WRITINGS OF ANDREW JUKES

by Andrew Jukes

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Andrew Jukes, compiled for study and devotional reading.

117 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 01.0.1. Four Views of Christ
2. 01.0.2. Preface
3. 01.0.3. Introduction
4. 01.1.0. Matthew's View
5. 01.2.0. Mark's View
6. 01.3.0. Luke's View
7. 01.4.0. John's View
8. 01.5.0. The Common Testimony
9. 02.0.1. The Characteristic Differences of the Four Gospels
10. 02.0.2. Preface
11. 02.1.0. The Four Gospels, Four Views of Christ
12. 02.2.0. St Matthew; or, the Son of Abraham
13. 02.3.0. St Mark; or, the Servant of God
14. 02.4.0. St Luke; or, the Son of Adam
15. 02.5.0. St John; or, the Son of God
16. 02.6.0. The Common Testimony
17. 03.00.1. THE LAW OF THE OFFERINGS
18. 03.00.2. PREFACE
19. 03.00.3. CONTENTS
20. 03.00.4. PREFACE TO E-SWORD EDITION
21. 03.00.5. Heb_10:1-14
22. 03.01. CHAPTER 1: THE TYPES IN GENERAL
23. 03.02. CHAPTER 2: THE BURNT-OFFERING
24. 03.03. CHAPTER 3: THE MEAT-OFFERING
25. 03.04. CHAPTER 4: THE PEACE-OFFERING
26. 03.05. CHAPTER 5: THE SIN-OFFERING
27. 03.06. CHAPTER 6: THE TRESPASS-OFFERING
28. 03.07. CHAPTER 7: THE OFFERINGS AS A WHOLE
29. 03.08. APPENDIX
30. 04.00.0. The Names of God
31. 04.00.1. Introduction
32. 04.01. God, or Elohim
33. 04.02. Lord, or Jehovah
34. 04.03. God Almighty, or El Shaddai
35. 04.04. Most High God, or El Elyon
36. 04.05. Lord, or Adonai
37. 04.06. Everlasting God, or El Olam
38. 04.07. Lord of Hosts, or Jehovah Sabaoth
39. 04.08. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

40. 04.09. Partakers of the Divine Nature
41. 04.10. Appendix
42. 05.0.1. RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS
43. 05.0.2. Preface
44. 05.0.3. Introduction
45. 05.1.0. The Nature of Scripture
46. 05.2.0. The Testimony of Scripture
47. 05.2.1. The First-born to Save the Later-born
48. 05.2.2. Through Successive Ages
49. 05.2.3. Through Death and Judgment
50. 05.3.0. Popular Objections
51. 05.3.1. Opposed to the Teaching of the Church
52. 05.3.2. Opposed to Reason
53. 05.3.3. Opposed to Scripture
54. 05.4.0. Concluding Remarks
55. 05.5.0. Postscript
56. 05.6.1. Appendix A - "Death" and "Destruction"
57. 05.6.2. Appendix B - Extracts from the Fathers
58. 05.6.3. Appendix C - On Hebrews 2:9,16
59. 06.0.1. Types in Genesis
60. 06.0.2. Editor's Notes
61. 06.0.3. Preface
62. 06.0.4.0. Introduction - The Work and Rest of God
63. 06.0.4.1. The Work of God
64. 06.0.4.2. The First Day
65. 06.0.4.3. The Second Day
66. 06.0.4.4. The Third Day
67. 06.0.4.5. The Fourth Day
68. 06.0.4.6. The Fifth Day
69. 06.0.4.7. The Sixth Day
70. 06.0.4.8. The Seventh Day
71. 06.1.0. Adam, or Human Nature
72. 06.1.1. Adam, or Man
73. 06.1.2. Man's Way
74. 06.1.3. The Fruit of Man's Way
75. 06.1.4. The Remedy for Man
76. 06.2.0. Cain and Abel, or the Carnal and Spiritual
77. 06.2.1. The First and Second Birth
78. 06.2.2. The Carnal and the Spiritual
79. 06.2.3. Their Lives
80. 06.3.0. Noah, or Regeneration
81. 06.3.1. Noah on the Ground of the Old Man

82. 06.3.2. Noah in the Waters
83. 06.3.3. Noah on the Earth Beyond the Flood
84. 06.3.4. Noah's Sons
85. 06.3.5. Noah's Failure
86. 06.4.0. Abraham, or the Spirit of Faith
87. 06.4.1. Abram's Separation from His Country
88. 06.4.3. Abram's Conflicts to Deliver Lot
89. 06.4.4. Abram's Trials Through the Word of God
90. 06.4.5. Abram's Efforts to Be Fruitful by Hagar
91. 06.4.6. The True Way for Abram to Be Fruitful
92. 06.4.7. The End of Lot
93. 06.4.8. Abraham in the Philistines' Land
94. 06.5.0. Isaac, or the Spirit of Sonship
95. 06.5.1. The Birth of Isaac, and Its Results
96. 06.5.2. The Offering Up of Isaac
97. 06.5.3. Isaac's Union with Rebekah
98. 06.5.4. Keturah, and Isaac at Lahai-roi
99. 06.5.5. The Trials of Isaac Respecting Seed
100. 06.5.6. Isaac's Twofold Seed
101. 06.5.7. Isaac in the Philistines' Land
102. 06.6.0. Jacob, or the Spirit of Service
103. 06.6.1. Jacob's Carnal Means to Gain God's Ends
104. 06.6.2. The Motives to Service
105. 06.6.3. The Service for Wives and Flocks
106. 06.6.4. The Departure from Laban
107. 06.6.5. The Journey to Canaan
108. 06.6.6. The Sojourn in Succoth, and Dinah's Fall
109. 06.6.7. The Return to Bethel
110. 06.6.8. The Seeds of Jacob and Esau
111. 06.7.0. Joseph, or Suffering and Glory
112. 06.7.1. Joseph's Dreams
113. 06.7.2. Judah's History
114. 06.7.3. Joseph in Potiphar's House
115. 06.7.4. Joseph in Prison
116. 06.7.5. Joseph Exalted Over All Egypt
117. 4.2. Abram's Separation from Lot

01.0.1. Four Views of Christ

FOUR

VIEWS OF CHRIST by

Andrew Jukes

"A river went out of Eden, to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." - Genesis 2:10.

"The first living creature was like unto a Lion; the second living creature was like unto a Calf; the third living creature had a face as a Man; the fourth living creature was like a flying Eagle." - Revelation 4:7.

Contents

Preface

Introduction Matthew’s View Mark’s View Luke’s View John’s View The Common Testimony

01.0.2. Preface

Preface

IT IS A MARK of love to dwell on the perfections of a beloved object, to notice and treasure up tones which fall unheeded on the unloving ear. Love of the truth, where it is deep and real, here resembles other love. It sees beauties where the unloving can discern none. Kings of the Gentiles who come to Zion may pass by together, may see it, and marvel, and hasten away. But he who dwells there will go around about her, and tell her towers; will mark her bulwarks, and count her palaces. His love for his home makes him quick to see its beauties, and to challenge others to notice and admire them with him. The joy I have had in the study of the Gospels, more especially since through grace the scales fell from my eyes, and I saw in their structure and diversity marks of a Divine purpose, has been such that I could wish to make others partakers with me in it; for to me the discovery of a reason for their form was like the acquiring of a new sense. Since then, as opportunity has served, I have led others to the subject. Recently I delivered the lectures which compose this volume. And now, though with the deepest sense of their imperfectness, I commit them to the press, at the repeated request of those who heard them. I have rather indicated the nature of the subject than sounded its depths. I do not know how far this age is prepared to eat "the hidden manna." But I shall rejoice if my attempt directs others to a line of truth, which I am sure demands the special attention of the Church of today. For now as ever, though now more keenly, the wisdom of the world is arrayed to prove the wisdom of God to be folly, because He has given His truth in a form, which, though it finds the lost, seems too childish and simple for wise and prudent ones. Only recently I met a man accounted wise in this world who told me, that "the crucial test which had of late been applied to the Gospels had proved them to be very different from the Divine thing which many took them for." I asked him if he knew the story, how, when the Truth came in the flesh, humbling Himself to that form, that thereby He might reach the very lowest, the "crucial test" was tried on Him too, and He was adjudged "a deceiver"; at least so said the men who used the "crucial test." So must the written Word be tried; for disputers of this world still stumble at the human form of the Word, not seeing that it is part of the mystery of the incarnation. But crucial tests, which could not be used against it, if God had not spoken to us in human form, "even as a man speaketh with his friend," will only prove to loving disciples the deeper glory of that Word, which, though Human, is yet Divine.

It only remains for me to acknowledge my many obligations to a beloved friend, whose love and instructions I count among the many blessings God has given me. To a little anonymous volume by him on St. Luke, and a paper on St. Mark, published some years ago in a now defunct periodical, I owe much. I am glad to be his debtor, for I feel that "wherever it can be shown we are not original, so much the better: our desire should be to enter the circle of the great dependence of all things; secure that there is no independence of heart or mind upon any other terms." Only "with all saints" can "we comprehend what is the depth and length" (Ephesians 3:18) of that which is presented to us in Christ Jesus. And the household which is too small by itself to take in the whole Lamb, can and must do so by the aid of others. For God will have every part of His Lamb to be

apprehended by us, thus by our very weakness linking us to one another. And now, O Lord, to Thee do I commend this little work. It is nothing with Thee to help with few or many. My feebleness cannot hinder if Thou wilt work. Work Thou to Thine own glory.

01.0.3. Introduction

Introduction

"A river went out of Eden, to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads" Genesis 2:10.

WE ARE TOLD OF ST. AUGUSTINE that on one occasion when his mind was much engaged in the contemplation of the doctrine of the Trinity, he was walking by the sea, and saw a child filling a shell with the water, which he then carried and poured into a hollow in the sand. "What are you doing, my boy, with that water?" said the Saint. "I am going to put all the sea into this hole," replied the child. The Father smiled and passed on, when a voice seemed to say to him, "And thou too art doing the like, in thinking to comprehend the depths of God in the narrow limits of thy finite mind." The attempt to treat of the differences of the Gospels within a few brief lectures, may appear to be only a repetition of the child's attempt to drain the sea. But I make no such attempt. I bear a cupful of water, a taste of what is at hand for all who seek and wait to draw it, not that, like Ishmael, any should be content to go forth with but a bottle; for in the dry and thirsty land, if our water is only in bottles, it will soon be all consumed; but rather to lead men like Isaac to dwell by the well, knowing that never is the water so sweet to us as when we draw it ourselves fresh from the living fountain.

Those who, like Ishmael, trust to bottles are not only oft-times faint, but have no eye for the well, which, though they see it not, springs close to them even in the dreary land. But the elect dwell by the waters, and open wells while others stop them, that man and beast may drink thereat. If in a day when the human mind seems more than ever alive to extract every possible refreshment from the streams of this world, I can point to a better spring - if, in a word, by the examples given here, I may lead some to the Gospels, prayerfully and humbly to wait there for the streams of God, these pages will not be in vain. I should be happy if the joy my own soul has had in the study could be communicated to others into whose hands this little book may come. To speak then of the Gospels. As every one knows, there are four. By many these are regarded as merely supplementary or corroborative of one another. That they serve this end, as coincident testimonies, I do not doubt. But this is secondary, the chief purpose being, I am sure, the revelation of the Lord in certain distinct relationships. Even an ordinary man's life might be written thus: one biographer giving his public, another his private and more domestic life. One would select one class of facts: another, omitting these, would record others, as better suiting his own purpose. Indeed, given the self-same facts, the two would notice different circumstances, without making either narrative imperfect in the particular view in which it was composed. It is just so in the Gospels. Each has its own purpose: each, therefore, has its own peculiar selection and arrangement of facts recorded. An example may illustrate this. Take, then, the life of Napoleon. If I wished to show his skill as a military commander, I might select some word or deed of boldness in the field. Did I wish to show his kind-heartedness, I might simply quote a letter written after the battle, sympathizing with the sorrows of one whose friend or brother had fallen. With another view I might point to the Despatches, so clear and true, as illustrative of the literary ability of the same

person. Thus from the self-same scene I might make selections of the circumstances to record, according to the particular end which I had before me in my writing. And also the order of the events narrated. If my purpose is to show the progress of a certain course of action, chronological order must be adhered to accurately. On the other hand, if I only wish to illustrate the spirit and character of that action, in which various facts all speak the same language, chronological order may be dispensed with without error. In each case the one question is, What is the writer's purpose? Unless this is understood, the writing will fail to accomplish in us its specific end however instructive it may be.

Take again the Code Napoleon as an example. If I should speak of it as a monument of the genius of him whose name it bears, I might select particular parts in which the bearing of law on society, an intuitive perception of just results in details, and the vast scope of design, were manifest, and show that these originated in his mind. If another history should seek to show Napoleon's own power in employing instruments, it might show the very same parts drawn up by men able in their vocation; and a caviller might find difficulty to reconcile the drawing up of all of them with the originating mind which had set all going and directed it throughout. Were I showing the progress of legislation in the world, I might allege these very same parts as the necessary consequence of the progress of society, and that they flowed as the obvious consequences from the preceding steps in this process, as one idea leads on to another; and, in appearance, Napoleon's originality would disappear.

All these histories might be true, yet seem impossible to one who had only these to reconcile them in everything; because he has not the additional elements and a knowledge of the whole order of man's mind and history, which would be absolutely necessary to put them together. Is God's history of His Son in the world less vast in conception, less multifarious in the relationships it speaks of, than Napoleon and a code of laws? And yet many speak of Holy Scripture as if its form were accidental, without a thought whether such a supposition be worthy or unworthy of a Divine revelation. Ignorant of God and His purpose and laws, they do not hesitate to judge His Word. To act thus with heathen poets, and charge them with ignorance, because the form of their verse is unlike ours, would of course be great presumption. But to judge God's Word without having His Spirit is to rely on the world's wisdom, and that is still utter foolishness. For the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. In His sanctuary some have learned to admire the grace and wisdom of this His revelation; and having given Him credit for having an object in its form have in due time learned by His Spirit what the object is. They know, as one of old expressed it, that "the living Word, humbling Himself to come in human form, became all things to all men, in a more Divine sense than St. Paul, in order that thus He might win all men." (Note: Origen, Comment. in Johan. Vol. x.) The human form, therefore, of the Written Word to them is no stumbling-block. They see that it is but part and parcel of the mystery of the Incarnation. They know, too, even though the world does not, that the division of Scripture into books, in each of which some particular aspect of the elect's position, and of God's grace to meet it, is given to us, was thus appointed the better to reveal Him, by dividing His light as with a prism, here a little and there a little, as man could bear it. In Paradise this might not be needed. There man might better conceive of God. But though in Eden the river of the water of life flowed in one full stream, when it left the Garden, and went forth into the world, it was seen parted into several channels. Could we comprehend Christ as He is, we should not need the many streams; but, being where and what we are, this form of the revelation

is very gracious; a witness among many, that the "sundry times and divers manners" of the communication were all additional expressions of perfect love. The fact is that our perceptions do not grasp realities, but their forms. If therefore what is seen is to be described, we must have many representations even of the same object; and this not only because the same object may be viewed on different sides, but because the amount of what is seen even on the same side will depend on the light and capacity of the beholder. He who made us knew this and provided for it. Hence of old, in type and figure, we have view after view of Him who was to come; not only because His offices and perfections were many, but also because we were weak and needed such a revelation.

Thus in the single relation of offering, Christ is seen a Burnt-offering, Peace-offering, and Sin-offering, each but a different view of the same one offering; each of which again may be seen in various measures, and yet the offering itself is only one. And just as in the self-same act of dying on the cross, our Lord was at the same moment a sweet-savor offering, willingly offering to God a perfect obedience, and also a sin-offering, penally bearing the judgment due to sin, and as such made a curse for us; (Note: For those not familiar with the typical offerings, I may note here that in "the sweet-savour offerings," man came to present an offering, which, as a sweet feast to God, was consumed upon His altar. In "the sin-offerings," man came as a sinner, and his offering, as charged with sin, was cast out, and burnt, not on the altar, but on the ground "without the camp." In the one the offerer came as an accepted worshipper: in the other as a condemned sinner. See Leviticus 1:1-17; Leviticus 2:1-16; Leviticus 3:1-17; Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-19. Both views meet in the death of Christ.) so in the selfsame acts of His life, each act may be seen in different aspects, for each act has a Divine fulness. It is this fulness which God in mercy presents to our view in the diversities of the Four Gospels.

It is for this reason that a Harmony of the Gospels, though it is interesting and has its uses, leads us from the special purpose for which the Gospels were written as they are. For by arranging everything chronologically many passages lose the force which they possess as portions of a distinct series. Here in historic, there in moral order, the Spirit of God has put this or that fact touching the Son before me. The facts are precious, get them as I may, but they are doubly precious if I am able to apprehend the purpose of God in presenting them in this or that relation. Then each scene, in its omissions, in its form, in its position in the series, is part of a Divine mystery, which, though hid from the wise and prudent of the world, is yet often revealed to babes by the Holy Spirit. The early Church saw this. And with one voice they testify to what they saw, namely, that the Four Gospels contained four different aspects of the Great Manifestation. And though to say that the Fathers so viewed the matter may not in these days commend the view, it will at least prove that the doctrine here is no novelty. The emblem which they applied to the Gospels was that of the Four Cherubim or "living creatures," conceiving that these four "living creatures" were apt representations of the Four Evangelists or Gospels, or rather, more correctly to express their thought, of those manifestations of Christ Himself which the Four Gospels respectively present to us, Christ himself being one and the same in each, yet seen and set forth by each in a different aspect. Illuminated missals, old Bibles, and the windows of Churches, in which these cherubic forms are connected with the Four Evangelists, show that, right or wrong, the Church for centuries has regarded this as a correct application. I believe they were right, and I am content to take the same symbols, finding no others which so well express the general and

particular character of each and all the Gospels. And here, though what I contend for is not the symbol but the fact, it may be well to show in what way the symbol of the Cherubim can be connected with certain views of Christ's person. For some may ask, Are not the Cherubim angels? If I err not, the Cherubim are always the Divine in creature form, the vessel in or by which the Lord reveals His glory. If He shows Himself in angels, then so far angels may be Cherubim. If He shows Himself in "living creatures full of eyes," who say, "Thou hast redeemed us" (Revelation 4:8; Revelation 5:8-9), then the redeemed are Cherubim. The Jews say that the Cherubim in the temple were the memorials of God's descent at the giving of the Law. That descent on Mount Sinai was a manifestation, even if "by the disposition of angels" (Acts 7:53), of His glory. But that descent, though the Jews never understood it, was itself a pledge of another and greater, when He who then wrote His laws on stone would write them in flesh, and descend to show His glory in the only begotten Son. For my own part, without pretending fully to explain "the living creatures," I cannot doubt that they are a vessel to reveal the Lord's glory; as such linked to the manifestation made in the flesh of Christ, and again that which shall be made in His mystic body, the Church of the redeemed first-born. For the one fore-shadows the other. And just as the work of the potter, before it feels the fire, has on it all those lines of beauty which shall be seen when the vessel has passed through the furnace, though none but the potter's eye can as yet trace the beauty; so do the Gospels contain hidden within them figures, not only of the revelation once made in Christ, but of that far more wondrous one which shall be made when the kingdom now in mystery shall be revealed openly. But on this I cannot enter here. Enough if I have shown on what grounds "the living creatures" may be used as figures of the various aspects of the manifestation given us in Christ Jesus. As to details, the figures are these: "The first living creature was like unto a lion; the second living creature was like unto a calf; the third living creature had a face as a man; and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle" (Revelation 4:7). The four camps in the wilderness - the camp of Reuben, of Judah, of Ephraim, and of Dan - had, it is said, these four figures on their respective standards: (Note: Numbers 2:1-34. Jewish tradition declares that Reuben's standard was the man, Judah's the lion, Ephraim's the ox, Dan's the eagle.) for Israel was the elect vessel in which the Lord would be seen; on them, therefore, in a way they little thought, was stamped some figure of that which should one day be seen in the true Israel (Isaiah 49:3-4). And in every age the lion, and ox, and man, and eagle, have all been seen in some part of the camp of the saints or the beloved city. Of the meaning of the figures I need scarcely speak. If Christ is seen as "the lion," a heavenly voice tells us in what connection He holds this form: "The lion of the tribe of Judah is the root of David" (Revelation 5:5; Revelation 22:16), again: "Judah is my lawgiver" (Psalms 108:8). Under this figure, therefore, I expect to find Him as a Son of Abraham, connected with a kingdom, and so with Abraham's seed. Then as to "the calf." This is the figure for service. So we read, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn" (1 Corinthians 9:9), and again: "Much increase is by the strength of the ox" (Proverbs 14:4). Under this figure I expect to see the Lord as the patient laborer for others, if need be offering Himself in His service as a perfect sacrifice. The "man" needs no comment. "The face of a man" bespeaks human sympathy, as it is written, "I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love" (Hosea 11:4). Here we shall see the "Son of man," one who can have compassion on the ignorant, seeing He also is compassed with infirmities; who, inasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, Himself likewise took part of the same; who took not on Him the nature of angels, but who took on Him the seed of Abraham, and was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;

that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Very different is "the eagle." Its ways are above the earth: "the way of an eagle in the air," says the wise man, "is too wonderful for me" (Proverbs 30:18-19). Much on the wing, it often rises where no human eye can follow, and possesses the power of gazing with undazzled eyes upon the mid-day sun. Here, "the Word who was with God," who came to reveal the Father, is seen as the One who is from heaven, and whose home is there.

Now those who have most learned Christ, have universally recognized these differing views of Him in the Four Gospels. For love is quick-sighted, and delights to dwell on the peculiarities and perfections of a beloved object. But with the exception of St. John's Gospel, where no question can arise, Christians have differed as to the particular view set forth in each Gospel. The most common view, which has been sanctioned by the Church of Rome, following Jerome and Ambrose and other Fathers, is that which makes the Four Gospels correspond with the order of the Cherubic faces, as seen in Ezekiel's first vision (Ezekiel 1:10); that is, first the man, then the lion, then the ox, then the eagle. There is little to recommend this view, except the fact that in Ezekiel's first vision the Cherubic faces are seen in this order. Some, among whom is Augustine, dissent; seeing the man in St. Mark, and the ox in St. Luke, while the lion and the eagle are the aspects he traces respectively in St. Matthew and St. John's Gospels. Others, while agreeing with Augustine in his view of St. John and St. Matthew, see more clearly the ox or service in St. Mark, and the Son of Man in St. Luke's Gospel. I believe the true order is set forth in the vision of St. John, that is, first the lion, then the ox, then the man, and last the eagle. But whence comes this difference of opinion? The reason is plain. In Ezekiel's vision of the living creatures, each one had all the four faces. And though I am sure that each Gospel has one more special aspect, yet each will give some traits of all the aspects to those who have eyes; while to those who have no eyes, or only half-opened ones, it will present something of all the four together. A distant view of a building often confuses its different sides.

Imperfect views of Christ's offering continually unite or confuse its different aspects, mixing the sin of it with what was a sweet savor; while on the other hand a more perfect comprehension shows many views in each aspect; either of which causes will account for the difference of judgment here. And as to the various views of St. Mark, where one sees the man, others the ox, a special reason may be found in St. Paul's words, "He took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Php 2:7). The one relation is so close to the other, that one runs into the other: one therefore very easily may be substituted or mistaken for the other. For as it is said of the living creatures, "two wings of every one were joined one to another," so in certain places the view peculiar to one Gospel seems to run into another view. And so as to St. Luke. I can quite understand how, seeing the special mercy there to the lost, some have connected this Gospel with the idea of atonement, and taken "the ox," the sacrificial animal, as an emblem of it. Nevertheless I feel certain that, according to the order of the living creatures in St. John's vision, the third Gospel shows "the man"; that it is as man that Christ meets the lost - "the priest must be taken from among men" (Hebrews 5:1-2); - as man He makes the atonement. And the following pages will show why I prefer the view which regards St. Luke's Gospel as the revelation of the Son of Adam. At the same time, while I see how "they four had one likeness" (Ezekiel 10:10), I am not surprised that men with different feelings have differed here. The old tradition as to the Lord, that He

appeared very different to different men, seems to me in point here, and quite probable. For something of this sort must be true of the Word in all His manifestations. Take an instance from the written Word. Paul saw in Hagar and Sarah what an unbeliever could not see. I look into the Gospels: how infinitely different do they appear to me, and to the sceptic who only sees in them certain exploded myths; and yet how very far does my view come short of that of angels and saints within the veil. So with the formed Word of creation; "the heavens which declare His glory"; how different is it to a Newton and to a New Zealand savage! So with the Word made flesh. To one He is but as "a root out of a dry ground"; to another He is "the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." It is so on all points. The Word must appear different to different men, because each sees, and can only see, with his own measure, and from his own standpoint. And this leads me to notice the writers of the Gospels; for the view of each is wonderfully connected with his own character. Each sees from his own ground. Matthew, a Jew and publican, one who, though by birth an Israelite, by his office as publican had been an official of the Roman empire, and so had been accustomed to contemplate a vast kingdom, sees our Lord both as Son of Abraham and of David, connected with Abraham’s seed, and also with a kingdom. Mark was the Apostle’s servant: "They had John, whose surname was Mark, for their minister" (Acts 12:12; Acts 12:25); and Paul says of him, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry." This is the man, living to serve, who sees the Lord as Servant; his own service being probably, not only the result of what he had seen in the Lord, but also a means for better enabling him to appreciate the perfections of that blessed ministry. Luke, apparently a Gentile, as he is distinguished by St. Paul from "those of the circumcision," the friend and companion of Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, whose ministry respected neither Jew nor Gentile, but addressed itself to man as such, is the one who sees Christ as the Son of Adam or Son of Man, not so much connected with a kingdom, or the Servant of God, as the One whose sympathies as a Man linked Him with Adam’s fallen and ruined children.

John, who leaned on the bosom of His Lord, sees Him as the Son in the bosom of the Father, not of the world, though for a season in it, to draw a heavenly people upward from it to the Father’s house above. In each case the vessel used by the Spirit was fitted for the special task. He knew, if they did not, His own purpose in thus variously tuning His chosen instruments. The result is full harmony to the instructed ear. I know that some, who have presumed to judge here after the flesh, complain of dissonance. I know, too, that to the savage ear our full chord is confused and strange; and how a note which seems like a discord could add character and tone, would be utterly incomprehensible. But the harpist, whose music satisfies the instructed, can afford to be judged by the untaught. The Lord did not lack perfectness, because some on earth saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him.

I would yet add a word as to the order of the Gospels, for I am certain that the order of Scripture, as we now have it, involves deep teaching. Here as well as in all other things God has had a hand. And indeed it needs no special light to see that in the Four Gospels, the character of the revelation increases in depth, or at least changes its form, as we proceed. The first thousand cubits the waters were to the ankles; the second thousand cubits the waters were to the knees; the third thousand cubits the waters were to the loins; afterwards it was waters to swim in, a river which could not be passed over. The King is the first view we get of the Lord. The Son of David is head of a kingdom, of which we all are, or should be, subjects. In this relation He gives His commands,

re-pealing old laws with His, "I say unto you"; while (for His kingdom is one of grace) He invites the weary to come unto Him, and He will give them rest. At the same time, like a righteous judge, He utters the woes which must ensue upon contempt or rejection of His rightful claim. All this we get in St. Matthew; and this is ever the view which an awakened soul first gets of the Lord Jesus.

Soon I get a further view. I see that in His love this Lord has actually become for us a true Servant; not only that He has given commands, but that He has Himself toiled for us. How He toiled comes out with wondrous beauty in the second Gospel. Soon we see even further; not only that He has served, but that verily and indeed He took our place and became a Man for us; a wailing child, bound with swaddling clothes, under human restraints, obeying parents; and then, oh wondrous vision! that He is the heavenly One, the Son of man in heaven. He grows as we look upon Him. Like the vine seen by Pharaoh's butler, which, as he looked, "was as though it budded, and shot forth, and bore clusters" (Genesis 40:10). Christ grows before those who see Him; one relation after another comes out, and comes out, I believe, very much according to the order of these Gospels.

I am sure that in the books of the Old Testament the order is most marked. We first see what comes out of Adam, the different forms of life growing out of the root of "old Adam." This is the book of Genesis. Then we see that, be it good or bad which has come out of Adam, there must be redemption: so an elect people by the blood of the Lamb are saved from Egypt. This is the book of Exodus. After redemption is known, we come to the experience of the elect, as needing access, and learning the way of it, to God the Redeemer in the sanctuary. This we get in Leviticus. Then in the wilderness of this world, as pilgrims from Egypt, the house of bondage, to the promised land, the trials of the journey are learnt, from that land of wonders and of man's wisdom and art, to the land flowing with milk and honey. This is the book of numbers.

Then comes the desire to exchange the wilderness for the better land, from entering which for a season after redemption is known the elect yet shrink; answering to the desire of the elect at a certain stage to know the power of the resurrection, to live even now as in heavenly places. The rules and precepts which must be obeyed, if this is to be done, come next. Deuteronomy, a second giving of the law, a second cleansing, tells the way of progress. After which Canaan is indeed reached: we go over Jordan: we know practically the death of the flesh, and what it is to be circumcised, and to roll away the reproach of Egypt. We know now what it is to be risen with Christ, and to wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers in heavenly places. This is Joshua. Every instructed Christian has felt this progress; and the books, and their order answer exactly to it. And so it is, I believe, with the Four Gospels. Nor here only. There is Divine order and progress, I am assured, in the Epistles. There is first Paul's truth, then James's truth, then Peter's truth, and then John's truth: (Note: The thought that Peter and John are types of different forms of Christian life is very common in the old writers; John being taken as the type of the life which is by vision of Christ; Peter, of that life which is by faith and conflict. See Augustine, Hom. in Johan. 124.) the same truth in substance, but given in different forms, meeting the advancing needs of God's elect people. Few now ever really get beyond Paul's form, the first side of truth, giving the first aspect of the application of heavenly mysteries. We are more at home in his arguments, addressed not a little to the mind, than in some of John's simple testimonies. As a proof of this I may say, that for one comment on St. John's Epistles, we have twenty on St. Paul; and this, not because the latter is the most difficult, but because he is more on ground where

intellect can find its own. John’s line of things in his Epistle is in its simplicity beyond us, even as his Gospel (if indeed Christians knew what it spoke) is not so near and easily comprehended as the view of a kingdom, and that we, with Christ, are members of it. But on this too I forbear: nevertheless the subject will repay the fullest meditation. But some may ask, Where is the proof that this difference really exists? May I answer, proof is not so much needed as an opened eye. The Jews of old asked signs, instead of the removal of the veil. They could see no proof that Christ was a Divine Person. In questions of sensual things, the senses will yield the proof. Sense proves that fire is hot, and ice cold. Intellect is needed to receive intellectual proof. The senses will not prove a mathematical proposition. To feel as a man, you must be a man, and to feel and see with God, you must possess God’s Spirit. "Who knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man? So the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11). And this is my answer here. Truth is revealed only to the true. The pure in heart, and they only, shall see God. The impure will see the world, or themselves, or their sins. Holiness is needed, if we would see the Lord. Barnabas, who was so surnamed by the Apostles, because he was "a son of consolation," when he came to the brethren at Antioch, "saw in them the grace of God; for," adds the inspired penman, "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 11:24). Pilate, had he gone thither, would never have seen the same. And so of the Gospels. Like the book of nature, they are "the open secret"; open to all, but opened only to a few. Like the holy city, though the gates shall not be shut at all by day, and there is no night there, yet shall there in no wise enter in thither anything that defileth or maketh a lie, but they that are written in the Lamb’s book of life. The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light. By such, the proof, when it is submitted to them, will, I am assured, not be judged lacking. But, oh! how few consider what a tale is told in what we see! how few remember that by it, like the mariner on the ocean, we may find out where we really are!

There is yet another question. Granting the proof, what is the use? What is gained by seeing these distinctions? Such a question - alas! too common - only shows where many now are, and how little God’s secrets are prized and treasured by us. Is it nothing to increase in the knowledge of Him, whom to know is life eternal, and "through the knowledge of whom are given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3)? Shall earthly objects attract, and ignorance be accounted shame, and is it no shame that we so little apprehend the wonders of this blessed revelation? If it be true, too, that "we shall be like Him, when we see Him as He is," is it no gain to grow in intelligent knowledge of Him? He that has seen the great sight will not ask, What is the use? He has seen and believed, and all questioning ends in worship and adoring praise. The fact is, we need an object. God knows this, though we forget it. He knows that to this day the color of the flocks is changed by the rods put before their eyes in their drinking-troughs (Genesis 30:37-39). He knows that, in spite of our boastings, the creature cannot be self-existent or self-supported. He therefore gives an object - a revelation of Himself - by the contemplation of which we may rise out of self to bear His image. And just as this revelation is permitted to reach us, it impresses us. We are like Him, when we see Him as He is. But the god of this world, knowing well how the vision of God will transform the creature, strives by another vision, of the glory of this world, to "blind the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them (2 Corinthians 4:4). But the pure in heart see God. And, such as see Him are changed from grace to grace, into the same image. Let but the light shine on them, and like the moon they must reflect it. The very pool in the street will flash back the rays of heaven, if they do but fall upon it. And we all, "with open face beholding as in a

glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18). But there is another answer. The Church, as Christ's body, must set Him forth. She is called to be His letter of recommendation before a world that knows Him not (2 Corinthians 3:3). In her relations to those who are the seed of Abraham, and yet not all children, "for in Isaac shall the seed be called"; in her relation as the Lord's servant in ministry here - in her relation to Adam's seed, or all mankind - in her relation to the heavenly family - is there nothing she has to learn? Those who know the most feel how much instruction they yet need in each and all these relations. Very blessed is it to see how Christ once filled them; for "as He is, so are we in this world." Who has had his eyes in any measure opened to the state of the professing Church - of that body which calls itself, and in one sense is, the seed of Abraham, and the Lord's kingdom - who has not felt the need of special teaching how he should walk towards it? This teaching will be found in that Gospel which shows Christ in connection with the kingdom and with Abraham's seed.

Again, in a day like the present, when so many new philanthropies are being forged to renovate and save a groaning world, is it nothing to have before us the details of that service by which, as God's Servant, our Lord perfectly pleased and glorified Him that sent Him? But every question on this head may be fully answered, as we contemplate the Gospel dedicated to reveal the service of the Lord's Servant. Again, we are Adam's sons: we are in the world as well as in the Church: we have a link which binds us to all mankind. Is it nothing to know how far that relationship should hold us - how we should sit and walk with publicans and among lost sinners? I look in St. Luke, and I see a Man, in every stage of life, meeting all men, and yet in all well-pleasing to God. And so of the Son of God, the begotten of the Father. We, too, as His begotten, have a place in His bosom, called to rise above the earth; as such, to be misunderstood and rejected here, and yet while judged, by a heavenly life to be continually judging things around us. Do I want to know the rule here, how, as son of God, Passovers, Sabbaths, and feasts of Tabernacles, may be all fulfilled in me? I look in St. John, and I receive the answer. Oh! for grace, more grace, to walk something more like that most blessed Pattern. In such a walk the world will see nothing - it saw no glory in the Lord. What was there in His relation to the Kingdom, or in His Service, or in His walk as a Man, or as the Son of God, worth noticing? The world saw no beauty. It will see none in us, and yet another Eye shall see the earnest of glory and of everlasting joys.

There is, however, a misuse, as well as a use, of this truth. Intellect may be exercised without conscience. Truth may be used to exalt self, (what is there the flesh will not spoil?) and so bring upon its possessor a worse judgment. Nothing really profits but what sanctifies and humbles. If, like Judas, we use the Word, or our knowledge of Him of whom it testifies, to minister to self, better would it be had we never known Him. If, on the contrary, in the midst of weakness, we use His glorious likeness to humble us for the little measure in which we are as yet conformed to it, and by that Pattern judge in us all which is unlike Him, our knowledge of Him, and His glory, shall not be wholly vain. May these pages, through His grace, serve this end in us! Amen.

01.1.0. Matthew's View

Matthew’s View "The first living creature was like unto a Lion" Revelation 4:7.

"The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book" Revelation 5:5.

I HAVE SAID THAT EACH of the Gospels serves a special end, and that the view which is given by St. Matthew of our Lord represents Him in connection with a certain kingdom: that He is not here the Servant of our need, or the Son of Adam, or of God, so much as the Seed of Abraham and Heir of an elect kingdom. The peculiarities of this Gospel will prove this. These peculiarities I would now note as illustrating the special path of the Lord as Son of Abraham. I may then show how these peculiarities give us the special teaching which we need, as to our position as members of a kingdom, and as Abraham’s seed. For "as He is, so we are in this world." "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself so to walk even as He walked."

First, then, as to what is distinctive. Here the difficulty is selection, for it would far exceed my limits were I to notice every minute point in which St. Matthew differs from the other Gospels. And yet the minute and less marked peculiarities, to the instructed eye, are as striking, and full of import, as those which are greater and more obvious. To, my mind, these minor points attest a Divine purpose through the book far more wonderfully than the broad distinctions which no one can overlook. And though an exercise of soul is surely needed to discern them aright, even as there must be an opened ear to hear that voice which in creation, "without speech or language," is ever speaking to us; yet to the humble, light shall not be wanting to show the wisdom of that revelation, which, without a formal declaration of its purpose, can and does reveal that purpose to such as wait on God.

I turn to the Gospel. Its opening verse is at once characteristic. This is "the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Here He is Heir of a kingdom, and one of a chosen seed; and so His genealogy is traced through the line of Israel’s kings as far as Abraham, and no further. In St. Luke it is traced to Adam; but here it is the Son of Abraham, not of Adam, whom God reveals to us. For an Heir had been promised, and here our Lord is shown as the One in whom the promise of the kingdom was to be fulfilled. The "sure mercies of David" spoke of a kingdom. The covenant ran thus: "I have found David my servant, with holy oil have I anointed him; also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth: my mercy will I keep with him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him: his seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven" (Psalms 89:20-29). Here the Heir is come, and His lineage is given, not as God’s or Adam’s but as David’s Son.

Then in this genealogy four women are mentioned, (Note: Matthew 1:3-6. Chrysostom, in his Homilies on St. Matthew, thus introduces this question: - "It is worth inquiry, wherefore can it be that, when tracing the genealogy through the men, he hath mentioned women also; and why, since he determined to do so, he hath yet not mentioned them all, but, passing over the more eminent, such as Sarah, and Rebekah, and as many as are like them, has brought forward them that are

famed for some bad thing, as, for instance, a harlot, an adulteress, a mother by incest, and a stranger" Hom. i. par. 14. I quote this passage for the sake of its opening words: "It is worth inquiring," says Chrysostom. I would to God that Christians thought so, and did "inquire.") each of whom in her life and course had been an appointed figure of the mystery of the kingdom. To see this may need some spiritual discernment; but, seen or unseen, it remains the same. It may not be out of place here, - for few regard these things, - to show how full of teaching is a single distinctive word in these Gospels. To speak then of Tamar, the woman first named here. This figure scarcely needs comment; for, as with Sarah and Hagar, the type is most clear. Judah is the line of the kingdom. The sceptre was his (Genesis 49:10). But his seed, for they were born of a Canaanitish mother, were very evil. Then a younger wife, Tamar, is brought in, and given to Judah's sons; but the children of the old wife dislike her, and have no seed by her. They are cut off for their iniquity. Then Judah's wife grows old and dies. After this the seed of the kingdom passes to her who had been rejected by Judah's sons. And by her, through Judah's sin, Judah being all conscious of it, the line of the kingdom passes from his first sons into another channel. Judah, however, rages against the seed; yea, he is ready to burn the mother. But proof is at hand that her fruit, though Judah knows it not, is Abraham's seed. The signet and staff, though Judah may rage, clearly prove the lineage, and in due time the kingdom is established in the hands of the children of the younger wife.

Surely this scarcely needs interpretation. The first wife of Judah, like Hagar in another type, represents the principles of the Jewish church, (Note: Women in the types are principles, either good or bad, as Sarah and Hagar; men, the activities or energies connected with them. For this reason it is that in the Books of Kings, where we are shown all the different forms of Rule to which God's elect may be subject, the mother of each king is always given, as showing from what principles certain forms of Rule proceed.) by which Judah strove to build up the line of the elect kingdom. But the seed were evil; and though an attempt was made to improve and build up the line, by bringing in the second and younger wife - that is, the spiritual principles of the new dispensation - yet the sons of the first wife would not have it. They turned from it with loathing, refusing to embrace it, for which abomination judgment overtook them. For even of old the spiritual church was offered to the Jew. In prophets and righteous men it came near to them, but they received it not. So Tamar, the younger wife, was rejected. But time goes on. Judah's wife dies. The old dispensation ends; but not before Judah's sons have been cut off by sore judgments. Then by Judah's own fall, and all unknown to him, the seed passes to the younger wife - for "the seed is the word" - and she becomes fruitful. A seed has sprung out of Judah, which, when sprung, Judah judges, not suspecting the true father. Yea, he is ready to destroy it; but proof is at hand that it is Abraham's seed. The signet and the staff, though Judah may rage, clearly prove the lineage of the Church's children. It is throughout a mystery of the kingdom, showing how the line of heirs should change, and, as such, has a place here in the Gospel devoted to show the Lord in connection with the promised kingdom. And the same may be said of the other women here. I do not enter into details, further than to say that in each of them, with some distinctive peculiarities, the same story of the kingdom will be found repeated; showing how the Gentiles (for these women are Gentiles) should obtain the kingdom and continue the line of Abraham's seed. But to turn from mysteries to what is on the surface. Here, to omit many minor points, (Note: Such as the fact, that this genealogy is given at Christ's birth, whereas St. Luke connects his with the baptism; - that here it is a descending series, in St. Luke an ascending one; - that this is Joseph's line, while St.

Luke, if I mistake not, gives Mary's; all of which, I am certain, is significant.) the Lord is called "Emmanuel," that is to say, "God with us," - a name, the witness of the covenant with the kingdom, and also with the elect, testifying that He who had redeemed would not forsake His people. When the kingdom seemed in danger, this was the sign that it should not fail - "A Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and His name shall be Emmanuel"; while the same name was again but a fulfilment of the general promise to the elect, "I will dwell in you, and I will walk in you." Then in this Gospel alone do we read of One "born king of the Jews." In St. Luke it is, "Good tidings to all people, for to you is born a Savior." After which St. Matthew records the immediate effects of the birth of the royal child. To Herod the king it is an alarming event, and to all Jerusalem with him; while to distant Gentiles, who come with gifts, it is matter of joy and praise. The whole scene being in itself a figure of that mystery of the kingdom which was even now at hand. But even in the letter the scene is distinctive. The Lord is seen here as the Heir; and so of Bethlehem it is said here, and no other Evangelist notes it, "Out of thee shall come a Governor, who shall rule my people Israel." In the following chapter "the kingdom of heaven" is announced. John the Baptist comes preaching "the kingdom," saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:1-2). In St. Mark and St. Luke he preaches "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3); in substance the same thing, but recorded under a form of expression suited to the tenor of each respective Gospel. Here, too, St. Matthew, referring to Isaiah, quotes the words of the prophet, - "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight," - and then stops; for what remains of the quotation does not concern Abraham's seed, but rather the wide out-lying Gentile world. But for this very reason St. Luke goes on with the quotation, adding, "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill be brought low"; - the distinction between the Jew and Gentile shall be done away, in the common enjoyment of a heavenly kingdom; - "the crooked shall be made straight, the rough places plain, and all flesh shall see the Lord's salvation." St. Matthew goes on, "His fan is in His hand, and He shall thoroughly purge His floor, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire," - language perfectly suited to the Lord of the kingdom, who "will gather out of His kingdom all that offends, and them that work iniquity"; but for this very reason omitted by St. Mark, for that Evangelist's office is to reveal, not so much the mighty Lord, as the humble Servant.

All this is characteristic, but the general tenor of the chapter still more so. The "kingdom of heaven" is preached, for the earthly kingdom of Israel is in ruins. Israel's place is now to repent, and be buried as dead in a mystic grave. Then the true Heir, "to fulfill all righteousness," comes into the place of death, that others there with Him by the same path of humiliation may obtain a better kingdom. Then "heaven is opened," and the Spirit descends, a witness that "the kingdom of heaven" is at hand, and that the sons of Abraham shall be partakers in it. Here this "opening of heaven" is connected with the announcement of "the kingdom of heaven." But because it has other bearings, on the service of the elect, and also on the world generally, it finds its place in the other Gospels which describe the Servant and the Son of Man: St. Mark speaks of its bearing on service, for there is no true service until heaven is opened to us, and the Holy Spirit comes: St. Luke records it as showing that man enters heaven only by death and resurrection, that for man as man the way of life and peace is through the flood. Here in St. Matthew, both the "preaching of the kingdom," which is peculiar, and the "opening of heaven," which is common, are equally characteristic of the special aim of this Gospel. And most instructive is it to observe how even what is common to the Gospels, becomes peculiar by its position as part of a distinct series.

Then comes the temptation. The "kingdoms of this world" are set in array before Him who has received the testimony of the "kingdom of heaven," and has seen "heaven opened." Both St. Matthew and St. Luke record this, for to Abraham's son, and to man as man, the kingdoms of this world and their glory are a very special trial. St. Mark and St. John omit it, as outside their views of Ministry and of The Word; the omission with them being as characteristic as is the insertion here. This temptation the Heir of the Kingdom overcomes, after which He comes Himself preaching the kingdom of heaven. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). The next scene, the Sermon on the Mount, is more distinctive. Here, beginning with a beatitude touching "the kingdom," the Lord with authority unfolds the principles and laws, and describes the subjects of His kingdom: not one verse of which, be it observed, is recorded in St. Mark, who, though generally following St. Matthew, invariably omits what is connected with power in the kingdom, as inconsistent with the view which it is his office to present to us.

Here many points are characteristic: the tone of authority throughout: the repeated "I say unto you," where the letter of Moses is set aside to make way for a higher Spirit: the special teaching, too, as to the connection of the Law of Moses with the New Law; how the latter was not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them: the doxology in the Lord's prayer, with an allusion to "the kingdom," given here but omitted in St. Luke: the repeated reference to a "kingdom," the character of which is remarkably implied in its distinctive title; in other Gospels the "kingdom of God," here only the "kingdom of heaven"; a peculiar expression which occurs near thirty times in this Gospel: so too the marks of His subjects, among which "righteousness" is specially named: - all this, not to speak of other points, is peculiar to St. Matthew, and all characteristic. As to the "kingdom," and the remarkable fact, that in St. Matthew only it is "the kingdom of heaven," I will speak more fully when I come to notice the special teaching which we get in what is peculiar to this Evangelist. I would, however, beg that it may be noticed that though in three places in this Gospel, the expression, "kingdom of God," occurs, in each case the reason for this variation in the language is obvious, and with a distinct purpose; the "kingdom of heaven" being always the title chosen to mark distinctively what is peculiar to the Lord's kingdom. And so as to the word "righteousness." To some it may seem trifling to notice that this word occurs frequently in St. Matthew, scarcely ever in the other Gospels. Here it is repeated again and again. "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). "Blessed are they which thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6): "blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness": - by the way, in St. Luke it is distinctively "reproach for the Son of Man's sake." So again, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes." So again, "Then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." So again, "The righteous shall answer, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered? So again, "The righteous into life eternal." So, where in St. Luke it is written, "That the blood of all the prophets, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, shall be required of this generation"; in St. Matthew we read, "From the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." So again, where in St. Luke we merely read, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all other things shall be added unto you"; in St. Matthew it is said, "The kingdom of God, and His righteousness"; righteousness being a special characteristic of the Lord's kingdom. So St. Paul teaches, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17). The Gospel of the kingdom peculiarly marks this, in its notice of "righteousness";

adding also in reference to peace, "Blessed are the peace-makers"; a beatitude only to be found in this Gospel.

Having thus published the laws of His kingdom, the Lord proceeds by acts of grace to bring "the kingdom" nigh to His elect Israel (Matthew 8:1-34, Matthew 9:1-38, Matthew 10:1-42, Matthew 11:1-30, Matthew 12:1-50). And what a kingdom! The strong man's house is spoiled. Death and disease flee away before the King's bidding. Lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised, the storms obey, the devils fear; and yet, though mercy rejoices against judgment, His people Israel will not receive their King. Much of this is common to the other Gospels, for Christ's rejection by the Jew has a bearing both on His course as Servant, and also as showing out the deceitfulness of the heart of man as man. For which reason many of these scenes are given, with characteristic omissions or additions, both in St. Mark and in St. Luke's Gospels. But here the rejection of the Heir of the Kingdom, and the nature of His kingdom, are set forth with a fulness of detail unequalled in any other Gospel. Of the King Himself St. Matthew tells us, - and the words are only here, - "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Of the spirit of His kingdom, we have the reiterated witness, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice"; words, which as they are peculiar to this Gospel, very distinctly mark the character of that rule which He brought to sinful men. Then as to His subjects. Only here do we read, "Many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 8:11-12). Israel will not have Him. Had He come with law, exercising lordship, He should have been called a benefactor. But because He comes with grace, to meet the vile, to save the lost, therefore His own receive Him not. Still He preaches "the gospel of the kingdom," - an expression peculiar to St. Matthew, - for He is moved with compassion, because they fainted, and were as sheep having no shepherd. All, however, whether the Baptist's, His own, or the Apostles' ministry, is rejected. "He is despised, and they esteem Him not."

Then comes a passage, peculiar to this Gospel, unveiling the heart of the King; in which, while He invites others to become His subjects, He shows by His own example what is that kingdom to which He now calls them. He has come to His own, and they reject Him. Is, then, His kingdom shaken? Nay, but the sin around only the more reveals that realm of peace, which, like "the brave everlasting firmament," through storms and tempests stood unmoved in Him.

First, His witness, John, doubts Him; chains and a prison chill his faith; even as to this hour in days of darkness we question the very truths, of which in more sunny days we have been the bold witnesses. Then Israel is like children, whom no care will please; who will not dance when piped to, or weep when mourned to. Then the cities which had witnessed His "mighty works" remain unchanged. Sodom would have repented; but they repent not. But none of these things move Him. The Lord of that "kingdom which is joy and peace," shows that, let what will come from without, there is a kingdom within Him which can overcome all things. So we read here, - "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, 0 Father, Lord of heaven and earth" (Matthew 11:25). "At that time," when His servant doubted, and Israel mocked, and men despised Him; - and who can tell what hosts of hell by all these circumstances now pressed against that loving spirit? - "At that time Jesus answered, I thank thee, Lord. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." And then at once turning as if to others, He utters the well-known words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you - be now my subjects - and learn of me, for I

am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest" (Matthew 11:28-30).

Here is indeed a kingdom which neither earth nor hell can move, - "the peace of God which passeth understanding": which can bear all, believe all, hope all, endure all: which out of apparent defeat can reap yet fresh glories. Here in the conscious enjoyment of such a kingdom, as now Lord of all; for it is here, in the midst of this rejection, that He says, "All things are delivered to me of the Father" (Matthew 11:27); while yet despised and doubted, He yet calls us to share His peace, in the kingdom which is not in creature-blessings, but in the Holy Spirit. This is indeed a kingdom, to live in the will of God; to understand that will; to be content with it; - to lose all self-will even in good; to be glad when self-strength fails; when all self-glorying is utterly put from us; and yet to joy in God, in that His will is done, with an unfeigned "Even so, Father, for thus it pleaseth Thee." Compared with this, what deserves the name of power or glory? Here is a kingdom worthy of the high title. Here is victory over all: having nothing, yet possessing all things: a broken heart, and yet unmeasured peace. As revealing the kingdom this scene is perfect. As such St. Matthew gives it; while for the same reason it is omitted in the corresponding place in all the other Gospels. The next chapter, (Matthew 12:1-50), though parts of it are common both to St. Mark and St. Luke, becomes generally distinctive by the additions peculiar to this Gospel. The Lord goes through the corn-fields, so choosing the day as to call in question Israel’s right to the reality, of which the sabbath had been the appointed token. The omissions or additions of each Evangelist upon this question very clearly mark the distinct and special ends proposed in each narrative. Here we read, "At that time Jesus went on the sabbath through the corn. And the Pharisees said, Behold, thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But He said unto them, Have ye never read what David did?" In St. John, under a similar charge, His ground of justification is not "what David did." As Son of the Father the answer is, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." In St. Matthew, as Son of David, "what David did" is a fit reply, and characteristic of His position, as coming to His kingdom, and like David at first rejected in it. He thus proceeds, - "Or have ye not read in the law how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath and are blameless?" I look to the same scene in St. Luke, but there is not one word there of "priests" or "law"; for there He is Son of Man, on far wider ground, meeting men without law. Then again, here in St. Matthew He adds, "But I say unto you that in this place is One greater than the temple"; words exactly suited by their authority to mark that relation as Lord of the kingdom, which our Lord occupies in this Gospel. I turn to the same scene in St. Mark, and that Evangelist, who up to this point implicitly follows St. Matthew, entirely omits these words, which as being a declaration of kingly power would be out of character in the meek Servant. Finally, here in St. Matthew the Lord repeats, "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless"; words to be found in no other Gospel, but very characteristic here, as marking the true nature of the Lord’s kingdom.

St. Matthew then proceeds with the tale of rejection, till the Lord withdraws himself, and so acts that the prophecy (St. Matthew alone quotes it), "He shall show judgment to the Gentiles," begins to be accomplished. This Scripture, peculiar to St. Matthew, is again linked with the kingdom. Here we have fresh discoveries of its nature, and glories, and of its rightful Lord. Here only do we read of Him, that "He shall not strive nor cry in the streets; a bruised reed shall He not break, nor quench the smoking flax." For His kingdom is not of this world, but of God, and God is love. It asks not therefore for outward strivings, but rather for silence, and prayer, and quiet contemplation. The

pomp of war, and this world's pride, these and like things men admire. Few believe that humbleness and grace are proofs of true greatness. Men do not see that to come down, one must be high; or that the depth of our descent is the exact measure of our true elevation. But this is seen in the kingdom. There the last is first, and he that has been lowest shall one day be seen highest. St. Matthew, and it is very characteristic, carefully notes this, in these little touches peculiar to him, as affording a lesson respecting the kingdom, much needed even by its true children.

What follows is equally distinctive. These ways strike the crowd. "All the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?" St. Luke, the only other Evangelist who records this scene, omits this witness as to "David's Son," telling us simply that "the people wondered." But when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." Then the Lord answers again, with two special words, both peculiar to this Gospel, and both distinctive; first declaring, as Lord of the kingdom, "I say unto you, that every idle word which men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment"; and then, that as with the unclean spirit which goes out but returns with seven others worse than the first, "So," - for He speaks as Judge here, - "shall it be to this wicked generation." After which, renouncing those earthly ties which had bound Him to Israel in the flesh, He acknowledges no other relationship but that of subjection and obedience to the Father's will: - "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, my sister, and my mother."

Then comes the unfolding of the mystery of that "kingdom," which should be brought in upon the rejection of the Lord, during His absence for a season growing out of that rejection. This mystery is here opened. The Lord came seeking fruit. He found no fruit in His fig-tree. Then He becomes a Sower. And the history of the period during which He should sit on the Father's throne, until His own throne as Son of Man should be set up, is here given from its first commencement, when the seed was sown in the field, even until the harvest.

This, as it is peculiar to St. Matthew, is quite characteristic. It is true that of these parables, three are given in the other Gospels; St. Mark giving us the Sower and the Mustard-seed, because, though on one side linked with the mystery of the kingdom, they have as manifest a bearing on the path of true service: St. Luke for a like reason giving the same two, and the Leaven also, in an order different from St. Matthew, because the Gentile world is also included in these three parables. St. Luke's order is striking. With him the parable of the Sower stands alone, as an introduction to the three chapters in which he successively describes the preaching, first of the Lord, then of the Twelve, then of the Seventy: while he puts the Mustard-seed and the Leaven, in contrast with the Barren Fig-tree, where he is showing how the Lord, finding no fruit on his fig-tree Israel, on its being cut down should have another tree growing from a little seed, and a leaven of doctrine leavening the whole world. Here in St. Matthew the order is different, for the thing to be unfolded is "the mystery of the kingdom." And distinguishing His disciples from the mass of Israel, as those who through grace were able to understand this mystery, our Lord here unfolds it to them in all its length and breadth. The first parable shows how Christ should now go forth as Sower, and, in spite of Israel's rejection of Him, should yet possess a kingdom. For here in St. Matthew the seed sown is "the word of the kingdom"; in St. Luke it is simply "the word of God." Then come the similitudes of the kingdom. Three spoken to the crowd, describing the outward result of the kingdom, of which all men might take knowledge. The three latter spoken only to the disciples, and descriptive of its true character and value, as seen by those possessing the mind of Christ. The

series as a whole is a complete unfolding of the secret of the kingdom. First the man sows good seed in his field, but his work is soon injured. While men sleep the tares are sown, which, though some would touch them, are spared awhile lest in gathering the tares the wheat be rooted up. Here we have the present state of the world, a mixture of good and bad, which by God's permission is to last until the harvest. Then comes the external form of the kingdom, a vast Gentile thing like Nebuchadnezzar's tree, in which birds of every wing, even those very birds which have plucked away the good seed, can find shelter. Then comes the diffusion of a doctrine through the mass, which the Lord describes as leaven, this also being something visible, inasmuch as the leaven as it spreads would make the meal to rise and work. (Note: The word "leaven" I believe is never used in Scripture for what is pure. It is to be remarked that its insertion into the meal is "the woman's" work, and not "the man's." Leaven is sour dough. Whether what is generally spread through Christendom is sweet or sour, a good thing corrupted or a good thing unspoilt, is left for the spiritual intelligence of such as are able to "discern the things that differ.") All this is outward and visible, and is stated as matter of fact, without bringing in God's estimate of it all, save on this one point, that the tares having been sown are not to be rooted out until the harvest.

Then follow the parables spoken "in the house"; first, of the treasure hid in the field, for the sake of which the field is bought, though as yet the treasure is not taken out of it; describing (for these last parables give God's view) the value of the Church to Christ, who was content to take the field of this world, for the sake of the treasure hid therein. Then we have the beauty of the treasure, a peerless pearl: Christ's estimate of the loveliness of grace in His redeemed children. Then comes the netful dragged to shore, with the separating process of judgment, the good being gathered and the evil cast away; a view of the judgment, not so much on earth as in heaven; not, as in the Tares, connected with the place where they have grown, but with the place to which those who have been caught in the net must be brought in due season. This subject of itself would fill a volume. Here I only note it as an illustration of the special view of the Lord presented to us in this Gospel. No less distinctive are the quotations which abound in this Gospel. Again and again we meet the words, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." The reason is plain. The prophets had spoken of "the kingdom," and the character of its King: therefore are they so carefully quoted in the Gospel of the kingdom. I may note (for this allusion to the prophets is distinctive) some of the Scriptures here quoted, as marking the coming and character of the promised kingdom. As to the birth of the Heir of the kingdom, it was to be above nature; "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son." The Heir of the kingdom must be begotten of the Holy Spirit. Thus only can we have Emmanuel, that is to say, God with us. As to His acts, "The people in darkness should see great light." "He should take our infirmities, and bear our sicknesses." "He should not strive, nor cry, nor break the bruised reed; but He should send forth judgment unto victory." All this was done "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets." And yet when He came to His people, they knew Him not. How this bears on the path of the heirs may perhaps be seen hereafter. Here I note it as another example of the peculiar tone which runs through this Gospel.

Time would fail me were I to attempt to show how the remainder of this Gospel is to the full as characteristic as that portion over which I have glanced thus hastily. To speak only of its many Parables. With, I think, three exceptions, each of which is significant, they are all similitudes of "the kingdom of heaven." We have seen how "the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven," "the kingdom

of heaven is like a net," "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls." To the end it is still "the kingdom."

Even in the exceptions I have referred to - namely the Sower, the Two Sons, and the Vineyard, which, as they describe a state of things previous to the setting up of "the kingdom of heaven," could not present similitudes of it (Note: These three parables, the Sower, (Matthew 13:3-9) the Two Sons, (Matthew 21:28-32) and the Vineyard, (Matthew 21:33-44) all represent things prior to the setting up of the kingdom of heaven. The Lord came as "Sower," before He ascended up on high, and thus before the establishment of the heavenly kingdom. The "Two Sons," too, are a figure of man as such, neglecting or giving heed to natural conscience or God's word, all which preceded the coming of the heavenly kingdom. In like manner the letting out of "the Vineyard" to the Jews preceded the rising of the King to heaven. For this reason, none of these three could be similitudes of "the kingdom of heaven.") - there is in each an allusion to "the kingdom." The seed of the Sower was "the word of the kingdom." The son, "who said, I will not, but repented and went," is the publican and harlot, who will "go into the kingdom," before those "who said, I go, Sir, but went not." And in the case of the Vineyard, after the husbandmen have killed the Heir, it is added, "Therefore shall the kingdom of God be taken from you, and given to another nation." By the way, observe here it is "the kingdom of God" which is taken from the Jews, not "the kingdom of heaven." They had "the kingdom of God," for they owned God as their king, but they never had "the kingdom of heaven," that form of the kingdom of God which was subsequent to Christ's resurrection into the heavens, and which is the peculiar distinction of this dispensation. (Note: I may add here, as marking the exactness with which these terms are used, that, in Matthew 12:28, our Lord who had before been preaching "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," changes His phrase, saying, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." The "kingdom of God" had come, because God's King was there. But for the same reason, the "kingdom of heaven" was not come, but coming, when the King should be cast out from earth, and received into heaven.) Thus in St. Matthew the burden of the Parables is throughout "the kingdom." The later ones especially reveal this in their whole character. In no other Gospel do we find such words as these, "Then shall the King say to them on His right hand"; and again, "The King shall answer and say, Depart, ye cursed."

How different all this is in St. Luke, must have been observed by every reader. There, in the Gospel of the Son of Man, the peculiar form for beginning a parable is, "A certain man" did this or that; and this invariably. "A certain man had a fig-tree": "a certain man had two sons": "there was a certain rich man who fared sumptuously." We cannot compare a parable which is common to these two Gospels, without being struck with this. For instance, in St. Matthew we read, "The kingdom of heaven is like to a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call them that were bidden, but they would not come." In St. Luke it is, "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many; but they would not come." So in the parable of the Vineyard, which I have already shown is not one of the similitudes of the "kingdom of heaven," in St. Matthew we read, "There was a certain householder, (in the original, oikodespotes, a title of authority), which planted a vineyard." In St. Luke, in the same parable, we have simply, "A certain man planted a vineyard." In St. Mark too, for he shows the Servant, the title of honor is dropped: it is only "A certain man."

One other point I must not omit. Only in this Gospel is the "Church" named. Here in the Gospel of the Kingdom it has a very distinct mention. Rejected by Israel, "He left them and departed." Then from His disciples He receives a confession, in reply to which He names His own "Church"; adding a promise of "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," with power on earth "to loose and bind." Abraham's sons take Him for "John the Baptist, or Jeremias, or one of the prophets." They cannot echo the prophet's voice, "To us a Son is given." Only a poor remnant, to whom "not flesh and blood, but the Father hath revealed it," can say, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." This is that knowledge which marks the Church; for of her it is said, that she is "to come in the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man" (Ephesians 4:13). At once the Lord replies, - and the words are only here, - "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven": words full of import touching "the kingdom," and therefore recorded here; and for the same reason omitted in all the other Gospels.

Then comes the Transfiguration, here, and here only, introduced with words, plainly directing us to recognize that display as a glimpse or sample of the coming kingdom. After this the disciples ask, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" elsewhere it is simply, "They disputed who should be the greatest." The Lord replies, "Except ye be converted" - (by the way, this also is peculiar to St. Matthew, and like the word "righteousness," is strikingly characteristic of the coming kingdom) - "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven; and whosoever will humble himself as a little child, the same shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Then He adds here, and here only, another word touching "the Church." "If thy brother trespass against thee, tell him his fault alone. If he will not hear thee, tell it to the Church. And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto thee, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." All this, together with the parable immediately added in reply to the question, "How oft shall my brother trespass, and I forgive him?" is only to be found in this Gospel. The parable is a prophetic sketch of the Church's judgment for want of mercy. But on this I will not enter here. Suffice it to say that the whole passage, as it is peculiar, bears with no uncertain aim on the Lord's relation to the Church and the kingdom.

These examples - and they are but a part of the evidence which might be adduced - may suffice to show the character of this Gospel, and give the clue to those who wish to search further. I now turn for a moment to the special teaching these peculiarities contain; for not the Jew only, but the Church also, needs the lesson here.

First, then, as to the character of the kingdom, much is taught in what is distinctive here. Take the peculiarity that in St. Matthew only the Lord's kingdom is always entitled the "kingdom of heaven." Has nothing been lost by neglecting to observe that the Gospel, which reveals the kingdom, reveals it by a special name, remarkably characteristic of the position of all its true subjects? How many a mistake would have been prevented had it been seen that the true kingdom was not of earth, nor of times and places, but indeed "of heaven." Where could the claims of that system rest which makes Rome and a man there its center, if it were understood that as Rome is not heaven, so Roman Catholic has nothing akin to the "kingdom of heaven" here spoken of? Had it simply

been said, "kingdom of God," the answer might of course be made, that as Israel, an earthly people with an earthly center, were once the kingdom of God, so an earthly people with an earthly center still might be that kingdom. But the Gospel which reveals the kingdom specially marks it as the "kingdom of heaven," in which neither Rome, nor time, nor earth, have any place. But the Church has erred even as the Jew, looking for a repetition of the old thing, rather than for that new creation of righteousness and joy and peace, which is indeed the true kingdom. Nor does the fact that the prophetic parables (such as the Tares, the Leaven, and the Mustard-seed), foretell the outward results of the kingdom, as a mixed and worldly thing, prove it to be right or normal, any more than the predictions of Israel's fall prove that their rejection of Christ, which also was foretold, was agreeable to the mind of God. Out of both, God can perform His purpose; but this does not prove that the fallen and spoiled thing is that which God looks for.

Take another peculiarity. In this Gospel our Lord, as Heir of the Kingdom, is presented to us as "Son of David, Son of Abraham." This title bespeaks in mystery the character of the kingdom. In more than one Epistle, St. Paul labors to show how much is involved in this lineage. What then is taught in the words, "Son of David, Son of Abraham"; inasmuch as an heir of the kingdom must not only be Abraham's son, but Abraham's son in one special line? St. Paul thus answers: - "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children of the kingdom, but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is," (this is an inspired comment), "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Romans 9:7-8). "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman" (Galatians 4:22-31). A child of the bond-maid, though Abraham's son, was not an heir of the kingdom. David and the kings all sprang from the long-barren free-woman. Which things are a mystery. The sons of the bond-maid, though Abraham's seed, were born according to nature, by human will and energy. For Hagar is the law, and her sons - children of bondage - are a figure of those who, though born in the house of the elect, and in one sense his seed, being born only by nature are not the true seed. The true heirs are of another generation, the sons of the free-woman, born when Abraham and Sarah are as good as dead; a figure of that spiritual seed which is born contrary to nature, which, like Isaac, is offered as a sacrifice, and yet lives. This is the line of the kingdom: this is the chosen seed. "He saith not, Seeds, as of many, but, To thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16), and His body. These are heirs of the kingdom, according to the description in this Gospel, sons of Abraham, according to David's line. Let such as count themselves to be heirs see that they have this lineage; that they are sons, not by nature or fleshly energy, but by Divine power.

Take another peculiarity of this Gospel: the connection of the laws of the kingdom with the old law. The teaching on this point, as it is peculiar here, throws much light on the whole question of that on which the kingdom rests. The Lord distinctly says here, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil, the law." How then can we say that "we are not under the law, but under grace?" And if, as these words seem to imply, grace contrasts with law, how is it that with precepts of grace the law is yet fulfilled? Our Lord's words peculiar to this Gospel, "Thus, it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," taken in connection with the occasion when they were uttered, may answer this question. It was at His baptism, when He presented Himself to receive that sign of death and the grave (Note: "We are buried by baptism" Romans 6:4.) that He spake thus of "fulfilling all righteousness."

It is when His followers take the same place, content to die that they may live, that righteousness will be seen in them also. I would it were more clearly seen that there can be no righteousness or fulfilling of the law without death; nay more, that obedient or disobedient law can only kill man. If I am perfectly obedient, the law will kill me, for it says, "Love God and man perfectly"; and such a love would soon consume me. If I am disobedient, it will kill me, for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them": clearly proving that the law was not given to save us, but, as St. Paul teaches, to be a standard to show us that we are ruined sinners. A law which could have given life could not be given to fallen man. Hence the Scripture by the law only concludes all men under sin. Grace comes in, thanks be to God; but it meets man in death. He must confess himself dead, (therefore we are baptized), and die, too, if the law is ever to be fulfilled in him. And no sooner do we take the place of dead ones, and own our lot as sons of men, than heaven and the kingdom of heaven is at once opened to us. Then this grace produces grace. Christ died for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. And then, if dying be the fulfilling of the law, we need not strive for life here, we need not take "eye for eye," or "hate our enemies." We may be content to suffer and die, and act in grace to all, knowing that, if we lose all, the kingdom of heaven is yet ours. Will the law be broken thus, because we are "not under," but above it? Nay, thus only will it be fulfilled. I venture to say that till men are content to die, - till they see that "fulfilling all righteousness" is connected with our taking the place of dead and buried sinners, - the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount will never be kept, however much they may be lauded by us. Take that law, hoping to live by it, and it must be pared down. Take it to die by, as part of the story of the cross, and it is all clear.

Another peculiarity of this Gospel is the special light which it throws upon the position of the true heirs of the kingdom, as respects their carnal brethren. Are the true heirs, like Pharisees, to separate themselves from those in error, and to thank God that they are not as other men; or shall they go out with a few, like Theudas (Acts 5:36-37), into the wilderness, in the hope of again finding the original circumstances of the dispensation? The true Heir, with a heart of love, takes neither course. He will not stand alone, but will take His place among the lost ones. And He took it though the religious people judged Him for it; not like Theudas and Judas looking for Jordan to dry up, but Himself going down into its waters, and being buried under them; not fighting to re-establish the kingdom upon earth, but trusting God to lift Him out of it into a higher, even a heavenly one. And so "heaven opened" to Him, and God said, "I am well pleased." Men might be displeased, but God was "well pleased." Then, having been a brief season in the wilderness - just as opened heavens yet drive men thither for a season - He returns in the power of the world to come, to tell others how near that same heaven is to them also. And to this day the same thing takes place in every heir of the kingdom who has reached this stage. For all have not reached it. For we may be, like Christ, heirs of the kingdom, and yet in Egypt. We may be heirs, and yet, like Him, be arguing with doctors at Jerusalem. He did so when He was twelve years old; and when He is twelve years old in us, we may do so. But if we grow with Him till with Him we see Israel’s state, and then so yield to Him, that He lives and walks in us, that "to us to live is Christ," then, inasmuch as He cannot change, but is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever," what He did of old, He will do again in us - go down again amongst publicans - then have heaven opened - and then, having overcome the devil, come forth to tell to others how near that kingdom is; and that the way to enter it is not by this or that outward separation, much less by boastings as to Israel’s works or temple, but by repentance, by admitting our state, and by taking the place which befits a fallen

people: expecting there to find our God and His grace sufficient for us.

Many other points might be adduced, growing out of what is special here: but with one other particular I must conclude. We noticed in this Gospel a special allusion to the Prophets. The expression, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophet," is peculiar to this Gospel. And yet the children of the kingdom knew not the Heir when He appeared. Though fulfilling their own Scriptures before them, He was a wonder to them. People in darkness saw light. He neither strove nor cried. The broken reed was not bruised, nor the smoking flax quenched. But so low was Israel fallen, that they knew not the day of their visitation. Like looked for like, and so they esteemed Him not. Had He come, like Barabbas, to strive for the restoration of the earthly kingdom, or had He sought to overthrow the existing rule of Herod, He should not have stood alone. But because His kingdom, is heavenly, Israel cared not for it. He may go whither He will: they want Him not. Such has been, such must be, the experience of the true heirs. They may in their lives fulfil the prophets, manifesting light, and grace, and righteousness. But if they will not fight for or against the outward things of their day by other outward things, the children of the kingdom, born after the flesh, either cannot discern, or will not have them. Let the heirs be prepared for their lot, to be rejected even by Abraham’s sons; for of Abraham’s sons it is written, "They which are born after the flesh persecute those which are born after the Spirit." But the mocked ones have their reward. If the kingdom of earth is closed, the "kingdom of heaven" is open to them. In that day when the King now hidden shall be revealed to men, may we, now content to be hidden with Him, be partakers of His glory. They that suffer in the mystery of the kingdom shall rejoice in its revelation. Till that revelation, may we be in "the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." Amen.

01.2.0. Mark's View

Mark’s View "The second living creature was like unto a Calf" Revelation 4:7.

"Much increase is by the strength of the Ox" Proverbs 14:4.

"THE SECOND LIVING CREATURE was like unto an Ox." And the second Gospel reveals the Lord in that aspect of which the Ox is the appointed figure. He stands here as the patient Servant and Sacrifice for others, spending and being spent to serve the sons of men. The first glance at this Gospel does not give us the same broad distinction which meets us upon the very face of the other three. A second look will prove that it has marks, which are in their way quite as conclusive and characteristic as the unmistakeable distinctions of the other Gospels. (Note: The fact that one sect of early heretics chose this Gospel in preference to the others, on account of its contents, proves that at that day something distinctive could be seen in it.) And though the peculiarities are, I own, minute, yet this is compensated for the fact that they are very many, and meet us again and again in every page. The strokes may be faint, and the touches fine, but their very fineness shows a Master’s hand, which without the exaggeration of caricature, by lines too minute to arrest the careless eye, can present a perfect picture. Of course, the subject itself in the main is the same in all the Gospels; the Lord’s life being the material of each narrative; but this only makes the distinctions more instructive: and though the disputer of this world may stumble, the humble imitator of God is richly taught.

I now proceed to these distinctions, which I may arrange as, first, the omissions, secondly, the additions, peculiar to this Gospel. From both we shall be able to note what is special and characteristic in the view of Christ here presented to us. And here before I notice the omissions, I would observe how much may be gathered, not only from what is taught, but also from what is omitted, in certain parts of Holy Scripture. Even had no Apostle shown us the significance of a slight omission, one with right thoughts of God might have anticipated that the whole form of a revelation from Him, and thus its omissions, could not be without reason. But, as ever, in pity to the ignorant and weak, the Lord gives us an example to show what we may expect in, and how we ought to read, His Word. Thus writing to the Hebrews, the Apostle points out how much is to be learned from the simple fact, that in the history of Melchizedek, nothing is narrated either of his birth or death. He is presented to us "without father, or mother, without descent or pedegree, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (Hebrews 7:3). And this omission, says the Apostle, is with purpose, and full of teaching, specially intended to show how One should arise, both king and priest, who in the fullest sense should be "without beginning of days, or end of life."

Equally instructive, as many know, are the omissions in other types, and to take a broader example, the omissions in the Books of Chronicles as compared with the history given in the Books of Kings. An apprehension of God’s purpose in each of these books shows how significant the omission is, and how, in ways the world cannot see, God’s wisdom is revealed to His own, even if they be babes and sucklings. It is the same in the case of the Gospels. Be it omission or addition, each is perfect; and for the eye that can see it, (though, indeed, few are seers - "a seer is

a prophet"), both are equally subjects for instructive contemplation. As to the omissions then in this Gospel, many points might be adduced. I confine myself to the more obvious ones, which I would now note in order. Here, then, is no genealogy, no miraculous birth, no reference to Bethlehem, or adoration of the wise men, as in St. Matthew's Gospel. No childhood at Nazareth, no subjection to His parents, no increase in wisdom and stature, as in St. Luke; no reference to His pre-existence and Divine glory, as in St. John's Gospel. All these points, important in their bearing on the kingdom or person of the Lord, would be out of place in the description of His service, and therefore have no place here. On the contrary, St. Mark comes at once to service, touching for a moment on that of the Baptist, quoting his testimony that One should follow who should baptize not with water only but with the Holy Spirit; and then passing directly, without further preface to the Lord's own ministry, in exact accordance with his opening words, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." The service here is such service as can only be rendered by one who rejoices that He is indeed a Son of God; by one who fully understands that not by service are we made sons, but by sonship may we become servants. When, therefore, St. Mark tells us that this is "the Gospel of the Son," we are prepared for service springing from the assurance of sonship - evangelical service as opposed to legal. It is this "Gospel," this ministry or service, which St. Mark is about to draw; and, omitting what does not bear on this, he comes straight to the details of this ministry.

Then here is no Sermon on the Mount. The laws of the kingdom would be out of place, for the Servant, not the King, is here manifested. Here is no "Our Father," which, so full of character in St. Matthew and St. Luke, as illustrating the wants and relationships both of the Jew and Gentile, is here omitted as having no special bearing on the path of service. For the same reason we have here no lengthy discourses, and but few parables; for the service here is rather doing than teaching. There are both, but the mind of the Spirit seems to be occupied more with the former of these than with the latter. Doing, and toiling, and serving the needy is far humbler work than teaching. As teacher one holds more of a place of authority than is consistent with the idea of pure service. Here the service presented is that of which the Ox is the fittest emblem, a service of which very little in spite of abounding preaching is to be discovered now. In a word, throughout this Gospel, as another has said, it is not Christ's claim on men, so much as man's claim on Christ, and His grace and power, which the Spirit here witnesses. Thus, while authoritative discourses and parables are few compared with the corresponding chapters of the other Gospels, the details of service are given far more minutely. And yet, though for the most part parables are omitted, there is one peculiar to this Gospel, in which, as we might anticipate from the fact of its insertion only here, we have something characteristic and instructive as to true ministry. Indeed, I believe that all the parables given in this Gospel - there are but four (Note: The Sower, the Seed which grew secretly, the Mustard-seed (Mark 4:1-41), and the Wicked Husbandmen (Mark 12:1-44). The connection of the truth contained in each of these four parables with ministry is obvious.) - bear upon this question. But as to that parable which is only here, of "the Seed which grew secretly, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn," what is it but an encouragement to servants to sow in faith, and then leave results to Him who only can give increase?

It seems to me as if the Lord himself here spoke out of the abundance of His heart; that He was expressing His own assurance of a full return for all His sore travail; and that in prospect of His death He rejoiced in the thought that whether the sower "sleep or rise," the seed should yet spring

up and increase greatly. I find in St. Matthew in the corresponding place, that instead of this parable, which here comes in between that of "the Sower," and "the Mustard-seed"; there, between these same parables, we have that of "the Tares," which finds no place in this Gospel. The reason is plain. The parable of "the Tares" gives our Lord the place of power. Such words as these, "In the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather first the tares, and bind them in bundles, and burn them," though exactly suited to the Lord of the kingdom, are for that very reason out of character here, and as such are not recorded. To continue the notice of omissions. Here is no arraignment of the nation, no sentence passed upon Jerusalem as in the other Gospels. I look in vain for the repeated judgment, "Woe unto you," so marked in St. Matthew; but instead of this, in the corresponding chapter, Jesus is here represented as sitting opposite to the treasury, and watching a poor widow (Compare Matthew 21:1-46; Matthew 22:1-46; Matthew 23:1-39 with Mark 12:1-44). If the Lord must judge, the Servant has an eye for service: unsparingly spending His own life for men, He can see and appreciate the spending of the last farthing. Here as everywhere the thing noticed answers to the beholder’s state. Oh, that this fact, so continually meeting us in these Gospels, might awaken some by what they see to discover where and what they are!

Again, in the prophecy on the Mount of Olives, here is no Bridegroom, as in St. Matthew, receiving the wise and rejecting the foolish virgins; here is no Lord judging between faithful and unfaithful servants; no King, enthroned in glory, separating the nations to the right and left hand. But on the contrary, here only we read, touching the coming of the Son of Man, "Of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32), - words which, as they are peculiar to this Gospel, so also are very characteristic: for here the Son is seen with glory laid aside, clothed in the likeness of man, in very deed a true Servant. And in this aspect, like other servants, He awaits another’s will, not knowing the lord’s secrets; for "the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth" (John 15:15). And so as Servant He says, naming Himself with other blessed servants, the holy angels - "Of that day knoweth no man, no, not the angels, neither the Son, but the Father." Nor does this touch the truth of His Person; for that is not the question here. But just as in St. Luke the words, "He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man," speak of Him as Son of Adam, without in any way contradicting that He is also "the Word made flesh"; just as His death in one aspect is spoken of as "a sweet savor," man freely giving to God what is most sweet to Him, while in another aspect it is regarded as penal and a sin-offering, the due judgment for the sins of men; so in like manner what is true of Him as Servant does not deny His lordship, which is but another view of the same wondrous and blessed Lord. And these omissions continue to the end. Thus in the Garden, here is no reference to His right to summon twelve legions of angels had He so willed it. Here is no promise of the kingdom on the cross to His dying companion; here is no notice of the resurrection and appearance of saints, accompanying the Lord, as freed by Him, when He arose and led captivity captive. Such acts or claims, perfect in St. Matthew, are out of the purpose of the Spirit here, and as such find no place in this Gospel. So in the last scene, the commission to the Apostles to go and preach, the points here recorded, when compared with what St. Matthew gives us, are very striking (Matthew 28:18-20, and Mark 16:15-20). There, as befits the Lord of the kingdom, we read that He came and said, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Surely the Lord of the kingdom comes out in every word. In St. Mark this is omitted, but we have, "Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,

and he that believeth not shall be damned." For here He is not discipling as with authority, or commanding that "all things which He has commanded should be observed in all nations"; but rather, as knowing the path of service, He hints at the rejection as well as the success, which His servants will surely meet with. "He that believeth, and he that believeth not" - what a tale is in the words; how do they express the experience of One who knows all the results even of the best service! Now His disciples are to take His place, and He will serve in them: even yet shall His work be accomplished in His members; and so in this Gospel only we have the special promise of power through His name, to work even as He worked (Mark 16:17-18). Then the Gospel thus closes, "They went forth and preached, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following"; for He is yet the Worker, though risen. So wonderfully, to the very end, does this Gospel preserve its own distinct character; from its opening words, beginning with "the Gospel of Jesus Christ," down to the promise of the spread of it through His servants to all nations.

I have thus marked some of the chief omissions which strike us in St. Mark; but, even in what is recorded, and where in substance the narrative follows St. Matthew, there is in this Gospel ever a lower and softened tone. Thus in John's testimony to Jesus, this Evangelist stops short, omitting the prediction, that "He should burn the chaff with fire unquenchable" (Compare Mark 1:8, and Matthew 3:11-12). So in the account of the ordination of "the twelve," in St. Matthew we read that "He sent them forth, and commanded them saying, Go not thus, but go thus and thus," as with authority. In St. Mark we read, "He ordained twelve that they might be with Him"; they are regarded rather as His companions in service, in which relation they are seen throughout this whole Gospel. For - and it is very characteristic - never do they call Him "Lord" in this Gospel. On the contrary, the word is remarkably omitted, till after His resurrection, in scenes where it occurs in the corresponding place in the other Gospels. For example, when the leper comes, in St. Matthew he says, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." In St. Mark I read, "A leper came beseeching Him, and saying, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." So at the supper. In St. Matthew, "They began to say, Lord, is it I?" In St. Mark, "They began to say unto Him, one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?" The word "Lord" is markedly omitted. So in the case of the dumb child, the father cries out, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." In our authorised version I find "Lord" inserted here in St. Mark; but Griesbach, without the slightest reference to the character of the Gospel, marks this word as one which is "absolutely spurious," and which as such has no place in his version. So in the storm. In St. Matthew we read that the disciples cried, "Lord, save us." We look in vain for such a word in the corresponding place in St. Mark's Gospel. Is this chance? Surely, if not a sparrow falls to the ground without being marked, a title of the beloved Son is not dropped out of a Gospel without the Father's knowledge. The omission or change here is of a piece with the form of His ancient Word, now speaking of Elohim, now of Shaddai, now of Jehovah, suiting His titles according to the matter in hand, and His own relation to it, as Creator, Protector, or God in covenant. (Note: Those acquainted with the Old Testament know that the name of God varies according to the subject-matter. Thus in Genesis 1:1-31 God is Elohim. In Genesis 2:1-25 He is Jehovah-Elohim. A title suffices to describe Him in the work of creation, which is not enough when His relation to His creature man comes to be described. In a deeper sense I may say, God is known by a different name in the days of labor, and in that Paradise whether man is set in relationship to God as lord of all. In Psalms 91:1-2, we have four titles of the Lord brought into the compass of a single sentence. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, (the name by which He was known to Melchizedek, 'priest of the Most High God,') shall

abide under the shadow of the Almighty, (the name by which He was known to Abraham;) I will say of Jehovah, (the covenant name for Israel,) He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, (my Elohim,) in Him will I trust." To the believer the names of God are full of meaning, as revelations of His nature, and property, and covenant-relationships.) The taught of the Father know this, and rejoice to trace His wisdom, even where others, making their blindness the judge of all things, can perceive no beauty. But it is time I should turn from omissions to what is positively distinctive here. And though I am sure that only one well practised in showing kindness can see the whole of these wonders, though a servant's eye may be needed to know the import of some touches here, the heart must be hard indeed, which sees nothing in the details peculiar to this Gospel. Trifling as each is by itself, the aggregate of the whole is an amount of teaching, from which the best-trained servant may continually draw some fresh lesson. The first point I notice then is the fact, here only recorded, in the temptation, that "He was with the wild beasts." This is a true mark of him who can serve, that, like David of old, he has, in the wilderness and alone, overcome the lion and the bear before in public he fights against Goliath. Let such as would serve lay this to heart. If called to service, they may expect for a season to be among the wild beasts. Alone with God, let us overcome such. Then we may go forth and fight for, and serve, Israel. The next thing I observe is the remarkable repetition of the word, "forthwith." We cannot read a single chapter carefully, or consult a Concordance - of course a Greek Concordance should be used, for the same word, eutheos, is in our version indifferently translated, "straightway," "forthwith," and "immediately" - without being struck with the recurrence of this word. Thus, to take but a single chapter - the first may serve as an example - Jesus is baptized, and then "immediately" He is driven into the wilderness. Then when He returns and begins His service, "He saw James and John, and straightway He called them, and they went after Him. And they went into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabbath-day He entered into a synagogue, and taught, and cast out an unclean spirit.... And forthwith, when they came out of the synagogue, they entered into Simon's house; and Simon's wife's mother was sick, and anon (the same word) they tell Him of her.... And there came a leper, and as soon as He had spoken immediately the leprosy departed... and forthwith He sent him away. And again He entered into Capernaum, and straightway many were gathered... and immediately, when Jesus perceived that they reasoned in their hearts, He said," etc. Now this runs through the Gospel, and is peculiar to it; (Note: I see, by a reference to Schmid's Concordance, that the word eutheos occurs only eighty times in the New Testament, and of these instances forty are found in the short Gospel of St. Mark.) and when it is taken in connection with other expressions, such as "in the way," "in the house," "as He sat at meat," or "as He walked in the temple," we get a glimpse of what is meant by "instant in season, out of season," and what befits one who is called to be the Lord's servant.

Then as to the way in which He served. We have here many details, as to His demeanor, and bearing, and looks, not to be found in any other Gospel. Thus in the case of the little children who were brought that He should touch them, here only do we read, that "He took them up in His arms, and blessed them." So again, of the child whom He set in the midst, here only, "He took him in His arms." Here only is it seen of Peter's wife's mother, that "He took her by the hand and lifted her up." So again, here only do we read, "He took the blind man by the hand." Here only is it noticed of the child which had the dumb spirit, that "Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up."

I need not stop to speak of the tenderness these acts display; but I believe many have yet to learn what ought to be, and has been, the effect of the touch and hand of God’s servants. I know that "laying on of hands" is now by many regarded as a mere form. I will only say, the time was when virtue accompanied the hand of God’s servants; indeed, when even the shadow of an Apostle could heal. It will not hurt us to remember, even if the glory is now departed from us, that such things have once been. And this I will add, that should the day return when devils are rebuked, and lame ones healed, those who look closely will see that a tender hand will not be wanting in such service. "But where," as one has asked, "are the layers on of hands, who give man to himself and God, by casting out his devils? Where is the clergy to whom sickness makes its last appeal for health? We find them among the fishermen of the first century, but not among our pastors now. Many say that the age of miracle is past and gone. But Christianity, as we find it in Scripture, was the institution of miracle. And if the age of miracle is well-nigh gone, is it not because the age of Christianity is well-nigh gone? The age of mathematics would be past, if no man cultivated them." But here I forbear. Let us be content to take beggars by the hand: we may then see things wholly out of the range of our present field of vision.

Again in this Gospel the look is noticed, and this in scenes where the other Evangelists in the corresponding places give us no such information. Thus, when they watched Him upon the Sabbath, whether He would heal or not, we read here, "When he had looked round about on them in anger" - was there nothing in such a look? So again, when they said, "Thy mother and Thy brethren without seek for Thee"; here only is it noticed, that "He looked round about on them who sat about Him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren." So again, when He spoke of His cross, and Peter began to rebuke Him, here only we read, "And when He turned about, and looked on His disciples, He rebuked Peter." There must have been something in that look never to be forgotten; a flash of light, a beam of the glory, which made its dwelling in that lowly Servant. So again, in the case of him who came kneeling down and asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" here only do we read, that "Jesus looking upon him, loved him"; and then again, "when he went away grieved," here only it is noticed, that "Jesus looking round said to His disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" Surely not in vain is the look recorded. Let servants mark this: there is no small ministry in a single look, be it of love, or grief, or anger. It may speak what words cannot express. It has ere now, in storm and calm, mid the rush of battle, and in scenes of deep anguish, imparted confidence and peace beyond the power of language. For it speaks truly: hence its deep power. And indeed heaven may be in an eye, its sunshine and rain; and if it be there, though there be no speech nor language, its voice shall still be heard. Oh, for a look like that of the Master! Oh, for that light of life within, breaking forth through eyes beaming with love and holiness! To do justice to my subject is beyond me, but as I have spoken of the acts and looks, I may add a reference or two to some of those words of ministry which are peculiar to this Gospel. One example we find in the raising of the daughter of Jairus. The scene is common to three Evangelists, but here only do we get some particulars full of marked tenderness. Thus St. Mark alone relates, that when some said, Thy daughter is dead, "Jesus, as soon as He heard the word that was spoken," (as if to save the father a moment’s anguish and unbelief), "said, Be not afraid"; brief words, but full of grace, revealing the Servant’s heart, who, even while He healed, watched to aid the spiritual progress of those He came to comfort. In the same spirit of mindful affection is Peter specially named here, when after the resurrection a message is sent by the women to the disciples. In St. Matthew the angels say, "Go

and tell His disciples": here only, "Tell His disciples, and Peter, that He goeth before you into Galilee." For, more than the rest, Peter needed a special word, and so above the rest he is remembered. The good Shepherd, who loves all, has peculiar pity towards the wounded sheep. Thus did this Servant of servants speak a word in season: "He spake," as St. Mark tells us, (and the words are peculiar to this Gospel), "as they were able to bear it" (Mark 4:33); with milk for babes, and meat for the strong, distributing His words, even as His acts, in special pity to the feeble, showing more abundant grace to that which lacked.

Another point peculiar to this Gospel is the repeated notice we get here of the way in which our Lord permitted Himself to be intruded upon in His retirement, and indeed upon all occasions. So thoroughly was He at the disposal of others (here only is it noticed) that "He could not so much as eat"; for the multitude came together, and it was not in the heart of that blessed Servant to refuse Himself to their importunities. This occurs again and again. Thus after a day of toil, the Lord, rising up early, "went and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed: but Simon and they that were with him, followed after Him; and when they found Him, they said unto Him, All men seek for Thee." Without a murmur He at once receives them, allowing the interruption, and says, "Let us go into the next towns, and preach there also, for therefore am I sent" (Mark 1:35-38). We find nothing answering to this in the other Gospels. So again, when His apostles returned from their mission, and gathered themselves together to Him, Jesus says, (and the words are only here), "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile"; thus showing not only His tender sympathy for them, but teaching how needful retirement is for those who serve others. "So they departed into a desert place by ship privately." But scarce had they got there before "the people ran afoot thither, and came together to Him."

Jesus at once allows the intrusion. He had sought to be alone, nevertheless He rises, and teaches them; and then, because it was a desert place, and they were faint, He feeds them, making His own ease give place to their need. And then, O perfect service! remembering His weary apostles, He constrains them to get into a ship and go away to the other side, "while He sent away the people" (Mark 6:31-45). So again, at the close of a day, "when even was come," wearied with toil, He enters a ship with His disciples to pass over to the other side. We read, "They took Him even as He was" (Mark 4:36), - a remarkable expression, peculiar to this Gospel, and descriptive of His extreme weariness. No sooner is He in the ship than He is asleep. But a storm alarms the disciples; they break in upon His rest; and (in this Gospel only are His words on this occasion given) without a murmur He arises to calm their troubled spirits. Oh, how different from us! Our times of rest must be our own. Sleeping or waking, He lives for others. If others need Him, He is their Servant, "always girded," ever ready to do them good. And here I may notice that this Evangelist records two miracles, which, as they are peculiar to this Gospel, are also very characteristic of what befits true ministry. The one is the case of "him who was deaf" (Mark 7:32-37); the other, of the blind man at Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26). In both I find not only in word, but in act, the Lord manifesting a desire to throw a veil of secrecy over these gracious actions. And surely this is one unfailing mark of service according to God, "alms in secret," "the right hand ignorant of what the left hand doeth." This comes out brightly here. We read, "He took him aside, and charged them that they should tell no man": again, "He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town, and said, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town." Words like these requiring secrecy, though not so frequently repeated, may be found elsewhere: but acts in

which the Servant so remarkably strives to hide Himself, are peculiar to this Gospel. So in the case of the woman of Canaan, here only it is added, "He entered into a house, and would have no man know it." For this is perfection in service, - to serve unseen, unthanked.

Such service is heavenly, like that of the holy angels. "Are they not all ministering spirits?" and yet who sees them, who thanks them? Nor do they ask, nor would they receive, our praise. Enough for them that they are doing the will of God; for they know, that "in keeping, as well as for keeping, His commandments is great reward." Surely not in vain are ministers addressed as "angels of churches" (Revelation 2:1 ff.). May such as count themselves to hold this place, see that tried by this test of unseen service they walk worthy of it. The peculiarities hitherto noticed refer to what was open in the Lord's service. But several deep and precious secrets of ministry are told out in the peculiarities of this Gospel, as God alone can tell them. Take, for instance, the secret of power. Do any ask, how is it gained? We read here that after having spent a day, healing the hearts and sicknesses of all about him - in this one day alone we read that He taught in the synagogue, cast out a devil, healed Peter's wife's mother, and at even relieved the many who were gathered about the door - after such a day it is added, "And in the morning rising up a great while before day, He went out to a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mark 1:35); words which, as they are peculiar to this Gospel, speak with no uncertain voice the one prime secret of all real power in true ministry.

Another secret comes out in those references to the exercises of our Lord's soul, which are quite peculiar to this Gospel. Thus, here only do we read, when the leper came, that "Jesus was moved with compassion." The act of healing is mentioned in St. Matthew and St. Luke; but St. Mark alone gives a glimpse of the exercise of heart in our Lord which accompanied the outward service. So in the feeding of the multitude, here again the heart is laid bare: we read that "When He came out, and saw much people, He was moved with compassion toward them, and began to teach them many things." So again, when the young ruler comes - a scene common to the other Gospels - here only is it recorded that "Jesus beholding him, loved him." This excercise of soul, the secret of all service, comes out in this Gospel, and only here. As a key to service, here it is quite perfect, teaching a lesson many need to learn, that without love the most costly service will be unlike the Lord's, and all barren.

Another secret of service is noticed in the cure of the child possessed with an unclean spirit. The scene generally is common to two of the other Gospels; but here only do we read that the father of the child cried out, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us," to which the Lord instantly replies, in words only found in this Gospel, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible" (Mark 9:22-23). A deep secret of ministry is here. Not only must love be in the servant, but there must be faith on the part of the patient who comes to seek the blessing. I can only serve those who trust me. And agreeable to this we read again - words only to be found in this Gospel - that in a certain place "He could do no mighty works, because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:5-6); showing how the most loving service is of no avail if met by unbelief, while faith draws yet more of the riches of God's hidden treasures out of His servants' hands.

One other point, and I have done. In no Evangelist but St. Mark do I find the same detail as to the special trials, inward and outward, which our Lord suffered. I say nothing of His weary days, that "He had no leisure so much as to eat" - a circumstance twice recorded in this Gospel, and only here: but His "grief for their hardness of heart" (Mark 3:5), an expression peculiar to this Gospel,

lifts the veil, and shows something of the wear of spirit which His service cost this blessed Servant. So again, here only do we find the reproach - "They said, He is beside Himself" (Mark 3:21) - because His service lacked that selfish prudence which a selfish world praises; a reproach which an Apostle felt so keenly that he answers it, saying, "If we be beside ourselves, or sober, it is for your sake"; a reproach felt by our Lord, but unanswered, save by the answer of a yet ceaseless, unmurmuring, patient, loving service.

Then in this Gospel only do we read, that "He marvelled because of their unbelief," when they refer to His calling, in answer to His works, saying, "Is not this the Carpenter?" Here only do we read that "He sighed," and again, that "He sighed deeply"; for in His service He did not offer to God that which cost Him nothing; teaching us too that if we would serve as He did, there must be many "sighs," the fruit first of sympathy with the pain around us, and then of rejected kindnesses. Then again, here only are we told, when He was led out to suffer, that "They bear Him." First we read, "They led Him out that they might crucify Him": but He seems to have failed under the burden, for soon "They compel another to bear His cross"; and then St. Mark tells us "They bear Him," as if actually supporting Him, "to the place called Golgotha." A fit end to such unsparing labor. He was worn out, and needed to be borne, and long before the thieves crucified with Him were dead, He had resigned His spirit. For indeed service is sacrifice throughout, and "the ox strong to labor" is also the chosen victim for the Lord’s altar.

Such are some of the details peculiar to this Gospel, and very plainly do they show that true ministry is no slight "warfare"; that service, "according to the pattern seen on the mount," is something very different from the correct drawing-room Christianity of the present day. And this deep sense of the cross, as the price of service, comes out all through this Gospel. A single word added to what is recorded by the other Evangelists, again and again sets this in the very clearest light. Thus, when the young man comes and asks, "What lack I yet?" in St. Matthew the Lord’s answer is, "Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." St. Mark, in recording the same scene, repeats these words, only adding, "And take up thy cross"; for the Servant, though He has made Himself poor, does not the less feel that herein there is a cross to carry. So again, in the answer of our Lord, when "Peter began to say, Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee," in St. Mark alone do we read that with the reward shall come the cross: - "He shall receive a hundred-fold in this time,... with persecutions." But enough. Blessed be God that such service has been seen on earth; that there has been such a hand, such an eye, and such a heart here, among the sons of men. And blessed be God, that by the same Spirit He waits to mold us to His pattern, yea, that He has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His beloved Son. And if the Head was content to serve thus; if, while He tarried here, He lived to meet the need of all who sought succor; if, now risen, He is yet the same, still the loving Worker, interceding within the veil, and working here too for us; if He shall yet serve us, "for the less is blessed of the greater," when in the coming kingdom He shall still lead His flock to living fountains, and wipe away their tears - shall not we whom He has purchased, in whom He seeks to dwell, who are His witnesses in a world which knows Him not, wait upon Him until His mantle fall on us, and His Spirit, "the oil which was upon the Head," run down even to us also; till we catch the mind of heaven, and are made like unto the angels, children of God and children of resurrection, called to stand in the presence of God, and yet to serve, as ministering spirits to them who shall be heirs of salvation? God is serving, - "the Father worketh."

Oh! what works of love, from the rain and fruitful seasons up to the mighty work of raising man from earth to highest heaven; and Christ has served, and is serving; and the Holy Spirit is serving, taking of the things of Christ, to reveal them to us, and then to work them in us; and angels are serving, and saints are serving, and the Church proclaims her call, that she too because redeemed must be a servant here, and that her rulers are but servants, yea, servant of servants; and heaven is serving earth, and earth the creatures on it. So let us, after our Pattern, being redeemed, go forth to serve also. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find so doing. Verily, He shall gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and He will come forth and serve them."

PRAYER

O Lord, Thou canst perform it; perform it to Thy praise; Oh! show us the glory of Thy service, full of grace and truth, that in its presence we may be changed; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, may even here bear to Thy glory the image of the heavenly. Amen.

01.3.0. Luke's View

Luke’s View "The third living creature had a face as a Man" Revelation 4:7.

"I drew them with the cords of a Man" Hosea 11:4. THE THIRD LIVING CREATURE had a face as a Man," agreeable to which the third Gospel sets forth the Lord as Son of Adam, or Son of Man. Unlike St. Mark, where the peculiar view of our Lord had to be gathered from nice details, each in itself comparatively trifling, yet when summed up affording a picture full of character and distinctness, St. Luke throughout writes very broadly and plainly the memoir of the Son of Man, showing the Lord as very Man, and therefore linked not only to a certain kingdom, but to all the Sons of Adam. Here is man according to God, the pattern Man, in and through whom man is blessed and God glorified, seen not only in moral perfectness, but in all the sufferings and honors, which according to God’s purpose are the heritage of the sons of men; first humbled into the dust of death, then exalted to God’s right hand, His image and likeness, to rule as Lord of all. For man had been God’s image, set by Him to rule the creature; and though this image had failed in the first Adam, it was to be renewed with greater blessings in "the Second Man, the Lord from heaven." This is the picture drawn by St. Luke. And as in St. Matthew, the Gospel of the Kingdom, we had the professing children of the kingdom, and their zeal for God, though not according to knowledge - their washings of the outside of the cup, their tithing mint and cummin, their compassing sea and land to make one proselyte - set very brightly in contrast with the true Heir, and His kingdom of righteousness, and joy, and peace, in the Holy Spirit; so here in the Gospel of the Son of Man, as the pattern Man walks before us, we have men as they are set side by side, in strong and marked contrast, with man as he should be, the Man Christ Jesus. In this relation as Son of Man, the Lord holds two offices, (Note: I have said that our Lord as Man holds two offices, because these two, Apostle, and High-priest, God’s messenger to man, and man’s to God, involve or are connected, I believe, with all the others, which He holds as Son of Man.) both of which, as they result from His being very Man, meet us very prominently throughout this Gospel. As Man He is the Priest, "for every high-priest is taken from among men," for this reason, "that he may have compassion on the ignorant, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." As Man He is the Prophet, or Apostle, sent from God, and yet feeling with those to whom He comes as God’s messenger. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews therefore, when speaking to them, of their "Apostle and High-priest," the One who comes from God, and goes to God, for us, introduces his subject with a proof that He who holds this place is Man, showing, that "forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same." "For in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High-priest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." This explains the reason why some, seeing so much of priestly compassion here, have connected this Gospel with the emblem of "the ox," taking that figure as representative of sacrifice, and so of Priest here, I cannot doubt. For the Priest is a relation, not arbitrarily undertaken, but necessarily growing out of our Lord’s true manhood. But this only confirms me in this view, which indeed is justified by this Gospel

throughout, that here the Lord stands before us as the "Son of Man." To pretend to give more than a few hints would lead me too far. I shall be content here to show, how what is distinctive in St. Luke points out the Son of Man; adding two or three examples as to the way in which the peculiarities of this Gospel mark our special duties and privileges as sons of men.

Now as to what is distinctive in St. Luke. His very Preface is characteristic: here only the Evangelist begins with an address to his friend Theophilus. Human affection is thus displayed here. A Man is to be described, and the Writer will draw his friend to the subject "by the bands of a man." Then this Evangelist - and this one alone - refers to his own personal knowledge of his subject, "having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first"; thus bringing something human into his task, which this Gospel presents to us. As another has observed, "the writer himself appears, as having the faculties and affections of a man exercised about the things which were engaging him." Nor were his heart and pen the less for this reason under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who, as He was about to draw the portrait of the Anointed Man, thus with a purpose permitted the human affections of His instrument to be seen, to show that perfect subjection to God could yet consist with what was truly human. No less characteristic is the opening chapter. St. John, as befits him, begins with "the Word which was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God." And his tone throughout, not of this world, corresponds with the glory of the Only-begotten. Very different, but quite as perfect in its place, is the opening of this Gospel. It begins, like a simple tale touching the sons of men, with, "There was in the days of Herod the king a certain priest." And as it proceeds, we are introduced to human sympathies and relationships, in a way perfectly unlike anything we get in the other Gospels; with all the circumstances of the birth and infancy of the Holy Child, and of him who was sent as His forerunner. Here too, and here only, do we find the three inspired Songs, which, as speaking of mercy to Gentile as well as Jew, have for ages been the chosen utterance of the Church taken from among all nations. Here Mary sings, "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away." Here even the priest looks beyond Israel, and while speaking of "salvation to his people," adds, "to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death"; while in the same strain the aged Simeon, ready to depart in peace, for his eyes have now seen God’s salvation, cannot but add, that it is "prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Thy people Israel." The second chapter is as distinctive. Beginning as usual here, with facts quite beyond the limits of the elect people, St. Luke notices that "in those days there went out a decree that all the world should be taxed." And then comes a fact which we should in vain look for in St. Matthew, that Joseph and Mary "went up to be taxed," among the rest who went every one to his own city. For the mind of the Spirit here is not so much to show One who has claims to rule, as One who is coming down perfectly on that ground which man as man then occupied.

Equally distinctive is the message of the angels to the watching shepherds. The kings of the East may ask in St. Matthew for One "who is born King." But in St. Luke the angel says, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born a Saviour: and this shall be the sign; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes." After which we get the story of the infancy of "the Child": how "the Child grew"; how "the grace of God was on Him"; how "when He was twelve years old, He went up with His parents to Jerusalem to the feast"; how "the

Child tarried behind, and His mother knew it not"; how "she said, Son, why hast Thou dealt thus"; how "He went down and was subject to them"; how "He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man"; - these and points like these, as they are peculiar to this Gospel, distinctly mark our Lord as Man, personally entering man's lot, and Himself fully tasting it; joining Himself to us, in birth, in childhood, and in youth, that, being very Man, He might in His own blessed Person bring man near to God.

I trace the same tone throughout the next chapter, which records John's ministry, and the baptism of the Lord. It commences - for the Spirit is here occupied with man as such - with a glance over the world, the rulers of which, (for rulers are the key to the state of their subjects), are at some length given to us. Tiberius Caesar is reigning: Pontius Pilate governs Judea: Herod is tetrarch of Galilee: Philip of Iturea: Lysanias rules Abilene: while, (and this is not without purpose) two men are named as the high-priests of that people which had once been God's elect. Two high-priests in Israel - what a tale this told of the fall of the elect, who had become so mixed with the world, that where God had appointed one high-priest, the Gentile could now make many. (Note: "In strict propriety there could be but one high-priest at a time, who held the office for life. But after the reduction of Judea to the Roman yoke, great changes were made, and the occupants of an office, which had enjoyed almost regal authority, were changed at the will of the conquerors. Hence some have supposed that the office had become annual, and that Annas and Caiaphas, occupying it by turns, each or both might be said to be the high priest" - Bloomfield's Greek Testament, in loco.) But this is characteristic, and in keeping here. The "Second Man" is to be seen, and men as they are, and their doings, are brought to show how God's thoughts are with them, even while their thoughts utterly differed from His thoughts. They have arranged the world as they like. Then He comes into the midst, both by His servants' preaching, and by His own life, to witness that what man now is, is opposed to God's image.

I have already noticed that in St. Matthew John comes preaching the "kingdom of heaven." Here he preaches "repentance for the remission of sins"; after which this Evangelist quotes the prophet, to show how in this act God was opening the door, that "all flesh should see His salvation" (Luke 3:3; Luke 3:6). Then here alone is the preaching of the Baptist to men of every grade recorded. Here only do we read, "The people asked him, saying, What shall we do? - and the publicans said, What shall we do? - and the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do?" - all which inquiries here are answered with a special word to each for man as man, whether soldier or publican, is the object which the Spirit would here present to us.

Then as to Christ's Baptism: here only do we read, "When all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened." He is linked here with "all the people," and it is specially noted, that, being baptized, as becomes a Man expressing His dependence, He "was praying." Baptism, as shadowing death and resurrection, is specially connected with us as sons of men, and also as members of that kingdom which flesh and blood cannot inherit. Therefore both St. Matthew and St. Luke so fully record it; while St. John for the same reason omits it, as being from the first occupied with a view of Christ as the heavenly and only-begotten Son.

Another fact, recorded only here, is that "Jesus now began to be about thirty years of age," a point of interest regarding Him as a man, and still more as a priest, if we take the number "thirty" in its

mystic signification. On this latter ground I scarce dare enter. A belief in mystic numbers too often in these days only provokes a smile. (Note: The thoughts of Augustine on this subject, as to the import and value of mystic numbers as symbols, are well known. His 11th chap. of the 2d book, De Libero Arbitrio, has some suggestive thoughts on the subject. I confess I cannot see, why, if all creation be a type, numbers alone should be excluded as having no signification. But here as everywhere the seer is wanted.) Nevertheless I am assured that this number, and indeed all else which is distinctive here, is added with a special reason. If I mistake not, it involves in type (as we know is the case with other numbers, as for instance the number eight), the very truth which was here set forth and fulfilled in Christ's baptism. Baptism is burial and resurrection: "we are buried by baptism," because in Adam we are dead, and in this act would confess our state, even while by faith in God's love we claim through the death of self a higher lineage. Christ as Son of Adam, through a mystic burial, figuring that other baptism, (Note: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" Luke 12:50.) when all God's waves and billows went over Him, here takes the place of Adam's Son, and thus through death brings man into the higher relationship as Son of God. Thus linking Himself with us in our shame, He takes a place from whence henceforth He can meet the vilest of Adam's children, and, because He has another life, lift them up with Him into heavenly places. Thus this act touches His priesthood: "for if He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing there were priests who offered according to the law" (Hebrews 8:4). But coming as He did in baptism to ground where "heaven was opened" to Him, He becomes, as the heavenly Man (thus anticipating His resurrection), a fit High-priest for ruined men. Now the thirtieth year in which the Jewish priest entered on his office (Numbers 4:3), like the eighth day of circumcision, figured this same mystery of death and resurrection, and as such it is noticed here in the Gospel of the Son of Man; in the letter speaking of His manhood; in the spirit, of a higher truth growing out of what as Man He did and suffered. For a like reason, in this Gospel the genealogy is given at His baptism, and not at His birth, to show us how the Son of Adam claimed a higher lineage by mystic death and resurrection. I need not notice that here the genealogy is traced to Adam, and is, I doubt not, the mother's line, to show, as was observed as long ago as the second century, that He whom St. Luke is showing us was very Man, linked to, and about to head up afresh, all the families of men who had sprung from the root of old Adam. All of which is characteristic, and illustrative of the relationship in which our Lord appears in this Gospel.

Equally marked is the account here given of the Lord's opening ministry. Both St. Matthew and St. Mark notice the fact, that after His baptism, "Jesus went into Galilee and began to preach." But this Evangelist only gives the particulars, which are all characteristic. Here we read, "He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up." Then in the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day He stood up to read a scripture descriptive of Himself as the Anointed Man: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me, ... He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted" (Luke 4:16-18). All this is in keeping here. He goes to the place "where He had been brought up," - "bringing up" is a part of man's lot, - and confessing that "the Lord has anointed Him," He declares the calling of the Gentiles, preaching deliverance to captives, and good tidings to the poor and broken-hearted.

Still more marked is the discourse which follows, which is peculiar to St. Luke, where, in quoting the Old Testament, and showing how His course agreed with that of the ancient prophets, He

speaks of Elijah and Elisha, as being sent, the one to Sarepta, a city of Sidon, to a widow there, the other to Naaman the Syrian, that is to two Gentiles; adding that remarkable declaration, so full of meaning, that "no prophet is accepted in his own country"; words implying that though rejected by the Jew, like Elijah and Elisha, He should yet find poor widows and lepers among the Gentiles, who would receive Him gladly.

These examples from the opening chapters of this Gospel may show how, while setting forth the Lord as Man, the Spirit continually looks out to the Gentiles, on man as man, far beyond elect Israel. And this peculiarity runs throughout. Thus, in Luke 6:1-49, in that discourse which answers in substance to the Sermon on the Mount, here, not to dwell on the place and audience, is no reference to what "had been said of old time"; no allusion to "the law and the prophets," as in St. Matthew's Gospel; no correction of the errors of practiced religionists as to alms and prayer; but simply broad moral teachings suited to the state and wants of man as man. Many minor differences might be noted, equally characteristic, as for instance, that where St. Matthew writes, "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect," St. Luke recording another form of the same expression (for doubtless the substance of this Sermon was often repeated) says, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful"; thus putting His disciples on the same ground He himself here occupies, as coming down in mercy to meet the sons of men. The same eye to man is seen in the mission of the Twelve as given here. In St. Matthew their labors are specially directed within the limits of a certain outward kingdom. There we read that the Lord said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." St. Luke omits this, as beside his purpose, simply saying, that "He sent them forth to preach," and that "they departed, preaching the Gospel everywhere" (Luke 9:6). Then on their return this Evangelist records (the words are only here and in St. Mark), that "John said, We saw one casting out devils, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said, Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us." St. Mark adds here, because it bears on service, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, shall not lose his reward" (Mark 9:38-41).

St. Luke, while omitting this of the "cup of water," records the command, "Forbid him not," because it shows how God may have a work among men outside of what we judge to be the kingdom, with which disciples, if they are humble and obedient, are not to strive or interfere. St. Luke then adds a scene not elsewhere recorded but characteristic here, as showing the heart of the Son of Man for men even while they rejected Him. The disciples go into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for Him; "and they did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go up to Jerusalem." At once the disciples, James and John, would have Him call for fire on the rejectors. Such is the flesh even in true and beloved followers of the loving Saviour - so unwilling to recognize laborers who are not with us; so ready to judge those who will not receive us. But Jesus turned and rebuked them, saying, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man is come, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them," - words omitted in the other Gospels, but perfect as revealing the Son of Man, who, with doors shut against Him, is yet content to bear this slight, if by long-suffering He may yet save lost sinners. The mission of the Seventy, which immediately follows, and which is only here (Luke 10:1 ff.), is in the same tone, reaching forth as it does with manifest desire to win the sons of men. One little point here, peculiar to this Gospel, may perhaps

be noticed. The Lord says, "Salute no man by the way"; and yet, "Into whatsoever house ye enter, say, Peace be to this house." The courtesies of life are not the chief thing with man in his present state. To be on good terms with those we meet is not the first thing, but rather, if it may be so, to set man right with God. To show how God's thoughts are thoughts of "peace," this is of far higher moment than salutations and greetings, which may only leave us far off from Him with whom we have to do.

Closely allied with this special regard for man as such, is the fact that throughout this Gospel in passages peculiar to St. Luke, man as he is, in his thoughts and ways, is searched and manifested in a truly wondrous manner. Take, for example, the particulars of the call of Peter as recorded here. This call is very briefly mentioned in the other Gospels; but here only do we read the exercises of Peter's heart; here only are we shown the feelings of a man, when for the first time he feels that God and His power are really brought near to him. He has been unsuccessful in fishing. The Lord bids him let down the net. A great multitude of fish is at once caught, insomuch that the net broke. Then Peter is astonished, and falls down, and says, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, 0 Lord."

Many secrets of the heart are here. A little matter, a draught of fishes, some providential occurrence, and it may be very slight, at times flashes in upon a man whom the Lord is leading, making him feel that God is very near him. When this is the case, man at once discovers that he is sinful, and as such would have the glory, which shows him his littleness, to depart from him. All this, as it is peculiar here, is quite in keeping, as showing man as he is. (Note: I just note here that some have objected that the call of the Apostles, as recorded in St. John, is not the same as that recorded by the other three Evangelists. I believe it is not. But such as have themselves been called, and experientially know all these steps, know also that we, like the disciples of old, are called distinctly several times; first in one place, when we are John's disciples (John 1:37-42); after which we yet cling to our nets, and need another call (Luke 5:1-10) to bring us to walk with Jesus. We may require yet another, when the cross is seen in all its bitterness (John 21:3; John 21:19.) Similar in character are the other words, only recorded in this same chapter, that "No man, having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better." The scene generally, and the conversation touching "new wine and old bottles," is in three of the Gospels; but here only are we carefully told the effect produced by drinking the old wine. In this another secret of human nature is disclosed, as to the power of habit and association to affect and bind the soul of man. If we indulge ourselves with the old wine, the excitements of the flesh, the new wine of the kingdom will not be relished by us. He that drinks the old will not desire the new; indeed, while the savor of the old remains, though the new far surpasses the old, he will yet say, "The old is better." St. Luke, and it is perfect here where man is the object before the mind of the Spirit, gives us, in what is peculiar to his Gospel, many fine touches of this nature which, for this same reason are omitted by St. Matthew and St. Mark, as lying out of that special line which it was their office to present to us.

Having thus shown how broadly the Spirit through this Gospel looks out on man, I would now throw together several particulars, only noticed in this Gospel, and equally characteristic, as to the ways and conduct of the Pattern Man. And here the first point I will notice is, that throughout this Gospel, again and again, in scenes common to the other Evangelists, and where they say nothing of prayer, St. Luke repeatedly adds, that "He was praying"; and this because, as prayer adds to the perfectness of the picture as Man, the Evangelist would show how "the Man Christ Jesus"

continually exercised this grace of true dependence. Thus here only do we read, that at His baptism He "was praying": here only that when he had cleansed the leper, "He withdrew Himself, and prayed" (Luke 5:12; Luke 5:16). So again, here only are we told that His choice of the twelve followed a night of ceaseless prayer: "He continued all night in prayer, and when it was day, He called His disciples unto Him, and of them He chose twelve." So again, here only do we read that Peter's famous confession was made "as Jesus was alone praying." Here only are we told that the Transfiguration happened as He prayed: "He went up into a mountain, and as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was changed." So again, in this Gospel, the Lord's Prayer was given, in answer to a request from His disciples, who, "as He was praying, when He ceased said, Lord, teach us to pray." In St. Matthew our Lord repeats this in His Sermon on the Mount, teaching us not to be ashamed to reiterate the self-same words, if only they are good words, in the ears of our disciples.

I may also note here, for it is characteristic, that in St. Luke, in the Lord's Prayer, we have, "Forgive us our sins," instead of "Forgive us our debts," as in St. Matthew's Gospel. And trifling as the difference may appear, the instructed eye will see how perfectly it accords with the distinctive character of the respective Gospels; "debts" being the thought as connected with a kingdom, where righteousness is the rule; "sins," where men generally are regarded, who without law are yet sinners. Again in this Gospel only have we the words of Peter, "I have prayed for thee" (Luke 22:32). All of which, as it is peculiar here, is not only characteristic of the Lord as very Man, but a deeply instructive example of what becomes us as sons of men, to whom every event, be it baptism, or ministry, or social intercourse, the choice of preachers, or the hour of rest, each and all should be an occasion of renewed communion with God, with prayer not only for our own souls, but also for those of others.

Another point equally characteristic is the care this Evangelist takes to record circumstances illustrative of the Human sympathy of our Lord, not given in the other Gospels. Thus in the scene with the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-16), which is peculiar to St. Luke, the Evangelist notes some particulars which would naturally affect a tender human heart. The young man who had died was "the only son of his mother," and "she was a widow"; for human sorrows and affections here are all noted. Then when Jesus saw her, "He had compassion on her"; and when He had raised the youth, "He delivered him to his mother," as One, who having known a mother's love, could truly feel with her. And I may note here that in scenes common to the other Gospels, St. Luke, by the addition of a single word, touches a human chord, beautifully in character with that view which it is his special work to present to us. For instance, in the case of Jarius' daughter, St. Luke alone tells us that she was his "only" child. So where another father comes to seek help, here only are his words recorded, "For he is mine only child." Such a fact would touch a Man, and as such we find it here, revealing the perfect sympathy of Him "who is not ashamed to call us brethren."

Equally distinctive is the repeated mention, so often found in this Gospel, of the fact that our Lord "sat down to eat meat." He is here eminently a social Man, going to tables where He is asked, and there, whether in houses of Publicans or Pharisees, using that social intercourse to instruct others. Thus He sanctifies man's commonest engagements and needs, for man must eat; showing us how even the lower necessities of our bodies may be made occasions of ministering the bread of life. How He sits at table is fully seen here. A Pharisee invites Him and He goes; but even while at table He is occupied with a poor sinner, though His compassion for her provokes the assembled

guests to judge Him, first as profane, and then as arrogant. At table, and in another's house, He fills the hungry with good things, while the rich, satisfied with themselves, are sent away empty. And this scene, recorded only here, full of the workings of man's heart, is perfectly in keeping with the special tenor of this Gospel; showing us that not merit or righteousness, but a sense of sin, is the fit introduction to Him who came to save sinners.

I notice here too, that in this Gospel the Lord repeats at table a great portion of that teaching, which, as we know from St. Matthew, was elsewhere given in public and set sermons. His audience is changed, but not His doctrine; in fact, the very words are adhered to, as if by this means He would the more firmly fix them on His disciples' hearts. (Note: Many instances are recorded of our Lord uttering nearly the same words on different occasions: as the words, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," twice recorded in St. Matthew (Matthew 9:13 and Matthew 12:7). So the answer to the repeated charge that "He cast out devils through Beelzebub" (Matthew 9:34 and Matthew 12:24). So the repeated references to His cross in almost the self-same words (Matthew 16:21; Matthew 17:23; Matthew 20:17-19). So in St. Matthew He uttered the Lord's Prayer in His Sermon on the Mount. In St. Luke, we find He gave it with some slight alteration to His disciples in reply to a request that He would teach them to pray. Every teacher knows how often he has used the same words to different audiences, and with slight differences. Our Lord did the same, as many places in the Gospels plainly intimate.) At a Pharisee's table, Pharisees are reproved. The fact that He is an invited guest shall not keep Him from faithfully warning those with whom He sits of the woes consequent on a form of godliness without the power.

Take another example of His manner at table, quite peculiar to St. Luke, but showing how blessedly He used for the good of men those social seasons which we so often misuse to our own injury; revealing too that blessed heart, which, while so keenly alive to man's needs, at the same time most deeply felt the contradiction of man's wickedness and selfishness on every side. A Pharisee asks Him to dine, and He accepts the call (Luke 14:1 ff.). It was "the Sabbath-day," and He knew they "watched Him"; but though conscious that any service on that day would bring on Him reproach, He nevertheless stops, as He enters the door, to heal a poor sufferer. Then, as He goes to dinner, He cannot but mark how "those who were bidden," chose the best places. Self is at work; human nature comes out even in so small a thing as a seat at table. For this He has a word. Then at the table, the choice of the guests suggests much. Men invite their rich neighbors, for they expect recompense. This draws for His comments. Then one at the table, "as he heard these things," apparently touched by the thought of that day, when poor and rich should all be brought together, said, "Blessed is he that shall eat meat in the kingdom of God." At once the Lord seems carried in spirit from the table before Him, for seats at which the guests are so eager, to another feast, which is prepared, and yet despised by men; from attendance at which they beg to be excused. The thought that when man spreads a table, it is full, contrasts strangely with the truth, that when God makes a feast, not one of the guests who are only bidden care to come. To sup with God, they must be compelled. But I need not pursue this. The whole scene, as it is peculiar to St. Luke, shows not only what man is, but what man has been in Christ Jesus, who, "whether He ate or drank," was recollected, doing all to the glory of God, while His heart yet yearned over the sons of men.

I have as yet said nothing of the Parables peculiar to St. Luke, save that in their opening form they remarkably differ from those in St. Matthew's Gospel. Here it is always, - "A certain man." "A

certain man fell among thieves" - "A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard" - "A certain man made a great supper" - "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, will not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness?" - or "What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, will not seek diligently till she find it?" So in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, "A certain man had two sons." So again, "There was a certain rich man which had a steward." So again, "There was a certain man clothed in purple and fine linen." So again, "Two men went up into the temple to pray." These parables are peculiar to St. Luke, and in their contents, as in their form, show the Lord as looking out broadly on man, more especially on man as lost and yet cared for. To take only the first, the Good Samaritan. Here it is seen how a Stranger can do for the ruined what Priest and Levite cannot. Priests served for the pure in the temple; but here is One who can meet even those who, going down from Jerusalem to the cursed city of Jericho (Joshua 6:26), have been left sorely wounded. I need not speak of such parables as those in the well-known 15th chapter, where God's own joy in saving the lost is so wondrously revealed to us; or of those which inculcate prayer (Luke 11:5 ff. and Luke 18:1 ff.), which, as they are peculiar here, pointedly mark man's place as a dependent creature.

Generally speaking, in all these parables, whether we regard their mere letter or their hidden spirit, a careful eye will see God's will respecting man, in some cases His special purpose to Gentiles in contrast with Jews. This, among other instances, is seen in the way in which two parables given by St. Matthew are here placed in a connection exactly in keeping with the object of St. Luke's Gospel. In St. Matthew the "Leaven" and "Mustard-seed" come as part of a series, describing the development of the mystery of the kingdom; here they come in immediately after the parable of the Barren Fig-tree, from which for three years fruit was sought in vain, and which was threatened with the axe if in the fourth year there should be no increase: showing how, when the tree of Judaism should be felled, the Sower's work in the field, and the leavening of the lump, would begin, all exactly in character here, where the Spirit looks beyond Jewish ground to the work among men coming in on Israel's failure. But all this is perfectly in keeping with the view of Christ as Son of Adam. To the peculiarities already noticed I might add many more, such as the fact that here only we have allusion to "the times of the Gentiles"; here only do we read of "Jerusalem being trodden down of the Gentiles," and her people "led away captive into all nations (Luke 21:24). Here only the shooting of the fig-tree is seen with "all the trees." Here only is the place of crucifixion called by its Gentile name, "Calvary," rather than, as in the other Gospels, Golgotha. Here only is the dying thief seen as saved by grace, in beautiful harmony with the whole tenor of this Gospel. So as to the Lord. Here only in the Garden is "an angel seen strengthening Him," to show how truly He was Man, receiving angels' ministry. Here only do we read of "the bloody sweat": here only does He say to the traitor, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Here only does the Centurion say, "This was a righteous Man." Here only on the cross does the Lord as a Man "commend His spirit" into the hands of God, His Father. So here only, after His resurrection He eats with men, verifying His manhood by yet partaking of "a piece of broiled fish and of a honey-comb." But all this, and much more of a like nature, will meet the attentive reader, and illustrate that distinct view of the Lord which is here presented to us. And now one word on the bearing of these things on us, who are Adam's sons. Need I draw out the moral of the repeated reference to prayer in this Gospel? Did the Son of Man pray at His baptism, when He chose apostles, when alone - did His prayer lead others to say, "Teach us to pray also"; and shall we who have nothing in ourselves be yet prayerless? Did He at table make every circumstance an

occasion of blessed and holy teaching, and shall we not strive, after His pattern, to eat to God’s glory, to sit in social circles, diffusing something of His Spirit to all around?

Oh! may we but see Him as He is, that like Him in the midst of men, instead of being affected by them, we may affect them in the power of a Higher Presence. And let us, who, though sons of Adam, by union with our risen Head, are conscious of possessing another and higher calling - who have confessed ourselves dead and risen, with heaven opened, and who, "by baptism, fasting, and temptation," are longing to be conformed to Him who went before - see that these things which were true in Him may be true in us also, for "as He is, so are we in this world." And if there be some, as, alas! there are, who know not man’s calling, as chosen in Christ to be the heir of all things, let them, looking in the face of Jesus, see God’s love to man, who so loved us that He gave His Son to be for us a Perfect Man; to be borne in the womb, to be born, to hang upon a woman, to suck her breasts, to be taught by her lips, to increase in wisdom here; to know our relationships, and our sorrows, and our toils, and at last our death, that in everything He might be linked with us, and through His death, still not losing us, might in Himself lift us up, to sit in heavenly places - angels, and principalities, and powers, all subject to Him as Man, a pledge that to us also they shall be subject in due season. Oh, might the mystery of His Incarnation come home to us as befits its glory! Oh, that we might understand what it witnesses of God’s purpose touching the sons of men; that He should be our everlasting dwelling-place, and we His temples; that He should be seen in us, and we be hid in Him! May the word, spoken by angels, "To you is born a Saviour," remove every doubt, if such can yet remain, as to the love of Him who thus loved us. "To you is born a Saviour." It is a birth-relationship, true whether we own and rejoice in it, or put it away from us. We have nothing to do to make Him a Saviour: He is "born a Saviour": He is a Man, and nothing pertaining to man can now be alien to Him. What should we think of the child, who, when told, "To you is born a brother," should answer, "But what shall I do to make him a brother to me?" The joy is, He is born a Brother, by birth linked to us, that we through grace might henceforth in Spirit be linked with Him. We may indeed deny the bond, and live groaning here as though God had never so loved man as to make him His son in Christ Jesus. We may doubt His love. Nevertheless "to us a Son is born"; and we who have trusted know that through and in Him is perfect peace.

While, therefore, we rejoice to trace the wisdom, seen even in the form of that revelation, which God in His rich grace has given to us, let none be content intellectually to trace this detail, unless with this, from His inmost heart he also embraces Him of whom this Gospel speaks. The wisdom of God in grace as in nature may be coldly contemplated, like any other piece of skill or wondrous workmanship, without a soul-saving and personal appropriation of the grace, which is yet by the understanding discerned so clearly. But, as one has said, "the Gospel has not been revealed that we may have the pleasure of feeling or expressing fine sentiments, but that we may be saved: the taste may receive the impression of the beauty and sublimity of the Bible, and the nervous system may have received the impression of the tenderness of its tone, and yet its meaning, its deliverance, its mystery of holy love, may remain all unknown."

PRAYER

Almighty God, who hast given us Thine Only-begotten Son, to take our nature upon Him, and for us to be born of a pure Virgin, grant that we, being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption

and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

01.4.0. John's View

John’s View "The fourth living creature was like a flying Eagle" Revelation 4:7.

"The way of an Eagle in the air is too wonderful for me" Proverbs 30:18-19.

WE COME NOW TO THAT GOSPEL which more than any other carries on its face the plainest tokens of being occupied with an aspect of Christ distinct from all the rest. "The fourth living creature was like unto an eagle." And if in tracing those views of the Lord, the emblems of which are taken from creatures which walk on earth, it has been difficult to bring within my limits the characteristic peculiarities of each Gospel, what shall I say of this Gospel, which like the eagle soars away to heaven, where nearly the whole is peculiar, and every part throughout replete with mysteries touching the Son of God? Canst thou fly as the eagle? "She mounteth up on high: she dwelleth and abideth in the rock, upon the strong place. Her eyes behold afar off; her young ones suck up blood, and where the slain is, there is she" (Job 39:27-30). Who can follow here? Some have heard a voice, saying, "I bare you upon eagles’ wings" (Exodus 19:4): and in His strength who makes His redeemed to ride upon high places, they also "mount up with wings as eagles" (Isaiah 40:31). For "as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord leads His beloved" (Deuteronomy 32:11) into heavenly places, thence to behold what such as walk on earth can never see. But alas! how little have we seen, how little are we fit to see, the precious things which are above this world. And yet it is this that St. John treats of, revealing the Lord as "not of this world," for the contemplation of those who like Him are not of this world; in tones replete with heaven, and which are themselves everywhere the exact echo of that Blessed One of whom they speak; witnessing how deeply His image and Spirit had sunk down into and pervaded the whole soul of "that disciple whom Jesus loved." My present purpose, however, is rather to indicate than to explore the subject; to show that there is a special purpose here, rather than to attempt to fathom its great deep. For here we may bathe our souls in seas of rest; here we indeed come to waters far above the loins or ankles: "the waters are risen, waters to swim in, a river that cannot be passed over." Having therefore briefly shown, though indeed it needs no proof, how remarkably this Gospel differs from the rest, I would endeavor to learn some of the lessons which these peculiarities are intended to impress upon us. To turn then to this Gospel. How distinctive is its beginning. Omitting the birth of Jesus as Son of Man, St. John begins before all worlds. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Then comes the wondrous announcement, that though "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made"; though "in Him was Life, and the Life was the Light," yet "He was made flesh and dwelt among us." For man had departed from God, and lost His image. Then "the image of God" (Colossians 1:15) comes to dwell in man, that man may dwell in God. No man could see God: therefore the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, came to declare Him to us. All this, and much more of a like nature, which meets us at the opening of this Gospel, is too remarkable to escape observation. Instead of the Lord of a kingdom, here it is "The Light of men." Instead of a Servant, here we see "Him who made all things." Instead of a Man subject to the powers of this

world, born of a woman, laid in a manger, here it is "the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father," revealing His image, and communicating life "to as many as received Him" among the sons of men. Objections may be raised, and explanations offered, but the fact is beyond all doubt, that the view here rises, as the heaven is above the earth, over any which is given to us in the other Gospels.

Equally characteristic is the notice of John. The Baptist is elsewhere seen rather in connection with the earthly than the heavenly relations of the Lord Jesus. Here it is clear that the Evangelist sees more, and wishes more to be seen in him, than the man. If Jesus is "the Light," John is also a light, though of another nature; a "lamp, burning and shining," yet but a lamp, (Note: John 5:35. The contrast between Christ as the Light, and John as the lamp, is lost in the common version, where the words respecting John, ekeinos en ho luchnos ho kaiornenos, have been rendered, "He was a burning light." The Vulgate here more correctly gives, "Ille erat lucerna ardens.") destined to be quenched soon as the Light of heaven shall have introduced the perfect day. So Jesus is "the Word" here, and John is "the Voice;" words, which even partially apprehended, convey something to us very different from such titles as "the Lord," and "my Messenger." The "Word" (Logos) is the sense: the "Voice" is the sound. Outwardly, the voice seems to be first, yet while in the act of communication it precedes the word, it is not really before it, for the sense must have been in the mind before it was outspoken. So the word, if it has been received, abides in the heart; but the voice passes away. Having served to communicate the word, which was in one heart to other hearts, the voice has done its work. Its use is as a witness, and this being accomplished, the word remains, while the witnessing voice is content to be forgotten. All this, as it applies to Him who is "the Word," and His forerunner, has been noticed by saints in other days. (Note: Augustine again and again refers to the mystery contained in the fact, that Christ is "the Word," and John "the Voice." A reference to the following passages will amply repay perusal, and suggest much: Serm. 288, par. 2 and 3; Serm. 289, par. 3; Serm. 293, par. 3.) To some it may be a hint of what is here for such as through grace can receive it. To all it speaks of the Lord in a relation connected with heaven rather than with earth. No less distinctive is the witness of the Baptist, as recorded here. In St. Matthew he preaches a "coming kingdom;" in St. Luke "repentance;" while here he is "a witness to the Light, that all men through him might believe" (John 1:7). Accordingly that part of his witness which is given here, touches the heavenly side of the Lord: - "I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God." "Again, the next day, John stood and two of His disciples, and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:32-36). All this, so perfectly in keeping here, is passed in silence by the other Evangelists, who, as their office is to show the Human rather than the Divine in Christ, (though in a sense even the Human in Him is all Divine), record such parts of the Baptist's testimony as bear upon their respective views, while St. John selects what is more connected with the Divine nature. How this testimony touches those who are "partakers of the Divine nature," we may see presently. Suffice it to notice here how the particulars given by St. John all lead us to contemplate the Son of God. The Baptist's words, too, respecting himself, as given here, which at first sight appear opposed to what St. Matthew has recorded of him, like all such apparent contradictions, express a deep truth, experimentally known by all who, like John, have been called by grace to "prepare the way of the Lord" by the preaching of His gospel. In St. Matthew John the Baptist says to Christ, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me" (Matthew 3:14); whereas in St. John he says, "I knew Him not, but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit

descending, and remaining upon Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John 1:33-34). Carelessly heard, these words do seem to have a discrepancy. But once see that St. John is speaking of our Lord in an aspect as much higher than St. Matthew's view as the Eternal Word is higher than the Son of David and Abraham, and then the words, which to our darkness may seem dark, in His light will yield only more brightness. For we may know, and do know, Christ as Son of David, and as such the rightful Heir of great glory long before we know Him as the Word, who gives the Holy Spirit. I speak what I have known and felt. And I know that from the first of my witness to Christ, when like John I went preaching and baptizing, I so far knew Christ as to say, "I have need to be baptized of Thee;" for even then I saw He was Lord of a kingdom, and that I more needed to be baptized of Him, than He could need my poor testimony; and yet I knew Him not as the Word, until, in the act of receiving Him, that I might bear witness of Him, the Father revealed Him to me in such a character as I had till then never known or conceived of; and this, though from my youth I had been taught to believe that Jesus was the Son of God; so that I can truly say, "I knew Him not;" while yet from the first I knew that I had "need to be baptized of Him." And this high knowledge of Christ as the Eternal Word - a knowledge we at first have not - is that of which St. John is speaking, and which is the special burden of this Gospel. But here, as in all things, experience only makes clear. "We must do the works, if we would know of the doctrine" (John 7:17). The next chapter - and it is one of a series, each stage of which illustrates some virtue of the Son - is full of particulars equally characteristic. Could I speak of the mysteries hid under the letter here, this would be yet more manifest. Here the first lesson is, that man's work ever ends in failure, while the work of the Son, out of man's failure, brings in yet greater glory. "Every man" - this is the way of men, in opposition to the way of the Son, - "Every man at the beginning sets forth good wine:" nature and the world give their best and fairest at the beginning; "but when men have well drunk, then that which is worse." Not so with the Son of God. "Thou hast kept the best wine until now." When man's feast fails, there yet remains what the Son of God has in store for them who bid Him welcome. And though with men the first is best, not so with the Son of God. His good wine comes sweeter and sweeter even to the end (John 2:10). The same truth comes out touching the temple. Man may, and will, ruin what he can; but the Son shall raise it up in greater glory. (Note: John 2:19. Strauss, while discussing the charge brought against the Lord, that He had said, "I will destroy this temple," etc., and noting the fact that St. Luke omits this, says, with his usual effrontery, "It is highly probable that the declaration about the destruction and rebuilding the temple was really uttered by Jesus. That Luke omits the production of the false witnesses is therefore to be regarded as a deficiency in his narrative." (Vol. iii. p. 214). This judge of the Gospels cannot see how what is perfectly in keeping touching the Son of God may be out of character in the description of the Son of Man. Surely the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.) But even the letter here is distinctive. "The mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, (could such words be found in St. Luke?) Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Then we read, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory;" for though the veil was yet upon Him, "the glory as of the Only begotten" could not be wholly hid. So of the temple of His body, He says here, - for "the Son quickeneth whom He will," - "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up" (John 2:4; John 2:11; John 2:19). So we read, "Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man," - words, which, as they bring to our remembrance the prophet's witness, "The heart

is deceitful, who can know it?" and the answer, "I the Lord search the heart," reveal Jesus as the Lord, "to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid." But this is exactly in keeping with that view which is now before us, of "the Word who was with God, and who was God."

Even more marked is the next chapter, where the doctrine of a "second birth," as connected with Himself, "the Only-begotten Son of God," is given in a tone quite different from anything in the other Gospels. We have here an advance on the preceding chapter. There generally it was shown how, when man's work ended in failure, the Son out of that failure could bring in better things; a fit introduction to the miracles of grace to be accomplished by the Son of the Father. Here the detail of that special miracle, (occupying the following chapter,) of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. With Nicodemus, the subject is "the birth of water and the Spirit." With the woman of Samaria, it is "the well of water within, springing up unto everlasting life." And here I would observe - for these scenes with Nicodemus, and the Samaritan, are examples - that in St. John though facts are related they are never, as in the other Gospels, recorded for their own sakes, but invariably serve to introduce some spiritual discourse, of which the fact is generally the outward sign: the discourse or doctrine being invariably introduced with "Verily, verily," an expression not to be found in any of the other Gospels. This very form of the Gospel is characteristic. We saw something like this in St. Luke, where describing the Son of Man, the very style, so distinctly human, was suited to the subject which that Evangelist had to set before us. The tendency in St. John to rise to heaven, and to witness of heavenly things, is no less marked, and is equally in keeping with that view of the Lord, which it is his office to present to us. As to the details of the interview with Nicodemus, I may add a word, for the truth here, growing out of that relationship of the Lord, which is set forth in this Gospel, is of the most vital interest. How is man to become God's son? This is the question here; and a fit question to have an early place in the Gospel which reveals the Son of God. In baptism indeed the Lord in His own person had shown the path, but its mystery had as yet never been opened out. Here the secret is told. Natural birth will bring us into this world; but natural birth will not introduce us into the kingdom which is within the veil. To go thither we must be re-born. But how can this be? The wise Pharisee, who comes regarding the Lord as "a teacher," and commencing his discourse with a self-sufficient "We know," is forced to confess he knows nothing, and to cry, "How can these things be?" before the mystery of the new-birth can be revealed to him. To be re-born we want something more than "a teacher." As sons of men, our life and portion is of the earth, earthly. Unfit for heaven, careless of its joys, how shall man enter there? Can the flesh be changed to bear the Lord's presence? "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" and "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom." What then can be done? There must be the communication of another life. So the Son who is the Word, "in whom is life," came down to men, and laid hold of man in His own Person. He entered the kingdom of this world, and became a Man, that so laying hold of man, and traversing the length and breadth of man's portion, He might lift man, as quickened by Him, through death into another life, as God's heir, and Christ's joint-heir. Therefore we are baptized. We come as dead ones, confessing that our life as men is utterly unfit to give us admission into the Lord's presence. We come to put off that life, and are buried in baptism, renouncing Old Adam, to claim a new life in union with the life-giving Word; in the faith that if He be in us, His home shall be ours, and though for a season we yet bear the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. This in effect is what the Lord says here. Ye must be born again. Do you ask, How can these things be? How can man rise up to enter heaven? No man

can ascend thither, save He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven. But to take man thither He has come to take man's lot and die. For as the serpent was lifted up, so shall the Son of Man be lifted up. Then faith in Him, risen and ascended, shall bring others to Him, and they who receive the Word shall live with Him. Thus by the reception of the Word, man receives a life as real and much more blessed than the natural life he has in old Adam - a life in which exists the witness that judgment is in one sense behind us, for Jesus is risen, and our regeneration is a participation in His resurrection and eternal life. Thus does "the lifting up of the Son" close all earthly associations, and introduce to heavenly things hitherto all unknown. I cannot do more than touch the question here; but the whole passage is a marked example of the tone which runs through this Gospel. Indeed the words repeated so often - "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" - sufficiently show what is the mind of the Spirit in this Scripture. "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm" (Jeremiah 17:5). But "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." And here let me observe how this word "life," so repeatedly recurring here (See John 3:36; John 5:26; John 5:29; John 5:40 John 6:33; John 6:35; John 6:48; John 6:51; John 6:53; John 6:63, etc.), contrasts with the language of St. Matthew's Gospel. With St. Matthew the idea throughout is "righteousness," rather than "life." Of course life and righteousness are but different forms or expressions of one and the same reality. But where St. Matthew, as befits his view of "the kingdom," sees righteousness, St. John sees life. Thus St. Matthew, as I have already noticed, records the words, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." St. John testifies of the Only-begotten, - "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." And this contrast runs through the Gospels. The Epistles have the like distinction. For instance, "righteousness" is the form of expression peculiar to the first Epistle. But where Paul says, "The righteousness of God without the law was manifested," John still in character, says, "The life was manifested." Where Paul comes to "declare God's righteousness, that He might be just, and yet a justifier," John comes "to bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us." Both speak of the same reality, in different forms, not without a reason; even as the difference of form in the Gospels develops the fulness of the same blessed Lord. The following chapter, of the woman of Samaria, takes up the same strain, enlarging on the growth and nourishment of the new life through faith in Christ Jesus. Nicodemus is told of the quickening, the Samaritan woman of the indwelling of life, through that Spirit, whose work it is to testify of and glorify the Son of God. The religious Jew is chosen to show that in spite of all his religion, he needs new life. The defiled Samaritan to be a witness that, in spite of all her sins, even in her soul there might be a well of living water. Here faith in the Son gives "a well of water springing up into everlasting life;" making us, now that we are alive, "worshippers," not in certain earthly places, but "in spirit and in truth"; revealing to us "the Father" as "seeking such to worship Him"; and enabling us to worship Him in the spirit of dear children. And all this, not in virtue of anything in man, for here one of the vilest is the example chosen to show us where this grace may find its dwelling, but as springing from union with the Son: - "The water which I shall give," is that which transforms this lost one, and others like her, into a vessel, first to contain, then to minister, the grace of life. The next three chapters rise yet higher, with a witness to the Person of the Son, the force of which I despair of expressing, even in the measure which has flashed in upon my own soul. I may however observe that in these three chapters, (5-7) the Lord is contrasted with all that law or ordinances had done for God's elect. Nay, He is shown as the fulfilment of all, whether Sabbaths, Passovers, or the like, Himself the true rest and food for

weary souls. The way in which these feasts are set aside here, to lead us higher, is very striking. Each of these chapters begins with a reference to some solemnity once ordained by God Himself; first, the Sabbath; then the Passover; then the Feast of Tabernacles. (Note: Chapter 5 begins, "After this there was a feast of the Jews" (John 5:1). That this was the Sabbath, appears from John 5:9. Chapter 6 commences, "And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh" (John 6:4). In John 7:2, we read, "Now the Jew's feast of Tabernacles was at hand.) These were forms, the witness of what God had done, or would do, for ruined men. Once the forms had glorified God, being used as seals of His truth, to give both to God and man their due place. Then there was life in them for men. But the time had come when these same forms were used to glorify men, to make sinners of one class glory over sinners of another, and then all was death. Then the Word, coming in a form in which God was glorified, through which therefore there was life for men, set Himself in contrast to the forms misused to glorify man, and which for this reason had become powerless. And they who clung to the form, all the more strongly because they lacked the life, fought against the life in Him, making the very form their weapon to resist that of which it was the witness. Nevertheless there stood the Vessel, in which God was glorified, and which therefore ministered rest and life to weary men, declaring that not only from Himself, the Only-begotten, but from those who believed in Him, and were adopted children, living waters should flow to comfort those around, when He was glorified. One in the form of a Man, glorifying God on earth, was here saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink:" nay more, saying of His disciples, "He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers." And "this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:37-39). O wondrous truth, that from the temples of our bodies, if only the Lord and not self is glorified, there shall run "living waters"; while if self is exalted, spite of all our knowledge, not one drop shall be ministered by us to weary souls! We may be believers, and yet the Lord may not in us be glorified. We may yet be under law, not come even to the cross, much less to Pentecost; nay, we may be crucifying Him afresh, and putting Him to an open shame. In such a case the Holy Spirit will not be given, because Jesus is not yet glorified. Where He is glorified, though Pharisees and the world rage and imagine vain things, the living waters shall run into the desert, and "everything shall live wither the river comes." My limits forbid my tracing, as I would desire, the truths unfolded here, as linked with the Person of the Lord, as Son of God. I may however observe, for it is characteristic of this Gospel, that the 5th chapter, which speaks of the work on the Sabbath, a work wrought as our Lord says, because neither God nor man could rest in sin and misery, (Note: The Lord's words were, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." As though He had said, You judge me for breaking the Sabbath in healing this sufferer on the Sabbath-day. I do so because it has been proved - this man's misery proves it - that this Sabbath, the rest of the first creation, is indeed no Sabbath. There is no rest in it now either for God or man, for neither God nor man can rest in sin and misery. God did indeed rest in an unfallen world, and since the fall, before finally giving up the first creation to condemnation, He tried it once and again; giving, while the trial lasted, the Sabbath as a sign of a rest in the first creation. But sin works in it, and God cannot rest. Therefore, instead of "God did rest the seventh day," the truth now is, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.") contrasts the incompetency of law, which, like the pool of Bethesda, required something of strength in the patient, with the absolute life-giving power of the Son of God; showing in addition that if men will not receive Him as Life-giver, they must as Judge; that in one or other of these relations He must be known by all men. The 6th chapter shows His place on earth,

according to the mystery of the Paschal Lamb; that He must suffer, and yet give life to men; fulfilling the word, "He shall satisfy her poor with bread;" then opening to His disciples the secret of that Bread which came down from heaven; and then concluding with the question, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before" (John 6:62)? After this comes the instruction of the 7th chapter, touching the Feast of Tabernacles, where, having testified that the time for His manifestation to the world as Son of Man was not yet come, He comes as the Sent of the Father, that is as Son of God, promising the "living water" as the witness of His coming glory. But I cannot pursue this. Enough if I have shown how Jesus is presented here, not so much as Son of Adam, or Abraham, as Son of God.

What follows is equally distinctive, though the force of the connection may be unperceived save where the life which connects it is personally enjoyed by us. Hitherto the burden touching the Son has been, "In Him was Life." Here He speaks of Light: - "I am the Light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). And what a Light it is! An adulteress taken in the act, with sin confessed, stands in the light without judgment; while righteous Pharisees must go out one by one, being convicted by their own consciences. And the miracle here accomplished on "the man blind from his birth," illustrates the light-giving power of this same Son of God. From this point the word "truth" constantly recurs. Faith grows to knowledge; for truth as well as grace had come by Jesus Christ. The grace saved, quickening to life: the truth sanctified, by giving light; the Life and the Light both issuing from the same fountain. He that believed, accepting the "grace," obtained eternal life; but he who followed the Pattern, continuing in the "truth," had light also. So the Lord says here to "those who believed in Him, If ye continue in my word, then ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). Faith from the first gives life; but if we keep the word, light comes, turning what once was faith into certain knowledge. I may have come out of the grave of nature, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, with a napkin about my face, having life, but no light. Now I have light. "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." And though rulers who set up to be lights, claiming authority and succession in the Church, even while saying, "Give God the glory," may judge the Light-giver and the enlightened, their judgments cannot rob him whose eyes are opened of the light of God. In other Gospels blind ones are healed; but here with the act of healing is added the witness, "As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world;" for the Spirit would show how light and knowledge, as well as life, are necessary accompaniments of a true reception of the eternal Word. Need I observe how all this marks the specific purpose of this Gospel? He that cannot see this must be blind indeed. But I will not pursue this, for the general tenor of this Scripture, little as its depth may be apprehended, needs no proof. I will therefore only add, that just as the other Gospels, as they proceed onwards increasingly develop each its own peculiar view of the Lord Jesus, - as, for example, St. Matthew, where the chapters preceding the Passion are full of matters touching the children of the kingdom, with a testimony of the sin of those who sit in Moses' seat, so here also, in the corresponding place, the burden of this Gospel is as distinctly seen in the testimony of the sending of the Spirit by the Son, and in all that revelation of the Father's house and heart which is given only in this Gospel (Chaps. 13-17). This, however, would lead us where few could follow. I pass therefore to lower ground, to those scenes which are common to this and to the other Gospels, to note how different are the points here dwelt on, how unmistakably they mark the specific view of Christ, which is here present to us.

Observe then, that in St. John not a word is said of His apprehensions of the cross, as in the other Gospels. Here He stands as it were above His sorrows. In St. Luke (Luke 18:32), He may speak of being "delivered to the Gentiles, and mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on." All this is entirely omitted here. Instead of speaking of His griefs, the Son of the Father, "when He knew that His hour was come, that He should depart out of this world unto the Father," is occupied in pouring comfort into His disciples' hearts. He "gives them His peace." He "declares to them the Father's name." "If they loved Him, they would rejoice, because He went to the Father"; for "now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him" (John 14:28; John 13:31). And if for a moment, at the recollection that one eating bread with Him should betray Him, His "soul is troubled," and He refers to the betrayal; it is but a passing cloud, only revealing by its contrast the depth and quiet of that heaven of peace which still abode in Him.

It is the same here in the Garden. Life and Light throughout are with Him. St. Luke may show how the Son of Man prepares for His last great conflict; may tell us how He, "who in all points was tempted as we are, yet without sin," said, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me;" may show us "an angel strengthening Him," as "in an agony He prays more fervently;" may mark how He seems to seek sympathy from His disciples, while "great drops of blood fall to the ground" (Luke 22:41-44). We look in St. John at the self-same scene; and what a contrast! Not one word of His prayer, or agony, or of an angel strengthening Him: not a word of His sweat, as it were great drops of blood: not a word of His apparent longing for sympathy and companionship in this dark hour. Throughout He is the incarnate Word. "Jesus, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. As soon as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground." Here, instead of weakness and agony, is power appalling His adversaries. Then again, instead of seeking sympathy from His disciples, here He is seen as possessing and exercising the power to protect them: "Jesus saith, I have told you that I am He. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way; that the saying might be fulfilled which He spake, Of them which Thou gavest me I have lost none." (Note: John 18:4-9. Such as look closely will notice here many more interesting particulars. In St. Luke our Lord says, "Father, remove this cup." In St. Matthew it is "My Father"; because in St. Matthew it is man in covenant with God that is presented to us. In St. Mark it is, "Abba, Father.") Surely here is both the peace, and the power, of heaven, even in the bitter cross. He stands as One from whom no one can take His life, unless He please to lay it down. In exact keeping with this, the company of people seen in St. Luke (Luke 23:27-28), yielding Him sympathy, "as they bewailed and lamented Him," and receiving His sympathy in return, as He bids them "weep for themselves," do not come within the line of vision to which St. John directs us. An exalted tone, as of the Son of God, runs throughout the whole. Before Pontius Pilate He is here the calm witness of the "truth," still testifying, "He that is of the truth heareth my voice." Even on the cross, it is the same. Abraham's Son may cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). The Servant of God may also "cry with a loud voice, and give up the ghost" (Mark 15:37). The Son of Man may say, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit" (Luke 23:46). But of the Son of the Father we read, "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, saith, I thirst." Then "when He had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished, and bowed the head, and yielded up the Spirit." (Note: John 19:28-30 - paredoke to pneuma, very different from St. Luke's exepneusen. Our authorized version translates both these very dissimilar expressions by the self-same English words, "He gave up the ghost"; a rendering which drops the

whole force of the contrast, which is clearly intended in the words of the original. The Vulgate here correctly translates, "tradidit spiritum" in St. John; and in St. Luke, "exspiravit.") As the eternal Son He need not "commend Himself" to God. His own "It is finished," seals with a sufficient witness the full accomplishment of His own perfect work. Add to which that St. John alone omits all record of the darkness, which, as it had a moral, as well as an historic, bearing, could have no place in the laying down of His life by the eternal Son. Thus it is ever here. The Word is seen made flesh; but the Divine beams forth through the Human everywhere. The cloud is bright with the sun, and the veil even before its rending is transparent to faith at least with heavenly glory. But enough of what is distinctive. The depth is yet untouched. But what has been said may be sufficient to indicate to God's children what lies before them in this Gospel. The further entrance into it I leave to their prayers and diligence, and to the teachings of that Spirit, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ, and show them to us. I would now, in one or two examples, show how what is distinctive here bears on those who, through grace, are the sons of God in Christ Jesus.

Take then the opening testimony touching the Son, that "in Him was life, and the life was the light of men." What does it teach us who rejoice that "as He is, so are we in this world," as to the nature of that light, which, if He be in us, we too must manifest? It says simply, "The life was the light," - the life, not the profession; "the life was the light of men." There stood One, in a servant's form, in the likeness of sinful flesh, whose life, even while others judged Him, was judging everything, and showing, by its holy contrast, what was in men and what was not, according to God's mind. "The life was the light." It is so yet. The Lord is in us: - "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Corinthians 13:5). And if He be in us, He must yet show Himself by a life, for "in Him is life," and we also must be "light in the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8). "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"; not the light of genius, or of doctrine, but "the light of life"; a light which will make itself felt, even if sinners hate it; which may shine in darkness, and the darkness not comprehend it, but which, misunderstood, slighted, or opposed, has something in it which false professors cannot abide, and from which, sooner or later, they will withdraw themselves. The light of doctrine they can misuse to their own self-glorification. But the "light of life," a life by self-judgment convincing the world of sin and judgment; a life, by an hourly preparation for a change, and for the Lord's return, witnessing that we expect Him one day suddenly to come and judge all things; a life, the foretaste of heaven, in that its joys are not of nature, which is sorrowful yet always rejoicing, dying and behold it yet lives; such a life, just because it is light, and shows pretenses as they are, if men will not be humbled by it, must be cast out. The wise of this world shall prove it a delusion, and pious worldlings lament its injudiciousness, and impious ones mock, and scoff, and hate it. But through it all, it shall prove it is a light, by reproving what it comes in contact with, for "all things are reproved and made manifest by the light" (Ephesians 5:13). In the Son of the Father there was life, and "the life was the light." Let the adopted children see that their life also is the light of men.

Take another point distinctive here: - "No one hath seen God at any time: the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath revealed Him." How does this testify of what becomes us as adopted children? The world knows not God: it cannot see Him: therefore the children of the Father, even as the Only-begotten Son, are set here to reveal and recommend Him. If Christ be in us - for "He cannot be hid" (Mark 7:24) - something at least of the Father will appear; for where He is, there the Father that sent Him is seen also. So St. Paul says to the Corinthians, "Ye are the

letter of Christ" (2 Corinthians 3:3); ye are they who give Him His character before the world. He represents you above. You must represent Him here, and thus reveal the Father, whose image He came to show to men. If you walk "worthy of God," God is glorified in you. If otherwise, "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." For though some have learned to divide between what is the Church's true position, and its failing, men do and will judge by what they see. Art thou a son of God? Then, as the Only-begotten Son revealed Him, so in thy measure must thou also. Would men learn by thee what God was? This is the test of Christians; this too is the test of true Churches. This it is which, if we understand our calling, compels us to deal in grace; which forbidding us to seize our brother by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest, commands us to suffer all things; because God now is dealing in grace, forgiving trespasses, and has set us here to represent that grace, by a life of sacrifice, that His character may be revealed in us. Oh! where is He thus revealed? Is that a revelation of Him, which has hid from men the holy and gracious standard which befits His kingdom; which has made it possible to be zealous for the Church, while careless of His glory; at peace with and honored by her, while not at peace with Him; judging while He is showing grace; in honor where He was rejected; descending to rule this world, instead of with Him waiting for that which is to come? Is this the revelation of the Father? If it be, then He who is without variableness or shadow of turning has indeed changed, since the Only-begotten Son revealed the glory, full of grace and truth. But I must conclude. For to show how the distinctions in this Gospel bear upon our walk, and illustrate our calling, as children of the Father, would lead me far beyond the limits here permitted to me. And indeed the things here shown are of such a nature, needing to be revealed by the Holy Spirit, that they are better left to be spoken by Him, in His sweet teachings, as He sees we need them. God grudges nothing. He who gave His Son, He whose Spirit is content to dwell in tabernacles, which, though by his workmanship made fair within, are without of badgers' skins, has shown how freely He gives. If we can bear it, all is ours: if we have it not, it is because we cannot bear it. Let us, like John, make our dwelling nigh to that side cleft for us, seeing in the water and blood shed there a pledge of those unsearchable depths of love which still remain, and we may drink our fill of love; and as no lack is there, so surely will there be no grudging. Oh, what depths are here! The heaven and earth were made; and thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, were made also. But the Maker is here before us, made for a season like to us, that we might by Him be changed to bear His image; till, made like Him, His works are wrought in us also, till we by Him are workers of His works to His glory.

I say therefore, Let such as desire to know what becomes them as God's children, ponder well the peculiarities of this Gospel; ponder them as little children, as poor in spirit, diligently using what they have, that they may receive more. "Much food is in the tillage of the poor" (Proverbs 13:23): their garden of herbs is small; but diligence gets much food thence, and health can use it all. If we be such "poor" ones, this Gospel will for us produce "much food": then in each peculiarity will some treasure be found by us. Is the Son the "Lamb of God?" We too must be lambs; not swine or dogs, with the mark of the beast, but with the spirit of a dove abiding on us. Has the Son both life and light? The begotten children, like the Only-begotten, must exhibit both life and light also; and though often misunderstood, and unintelligible to carnal and godless men, must show in their ways, because Christ is in them, the living truth of which sabbaths, passovers, and feasts of tabernacles, were but the faint figures. As sons of men they may at times have fears, and doubts, and darkness. But, as sons of the Father, their place is to walk even now as admitted within the

veil: calm in trial, strong in weakness, betrayed but not distracted, to the end the unwavering witnesses for the same blessed Truth.

PRAYER

Lord, all things are possible with Thee. Fulfil Thou Thy purpose. Thou hast predestinated us to be conformed to the image of Thy beloved Son. So conform us to Him here, by making us partakers of His cross and resurrection, that like Him we may reveal Thee, and not ourselves, in all our ways. Amen.

01.5.0. The Common Testimony

The Common Testimony "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit" 1 Corinthians 12:11.

"To us there is one Lord Jesus, by whom are all things, and we by Him" 1 Corinthians 8:6.

HITHERTO I HAVE SPOKEN ONLY of the diversities of the Gospels. We have seen that these variations throughout are part of a Divine purpose, the appointed and appropriate means for affording a fuller revelation of the manifold relationships of the One Lord. And though to some this is an offense, as other acts of the same "wise God," to them that are called it is a sure corner-stone. But from what is distinctive I would now turn to speak of what is common to all the Four Gospels. For if what is peculiar to one or other of them has ever its own purpose, and is instructive as revealing the special experiences of this or that relationship of the One Elect; what is common to all is not less instructive, as showing those experiences which must attend the Head and His members in each and all their relationships. For some things come upon us, as upon Christ, as sons of Abraham, some on us as servants, some as Adam's children, and some as sons of God. But some trials and joys there are which are common to the elect in every relation, which must be our experience, whether as sons of Abraham, or Adam, or as servants, or as sons of God. These experiences, which belong to us in all our relations, are the burden of that testimony which is common to all the Four Gospels.

What is this common witness? Not His birth, not His age, not His baptism, fasting, or transfiguration; but the cross and resurrection, the death of the flesh, the life of the spirit; the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow. Out of countless acts and words of Jesus, death and resurrection is chosen to be the great subject for the common testimony. The Son of Abraham suffers and dies: the Servant of God suffers and dies: the Son of Man suffers and dies: the Son of God suffers and dies. The Son of Abraham rises: the Servant of God rises: the Son of Adam rises: the Son of God rises. The Church is "in Christ" (Ephesians 1:1, Ephesians 1:3, Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 1:6, Ephesians 1:7, etc). He is the Head, we the members (1 Corinthians 12:12). He that saith he abideth in Him ought to walk even as He walked (1 John 2:6). Other things, therefore, may be doubtful, but this is sure: the cross and resurrection must be ours, if we are His. Other things may vary. One is a prophet; one has tongues; one has knowledge; one the gifts of healing. But as the body is one, and hath many members, so also is Christ, for by one Spirit are we all baptized into One Body. And then, though of all it cannot be said that they preach with Christ, yet of all without any exception it is true that they are "crucified with Him" (Romans 6:6; Galatians 5:24), of all, that they are "risen with Him" (Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:1), of all that they must "suffer with Him, that they may also be glorified together" (Romans 8:17). It cannot but be so, for "we are no more twain," He in us, and we "in Him." Would to God this union of Christ and His members were understood. Then the lesson of the cross would not as now so often fall on heavy ears. "In Christ Jesus," - "Surely not in vain, (as another has said), does this language recur so frequently, on so many different occasions. No mere external relation, as being members of the visible body called by His name, exhausts the inwardness of the words, 'in Christ.' It stands there

in deep simplicity, yet opening the hidden mystery of union with Christ, and of the reality of our dwelling in Him, and He in us. It is not any unity of will, though worked by Him; no mere conformity of mind, though by Him wrought; no act of faith, casting itself on His mercy; no outward imputation of righteousness; no mere ascription of His perfect obedience in our stead; no being clothed upon, as people speak, with His righteousness; not being looked upon by the Father as in Him: none of these things come up to the reality of being 'in Him.' And why, when Scripture speaks of being 'in Him,' speak of 'being regarded as in Him?' Why, when Scripture speaks of being 'clothed with Him,' speak of having His righteousness cast around us to interpose between our sins and the sight of God? When Scripture talks of realities, why talk of figures? No, there is a reality in this Scripture language, which is not to be exchanged away for any of these substitutions. As we are 'in Adam,' not merely by the imputation of Adam's sin, but by an actual community of a corrupt nature, derived to us from him by our natural descent from him, so that we have a sad share in him, as having been in him, and being from him, and of him, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; so, on the other hand, are we 'in Christ,' not merely by the imputation of His righteousness, but by an actual, real, spiritual, origin from Him, not physical, but still as real as our descent from Adam. As we are really 'sons of man' by physical birth, so are we as really and as actually 'sons of God' by spiritual birth; sons of man by being born in Adam, sons of God by being members of Him who is the Son of God."

Let us turn then to His cross, not only with the joy of faith, as seeing how for us sin was judged, and man brought nigh to God in Christ Jesus; but looking on it as a thing to be attained to, and as desiring in the Spirit each according to our measure to apprehend what we are apprehended for. I only note the common witness, that therefore which is the elect's common portion, whether as sons of Adam or Abraham, as servants, or as sons of God.

Here is the common testimony. In all the Gospels Christ is betrayed by one, denied by another follower: in all, a disciple is near Him, striving instead of yielding, attempting to escape the cross by a carnal appeal to human energy: in all, He is judged by the Priests, and Scribes, and Elders: in all He is condemned by Pilate, that is the great of this world: in all Barabbas, who was imprisoned for sedition, is preferred before Him: in all He is crucified, and numbered with transgressors: in all He is stripped, and His raiment is taken from Him, and parted among His murderers: in all He dies: in all He has a grave prepared by others: in all He rises, and as risen speaks and walks with men. As He is, so are we in this world; and though many a step is trod by the elect before he reaches the death of self and resurrection, yet this is our goal, for this we look, this is the end to be pressed to, yea with great longings; "that we may win Christ, and be found in Him; that we may know the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, if by any means we may attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Php 3:10-11). And though with us, even as with Him, if Christ be formed in us, there will first be increase in wisdom and stature here: and then a sitting with the doctors, hearing and asking questions, for babes in Christ yet talk with doctors, in a way never repeated after heaven is opened to us - though these steps come first, and baptism, and prayer, and fasting, and temptation, and preaching, and many labors; and many a weary hour with disciples and the men of this world, and many a lonely night when God only is witness to our cries and tears and sighings; and hours of joy too when babes believe, and when our faces shine, and the departed seem very near to us, and we are for a moment transfigured with the light of coming glory - though all this must precede the cross, yet it

shall come at last, if only through grace step by step we follow onward whither the Spirit leads us. Little by little, if we walk in the Spirit, the cross is reached, even as little by little, if we walk in the flesh, it will be removed from us.

He who hung there for us reached it not at a step, but by many stages, by common and little and every-day acts of truth and faithfulness; even as they who brought Him to it did so in like manner, by common, little, every-day sins; one because he would sell the truth to gain a little money; others to quench the light which judged them; others, through fear of man, yielding to popular outcry, dreading not to be accounted Caesar's friend; others, as those who pierced Him, simply in the way of trade, without the slightest personal grudge or quarrel with Him. Each in his way, a step at a time, crucifiers and Crucified, reached the cross; they by sparing, He by sacrificing, self in all things. For it could have been avoided. Had He never spoken to strip deceivers bare, had He deserted His post, had He exposed Judas, had He prayed for the legions of angels which wait to serve the elect, had He used the might of this world, had He never called disciples, the cross might have been escaped, and man might have remained, living out his life of Adam, with such things as earth gives, but without a better kingdom. But it could not be so, for He came to do the Father's will, through death to lift man to the place of the Son even in the Father's bosom. So the corn of wheat fell into the ground, and abode not alone, and has sprung up to bear much fruit. And so with us. If we seek our own, Christ's cross may still be missed. But if like Him we seek in all things to do the Father's will and not our own, content through toil, prayer, and fasting, to follow step by step, then the common witness of the Gospels shall in due time be fulfilled in us also. Some of our brethren who have eaten of our bread shall betray and some deny us; while some with honest love, yet carnal, shall strive if it may be by human energy to save and free us here; and Priests shall sit in judgment on the Lord and His anointed, and the Rulers condemn us that they may be Caesar's friends; and they who fight for freedom even by sedition shall be preferred before us; and we shall be exposed a spectacle to men and angels: and though we may have covered the nakedness of others, ours shall be seen and mocked, while our enemies shall clothe themselves with that they take from us.

Indeed, this shall be seen by all; for though few even of those we love see the elect transfigured and submitting in the garden, all see the bitter cross; it is meant to be seen, to show man's rightful lot, even while it shows the love of Him who from such dishonor will lift man to everlasting glory. So we shall die, and be laid low, and yet rise, and speak to men in the power of a life which is not of this world; though by nature sons of men, now declared to be the sons of God according to the Spirit of holiness and by the resurrection from the dead. For this was wrought in the Head: it must be therefore the lot of those who through grace grow up to be conformed to Him in all things.

Such is the common witness. The four living creatures, speaking out of the depths of God's sanctuary, here speak but one language. For the veil, whereupon they are wrought, is rent from the top throughout; and, in its rending, their forms must needs be rent also. (Note: The veil was covered with cherubims. We read, "Thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine-twined linen, of cunning work; with cherubims shall it be made" (Exodus 26:31, and Exodus 36:35). This veil, St. Paul expressly tells us, represented "Christ's flesh" (Hebrews 10:20). And we are members of His body, "of His flesh, and of His bones" (Ephesians 5:30.) Blessed be God that it is so, for until the cherub-covered veil is rent, the way into the holiest cannot be open to us. Till it is rent we stand without in the first tabernacle, still among shadows, the figures of the true. But the

four-fold witness is agreed. The veil with its cherubim must be rent. The four living creatures bear but one testimony. And the "three that bear record on earth" - in all a seven-fold witness - "these three also agree in one" (1 John 5:8). The Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, answer from earth to heaven, sealing the same witness of death and resurrection.

Thus answers the Spirit in the Church: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, and suffered under Pontius Pilate; that He was crucified, dead, and buried; that He descended into hell; that He rose again from the dead the third day; that He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at God's right hand, from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Such is the Spirit's witness. Such is our faith touching the Son. Such, therefore, is our faith touching those who in Him are sons also. I believe that they who are sons must be conceived, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of the Holy Spirit. I believe that they must be born, not of the mother of harlots, but of a virgin (2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7), whose name is well called Mary, for she hath known bitterness. I believe that they must suffer; nay more, that for God's true sons there are but few steps between their birth and some suffering. I believe that they must bear the cross, and die, and lie in the grave, and be raised, and in due season ascend to heaven. I believe they must return to earth to judge the quick and the dead, for "the saints shall judge the world"; nay, it is written, "they shall judge angels" (1 Corinthians 6:2-3). It is the Spirit that beareth witness, and the Spirit is truth. He that believeth hath in himself the witness. And though some things may vary, this is sure for all God's sons: this is our faith: would that it were our experience also. The Water speaks the same, as with another seal assuring us of this same truth of death and resurrection. For why are we baptized? "Know ye not," says Paul, "that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? We are buried with Him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12). For the water is a mystic grave: and we do not bury live things but dead things; and our old man is buried there in hope of resurrection. Therefore it is said again, "We are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead, even so we should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection" (Romans 6:3-5). Thus baptism is our profession of death and resurrection: from it Paul can answer, "If the dead rise not, why are we then baptized for the dead?" (1 Corinthians 15:29). Circumcision told no such story. In that sign of a bygone age, when man in the flesh, the carnal seed of the believer, was taken into covenant, there was only "the putting away of the filth of the flesh" (1 Peter 3:21); for it was yet a trial of the flesh, whether man in the flesh could be cleansed and fitted for the Lord's presence. But now in baptism it is "the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh" (Colossians 2:11). It has been proved that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom: that not "its filth" only must be "put away," but that "the body of sinful flesh," because it is sinful, must be "put off" to gain a better resurrection. Thus does the Water also witness that the elect must die, that our appointed calling is to death and resurrection. The Blood repeats the same. For as oft as we drink it we do show forth the Lord's death until He come. The corn is bruised, the grape is crushed, to make the bread and wine. And sharing this bread and wine - many kernels and yet one bread, many grapes and yet but one chalice - we represent that common life which is ours when we are bruised that we may be truly one in Christ Jesus. Life is through death; and this is true in Him and in us. So speaks the Blood, even as the Water and the Spirit. Nay more. Brought through the waters, like Noah, the death of

the flesh becomes to us far more than mere testimony. Now it is meat also for the elect. In the world before the flood, before resurrection-life is known or reached by us, we feed on the fruits of the earth, those fruits of righteousness, which, whether in Christ or in ourselves, naturally afford man some satisfaction. As yet the death of the creature is no satisfaction to the elect, though God is satisfied, and we are clothed thereby. God's fire may fall and consume the oblation, but we are not partakers with Him. It is otherwise when resurrection-life is apprehended. Then the death of the creature is not only a witness, but it affords us food: the elect also can find satisfaction in it. They too can now rejoice in the giving up of life, and great is the strength which the spiritual man derives from the meat which is thus given to him. (Note: Compare Genesis 1:29, where we read of man's food before the flood, with Genesis 9:3, where the grant of the flesh of beasts is recorded. When God's religion was in the flesh, it was part of the true religion to eat flesh, as in the Offerings, to witness our satisfaction in the death of the creature. Vegetarianism is only one sign among many of the age we live in, when the attempt is, if possible, to blink the curse, and to forget death and resurrection.)

If these things are so, then have we, who profess to believe, deep cause for humiliation; for while we all proclaim the cross, few of us show faith in it by being crucified by it to the world and the world to us. Another has said, "The boast of our day is that Christ crucified is preached. But is He, even in this one respect, fully preached, or the doctrine of the cross fully comprehended? Let the walk of those who make the boast answer. It is not insinuated that such are chargeable with licentiousness or immorality. But are they therefore not chargeable with 'walking after the flesh,' and 'making provision to fulfil its desires?' In the multitude of particulars it is difficult to make a selection.

"But what then is the high regard in which blood, and ancestry, and family connection, are held by some? What is the regard to personal appearance and dress in others? What the attention to ease and comfort, and oft-times profuse expenditure, not to speak of actual luxuries, in the arrangement of the houses, tables, etc., of almost all? Is all this, and a thousand things too numerous to particularize, consistent with reckoning ourselves dead as to the old or natural man? Is this what the Scriptures intend by crucifixion of the flesh? Alas! full well do many of the professing Christians of our day show that they are but half taught the very doctrine in which they make their boast: that they have but half learned the lesson which even the cross teaches. They have learned that Christ was crucified for them, but they have not learned that they are to be 'crucified with Him'; or they have found an explanation for this latter expression in the imputation of His death for our justification; a part of the truth, but not the whole; for in vain in this explanation of the words should we seek an answer to the objection which the Apostle anticipated. Indeed, that objection is confirmed by it, for it is nothing else than making the cross the reprieve of the flesh from death. And then when death itself comes to give the refutation to this creed, and to show that the Christian is not saved in the flesh, then is the effect of this half-learned lesson seen.

"Instead of welcoming death as that of which his life has been the anticipation, the execution of that sentence on the flesh, which, since he has known Christ as crucified for him, he has learned in its desert, and has been continually passing on it in mind and spirit, the dying with Christ daily, the 'being planted in the likeness of His death' - instead of being enabled in this view actually to glory in his infirmities, in the weakness, yea, and the dissolution of the flesh, and like the victim found on the arrival of the executioner to have anticipated the end meditated for him, being found

of death dead - he is scarcely resigned to die, and impatient of suffering in the flesh. And why? Because that truth which the cross of Christ was designed to teach, he never distinctly understood, or rather experienced - namely, that salvation is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; not from death, but out of it; not the reinstating of the old nature, but the conferring of a new, by the dying and rising again with Christ." But this doctrine finds little acceptance. What pleases? "If you wish to please," so said Lord Chesterfield, one who knew the world, "you must make men pleased with themselves: they will then be pleased with you." But the cross is meant to make men displeased with themselves, to humble and abase them. How then can it be so preached as to please all men? A way has been found. Let us say to men, Thank God you are not like others. You hold the true doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ's sufferings. You are not like those deluded creatures who think to be saved by works or feelings. You are not like those Papists, or High-Churchmen, or Dissenters, just as the case may be. Let us thus by implication, while preaching even truth, lay to men's souls the flattering unction that they whom we address are not as other men, and they will be well pleased. And having by us been pleased with themselves, they will be pleased with us in return, and the truth shall seem to have acquired many friends. But let the true cross be brought before men, the death of self in all its forms, the end of righteousness and strength and will as sons of Adam; let us show that participation with the sufferings of Christ into which the Holy Spirit leads us - the deep joy there is even in the midst of outward sorrows in the putting off of old Adam - the life in things that are unseen, in righteousness, joy, and peace, which takes away even the desire to have something or to be something here; let this be preached in life and word, and we shall find the offence of the cross remains, now as of old a stumblingblock, not least to those who thank God that they are "not as other men." The fact is that we live in a day when the cross as it bears upon our life is very generally condemned as the exploded folly of a less enlightened age. It is possible, so a popular preacher has lately expressed it, "to make the best of both worlds." The Christian now can show the heathen how to get more out of this world than they knew before; not resurrection, but power in the flesh; not the Holy Spirit, but learning and wealth; not Christ at God's right hand, and we in Him, but discoveries, blessings, and institutions here. Christ and His Apostles lost this world. They could not, or did not, make the best of both; but we in wiser days can gain both worlds. So the aim is a walk of faith, so as not to exclude a walk of sight; heaven perhaps some day, but at all events a better home, a safer resting-place on this side of death. The old Church said, Christ suffered, and His saints must suffer. The new gospel is, Christ died in the Flesh that we may live in it. Mortifications therefore, and crosses, and fastings, are a mistake. The lot of the Head and the members may differ very widely. It is true He suffered and died, but we know that cross was for us: why should we bear what He once bore for us? Thus is the cross which condemns the flesh preached as its reprieve, and as the excuse for carnal and careless walking. Oh cunning lie of the devil, to cut us off from Christ, to make Him and His members not one body; as if we could indeed be His, and miss the cross; as if the improvement of the fallen creature, and not its death, were our appointed calling. Such a religion, "the way of Cain" (Jude 1:11), cultivation of the creature instead of death, fruits of the earth offered as if neither sin nor the curse were working in it - such a religion will generally please, though even here, if God has the best, the devotee will not escape censure from some who boast to be spiritual. But let there be blood, a life poured out - "for the blood is the life" - let there be the yielding to death of what is animal in us - let there be self-judgment, intellect, judged, this is rank superstition, treason against Him who made or permitted the creature to be what we now see it.

We are not in Eden, but in a groaning world: explain it as we will, death is here; a curse works in us. But our religion shall forget both the sin that has caused this, and its judgment; good fruits of the fallen creature shall be a sufficient offering. So thought Cain; so think his children; but their offering lacks the flame. And though some of the most beautiful exhibitions of good fruits, now as of old, are to be seen on Cain's altars; fruits most sweet in their true place, as an adjunct to the blood of the lamb, and as such accepted; for in the Meat-offering God will have fruits offered where there has first been the blood of the Burnt-offering; yet are Cain and his seed angry with their brothers who confess the curse by a death of the Flesh in hope of resurrection. And even true Christians stumble here. Like Martha we say, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." We think if Christ were with us, death and sorrow would not come; if He were here, we should escape the curse. To such thoughts His answer is, "I am the resurrection; believest thou this?" She saith unto Him, "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Christ says, "I am the resurrection; believest thou this?" and we reply, "Yea, Lord, Thou art the Christ"; a good confession, but not the answer to the Lord's question. If we really believed Him to be "the resurrection," we should understand that there must first be death, for without death there can be no resurrection. Thus, "I am the resurrection," would answer our thought, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died": but with Martha we can only say, "Yea, Lord, we believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." "And when she had said this, she went her way, and called Mary"; a secret consciousness that the subject was beyond her leads her to call others; even as to this hour, "I am the resurrection," the Church's life in Christ, her blessed privileges through death and resurrection, often drive God's children away from Christ to brethren, to conceal the lack of communion which makes His words too high and painful to us. But I must conclude. Happy are they to whom the cross of Christ is not a rock of offense, but a most sure cornerstone, who in the ancient faith of saints, still believing those oft-repeated words - "He was born, He suffered, He died, He rose" - can yet be content to add as the conclusion of such a creed, "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." Time was when "with great power the Church bore witness to the resurrection," for of "the multitude of them that believed, none said that aught that he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." Then "as many as were possessors of lands and houses sold them, and distribution was made to every man, as he had need" (Acts 4:33-35). And whence all this? He whom they had walked with upon the earth, He who loved them even unto death, was cast out of this world. They knew He was Lord of heaven: and they longed to be like Him, and to be with Him; sharing with Him His portion here, as sacrifices for others; sharing with Him His blessed hope. But the path was hard for flesh and blood: false brethren made it harder. Soon the first love waxed cold. And soon as saints forgot their hope, they began to improve the world that is, that they might improve their own lot in it. Thus, the Church's temptation, even as her Lord's, has ever been to anticipate her future glory in a fallen world, to seek a home in a creation yet tainted with the curse. Let her remember sackcloth is her clothing here (Revelation 11:3). Christ's crown and purple robe were the gift not of His Father, but of His murderers. If the Church be crowned and in purple in this world, let her see to it, and ask - Is she truly adorned by these things, or is she mocked by them?

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. For many walk, of whom I have told you

often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. For our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Php 3:15-21). Yet one word. These pages may fall into the hands of some who as yet are not at peace with God. To such, even as to believers, my testimony is of Christ Jesus. Him hath God exalted to be a Saviour. Our real misery is that we do not know either ourselves or God. Of ourselves we have good thoughts; of Him, hard thoughts. Christ's life and death meet this: they bring proof that there is no hope for man in himself - every hope for him in God his Saviour. God, however, as He is the true God, can deal only with realities. He occupies Himself with what really is. We must therefore come to Him as we really are. Come to Him, pretending to be what you are not, and there can be no true peace. For God will not deal with you on the ground of pretenses. Come to Him as you really are: God will go with you to the very bottom of your misery, and, because He is God, has grace which will meet your every need. Trust Him, and you have peace. Doubt Him, and trust yourself, and you can have no peace, though every ordinance in the world may have been observed by you. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the witness which God gave of His Son. And this is the witness, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5:10-11).

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

Chapter 9

02.0.1. The Characteristic Differences of the Four Gospels

THE Characteristic Differences OF THE FOUR GOSPELS Considered as Revealing Various Relations of the Lord Jesus Christ. BY

ANDREW JUKES Transcribed from:

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CONTENTS.

I. THE FOUR GOSPELS, FOUR VIEWS OF CHRIST II. ST MATTHEW; OR, THE SON OF ABRAHAM III. ST MARK; OR, THE SERVANT OF GOD IV. ST LUKE; OR, THE SON OF ADAM V. ST JOHN; OR, THE SON OF GOD VI. THE COMMON TESTIMONY

02.0.2. Preface

PREFACE.

IT is a mark of love to dwell on the perfections of a beloved object, to notice and treasure up tones which fall unheeded on the unloving ear. Love of the truth, where it is deep and real, here resembles other love. It sees beauties where the unloving can discern no comeliness. Kings of the Gentiles who come to Zion may pass by together, may see it, and marvel, and hasten away. But he who dwells there will go round about her, and tell her towers: will mark her bulwarks, and count her palaces: his love for his home making him quick to see its beauties, and to challenge others to notice and admire them with him. The joy I have had in the study of the Gospels, more especially since through grace the scales fell from my eyes, and I saw in their structure and diversity marks of a Divine purpose, has been such that I could wish to make others partakers with me in it; for to me the discovery of a reason for their form was like the acquiring of a new sense. Since then, as opportunity has served, I have led others to the subject. Lately I delivered the Lectures which compose this volume. And now, though with the deepest sense of their imperfectness, I commit them to the press, at the repeated request of those who heard them. I have rather indicated the nature of the subject than sounded its depths. I do not know how far this age is prepared to eat "the hidden manna." But I shall rejoice if my attempt direct others to a line of truth, which I am sure demands the special attention of the Church at this day. For now as ever, though now more keenly, the wisdom of this world is arrayed to prove the wisdom of God folly, because He has given His truth in a form, which, though it finds the lost, seems too childish and simple for wise and prudent ones. Only lately I met with one, accounted wise in this world, who told me, that "the crucial test which had of late been applied to the Gospels had proved them to be very different from the Divine thing which many took them for." I asked him if he knew the story, how, when the Truth came in the flesh, humbling Himself to that form, that thereby He might reach the very lowest, the "crucial test" was tried on Him too, and He was proved "a deceiver;" at least so said the men who used the "crucial test." So must the Written Word be tried; for disputers of this world still stumble at the human form of the Word, not seeing that it is part of the mystery of the Incarnation. But crucial tests, which could not be used against it, had not God spoken to us in human form, "even as a man speaketh with his friend," will only prove to loving disciples the deeper glory of that Word, which, though Human, is yet indeed Divine.

It only remains for me to acknowledge my many obligations to a beloved friend, whose love and instructions I count among not the least of the blessings God has given me. To a little anonymous volume by him on St Luke, (On the Gospel by St Luke, published by Bateman.) and a paper on St Mark, published some years since in a now defunct periodical, I owe much. I am glad to be his debtor, for I feel that "wherever it can be shewn we are not original, so much the better: our desire should be to enter the circle of the great dependence of all things; secure that there is no independence of heart or mind upon any other terms." Only "with all saints" can "we comprehend what is the depth and length" (Ephesians 3:18) of that which is presented to us in Christ Jesus. And the household which is too small by itself to take in the whole Lamb, can and must do so by

the aid of others (Exodus 12:4). For God will have every part of His Lamb to be apprehended by us, thus by our very weakness linking us to one another. And now, O Lord, to Thee do I commend this little work. It is nothing with Thee to help with few or many. My feebleness cannot hinder if Thou wilt work. Work Thou to Thine own glory. "Domine Deus, quaecunque dixi de tuo, agnoscant et tui. Si qua de meo, et Tu ignosce et tui."

02.1.0. The Four Gospels, Four Views of Christ

THE FOUR GOSPELS, FOUR VIEWS OF CHRIST.

"A river went out of Eden, to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." -- Genesis 2:10.

WE are told of St Augustine, that on one occasion, when his mind was much engaged in the contemplation of the doctrine of the Trinity, he was walking by the sea, and saw a child filling a shell with the water, which it then carried and poured into a hollow in the sand. "What are you doing, my boy, with that water?" said the Saint. "I am," replied the child, "going to put all the sea into this hole." The Father smiled and passed on; when a voice seemed to say to him, "And thou too art doing the like, in thinking to comprehend the depths of God in the narrow limits of thy finite mind." The attempt to treat of the Differences of the Gospels within a few brief lectures, may appear to be only a repetition of the child's attempt to drain the sea. But I make no such attempt. I bear a cupful of water, a taste of what is at hand for all who seek and wait to draw it; not that, like Ishmael, any should be content to go forth with but a bottle; for in the dry and thirsty land, if our water is only in bottles, it will soon be all consumed (Genesis 21:14-15); but rather to lead men like Isaac to dwell by the well (Genesis 25:11), knowing that never is the water so sweet to us, as when we draw it ourselves fresh from the living fountain. Those who, like Ishmael, trust to bottles, are not only oft-times faint, but have no eye for the well, which, though they see it not, springs close to them even in the dreary land (Genesis 21:19). But the elect dwell by the waters, and open wells while others stop them (Genesis 26:18-23), that man and beast may drink thereat. If in a day when the human mind seems more than ever alive to extract every possible refreshment from the streams of this world, I can point to a better spring -- if, in a word, by the examples given here, I may lead some to the Gospels, prayerfully and humbly to wait there for the streams of God, these pages will not be in vain. Happy should I be, if the joy my own soul has had in the study could be communicated to others into whose hands this little book may come. To speak then of the Gospels. As every one knows, there are four. By many these are regarded as merely supplementary or corroborative of one another. That they serve this end, as coincident testimonies, I do not doubt; but this is secondary, the chief purpose being, I am assured, the revelation of the Lord in certain distinct relationships. Even a man's life might be thus written: one biographer giving his public, another his private and more domestic life. Thus one would select one class of facts: another, omitting these, would record others, as better suiting his own purpose. Nay, in the self-same facts, the two would notice different circumstances, without making either narrative imperfect in the particular view in which it was composed. It is just so in the Gospels. Each has its own object: each, therefore, has its own peculiar selection and arrangement of facts recorded. An example may illustrate this. Take, then, the life of that great man who has so lately been taken from among us. If I wished to shew his skill as a military commander, I might select some word or deed of boldness in the field. Did I wish to shew his kind-heartedness, I might simply quote a letter written after the fight, sympathizing with the sorrows of one whose friend or brother had there fallen. While with another view I might point to the Despatches, so clear and true, as

illustrative of the literary ability of the same person. Thus from the self-same scene I might make selections of the circumstances to record, according to the particular end which I had before me in my writing. And so as to the order of the events narrated. If my object is to shew the progress of a certain course of action, chronological order must be adhered to accurately. On the other hand, if I only wish to illustrate the spirit and character of that action, in which various facts all speak the same language, chronological order may be dispensed with without error. In each case the one question is, What is the writer's object? Unless this is apprehended, the writing will, though perhaps instructive, fail to accomplish in us its specific end.

Take again the Code Napoleon as an example. "Did I speak of it as a monument of the genius of him whose name it bears, I might select particular parts in which the bearing of law on society, an intuitive perception of just results in details, and the vast scope of design, were manifest, and shew that these originated in his mind. Did another history seek to shew Napoleon's own power in employing instruments, it might shew the very same parts drawn up by men able in their vocation; and a caviller might find difficulty to reconcile the drawing up of all by these instruments, with the originating mind which had set all agoing and directed it throughout. Were I shewing the progress of legislation in the world, I might allege these very same parts as the necessary consequence of the progress of society, and that they flowed as the evident consequences from the preceding steps in this process, as one idea leads on to another; and, in appearance, Napoleon's originality would disappear. All these histories might be true, yet seem impossible to one who had only these to reconcile them in everything; because he has not the additional elements and a knowledge of the whole order of man's mind and history, which would be absolutely necessary to put them together. Is God's history of His Son in the world less vast in conception, less multifarious in the relationships it speaks of, than Napoleon and a code of laws?" (The Irrationalism of Infidelity, p. 77.) And yet many speak of Holy Scripture as if its form were accidental, without a thought whether such a supposition be worthy or unworthy of a Divine revelation. Ignorant of God and His purpose and laws, they scruple not to judge His Word. To act thus with heathen poets, and charge them with ignorance, because the form of their verse is unlike ours, would of course be great presumption. But without God's Spirit to judge His Word, is wisdom, the world's wisdom, which is yet utter foolishness. But the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. In His sanctuary some have learned to admire the grace and wisdom of this His revelation; and having given Him credit for having an object in its form, have in due time learned by His Spirit what that object is. They know, as one of old expressed it, that "the living Word, humbling Himself to come in human form, became all things to all men, in a more Divine sense than St Paul, in order that thus He might win all men." (Origen, Comment. in Johan. tom. x.) The human form, therefore, of the Written Word to them is no stumbling-block. They see that it is but part and parcel of the mystery of the Incarnation. They know, too, if the world know not, that the division of Scripture into books, in each of which some particular aspect of the elect's position, and of God's grace to meet it, is given to us, was thus appointed the better to reveal Him, by dividing as with a prism His light, here a little and there a little, as man could bear it. In Paradise this might not be needed. There man might better conceive of God. But though in Eden the river of the water of life flowed in one full stream, when it left the Garden, and went forth into the world, it was seen parted into several channels (Genesis 2:10). Could we apprehend Christ as He is, we should not need the many streams; but being where and what we are, very gracious is the form of the revelation; a witness among many, that the "sundry times and divers manners" (Hebrews 1:1) of the communication were all additional

expressions of perfect love. The fact is that our perceptions do not grasp realities, but their forms. If therefore what is seen is to be described, we must have many representations even of the same object; and this not only because the same object may be viewed on different sides, but because the amount of what is seen even on the same side will depend on the light and capacity of the beholder. He who made us knew this and provided for it. Hence of old, in type and figure, we have view after view of Him that was to come; not only because His offices and perfections were many, but also because we were weak and needed such a revelation. Thus in the single relation of offering, Christ is seen as Burnt-offering, Peace-offering, and Sin-offering, each but a different view of the same one offering; each of which again may be seen in various measures, and yet the offering itself be only one. And just as in the self-same act of dying on the cross, our Lord was at the same moment a sweet-savour offering, willingly offering to God a perfect obedience, and also a sin-offering, penally bearing the judgment due to sin, and as such made a curse for us; (For those not familiar with the typical offerings, I may note here that in "the sweet-savour offerings," man came to present an offering, which, as a sweet feast to God, was consumed upon His altar. In "the sin-offerings," man came as a sinner, and his offering, as charged with sin, was cast out, and burnt, not on the altar, but on the ground "without the camp." In the one the offerer came as an accepted worshipper: in the other as a condemned sinner. See Leviticus 1:1-17; Leviticus 2:1-16; Leviticus 3:1-17; Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-19. Both views meet in the death of Christ.) so in the selfsame acts of His life, each act may be seen in different aspects, for each act has a Divine fulness. It is this fulness which God in mercy presents to our view in the diversities of the Four Gospels.

It is for this reason that a Harmony of the Gospels, though it is interesting and has its use, leads us from the special purpose for which the Gospels were written as they are. For by arranging everything chronologically many passages lose the force which they possess as portions of a distinct series. The Spirit of God, here in historic, there in moral order, has put this or that fact touching the Son before me. The facts are precious, get them as I may; but doubly precious, if I am able to apprehend the purpose of God in presenting them in this or that relation. Then each scene, in its omissions, in its form, in its position in the series, is part of a Divine mystery, which, though hid from the wise and prudent of the world, is yet often by the Holy Ghost revealed to babes. The early Church saw this. And with one voice they testify what they saw, namely, that the Four Gospels contained four different aspects of the Great Manifestation. And though to say that the Fathers so view the matter will not in these days commend the view, it will at least prove that the doctrine here is no novelty. The emblem which they applied to the Gospels was that of the Four Cherubim or "living creatures," conceiving that these four "living creatures" were apt representations of the Four Evangelists or Gospels, or rather, more correctly to express their thought, of those manifestations of Christ Himself which the Four Gospels respectively present to us, Christ himself being one and the same in each, yet seen and set forth by each in a different aspect. (Take one witness, who speaks for many -- Ambros. Prolog. in Expos. Evangelii secundum Lucam. § 8. Irenaeus, Athanasius, Victorinus, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great, all refer to the Cherubim in this connexion.) Illuminated Missals, Old Bibles, and the windows of Churches, in which these Cherubic forms are connected with the Four Evangelists, shew that, right or wrong, the Church for centuries has regarded this as a correct application. I believe they were right, and I am content to take the same symbols, finding no others which so well express the general and particular character of each and all the Gospels. And here,

though what I contend for is not the symbol but the fact, it may be well to shew in what way the symbol of the Cherubim can be connected with certain views of Christ's person. For some may ask, Are not the Cherubim angels? If I err not, the Cherubim are always the Divine in creature form, the vessel in or by which the Lord reveals His glory. If He shews Himself in angels, then so far angels may be Cherubim. If He shews Himself in "living creatures full of eyes," who say, "Thou hast redeemed us" (compare Revelation 4:8 and Revelation 5:8-9), then the redeemed are Cherubim. The Jews say that the Cherubim in the temple were the memorials of God's descent at the giving of the Law. That descent on Mount Sinai was a manifestation, even if "by the disposition of angels" (Acts 7:53), of His glory. But that descent, though the Jews never understood it, was itself a pledge of another and greater, when He who then wrote His laws on stone would write them in flesh, and descend to shew His glory in the only begotten Son. For my own part, without pretending fully to explain "the living creatures," I cannot doubt that they are a vessel to reveal the Lord's glory; as such linked to the manifestation made in the flesh of Christ, and again that which shall be made in His mystic body, the Church of the redeemed first-born. For the one foreshadows the other. And just as the work of the potter, before it feels the fire, has on it all those lines of beauty which shall be seen when the vessel has passed through the furnace, though none but the potter's eye can as yet trace the beauty; so, I doubt not, do the Gospels contain hidden within them figures, not only of the revelation once made in Christ, but of that far more wondrous one which shall be made when the kingdom now in mystery shall be revealed openly. But on this I cannot here enter. Enough if I have shewn on what grounds "the living creatures" may be used as figures of the various aspects of the manifestation given us in Christ Jesus. As to details, the figures are these: -- "The first living creature was like unto a lion; the second living creature was like unto a calf; the third living creature had a face as a man; and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle" (Revelation 4:7). The four camps in the wilderness -- the camp of Reuben, of Judah, of Ephraim, and of Dan -- had, it is said, these four figures on their respective standards (Numbers 2:3; Numbers 2:10; Numbers 2:18; Numbers 2:25): (The Jewish traditions declare that Reuben's standard was the man, Judah's the lion, Ephraim's the ox, Dan's the eagle.) for Israel was the elect vessel in which the Lord would be seen; on them, therefore, in a way they little thought, was stamped some figure of that which should one day be seen in the true Israel. (See Isaiah 49:3, where Christ is called "Israel;" and compare Isaiah 49:4.) And in every age, the lion, and ox, and man, and eagle, have all been seen in some part of the camp of the saints or the beloved city. Of the import of the figures I need scarcely speak. If Christ is seen as "the lion," a heavenly voice tells us in what connexion He holds this form: -- "The lion of the tribe of Judah is the root of David" (Revelation 5:5; Revelation 22:16): again, "Judah is my lawgiver" (Psalms 108:8). Under this figure, therefore, I expect to find Him as a Son of Abraham, connected with a kingdom, and so with Abraham's seed. Then as to "the calf." This is the figure for service. So we read, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn" (1 Corinthians 9:9): and again, "Much increase is by the strength of the ox" (Proverbs 14:4). Under this figure I expect to see the Lord as the patient labourer for others, if need be offering Himself in His service as a perfect sacrifice. The "man" needs no comment. "The face of a man" bespeaks human sympathy, as it is written, "I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love" (Hosea 11:4). Here we shall see the "Son of man," one who can have compassion on the ignorant, seeing He also is compassed with infirmities; who, forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, Himself likewise took part of the same; who took not on Him the nature of angels, but who took on

Him the seed of Abraham, and was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin; that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Very different is "the eagle." Its ways are above the earth -- "the way of an eagle in the air," says the wise man, "is too wonderful for me" (Proverbs 30:18-19). Much on the wing, it often rises where no human eye can follow, and possesses the power of gazing with undazzled eyes upon the mid-day sun. Here, "the Word who was with God," who came to reveal the Father, is seen as the One who is from heaven, and whose home is there. (The following passage from Irenaeus, who wrote within a century from the time of the Apostles, will shew how ancient this interpretation is -- Adv. Hoeres. lib. iii. cap. 11.)

Now those who have most learned Christ, have universally recognised these several views of Him in the Four Gospels. For love is quick-sighted, and delights to dwell on the peculiarities and perfections of a beloved object. But with the exception of St John's Gospel, where no question can arise, Christians have differed as to the particular view set forth in each Gospel. The most common view, and which has been sanctioned by the Church of Rome, following in this Jerome and Ambrose and other Fathers, is that which makes the Four Gospels correspond with the order of the Cherubic faces, as seen in Ezekiel's first vision (Ezekiel 1:10); that is, first the man, then the lion, then the ox, then the eagle. For this view there is little to be urged, except the fact that in Ezekiel's first vision the Cherubic faces are seen in this order. Some, therefore, among whom is Augustine, dissent; seeing the man in St Mark, and the ox in St Luke, while the lion and the eagle are the aspects he traces respectively in St Matthew and St John's Gospels. (De Consensu Evangelistarum, lib. i. cap. 6. Augustine does not mention this as merely his own opinion, but as that traditional interpretation which he most approved of. Of those who held the view sanctioned by the Church of Rome, he says, "De principiis librorum ... perscrutanda.") Others, while agreeing with Augustine in his view of St John and St Matthew, see more clearly the ox or service in St Mark, and the Son of Man in St Luke's Gospel. I believe the true order is set forth in the vision of St John, that is, first the lion, then the ox, then the man, and last the eagle. (There is doubtless a reason for the varying order in which the living creatures are seen, by the man by the river Chebar (Ezekiel 1:1; Ezekiel 1:3), by the man in Jerusalem, with the elders of Jerusalem before him (Ezekiel 8:1; Ezekiel 10:14), and by the man in heaven (Revelation 4:1; Revelation 4:7). But why should we in these New Testament days, when we are called to "heavenly places," take the view from beside the river Chebar? If we are, like Ezekiel, captives in Babylon, we perhaps must do so; for here as elsewhere our view depends on our position.) But whence this difference of opinion? The reason is most plain. In Ezekiel's vision of the living creatures, each one had all the four faces. And though I am well assured that each Gospel has one more special aspect, yet each will to those who have eyes give some traits of all the aspects; while to those who have no eyes, or only half-opened ones, it will present something of all the four together. A distant view of a building often confounds its different sides. Imperfect views of Christ's offering continually unite or confuse its different aspects, mixing the sin side of it with what was a sweet savour; while on the other hand a more perfect apprehension shews many views in each aspect; either of which causes will account for the difference of judgment here. And as to the various views of St Mark, where one sees the man, others the ox, a special reason may be found in St Paul's words, "He took on Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man" (Php 2:7). The one relation is so close to the other, that one runs into the other: one therefore very easily may be substituted or mistaken for the other. For as it is said of the living creatures, "two wings of every one were joined one to

another" (Ezekiel 1:9; Ezekiel 1:11), so in certain places the view peculiar to one Gospel seems to run into another view. And so as to St Luke. I can quite understand, how, seeing the special mercy there to the lost, some have connected this Gospel with the idea of atonement, and taken "the ox," the sacrificial animal, as an emblem of it. Nevertheless I feel assured that, according to the order of the living creatures in St John's vision, the third Gospel shews "the man;" that it is as man that Christ meets the lost -- "the priest must be taken from among men" (Hebrews 5:1-2); -- as man He makes the atonement. And the following pages shew why I prefer the view which regards St Luke's Gospel as the revelation of the Son of Adam. At the same time, while I see how truly all "they four had one likeness" (Ezekiel 10:10), I cannot wonder that men with different feelings have thus differed here. The old tradition as to the Lord, that He appeared very different to different men, (Orig. Tractat. 35 in Matthaeum.) seems to me in point here, and quite probable. For something of this sort must be true of the Word in all His manifestations. Take an instance from the Written Word. Paul saw in Hagar and Sarah what an unbeliever could not see. I look into the Gospels: how infinitely different do they appear to me, and to the sceptic who only sees in them certain exploded myths; and yet how very far does my view come short of that of angels and saints within the veil. So with the formed Word of creation; "the heavens which declare His glory;" how different is it to a Newton and to a New Zealand savage! So with the Word made flesh. To one He is but as "a root out of dry ground" (Isaiah 53:2); to another He is "the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely" (Song of Solomon 5:10; Song of Solomon 5:16). It is so on all points. The Word must appear different to different men, because each sees, and can only see, with his own measure, and from his own standing point. And this leads me to notice the writers of the Gospels; for the view of each is wonderfully connected with his own character. Each sees from his own ground. Matthew, a Jew and publican (Matthew 10:3), one who, though by birth an Israelite, by his office as publican had been an official of the Roman empire, and so had been accustomed to contemplate a vast kingdom, sees our Lord both as Son of Abraham and of David, connected with Abraham's seed, and also with a kingdom. Mark was the Apostle's servant: "They had John, whose surname was Mark, for their minister" (Acts 12:12; Acts 13:5; Acts 15:37-39); and Paul says of him, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (2 Timothy 4:11). This is the man, living to serve, who sees the Lord as Servant; his own service being probably, not only the result of what he had seen in the Lord, but also a means for better enabling him to appreciate the perfections of that blessed ministry. Luke, apparently a Gentile, as he is distinguished by St Paul from "those of the circumcision" (Colossians 4:14), the friend and companion of Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles (Acts 16:11; Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:24), whose ministry respected neither Jew nor Gentile, but addressed itself to man as such, is the one who sees Christ as the Son of Adam or Son of Man, not so much connected with a kingdom, or the Servant of God, as the One whose sympathies as a Man linked Him with Adam's fallen and ruined children. John, who leaned on the bosom of His Lord, sees Him as the Son in the bosom of the Father, not of the world, though for a season in it, to draw a heavenly people upward from it to the Father's house above. In each case the vessel used by the Spirit was fitted for the special task. He knew, if they knew not, His own purpose in thus variously tuning His chosen instruments. The result is full harmony to the instructed ear. I know indeed that some, who have presumed to judge here after the flesh, complain of dissonance. I know, too, that to the savage ear our full chord is confused and strange; and how a note which seems like a discord could add character and tone, would be utterly incomprehensible. But the harper, whose

music satisfies the instructed, can afford to be judged by the untaught. The Lord did not lack perfectness, because some on earth saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him.

I would yet add a word as to the order of the Gospels, for I am well assured that the order of Scripture, as we now have it, involves deep teaching. (Augustine says of the order of St Matthew and St Mark, "Hoc fortasse non sine aliquo sacramento." -- De Consensu Evang. lib. i. c. 3.) Here as well as in all things God has had a hand. And indeed it needs no special light to see that in the Four Gospels, the character of the revelation increases in depth, or at least changes its form, as we proceed. The first thousand cubits the waters were to the ancles; the second thousand cubits the waters were to the knees; the third thousand cubits the waters were to the loins; afterwards it was, waters to swim in, a river which could not be passed over (Ezekiel 47:3-5). The King is the first view we get of the Lord. The Son of David is head of a kingdom, of which we all are, or should be, subjects. In this relation He gives His commands, repealing old laws with His, "I say unto you;" while (for His kingdom is one of grace) He invites the weary to come unto Him, and He will give them rest. At the same time, like a righteous judge, He utters the woes which must attend contempt or rejection of this His rightful claim. All this we get in St Matthew; and this is ever the view which an awakened soul first gets of the Lord Jesus. Soon I get a further view. I see that in His love this Lord has actually become for us a true Servant; not only that He has given commands, but that He has Himself toiled for us. How He toiled comes out with wondrous beauty in the second Gospel. Soon we see even further; not only that He has served, but that verily and indeed He took our place and became a Man for us; a wailing child, bound with swaddling clothes, under human restraints, obeying parents; and then, oh wondrous vision! that He is the heavenly One, the Son of man in heaven. He grows as we look upon Him. Like the vine seen by Pharaoh’s butler, which, as he looked, "was as though it budded, and shot forth, and bore clusters" (Genesis 40:10 hew:10 hew:10), Christ grows before those who see Him; one relation after another comes out, and comes out, I believe, very much according to the order of these Gospels. Sure I am that in the books of the Old Testament the order is most marked. We first see what comes out of Adam, the different forms of life growing out of the root of "old Adam." This is the book of Genesis. Then we see that, be it good or bad which has come out of Adam, there must be redemption: so an elect people by the blood of the Lamb are saved from Egypt. This is the book of Exodus. After redemption is known, we come to the experience of the elect, as needing access, and learning the way of it, to God the Redeemer in the sanctuary. This we get in Leviticus. Then in the wilderness of this world, as pilgrims from Egypt, the house of bondage, to the promised land, the trials of the journey are learnt, from that land of wonders and of man’s wisdom and art, to the land flowing with milk and honey. This is the book of Numbers. Then comes the desire to exchange the wilderness for the better land, from entering which for a season after redemption is known the elect yet shrink; answering to the desire of the elect at a certain stage to know the power of the resurrection, to live even now as in heavenly places. The rules and precepts which must be obeyed, if this is to be done, come next. Deuteronomy, a second giving of the law, a second cleansing, tells the way of progress. After which Canaan is indeed reached: we go over Jordan: we know practically the death of the flesh, and what it is to be circumcised, and to roll away the reproach of Egypt. We know now what it is to be risen with Christ, and to wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers in heavenly places. This is Joshua. Every instructed Christian has felt this progress; and the books, and their order exactly answer to it. And so, I believe, it is with the Four Gospels. Nor here only. There is Divine order and progress, I am assured, in the Epistles.

There is first Paul’s truth, then James’s truth, then Peter’s truth, and then John’s truth: (The thought that Peter and John are types of different forms of Christian life is very common in the old writers; John being taken as the type of the life which is by vision of Christ; Peter, of that life which is by faith and conflict. See Augustine, Hom. in Johan. cxxiv.) the same truth in substance, but given in different forms, meeting the advancing needs of God’s elect people. Few now ever really get beyond Paul’s form, the first side of truth, giving the first aspect of the application of heavenly mysteries. We are more at home in his arguments, addressed not a little to the mind, than in some of John’s simple testimonies; as a proof of which I may say, that for one comment on St John’s Epistles, we have twenty on St Paul; and this, not because the latter is the most difficult, but because he is more on ground where intellect can find its own. John’s line of things in his Epistle is in its simplicity beyond us, even as his Gospel (if indeed Christians knew what it spoke) is not so near and easily apprehended as the view of a kingdom, and that we, with Christ, are members of it. But on this too I forbear: nevertheless the subject will repay the fullest meditation. But some may ask, Where is the proof that this difference really exists? May I answer, proof is not so much needed as an opened eye. The Jews of old asked signs, instead of the removal of the veil. They could see no proof that Christ was a Divine Person. In questions of sensual things, the senses will yield the proof. Sense proves that fire is hot, and ice cold. Intellect is needed to receive intellectual proof. The senses will not prove a mathematical proposition. To feel as a man, you must be a man; and to feel and see with God, you must possess God’s Spirit. "Who knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man? So the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11). And this is my answer here. Truth is revealed only to the true. The pure in heart, and they only, shall see God. The impure will see the world, or themselves, or their sins. Holiness is needed, if we would see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). Barnabas, who was so surnamed by the Apostles, because he was "a son of consolation" (Acts 4:36), when he came to the brethren at Antioch, "saw in them the grace of God; for," adds the inspired penman, "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 11:23-24). Pilate, had he gone thither, would never have seen the same. And so of the Gospels. Like the book of nature, they are "the open secret;" open to all, but opened to few. Like the holy city, though the gates shall not be shut at all by day, and there is no night there, yet shall there in no wise enter in thither anything that defileth or maketh a lie, but they that are written in the Lamb’s book of life. The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light. By such, the proof, when it is submitted to them, will, I am assured, not be judged lacking. But, oh! how few consider what a tale is told in what we see! how few remember that by it, like the mariner on the ocean, we may find out where we really are!

There is yet another question. Granting the proof, what is the use? What is gained by seeing these distinctions? Such a question -- alas! too common -- only shews where many now are, and how little God’s secrets are prized and treasured by us. Is it nothing to increase in the knowledge of Him, whom to know is life eternal, and "through the knowledge of whom are given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3)? Shall earthly objects attract, and ignorance be accounted shame, and is it no shame that we so little apprehend the wonders of this blessed revelation? If it be true, too, that "we shall be like Him, when we see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2), is it no gain to grow in intelligent knowledge of Him? He that has seen the great sight will not ask, What is the use? He has seen and believed, and all questioning ends in worship and adoring praise. The fact is, we need an object. God knows this, though we forget it. He knows that to this day the colour of the flocks is changed by the rods put before their eyes in their drinking-troughs

(Genesis 30:37-39). He knows that, spite of our boastings, the creature cannot be self-existent or self-supported. He therefore gives an object -- a revelation of Himself -- by the contemplation of which we may rise out of self to bear His image. And just as this revelation is permitted to reach us, it impresses us. We are like Him, when we see Him as He is. But the god of this world, knowing well how the vision of God will transform the creature, strives by another vision, of the glory of this world, to "blind the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Corinthians 4:4). But the pure in heart see God. And, such as see Him are changed from grace to grace, into the same image. Let but the light shine on them, and like the moon they must reflect it. The very pool in the street will flash back the rays of heaven, if they do but fall upon it. And we all, "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18). But there is another answer. The Church, as Christ's body, must set Him forth. She is called to be His letter of recommendation before a world that knows Him not (2 Corinthians 3:3). In her relations to those who are the seed of Abraham, and yet not all children, "for in Isaac shall the seed be called" (Romans 9:7); -- in her relation as the Lord's servant in ministry here -- in her relation to Adam's seed, or all mankind -- in her relation to the heavenly family -- is there nothing she has to learn? Those who know the most feel how much instruction they yet need in each and all of these relations. Very blessed is it to see how Christ once filled them; for "as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17). Who has had his eyes in any measure opened to the state of the professing Church -- of that body which calls itself, and in one sense is, the seed of Abraham, and the Lord's kingdom -- but has felt the need of special teaching how he should walk towards it? This teaching will be found in that Gospel which shews Christ in connexion with the kingdom and with Abraham's seed. Again, in a day like the present, when so many new schemes are being forged of philanthropy to renovate and save a groaning world, is it nothing to have before us the details of that service by which, as God's Servant, our Lord perfectly pleased and glorified Him that sent Him? But every question on this head may be fully answered, as we contemplate the Gospel dedicated to reveal the service of the Lord's Servant. Again, we are Adam's sons: we are in the world as well as in the Church: we have a link which binds us to all mankind. Is it nothing to know how far that relationship should hold us -- how we should sit and walk with publicans and amongst lost sinners? I look in St Luke, and I see a Man, in every stage of life, meeting all men, and yet in all well-pleasing God. And so of the Son of God, the begotten of the Father. We, too, as His begotten, have a place in His bosom, called to rise above the earth; as such, to be misunderstood and rejected here, and yet while judged, by a heavenly life to be continually judging things around us. Do I want to know the rule here, how, as a son of God, Passovers, Sabbaths, and feasts of Tabernacles, may be all fulfilled in me? I look in St John, and I receive the answer. Oh! for grace, more grace, to walk something more like that most blessed Pattern. In such a walk the world will see nothing -- it saw no glory in the Lord. What was there in His relation to the Kingdom, or in His Service, or in His walk as a Man, or as the Son of God, worth noticing? The world saw no beauty. It will see none in us, and yet another Eye shall see the earnest of glory and of everlasting joys.

There is, however, a misuse, as well as a use, of this truth. Intellect may be exercised without conscience. Truth may be used to exalt self, (what is there the flesh will not spoil?) and so bring on its possessor a worse judgment. Nothing really profits but what sanctifies and humbles. If, like Judas, we use the Word, or our knowledge of Him of whom it testifies, to minister to self, better

would it be had we never known Him. If, on the contrary, in the midst of weakness, we use His glorious likeness to humble us for the little measure in which we are as yet conformed to it, and by that Pattern judge in us all which is unlike Him, our knowledge of Him, and His glory, shall not be wholly vain. May these pages, through His grace, serve this end in us! Amen.

02.2.0. St Matthew; or, the Son of Abraham

ST MATTHEW;

OR, THE SON OF ABRAHAM.

"The first living creature was like unto a Lion." -- Revelation 4:7.

"The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book." -- Revelation 5:5.

I HAVE said that each of the Gospels serves a special end, and that the view which is given by St Matthew of our Lord represents Him in connexion with a certain kingdom: that He is not here the Servant of our need, or the Son of Adam, or of God, so much as the Seed of Abraham and Heir of an elect kingdom. (Aug. de Cons. Evang. lib. i. c. 3, 6.) The peculiarities of this Gospel will prove this. These peculiarities I would now note as illustrating the special path of the Lord as Son of Abraham. I may then shew how these peculiarities give us the special teaching which we need, as to our position as members of a kingdom, and as Abraham's seed. For "as He is, so we are in this world." "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself so to walk even as He walked" (1 John 2:6; 1 John 4:17).

First, then, as to what is distinctive. Here the difficulty is selection, for it would far exceed my limits were I to notice every minute point in which St Matthew differs from the other Gospels. And yet the minute and less marked peculiarities, to the instructed eye, are as striking, and as full of import, as those which are greater and more obvious. To my mind, these minor points attest a Divine purpose through the book far more wonderfully than the broad distinctions which no one can overlook. And though an exercise of soul is surely needed to discern them aright, even as there must be an opened ear to hear that voice which in creation, "without speech or language," is ever speaking to us (Psalms 19:1-3); yet to the humble, light shall not be wanting to shew the wisdom of that revelation, which, without a formal declaration of its purpose, can and does reveal that purpose to such as wait on God.

I turn to the Gospel. Its opening verse is at once characteristic. This is "the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Here He is Heir of a kingdom, and one of a chosen seed; and so His genealogy is traced through the line of Israel's kings, as far as Abraham, and no further (Matthew 1:2-16). In St Luke it is traced to Adam (Luke 3:23-38); but here it is the Son of Abraham, not of Adam, whom God reveals to us. For an Heir had been promised, and here our Lord is shewn as the One in whom the promise of the kingdom was to be fulfilled. The "sure mercies of David" spake of a kingdom. The covenant ran thus: "I have found David my servant, with holy oil have I anointed him; also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth: my mercy will I keep with him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him: his seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven" (Psalms 89:20-29). Here the Heir is come, and His lineage is given, not as God's, or Adam's, but as David's Son.

Then in this genealogy four women are mentioned (Matthew 1:3; Matthew 1:5-6), (Chrysostom, in his Homilies on St Matthew, thus introduces this question: -- "It is worth inquiry, whereas can it be that, when tracing the genealogy through the men, he hath mentioned women also; and why, since he determined to do so, he hath yet not mentioned them all, but, passing over the more eminent, such as Sarah, and Rebekah, and as many as are like them, has brought forward them that are famed for some bad thing, as, for instance, a harlot, an adulteress, a mother by incest, and a stranger." -- Hom. i. § 14. I quote this passage for the sake of its opening words: -- "It is worth inquiring," says Chrysostom. I would to God that Christians thought so, and did "inquire.") each of whom in her life and course had been an appointed figure of the mystery of the kingdom. To see this may need some spiritual discernment; but, seen or unseen, it remains the same. It may not be out of place here, -- for few regard these things, -- to shew how full of teaching is a single distinctive word in these Gospels. To speak then of Thamar, the woman first named here. This figure scarce needs comment; for, as with Sarah and Hagar, the type is most manifest. Judah is the line of the kingdom. The sceptre was his (Genesis 49:10). But his seed, for they were born of a Canaanitish mother, (See the history, Genesis 38:1-30; and compare Genesis 38:2 with Ezekiel 16:3.) were very evil. Then a younger wife, Thamar, is brought in, and given to Judah's sons; but the children of the old wife dislike her, and have no seed by her. They are cut off for their iniquity. Then Judah's wife grows old and dies. After this the seed of the kingdom passes to her who had been rejected by Judah's sons. And by her, through Judah's sin, Judah being all unconscious of it, the line of the kingdom passes from his first sons into another channel. Judah, however, rages against the seed; yea, he is ready to burn the mother. But proof is at hand that her fruit, though Judah knows it not, is Abraham's seed. The signet and staff, though Judah may rage, clearly prove the lineage, and in due time the kingdom is established in the hands of the children of the younger wife. Surely this scarcely needs interpretation. The first wife of Judah, like Hagar in another type, represents the principles of the Jewish Church, (Women in the types are principles, either good or bad, as Sarah and Hagar; men, the activities or energies connected with them. For this reason it is that in the Books of Kings, where we are shewn all the different forms of Rule to which God's elect may be subject, the mother of each king is always given, as shewing from what principles certain forms of Rule proceed.) by which Judah strove to build up the line of the elect kingdom. But the seed were evil; and though an attempt was made to improve and build up the line, by bringing in the second and younger wife -- that is, the spiritual principles of the New Dispensation -- yet the sons of the first wife would not have it. They turned from it with loathing; refusing to embrace it, for which abomination judgment overtook them. For even of old the spiritual church was offered to the Jew. In prophets and righteous men it came near to them, but they received it not. So Thamar, the younger wife, was rejected. But time goes on. Judah's wife dies. The old dispensation ends; but not before Judah's sons have been cut off by sore judgments. Then by Judah's own fall, and all unknown to him, the seed passes to the younger wife -- for "the seed is the word" -- and she becomes fruitful. A seed has sprung out of Judah, which, when sprung, Judah judges, not suspecting the true father. Yea, he is ready to destroy it; but proof is at hand that it is Abraham's seed. The signet and the staff, though Judah may rage, clearly prove the lineage of the Church's children. (I refer those with whom authority is truth, rather than truth authority, to Augustine on this history. See Contra Faust. lib. xxii. c. 84-86.) It is throughout a mystery of the kingdom, shewing how the line of heirs should change, and, as such, has a place here in the Gospel devoted to shew the Lord in connexion with the promised kingdom. And the

same may be said of the other women here. I do not enter into details, further than to say that in each of them, with some distinctive peculiarities, the same story of the kingdom will be found repeated; shewing how the Gentiles (for these women are Gentiles) should obtain the kingdom and continue the line of Abraham’s seed. But to turn from mysteries to what is on the surface. Here, to omit many minor points, (Such as the fact, that this genealogy is given at Christ’s birth, whereas St Luke connects his with the baptism; -- that here it is a descending series, in St Luke an ascending one; -- that this is Joseph’s line, while St Luke, if I mistake not, gives Mary’s; all of which, I am well assured, is significant.) the Lord is called "Emmanuel," that is to say, "God with us," -- a name, the witness of the covenant with the kingdom, and also with the elect, testifying that He who had redeemed would not forsake His people. When the kingdom seemed in danger (Isaiah 7:1-14), this was the sign that it should not fail, -- "A Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and His name shall be Emmanuel;" while the same name was again but a fulfilment of the general promise to the elect, "I will dwell in you, and I will walk in you" (Exodus 29:45). Then in this Gospel alone do we read of One "born king of the Jews" (Matthew 2:2). In St Luke it is, "Good tidings to all people, for to you is born a Saviour" (Luke 2:10-11). After which St Matthew records the immediate effects of the birth of the royal child. To Herod the king it is an alarming event, and to all Jerusalem with him; while to distant Gentiles, who come with gifts, it is matter of joy and praise (Matthew 2:3-11). The whole scene being in itself a figure of that mystery of the kingdom which was even now at hand. But even in the letter the scene is distinctive. The Lord is seen here as the Heir; and so of Bethlehem it is said here, and no other Evangelist notes it, "Out of thee shall come a Governor, who shall rule my people Israel." In the following chapter "the kingdom of heaven" is announced. John the Baptist comes preaching "the kingdom," saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:1-2). In St Mark and St Luke he preaches "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3); in substance the same thing, but recorded under a form of expression suited to the tenor of each respective Gospel. Here, too, St Matthew, referring to Isaiah, quotes the words of the prophet, -- "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight," -- and then stops; for what remains of the quotation does not concern Abraham’s seed, but rather the wide out-lying Gentile world. But for this very reason St Luke goes on with the quotation, adding, "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill be brought low;" -- the distinction between the Jew and Gentile shall be done away, in the common enjoyment of a heavenly kingdom; -- "the crooked shall be made straight, the rough places plain, and all flesh shall see the Lord’s salvation." St Matthew goes on, "His fan is in His hand, and He shall thoroughly purge His floor, and burn up the chaff with fire unquenchable," -- language perfectly suited to the Lord of the kingdom, who "will gather out of His kingdom all that offends, and them that work iniquity;" but for this very reason omitted by St Mark, for that Evangelist’s office is to reveal, not so much the mighty Lord, as the humble Servant.

All this is characteristic, but the general tenor of the chapter still more so. The "kingdom of heaven" is preached, for the earthly kingdom of Israel is in ruins. Israel’s place is now to repent, and be buried as dead in a mystic grave. Then the true Heir, "to fulfil all righteousness," comes into the place of death, that others there with Him by the same path of humiliation may obtain a better kingdom. Then "heaven is opened," and the Spirit descends, a witness that "the kingdom of heaven" is at hand, and that the sons of Abraham shall be partakers in it. Here this "opening of heaven" is connected with the announcement of "the kingdom of heaven." But because it has

other bearings, on the service of the elect, and also on the world generally, it finds its place in the other Gospels which describe the Servant and the Son of Man: St Mark speaking of its bearing on service, for there is no true service until heaven is opened to us, and the Holy Spirit comes: St Luke recording it as shewing that man only enters heaven by death and resurrection, that for man as man the way of life and peace is through the flood. Here in St Matthew, both the "preaching of the kingdom," which is peculiar, and the "opening of heaven," which is common, are equally characteristic of the special aim of this Gospel. And most instructive is it to observe how even what is common to the Gospels, becomes peculiar by its position as part of a distinct series.

Then comes the temptation. The "kingdoms of this world" are set in array before Him who has received the testimony of the "kingdom of heaven," and has seen "heaven opened." Both St Matthew and St Luke record this, for to Abraham's son, and to man as man, the kingdoms of this world and their glory are a very special trial. St Mark and St John omit it, as beside their views of Ministry and of The Word; the omission with them being as characteristic as is the insertion here. This temptation the Heir of the Kingdom overcomes, after which He comes Himself preaching the kingdom of heaven. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). The next scene, the Sermon on the Mount, is more distinctive. Here, beginning with a beatitude touching "the kingdom," ("He opened His mouth, and said, Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." -- Matthew 5:3.) the Lord with authority unfolds the principles and laws, and describes the subjects of His kingdom: not one verse of which, be it observed, is recorded in St Mark, who, though generally following St Matthew, invariably omits what is connected with power in the kingdom, as inconsistent with the view which it is his office to present to us. Here many points are characteristic: the tone of authority throughout: the repeated "I say unto you" (Matthew 5:18; Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:26; Matthew 5:28; Matthew 5:32; Matthew 5:34; Matthew 5:39), where the letter of Moses is set aside to make way for a higher Spirit: the special teaching, too, as to the connexion of the Law of Moses with the New Law; how the latter was not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them (Matthew 5:17; Matthew 7:12): the doxology in the Lord's prayer, with an allusion to "the kingdom," given here but omitted in St Luke (compare Matthew 6:13 with Luke 11:4): the repeated reference to a "kingdom," the character of which is remarkably implied in its distinctive title; in other Gospels the "kingdom of God," here only the "kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3; Matthew 5:10; Matthew 5:19-20, &c.); a peculiar expression which occurs near thirty times in this Gospel: so too the marks of His subjects, among which "righteousness" is specially named: -- all this, not to speak of other points, is peculiar to St Matthew, and all characteristic. As to the "kingdom," and the remarkable fact, that in St Matthew only it is "the kingdom of heaven," I will speak more fully when I come to notice the special teaching which we get in what is peculiar to this Evangelist. I would, however, beg that it may be noticed that though in three places in this Gospel, the expression, "kingdom of God," occurs (Matthew 6:33; Matthew 12:28; Matthew 21:43), in each case the reason for this variation in the language is obvious, and with a distinct purpose; the "kingdom of heaven" being ever the title distinctively chosen to mark what is peculiar to the Lord's kingdom. And so as to the word " righteousness." To some it may seem trifling to notice that this word occurs frequently in St Matthew, scarcely ever in the other Gospels. Here it is repeated again and again. "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). "Blessed are they which thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6): "blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness:" -- by the way, in St Luke it is distinctively "reproach for the Son of Man's sake"

(compare Matthew 5:10 and Luke 6:22). So again, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes" (Matthew 5:20). So again, "Then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43). So again, "The righteous shall answer, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered?" (Matthew 25:37). So again, "The righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46). So, where in St Luke it is written, "That the blood of all the prophets, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, shall be required of this generation;" in St Matthew we read, "From the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar" (compare Luke 11:51 and Matthew 23:35). So again, where in St Luke we merely read, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all other things shall be added unto you;" in St Matthew it is said, "The kingdom of God, and His righteousness" (compare Luke 12:31 and Matthew 6:33); righteousness being a special characteristic of the Lord's kingdom. So St Paul teaches, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17). The Gospel of the kingdom peculiarly marks this, in its notice of "righteousness;" adding also in reference to peace, "Blessed are the peace-makers;" a beatitude only to be found in this Gospel.

Having thus published the laws of His kingdom, the Lord proceeds by acts of grace to bring "the kingdom" nigh to His elect Israel (in chapters 8-12). And what a kingdom! The strong man's house is spoiled. Death and disease flee away before the King's bidding. Lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised, the storms obey, the devils fear; and yet, though mercy rejoices against judgment, His people Israel will not receive their King. Much of this is common to the other Gospels, for Christ's rejection by the Jew has a bearing both on His course as Servant, and also as shewing out the deceitfulness of the heart of man as man. For which reason many of these scenes are given, with characteristic omissions or additions, both in St Mark and in St Luke's Gospels. But here the rejection of the Heir of the kingdom, and the nature of His kingdom, are set forth with a fulness of detail unequalled in any other Gospel. Of the King Himself St Matthew tells us, -- and the words are only here, -- "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17). Of the spirit of His kingdom, we have the reiterated witness, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (Matthew 9:13; Matthew 12:7); words, which as they are peculiar to this Gospel, very distinctly mark the character of that rule which He brought to sinful men. Then as to His subjects. Here only do we read, "Many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 8:11-12). Israel will not have Him. Had He come with law, exercising lordship, He should have been called a benefactor (Luke 22:25). But because He comes with grace, to meet the vile, to save the lost, therefore His own receive Him not. Still He preaches "the gospel of the kingdom," (Matthew 9:35. Compare the same expression in Matthew 24:14 with the parallel passage in Mark 13:10.) -- an expression peculiar to St Matthew, -- for He is moved with compassion, because they fainted, and were as sheep having no shepherd. All, however, whether the Baptist's, His own, or the Apostles' ministry, is rejected. "He is despised, and they esteem Him not."

Then comes a passage, peculiar to this Gospel, unveiling the heart of the King; in which, while He invites others to become His subjects, He shews by His own example what is that kingdom to which He now calls them. He has come to His own, and they reject Him. Is, then, His kingdom shaken? Nay, but the sin around only the more reveals that realm of peace, which, like "the brave

everlasting firmament," through storms and tempests stood unmoved in Him. First, His witness John doubts Him; chains and a prison chill his faith; even as to this hour in days of darkness we question the very truths, of which in more sunny days we have been the bold witnesses. Then Israel is like to children, whom no care will please; who will not dance when piped to, or weep when mourned to. Then the cities which had witnessed His "mighty works" remain unchanged. Sodom would have repented; but they repent not. But none of these things move Him. The Lord of that "kingdom which is joy and peace," shews that, let what will come from without, there is a kingdom within Him which can overcome all things. So we read here, -- "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth" (Matthew 11:25). "At that time," when His servant doubted, and Israel mocked, and men despised Him; -- and who can tell what hosts of hell by all these circumstances now pressed against that loving spirit? -- "At that time Jesus answered, I thank thee, Lord. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." And then at once turning as if to others, He utters the well-known words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you -- be now my subjects -- and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest" (Matthew 11:28-30). Here is indeed a kingdom which neither earth nor hell can move, -- "the peace of God which passeth understanding:" which can bear all, believe all, hope all, endure all: which out of apparent defeat can reap yet fresh glories. Here in the conscious enjoyment of such a kingdom, as now Lord of all; for it is here, in the midst of this rejection, that He says, "All things are delivered to me of the Father" (Matthew 11:27); while yet despised and doubted, He yet calls us to share His peace, in the kingdom which is not in creature-blessings, but in the Holy Ghost. This is indeed a kingdom, to live in the will of God; to understand that will; to be content with it; -- to lose all self-will even in good; to be glad when self-strength fails; when all self-glorying is utterly put from us; and yet to joy in God, in that His will is done, with an unfeigned "Even so, Father, for thus it pleaseth Thee." Compared with this, what deserves the name of power or glory? Here is a kingdom worthy of the high title. Here is victory over all: having nothing, yet possessing all things: a broken heart, and yet unmeasured peace. As revealing the kingdom this scene is perfect. As such St Matthew gives it; while for the same reason it is omitted in the corresponding place in all the other Gospels. The next chapter, (the 12th,) though parts of it are common both to St Mark and St Luke, becomes generally distinctive by the additions peculiar to this Gospel. The Lord goes through the corn-fields, so choosing the day as to call in question Israel’s right to the reality, of which the sabbath had been the appointed token. (It had been the sign of the covenant with Israel (Ezekiel 20:12-20), touching a rest in the first creation.) The omissions or additions of each Evangelist upon this question very clearly mark the distinct and special ends proposed in each narrative (Matthew 12:1-7; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5). Here we read, "At that time Jesus went on the sabbath through the corn. And the Pharisees said, Behold, thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But He said unto them, Have ye never read what David did?" In St John, under a similar charge, His ground of justification is not "what David did." As Son of the Father the answer is, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17). In St Matthew, as Son of David, "what David did" is a fit reply, and characteristic of His position, as coming to His kingdom, and like David at first rejected in it. He thus proceeds, -- "Or have ye not read in the law how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath and are blameless?" I look to the same scene in St Luke, but there is not one word there of "priests" or "law;" for there He is Son of Man, on far wider ground, meeting men without law. Then again, here in St Matthew He adds, "But I say unto you that in this place is

One greater than the temple;" words exactly suited by their authority to mark that relation as Lord of the kingdom, which our Lord occupies in this Gospel. I turn to the same scene in St Mark, and that Evangelist, who up to this point implicitly follows St Matthew, entirely omits these words, which as being a declaration of kingly power would be out of character in the meek Servant. Finally, here in St Matthew the Lord repeats, "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless;" words to be found in no other Gospel, but very characteristic here, as marking the true nature of the Lord's kingdom.

St Matthew then proceeds with the tale of rejection, till the Lord withdraws himself (Matthew 12:15), and so acts that the prophecy, (St Matthew alone quotes it,) "He shall shew judgment to the Gentiles," begins to be accomplished (Matthew 12:17-21). This Scripture, peculiar to St Matthew, is again linked with the kingdom. Here we have fresh discoveries of its nature, and glories, and of its rightful Lord. Here only do we read of Him, that "He shall not strive nor cry in the streets; a bruised reed shall He not break, nor quench the smoking flax." For His kingdom is not of this world, but of God, and God is love. It asks not therefore for outward strivings, but rather for silence, and prayer, and quiet contemplation. The pomp of war, and this world's pride, these and like things men admire. Few believe that humbleness and grace are proofs of true greatness. Men do not see that to come down, one must be high; or that the depth of our descent is the exact measure of our true elevation. But this is seen in the kingdom. There the last is first, and he that has been lowest shall one day be seen highest. St Matthew, and it is very characteristic, carefully notes this, in these little touches peculiar to him, as affording a lesson respecting the kingdom, much needed even by its true children.

What follows is as distinctive. These ways strike the crowd. "All the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?" St Luke, the only other Evangelist who records this scene, omits this witness as to "David's Son," telling us simply that "the people wondered" (compare Matthew 12:22-23 and Luke 11:14). But when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." Then the Lord answers again, with two special words, both peculiar to this Gospel, and both distinctive; first declaring, as Lord of the kingdom, "I say unto you, that every idle word which men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment;" and then, that as with the unclean spirit which goes out but returns with seven others worse than the first, "So," -- for He speaks as Judge here, -- "shall it be to this wicked generation." After which, renouncing those earthly ties which had bound Him to Israel in the flesh, He acknowledges no other relationship but that of subjection and obedience to the Father's will: -- "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, my sister, and my mother" (Matthew 12:36; Matthew 12:45; Matthew 12:50).

Then comes the unfolding of the mystery of that "kingdom," which should be brought in upon the rejection of the Lord, during His absence for a season growing out of that rejection. This mystery is here opened (Matthew 13:1-58). The Lord came seeking fruit. He found no fruit in His fig-tree. Then He becomes a Sower. And the history of the period during which He should sit on the Father's throne, until His own throne as Son of Man should be set up, is here given from its first commencement, when the seed was sown in the field, even until the harvest. This, as it is peculiar to St Matthew, is quite characteristic. It is true that of these parables, three are given in the other Gospels; St Mark giving us the Sower and the Mustard-seed, because, though on one side linked with the mystery of the kingdom, they have as manifest a bearing on the path of true service: St

Luke for a like reason giving the same two, and the Leaven also, in an order different from St Matthew, because the Gentile world is also included in these three parables. St Luke's order is striking. With him the parable of the Sower stands alone, as an introduction to the three chapters in which he successively describes the preaching, first of the Lord, then of the Twelve, then of the Seventy (Luke 8:1-56; Luke 9:1-62; Luke 10:1-42): while he puts the Mustard-seed and the Leaven, in contrast with the Barren Fig-tree (Luke 13:6-9; Luke 13:18-19; Luke 13:20-21), where he is shewing how the Lord, finding no fruit on his fig-tree Israel, on its being cut down should have another tree growing from a little seed, and a leaven of doctrine leavening the whole world. Here in St Matthew the order is different, for the thing to be unfolded is "the mystery of the kingdom." And distinguishing His disciples from the mass of Israel, as those who through grace were able to understand this mystery, our Lord here unfolds it to them in all its length and breadth. The first parable shews how Christ should now go forth as Sower, and, spite of Israel's rejection of Him, should yet possess a kingdom. For here in St Matthew the seed sown is "the word of the kingdom;" (Matthew 13:19. Compare Luke 8:11. In Mark 4:14 also, the seed is simply "the word.") in St Luke it is simply "the word of God." Then come the similitudes of the kingdom. Three spoken to the crowd, describing the outward result of the kingdom, of which all men might take knowledge. The three latter spoken only to the disciples, and descriptive of its true character and value, as seen by those possessing the mind of Christ. The series as a whole is a complete unfolding of the secret of the kingdom. First the man sows good seed in his field, but his work is soon injured. While men sleep the tares are sown, which, though some would touch them, are spared awhile lest in gathering the tares the wheat be rooted up. Here we have the present state of the world, a mixture of good and bad, which by God's permission is to last until the harvest. Then comes the external form of the kingdom, a vast Gentile thing like Nebuchadnezzar's tree (Daniel 4:10-14), in which birds of every wing, even those very birds which have plucked away the good seed, can find shelter. Then comes the diffusion of a doctrine through the mass, which the Lord describes as leaven, this also being something visible, inasmuch as the leaven as it spreads would make the meal to rise and work. (The word "leaven" I believe is never used in Scripture for what is pure. It is to be remarked that its insertion into the meal is "the woman's work, and not "the man's." Leaven is sour dough. Whether what is generally spread through Christendom is sweet or sour, a good thing corrupted or a good thing unspoilt, is left for the spiritual intelligence of such as are able to "discern the things that differ.") All this is outward and visible, and is stated as matter of fact, without bringing in God's estimate of it all, save on this one point, that the tares having been sown are not to be rooted out until the harvest. Then follow the parables spoken "in the house;" first, of the treasure hid in the field, for the sake of which the field is bought, though as yet the treasure is not taken out of it; describing, (for these last parables give God's view,) the value of the Church to Christ, who was content to take the field of this world, for the sake of the treasure hid therein. Then we have the beauty of the treasure, a peerless pearl: Christ's estimate of the loveliness of grace in His redeemed children. Then comes the netful dragged to shore, with the separating process of judgment, the good being gathered and the evil cast away; a view of the judgment, not so much on earth as in heaven; not, as in the Tares, connected with the place where they have grown, but with the place to which those who have been caught in the net must be brought in due season. This subject of itself would fill a volume. Here I only note it as an illustration of the special view of the Lord presented to us in this Gospel. Not less distinctive are the quotations which abound in this Gospel. Again and again we meet the words, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the

prophet." The reason is plain. The prophets had spoken of "the kingdom," and the character of its King: therefore are they so carefully quoted in the Gospel of the kingdom. I may note, (for this allusion to the prophets is distinctive,) some of the Scriptures here quoted, as marking the coming and character of the promised kingdom. As to the birth of the Heir of the kingdom, it was to be above nature; "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son" (Matthew 1:22-23). The Heir of the kingdom must be begotten of the Holy Ghost. Thus only can we have Emmanuel, that is to say, God with us. As to His acts, "The people in darkness should see great light" (Matthew 4:14-16). "He should take our infirmities, and bear our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17). "He should not strive, nor cry, nor break the bruised reed; but He should send forth judgment unto victory" (Matthew 12:17-18). All this was done "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets." And yet when He came to His people, they knew Him not. How this bears on the path of the heirs may perhaps be seen hereafter. Here I note it as another example of the peculiar tone which runs through this Gospel.

Time would fail me were I to attempt to shew how the remainder of this Gospel is to the full as characteristic as that portion over which I have glanced thus hastily. To speak only of its many Parables. With, I think, three exceptions, each of which is significant, they are all similitudes of "the kingdom of heaven." We have seen how "the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven," "the kingdom of heaven is like a net," "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls." To the end it is still "the kingdom." And even in the exceptions I have referred to -- namely the Sower, the Two Sons, and the Vineyard, which, as they describe a state of things previous to the setting up of "the kingdom of heaven," could not present similitudes of it (These three parables, the Sower (Matthew 13:3-9), the Two Sons (Matthew 21:28-32), and the Vineyard, (Matthew 21:33-44), all represent things prior to the setting up of the kingdom of heaven. The Lord came as "Sower," before He ascended up on high, and thus before the establishment of the heavenly kingdom. The "Two Sons," too, are a figure of man as such, neglecting or giving heed to natural conscience or God’s word, all which preceded the coming of the heavenly kingdom. In like manner the letting out of "the Vineyard" to the Jews preceded the rising of the King to heaven. For this reason, none of these three could be similitudes of "the kingdom of heaven.") -- there is in each an allusion to "the kingdom." The seed of the Sower was "the word of the kingdom." The son, "who said, I will not, but repented and went," is the publican and harlot, who will "go into the kingdom," before those "who said, I go, Sir, but went not." And in the case of the Vineyard, after the husbandmen have killed the Heir, it is added, "Therefore shall the kingdom of God be taken from you, and given to another nation." By the way, observe here it is "the kingdom of God" which is taken from the Jews, not "the kingdom of heaven." They had "the kingdom of God," for they owned God as their king, but they never had "the kingdom of heaven," that form of the kingdom of God which was subsequent to Christ’s resurrection into the heavens, and which is the peculiar distinction of this dispensation. (I may add here, as marking the exactness with which these terms are used, that, in Matthew 12:28, our Lord who had before been preaching "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," changes His phrase, saying, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (ephthasen eph humas). The "kingdom of God" had come, because God’s King was there. But for the same reason, the "kingdom of heaven" was not come, but coming, when the King should be cast out from earth, and received into heaven.) Thus in St Matthew the burden of the Parables is throughout "the kingdom." The later ones especially reveal this in their whole character. In no other Gospel do we find such words as these, "Then shall the

King say to them on His right hand;" and again, "The King shall answer and say, Depart, ye cursed."

How different all this is in St Luke, must have been observed by every reader. There, in the Gospel of the Son of Man, the peculiar form for commencing a parable is, "A certain man" did this or that; and this invariably. "A certain man had a fig-tree:" "a certain man had two sons:" "there was a certain rich man who fared sumptuously." We cannot compare a parable which is common to these two Gospels, without being struck with this. For instance, in St Matthew we read, "The kingdom of heaven is like to a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call them that were bidden, but they would not come." In St Luke it is, "A certain man made a great supper, and bade many; but they would not come" (compare Matthew 22:2 and Luke 14:16). (I see that in the Greek in St Matthew it is anthropo basilei, "a man who was a king;" shewing the link, and yet contrast, with St Luke's Gospel.) So in the parable of the Vineyard, which I have already shewn is not one of the similitudes of the "kingdom of heaven," in St Matthew we read, "There was a certain householder, (in the original, oikodespotes, a title of authority,) which planted a vineyard." In St Luke, in the same parable, we have simply, "A certain man planted a vineyard" (compare Matthew 21:33 and Luke 20:9). In St Mark too, for he shews the Servant, the title of honour is dropped: it is only "A certain man" (Mark 12:1).

One other point I must not omit. Only in this Gospel is the "Church" named. Here in the Gospel of the Kingdom it has a very distinct mention. Rejected by Israel, "He left them and departed" (Matthew 16:4). Then from His disciples He receives a confession, in reply to which He names His own "Church;" adding a promise of "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," with power on earth "to loose and bind." Abraham's sons take Him for "John the Baptist, or Jeremias, or one of the prophets" (Matthew 16:14). They cannot echo the prophet's voice, "To us a Son is given." But a poor remnant, to whom "not flesh and blood, but the Father hath revealed it," can say, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). This is that knowledge which marks the Church; for of her it is said, that she is "to come in the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man" (Ephesians 4:13). At once the Lord replies, -- and the words are only here, -- "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven:" words full of import touching "the kingdom," and therefore recorded here; and for the same reason omitted in all the other Gospels. Then comes the Transfiguration, here, and here only, introduced with words, plainly directing us to recognise that display as a glimpse or sample of the coming kingdom (Matthew 16:28). After this the disciples ask, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" elsewhere it is simply, "They disputed who should be the greatest" (compare Matthew 18:1 with Mark 9:34 and Luke 9:46). The Lord replies, "Except ye be converted" -- (by the way, this also is peculiar to St Matthew, and like the word, "righteousness," is strikingly characteristic of the coming kingdom) -- "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven; and whosoever will humble himself as a little child, the same shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Then He adds here, and here only, another word touching "the Church." "If thy brother trespass against thee, tell him his fault alone. If he will not hear thee, tell it to the Church. And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto thee, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and

whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:15-20). All this, together with the parable immediately added in reply to the question, "How oft shall my brother trespass, and I forgive him?" is only to be found in this Gospel. The parable (Matthew 18:23-35) is a prophetic sketch of the Church's judgment for want of mercy. But on this I will not enter here. Suffice it to say that the whole passage, as it is peculiar, bears with no uncertain aim on the Lord's relation to the Church and the kingdom.

These examples -- and they are but a part of the evidence which might be adduced -- may suffice to shew the character of this Gospel, and give the clue to those who wish to search further. I now turn for a moment to the special teaching these peculiarities contain; for not the Jew only, but the Church also, needs the lesson here.

First, then, as to the character of the kingdom, much is taught in what is distinctive here. Take the peculiarity that in St Matthew only the Lord's kingdom is always entitled the "kingdom of heaven." Has nothing been lost by neglecting to observe that the Gospel, which reveals the kingdom, reveals it by a special name, remarkably characteristic of the position of all its true subjects? How many a mistake would have been prevented had it been seen that the true kingdom was not of earth, nor of times and places, but indeed "of heaven." Where could the claims of that system rest which makes Rome and a man there its centre, if it were understood that as Rome is not heaven, so Roman Catholic has nothing akin to the "kingdom of heaven" here spoken of? Had it simply been said, "kingdom of God," the answer might of course be made, that as Israel, an earthly people with an earthly centre, were once the kingdom of God, so an earthly people with an earthly centre might be that kingdom still. But the Gospel which reveals the kingdom specially marks it as the "kingdom of heaven," in which neither Rome, nor time, nor earth, have any place. But the Church has erred even as the Jew, looking for a repetition of the old thing, rather than for that new creation of righteousness and joy and peace, which is indeed the true kingdom. Nor does the fact that the prophetic parables (such as the Tares, the Leaven, and the Mustard-seed,) foretell the outward results of the kingdom, as a mixed and worldly thing, prove it to be right or normal, any more than the predictions of Israel's fall prove that their rejection of Christ, which also was foretold, was agreeable to the mind of God. Out of both, God can perform His purpose; but this does not prove that the fallen and spoilt thing is that which God looks for.

Take another peculiarity. In this Gospel our Lord, as Heir of the Kingdom, is presented to us as "Son of David, Son of Abraham." This title bespeaks in mystery the character of the kingdom. In more than one Epistle, St Paul labours to shew how much is involved in this lineage. What then is taught in the words, "Son of David, Son of Abraham;" for an heir of the kingdom must not only be Abraham's son, but Abraham's son in one especial line. St Paul thus answers: -- "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children of the kingdom, but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is," (this is an inspired comment,) "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Romans 9:7-8). "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman" (Galatians 4:22-31). A child of the bond-maid, though Abraham's son, was not an heir of the kingdom. David and the kings all sprung from the long-barren free-woman. Which things are a mystery. The sons of the bond-maid, though Abraham's seed, were born according to nature, by human will and energy. For Hagar is the law, and her sons -- children of bondage -- are a figure of

those who, though born in the house of the elect, and in one sense his seed, being born only by nature, are not the true seed. The true heirs are of another generation, the sons of the free-woman, born when Abraham and Sarah are as good as dead; a figure of that spiritual seed which is born contrary to nature, which, like Isaac, is offered as a sacrifice, and yet lives. This is the line of the kingdom: this is the chosen seed. "He saith not, Seeds, as of many, but, To thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16), and His body. These are heirs of the kingdom, according to the description in this Gospel, sons of Abraham, according to David's line. Let such as count themselves to be heirs, see that they have this lineage; that they are sons, not by nature or fleshly energy, but by Divine power.

Take another peculiarity of this Gospel: the connexion of the laws of the kingdom with the old law. The teaching on this point, as it is peculiar here, throws much light on the whole question of that on which the kingdom rests. The Lord distinctly says here, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil, the law" (Matthew 5:17). How then can we say that "we are not under the law, but under grace?" (Romans 6:14). And if, as these words seem to imply, grace contrasts with law, how is it that with precepts of grace the law is yet fulfilled? Our Lord's words peculiar to this Gospel, "Thus, it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," taken in connexion with the occasion when they were uttered, may answer this question. It was at His baptism, when He presented Himself to receive that sign of death and the grave ("We are buried by baptism." -- Romans 6:4.) that He spake thus of "fulfilling all righteousness." It is when His followers take the same place, content to die that they may live, that righteousness will be seen in them also. I would it were more clearly seen that there can be no righteousness or fulfilling of the law without death; nay more, that, obedient or disobedient, law can only kill man. If I am perfectly obedient, the law will kill me, for it says, "Love God and man perfectly;" and such a love would soon consume me. If I am disobedient, it will kill me, for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them:" clearly proving that the law was not given to save us, but, as St Paul teaches, to be a standard to shew us that we are ruined sinners (Romans 3:20; Romans 7:7). A law which could have given life could not be given to fallen man. Hence the Scripture by the law only concludes all men under sin (Galatians 3:21-22). Grace comes in, thanks be to God; but it meets man in death. He must confess himself dead, (therefore are we baptized,) and die, too, if the law is ever to be fulfilled in him. And no sooner do we take the place of dead ones, and own our lot as sons of men, than heaven and the kingdom of heaven is at once opened to us. Then this grace produces grace. Christ died for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16). And then, if dying be the fulfilling of the law, we need not strive for life here, we need not take "eye for eye," or "hate our enemies." We may be content to suffer and die, and act in grace to all, knowing that, if we lose all, the kingdom of heaven is yet ours. Will the law be broken thus, because we are "not under," but above it? Nay, thus only will it be fulfilled. I venture to say that till men are content to die, -- till they see that "fulfilling all righteousness" is connected with our taking the place of dead and buried sinners, -- the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount will never be kept, however much they may be lauded by us. Take that law, hoping to live by it, and it must be pared down. Take it to die by, as part of the story of the cross, and it is all clear.

Another peculiarity of this Gospel is the special light which it throws upon the position of the true heirs of the kingdom, as respects their carnal brethren. Are the true heirs, like Pharisees, to separate themselves from those in error, and to thank God that they are not as other men; or shall

they go out with a few, like Theudas (Acts 5:36-37), into the wilderness, in the hope of again finding the original circumstances of the dispensation? The true Heir, with a heart of love, takes neither course. He will not stand alone, but will take His place among the lost ones. And He took it, though the religious people judged Him for it; not like Theudas and Judas looking for Jordan to dry up, but Himself going down into its waters, and being buried under them; not fighting to re-establish the kingdom upon earth, but trusting God to lift Him out of it into a higher, even a heavenly one. And so "heaven opened" to Him, and God said, "I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). Men might be displeased, but God was "well pleased." Then, having been a brief season in the wilderness, -- just as opened heavens yet drive men thither for a season, -- He returns in the power of the world to come, to tell others how near that same heaven is to them also. And to this day the same thing takes place in every heir of the kingdom who has reached this stage. For all have not reached it. For we may be, like Christ, heirs of the kingdom, and yet in Egypt. We may be heirs, and yet, like Him, be arguing with doctors at Jerusalem. He did so when He was twelve years old; and when He is twelve years old in us, we may do so. But if we grow with Him till with Him we see Israel's state, and then so yield to Him, that He lives and walks in us, that "to us to live is Christ," then, inasmuch as He cannot change, but is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," what He did of old, He will do again in us, -- go down again amongst publicans, -- then have heaven opened, -- and then, having overcome the devil, come forth to tell to others how near that kingdom is; and that the way to enter it, is, not by this or that outward separation, much less by boastings as to Israel's works or temple, but by repentance, by owning our state, and by taking the place which befits a fallen people; expecting there to find our God and His grace amply sufficient for us.

Many other points might be adduced, growing out of what is special here: but with one other particular I must conclude. We noticed in this Gospel a special allusion to the Prophets. The expression, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophet," is peculiar to this Gospel. And yet the children of the kingdom knew not the Heir when He appeared. Though fulfilling their own Scriptures before them, He was a wonder to them. People in darkness saw light. He neither strove nor cried. The broken reed was not bruised, nor the smoking flax quenched. But so low was Israel fallen, that they knew not the day of their visitation. Like looked for like, and so they esteemed Him not. Had He come, like Barabbas, to strive for the restoration of the earthly kingdom, or had He sought to overthrow the existing rule of Herod, He should not have stood alone. But because His kingdom is heavenly, Israel care not for it. He may go whither He will: they want Him not. Such has been, such must be, the experience of the true heirs. They may in their lives fulfil the prophets, manifesting light, and grace, and righteousness. But if they will not fight for or against the outward things of their day by other outward things, the children of the kingdom, born after the flesh, either cannot discern, or will not have them. Let the heirs be prepared for their lot, to be rejected even by Abraham's sons; for of Abraham's sons it is written, "They which are born after the flesh persecute those which are born after the Spirit." But the mocked ones have their reward. If the kingdom of earth is closed, the "kingdom of heaven" is open to them. In that day when the King now hidden shall be revealed to men, may we, now content to be hidden with Him, be partakers of His glory. They that suffer in the mystery of the kingdom shall rejoice in its revelation. Till that revelation, may we be in "the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." Amen.

02.3.0. St Mark; or, the Servant of God

ST MARK;

OR, THE SERVANT OF GOD.

"The second living creature was like unto a Calf." -- Revelation 4:7.

"Much increase is by the strength of the Ox." -- Proverbs 14:4.

"THE second living creature was like unto an Ox." And the second Gospel reveals the Lord in that aspect of which the Ox is the appointed figure. He stands here as the patient Servant and Sacrifice for others, spending and being spent to serve the sons of men. The first glance, indeed, at this Gospel does not give us the same broad distinction which meets us upon the very face of the other three. A second look will prove that it has marks, which are in their way quite as conclusive and characteristic as the unmistakeable distinctions of the other Gospels. (The fact that one sect of early heretics chose this Gospel in preference to the others, on account of its contents, proves that at that day something distinctive could be seen in it. Irenaeus, Adv. Hoer. lib. iii. c. 11.) And though the peculiarities are, I own, minute, yet this is compensated for by the fact that they are very many, and meet us again and again in every page. The strokes may be faint, and the touches fine, but their very fineness shews a Master’s hand, which without the exaggeration of caricature, by lines too minute to arrest the careless eye, can present a perfect picture. Of course, the subject itself in the main is the same in all the Gospels; the Lord’s life being the material of each narrative; but this only makes the distinctions more instructive: and though the disputer of this world may stumble, the humble imitator of God is richly taught.

I now proceed to these distinctions, which I may arrange as, first, the omissions, secondly, the additions, peculiar to this Gospel. From both we shall be able to note what is special and characteristic in the view of Christ here presented to us. And here before I notice the omissions, I would observe how much may be gathered, not only from what is taught, but also from what is omitted, in certain parts of Holy Scripture. Even had no Apostle shewn us the significance of a slight omission, one with right thoughts of God might have anticipated that the whole form of a revelation from Him, and thus its omissions, could not be without reason. But, as ever, in pity to the ignorant and weak, the Lord gives us an example to shew what we may expect in, and how we ought to read, His Word. Thus writing to the Hebrews, the Apostle points out how much is to be learned from the simple fact, that in the history of Melchisedec, nothing is narrated either of his birth or death. He is presented to us "without father, or mother, without descent or pedigree, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (Hebrews 7:3). And this omission, says the Apostle, is with purpose, and full of teaching, specially intended to shew how One should arise, both king and priest, who in the fullest sense should be "without beginning of days, or end of life." Equally instructive, as many know, are the omissions in other types, and to take a broader example, the omissions in the Books of Chronicles as compared with the history given in the Books of Kings. An apprehension of God’s purpose in each of these books shews how significant

the omission is, and how, in ways the world cannot see, God’s wisdom is revealed to His own, even if they be babes and sucklings. It is the same in the case of the Gospels. Be it omission or addition, each is perfect; and for the eye that can see it, (though, indeed, few are seers -- "a seer is a prophet,") both are equally subjects for instructive contemplation. As to the omissions then in this Gospel, many points might be adduced. I confine myself to the more obvious ones, which I would now note in order. Here, then, is no genealogy, no miraculous birth, no reference to Bethlehem, or adoration of the wise men, as in St Matthew’s Gospel. No childhood at Nazareth, no subjection to His parents, no increase in wisdom and stature, as in St Luke; no reference to His pre-existence and Divine glory, as in St John’s Gospel. All these points, important in their bearing on the kingdom or person of the Lord, would be out of place in the description of His service, and therefore here have no place. On the contrary, St Mark comes at once to service, touching for a moment on that of the Baptist, quoting his testimony that One should follow who should baptize not with water only but with the Holy Ghost; and then passing directly, without further preface to the Lord’s own ministry, in exact accordance with his opening words, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). The service here is such service as can only be rendered by one who rejoices that He is indeed a Son of God; by one who fully understands that not by service are we made sons, but by sonship may we become servants. When, therefore, St Mark tells us that this is "the Gospel of the Son," we are prepared for service springing from the assurance of sonship -- evangelical service as opposed to legal. It is this "Gospel," this ministry or service, which St Mark is about to draw; and, omitting what does not bear on this, he comes straight to the details of this ministry.

Then here is no Sermon on the Mount. The laws of the kingdom would be out of place, for the Servant, not the King, is here manifested. Here is no "Our Father," which, so full of character in St Matthew and St Luke, as illustrating the wants and relationships both of the Jew and Gentile, is here omitted as having no special bearing on the path of service. For the same reason we have here no lengthened discourses, and but few parables; for the service here is rather doing than teaching, -- there are both, -- but the mind of the Spirit seems to be occupied more with the former of these than with the latter. Doing, and toiling, and serving the needy, is far humbler work than teaching. As teacher one holds more of a place of authority than consists with the idea of pure service. Here the service presented is that of which the Ox is the fittest emblem, a service of which very little, spite of abounding preaching, is to be discovered now. In a word, throughout this Gospel, as another has said, it is not Christ’s claim on men, so much as man’s claim on Christ, and His grace and power, which the Spirit here witnesses. Thus, while authoritative discourses and parables are few compared with the corresponding chapters of the other Gospels, the details of service are given far more minutely. And yet, though for the most part parables are omitted, there is one peculiar to this Gospel, in which, as we might anticipate from the fact of its insertion only here, we have something characteristic and instructive as to true ministry. Indeed, I believe that all the parables given in this Gospel, -- there are but four, (The Sower, the Seed which grew secretly, the Mustard-seed (ch. 4), and the Wicked Husbandmen (ch. 12). The connexion of the truth contained in each of these four parables with ministry is obvious.) -- bear upon this question. But as to that parable which is only here, of "the Seed which grew secretly, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn" (Mark 4:26-29), what is it but an encouragement to servants to sow in faith, and then leave results to Him who only can give increase? It seems to me as if the Lord himself here spoke out of the abundance of His heart; that He was expressing His own assurance

of a full return for all His sore travail; and that in prospect of His death He rejoiced in the thought that whether the sower "sleep or rise," the seed should yet spring up and increase greatly. I find in St Matthew in the corresponding place, that instead of this parable, which here comes in between that of "the Sower," and "the Mustard-seed;" there, between these same parables, we have that of "the Tares," which finds no place in this Gospel. The reason is plain. The parable of "the Tares" gives our Lord the place of power. Such words as these, "In the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather first the tares, and bind them in bundles, and burn them," though exactly suited to the Lord of the kingdom, are for that very reason out of character here, and as such are not recorded. To continue the notice of omissions. Here is no arraignment of the nation, no sentence passed upon Jerusalem, as in the other Gospels. I look in vain for the repeated judgment, "Woe unto you," so marked in St Matthew; but instead of this, in the corresponding chapter, Jesus is here represented as sitting opposite to the treasury, and watching a poor widow (compare Matthew 21:1-46; Matthew 22:1-46; Matthew 23:1-39 with Mark 12:1-44). If the Lord must judge, the Servant has an eye for service: unsparingly spending His own life for men, He can see and appreciate the spending of the last farthing. Here as everywhere the thing noticed answers to the beholder’s state. Oh that this fact, so continually meeting us in these Gospels, might awaken some by what they see to discover where and what they are!

Again, in the prophecy on the Mount of Olives (compare Matthew 24:1-51; Matthew 25:1-46 with Mark 13:1-37), here is no Bridegroom, as in St Matthew, receiving the wise and rejecting the foolish virgins; here is no Lord judging between faithful and unfaithful servants; no King, enthroned in glory, separating the nations to the right and left hand. But on the contrary, here only we read, touching the coming of the Son of Man, "Of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32), -- words which, as they are peculiar to this Gospel, so also are very characteristic: for here the Son is seen with glory laid aside, clothed in the likeness of man, in very deed a true Servant. And in this aspect, like other servants, He awaits another’s will, not knowing the lord’s secrets; for "the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth" (John 15:15). And so as Servant He says, naming Himself with other blessed servants, the holy angels, -- "Of that day knoweth no man, no, not the angels, neither the Son, but the Father." Nor does this touch the truth of His Person; for that is not the question here. But just as in St Luke the words, "He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man," speak of Him as Son of Adam, without in any way contradicting that He is also "the Word made flesh;" just as His death in one aspect is spoken of as "a sweet savour," man freely giving to God what is most sweet to Him, while in another aspect it is regarded as penal and a sin-offering, the due judgment for the sins of men; so in like manner what is true of Him as Servant does not deny His lordship, which is but another view of the same wondrous and blessed Lord. And these omissions continue to the end. Thus in the Garden, here is no reference to His right to summon twelve legions of angels had He so willed it (compare Mark 14:47-50 and Matthew 26:52-54). Here is no promise of the kingdom on the cross to His dying companion; here is no notice of the resurrection and appearance of saints, accompanying the Lord, as freed by Him, when He arose and led captivity captive. Such acts or claims, perfect in St Matthew, are out of the purpose of the Spirit here, and as such find no place in this Gospel. So in the last scene, the commission to the Apostles to go and preach, the points here recorded, when compared with what St Matthew gives us, are very striking (Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15-20). There, as befits the Lord of the kingdom, we read that He came and said, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth: go ye

therefore, and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Surely the Lord of the kingdom comes out in every word. In St Mark this is omitted, but we have, "Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." For here He is not discipling as with authority, or commanding that "all things which He has commanded should be observed in all nations;" but rather, as knowing the path of service, He hints at the rejection as well as the success, which His servants will surely meet with. "He that believeth, and he that believeth not," -- what a tale is in the words; how do they express the experience of One who knows all the results even of the best service! Now His disciples are to take His place, and He will serve in them: even yet, shall His work be accomplished in His members; and so in this Gospel only we have the special promise of power through His name, to work even as He worked (Mark 16:17-18). Then the Gospel thus closes, "They went forth and preached, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following;" for He is yet the Worker, though risen; so wonderfully, to the very end, does this Gospel preserve its own distinct character; from its opening words, beginning with "the Gospel of Jesus Christ," down to the promise of the spread of it through His servants to all nations.

I have thus marked some of the chief omissions which strike us in St Mark; but, even in what is recorded, and where in substance the narrative follows St Matthew, there is in this Gospel ever a lower and softened tone. Thus in John’s testimony to Jesus, this Evangelist stops short, omitting the prediction, that "He should burn the chaff with fire unquenchable" (compare Mark 1:8 and Matthew 3:11-12). So in the account of the ordination of "the twelve," in St Matthew we read that "He sent them forth, and commanded them saying, Go not thus, but go thus and thus" (Matthew 10:5-6), as with authority. In St Mark we read, "He ordained twelve that they might be with Him" (Mark 3:14); they are regarded rather as His companions in service, in which relation they are seen throughout this whole Gospel. For, and it is very characteristic, never do they call Him "Lord" in this Gospel. On the contrary, the word is remarkably omitted, till after His resurrection, in scenes where it occurs in the corresponding place in the other Gospels. For example, when the leper comes, in St Matthew he says, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Matthew 8:2). In St Mark I read, "A leper came beseeching Him, and saying, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Mark 1:40). So at the supper. In St Matthew, "They began to say, Lord, is it I?" (Matthew 26:22). In St Mark, "They began to say unto Him, one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?" (Mark 14:19). The word "Lord" is markedly omitted. So in the case of the dumb child, the father cries out, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24). In our authorised version I find "Lord" inserted here in St Mark; but Griesbach, without the slightest reference to the character of the Gospel, marks this word as one which is "absolutely spurious," and which as such has no place in his version. So in the storm. In St Matthew we read that the disciples cried, "Lord, save us" (Matthew 8:25). We look in vain for such a word in the corresponding place in St Mark’s Gospel (Mark 4:37, &c). Is this chance? Surely, if not a sparrow falls to the ground without being marked, a title of the beloved Son is not dropped out of a Gospel without the Father’s knowledge. The omission or change here is of a piece with the form of His ancient Word, now speaking of Elohim, now of Shaddai, now of Jehovah, suiting His titles according to the matter in hand, and His own relation to it, as Creator, Protector, or God in covenant. (Those acquainted with the Old Testament know that the name of God varies according to the subject-matter which is discoursed of. Thus in Genesis 1:1-31 God is Elohim. In Genesis 2:1-25 He is Jehovah-Elohim. A title suffices to describe

Him in the work of creation, which is not enough when His relation to His creature man comes to be described. In a deeper sense I may say, God is known by a different name in the days of labour, and in that Paradise where man is set in relationship to God as lord of all. In Psalms 91:1-2, we have four titles of the Lord brought into the compass of a single sentence. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, (the name by which He was known to Melchizedek, 'priest of the Most High God,') shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, (the name by which He was known to Abraham;) I will say of Jehovah, (the covenant name for Israel,) He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, (my Elohim,) in Him will I trust." To the believer the names of God are full of meaning, as revelations of His nature, and property, and covenant-relationships.) The taught of the Father know this, and rejoice to trace His wisdom, even where others, making their blindness the judge of all things, can perceive no beauty. But it is time I should turn from omissions to what is positively distinctive here. And though I am well assured that only one well practised in shewing kindness can see the whole of these wonders, though a servant's eye may be needed to know the import of some touches here, the heart must be hard indeed, which sees nothing in the details peculiar to this Gospel. Trifling as each is by itself, the aggregate of the whole is an amount of teaching, from which the best trained servant may continually draw some fresh lesson. The first point I notice then is the fact, here only recorded, in the temptation, that "He was with the wild beasts" (Mark 1:13). This is a true mark of him who can serve, that, like David of old, he has, in the wilderness and alone, overcome the lion and the bear, before in public he fights against Goliath. Let such as would serve lay this to heart. If called to service, they may expect for a season to be among the wild beasts. Alone with God, let us overcome such. Then we may go forth, and fight for, and serve Israel. The next thing I observe is the remarkable repetition of the word, "forthwith." We cannot read a single chapter carefully, or consult a Concordance, -- of course a Greek Concordance should be used, for the same word, eutheos, is in our version indifferently translated, "straightway," "forthwith," and "immediately," -- without being struck with the recurrence of this word. Thus, to take but a single chapter, -- the first may serve as an example, -- Jesus is baptized, and then "immediately" He is driven into the wilderness. Then when He returns and begins His service, "He saw James and John, and straightway He called them, and they went after Him. And they went into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabbath-day He entered into a synagogue, and taught, and cast out an unclean spirit. ... And forthwith, when they came out of the synagogue, they entered into Simon's house; and Simon's wife's mother was sick, and anon (the same word) they tell Him of her. ... And there came a leper, and as soon as He had spoken immediately the leprosy departed, ... and forthwith He sent him away. And again He entered into Capernaum, and straightway many were gathered, ... and immediately, when Jesus perceived that they reasoned in their hearts, He said," &c. (Mark 1:12; Mark 1:20-21; Mark 1:29-30; Mark 1:42, &c.) Now this runs through the Gospel, and is peculiar to it; (I see, by a reference to Schmid's Concordance, that the word eutheos only occurs eighty times in the New Testament, and of these instances forty are found in the short Gospel of St Mark.) and when it is taken in connexion with other expressions, such as "in the way," "in the house," " as He sat at meat," or "as He walked in the temple," we get a glimpse of what is meant by "instant in season, out of season," and what befits one who is called to be the Lord's servant.

Then as to the way in which He served. We have here many details, as to His demeanour, and bearing, and looks, not to be found in any other Gospel. Thus in the case of the little children who were brought that He should touch them, here only do we read, that "He took them up in His arms,

and blessed them." (Mark 10:16. Compare Matthew 19:13-15.) So again, of the child whom He set in the midst, here only, "He took him in His arms." (Mark 9:36. Compare Matthew 18:2.) Here only is it seen of Peter's wife's mother, that "He took her by the hand and lifted her up." (Mark 1:31. Compare Luke 4:38-39). So again, here only do we read, "He took the blind man by the hand" (Mark 8:23). Here only is it noticed of the child which had the dumb spirit, that "Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up." (Mark 9:27. Compare Matthew 17:18 and Luke 9:42.) I need not stay to speak of the tenderness these acts display; but I believe many have yet to learn what ought to be, and has been, the effect of the touch and hand of God's servants. I know that "laying on of hands" is now by many regarded as a mere form. I will only say, time was when virtue accompanied the hand of God's servants; nay, when even the shadow of an Apostle could heal. It will not hurt us to remember, even if the glory is now departed from us, that such things have once been. And this I will add, that should the day return when devils are rebuked, and lame ones healed, those who look closely will see that a tender hand will not be wanting in such service. "But where," as one has asked, "are the layers on of hands, who give man to himself and God, by casting out his devils? Where is the clergy to whom sickness makes its last appeal for health? We find them among the fishermen of the first century, but not among our priests now. Many say that the age of miracle is past and gone. But Christianity, as we find it in Scripture, was the institution of miracle. And if the age of miracle is well-nigh gone, is it not because the age of Christianity is well-nigh gone? The age of mathematics would be past, if no man cultivated them." But here I forbear. Let us be content to take beggars by the hand: we may then see things wholly out of the range of our present field of vision.

Again in this Gospel the look is noticed, and this in scenes where the other Evangelists in the corresponding places give us no such information. Thus, when they watched Him upon the Sabbath, whether He would heal or not, we read here, "When he had looked round about on them in anger," (Mark 3:5. Compare Matthew 12:13.) -- was there nothing in such a look? So again, when they said, "Thy mother and Thy brethren without seek for Thee;" here only is it noticed, that "He looked round about on them who sat about Him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren." (Mark 3:34. Compare Matthew 12:46-49 and Luke 8:19-21.) So again, when He spoke of His cross, and Peter began to rebuke Him, here only we read, "And when He had turned about, and looked on His disciples, He rebuked Peter." (Mark 8:33. Compare Matthew 16:23.) There must have been something in that look never to be forgotten; a flash of light, a beam of the glory, which made its dwelling in that lowly Servant. So again, in the case of him who came kneeling down and asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" here only do we read, that "Jesus looking upon him, loved him;" and then again, "when he went away grieved," here only is it noticed, that "Jesus looking round said to His disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark 10:20-23. Compare Matthew 19:20-23 and Luke 18:21-24.) Surely not in vain is the look recorded. Let servants mark this: there is no small ministry in a single look, be it of love, or grief, or anger. It may speak what words cannot express. It has ere now, in storm and calm, mid the rush of battle, and in scenes of deep anguish, imparted confidence and peace beyond the power of language. For it speaks truly: hence its deep power. And indeed heaven may be in an eye, its sunshine and rain; and if it be there, though there be no speech nor language, its voice shall still be heard. Oh for a look like that of the Master! Oh for that light of life within, breaking forth through eyes beaming with love and holiness! To do justice to my subject is beyond me, but as I have spoken of the acts and looks, I may add a reference or two to some of those

words of ministry which are peculiar to this Gospel. One example we find in the raising of the daughter of Jairus. The scene is common to three Evangelists, but here only do we get some particulars full of marked tenderness. Thus St Mark alone relates, that when some said, Thy daughter is dead, "Jesus, as soon as He heard the word that was spoken, (The promptness of this reply is very strong in the original: eutheos akousas ton logon laloumenon, k.t.l. -- Mark 5:36. Compare Matthew 9:24.) (as if to save the father a moment's anguish and unbelief,) said, Be not afraid;" brief words, but full of grace, revealing the Servant's heart, who, even while He healed, watched to aid the spiritual progress of those He came to comfort. In the same spirit of mindful affection is Peter specially named here, when after the resurrection a message is sent by the women to the disciples. In St Matthew the angels say, "Go and tell His disciples:" here only, "Tell His disciples, and Peter, that He goeth before you into Galilee." (Mark 16:7. Compare Matthew 28:7.) For Peter more than the rest needed a special word, and so above the rest he is remembered. The good Shepherd, who loves all, has peculiar pity towards the wounded sheep. Thus did this Servant of servants speak a word in season: "He spake," as St Mark tells us, (and the words are peculiar to this Gospel,) "as they were able to bear it" (Mark 4:33); with milk for babes, and meat for the strong, distributing His words, even as His acts, in special pity to the feeble, shewing more abundant grace to that which lacked.

Another point peculiar to this Gospel is the repeated notice we get here of the way in which our Lord permitted Himself to be intruded upon in His retirement, and indeed upon all occasions. So thoroughly was He at the disposal of others, (here only is it noticed,) that "He could not so much as eat" (Mark 3:20; Mark 6:31): for the multitude came together, and it was not in the heart of that blessed Servant to refuse Himself to their importunities. This occurs again and again. Thus after a day of toil, the Lord, rising up early, "went and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed: but Simon and they that were with him, followed after Him; and when they found Him, they said unto Him, All men seek for Thee." Without a murmur He at once receives them, allowing the interruption, and says, "Let us go into the next towns, and preach there also, for therefore am I sent" (Mark 1:35-38). (We find nothing answering to this in the other Gospels.) So again, when His apostles returned from their mission, and gathered themselves together to Him, Jesus says, (and the words are only here,) "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile;" thus shewing not only His own tender sympathy for them, but teaching how needful retirement is for those who serve others. "So they departed into a desert place by ship privately." But scarce had they got there before "the people ran afoot thither, and came together to Him." And Jesus at once allows the intrusion. He had sought to be alone, nevertheless He rises, and teaches them; and then, because it was a desert place, and they were faint, He feeds them, making His own ease give place to their need. And then, O perfect service! remembering His weary apostles, He constrains them to get into a ship and go away to the other side, "while He sent away the people." (Mark 6:31, &c. Compare Matthew 14:15.) So again, at the close of a day, "when even was come," wearied with toil, He enters a ship with His disciples to pass over to the other side. We read, "They took Him even as He was" (Mark 4:36), -- a remarkable expression, peculiar to this Gospel, and descriptive of His extreme weariness. No sooner is He in the ship than He is asleep. But a storm alarms the disciples; they break in upon His rest; and (in this Gospel only are His words on this occasion given) without a murmur He arises to calm their troubled spirits. Oh, how different from us! Our times of rest must be our own. Sleeping or waking, He lives for others. If others need Him, He is their Servant, "always girded," ever ready to do them good. And here I may notice that this

Evangelist records two miracles, which, as they are peculiar to this Gospel, are also very characteristic of what befits true ministry. The one is the case of "him who was deaf" (Mark 7:32-37); the other, of the blind man at Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26). In both I find not only in word, but in act, the Lord manifesting a desire to throw a veil of secresy over these gracious actions. And surely this is one unfailing mark of service according to God, "alms in secret," "the right hand ignorant of what the left hand doeth." This comes out brightly here. We read, "He took him aside, and charged them that they should tell no man" (Mark 7:33; Mark 7:36): again, "He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town, and said, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town" (Mark 8:23; Mark 8:26). Words like these requiring secresy, though not so frequently repeated, may be found elsewhere: but acts in which the Servant so remarkably strives to hide Himself, are peculiar to this Gospel. So in the case of the woman of Canaan, here only is it added, "He entered into a house, and would have no man know it" (Mark 7:24). For this is perfection in service, -- to serve unseen, unthanked. Such service is heavenly, like that of the holy angels. "Are they not all ministering spirits?" and yet who sees them, who thanks them? Nor do they ask, nor would they receive, our praise. Enough for them that they are doing the will of God; for they know, that "in keeping, as well as for keeping, His commandments is great reward." Surely not in vain are ministers addressed as "angels of churches" (Revelation 2:1, &c.). May such as count themselves to hold this place, see that tried by this test of unseen service they walk worthy of it. The peculiarities hitherto noticed refer to what was open in the Lord’s service. But several deep and precious secrets of ministry are told out in the peculiarities of this Gospel, as God alone can tell them. Take, for instance, the secret of power. Do any ask, how is it gained? We read here that after having spent a day, healing the hearts and sicknesses of all about him, -- in this one day alone we read that He taught in the synagogue, cast out a devil, healed Peter’s wife’s mother, and at even relieved the many who were gathered about the door, -- after such a day it is added, "And in the morning rising up a great while before day, He went out to a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mark 1:35); words which, as they are peculiar to this Gospel, speak with no uncertain voice the one prime secret of all real power in true ministry. Another secret comes out in those references to the exercises of our Lord’s soul, which are quite peculiar to this Gospel. Thus, here only do we read, when the leper came, that "Jesus was moved with compassion." (Mark 1:41. Compare Matthew 8:3 and Luke 5:13.) The act of healing is mentioned in St Matthew and St Luke; but St Mark alone gives a glimpse of the exercise of heart in our Lord which accompanied the outward service. So in the feeding of the multitude, here again the heart is laid bare: we read that "When He came out, and saw much people, He was moved with compassion toward them, and began to teach them many things." (Mark 6:33-35. Compare Luke 9:11-12, &c.) So again, when the young ruler comes -- a scene common to the other Gospels (Mark 10:21. Compare Matthew 19:21 and Luke 18:22.) -- here only is it recorded that "Jesus beholding him, loved him." This exercise of soul, the secret of all service, comes out in this Gospel, and only here. As a key to service, here it is quite perfect, teaching a lesson many need to learn, that without love the most costly service will be unlike the Lord’s, and all barren. Another secret of service is noticed in the cure of the child possessed with an unclean spirit. The scene generally is common to two of the other Gospels; but here only do we read that the father of the child cried out, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us," to which the Lord instantly replies, in words only found in this Gospel, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible." (Mark 9:22-23. Compare Matthew 17:14-18 and Luke 9:37-42.) A deep secret of ministry is here. Not only must love be in the servant, but

there must be faith on the part of the patient who comes to seek blessing. I can only serve those who trust me. And agreeably to this we read again -- words only to be found in this Gospel -- that in a certain place "He could do no mighty works, because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:5-6); shewing how the most loving service is of no avail if met by unbelief, while faith draws yet more of the riches of God’s hidden treasures out of His servants’ hands.

One other point, and I have done. In no Evangelist but St Mark do I find the same detail as to the special trials, inward and outward, which our Lord suffered. I say nothing of His weary days, that "He had no leisure so much as to eat" -- a circumstance twice recorded in this Gospel, and only here: but His "grief for their hardness of heart" (Mark 3:5), an expression peculiar to this Gospel, lifts the veil, and shews something of the wear of spirit which His service cost this blessed Servant. So again, here only do we find the reproach, -- "They said, He is beside Himself" (Mark 3:21), -- because His service lacked that selfish prudence which a selfish world praises; a reproach which an Apostle felt so keenly that he answers it, saying, "If we be beside ourselves, or sober, it is for your sake" (2 Corinthians 5:13); a reproach felt by our Lord, but unanswered, save by the answer of a yet ceaseless, unmurmuring, patient, loving service. Then in this Gospel only do we read, that "He marvelled because of their unbelief," when they refer to His calling, in answer to His works, saying, "Is not this the Carpenter?" (Mark 6:3; Mark 6:6). Here only do we read that "He sighed," and again, that "He sighed deeply" (Mark 7:34; Mark 8:12); for in His service He did not offer to God that which cost Him nothing; teaching us too that if we would serve as He did, there must be many "sighs," the fruit first of sympathy with the pain around us, and then of rejected kindnesses. Then again, here only are we told, when He was led out to suffer, that "They bear Him." First we read, "They led Him out that they might crucify Him:" but He seems to have failed under the burden, for soon "They compel another to bear His cross;" and then St Mark tells us "They bear Him" (Gr. pherousin auton -- Mark 15:20; Mark 15:22), as if actually supporting Him, "to the place called Golgotha." A fit end to such unsparing labour. He was worn out, and needed to be borne, and long before the thieves crucified with Him were dead, He had resigned His spirit. For indeed service is sacrifice throughout, and "the ox strong to labour" is also the chosen victim for the Lord’s altar.

Such are some of the details peculiar to this Gospel, and very plainly do they shew that true ministry is no slight "warfare;" (See Numbers 4:23; Numbers 4:30, margin, and compare 1 Timothy 1:18.) that service, "according to the pattern seen on the mount," is something very different from the correct drawing-room Christianity of the present day. And this deep sense of the cross, as the price of service, comes out all through this Gospel. A single word added to what is recorded by the other Evangelists, again and again sets this in the very clearest light. Thus, when the young man comes and asks, "What lack I yet?" in St Matthew the Lord’s answer is, "Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." St Mark, in recording the same scene, repeats these words, only adding, "And take up thy cross;" (Mark 10:21. Compare Matthew 19:21.) for the Servant, though He has made Himself poor, does not the less feel that herein there is a cross to carry. So again, in the answer of our Lord, when "Peter began to say, Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee," in St Mark alone do we read that with the reward shall come the cross: -- "He shall receive a hundred-fold in this time, ... with persecutions." (Mark 10:30. Compare Matthew 19:29.) But enough. Blessed be God that such service has been seen on earth; that there has been such a hand, such an eye, and such a heart here, among the sons of men. And blessed be

God, that by the same Spirit He waits to mould us to His pattern, yea, that He has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His beloved Son. And if the Head was content to serve thus; -- if, while He tarried here, He lived to meet the need of all who sought succour; -- if, now risen, He is yet the same, still the loving Worker, interceding within the veil, and working here too for us; -- if He shall yet serve us, "for the less is blessed of the greater," when in the coming kingdom He shall still lead His flock to living fountains, and wipe away their tears; -- shall not we whom He has purchased, in whom He seeks to dwell, who are His witnesses in a world which knows Him not, wait upon Him until His mantle fall on us, and His Spirit, "the oil which was upon the Head," run down even to us also; till we catch the mind of heaven, and are made like unto the angels, children of God and children of resurrection, called to stand in the presence of God, and yet to serve, as ministering spirits to them who shall be heirs of salvation? God is serving, -- "the Father worketh," -- Oh! what works of love, from the rain and fruitful seasons up to the mighty work of raising man from earth to highest heaven; and Christ has served, and is serving; and the Holy Ghost is serving, taking of the things of Christ, to reveal them to us, and then to work them in us; and angels are serving, and saints are serving, and the Church proclaims her call, that she too because redeemed must be a servant here, and that her rulers are but servants, yea, servants of servants; and heaven is serving earth, and earth the creatures on it. So let us, after our Pattern, being redeemed, go forth to serve also. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find so doing. Verily, He shall gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and He will come forth and serve them." O Lord, Thou canst perform it; perform it to Thy praise; Oh! shew us the glory of Thy service, full of grace and truth, that in its presence we may be changed; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, may even here bear to Thy glory the image of the heavenly. Amen.

02.4.0. St Luke; or, the Son of Adam

ST LUKE;

OR, THE SON OF ADAM.

"The third living creature had a face as a Man." -- Revelation 4:7.

"I drew them with the cords of a Man." -- Hosea 11:4.

"THE third living creature had a face as a Man," agreeable to which the third Gospel sets forth the Lord as Son of Adam, or Son of Man. Unlike St Mark, where the peculiar view of our Lord had to be gathered from nice details, each in itself comparatively trifling, yet when summed up affording a picture full of character and distinctness, St Luke throughout writes very broadly and plainly the memoir of the Son of Man, shewing the Lord as very Man, and therefore linked not only to a certain kingdom, but to all the Sons of Adam. Here is man according to God, the pattern Man, in and through whom man is blessed and God glorified, seen not only in moral perfectness, but in all the sufferings and honours, which according to God's purpose are the heritage of the sons of men; first humbled into the dust of death, then exalted to God's right hand, His image and likeness, to rule as Lord of all. For man had been God's image, set by Him to rule the creature; and though this image had failed in the first Adam, it was to be renewed with greater blessings in "the Second Man, the Lord from heaven" (1 Corinthians 15:47). This is the picture drawn by St Luke. And as in St Matthew, the Gospel of the Kingdom, we had the professing children of the kingdom, and their zeal for God, though not according to knowledge, -- their washings of the outside of the cup, their tithing mint and cummin, their compassing sea and land to make one proselyte, -- set very brightly in contrast with the true Heir, and His kingdom of righteousness, and joy, and peace, in the Holy Ghost; so here in the Gospel of the Son of Man, as the pattern Man walks before us, we have men as they are set side by side, in strong and marked contrast, with man as he should be, the Man Christ Jesus. In this relation as Son of Man, the Lord holds two offices, (I have said that our Lord as Man holds two offices, because these two, Apostle, and High-priest, God's messenger to man, and man's to God, involve or are connected, I believe, with all the others, which He holds as Son of Man.) both of which, as they result from His being very Man, meet us very prominently throughout this Gospel. As Man He is the Priest, "for every high-priest is taken from among men," for this reason, "that he may have compassion on the ignorant, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity" (Hebrews 5:1-2). As Man He is the Prophet, or Apostle, sent from God, and yet feeling with those to whom He comes as God's messenger. St Paul therefore, when speaking to the Hebrews of their "Apostle and High-priest," the One who comes from God, and goes to God, for us, introduces his subject with a proof that He who holds this place is Man, shewing, that "forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same." "For in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High-priest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:17-18, see also Luke 5:15-16). And this explains the reason

why some, seeing so much of priestly compassion here, have connected this Gospel with the emblem of "the ox," taking that figure as representative of sacrifice, and so of priestly propitiation. That they were right in seeing the Priest here, I cannot doubt. For the Priest is a relation, not arbitrarily undertaken, but necessarily growing out of our Lord's true manhood. But this only confirms me in the view, which indeed is justified by this Gospel throughout, that here the Lord stands before us as the "Son of Man." To pretend to give more than a few hints would lead me too far. I shall be content here to shew, how what is distinctive in St Luke points out the Son of Man; adding two or three examples as to the way in which the peculiarities of this Gospel mark our special duties and privileges as sons of men.

Now as to what is distinctive in St Luke. His very Preface is characteristic: here only the Evangelist begins with an address to his friend Theophilus (Luke 1:1-4). Human affection is thus displayed here. A Man is to be described, and the Writer will draw his friend to the subject "by the bands of a man." Then this Evangelist -- and this one alone -- refers to his own personal knowledge of his subject; -- "having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first;" thus bringing something human into his task, which is perfectly in keeping with the view of Christ which this Gospel presents to us. As another has observed, "the writer himself appears, as having the faculties and affections of a man exercised about the things which were engaging him." (On the Gospel by St Luke, p. 12.) Nor were his heart and pen the less for this reason under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who, as He was about to draw the portrait of the Anointed Man, thus with a purpose permitted the human affections of His instrument to be seen, to shew that perfect subjection to God could yet consist with what was truly human. No less characteristic is the opening chapter. St John, as befits him, begins with "the Word which was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God." And his tone throughout, not of this world, corresponds with the glory of the Only-begotten. Very different, but quite as perfect in its place, is the opening of this Gospel. It begins, like a simple tale touching the sons of men, with, "There was in the days of Herod the king a certain priest" (Luke 1:5). And as it proceeds, we are introduced to human sympathies and relationships, in a way perfectly unlike anything we get in the other Gospels; with all the circumstances of the birth and infancy of the Holy Child, and of him who was sent as His forerunner. Here too, and here only, do we find the three inspired Songs, which, as speaking of mercy to Gentile as well as Jew, have for ages been the chosen utterance of the Church taken from among all nations. Here Mary sings, "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away" (Luke 1:52-53). Here even the priest looks beyond Israel, and while speaking of "salvation to his people," adds, "to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death" (Luke 1:77; Luke 1:79); while in the same strain the aged Simeon, ready to depart in peace, for his eyes have now seen God's salvation, cannot but add, that it is "prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Thy people Israel" (Luke 2:31-32). The second chapter is as distinctive. Commencing as usual here, with facts quite beyond the limits of the elect people, St Luke notices that "in those days there went out a decree that all the world should be taxed" (Luke 2:1-3). And then comes a fact which we should in vain look for in St Matthew, that Joseph and Mary "went up to be taxed," among the rest who went every one to his own city. For the mind of the Spirit here is not so much to shew One who has claims to rule, as One who is coming down perfectly on that ground which man as man then occupied. Equally distinctive is the message of the angels to the watching shepherds. The kings of the East may ask

in St Matthew for One "who is born King." But in St Luke the angel says, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born a Saviour: and this shall be the sign; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes" (Luke 2:10-12). After which we get the story of the infancy of "the Child:" how "the Child grew;" how "the grace of God was on Him" (Luke 2:40); how "when He was twelve years old, He went up with His parents to Jerusalem to the feast;" how "the Child tarried behind, and His mother knew it not;" how "she said, Son, why hast Thou dealt thus;" how "He went down and was subject to them;" how "He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:42-52); -- these and points like these, as they are peculiar to this Gospel, distinctly mark our Lord as Man, personally entering man's lot, and Himself fully tasting it; joining Himself to us, in birth, in childhood, and in youth, that, being very Man, He might in His own blessed Person bring man near to God.

I trace the same tone throughout the next chapter, which records John's ministry, and the baptism of the Lord. It commences -- for the Spirit is here occupied with man as such -- with a glance over the world; the rulers of which, for rulers are the key to the state of their subjects, are at some length given to us (Luke 3:1-2). Tiberius Caesar is reigning: Pontius Pilate governs Judea: Herod is tetrarch of Galilee: Philip of Iturea: Lysanias rules Abilene: while, (and this is not without purpose,) two men are named as the high-priests of that people which had once been God's elect. Two high-priests in Israel -- what a tale this told of the fall of the elect, who had become so mixed with the world, that where God had appointed one high-priest, the Gentile could now make many. ("In strict propriety there could be but one high-priest at a time, who held the office for life. But after the reduction of Judea to the Roman yoke, great changes were made, and the occupants of an office, which had enjoyed almost regal authority, were changed at the will of the conquerors. Hence some have supposed that the office had become annual, and that Annas and Caiaphas, occupying it by turns, each or both might be said to be the high-priest." -- Bloomfield's Greek Testament, in loco.) But this is characteristic, and in keeping here. The "Second Man" is to be seen, and men as they are, and their doings, are brought to shew how God's thoughts are with them, even while their thoughts utterly differed from His thoughts. They have arranged the world as they like. Then He comes into the midst, both by His servants' preaching, and by His own life, to witness that what man now is, is opposed to God's image. I have already noticed that in St Matthew John comes preaching the "kingdom of heaven." Here he preaches "repentance for the remission of sins;" after which this Evangelist quotes the prophet, to shew how in this act God was opening the door, that "all flesh should see His salvation" (Luke 3:3; Luke 3:6). Then here only is the preaching of the Baptist to men of every grade recorded. Here only do we read, "The people asked him, saying, What shall we do? -- and the publicans said, What shall we do? -- and the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do?" -- all which inquiries here are answered (Luke 3:10-14), with a special word to each, for man as man, whether soldier or publican, is the object which the Spirit would here present to us.

Then as to Christ's Baptism: here only do we read, -- "When all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened" (Luke 3:21). He is linked here with "all the people," and it is specially noted, that, being baptized, as becomes a Man expressing His dependence, He "was praying." Baptism, as shadowing death and resurrection, is specially connected with us as sons of men, and also as members of that kingdom which flesh and blood cannot inherit. Therefore both St Matthew and St Luke so fully record it; while St John for the

same reason omits it, as being from the first occupied with a view of Christ as the heavenly and only-begotten Son. Another fact, only recorded here, is that "Jesus now began to be about thirty years of age" (Luke 3:23), a point of interest regarding Him as a man, and still more as a priest, if we take the number "thirty" in its mystic signification. On this latter ground I scarce dare enter. A belief in mystic numbers too often in these days only provokes a smile. (The thoughts of Augustine on this subject, as to the import and value of mystic numbers as symbols, are well known. His 11th chap. of the 2d book, De Libero Arbitrio, has some suggestive thoughts on the subject. I confess I cannot see, why, if all creation be a type, numbers alone should be excluded as having no signification. But here as everywhere the seer is wanted.) Nevertheless I am assured that this number, and indeed all else which is distinctive here, is added with a special reason. If I mistake not, it involves in type (as we know is the case with other numbers, as for instance the number eight,) the very truth which was here set forth and fulfilled in Christ's baptism. Baptism is burial and resurrection: "we are buried by baptism" (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), because in Adam we are dead, and in this act would confess our state, even while by faith in God's love we claim through the death of self a higher lineage. Christ as Son of Adam, through a mystic burial, figuring that other baptism, ("I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straightened until it be accomplished!" -- Luke 12:50.) when all God's waves and billows went over Him, here takes the place of Adam's Son, and thus through death brings man into the higher relationship as Son of God. Thus linking Himself with us in our shame, He takes a place from whence henceforth He can meet the vilest of Adam's children, and, because He has another life, lift them up with Him into heavenly places. Thus this act touches His priesthood: "for if He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing there were priests who offered according to the law" (Hebrews 8:4). But coming as He did in baptism to ground where "heaven was opened" to Him, He becomes, as the heavenly Man (thus anticipating His resurrection,) a fit High-priest for ruined men. Now the thirtieth year in which the Jewish priest entered on his office (Numbers 4:3), like the eighth day of circumcision, figured this same mystery of death and resurrection, and as such it is noticed here in the Gospel of the Son of Man; in the letter speaking of His manhood; in the spirit, of a higher truth growing out of what as Man He did and suffered. (This must needs be inconclusive to those unexercised in such subjects, for several points must be apprehended before we arrive at the result. I may however add a few words as to the two numbers to which allusion has been made. And first as to "the eighth day." Seven days in type include the periods proper to the first creation. The eighth, as it takes us out of these, into a new order of times, into another first day, speaks of a new creation or resurrection. Therefore was circumcision on the eighth day, to shew that when resurrection came, the filth of the flesh should be put away. So with "thirty," which is the multiple of three and ten; "ten" being but a unity of another order, and "three" the number most commonly used (why I know not, but the fact is so,) to prefigure one view of resurrection. But I forbear upon this. Augustine says, "Diei octavi sacramentum ... quo significatur resurrectio." -- Epist. lib. ii. 55, c. 13. Before I had read Augustine, simply from Scripture, I had come to the same conclusion, as indeed have many others.) For a like reason, in this Gospel the genealogy is given at His baptism, and not at His birth, to shew us how the Son of Adam claimed a higher lineage by mystic death and resurrection. I need not notice that here the genealogy is traced to Adam, and is, I doubt not, the mother's line, to shew, as was observed so long since as the second century, that He whom St Luke is shewing us was very Man, linked to, and about to head up afresh, all the families of men who had sprung from the root of old Adam. (Irenaeus, lib. iii. cap. 33. He alludes to the fact of there

being seventy-two generations in this genealogy as something mystic. The Jews seem to have taken this genealogy, which sets out from Heli, for Mary's, in representing Mary, the daughter of Heli, tormented in hell. (See Lightfoot.) Justin Martyr also (Dial. c. Tryph. § 43) says that "the Virgin Mary was of the race of David, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham," an expression which has been considered as an indication that he regarded one of the Genealogies as that of Mary.) All of which is characteristic, and illustrative of the relationship in which our Lord appears in this Gospel.

Equally marked is the account here given of the Lord's opening ministry. Both St Matthew and St Mark notice the fact, that after His baptism, "Jesus went into Galilee and began to preach." But this Evangelist only gives the particulars, which are all characteristic. Here we read, "He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up." Then in the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day He stood up to read a scripture descriptive of Himself as the Anointed Man: -- "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me, ... He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted" (Luke 4:16-18). All this is in keeping here. He goes to the place "where He had been brought up," -- "bringing up" is a part of man's lot, -- and confessing that "the Lord has anointed Him," He declares the calling of the Gentiles, preaching deliverance to captives, and good tidings to the poor and broken-hearted. Still more marked is the discourse which follows, which is peculiar to St Luke, where, in quoting the Old Testament, and shewing how His course agreed with that of the ancient prophets, He speaks of Elijah and Elisha, as being sent, the one to Sarepta, a city of Sidon, to a widow there, the other to Naaman the Syrian, that is to two Gentiles; adding that remarkable declaration, so full of meaning, that "no prophet is accepted in his own country" (Luke 4:24-27); words implying that though rejected by the Jew, like Elijah and Elisha, He should yet find poor widows and lepers among the Gentiles, who would receive Him gladly.

These examples from the opening chapters of this Gospel may shew how, while setting forth the Lord as Man, the Spirit continually looks out to the Gentiles, on man as man, far beyond elect Israel. And this peculiarity runs throughout. Thus, in the 6th chapter, in that discourse which answers in substance to the Sermon on the Mount, here, not to dwell on the place and audience, is no reference to what "had been said of old time;" no allusion to "the law and the prophets," as in St Matthew's Gospel; no correction of the errors of practised religionists as to alms and prayer; but simply broad moral teachings suited to the state and wants of man as man. Many minor differences might be noted, equally characteristic, as for instance, that where St Matthew writes, "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect," St Luke recording another form of the same expression, (for doubtless the substance of this Sermon was often repeated,) says, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful;" thus putting His disciples on the same ground He himself here occupies, as coming down in mercy to meet the sons of men. The same eye to man is seen in the mission of the Twelve as given here. In St Matthew their labours are specially directed within the limits of a certain outward kingdom. There we read that the Lord said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." St Luke omits this, as beside his purpose, simply saying, that "He sent them forth to preach," and that "they departed, preaching the Gospel everywhere." (Luke 9:6. Compare Matthew 10:5-7.) Then on their return, this Evangelist records, (the words are only here, and in St Mark,) that "John said, We saw one casting out devils, and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said, Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us." St Mark adds

here, because it bears on service, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, shall not lose his reward" (Mark 9:38-41). St Luke, while omitting this of the "cup of water," records the command, "Forbid him not," because it shews how God may have a work among men outside of what we judge to be the kingdom, with which disciples, if they are humble and obedient, are not to strive or interfere. St Luke then adds a scene (Luke 9:52-56), not elsewhere recorded, but characteristic here, as shewing the heart of the Son of Man for men, even while they rejected Him. The disciples go into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for Him; "and they did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go up to Jerusalem." At once the disciples, James and John, would have Him call for fire on the rejectors. Such is the flesh even in true and beloved followers of the loving Saviour -- so unwilling to recognise labourers who are not with us; so ready to judge those who will not receive us. But Jesus turned and rebuked them, saying, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man is come, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them," -- words omitted in the other Gospels, but perfect as revealing the Son of Man, who, with doors shut against Him, is yet content to bear this slight, if by long-suffering He may yet save lost sinners. The mission of the Seventy, which immediately follows, and which is only here (Luke 10:1, &c.), is in the same tone, reaching forth as it does with manifest desire to win the sons of men. One little point here, peculiar to this Gospel, may perhaps be noticed. The Lord says, "Salute no man by the way;" and yet, "Into whatsoever house ye enter, say, Peace be to this house." The courtesies of life are not the chief thing with man in his present state. To be on good terms with those we meet is not the first thing, but rather, if it may be so, to set man right with God. To shew how God's thoughts are thoughts of "peace," this is of far higher moment than salutations and greetings, which may only leave us far off from Him with whom we have to do.

Closely allied with this special regard for man as such, is the fact that throughout this Gospel, in passages peculiar to St Luke, man as he is, in his thoughts and ways, is searched and manifested in a truly wondrous manner. Take, for example, the particulars of the call of Peter as recorded here. This call is very briefly mentioned in the other Gospels; but here only do we read the exercises of Peter's heart; here only are we shewn the feelings of a man, when for the first time he feels that God and His power are really brought near to him (Luke 5:1-10). (I say nothing here of the mystic sense of this scene, which is equally characteristic, as describing the gathering of creatures out of the Gentile waters of the sea of Galilee, (the mystery of which has long since been noticed,) by means of the Apostles' labour.) He has been unsuccessful in fishing. The Lord bids him let down the net. A great multitude of fish is at once caught, insomuch that the net brake. Then Peter is astonished, and falls down, and says, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Many secrets of the heart are here. A little matter, a draught of fishes, some providential occurrence, and it may be very slight, at times flashes in upon a man whom the Lord is leading, making him feel that God is very near him. When this is the case, man at once discovers that he is sinful, and as such would have the glory, which shews him his littleness, to depart from him. All this, as it is peculiar here, is quite in keeping, as shewing man as he is. (I just note here, that some have objected that the call of the Apostles, as recorded in St John, is not the same as that recorded by the other three Evangelists. I believe it is not. But such as have themselves been called, and experimentally know all these steps, know also that we, like the disciples of old, are called distinctly several times; first in one place, when we are John's disciples (John 1:37-42); after which we yet cling to our nets, and need another call (Luke 5:1-10), to bring us to walk with Jesus.

We may want yet another, when the cross is seen in all its bitterness (John 21:3; John 21:19).) Similar in character are the other words, only recorded in this same chapter, that "No man, having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better." The scene generally, and the conversation touching "new wine and old bottles," is in three of the Gospels; but here only are we carefully told the effect produced by drinking the old wine. In this another secret of human nature is disclosed, as to the power of habit and association to affect and bind the soul of man. If we indulge ourselves with the old wine, the excitements of the flesh, the new wine of the kingdom will not be relished by us. He that drinks the old will not desire the new; nay, while the savour of the old remains, though the new far surpasses the old, he will yet say, "The old is better." (Luke 5:39. Compare Matthew 9:17 and Mark 2:22.) St Luke, and it is perfect here, where man is the object before the mind of the Spirit, gives us, in what is peculiar to his Gospel, many fine touches of this nature, which, for this same reason, are omitted by St Matthew and St Mark, as lying out of that special line which it was their office to present to us.

Having thus shewn how broadly the Spirit through this Gospel looks out on man, I would now throw together several particulars, only noticed in this Gospel, and equally characteristic, as to the ways and conduct of the Pattern Man. And here the first point I will notice is, that throughout this Gospel, again and again, in scenes common to the other Evangelists, and where they say nothing of prayer, St Luke repeatedly adds, that "He was praying;" and this because, as prayer adds to the perfectness of the picture as Man, the Evangelist would shew how "the Man Christ Jesus" continually exercised this grace of true dependence. Thus here only do we read, that at His baptism He "was praying:" here only that when He had cleansed the leper, "He withdrew Himself, and prayed" (Luke 5:12; Luke 5:16). So again, here only are we told that His choice of the twelve followed a night of ceaseless prayer: "He continued all night in prayer, and when it was day, He called His disciples unto Him, and of them He chose twelve." (Luke 6:12-13. Compare Matthew 10:1.) So again, here only do we read that Peter’s famous confession was made "as Jesus was alone praying." (Luke 9:18. Compare Matthew 16:13 and Mark 8:27.) Here only are we told that the Transfiguration happened as He prayed: "He went up into a mountain, and as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was changed." (Luke 9:29. Compare Matthew 17:1-2 and Mark 9:2.) So again, in this Gospel, the Lord’s Prayer was given, in answer to a request from His disciples, who, "as He was praying, when He ceased said, Lord, teach us to pray." (Luke 11:1-2. Compare Matthew 6:9.) In St Matthew our Lord repeats this in His Sermon on the Mount, teaching us not to be ashamed to reiterate the self-same words, if only they are good words, in the ears of our disciples. I may also note here, for it is characteristic, that in St Luke, in the Lord’s Prayer, we have, "Forgive us our sins," instead of "Forgive us our debts," as in St Matthew’s Gospel. And trifling as the difference may appear, the instructed eye will see how perfectly it accords with the distinctive character of the respective Gospels; "debts" being the thought as connected with a kingdom, where righteousness is the rule; "sins," where men generally are regarded, who without law are yet sinners. Again, in this Gospel only have we the words to Peter, "I have prayed for thee." (Luke 22:32. Compare Matthew 26:33-34). All of which, as it is peculiar here, is not only characteristic of the Lord as very Man, but a deeply instructive example of what becomes us as sons of men, to whom every event, be it baptism, or ministry, or social intercourse, the choice of preachers, or the hour of rest, each and all should be an occasion of renewed communion with God, with prayer not only for our own souls, but also for those of others.

Another point equally characteristic is the care this Evangelist takes to record circumstances illustrative of the Human sympathy of our Lord, not given in the other Gospels. Thus in the scene with the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-16), which is peculiar to St Luke, the Evangelist notes some particulars which would naturally affect a tender human heart. The young man who had died was "the only son of his mother," and "she was a widow;" for human sorrows and affections here are all noted. Then when Jesus saw her, "He had compassion on her;" and when He had raised the youth, "He delivered him to his mother," as One, who having known a mother's love, could truly feel with her. And I may note here that in scenes common to the other Gospels, St Luke, by the addition of a single word, touches a human chord, beautifully in character with that view which it is his special work to present to us. For instance, in the case of Jairus' daughter, St Luke alone tells us that she was his "only" child. (Luke 8:42. Compare Matthew 9:18-19 and Mark 5:22-24.) So where another father comes to seek help, here only are his words recorded, "For he is mine only child." (Luke 9:38. Compare Matthew 17:15 and Mark 9:17.) Such a fact would touch a Man, and as such we find it here, revealing the perfect sympathy of Him "who is not ashamed to call us brethren."

Equally distinctive is the repeated mention, so often found in this Gospel, of the fact that our Lord "sat down to eat meat." (See Luke 7:36; Luke 11:37; Luke 14:1; Luke 19:7, all of which examples are peculiar to this Gospel.) He is here eminently a social Man, going to tables where He is asked, and there, whether in houses of Publicans or Pharisees, using that social intercourse to instruct others. Thus He sanctifies man's commonest engagements and wants, for man must eat; shewing us how even the lower necessities of our bodies may be made occasions of ministering the bread of life. How He sits at table is fully seen here. A Pharisee invites Him and He goes (Luke 7:36, &c.); but even while at table He is occupied with a poor sinner, though His compassion for her provokes the assembled guests to judge Him, first as profane, and then as arrogant. At table, and in another's house, He fills the hungry with good things, while the rich, satisfied with themselves, are sent away empty. And this scene, only recorded here, full of the workings of man's heart, is perfectly in keeping with the special tenor of this Gospel; shewing us that not merit or righteousness, but a sense of sin, is the fit introduction to Him who came to save sinners. I notice here too, that in this Gospel the Lord repeats at table a great portion of that teaching, which, as we know from St Matthew, was elsewhere given in public and set sermons. His audience is changed, but not His doctrine; nay, the very words are adhered to, as if by this means He would the more firmly fix them on His disciples' hearts. (Many instances are recorded of our Lord uttering nearly the same words on different occasions: as the words, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," twice recorded in St Matthew (Matthew 9:13; Matthew 12:7). So the answer to the repeated charge that "He cast out devils through Beelzebub" (Matthew 9:34; Matthew 12:24). So the repeated references to His cross in almost the self-same words (Matthew 16:21; Matthew 17:23; Matthew 20:17-19). So in St Matthew, He uttered the Lord's Prayer in His Sermon on the Mount. In St Luke, we find He gave it, with some slight alteration, to His disciples in reply to a request that He would teach them to pray. Every teacher knows how often he has used the same words to different audiences, and with slight differences. Our Lord did the same, as many places in the Gospels plainly intimate.) At a Pharisee's table, Pharisees are reproved (Luke 11:37; Luke 11:39; Luke 11:42). The fact that He is an invited guest shall not keep Him from faithfully warning those with whom He sits of the woes consequent on a form of godliness without the power.

Take another example of His manner at table, quite peculiar to St Luke, but shewing how blessedly He used for the good of men those social seasons which we so often misuse to our own injury; revealing too that blessed heart, which, while so keenly alive to man's wants, at the same time most deeply felt the contradiction of man's wickedness and selfishness on every side. A Pharisee asks Him to dine, and He accepts the call (Luke 14:1, &c). It was "the Sabbath-day," and He knew they "watched Him;" but though conscious that any service on that day would bring on Him reproach, He nevertheless stops, as He enters the door, to heal a poor sufferer. Then, as He goes to dinner, He cannot but mark how "those who were bidden," chose out the best places. Self is at work; human nature comes out even in so small a thing as a seat at table. For this He has a word. Then at the table, the choice of the guests suggests much. Men invite their rich neighbours, for they expect recompence. This draws forth His comments. Then one at the table, "as he heard these things," apparently touched by the thought of that day, when poor and rich should all be brought together, said, "Blessed is he that shall eat meat in the kingdom of God." At once the Lord seems carried in spirit from the table before Him, for seats at which the guests are so anxious, to another feast, which is prepared, and yet despised by men; from attendance at which they beg to be excused. The thought that when man spreads a table, it is full, contrasts strangely with the truth, that when God makes a feast, not one of the guests who are only bidden care to come. To sup with God, they must be compelled. But I need not pursue this. The whole scene, as it is peculiar to St Luke, shews not only what man is, but what man has been in Christ Jesus, who, "whether He ate or drank," was recollected, doing all to the glory of God, while His heart yet yearned over the sons of men.

I have as yet said nothing of the Parables peculiar to St Luke, save that in their opening form they remarkably differ from those in St Matthew's Gospel. Here it is always, -- "A certain man" (Luke 10:30; Luke 13:6; Luke 14:16; Luke 15:4; Luke 15:8; Luke 15:11; Luke 16:1; Luke 16:19; Luke 18:10). "A certain man fell among thieves" -- "A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard" -- "A certain man made a great supper" -- "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, will not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness?" -- or "What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, will not seek diligently till she find it?" So in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, "A certain man had two sons." So again, "There was a certain rich man which had a steward." So again, "There was a certain man clothed in purple and fine linen." So again, "Two men went up into the temple to pray." These parables are peculiar to St Luke, and in their contents, as in their form, shew the Lord as looking out broadly on man, more especially on man as lost and yet cared for. To take only the first, the Good Samaritan. Here it is seen how a Stranger can do for the ruined what Priest and Levite cannot. Priests served for the pure in the temple; but here is One who can meet even those who, going down from Jerusalem to the cursed city of Jericho (Joshua 6:26), have been left sorely wounded. I need not speak of such parables as those in the well-known 15th chapter, where God's own joy in saving the lost is so wondrously revealed to us; or of those which inculcate prayer (Luke 11:5; Luke 18:1, &c.), which, as they are peculiar here, pointedly mark man's place as a dependent creature. Generally speaking, in all these parables, whether we regard their mere letter or their hidden spirit, a careful eye will see God's will respecting man, in some cases His special purpose to Gentiles in contrast with Jews. This, among other instances, is seen in the way in which two parables given by St Matthew are here placed in a connexion exactly in keeping with the object of St Luke's Gospel. In St Matthew the "Leaven" and "Mustard-seed" come in as part of a series, describing the development of the

mystery of the kingdom; here (Luke 13:6; Luke 13:19; Luke 13:21) they come in immediately after the parable of the Barren Fig-tree, from which for three years fruit was sought in vain, and which was threatened with the axe if in the fourth year there should be no increase: shewing how, when the tree of Judaism should be felled, the Sower's work in the field, and the leavening of the lump, would begin, all exactly in character here, where the Spirit looks beyond Jewish ground to the work among men coming in on Israel's failure. The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is another example. (In this Parable we have a figure of the Jew and Gentile. See Augustine, Quoest. Evang. lib. ii. 38. Others of the Fathers give the same interpretation, of the correctness of which I have not a doubt.) But all this is perfectly in keeping with the view of Christ as Son of Adam. To the peculiarities already noticed I might add many more, such as the fact that here only we have allusion to "the times of the Gentiles;" here only do we read of "Jerusalem being trodden down of the Gentiles," and her people "led away captive into all nations" (Luke 21:24). Here only the shooting of the fig-tree is seen with "all the trees" (Luke 21:29). Here only is the place of crucifixion called by its Gentile name, "Calvary," rather than, as in the other Gospels, Golgotha. (Luke 23:33. Compare Matthew 27:33.) Here only is the dying thief seen as saved by grace, in beautiful harmony with the whole tenor of this Gospel (Luke 23:43). So as to the Lord. Here only in the Garden is "an angel seen strengthening Him" (Luke 22:43), to shew how truly He was Man, receiving angels' ministry. Here only do we read of "the bloody sweat" (Luke 22:44): here only does He say to the traitor, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48). Here only does the Centurion say, "This was a righteous Man." Here only on the cross does the Lord as a Man "commend His spirit" into the hands of God, His Father (Luke 23:46-47). So here only, after His resurrection He eats with men, verifying His manhood by yet partaking of "a piece of broiled fish and of a honey-comb" (Luke 24:41-43). But all this, and much more of a like nature, will meet the attentive reader, and illustrate that distinct view of the Lord which is here presented to us. And now one word on the bearing of these things on us, who are Adam's sons. Need I draw out the moral of the repeated reference to prayer in this Gospel? Did the Son of Man pray at His baptism, when He chose apostles, when alone, -- did His prayer lead others to say, "Teach us to pray also;" and shall we who have nothing in ourselves be yet prayerless? Did He at table make every circumstance an occasion of blessed and holy teaching, and shall we not strive, after His pattern, to eat to God's glory, to sit in social circles diffusing something of His Spirit to all around? Oh! may we but see Him as He is, that like Him in the midst of men, instead of being affected by them, we may affect them in the power of a Higher Presence. And let us, who, though sons of Adam, by union with our risen Head, are conscious of possessing another and higher calling, -- who have confessed ourselves dead and risen, with heaven opened, and who, "by baptism, fasting, and temptation," are longing to be conformed to Him who went before, -- see that these things which were true in Him may be true in us also, for "as He is, so are we in this world." And if there be some, as, alas! there are, who know not man's calling, as chosen in Christ to be the heir of all things, let them, looking in the face of Jesus, see God's love to man, who so loved us that He gave His Son to be for us a Perfect Man; to be borne in the womb, to be born, to hang upon a woman, to suck her breasts, to be taught by her lips, to increase in wisdom here; to know our relationships, and our sorrows, and our toils, and at last our death, that in everything He might be linked with us, and through His death, still not loosing us, might in Himself lift us up, to sit in heavenly places, -- angels, and principalities, and powers, all subject to Him as Man, a pledge that to us also they shall be subject in due season. Oh, might the mystery of His Incarnation come home to us as

befits its glory! Oh, that we might understand what it witnesses of God’s purpose touching the sons of men; that He should be our everlasting dwelling-place, and we His temples; that He should be seen in us, and we be hid in Him: And may the word, spoken by angels, "To you is born a Saviour," remove every doubt, if such can yet remain, as to the love of Him who thus loved us. "To you is born a Saviour." It is a birth-relationship, true whether we own and rejoice in it, or put it away from us. We have nothing to do to make Him a Saviour: He is "born a Saviour:" He is a Man, and nothing pertaining to man can now be alien to Him. What should we think of the child, who, when told, "To you is born a brother," should answer, "But what shall I do to make him a brother to me?" The joy is, He is born a Brother, by birth linked to us, that we through grace might henceforth in Spirit be linked with Him. We may indeed deny the bond, and live groaning here as though God had never so loved man as to make him His son in Christ Jesus. We may doubt His love. Nevertheless "to us a Son is born;" and we who have trusted know that through and in Him is perfect peace.

While, therefore, we rejoice to trace the wisdom, seen even in the form of that revelation, which God in His rich grace has given to us, let none be content intellectually to trace this detail, unless with this, from His inmost heart he also embraces Him of whom this Gospel speaks. The wisdom of God in grace as in nature may be coldly contemplated, like any other piece of skill or wondrous workmanship, without a soul-saving and personal appropriation of the grace, which is yet by the understanding discerned so clearly. But, as one has said, "the Gospel has not been revealed that we may have the pleasure of feeling or expressing fine sentiments, but that we may be saved: the taste may receive the impression of the beauty and sublimity of the Bible, and the nervous system may have received the impression of the tenderness of its tone, and yet its meaning, its deliverance, its mystery of holy love, may remain all unknown."

Almighty God, who hast given us Thy Only-begotten Son, to take our nature upon Him, and for us to be born of a pure Virgin, grant that we, being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

02.5.0. St John; or, the Son of God

ST JOHN;

OR, THE SON OF GOD.

"The fourth living creature was like a flying Eagle." -- Revelation 4:7.

"The way of an Eagle in the air is too wonderful for me." -- Proverbs 30:18-19.

WE come now to that Gospel which more than any other carries on its face the plainest tokens of being occupied with an aspect of Christ distinct from all the rest. "The fourth living creature was like unto an eagle." And if in tracing those views of the Lord, the emblems of which are taken from creatures which walk on earth, it has been difficult to bring within my limits the characteristic peculiarities of each Gospel, what shall I say of this Gospel, which like the eagle soars away to heaven, where nearly the whole is peculiar, and every part throughout replete with mysteries touching the Son of God? Canst thou fly as the eagle? "She mounteth up on high: she dwelleth and abideth in the rock, upon the strong place. Her eyes behold afar off; her young ones suck up blood, and where the slain is, there is she" (Job 39:27-30). Who can follow here? Some have heard a voice, saying, "I bare you upon eagles' wings" (Exodus 19:4): and in His strength who makes his redeemed to ride upon high places, they also "mount up with wings as eagles" (Isaiah 40:31 hew:31 hew:31). For "as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord leads His beloved" (Deuteronomy 32:11-12) into heavenly places, thence to behold what such as walk on earth can never see. But alas! how little have we seen, how little are we fit to see, the precious things which are above this world. And yet it is this that St John treats of, revealing the Lord as "not of this world" (John 17:16), for the contemplation of those who like Him are not of this world; in tones replete with heaven, and which are themselves everywhere the exact echo of that Blessed One of whom they speak; witnessing how deeply His image and Spirit had sunk down into and pervaded the whole soul of "that disciple whom Jesus loved." My present purpose, however, is rather to indicate than to explore the subject; to shew that there is a special purpose here, rather than to attempt to fathom its great deep. For here we may bathe our souls in seas of rest; here we indeed come to waters far above the loins or ancles: "the waters are risen, waters to swim in, a river that cannot be passed over" (Ezekiel 47:3-5). Having therefore briefly shewn, though indeed it needs no proof, how remarkably this Gospel differs from the rest, I would endeavour to learn some of the lessons which these peculiarities are intended to impress upon us. To turn then to this Gospel. How distinctive is its commencement. Omitting the birth of Jesus as Son of Man, St John begins before all worlds. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Then comes the wondrous announcement, that though "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made;" though "in Him was Life, and the Life was the Light," yet "He was made flesh and dwelt among us." For man had departed from God, and lost His image. Then "the image of God" (Colossians 1:15) comes to dwell in man, that man may dwell in God. No man could see God: therefore the Only-begotten Son, who is in the

bosom of the Father, came to declare Him to us. All this, and much more of a like nature, which meets us at the opening of this Gospel, is too remarkable to escape observation. Instead of the Lord of a kingdom, here it is "The Light of men." Instead of a Servant, here we see "Him who made all things." Instead of a Man subject to the powers of this world, born of a woman, laid in a manger, here it is "the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father," revealing His image, and communicating life "to as many as received Him" among the sons of men. Objections may be raised, and explanations offered, but the fact is beyond all doubt, that the view here rises, as the heaven is above the earth, over any which is given to us in the other Gospels.

Equally characteristic is the notice of John. The Baptist is elsewhere seen rather in connexion with the earthly than the heavenly relations of the Lord Jesus. Here it is clear that the Evangelist sees more, and wishes more to be seen in him, than the man. If Jesus is "the Light," John is also a light, though of another nature; a "lamp, burning and shining," yet but a lamp (John 5:35), (The contrast between Christ as the Light, and John as the lamp, is lost in the common version, where the words respecting John, ekeinos en ho luchnos ho kaiomenos, have been rendered, "He was a burning light." The Vulgate here more correctly gives, "Ille erat lucerna ardens.") destined to be quenched soon as the Light of heaven shall have introduced the perfect day. So Jesus is "the Word" here, and John is "the Voice" (John 1:23); words, which even partially apprehended, convey something to us very different from such titles as "the Lord," and "my Messenger" (Mark 1:2). The "Word" (Logos) is the sense: the "Voice" is the sound. Outwardly, the voice seems to be first, yet while in the act of communication it precedes the word, it is not really before it, for the sense must have been in the mind before it was out-spoken. So the word, if it has been received, abides in the heart; but the voice passes away. Having served to communicate the word, which was in one heart, to other hearts, the voice has done its work. Its use is as a witness, and this being accomplished, the word remains, while the witnessing voice is content to be forgotten. All this, as it applies to Him who is "the Word," and His forerunner, has been noticed by saints in other days. (Augustine again and again refers to the mystery contained in the fact, that Christ is "the Word," and John "the Voice." A reference to the following passages will amply repay perusal, and suggest much: Serm. 288, § 2 and 3; Serm. 289, § 3; Serm. 293, § 3.) To some it may be a hint of what is here for such as through grace can receive it. To all it speaks of the Lord in a relation connected with heaven rather than with earth. No less distinctive is the witness of the Baptist, as recorded here. In St Matthew, he preaches a "coming kingdom;" in St Luke, "repentance;" while here he is "a witness to the Light, that all men through him might believe" (John 1:7). Accordingly that part of his witness which is given here, touches the heavenly side of the Lord: -- "I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." "Again, the next day, John stood and two of His disciples, and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:32-36). All this, so perfectly in keeping here, is passed in silence by the other Evangelists, who, as their office is to shew the Human rather than the Divine in Christ, (though in a sense even the Human in Him is all Divine,) record such parts of the Baptist's testimony as bear upon their respective views, while St John selects what is more connected with the Divine nature. How this testimony touches those who are "partakers of the Divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), we may see presently. Suffice it to notice here how the particulars given by St John all lead us to contemplate the Son of God. The Baptist's words, too, respecting himself, as given here, which at first sight appear opposed to what St Matthew has recorded of him, like all such apparent contradictions, express a deep truth, experimentally known by all who, like John, have been called by grace to "prepare the way of the Lord" by the preaching

of His gospel. In St Matthew, John the Baptist says to Christ, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me" (Matthew 3:14); whereas in St John he says, "I knew Him not, but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John 1:33-34). Carelessly heard, these words do seem to have a discrepancy. But once see that St John is speaking of our Lord in an aspect as much higher than St Matthew's view as the Eternal Word is higher than the Son of David and Abraham, and then the words, which to our darkness may seem dark, in His light will yield only more brightness. For we may know, and do know, Christ as Son of David, and as such the rightful Heir of great glory, long before we know Him as the Word, who gives the Holy Ghost. I speak what I have known and felt. And I know that from the first of my witness to Christ, when like John I went preaching and baptizing, I so far knew Christ as to say, "I have need to be baptized of Thee;" for even then I saw He was Lord of a kingdom, and that I more needed to be baptized of Him, than He could need my poor testimony; and yet I knew Him not as the Word, until, in the act of receiving Him, that I might bear witness of Him, the Father revealed Him to me in such a character as I had till then never known or conceived of; and this, though from my youth I had been taught to believe that Jesus was the Son of God; so that I can truly say, "I knew Him not;" while yet from the first I knew that I had "need to be baptized of Him." And this high knowledge of Christ as the Eternal Word -- a knowledge we at first have not -- is that of which St John is speaking, and which is the special burden of his Gospel. But here, as in all things, experience only makes all clear. "We must do the works, if we would know of the doctrine" (John 7:17). The next chapter -- and it is one of a series, each stage of which illustrates some virtue of the Son -- is full of particulars equally characteristic. Could I speak of the mysteries hid under the letter here, this would be yet more manifest. Here the first lesson is, that man's work ever ends in failure, while the work of the Son, out of man's failure, brings in yet greater glory. "Every man" -- this is the way of men, in opposition to the way of the Son, -- "Every man at the beginning sets forth good wine:" nature and the world give their best and fairest at the beginning; "but when men have well drunk, then that which is worse." Not so with the Son of God. "Thou hast kept the best wine until now." When man's feast fails, there yet remains what the Son of God has in store for them who bid Him welcome. And though with men the first is best, not so with the Son of God. His good wine comes sweeter and sweeter even to the end (John 2:10). The same truth comes out touching the temple. Man may, and will, ruin what he can; but the Son shall raise it up in greater glory (John 2:19). (Strauss, while discussing the charge brought against the Lord, that He had said, "I will destroy this temple," &c., and noting the fact that St Luke omits this, says, with his usual effrontery, "It is highly probable that the declaration about the destruction and rebuilding of the temple was really uttered by Jesus. That Luke omits the production of the false witnesses is therefore to be regarded as a deficiency in his narrative." (Vol. iii. p. 214.) This judge of the Gospels cannot see how what is perfectly in keeping touching the Son of God may be out of character in the description of the Son of Man. Surely the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.) But even the letter here is distinctive. "The mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, (could such words be found in St Luke?) Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Then we read, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory;" for though the veil was yet upon Him, "the glory as of the Only-begotten" could not be wholly hid. So of the temple of His body, He says here, -- for "the Son quickeneth whom He will," -- "Destroy this temple, and I will

raise it up" (John 2:4; John 2:11; John 2:19). So we read, "Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man," -- words, which, as they bring to our remembrance the prophet's witness, "The heart is deceitful; who can know it?" and the answer, "I the Lord search the heart," reveal Jesus as the Lord, "to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid." But this is exactly in keeping with that view which is now before us, of "the Word who was with God, and who was God."

Even more marked is the next chapter, where the doctrine of a "second birth," as connected with Himself, "the Only-begotten Son of God," is given in a tone quite different from anything in the other Gospels. We have here an advance on the preceding chapter. There generally it was shewn how, when man's work ended in failure, the Son out of that failure could bring in better things; ("This beginning of miracles" (John 2:11). Doubtless there was a reason for this miracle in Cana being the first. I may observe in passing that it overthrows the stories of the infantine miracles as recorded in the Apocryphal Gospels.) a fit introduction to the miracles of grace to be accomplished by the Son of the Father. Here the detail of that special miracle, the new-birth, comes as a stepping-stone to the next miracle, (occupying the following chapter,) of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. With Nicodemus, the subject is "the birth of water and the Spirit." With the woman of Samaria, it is "the well of water within, springing up unto everlasting life." And here I would observe, -- for these scenes with Nicodemus, and the Samaritan, are examples, -- that in St John, though facts are related, they are never, as in the other Gospels, recorded for their own sakes, but invariably serve to introduce some spiritual discourse, of which the fact is generally the outward sign: the discourse or doctrine being invariably introduced with "Verily, verily" (See John 1:51; John 3:3; John 3:5; John 3:11; John 5:19; John 5:24; John 5:25; John 6:26; John 6:32; John 6:47; John 6:53; John 8:34; John 8:51; John 8:58; John 10:1; John 10:7; John 12:24; John 13:16; John 13:20; John 13:21; John 13:38; John 14:12; John 16:20; John 16:23; John 21:18), (St John, himself "the disciple who testifieth" (John 21:24), the one who caught most of the manner of the Lord, of Him who was "the faithful Witness" (Revelation 1:5), is the only evangelist who gives this double, "Verily, verily.") an expression not to be found in any of the other Gospels. This very form of the Gospel is characteristic. We saw something like this in St Luke, where, in describing the Son of Man, the very style, so distinctly human, was suited to the subject which that Evangelist had to set before us. The tendency in St John to rise to heaven, and to witness of heavenly things, is no less marked, and is equally in keeping with that view of the Lord, which it is his office to present to us. As to the details of the interview with Nicodemus, I may add a word, for the truth here, growing out of that relationship of the Lord, which is set forth in this Gospel, is of the most vital interest. How is man to become God's son? This is the question here; and a fit question to have an early place in the Gospel which reveals the Son of God. In baptism indeed the Lord in His own person had shewn the path, but its mystery had as yet never been opened out. Here the secret is told. Natural birth will bring us into this world; but natural birth will not introduce us into the kingdom which is within the veil. To go thither we must be re-born. But how can this be? The wise Pharisee, who comes regarding the Lord as "a teacher," and commencing his discourse with a self-sufficient "We know," is forced to confess he knows nothing, and to cry, "How can these things be?" before the mystery of the new-birth can be revealed to him (John 3:2; John 3:9). To be re-born we want something more than "a teacher." As sons of men, our life and portion is of the earth, earthy. Unfit for heaven, careless of its joys, how shall man enter there? Can the flesh be changed to bear the

Lord’s presence? "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" and "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom." What then can be done? There must be the communication of another life. So the Son who is the Word, "in whom is life," came down to men, and laid hold of man in His own Person. He entered the kingdom of this world, and became a Man, that so laying hold of man, and traversing the length and breadth of man’s portion, He might lift man, as quickened by Him, through death into another life, as God’s heir, and Christ’s joint-heir. Therefore we are baptized. We come as dead ones, confessing that our life as men is utterly unfit to give us admission into the Lord’s presence. We come to put off that life, and are buried in baptism, renouncing Old Adam, to claim a new life in union with the life-giving Word; in the faith that if He be in us, His home shall be ours, and though for a season we yet bear the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. This in effect is what the Lord says here. Ye must be born again. Do you ask, How can these things be? How can man rise up to enter heaven? No man can ascend thither, save He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven. But to take man thither He has come to take man’s lot and die. For as the serpent was lifted up, so shall the Son of Man be lifted up. Then faith in Him, risen and ascended, shall bring others to Him, and they who receive the Word shall live with Him. Thus by the reception of the Word, man receives a life as real and much more blessed than the natural life he has in old Adam -- a life which exists the witness that judgment is in one sense behind us, for Jesus is risen, and our regeneration is a participation in His resurrection and eternal life. Thus does "the lifting up of the Son" close all earthly associations, and introduce to heavenly things hitherto all unknown. I cannot do more than touch the question here; but the whole passage is a marked example of the tone which runs through this Gospel. Indeed the words repeated so often, -- "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," -- sufficiently shew what is the mind of the Spirit in this Scripture. "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm" (Jeremiah 17:5). But "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." And here let me observe how this word "life," so repeatedly occurring here (see John 3:36; John 5:26; John 5:29; John 5:40 John 6:33; John 6:35; John 6:48; John 6:51; John 6:53; John 6:63, &c.), contrasts with the language of St Matthew’s Gospel. With St Matthew the idea throughout is "righteousness," rather than "life." Of course life and righteousness are but different forms or expressions of one and the same reality. But where St Matthew, as befits his view of "the kingdom," sees righteousness, St John sees life. Thus St Matthew, as I have already noticed, records the words, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." St John testifies of the Only-begotten, -- "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." And this contrast runs through the Gospels. The Epistles have the like distinction. For instance, "righteousness" is the form of expression peculiar to the first Epistle. But where Paul says, "The righteousness of God without the law was manifested" (Romans 3:21), John, still in character, says, "The life was manifested" (1 John 1:2). Where Paul comes to "declare God’s righteousness, that He might be just, and yet a justifier" (Romans 3:26), John comes "to bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us" (1 John 1:2). Both speak of the same reality, in different forms, not without a reason; even as the difference of form in the Gospels develops the fulness of the same blessed Lord. The following chapter, of the woman of Samaria, takes up the same strain, enlarging on the growth and nourishment of the new life through faith in Christ Jesus. Nicodemus is told of the quickening, the Samaritan woman of the indwelling of life, through that Spirit, whose work it is to testify of and glorify the Son of God. The religious Jew is chosen to shew that, spite of all his religion, he needs

new life. The defiled Samaritan to be a witness that, spite of all her sins, even in her soul there might be a well of living water. Here faith in the Son gives "a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14); making us, now that we are alive, "worshippers," not in certain earthly places, but "in spirit and in truth;" revealing to us "the Father" as "seeking such to worship Him;" and enabling us to worship Him in the spirit of dear children. And all this, not in virtue of anything in man, for here one of the vilest is the example chosen to shew us where this grace may find its dwelling, but as springing from union with the Son: -- "The water which I shall give," is that which transforms this lost one, and others like her, into a vessel, first to contain, then to minister, the grace of life. The next three chapters rise yet higher, with a witness to the Person of the Son, the force of which I despair of expressing, even in the measure which has flashed in upon my own soul. I may however observe that in these three chapters, (the 5th, 6th, and 7th,) the Lord is contrasted with all that law or ordinances had done for God’s elect. Nay, He is shewn as the fulfilment of all, whether Sabbaths, Passovers, or the like, Himself the true rest and food for weary souls. The way in which these feasts are set aside here, to lead us higher, is very striking. Each of these chapters begins with a reference to some solemnity once ordained by God Himself; first, the Sabbath; then the Passover; then the Feast of Tabernacles. (Chapter 5 commences, "After this there was a feast of the Jews" (John 5:1). That this was the Sabbath appears from John 5:9. Chapter 6 commences, "And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh" (John 6:4). In John 7:2, we read, "Now the Jews’ feast of Tabernacles was at hand.) These were forms, the witnesses of what God had done, or would do, for ruined men. Once the forms had glorified God, being used as seals of His truth, to give both to God and man their due place. Then there was life in them for men. But the time had come when these same forms were used to glorify men, to make sinners of one class glory over sinners of another, and then all was death. Then the Word, coming in a form in which God was glorified, through which therefore there was life for men, set Himself in contrast to the forms misused to glorify man, and which for this reason had become powerless. And they who clung to the form, all the more strongly because they lacked the life, fought against the life in Him, making the very form their weapon to resist that of which it was the witness. Nevertheless there stood the Vessel, in which God was glorified, and which therefore ministered rest and life to weary men, declaring that not only from Himself, the Only-begotten, but from those who believed in Him, and were adopted children, living waters should flow to comfort those around, when He was glorified. One in the form of a Man, glorifying God on earth, was here saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink:" nay more, saying of His disciples, "He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers." And "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" (John 7:37-39). O wondrous truth, that from the temples of our bodies, if only the Lord and not self is glorified, there shall run "living waters;" while if self is exalted, spite of all our knowledge, not one drop shall be ministered by us to weary souls! We may be believers, and yet the Lord may not in us be glorified. We may yet be under law, not come even to the cross, much less to Pentecost; nay, we may be crucifying Him afresh, and putting Him to an open shame. In such a case "the Holy Ghost will not be given, because Jesus is not yet glorified." Where He is glorified, though Pharisees and the world rage and imagine vain things, the living waters shall run into the desert, and "everything shall live whither the river comes." My limits forbid my tracing, as I would desire, the truths unfolded here, as linked with the Person of the Lord, as Son of God. I may however observe, for it is characteristic of this Gospel, that the 5th chapter, which speaks of the

work on the Sabbath, a work wrought as our Lord says, because neither God nor man could rest in sin and misery, (The Lord's words were, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." As though He had said, You judge me for breaking the Sabbath in healing this sufferer on the Sabbath-day. I do so because it has been proved -- this man's misery proves it -- that this Sabbath, the rest of the first creation, is indeed no Sabbath. There is no rest in it now either for God or man, for neither God nor man can rest in sin and misery. God did indeed rest in an unfallen world, and since the fall, before finally giving up the first creation to condemnation, He tried it once and again; giving, while the trial lasted, the Sabbath as a sign of a rest in the first creation. But sin works in it, and God cannot rest. Therefore, instead of "God did rest the seventh day," the truth now is, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.") contrasts the incompetency of law, which, like the pool of Bethesda, required something of strength in the patient, with the absolute life-giving and strength-giving power of the Son of God; shewing in addition that if men will not receive Him as Life-giver, they must as Judge; that in one or other of these relations He must be known by all men. The 6th chapter shews His place on earth, according to the mystery of the Paschal Lamb; that He must suffer, and yet give life to men; fulfilling the word, "He shall satisfy her poor with bread;" then opening to His disciples the secret of that Bread which came down from heaven; and then concluding with the question, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?" (John 6:62). After this comes the instruction of the 7th chapter, touching the Feast of Tabernacles, where, having testified that the time for His manifestation to the world as Son of Man was not yet come, He comes as the Sent of the Father, that is as Son of God, promising the "living water" as the witness of His coming glory. But I cannot pursue this. Enough if I have shewn how Jesus is presented here, not so much as Son of Adam, or Abraham, as Son of God.

What follows is equally distinctive, though the force of the connexion may be unperceived save where the life which connects it is personally enjoyed by us. Hitherto the burden touching the Son has been, "In Him was Life." Here He speaks of Light: -- "I am the Light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). And what a Light it is! An adulteress taken in the act, with sin confessed, stands in the light without judgment; while righteous Pharisees must go out one by one, being convicted by their own consciences (John 8:3-11). And the miracle here accomplished on "the man blind from his birth" (John 9:1-7), illustrates the light-giving power of this same Son of God. From this point the word "truth" constantly recurs. Faith grows to knowledge; for truth as well as grace had come by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). The grace saved, quickening to life: the truth sanctified, by giving light; the Life and the Light both issuing from the same fountain. He that believed, accepting the "grace," obtained eternal life; but he who followed the Pattern, continuing in the "truth," had light also. So the Lord says here to "those who believed in Him, If ye continue in my word, then ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). Faith from the first gives life; but if we keep the word, light comes, turning what once was faith into certain knowledge. I may have come out of the grave of nature, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, with a napkin about my face, having life, but no light. Now I have light. "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25). And though rulers who set up to be lights, claiming authority and succession in the Church, even while saying, "Give God the glory" (John 9:24), may judge the Light-giver and the enlightened, their judgments cannot rob him whose eyes are opened of the light of God. In other Gospels blind ones are healed; but here with the act of healing is added the witness, "As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world;" for the Spirit would shew how light and knowledge, as well as

life, are necessary accompaniments of a true reception of the eternal Word. Need I observe how all this marks the specific purpose of this Gospel? He that cannot see this must be blind indeed. But I will not pursue this, for the general tenor of this Scripture, little as its depth may be apprehended, needs no proof. I will therefore only add, that just as the other Gospels, as they proceed onwards increasingly develop each its own peculiar view of the Lord Jesus, -- as, for example, St Matthew, where the chapters preceding the Passion are full of matters touching the children of the kingdom, with a testimony of the sin of those who sit in Moses' seat, -- so here also, in the corresponding place, the burden of this Gospel is as distinctly seen in the testimony of the sending of the Spirit by the Son, and in all that revelation of the Father's house and heart which is given only in this Gospel (chapters 13-17). This, however, would lead us where few could follow. I pass therefore to lower ground, to those scenes which are common to this and to the other Gospels, to note how different are the points here dwelt on, how unmistakeably they mark the specific view of Christ, which is here presented to us.

Observe then, that in St John not a word is said of His apprehensions of the cross, as in the other Gospels. Here He stands as it were above His sorrows. In St Luke (Luke 18:32), He may speak of being "delivered to the Gentiles, and mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on." All this is entirely omitted here. Instead of speaking of His griefs, the Son of the Father, "when He knew that His hour was come, that He should depart out of this world unto the Father" (John 13:1), is occupied in pouring comfort into His disciples' hearts. He "gives them His peace" (John 14:27). He "declares to them the Father's name" (John 17:26). "If they loved Him, they would rejoice, because He went to the Father;" for "now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him" (John 14:28; John 13:31). And if for a moment, at the recollection that one eating bread with Him should betray Him, His "soul is troubled" (John 12:27; John 13:21), and He refers to the betrayal; it is but a passing cloud, only revealing by its contrast the depth and quiet of that heaven of peace which still abode in Him.

It is the same here in the Garden. Life and Light throughout are with Him. St Luke may shew how the Son of Man prepares for His last great conflict; may tell us how He, "who in all points was tempted as we are, yet without sin," said, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me;" may shew us "an angel strengthening Him," as "in an agony He prays more fervently;" may mark how He seems to seek sympathy from His disciples, while "great drops of blood fall to the ground" (Luke 22:41-44). We look in St John at the self-same scene; and what a contrast. Not one word of His prayer, or agony, or of an angel strengthening Him: not a word of His sweat, as it were great drops of blood: not a word of His apparent longing for sympathy and companionship in this His dark hour. Throughout He is the incarnate Word. "Jesus, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. As soon as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground." Here, instead of weakness and agony, is power appalling His adversaries.

Then again, instead of seeking sympathy from His disciples, here He is seen as possessing and exercising the power to protect them: -- "Jesus saith, I have told you that I am He. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way; that the saying might be fulfilled which He spake, Of them which Thou gavest me I have lost none" (John 18:4-9). (Such as look closely will notice here many more interesting particulars. In St Luke our Lord says, "Father, remove this cup." In St Matthew it is "My Father;" because in St Matthew it is man in covenant with God that is presented to us. In St Mark it

is, "Abba, Father.") Surely here is both the peace, and the power, of heaven, even in the bitter cross. He stands as One from whom no one can take His life, unless He please to lay it down. In exact keeping with this, the company of people seen in St Luke (Luke 23:27-28), yielding Him sympathy, "as they bewailed and lamented Him," and receiving His sympathy in return, as He bids them "weep for themselves," do not come within the line of vision to which St John directs us. An exalted tone, as of the Son of God, runs throughout the whole. Before Pontius Pilate He is here the calm witness of the "truth," still testifying, "He that is of the truth heareth my voice" (John 18:37). Even on the cross, it is the same. Abraham's Son may cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). The Servant of God may also "cry with a loud voice, and give up the ghost" (Mark 15:37). The Son of Man may say, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46). But of the Son of the Father we read, "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, saith, I thirst." Then, "when He had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished, and bowed the head, and yielded up the Spirit" (John 19:28; John 19:30). (paredoke to pneuma, very different from St Luke's exepneumen. Our authorised version translates both these very dissimilar expressions by the self-same English words, "He gave up the ghost;" a rendering which drops the whole force of the contrast, which is clearly intended in the words of the original. The Vulgate here correctly translates, "tradidit spiritum" in St John; and in St Luke, "exspiravit.") As the eternal Son He need not "commend Himself" to God. His own "It is finished," seals with a sufficient witness the full accomplishment of His own perfect work. Add to which that St John alone omits all record of the darkness, which, as it had a moral, as well as an historic, bearing, could have no place in the laying down of His life by the eternal Son. Thus it is ever here. The Word is seen made flesh; but the Divine beams forth through the Human everywhere. The cloud is bright with the sun, and the veil even before its rending is transparent to faith at least with heavenly glory. But enough of what is distinctive. The depth is yet untouched. But what has been said may be sufficient to indicate to God's children what lies before them in this Gospel. The further entrance into it I leave to their prayers and diligence, and to the teachings of that Spirit, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ, and shew them to us. I would now, in one or two examples, shew how what is distinctive here bears on those who, through grace, are the sons of God in Christ Jesus.

Take then the opening testimony touching the Son, that "in Him was life, and the life was the light of men." What does it teach us who rejoice that "as He is, so are we in this world," as to the nature of that light, which, if He be in us, we too must manifest? It says simply, "The life was the light," -- the life, not the profession; "the life was the light of men." There stood One, in a servant's form, in the likeness of sinful flesh, whose life, even while others judged Him, was judging everything, and shewing, by its holy contrast, what in men was, and what was not, according to God's mind. "The life was the light." It is so yet. The Lord is in us: -- "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Corinthians 13:5). And if He be in us, He must yet shew Himself by a life, for "in Him is life," and we also must be "light in the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8). "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life;" not the light of genius, or of doctrine, but "the light of life;" a light which will make itself felt, even if sinners hate it; which may shine in darkness, and the darkness not comprehend it, but which, misunderstood, slighted, or opposed, has something in it which false professors cannot abide, and from which, sooner or later, they will withdraw themselves. The light of doctrine they can misuse to their own self-glorification. But the "light of life," a life by self-judgment convincing the world of sin and judgment; a life, by an hourly preparation for a change, and for the Lord's return, witnessing that

we expect Him one day suddenly to come and judge all things; a life, the foretaste of heaven, in that its joys are not of nature, which is sorrowful yet always rejoicing, dying and behold it yet lives; such a life, just because it is light, and shews pretences as they are, if men will not be humbled by it, must be cast out. The wise of this world shall prove it a delusion, and pious worldlings lament its injudiciousness, and impious ones mock, and scoff, and hate it. But through all, it shall prove it is a light, by reproving what it comes in contact with, for "all things are reproved and made manifest by the light" (Ephesians 5:13). In the Son of the Father there was life, and "the life was the light." Let the adopted children see that their life also is the light of men.

Take another point distinctive here: -- "No one hath seen God at any time: the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath revealed Him" (John 1:18). How does this testify of what becomes us as adopted children? The world knows not God: it cannot see Him: therefore the children of the Father, even as the Only-begotten Son, are set here to reveal and recommend Him. If Christ be in us, -- for "He cannot be hid" (Mark 7:24), -- something at least of the Father will appear; for where He is, there the Father that sent Him is seen also (John 12:45). So St Paul says to the Corinthians, "Ye are the letter of Christ" (2 Corinthians 3:3); ye are they who give Him His character before the world. He represents you above. You must represent Him here, and thus reveal the Father, whose image He came to shew to men. If you walk "worthy of God," God is glorified in you. If otherwise, "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." For though some have learned to divide between what is the Church’s true position, and its failing, men do and will judge by what they see. Art thou a son of God? Then, as the Only-begotten Son revealed Him, so in thy measure must thou also. Would men learn by thee what God was? This is the test of Christians; this too is the test of true Churches. This it is which, if we understand our calling, compels us to deal in grace; which, forbidding us to seize our brother by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest, commands us to suffer all things; because God now is dealing in grace, forgiving trespasses, and has set us here to represent that grace, by a life of sacrifice, that His character may be revealed in us. Oh! where is He thus revealed? Is that a revelation of Him, which has hid from men the holy and gracious standard which befits His kingdom; which has made it possible to be zealous for the Church, while careless of His glory; at peace with and honoured by her, while not at peace with Him; judging while He is shewing grace; in honour where He was rejected; descending to rule this world, instead of with Him waiting for that which is to come? Is this the revelation of the Father? If it be, then He who is without variableness or shadow of turning has indeed changed, since the Only-begotten Son revealed the glory, full of grace and truth. But I must conclude. For to shew how the distinctions in this Gospel bear upon our walk, and illustrate our calling, as children of the Father, would lead me far beyond the limits here permitted to me. And indeed the things here shewn are of such a nature, needing to be revealed by the Holy Ghost, that they are better left to be spoken by Him, in His sweet teachings, as He sees we need them. God grudges nothing. He who gave His Son, He whose Spirit is content to dwell in tabernacles, which, though by his workmanship made fair within, are without of badgers’ skins, has shewn how freely He gives. If we can bear it, all is ours: if we have it not, it is because we cannot bear it. Let us, like John, but make our dwelling nigh to that side cleft for us, seeing in the water and blood shed thence a pledge of those unsearchable depths of love which still remain, and we may drink our fill of love; and as no lack is there, so surely will there be no grudging. Oh, what depths are here! The heaven and earth were made; and thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, were made also. But the Maker is here before us, made for a season like to us, that we

might by Him be changed to bear His image; till, made like Him, His works are wrought in us also, till we by Him are workers of His works to His glory.

I say therefore, Let such as desire to know what becomes them as God’s children, ponder well the peculiarities of this Gospel; ponder them as little children, as poor in spirit, diligently using what they have, that they may receive more. "Much food is in the tillage of the poor" (Proverbs 13:23): their garden of herbs is small; but diligence gets much food thence, and health can use it all. If we be such "poor" ones, this Gospel will for us produce "much food:" then in each peculiarity will some treasure be found by us. Is the Son the "Lamb of God?" We too must be lambs; not swine or dogs, with the mark of the beast, but with the spirit of a dove abiding on us. Has the Son both life and light? The begotten children, like the Only-begotten, must exhibit both life and light also; and though often misunderstood, and unintelligible to carnal and godless men, must shew in their ways, because Christ is in them, the living truth of which sabbaths, passovers, and feasts of tabernacles, were but the faint figures. As sons of men they may at times have fears, and doubts, and darkness. But, as sons of the Father, their place is to walk even now as admitted within the veil: calm in trial, strong in weakness, betrayed but not distracted, to the end the unwavering witnesses for the same blessed Truth. Lord, all things are possible with Thee. Fulfil Thou Thy purpose. Thou hast predestinated us to be conformed to the image of Thy beloved Son. So conform us to Him here, by making us partakers of His cross and resurrection, that like Him we may reveal Thee, and not ourselves, in all our ways. Amen.

02.6.0. The Common Testimony

THE COMMON TESTIMONY.

"All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit." -- 1 Corinthians 12:11.

"To us there is one Lord Jesus, by whom are all things, and we by Him." -- 1 Corinthians 8:6.

HITHERTO I have only spoken of the diversities of the Gospels. We have seen that these variations throughout are part of a Divine purpose, the appointed and appropriate means for affording a fuller revelation of the manifold relationships of the One Lord. And though to some this is an offence, as other acts of the same "wise God," to them that are called it is a sure corner-stone. But from what is distinctive I would now turn to speak of what is common to all the Four Gospels. For if what is peculiar to one or other of them has ever its own purpose, and is instructive as revealing the special experiences of this or that relationship of the One Elect; what is common to all is not less instructive, as shewing those experiences which must attend the Head and His members in each and all their relationships. For some things come upon us, as upon Christ, as sons of Abraham, some on us as servants, some as Adam’s children, and some as sons of God. But some trials and joys there are which are common to the elect in every relation, which must be our experience, whether as sons of Abraham, or Adam, or as servants, or as sons of God. These experiences, which belong to us in all our relations, are the burden of that testimony which is common to all the Four Gospels.

What is this common witness? Not His birth, not His age, not His baptism, fasting, or transfiguration; but the cross and resurrection, the death of the flesh, the life of the spirit; the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow. Out of countless acts and words of Jesus, death and resurrection is chosen to be the great subject for the common testimony. The Son of Abraham suffers and dies: the Servant of God suffers and dies: the Son of Man suffers and dies: the Son of God suffers and dies. The Son of Abraham rises: the Servant of God rises: the Son of Adam rises: the Son of God rises. The Church is "in Christ" (Ephesians 1:1; Ephesians 1:3-4; Ephesians 1:6-7, &c.). He is the Head, we the members (1 Corinthians 12:12). He that saith He abideth in Him ought to walk even as He walked (1 John 2:6). Other things, therefore, may be doubtful, but this is sure: the cross and resurrection must be ours, if we are His. Other things may vary. One is a prophet; one has tongues; one has knowledge; one the gifts of healing. But as the body is one, and hath many members, so also is Christ, for by one Spirit are we all baptized into One Body. And then, though of all it cannot be said that they preach with Christ, yet of all without any exception it is true that they are "crucified with Him" (Romans 6:6; Galatians 5:24), of all, that they are "risen with Him" (Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:1), of all that they must "suffer with Him, that they may also be glorified together" (Romans 8:17). It cannot but be so, for "we are no more twain," He in us, and we "in Him." Would to God this union of Christ and His members were understood. Then the lesson of the cross would not as now so often fall on heavy ears. "In Christ Jesus," -- "Surely not in vain, (as another has said,) does this language recur so frequently, on so many different occasions. No mere external relation, as being members of the visible body called

by His name, exhausts the inwardness of the words, 'in Christ.' It stands there in deep simplicity, yet opening the hidden mystery of union with Christ, and of the reality of our dwelling in Him, and He in us. It is not any unity of will, though worked by Him; no mere conformity of mind, though by Him wrought; no act of faith, casting itself on His mercy; no outward imputation of righteousness; no mere ascription of His perfect obedience in our stead; no being clothed upon, as people speak, with His righteousness; not being looked upon by the Father as in Him: none of these things come up to the reality of being 'in Him.' And why, when Scripture speaks of being 'in Him,' speak of 'being regarded as in Him?' Why, when Scripture speaks of being 'clothed with Him,' speak of having His righteousness cast around us to interpose between our sins and the sight of God? Why, when Scripture talks of realities, talk of figures? No, there is a reality in this Scripture language, which is not to be exchanged away for any of these substitutions. As we are 'in Adam,' not merely by the imputation of Adam's sin, but by an actual community of a corrupt nature, derived to us from him by our natural descent from him, so that we have a sad share in him, as having been in him, and being from him, and of him, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; so, on the other hand, are we 'in Christ,' not merely by the imputation of His righteousness, but by an actual, real, spiritual, origin from Him, not physical, but still as real as our descent from Adam. As we are really 'sons of man' by physical birth, so are we as really and as actually 'sons of God' by spiritual birth; sons of man by being born in Adam, sons of God by being members of Him who is the Son of God." (Scriptural Views of Holy Baptism, pp. 116, 117.)

Let us turn then to His cross, not only with the joy of faith, as seeing how for us sin was judged, and man brought nigh to God in Christ Jesus; but looking on it as a thing to be attained to, and as desiring in the Spirit each according to our measure to apprehend what we are apprehended for. I only note the common witness, that therefore which is the elect's common portion, whether as sons of Adam or Abraham, as servants, or as sons of God.

Here is the common testimony. In all the Gospels Christ is betrayed by one (Matthew 26:21; Matthew 26:47; Mark 14:18; Mark 14:43; Luke 22:21; Luke 22:47; John 13:21; John 18:3), denied by another follower (Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:56-62; John 18:17-18; John 18:25-27): in all, a disciple is near Him, striving instead of yielding, attempting to escape the cross by a carnal appeal to human energy (Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50; John 18:10): in all, He is judged by the Priests, and Scribes, and Elders (Matthew 26:57; Mark 14:53; Luke 22:54; Luke 22:66; John 18:13; John 18:24): in all He is condemned by Pilate, that is the great of this world (Matthew 27:2; Mark 15:1; Luke 23:1; John 18:28-29): in all Barabbas, who was imprisoned for sedition, is preferred before Him (Matthew 27:21; Mark 15:11; Luke 23:18; John 18:40): in all He is crucified, and numbered with transgressors (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:25; Luke 23:33; John 19:18): in all He is stripped, and His raiment is taken from Him, and parted among His murderers (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23-24): in all He dies (Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30): in all He has a grave prepared by others (Matthew 27:59-60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:40-42 hew-42 hew-42): in all He rises, and as risen speaks and walks with men (Matthew 28:6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:6; John 20:18-21). As He is, so are we in this world; and though many a step is trod by the elect before he reaches the death of self and resurrection, yet this is our goal, for this we look, this is the end to be pressed to, yea with great longings; "that we may win Christ, and be found in Him; that we may know the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, if by any means we may

attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Php 3:10-11). And though with us, even as with Him, if Christ be formed in us, there will first be increase in wisdom and stature here: and then a sitting with the doctors, hearing and asking questions, -- for babes in Christ yet talk with doctors, in a way never repeated after heaven is opened to us; -- though these steps come first, and baptism, and prayer, and fasting, and temptation, and preaching, and many labours; and many a weary hour with disciples and the men of this world, and many a lonely night when God only is witness to our cries and tears and sighings; and hours of joy too when babes believe, and when our faces shine, and the departed seem very near to us, and we are for a moment transfigured with the light of coming glory; -- though all this must precede the cross, yet it shall come at last, if only through grace step by step we follow onward whither the Spirit leads us. By little and little, if we walk in the Spirit, the cross is reached, even as by little and little, if we walk in the flesh, it will be removed from us. He who for us hung there reached it not at a step, but by many stages, by common and little and every-day acts of truth and faithfulness; even as they who brought Him to it did so in like manner, by common, little, every-day sins; one because he would sell the truth to gain a little money; others to quench the light which judged them; others, through fear of man, yielding to popular outcry, dreading not to be accounted Caesar’s friend; others, as those who pierced Him, simply in the way of trade, without the slightest personal grudge or quarrel with Him. Each in his way, a step at a time, crucifers and Crucified, reached the cross; they by sparing, He by sacrificing, self in all things. For it can be shunned. Had He never spoken to strip deceivers bare, had He deserted His post, had He exposed Judas, had He prayed for the legions of angels which wait to serve the elect, had He used the might of this world, had He never called disciples, the cross might have been escaped, and man might have remained, living out his life of Adam, with such things as earth gives, but without a better kingdom. But it could not be so, for He came to do the Father’s will, through death to lift man to the place of the Son even in the Father’s bosom. So the corn of wheat fell into the ground, and abode not alone, and has sprung up to bear much fruit. And so with us. If we seek our own, Christ’s cross may still be missed. But if like Him we seek in all things to do the Father’s will and not our own, content through toil, prayer, and fasting, to follow step by step, then the common witness of the Gospels shall in due time be fulfilled in us also. Some of our brethren who have eaten of our bread shall betray and some deny us; while some with honest love, yet carnal, shall strive if it may be by human energy to save and free us here; and Priests shall sit in judgment on the Lord and His anointed, and the Rulers condemn us that they may be Caesar’s friends; and they who fight for freedom even by sedition shall be preferred before us; and we shall be exposed a spectacle to men and angels: and though we may have covered the nakedness of others, ours shall be seen and mocked, while our enemies shall clothe themselves with that they take from us. And this shall be seen by all; for though few even of those we love see the elect transfigured and submitting in the garden, all see the bitter cross; it is meant to be seen, to shew man’s rightful lot, even while it shews the love of Him who from such dishonour will lift man to everlasting glory. So we shall die, and be laid low, and yet rise, and speak to men in the power of a life which is not of this world; though by nature sons of men, now declared to be the sons of God according to the Spirit of holiness and by the resurrection from the dead. For this was wrought in the Head: it must be therefore the lot of those who through grace grow up to be conformed to Him in all things.

Such is the common witness. The four living creatures, speaking out of the depths of God’s sanctuary, here speak but one language. For the veil, whereupon they are wrought, is rent from

the top throughout; and, in its rending, their forms must needs be rent also. (The veil was covered with cherubims. We read, "Thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine-twisted linen, of cunning work; with cherubims shall it be made" (Exodus 26:31; Exodus 36:35). This veil, St Paul expressly tells us, represented "Christ's flesh" (Hebrews 10:20). And we are members of His body, "of His flesh, and of His bones" (Ephesians 5:30).) Blessed be God that so it is, for until the cherub-covered veil is rent, the way into the holiest cannot be open to us. Till it is rent we stand without in the first tabernacle, still among shadows, the figures of the true. But the four-fold witness is agreed. The veil with its cherubim must be rent. The four living creatures bear but one testimony. And the "three that bear record on earth," -- in all a seven-fold witness, -- "these three also agree in one" (1 John 5:8). The Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, answer from earth to heaven, sealing the same witness of death and resurrection.

Thus answers the Spirit in the Church: -- "I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, and suffered under Pontius Pilate; that He was crucified, dead, and buried; that He descended into hell; that He rose again from the dead the third day; that He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at God's right hand, from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Such is the Spirit's witness. Such is our faith touching the Son. Such, therefore, is our faith touching those who in Him are sons also. I believe that they who are sons must be conceived, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of the Holy Ghost. I believe that they must be born, not of the mother of harlots, but of a virgin (2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7), whose name is well called Mary, for she hath known bitterness. I believe that they must suffer; nay more, that for God's true sons there are but few steps between their birth and some suffering. I believe that they must bear the cross, and die, and lie in the grave, and be raised, and in due season ascend to heaven. I believe they must return to earth to judge the quick and the dead, for "the saints shall judge the world;" nay, it is written, "they shall judge angels" (1 Corinthians 6:2-3). It is the Spirit that beareth witness, and the Spirit is truth. He that believeth hath in himself the witness. And though some things may vary, this is sure for all God's sons: this is our faith: would that it were our experience also. The Water speaks the same, as with another seal assuring us of this same truth of death and resurrection. For why are we baptized? "Know ye not," says Paul, "that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? We are buried with Him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12). For the water is a mystic grave: and we do not bury live things but dead things; and our old man is buried there in hope of resurrection. Therefore it is said again, "We are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead, even so we should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection" (Romans 6:3-5). Thus baptism is our profession of death and resurrection: from it Paul can answer, "If the dead rise not, why are we then baptized for dead?" (1 Corinthians 15:29). Circumcision told no such story. In that sign of a bygone age, when man in the flesh, the carnal seed of the believer, was taken into covenant, there was only "the putting away of the filth of the flesh" (1 Peter 3:21); for it was yet a trial of the flesh, whether man in the flesh could be cleansed and fitted for the Lord's presence. But now in baptism it is "the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh" (Colossians 2:11). It has been proved that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom: that not "its filth" only must be "put away," but that "the body of sinful flesh," because it is sinful, must be "put

off" to gain a better resurrection. Thus does the Water also witness that the elect must die, that our appointed calling is to death and resurrection. The Blood repeats the same. For as oft as we drink it we do shew forth the Lord’s death until He come. The corn is bruised, the grape is crushed, to make the bread and wine. And sharing this bread and wine, many corns and yet one bread, many grapes and yet but one chalice, -- we represent that common life which is ours when we are bruised that we may be truly one in Christ Jesus. Life is through death; and this is true in Him and in us. So speaks the Blood, even as the Water and the Spirit. Nay more. Brought through the waters, like Noah, the death of the flesh becomes to us far more than mere testimony. Now it is meat also for the elect. In the world before the flood, before resurrection-life is known or reached by us, we feed on the fruits of the earth, those fruits of righteousness, which, whether in Christ or in ourselves, naturally afford man some satisfaction. As yet the death of the creature is no satisfaction to the elect, though God is satisfied, and we are clothed thereby. God’s fire may fall and consume the oblation, but we are not partakers with Him. It is otherwise when resurrection-life is apprehended. Then the death of the creature is not only a witness, but it affords us food: the elect also can find satisfaction in it. They too can now rejoice in the giving up of life, and great is the strength which the spiritual man derives from the meat which is thus given to him. (Compare Genesis 1:29, where we read of man’s food before the flood, with Genesis 9:3, where the grant of the flesh of beasts is recorded. When God’s religion was in the flesh, it was part of the true religion to eat flesh, as in the Offerings, to witness our satisfaction in the death of the creature. Vegetarianism is only one sign among many of the age we live in, when the attempt is, if possible, to blink the curse, and to forget death and resurrection.)

If these things are so, then have we, who profess to believe, deep cause for humiliation; for while we all proclaim the cross, few of us shew faith in it by being crucified by it to the world and the world to us. Another has said, "The boast of our day is that Christ crucified is preached. But is He, even in this one respect, fully preached, or the doctrine of the cross fully apprehended? Let the walk of those who make the boast answer. It is not insinuated that such are chargeable with licentiousness or immorality. But are they therefore not chargeable with ’walking after the flesh,’ and ’making provision to fulfil its desires?’ In the multitude of particulars it is difficult to make a selection. But what then is the high regard in which blood, and ancestry, and family connexion, are held by some? What is the regard to personal appearance and dress in others? What the attention to ease and comfort, and oft-times profuse expenditure, not to speak of actual luxuries, in the arrangement of the houses, tables, &c., of almost all? Is all this, and a thousand things too numerous to particularize, consistent with reckoning ourselves dead as to the old or natural man? Is this what the Scriptures intend by crucifixion of the flesh? Alas! full well do many of the professing Christians of our day shew that they are but half taught the very doctrine in which they make their boast: that they have but half learned the lesson which even the cross teaches. They have learned that Christ was crucified for them, but they have not learned that they are to be ’crucified with Him;’ or they have found an explanation for this latter expression in the imputation of His death for our justification; a part of the truth, but not the whole; for in vain in this explanation of the words should we seek an answer to the objection which the Apostle anticipated. Yea rather that objection is confirmed by it, for it is nothing else than making the cross the reprieve of the flesh from death. And then when death itself comes to give the refutation to this creed, and to shew that the Christian is not saved in the flesh, then is the effect of this half-learned lesson seen. For, instead of welcoming death as that of which his life has been the anticipation, the execution of that

sentence on the flesh, which, since he has known Christ as crucified for him, he has learned in its desert, and has been continually passing on it in mind and spirit, the dying with Christ daily, the 'being planted in the likeness of His death,' -- instead of being enabled in this view actually to glory in his infirmities, in the weakness, yea, and the dissolution of the flesh, and like the victim found on the arrival of the executioner to have anticipated the end meditated for him, being found of death dead, -- he is scarcely resigned to die, and impatient of suffering in the flesh. And why? Because that truth which the cross of Christ was designed to teach, he never distinctly understood, or rather experienced -- namely, that salvation is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; not from death, but out of it; not the reinstating of the old nature, but the conferring of a new, by the dying and rising again with Christ." (Burgh's Tracts, On Preaching Christ: Christ in His Death. Pp. 5, 6.) But this doctrine finds little acceptance. What pleases? "If you wish to please," so said one who knew the world, "you must make men pleased with themselves: they will then be pleased with you." (Lord Chesterfield.) But the cross is meant to make men displeased with themselves, to humble and abase them. How then can it be so preached as to please all men? A way has been found. Let us say to men, Thank God you are not like others. You hold the true doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ's sufferings, You are not like those deluded creatures who think to be saved by works or feelings. You are not like those Papists, or High-Churchmen, or Dissenters, just as the case may be. Let us thus by implication, while preaching even truth, lay to men's souls the flattering unction that they whom we address are not as other men, and they will be well pleased. And having by us been pleased with themselves, they will be pleased with us in return, and the truth shall seem to have acquired many friends. But let the true cross be brought before men, the death of self in all its forms, the end of our righteousness and strength and will as sons of Adam; let us shew that participation with the sufferings of Christ into which the Holy Ghost leads us, -- the deep joy there is even in the midst of outward sorrows in the putting off of old Adam, -- the life in things that are unseen, in righteousness, joy, and peace, which takes away even the desire to have something or to be something here; let this be preached in life and word, and we shall find the offence of the cross remains, now as of old a stumblingblock, not least to those who thank God that they are "not as other men." The fact is that we live in a day when the cross as it bears upon our life is very generally condemned as the exploded folly of a less enlightened age. It is possible, so a popular preacher has lately expressed it, "to make the best of both worlds." The Christian now can shew the heathen how to get more out of this world than they knew before; not resurrection, but power in the flesh; not the Holy Ghost, but learning and wealth; not Christ at God's right hand, and we in Him, but discoveries, blessings, and institutions here. Christ and His Apostles lost this world. They could not, or did not, make the best of both; but, we in wiser days can gain both worlds. So the aim is a walk of faith, so as not to exclude a walk of sight; heaven perhaps some day, but at all events, a better home, a safer resting-place on this side death. The old Church said, Christ suffered, and His saints must suffer. The new gospel is, Christ died in the flesh that we may live in it. Mortifications therefore, and crosses, and fastings, are a mistake. The lot of the Head and the members may differ very widely. It is true He suffered and died, but we know that cross was for us: why should we bear what He once bore for us? This is the cross which condemns the flesh preached as its reprieve, and as the excuse for carnal and careless walking. Oh cunning lie of the devil, to cut us off from Christ, to make Him and His members not one body; as if we could indeed be His, and miss the cross; as if the improvement of the fallen creature, and not its death, were our appointed calling. Such a religion, "the way of Cain" (Jude 1:11), cultivation of the creature instead

of death, fruits of the earth offered as if neither sin nor the curse were working in it, -- such a religion will generally please, though even here, if God has the best, the devotee will not escape censure from some who boast to be the spiritual. But let there be blood, a life poured out, -- "for the blood is the life," -- let there be the yielding to death of what is animal in us, -- let there be self-judgment, intellect judged, this is rank superstition, treason against Him who made or permitted the creature to be what we now see it. We are not in Eden, but in a groaning world: explain it as we will, death is here; a curse works in us. But our religion shall forget both the sin that has caused this, and its judgment; good fruits of the fallen creature shall be a sufficient offering. So thought Cain; so think his children; but their offering lacks the flame. And though some of the most beautiful exhibitions of good fruits, now as of old, are to be seen on Cain's altars; fruits most sweet in their true place, as an adjunct to the blood of the lamb, and as such accepted; for in the Meat-offering God will have fruits offered where there has first been the blood of the Burnt-offering (see Leviticus 2:1-16); yet are Cain and his seed angry with their brothers who confess the curse by a death of the flesh in hope of resurrection. And even true Christians stumble here. Like Martha we say, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (see John 11:21; John 11:25-27). We think if Christ were with us, death and sorrow would not come; if He were here, we should escape the curse. To such thoughts His answer is, "I am the resurrection; believest thou this?" She saith unto Him, "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Christ says, "I am the resurrection; believest thou this?" and we reply, "Yea, Lord, Thou art the Christ;" a good confession, but not the answer to the Lord's question. If we really believed Him to be "the resurrection," we should understand that there must first be death, for without death there can be no resurrection. Thus, "I am the resurrection," would answer our thought, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died:" but with Martha we can only say, "Yea, Lord, we believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." "And when she had said this, she went her way, and called Mary;" a secret consciousness that the subject was beyond her leads her to call others; even as to this hour, "I am the resurrection," the Church's life in Christ, her blessed privileges through death and resurrection, often drive God's children away from Christ to brethren, to conceal the lack of communion which makes His words too high and painful to us. But I must conclude. Happy are they to whom the cross of Christ is not a rock of offence, but a most sure corner-stone, who in the ancient faith of saints, still believing those oft-repeated words, -- "He was born, He suffered, He died, He rose," -- can yet be content to add as the conclusion of such a creed, "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." Time was when "with great power the Church bore witness to the resurrection," for of "the multitude of them that believed, none said that ought that he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." Then "as many as were possessors of lands and houses sold them, and distribution was made to every man, as he had need" (Acts 4:33-35). And whence all this? He whom they had walked with upon the earth, He who loved them even unto death, was cast out of this world. They knew He was Lord of heaven: and they longed to be like Him; sharing with Him His portion here, as sacrifices for others; sharing with Him His blessed hope. But the path was hard for flesh and blood: false brethren made it harder. Soon the first love waxed cold. And soon as saints forgot their hope, they began to improve the world that is, that they might improve their own lot in it. Thus, the Church's temptation, even as her Lord's, has ever been to anticipate her future glory in a fallen world, to seek a home in a creation yet tainted with the curse. Let her remember that sackcloth is her clothing here (Revelation 11:3). Christ's crown and purple robe were the gift not of His Father, but

of His murderers. If the Church be crowned and in purple in this world, let her see to it, and ask, -- Is she truly adorned by these things, or is she mocked by them?

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. For our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Php 3:15-21).

Yet one word. These pages may fall into the hands of some who as yet are not at peace with God. To such, even as to believers, my testimony is of Christ Jesus. Him hath God exalted to be a Saviour. Our real misery is that we do not know either ourselves or God. Of ourselves we have good thoughts; of Him, hard thoughts. Christ’s life and death meet this: they bring proof that there is no hope for man in himself -- every hope for him in God his Saviour. God, however, as He is the true God, can only deal with realities. He occupies Himself with what really is. We must therefore come to Him as we really are. Come to Him, pretending to be what you are not, and there can be no true peace. For God will not deal with you on the ground of pretences. Come to Him as you really are: God will go with you to the very bottom of your misery, and, because He is God, has grace which will meet your every need. Trust Him, and you have peace. Doubt Him, and trust yourself, and you can have no peace, though every ordinance in the world may have been observed by you. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the witness which God gave of His Son. And this is the witness, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5:10-11).

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

03.00.1. THE LAW OF THE OFFERINGS

THE LAW OF THE OFFERINGS

ANDREW JUKES

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“This is the law of the Burnt-offering, of the Meat-offering, and of the Sin-offering, and of the Trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifices of the Peace-offerings.” Leviticus 7:37.

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03.00.2. PREFACE

PREFACE

HE, who spake as never man spake, opened His mouth in parables. With His example before us, I have often been surprised that the inspired parables of the Old Testament should have been so neglected; the more as we see from the writings of St Paul, not only how closely these emblems are connected with Christ, but also how aptly they illustrate, in simplest figures, the wondrous truths and profound mysteries of redemption.

Some years ago, one of these Old Testament parables was made an especial blessing to myself. This led me further; and having learnt by personal experience the preciousness of these emblematic Scriptures, I have since freely used them in ministering to others the truths connected with Christ's Work and Person. Some months since, I gave a course of Lectures on THE OFFERINGS, which were taken down in short-hand at the time. At the repeated request of others, I have since corrected them as time has allowed. They are now published in the following pages. As to the great outlines and principles contained in them, I may say that I have confidence that they are in the main correct: mixed with much infirmity and weakness I doubt not; (how much few perhaps will feel more than I do; indeed it has been the sense of this which has so long delayed their publication;) yet still. . . I trust according to the mind of God, and setting forth not only a measure of truth, but also the truth which the Offerings were intended to typify. Where they contain error, may the Lord and His saints pardon it: where truth, may we all acknowledge it as His, and follow it I need not say, "I have no commandment of the Lord." I merely "give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful."

It only remains for me to add here, that I have derived much assistance upon this subject from a Tract entitled, The Types of Leviticus. I cannot follow the writer of it in his view of every Offering. I do not know how far he would assent to the principles I have applied to their varieties. Yet I feel that under God I am much his debtor, I doubt not for far more than I am even conscious of.

I now commend these pages to the Lord. May He be pleased to use them, as shall seem good to Him, to His glory.

03.00.3. CONTENTS

CONTENTS CHAPTER 1: THE TYPES IN GENERAL CHAPTER 2: THE BURNT-OFFERING CHAPTER 3: THE MEAT-OFFERING CHAPTER 4: THE PEACE-OFFERING CHAPTER 5: THE SIN-OFFERING CHAPTER 6: THE TRESPASS-OFFERING CHAPTER 7: THE OFFERINGS AS A WHOLE

APPENDIX

03.00.4. PREFACE TO E-SWORD EDITION

PREFACE TO THE E-SWORD EDITION

E-Sword has become a valuable part of my regular Bible study and I am thrilled and thankful for the opportunity to assist Dr. David Thomason, Pamela Marshall, Jason Briggs and Ed Sandlin who have made that possible. This module has not been changed in any substantive way. The Bible references have been tool tipped so they can be recognized by the E-Sword Bible Program. Some minor spelling issues may have been corrected. The chapter and section titles have been formatted to make them stand out. Subtitles have been grouped together at the beginning of each chapter. Footnotes have been consecutively numbered and placed at the end of each chapter. To my knowledge, those are the only changes since the author originally published this work.

I am truly thankful to my family, Dr. Dave Thomason and the OMLB. Above all to the Lord Jesus Christ who does all things well.

James R. Rice

Cleveland, Ohio

03.00.5. Heb_10:1-14

Hebrews 10:1-14 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have bad no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Wherefore when He cometh into the world He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared Me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God.

Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein which are offered by the law;

Then said He, Lo. I come to do Thy will. O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

03.01. CHAPTER 1: THE TYPES IN GENERAL

CHAPTER 1: THE TYPES IN GENERAL Galatians 4:21-31

“THE works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.” Such was the witness of one of old; and the saints of God can yet set their seal to it. Great, indeed, are the works of the Lord; sought out, and sought into, are they by His people: but how great, how exalted, how wondrous, none feel so deeply as those who have most considered them! Man’s work, if we are continually poring over it, will soon weary us a little attention will in time make us masters of it. God’s work, the more we examine and look into it, will only attract us the more. The more it is studied, the more it opens out, at every step unfolding fresh and endless objects. Take any portion of it the earth, the air, the sky; and the further we search, the deeper we examine, the more are we led to acknowledge that as yet we know next to nothing, and that the great ocean of truth of every kind lies before us, as yet all unfathomed and unfathomable. The reasons for this are many. A very obvious one is that man is finite, God infinite; and the finite cannot measure the infinite. Another reason is, that God uses the same instrument for many and different ends. Thus, when we know one use or end of this or that part of creation, we may yet be ignorant of many other ends which God may be carrying out by the same means. Take, for example, the air. How many ends does God accomplish by this one simple element! Air supplies the lungs, supports fire, conveys sound, reflects light, diffuses scents, gives rain, wafts ships, evaporates fluids, and fulfils besides, I know not how many other purposes. Man, from his infirmity, makes a special tool for every special purpose. God uses one thing for many purposes. Man has often tried to make an instrument which will perfectly serve several different ends, and never entirely succeeded. In God’s work, on the other hand, we constantly see many ends met, and met perfectly, by one and the same most simple arrangement The consequence of this is that the difference is immense between looking upon God’s work and looking into it. Merely to look upon His work in nature, shews, indeed, that the hand that made it is divine. The first glance, cursory as it may be, gives a satisfying impression, an impression of perfectness. But how much lies beyond this superficial glance! We look out on nature in any form hills, dales, woods, rocks, trees, water; whatever it is we look on round us, the first glance is enough to give us the impression of perfectness. But in each part of that scene, so cursorily glanced at, every minutest portion will bear the strictest inspection, for every minutest part is perfect. Each blade of grass in all that wide-spread landscape, each worthless, perishing blade of grass, will bear the closest scrutiny; for it is finished by a master’s hand. Look at the humblest plant; consider its wondrous mechanism; its vessels for imbibing nourishment from the earth, and nourishment from the air and light; its perfect and complete apparatus for preserving and increasing its allotted growth. Look at the vilest ant most insignificant insect that creeps up that unthought-of stem, whose life is but a fleeting hour; for that hour finding all its wants supplied, and its’ powers, one and all, adapted and perfect to their appointed end. Think of these things, and then we shall be better able to enter somewhat into the perfectness of the work of God And God’s Word, in all these particulars, is like God’s work; yea, God’s Word is His work as much as creation; and it is its infinite depth and breadth, and the diverse and manifold

ends and aims of all we find in it, which make it what it is, inexhaustible. To look, therefore, on the mere surface of the Bible, is one thing; to look into it quite another; for each part may have many purposes. The very words which, in one dispensation and to one people, conveyed a literal command, to be obeyed literally, may, in another age and dispensation, supply a type of some part of God's work or purpose; while in the selfsame passage the humble believer of every age may find matter of comfort or warning, according to his need. The microscope may be used here as well as in the physical world. And as in nature those wonders which the microscope presents to us, though it may be but in an insect's wing or a drop of water, give us at a glance a sense of the perfectness of God's work, such as we might not receive even from a view of the boundless heavens, testifying with a voice not to be misunderstood, how wondrous is the Hand that formed them, with whom nothing is too insignificant to be perfected: so His Word, in its more neglected portions, in those passages which we have perhaps thought of comparatively little value, shews the same perfectness. The finishing of the emblems in the Types is by the same hand that finished redemption; the one was, if you please, His great work, the other His small one; but both are His work, and both perfect. And this His work in His Word has another striking resemblance to His work in creation. Just as in creation, one leading idea is presented throughout it, which testifies in everything we look upon, in every leaf, in every insect, in every blade of grass, to the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Creator, a testimony which the partial and apparent contradictions of tempests and earthquakes does not alter or disannul; so has all Scripture one great thought stamped on it, which it is bringing out on every side continually, every act, every history shews it, that thought is the grace of the Redeemer. There is neither speech nor language, but in all we hear the wondrous tale. Christ is throughout the key to Scripture. He is the one great idea of the Bible. Know Christ, understand God's thoughts about Him, and then you will understand the Bible. We are in the dark because we know so little of Him.

I have commenced my inquiry into the Typical Offerings with these remarks, because I am disposed to think that there is with many a feeling, not perhaps openly expressed, though not on that account the less acted on, that some portions of the Scriptures, such as the Types, are less valuable and less instructive. But whence have we got this notion? Not from God. Were these typical parts of Scripture unimportant, God would not have given us so many chapters which really contain no meaning for us, except they have a typical import; respecting which He yet testifies that they are profitable to aid and instruct the man of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration, and is profitable;" and this not to mere babes in Christ, but to the man of God, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16-17) The Types are, in fact, a set of pictures or emblems, directly from the hand of God, by which He would teach His children things otherwise all but incomprehensible. In the Types, if I may be allowed the expression, God takes His Son to pieces. By them does He bring within the range of our capacity definite views of the details of Christ's work, which perhaps but for these pictures we should never fully, or at least so fully, apprehend. The realities which the Types represent are in themselves truths and facts the most elevated, facts which have taken place before God Himself, facts in which He has Himself been the actor. These vast and infinite objects He brings close before us in emblems, and presents them to our eyes in a series of pictures, with the accuracy of One who views these things as they are seen and understood by Himself, and in a way in which they may be seen and understood by us. The real secret of the neglect of the Types, I cannot but think may in part be traced to this, that they require more spiritual intelligence than many Christians can bring to them.

To apprehend them requires a certain measure of spiritual capacity and habitual exercise in the things of God, which all do not possess, for want of abiding fellowship with Jesus. The mere superficial glance upon the Word in these parts brings no corresponding idea to the mind of the reader. The types are, indeed, pictures, but to understand the picture it is necessary we should know something of the reality. The most perfect representation of a steam-engine to a South-sea savage would be wholly and hopelessly unintelligible to him, simply because the reality, the outline of which was presented to him, was something hitherto unknown. But let the same drawing be shown to those who have seen the reality, such will have no difficulty in explaining the representation. And the greater the acquaintance with the reality, the greater will be the ability to explain the picture. The savage who had never seen the steam-engine would of course know nothing whatever about it. Those who had seen an engine but know nothing of its principles, though they might tell the general object of the drawing, could not explain the details. But the engineer, to whom every screw and bolt are familiar, to whom the use and object of each part is thoroughly known, would not only point out where each of these was to be found in the picture, but would shew, what others might overlook, how in different engines these might be made to differ.

It is just so in the Types. He who knows much of the reality will surely also know something of the type. The real secret of our difficulty is that we know so little, and, what is worse, we do not know our ignorance. And the natural pride of our hearts, which does not like to confess our ignorance, or to go through the deep searchings of soul which attend learning and abiding in God's presence, excuses itself under the plea that these things are not important, or, at least, nonessential. Paul had to meet the same spirit in several of the early churches. Thus, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, when about to prove from a type the doctrine of Christ's everlasting priesthood, he speaks of Him as "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec," he cannot go on with the proof without telling the Hebrews how much of the difficulty of the subject was to be traced not so much to its own abstruseness as to their spiritual childhood and ignorance. "Of whom," says he, speaking of Melchisedec, "I have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." (Hebrews 5:12-13 see also 1 Corinthians 3:1-2) It was their infancy in Christ, their lack of growth, which hindered their understanding the Scriptures. As in the natural world life and intelligence are different, just so is it in the spiritual. A man may be born of God, and as such, having the life of Christ, be an heir of heaven, sure of all that the love of God has laid up in store for the redeemed family in glory; and yet, like a child, know nothing of his inheritance, nothing of his Father's will, be a stranger to service and warfare, and ready to be deceived by any. This is, I fear, the case with many believers now. The low standard of truth in the Church, making the possession of eternal life the end instead of the beginning of the Christian's course, has led many to think that if they have, or can at last obtain, this life, it is enough. But these are not God's thoughts. Birth, spiritual birth, is birth of God for ever, a life once given never to be destroyed. Schooling, training, adorning, clothing, follow the possession of life, and even the knowledge of it I own, indeed, that while the Christian is a babe, he needs milk, and ought never to be pressed to service: at such a time he does not need the deeper truths of Scripture; strong meat may choke the babe as much as poison. But milk, the simpler doctrines of the Word, will not support the man in active service. The man of God needs deeper truth: and it is, I believe, the lack of this deeper truth in the Church which so effectually leaves us without power or service, and brings it to pass

that much of what is done is performed in the energy of the flesh rather than in the power of the Spirit.

I must add one word in connexion with the passage just alluded to, which, though beside our present object, may not really be beside the mark. It is written, “Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Hebrews 5:14) It is “by reason of use” that is, by using the truth we already possess, that the senses are exercised to advance further. Let us act up faithfully to the light we have, use out fully the grace already given, then surely our spiritual strength will not only rapidly but wonderfully increase. But it is time I should turn particularly to the object more immediately before us, The Types in general; their characteristic differences in the different books of the Old Testament.

It is pretty generally known that in the Old Testament there are typical persons, things, times, and actions; but it is not, I believe, so generally known how remarkably these types vary in character, and how beautifully they have been divided and arranged by God himself under different classes, if I may so speak; each one distinct from the others, and each having something characteristic. The books of the Old Testament are God’s divisions; each of them may be called one of God’s chapters; and in each of these books we find something different as respects the character of the Types they contain. The general notion of the Types is that they are merely sketches. This is very far short of the truth. So far from being rough sketches, they are one and all most perfectly finished with a master’s hand: and a tolerable acquaintance with the distinct character of the different books, and of their types, is enough at once to prove this. Christ is indeed the key to them all: He is the key of the Types, and the key to the Bible. Of Him God has given us more than sketches; the Word from end to end is full of Him. In the Word we have a whole Christ presented to us: Christ in His offices; in His character; in His person; Christ in His relations to God and man; Christ in His body the Church; Christ as giving to God all that God required from man; Christ as bringing to man all that man required from God; Christ as seen in this dispensation in suffering; Christ as seen in the next dispensation in glory; Christ as the first and the last; as “all and in all” to His people. The different books are but God’s chapters in which He arranges and illustrates some one or more of these or other aspects of His Beloved.

Many are satisfied to see nothing of this: the sprinkled blood in Egypt is enough for them. And this, indeed, secures salvation: but, oh! How much lies beyond! Knowing only the blood in Egypt will never teach us our priestly office, nor the value and use of the offerings of the Lord, nor the will of the Lord respecting us. The blood, indeed, wherever seen, bespeaks our safety, and it is blessed even in Egypt to know God’s claim is met; but ought we not also, as His redeemed and loved ones, to desire to know more also of His will and our portion?

We know but little of all this as yet, but we know enough to make us long for more. As an old writer has well said, contrasting the dispensations, God in the Types of the last dispensation was teaching His children their letters. In this dispensation He is teaching them to put these letters together, and they find that the letters, arrange them as we will, spell Christ, and nothing but Christ. In the next dispensation He will teach us what Christ means. This is most true. But the Church “as now risen with Christ” as already “seated in heavenly places” (Ephesians 2:6) and “in the kingdom” ought even now in spirit to enter a little more into the truth of what Christ has been

for us and to us. The Lord teach us all more of His infinite fullness.

I said there was a distinct difference in the Types of the Old Testament, and that this difference is apparently so arranged on purpose, the different classes of types for the most part being found in different books. For my own part I cannot doubt the fact, though I feel it will be quite another thing for me to commend it to others. Take, however, first my statement, and then I will endeavour, in dependence on the Lord, to give the proof which may be brought in support of it.

Those who are so far acquainted with the earlier books of the Bible as to be able to carry their general contents in their memories, will at once recollect how very different in character some of these books are from others; some, as for example Genesis, being throughout simple narratives; others, like Leviticus, being from first to last a series of ceremonial observances. Each of these books, those which deal in narrative, as much as those which contain emblematical ordinances, are, as we find from the New Testament, typical. There is, however, a great difference in the character of their types; and to this distinction I now direct attention.

Generally speaking the difference is this. The types of Genesis foreshadow God's great dispensational purposes respecting mans development; showing in mystery His secret will and way respecting the different successive dispensations. The types of Exodus I speak, of course, generally bring out, as their characteristic, redemption and its consequences; a chosen people are here redeemed out of bondage, and brought into a place of nearness to God. Leviticus again differs from each of these, dealing; I think I may say solely, in types connected with access to God. Numbers and Joshua are again perfectly different, the one giving us types connected with our pilgrimage as in the wilderness; the other, types of our place as over Jordan, that is, as dead and risen with Christ. In speaking thus, I would by no means be understood to say that Genesis is the only book which contains dispensational types: I believe that there are many in the other books; but, wherever this is the case, the dispensational type is subservient to, or rather in connexion with, the special subject of the book. Thus, if Numbers is the book of the wilderness, the dispensational types in it, if there are any, will bear on the wilderness. [1] Nor are these the only books of the Old Testament in which a characteristic and typical thought may be easily traced. I feel satisfied that had we but sufficient intelligence, the remaining books might be viewed in the same manner. [2] But I take the opening ones as being generally more familiar to us, and sufficient to shew my meaning. But it may be asked, what proof is there for these assertions? I answer, the New Testament itself seems to me to supply the proof in every case. Of course, as in every other study, a certain amount of apprehension is needed in those to whom the proof is submitted. All have not intelligence enough to grasp the proofs of astronomy, which, nevertheless, are proofs and unanswerable proofs to those whose senses are sufficiently exercised to discern them. So, I doubt not, will it be here. And I venture to say that those who know most of spiritual communion, who, in God's presence, have entered the deepest into the value of Christ and God's thoughts about Him, these will be the persons best qualified rightly to estimate the amount of proof contained in what I now suggest to them. To return, then, to GENESIS. I said that its types, for the most part, were of a dispensational character, showing God's great dispensational purposes and the course appointed for man's development. Perhaps it may be necessary for me to explain what I mean by "dispensational purposes." God has, since the fall of man, at various periods dealt with man, in different degrees of intimacy, and, in a certain sense, also on different principles. Throughout all, He has had one purpose in view, to reveal what He is, and to shew what man is;

but this one end has been brought out in different ways, and under various and repeated trials. The sum is this. Man by disobedience fell, and thenceforth has, with all his progeny, been a sinner. The different dispensations, while, on the one hand, they were revelations of God, were also the trial whether, under any circumstances, man could recover himself. God first tried man without law; the end of that was the flood, “for the earth was filled with violence.” (Genesis 6:11) God then committed power to Noah, trying man under the restraints of human authority, saying, “He that sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed,” (Genesis 9:6) to see, if I may so speak, whether, with this help, man could in any measure recover himself. The end of that, and this within no long period, was open and wide-spread idolatry. God himself then came more manifestly forth as a giver. The other dispensations are specially His. He chose one family, the family of Abraham, and, to give man in the flesh every assistance in recovering himself, He gave him a perfect law, to see whether by this law he could improve or restore himself. This was the dispensation of the law. I need not tell you the end of this. God sent His servants seeking fruit of the husbandmen to whom He had let out His vineyard; and some they beat, and some they stoned, and all they treated shamefully. Last of all He sent His Son and Him they cast out and crucified (Matthew 21:33-39). Such was the end of this first dispensation, and of the experiment whether man in the flesh could be amended by law. God then brought in a new thing, the dispensation of resurrection, I mean the Christian dispensation, differing from the preceding in this point, above all others, that it did not recognize man in the flesh at all, but only owned, as the subjects of a heavenly kingdom, such as were quickened by a new and heavenly life. Man in the flesh was now no more to be tried, for it was a settled thing that he was utterly lost and helpless, and baptism sealed this. [3] God would now Himself make a people, “begotten again by the resurrection of Christ.” (1 Peter 1:3) Who through this dispensation of grace should be a witness, not of what they were, but of what He was. A dispensation, therefore, was begun, not owning man in the flesh in any way, in which God has been dealing almost in direct contrast to His dealings with man under the law. This is the present dispensation.

I have perhaps enlarged on this question more than my subject demands, but the importance of it may be my apology, an importance, I grieve to say, but little recognized by the mass of Christians. What I have said, however, will shew how God has dealt with man dispensationally, that is, how, in different ages and dispensations, His requirements and laws have varied. God’s first dispensation was the law: His second is the gospel

Now the types of Genesis, unlike those of some of the other books, are taken up, I may say almost exclusively, with foreshadowings of great truths or events connected with these dispensations. Two or three passages from the New Testament will supply a divinely-authorized proof of this statement. With these, as a starting-point, I trust I shall easily shew how full Genesis is of similar types.

Let us look, then, for a moment at Genesis 21:1-21, with St Paul’s comment on it in Galatians 4:21-28 “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the

mother of us all But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond- woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman."

Now all this is dispensational. Hagar, the handmaid, and a bond-woman, stands the perfect type of the covenant of law: Sarah, the true wife, and a free- woman, the representative of the covenant of grace. The first son, Ishmael, born according to nature, a type of the Jew, who by natural birth came into covenant. The second son, Isaac, born contrary to nature, of parents who were "as good as dead," (Hebrews 11:12; Romans 4:19) a type of the resurrection life of this dispensation, the life from above springing out of death. I can but just touch the subject here; but enough perhaps has been said to shew my meaning. Christ, of course, is the key here as elsewhere; yet how different here from the types of Leviticus, which, instead of speaking of Him as connected with dispensations, shew His work as bearing on communion. And if the types of Genesis are unlike Leviticus, what shall we say of Numbers and Joshua, which in their types are full, as we shall see, of representations of the varied experience of the redeemed? The least measure of spiritual intelligence must, I think, at once apprehend a difference so striking as this. I cannot leave the type of Hagar and Sarah without just noticing one other part in it, which may not be altogether thrown away. Observe, when Sarah died, Abraham took again another wife, Keturah (Genesis 25:1-4); and by her he had, not one son, as in the preceding types, (one son in each being the emblem of one family,) but many sons, the type of that which shall take place when the Sarah dispensation is ended: when not one nation only shall be the Lord's, but when "the kingdoms of this world" shall be His. Hitherto God has had but one nation: in the last dispensation a peculiar nation in the flesh; now a peculiar nation in the spirit, whose birth is not from Adam, but from Christ. But in the next dispensation it will be otherwise. The Sarah covenant will never embrace the nations, though it will "take out of them a people for His name," (Acts 15:14) for in it "there is neither Jew nor Greek;" the flesh, as I have said, in it being in no way recognized. It will be otherwise when the next dispensation comes, and "the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord." But I am to speak of the characteristic difference of the Types, and not of all that is taught us in them. A second passage from the book of Genesis, which is referred to in the New Testament as typical, is the history of Melchisedec. In Hebrews 7:1-28 the apostle is showing the abrogation and disannulling of the Levitical priesthood, and how the dispensation of the law, with the things pertaining to it, was superseded by a new dispensation. In support of this, he refers to a fact recorded in Genesis, which he uses as his sufficient proof. The passage is very remarkable, not only as showing the character of the types of Genesis, but as teaching us something of the nature of typical representations, and of the way in which they must be interpreted. But I here simply refer to it as an instance in point, to shew the general character of the types of Genesis. The history tells us that Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec, one who in his own person was both king and priest. The apostle shews how every detail given of this person, yea, and how that also which is omitted respecting him, is all full of typical instruction. [4] Levi paid tithes in Abraham to Melchisedec: that proves, says the apostle, how far Levi was below Melchisedec. It speaks, also, of a time when the priesthood of Levi will have to yield to another priesthood. I do not go into details: they are sufficiently familiar to those even moderately versed in Scripture. I only refer to it as another undoubted illustration of the dispensational character of the types of Genesis.

Take another of the types of Genesis, I mean the history of Joseph. No one, I suppose, who has ever thought upon it, can doubt that this history is typical. But typical of what? Of dispensational truth. Joseph is the eldest son of the younger and best-loved wife. Here, again, we get the two wives, as in a former instance, bringing out the same truth, though with some additions. Leah, the elder wife, has all her children before Rachel, the younger, has any. The Jewish dispensation had all its children before the Christian dispensation had any. Christ, the first-born from the grave, was the first son of the Rachel dispensation. This son, the beloved of his father, is cast out by his brethren, the children of the elder wife, and cast into Egypt, the constant type of the Gentile world. There, after a season of suffering and shame, he is exalted to be head over the kingdom; his wife is given him from out of the Gentiles, and then his brethren, the children of the first wife, know him. This type, I think, needs no explanation: if explanation be needed, Romans 11:1-36 will supply it. The sin of the Jews, the elder brethren, is made the riches of the Gentiles for a season, until the elder brethren in need are brought to know and worship their brother, and are reconciled to Him. But I wish merely to call attention to the fact, that here, as elsewhere in Genesis, the types are dispensational. Christ rejected by the Jewish family, and His history among the Gentiles, and again the restoration of His brethren to Him: this is the history of Joseph. I will give but one more example, which must suffice for my proof as to the book of Genesis. Take, then, the ark of Noah. If there be a type in the Bible, the ark is surely a type, of Christ without doubt, but of Christ viewed dispensationally. Indeed, St Peter expressly refers to it in this light, as a type of the mystical death and resurrection of the Church in Christ [5]. But to look at the history. We have first an old world to be destroyed, with one faithful family upon it, or rather one family who are saved for the faithfulness and piety of their head, as it is said, “Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark: for thee have I seen righteous.” (Genesis 7:1) Then we have a new world coming forth in beauty, after destruction has passed on the old; while the chosen family are brought from the one world to the other, in an ark, the only place of safety. Christ is the Ark, taking the chosen family from the world of judgment to the new heavens and the new earth. This is clear; but look at the details. May I not say, the microscope may be used here? The ark, with all its burden, rests on the mountains of the new world, months before any portion of that new world could be seen. Christ, as our Ark, has rested in resurrection, with all the redeemed family in Him; for in Him we are already “risen,” while as yet the waters of judgment (for “now is the judgment of this world,” (John 12:31)) are resting on the world. And mark the foreknowledge of God; the day the ark rested was the very day and the very month on which, ages afterwards, Christ, the true Ark, rested in resurrection. “The ark rested on the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month.” (Genesis 8:4) On that day Christ rose from the dead. The fourteenth day of this seventh month (afterwards, by God’s command, called the first month, (Exodus 12:2)) was the Passover; the fifteenth, the feast of unleavened bread; (Leviticus 23:5-6; compare this with Matthew 26:17; Luke 22:7; and John 18:28) and the third day from that, “the seventeenth day,” was the day Christ rose from the dead. But I have said enough to shew the character of the types of Genesis, and that they are all more or less dispensationed. And let it be observed we have in them three dispensations, the past, the present, and a future one.

I now pass on more briefly to speak of the general character of the types of EXODUS. These, as I have already said, are chiefly connected with redemption and its consequences. In proof of this, as in the former case, I will begin with New Testament evidence.

Let us, then, begin with the Passover, the institution of which is recorded in Exodus 12:1-51. Is there a doubt on the mind of any whether or not this ordinance is to be regarded as typical? Then let us hear Paul's comment upon it: "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Corinthians 5:7) And what is this Passover but redemption? The elect family, with shoes on their feet, and their loins girt ready for flight from Egypt, are standing by night ("the night is far spent" Romans 13:12) within the house whose door-posts are sprinkled with blood, while the destroying angel is abroad in judgment, in the death of their first-born judging the pride of Egypt. And this is the one great truth in Egypt, the sprinkled blood, and its value as delivering from judgment In Egypt it is much to know that Israel is redeemed, and that there is safety in the blood of sprinkling. But the blood of Jesus has much more connected with it than mere deliverance from Egypt or salvation; yet this is the only use of it which is known by Israel in the house of bondage. For Israel in Egypt, for the Christian in the world, the one great truth is the Passover, redemption through the blood of the Lamb, salvation, not for our righteousness' sake, but because the blood is on the door-post. To leans anything further of the uses of that blood, Israel must be brought to know themselves out of Egypt, to see themselves as the redeemed of the Lord, and that God doth put a difference between them and the Egyptians. It is in the wilderness, in separation from Egypt, that God opens to His people all the value of the Offerings. There is no knowledge of the burnt-offering in Egypt, or of its difference from the meat-offering or the sin-offering; there is no knowledge of the laver or shew-bread there, or of the blessed work which the priest performs. All this is learnt when Israel is in truth a pilgrim, with the Red Sea and Egypt behind him.

How true is all this in our experience. Look at saints who do not fully know redemption; what is the only truth for them? Just this the Passover, the sprinkled blood; they have no heart or eyes to see any farther. But I am again going into the type, rather than pointing out its general bearing, redemption. And that this is the general character of the types of Exodus, will, I think, be apparent to such as endeavour, in dependence on the Lord, to read the book as a whole, and to grasp the one great thought which throughout is stamped on it. What is the exodus from Egypt but redemption? What is the march through the sea but redemption? This is the key-note of Israel's song when Pharaoh and his hosts are fallen: "Thou in Thy mercy, Lord, hast led forth Thy people which Thou hast redeemed: . . . fear shall fall on the inhabitants of Canaan, till the people pass over, whom Thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in." (Exodus 15:13; Exodus 15:16-17) And in keeping with this commencement, the types in the latter part of the book are occupied with representations of the consequences of redemption, a people brought near to God.

LEVITICUS differs from all this. That it is typical, I need hardly say: for unless we look at it as such, it has I say it with reverence for us no meaning. But the Epistles of the New Testament are full of direct references, which prove beyond a doubt the typical character of its ordinances. [6] Of these references, there are not less than forty, every one of which speaks of the things referred to as typical. But typical of what? Of Christ, clearly. But of Christ under what aspect? Not as connected with dispensations, as we see Him in the types of Genesis; not as teaching redemption, as we see Him in the earlier types of Exodus. Leviticus begins after redemption is known, and speaks of things connected with the access of a chosen people to God. Thus, as the following pages I trust will shew, though Christ in His work is the sum and substance of these types, it is Christ as

discerned by one who already knows the certainty of redemption: it is Christ as seen by one, who, possessing peace with God and deliverance, is able to look with joy at all that Christ has so fully been for him. Christ as the priest, the offerer, the offering; Christ as meeting all that a saved sinner needs to approach to God; Christ for the believer, and all that Christ is to the believer, as keeping up his communion with God; this is what we have distinctly set forth in the varied types of Leviticus. Exodus gives us the blood of the lamb, saving Israel in the land of Egypt. Leviticus gives us the priest and the offerings, meeting Israel's need in their access to Jehovah. But I do not enter into details here, as the Offerings will supply a sufficient proof. I pass on therefore to the types of Numbers, to mark what appears to me to be their distinctive character.

NUMBERS, giving the history of Israel in the wilderness, their services, their trials, and their failures there, brings out, I cannot doubt, repeated types of the Christians experience and pilgrimage in His world as in a wilderness. Israel's history, as well as Israel's ordinances, was typical; their coming out of Egypt was typical; their sojourn in the wilderness was typical; their entering the land was typical; and the details of each of these portions of their history, the typical character of which in general is granted by all, will shew how perfectly the pictures are finished by the hand of One who well knew what He was describing. In Numbers, then, we get types connected with the wilderness. Here the world is viewed not as the house of bondage, but as the place of trial, the scene of pilgrimage, through which Israel must pass to Canaan. [7]

Thus, in those chapters in Numbers which are most allied in their character to the types of Leviticus, (where the offering of Christ, as in "the red heifer," is without doubt the great end of the representation,) [8] we have the sacrifice, not as in Leviticus, showing some aspect of Christ's offering as bearing on communion, but as further coming in with particular application to the trials of a walk of faith in the wilderness; and meeting the cases of individual experience, such as contact with evil, or any other defilement.

I speak the less on this subject, because the whole character of the book is so obvious, [9] and to enter into the particulars would fill a volume. Suffice it to say, throughout we have the elect in the wilderness, learning there what man is, and what God is; what the ransomed people ought to be, and what they really are. We have the Levites, I take one undoubted type from the fourth chapter, the picture of the Church in service, with garments unspotted from pollution, passing onwards through the desert land; each day dependent on God for everything, and following the guidance of the fire and cloud, while they bear the vessels of the sanctuary, and care for them in the dreary waste. Those vessels all typified something of Christ and the spiritual Levites have now to bear Him through the wilderness. And so throughout, Numbers gives us the wilderness. The pillar of cloud preceding them; [10] the blowing of the silver trumpets, and the alarm in the camp; [11] the murmuring after the flesh-pots of Egypt; [12] and the shrinking through unbelief from going up to Canaan; fit representation of God's chosen people shrinking backward from the trials of their heavenly calling; the want of water in the wilderness, and the stony rock opened to supply that need; [13] the whoredom with the daughters of Moab, [14] and the discouragement because of the way; [15] what are all these but living pictures of the Christian pilgrim's experience as in the wilderness?

How different is JOSHUA from all this; experience again, I doubt not, but what different experience. The one teaching us our way in the wilderness, the other as already beyond Jordan in

the land. Into this I fear some may find it more difficult to enter, because the reality which is represented is a thing unknown to them. Joshua teaches us, in type, the Church already with Christ in heavenly places, and but few saints apprehend this experience, or know what resurrection means. Thus the book of Joshua, if viewed typically, answers very nearly to the Epistle to the Ephesians. In either book we see the elect standing in the place of promise, but finding it still a place of conflict. As Paul says, “We are raised up, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ:” (Ephesians 2:6) but that place is not yet the rest; for, as he proceeds in the same Epistle, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers in heavenly places.” [16] The book of Joshua is just this. It describes to us Israel passing from the wilderness over Jordan into the land of Canaan. All these are emblems familiar to us. Jordan, as we all know, is the type of death, dividing the wilderness, this world, from the land of promise, heaven. Israel passes through Jordan without feeling its waters, and comes with Joshua into the Promised Land. When he passes Jordan, all Israel passes. And thus it was in Christ. The Church is dead with Him, buried with Him, risen with Him; but there is still a conflict, for the Canaanite will dwell in that land. And so it will be till the true Solomon comes. Oh, may He hasten His coming! But let us take an example or two as illustrating this. In Joshua 4:1-24 we read of Israel crossing Jordan dry-shod: in the fifth we read of their circumcision. As soon as they are over Jordan, so soon are they all called to be circumcised. Though the seed of Abraham, there had been no circumcision for Israel in the wilderness; but as soon as they come into the land, circumcision begins at once. Need I explain what this is, or shew how exactly it answers to “the eighth day” of the original institution? Circumcision was to be “on the eighth day.” (Genesis 17:8; Php 3:5) To those at all familiar with the types, I need not say that “the eighth day” is always typical of resurrection. The eighth day, the day after the seventh or Sabbath, answers to “the first day of the week “on which Christ rose: it is however “the first day” in reference to seven having gone before. Seven days include the periods proper to the first creation. The eighth day, as it takes us beyond and out of these, that is, beyond the limits of the old creation, brings us in type into a new order of things and times, in a word, into the new creation or resurrection. With regard to circumcision, we are taught in Peter, that it represented “the putting away the filth of the flesh.” To do this was the great attempt of the whole Jewish dispensation, and that attempt ended in failure; for resurrection, the place beyond Jordan, was not yet occupied by Israel But since Christ, the true Joshua, has passed through Jordan, and since all the Church is in and with Him, and because, as members of His body, the Church is dead and risen with Him, therefore it is called to be circumcised, and to put away the filth of the flesh. “If ye be risen with Christ . . . put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy.” (Colossians 3:1; Colossians 3:3; Colossians 3:5; Colossians 3:8) True circumcision of the heart is only known and attained to in proportion as we know the power of the resurrection. But to speak of other parts; how different throughout is the experience of the books of Numbers and Joshua. Not that in fact the two can really be separated, for in Christ the Church is apprehended for everything: but it is one thing to be apprehended of Him, and another to apprehend that for which we are apprehended (Php 3:12). One portion of experience is often more apprehended than another. Indeed, our experience is but the measure of our individual attainment, the extent to which we have proved the truth, the apprehension in our own souls of that which is already true for us in Christ. The work of Christ for us has brought His members into every blessing, and faith at once rests on this; but experience only apprehends that amount of this which is realized in our souls by the Holy Ghost. But to return to the difference of Numbers and Joshua. There was no difficulty in

possessing the wilderness; but Israel had to fight for every step in the land. Instead of lusting for flesh as in the wilderness, in the land, in the knowledge of resurrection, the temptation is quite of another sort. We have confidence in strength, as before Ai; [17] confidence in knowledge, as in the case of the Gibeonites; [18] abusing grace, as in the case of Achan; understanding how it gives victory, but not seeing God's claims in it. As saints grow in grace and in the knowledge of their place as even now risen, they have another class of trials to meet in addition to the trials of the wilderness, "the wrestling, not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers in heavenly places." And this is in fact the book of Joshua.

Such is a very brief and imperfect sketch of the different character of some of the typical parts of Scripture. I feel how little what I have said will convey to one who has not studied it, the exceeding depth and fullness of my subject. Does any one say that these are but points of knowledge, and as such of comparatively little value? I grant that they are points of knowledge, but I answer, we grow in grace through knowledge (2 Peter 1:2). And one reason of the weakness of the Church is the shallowness of her knowledge on these points. To shew the use of this knowledge is not my present purpose. Suffice it to say, that were the types of Genesis understood, we should not see such grievous mistakes arising from confounding the dispensations, and mingling the things and hopes of one covenant with the things and hopes of another. And so of the rest. Know more of Exodus, that is, of redemption; know more of Leviticus, that is, of the ground of access to God; know more of Numbers, the experience of the wilderness; and of Joshua, the experience as even now beyond Jordan; and then see if you have not something more to use in service for Him who redeemed and loved you. That thus it may be with us indeed, let us pray that the Lord will keep us near to Himself, in abiding communion with Him. Amen.

FOOTNOTES [1] The history in the thirty second chapter, I believe, supplies an instance.

[2] The history recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles is a good illustration of this. The same persons come before us in both, but with a different object in each. The typical character of the respective books will supply the key to the points of difference.

[3] The contrast between baptism and circumcision is most characteristic of their respective dispensations. Circumcision, as we are told in Peter, (1 Peter 3:21.) represented "the putting away the filth of the flesh." This was all the old dispensation aimed at; for it assumed that the flesh could be improved. Man, therefore, the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, was in the flesh taken into covenant. Baptism, on the contrary, as we are repeatedly told, (Romans 6:1-23, Colossians 2:1-23, 1 Peter 3:1-22) represents the death and burial of the flesh: for this dispensation starts on the ground that the flesh is incurable, and that it is only as Quickened by the Spirit that man can come to God; in a word, that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. And the believer, having this new birth, is called to profess the worthlessness of the flesh, in an ordinance which, if rightly administered, is as strikingly representative of the design of this, as circumcision was of the design of the old covenant.

[4] I refer here to the fact noticed by the apostle, that in Melchisedec's history there is no record either of his birth or death, an omission very unusual in Scripture with those who take a prominent place; which omission, however, the apostle shews to be typical. Melchisedec, says Paul, was

“without father or mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life.” He does not mean that Melchisedec really had none of these; but that none are recorded in his history, and that his omission is distinctly typical. We shall find, as we proceed, that the omissions in the types of Leviticus are as full of import as the facts recorded.

[5] 1 Peter 3:21 w αντιτυπον, k.t.l.

[6] Hebrews 5:1-14, Hebrews 7:1-28, Hebrews 8:1-13, Hebrews 9:1-28, Hebrews 10:1-39, Hebrews 13:1-25, 1 Peter 2:1-25 i.e.,i.e.,

[7] In Exodus we get just the reverse, the world viewed, not as our place of pilgrimage, but as the kingdom of Pharaoh and the house of bondage.

[8] Numbers 19:1-22. The red heifer was the only sin-offering in which the fat of the inwards was not burnt on the altar. But this is in exact keeping with the character of the book of Numbers, giving us the offering only in its relation to the wilderness. The fat on the altar would have been God’s part. In Numbers, therefore, this is unnoticed.

[9] See St Paul’s application of the history in 1 Corinthians 10:1-11.

[10] Leviticus 9:1-24 [11] Leviticus 10:1-20 [12] Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57 [13] Leviticus 20:1-27 [14] Leviticus 23:1-44 [15] Leviticus 21:1-24

[16] Ephesians 6:12 εν τοις επουρανιοις, the same as in Ephesians 1:6 [17] Leviticus 7:1-38 [18] Leviticus 9:1-24

03.02. CHAPTER 2: THE BURNT-OFFERING

CHAPTER 2: THE BURNT-OFFERING Leviticus 1:1-17 IN the preceding pages, I have endeavored to point out the distinctive character of the types in some of the earlier books of the Old Testament. We are now in a better position to estimate the distinctions in the types of this book, Leviticus.

Speaking generally, the types of Leviticus, as I have said, give us the work of Christ, in its bearing on worship and communion. We have not here, as in the earlier part of Exodus, the sprinkled blood to redeem from Egypt; but we get definite instruction respecting the Offering and Priest, to meet the need of a saved people in their approaches to God their Saviour. In a word, instead of seeing Christ as redeeming, we here see His work for the redeemed; His work, not in bringing them out of Egypt, but in bringing them into the place of worship, in keeping them there in happy fellowship, and in restoring them when they fail or fall. And how varied are the aspects of Christ's work, viewed merely in this one relation. To hold communion with God, the redeemed need Christ as the Offering; and this is the first view we get of Him in Leviticus: but they need Him also as the Priest and Mediator; and therefore this is also another aspect in which He is presented to us. And so we might go on step by step in the consideration of the blessed work of Jesus, passing from one part to another of His service in keeping up and restoring the communion of His redeemed. The work of Christ, then, as connected with the communion of His people, may, and indeed, if fully apprehended, must be viewed under many different representations. The offering is the first representation; the priest, in close connexion with it, the second; because it is under these two great aspects that the redeemed in communion with God have most to do with Jesus. At present I purpose going no further than Christ viewed as His Offering. Christ as the key to the dispensations, as we see Him in the types of Genesis; Christ as the ground of redemption, as shown in the book of Exodus; Christ the rearer of the tabernacle, and the substance of its many services; Christ the guide of His people, whether through the wilderness or into the land over Jordan; Christ as the rejected king while another holds His kingdom; Christ as the glorious king who builds the temple in Jerusalem: all these and many other aspects of the work and person of our blessed Lord will, for the present, in some measure be held in abeyance, that we may more particularly enter into this one aspect, this first aspect of Christ, as connected with communion, CHRIST THE SUM OF THE OFFERINGS. And how much is there to arrest and instruct us in this one simple view of Him. He is the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, the Peace-offering, the Sin-offering, and the Trespass-offering for His people (Hebrews 10:4-10). By His one oblation of Himself once offered, He has stood in all these different relations, relations so precious to God, that through preceding ages He had the representation of them constantly presented to Him, relations so needful to the Church, that it is on the apprehension of them that her joy and strength depend. And yet how great a proportion of believers have neither knowledge nor wish to trace these. They read of Him as the Sin-offering and the Burnt-offering; but no corresponding thought is suggested to them by this distinction. It is enough for them that the blood has been sprinkled on the door-post; and they care not 'to know more of Him who sprinkled it. But these are not God's

thoughts, nor are they the thoughts of those who know the joy of communion with Him. Such go from strength to strength in the knowledge of the grace and work of Jesus. Have they known Him as the paschal lamb in Egypt? They seek then to know Him as the offering within the tabernacle. Have they learnt Him in His different relations as offering? They seek to know Him in all His offices as priest. Do they know Him as priest? They seek Him as prophet, as manna, as water, as guide, as everything. May the Lord only fill us with His Spirit: then we cannot but follow on to know more of Jesus. But it is time we should turn to THE OFFERINGS. In approaching them I would make a general observation or two on some particulars which are common to all the Offerings, the right understanding of which may lead us to a clearer apprehension of the principle on which they must be interpreted. Without definite thoughts on each of these particulars, the various types will be little more than unmeaning repetition to us.

(1) The first point, then which requires our notice is this: In each offering there are at least three distinct objects presented to us. There is the offering, the priest, the offerer. A definite knowledge of the precise import of each of these is absolutely requisite if we would understand the offerings.

What, then, is the offering? What the priest? What the offerer? Christ is the offering, Christ is the priest, Christ is the offerer. Such and so manifold are the relations in which Christ has stood for man and to man, that no one type or set of types can adequately represent the fullness of them. Thus we have many distinct classes of types, and further variations in these distinct classes, each of which gives us one particular view of Christ, either in His character, or in His work, or person. But see Him as we may for sinners, He fills more than one relation. This causes the necessity of many emblems. First He comes as offerer, but we cannot see the offerer without the offering, and the offerer is Himself the offering, and He who is both offerer and offering is also the priest. As man under the law, our substitute, Christ, stood for us towards God as offerer. He took “the body prepared for Him” as His offering, that in it and by it He might reconcile us to God. Thus, when sacrifice and offering had wholly failed, when at man’s hand God would no more accept them, “then said He, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, God: yea, Thy law is within my heart.” (Hebrews 10:5-9; Psalms 40:6-8) Thus His body was His offering: He willingly offered it; and then as priest He took the blood into the holiest. As offerer, we see Him man under the law, standing our substitute, for us to fulfill all righteousness. As priest, we have Him presented as the mediator, God’s messenger between Himself and Israel. While as the offering He is seen the innocent victim, a sweet savour to God, yet bearing the sin and dying for it.

Thus in the selfsame type the offerer sets forth Christ in His person, as the One who became man to meet God’s requirements: the offering presents Him in His character and work, as the victim by which the atonement was ratified; while the priest gives us a third picture of Him, in His official relation, as the appointed mediator and intercessor. Accordingly, when we have a type in which the offering is most prominent, the leading thought will be Christ the victim. On the other hand, when the offerer or priest predominates, it will respectively be Christ as man or Christ as mediator.

Connected with this there is also another particular, the import of which must be known to understand the Offerings. I refer to the laying of the offerer’s hands on the head of the victim offered. This act in itself was nothing more than the expression of the identity of the offerer and offering. In each case the giving up of the offering represented the surrender of the person of the offerer. The offering, whatever it might be, stood for, and was looked upon as identical with the

offerer. In the one case, in the sweet savour offerings, it represented the offerer as an accepted worshipper, wholly surrendering himself upon the altar of the Lord, to be a sweet savour to Jehovah. In the other case, as in the sin and trespass offerings, where the offerer came as a sinner with confession, the offerer in his offering surrendered himself as a sinner to God's judgment, and was cast out as accursed into the wilderness. We know Him who stood in both these relations, when in the body prepared for Him "He gave Himself."

(2) Another particular to which I would direct attention respects the differences between the several offerings. These differences are not a secondary matter. The very definiteness and distinct character of the particular offerings is wholly involved in them. Any non-apprehension, therefore, or misapprehension on this point, must necessarily leave us in much uncertainty. As to these differences, then, there are first several different offerings, as the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, the Peace-offering, &c.; and secondly, there are different grades of the same offering, as the burnt-offering of the herd, the burnt-offering of the flock, the burnt-offering of fowls; the peace-offering of the herd, the peace-offering of the flock, &c. The question is, - or rather it is no question, have these distinctions any meaning corresponding to them? With regard to all the great outlines in these typical ordinances, every Christian is satisfied that they represent Jesus; yet some doubt whether we are justified in expecting to find Him in every distinct and minute particular. And the fancies 'which have been vented upon this subject have, indeed, been enough to warn us. Still, my answer to such doubts is simply this, Are not the particulars, as all Scripture, "written for our learning;" and can they be so if the words are without import, if they are meant to reveal nothing to us? But no. This God's representation of the work of His Beloved will bear looking at as much as His other works. Doubtless here, where every addition is but to depict Christ's fullness, each minutest particular, each variety, has a meaning attached to it. God's words are not here, more than elsewhere, vain words. It is only our want of spiritual apprehension which makes these things so mysterious to us. The shadow may, indeed, be more dark than the substance, but for every shadow there must be a substance; and he that best knows the substance and reality will soonest recognize its darkened shadow. And just as the shadow of this our earth, as it passes over the face of another planet, leads the instructed eye by a glance to the knowledge of facts respecting the form and proportions of the globe we dwell on; so often does the apprehension of one of these shadows which God has marked as cast from the work of Jesus, reveal Him and His work to His people in a way which no less delights than it astonishes them. The fact is, the true secret respecting the difficulty of the types is, that we are not sufficiently acquainted with the reality; and as a consequence, the representation of that reality is unintelligible or almost unintelligible to us. Only let us see more of Christ; only let us, in God's presence, learn more of Him in all His relations; and then the things which God has thought worthy a place in His Word, because they represent something which may be seen of Jesus, will find an answering place in our intelligence, because they will each find a response in our experience. But to speak of these differences. I have not a doubt that they are intended to represent different aspects of Christ's offering. I cannot say how far the proof of this may commend itself to those who are comparatively strangers to such questions, for here as elsewhere a certain measure of previous intelligence is required to enable us rightly to estimate the value of the proof submitted to us. In this field of knowledge too, as in others of a kindred nature, the proof of a fact may be more difficult than the discovery of it; and again, the demonstration of the proof to those unaccustomed to such questions, far more difficult than the demonstration of the fact itself. I doubt not it will be so in this

case. I am, however, satisfied as to the fact; I will now endeavour, as briefly as may be, to express what proof may be given of it. To do this I must again advert to what has already been said respecting the offerer and offering. We have seen that the offerer is Christ, standing as man under the law to fulfill all righteousness. We have seen that the offering represents His body, and the laying on of hands the identity of the offering and offerer. Now in these types we have this offerer and His offering both presented to us in very different circumstances. The faithful Israelite is seen in different aspects, and according to the aspect in which he is regarded, so is his offering dealt with. In one we see him standing as a sinless offerer, offering a sweet-smelling savour for acceptance. In another he stands as a convicted sinner, offering an expiatory sacrifice which bears the penalty of his offences.

Now the offering of Christ, which all these shadows typify, was but one, and but once offered; but the shadows vary in shape and outline according to the point from whence, and the light in which, they are looked upon. In other words, the one offering had several aspects, and each aspect required a separate picture. Had Christ's fullness and relations been less manifold, fewer emblems might have sufficed to represent them; but as they are many, and each to be variously apprehended, no one emblem, however perfect, could depict them all. As priest, or offering, or offerer, He fills a distinct relation, the representation of which necessarily requires a distinct emblem. Yet in each of these relations He may be variously seen, and each of these variations will again require a different picture. Thus as priest He may be seen interceding with God, or sprinkling the leper, or taking in the blood. It is plain that the emblem which might set forth one of these would by no means present another relation of Him. But God's will is that all His relations should be seen; and the consequence is types many and various. With respect, then, to the varieties in the offerings, I conclude that they are but different aspects of Christ's work or person. Let us now advance a step further and inquire, What are the different grades which we find in the different offerings? Without doubt these proceed on the same principle. They are but different views of this or that peculiar aspect. Not only is Christ's work one which has many aspects, but each aspect may be very differently apprehended, according to the measure of intelligence possessed by those who look at Him. Thus there may be different apprehensions of the same relation, and of the selfsame act in the same relation. For instance, as the offering, one grade of it is the bullock, another the lamb, another the turtle-dove. Now each of these emblems gives us a different thought respecting the value or character of the selfsame offering. One grade shews Christ, and one saint sees Him, as an offering "of the herd," that is the most costly offering. Another gives a lower view of its value, or at least a different view of its character, as in the grade of "the turtle-dove." In every grade, the lowest as much as the highest, the offering is seen to be free from blemish: in every grade it is seen a sufficient offering, meeting all the requirements of the sacrifice; but the riches of the offerer, and the value and distinct character of his offering, are very differently apprehended in the different pictures.

I conclude, therefore, that as the different offerings give us different aspects or relations of Christ's one offering, so the different grades in the same offering give us different views or apprehensions of the same aspect. An illustration may perhaps better express the difference. Suppose, then, several aspects of some building, the north aspect, the south aspect, the west aspect; these would correspond with the different offerings, as the burnt-offering, the meat-offering, &c. But there might be three or four views of the building taken from the same side, but under different lights, and at

different distances: this would be the different grades in the same offering. And the analogy of the other parts of Scripture directly supports this interpretation; for the different books, as we have seen, looked at typically, do but bring out different aspects or measures of apprehension of that great and perfect work of which all Scripture testifies. One book gives the experience of Egypt; another the experience of the wilderness; another the experience of the land. All these by one act of Jesus are true for the Church in Him; but they are not all equally apprehended; for our experience always comes far short of the reality, and the reality may be apprehended in very different measures. Christian experience, as I have before observed, is only our measure of apprehension of that which is already true for us in Jesus. And this measure of apprehension may vary, though the work apprehended be the same. Thus, one Christian, with little knowledge of his place in Jesus, sees himself as still in the house of bondage; but there, hiding within the blood-sprinkled door-posts, he waits with girded loins to depart from Egypt (1 Peter 1:13 and Exodus 12:11). Another by faith sees further, even to the experience of the wilderness, knowing that Pharaoh is judged (John 12:31), and the Red Sea behind him. A third sees further still, even into the land, and knows himself even now over Jordan (Ephesians 2:6). In a word, one sees Exodus, another Numbers, another Joshua. Yet the reality, though differently apprehended, is the same, salvation through the blood of Jesus. The difference is in our apprehension of it, and it is this difference that these books, if regarded typically, are so full of. It is, I believe, precisely similar in these types of Christ in His work as offering. The different offerings give us the different aspects of His offering; the different grades in the same offering, the different apprehensions of the same aspect. The truth is, that Christ's work is so manifold, and has so many different aspects and each aspect may be so differently apprehended, according to the different measure of light in the believer, that one type or one history, however full, can never fully describe or represent Him. We see this unquestionably in the Gospels, in reference to the person of the Lord. One Gospel does not shew out all the glories of His person: the subject requires four distinct presentations. The Gospels are not mere supplementary narratives of Christ in one relation. Each gives a separate view of Him. Not of His work in saving, this we get in the Epistles, but of Himself, His perfect character, His blessed person.

I do not here enter into the distinctions of the Gospels, though few' subjects of inquiry are more blessed, further than to refer to them m illustration of our subject, as showing the way in which the Word is written. Take but Luke and John. In their narratives, as in the offerings, in each, as others have observed, we have a distinct aspect of Jesus. Luke gives Him as Son of Adam: John as Son of God. In the former of these, therefore, I read His "genealogy," His "conception" of Mary, His "birth" at Bethlehem; His "increase in wisdom and stature," and His "subjection" to His earthly parents; His "baptism," His "temptation" in the wilderness, and His "anointing with the Holy Ghost." In John not a word about matters of this sort, but "the Word which was with God, and was God." Take any event narrated by the two Evangelists, not to say the general tone and tenor of their writings, and see how perfectly each narrative will be in keeping with the distinct character of each particular Gospel.

Take, for instance, a scene familiar to most of us, the agony in the garden of Gethsemane. In Luke 22:42 we see Jesus, the suffering "Son of Adam," in all points, sin excepted, tempted as we are; saying, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me." An angel appears strengthening Him. In an agony He prays more fervently. He seems to seek sympathy from His disciples: great drops

of blood fall to the ground. Now turn to the same scene in John (John 18:1-40), and mark the striking contrast. Not a word about His prayer or agony; not a word about strength ministered to Him by an angel; not a word of His drops of blood, or of His apparent longing for sympathy in His trial. Throughout He is “the Word “incarnate.” Jesus knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth and said, “Whom seek ye?” “As soon as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground.” Here, instead of weakness and agony, is power appalling His adversaries. Then again, instead of seeking sympathy from His disciples, He is seen rather as possessing the power to protect them. “If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way; that the saying might be fulfilled which He spake, Of those whom thou hast given me I have lost none.”

Some saints see nothing of this. Like Israel in Egypt, the only truth for them is redemption. Little distinction can they see either in the work or offices of Jesus. Still less do they see of His character or person. But among those who do see these things, how vast may be the difference of spiritual intelligence. It is this distinction, I cannot doubt, which is brought out, as the subject demands, in the varieties of the Offerings. But it is time that we turn to THE BURNT-OFFERING. Let us examine it, first, in its contrast to the other offerings; and then, secondly, in its varieties.

I. IN ITS CONTRAST TO THE OTHER OFFERINGS, at least four points may be enumerated. It was, (1) A sweet savour offering, and, (2) Offered for acceptance; in these two particulars it differed from the Sin-offerings. (3) Thirdly, it was the offering of a life: in this it differed from the Meat-offering. (4) Fourthly, it was wholly burnt; here it differed from all, and particularly from the Peace-offering.

(1) First, it was a sweet savour offering: “a sweet savour unto Jehovah.” (Leviticus 1:9, Leviticus 1:13, Leviticus 1:17) I have already adverted to the difference between the offerings, and that they were divided into two great and distinctive classes, first, the sweet savour offerings, which were all, as we shall find, oblations for acceptance; and secondly, those offerings which were not of a sweet savour, and which were required as an expiation for sin. The first class, the sweet savour offerings, comprising the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, and the Peace-offering, [1] were offered on the brazen altar which stood in the Court of the Tabernacle. The second class, the Sin and Trespass-offerings [2] were not consumed on the altar: some of them were burnt on the earth without the camp; others the priest ate, having first sprinkled the blood for atonement. In the first class, sin is not seen or thought of: it is the faithful Israelite giving a sweet offering to Jehovah. In the Sin-offerings it is just the reverse: it is an offering charged with the sin of the offerer. Thus, in the first class, that is, the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, and the Peace-offering, the offerer came for acceptance as a worshipper. In the second class, in the Sin and Trespass-offerings, he came as a sinner to pay the penalty of sin and trespass. In either case the offering was without blemish; for the Sin-offerings required perfectness in the victim as much as the Burnt-offering. But in the one the offerer appears as man in perfectness, and in his offering stands the trial of fire, that is, God’s searching holiness; and accepted as a fragrant savour, all ascends a sweet offering to Jehovah. In the other, the offerer appears as a sinner, and in his offering bears the penalty due to his offences.

Now the Burnt-offering was of the first class, a sweet-smelling savour; as such in perfect contrast with the Sin-offerings. We are not here, therefore, to consider Christ as the Sin-bearer, but as man in perfectness meeting God in holiness. The thought here is not, “God hath made Him to be sin for

us," (2 Corinthians 5:21) but rather, "He loved us, and gave Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour."(Ephesians 5:2) Jesus, blessed be His name, both in the Burnt-offering and Sin-offering, stood as our representative. When He obeyed, He obeyed "for us:" when He suffered, He suffered "for us." But in the Burnt-offering He appears for us, not as our sin-bearer, but as man offering to God something which is most precious to Him. We have here what we may in vain search for elsewhere; man giving to God what truly satisfies Him. The thought here is not that sin has been judged, and that man in Christ has borne the judgment: this would be the Sin-offering. The Burnt-offering shews us man going even further, and giving to God an offering so pleasing to Him that the sweet savour of it satisfies Him, and will satisfy Him for ever. With our experience of what man is, it seems wondrous that he should ever perfectly perform his part to God-ward. But in Christ man has so performed it: His offering was "a sweet savour unto the Lord."

Here, then, is the first thought presented to us in the Burnt-offering: God finds food, that is, satisfaction, in the offering. In other oblations we have Christ as the faithful Israelite, by His offering feeding and satisfying the priests. Here He is seen satisfying Jehovah. The altar is "the table of the Lord:" (Malachi 1:12) whatever was put upon it was "the food of God." (Leviticus 21:6, Leviticus 21:8, Leviticus 21:17, Leviticus 21:21, Leviticus 21:22, margin.) The fire from heaven, emblem of God's holiness, consumes the offering; and it all ascends as sweet incense before Him. [3] And just as in the Burnt-offering the fire from heaven fell and consumed the sacrifice of the altar, a pledge to him who offered it that there was something in the offering which God found pleasure in, so, typically speaking, did God find food in the unblemished sacrifice of Jesus. His perfect spotlessness and devotedness was a sweet feast to the God of heaven. Here was something according to His taste. Here, at least, He found satisfaction.

We too often omit this thought when thinking of the offering of Jesus. We think of His death; but little of His life. We look but little into His ways. Yet it is His ways throughout His pilgrimage, even to the way He laid down His life, which God so delights in. Our views are so selfish and meagre. If we are saved, we seek no further. Most saints, therefore, have very little thought of Christ's offering, except as offered for sin, "delivered for our offences." God, however, puts the Burnt-offering first: for this was peculiarly His portion in Jesus. And just in proportion as a believer grows in grace, we shall find him turning intelligently to the Gospels; from them adding to the knowledge he has of the work of Jesus, greater knowledge of His ways and person; with earnest desire to know more of the Lord Himself, and how in all things He was "a sweet savour to Jehovah."

(2) But the Burnt-offering was not only "a sweet savour;" it was also an offering "for acceptance," that is, it was offered to God to secure the acceptance of the offerer. So we read, I give the more correct translation, "he shall offer it for his acceptance." [4] To understand this, we must recur for a moment to the position Christ occupied as offerer. He stood for man as man under the law, and, as under law, His acceptance depended on His perfectness. God had made man upright; but he had sought out many inventions. One dispensation after another had tried whether, under any circumstances, man could render himself acceptable to God. But age after age passed away: no son of Adam was found who could meet God's standard. The law was man's last trial, whether, with a revelation of God's mind, he could or would obey it. But this trial, like the others, ended in failure: "there was none righteous, no, not one." How, then, was man to be reconciled to God?

How could he be brought to meet God's requirements? One way yet remained, and the Son of God accepted it. "He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took the seed of Abraham;" and in His person, once and for ever, man was reconciled to God. In effecting this, Jesus, as man's representative, took man's place, where He found man, under law; and there, in obedience to the law, He offered, "for His acceptance." The question was, could man bring an offering so acceptable as to satisfy God? Jesus as man did bring such an offering. He offered Himself, and His offering was accepted. Even with our poor thoughts of what Jesus was to the Father, it seems wondrous that He, the Blessed One, should ever have thus offered "for His acceptance." But this was only one of the many steps of humiliation which He took, as our representative, "for us." And this explains the word "atonement" in the fourth verse: "It shall be accepted for him to make atonement." These words might suggest to some the thought of sin in connexion with the Burnt-offering. Such a view of the case would be erroneous. The word "atonement" here, as elsewhere, in itself means simply making satisfaction: and satisfaction may be of two sorts, depending on that which we have to satisfy. We may satisfy a loving and holy requirement, or satisfy offended justice. Either would be satisfaction: the Burnt-offering is the former; the Sin-offering the latter. And that the atonement of the Sin-offering is of a very different nature from the atonement here spoken of in the Burnt-offering, will at once be seen by any who will compare what is said of the atonement of the Burnt-offering and of the Sin-offerings: for in the Sin-offering we find it expressly added that the atonement is an "atonement for the offerer's sin." [5] This is never said in the Burnt-offering: on the contrary, it is said to be "offered for acceptance." The atonement of the Burnt-offering is the satisfaction which God receives from the perfectness which the offerer presents to Him. The atonement of the Sin-offering is expiatory: the offerer by his offering satisfies offended justice. In the Sin-offering the atonement is for sin; the offering, therefore, is not presented for acceptance; but as seen charged with the sin of the offerer, is cast out, the victim of a broken law: thenceforth, as under the imputation of sin, and regarded as unfit for a place among God's people, it is cast out from the midst of Israel, and burnt without the camp. In the Burnt-offering the atonement is made by one who comes as a worshipper without sin, and in his sinless offering offers for acceptance that which is received as a sweet savour by the Lord. Man is under trial, indeed, and offering for acceptance: but he is seen accepted, as having satisfied God. I need not say that but One ever did this perfectly, and He gave Himself, and was accepted for us. (Ephesians 5:2; Titus 2:14)

(3) The third point peculiar to the Burnt-offering was, that a life was offered on the altar: "He shall kill the bullock before the Lord, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar." (Leviticus 1:5) In this particular the Burnt-offering stands distinguished from the Meat-offering, which in other respects it closely resembles. In the Meat-offering, however, the offering was "corn, oil, and frankincense;" here the offering is a life. The right understanding of the precise import of this particular will help us to the distinct character of the Burnt-offering. Life was that part in creation which from the beginning God claimed as His. As such, as being His claim on His creatures, it stands as an emblem for what we owe Him. What we owe to God is our duty to Him. And this, I doubt not, is the thought here intended. Of course, the offering here, as elsewhere, is the body of Jesus, that body which He took, and then gave for us: but in giving God a life, in contradistinction to offering Him corn or frankincense, the peculiar thought is the fulfilment of the first table of the Decalogue. Thus the life yielded is man's duty to God, and man here is seen perfectly giving it. Am I asked what man ever thus offered? I answer, none but One, "the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5) He alone

of all the sons of Adam in perfectness accomplished all man's duty to Godward; He in His own blessed and perfect righteousness met every claim God could make upon Him. Again, I say, He did it "for us," and we are "accepted in Him."

(4) The fourth and last feature peculiar to the Burnt-offering is, that it was wholly burnt on the altar. "The priest shall burn all upon the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice unto the Lord (Leviticus 1:9). In this particular the Burnt-offering differed from the Meat and Peace-offerings, in which a part only was burnt with fire; nor did it differ less from those offerings for Sin, which, though wholly burnt, were not burnt upon the altar. The import of this distinction is manifest, and in exact keeping with the character of the offering. Man's duty to God is not the giving up of one faculty, but the entire surrender of all. So Christ sums up the First Commandment, all, the mind, all the soul, all the affections. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."(Matthew 22:37) I cannot doubt that the type refers to this in speaking so particularly of the parts of the Burnt-offering; for "the head," "the fat," "the legs," "the inwards," are all distinctly enumerated. (Leviticus 1:8-9) "The head" is the well-known emblem of the thoughts; "the legs" the emblem of the walk; and "the inwards" the constant and familiar symbol of the feelings and affections of the heart. The meaning of "the fat" may not be quite so obvious, though here also Scripture helps us to the solution (Psalms 17:10; Psalms 42:14; Psalms 79:70; Deuteronomy 32:15). It represents the energy not of one limb or faculty, but the general health and vigor of the whole. In Jesus these were all surrendered, and all without spot or blemish. Had there been but one thought in the mind of Jesus which was not perfectly given to God; had there been but one affection in the heart of Jesus which was not yielded to His Father's will; had there been one step in the walk of Jesus which was taken not for God, but for His own pleasure; then He could not have offered Himself or been accepted as "a whole burnt-offering to Jehovah:" But Jesus gave up all: He reserved nothing. All was burnt, all consumed upon the altar.

I do not know that there is anything more remarkable than this in the perfect offering of our blessed Master. Everything He did or said was for God. From first to last self had no place: His Father's work, His Father's will, were everything. The first words recorded of Him as a child are, "I must be about my Father's business." His last words on the cross, "It is finished," proclaim how that business and that labour were fulfilled and cared for. So entirely was His whole life devoted to spend and be spent for His Father, that in reading the Gospels the thought scarce occurs to us that He could have had a will of His own. Yet Jesus was perfect man, and as such had a human will as we have. In one point only did it differ from ours: His will was always subject to His Father. As a man, His thoughts were human thoughts; His affections human affections. But how much of these did He reserve for self, for His own ease, or credit, or pleasure? What one act recorded of Him was for His own advancement? What one word which was not in entire devotedness to His Father? But it is vain to endeavour to describe His perfectness; words cannot express it: God only knows it. Of this, however, I am fully assured, the more we are in communion with God, the more we shall estimate it. Out of God's presence we see no beauty in Jesus: His very perfectness is so strange to our natural judgments. Had He been less devoted, we should have better understood Him. Nay, had His self- surrender been less complete, we should have valued it higher. Had He, instead of always refusing to be anything here, taken the glory of the world for a season, and then resigned it, we should probably have thought more of His humiliation in becoming the friend and companion of the poor. But so it was, and so it is still; the more humble, the more despised in

man’s eyes; the more faithful, the less accepted. But the Burnt-offering was for God’s acceptance, not for man’s. He at least could estimate the full value of the offering.

Such was “the whole burnt-offering:” the entire surrender of self to God in everything. How utterly in contrast to what the world thinks wisdom; “for men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself.” (Psalms 18:18) Nay, how utterly unlike anything which can be found even in believers. With us how many thoughts are there for self; for our ease, our pleasure, our interest. How much of our walk, how much of our affections, is consumed on anything rather than the altar! It was not so with the blessed Jesus. “With all His heart” He lived for God, for “the inwards” were all consumed: “with all His soul and with all His strength,” for “the fat and head” were offered. His offering was not the surrender of one part, while He kept what He most valued for Himself. It was not the surrender of what cost nothing, or what cost but little, or what was comparatively worthless. “He gave Himself,” (Ephesians 5:2) in all His perfectness, and satisfied the heart of God.

Such is the general aspect of the Burnt-offering, as distinguished from the other offerings. It was a sweet savour, an offering for acceptance, the offering of a life, and wholly burnt upon the altar. Let us now proceed to examine, II. ITS VARIETIES, that is, the different measures of apprehension with which it may be seen.

There were, then, three grades in the Burnt-offering. It might be “of the herd,” (Leviticus 1:3) or “of the flock” (Leviticus 1:10) or “of fowls” (Leviticus 1:14). These different grades gave rise to several varieties in the offering, the import of which we shall now consider.

(1) The first difference is in the animal offered. We have in the first grade, “a bullock;” in the second, “a lamb;” in the third, “a turtle-dove” Each of these animals, from their well-known character, presents us with a different thought respecting the offering. The bullock, “strong to labour,” (Psalms 144:4) for “great increase is by the strength of the ox,” (Proverbs 14:4) suggests at once the thought of service, of patient, untiring labour. In the lamb we have another picture presented to us; here the thought is passive submission without a murmur: for the lamb is the figure constantly chosen to represent the submissive, uncomplaining character of Christ’s sufferings. “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so He openeth not his mouth.” (Isaiah 53:7) The turtle-dove is different from either of these, and gives again another view of the offering of Jesus. In this class the thought of labour is lost sight of: the unmurmuring submission, too, of the lamb is wanting: the thought is rather simply one of mourning innocence; as it is written, “We mourn like doves;” (Isaiah 59:11; Isaiah 38:14) and again, “Be harmless as doves.” (Matthew 10:16)

Here, then, are some of the measures of apprehension with which the sacrifice of Jesus as Burnt-offering may be regarded; for a saint may see either His devoted labour, His uncomplaining submission, or His mourning innocence. All these are equally true, all equally precious, all equally acceptable: yet all do not equally bring out the distinct character of this perfect offering. The thought of the Burnt-offering, as we have already seen, is man fulfilling his duty towards God. But man’s duty to God is not merely a life of innocence, or a life of submission; it is also a life of labour. “The bullock” brings out this thought distinctly: the other classes, “the lamb” and “turtle-dove,” omit it.

It may be asked, what do we learn by “the goat” (Leviticus 1:10) which was sometimes offered in one of the lower grades of the Burnt-offering? If I mistake not, this emblem suggests a thought of the Sin-offering, reminding us of Christ’s offering as scape-goat. This view of the case may seem to be open to an objection; and I may be asked how the thought of sin can be connected with the Burnt-offering? I answer, these different grades in the offerings are but different measures of apprehension; and there may be apprehension enough to see Christ bringing His offering, without clearly distinguishing the different aspects of that offering. Accordingly, we find that in the lower grades of all the offerings, the distinctive character of the particular offering is constantly lost sight of, while a thought or view of some other offering is partially substituted in its place. [6] This is what we might naturally have expected as the result of a smaller measure of apprehension. It is what we find universally the case in those whose views of Christ are limited. So in the type; where the measure of apprehension is small, there is a confusion between two different aspects of Christ’s offering. The building, to recur to a former illustration, is viewed from so great a distance, that more than one side of it is seen, though neither of the sides is seen very distinctly. Thus with many the thought of Jesus as Burnt-offering is scarce distinguished from the thought of the Sin-offering. These different relations of His work are unseen, or at least they are very much confused together.

Such are some of the varieties of the Burnt-offering, corresponding to the different apprehensions which believers have of Jesus: for His offering may be seen as the bullock, the lamb, the goat, or the turtle-dove. Comparatively few, I believe, see Jesus as presented in the first class, the patient, unwearied labourer for others. The lamb, the goat, the turtle-dove, are all more familiar symbols. The fact is, we need to be ourselves in service, and to know practically something of its toil and trial, before we can at all rightly estimate the aspect of Christ’s offering which is presented in the emblem of the bullock. The Gospels, however, are full of this view of the Burnt-offering: in fact, one whole Gospel is especially devoted to it. In Mark, Jesus is not brought before us as in the other Gospels, either as Son of Abraham, Son of Adam, or Son of God; He stands rather, as another has observed, the patient, untiring labourer for others. In Mark, turn where we will, we see Jesus always “the girded servant;” always at the disposal of others, to spend and be spent at their bidding. Thus when, after days of ceaseless labour, He retires alone for prayer or rest with His disciples, no sooner do the multitude disturb Him than He at once goes with them, or rises to minister to their need. (Mark 1:35-38; Mark 6:30-45) So entirely does He give Himself to His work, that “He had no leisure so much as to eat ;”(Mark 3:20; Mark 6:31) but He had meat to eat which the world saw not: “His meat was to do His Father’s will.” (John 4:31-34) And oh, what touches of grace are there in all His service! He not only cures the blind, but “He takes him by the hand.” (Mark 8:23) He not only raises the dead: His mission in that house ends not till, with careful foresight, “He commands them to give her meat.” (Mark 5:43) Blessed Lord, shew us more of Thy footsteps, that, while we rejoice in Thy work, we may learn to follow Thee.

(2) A second distinction between the different grades of the Burnt-offering is, that while in the first grade the parts are discriminated, in the last this peculiarity is omitted: the bird was killed, but not divided in the case of the bullock and the lamb, it is noticed that the offering is “cut into its pieces.” Here “the legs, the head, the fat, the inwards,” are all distinctly noticed and enumerated. (Leviticus 1:6; Leviticus 1:8-9; Leviticus 1:17) In the last case, that of the turtle-dove, it is otherwise: “he shall not divide it asunder.” “The legs, the head, the inwards,” as we have already seen, represent the walk, the thoughts, the feelings of Jesus. In the first grade these are all apprehended: they are all

lost sight of in the last. These grades represent, as I have said, measures of apprehension. Where the measure of spiritual apprehension is large, a saint will see the offering dissected: his eyes will be turning constantly to see the walk, the mind, the affections of Jesus. He will now observe, what once he regarded not, how Jesus walked, how He thought, what were His feelings. On the other hand, where Jesus is but little apprehended, all the details of His walk and feelings will be unseen. Christ's character will not be dissected, nor the different parts of His work appear.

It is further noticed in the type, that, in the first class of the Burnt-offering, "the inwards and legs were washed in water." (Leviticus 1:9) Nothing like this is seen in the last grade: there even the parts are not discriminated. What are we to learn by this distinction? "The Legs" and "the inwards" are the walk and affections. "The water" represents the Spirit acting through the Word; as it is written, "Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the Word;" (Ephesians 5:26) and again, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth."(John 17:17; Psalms 17:4) Christ, though without spot or blemish, yet as a man in His feelings and walk submitted to God's Word and Spirit. As a man He was Himself sanctified by them; for as He said, "By the word of Thy lips I have kept me." The law said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God;" (Deuteronomy 8:3; Luke 4:4) and Jesus, as man, fully did so: every step, every feeling, obeyed. But all this is lost sight of in the turtle-dove. The discrimination of the parts, and the washing of water, are both unnoticed.

(3) A third distinction between the different grades of the Burnt-offering is, that while in the first grade the offerer is seen to lay his hand on the offering, (Leviticus 1:4) in the other grades this act is not observed. I have already adverted to the import of this action as representing the identity of the offering and offerer. In the first grade of the Burnt-offering this identity is seen: it is wholly lost sight of in the other grades. Not a few see Christ as offering for us, without fully realizing that His offering was Himself. They see that He gave up this thing or that; that He gave much for us, and that what He gave was most precious. But they do not really see that "He gave Himself," that His own blessed person was what He offered. This is clearly seen in the first grade of the Burnt-offering. It is lost sight of, or unobserved, in the other grades.

(4) A fourth distinction, closely allied with the one just considered, is, that in the first class the offerer is seen to kill the victim, in the last the priest kills it (Compare Leviticus 1:5 and Leviticus 1:15). In fact, in the last class, the priest does nearly everything, the offerer is scarcely seen at all; whereas in the first class it is just the reverse, there are many particulars noted of the offerer. The import of this is at once obvious, when we see the distinction between the priest and offerer. The offerer, as I have already observed, sets Christ before us in His person. The priest represents Him in His official character, as the appointed Mediator between God and man. Where the identity between the offerer and offering is apprehended, the offerer is seen to kill the offering; that is, Christ is seen in His person, of His own will laying down His life; as it is written, "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." (John 10:18) On the contrary, where the identity of the offering and offerer is unseen or disregarded, the priest is seen to kill the victim, that is, Christ's death is seen as the work of the Mediator; and is connected with His official character as Priest, rather than with His person as the willing Offerer. So with believers, where there is only a limited measure of apprehension, little is known of Christ save His office as Mediator: He Himself, His blessed person, is overlooked or but little seen.

Such are the chief varieties of the Burnt-offering: how full are they of instruction to the believer: how clearly do they mark the different apprehensions among saints respecting the work and person of our Lord. Some, however, I speak of believers, are content to know nothing of this; and they would rather not be told their ignorance. They can see but one truth, the Paschal lamb, and anything further they neither care nor wish for. Such, whether they are aware of it or not, shew too plainly that they know little either of the wilderness or of the tabernacle, that hitherto their home has been Egypt, and that as yet they are little better than bondsmen there. But after through grace we are out of Egypt, and have received a knowledge of the varied offerings; after we know and are assured of our deliverance, and have spiritual apprehension enough to see the different aspects of Christ's offering; how much remains to be learnt of Jesus in any or every aspect of His work. There are babes as well as strong men in the wilderness, and the babes can know but little till they are grown. Yea, there are men of Israel, full-grown men, in the wilderness, who through unfaithfulness are almost strangers to the offering. With all such the measure of apprehension will be limited, and consequently their joy and strength but small. Lord, awaken Thy saints to know their calling, by knowing more and more of Jesus; that instead of boasting themselves as children of Abraham, while they are bondsmen in Babylon or Egypt, they may seek as sons of Abraham to walk as he did, as strangers and pilgrims with Thee!

Here I conclude my remarks on the Burnt-offering. In it we have seen Jesus as our representative. His offering was offered "for us;" therefore "as He is, so are we in this world;" (1 John 4:17) the measure of His acceptance is the measure of our acceptance, "we are made accepted in the Beloved." (Ephesians 1:6) But in the Burnt-offering Jesus stands also as our example, "leaving us an example that we should follow His steps;" (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6) the measure therefore of His devotedness should be the measure of ours, "we should walk even as He walked." May the Lord grant to His Church more fully to know and apprehend her calling, her union with Jesus dead and risen, and her hope when He appears; that so while she rejoices in her inheritance, and that Jesus represents her above, she may daily be found nearer to His cross, and more and more represent Him here. Amen.

FOOTNOTES [1] Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17 [2] Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30

[3] The word used for the Burnt-offering, ■■■ literally "ascending," is the same as that used for burning incense. The burning of the Sin-offering is expressed by an entirely different word.

[4] In the common version these words are translated, "He shall offer it of his own voluntary will." (Leviticus 1:3) The Septuagint, the Chaldee version, the Vulgate, and the Targum Hierosolymitanum, all render this, "to be accepted;" which is confirmed by Leviticus 1:4: "it shall be accepted for him." The words are ■■■■■■■ and ■■■ . I may add, that the same expression, where it occurs in Leviticus 33:11, is in our version also, as well as in those referred to, translated "to be accepted."

[5] See Leviticus 4:20; Leviticus 4:26; Leviticus 4:31; Leviticus 5:6; Leviticus 5:10; Leviticus 5:13; Leviticus 5:16; Leviticus 5:18; Leviticus 6:7; where in every case the atonement of the Sin-offerings is expressly connected with sin. There is nothing like this in the atonement of the

Burnt-offering, Leviticus 1:4.

[6]This is seen especially in the last grade of the Meat-offering, and in the last two grades of the Sin-offering. The last class of the Meat-offering gives us a thought of “first-fruits;” (Leviticus 2:14.) The last grade but one of the Sin-offering is seen as “a sweet savour” Burnt-offering; (Leviticus 4:31) while the last grade of all is represented as almost a Meat-offering; (Leviticus 5:11-12)

03.03. CHAPTER 3: THE MEAT-OFFERING

CHAPTER 3: THE MEAT-OFFERING Leviticus 2:1-16

WE now come to THE MEAT-OFFERING, which gives us another aspect of the perfect offering of Jesus. We may consider it, first, in its contrasts to the other offerings; that is, as giving us one definite and particular aspect of His offering: and then, secondly, in its several varieties; that is, as bringing out the different apprehensions of this one aspect.

I. And first, IN ITS CONTRAST TO THE OTHER OFFERINGS. Five points here at once present themselves, which bring out what is distinctive in this offering. The apprehension of these will enable us to see the particular relation which Jesus filled for man as Meat-offering.

(1) The first point is that the Meat-offering was a sweet savour. (Leviticus 2:2; Leviticus 2:9) In this particular it stands in contrast to the Sin-offering, but in exact accordance with the Burnt-offering. For this latter reason I need not dwell upon the purport of it, as I have already sufficiently considered it in the Burnt-offering. Suffice it to say, that the thought of sin never comes into any of the sweet savour offerings: they represent man in perfect obedience yielding to God an offering which He accepts as pleasing to Him. The Sin-offerings, on the contrary, are not a sweet savour: they represent man as a sinner receiving the penalty due to his offences. But I have already sufficiently pointed out this distinction. I do not therefore here further dwell upon it.

(2) The second point in which the Meat-offering differed from the others, is seen in the materials of which it was composed. These were “flour, oil, and frankincense:” (Leviticus 2:1) there is no giving up of life here. It is in this particular, especially, that the Meat-offering differs from the Burnt-offering. The question is, does the Scripture supply us with a key by which to discover what is intended by this distinction? That it does so, not on this point alone, but on every other, I do not entertain a doubt The Scripture is a key to itself. Besides, we have the Holy Ghost to open it to us: and especially is this His office where Jesus is the subject of our inquiries. God is His own interpreter. We fail in understanding the Scripture because we so little use Him. This I feel assured is the reason we are so often in ignorance. It is not that the truth sought for is not in the Word, but that through lack of communion with Him who gave that Word, we have not enough of His mind to apprehend His meaning, even where He has fully expressed it. But to return. I said that the great distinction between the Burnt-offering and the Meat-offering was, that life was offered in the one case, fruits in the other. The key to this I believe may be found in more than one place in Scripture. Thus in the first chapter of Genesis we read of God thus allotting to man that part of creation which He intended to satisfy him: “Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.” (Genesis 1:29) Thus the fruit of the herb and of the tree was man’s allotted portion. But life was reserved as God’s portion, and wholly belonged to Him. It was only after the flood, (and this too I believe is typical,) that man was permitted to eat the flesh of animals. Yet even then the life was God’s part: as it is written, “The life, which is the blood, ye shall not eat.” (Genesis 9:4) The import of this difference between the Burnt and Meat-offerings may now be surely and easily

gathered. Life is that which from the beginning God claimed as His part in creation: as an emblem, therefore, it represents what the creature owes to God. Corn, the fruit of the earth, on the other hand, is man's part in creation; as such, it stands the emblem of man's claim, or of what we owe to man. What we owe to God or to man is respectively our duty to either. Thus in the Burnt-offering the surrender of life to God represents the fulfilment of man's duty to God; man yielding to God His portion to satisfy all His claim. In the Meat-offering the gift of corn and oil represents the fulfilment of man's duty to his neighbour: man in his offering surrendering himself to God, but doing so that he may give to man his portion. Thus the Burnt-offering is the perfect fulfilment of the laws of the first table; the Meat-offering the perfect fulfilment of the second. Of course, in both cases the offering is but one, that offering is "the body" of Jesus; but that body is seen offered in different aspects: here in the Meat-offering as fulfilling man's duty to man. The one case is man satisfying God, giving Him His portion, and receiving testimony that it is acceptable. The other is man satisfying his neighbour, giving man his portion as an offering to the Lord. And how exactly do the emblems here chosen represent the perfect fullness of this blessed offering. God's claim met perfectly in the Burnt-offering: man's claim as perfectly satisfied here. Had the Burnt-offering alone been offered, man would have lacked his portion and been unsatisfied: and again, had the Meat-offering been offered to the exclusion of the Burnt-offering, God would have been unsatisfied; it would have been imperfect. But it could not be so; therefore after the law came in, the Meat-offering was regarded as an adjunct of the Burnt-offering. Thus the book of Numbers always speaks of the Meat-offering as in use and practice connected with the Burnt-offering. Having first regulated the amount of flour for the Meat-offering, which was to accompany the different classes of the Burnt-offering, (Numbers 28:12-13) the law proceeds to speak of "the Burnt-offering and its Meat-offering," "the Burnt-offering and the Meat-offering thereof." (Numbers 29:1-40, passim) So again in Ezra the offerings for the altar are summed up as "bullocks, rams, lambs, with their Meat-offerings." (Ezra 7:17; Judges 13:19) The Meat-offering was in fact Cain's offering, but offered by one who had first offered as Abel did. Cain's offering was "the fruit of the ground," offered to God without blood shedding. How could this, the mere acknowledgment of man's claim, satisfy Him who had His own claim also on His creatures? And this was Cain's error. Here was a fallen man, through the fall an exile from Eden, despising the sprinkled blood, that is, the acknowledgment of God's claim upon him; and presuming to approach and satisfy God with the fruit of the earth, that is, man's claim. Yet how many, even now, are thinking to render Cain's offering, deceiving themselves with the idea that of itself it will be accepted. Had any man's service to his fellow-creatures been such as to justify him before God, that one would have been our blessed Lord; yet even He came not without a Burnt-offering. Christ's perfect fulfilment of every duty to man was not enough without entire devotedness, even to death, to God-ward. Nor could all this perfectness avail for sinners, had not the Perfect One further been judged for sin. The Meat-offering, then, to speak of it generally, is Christ presenting Himself to God as man's meat. Most sweet it is, most precious to the soul of the believer who can thus see Jesus. We shall see this preciousness as we examine particularly the typical import of each of the materials of the Meat-offering.

[i.] The first is "flour;" and the type is significant, in exact accordance with the word, "Bread corn must be bruised." (Isaiah 28:28) Bread is the staff of life, and Christ our staff of life is here represented as the bruised One. The emblem, corn ground to powder, is one of the deepest suffering. It is not the blade springing up in beauty, green and flourishing with the rain of heaven,

or ripening into full maturity under the influence of the summer sun. The thought is one of bruising and grinding; of pressing, wearing trial. Jesus was not only tried by “fire;” God’s holiness was not the only thing that consumed Him. In meeting the wants of man, His blessed soul was grieved, and pressed and bruised continually. And the bruising here was from those to whom He was ministering, for whom He daily gave Himself. Who can read the Gospels without seeing this? Jesus lays Himself out for others; He spends Himself for others; but they cannot understand Him. His soul is grieved, His spirit bruised with the blindness and hardness of their hearts.

Oh, what a picture of devotedness does His lowly service present to us! Look at Him beginning His course, knowing each sorrow that was to befall Him; foreseeing the whole course of rejection, and the shameful end of His pilgrimage: rejected when He would minister blessing; misunderstood when He gave instruction; suffering not merely at the hands of enemies, but more acutely from those around Him; to them alone He said, “How long shall I suffer you?” (Mark 9:19) -- rejected, misunderstood, suffering, He goes forward without the slightest faltering; He never stops for a moment in His devoted service to all around Him. To the very end of His course, as at the beginning, He is the meat of all who need and will accept Him. We think when trouble or sorrow comes on us, that it is time to care for ourselves. Not so Jesus. We think there must be a limit to our self-sacrifice. Not so our blessed Lord. We think that our interests, our credit, or at least our life, must not be touched or endangered. We think when our kindness is rejected we need not repeat it; we think our times of rest and relaxation are our own. Oh, how unlike to us in all was our blessed, lowly Master! Oh, how far above us in all things! Nothing moved His steadfast heart, or turned Him from doing good. In vain was the stupidity of His disciples, the rage of His enemies, or the craft of Satan. Jesus never wavered nor hesitated; His course of self-surrender was complete. But are we to suppose He did not feel all this? God only knows the measure of His sufferings, or how deeply He was bruised and broken. As a man He was “in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin;” this aggravated His sufferings. The Psalms here and there give us a glance of His sorrows, though no murmur ever escaped His lips. “Reproach,” He says, “has broken my heart. They lay to my charge things I know not It was not an enemy that did this, for then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me, for then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company.” (Psalms 69:20; Psalms 35:11; Psalms 55:12-13) It may be, some of God’s children cannot enter into this; they know not as yet the trials of service. Only let them follow Jesus in spending and being spent for others, and the emblem of this type, “bruised corn,” will not be altogether strange to them. And, indeed, how much is there of Christ’s suffering which we have no idea of until through grace we are in measure brought into His circumstances, and feel the bruising which our brethren, oft unconsciously, inflict on us, while we would minister to, and be spent for them.

I have just glanced at some of the bruisings of Christ’s spirit, but as respects His body also how much was He bruised! What labours, what pains, what weaknesses did He suffer to feed others! (Psalms 22:15; Psalms 102:4-5) So much was He worn by labour, that He could not even bear His cross. Another was compelled to bear it for Him. (Mark 15:21) Doubtless this was not kindness but necessity. Jesus was already ground and broken. He was now ready to be put upon the altar. And what a lesson is there here for the believer who wishes to give himself in service to his brethren! This scripture, as in fact all Scripture, testifies that service is self-surrender, self-sacrifice. Christ, to

satisfy others, was broken: and bread corn must still be bruised: and the nearer our ministry approaches the measure of His ministry, immeasurably far as we shall ever be behind Him, the more shall we resemble Him, the bruised, the oppressed, the broken One. But there is another thought brought out in this emblem. The Meat-offering was not only flour; it was to be “fine flour.” (Leviticus 2:1) In fine flour there is no unevenness, fit emblem of what Jesus was. In Him there was no unevenness. Perhaps in no one respect does He stand out more in contrast to His best and most beloved servants. Jesus was always even, always the same, unchanged by circumstances. In Him one day’s walk never contradicted another, one hour’s service never clashed with another. In Him every grace was in its perfectness, none in excess, none out of place, none wanting. Firm, unmoved, elevated, He was yet the meek, the gentle, the humble One. In Him firmness never degenerated into obstinacy, or calmness into stoical indifference. His gentleness never became a weakness, or His elevation of soul forgetfulness of others. With us our very graces are uneven, and clash and jostle with each other. Our very attempts to live and die for Him who loved us only shew how unlike Him we are.

Take His most devoted followers, a Paul, a John, a Peter. In each of them there is unevenness, one grace preponderates; in Paul energy, in Peter zeal, in John affection. And even in their very graces we see their failings. Paul’s energy leads him to Macedonia when a door is opened in Troas: (1 Corinthians 2:12-13) he repents of his letter to Corinth, and then again he does not repent. (2 Corinthians 7:8) Peter too, through zeal, once and again takes a place he has not grace to occupy: he steps out on the water and sinks; (Matthew 14:28-31) he follows Jesus but to deny Him. (Matthew 26:58) So, too, in the beloved disciple, his very affection to his Master does but bring out his unlikeness to Him: he would be the highest, next to His Lord, in the kingdom; (Matthew 20:20-24) he would call down fire on all who dared to reject Him. (Luke 9:54) And to turn from apostles to ourselves, we need not. I think, be shown our unevenness. One thing when alone before God, we are quite another thing before our brethren. In solitude striving and praying against the very folly we commit in public. In one circumstance backward, in another hasty; in this place steadfast, in that wavering. Nor is it our sins alone which shew our unevenness: our very graces are uneven: and our possessing one more than another only shews our deficiency. Why is it that in Paul, John, and Peter, we mark one grace peculiarly, while such a thought never so much as occurs to us in considering our blessed Lord? Is it that His servants surpassed Him in energy, or zeal, or tenderness? The reason is, Jesus was perfect In His devotedness there was no unevenness. No one grace to be singled out where everything and all were perfect.

[ii] The next material in the Meat-offering is oil. “He shall pour oil upon it;” (Leviticus 2:1) this was a necessary ingredient: without it the offering was incomplete. The typical signification of this will be familiar to many, for the New Testament is full of allusions to it. Oil, in its nature nourishing and healing, is the constant emblem of the Spirit’s actings. Jesus as the obedient man was filled with the Holy Ghost, and His oblation of Himself as Meat-offering was in the unction and power of the Spirit. Luke, the Gospel of the Son of Man, gives abundant information on this point. Accordingly we read, when His public ministry commenced, when, to speak typically, He began to bring His Meat-offering, “the Holy Ghost descended on Him visibly,” (Luke 3:22) the oil was poured on the flour. Immediately after, (Luke 4:1) we read again, “Jesus, full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan.” Again, in the fourteenth verse, “Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee.” (Luke 4:14) Then immediately, (Luke 4:16) in the synagogue of Nazareth, when the book of the

prophet Esaias is delivered to Him, He finds the place which describes His anointing and its consequences: and whether He heals the sick, teaches the poor, or feeds the hungry, it is all done in the power of the anointing. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, and to heal the broken-hearted.” “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power; and He went about doing good;” (Acts 10:38) this is exactly the Meat-offering. And the Gospels from one end to the other in every page are full of it. To take one example from the chapter referred too: no sooner had our Lord commenced His ministry, than they rose up and thrust Him out of the city. (Luke 4:29) Go where He would, He was still the Meat-offering; the bruised corn and the oil are always together.

What a contrast to us in all this is Jesus our blessed Master! In Him, viewed simply as a man, the bruised corn is fully anointed. For this reason, bruised as He may be. He never lacks power. How different with us! We are not bruised, we are not broken, but we are powerless: and what little is attempted or done for others is too often in the energy of our flesh rather than in the power of the Spirit. It is this which so ruins our efforts; the power we use for God is our power, not the Spirit If “we go about doing good,” is it, I ask, in the power of the anointing from above, or in the power derived from some earthly advantage of circumstance, or station, or natural ability? Is it not thought right’ to seek these things to give power where we feel power is wanting? But this is not the strength Christ walked in: the Meat-offering was “anointed with oil.” The truth is, that the greatest zeal and knowledge are useless towards others without the Spirit. Look at Christ’s last interview with His disciples! (Luke 24:44-49) We read, “He opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures:” He then shewed them “what was written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning Him.” He tells them further, that of these very truths they are the constituted “witnesses.” He then “lifts up His hands and blesses them.” Are they then fitly equipped for the work appointed them? No: He says, “Tarry till ye be endued with power.” They have knowledge of Christ, they have His commission, they have His blessing; but they lack power, and the word is, ‘Tarry.” They must wait for “power from on high,” and that power is the Spirit. When shall we learn that we require not only truth but power: and that the only power which avails in ministry is the power of the Holy Ghost?

I have one other remark to make here. The “oil” is in the Meat-offering, not in the Burnt-offering. In the Burnt-offering we have the Spirit as “water:” (Leviticus 1:9 and see page 63) in the Meat-offering it is seen as “oil.” It is in relation to man, in service to our neighbour, that the Spirit is specially needed in grace and power. There is the flesh in our brethren to try us, and the thousand difficulties of intercourse with evil. How is this to be met aright, save in the grace and unction of the Spirit? But could Jesus in His offering of Himself be so dependent as to need this anointing? Could He require the Spirit of power for His walk and service to those around Him? Yes, He humbled Himself even to this, to take, as a lowly dependent man, the grace which He manifested to others. Blessed Jesus! May we learn more and more to be dependent like Thee.

[iii.] The third ingredient of the Meat-offering is frankincense: “he shall put frankincense thereon;” (Leviticus 2:1) in connexion with which, and yet in contrast, it is commanded, “ye shall burn no honey unto the Lord.” (Leviticus 2:11) These emblems, like all the others, are at once simple yet most significant. Frankincense is the most precious of perfumes, of enduring and delightful fragrance: fit emblem of the sweetness and fragrance of the offering of our blessed Lord. Honey, on the other hand, though sweet, is corruptible; soon fermented, and easily turned sour. In

frankincense the full fragrance is not brought out until the perfume is submitted to the action of fire. In honey it is just the reverse; the heat ferments and spoils it The bearing of this on the offering of Jesus is too obvious to require comment. The fire of God's holiness tried Him, but all was precious fragrance. The holiness of God only brought out graces which would have escaped our notice had He never suffered. Yea, much of the precious odour of His offering was the very result of His fiery trial. How different is it in believers! There is in many a sweetness of nature; very sweet for a while it may seem to our taste, which yet will not stand the test of fire: the first trial is enough to sour it. Who is there that has been cast into sifting circumstances, where God's holiness and our ease or interests have come into collision, without feeling how much there is in us which could not be a sweet savour on the alter? And have we never found, in setting even before saints some plain but neglected command of our Master, that much of the sweetness in them, which we have taken to be frankincense, has at once shown itself to be fermenting honey. It was not so with the blessed Jesus: "Anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, all His garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia." (Psalms 45:7-8) "Because of the savour of His good ointments, His name is like ointment poured forth." (Song of Solomon 1:3) Sweetness there is in abundance, but the sweetness of frankincense, not honey. Well might the bride exclaim, "My beloved is a bundle of myrrh; my beloved is to me as clusters of camphire." (Song of Solomon 1:13-14) And not to her alone: for her He has been a sweet savour unto Jehovah.

[iv.] The fourth and last ingredient of the Meat-offering is salt: - "Every oblation of the meat-offering shalt thou season with salt." (Leviticus 2:13) And to bring out the typical import more clearly, another emblem by way of contrast is added: "No meat-offering shall be made with leaven:" (Leviticus 2:11) there must be salt; there must be no leaven. The import of these emblems is obvious: the one positively, the other negatively, bringing but one and the same thought before us. "Salt," the well-known preservative against corruption, is the emblem of perpetuity and incorruptness; while "leaven," on the other hand, composed of sour and corrupting dough, is the as well-known emblem of corruption. Thus, when the Apostle would sum up in a word "the incorruptness, gravity, and sincerity," befitting a Christian, he says, "Let your speech be always With grace, seasoned with salt."(Colossians 4:6) Thus again, when a covenant is described as perpetual, it is spoken of as "a covenant of salt."(Numbers 18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5) The use of the word "leaven" is even more familiar. We read of "the leaven of the Pharisees," (Luke 12:1) "the leaven of the Sadducees," (Matthew 16:6) and "the leaven of Herod." (Mark 8:15) So, too, in the Epistles, we are enjoined to "purge out the old leaven." [1] Here we have a key to these emblems. Jesus in His blessed offering brought that with it which not only secured its own incorruption, but which supplied a preservative against corruption to whatever He might come in contact with. It might not always be sweet to man's taste, but it was the seasoning of the offering to the Lord.

How different is it with the most devoted Christians! Leaven is mixed with their choicest offerings. But our God has foreseen and provided for it. Thus at the offering at Pentecost, and the oblation with the Peace-offering, (appointed emblems of the Church's offering,) leavened cakes were offered to the Lord, but though accepted, they could not be burnt as a sweet savour. These offerings I shall notice as I proceed; I do not therefore here enter into them, further than to observe, that no measure of oil, that is, the Spirit, could counteract the effect of leaven. A cake might be anointed again and again, but if there had been leaven in its composition, it could not be put upon the altar. What a lesson for those who are looking to the Spirit in them rather than to

Christ for them as the ground of acceptance! The Spirit's operations in the greatest power will never alter or destroy the old nature. As soon may we expect the nettle to yield us olives as for sinful flesh to be ought but sinful. Salt water cannot be washed sweet: you may pour oil on it, but they will not mingle; "that which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6) The flesh is still in Paul, after he has been caught up to Paradise; he therefore needs the thorn in it to humble him. (2 Corinthians 12:4; 2 Corinthians 12:7) The power of the flesh in us may be controlled, and its active energy restrained or weakened, but the leaven is still within us, only waiting its opportunity to rise.

"The root of bitterness" is there, though it may be out of sight and kept from budding.

It was not so with the blessed Jesus. Even by natural birth He was born of God. His nature, as well as His walk, was sinless; for "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost." Thus, when, after a trial of centuries, both Burnt-offering and Meat-offering had failed in man's hand, Jesus in "the body prepared for Him" came to do His Father's will. These offerings in type shew us how He did it. And He was accepted for us.

(3) But it is time that we pass on to consider the third particular in which the Meat-offering stood in contrast to the other offerings. The Meat-offering was not wholly burnt. (Leviticus 2:2-3) In this it differed from the Burnt-offering. Christ as performing man's duty to God, that is, the Burnt-offering, was wholly the food of God, wholly put upon His altar, wholly consumed by Him. But Christ as performing His duty to man, that is, the Meat-offering, is also man's meat, the food of the priests: "The remnant of the meat-offering shall be Aaron's and his sons; it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the Lord made by fire." Yet even here He satisfies God. "A handful, the memorial of the offering" is put upon the altar, to teach us, that even in fulfilling man's duty to his neighbour, Christ fulfilled it as "an offering unto the Lord." But though God had thus a portion in the Meat-offering, it is nevertheless specially the food of man; primarily to be viewed as offered for us to God, but also as given to us, as priests, to feed on. For us, as

Meat-offering, Jesus fulfilled what was due to man. He did this as our representative, as the substitute of those who trust Him: in this aspect of the offering our souls find peace; here is our acceptance: but this, though securing peace, is but a part of our blessed portion. If Jesus did all this for us, will He not do it to us? As righteous in Him, we still have wants, we need daily food and anointing; and for these as much as for righteousness, we are debtors to His abounding grace. We need Him, and we have Him as our brother to fulfill His part of the law to us, "for He came not to destroy, but to fulfill." (Matthew 5:17) The law is, that the priests should be fed of the altar; they may not work for their bread as others. The faithful Israelite is the appointed channel of their subsistence: on his faithfulness, under God, do they depend for their food. Jesus, as the faithful Israelite, will not fail the priests who wait at the altar. Let His priests ("ye are a royal priesthood," 1 Peter 2:9) be but found where they should be, and His offering will be there to feed them. "He will abundantly bless the provision, He will satisfy His poor with bread." (Psalms 132:15)

We do not sufficiently think of Jesus in this aspect, as presenting Himself to God as man's meat. The Gospels, however, are full of it: it shines out in every page. Jesus, with all His devotedness to God, was still ever the devoted servant of all around Him. Who ever drew upon His love or power, and went away without being satisfied? He opened His hand wide unto His brother, to the poor and the needy in the land. What sorrow was there, what need, what trial, to which Jesus refused to

minister?

How precious, then, is Jesus, viewed as Meat-offering! We often want one to fulfill toward us those acts of love and sympathy which our lonely hearts yearn after. Around us there is a heartless world, or brethren, it may be, who can neither sympathize with, nor help us. We think, perhaps, if Jesus were here on earth, we would go to Him and tell Him our sorrows. We are sure, if He were still “the man of sorrows,” that we should have a claim on His loving heart But is He not the same now as in His humiliation, “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever?” (Hebrews 13:8) Surely He is the same to those who come to Him. Oh, may we learn thus to use Him, that He may satisfy us in every difficulty; when poor to give us bread, when mourning to dry our tears! Weary pilgrim, Jesus is the Meat-offering, to meet your claim as well as God’s. You have a claim on Him; it is your necessity. He must, as a brother, answer it. Come to Him, then, as the One to feed you: it is more blessed for Him to give than for you to receive. Know Him as the One who, when all else fail, has a Meat-offering already provided to satisfy you.

I said that the Meat-offering was not all burnt; but though not all burnt, all was consumed. In this offering the offerer had nothing for himself. God and His priests had the whole between them. How simple, how instructive the lesson! If we could fulfill every duty to God and man according to the standard God has given, if our bodies were really a living sacrifice, if we were offered on the sacrifice and service of faith, as Jesus set us an example, what should we have left for self? Just what was left of the Burnt and Meat-offering; nothing. Between God and man all would be consumed. A holy God and a needy world would require everything.

I would that they, who think to earn heaven by their fulfilment of the law, might learn here what fulfilling the law comes to, and how far it is above and beyond them! The Burnt-offering and the Meat-offering together are God’s standard of full obedience: and what a picture do they give us! The first, the Burnt-offering, requiring perfectness in every member, and then the entire surrender of every member; the head, the inwards, the legs, all yielded up upon the altar. The next, the Meat-offering, though giving another aspect of devotedness, not a whit behind the Burnt-offering in entire self-surrender; witness the bruised corn, the oil, the frankincense, and the salt to savour it all. This is God’s measure of devotedness; that is what satisfies Him. One, and but one, has thus satisfied Him; and in Him, and in Him alone, we may rejoice.

(4) The fourth point I notice in the Meat-offering is, that, though intended for, and for the most part consumed by, man, it was, nevertheless, “offered unto the Lord.” (Leviticus 2:1) In this particular, as in every other, the Meat-offering has something we’ll worth our notice. In the Meat-offering the offerer gives himself as man’s meat; yet this is yielded as “an offering unto Jehovah.” The offering indeed fed the priests; but it was offered, not to them, but to the Lord. The first Adam took for man not only what was given him, but what God had reserved for Himself. The second Adam gave to God not only God’s portion, but even of man’s part God had the first memorial Jesus as man, in satisfying man’s claim on Him, did it as “an offering unto the Lord.” With us how much even of our graces is offered to man rather than to God. Even in our most devoted service, what a seeking there is, perhaps unconsciously, to be something in the estimation of others: some secret desire, some undetected wish, even by our very service to be greater here. The very gifts of God and the power of His Spirit are sought the better to give us a place in this world. Thus are our very graces used to obtain for us glory, not of God, but of those around us. Surely this is one of the reasons

why God can trust us with so little, for with His gifts we build up our own name, instead of His name. But how unlike all this to our Master; yea, how unlike even to His apostles! “Neither of men,” says Paul, “sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others.” (1 Thessalonians 2:16) This is our calling, not only to be nothing in the world, but to be willing to be nothing even among our brethren; to take the nearest place to Him who has indeed taken the lowest. And in these last days, when through abounding iniquity the love of many is waxing cold, when the service which the time demands is the only service the Church will not accept, Christ’s example, as here seen in the Meat-offering, is one most precious to us. His service to His neighbour was always “an offering unto the Lord.” Thus He gladly was spent for others, though the more He loved them, the less He was loved. May we be thus like Him, that so through grace we may be steadfast. If, on the other hand, our labour of love is offered for man’s acceptance, when man rejects us our labour will cease. And surely this is the secret of much of our half-hearted service. But let us when ministering to others, offer ourselves, like Jesus, “unto the Lord,” and not unto man; then, though our love is here slighted, it will be accepted by Him to whom we offer it.

We have thus marked four particulars in which the Meat-offering differed from the other offerings. First, it was of a sweet savour; here it differed from the Sin and Trespass-offerings. Next, it was fed upon by the priests; here, as well as in its materials, it differed from the Burnt-offering. Then again it left nothing for the offerer; here it differed from the Peace-offering. It now remains for me to point out,

(5) In the last place, the contrast between the Meat-offering and the offering of first-fruits at Pentecost. The distinction is stated in the twelfth verse: “As for the oblation of the first-fruits, ye shall offer them unto the Lord, but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.” The contrast is this: the Meat-offering was a sweet savour: the oblation of first-fruits, though very like the Meat-offering, was -not so. For the key to this we must turn to Leviticus 23:1-44, where the law respecting “the oblation of first-fruits” is given to us. In that chapter we have a list of the Feasts. First in order conies the Passover, on the fourteenth day at even: (Leviticus 23:5) then the wave-sheaf of first-fruits, on the morrow after the sabbath: (Leviticus 23:11) and then, fifty days after, the oblation of the first-fruits on the day of Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15-17) The “sheaf of first-fruits,” on the morrow after the sabbath, might be burnt to the Lord as a sweet savour; (Leviticus 2:15-17) but “the oblation of the first-fruits” at Pentecost might not be burnt on the altar. (Leviticus 2:12) The reason for this distinction is found in the fact, that “the sheaf of first-fruits” was unleavened, while “the oblation of first-fruits” at Pentecost was mixed and made with leaven. (Leviticus 23:17) The typical application of all this is too obvious to need any comment. Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us, and sacrificed on the predetermined day. (John 18:28; 1 Corinthians 5:7) Then “on the morrow after the sabbath,” the next ensuing Sabbath, that is, on the appointed “first day of the week,” (Mark 16:1-2) Christ “rose from the dead, and became the first-fruits of them that slept.” (1 Corinthians 15:20) In Him there was no sin, no leaven; He was in Himself a sweet savour to Jehovah. With this offering, therefore, no Sin-offering was coupled; it was offered only with a Burnt-offering and Meat-offering. (Leviticus 23:12-13)But fifty days after this, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come” the Church, typified by the leavened oblation of first-fruits, is offered unto the Lord: for we, as well as Jesus, are first-fruits; “we are” says James, “a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.” (James 1:18) But this offering, having sin in it, being “mixed with leaven” could neither stand the test of the fire of the altar, nor be an offering made by fire of a

sweet savour unto the Lord. Yet it was to be both offered and accepted: “Ye shall offer it, but it shall not be burnt.” (Leviticus 2:12) And why, and how, was this leavened cake accepted? Something was offered “with it” for the sake of which the leavened first-fruits were accepted. They offered with the leavened bread a Burnt-offering, a Meat-offering, a Peace-offering, and a Sin-offering; (Leviticus 23:18-19) for leaven being found in the oblation of first-fruits, a Sin-offering was needed with it. And the priest waved all together: “the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits for a wave-offering before the Lord.” The Church comes with Christ before God; it is offered with all the value of His work attached to it In itself it cannot stand the trial of God’s holiness, for no measure of oil can naturalize the leaven; but in Christ, and with Christ, and for. Christ, it is accepted even as He is. Thus when the Church is presented to God, it comes not alone into His presence, but with the sweet savour of all that Christ has been for it, and with the witness that He has met its sin.

It may be asked, perhaps, why the offering of the Church is represented by a Meat-offering, seeing this Offering has such special reference to the second table of the Decalogue? I answer, the Church is not always seen as a Meat-offering. It is on Pentecost that it appears in this aspect. There are in the law many types of the Church. She is seen as daughter in the father’s house, as wife in the husband’s; (Numbers 30:1-16) and further, she shares with Christ in many of His relations, as offering, as priest, as prophet, or as candlestick. But on Pentecost she is specially seen as a Meat-offering, that is, as man’s portion, in active service towards a lost and needy world; because on that day she first stood forth in such service toward man, as taking her part with Christ in loving service to the sons of Adam. Then, “Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, strangers from Rome, Jews, Proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians,” were fed by the service of those, who, though leavened, were yet an appointed and accepted Meat-offering.

Such is the general character of the Meat-offering, as collected from the points in which it differs from the other offerings. I proceed now very briefly to examine it.

II. IN ITS DIFFERENT GRADES OR VARIETIES. These are three in number, and represent (as we have already seen,) the different measures of apprehension with which a saint may see Jesus in any of His relations. The first class or grade is unbaked flour; (Leviticus 2:1) this is the most perfect type of the Meat-offering: the second is baked loaves or cakes; (Leviticus 2:4-7) in this emblem one or two particulars are lost sight of: the third, green ears dried by the fire, (Leviticus 2:14) is lower still than either of the others. Each gives us Jesus as Meat-offering, that is, as meeting and fulfilling man’s claim on Him: in all He is equally “a sweet savour,” in all equally acceptable to God: but the second class gives a higher view of His perfectness in this relation than the third; and again the first class is higher than either. The first class shews us an offering like that of the princes; (Compare Leviticus 2:1, and Numbers 7:13; Numbers 7:19; Numbers 7:25, &c.) The next gives us something lower; [2] the last class shews us the offering in its rudest form, “ears of corn dried by the fire.” The Lord lead us to see Jesus more fully, according to the measure of the first class, that our joy and strength may increase. We must rejoice in proportion as we see His perfectness; for His offering is all ours; it was “offered for us.”

Observe, then, the chief distinctions between the different grades of the Meat-offering.

(1) The first contrast is, that while in the first grade each article of the materials is enumerated (Leviticus 2:1-2) the second describes the offering more generally as “unleavened wafers

anointed." (Leviticus 2:4) The import of this distinction is at once and easily discoverable. How many saints are there, who, in thinking or speaking about Jesus, can fully assert that He is "unleavened," who know and believe He is sinless, while yet they cannot see all His perfectness. But absence of evil, the being without leaven, is a lower thought than the possession of perfect goodness. We can say, "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth," long before we can tell what was in Him, and the way in which He spent it all for others.

(2) A. second point of contrast between the different grades of the Meat-offering is too remarkable to be omitted. In the first class it is observed, that the offerer himself takes the memorial for God out of the offering: (Leviticus 2:2) in the second, the priest is said to take it: (Leviticus 12:9) while in the last class, "in the dried ears," no mention is made who takes it. (Leviticus 2:16) We observed a distinction similar to this in the Burnt-offering: in the first class the offerer killed the victim; in the last, the priest did. The difference is obvious and instructive. The one view shews Christ in His person as offerer; the other in His appointed office as the priest. The first, Christ as offerer personally giving to God, is a higher view than Christ offering as priest officially. The latter view loses, at least, one precious object in the precious offering of Jesus: the office is indeed seen, but the person of the Lord quite lost sight of.

(3) But there is a third contrast, and one which may be more generally apprehended, between the first class of the Meat-offering and the others. In the first class Christ's offering is seen as flour: He is "the fine flour" bruised. In the other classes this particular is almost merged: He is rather bread, either "loaves" or "wafers." (Compare Leviticus 2:1; Leviticus 2:4) The distinction here is very manifest We may see Jesus as our "bread," or even as God's bread, without entering into the thoughts which are suggested by the emblems of "fine flour" and "frankincense." The perfect absence of all unevenness, and the deep bruisings which He endured that He might satisfy us; the precious savour also of the offering, only more fragrant when tried by fire; these are not our first views of Jesus: for as they are the most perfect apprehensions, so are they generally the last.

(4) The difference between the first class of the Meat-offering and the third is even more striking and manifest: this latter offering giving us a thought of Christ as "first-fruits" the first sheaf of the ripening harvest, rather than the bread already prepared for food, or the fine flour as seen in the first grade. (Compare Leviticus 2:1; Leviticus 2:14) This distinction I need not dwell upon, as its general bearing is sufficiently clear. Suffice it to say, that here, as in the latter grades of the other offerings, we lose what is distinctive or peculiar in the particular offering, while a thought or view of some other offering is in measure substituted in its place. We have already seen this to be the case in the Burnt-offering: we shall find it again in the Sin-offerings. The fact is that these classes are measures of apprehension. When the measure of apprehension is small, one view of the offering is confounded with another view. The building, to repeat a former illustration, is seen too indistinctly to observe its different aspects: more than one side of it is seen at once, though neither of these sides is seen very distinctly. This, I doubt not, is the case here. The thought of the Meat-offering is joined with that of the First-fruits. How many true Christians are there whose views of Christ are thus without definiteness; Sin-offering, Meat-offering, Burnt-offering, all mixed together.

Such are some of the Varieties in this Offering; and if they teach no more, they teach us at least what Christians lose from their lack of knowledge: for many a precious truth seen in the first grade,

is in the lower grades wholly overlooked. For instance, in the first grade, all the materials are seen, “the flour, the oil, the salt, the frankincense;” while nearly the whole of this is lost in the lower grades, where it is only noticed that the offering is “unleavened.” Is it to be supposed that this mere negative knowledge, this bare knowledge of what Christ was not, can ever have the same effect upon our souls as the full apprehension of what He really was? So again, in the first grade Christ’s person is seen: the offerer is seen himself offering. Need we be told how different is the effect of merely seeing Christ’s office in His atonement? And so of the rest. He who, seeing the first-fruits, confounds or substitutes this thought for that of the Meat-offering, though he sees Christ, does not see Him as fulfilling the Law, but simply as the first sheaf of a promised harvest. There are many who believe that Christ is risen as the first-fruits of them that slept, who by no means see how, by His offering for them, they also are accepted in Him. But I will not pursue the subject. Such as have intelligence will be able to trace it for themselves. Others, I fear, would scarce understand the mere outline, which is all that I could here give of it.

Here I close my remarks on the Meat-offering. More, much more, might be said. What has been said, I trust, may, through grace, lead us, first to bless God for having given us such an offering; and then to desire a greater insight into all that Jesus has been for us. For ever blessed be our God who has thus loved us. May we daily know more of His love?

FOOTNOTES

[1]1 Corinthians 5:7. The parable of the leaven, Matthew 13:33 may perhaps be quoted as giving to leaven another meaning. I am satisfied, however, that there, as in every other place, leaven is the emblem of evil and corruption. Of course, the great thought in the parable is the spread of nominal Christianity, while it is left for spiritual apprehension to discern whether what is actually spread is good or evil. But the Church is so blind to her own state, that she can neither see it as foretold in Scripture or existing in fact. As with the disciples at the sepulchre, a fact is before us which but few have eyes or heart to apprehend.

[2] Here, too, there is within this class a measure of variety, as the Meat-offering baked in the oven and in the pan. The difference, however, I believe, is merely connected with the size of the offering. A large loaf could not be baked in a frying-pan.

03.04. CHAPTER 4: THE PEACE-OFFERING

CHAPTER 4: THE PEACE-OFFERING Leviticus 3:1-17; Leviticus 7:11-21; Leviticus 7:29-34

WE now come to the sacrifice of PEACE-OFFERINGS, the last offered of all the typical offerings. Accordingly, we shall find it revealing to us that aspect of Christ's offering, which is generally the last apprehended by the believer. And I may add, that as it was "burnt upon the Burnt-offering," (Leviticus 3:5) and was directly consequent upon it, so it reveals to us the consequences of those aspects of Christ's offering which are prefigured in the Burnt and Meat-offerings.

We may examine it, first, in its contrasts to the other offerings, that is, as bringing out one definite and particular aspect of Christ's offering; and then, secondly, in its several varieties, as showing the different apprehensions enjoyed by Christians of this aspect.

I. And, first, IN ITS CONTRAST TO THE OTHER OFFERINGS, it may be sufficient to enumerate two chief points: (1) It was a sweet-savour offering; and, (2) The offerer, God, and the priest were fed by it. In the former of these particulars, it differed from the Sin-offerings; in the latter, it differed from all others.

(1) It was a "sweet-savour" offering. (Leviticus 3:5; Leviticus 3:16) On the import of this distinction, I need here say little, since we have already more than once examined it. Suffice it to say that here, as in the Burnt and Meat-offerings, we are presented with a view of the offering, not as offered with any reference to sin, but rather as showing man giving to God that which is sweet and pleasant to Him. But the Burnt-offering and Meat-offering were both "sweet savours." This particular, therefore, though distinguishing the Peace-offering from the Sin-offerings, gives us nothing by which we may distinguish it from the other sweet-savour offerings. I pass on, therefore, to the next particular, in which the Peace-offering very distinctly differs from the Burnt and Meat-offerings.

(2) The second point in which the Peace-offering differed from others was, that in it the offerer, the priest, and God, all fed together. This was the case in no offering but the Peace-offering. In this they had something in common. Here each had a part. They held communion in feeding on the same offering.

We have first the offerer's part; then God s part; then the priest's part; and included in this last, though separately mentioned, the part which was fed upon by the priest's children. [1] And what a view does this give of the efficacy of the offering! How does it magnify "the unsearchable riches of Christ! "God, man, and the priest, all fed together, all finding satisfaction in the offering. God first has His part and is satisfied, for He declares it to be very good. "It is an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord." (Leviticus 3:5) Man (in Christ) as offerer has his part, and is permitted to share this offering with his friends. (Leviticus 7:16) And the priest, that is, Christ in His official character, is satisfied also, and His children are satisfied with Him. (Leviticus 7:31) What a picture is here presented to us! The offerer feasts with God, with His priest, and with the priest's children.

[i.] In the Peace-offering the offerer feasts, in other words, finds satisfaction, and feeds upon the same offering of which a part has already satisfied God: for a part of the Peace-offering, (as we shall see in the sequel,) “the fat, the blood, the inwards,” before the offerer can touch his part, must have already been consumed on the altar.

We get nothing like this either in the Burnt or Meat-offering. In them we have the offering satisfying God; all consumed by His fire, and ascending to Him, as in the Burnt-offering; or shared, as in the Meat-offering, with His priests. But in all this, though God was satisfied, the offerer got no part of the offering. The Burnt and Meat-offerings were (as we have already seen) the emblem of the perfect fulfilment of the law’s requirements. In them we see man (in Christ) offering to God that which perfectly satisfies Him. God finds food in the offering, and declares it to be very good. But in all this the offerer has nothing. The Peace-offering shews us the offerer himself satisfied.

Now the offerer here, as elsewhere, is Christ; Christ in His person standing “for us.” (Ephesians 5:2) But the extent to which we are interested in this, and the fact that, till we realize it, the Peace-offering is unintelligible, require that I should dwell here for a moment, before I proceed to details.

I repeat, then, that in all the offerings, Christ, as offerer, stands as our representative. Whether it be in the Sin-offering, the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, or the Peace-offering, He is the man Christ Jesus “for us.” He is for us without the camp, for us put upon the altar, for us bearing our sins, for us accepted and satisfied. And when we say He did this “for us,” we mean that He did it instead of us, nay, as us. Thus, when He was judged, He was judged as us. When He kept the law, He kept it as us. When He was accepted, He was accepted as us; and so when He was satisfied, He was satisfied as us.

Now, the consequence of Christ’s thus standing “for us” is, that what is true of Him, is true of all who are in Him. Thus the offerings, in showing us Christ’s position, in showing Him, only shew us our own; nay, I may say, when they shew us Christ, they shew us the Church, for He stood “for us.” “As He is, so are we in this world:” (1 John 4:17) we are “accepted in the Beloved.” (Ephesians 1:6) I do not say that this is apprehended even by those who are seen of God to stand in these blessings. I need not say how little “we apprehend of that for which we are apprehended.” (Php 3:12) I simply state the fact, that in all those relations which are typified by the various offerings, Jesus in offering them as a man stood “for us;” He stood as us; nay, He was us, if I may say so. When Christ offered, God saw us offering; for Christ stood as offerer “for us.” God looked upon Christ as us. He sees us, therefore, as Christ before Him (See 1 Corinthians 12:12; “So also is Christ”). And just as truly as Christ stood for us and as us, so as a consequence do we stand in Him to God-ward. What He did, we are reckoned to have done, for as us He did it. So what He enjoys, we enjoy, for as us He enjoys it

Now this last thought is the thought of the Peace-offering. Christ is satisfied and fed by His offering. But in this He stands for us; and therefore we are satisfied as soon as we thus apprehend Him. The thought may be a little more complex than that of the Sin and Burnt-offering; but it proceeds exactly on the same principle. Just as the feeble believer in Christ, when he sees Christ offering the Sin-offering, sees that God’s wrath against sin has been met, for Jesus standing instead of us as man has borne it; just as the same feeble saint, when He sees Christ offering the Burnt and Meat-offering, sees that God and His requirements have been satisfied, for Jesus

standing for us as man has satisfied them; just so the same believer when he sees Christ offering the Peace-offering, sees that man is satisfied with the offering, for

Jesus standing for us as man is satisfied. And as our sense of acceptance depends on realizing Him as accepted for us, so our sense of satisfaction and communion with God depends on realizing Him in communion for us. Thus seeing the Peace-offering, and by it finding that Christ as man is satisfied, is to those who know themselves “in Christ,” to find that they themselves are satisfied.

I fear that there are but too many saints who never realize this aspect of the Offering, and therefore never fully experience that satisfaction which the Offering has purchased for them. I do not say that the blessing is not theirs; this and all else is theirs, if they are “in Christ.” But those things which are true for them in Him, are not realized by them in their own experience. Experience is, I again repeat, nothing more than our measure of apprehension of that which is already true for us in Christ. Thank God, the sufficiency of His work does not depend upon our apprehension of it. But our satisfaction depends much on our apprehension. It is because we apprehend so little that we have so little comfort. And our strength particularly depends on our apprehension of that view of Christ which the Peace-offering teaches; for strength is sustained by food, and the Peace-offering shews man fed by the sacrifice. Yet how little is this view of Christ apprehended! Am I asked the cause? It is because so few really know acceptance. As long as it is at all a question with you whether God has accepted you or not, your chief desire will be to know God satisfied, far rather than to be satisfied yourself. As a criminal whose reprieve has not yet come, you will not ask, Have I bread for today? But, Am I pardoned? Death stares you in the face: you cannot think of food or raiment But let the question of acceptance be settled: let this be fully known; and then you will find time to listen to the cravings of that new nature, which needs to be sustained and nourished. What is to satisfy this? Nothing but the precious meat of the altar. And this is shown as provided for us in Jesus, when we see Him, as our representative, the offerer of the Peace-offering. And here observe what the offerer feasts on. He feasts on the meat of the altar: his food is the spotless offering which has already satisfied the Lord.

Now this offering represents “the body of Jesus,” (Hebrews 10:5-10) including His walk, His thoughts, His strength, His affections. These, as we saw in the Burnt-offering, were the things He sacrificed; and because they were unblemished, they were accepted. As a sweet savour they satisfied God. But they give satisfaction, too, because they are unblemished, to the offerer. Christ finds His meat in His own offering. He “is satisfied with the travail of His soul.” (Isaiah 53:11)

Jesus as offerer stands “for us;” and by His feeding on the offering, He shews how man is satisfied. Would to God His people might learn here what, as respects atonement, will alone satisfy them. Out of God’s presence man seeks food in many things. He may try “the riotous living of the far country.” yea, in his hour of need he may come to “the husks which the swine eat.” (Luke 15:13; Luke 15:15-16) In seeking God’s presence too, not a few have yet to learn what alone can give peace and satisfaction in that presence. Some of those who are longing to feast with God are seeking satisfaction in their frames or feelings. Others are trying their own righteousness, their experiences, their walk, their service. Are these things the unblemished meat of the altar? Is it by these things Christ has satisfied God? Are our experiences, our frames, our feelings, the things on which, as respects atonement, Christ and God have fellowship? If not, they cannot be the meat

upon which we, as needing atonement, are to feed with God. If Christ as man could not have communion with God through anything save a spotless offering, so neither can any of His members: if they are fed at all, they must be fed as He is. Oh, let us be wise and see our calling, nor seek satisfaction save in Jesus! He is the only perfect One; out of Him there is nothing fit for the altar, nothing suited therefore to feed our souls. When Christ feeds with God on that which is blemished; when He makes a Peace-offering of the unclean; then, nor till then, let us seek our food in the unclean, the torn, the blemished. But while we see that even He, as far as atonement is concerned, can only be fed with His own perfect unblemished offering, let us as in Him reject all others, and feed and be satisfied in Him. How important is the lesson taught here; how unanswerably does it express this truth, that, as respects atonement at least, the Christian has nothing to feed on with God, but that which Christ Himself feeds on with Him: that however right our experiences or attainments or walk or service may be in their place, they are not the offering for atonement, nor can they ever be the ground of peace. And indeed, for a Christian to seek his food in these things is as though an Israelite were to take his garments to feed on. In truth the man who seeks satisfaction in his own attainments just does this: what should be his raiment, he makes his meat. The garments of the Israelite are the appointed symbol of a man's deportment and manifested character. [2] So the New Testament interprets the type: "The fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Revelation 19:8) This garment might be easily defiled. But let us suppose it clean: are garments to be fed on? The type answers at once: it is the meat of the altar, the sweet savour alone, which satisfies. Our prayers, our love, our service, these things, like the leavened cake at Pentecost, [3] though accepted for the sake of what accompanies them, are one and all in themselves blemished. In one sense indeed, our services are a "sweet savour; (Php 4:18) "but it is only in the same sense that our persons are "righteous." In either case the works and persons are accounted to be what in themselves they are not, in virtue of that perfect Work and Person, in whom and through whom they are offered. Just as the sinner, though in himself vile, is accounted righteous in Him through whom we have received the atonement; so are His offerings, though leavened, accounted sweet in the savour of that through which they are offered. The sinner accepted in Christ becomes indeed himself, in spirit, both an offerer and offering; yet even then his "spiritual sacrifices," whether of work or worship, are only "acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5) Like "the leavened cake "already referred to, our works or worship, because imperfect, could never be accepted, did they not come before God with the sweet savour, and as the consequence of another and a perfect offering. Were they offered to make atonement they would be rejected. They are only accepted because atonement has been already made. To make atonement, there must be perfection in the offering: God will not be satisfied with ought less than a perfect sacrifice. If we wish to be fed and satisfied with Him, it must be in and through that "One offering" which has already satisfied His holiness. But this leads us to the next particular in the Peace-offering; namely, that,

[ii.] The offerer feasts with God. Man (in Christ) and God find common food. The offering is shared between them. The thought here is not, as in the Burnt-offering, merely that God finds satisfaction in the offering. It includes this, but it goes further. It shews communion; for God and man share together.

I would that this aspect of the Offering were more familiar to the minds of Christians: how would it raise their thoughts of the value of the Offering, and of the place, which, through the Offering, man

is called to! We should not, we could not, truly realize the joy and satisfaction God finds in the Offering, without obtaining more exalted views of its wondrous preciousness and efficacy. We could not behold man sharing with God in that which God declares to be most precious to Him, without being led to a far deeper apprehension of man's high and blessed destiny. But are these our thoughts of the Offering? Do we, when we think of it, think of the joy God finds in it; or do we thus habitually realize the place into which it puts man as sharer with God? Alas! To how many are such thoughts strangers; and the reason is, because as yet they have not seen the Peace-offering. If only they may be delivered from wrath! If only they may hope for acceptance! This is all many saints hope for; this is practically all they expect. But is this all that the Offering has purchased? Is this all that Christ enjoys? Is His place bare acceptance? Is His portion only pardon? Is He not, as man, God's heir and first-born, the One in whom His soul delights, the One with whom God holds unbroken fellowship, to whom He reveals all His mind? And does Jesus hold this alone? Are we not, in Him, called to the same communion? Are we not in all His fellow-heirs, His joy, His bride, His members? The Peace-offering answers the question when it shews us man feasting with Jehovah; when it tells us that Christ's place is our place, and that in Him we are called to share with God. And how clearly does this portion of the type give the answer to the question, What is communion? Communion is simply sharing; to have communion, therefore, we must have something to share; and to have communion with a holy God, we must have something which we can share with Him, We cannot share nothing, and He will not share with us in the unclean. Our attainments, therefore, cannot yield communion, nor our works, for the best have sin in them. But, thank God, there is a perfect offering, the offering of our blessed Lord; and if we would have communion with God, the only way is to share that offering. And this at once gives us the key to the cause of our general and acknowledged lack of communion. Of intercourse we have enough, perhaps too much. Of communion, how very little! The reason is, so little of Christ's Offering is apprehended, that when believers meet they have scarce anything of Him to share. And the same is true of our approaches to God, for there may be intercourse with God without communion. How often when we approach God do we speak to Him only about our feelings, our experiences, our sins, our trials. All this is right; we cannot be without these, and we are right to tell them to our Father. But after all, this of itself is not communion, nor will speaking of these things ever yield it to us. Let us come before God to be filled with Christ, to be taken up with Him, His life, His ways, His sweetness; let the confession of our failure and nothingness in ourselves be made the plea that we may be filled with Him; and our intercourse will be soon changed to communion, for in Him we shall have something we can share. May the Lord lead us more into His presence, there to be taught what we possess in Jesus; and then, when we meet our brethren or our Father, we shall feast together on what there is in Him.

[iii.] But further, in the sacrifice of Peace-offerings, the offerer feasts with the priest. (Leviticus 7:32-33) The sacrificing priest, as I have already observed, is always Christ, viewed in His official character as Mediator. We learn here how the offering, which He offered as man, feeds, that is, satisfies Him, not only as man, but also as Mediator. To understand this we must recollect and apprehend the varied relations in which Christ stands connected with the offering; for He appears for us in many offices, in more than one relation. In connexion with the Offering alone, we see Him, as I have said, in at least three characters. He stands as offerer, but He is also the offering; and He who is both offerer and offering is also priest. Yet each of these is a distinct relation; each gives us a different thought of Christ. As offerer He is presented to us as man: there is one in our nature

satisfying God. Thus in the offerer we rather see Christ's person: it is a man standing for men. The offering gives us another thought. It is not Himself, so much as what He did. Here it is not His person, so much as His work and character, which the type brings before us. The priest again is even more distinct. It is Christ in His office as Mediator: here it is neither Christ's person nor His work, but one of His offices, which is presented to us.

Now, if this simple distinction be apprehended, as I think it must be more or less by every Christian, it will be manifest that there are things true of Christ in one relation which are by no means true of Him in another. For instance, His intercession for us is as priest. As the offering, He does not intercede; as lamb, He dies for us. So again as priest and offerer, He is fed; as the lamb, as the offering, He is not fed. Now there are offerings in which the priest finds food, but from participating in which the offerer is excluded: some of the Sin-offerings are of this latter character, for in them the priest is fed, while the offerer has nothing. The Sin-offerings, as we shall see more fully in the sequel, are man satisfying offended justice. They are not man giving something sweet to God, but man receiving from God in his offering the penalty of sin. These Sin-offerings supply food to the priest, (Leviticus 6:25-30) that is, Christ as Mediator finds satisfaction in them, but they afford Him no food as man the offerer: as man in them He only confesses sin. The priest, God's official servant, is satisfied, because offended justice is vindicated: but man, who pays the penalty in his offering, finds no satisfaction in the act. The Peace-offering gives us a very different view of the offering. In it man, as well as the priest, is satisfied in bearing the penalty of sin, that is, in the Sin-offering, man found no satisfaction. But he does find it in the sacrifice of Peace-offerings; here he shares the offering with God. Nor is the priest excluded from this offering: the Peace-offering feeds him too. If, as priest, Christ found satisfaction in the Sin-offering, that offering which only vindicated offended justice, we might expect to find Him equally satisfied in the offering which fed both God and man. And the Peace-offering reveals that it is so. God and man feast in peace together; and the Priest, the common friend of both, seeing them satisfied, is Himself satisfied also. How blessed is the thought here revealed to us! How does it open to us the heart of Christ, the joy which He feels as Mediator in seeing communion instituted between God and man! Surely we lose not a little in our communion, if we forget the joy which the Mediator .finds in it; if we overlook the satisfaction which He experiences when He sees man at peace with God. He, who knows the full value of the offering, never forgets that by it the priest is fed. And if the presence of beloved friends enhances the sweetness of each earthly blessing; and if the absence of those we love makes the full cup lose half its enjoyment; how much must it enhance our joy to know that He who loves us is feasting with us; what must they lose of the sweetness of communion who forget that in it our Priest is fed! This I know, Christ never forgets that when He feasts, He feasts with us. Even yet He says, as once of old, "With desire I desire to eat this sacrifice with you." (Luke 22:15) Shall we, then, have no thought of His joy; shall we forget the satisfaction He finds in the offering? Those who can do this have as yet learnt but little of the Peace-offering; for in the Peace-offering the Priest is fed.

[iv.] But the type takes us further still and shews us the Priest's children also sharing with the offerer in the Peace-offering. [4] They, too, as well as the offerer, the priest, and God, find satisfaction in this blessed offering. Our first question here, of course, must be, Who are represented by the Priest's children?

We have already seen that the Priest is Christ; Christ viewed in His official character as Mediator. His children, that is, His family, are therefore the Church; but the Church viewed in one particular aspect. The Church, like her blessed Lord, stands both to God and man in more than one relation; and each of these different relations requires in the type a different emblem. This we have abundantly seen is true of Christ: but it is no less true of the Church, His body. For instance, just as the varied pictures we have considered, the offering, the priest, the offerer, all shew out our blessed Lord, while yet each shews Him in a different character; so in like manner is it with the Church also. She, too, has varied relations, which require varied emblems. In one we see her in service for God; in another in communion with Him. Israel, as the chosen nation, represents the Church as "the peculiar people," looked at simply as the seed of Abraham, and as such, in covenant with God. The Levites give us a different thought: they shew us the Church in service; as ministering for God before men, carrying His ark, and caring for His tabernacle.[5] The family of Priests give us yet another thought. Here we have the Church in communion with God; as the seed of the High Priest and Mediator, sharing with Him in His access to God and in intercession; having a right to stand in the holy place, where no eye sees them but God's.

If this be seen, it will sufficiently reveal the import of the Priest's children feeding on the Peace-offering. Their share in the sacrifice shews us the Church in communion, sharing with the Offerer in the satisfaction afforded by the Offering. To me this is a blessed thought, marking the extent and efficacy of this precious offering. Just as of old he that really feasted with God in the Peace-offering, could not do so without sharing with God's priests; so now communion with God, if enjoyed at all, must be shared with all in communion with Him. This is no question of choice: it cannot be otherwise; for he that is in communion with God must be in communion also with all whom He communes with. We may indeed be accepted in the Beloved, while yet we do not know our calling, or the relationship which exists in Christ between us and all His redeemed worshippers. But it is impossible to realize our standing in Christ, as offerers and partakers in Him of the Peace-offering, without finding that the Offering in which we rejoice links us with the joy of all God's spiritual priesthood. And here let me observe in connexion with this particular, that it is possible for believers to find satisfaction in the offering as priest's children, when through ignorance of their union with Christ as the Offerer, they find no satisfaction as offerers in Him of the Peace-offering. Alas! the great mass of God's Israel are captives in Babylon or Egypt; cut off, though born to it, from the exercise of priesthood and sacrifice, and from the sacred meat of the altar. But even of those who do know the power of redemption, and who have fed on the offerings of the Lord, how few know that meat save as priests; how few apprehend it as offerers of the Peace-offering! I would that all saints fed as priest's children, but not less that they fed as offerers in Christ. To find satisfaction as priest's children in the offering, we need not know our oneness with Christ as Offerer. It is enough to see that He as the faithful Israelite has offered, and that we as priest's children have a claim on the sacrifice. But this measure of apprehension will not suffice to make us realize our share in the Peace-offering as offerers. To know that Christ as Offerer has offered, will not give us the food which belongs to the offerer, unless we apprehend our oneness with Him that He stood for us, that we are "in Him." This, alas! How few now see: how few therefore take the offerer's part in the Peace-offering. Thank God, if we know our priesthood, this relation alone will provide us meat: for another has satisfied God and His priests may feed with Him. But while we do this, and rejoice in this relation, may the Lord lead us on to see yet another, that our place is also "in Christ" as Offerer, and that we have satisfied God in Him. This as much

as priesthood is our calling. May we but apprehend what we are apprehended for!

There is a particular connected with participation in the Peace-offering, which is incidentally mentioned here, and which we must not overlook; namely, that none, even though of the Priest's family, could eat of the offering unless they were clean. (Leviticus 7:20) There is a difference between being a priest and being clean. The fact of a man's contracting some defilement did not prove him to be no priest. On the contrary, the rules respecting clean and unclean were only for God's elect. This is very important truth. May the Lord make us all understand it better. It teaches us that it is one thing to be a priest; another thing to be a clean priest; yet the unclean priest, if of the chosen seed, is still in the covenant, and on very different ground from the seed of strangers. The Israelite, who through contact with uncleanness, might for a while be excluded from the Tabernacle, could at any time be restored again by using the appointed washings. Still his uncleanness for the time made him as a stranger, and cut him off from the meat of God. The details of the law on this point (Leviticus 22:1-7) are well worthy our deepest attention. We learn that "leprosy" or "the running issue "excluded even a son of Aaron from the camp; the period of his exclusion depending on the time during which the disease was manifest. "Leprosy" and "the running issue" were both breakings out of the flesh, breakings out which were manifest to others, though manifested differently. They typify those outbreaks of the flesh in the Christian, which are too flagrant to be hid from others. The appointed discipline for these, now as of old, is temporary exclusion from the camp. (1 Corinthians 5:13) During this period the priest's child was still a priest; but to little purpose, for he was cut off from the altar. But there were defilements of a less manifest character than leprosy, less discernible by the eyes of man, which yet brought with them temporary uncleanness, and with it temporary exclusion from the Tabernacle. If a child of the priest touched any dead thing, or anything which was unclean by contact with the dead; or if he touched any creeping thing whereby he might be made unclean, or a man of whom he might take uncleanness, the law was express, "The soul that hath touched any such shall be unclean until the even, and shall not eat of the holy things unless he wash his flesh with water." A spiritual priest may in like manner contract defilement, and so have his communion hindered. If our spirits (for this dispensation is spiritual, not carnal,) come in contact with the spirit of the world, if its dead things are felt to touch us, if its creeping things affect our souls, no visible impression may be left to be seen by others, while yet we ourselves may feel our communion hindered. At such a time we may not, under a penalty of judgment, [6] approach that which at other times is our food. Thank God, contact with the unclean, though it hinders our sense of communion, cannot remove the blood of the covenant. That still remains before God. We may not see it perhaps; He always sees it. Yet who would willingly be the unclean priest, cut off from participation with the altar; his days lost to God and to His tabernacle; his food eaten in the dark? [7]

Such are the chief particulars in which the Peace-offering differed from the other offerings. It was the sweet-savour offering in which not only God was satisfied, but in which man and the priest found satisfaction also.

I now pass on to observe,

II. THE DIFFERENT GRADES OR VARIETIES WHICH ARE OBSERVED IN THIS OFFERING. These shew US the different measures of intelligence with which this view of Christ's offering may be apprehended. And here, as there are several distinct sharers in the offering, for God, man, and

the Priest, have each a portion, it may be well to consider each portion separately with its particular differences, since in each portion there are distinct varieties observed.

(1) First, then, as to God's part in the Peace-offering. In this certain varieties at once present themselves; some of them relating to the value of the offering, others connected with the offerer's purport in the oblation.

[i.] To speak first of the, varieties touching the value of the offering. We have here, just as in the Burnt-offering, several different grades. There is the "bullock," "the lamb," "the goat;" and these respectively represent here what they do in the Burnt-offering. Each gives us rather a different thought as to the character of Christ's blessed offering. But it is to be noticed here, that although in the Peace-offering we have nearly the same number of grades as in the Burnt-offering, in the details of these various grades we do not find nearly so much difference as is the case in the Burnt-offering. There is, indeed, the variety of "bullock" "lamb," and "goat," showing that the offering is apprehended under these various characters; but nearly all the rest seen respecting this portion of the offering, as to the mode of the oblation and the part taken by the offerer, is much the same. It will be remembered that, in the different grades of the Burnt-offering, a great variety was observed in the mode of oblation. In some the parts of the victim were seen to be discriminated; in others this was not so: in some a portion of the offering was seen to be washed in water; in others this was overlooked: in some the offerer was seen laying his hand on the offering; in others this was not observed: in some the offerer himself was seen to kill the offering; in others the priest killed it. But in the Peace-offering we lose this great variety, for in each grade the offering is treated nearly alike. There are indeed the different grades, but this is nearly all: and even these grades do not vary here so much as in the Burnt-offering. [8] The import of this is sufficiently plain. It teaches that if God's part of the Peace-offering be apprehended at all, it will be apprehended nearly equally. If Christ is seen at all as offering the Peace-offering to God, the view of Him will lack no important particular, nor will His office be confounded with His person, nor will the various parts of His work be overlooked. The difference, for the most part, will simply have reference to the general character of the offering as "goat," "lamb," or "bullock."

[ii.] But there are other varieties noticed in the type, as to that part of the Peace-offering which was offered to God, which are connected, not with the value of the offering, but with the offerer s purport in bringing the oblation. If we turn to the seventh chapter, where the distinction I refer to is mentioned, it will be seen that the Peace-offering might be offered in two ways. It might be offered either as a thanksgiving, that is, for praise; [9] or as a vow or voluntary offering, that is, for service. (Leviticus 7:16) If it were seen to be offered "for thanksgiving," many particulars are noticed respecting man's share in it, which are entirely lost sight of and omitted when it is seen to be offered "for a vow." And most of the varieties in the Peace-offering (I may say all the varieties touching the Priest's and Offerer's part in it) depend upon the view which may be taken of the general character of the offering, whether it were offered "for thanksgiving," or whether it were offered "for a vow." What these particular differences are, we shall note in their proper order and place when we come to consider the Varieties in the Priest's and Offerer's part of the Peace-offering. Suffice it here to state the import of the general distinction between "the Thanksgiving" and "the Vow;" and to shew wherein the view of the Peace-offering as seen offered "for thanksgiving," differed from the Peace-offering to be offered "for a vow." To understand this, we must remember what the Offering was. It was Christ, as our representative, giving Himself to

God for us. But the purport of this offering may be very differently apprehended: it may be seen as offered for praise, or in service. Jesus may be seen as offering Himself for God's glory; this is the offering "for praise:" or He may be seen offering Himself in God's service; this is the offering "for a vow." Most Christians, I believe all of us at first, regard Christ's offering rather as a matter of service: we look on the atonement as something done by Christ in Gods service; rather than as something which, from first to last, was for God's glory. Of course these two views are most intimately connected; but I note here, that though connected, they are distinct: and the difference, if it be seen in nothing else, is immediately seen in the results of either. It will be found in the type, and our experience confirms this, that the apprehension of Christ as bringing an offering for Gods glory will lead us at once to far deeper and more extended views of its consequences, than the view of Christ as offering Himself in Gods service. Accordingly, when the offering is apprehended as offered "for praise," then many details and consequences connected with it are seen also, which are entirely omitted or lost sight of when the offering is seen as offered "for a vow." [10]

Having thus briefly marked the varieties in the Peace-offering, in that part which was offered to God, as showing the different apprehensions which may be entertained by saints of this aspect of Christ's offering, we now proceed to consider.

(2) The Priest's and Offerer's part, and the varieties which are observable here. It will be found that the particulars respecting this portion of the Peace-offering differ very much according as the offering is apprehended "for praise" or "for service." "If he offer it for a thanksgiving (or for praise), then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried. Besides the cakes, he shall offer for his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace-offerings. And of it he shall offer one out of the whole oblation for a heave-offering unto the Lord and it shall be the priest's that sprinkleth the blood of the peace-offerings. And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning. But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow, or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten: but the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burnt with fire." (Leviticus 7:12-17) Such is the law: let us now note these particulars. When offered "for praise," [i.] a Meat-offering is offered with the Peace-offering, of which the offerer, as well as the priests, partake; [ii.] leavened cakes also are seen to be offered with the sacrifice, which, though presented "with the Peace-offering," are, of course, not burnt; and [iii.] further one cake out of the whole oblation, that is, one of each sort, both leavened and unleavened, is, after being waved as a Heave-offering to the Lord, given to the priest, who sprinkles the blood of the Peace-offerings; [iv.] the last thing noted is, that the flesh of the offering is to be eaten the same day, or until the morning. Three of these four particulars are entirely overlooked when the sacrifice of Peace-offerings is "for a vow;" and though the fourth is noticed, it is seen rather differently; the flesh in "the vow-offering" is eaten for two days, or until the third day. As several of the emblems used here have already been considered, though not in the combination which we find in the Peace-offering, a few words may be sufficient to point out their purport and significance here.

[i.] In the offering "for praise," a Meat-offering is offered of which the offerer as well as the priests partake. The purport of the Meat-offering, as we have already seen, is the fulfilment of the second table of the Decalogue; man offering to God as a sweet savour the perfect accomplishment of his

duty towards his neighbour. The peculiarity here is, that the offerer partakes of this Meat-offering, a thing not permitted in the common Meat-offering. The common Meat-offering shews us the fulfilment of the law, simply with reference to God, to satisfy Him. But that same fulfilment of the law has other aspects, one of which is, that it satisfies the Offerer also. This is the truth brought out in the Peace-offering, in which the Offerer, as well as God, finds satisfaction in the fulfilment of all righteousness. And this satisfaction is not only in the fulfilment of that part of the law which had reference to God, and which was represented by the offering of a life; but in that part also which referred to man, and was represented by the unleavened cakes of the Meat-offering. The latter part of this appears to be quite lost sight of, unless the Peace-offering is apprehended as offered "for praise."

[ii.] But further, in the offering "for praise" leavened cakes also are seen to be offered with the sacrifice. (Leviticus 7:13) This emblem, too, has already occupied our attention in "the leavened cakes" of the day of Pentecost. Those cakes represent the offering of the Church. When Christ's work is seen merely as "the vow," as a matter of service, the Church's offering does not come into sight: but when His offering is seen "for praise," that is for God's glory, the Church is seen united with Him. The leavened cakes could not be burnt to God, but they come before Him "with" [11] the sweet-savour offerings. And though not fit to stand the trial of fire, or to satisfy God as the meat of His altar, they are yet presented for Hid gracious acceptance, and are fed upon by the Priest and Offerer.

[iii.] And this leads us to the next particular, namely, that one cake out of all the oblation (that is, one of each sort, both leavened and unleavened,) is given to the priest who sprinkles the blood, (Leviticus 7:14) while the remainder, both of the leavened and unleavened, belongs to him who brings the offering. Christ, as Priest, finds food and satisfaction not only in His own blessed and perfect offering: He feeds also on "the leavened cake:" the offering of His Church, with all its failings, satisfies Him. As Offerer, too, He presents this offering with His own: as Offerer, too, He feeds upon it. And we also, as offerers in Him, though not able to hold fellowship with God on the Church's offerings, (no part of leavened cake was burnt to God,) may yet find satisfaction in such offerings, even as Paul found satisfaction in the love of saints. (2 Timothy 1:16; Philemon 1:7; Philemon 1:20) Sweet, however, as such offerings may be to us, and much as they may "refresh our bowels in the Lord," they cannot by themselves be accepted of God, or be the ground of our communion with Him. The only meat we can thus share with Him is the unblemished and perfect meat of the altar. But these particulars and distinctions are not apprehended, unless the Peace-offering is seen as offered "for praise."

[iv.] The last particular noticed respects the period during which the Peace-offering was to be eaten. The time for eating the offering "for praise" was "the same day" or "until the morning:" (Leviticus 7:15) in the "vow-offering" there is a little difference; it might be eaten "the same day and on the morrow," or "until the third day." (Leviticus 7:16-17)

Now the "morning" and the "third day" are sufficiently common types, and are both constantly used, I believe, to denote the resurrection. [12] Thus far I conceive the sense of the emblems unquestionable: but I am not so certain as to the different aspect of the resurrection represented by each of them. I am disposed, however, to think that "the morning" represents the resurrection as the time of Christ s appearing; while the thought connected with "the third day" is simply

deliverance from the grave. In either case the main truth remains the same, that the Peace-offering is our food until the resurrection: but in the one case we eat as those whose time is short, in the night it may be, but in hope of the morning; in the other the thought of the morning is lost, and instead of it we see days of labour to intervene. I need not say that the first is the higher and happier view.

Such is the law of the Peace-offering, and such some of its chief varieties. In our progress we have little more than traced the outline, but how much does it contain. Even what we see and know of it reveals both depths and lengths of grace in the Redeemer; when we think of what our peace cost Him, and that He poured out His life to bring us to communion. Blessed be His name for the measure and manner of His love. May He reveal it to us by the Holy Ghost Well might the Psalmist say, “Praise waiteth for thee, God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed. Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.”(Psalms 115:1; Psalms 115:4) “They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house. Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.” (Psalms 36:8) The Lord grant us, not merely to know about these things, but to know Him better of whom they speak.

FOOTNOTES [1] See Leviticus 7:31-32, and compare Numbers 18:9-11

[2] Psalms 73:6; Psalms 109:18; Isaiah 53:1; Isaiah 64:17; Isaiah 66:3; Zechariah 3:3; Colossians 3:8; Colossians 3:12; Revelation 3:4; Revelation 16:15 [3] See page 91.

[4] Leviticus 7:31-32, compared with Numbers 18:9-11.

[5] I may observe here that both Priests and Levites are types of the whole Church, not of a part of it. We are told that by God’s express command “the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel.” (Numbers 1:47; Numbers 1:54, and Numbers 2:33.) By this appointment the tribe of Levi was purposely separated, so that it might not be looked at merely as a part of Israel Thus it constitutes a distinct picture, and shews a distinct relation of the Church.

[6] Compare Leviticus 7:20-21, and 1 Corinthians 11:29.

[7] He might not eat it until after sunset See Leviticus 22:7.

[8] The “turtle-dove,” that is, the lowest view of the offering, is omitted.

[9] Leviticus 7:12, “for praise.” So the LXX, and many versions.

[10] Compare Leviticus 7:12-15, which describe the offering “for praise,” with Leviticus 7:16-18, which describe the offering “for a vow.”

[11] Leviticus 7:13, and Leviticus 23:18.

[12] For “the morning” see Exodus 12:8; Exodus 12:10; Psalms 49:14; Romans 13:12. For “the third day,” Hosea 6:2; Luke 13:32; 1 Corinthians 15:4, &c. The “eighth day” also is the resurrection, but the resurrection looked at in a different aspect, either to the view given in “the morning” or “the third day.”

03.05. CHAPTER 5: THE SIN-OFFERING

CHAPTER 5: THE SIN-OFFERING Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-13

WE now come to OFFERINGS NOT OF A SWEET SAVOUR. Of this class are the Sin and Trespass-offerings; the object of which is to present Christ's Offering to us in an aspect wholly distinct from those already dwelt upon. Hitherto we have met no thought of Sin in the offerings. The Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, and the Peace-offering, much as they differed, were yet alike in this, that in each of them the offering was the presentation of something which was sweet to Jehovah, an oblation to satisfy His holy requirements, and in the acceptance of which He found grateful satisfaction. But here, in the Sin and Trespass-offerings, we read of Sin in connexion with the offering. Here is confessed sin, judged sin, sin requiring sacrifice and blood-shedding; yet sin atoned for, blotted out, and pardoned.

It might perhaps be thought that this view of the Offering, as leading to the knowledge and discovery of sin, might be less blessed, less full of joy and consolation, than those views of the Offering on which we have already meditated. Such might be the case, were we other than what we are, and were the Sin-offering other than God has provided. Were we sinless beings who knew no sin, this view of the Offering might not be needed by us, save as revealing the grace of Him who, though the Holy One, could be "just and yet a justifier." But to us, who, knowing ourselves to be sinners, and as such subject to God's just wrath and judgment, have yet believed in Him "who was made a curse for us," (Galatians 3:13) this view of the Offering is perhaps of all most comforting. The Sin-offering shews that sin has been judged, and that therefore the sense of sin, if we believe, need not shake our sense of safety. Sin is indeed here pre-eminently shown to be exceeding sinful, exceeding hateful, exceeding evil before God: yet it is also shown to have been perfectly met by sacrifice, perfectly borne, perfectly judged, and perfectly atoned for. And the fact is that the view of Christ as Sin-offering is sooner apprehended than those prefigured in the Burnt and Meat-offerings. Experience abundantly testifies this. As in the type the Sin-offerings, though last in order of institution, were invariably the first in order of application; [1] so in the experience of saints, Christ is first apprehended as the Sin-offering. Long before there is any intelligence of all the details of Christ's perfect work, as fulfilling all righteousness as man and being accepted of God as a sweet-smelling savour, long before there is any thought of His offering as that wherein God takes delight and finds satisfaction, the weak Christian sees Christ as Sin-bearer, and His offering as a sacrifice for sin. And though, as the type will shew us, this view may be very indistinct, confused, or partial, and though it may be apprehended by different believers with an immense difference as to the measure of discernment and intelligence, yet in some form or other it is, I may say invariably, the first view of Christ's Offering apprehended by the Christian.

I have observed that in the institution of the offerings, as recorded in the commencement of Leviticus, the sweet-savour offerings precede the others, but that in the application of these offerings, the order is reversed. I will add here a word or two on this point, as, if I mistake not, this, like all else, has a meaning in it. The reason of it will, I think, commend itself, when the

characteristic difference of these offerings is seen. The sweet-savour offerings are, as we know, Christ in perfectness offering Himself for us to God without sin: the others, on the contrary, as we shall see, represent Him as offering Himself as our representative for sin. The institution of these sacrifices gives us certain aspects of the Offering, in the order in which they are viewed by God: and in this view Christ offering Himself without sin would clearly precede His offering Himself for sin. Had He not been in Himself what the Burnt and Meat-offerings typify, a voluntary offerer of a sinless offering, He could not have been offered for sin: the fact of His being perfect fitted Him to be a Sin-offering. But the application of the offerings, on the other hand, gives us the order of Christ's work as viewed by Israel; and Israel's view in this case, as in all others, begins where the Offering meets Israel's sin and failure. For this reason it is, I cannot doubt, that in their application the Sin-offerings preceded the Burnt-offerings. But to pass from this order to the Offerings themselves, the least degree of attention is sufficient to shew, that the offerings which were not of a sweet savour are of two sorts, first the Sin-offerings (Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-13) and then the Trespass-offerings. (Leviticus 5:14-19; Leviticus 6:1-7) For a Christian rightly to know the difference between these, shews that he has learnt more than one lesson in God's school. And indeed it is one mark, a mark not to be mistaken, of the present low state of the mass of Christians that so many of them never seem to apprehend the difference which God sees between Sin and Trespass. I assume here that there is a difference; for with these offerings before us, it is impossible to doubt it. One thing at least is plain: God sees a difference: happy the saint who sees with God. Happy, I say, for though the knowledge of sin in itself can never be a cause of joyfulness, yet to see and judge anything as God Himself judges it is a step to blessedness, as surely as it is a mark of communion with Him. Truly it is for lack of knowledge on the particular now before us, that so many are mourning who should be praising; for they do not see that atonement has been made and accepted for sin in them, as well as for their acts of trespass. I defer, however, entering into this subject, until we have more fully considered the peculiar character of the Sin-offering. When we have done this, and obtained, as I hope, a clearer apprehension of it, we shall be better able to discriminate the distinction between Sin and Trespass and their respective offerings.

I proceed, therefore, at once to the consideration of THE SIN-OFFERING. We may look at it, first, in its contrast to the other offerings; and then, in its several varieties: the first will shew the particular aspect of Christ's Offering which is prefigured in the type now before us; the second, the various measures of intelligence with which this aspect may be apprehended by Christians.

I. To note then, first, the Sin-offering IN CONTRAST WITH THE OTHER OFFERINGS: three particulars will give us all the outlines. (1) First, it was, though without blemish, not of a sweet savour. Then (2) it was burnt, not on the altar in the tabernacle, but on the bare earth without the camp: in these two particulars the Sin-offering was in contrast to the Burnt-offering. Lastly, (3) it was an offering for sin, and this as distinct from an offering for trespass: in this, as I need hardly observe, it stands contrasted particularly with the Trespass-offering.

(1) First, the Sin offering, though without spot or blemish, was yet not a sweet savour offering. [2] I have already dwelt more than once on what is implied in a "sweet savour." I need not, therefore, here do more than refer to it, to shew how Jesus, the spotless One, could be "not a sweet savour." The distinction is this: the sweet-savour offerings were for acceptance; the others for expiation. In the first class, sin is not seen at all; it is simply the faithful Israelite satisfying Jehovah. In the

Sin-offerings it is just the reverse; it is an offering charged with the sin of the offerer. In the Burnt-offering and other sweet-savour offerings, the offerer came as a worshipper, to give in his offering, which represented himself, something sweet and pleasant to Jehovah. In the Sin and Trespass-offerings, which were not of a sweet savour, the offerer came as a convicted sinner, to receive in his offering, which represented himself, the judgment due to his sin or trespass. In the Sin-offerings, as in the Burnt-offerings, Christ is Offerer: but here He is seen standing for us under the imputation of sin. For though in Himself without sin, “the Holy One,” yet He became our substitute, confessed our sins as His sins, and bore their penalty. Thus taking up His people’s sins as His own, He says, “My sins, God, are not hid from Thee.”(Psalms 69:5) “Innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me: they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me.” (Psalms 40:12) O wondrous mystery, the Holy One of God made sin for sinners! (2 Corinthians 5:21) And unspeakable love, the Blessed One made a curse for cursed ones! (Galatians 3:13)

Such, then, is the import of the distinction between what was, and what was not, of a sweet savour. In the one case the offering was accepted to shew that the offerer was accepted of the Lord; and the total consumption of the offering on the altar shewed God’s acceptance of, and satisfaction in, the offerer. In the other case the offering was cast out, and burnt, not on God’s table, the altar, but in the wilderness without the camp; to shew that the offerer in his offering endures the judgment of God, and is cast out of His presence as accursed. In the one the offerer came to satisfy God, and having in his offering stood the sifting trial of fire, was accepted as a sweet savour, and fed upon, if I may say so, by the Lord. In the other he came as a guilty sinner, and in his offering bore the penalty for sin. The one is, “He gave Himself for us, as an offering to God of a sweet-smelling savour.” (Ephesians 5:2) The other, “He gave Himself for our sins :”(Galatians 1:4) “He was made sin for us, who knew no sin.” (2 Corinthians 5:21) The Sin-offering is the latter of these: not for acceptance, but to expiate sin. And yet the Sin-offering needed to be “without blemish” (Leviticus 4:3) as much as the Burnt-offering: indeed in no offering was perfectness more requisite. Again and again it is repeated that nothing but an unblemished victim could be a Sin-offering: [3] one blemish, either within or without, was enough to unfit the offering to bear the sin of others. So, because He was sinless, Jesus could be a Sin-offering. Because He was perfect, He could bear our sin.

It is well to meditate on this, the perfectness yet the rejection of the victim in the Sin-offering, that we may learn how alone sin can be borne, and how it has been borne and pardoned. Had there been spot or blemish of any sort on Jesus, His offering could not have met and expiated sin. Had there been one desire in His heart unholy, one act, one word, one look, one thought imperfect, He could not have borne the curse for others: He would Himself have needed atonement. But He was tried by man, by God, by devils; and the trial only proved Him “the Holy One of God.” And “yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him:” (Isaiah 53:10) though “the Holy One,” He was cast without the camp: the only spotless offering this world ever witnessed, was yet not only afflicted of man, but judged of God and smitten. The spotless Jesus not a sweet savour! The spotless Jesus accursed of God! Cast forth, not merely without the Tabernacle, but as unclean “without the camp!” “But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and by His stripes we were healed.” (Isaiah 53:5) Here we may learn the measure of the love of Jesus, and our security as having been already judged in Him. In His love

He beheld, and saw us ruined, and that fallen man could not bear the curse and live: “Then He said, Lo, I come:” and He came, and was accursed for sinners. As our representative He confessed our sins, binding on Him that which would have sunk us in wrath for ever: as our representative He bore their curse; and received at God’s hand our judgment. And because He has been judged for us, justice is satisfied; we who believe have already been judged in Him; and God now is “just to forgive us,” (1 John 1:9) for Christ has borne our sins. “He His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, might live unto righteousness:” (1 Peter 2:24) “For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:10-11) But I pass on to the next characteristic feature in the Sin-offering, which has already been incidentally alluded to.

(2) The Sin-offering was burnt without the Camp. (Leviticus 4:12; Leviticus 4:21) The other offerings were, without exception, burnt on the altar in the Tabernacle. Here “the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, his inwards, &c., even the whole bullock shall he carry without the camp ...and burn him on the wood with fire.” (Lev 6:11-12) The import of this we have more than once noticed in passing. It testified how completely the offering was identified with the sin it suffered for; so completely identified that it was itself looked at as sin, and as such cast out of the camp into the wilderness. A part indeed, “the fat,” (Leviticus 6:8) was burnt on the altar, to shew that the offering, though made a sin bearer, was in itself perfect. But the body of the victim, “even the whole bullock” was cast forth without the camp. “Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.” (Hebrews 13:12) He was cast out as one who was unfit for Jerusalem, as unworthy a place in the city of God. And what this must have cost that Blessed One can never be entered into or understood, till the holiness of Christ and the sinfulness of sin are seen in measure at least as God sees them. Who shall tell the secrets of that hour, when this part of the type was fulfilled in Jesus; when He was led forth without the camp, to bear the vengeance due to sinners? His own words may perhaps help us to lift the veil: “My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46) As a man, and He was perfect man, with all our feelings and affections, sin excepted, as a man He felt the approach of death by painful, shameful, lingering suffering: but the hiding of His Father’s face, the consequence of imputed sin; this was His anguish. Doubtless He suffered being tempted; He suffered from reproach, from the shame, the contempt, the spitting: doubtless He felt the mockery of His foes, the flight of His disciples, with all their aggravating circumstances. How He felt let the Psalms reveal. But it was not this which made Him cry in anguish, “My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?” He had “suffered being tempted;” (Hebrews 2:18) He had “suffered, leaving us an example;” (1 Peter 2:21) but His greatest suffering was, “He suffered for sins.” (1 Peter 3:18) And herein was His anguish, that He who had never known what it was to have a thought out of communion with His Father, should for a season be cast out of His presence, and endure the hiding of that Father’s face. In the Garden, looking forward to this hour, with a will still longing for unbroken fellowship with His God, He cried once and again, while great drops of blood fell from Him, “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” But even here He says, “Nevertheless not my will, not my will, but Thine, be done.” (Luke 22:42) Yea, knowing what being forsaken of God would involve, He comes to His Father and says, “Not my will, but Thy will.” He might, had He wished to spare Himself, have escaped this. He might have refused to drain the cup of trembling. But then how would His Father have been glorified, how should we have been redeemed to His

praise? Therefore “He suffered for sins,” and “the Just One” died for the unjust. He took our place that we may take His: He was “cast out” that we might be “brought nigh” (Ephesians 1:13) for ever. Blessed, blessed Lord, may we in the knowledge of Thy love learn to love Thee better!

What consolation is there here for the mourner groaning under the sense of sin or strong temptation; to know Jesus, though sinless, has suffered for sins, and therefore He can, and assuredly will, sympathize with us. And oh! What security, too, is here: our sins have a Sin-bearer; they were once His burden. It is unbelief, or ignorance of the Sin-bearer, that leaves the sense of the burden but for a moment upon us. Faith sees the Sin-offering “without the camp,” and that Jesus there has met, and suffered for sins for us.

(3) The third peculiarity we may note in the Sin-offering is that it was an offering for sin, not an offering for trespass. [4] This distinction, like all the rest which God has recorded, is full of instruction and of comfort to our souls. It is as definite, too, as any of the other differences which we have dwelt upon. The want of apprehension respecting it only arises from our so little knowing either what man is, or what God is. With our shortsightedness, our inability to see beyond the surface, we naturally look at what man does rather than at what he is; and while we are willing to allow that he does evil, we perhaps scarcely think that he is evil But God judges what we are as well as what we do; our sin, the sin in us, as much as our trespasses. In His sight sin in us, our evil nature, is as clearly seen as our trespasses, which are but the fruit of that nature. He needs not wait to see the fruit put forth. He knows the root is evil, and so will be the buddings.

Now the distinction between the Sin and Trespass-offerings is just this: the one is for sin in our nature, the other for the fruits of it. And a careful examination of the particulars of the offerings is all that is needed to make this manifest. Thus in the Sin-offering no particular act of sin is mentioned, “but a certain person is seen standing confessedly as a sinner: in the Trespass-offering certain acts are enumerated, and the person never appears. In the Sin-offering I see a person who needs atonement, offering an oblation for himself as a sinner: in the Trespass-offering I see certain acts which need atonement, and the offering offered for these particular offences. The details of the offerings, as we examine them, will bring all this before us most remarkably. Of course, in the Sin-offering, though the man is seen rather than his acts, proof must needs be brought that he is a sinner. But let it be noticed that this is done, not by the enumeration of certain trespasses, but simply by a reference to the law; which, though no particular transgression is mentioned, is said to have been neglected or broken. [5] Be it noticed, no particular act is mentioned, though of course it is by particular acts that sin in us is shown; but the particular acts are not seen in the Sin-offering, for the object is to shew sin, not trespass. And therefore, though it was needful to shew sin, and in doing so to refer to the commandment as exposing it, yet any definite act of trespass is not seen here: for it is “an offering for sin,” not an offering for trespass. In the Trespass-offering, on the other hand, it is exactly the reverse.

We have nothing but one detail after another of particular wrongs and offences; the first class being of wrongs done against God, the other of wrongs against our neighbour. And here, by the way, let me call attention to a point incidentally brought before us respecting the Sin-offering, namely that the sin was brought out “by the commandment,” as it is said, “If he shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments.” (Leviticus 5:2) We get here, I think, the reason why before the law there were neither Sin nor Trespass-offerings. We read indeed of Burnt-offerings

and Meat-offerings being offered by many of the early patriarchs; but they are never recorded to have offered Sin-offerings, for “where there is no law there is no transgression.” [6] “By the law,” says the Apostle, “is the knowledge of sin,” and again, “Sin is not imputed where there is no law.” (Romans 3:20; Romans 5:13) It was the law which convicted man of sin, and made it necessary that he should have a Sin-offering. “The law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded grace did much more abound.” (Romans 5:20) The law entered, and it proved man a sinner, and that to make his flesh other than sinful flesh was impossible. But grace has done what law could not do; grace brought One “in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin” (Romans 8:3) to save us. The truth is, the law given by Moses was given neither to make nor prove man holy; but rather to prove us, what God ever since the fall has seen us, in ourselves sinners and only sinners. Yet how has Satan beguiled man here also: he would have us to prove ourselves holy by that which God gave to prove us sinners. But to return to the distinction between the Sin and Trespass-offering: the one was for sin in our nature, the other for the fruits of it. In the Sin-offering, the atonement is seen not for trespasses the fruits of sin, but for sin itself within us. I would that all God’s children saw this. Sure I am, and the type proves it, that many know the Trespass-offering who have but very imperfect views of Christ as Sin-offering. I do not now speak of the unconverted: with them acts of trespass are the only things discernible: sin in them is generally utterly disbelieved; at all events its guilt is always unfelt, unrecognized. With the young Christian, too, but just awakened, how much less perception is there of sin than trespass: he has done this evil, or that evil, or the other; he scarcely has learnt as yet that in himself he is evil. But look at the man who has somewhat grown in grace; not only what he has done, but what he is, is his sorrow. With such it is not so much this or that act of trespass, which leaves the question of guilt on the conscience: but it is the constant sense of indwelling evil, and that “when we would do good, evil is present with us.” This or that particular act of iniquity we have confessed, it is past, and we believe it pardoned: but this ever-remaining, ever-struggling sin within us, it is this more than ought else that burdens us. True, “the Spirit in our hearts cries Abba, Father,” and “the Spirit in us lusteth against the flesh;” but we find that all this instead of improving the flesh only manifests it, and shews how it “lusteth against the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:17) To those who are thus painfully learning what they are, what joy to know Christ died for this as well as for trespasses; and that this indwelling sin, as much as our acts of wickedness, was equally confessed and put away by His sacrifice. Nay, had we not been suffering under this very evil, had we been without this sin, He would not have offered a Sin-offering. It was because we were this that He offered; and because He offered, we who trust Him are saved.

Oh, how little is this apprehended, and, consequently, how little peace is there among saints! Many seem to think that the Spirit’s work in revealing to them their sinfulness, [7] should be an excuse for unbelief and doubtings; that because God in His mercy has shown them what they are, sinners, therefore they are not safe. To such I say, Are we saved by Christ as sinners, or are we saved by being sinless and holy? God’s testimony is that we are saved as sinners, not by the Spirit’s work in us, but by Christ’s work for us. The Lord grant us to know more of the Spirit’s work in us; but after all, this is not the ground of peace. The type is clear on this: and if it shews anything, it shews that the discovery of sin should not shake the believer’s faith of pardon; for faith sees not only that we have sinned, but that the “Holy One” has been made sin for us. To doubt our pardon because we see our sin is just weakness of faith in the Offering: it proves how low is our estimate of Christ, how limited our confidence in God’s love and faithfulness. Do I then speak

lightly of sin? God forbid! If we want to know how hateful it is, we have but to look at the Sin-offering; to see the Holy One of God, His beloved Son, for sin cast out and broken. Our sin is indeed hateful to God, but it does not alter the value of Christ's Offering. Our sin indeed is most hateful; but I ask still, has not the Sin-offering been offered? If it has not, then we may mourn for ever, for we can never blot out one single trespass. But if it has been offered, what are all our doubts but aspersions on the value of Christ's Offering? Whatever plea we have for them, be it humility, or fear of presumption, or the amount and evil of our sinfulness, God judges such pleas for doubt as unbelief, and as a questioning of what He testifies of Jesus. God indeed never forgets we are sinners: we may forget it, He never can: but He never forgets the Offering of Christ, and that by that Offering the Church's sins are cancelled. And the blood of the Sin-offering which is taken within the veil, by the High Priest on the great day of atonement, remains there where none can approach to hide it, ever present before the eye of God. And even when through the uncleanness of the camp or the wilderness we seem to lose sight of it, it remains there before Him a witness that sin has been judged, and that the way is open for sinners into the holiest.

"He by Himself purged our sins." (Hebrews 1:3) Yea, He sat not down again in glory till He had purged them. What certainty of salvation is there here for those who trust in Jesus? It is no future work, no promised work, no work to be yet accomplished, but a finished work which is our sure foundation. "He bore our sins:" this is God's testimony: and having borne them "He was raised because we were justified." [8] Had we not been justified, Christ could not have been raised. His resurrection, and ours in Him, is the proof that we are justified. If sin has not been already borne, how shall it be borne? Is Christ to die again; is He to be again a Sin-offering? "Christ was ONCE offered to bear the sins of many," (Hebrews 9:28) and "now there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." (Hebrews 10:18; Hebrews 10:26) If therefore He has not borne our sins, He can never bear them. If He has borne them, why have we not peace? If we think that the Sin-offering once offered on Calvary has not met all sin and every trespass, whatsoever remains, be it small or great, can never be propitiated, never pardoned. But Jesus for His people bore not some sins, but all sins: and "by Him all that believe are justified from all things." (Acts 13:39) "He hath forgiven us all trespasses." (Colossians 2:13) The Cross has cancelled all. May the Lord more fully reveal these things to His chosen ones, that their rejoicing may be, not Yea and Nay, but Yea and Amen.

Such is the general character of the Sin-offering, as elicited by comparing the particulars in which it stands in contrast to the other Offerings. We now proceed to consider,

II. THE VARIETIES IN THIS OFFERING, which shew the different apprehensions which may be entertained of this particular aspect of Christ's sacrifice. And here there is very great variety, far exceeding what we find in any of the preceding offerings. In the Sin-offering there is not only variety seen in the animal offered, and in the details which are given as to the mode of offering it; but a good deal of variety is noticed as to the person of the offerer, a peculiarity not to be found in any of the other offerings. Besides these varieties, there are several other minor ones, in reference to the blood, the fat, the body, and lastly the name, of the offering. Each of these varieties as they are recorded by the Lord, so will they be found worthy of our attentive meditation. I shall do little more here than mark some of the chief outlines, and may the Lord make His people to profit by them.

(1) The first variety, then, which is seen in the Sin-offering is the difference in the animal offered. In the Burnt-offering we observed a similar variety; the purport of which is, of course, the same in both cases. There is, however, far greater variety in the different grades of the Sin-offering than in the Burnt-offering; thus teaching us that Christ's offering for sin may be apprehended with far greater measures of difference than Christ as Burnt-offering. In the Burnt-offering, the offering though varied was limited, either to a bullock, a lamb, a goat, or turtle-doves (see Leviticus 1). Here in the Sin-offering we have several other grades, [9] coming down at last to a sin-offering composed of simple "flour." The last grade is this: "And if he be not able to bring two turtle-doves or two young pigeons; then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of tine flour for a sin-offering: he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon; for it is a sin-offering."

We have already considered the import of these varied emblems; I need not therefore do more than just advert to them. Suffice it to say that here, as in the Burnt-offerings, they shew us the different characters under which the Offering of Christ may be apprehended by us. In the Sin-offering as in the Burnt-offering, one saint has one view, another another view respecting the character of the offering. One sees the willing labour, another the submission, another the innocence, of the Offering which is yielded to Jehovah. But in the Sin-offering we have still lower views, the lowest of which is, as we have observed, very like a Meat-offering. The solution is easy. As in the preceding offerings we found, without exception, that there was an indistinctness, almost like confusion, in the lower views, a mixing up of one aspect with another, while the distinct thought of each was more or less lost sight of; so is it here: in its lowest grade, (the one we are considering,) the Sin-offering is seen very nearly as a Meat-offering. The thought is almost that of the Meat-offering, yet it is seen as offered for sin: this is distinctly noticed: though "of flour," "it is a Sin-offering." (Leviticus 5:11)

How exactly this peculiarity in the type describes the way in which some apprehend the Offering, will be best understood by those who, going from strength to strength, have learnt how partially Christ may be apprehended, even by those who love Him. Some see the pain and sorrow Christ had in service, the grinding, the bruising, the scorching, of the Meat-offering: and they think that this was His sin-bearing: they cannot distinguish between the trials of service and the curse. They see indeed a life of suffering, but they do not see One accursed for them. Nevertheless, they see a suffering One offered, and though they lose many points in His Offering, they still see it as offered for sin. Yet how much is lost, in such partial views, of the design and character of the work of Jesus,

(2) The next variety we may notice is in the person offering: we have the priest, the congregation, the ruler, and the common Israelite. First in order we have the Sin-offering for the priest; (Leviticus 4:3-12) then the Sin-offering for the whole congregation; (Leviticus 4:13-21) then the Sin-offering for a ruler; (Leviticus 4:22-26) then for one of the common people; (Leviticus 4:27-35) and lastly, the Sin-offering for particular sins; (Leviticus 5:1-13) in which last the person of the offerer is lost sight of, and the particular act for which he offers more clearly seen. This last is very nearly akin to the Trespass-offering, and is indeed called indifferently by both names of Sin and Trespass. (Leviticus 5:6-9) In this last class, as in the lowest classes of the other offerings, we get the lowest view which can be taken of this particular aspect of the Offering. But what is the import of this variety in the person offering? We have only to remember what these varieties are. They are, as

we have sufficiently seen, only different measures of apprehension. In the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, and the Peace-offering, we have already become familiar with the varieties in the Offering, and have seen that they represent the different apprehensions which may be, and are, formed of its value and character. So in the Sin-offering, the varieties which are noted of the Offerer, in like manner represent the different apprehensions which are formed of the person who offered. Of course the Offerer here, as elsewhere, is Christ, man under the law, our representative. As such He is here seen confessing sin; but though seen as Offerer in this aspect, He may yet be seen very differently. For example, in the first case the offerer is apprehended as “priest,” a person who stands the representative of a family or congregation. In other cases the offerer is seen as “one of the common people,” one who stands simply the representative of an individual. In the lowest cases of all, the person of the offerer is altogether lost sight of, neither individual nor congregation are seen, and the sin for which he suffers is almost the only thing apprehended. But let us note here a little more particularly, the exact difference which is intended by these separate views of the Offerer; and that we may see the contrast more clearly, let us for a moment set side by side the higher and lower grades of the Sin-offering. In the first class the offerer is the “anointed priest;” in the next, “the whole congregation;” in a lower grade, (how great the contrast,) the offerer is “one of the common people.” The “anointed priest,” and “the whole congregation,” are types familiar to the youngest Christian. “The anointed priest,” as head of the priestly family, and the appointed mediator between God and man, stands the type of Jesus as head of a priestly family, and also as mediator to God’s chosen Church. In this class, Christ, as Offerer of the Sin-offering, is seen either as Head of the Church, or as its appointed Mediator. His Offering is apprehended, not merely as the atonement for this or that individual, but as affecting a whole family or people. In the next class, “the congregation “offer. This congregation represents the Church. Here we lose sight of the priest as under the guilt of sin with Israel; but with this exception, the congregation’s offering is almost identical with the preceding one. But the point to be especially noted in both these cases, and where they differ so remarkably from the others, is that the sin, and atonement made, is seen, not as affecting an individual merely, but the whole of Israel. Now, mark the contrast. In the lower classes the offerer is a private individual, “one of the common people:” and his sin, and the atonement made for it, is seen as affecting only himself. Those saints who have the highest views of the Sin-offering, see it as affecting not themselves merely, but the Priest and Israel Those with lower views only see it for themselves: the High Priest’s or Israel’s interest in it is unseen and forgotten.

Here then is the difference. The apprehension some have of Christ as Offerer of the Sin-offering is One who in His own person represented the whole Church; the Church being seen either as the family of the Priest, or as the whole congregation of Israel Others again see Him as head of a tribe, “the ruler;” in this case the unity of the Church is lost sight of. Others, far more numerous, never see anything of this; Christ as Offerer of the Sin-offering is viewed as having stood for them individually. Others again, lower still in the scale of intelligence; see only that He stood for sin. These stages in the apprehension and experience of Christians will be familiar to those who know much of that experience. Such is the variety respecting the person of the Offerer, and such too, if I mistake not, the purport of it. We have only glanced at the outlines, but the details are equally full of interest; requiring indeed a certain measure of intelligence to apprehend them, yet if apprehended, precious to our souls. And just as every difference of the Offering, the difference, I mean, whether it was a bullock, a lamb, or turtle-dove, all brought before us some feature of

Christ's work or character, in which both God and His saints saw perfectness; so here, in each of these varieties in the Offerer, there is some fresh thought or view of Christ's person for us to glory in. I will not, however, enter further into the consideration of them, not from a doubt of their value, but from a sense of the length to which they would carry me. I only pray that we may be led to feel our need of knowing more of Him of whom these things testify.

(3) A third variety in the Sin-offering has reference to "the blood." In the higher classes the blood was sprinkled on the incense altar; (Leviticus 4:7; Leviticus 4:18) in the lower classes it was not taken into the holy place, but sprinkled upon the brazen altar in the court. (Leviticus 4:25; Leviticus 4:30; Leviticus 4:34) I fear it will be impossible to make this intelligible to those who have never considered the typical import of the relative parts of the Tabernacle. Two things, at least, must be apprehended; first, the import of these altars, and then of their sprinkling. As to the altars, they were the one of gold, the other brazen. The brazen one stood in the outer court of the congregation. The other, the golden one, in the holy place, where none but the priests might enter. The "outer court," with its brazen altar and laver, represents the earth and the work which is done in it to God-ward. The "holy place," with the golden altar for incense, shews us the heavenly places and their appointed service. On the brazen altar were offered the sacrifices of Israel. Any Israelite, if clean, might draw nigh and offer there. (Exodus 29:36-43) But priests only might approach the golden altar, and nothing come on it save the perfumed incense. (Exodus 30:1-10) The position and use of these altars, and the references to them in the New Testament [10] unite to point out their typical meaning; the one leading us to the service of the Church as on earth, the other to their service as priests in heavenly places.

Thus much for the altars. As to the sprinkling of blood, I need scarcely say it always refers to atonement by sacrifice: it signifies that the thing or person sprinkled is thereby brought from a state of distance from God to a state of nearness. The sprinkling, then, of blood upon the incense altar implied that until this act was performed the altar was unapproachable; and consequently, that all priestly service, and therefore all service of all kinds, was stopped between God and Israel. In like manner the sprinkling of blood on the brazen altar implied that till this was done, that altar too was regarded as unapproachable. In each case sin is apprehended to have interrupted communion; in the one, the communion of priests; in the other, that of Israel; while the sprinkling of blood declares that communion restored through the Sin-offering, on the incense altar to the priests, on the brazen altar to Israel. The import of the distinction we are considering will now, I suppose, be sufficiently plain. In the higher classes, where it is observed that the incense altar needs sprinkling, the consequences of sin are seen to be far more extensive than in the other case; for the interruption of communion is apprehended, not of individuals on earth merely, but of the priests in their access to God as in heavenly places. In the lower classes, for instance, in the case of "one of the common people," it is not seen that sin has destroyed the communion of the congregation: it is not observed how the priest and Israel are implicated in it: the thought is rather about self. In a word, in the lower classes both the full effects, and the full remedy of sin, are known but partially. Need of personal acceptance and reconciliation is indeed seen, and that acceptance and reconciliation apprehended; but that the whole congregation needs reconciliation, and that it has it, is unknown, or at least forgotten. Thus is the sense of the extent of the evil caused by sin exactly in proportion to the depth of apprehension respecting the extent of the reconciliation effected by the Sin-offering. He only that saw the Priest's altar hallowed for service by the blood of the

Sin-offering, saw also that the communion of that altar had ever been hindered by sin. It is so on all points. The deeper the apprehension of the efficacy of the blood, the deeper will be the sense of that from which it delivers us. But the difference in the apprehension of this particular goes even further. In the fifth chapter, which gives the lowest grades of the Sin-offering, there is no notice whatever taken of either altar. [11] All that is apprehended is, that an atonement has been made by the Priest; the altars, and their restoration to service, are forgotten. This, alas! Is the common case with many now-a-days. An atonement has been made for sin; thus much they see, and they are thankful for it. But as for any intelligent apprehension of the different altars, or how far their use is hindered by sin and restored by the Sin-offering, they not only know nothing about it, but judge such matters non-essential, unnecessary. The same spirit which makes the fool say, “There is no God,” tempts even Christians to say there is nought in much He wrought for us.

(4) A fourth variety noticed in the Sin-offering has reference to “the fat.” In the higher grades the fat was burnt upon the altar: [12] in the lowest class (Leviticus 5:6) this is overlooked: what was done with the fat is entirely unnoticed. As usual between the highest and lowest class, we have several steps of more or less intelligence. In the first grade not only is it seen that the fat is burnt, but there is the fullest discrimination of every portion of it. [13] In the subsequent grades too, indeed in all save the lowest, the fat is burnt, but the parts are not discriminated. In the last grade alone of all, “the fat” of the offering is quite unnoticed. “The fat,” as we have already seen in the other offerings, [14] represents the general health and energy of the whole body. Its being burnt to God was the appointed proof that the victim offered for sin was yet in itself acceptable. This acceptability is most seen in the higher classes, but it is apprehended also in all save the lowest grade. There the atonement made for sin is indeed apprehended, but the perfect acceptableness of the victim is unnoticed. So with some Christians, is not their thought respecting the Sin-offering more of our pardon than of Christ’s perfectness?

(5) Another variety we may observe in the Sin-offering has reference to “the body” of the victim. In the higher grades it is cast without the camp: (Leviticus 4:12; Leviticus 4:21) in the lower this is unnoticed: but in the law of the offerings (Leviticus 6:25-30) another particular is marked: the priest is seen to feed on the offering. The import of this distinction is at once obvious. Where the Sin-offering is fully apprehended, the victim, which is the sin-bearer, is seen accursed, and as such cast out as unclean into the wilderness. Where the Sin-offering is more partially apprehended, the victim is still seen as sin-bearer, but the reality of its separation from God is lost sight of, and its death viewed merely as satisfying the Mediator. And here let me observe how amidst all this variety of detail, there is still throughout one point of remarkable similarity in principle. It is this. In the lower classes, that is where there is a lower measure of intelligence, the view of the nature of the Offering is invariably exchanged for a view of the effects of it: in other words, the Offering is seen as it affects Israel, rather than as it is in itself, in its real character. Thus the burning of the fat, showing the perfectness of the victim offered; and the casting forth of its body, showing the nature of the judgment borne by it; these and similar details respecting the sacrifice itself, are lost sight of in the lower classes; while the effects of it, as making atonement, are perhaps even more fully dwelt upon. And how exactly this accords with the successive stages of Christian experience, will be sufficiently understood by those who know much either of themselves or others. At first Christ’s work, or person, or offering, is viewed with interest solely on account of what it is to us. Nothing respecting it is regarded as worthy of notice save its bearing

upon us, or efficacy towards us. It has taken away our sins; it has made atonement; this is the one thing, and almost the sole thing, seen respecting it. Anything further than this at such a stage would appear a grand impertinence. But Let the question of peace with God be settled, let our acceptance become a thing known and realized, then the perfectness of the Offering, and what it is in itself, will, without exception, be more seen and dwelt upon.

(6) The last variety I will here notice in the different grades of the Sin-offering is connected with the name by which the offering is variously designated. In the higher classes it is always called a "Sin-offering" [15] and no particular act of trespass is noticed; in the lower classes it is called a "Trespass-offering" as well as a "Sin-offering," (Leviticus 5:6-7) and the person of the offerer is lost sight of in the particular trespass. So when the measure of apprehension is limited, there will be want of intelligence respecting the precise difference of sin and trespass; nor this alone; the Offering will be seen only for sins; that it is offered for persons will not be apprehended. But the expressions here used respectively, in reference to the effects of each different grade of the Sin-offering, are so remarkably varied in reference to this particular, that we cannot but notice the differences. In the higher class, in "the congregation's offering," (Leviticus 4:20) we simply read, "The priest shall make atonement for them." In the case of "the ruler," (Leviticus 4:26) we find this slight variety, "The priest shall make atonement for him for his sin." In the case of "one of the common people," (Leviticus 4:35) we find still further difference, "The priest shall make an atonement for his sin which he hath committed." Observe, in the first of these the atonement is seen for persons; "The priest shall make atonement for them." Of course the atonement here is in consequence of sin, but the persons rather than the sin are specially thought of. In the next class, the atonement is regarded as for the sin of the persons, rather than for the persons; though both persons and sins are seen atoned for: as it says, "The priest shall make atonement for him for his sin." In the lowest class, "of the common people," the atonement for persons is quite lost sight of; "the sin which he hath committed" is the chief thing dwelt upon.

How much is there "for our learning" in these varieties; how clearly they teach us the cause of the difference in the views of saints respecting the Atonement There are some believers who see atonement for sin, but almost deny that atonement has been made for persons. They see Christ gave Himself "for sins," (1 Peter 3:18) but hardly think He stood for persons. In word perhaps they assent to the Apostle, who said, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me;" (Galatians 2:20) but the full reality and force of his words are scarcely assented to; they need to be explained away. And as long as there are different measures of intelligence, so long will such difference of views be inevitable; for though the truth is but one, yet while "we know in part," that one truth may and will be seen variously or partially.

Such are some of the Varieties in the Sin-offering. There are others to be seen, but I have noticed the chief. They shew us how very different is the measure of apprehension with which Christ as Sin-bearer may be seen by Christians. They shew us, too, how much of Christ, and therefore of joy, is lost sight of, by those who are content to continue in comparative ignorance of the Offering. I .shall rejoice if these Notes should be used of God to lead but one of His people to seek more communion with Him, there to inquire whether these things are so, in deeper acquaintance with Him of whom they speak. Need I add here that it is one thing to know Him; another to know about Him. It is possible that some, who read these pages, may at once confess that such and such things are to be seen of Christ, who yet may have never seen and even do not care to see, one of

them. To know that another has seen the Prince, and know Him in His different relations, or that He may be so seen by those who dwell with Him, is very different from our knowing Him ourselves. It is just so with the knowledge of Jesus. Strangers to His family and household may hear about Him; but to know Him, as He is, must be taught of God, and is only to be learnt in His presence by His family.

We have thus gone through the particulars of the Sin-offering, as far at least as they are given in the Law of the Offerings. In other places there are some other details added, the principles of which are, however, all contained in what we have investigated. The additions only give us some new combinations as to the character under which the Sin-offering may be exhibited: I refer to the Offerings of the Red Heifer (Numbers 19:1-22) and of the Scape-goat on the great Day of Atonement. (Leviticus 16:1-34) The offering of the Red Heifer, as we might expect from its being found in Numbers, exhibits not so much what the offering is in itself, as its use in meeting the wants of the wilderness. Thus no memorial of it was burnt on the altar, nor was the blood seen to be taken into the Tabernacle; but the whole animal was burnt without the camp, and its ashes laid up to be mixed with the water of purification. Then when an Israelite found himself unclean, through contact with the dead, these ashes with water were sprinkled on him. All this is the Sin-offering as meeting our need of cleansing, and as given to remove the defilement caused by the dead things of the wilderness. The view presented by it has to do with the effects of the offering, and its use towards man as applied by water, that is the Spirit. In the Scape-goat, offered on the great day of atonement, the view presented is very different. In this Sin-offering, which was offered but once a year, the blood was seen to be put on the mercy-seat. The offering it spoke of is shown by Paul to have been “once for ever,” and “access into the holiest” the consequence of it. (Hebrews 10:1; Hebrews 10:22) But I forbear going further into these particulars, as we have already sufficiently seen their principles. He that has apprehended what we have gone over will see more. For others, any further detail would be unintelligible.

Such is the Sin-offering and such some of the apprehensions of it. Blessed be God that we have such an Offering. “He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

FOOTNOTES

[1] See any chapter which describes the order in which the sacrifices were to be offered, as Exodus 29:1-46; Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 15:1-33 and 2 Chronicles 29:1-136 &c.

[2] Leviticus 4:1-35 [3] Leviticus 4:3, Leviticus 4:23, Leviticus 4:28, Leviticus 4:32, i.e.,

[4] Leviticus 4:3, Leviticus 4:21, Leviticus 4:24, Leviticus 4:33, compared with Leviticus 5:13; Leviticus 5:19, and Leviticus 6:2; Leviticus 6:6 [5] Leviticus 4:2, Leviticus 4:13, Leviticus 4:14, Leviticus 4:22, Leviticus 4:27, i.e.,

[6] Romans 4:15. I observe that in Job 1:5 we find the Burnt-offering offered in reference to sin. We read that “Job rose up early in the morning, and offered Burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their

hearts." This was before the law was given; so Job says, "It may be that my sons have sinned." Had they sinned after the giving of the law, a Sin or Trespass-offering would have been needed; but before the law the Burnt-offering was all which could be given: and as it represented all God's claim fulfilled, nothing more in such an age could be added to it.

[7] "He shall convince of sin," i.e., John 16:8.

[8] Romans 4:25 "He was delivered, παρεδοθη δια τα παραπτωματα ημων, because of our sins; and raised, ηγερθη δια την δικαιωσιν ημων, because of our justification."

[9] "A male kid," Leviticus 4:23 : "a female kid," Leviticus 4:28 : "female lamb," Leviticus 4:32 : ending at last with "flour" Leviticus 4:11.

[10] Hebrews 13:10; Hebrews 13:16; Revelation 8:3-4, i.e.,

[11] Leviticus 5:6. "And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord, for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb, or a kid of the goats, for a sin-offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin." It will be observed that here there is no notice of either altar.

[12] Leviticus 4:8-10, Leviticus 4:19, Leviticus 4:26, Leviticus 4:31, Leviticus 4:35.

[13] Leviticus 4:8; Leviticus 4:10. We read here of "the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards, and the fat that is upon the kidneys," &c. &c. In no other grade do we find this detail.

[14] See in the Burnt-offering, p. 55.

[15] Leviticus 4:8, Leviticus 4:21, Leviticus 4:24, Leviticus 4:29

03.06. CHAPTER 6: THE TRESPASS-OFFERING

CHAPTER 6: THE TRESPASS-OFFERING Leviticus 5:14-19; Leviticus 6:1-7.

WE now come to the TRESPASS-OFFERING. Closely allied in its broad principle to the Sin-offering, in certain particulars it as decidedly differs from it. These particulars, though few in number, are broadly marked, and full of teaching. The apprehension of them will bring out very definitely that distinct aspect of Christ which the Trespass-offering is designed to present to us.

I proceed at once, as before, to consider this Offering, first, in its distinctive character, and then in its varieties: the first will give us the distinct aspect of Christ which is intended by this particular offering: the second shew the various apprehensions which may be formed of this one aspect.

I. First then, AS TO THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF THIS OFFERING: four particulars may at once be noted; the first having reference to the broad distinction between the Trespass-offerings and the whole class of sweet-savour offerings; the next bearing on the general distinction between the offerings not of a sweet savour, namely, the Sin and Trespass-offerings: the other two are more definite, and have to do with certain details connected with and flowing from the distinction between the nature of sin and trespass, and their atonement.

(1) On the first particular I need not here enter, for the distinction between what was and what was not of a sweet savour has so often been dwelt upon. I therefore merely notice the fact that the Trespass-offering was not a sweet savour. Christ is seen here suffering for sins: the view of His work in the Trespass-offering is expiatory.

(2) The next particular, too, we have already considered, namely, that this offering was a Trespass-offering, as distinct from a Sin-offering. We may, however, again advert to this, as the particulars given here very definitely mark what constitutes trespass. If a man wronged God that was trespass: if he wronged or robbed his neighbour that was trespass. We read, “If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord; . . . . then he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done” (Leviticus 5:15-16) Again, “If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour; or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein: then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found.” (Leviticus 6:2-4) Here trespass is defined as wrong done to God, or wrong done to a neighbour: we read of “violently taking,” “deceitfully getting,” and “swearing falsely about that which is found.” In every case of trespass, wrong was done; there was an act of evil by which another was injured. And the offering for this act, the Trespass-offering, (in this a contrast to the Sin-offering,) was offered by the offerer, not because he was, but because he had done evil. Accordingly, in the Trespass-offering we never get sight of any particular person as a sinner: the act of wrong is the point noticed and dwelt upon.

Such was trespass, actual wrong and robbery, and yet there might be trespass, as well as sin, of which the trespasser was ignorant. [1] This is remarkable. It shews how little man's judgment, not only respecting what he is, but respecting what he does, can be trusted. I observe that this unwitting trespass is specially seen in cases of "wrong in holy things;" we do not find an instance of it in cases of "wrong done to a neighbour." The reason is manifest: our natural conscience takes cognizance of man and his claims far more readily than it is brought to understand God's standard for all approaches to Him in holy things. Thus when little is known of this standard, when little is seen of the holy things, when trespass is thought of merely as affecting man, then unwitting trespass will not be recognized. But let a man be led much into the sanctuary, and learn something there of God's holiness, and he will find that the holy things themselves, the very opportunities of worship, may, through our weakness, open a door for trespass. Those who are most with God will most confess, what to some seems quite incredible, that often there has been unwitting trespass in the holiest acts of work and worship. I believe there is not an act of any kind, whether of praise, or prayer, or worship, or ministry, which may not, through Satan's cunning, prove an occasion to the flesh to bring forth some fruit of trespass. I need not particularize instances; I doubt not each instructed Christian will recognize some, where that which has been done either to the Lord or for the Lord, has afterwards been discovered to have been mixed with trespass. At the time, perhaps, the trespass has been unrecognized: but other circumstances or fuller light have made us conscious of it. Still the trespass is the same, recognized or unrecognized: and our ignorance, though it leaves us unconscious of evil, does not alter it. And how solemn is the truth here taught us, that neither our conscience, nor our measure of light, nor our ability, but the truth of God, is the standard by which both sin and trespass are to be measured. "Though he wist it not, yet is he guilty; he hath certainly trespassed against the Lord." (Leviticus 5:17; Leviticus 5:19) If man's conscience or man's light were the standard, each man might have a different rule. And, at this rate, right or wrong, good or evil, would depend, not upon God's truth, but on the creature's apprehension of it. At this rate, the filthiest of unclean beasts could not be convicted of uncleanness, while it could plead that it had no apprehension of that which was pure and seemly. But we do not judge thus in the things of this world; neither does God judge so in the things of heaven. Who argues that because swine are filthy, therefore the standard of cleanliness is to be set by their perceptions or ability; or that because they seem unconscious of their state, therefore the distinction between what is clean and unclean must be relinquished. No: we judge not by their perceptions, but our own; with our light and knowledge, not their ignorance, as our standard. God, in like manner, though in grace He finds means for pardoning it, still judges evil as evil wherever He meets it. Our blindness does not alter His judgment; for it is our sin and that alone which has caused the blindness.

Such is trespass, and such the measure of it, a measure ever apparently widening according to our knowledge; for He who calls us, leads us to see as He sees, not only His grace, but our own deep and constant need of it. But, blessed be God, He that convinces of sin, testifies of Him also by whose Offering sins are pardoned. He that sees Jesus in the Trespass-offering, sees trespass met; for Christ has confessed it, borne its judgment, paid its penalty. Not only was "His soul an offering for sin" in this we get the Sin-offering, but "He was wounded for our transgressions" [2] the judgment for trespass was also laid upon Him. Here, as in the Sin-offering, He stood "the just for the unjust" (1 Peter 3:18) confessing the wrongs of His people as His wrongs; and for those wrongs He made full restitution; and we in Him have satisfied God. All this, however, is so nearly

allied to the Sin-offering, that I pass it as briefly as may be, to go on to those particulars which are more definite, and specially characteristic of the Trespass-offering.

These are two. In the Trespass-offering, besides the life laid down, the value of the trespass, according to the priest's valuation of it, was paid in shekels of the sanctuary, to the injured party. Then, in addition to this, a fifth part more, in shekels also, was added to the sum just spoken of, which, together with the amount of the original wrong or trespass, was paid by the trespasser to the person trespassed against. [3] These particulars, respecting the payment of money in connexion with the offering, are not only very definite, but very remarkable. It may be well, therefore, before we consider them separately, to note how distinctly all this differed from the Sin-offering. In the Sin-offering we see nothing of money: there was no estimation by the priest, nor any fifth part added. Indeed, from the nature of the case, there could be neither of these, for they depend entirely on the nature of trespass. In the Sin-offering the offerer was a sinner: and his sin was met and judged in the victim. A perfect victim bore the penalty; a sinless one was judged for sin. In all this the one thought presented to us is sin receiving its rightful wages. We see due judgment inflicted on the sinner's substitute; and this having been inflicted, justice is satisfied. In the Trespass-offering, with the exception of "trespass" instead of "sin," we have all this precisely the same as in the Sin-offering. The victim's life is given for trespass: judgment is inflicted, and so far justice is satisfied. But in the Trespass-offering, there is more than this, arising, as we shall see, out of the nature of trespass, the original wrong or evil is remedied; and further, a fifth part is added to it. Observe, in the Trespass-offering the wrong inflicted is made up and restored by the offerer. According to the priest's valuation, the injured party receives his own, or the value of it, back again. Nor is this all; more than the original loss is repaid: the loss is more than remedied. These two most interesting particulars, specially characterizing, as they do, the atonement of the Trespass-offering, result directly and immediately from the distinction between sin and trespass. The apprehension of this distinction is absolutely necessary, if we would understand what remains of the Trespass-offering.

Sin then, I repeat, is the evil of our nature; and the offering for this, the Sin-offering, is for what we are. In the case of trespass, the offering is for what we have done, for actual wrong committed against some one.

Now, it follows from the distinct nature of these things, that the atonement or satisfaction for each must differ, in measure at least; for that which would fully satisfy justice in reference to sin, would by no means do so in reference to trespass. In the case of sin that is, our sinful nature, where no actual robbery or wrong had been committed against any one -justice would be fully satisfied by the death and suffering of the sinner. But the mere suffering and death of the sinner would not make satisfaction for the wrong of trespass. For the victim merely to die for trespass, would leave the injured party a loser still. The trespasser indeed might be punished, but the wrong and injury would still remain. The trespasser's death would not repair the trespass, nor restore those rights which another had been robbed of. Yet, till this was done, atonement or satisfaction could scarcely be considered perfect. Accordingly, to make satisfaction in the Trespass-offering, there is not only judgment on the victim, but restitution also: the right of which another had been defrauded is satisfied; the wrong fully repaid. To illustrate this; suppose some noxious creature. It is evil: for this it merits death: the infliction of death would be judgment of the evil, and justice here could claim no more. But suppose this creature had also done evil and robbed us; its mere death will not repair

the injury. Satisfaction for this will not be complete unless the injury done is made good in all points. In a word, atonement for trespass implies restitution; without this, though the trespasser is judged, the claim of trespass remains still unsatisfied. But in Christ man has made full satisfaction. God is not a loser even from the wrong of trespass. Nor this only. He receives even more. But let us look at the distinct particulars.

(3) In the Trespass-offering we get restitution, full restitution for the original wrong. The amount of the injury, according to the priest's valuation of it, is paid in shekels of the sanctuary to the injured person. (Leviticus 5:15) The thought here is not that trespass is punished, but that the injured party is repaid the wrong. The payment was in shekels: these "shekels of the sanctuary" were the appointed standard by which God's rights were measured; [4] as it is said, "And all thy estimation shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary." (Leviticus 27:25) Thus they represent the truest measure, God's standard by which He weighs all things. By this standard the trespass is weighed, and then the value paid to the injured person. And God and man, though wronged by trespass, each receive as much again from man in Christ through the Trespass-offering. God was injured by trespass in His holy things, His rights unpaid, His claim slighted: for man was ofttimes a robber, taking for himself the fat or life, God's claim in the offerings. Thus, if I may so say, God through man was a loser: but at the hands of Christ the loss has been repaid: and whatever was lost through man in the First Adam has been made up to the full in the Second Adam. Whether honour, service, worship, or obedience, whatever God could claim, whatever man could rob Him of, all this has He received again from man in Christ, "according to the priest's estimation in shekels of the sanctuary." But man also was injured by trespass; and he, too, receives as much again. Christ for man as offerer of the Trespass-offering must offer to injured man the value of the original injury. And such as accept His offering; find their loss through man's trespass more than paid. Has trespass wronged man of life, peace, or gladness, he may claim and receive through Christ repayment. For man to man, as for man to God, Christ stands the One in whom man's wrongs are remedied. The wrong done to God has been met. God clearly is no loser now by trespass. And the wrong done to man is no less paid for. Man need not, more than God, be a loser.

(4) But this is not all. Not only is the original wrong paid, but a fifth part more is paid with it in the Trespass-offering. (Leviticus 5:16; Leviticus 6:5) Not only is the original claim, of which God and man had been wronged, satisfied: but something more, "a fifth," is added with it. And first, what of the amount? It is "a fifth part." To find the import of this, we must again go back to Genesis. If I mistake not, the first place in Scripture where "the fifth" is mentioned, will lead us to apprehend its import. The particulars will be found in the history of Joseph. Briefly, the facts are these. Before the great seven years' famine, though Egypt was Pharaoh's land, and the Egyptians his people, yet both were independent of him in some way which evidently was not the case afterwards. This we gather from the fact that after the famine "a fifth," never paid before, was paid to Pharaoh, in token that both land and people were Pharaoh's by another claim. We read that "when that year was ended, the Egyptians came to Joseph the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle: there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands: wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh; and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate. And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field,

because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day, and your land, for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land. And it shall come to pass, in the increase that ye shall give the fifth part to Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own. And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants. And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's." (Genesis 47:18-26)

We see here that "the fifth part" paid to Pharaoh, was the acknowledgment that all had been forfeited to him through misery. We learn, too, that in whatever way the Egyptians had been his people heretofore, they were now, through their need, made his by another claim. Accordingly, the payment of "a fifth" hence forward, wherever we meet with it in Scripture, [5] is the acknowledgment that the person paying it has lost and forfeited that whereof "the fifth" was offered. It is a witness not only that the sum or thing yielded up, has been yielded of necessity, as a debt, not as a free gift, but that the whole of that whereof the fifth was paid, was the right and property of him to whom its "fifth" was rendered. Thus its import in the Trespass-offering seals the character of the offering, testifying that what was given was indeed a debt, and not a free gift. [6] But while this was the import of giving "the fifth part," yet by the addition of this fifth the injured party became in truth a gainer. So far from losing by trespass, he received more back again: and this is what we have now to consider. Wonderful indeed are the ways of God: how unsearchable are His counsels and wisdom! Who would have thought that from the entrance of trespass, both God and man should in the end be gainers. But so it is. From man in Christ both God and man have received back more than they were robbed of. All things are indeed of God; yet it is from man in Christ and this in consequence of trespass, that God, according to His wondrous purpose, receives back more than that of which sin had robbed Him. In this sense, "where sin abounded," yea, and because sin abounded, "grace did more abound." Just as in the case above alluded to, which I doubt not is typical, and typical, if I mistake not, of very kindred truth, the effect of the famine and misery on the Egyptians was to give Pharaoh a claim not possessed before; so the effect of the entrance of trespass has been to give the injured person, whether God or man, a claim on the person and property of the trespasser, which before trespass entered was all unknown.

I would to God this were more fully seen. We should then oftener hear of grace, of rights more seldom: nor should we so often see Christians shrinking from that which we call grace, but to the exercise of which we are nevertheless most surely debtors. But to explain this: Before trespass entered, God only claimed His part or right. He had a right to holy things as His portion, and these He looked for from man. But since trespass has entered, His claim is more: the original right and the fifth part added. "The fifth" was, as we have seen, the token how much had been forfeited by the trespasser. Its payment testified that he to whom it was given had now not only his original right, but a still further claim upon him who wronged him. Thus God's claim through trespass is greater: and the same is true with regard to man's claim. Before trespass entered, man too had his claim: that claim was his right, that claim was justice. But since trespass has entered, his claim is more: more than his right is now his claim from the trespasser. The fact that God has been wronged by man, and that Christ stands for man confessing trespasses, gives God a claim upon Him, not only for the original right, but for more than the first claimed holy things. So, too, because

man has been injured by man, and because Christ stands for man as his substitute, therefore man, injured by trespass, has a claim on Christ, not for the original right only, but for greater blessings. And this claim Christ never refuses: nor are those in Christ free to shrink from it. They, too, as “in Him,” are called, yea, and they are debtors, to deal in grace far beyond the claim of justice. The world may think that to mete out justice is the highest path of which man is capable. But Christ has shown a higher still; and “he that abideth in Him is called to walk as He walked.” (1 John 2:6) Such a path, of course, as every other step after Christ, if followed, will surely cost us something. But costly things become king’s children: we are rich enough to lose this world. May the Lord make His people know their calling, and conform them to Him in grace even as in glory! But I will not pursue this here, as further on I must again touch it in its bearing on the believer’s walk. I merely add therefore, “Christ set us an example:” (1 Peter 2:21) and He yielded, not merely rights, but grace, to every man.

Thus much then, for what is especially characteristic of the Trespass-offering, and as marking where it differs from the other offerings. It only remains to notice,

II. THE VARIETIES OF GRADES IN THIS OFFERING. These are fewer than in any other offering, teaching us that those who apprehend this aspect of Christ’s work will apprehend it all very much alike. Doubtless, the cause of this lies in the nature of trespass, as it stands distinct from sin. It will be remembered, that in the Sin-offering the varieties were most numerous, and that because sin in us may be, and is, so differently apprehended; but trespass, the act of wrong committed, if seen at all, can scarce be seen differently.

Accordingly, we find but one small variety in the Trespass-offering, for I can scarce regard the two different aspects of trespass as varieties. These aspects are, first, trespasses against God, (Leviticus 5:15-19) and then trespasses against our neighbour; (Leviticus 6:1-7) but this distinction is more like the difference between the offerings, than the varieties in the different grades of the same. It simply points out distinct bearings of trespass, for which in each case the atonement seen is precisely similar.

There is, however, one small yet remarkable difference between the two grades of the offering for wrongs in holy things. In the first grade, which gives us the fullest view of the offering, we read of the life laid down, the restitution made, and the fifth part added. But in the lower class, the last of these is unnoticed: “the fifth part” is quite unseen. [7] And how true this is in the experience of Christians. Where the measure of apprehension is full, there not only the life laid down, and the restitution made in the Trespass-offering, but all the truth also which is taught in the “fifth part” will be seen as a consequence of trespass and a part of the Trespass-offering. Not so, however, where the apprehension is limited: here there is no addition seen beyond the amount of the original trespass. But I hasten to conclude these Notes on the distinctive character of the Offerings. We have considered them separately; but we must never forget that though there are different aspects, there is but One Offering. Jesus, our blessed Lord, by His one oblation of Himself once offered for ever, has perfectly met, and perfectly satisfied, and that for us who believe, all that these emblems typify. I know that saints do not, and cannot see all the aspects of His Offering equally; but God sees all, and sees it “for us.” In this surely we may rest. Blessed indeed is it so to grow in grace that we can “apprehend that for which we are apprehended:” but after all the joy is this, that we are indeed apprehended. And though our knowledge of what is

Christ’s and ours is still small, the day that is coming shall reveal it. Then when that which is perfect is come, our present knowledge, which is but in part, shall be done away. Blessed Lord, hasten Thy coming, to gladden with Thine own presence those whom Thou hast saved with Thy blood!

FOOTNOTES [1] Leviticus 5:15; Leviticus 5:17; Leviticus 5:19 [2] Compare Isaiah 53:5; Isaiah 53:10 [3] Leviticus 5:15-16, and Leviticus 6:5-6.

[4] See Exodus 30:13; Exodus 30:24; Exodus 38:24-25; Leviticus 27:3; Leviticus 27:25; Numbers 3:47; Numbers 3:50; Numbers 18:16.

[5] It is only found in the law of the Trespass-offerings, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30; and in the law concerning vows or dedicated things, Leviticus 27:1-34. In both cases evidently the purport is the same.

[6] If I mistake not, this “fifth” is also connected with the tenth or tithe; the fifth being two tenths, or a double tithe. One tenth was paid by God’s people before anything was forfeited in any way, as the acknowledgment that he to whom it was paid had a claim on all that of which a tenth was offered. But after a thing was forfeited by vow or trespass, (Leviticus 27:1-34 and Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30) we find that a fifth or double tithe was rendered. By the law in Exodus 22:4; Exodus 22:7; Exodus 22:9, any act of trespass gave him who had been trespassed against a double claim, or rather a claim to double the amount of the original wrong or injury inflicted on him. Thus when trespass had been committed and confessed, “the fifth” was paid as the acknowledgment of the double claim. But this only by the way, as marking, if I mistake not, the connexion between the “tithe” and the “fifth part.”

[7] Compare Leviticus 5:15-16, which contain the higher grade, with Leviticus 5:17-18, which give the lower.

03.07. CHAPTER 7: THE OFFERINGS AS A WHOLE

CHAPTER 7: THE OFFERINGS AS A WHOLE 1 Peter 4:1; Romans 12:1-2

UNION with Christ is that which essentially constitutes a Christian. Nor is this union something changeful or visionary: it is a reality wrought by the Holy Ghost. The Church is “in Christ Jesus;” [1] and, as a consequence, “as He is, so are we in this world;” (1 John 4:17) identified with Him in His shame and in His joys; in His death, His burial, and His resurrection. (Romans 6:4; Romans 6:8; Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:1) And truly the figures which are used to describe this union are such as we should never have dared to appropriate, had they not been given to us in our Father’s Word, and were they not sealed in our hearts by His Spirit. What is the fellowship of brethren? What the union of the bridegroom and bride? What is the union of members with the head, of the branches with the vine, yea, of Christ with God; such is the union of saints with Christ, such the bond which binds us to Him. Not only does Christ say of His people, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world;” (John 17:14; John 17:16) but if He is “the Head,” they are “the members,” and both but “one body.” “As the many members are one body, so also is Christ.” (1 Corinthians 12:12) The context and argument here plainly demand that the sense should be, “so also is the Church;” but the Church and Christ “are not twain, but one:” (Ephesians 5:30-31) therefore the Apostle writes, “So also is Christ:” “For ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” “And no man ever yet hated his own body; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” (Ephesians 5:29-30) This union has its consequences, and they are most important, having reference to our standing and to our walk in Christ. For the first of these, our standing in Christ, faith apprehends it: and thus we have peace with God. We see a man, “the man Christ Jesus,” as man in perfectness standing “for us:” by His perfect sacrifice of Himself meeting God’s claim on man, and thus in His person reconciling man to God. The sight of this, or rather the faith of it, gives peace. We see man reconciled to God through the blood of Jesus. His place, therefore, is now by faith apprehended as ours. Through Him, and in Him, by the Spirit, we claim and realize it. But the union of Christ and His Church not only affects our standing; it must, if it be a reality, affect our walk. It is true, indeed, that our walk, as being part of our experience, and our experience being but the measure of our apprehension, through our lack of spiritual power, is constantly short of that for which we are apprehended. (Php 3:12) But our standard is still that for which we are apprehended, and that is the walk of Christ. “He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked,” (1 John 2:6) Indeed, the work of the Spirit is but to verify in all Christ’s members that which is already true for them in the person of their Head. To see, therefore, what is true of Him as our Head cannot be looked at alone in its connexion with our standing. If we are Christ’s it must necessarily take us further, leading us to know what should be the measure of our walk, and teaching us to judge in it, as unbecoming our calling, all that in us is contrary to the walk of Christ. If it be true that we are indeed His members, by the living Spirit bound to Him, to be His for ever; if it be true that in Him. we are dead and risen, and if through grace we can rejoice in this; we are only the more called on in the knowledge of this to seek to be conformed to Him, that so the things

which are true for us in Him, may be made true in our soul's experience by the Spirit.

Now, there are not a few who seem to see one part of this truth, but who appear incapable of receiving both parts; some exclusively pressing that which bears upon our walk, others that which is connected with our standing. The consequence inevitably is meagerness in both, while the truth of God is on each point deformed and weakened. Those who, while they see the standard for our walk in Christ, do not see the believer's place in Him as accepted, uncertain of their place, while aiming to apprehend, lose the joy and strength which flows from knowing that they are apprehended. As a consequence, they lower the standard of their walk, seeking only just so much of the Spirit's fruits as will prove them Christians. Others again, having read of Christ's oneness with His Church, and as a consequence the believer's acceptance in Him, seem often by no means equally to understand the necessary connexion of this with their walk as Christians. Such profess to see their union with Christ that He died for them that they died in Him, without seeing that this union, if indeed it be real, must involve their daily dying with Him. Indeed, the very reverse of this is practically asserted. They seem to think Christ died in the flesh, that they might live in it. With such the doctrine really is this, Christ died to sin that I might live to sin. I ask, is there anything like this to be found within the whole compass of Scripture? Such a doctrine exhibited as it is in the lives of hundreds, though practically denying our union with Christ, because so often stated by those who profess to know that union, has done more than ought else to hide it. The humble soul, shrinking from the thought of making Christ's love to us an indulgence or apology for sin, recoils instinctively from that which, while it speaks of union with Christ, in works utterly denies it. To connect this with THE OFFERINGS. The Offerings set forth Christ. We see in them how man in Christ has made atonement. Our standing as believers immediately flows from this: for "as He is, so are we in this world." We look at the Sin and Trespass-offerings, and see that the sin of man has been fully borne. We look at the Burnt and Meat-offerings, and see all God's requirements satisfied. And this is our confidence, that as Christ "for us "has been without the camp, as "for us" He has been laid on the altar; so truly do we, if quickened by His Spirit, stand in Him, even as He is: "for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14) But there is also the other aspect of this truth. We are one with Christ: therefore we should walk even as He walked. In this view His Offering, as our example, sets before us the model and standard for our self-sacrifice. And just as Christ's sacrifice for us had varied aspects, as satisfying God, as satisfying man, as bearing sin; so, though of course in a lower sense, will our self-sacrifice, just as it is conformed to His, and because we are one with Him, have these same aspects. It is in this way that, in a secondary sense, the typical offerings have an application to Christians. Thus we also are offerers and our bodies offerings; as it is written, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice." (Romans 12:1) Not indeed as though by our self-sacrifice we could make Christ's Offering for us more acceptable: "We are sanctified by the offering of His body once for all;" (Hebrews 10:10) "we are made accepted in the Beloved: (Ephesians 1:6) but as the consequence of our acceptance in Him, and as the fruit of our union with Him through the Spirit. Therefore we offer; and as already accepted in Christ, though in ourselves poor, weak, and worthless, our sacrifices, whether our works or person, as the fruits of Christ's Spirit, are acceptable through Him. Of course there is in His pure offering that which will find no counterpart in us. Dissimilarities neither few nor small arise from the fact that He was sinless, we sinners. Yet the saint, as in spirit alive with Christ, as entering into His willing mind, (1 Corinthians 2:16) yea, as already one with Him, as in Him dead and risen, will seek further "to be made conformable to His death." (Php 3:10) His self-sacrifice

may fail in many ways: but his rule is the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.

I proceed therefore to trace, in conclusion, how far the various aspects of the offering of the body of Christ, may be applicable to those who, being members of His mystical body, are called to walk even as He walked.

I. And first THE BURNT-OFFERING. This was man satisfying God: man in Christ giving himself to God as His portion. We have seen how for us this was fulfilled in Christ We inquire how far in us it may be fulfilled by the Spirit And in this light, both in its measure and character, the Burnt-offering stands a witness how we should “yield ourselves.” (Romans 6:13) First, as to its measure. It was “wholly burnt.” No part was withheld from God. Can we mistake this teaching? Does it not plainly say that conformity to Christ must cost us something, yea, that it involves entire self -surrender, even though that surrender lead us to the cross? “I will not,” said David, “offer unto the Lord a Burnt-offering of that which doth cost me nothing.” (2 Samuel 24:24) The Burnt-offering is still costly, befitting Him who receives it at our hands. The Burnt-offering was God’s claim; that claim was love; as He said, “Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart.” The fulfilment of this required a life from Christ. It will demand our lives just in measure as we walk with Him. “For love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.” (Song of Solomon 8:6) And in these days when pious worldliness is so successfully misusing the truth of God; when, in the light of the advanced wisdom of this our age, self-sacrifice is exploded folly; when the mere fact that a path involves loss in this world, is considered a good reason for our at once avoiding it; when the doctrine of the cross, as it bears upon our walk, is not only omitted, but openly condemned; when to give up the world is injudiciousness, and to crucify the flesh a return to law; in such days we do well to look at the Burnt-offering, as setting before us the example we are called to follow. Alas! That it should be so, but it is not denied, by some it is even gloried in, that Christianity now involves no loss; the times are altered: the world is changed. The offence of the cross has ceased: they that live godly need not suffer. (2 Timothy 3:12) A path has been found, a happy path some think it, wherein the highest profession of Christ costs nothing; nay, in which such a profession, so far from involving the loss of this world, is the surest way to gain its praise. According to this doctrine, Christ suffered for us; apostles, prophets, martyrs, all suffered. They, in their pilgrimage, lost this world for another; but we, in happier days, can possess both worlds. It cannot be. If God’s Word be true, our path after Christ must be still a sacrifice. We, as they of old, if followers of Christ must with Him “present our bodies a living sacrifice.” (Romans 12:1) And indeed if we do but weigh these words, “Present your bodies a living sacrifice,” we cannot shut our eyes to what is involved in them, and that we are called to give up ourselves. Can we do this without cost, or without feeling that sacrifice is indeed sacrifice, though it be willing sacrifice? Impossible. Christ felt His sacrifice: and so surely shall we, if we offer with Him. Nor shall we grudge this. Just as it was His joy to give Himself; as He said, “I delight to do Thy will, God;” (Psalms 40:8) so in us also, as quickened with Him, “the spirit is willing, though the flesh is weak.”

I do not wish to press every detail of the Burnt-offering in its application to our individual walk; yet the general character of the victim may be a guide to the character, as its entire surrender was to the measure, of our offering. We saw, in the application of the type to Christ, how its varieties of bullock, lamb, and turtle-dove, each brought out some distinct particular in the character of our blessed Lord. In each of these we have an example we can comprehend, however far we may be

from attaining to it. Would to God that in active yet patient service, in silent unmurmuring submission, in gentleness and innocency of life, we might be conformed to Him who went before us. These emblems of His offering, if they mean anything, sufficiently shew us, even as His example shewed it, that self-sacrifice is not to make us great in this world: service, submission, meekness, will gain no crown here. We cannot be heroes in this world, if we offer ourselves to God in the character these emblems typify. But if conformed to them, we shall be more like Christ. May He give us grace gladly to acquiesce in the likeness! He, as man in a proud and violent world, yea, and for us, was all that these emblems typify. He bore the cross such a character involved; He shrunk not from the reproach it brought Him. He was despised and rejected of men, as a lamb slain, and none to pity. In a word, and this is indeed the sum of it, He was content to be nothing, that God might be all. May the corresponding reality be more manifested in us, through subjection to the power of His indwelling Spirit.

II. But let us pass on to the MEAT-OFFERING. Here, as man for men, Christ offered Himself as the fruit of the earth, that is, as mans meat. In doing this, He gave Himself to God, yet with special reference to man, and as meeting man's claim on Him. Man had a claim upon man; God had ratified the claim, saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." In the Meat-offering, Christ met and satisfied this claim, by giving Himself to God as man's portion. Let us, in the light of His sacrifice, learn how far His members, though but "leavened bread," may yield themselves to God as man's meat. To turn then to our Pattern. What, as meeting man's claim, was the character of His Offering, and what the measure of it? For its character, "the bruised corn," "the oil," "the salt," and "the frankincense," are sufficiently explicit. For the measure of it, it is enough to say, the Type shews us the whole consumed. Such is our standard. Its import we cannot mistake. The question is, How far we may be conformed to it? To answer this let us look to other days, and see how far poor sinful man has been conformed to it. Time as when the Church, though but "a leavened cake," (Leviticus 23:17) was so far filled with the anointing of the Holy Ghost, that "the multitude of them which believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. Neither was there any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made to every man according as he had need." (Acts 4:32-35) Here was a Meat-offering, and a costly one: but costly as it was, it was not then a rare one. In that day there were living men, who for the gospel had "lost all things" (Php 3:8) who yet, while suffering this, were willing to suffer more, even to give their own lives to God for others. "Yea" says Paul, "if I be poured out," (he alludes to the Drink-offering which was offered as an adjunct to the Meat-offering (Numbers 15:1-12) - "Yea if I be poured out on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you." (Php 2:17) Nor was he alone in this. Time would fail to tell of others, Onesiphorus, Epaphroditus, Philemon, Phebe, who "oft refreshed the bowels of the saints." (Philemon 1:7) Their lives were indeed a Meat-offering.

There is yet a Church. There must yet be offerings; and thank God we yet hear of sacrifices. But what is their measure, what their character? How far are they conformed to those we have but just spoken of? Let each here judge himself. This only will I say, that just in measure as we are like our Master, just in proportion as we accept His words as the rule for the measure, as well as the manner of our sacrifice, just so far as in the steps of those of old, we "sell that we have, and give

alms," just as we "give to him that asketh of us, and from him that would borrow of us turn not away," just so far shall we find our path a sacrifice, involving not only cost, but unexpected trial As of old, so is it now. The box of alabaster, of ointment, of spikenard very precious, cannot be poured upon the head of Christ, without exciting the anger of those who see it. Even disciples must complain. "When the disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose was this waste?" Even so is it now. Self-sacrifice is still reproved, even by those who follow the Crucified One. With not a few, such a course is sufficient proof of the lack of common sense or common prudence in the person guilty of it. But what saith the Lord? "When Jesus understood it, He said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me: for in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." (Matthew 26:7-13) And in that coming day, when the gospel shall have done its work, in gathering a people out of all nations, when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, in that day when the righteous answer, When saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee, the King shall say, Inasmuch as ye did it to my brethren, ye did it unto me.

III. I pass on to THE PEACE-OFFERING. This was that view of the Offering which shewed us the Offerer fed. In the Peace-offering, the offerer, with the Priest, and God, partook of, that is, found satisfaction in, the offering. Can it be said that in this aspect of the Offering, our self-sacrifice can at all resemble Christ's? Can our poor offerings yield any satisfaction to ourselves? Can they afford any satisfaction to Christ and God? I must take heed what I say here. But what saith the Lord? Let His Word in each case supply the answer. That answer will teach us that in this aspect also the Peace-offering has a fulfilment, not only in Christ, but in His members. And first, for God's part. Does God find satisfaction in our offerings? The following witness is sufficiently clear: "To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Hebrews 13:16) So again, the offering sent by the Philippians to Paul was "a sweet savour:" God found in it something pleasant to Him: "The things which were sent from you, are an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." (Php 4:18) If the words here used in the original are the very same as those which the Septuagint have used to express "a sweet savour" in the Peace-offering. [2] What stronger proof can we need of God's satisfaction in, and the value He puts upon, the offerings of His Church. "God loveth a cheerful giver;" (2 Corinthians 9:7) and as our greatest gift is "to give ourselves," (2 Corinthians 8:5) so the presentation of our bodies as living sacrifices is "acceptable unto the Lord." (Romans 12:1) And we need to remember this. It is possible, nay, it is easy, in our zeal against the doctrine of salvation by works, to leave the impression that all works are useless, none acceptable to God, or accepted of Him. I fear there are not a few who, practically at least, are in error upon this very question. The works of the flesh are indeed dead works; but the fruits of the Spirit, as they flow from Christ, as they are the witnesses of His grace, an offering to His praise, so do they come up before God through Him "a sweet savour." But the Priest also fed in the Peace-offering. For the joy which our Priest finds in our offerings, poor and feeble though they be, it is enough to know, that even in the cup of cold water, in the bread to the hungry, He is refreshed and fed. "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink." (Matthew 25:35) Oh, did we but know His joy in seeing us yield ourselves an offering for Him, to find that in a world which hated Him some remember Him while still away: if we but realized the gladness of His soul in some work of faith or labour of love,

forgotten it may be by the feeble doer, but treasured in the book of Him who is “not forgetful;” we could not, I think, give up ourselves with such narrow, selfish, grudging hearts. Could we, if in our services to the poor we saw Christ in them, and realized that He received our gifts, present them with such niggard hands? Would not our best be freely offered Him?

Suppose Him wanting bread. If we knew He lacked, that He was hungry, naked, sick, or suffering; would not our last shilling, our most precious time, be freely given to minister to Him? We can do so still. “I was sick, and ye visited me: I was a stranger, and ye took me in. Verily I say, Inasmuch as ye did it to my brethren, ye did it unto me.” (Matthew 25:40) But further, the Peace-offering fed the offerer. And surely we have been strangers to self-sacrifice, if we need be told the joy it imparts to him who sacrifices. But what saith the Word? Paul, speaking of his service, says, “Yea, if I be sacrificed, I joy, and rejoice with you.” (Php 2:17) So again to the Colossians, “I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Colossians 1:24) So again, “I count not my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy.” (Acts 20:24) Not only is it true, that for our service “every one shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour;” (1 Corinthians 3:8) but in our service, in yielding ourselves to God, there is present joy with which a stranger intermeddleth not. “It is more blessed to give than to receive;” (Acts 20:35) and he who gives himself to God shall know this blessedness. “Sorrowful” he may be, “yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich.” (2 Corinthians 6:10) The very costliness of the sacrifice increases our joy, when we know that He, to whom we offer, rejoices with us.

IV. Thus far we have only followed the sweet-savour offerings, in their application to the Christian’s walk. Are the remaining offerings, THE SIN and TRESPASS-OFFERINGS, equally applicable to us upon this same principle? I believe they are; though, as in the preceding offerings, only applicable in a secondary way. God forbid I should be mistaken upon this point, as though I thought that the saint could atone for himself or others. In this sense, any interference with the Sin-offering would be a setting aside of the work of Christ. Still, there is a sense and measure in which the Sin-offering has its counterpart in us, as bearing on our self-sacrifice: there is a sense in which the Christian may bear sin, and suffer its judgment in his mortal flesh. Just as the Burnt-offering, which, in its first and full application, shews Christ in perfectness once offering Himself for man; by that One Oblation of Himself once offered, meeting God’s claim on man, and so reconciling us to God for ever; just as this Burnt-offering, while as offered for us it secures our acceptance, has also, as an example to us, an application to our walk, showing how man in Christ should offer himself, through the Spirit giving himself to God; just so is it in the Sin and Trespass-offerings. Without in the least degree interfering with the atonement perfected by the One great Sin-offering; while holding that by that One perfect sacrifice, and by that alone, sin can ever be purged; as it is written, “He by Himself purged our sins;” (Hebrews 1:3) and again, “He hath put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself;” (Hebrews 9:26) there is still a sense in which the Christian, in offering himself to God, can and should use the Sin-offering, as well as the Burnt-offering, as his pattern. For lack of knowing this many are sparing that flesh, which the cross of Christ was given to crucify.

What then was THE SIN-OFFERING? It was that peculiar offering, in which the victim bore sin, and died for it. The question is, how far, even if at all, this is applicable to the Christian’s offering. Is there anything to be wrought in us by the Spirit, answering to the dying for sin of the Sin-offering? Let the Scripture answer: “Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might

bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18) And what is the inference? Is it that the death of Christ is the reprieve to the flesh, its release from suffering? On the contrary, Christ's death in the flesh for sin is made our example: we too must also, yea therefore, die with Him. So it follows: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." (1 Peter 4:1) The saint, as having been judged in the person of Christ, and knowing that for him Christ has borne the cross, follows on by that cross to judge and mortify all that he finds in himself still contrary to his Lord. The flesh in him is contrary to that Holy One: the flesh in him therefore must die. And instead of making Christ's cross the reprieve for that flesh, the child of God will use that cross to slay it. Others may preach the cross of Christ as an excuse for carnal and careless walking. He who abides in God's presence will surely learn there that by the cross we must be crucified with Christ. If he says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," he will add at once, "by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Galatians 6:14) I know indeed that "there are enemies of the cross, whose God is their belly, who glory in their shame;" (Php 3:19) who are using the doctrine of the cross, to spare that flesh which the cross should crucify. But God's truth is, that so far from "the flesh" or "old man" being saved from death by the cross, it is by it devoted to death and to be crucified; and that Christ's death, instead of being a kind of indulgence for sin, or a reprieve of the life of the flesh, the life of the old man, is to His members the seal that their flesh must die, and that sin with its lusts and affections must be mortified. [3] The fact is that the child of God, who, through ignorance of God's mind, or disobedience, instead of judging the old man with his works, makes provision to fulfill the lusts thereof; such a one, if indeed he be Christ's, by not judging himself, only brings upon himself God's judgment. Happy they who, in communion with the Lord, learn and judge the flesh there, rather than in chastenings from Him. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 11:31) But if we reject this path: still the flesh must die. If we do not mortify it, God most surely will. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh." (Galatians 5:24) "Our old man is crucified with Him." (Romans 6:6) And just as, because we are alive in Christ, we can, as risen with Him, yield ourselves to God, in spirit giving Him the fruits of righteousness, a sweet savour to Him by Jesus Christ; so may we also, as one with Christ in the power and energy of the same Spirit, mortify our members which are upon the earth, and yield our flesh to death, to be crucified with Him.

How full, then, of teaching is the Sin-offering, viewed even in this lower light, merely as an example to us! How does it seal that truth we are so slow to learn, that the flesh, the old man, must be judged and mortified! I ask, how is this aspect of Christ's Offering, and our offering with Him, apprehended by Christians? Another has said, "The boast of our day is that Christ crucified is preached. But is He, even in this one respect, fully preached, or the doctrine of the cross fully apprehended? Let the walk of those who make the boast answer. It is not insinuated that such are chargeable with licentiousness or immorality. But are they, therefore, not chargeable with "walking after the flesh" and "making provision to fulfill its desires?" In the multitude of particulars it is difficult to make a selection. But what then is the high regard in which blood, and ancestry, and family connexion, are held by some? What is the regard to personal appearance and dress, in others? What the attention to ease and comfort, and often-times profuse expenditure, (not to speak of actual luxuries,) in the arrangement of the houses, tables, &c., of almost all? What are the accomplishments, on the acquiring of which so much time and money are spent? What the

character of the education which most Christians, in common with the world, give their children? Or, to take a wider view still of making “provision for the flesh” apart from what is generally considered evil or sinful, to what are all the discoveries in science, all the improvements in art, directed? What is the end of most of the trades and businesses followed in a professing Christian country, and often by Christians? Is all this, and a thousand other things too numerous to particularize, consistent with reckoning ourselves dead as to the old or natural man? Is this what the Scriptures intend by crucifixion of the flesh? Alas! Full well do many of the professing Christians of our day shew that they are but half taught the very doctrine in which they make their boast; that they have but half-learned the lesson which even the cross teaches. They have learned that Christ was crucified for them, but they have not learned that they are to be “crucified with Him;” or they have found an explanation for this latter expression in the imputation of His death for our justification; a part of the truth, but not the whole; for in vain in this explanation of the words should we seek an answer to the objection which the Apostle anticipated. Yea, rather, that objection is confirmed by it, for it is nothing else than making the cross the reprieve of the flesh from death. And then when death itself comes to give the refutation to this creed, and to shew that the Christian is not saved in the flesh, then is the effect of this half-learned lesson seen. For, instead of welcoming death as that of which his life has been the anticipation, the execution of that sentence on the flesh, which, since he has known Christ as crucified for him, he has learned in its desert, and has been continually passing on it in mind and spirit, the dying with Christ daily, the “being planted in the likeness of His death” instead of being enabled in this view actually to glory in his infirmities, in the weakness, yea, and the dissolution of the flesh, and like the victim found on the arrival of his executioner to have anticipated the end meditated for him, being found of death dead, he is scarcely resigned to die, and impatient of suffering in the flesh. And why? Because that truth which the Cross of Christ was designed to teach, he never distinctly understood, or rather experienced, namely, that salvation is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; not from death, but out of it; not the reinstating of the old nature, but the conferring of a new, by the dying and rising again with Christ” [4]

V. It only remains for us to look at THE TRESPASS-OFFERING, in its bearing on the walk of saints. This was that offering in which restitution was made for wrong; the original claim with the added “fifth” was paid by the trespasser. We have seen how this was fulfilled for us in Christ, how at His hands God recovered all whereof man had robbed Him. We have seen the consequence of this to those in Christ, how they are complete in Him through whom we have received the atonement Our present inquiry is, how this offering should affect our walk; how far our union with Christ will make this view of His sacrifice an example to us? And first we have restitution here. Christ standing for man makes full restitution for man’s wrong and trespass; “not with corruptible things, as silver and gold;” (1 Peter 1:18-19) but by the value of His own Offering He repays our trespass. In this sense we can make no restitution. If Christ has not made it, we are lost. The rest of our lives, if wholly spent for God, could never atone for our acts of trespass. Each day would bring its own proper claim. Works of supererogation, therefore, we could have none. Yet there is a measure and a sense in which the saint in fellowship with Christ will make restitution. Not indeed as to win acceptance, but as showing how, according to his measure, through the Spirit, he sympathizes with Christ. As he has in days past, as the servant of sin, robbed man and God of their rights, so now, as having been made free from sin, he becomes the servant of righteousness. “Now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness,

and the end everlasting life." (Romans 6:22) But there was a fifth part added. God or man, if wronged by trespass, not only received back their original claim. In consequence of trespass, more than that claim was due to them, the payment of which with a life, constituted the Trespass-offering. Under the law, God and man had each their claim on man: the measure of that claim, by God's own appointment, was righteousness: if man dealt justly toward God and man, nothing further than the right, nothing like grace, could by law be claimed of him. But it was different after he had trespassed. Then, by God's own appointment, right was no longer the measure of his debt to others. If we were sinless, we should without doubt be safe, yea; we might bring the law to justify us, in dealing mere rights to every one. But if the Old and New Testaments mean anything by what they teach on this point, the trespasser is the wrong man to contend for rights. The fact of our being trespassers gives God a claim upon us, not merely the original claim, not the bare claim of right. Above and beside this, the trespasser is a debtor to yield that which, but for his being a trespasser, could never have been claimed from him. I know we call this, dealing in grace, to yield to sinners more than their just claim on us. In a sense it is grace: it would be so fully, if we ourselves were sinless before God. But because we are convicted trespassers, and trespassers who make our boast in grace, we are called, as the very witness of that grace and of our need of it, to deal in what we call grace to others. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye: but I say unto you, resist not evil. Do good to them that hate you; pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matthew 5:38-44) "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your heavenly father forgive you your trespasses," (Mark 11:25-26) "For if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? For sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? For sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do well, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil." (Luke 6:32-35) This is very plain. But how far is it acted upon by many who profess to be one with Christ? Provided we have been just, who asks, have I been gracious, in my dealings to my fellow-men? Who scruples to go to law, (1 Corinthians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 6:7) who fears to claim his rights, little thinking of the added "fifth" of the Trespass-offering? And who, were his rights withheld by law, would hesitate to strive against the law by political agitation or otherwise; forgetting that grace, not right, must be the law, as it is the hope, of the trespasser? But I forbear upon this head. He that cannot hear Christ will scarcely hear His feeble servant. "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Such is "HE LAW OF THE OFFERINGS." It gives but one view of Christ: yet how much is involved in it, both as to our walk and standing. Do we not need this truth? Surely if ever there was a time when the truths connected with Christ's sacrifice were needed, that time is the present. As in the days of Christ, so now God's truth is used as the prop of error. Just as then the Law, which was given to prove man's sinfulness, was used by Pharisees to exalt man's righteousness; so now the Gospel, which was given to lead us to another world, is being used to make this world a more sure abiding place. I speak what is notorious: it is the boast of our age that Christianity is doing what it never did before. It is giving temperance to the world and peace to the nations, it is vindicating the liberty of the slave; in a word, it is making for man a better home, a safer resting-place, on this side

the grave. And all the while the world is still the world and the slave still, as before, the slave of lust. Time was when Christians gave up the world. They now can mend it: they need not leave it. Oh, cunning device of the Evil One, too easily followed by a deluded age! God's truth now, instead of laying man in his grave, with the certain hope of a resurrection morning, is used on all hands, misused I should say, to perfect man in the flesh, almost to deify him; used to prop "the things which must be shaken," instead of leading us to those "which cannot be moved," used to give an inheritance on this side death, instead of in the glory which shall be revealed. Oh, how does THE OFFERING judge all this! It speaks of sacrifice, even to the cross. It tells us that, as one with Christ, our portion in Him must yet be His portion. What had He here? He suffered under Pontius Pilate; He was crucified, dead, and buried; He rose again the third day; He ascended up into heaven; He sitteth at the right hand of God; He shall come again to judge the quick and dead. What had He here? Nothing. He took not as His home a world unpurged by fire, a creation still under the curse. He passed through it as a rejected pilgrim. We, too, if we would be like Him, must do so still. As Luther said, "Our spouse is a bloody husband to us." He will not let us have this world till He has it. His day is at hand: for that day He waits. (Hebrews 10:13) Let us be content, "yet a "little while," to wait with Him. And while many are anticipating His kingdom, in a kingdom without His presence, and without His saints, let us look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

FOOTNOTES [1] Romans 12:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 1:22; Ephesians 1:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 John 5:20, &c., &c.

[2] St Paul's words are δεκτην ευαρεστον τω θεω In the Peace offering the Septuagint version gives δεκτην ευαρεστον τω kuriw.

[3] It was but lately that in looking over a work just published, I found the following objection to the doctrines of grace; that, "if death be the penalty of sin, and Christ in dying for His people indeed bore the punishment due to them, how comes it that any believers die? "Full well has the so-called Evangelical preaching of the day merited such a rebuke a rebuke which could never have been heard, had the full truth of the cross been stated, namely, that Christ's death is the witness to His people, that, since they are His members, they must also be crucified with Him. See Romans 6:1-23, Galatians 2:1-21, 1 Peter 4:1-19.

[4] Burgh's Tracts, "On preaching Christ." Christ in His death. Pp. 5, 6.

03.08. APPENDIX

APPENDIX THE principle on which I have interpreted the Varieties of the Offerings is one which appears to lie open to an objection. My principle, it will be remembered, is that the Varieties in the Typical Offerings represent different aspects or apprehensions of Christ's One Offering: the different offerings giving us different aspects of His Offering; the different grades the various apprehensions of some one aspect. In the preceding pages [1] I have briefly given the grounds for this judgment. An objection, however, may be made. It may be urged, that it is far more reasonable to suppose that God in His Word would give us representations of realities themselves rather than of certain apprehensions of them, inasmuch as since different apprehensions must be more or less imperfect, the representation of such in His Word would make that Word imperfect likewise. The plausibility of this objection makes me notice it here. It is, however, I am convinced, unsound; proceeding throughout on an assumption opposed to reason and all experience. That this assumption is not sooner detected arises from the fact that it involves questions with which but few are conversant. The objection assumes, without appearing to assume anything, certain points connected with the capabilities of our perceptive faculties. The mass of mankind are content to use their perceptive faculties without ever troubling themselves to inquire what it is those faculties deal with. Any assumption, therefore, on such subjects, takes them into an unknown sphere, where, from misapprehension of what they seem to see, their most logical conclusions, because founded on misapprehension, may, and indeed necessarily must, be most irrational.

I say the objection makes assumptions. It does so on the subject of representations, assuming it reasonable to suppose that representations must be of realities rather than of certain apprehensions of realities. To this I say at once, that such a supposition, so far from being reasonable, is most, unreasonable. For, first, it is acknowledged that the perceptive faculty, whether of things inward or outward, deals not with realities themselves, but only with their phenomena; which phenomena, though they pre-suppose the existence of realities, are not realities, but, as the name imports, only certain appearances of them. And secondly, it is equally plain, that pictures or similar representations, (and the types are confessedly such representations,) can of necessity be conversant with phenomena only, inasmuch as they only describe or represent what the perceptive faculty takes cognizance of. It follows hence at once, that if the Types are to represent what our perceptive faculties take cognizance of, they will necessarily be representations, not of realities themselves, but of certain appearances or apprehensions of them.

I am more and more satisfied that what we see of Christ and God, though true as far as it goes, (and surely most true it is,) is yet very far short of the ineffable reality "which passeth all understanding." Certain forms of the truth we have got: the reality, who has yet attained to know it?

FOOTNOTES [1] Pages 40-47.

Chapter 30

04.00.0. The Names of God

The Names of God Discovering God as He Desires to be Known by

Andrew Jukes This book is in the public domain.

CONTENTS

Introduction 1. God, or Elohim 2. Lord, or Jehovah 3. God Almighty, or El Shaddai 4. Most High God, or El Elyon 5. Lord, or Adonai 6. Everlasting God, or El Olam 7. Lord of Hosts, or Jehovah Sabaoth 8. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost 9. Partakers of the Divine Nature

Appendix

"I have manifested thy Name to the men which thou gavest me out of the world; ... for the words which thou gavest me I have given them. ... And I have declared unto them thy Name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."—John 17:6; John 17:8; John 17:26.

04.00.1. Introduction

INTRODUCTION

WHAT is the meaning of all the teaching and preaching, which by our Lord's command is continued day by day both in the Church and in the world? It means that there is something which we do not know, which it is very important that we should know, and which we are all slow to learn. What is it that we do not know, which it is so important we should know, and which we are so slow to learn? Only two things: we do not know ourselves: we do not know God. All teaching and preaching are to make us know ourselves and God. Do we know ourselves? Some of us have gone through colleges and schools, and have learnt this language or studied that science: nay, we may have gone round the world, and seen its peoples, its cities, and great sights, without, like the Prodigal, ever "coming to ourselves." And even when we have "come to ourselves," and so have "come to our Father" (Luke 15:17; Luke 15:20), we may still not know our special weakness, and what we might do if tempted, or our strength in Christ, who is our true life, when He is manifested in us. St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, is one of the many examples which Holy Scripture gives us to shew how true disciples, though they love Christ, and have given up much to follow Him, may be wholly ignorant of their own weakness, and of man's true perfecting through death and resurrection. Who understands the wonderful contradictions which go to make up man? At times almost an angel; at times a beast or devil: now with aspirations high as heaven; now with self-love and envy low as hell. Who knows himself even as his neighbours know him? Well might the old heathen oracle say, "Know thyself." Well might the Psalmist again and again ask, "Lord what is man?" (Psalms 8:4; Psalms 144:3). And then as to God, do we know Him? Do we even know our true relation to Him? What are our thoughts about Him? Is He for us, or against us? Is He friend or foe—a stranger or a Father? Can we trust Him as we trust an earthly friend? Or are those right who call themselves Agnostics, and say, not only that we do not, but even that we cannot, really know Him? Alas—it is too true: men know Him not. But this is not man's proper state. This is not the will of God respecting us. Does the book we call the Bible throw any light upon our present state of ignorance of God and of ourselves? Does it hold out any remedy for it? One of its first lessons is to tell us how man became what he now is, fallen for a while from God, yet not forsaken by Him. Who has not heard the story, little as it is understood, how a lower creature suggested a falsehood as to God and man,—that God was grudging, in denying that which looked so pleasant to the eyes and good for food,—untrue in saying that if man ate of it he should surely die;—and as to man, that he should be as God, with his eyes opened, knowing good and evil, if only he would act in self-will and disobedience? Who has not heard, how, as the result of believing this lie, man learnt that he was naked, and hid himself from God, and sought to cover his nakedness with fig leaves, and his disobedience with excuses; yet that God sought him with a Call, a Promise, and a Gift,—a Call which is yet sounding in the ears of all, asking man where he now is, and why he is not still with Him who made him,—a Promise also of deliverance from his enemy,—and a Gift to meet his present need (Genesis 3:1-21). It is all in the Old Book: nay—it is being re-enacted every day; for the "old man" in us yet repeats old Adam's folly. Men everywhere believe the lie, and hide

from God, and seek to cover their shame with pretexts, which still leave them naked after all their labour. And the natural result is, man has hard thoughts of God, and high thoughts of himself. God's character everywhere is gone with man, who has now more faith in creatures than in God, and more pleasure in them than in his Maker. Man's thoughts of Him may be seen in the idols which he has set up to represent Him—some monstrous Moloch or Juggernaut, who can look unmoved at the destruction of His creatures. Even a pantomime therefore, as Augustine says, can please us more than God. We would not pass a bag of money, if we might have it, because we could get some pleasure from it; but we can pass by God, morning, noon, and night, for we expect no good or pleasure from Him. So we eat without Him, drink without Him, buy without Him, sell without Him, live without Him: if we could, we would gladly die without Him. For does He not restrict and cross and punish us all through this fleeting earthly life, and will He not damn the mass of His poor miserable creatures at last with endless pain and hell-fire? Such is the working of the serpent's lie, which is rankling deep in every heart, till the remedy, which, lies as near us as the lie, is by God's Spirit brought home to us.

For, thank God, there is a remedy, and the remedy is in God. God is God, spite of His creatures' fall from, and wretched thoughts of, Him. All we need is to know God, and what He truly is, and His relation to His creatures. This is the remedy, the only remedy, for the evil. Revelation, that is an unveiling of Him,—for the serpent's lie and its bitter fruits have almost wholly hidden God from us,—in a word, His shewing Himself to us as we can bear it,—is the means, not only to give us peace and bring us to God, but to change us again into His own image. Just as the sun, if it shines upon the earth, changes everything it shines on,—as the light, if it comes upon the fields, makes them partakers of its varied hues and brightnesses,—so does God's revelation of Himself to His fallen creature restore in it His likeness. We become like Him just in proportion as we see Him as He is. But how has God revealed Himself to man? Even as man yet reveals himself; for man was made in God's image. Man shews himself by his words and works. God in like manner has done this. His Word is the express image of His person and the brightness of His glory; and by that Word, which is perfect truth, He has answered, and still answers, the false word of the serpent, which has been our ruin. By His Word in nature, "for the heavens declare His glory" (Psalms 19:1), though to fallen man there seems "no voice or language" in them;—by His Word spoken through His servants, "at sundry times and in divers manners" (Hebrews 1:1), coming to us from without and in the letter, because we could not bear His Spirit;—above all by His "Word made flesh," in Christ our Lord (John 1:14);—God has shewn us what He is, and thus by word and deed answered the lie that He is grudging and untrue, and that man can be as God in independence of Him. Does not God love? Is He not true? Christ is the answer. God is so loving, that, though His creature has fallen, He will come into his likeness for him, and will lift up man again to bear His own image. God is so true, that, if man sins, he must surely die. But God through death can destroy him that has the power of death, and say to death, "I will be thy plagues, and to hell, I will be thy destruction" (Hosea 13:14). Nay, He has already done it for us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Christ shews us man condemned, and yet justified. God has dwelt in man, born of a woman, in all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9); and man, who has suffered and died, now dwells in God, with all power in heaven and earth, to destroy the works of the devil, and to reconcile and bring back all to God for ever (Colossians 1:20). This is God's answer to the serpent's lie. The Word has been made flesh (John 1:14). God has taken on Him the curse, that man should be blessed, and bear His image evermore. The perfect revelation then of God is in

Jesus Christ our Lord. But the very fulness of the revelation, like the dazzling brightness of the sun, may keep us for a while from seeing all its wonders; and we may learn, even from the revelation in the letter, that is from Holy Scripture, specially from the varied names under which it has pleased God to reveal Himself to man from the beginning, things concerning His nature and fulness, which, though they are all more perfectly revealed in Christ, would perhaps be beyond our vision but for the help which even the shadows of the letter give us. What have men not learnt from the shadow of the earth upon the moon. So the old revelation which God has given us of Himself in Holy Scripture, as "God," or "LORD," or "Almighty," or the "Most High," though it is "piecemeal" (Hebrews 1:1), as the Apostle says, may assist us, to see His fulness; just as the many figures which the same Scriptures give us, in the carnal offerings of the ceremonial law, help us to see the varied and apparently contradictory aspects of the one great perfect Sacrifice. We cannot yet see the things of heaven. God therefore reveals them as we can bear it, with the accuracy of One who sees them as they are, and in a way in which they may be seen and understood by us. And we need all His teaching, even the partial revelations, which represent Him under varied names, by which He prepares us in due time to see Him as He is (1 John 3:2), and to know as we are known (1 Corinthians 13:12).

I purpose therefore, if God permit, to call attention to the names under which God has revealed Himself to man in Holy Scripture. The first four we find in the earlier chapters of Genesis. They are, first, "God," (in Hebrew, Elohim;) then, "LORD," (or Jehovah;) then, "Almighty," (El Shaddai;) and then, "Most High," (El Elyon.) These all reveal some distinct attribute or characteristic of the same one blessed God. Beside these we have three other names, which describe God’s relation to certain things or persons rather than His nature; namely "Lord," (in Hebrew Adonai;) then "The Everlasting God," (El Olam;) and lastly, "Lord of Hosts," (Jehovah Sabaoth.) But the first four names tell us what God is. In every age these first four names have been the rest and refuge and comfort of His people. In the book of Psalms we find them all constantly repeated: in one place we have all four within the compass of a single sentence:—"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the MOST HIGH, shall abide under the shadow of the ALMIGHTY. I will say of the LORD, (that is Jehovah,) He is my refuge and my fortress; my GOD, (that is my Elohim,) in Him will I trust." (Psalms 91:1-2; so too in Psalms 77:7-11, we have four names.) All these varying names are but the result of His being what He is, so wonderful and manifold, that no one name can adequately express what an apostle calls His "fulness" (Ephesians 3:19; Colossians 1:19; Colossians 2:9). Just as in the Gospels four distinct and varying presentations of the same One Lord, as the Lion, the Ox, the Man, the Eagle, are required to shew the Christ in all His varied aspects or relations, some of which, as we here apprehend them, under the limitations of our fallen nature, seem at times to clash with other no less true views of Him who is both Son of God and Son of Man; while it is no less true that in each distinct presentation of Him we may detect hidden intimations that He contains within Himself all the apparently varying characteristics, which the other Gospels or Cherubic Faces reveal more particularly; (Note: See Four Views of Christ, pp. 2-14.) so is it in the older revelation, which God gave of Himself. He cannot fully speak of Himself under a single name or under one title. And yet each differing name contains, hidden in itself, (for God’s perfections are inseparable,) something of the special virtues which the other names bring out more separately. We may see this even in a man of varied gifts. To know David we must be told that he was Shepherd, Warrior, King, Prophet, Poet, and Musician. All these are outcomes of a deep and rich nature. Shall we then wonder that God, the Maker, Judge, and Saviour of all, who in Himself is

Love, and Power, and Wisdom, if He is to reveal His nature and relationships to those who know Him not, must be known by many names, each of which can only tell out something of His glory. At all events, God has thus revealed Himself to man, here a little, and there a little; and His children, as they grow up into His likeness, can only bless and praise Him for such a revelation. My desire, then, in considering the names under which God has revealed Himself, is by them to lead some of His children and His creatures, if it may be so, to learn to know Him better. But indirectly and incidentally our study of this subject may also answer the objections of certain critics, who, from the varied names of God in Genesis, have argued that the book is a merely human composition, based on and compiled from several earlier and conflicting records, the differences and divergences of which shew that they are only the views or speculations of fallible minds as to the nature and character of God. If these critics, whose criticisms I may say are continually destroying one another, instead of so confidently judging that "Scripture," which our Lord says "cannot be broken" (John 10:35), could have only more deeply considered the question how God can reveal Himself to fallen creatures, and whether it is possible, while they are as they are, to make them know Him fully as He is,—still more if they could have been "disciples," that is learners in the school, of Christ, before they set up to be teachers,—they might, and I believe would, have learnt the reason for the form of the revelation which God has given us in Holy Scripture. Surely from the beginning, seeing what man had become, God must have desired to make Himself known; and being All-loving and All-wise, He cannot but have taken the best method of doing it. But how could He do it, man being what he is? What can we shew of our nature to an infant child? What can we make a beast understand of our inward thoughts and feelings? Was it not a simple necessity of the case that God should shew Himself under many forms, and according to the limitations of the creature in and to whom He sought to reveal Himself? Was it not necessary that the revelation should be in creature form and grow from stage to stage, even as Christ, the Word of God, when He was made flesh for us, grew in wisdom and stature unto the perfect man? (Luke 2:52). The fact therefore, supposing it to be a fact, that those portions of the book of Genesis which speak of "Elohim" were part of an earlier or a later record than those which tell us of "Jehovah," can never prove that in its present form and order this book and the rest of Holy Scripture are not divinely given to us. In an elaborate mosaic the bits of stone have come from different quarries, but the pattern or figure which is formed by them shews that the work is not a mere chance collection of discordant atoms, but that a superintending mind has arranged and planned it with a special purpose. The fact too, which chemistry has proved, that the substances of which our flesh and bones are formed were all in the earth, and then in animal or vegetable forms, before they became parts of our present earthly bodies, is no disproof that these bodies are the work of God, or their form and arrangement the result of His purpose. So with the Bible. Even if it could be shewn that some portions of it have come from a record treasured by those who knew God only as "Elohim," while some other part was originally the vision granted to those who knew Him rather as "Jehovah," (which is not impossible, though it has not yet been proved,) such a fact, if it be a fact, would militate nothing against the unity or Divine inspiration of Holy Scripture as we now have it, but would only shew, what Scripture itself asserts, that God has spoken to man through partial revelations, till he could receive a more perfect knowledge of the truth through Christ and His Spirit. Of course in such a case, if men are not aware of their state as fallen from God, and as such unable to see Him as He is, it is easy to object that one partial presentation or revelation of Him contradicts or clashes with another. But all nature is full of similar apparent contradictions, which

are found to be no contradictions, as its secrets one by one are opened to us. Is not the one white light made up of seven differing rays and colours? Is not the order of the heavens, so quiet and so firm, the result of forces, centrifugal and centripetal, which seem directly antagonistic? Is not the balance of the heart's life preserved by systole and diastole? Is not the unity of mankind made up of man and woman? In the moral world it is the same. Truth seems often opposed to love; yet are truth and love both outcomes and manifestations of the same one Blessed God. Christ, the perfect image of God, reveals to us the unity of all apparent antagonisms. While however we remain in the flesh, we can only "know in part" (1 Corinthians 13:12), and to meet us with such knowledge, He, whose fulness fills all things, has revealed Himself in a way which men may call imperfect, the very imperfection of which, if it may be called so, is its perfection, shewing its perfect adaptation for its appointed end. If we can but see what the differing names of God declare, we shall be forced, I feel assured, like all who have seen this great sight, to fall down before Him, crying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God, Almighty, Most High, heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory."

I will only add here, that, as these names of God speak of His nature, none can ever rightly see their import but those who are partakers of that nature; "for who knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Mere intellect therefore will never open what these names contain, nor will even the desire for light, unless that desire is joined with faith and prayer and humility. On the other hand a walk of faith, a life of love, a daily waiting upon God for His Spirit, a humble treasuring of His words, even when at first they seem dark and mysterious, these things, as they come from God, will lead to God, and to a fuller knowledge of Him, and of His fulness, as He has revealed it in His written and in His Incarnate Word. He has made us to know and love Him, and to bear His image, and so to reveal Him to a world which knows Him not. And just as by grace that image is restored in us, by the indwelling of Him who is the image of the invisible God, we may see what eye hath not seen, and hear what ear hath not heard, even the things which God reveals by His Spirit. There is indeed a stage of our experience, when the one question which occupies the soul is, How can a sinner be brought to righteousness and peace? But there is no less surely another, in which the soul hungers after God, to know Him and His perfections, in the deep sense that to know Him is the way to be conformed to Him. The names of God serve both these ends. In the beatific vision God will be all. Even here, in proportion as His redeemed see Him, they are made like Him. May our meditations on His names serve this end, to His glory and our blessing evermore!

04.01. God, or Elohim

1

GOD OR ELOHIM

HAVING thus seen that in Holy Scripture God is spoken of under different names, each given with a purpose, to set forth some distinct virtue or characteristic of His nature, we may now turn to the first name under which He is revealed. This is "God,"—in Hebrew, "Elohim" (Heb. ■■■■■). This is the name, and the only name, by which God is set before us in the first chapter of the book of Genesis. Here we find it repeated in almost every verse. Under this name we see God, according to His own will, working on a dark and ruined creature, till by His Word all is set in order and made "very good." This is the name which we need to know before all others. This, therefore, is the first revealed in Holy Scripture; for it shews us One, who, when all is lost, in darkness and confusion, brings back, first His light and life, and then His image, into the creature, and so makes all things new and very good.

Now there are certain peculiarities connected with this name, which must be considered, if we would understand even in measure all that is divinely taught under it. This name then, (in Hebrew, "Elohim" or "Alehim,") is a plural noun, which, though first and primarily used in Holy Scripture to describe the One true God, our Creator and Redeemer, is used also in a lower sense in reference to the "gods many and lords many" (1 Corinthians 8:5), whom the ancient heathen feared and worshipped. Let us first look at the primary use of this name, in which we learn its highest significance. We shall then better understand how it could be applied to the gods of the heathen, or to the idols which represented them.

First then this name, though a plural noun, when used of the one true God is constantly joined with verbs and adjectives in the singular. (Note: For singular verbs with Elohim, see Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:3, &c., and in countless places. For singular adjectives see 2 Kings 19:4; 2 Kings 19:16; Psalms 7:9; Psalms 57:2, &c. See Gesenius, Thesaurus, under ■■■■■, p. 96.) We are thus prepared, even from the beginning, for the mystery of a plurality in God, who, though He says, "There is no God beside me" (Deuteronomy 32:39), and "I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 45:5; Isaiah 45:22), says also, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26); and again, "The man is become like one of us" (Genesis 3:22); and again at Babel, "Go to, let us go down and confound their language" (Genesis 11:7); and again, in the vision granted to the prophet Isaiah, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us" (Isaiah 6:8). And this same mystery, though hidden from an English reader, comes out again and again in many other texts of Holy Scripture. For "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," is literally, "Remember thy Creators" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Again, "None saith, Where is God my Maker?" is in the Hebrew, "God my Makers" (Job 35:10). So again, "Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him," is, in the Hebrew, "in his Makers" (Psalms 149:2). And so again in the Proverbs, "The knowledge of the Holy Ones is understanding" (Proverbs 9:10). So again where the Prophet says, "Thy Maker is thy husband," both words are plural in the Hebrew (Isaiah 54:5). Many other passages of Scripture

have precisely the same peculiarity. (Note: For example, "Holy Ones" in Job 5:1, and in Hosea 11:12; and "Thy Redeemers" in Isaiah 44:24, &c.) Therefore in heaven "Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD of Hosts" (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8), while on earth, taught by the Spirit of our Lord, we say, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" (2 Corinthians 13:14). The plural form of the first name of God, that is "Elohim," shadows forth the same mystery; while the verb, and even the adjective, joined with it in the singular, as when we read, "the living" (2 Kings 19:4; 2 Kings 19:16; Heb. ■■ ■■■■■), or "the righteous" (Psalms 7:9; Heb. ■■■■ ■■■■■), or "the Most High God" (Psalms 57:2; Heb. ■■■■■ ■■■■■), (Note: See Gesenius, Thesaurus, p. 96, under ■■■■■.) shew that this "Elohim," though plural, is but One God. (Note: In a very few places this name, "Elohim," is joined with plural adjectives, (see Genesis 20:13; Genesis 35:7;) and verbs, (Deuteronomy 4:7; Deuteronomy 5:26; Joshua 24:19; 1 Samuel 17:26; 1 Samuel 17:36; 2 Samuel 7:23; Psalms 58:12; Jeremiah 10:10; Jeremiah 23:36.) But in all these cases, except the first two, where perhaps angels are referred to, the name "Jehovah" is connected with "Elohim;" and the plural adjective or verb may be used to teach us, that in the One "Jehovah" there is the plurality of the "Elohim.")

Further, this name, like every other name in the Hebrew, has a distinct meaning, full of significance. For the word "Elohim" (Heb. ■■■■■) is formed from the Hebrew word, "Alah," (Heb. ■■■) "to swear," and describes One who stands in a covenant-relationship, which is ratified by an oath. Parkhurst, in his well-known Lexicon, thus explains the name:—"Elohim:" "A name usually given in the Hebrew Scriptures to the ever-blessed Trinity, by which they represent themselves as under the obligation of an oath. ... This oath, (referred to in Psalms 110:4, 'The Lord sware and will not repent,') was prior to creation. Accordingly 'Jehovah' is at the beginning of the creation called 'Elohim,' in Genesis 1:1, which implies that the Divine Persons had sworn when they created; and it is evident, from Genesis 3:4-5, that both the Serpent and the Woman knew 'Jehovah' by this name, 'Elohim,' before the Fall." (Note: Parkhurst adds here, "From this name (Elohim) of the true God, the Greeks had their Ζε■ς ■ρκιος. Hence, also, the corrupt tradition of Jupiter's oath, which overruled even Fate itself" (Heb. Lex. in loc.). As to the view of some, that the word "Elohim" is derived directly from El, (■■) which signifies "strong" or "mighty," it may perhaps suffice to say that the plural of El is Elim, not Elohim. God surely may be and is called both "El," (Genesis 14:20, and in many other places,) and "Elim," (as in Psalms 29:1; and elsewhere,) that is "The Mighty;" but the letter H in "Elohim" points to the true etymology of the name, as from ■■■, "to swear"; though, indeed, ■■■ is also probably connected with ■■; for, as the Apostle says, (Hebrews 6:16,) "Men verily swear by the greater;" and the original idea of an oath may have been this affirmation by the "Strong" or "Mighty One." In the case of God, as the same Apostle writes, "Because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself." (Hebrews 6:13.)) Here a wondrous deep opens to our view, as to the nature and being of God. Blessed be His name, that He has Himself, both by His Son and by His Spirit, given us some glimpses into the height and the depth here set before us, which flesh and blood never could have fathomed. For this covenant-relationship, which the name "Elohim" expresses, is first a relationship in God. He is One, but in Him also, as His name declares, there is plurality; and in this plurality He has certain relationships, both in and with Himself, which, because He is God, can never be dissolved or broken. Thus, as Parkhurst says, this name contains the mystery of the Trinity. For the perfect revelation of this great mystery man had indeed to wait until it was declared by the Only-begotten of the Father, and even then only after His resurrection from the dead, to those whom He had

called to be His disciples. But from the beginning the name "Elohim" contained and shadowed it forth, and the visions and words of the prophets gave still clearer intimations of it.

Into this mystery, however, I do not here enter, further than to say, with St. Augustine, that, if God is love, then in God there must be a Lover, a Beloved, and the Spirit of love, for there can be no love without a lover and a beloved. (Note: "Ubi amor, ibi trinitas." See Augustine, De Trinitate, lib. viii. cap. 10; lib. ix. cap. 2; and lib. xv. cap. 3.) And if God be eternal, then there must be an eternal Lover, and an eternal Beloved, and an eternal Spirit of Love, which unites the eternal Lover to the eternal Beloved, in a bond of Love which is eternal and indissoluble. The relationship in God, in and with Himself, is one in which there can be no breach. From the beginning God is "Elohim," in covenant-union with Himself for evermore. But the truth here, as to the covenant-relationship involved in the name "Elohim," goes still further. For the Beloved is the Son, "the Word," "by whom all things were made," and "in whom all things consist." "All things were created by Him and for Him." (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16-17.) God therefore, or "Elohim," in covenant with the Beloved Son, must be in covenant with all that is created by Him, and which only consists, or is held together, in Him. For, as St. Paul says, He is "the God who cannot lie, who promised eternal life before the world began" (Titus 1:2),—words which again refer to the covenant in Christ before the Fall:—"the Faithful Creator," as St. Peter adds, to whom we may "commit the keeping of our souls" (1 Peter 4:19); for "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things" (Romans 11:36). And in virtue of this covenant-relationship, because He is "Elohim," though His creatures fail and fall, "He will never leave us, nor forsake us."

It may be asked, whether, when this name was first revealed, those who received it could have understood all that was thus implicitly contained in and taught by it. Probably they did not. When God first speaks, men rarely, if ever, fully understand Him. It is only by degrees, and just in proportion as His servants and disciples treasure up His words and seek to obey Him, that those words, often very slowly, open to them. All our first apprehensions of Him and of His truth are imperfect, and mixed with fallacies arising from the senses. Nevertheless His words, even when little understood, convey true blessing to those who receive them, though the depths of Divine wisdom which they contain are more or less hidden. Who at first takes in all that Nature is saying to us? Who, when he first receives the Gospel or the Sacraments of the Gospel, understands all that they convey and witness to him? And so with the names of God. Though even yet little understood, from the beginning they have been telling what God’s fulness is, and through His grace telling it in such ways and in such measures as fallen men were able to receive and profit by. Just in proportion as they walked with Him, His names and words would open to them, while, if they forsook Him, the selfsame words would first be dark and then perverted to misrepresent Him. For the Word of God, if not obeyed, ever becomes a curse and snare, even confirming men in their worst errors and delusions.

It was so with this first and wondrous name, "Elohim." The truth it taught was soon abused and turned into a lie, as man departed more and more from God, and in His place "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator." For the truth, that in "Elohim," who says, "There is no God beside me," there is plurality, was soon perverted into many gods; the manifold and diverse powers in nature, which had been formed to shew forth God’s fulness, being worshipped as so many distinct and differing deities; and then His covenant-relation to His creatures was made the ground of the doctrine, that each nation or people had its tutelary gods, who stood in special

relationship to those who acknowledged and served them. Thus each country had its own gods, some the "gods of the hills," some those "of the valleys" (Judges 10:6; 1 Kings 11:33; 1 Kings 20:23; 1 Kings 20:28), each of which was worshipped as more or less intimately related to different lands or peoples. For, looking at nature, fallen man saw power or force on every hand: power in the sun, which seemed to make the earth bring forth and bud: power in the earth to support and nourish all creatures: power in the sea, and in the air; in cold and lightning, and storm. Each of these seemed stronger than man: some served him at times, but could also cross and wound and slay him. So man, having let go the faith that God is Love, bowed to the powers which were around him, and looked to them and worshipped them as gods. Is there no such worship even now? Alas, the world always does this. For a worshipper by his very constitution man must be. And if he cannot trust a God of Love and Truth, the true "Elohim," he will surely look for help to some of the forces, seen or unseen, which compass him on every hand. (Note: Parkhurst, in his note on the secondary sense of the word, "Elohim," as applied to the gods or powers which the heathen worshipped, says, "The ancient heathen called, not only the whole heaven, but any one of its three conditions, (namely fire, light, and air or spirit,) 'Elohim.' They meant not to deny the joint action of the material trinity, but to give it the glory of each particular attribute. See Hutchinson's Trinity of the Gentiles, p. 246; and also his Moses sine Principio, p. 116.") But to return to the name, "Elohim," as used in Holy Scripture of the One true God. The whole first chapter of Genesis shews us One, who, because He is "Elohim," in virtue of His own nature and covenant-relation to His creature, can never leave it, fallen as it is, till all again is very good. In that opening chapter, which is indeed the foundation and sum of all further revelation, we are told of a creation, by "Elohim," of the heavens and the earth; and then that creation, or part of it at least, is shewn as fallen, "without form and void," with "darkness upon the face of the deep." But does "Elohim" forsake it because it has become dark and void and formless? No. When nothing else moves, "the Spirit of God moves," (literally, "broods,") "over the face of the waters," and then "Elohim" speaks, and by His Word, step by step, the wondrous change is wrought, till the day of rest is reached, when "all is very good." For the fallen creature begins nothing, continues nothing, perfects nothing. Each stage of the restoration is the direct result of the unsought word and work of "Elohim." At every step again and again we read, "God said," and "God made" (Genesis 1:3; Genesis 1:6-7; Genesis 1:9; Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:16, &c.). Throughout, all is of God, whose name and nature in itself contains the pledge that He cannot rest till His fallen creature is restored and re-created. No wonder then that the early Church dwelt so much and often on the work of the Six Days, (Note: Almost all the Great Fathers have left us their Hexemerons.) seeing in them a covenant-God, whose new creation from first to last is wholly His workmanship. And what a work it is! First "Elohim" by His word brings "light." Then a "heaven" is formed in the yet restless creature, to divide the waters from the waters. Then a rising "earth" is seen emerging from the waters. Then come "fruits;" then "lights;" then "living creatures," first from the waters, then from the earth; till at last the "man" is created in the image of God to have dominion over all. Nothing hinders His work or changes His purpose. Again and again, even after He begins His work, the awful darkness rises for awhile, and in each returning "evening" seems to swallow up the light; but again and again the covenant-God, "Elohim," binds the darkness every "morning," and even incorporates it into "days" of ever-progressing blessing, for it is written, "The evening and the morning made the day," until the seventh day comes, when we read of no "evening." Blessed be God, not a few by grace know all these stages in their own experience. They know, that, until the Word has spoken, there is no

light in them by which to see their ruin. What barren restless waters does the light at first reveal. But the very discovery of the barrenness is progress. Till this is seen, no heaven is formed. Till the heaven is formed, the earth can yield no fruits or increase. Till the fruits appear, there are no lights in heaven, to rule the day and to rule the night, nor living creatures either from the waters or the earth. Every stage is a preparation for something yet more perfect. It is only as we know our need that we really know God. And by His work in us He makes us know what it is to have a covenant-God, whose fulness meets our every want, and whose very name and nature is the pledge of our deliverance. And mark especially that "Elohim" works, not only on, but with, the creature. This indeed is grace, most wondrous and abounding. For it is all of grace that "Elohim" should restore and save His fallen creature. It is still greater grace that in the restoration He makes that creature a fellow-worker with Himself. Yet so it is. For He says, "Let the waters bring forth," and "Let the earth bring forth" (Genesis 1:11; Genesis 1:20; Genesis 1:24). In other words He calls the fallen creature to travail and labour with Him. His love indeed is the cause of all, and His Word the agent in effecting all; but in accomplishing His purpose He works, not apart from, but with, the creature. Herein is the root of the truth which lies in the doctrine of Evolution. For it is not that Nature, unaided or apart from God, can re-create or change herself, or by herself evolve ever-advancing forms of life, all leading up to man in God's image; but rather, that, even in her lowest fall, God accepts the captive powers of the fallen creature, as a matrix from which, through successive births, all quickened by His Word, He may, according to her advancing state, bring forth advancing forms of life, each shewing some nearer resemblance to His image. And the fact that this earth, when God began to work upon it, was itself the ruin of a prior creation, (Note: In Isaiah 45:18, God distinctly says that He did not create the earth "without form;" in Hebrew, "tohu," ■■■. The formlessness was the result of some fall.)—the debris, if I mistake not, of the once bright spiritual kingdom of Satan and his angels, destroyed and self-consumed by him,—may explain what seems so perplexing, namely that there should be in all nature, what some have called "a concausation of evil." (Note: John Stuart Mill constantly repeats this thought, that in nature, not only do we see the presence both of good and evil, but further, that the evil is working with the good, in the composition of things as they now are; which to him appears a proof that nature cannot be the work of a perfectly good and powerful God. See his Essay on Nature, almost passim; and the second part of the Essay on Theism, entitled Attributes, pp. 184, 185, 186.) God certainly adopted the darkness of each returning "evening," and incorporated it into "days" of ever growing order, until the seventh day comes without an evening. Had not the "earth" and "waters" also germs in them of their fallen and corrupted nature, and do not these manifest themselves, even when they are commanded by Elohim to bring forth new life? Certainly in our regeneration we see how the old man shews himself, and is even stimulated by the Word, which brings new and strange forms of life out of the fallen creature. Such a working shews what "Elohim" is, who in His faithfulness and grace bears with imperfect forms of life, the dumb "fish" and "creeping thing," until He Himself "creates" (Genesis 1:27) the man in His own image, when "all is very good." It has ever been so: Moses before Christ; the flesh or letter before the Spirit; yet both of God, and shewing forth His grace, who works not only on, but with, the creature.

Such is the light which the opening chapter of the book of Genesis throws on the special meaning of the first name of God, "Elohim." Fully to illustrate its import would require an examination of every passage, where this name occurs in Holy Scripture. But to attempt this here would be impossible. (Note: The name "Elohim" occurs about two thousand two hundred and fifty times in

the Old Testament.) Nor is it necessary. Any careful reader, once in possession of the key which the Hebrew name carries in itself, can test how the idea conveyed by it is always that of "One in covenant." A selection of texts would only give a part of the evidence. But I may cite a few to shew how distinctly this name, "Elohim," refers to and implies One who stands in a covenant-relationship.

Take the following as examples. First, God's words to Noah:—"And Elohim said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me, ... but with thee will I establish my covenant" (Genesis 6:13; Genesis 6:18). "And I, behold I, establish my covenant with you, and with your seed, and with every living creature that is with you. And this is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you. I do set my bow in the cloud, and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth" (Genesis 9:9-17). So in His words to Abram, "Elohim's" name pledges the same relationship:—"I am the Almighty God: walk before me and be thou perfect; and I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in all generations, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed, and I will be their Elohim," that is, I will be with them in covenant-relationship (Genesis 17:1-8). Therefore again and again we read that "Elohim remembered:"—"Elohim remembered Noah" (Genesis 8:1); and again, "When God destroyed the cities of the plain, Elohim remembered Abram, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow" (Genesis 19:29); and again, "Elohim remembered Rachel" (Genesis 30:22; also Exodus 2:24). There is the same reference to a covenant in God's words to Isaac (Genesis 26:24), and to Jacob (Genesis 28:13-14); and Joseph's dying words witness to the same:—"I die, but Elohim will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, into the land which He sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob" (Genesis 50:24). Moses no less refers to it (Exodus 6:2-4; Exodus 6:7-8; Deuteronomy 7:9). David's joy too in the LORD, his God, is, that "He will ever be mindful of His covenant" (Psalms 111:5). Therefore in His deepest trials he "encourages himself in God," saying, "O my soul, hope thou in God, who is the health of my countenance and my God" (Psalms 42:5; Psalms 42:11). His "last words" dwell on the same theme: "Although my house be not so with God, yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure" (2 Samuel 23:1; 2 Samuel 23:3; 2 Samuel 23:5); for "Jehovah Elohim" had said, "My mercy will I keep for him for ever, and my covenant shall stand fast with him" (Psalms 89:8; Psalms 89:28). It is the same with all the saints. The fact that God is "Elohim," that is the "One who keepeth covenant" (1 Kings 8:23), is the foundation of His creature's hope in every extremity. "God is our refuge and strength" (Psalms 46:1). "He is my God, and my father's God" (Exodus 15:2). And "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Genesis 28:13-15; Hebrews 13:5). For "He is God of gods, and Lord of lords: He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and the widow" (Deuteronomy 10:17-18). "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God, in His holy habitation" (Psalms 68:5). The faithful Creator (1 Peter 4:19) cannot fail His creatures. They may be, and are, unworthy, but He is "Elohim" for evermore. Therefore He says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for there is no Elohim besides me. I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear" (Isaiah 45:22-23). And this is the truth, which, above all others, the Gospel opens, in the life and ways of Him who is "the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3), who has come to reveal to us a Father's love, which cannot fail because we are "His offspring" (Acts 17:28). We may need another view of God, as the One who "loves righteousness and hates iniquity," and who therefore must judge all evil (Hebrews

10:30), till it is destroyed, and "mortality is swallowed up of life" (2 Corinthians 5:4). And this, as we shall see, is the special lesson of the second name of God, "Jehovah." But, before and beneath and beyond all this, God yet is "Elohim," that is, God, in covenant. His creatures may not know it. Even His Church may very dimly see it. But God has said, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the word that is gone out of my lips" (Psalms 89:34). Well may Paul argue, "Though it be but a man's covenant, yet, if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto." Seen as "Jehovah," God may give law; and "the law worketh wrath; for where there is no law, there is no transgression" (Romans 4:15). But "the covenant which was confirmed before of God in, or to (Gr. ε■ς Χριστ■ν), Christ, the law which was four hundred years after cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect" (Galatians 3:15-18). The law was needed in its place, to shew the creature what it is, and to slay in man the fallen life of independence. But "the ministration of death and condemnation" is "to be done away," while "the ministration of righteousness and life remaineth" (2 Corinthians 3:7-11). So the Apostle says again, even of those who slew and rejected Christ, "God is able to graff them in again. ... For this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. ... And God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; ... for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things" (Romans 11:23-36). This is what the name "God," or "Elohim," brings out so fully, in itself forestalling not a little of that which we now call the Gospel: this is what the ever-blessed God would teach us, when He assures us that He will be "our God" (Isaiah 40:1; Jeremiah 7:23; Jeremiah 11:4; Jeremiah 30:22; Ezekiel 34:31; Ezekiel 36:28, &c.). "For this is the covenant, ... I will put my laws into their minds, and in their heart will I write them; and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Hebrews 8:10). In a word, God promises for both, saying not only, "I will," but "They shall," that is, pledging His word both for Himself and for His creatures. Our Lord's own teaching only repeats the selfsame truth, in those blessed words, even yet so little understood, to Pharisees and Scribes, who objected that He "received sinners" (Luke 15:1-2, &c.). "What man of you," He says, fallen and wretched as you are, would be content to lose even a sheep, which had strayed and wandered from him? Or what woman would be content to lose a piece of silver? Would they not seek their lost until they found it? Is God's love for His creature less than a man's is for a sheep? Is not the lost creature really God's loss? Can He rest, when it is lost, until He find it? And when it is found, is it not His joy even more than the recovered creature's? For it is not the joy of the recovered sheep, nor of the silver, nor of the once lost son, that our Lord declares in these Parables, but the joy of the Shepherd, and of the Woman, and of the Father, each of whom exclaims, "Rejoice with me, for I have found that which I had lost." The name "Elohim" says all this, and more also. It says that "God has sworn" (Hebrews 6:13). It declares that "God, willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, (His will and His word,) in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Hebrews 6:17-18). This is our refuge:—"God is not a man, that He should lie, or the son of man, that He should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19; Numbers 23:21). Herein is the creature's hope. God is and shall be God for ever. A "great voice from heaven" has said, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God; and God

shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:3-4).

Such is the first name of God which Holy Scripture gives us. What has here been said in illustration of it, though it affords the key to the view of God which this name reveals for the comfort of His creatures, necessarily fails, (for it is only a part of the wondrous record of "Elohim,") to express the overflowing riches of that unforsaking love, of which this name, wherever it occurs in Scripture, is the ceaseless witness. Blessed be God for such a revelation. Shall we not pray for opened eyes, to understand all that is treasured up for us and for all creatures in "Elohim"? Shall we not bless Him who has said, "I will be to you a God"? Shall not every heart reply, "My Elohim, in Him will I trust"? (Psalms 91:2).

04.02. Lord, or Jehovah

2

LORD OR JEHOVAH THE second name of God revealed in Holy Scripture, the name "Jehovah," which we translate "LORD," shews us qualities in God, which, though they are contained, can hardly be said to be expressed, in the first name, "Elohim." (Note: I may perhaps say here, for those who do not read Hebrew, that, in our Authorised Version, wherever we find the name "GOD" or "LORD" printed in capitals, the original is "Jehovah," (as in Genesis 2:4-5; Genesis 2:7-8, &c.; Genesis 6:5-6; Genesis 15:2; Genesis 18:1; Genesis 18:13; Genesis 18:19; Genesis 18:22; Genesis 18:26; Ezekiel 2:4; Ezekiel 3:11; Ezekiel 3:27; Obadiah 1:1.) Wherever we find "God," (as in Gen. 1 throughout, and in countless other passages,) it is "Elohim." Where we find "Lord," (as in Genesis 15:2; Genesis 18:3; Genesis 18:27; Genesis 18:30-32; and constantly in the prophecies of Ezekiel,) it is "Adonai." Thus "LORD God" (in Genesis 2:4-5; Genesis 2:7-8, and elsewhere,) is "Jehovah Elohim;" while "Lord GOD" (in Genesis 15:2, and Ezekiel 2:4, and elsewhere,) is "Adonai Jehovah." I may add that wherever the name "Jehovah" stands alone, (as in Genesis 4:1; Genesis 4:3-4; Genesis 4:6; Genesis 4:9, &c.) or is joined with "Elohim," (as in Genesis 2:4-5, &c.,) it is always written in Hebrew with the vowel points of "Adonai:" where "Adonai" is joined to "Jehovah," (as in Genesis 15:2; Ezekiel 2:4, &c.) "Jehovah" is written with the vowel points of "Elohim." For the Jews scrupulously avoided pronouncing the name "Jehovah," always reading "Adonai" for "Jehovah," except where "Adonai" is joined to "Jehovah," (as in Genesis 15:2, and like passages,) in which case they read "Adonai Elohim.") For the name "Elohim," as we have seen, in its very import and by its plural form, spoke of One whose very Being involved a covenant-relationship, which never could be broken. "Jehovah" on the other hand, as we shall see, shews One, who, being Love, is righteous also, and must therefore judge evil, wherever it exists, and at whatever cost, whether to the creature or to the Creator. Of course God is the same God, whether seen as "Jehovah" or "Elohim;" but "Elohim" gives us only one view, blessed as that is, of God our Saviour. We must know Him as "Jehovah" also, if we would know ourselves, or what it costs the blessed God to make us "partakers of His holiness" (Hebrews 12:10).

Let me try to shew more exactly what the difference between these two names is, and how the One unchanging God, who in Himself is perfect Love, may, as we apprehend Him, appear in very different aspects or characters, either as Love or Truth as "Elohim" or "Jehovah." St. John tells us, "God is love" (1 John 4:8; 1 John 4:16). This is what He absolutely is. But in the expression of love we may see that love is righteous also. As to His Being, God is Love, and "Elohim" declares this. "Jehovah" reveals Him as the Truth; and Truth is not so much the Being of God as the Expression of His Being. And as apprehended by us these appear different, though in themselves they are and must be one. Some may not yet see this. But all I think will see how Love must shew itself in truth and righteousness. Thus the selfsame Love in its Being and in its Expression may seem different. If we think of its Being, we shall see a will which cannot change, because it springs from and rests on being and relationship. If we think of its Expression, we shall see how variously it acts, and changes, or seems to change, in virtue of certain qualities or conduct in the loved one. A

father’s and still more a mother’s unchanging love illustrates the first, a love which cannot change, spite of faults and failings in the loved one. This is love in its Being. But the Expression of this love varies in virtue of certain qualities in the beloved. If therefore a child rebels, or a friend deceives, or if a wife becomes unfaithful, there will be a breach of love. You must, much as it may pain you, part from them, and judge the evil; for if you do not, you countenance their evil doings.

Now Holy Scripture presents us with both these views of God. We have first the view of "Elohim," who, in virtue of His Being, in the might of love in virtue of relationship, cares for and works on His fallen creature, lost and fallen as it is, because it is His creature, and He is Love, and therefore He can never leave it nor forsake it. This is the view of God so fully shewn us in the first chapter of the Bible, and recognised and illustrated wherever we read of "Elohim" and His doings. But there is the second view, as to the Expression of love, namely, love in its relation to certain qualities in the loved one; and this it is which the name "Jehovah" so wondrously reveals everywhere; shewing that God, who is perfect love, is and must be a "God of truth" (Isaiah 65:16), and that in all truest love there must be righteousness. And with creatures such as we are the result is plain. If in God there is perfect love, such love in its expression must regard conduct and quality; in other words, if there is in His love an element of righteousness, there may arise a breach between "Jehovah" and His creature; and if the creature sin, there must be a breach and separation.

Here then we meet with the first, and perhaps the greatest, of these apparent antagonisms in God, of which, not Scripture only, but Nature also, is so full everywhere. God surely is love; but if He loves only in virtue of quality, how can He love, what can He have to say to, sinners? Must He not hate us for our evil? On the other hand, if He only loves in virtue of relationship, what becomes of His righteousness, which must abhor and judge evil? It seems a hard riddle. But without this apparent antagonism we could not know God. For to creatures in our present state, who only see things as they appear, the full truth, or things as they are, can only be taught by the union of apparent opposites. The view we first need of God is to see Him as "Elohim." With this name therefore God begins the revelation. But fully to know God, something more than this is needed. So long as only this view of Him is seen, there can be no proper knowledge either of righteousness or sin. For in "Elohim" what we chiefly see is One whose love works with and overcomes all, and whose will prevails, whatever the hindrances. More than this is needed: even the knowledge of righteousness and sin, and how our sin, which is the opposite of righteousness and love, wounds, not the creature only, but "Jehovah." All this comes out in the knowledge of the second name of God, which Holy Scripture reveals "to make the man of God perfect" (2 Timothy 3:17). This name "Jehovah," which thus supplements the primal name "Elohim," is first brought before us in the second and third chapters of the book of Genesis. In these chapters God is always "LORD God," in the Hebrew, "Jehovah Elohim," except where the serpent twice speaks of "God" to Eve (Genesis 3:1; Genesis 3:5), and where the woman parleys with the serpent (Genesis 3:3). In both these cases, Eve and the serpent omit the name "Jehovah," and only speak of "God," as if they would shut their eyes to all except His covenant relationship:—"Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" and "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, nor touch it, lest ye die." All this is significant, as throwing light on the temptation. We are however now looking rather at the import of the name "Jehovah." And this name, like "Elohim," carries within itself its own meaning. It is formed of two tenses of the Hebrew verb, (Havah,) "to be," (Note: See Parkhurst’s and Gesenius’ Lexicons, under the word.) and means, "One who is what He is," thus

containing the substance of the well-known words to Moses, "I AM THAT I AM" (Exodus 3:14). For these words, "I am that I am," are the expression of what God is. And this, if I err not, is the special and exact import of the name "Jehovah." "Jehovah" is the expression of God's being. And because He is true being, though He is love, He must be just and holy also, for evil is not true being, but the negation or privation of it. (Note: The great answer of the early Church to the Manichaean error always was, that evil is τ■ μ■ ■ν, that is, not true being; therefore not eternal. God is true being; ■ ■ν. So Athanasius, Orat. c. Gentes, c. 4 and 6; Basil, Hom. "Quod Deus non est auctor malorum," c. 5; Gregory of Nyssa, Orat. Catech. c. 28; and Augustine, De Moribus Manich. lib. ii. § 2 and 3, and Confess. lib. vii. c. 12.) If we do not see, we may yet believe, that "I AM THAT I AM" involves all this; for touching "Jehovah," Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD" (Isaiah 6:2-3; and Revelation 4:8); and He says Himself, "Be holy, for I am holy" (Leviticus 11:44-45). "Jehovah" therefore is One, who "being what He is," "loves righteousness and hates iniquity" (Psalms 45:7), and finds in all evil, if it exists, something antagonistic to His nature, which, because it is not true, must be opposed and judged. But this recognition of something to which He is opposed, and which opposes Him, opens a depth which is never seen until we know "Jehovah." What this possibility of a will antagonistic to His own involves, not to the creature only, but to "Jehovah," is here told as only God could tell it. It is a wondrous vision, but it is most distinctly presented wherever "Jehovah" shews Himself; not least in those early chapters of Holy Scripture where this name is first revealed to us.

Let us then look more closely at the second and third chapters of Genesis. Man as well as God are seen here in an aspect very different to that which is set before us in the first chapter. There after the "waters" and the "earth" by the Word of God had "brought forth the moving creatures which had life,"—literally "the moving creatures which have a living soul," (Note: Heb. ■■■ ■■■; literally translated "living soul," in the margin of the Authorised Version, Genesis 1:20; Genesis 1:30.)—"God created man in His own image," and "set him to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over all cattle, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26; Genesis 1:28). But in the second chapter, where "Jehovah" appears, man is shewn as "formed of the dust of the ground," (Note: Three different words,—namely ■■■ "created;" ■■■, "made;" and ■■■, "formed,"—are used, surely not without a purpose, as to God's work, in Gen. 1 and 2. The first, probably connected with ■■, "a son," is to "create," or "generate:" the second is to "make" out of existing materials: the third is to "mould" or "form," as a potter moulds the clay. All these three words occur in one verse, in Isaiah 43:7 :—"I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.) then there is "breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives," (Plural in the Hebrew: ■■■■ ■■■■,) and man became, (what the creatures had been before him,) a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). (Note: The word here translated, "living soul" is exactly the same as that used respecting the beasts, in Genesis 1:20; Genesis 1:30. The text describes the genesis of what St. Paul calls the "natural" (or psychical) man. See 1 Corinthians 15:44-46; and 1 Corinthians 2:14. If I err not, Genesis 1:27 speaks of the creation of the "spiritual" man.) This is not seen until "Jehovah" is revealed. Then, having "become a living soul," man so "formed" is at once put under law. Instead of "God blessed him," as in the first chapter (Genesis 1:28), we have now, "Jehovah God commanded the man" (Genesis 2:16-17). Can we forget here the Apostle's words, "The law is not made for a righteous man" (1 Timothy 1:9)? After which "every beast and fowl is brought to man, to see what he would call them;" but among them all "for Adam there was not found a help meet for him." What had taken place I do not fully know, but this at

least is certain, that whereas, when "God created man in His own image," He said that "all was very good" (Genesis 1:31), "Jehovah Elohim" now first says, "It is not good" (Genesis 2:18); and the result is, that the man is thrown into "a deep sleep,"—a sleep which the Church has always viewed as figuring the cross and death of Christ, (Note: So Augustine, in Psalm 127 (E.V. 128) § 11; and in Psalm 126 (E.V. 127) § 7. This interpretation is common to nearly all the Fathers.) for indeed all sleep is the brother of death,—after which the man originally made in God's image, is divided, the woman taken out of the man, so that we have division where till now there had been oneness. So much as to the altered view here given of man. What is shewn of "Jehovah" is, if possible, even more significant. Every word presents Him as One who marks quality and looks for righteousness. Even in Paradise He has, beside the "tree of life," the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" also (Genesis 2:9), thus from the very beginning calling attention to the difference between these. Then, as we have already seen, He puts man under law, saying both "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not" (Genesis 2:16-17), with a warning and threat that disobedience must surely bring judgment. And then, when man disobeys, "Jehovah" pronounces judgment, sending him forth from Eden to eat bread by the sweat of his brow, until he return unto the ground from whence he was taken (Genesis 3:17-19); yet not without hope, for in the very judgment there is a promise of deliverance:—"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head" (Genesis 3:15). But the vision throughout is of One whose love is in virtue of quality; whose will therefore can be obeyed or crossed, and whose will actually is crossed, by His creatures, though not with impunity; and who therefore, (if one may say so,) is subject to His creature's acceptance and rejection,—for He may have His Paradise stripped and emptied of its heir,—and so may be affected by the destructions which sin brings with it into God's creation. Oh, what a picture these early chapters of Genesis give us of "Jehovah." He makes for the man whom He has formed a Paradise, with every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. He puts him there to walk in converse with Himself. Because He is Himself holy, He gives man a commandment, which is holy, just and good. And the serpent's word is preferred to "Jehovah's." So Paradise is emptied of its heir: "Jehovah's" work is marred: His will is crossed: His holy law is broken.

Such is the first record we have of "Jehovah," every detail of which marks the view of God which this name reveals everywhere. All that Holy Scripture further records respecting this name only emphasizes its contrast to "Elohim," and reveals more fully those characteristics of "Jehovah" which the story of the Fall brings out so clearly. Take the fourth and fifth chapters of Genesis as an example, the former of which speaks only of "Jehovah," except where Eve says something of "another seed" (Genesis 4:25); the latter no less exclusively of "Elohim." In the former we have the record of the woman's seed: in the latter, the generations of the Son of Man. Throughout the former we are told of the woman "conceiving," and then of her varied seed, which is set before us as marked by varying tastes and qualities. Thus we read, "Adam knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain; and she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. ... And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Enoch, and he builded a city. And unto Enoch was born Irad. ... And Lamech took two wives, Adah and Zillah; and Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents: and his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron" (Genesis 4:1-22). All this variety of quality in the woman's seed, in strictest conformity with the name under which it is revealed, is set before us under "Jehovah," who loves in virtue of quality, and who therefore "has respect to one," while to

another He "has not respect" (Genesis 4:4-5); who accepts one, while He judges and rejects another. How entirely different is the other record, in the fifth chapter, where we have the generations of the Son of Man, under "Elohim," where no reference is made to quality, but only to relationship; the one great fact, repeated generation after generation, being that the man "begat sons and daughters," and "lived" so long, and then "died" (Genesis 5:4; Genesis 5:7; Genesis 5:10; Genesis 5:13, &c.). Every word is distinctive and significant. It is thus also in the judgment of the Antediluvian world: how marked is the revelation respecting "Jehovah." We read, "And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth. And Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created ... and it repented Him that He had made man." What is all this in substance but a repetition of what we saw in Eden? Jehovah is righteous: He must judge evil. But the sin of man crosses and grieves Him. If His creatures suffer, He too suffers. So it is added, "And it repented Jehovah that He had made man, and it grieved Him at His heart" (Genesis 6:3; Genesis 6:5-7). Need I shew how all this differs from the vision of "Elohim"? "Jehovah" loves righteousness. If sin come into His creation, it crosses Him, and therefore must be judged.

I cannot go into all the details, yet I may perhaps notice in the record of the Flood, how the names "Elohim" and "Jehovah" are again and again interchanged in a way which cannot but strike a thoughtful reader. For instance, in Genesis 6:8, we read, that "Noah found grace in the eyes of Jehovah," while in the very next verse it is written, that "Noah walked with Elohim." For "Jehovah" is the "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord," before whom even the heavenly cherubim "veil their faces" (Isaiah 6:2): He Himself says, "No man can see my face and live" (Exodus 33:20): while in "Elohim" the revelation is of a love in virtue of relationship. Noah therefore and Enoch may "walk with Elohim, and beget sons and daughters" (Genesis 5:22); but "Noah found grace in the eyes of Jehovah," for "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations" (Genesis 6:8-9). Again, in Genesis 6:5, we read, "Jehovah saw the wickedness of man, that it was great upon the earth. ... And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created;" while only a few verses later (Genesis 6:12-18), we read, "And Elohim saw the earth, and behold it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way. And Elohim said, I will destroy them with the earth: make thee an ark of gopher wood; for with thee will I establish my covenant." Here the righteous "Jehovah" says only, "I will destroy;" while when "Elohim" utters the same words, He adds directions as to "the Ark," and a promise as to the establishment of His "covenant." Every word is characteristic. So again, in Genesis 6:22, we read, "Thus did Noah according to all that Elohim commanded him;" while in Genesis 7:5, we have, "And Noah did according to all that Jehovah commanded him." But here again the context shews the reason for the change of name. For in "Elohim's" command only "two of every living thing were to be taken into the ark" (Genesis 6:19), for these "two" would continue the race, according to the will of Him who loves in virtue of relationship. "Jehovah's" added command is, "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens" (Genesis 7:2), for "Jehovah," the truth-requiring God looks for sacrifices. Therefore after the flood, "Of every clean beast Noah offered burnt-offerings to Jehovah" (Genesis 8:20), when righteous judgment had purged the earth of its pollution. But Israel, to whom this name was especially revealed, is the great illustration of what "Jehovah" really is, though here, as in every revelation, eyes are needed to see, and ears to hear, what Holy Scripture sets before us. The revelation however is most distinct, whether in the Law, the Prophets, or the Psalms. Hear first the Law. In it "Jehovah" always speaks as the One who loves righteousness, and requires His own likeness in His people:—"Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is

one Jehovah. And thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (Deuteronomy 6:4-5; see too Deuteronomy 10:12; and Joshua 22:5); that is, Thou shalt be like the LORD thy God. Every word is a demand for a love like "Jehovah's" own, and testifies of a requirement of righteousness and love in the beloved. This is the thought all through the Law, in its threatenings and promises as much as in its commandments. Therefore we read again, "And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently to my commandments, to love Jehovah your God, and to serve Him with all your heart, that I will give you the rain of your land in due season, that thou mayest gather in thy corn and wine and oil" (Deuteronomy 11:13-14). "But if ye will not obey the voice of Jehovah, but rebel against His commandments, then shall the hand of Jehovah be against you, as it was against your fathers" (1 Samuel 12:15). Indeed the great offence of Israel, after being redeemed by "Jehovah," "to be a nation of priests and a holy nation to Jehovah" (Exodus 19:6), is that they are not a holy people, and that they do not walk as the people of "Jehovah," the truth-requiring God (Amos 3:2). And all that is enjoined, whether as to "the offerings of the LORD," or, "the priests of the LORD," or, "the temple of the LORD," or, "the altar or table of the LORD," in a word all the appointed service of "Jehovah," expresses requirement,—a requirement which is for our good, yet a requirement to be satisfied, and which calls for ceaseless sacrifices, even to the pouring out of life, and of giving our best with gladness to Him. Sacrifice therefore even unto death,—a shedding of blood, that is a pouring out of life, in His service, in the sweet-savour offerings as much as in the sin and trespass offerings,—very specially marks the worship of Jehovah. His people must be holy:—"Ye shall be holy, for I, Jehovah your God, am holy" (Leviticus 19:2). And again, "I am Jehovah your God. Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, for I am holy" (Leviticus 20:24-26).

If we grasp, even in measure, the meaning of this name, "Jehovah," we may better understand what "Elohim" said to Moses, "I am Jehovah, and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them" (Exodus 6:2-3). God had always been "Jehovah," but in the character which this name declares, that is, as the God whose love would be in virtue of certain qualities, even His elect, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had not as yet known Him. To them He had been known rather as "Elohim," that is, in covenant, or as "El Shaddai," that is, God Almighty. Not until the redemption out of Egypt, when He gave the law, and said, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," was the full import of the name "Jehovah" revealed to Israel. Eve had known it (Genesis 4:1), for she knew judgment. Noah too knew it (Genesis 9:26), for he had seen the Flood. But the life of faith, and sonship, and service, (and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, figure these,) (Note: See Types of Genesis, pp. 159, 160.) often goes far before it fully knows "Jehovah." So much as to the revelation of "Jehovah" under the Law. But the same love of quality is no less seen in what the Prophets witness of Him:—"If a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, and hath walked in my statutes and kept my judgments, he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord Jehovah, ... but he that doeth not any of these duties, ... he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him" (Ezekiel 18:5; Ezekiel 18:9; Ezekiel 18:11-13). This is the ceaseless witness of the "prophets of Jehovah" (1 Samuel 3:20; 1 Kings 22:7; 2 Chronicles 28:9). They cry aloud and spare not, lifting up their voices like a trumpet, to shew Jehovah's people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins (Isaiah 58:1); saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3); and yet "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4; Ezekiel 18:20). For "I, Jehovah thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy

unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments" (Exodus 20:5-6). This testimony never changes. The Psalms are full of it:—"Upon the wicked, Jehovah shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous Jehovah loveth righteousness, His countenance doth behold the upright" (Psalms 11:6-7). And yet with Israel, even as in Eden, and with the world before the Flood, while He most inflexibly inflicts judgment, we are shewn again and again, what so few think of, that sin grieves and wounds "Jehovah," and that He also suffers, if His people are disobedient. He Himself is pained by the destructions which sin must bring with it. Unless we see this, we do not know "Jehovah." But here, as throughout the whole record of "Jehovah," the testimony is most clear. Again and again, when Israel sinned, "the anger of Jehovah was kindled against His people, and Jehovah sold them into the hands of their enemies;" but it is not Israel only that is "sore distressed;" for of "Jehovah" also it is written, "And His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel" (Judges 10:6-7; Judges 10:9; Judges 10:16). So, again the Prophet declares, "Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves" (Amos 2:13); that is, He is pressed and burdened, and goes groaning. So again the Psalmist says, "Forty years long was I grieved with this generation in the wilderness" (Psalms 95:10). "In all their afflictions He was afflicted" (Isaiah 63:9). Who can measure the anguish of His words:—"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together" (Hosea 11:8).

We are slow to see all this. And yet if Jesus Christ really reveals "Jehovah:" if He is indeed "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person" (Hebrews 1:3): if He is, as the Apostle says, "the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15): then His cross and sufferings shew, not only that sin brings death and sorrow upon men, but (if we may say it) sorrow and trouble also on "Jehovah." Christ’s cross is the witness of "Jehovah’s" cross, though by His cross He conquers all. "Surely He hath borne our griefs" (Isaiah 53:4). Was it no grief to Him that His people rejected Him? "When He was come near and beheld the city, He wept over it" (Luke 19:41). Was He not crossed? He makes a feast, and none will come but those who are compelled. He says, "Come, for all things are now ready; and they all with one consent began to make excuse" (Matthew 22:4-5; Luke 14:16-18). Can we misunderstand His oft repeated words:—"How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not" (Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34)? His complaint is, "All the day long have I stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Isaiah 65:2; Romans 10:21). For a time at least His will is crossed. Oh wonder of all wonders! "Jehovah" suffers as only righteous Love can suffer. But there is more even than this in the revelation of "Jehovah," though the crowning glory of the revelation is only yet dimly seen by many of His people. Not only is He the God who requires righteousness; not only is He Himself affected by the destructions which sin has brought upon His creature; but still more, blessed be His name, His righteousness is not fully declared until He makes His creatures righteous with His own righteousness. What we first see in Him is law, and that, because He is righteous, He must condemn evil. But we should greatly err if we therefore concluded that this could be the end, for the new covenant of grace is His also (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-12). It is "Jehovah" who says, "This is the covenant that I will make after those days,"—(that is after law has done its work of condemnation,)—"I will put my law into their mind, and will write it in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Righteousness is not complete, if it only judges and condemns; for the devil also can condemn. The highest righteousness, while it judges sin, can

never rest until it also makes the sinner righteous. The saints have always felt this, and that God's righteousness is for them, not against them; saying, "I know, O Jehovah, that thy judgments are right, and that in very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me" (Psalms 119:75). "Quicken me, O Jehovah, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness sake bring my soul out of trouble" (Psalms 143:11). "In thy name shall thy people rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted" (Psalms 89:15-16). Because He is righteous, evil must be judged: the evil-doer must be punished. But the evil being thus judged, and the sinner condemned, the righteous God is no less righteous,—rather He is yet more righteous,—in making the judged creature a "partaker of His holiness" (Hebrews 12:10). Therefore St. Paul calls the Gospel "the ministration of righteousness, which exceeds in glory," even while he declares that the law, or "ministration of condemnation," has its own, though an inferior, "glory" (2 Corinthians 3:7-9). Therefore he says again, that our "being made righteous freely by His grace" is "to declare God's righteousness" (Romans 3:24-25). Thus, though "sin reigns unto death, grace no less reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 5:21). For "Jehovah" is not content to be righteous Himself. Unlike the Pharisee, who thanks God that "he is not as other men" (Luke 18:11), "Jehovah" will have the creature made like Himself, by coming into its place, and making it sharer in His own righteousness. In a word, "He is just, and (therefore) the justifier" (Romans 3:26). "He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake" (Psalms 23:3). For to sum up all, as the Prophet says, "This is the name whereby He shall be called, The LORD, that is, Jehovah, our righteousness" (Jeremiah 23:6). This, and nothing less, is "the end of the LORD" (James 5:11). He condemns to justify; He kills to make alive; that is to make the creature righteous as He is righteous. (Note: The whole of Scripture is full of this thought. See Psalms 85:16-18; Psalms 118:18-20; Isaiah 26:9.) But, as I have said, there are not a few from whom this part of the revelation of "Jehovah" is more or less hidden. Even men of faith, like Abram, do not see it for awhile. It comes out after the name "El Shaddai," that is "God Almighty," is revealed, and the man of faith is changed from Abram into Abraham.

Such is a brief outline of the revelation of "Jehovah." When it is seen in its completeness, it shews, what we so slowly learn, that God's love of righteousness is for us, as much as the love which springs from, and is in virtue of, relationship: nay more, that even the judgment and the curse involve a blessing; in other words, that "Jehovah" is a Saviour as truly as "Elohim." (Note: How mysterious are Jehovah's ways. "Neither to Adam nor to Eve was there one word of comfort spoken. The only hint of such a thing was given in the act of cursing the serpent. The curse involved the blessing."—The Eternal Purpose of God, by A.L. Newton, p. 10.) It shews too how the names of God, like the Four Gospels, overlap each other, each more or less containing something of that unutterable love, the fulness of which can only be expressed from stage to stage in successive revelations as we can bear it. Certainly in "Elohim's" dividing the light from the darkness, and the waters below from the waters above, and the fruitful earth from the salt and barren waters (Genesis 1:4; Genesis 1:6; Genesis 1:9), we see something of that discriminating love which is characteristic of "Jehovah," though, as we have seen, the revelation in "Elohim" is a love in virtue of relationship. So in "Jehovah," while this name expresses true being, and reveals One, who, because He is the Truth, must condemn all evil and unrighteousness, we may yet see, even in His judgments to make His creatures like Himself, tokens of the unforsaking love of which Elohim is the witness; while in His giving His own nature and righteousness to His creatures we have still further glimpses of that vision which the following name "El Shaddai," or "Almighty," more

distinctly declares to us. For God’s perfections are inseparable. All really are in all, though we learn them by degrees, and as our need calls for the growing revelation.

I will only add here, that when "Jehovah" is first revealed, as in the second and third chapters of Genesis, His primal name, "Elohim," is always added also, except, as we have seen, where the woman or the serpent speak, who speak only of "Elohim." Every act and word is of "Jehovah Elohim;" to shew that, though He is all that "Jehovah" expresses, One who is righteous and must judge sin, He never ceases to be "Elohim" also, who loves unforsakingly, because He loves in virtue of relationship; that therefore to the very end, even if man falls, there is "hope for him in God" (Psalms 3:2; Psalms 42:11), who says, "There is no Elohim besides me: look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else;" who yet says, in the same breath, "I am Jehovah, a just God and a Saviour;" and again, "Surely shall one say, In Jehovah have I righteousness and strength. ... In Jehovah shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory" (Isaiah 45:21-25). The names are often intermingled, but always with a purpose, to bring out something distinctive in our God, the knowledge of which adds to His people’s strength or gladness. "Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Jehovah, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted" (Psalms 89:15-16). Shall we not then pray with Moses, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory," when, as with Moses, "Jehovah passes before us," and proclaims His name,—"Jehovah, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 33:18; Exodus 34:6-7). Shall we not say with the Psalmist, "I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live:" "I will say of Jehovah, He is my refuge" (Psalms 104:33; Psalms 91:2).

04.03. God Almighty, or El Shaddai

3 GOD ALMIGHTY OR EL SHADDAI

WE have already seen how the revelation of the first two names of God, "Elohim" and "Jehovah," involves what looks like an antagonism. "Elohim" is One who is in covenant-relationship, and loves in virtue of relationship; who therefore carries on His new creation work accordingly to His own purpose, till all is very good. "Jehovah," on the other hand, reveals true being; One therefore who must be opposed to all that is false and evil, that is, to all that is not true being; and who must judge it, because His will is crossed by evil, even though He Himself suffers with His creatures in the judgment. We cannot deny that there is something which looks like a contradiction here, between a God who carries out His purpose according to His will, and One whose heart is grieved and whose will is crossed by the disobedience of the creature. But Holy Scripture does not shrink from repeating this apparent contradiction. We see it in the seeming opposition between the truth of God's free grace and man's free will, and in the no less seeming contradiction that our Lord's sacrifice and death was at the same moment both a sweet-savour and a non-sweet-savour offering. How, it has been asked, can it be true that all is of God's grace; "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Romans 9:16); and yet that God can say, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40); "How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not?" (Matthew 23:37). How is it possible that our Lord's sacrifice, even unto death, could have been voluntarily offered by Him, as the most perfect freewill offering of love, and therefore most acceptable to God, as a sweet savour upon His altar; and yet that at the same time it should be penal, the divinely required and necessary vindication of a broken law? Yet Holy Scripture distinctly teaches that Christ's sacrifice has both these aspects; and, as we pass from things as they appear to things as they are, we see that no sacrifice can be perfect, unless it is at the same time both voluntary and involuntary. So as to God Himself. It is only in the union of apparent opposites, (as I have already said,) that we can get even glimpses of His unmeasured and immeasurable fulness. To contend therefore only for one view or side of truth against another, simply because under the limitations of our present nature we cannot at once logically reconcile the two, is to shut ourselves out from that more perfect knowledge to which God leads us by varied revelations. But how many are thus "straitening themselves" (2 Corinthians 6:12-13), losing thereby the fulness of the light, which the acceptance of every ray of His truth, however much one may seem to differ from another, must always bring with it. And both saints and sinners may err in this way, through one-sided views of truth. On the one hand careless souls, with their vague hope of some future salvation, on the ground that God is merciful and can "never leave us nor forsake us," shut their eyes to the no less certain fact that He is righteous, and must judge, not all evil only, but evildoers also, to the uttermost. On the other, those who have learnt that God is righteous, and that His will is crossed by sin, which He must judge, conclude that, because it is now so crossed, it will be crossed for ever, and that, because He is righteous, though He desires to save all, He must for ever lose a portion of His creatures. If these careless souls could only see that their thought ignores God's holiness, and that all evil sooner or later must be judged, because the LORD is

righteous, they could hardly live as they do in their present carelessness, but would judge themselves, that they might not be judged of the LORD. On the other hand, if those who think of God as just, and that He must condemn evil, could but go on to know the LORD as He is revealed under the names "Almighty" and "Most High," they would see how their view of "Jehovah" yet lacks something, and that there are powers in the "Almighty" and the "Most High," which cannot permit God to be crossed for ever, but which, first in His elect, and then by them, can and must accomplish His will, that all men should be saved, and should come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4-6). For the third and fourth names under which God is revealed in Holy Scripture, the name "Almighty," by which He revealed Himself to Abram, the man of faith, and the name "Most High," by which He was known to the Canaanite King, Melchisedek, if we can read them aright, give God's solution of the seeming contradiction, first, to the elect, and then to those who are as far off as the Canaanite. But to know "El Shaddai," we must be like him to whom this name was first revealed, and, even if we are such, there are many stages to be trodden before this revelation is vouchsafed to us. For the man of faith "gets him out of his country," and then "from his kindred and his father's house," and has some experience of Canaan, and has gone down thence to Egypt, and has denied Sarai, and is yet without the promised seed, though he has sought it by Hagar, that is by law, and by his own energy (See Genesis 12:1; Genesis 12:5; Genesis 12:11-12; Galatians 4:24), before he hears the words, "I am God Almighty," and learns in self-judgment how the strength of God is made perfect in our weakness. If we know nothing of this path, there may be things yet beyond us in the revelation of "El Shaddai," even though we may be Abrams, that is men of faith, who seek to be obedient. But a time comes when the name is known, when we learn, not in word but deed, how the self-willed creature can be blessed, and "Jehovah's" will, crossed by man's sin, shall henceforth by grace be crossed no more. The LORD Himself, the "Almighty," help me, while I try to open what may be opened here respecting this name, "El Shaddai," or "Almighty."

And, first, to say what this name, "Almighty," does not mean, (for there may be some misapprehensions respecting this,) that we may better see what it does mean.

"Almighty" is supposed by some to mean One who has the power to do anything and everything. But such an idea of Almightiness is not that which Holy Scripture presents to us. Holy Scripture says that God is Truth (Isaiah 65:16) and Love (1 John 4:8). As the true and righteous God, the very Truth, He "cannot lie" (Titus 1:2; Numbers 23:19). He "cannot." Does this "cannot" limit His Almightiness? Would He be more Almighty, if He could lie? Certainly not. Falsehood is weakness. Almightiness therefore is not the power of doing anything or everything. Almightiness is the power to carry out the will of a Divine nature. It is no part of God's nature to be false or lie. It is therefore no limiting of His Almightiness to say, He "cannot lie." But God is also Love. His will is to bless all (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). Would it be any proof of His Almightiness, if, instead of being able to save and bless His creatures, He could only punish and destroy them? Take an illustration. Suppose a sculptor, who desired to form an image of himself out of some material, whether of wood, or stone, or metal. Would it be any proof of his power as a sculptor, if, because the stone, or wood, or metal, were hard to work on, he dashed his image all to pieces? Would such an act shew his ability? Quite the reverse. And so with God. To be "Almighty," He must be able to carry out His own will and purpose to the uttermost. And this will is to save His creatures, and to restore and re-form His image in them. If He cannot do this, and "turn the hearts of the disobedient to the

wisdom of the just" (Luke 1:17), He is not able to fulfil the desire of His nature, and so would not be Almighty. I say, "If He cannot do this." Thank God, "He is able to subdue all things unto Himself" (Php 3:21). And, because He is Love, to "subdue all things to Himself" is to subdue all things to Love.

Now this third name, "God Almighty," in the Hebrew "El Shaddai," taken in connexion with the circumstances under which it was revealed to the man of faith, opens the secret how He does this. The name itself says not a little. "El," which is so often and rightly translated "God," primarily means "might," or "power," and is used in this sense in not a few passages of Holy Scripture. So Laban says, "It is in the power (El) of my hand to do you hurt" (Genesis 31:29). So again Moses, foretelling the judgments which should come on Israel, for their sins, says, "Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given to another people, ... and there shall be no might (El) in thine hand" (Deuteronomy 28:32). (Note: For further examples of this use of "El," see Nehemiah 5:5, where we read, "Some of our daughters are brought into bondage, neither is it in our power (El) to redeem them." So too Proverbs 3:27—"Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power (El) of thine hand to do it;" and again in Micah 2:1 :—"They practise evil, because it is in the power (El) of their hand." Parkhurst's note on the root idea of this word, "El" as expressing Interposition or Intervention, even when applied, as it so constantly is, to God, is well worth turning to. See his Lexicon, under the word ■■.) Where the word is applied to the One true God, as it continually is, it always assumes His power. So David says, "It is El that girdeth me with strength" (Psalms 18:32); and again, "Thou art the El, that doest wonders" (Psalms 77:14). (Note: To a mere English reader there will always be a difficulty in knowing whether the name "God" in our English version is "Elohim" or "El" in the original. For both these names have been alike translated "God," while there is an important difference in their signification. When I state again that "Elohim" is translated "God" about two thousand two hundred and fifty times, and that "El" is also translated by the same word, "God," no less than two hundred and twenty-five times in our Authorised Version of the Old Testament, and that there is nothing in our translation to mark the difference between these two names, it will at once be evident that it must be impossible for a mere English reader to know whether some given passage, where the name "God" occurs in our version, speaks of "El" or of "Elohim." If a Revised Version of the Old Testament is ever issued by authority, it would surely be well in some way to mark where the original reads "El," and where it is "Elohim." See further as illustrating this name "El," Deuteronomy 3:24; Psalms 68:35; Psalms 78:19; Psalms 89:7; Nehemiah 9:32; Job 36:5; Job 36:26; Job 40:9; Isaiah 40:18; Isaiah 46:9; &c.) When it is applied to angels or men, the same idea of power is always present in it (Psalms 29:1; Psalms 82:1; Psalms 89:6); as also when it is used of lower creatures, such as "Behemoth," who in virtue of his power is called, "chief of the ways of El" (Job 40:19), or of the "great mountains" or "goodly cedars," which are called "mountains of El," or "cedars of El," because they surpass others in magnificence (Psalms 36:6; Psalms 80:10). The thought expressed in the name "Shaddai" (Heb. ■■■) is different, though it also describes power; but it is the power, not of violence, but of all-bountifulness. "Shaddai" primarily means "Breasted," being formed directly from the Hebrew word "Shad" (Heb. ■■), that is, "the breast," or, more exactly, a "woman's breast." (Note: See Genesis 49:25; Job 3:12; Psalms 22:9; Song of Solomon 1:13; Song of Solomon 4:5; Song of Solomon 7:3; Song of Solomon 7:7-8; Song of Solomon 8:1; Song of Solomon 8:8; Song of Solomon 8:10; Isaiah 28:9; Lamentations 4:3; Ezekiel 16:7; Ezekiel 23:3, and other passages; in all which the word translated "breasts" is "Shad," the direct root of "Shaddai." Our English word to

"shed" is said by some to come from the same root, which can be traced also in Sanscrit.) Parkhurst thus explains the name:—"Shaddai, one of the Divine titles, meaning 'The Pourer or Shedder forth,' that is, of blessings, temporal and spiritual." But inasmuch as the pourings forth even of the breast, if not properly received, may choke a child; as the rain from heaven, if not drunk in by the earth, may form torrents, and cause ruin and destruction; the same word came to have another meaning, namely to sweep away or make desolate; (Note: For instances of this secondary sense of ■■ see Job 5:22; Psalms 12:5; Isaiah 13:6; Isaiah 22:4; Jeremiah 6:7; Joel 1:15; and in other places.) and this thought also may be connected with the name "Shaddai," for blessings and gifts misused become curses. The kindred name, "Sheddim" (Heb. ■■■■), referred to as objects of idolatrous worship in other parts of Scripture, (and in our Authorised Version translated "devils," See Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalms 106:37,) describes "the many-breasted idols, representing the genial powers of nature," which were "worshipped among the heathen, as givers of rain, and pourers forth of fruits and increase." (Note: See Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon, under the words "Shaddai" and "Sheddim." The "Vale of Siddim," which is mentioned in Genesis 14:3; Genesis 14:10, and which was "well watered as the garden of the Lord," Genesis 13:10, seems to have received its name, which is from the same root, ■■, from its extreme fertility.) "El Shaddai" is the true Giver of His own life, of whom these heathen "Sheddim" were the idolatrous perversion. In this name the men of faith have ever trusted, of His fulness to receive grace for grace.

If this is seen, I need hardly explain how this title, the "Breasted," or the "Pourer-forth," came to mean "Almighty." Mothers at least will understand it. A babe is crying,—restless. Nothing can quiet it. Yes: the breast can. A babe is pining,—starving. Its life is going out. It cannot take man's proper food: it will die. No: the breast can give it fresh life, and nourish it. By her breast the mother has almost infinite power over the child. Some perhaps will remember the old Greek story, which has come down to us in different forms, (Note: See the Greek Anthology, lib. 1., cap. 14, § 1.) of the babe laid down near some cliff by its mother, while she was busy with her herd of goats. The babe, unperceived, crawled to the edge. The mother, afraid to take a step, lest the child should move further and fall over the precipice, only uncovered her breast, and so drew back the infant to her. It is this figure which God Himself has chosen in this third name, by which to express to us the nature of His Almightiness. The Almightiness which will make His creatures like Him is not of the sword or of mere force. "Jehovah" bears a sword (Deuteronomy 32:41-42; Ezekiel 21:3; Ezekiel 21:5). But "El Shaddai," the "Almighty," here revealed to Abram, is not the "sworded" God. His Almightiness is of the breast, that is, of bountiful, self-sacrificing, love, giving and pouring itself out for others. Therefore He can quiet the restless, as the breast quiets the child: therefore He can nourish and strengthen, as the breast nourishes: therefore He can attract, as the breast attracts, when we are in peril of falling from Him. This is the "Almighty." And so St. John, when he receives the vision of One who declares, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty," marks that He, who says, "I am the Almighty," is "clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle" (Revelation 1:8; Revelation 1:13). (Note: "Girt about the paps." St. John here uses the word μαστ■ς, which is the woman's breast or "paps," while μαζ■ς is used more indiscriminately for the breast of either man or woman.) Here is the woman's dress and the woman's breast, while yet the speaker is "The Almighty." This is "El Shaddai," the "Pourer-forth," who pours Himself out for His creatures; who gives them His lifeblood (Acts 20:28); who "sheds forth His Spirit" (Acts 2:17; Acts 2:33), and says, "Come unto me and drink" (John 7:37): "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it"

(Psalms 81:10): and who thus, by the sacrifice of Himself, gives Himself and His very nature to those who will receive Him, that thus His perfect will may be accomplished in them. The blessed Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ is the ceaseless witness of this His giving Himself to us. We may, and we must, "Eat His flesh and drink His blood," if He is to live and work His works in us. Only so, "if we eat His flesh and drink His blood," can we "abide in Him and He in us" (John 6:53-57). Only so, in virtue of His indwelling, can He fulfil His purpose, and be Almighty in us. And yet this giving of Himself involves judgment: self-judgment, if we are obedient: if disobedient, the judgment of the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:31-32). This is the truth which the name, "El Shaddai," or "Almighty," everywhere proclaims. But it nowhere comes out more clearly than in the record of the LORD'S dealings with Abram, when this name, "Almighty," was first revealed to him. Abram had long been the heir of promise. As yet he knew not "Jehovah," but the LORD had promised to bless him, and to give him an inheritance, and a seed which should be as the dust of the earth for multitude (Genesis 12:7; Genesis 13:15-16). But Abram was yet childless. Moved, however, by the promise of God, in his own energy, and by a bondmaid, he makes efforts to obtain that which was to come to him, not in his own strength, but by God's Almightiness. Then comes the revelation of "El Shaddai." God gives Himself to Abram, and then Abram perfectly gives himself to God, and by God is made fruitful. First, the LORD says, "I am God Almighty." Here is the revelation of the source from which Abram is to receive everything. Then He adds something to Abram's name. He puts something into Abram, which at once changes him from Abram to Abraham. What He adds is the letter He, (■), the chief letter of His own name "Jehovah,"—that sound which can only be uttered by an outbreathing,—thus giving to the elect something of His own nature, (for name denotes nature,) and so by the communication of Himself and of His outbreath or spirit, moulding His creature to His own pleasure, that he may be a channel of blessing to many others. (Note: May I refer the reader to my Types of Genesis, pp. 221, 222, for a further exposition of the import of this change in Abram's name.) At once Abram yields himself to "God Almighty" in everything:—first, in the outward act of circumcision, that figure of self-judgment and perfect self-surrender, which testified that his hope was not in the flesh, or its energies, but only in the blessed Giver of Himself, by whom alone we can bring forth the fruit that is accepted of Him:—and then no less in the giving up and sacrifice of the much-loved son, who had so long been waited for, and of whom it had been said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called;" that thus, in the utter renunciation of himself and of his own will, the power of "Almighty God" might be brought in, and the elect in his weakness be made strong, and in his giving up of all be filled with all the fulness of his God. This was the lesson Abram learnt from the revelation of the name, "El Shaddai." This is the lesson we must all learn, if we too are to know God as "Almighty," able to fulfil His purpose in us, and from fruitless Abrams to make us Abrahams, that is the "fathers of a multitude" (See Genesis 17:5, margin). From the "Pourer out" of His own Spirit we must receive that Spirit, which will make us give up ourselves in all things; and that Spirit, though freely given, we only receive in the measure that we are emptied of all self-will and self-confidence. Thus are the elect made fruitful. So long as we lack this breath of God, though heirs of promise, we struggle on for our own will, and even in our efforts to gain the promise, as in Abram's dealings with Hagar, are really crossing Jehovah. When He reveals Himself as the One who gives Himself and His own life to us, and by grace we drink into His Spirit, that "renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He sheds forth abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus 3:5-6), then the creature's will is yielded to God, and indeed becomes one with God's will, and therefore God can do what He will, both in us, and with us. Thus God gives Himself

to us, just in measure as we give ourselves to Him. Thus His Almightiness comes to us in what appears to be our helplessness. The less of self, the more of God. And the one only thing needed on man's part, to receive all this Almightiness, is the faith to yield oneself to God, and to let Him do what He will with us. Can we so believe as to let God do what He pleases with us? Then as "all things are possible with God" (Mark 10:27), so "all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). "Nations and kings shall come out" of him who is "as good as dead" (See Genesis 17:6; and Hebrews 11:12). Nor are the elect alone blessed in all this. Abram is witness, that by this sacrifice of self, through receiving God, blessing comes down on others who are yet far off. All the kindreds of the earth are blessed in the elect, when he can give himself, and his strength, and his life, and all he has to God, that Jehovah's will, so long crossed, may have its way everywhere.

Such is the lesson of the name "El Shaddai," and its connexion with circumcision, that is the self-judgment of the elect, and with the higher fruitfulness which at once results from it. Its subsequent use in Holy Scripture only illustrates the same great truth, that God by giving Himself and His life to us can make us like Himself, givers of ourselves and of our lives, first to Him, and then by Him to others. The name, "Almighty," occurs forty-eight times in Holy Scripture; and of these, thirty-one are in the book of Job, and eight in the Revelation; but wherever it occurs, all the allusions to it repeat implicitly or explicitly this same teaching. I have already referred to the words to Abram, when "El Shaddai" speaks and says, "This is my covenant which ye shall keep. Ye shall circumcise your flesh, and I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and nations and kings shall come out of thee" (Genesis 17:6). But the same thought of fruitfulness is present wherever "El Shaddai" is spoken of. So when Isaac sends Jacob away to Padan-aram to seek a wife, it is upon "El Shaddai" that he calls, saying, "God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people" (Genesis 28:3). So it is "God Almighty" who says to Jacob, "Be fruitful and multiply: a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee" (Genesis 35:11). It is to "God Almighty" that the same Jacob looks to save his children, when he hears that Simeon is detained in Egypt, and his loved Benjamin is required to go there (Genesis 43:14). And in his blessing upon his sons, it is under this name, "Almighty," that he blesses Joseph, with "blessings of the breasts and of the womb" (Genesis 49:25). The name is ever linked with fruit and fruitfulness, even in cases where it is the loss of fruit that is lamented. Thus Naomi twice speaks of her sons' deaths as "affliction from the Almighty," saying "The Almighty hath afflicted me." ... "The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me" (Ruth 1:20-21); while, on the other hand, a "seed that is great, and an offspring as the grass of the field," is the portion of him who "despises not the chastening of the Almighty" (Job 5:17; Job 5:25). For indeed, as with Abram, so with the elect, an acceptance of the judgment of our flesh is the one way to receive, and then to minister, the special blessing which "God Almighty" has prepared for us. But it is in the book of Job, and in the Revelation, as I have already said, that we most often find the name "Almighty," and in both cases for the same reason. First as to Job. One can hardly understand the continual reference to "El Shaddai" in this book, without some apprehension of its distinctive lesson. The aim of the book is to shew the sacrificial use of God's elect, and how a "perfect and upright" man, not yet dead to self, by suffering in the flesh is purged from self, and thus made an instrument, first to silence Satan, and then, as a priest, appointed by God, to pray and intercede for those who have condemned him. All know the story, how Job is stripped, first of his wealth and of his sons, and then smitten with a loathsome disease, which is a daily death to him. Three friends come to assist him. "Miserable comforters are they all" (Job 16:2). They all, in their replies to Job,—Eliphaz more

often than the other two,—refer to and dwell upon the name "Almighty." (Note: Eliphaz uses this name in Job 5:17; Job 15:25; Job 22:3; Job 22:17; Job 22:23; Job 22:25-26; Bildad, in Job 8:3; Job 8:5; Zophar in Job 11:7. I notice too that while Job's three friends constantly refer to "El," e.g. Job 5:8; Job 8:3; Job 8:5; Job 8:13; Job 8:20; Job 15:4; Job 15:11; Job 15:13; Job 15:25; Job 18:21; Job 20:15; Job 20:29; Job 22:2; Job 22:13; Job 22:17; Job 25:4, &c., they only twice name "Elohim," and in both these instances they speak of "El" in the same verse. See Job 5:8; Job 20:29.) They seem to use it as a sort of proof, that Job's troubles are a judgment for his sins, for "Shaddai" the "Pourer-forth," would (so they argue) surely bless the upright; and if, instead of blessing, He pours out judgments upon Job, then Job must be an evildoer. Eliphaz's one idea of God's government is the exercise of power, especially in punishing the wicked; for when he speaks of the great doings of God, his words are mainly of "crushing," and "destroying," and "causing to perish" (Job 4:19-20; Job 5:4; Job 15:21). Bildad dwells rather on God's justice (Job 8:3; Job 8:6-7; Job 8:20). Zophar's reproof of Job is based on God's wisdom (Job 11:6-12). But the three friends agree that Job's sorrows must come from sin on his part. None of them have any idea of the sacrificial use of God's elect, or how by the sufferings of His saints God may be stilling the enemy and the avenger. Of these three friends God says, that, with all their zeal to justify God, "they have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath." Eliphaz is singled out for special reproof (Job 42:7); though his view of God's "Almightiness," as being mere power to "crush" and to "destroy," is still with many the approved doctrine. Job is accepted and blessed, spite of all his self-assertion, and his perplexity, how "God Almighty," being what He is, can allow him to suffer such varied agonies (Job 24:1; Job 21:1-34). (Note: Thirteen times does Job specially refer to this name, "Almighty.") But he understands at last. His pains have wrought his cure. He needed to be emptied to be better filled; and "God Almighty," having emptied, fills His servant in due time with double blessings. For the day had been when Job could say, "When the ear heard me it blessed me: and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me" (Job 29:11). The day comes, when his flesh is judged, and he cries out, "But now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6). Job, even as we, with all his uprightness, had to learn how self can live and please itself, not only in an irreligious and worldly life, but even in what looks like, and indeed is, real devotedness. Of this religious self he has to be stripped. And he is stripped by "El Shaddai." The judgment of his flesh, which is "the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," by that death to self, which is indeed "the circumcision of Christ" (Colossians 2:11), brings him to the self-emptying and self-despair, where the Lord, as the "Pourer-forth," can fill him out of His Divine fulness. Job at once is freed, and made a blessing. He "prays for his friends, and is accepted," and his "latter end is blessed more than his beginning;" for he receives "twice as much as he had before, fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses: he had also seven sons, and three daughters. And after this Job lived a hundred and forty years,"—that is, twice the allotted "three-score and ten,"—"and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations" (Job 42:10-16). Here was fruitfulness indeed. "El Shaddai," whom he had invoked, though He had tried him, had indeed blessed him. The other book, where the name "Almighty" recurs so often, is that which describes "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him" (Revelation 1:1), and which thus opens the course and stages of the manifestation of the Divine life in this outer world, where sin and death are now working. Here the other view of "El Shaddai," as the "Pourer-forth" of judgments, is most prominent; for the Revelation shews the coming in of

God’s life, not so much with the elect, (which is seen in Abram, Job, and others,) but rather into the world, which will not willingly receive it, or which, if in some sense it is accepted, only perverts it. And the result is, that as the pourings forth of the breast, not properly received, may choke the babe:—as the rain from heaven, not drunk in by the earth, may cause a torrent, which for the time brings only desolation:—as drinking Christ’s cup may be a drinking of judgment or damnation (1 Corinthians 11:29):—so the pouring out of the Divine life and Spirit into the world may, and indeed must, bring judgment, that so through judgment, if in no other way, the true Kingdom may be brought in. The elect who willingly receive the Word and outbreath of "El Shaddai," shew that even an obedient reception involves the judgment of the flesh. How much sorer must this judgment be to the world which will not receive God! If the Word or Spirit comes to such, it must be in double judgment. It is judgment to the willing elect: how much more to those who will not open their hearts to welcome it! For "all flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it" (Isaiah 40:6-7). Therefore in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gives Him in the world, we read so often of the "Almighty," and of the outpourings of "El Shaddai," as causing judgments. His most precious gifts bring chastening and judgment to His rebellious creatures. Yet spite of the judgment, nay rather by it, the Kingdom comes. In the Revelation we are shewn the successive stages of its coming. And it is especially at the end, when the best gifts are given, that there is the sorest judgment. Three stages of the coming of the Lord are revealed, under the figures of the Opening of the Sealed Book or Word, (Note: "Book" or "Word" are the same in Hebrew, ■■■; see Genesis 15:1; Genesis 15:4; Genesis 24:30; Genesis 24:52; 1 Chronicles 29:29; 2 Chronicles 9:29; 2 Chronicles 12:15, &c. A book is a word.) the Sounding forth of Trumpets, and the Pouring forth of Golden Vials. Connected with all these is the name "Almighty:" once in connexion with the Loosing of the Seals (Revelation 4:8): once with the Trumpets (Revelation 11:17): and four times in connexion with the Pouring out of the Vials, and the final coming of the Lord (Revelation 15:3; Revelation 16:7; Revelation 16:14; Revelation 19:15). (Note: Isaiah and Joel also both foresee, that "the day of the Lord shall come as a destruction from the Almighty." Isaiah 13:6; Joel 1:15.) The Lamb first comes as the Looser of the Seals. He who had been the Pourer out of His own blood from the beginning, for He is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 5:9; Revelation 13:8), begins by giving forth His Word in opening the Seals, that is the mystery of God (Romans 16:25-26; Ephesians 3:4-5). These are judgments to the world (Revelation 6:1-17). But there is still sorer judgment when the Breath of God goes forth through the Trumpets, and smites a "third part" of the earth, and the sea, and rivers, and sun, and all things of this world (Revelation 8:2-13; Revelation 9:1-21). (Note: Compare this "third part" with what St. Paul says of man’s nature, "spirit, soul, and body," in 1 Thessalonians 5:23.) Lastly we have the final pouring out of the Golden Vials of the true temple, which smites, not a "third part" only, but the whole creature or creation. In these is filled up the wrath of God (Revelation 15:1; Revelation 16:1-21). And yet, as William Law said long ago, "the Love that brought forth the existence of all things changes not through the fall of its creatures, but is continually at work to bring back all fallen nature and creatures. All that passes for a time between God and His fallen creature is but one and the same thing, working for one and the same end; and though this is called ’wrath,’ and that called ’punishment,’ ’curse,’ and ’death,’ it is all from the beginning to the end nothing but the work of the first creating Love, and means nothing else, and does nothing else, but those works of purifying fire, which must and alone can burn away all that dark evil, which separates the creature

from its first-created union with God. God’s providence, from the fall to the restitution of all things, is doing the same thing as when He said to the dark chaos of fallen nature, ’Let there be light.’ He still says, and will continue saying, the same thing, till there is no evil of darkness left in nature and creature. God creating, God illuminating, God sanctifying, God threatening and punishing, God forgiving and redeeming, are all but one and the same essential, immutable, never-ceasing working of the Divine Nature. That in God, which illuminates and glorifies saints and angels in heaven, is that same working of the Divine Nature, which wounds, pains, punishes, and purifies, sinners upon earth. And every number of destroyed sinners, whether thrown by Noah’s flood or Sodom’s brimstone into the terrible furnace of a life insensible of anything but new forms of misery until the judgment day, must through the all-working, all-redeeming love of God, which never ceases, come at last to know that they had lost and have found again such a God of love as this." (Note: Law’s Address to the Clergy, pp. 171, 172.) The end is a "new creation," where "there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor pain" (Revelation 21:4-5); where "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb shall be the glory and the light" for ever (Revelation 21:22-24).

Such is "El Shaddai," "God Almighty," who works His will in His elect by giving Himself to them, that they may give themselves to Him, and then by Him be blessed to others, in and by that circumcision or self-judgment, which makes them vessels, through which He can minister His own fulness. In a word, like Christ, they are made sacramental,—pledges of what God can do in man, and means by which others may receive the same blessing. God, by the sacrifice of Himself, has made them partakers of His nature. They, as His sons and daughters, make others partakers of the same nature. Their separation to Him fits them for their work; as He says, "Come out, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:17-18). (Note: The only place in the New Testament where the name "Almighty" occurs, except in the Apocalypse.) Thus they also become "breasted" and "pourers forth." In them is fulfilled the promise to Jerusalem, that "those who love her may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that they may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory" (Isaiah 66:10-11). Out of their belly flow rivers of living water (John 7:38). By faith they minister the Spirit and work miracles (Galatians 3:5).

If all this is seen we may better understand why the Church makes such use of this name, "Almighty," and begins so many of her prayers with the words, "Almighty and most merciful Father," or "Almighty God." (Note: See the Prayer Book generally, and specially the Communion Service.) For by this name she claims His Spirit, confessing that He gives all, while by the same name she reminds her children, how, in His very gifts, those who eat and drink unworthily may eat and drink their own judgment. As we call upon this name let us remember all its rich and solemn import, and by grace be made, not only, like old Adam, "living souls," but, like Christ our Lord, "quickening spirits" also to all around us (1 Corinthians 15:45). Shall we not bless God for this name revealed to men of faith? Shall we not "abide under the shadow of the Almighty"?

04.04. Most High God, or El Elyon

4 MOST HIGH GOD, OR EL ELYON

WE have seen how the view of God, revealed to Abram under the name "El Shaddai," or "Almighty," reconciles, so far as the elect are concerned, the apparent contradiction suggested by the first two names of God, and by the varying aspects of His nature which are brought before us in them. The name, "Most High," which we are now to consider, throws yet further light on the same point, revealing God in relation to those who are not Abram's seed, who nevertheless possess a priesthood of an order which is earlier and greater than that of the elect, and yet not in opposition to it. This name, "Most High God," is revealed in connexion with Melchisedek, the King of Salem, in the days of Abram. Melchisedek, we are told, was "priest of the Most High God;" and it was through him that Abram also received the knowledge of this name; for it was only after Abram's meeting with Melchisedek that he says, "I have lifted up my hand unto the LORD, the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth" (Genesis 14:22). The elect's knowledge of this name therefore is somehow connected with his knowledge of Melchisedek, and of the special nature of his priesthood, as "priest of the Most High."

Now that there is something very deep and special in the knowledge of this name, and of this priesthood, is obvious from the way in which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews introduces what he has to say respecting it. The passage is in the fifth, sixth, and seventh, chapters of that Epistle. There we see that the writer, having in the earlier portion of his Epistle spoken, first, of "God," who "has built all things," and who "made them by His Son" (Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 3:4), whose "word is quick and powerful," for He is "appointed Heir of all things" (Hebrews 4:12); and then, secondly, of the "LORD," who "remains the same, and whose years shall not fail" (Hebrews 1:12), who "is and shall be what He is," to whose words therefore "we ought to give the more earnest heed, lest at any time we let them slip" (Hebrews 2:1); and then, thirdly, of One who gives His Spirit to men, so that the elect are partakers of His life, as he says, "He that sanctifieth, and they which are sanctified are all of one" (Hebrews 2:11), which is the truth taught under the title, "The Almighty," who in the power of His outbreathing makes His elect partakers of His nature;—the writer, having thus referred to the three names of God which we have already considered, namely, "God," "LORD," and "Almighty," says that he wishes, "if God permit," to go on to speak of One, who, being a "Priest after the order of Melchisedek," is "Priest of the Most High God" (Hebrews 5:6; Hebrews 5:10; Hebrews 7:1); "of whom," he adds, "we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing that ye are dull of hearing; for when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." But at this point the writer suddenly breaks off, and makes a long digression, which occupies the latter part of the fifth, and the whole of the sixth, chapter of his Epistle.

What he says in this digression is in substance this:—"You ought, considering the time you have been believers, to be able to go on from the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, which are as

milk for babes, to the deeper truths of revelation, which are the meat for men of full age." The "first principles" consist of three things: first, "repentance from dead works;" secondly, "faith towards God;" and thirdly, a certain "doctrine" or teaching, as to "baptisms, and the laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment." Of these the first, touching "repentance," is connected with "Jehovah," the just and holy LORD: the second, namely "faith towards God," takes us back to "Elohim's" changeless love in virtue of relationship: while the third, containing a fourfold doctrine,—as to "baptisms," which are purifications; as to "laying on of hands," which are gifts bestowed; and as to "resurrection" and "eternal judgment," which are the varying results of the working of God's Spirit on the creature, whether obedient or disobedient,—is all directly connected with the knowledge of "El Shaddai," the "Pourer-forth" of His own life, to make His creatures fruitful. These truths, which comprise all that the majority of Christians now consider essential, are by the Apostle here all spoken of as simply "first principles." "Leaving these," he says, "let us go on unto perfection." "And this," he adds, "we will do, if God permit." But God may not permit. For there is a peculiar peril in the carnal reception of the higher truth, which is contained in the name "Most High," and in the doctrine of the "priesthood of Melchisedek," which is connected with this revelation. "For," as the Apostle goes on to say, "it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame;" for this knowledge may be like the rain, which not only makes the ground bring forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, but may also stimulate it to produce an increased growth of thorns and briars; so that by this higher knowledge a man may be even worse than he was before, "nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." There is therefore a special peril, as well as blessing, in the knowledge of this name, "Most High." An awful pride may be the result of an unsanctified reception of it. If our self-will is chastened by it, we may be made more perfect and enlightened; but if our will is only stimulated to greater self-confidence and self-assertion by the deeper truth received, a more awful judgment can only result from such knowledge. As old John Bunyan said, when asked, what doctrine was the worst,—"I know of none so dangerous as the truth of God received carnally." The knowledge of the "Most High" is therefore "a secret" (Psalms 91:1). A Divine warning mercifully meets us on our approach to it. With this warning, which is that of the Apostle, when he would speak of the "priest of the Most High," I proceed to say what little I may respecting this name of God, and the circumstances under which it is revealed in Holy Scripture. Both the name itself, and its special connexion with things and persons outside the election, if we can read their import, are full of significance.

First, as to the name itself, "Most High God:" in Hebrew, "El Elyon" (Heb. ■■■■■ ■■): the "El" here is the same as in the name "El Shaddai," and, here as there, expresses the same idea of God as "Might" or "Power." (Note: See what is said of "El" in chapter 3.) What is further revealed here is that this "God," or "El," is the "Most High," and as such "Possessor of heaven and earth" (Genesis 14:19; Genesis 14:22). Now this name "Elyon," or "Most High," like some others which are used of God, is at times applied in Holy Scripture to things and persons of this world; but, wherever it is so used, its special and distinctive sense is always, that the person or thing it speaks of is the highest of a series or order of like natures. It is used of the "highest basket" of a tier of baskets (Genesis 40:17): of the "nation high above all nations" (Deuteronomy 26:19); of the "king higher than other kings" (Psalms 89:27); of "chambers higher than other chambers" (Ezekiel 41:7; Ezekiel 42:5).

(Note: For other illustrations of this, compare, the "upper watercourse," 2 Chronicles 32:30; the "upper pool," 2 Kings 18:17; Isaiah 7:3; Isaiah 36:2; the "upper gate," 2 Kings 15:35; 2 Chronicles 23:20; the "upper court," Jeremiah 36:10; and the "high house," Nehemiah 3:25; in all which places the word "Elyon" is used, to describe the "pool," or "gate," or "court," or "house," higher than other "pools," or "gates," or "courts," or "houses.") A different word is used when it is said that the "heavens are higher than the earth" (Isaiah 55:9); or that the "clouds are higher than a man" (Job 35:5). Thus the word, "Elyon," or "Most High," here applied to God, reveals, that, though He is the "Highest," there are others below Him, endowed by Him with like natures, and therefore in some way related to Him; but that, because He is the "Highest," He has power to rule and turn them as He will, should they be disobedient or seek to exalt themselves against Him. For "the Most High doeth according to His will, in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou? His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation" (Daniel 4:34-35). Who then are those below Him, who are endowed with like natures? First, angels are "sons of God" (Job 38:7; Psalms 29:1; Psalms 89:6): even fallen angels, whatever the depth of their fall, are partakers of a nature which is descended from Him (Job 1:6; Job 2:1). This it is which makes their fall so awful. These are the powers of heaven (Ephesians 6:12), which exalted themselves, figured by the kings of Tyre and Babylon of old, whose "heart was lifted up because of their beauty, and who corrupted their wisdom by reason of their brightness;" who "said, I am El: I sit in the seat of God:" "I will exalt my throne above the stars of El: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High" (See Ezekiel 28:2-17; Isaiah 14:12-14). But there are others, who "for a little while are lower than the angels" (Hebrews 2:7), who are also "children of the Most High." This is the point constantly referred to in the Psalms which speak of the "Most High," especially in the Psalm which our Lord quotes, where men are called "gods:"—"Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods, and all of you the children of the Most High?" (Psalms 82:1; Psalms 82:6; John 10:34). For man was "created in the image of God" (Genesis 1:27). (Note: I have already referred to the connexion between ■■■, to create, and ■■, a son.) He may not know it, for he is fallen, and become "even as a beast" (Psalms 40:12; Psalms 40:20; Psalms 73:22); for awhile without his true inheritance; yet is he in his fall a fallen son; for "Adam was son of God" (Luke 3:38), and "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29). Therefore even to unconverted Gentiles, bowing to idols, Paul could quote as truth their poet’s words, "For we also are His offspring" (Acts 17:28), and say again to carnal Corinthians, that "the head of every man is Christ," and that "man is the image and glory of God" (1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 11:7), like the "lost silver" (Luke 15:8), bearing something of the image of his Maker, dimmed and defaced as that image may be through sin. Certainly when one thinks what man can do, even in his fall, and in this life, which is "but as a vapour, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14), how he can weigh the earth, measure the stars, calculate to a moment when some planet in its rapid course shall pass between us and the sun, and tell where on one part of the surface of this moving globe this shall be seen, while on other parts of the same globe it shall be invisible: how he can make the lightning carry his words, under the sea or over the earth: how he makes the sunlight give us pictures of every seen creature: nay more, how he can speak the words of God Himself, for God speaks both through him and to him:—when but for a moment one considers this, what does it all witness, but that man is even here a son of the "Most High,"—a fallen son, even a dead son, leprous, palsied, mad, or blind, not knowing his Father,—nevertheless a son; and

because a son, never to be forsaken by Him from whom he came; for "the fathers must lay up for the children, and not the children for the fathers" (2 Corinthians 12:14). There is surely peril in this high truth, yet there is rich blessing also; for the "Most High" cannot deny Himself, and therefore, even if we forget our relationship to Him, can and surely will overthrow and overturn and overcome us, till He has again His due place in us for our blessing. For He is "over all" (Romans 9:5), the "God of gods" (Psalms 136:2), the "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:16), "of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things" (Romans 11:36). This is the truth first revealed in Scripture through Melchisedek, who was "king of Salem, and priest of the Most High." Apparently of Canaan's race, (Note: This was the view of some of the most learned of the Fathers, Hippolytus, Eusebius, Theodoret, and others, (see Jerome, in his Epist. lxxviii, on this subject,) and seems also to have been the opinion of Josephus. (Antiqq. i. 10. § 2.) The name of the king of Jerusalem in the days of Joshua, Adonizedek, supports this view; Adonizedek being substantially the same as Melchisedek, the one meaning "lord," the other "king," of righteousness.) for he dwelt among them as one of their kings, he does not seem to have known,—certainly he does not speak of,—"Elohim," the covenant-keeping God, or of "Jehovah," the righteous LORD, who yet suffers with His fallen creatures, or of "El Shaddai," the Breasted God, who gives His own Spirit to His people. All these are names which are the special portion of the elect. But he knew "Elyon," the "Most High," whose name preserved, even among the Gentiles, the truth, however much abused, that in God's creation there are "thrones and dominions and principalities and powers," called "gods" (Colossians 1:16; Psalms 97:7), which are more or less akin to God; and that though for a season lower than these, and under a curse for sin, men also are "children of the Most High," and as such predestined to an inheritance which must be one of rich blessing. Strange and yet most certain, that this truth, so dimly seen by Israel, should have been kept by the Gentile world. Yet so it was. The old mythologies are full of stories of men who were sons of gods, these gods being sons of a higher God, who was the Lord of all. Melchisedek shews how even a son of Canaan kept up the same tradition of man's high nature; while what is recorded of his people reveals, how in this faith, often to their own hurt, they sought, by "witches, and consulters with familiar spirits, and wizards, and necromancers" (Deuteronomy 18:10-12), to hold converse with the unseen powers, which they recognised as above, and yet not wholly severed from, them. Their idea of God was terribly perverted, but it was the perversion of a great truth, that God had sons, and that man was one; a truth which the elect nation, through their bondage in Egypt, had lost perhaps even more than far-off Gentiles. The name, "El Elyon," preserved this truth of God's relation to "thrones and dominions" far below Him, and that even men, under a curse, and fallen from Him, are indeed "His offspring."

All this, and secrets of grace, even more profound, are revealed yet hidden in what is recorded of Melchisedek. For the fact that man is son of God involved a further relationship. Man as son of God must be a priest; for as God, because He is love, cannot but sacrifice, so man, the son of God, and inheriting His nature, must also sacrifice. The name, "El Shaddai," revealed much. It told how God is specially related to the elect, and that through circumcision, that is the judgment of the flesh, a new life shall be brought forth, a life, like Isaac's, of sacrifice, and yet of rest, in and through whom all nations shall be blessed. The name "El Elyon" reveals more,—namely, that Gentiles, like Canaan, though doomed to judgment here, have, in their relation to the "Most High," the pledge of sure and high blessing, even to be priests in virtue of their sonship. This truth shadowed in Melchisedek, who is brought before us in Scripture, as "without genealogy or

descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:3), is the blessed truth which is perfectly revealed in Christ, the Son of God, who, because He is One to whom God says, "Thou art my son, to day have I begotten thee," is "priest after the order of Melchisedek" (Hebrews 5:5-6). Christ is the witness of man's true nature—that he is son of God. He serves as priest, because he is a son of God. His priesthood, as the Apostle says, is "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:16). The priesthood after the order of Aaron is a priesthood based on a commandment (Hebrews 7:5); that commandment being required by man's fall, and the consequent separation between God and man, and man and man. But the priesthood of man, as man, that is, as son of God, for "Adam was son of God" (Luke 3:38), is based on the participation of the Divine nature. And though that nature is spoilt and perverted by the fall, and man, in ignorance of God through the serpent's lie, regarding Him as an Exactor rather than a Giver, ceases himself to be a giver or offerer of himself in willing sacrifice; yet is his nature in its source and essence still Divine. Even in its fall it is the fall of something heavenly. The priesthood of one so related to God must be in virtue of a life, not of a commandment, and as such far greater than any priesthood or righteousness of law. The "priest of the Most High" preserves this truth, and is the means of teaching it even to him who had received the promises.

Now a priest in virtue of sonship, inheriting God's nature, will necessarily inherit all the varied virtues of that nature. The Apostle calls our attention to this fact in pointing out that the "priest of the Most High" is "King of righteousness" and "King of peace" (Hebrews 7:2). In this double title we see again the union of the two great truths revealed apart in "Jehovah" and "Elohim." For "Jehovah" is righteous: and the "priest of the Most High" is "king of righteousness." Elohim's covenant and oath pledge unbroken union and peace: and the "priest of the Most High" is also "king of peace." Thus he is witness that "righteousness and peace shall kiss each other" (Psalms 85:10), through the power which is in the "Most High" to reconcile all antagonisms. It is hard to utter even a little of the wonders which are figured here. Melchisedek, though a Gentile, and of Canaan's cursed seed, "blesses Abram," who has already received the promise, that the land of Canaan shall be his for ever;—a promise only to be fulfilled by the casting out of Canaan and his seed;—and further "blesses the Most High God, who has delivered Abram's enemies into his hands;" while Abram, the heir of promise, "pays tithes," as a debtor to one, whose people are to be judged and cast out for the fulfilment of the promises (Genesis 14:19-20). To crown all, Canaan, the land of the cursed, for "Cursed is Canaan" (Genesis 9:25), becomes the land of promise, and the inheritance of the elect (Psalms 105:11). But Christ has opened all the secret. Man as man is son of God. He may be, and is, for awhile like Canaan under a curse; but even so, because his God is the "Most High," he is also the heir of boundless blessing. With such a God the very curse became a blessing; judgment is mercy; and death the way of life. The cursed are to be blessed, and blessed through the elect, who are but "a kind of firstfruits of God's creatures" (Romans 11:16; James 1:18; Revelation 14:4); while the elect, who have accepted the judgment of their flesh, in circumcision, are appointed to judge those who cannot judge themselves, for "the saints shall judge the world" (1 Corinthians 6:2); that so "the creature may be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21). Therefore those who must be judged, like Canaan and his seed, bless both the elect, who shall judge them, and the "Most High," who gives His elect victory over the foe which has led their brethren captive (Genesis 14:17-18; Hebrews 7:1). The true "Priest after the order of Melchisedek," the Son of Man and Son

of God, has set this in a light never to be dimmed, though few as yet see all its significance. As in the flesh, and linked with all, He was accursed, and yet is blessed (Galatians 3:13; Revelation 5:12): condemned in the flesh, yet justified in the Spirit (1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18). As the elect, He will judge the world; and His judgment, when with the sword, which goeth out of His mouth, He will smite all flesh, both of free and bond, will save the world (Revelation 19:15; Revelation 19:18; Psalms 82:8). He Himself is the witness how the judged through judgment shall be blessed, and how the Judge only judges to bring in righteousness and peace. And the further title, which is added when the name "Most High" is first revealed, namely "Possessor of heaven and earth" (Genesis 14:19), throws yet clearer light on the view of God here opened to us. For the word translated "Possessor" (Heb. ■■■), comes directly from a verb, which, though in our Authorised Version variously rendered to "buy," or "purchase," or "possess," (Note: See Genesis 25:10; Genesis 33:19; Genesis 39:1; Genesis 47:19-20; Genesis 47:22; Exodus 15:16; Exodus 21:2; Leviticus 22:11; Deuteronomy 32:6; Nehemiah 5:8; Psalms 74:2; Psalms 78:54; and in many other places.) means primarily to "contain" or "hold." (Note: So Parkhurst: see Heb. Lex. in loc. This primary sense of this word, as meaning to "contain," or "hold," explains its use in Genesis 4:1; Proverbs 1:5; Proverbs 4:5; Proverbs 4:7; Proverbs 16:16, and in other places, where it is translated "get" or "attain.") It therefore describes One "in whom we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28); "in whom all things consist" (Colossians 1:17); "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things" (Hebrews 2:10). The "Most High" is "Possessor" of all, "of heaven and earth," of church and world: and this His rightful claim He never foregoes, though angels or men for awhile may act as self-proprietors. Thus this name answers the question of the Apostle, "Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also" (Romans 3:29). For He is "the God of the spirits of all" (Numbers 16:22). He has said, "All souls are mine" (Ezekiel 18:4). "All lands" should "know," that "it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture" (Psalms 100:1; Psalms 100:3). And the true elect, like Abram, though through long years they may not have seen this,—for the elect are slow to receive things outside their own election,—when it is shewn them by the "Priest of the Most High," at once accept the blessed truth, saying, "I have lifted up my hand to the Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth" (Genesis 14:22). Thus does Abram learn from a Gentile what the chief Apostle learnt later through the centurion of the Italian band, that the elect "should call no man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28); "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" (Romans 10:12-13).

Such is the first mention of the "Most High" in Holy Scripture; but in every passage where the name occurs, its special import is the same, revealing the relationship of God to all, even to the world outside the election, and that, where men either cannot or will not judge themselves, the "Most High" even through judgment will carry out in them His own purpose. Every reference to the name repeats this teaching. In the books of Moses we find it only in three places,—first in the words we have considered, in connexion with Melchisedek, then in Balaam’s prophecy, and lastly in the song of Moses,—but in each case this name is either in the mouth of a Gentile, or in reference to the Gentile world, and God’s relation to it. Balaam, who "came from Aram, out of the mountains of the east" (Numbers 23:7), says, that he "had heard the words of El, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, and saw the vision of the Almighty." What does he see but the judgment of the nations, of "Sheth, and Moab, and Amalek, and Asshur," while "out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion" (Numbers 24:19)? The words of the song of Moses no less

distinctly link the nations with the "Most High:"—"When the Most High divided the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel;" thus caring for Gentiles, though at the same time witnessing that "Jehovah's portion is His people," and that He has chosen Jacob for a special purpose and for special blessings (Deuteronomy 32:8-9). In the Historic Books, from Joshua to Esther, the name "Most High" never occurs, except in a Psalm of David's, which is inserted in the history (2 Samuel 22:14); but the omission is characteristic, for these books are the record of the elect, and of their relation to "Jehovah," and the name "Most High" rather belongs to the world outside the election. In the Psalms the name is oftener referred to; but, wherever it is used, we find, if not a direct mention of the Gentile world, and its final subjection to the "Most High," yet a recognition of its claims and of God's universal providence. Thus in the eighty-third Psalm, where we read of the "enemies of God," "Edom, Moab, and the Hagarenes, the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre, and Asshur," the end is foreseen, that "they shall be confounded, and put to shame, and perish; that they may seek thy name, and know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth" (Psalms 83:6-7; Psalms 83:16-18). It is the same in the eighty-seventh Psalm, where, foreseeing that "of Zion it shall be said, The Highest (or "Most High") Himself shall establish her," "mention" is no less made of "Rahab, and Babylon, and of Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia," that "this man was born there" (Psalms 87:4-5). To the same effect, in the Psalm already referred to, from which our Lord quotes the words, "I said, Ye are gods, and all of you the children of the Most High," the conclusion is, "Arise, O God, and judge the earth, for thou shalt inherit all nations" (Psalms 82:6; Psalms 82:8). Thus again in the Psalm, which speaks perhaps more clearly than any other of God's kingdom over all nations, the Psalmist's reason why all should praise Him is, that "the LORD, Most High, is terrible: He is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet; for God is the King over all the earth; and the princes of the peoples are gathered together to be (Note: So the Revised Version.) the people of the God of Abraham; for the shields of the earth belong unto God. He is greatly exalted" (Psalms 47:1-9). And I notice that the elect themselves, when, either for their own or for Israel's sin, they are cast out, almost as Gentiles, "far from God's holy hill and from His tabernacle," seem instinctively to turn to this name "Most High," as a ground of hope, whatever may be their trouble or unworthiness. Thus David, "when the Philistines took him in Gath," cries to the "Most High" (Psalms 56:2, and title). Again, "when he fled from Saul in the cave," his words are, "I will cry unto God, Most High; unto God that performeth all things for me" (Psalms 57:2, and title). Again, when fleeing from his son Absalom, he hears "the words of Cush, the Benjamite," he accepts the Gentiles' place, invoking the "Most High." (Psalms 7:17, and title. Compare also Psalms 9:2; Psalms 9:5; Psalms 18:13; Psalms 21:7.) For under this name all may find hope. It is the witness for ever, that, whatever our condition, there yet is help for us in Him from whom we came. But there is perhaps no better illustration of the import of this name than the way it is used in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, who is set before us in the book of Daniel as the great head of Gentile power. In him we find the Adamic dominion almost repeated:—"Thou, O king, art a king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over all" (Daniel 2:37-38). But his heart is lifted up: through self-exaltation he loses his understanding, till by judgment he is brought to know the "Most High." What is written of him requires no comment. "The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built, by the might of my power,

and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will. The same hour was Nebuchadnezzar driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, till his hairs were grown like eagles’ feathers, and his nails like birds’ claws. And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes to heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom from generation to generation" (Daniel 4:30-34). (Note: See too Daniel 5:18-22, where the same name, "Most High," is used by Daniel when he interprets to Belshazzar the "writing on the wall.") Are there not yet such souls, some of the grandest of the sons of men, who know neither "Elohim," nor "El Shaddai," nor "Jehovah," but who like Nebuchadnezzar shall be brought to know that the "Most High" ruleth, and through His rule shall regain their understanding? This, if I err not, is the "secret of the Most High" (Psalms 91:1). Souls outside the election shall own His power; and the saints,—here, in their relation to the world, called the "saints of the Most High,"—shall have judgment given to them, and shall "possess the kingdom" (Daniel 7:18; Daniel 7:22; Daniel 7:25; Daniel 7:27).

I will only add that the indirect allusions to the worship of the "Most High," wherever we find such in Holy Scripture, always shew something wider and simpler than that which was divinely ordained for the elect people. To recur to the first place in which the name occurs. Melchisedek, "priest of the Most High," is presented to us, not only "without genealogy" (Hebrews 7:3), as the Apostle says, but also without a temple, and without blood, offering simply "bread and wine," when He blesses the "Most High," and at the same time pronounces upon Abram the blessing of the "Most High" (Genesis 14:18; Genesis 14:20). For "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7:48); "neither is He worshipped as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25-26). Therefore in the Psalm which says, "The Mighty God hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof," His question, to those who would satisfy Him with "bullocks out of their house, and he-goats out of their folds," is, "Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Psalms 50:1; Psalms 50:9; Psalms 50:13-14). What the "Most High" delights in is a life in accordance with His own. This is the witness of His beloved Son, in the Gospel which links Him with all men, and in which alone of the Gospels the title "Most High" is to be found (Luke 1:32; Luke 1:35; Luke 1:76), where He says, "Love your enemies, and do good and lend, hoping for nothing again; and ye shall be children of the Most High, for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Luke 6:35). "In every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him" (Acts 10:35).

Such is the teaching of the name "Most High." In it more than in any other name, we have the revelation of God’s relationship to man as man, and of the unchangeableness of that relationship, spite of the change which sin has wrought in man’s condition. Need I say again that a special peril attends this truth? It is like the rain which the Apostle speaks of, which, if it does not make the earth bear fruit, cannot but stimulate a greater growth of thorns and briars (Hebrews 6:7-8). If rightly received, it will increase our faith and hope in God, who though He is so high, spite of our

fall, yet owns and claims us as His children. If abused, it may lead us to regard our fallen state as good, and so to consider the voice of our passions as the voice of God. The great coming apostasy will, if I err not, be the final perversion of this truth, when the last Antichrist, whose claim and boast will be a Divine humanity, will assume as man, in the fallen life of independence, that which can only be truly possessed by us, as partakers of the life of God, in Christ Jesus. There is therefore peril as well as blessing in the mystery of the "Most High," which, as we have seen, is so closely connected with the "priesthood after the order of Melchisedek." And yet, until we know this calling, and what we really are, we shall not understand the depth and fulness of God's purpose, and that, though fallen, man is a son of the "Most High." And the way in which, both in the Old Testament and in the New, this name is joined with the other names, "Elohim" or "God," "Jehovah" or "LORD," and "El Shaddai" or "Almighty," shews that while some may abuse this truth, it is no less an integral part of the one harmonious whole of God's fulness, in which not only righteousness and love are one, but where also the election of some and the final salvation of all may both be seen as consistent parts of one purpose. Thus the Psalmist in a single sentence speaks of the "secret of the Most High," of the "shadow of the Almighty," of the "refuge in Jehovah," and of the "trust in God" (Psalms 91:1-2). For there is a "secret" in the "Most High," as to man's participation in the Divine nature, and the power of the "Most High" to abase him in the dust, if he abuse his gifts and calling, even though those "gifts and calling are without repentance." There is a "shadow of the Almighty;" a shadow in a double sense; either a cloud, with some darkness in the shadow, for there is pain both in self-judgment and in God's judgment; or a shadow, as the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isaiah 32:2); for the "Almighty" is such a shadow also, "under which we may sit with great delight" (Song of Solomon 2:3). Such as know this can "say of Jehovah," who "judges evil," "He is my refuge and my fortress:" such can say of "God," who loves in virtue of relationship, "In Him will I trust." And the song of those whom St. John sees standing on the "sea of glass, having the harps of God," and who "have gotten the victory over the beast and over his image," is again little more than a triumphant repetition of these same names of God, as all subserving our salvation and deliverance; for they say, "Great and marvellous are thy ways, Lord, God, Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King (or "Most High") of nations. (Note: There is a question whether the true reading is "King of ages," or "King of nations." Alford, in his text, adopts the reading, "King of nations," which is supported by a mass of MSS., and is given also in the margin of the Authorised Version; but in a note he adds, that "in the conflict of authorities it is impossible to decide" whether ■θν■ν or α■■νων was the original: the context seems to me to shew that it must have been ■θν■ν.) Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are made manifest" (Revelation 15:2-4). This is the "song of Moses and of the Lamb." These are the names, full of light and love, which the Word, whether as Law or Gospel, opens to us. And the Church on earth re-echoes the same. In her Communion Service, which, in this part at least, comes down to us unaltered almost from Apostolic days, once and again we are taught to repeat the same four names in union; first, when we say, "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks to thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of hosts: heaven and earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord, Most High;" and again, in the "Gloria in excelsis," where we say, "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will

towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord, God, heavenly King, God, the Father, Almighty. ... For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art Most High, in the glory of God the Father."

Blessed for ever be the "LORD," "God," "Almighty," the "Most High," for such a revelation of Himself, that men may know and trust and joy in Him.

04.05. Lord, or Adonai

5

LORD OR ADONAI THE names of God, which we have so far noticed, have mainly revealed His nature: "Elohim," His unchanging love; "Jehovah," His righteousness and truth; "El Shaddai," that He is a giver or pourer out of Himself for others; "El Elyon," that though Most High, He is yet of a kindred nature with us. The names which remain for our consideration speak rather of His relationships, to things or persons, whether in heaven or earth. Not that we can say of any view of God that it excludes the others, or that this or that name speaks only of His nature, while some other name dwells exclusively on His relationships. God’s perfections are so united that we cannot know one without seeing in it something of all, though one may and does more prominently bring out one aspect, and another some other aspect, of His fulness. It is here as in the Four Gospels, where each differing view of our Lord contains or gives hints of all. Thus the names "Elohim," "Jehovah," "El Shaddai," and "El Elyon," though they do not exclude the relationships which are in God Himself, and in which He likewise stands both to His fallen and unfallen creatures, rather reveal this or that perfection of His nature; while the names which follow, "Adonai," "El Olam," and "Jehovah Sabaoth," speak more directly of His relationships, either to men or angels, or to the differing and successive ages, in and through which He works His purposes. These latter, though in themselves not perhaps so wondrous as some of the preceding, may touch us more directly, as shewing what is becoming in those, who by grace are called to know God’s mind, and to have such close and abiding relationships with the Lord and God of all. The name which we are now to consider is "Adonai," which our Authorised Version translates "Lord,"—not by any means the same word as "LORD," which is the usual rendering of the name "Jehovah." (Note: I have already said, in speaking of the name "Jehovah," that the Jews of old not only wrote the name "Jehovah," whereever it occurred alone in Scripture, with the vowel points of "Adonai," but actually read "Adonai" instead of "Jehovah," except where, as in Genesis 15:2; Genesis 15:8, and like places, the word "Adonai" is united with "Jehovah," in which cases they wrote "Jehovah" with the vowel points of "Elohim," and read "Elohim" for "Jehovah.") This name, "Adonai," is first found in Abram’s address to God, when, after his interview with Melchisedek, "the word of Jehovah came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward; and Abram said, Lord GOD, (that is "Adonai Jehovah,") what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?" and again immediately after, when "Jehovah said, I am the LORD, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it: and Abram said, Lord GOD, (that is "Adonai Jehovah,") whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" (Genesis 15:1-8). Abram again uses the same name repeatedly in his addresses to God, when he intercedes for Sodom (Genesis 18:27; Genesis 18:30-32); and it is, as we shall see, a name which is continually in the mouth of all God’s servants generation after generation. The question is, or rather it is no question, What does this name reveal? "Adonai" is simply the plural of the Hebrew word, "Adon," which means "lord" or "master," and which both in the singular and plural is constantly applied to God. (Note: For the singular, "Adon," ■■■■, as used of God, see Exodus 23:17; Exodus 34:23; Joshua 3:11; Joshua

3:13; Nehemiah 8:10; Psalms 8:1; Psalms 8:9; Psalms 97:5; Psalms 114:7; Psalms 135:5; Psalms 147:5; Isaiah 1:24; Isaiah 3:1; Isaiah 10:16; and elsewhere. The plural, "Adonai," ■■■■, occurs, as a title of God, in countless places. Gesenius says that "the ■ in ■■■■ is the ancient termination for ■■, and this form of plural is used exclusively of God, both when He is addressed or spoken of." When the word in the plural is used of men or angels, as in Isaiah 26:13; Jeremiah 27:4; Amos 4:1; Psalms 136:3; Proverbs 25:13; and similar passages; the usual plural termination, ■■, is used. (Heb. Lex. on the word.)) When applied to man, as it constantly is, this word is used to express two well-known earthly relationships; first, the relation of a master to his slave or servant; (Genesis 24:9-10; Genesis 24:12; Genesis 24:14; Genesis 24:27; Genesis 24:35; Genesis 39:2-3; Genesis 39:7-8; Exodus 21:4-6; Judges 19:11; and in many other places.) and then of that of a husband to his wife. (Genesis 18:12; Judges 19:27; 1 Kings 1:17-18; Psalms 45:11; 1 Peter 3:6; &c.) To see its meaning as applied to God, we have only to understand what these relationships exactly were, which God has chosen to express His relations towards us. Of old both slave and wife occupied a position somewhat different from that which is accorded to wives and servants at the present day. The title, "Adon," or "Lord," whether as meaning "master" or "husband," expressed a personal relationship, which involved rights of lordship and possession. The slave or wife were "not their own" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Both, voluntarily or involuntarily, belonged to, and were the property of, their lord. In the slave the relationship was binding quite irrespective of his own will. As a rule he or his parents were either purchased for money, or were captives taken from an enemy (Leviticus 25:44-46; Numbers 31:35); for in those days there were but two ways of dealing with captives in war, namely, either putting them to death, or reducing them to slavery. In the case of the wife, though she too generally was given or sold by her father (Genesis 29:15-20; Exodus 21:7-11), there might be more of the element of free will; for the woman, as we see in Rebekah’s case, might be asked, "Wilt thou go with this man?" (Genesis 24:58). But, once a man’s wife, she was his for life, unless she should be put away for some evil in her, or for unfaithfulness (Deuteronomy 24:1). With their will however, or without it, slave or wife stood in a relation of subjection to their lord, where faithfulness received due honour and reward, while unfaithfulness would no less surely be visited with just judgment.

Now the name "Adonai," or "Lord," teaches that a relationship answering to that of servants to their lord, and of wives to their husbands, exists between God in heaven and His creature man upon the earth. Not only do the elect, in their approaches to Him, constantly use this name in addressing God, to express their relation to and dependence on Him, as well as their faith in the faithfulness of One, who, because He is their rightful Lord, is bound to sustain, and keep, and help them; but God also no less, when speaking of Himself, continually claims this title (See Isaiah 8:7; Job 28:28; and in countless other places), as declaring His relationships of Master and Husband to us,—relationships, which, while they set us in the place of honour, for to be even a servant, much more to be the beloved, of the "King of kings" is great honour, no less involve most solemn responsibilities, if, called with such a calling, we are unfaithful to it. In nothing more therefore than in the confession or denial of this name do we see the radical contrast between the Church and the world. The Church is Church because it acknowledges relationship: (Note: The English word, "Church," an abridgment or corruption of the Greek word κυριακ■, simply means "belonging to the Lord.") the world is world because in practice it denies it. The great mark of the elect is that they "know the LORD" (1 Samuel 3:7; Jeremiah 9:24; Jeremiah 24:7; Jeremiah 31:34; John 17:3), while the world yet knows Him not (John 8:19; John 8:55; John 17:25; Acts 17:23; 1 Corinthians

1:21; 2 Thessalonians 1:8), and acts as far as may be in independence of Him. The world's way is to do as it likes, think as it likes, speak as it likes, without regard to any higher will above it. Its great ones do "according to their will" (Daniel 8:4; Daniel 11:3; Daniel 11:16; Daniel 11:36). They say, "Our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" (Psalms 12:4). They live as if they were their own. All obedience with such seems more or less degrading. The very opposite marks all God's saints. All own a Lord. All say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). All with Christ, their Master, come to do, not their own will, but the will of Him that sent them; for they know that not in self-will, but in God's will, and in it alone, is perfect rest. Let us look briefly at some of the teaching of Holy Scripture upon this point, though indeed the lesson is so clear and so oft repeated, that it hardly needs exposition or illustration.

First then to look at the name, "Adonai," as expressing the relationship of Master. Not one only, but all God's saints, in trial of all kinds, turn instinctively to this name, as assuring them of the help which they must require and will receive in their appointed service. "Who goeth a warfare at his own charges?" (1 Corinthians 9:7). Who serveth a master at his own cost? "The eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters" (Psalms 123:2); and God's servants are no less cared for. As not their own, but purchased by their Lord, they are parts of His household in a way no hired servant can be. For, strange as it may seem to our modern views, the purchased slave of old stood in a nearer relation to his lord than the hired servant, who, as he worked for wages, could come or go according to his own will. For the hired servant might not eat of the Passover or of the holy things of his master's house, while the purchased slave, as belonging to his lord, was free of both these privileges (Exodus 12:45; Leviticus 22:10-11). Abram, the father of the faithful, in the scene where the name "Adonai" first meets us, shews how blessed is the relationship which he confesses when he says, "My Lord," and "Lord GOD." For at the time two burdens were pressing on his heart. A seed and an inheritance had been promised him; and years had passed, and he was still childless and without the promised land. But because in his "Lord" he has One who cannot fail, he pours out his complaint, saying, "Lord (Adonai) GOD, what wilt thou give me?" and again, "Adonai GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" and receives in vision once and again enlarged assurances, that both seed and inheritance, far larger than he hoped, shall surely be given to him by his Lord: a seed even as the stars of heaven for multitude, and for an inheritance the land of many nations. He is yet but a servant: he calls himself a "slave" (Heb. ■■■. See Genesis 18:3; Genesis 18:5; and elsewhere): but on his "Lord's" faithfulness and power he relies for everything.

It is so with all God's servants. Their sufficiency is in their Lord (2 Corinthians 3:5-6), who fits each specially for the varied work committed to them. So Moses, called to bear God's message to Israel, says, "O my Lord, (Adonai,) I am not eloquent, neither before nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant. And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and will teach thee what thou shalt say" (Exodus 4:10-12). So again, Joshua, when he is appointed to lead God's people into the land, and they are smitten at the outset by the men of Ai, turns to this name, saying, "O Lord, (Adonai,) what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?" and at once receives directions how he may discover the "accursed thing," which, though hidden, has been the cause of the defeat of God's people (Joshua 7:7-8). So again Gideon, when he is called to deliver Israel from the Midianites, and answers, "O my Lord,

(Adonai,) why is all this befallen us?" and again, "O my Lord, (Adonai,) wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am least in my father's house," receives for answer these words,—"Surely I will be with thee: go in this thy might: have not I sent thee?" (Judges 6:13-16). The servant's strength is in his Lord. All God's servants prove this. Those in whom God's power has most been seen most freely confess it. Manoah childless (Judges 13:8); Samson in his bonds (Judges 16:28); Samuel in his youth with Eli (1 Samuel 3:9-10), above all David, so greatly tried; all confess this name "Adonai," as their encouragement and hope in every weakness. It seems as if David could not too often repeat this name:—"Then went David in, and said, Who am I, O Adonai Jehovah, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Adonai Jehovah; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come; and is this the manner of man, O Adonai Jehovah? And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Adonai Jehovah, knowest thy servant. For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them" (2 Samuel 7:18-21). (Note: We find the same constant repetition of this name "Adonai" in Daniel's prayer, Daniel 9:3-19.) The Psalms continually repeat this language:—"O LORD, our Lord, (Adonai,) how excellent is thy name in all the earth." Thy servants are weak, but Thou art their "Lord." Therefore even "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength. ... What is man that thou art mindful of him? Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away. But thou, O LORD, our Lord, hast put all things under his feet. ... O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth." (Psalms 8:1-9; Psalms 144:3-4. See also Psalms 35:23; Psalms 38:9; Psalms 38:15; Psalms 38:22; Psalms 39:7; Psalms 40:17; Psalms 51:15; Psalms 68:17; Psalms 68:19, &c.) The prophets still more bring out the blessings which lie hid in the relationship which is confessed under the name "Adonai." From or in connexion with it, they draw their inspiration. To take one or two examples out of many. It is the vision of "Adonai," and of the service which is rendered Him by heavenly hosts, which moves Isaiah, when all things around him seem dark, to say, "Here am I: send me" (Isaiah 6:1-8). He thus describes his call:—"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, (Adonai,) sitting upon his throne, high and lifted up." The earthly lord is taken away. Signs are abroad that for Israel's sins even the semblance of power may ere long pass away from God's elect. But the prophet's eye is opened to see a "Lord," who is yet "high and lifted up," and whose "train filled the temple." "Before Him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly; and one cried to another, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory;" all revealing, not only the shrinking from self-display, which marks the spirits nearest to the throne, but no less their power and readiness to go anywhere to fulfil their Lord's bidding. The immediate result of such a vision is to make the prophet cry, "Woe is me, for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips," till "there flew one of the seraphim, having a live coal which he had taken from off the altar," the touch of which upon the prophet's lips, not only imparted new power, but also purged away his sin. And then he "heard the voice of the Lord, (Adonai,) saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" What could he say, but, that which all who have seen such a vision always must say, "Here am I: send me." With such a Lord, and with such help, and with such hosts to serve His servants, who can refuse to bear their Lord's message, whatever the cost of its delivery. The same name meets us in the mission of the other prophets. In none perhaps do we more clearly see its special import than in the call of Jeremiah. Here was a man by nature timid, whose words and ways constantly reveal

even a womanly tenderness and susceptibility. In his case it was no natural self-confidence or self-conceit which brought him out before his king and people as a prophet of the LORD. More even than Moses he shrunk from the burden laid upon him. But "the word of the LORD comes to him," saying, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I ordained thee a prophet to the nations." And Jeremiah answered and said, "Ah Lord (Adonai) GOD, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." But He answered, "Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid, for I am with thee." And then He touched his mouth and said, "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have set thee this day over the nations, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to build, and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:2-10). It is the same in Ezekiel's case. He, like Jeremiah, lived in evil days, when Israel was a "rebellious house" (Ezekiel 2:7-8), and the prophet with his people was "among the captives by the river Chebar." There "the heavens opened, and he saw visions of God." "The word of the LORD came to him" (Ezekiel 1:1; Ezekiel 1:3), with a message from One, who claimed to be both his and Israel's "Lord," "whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear;" and who throughout the whole of this prophecy, more perhaps than in any other part of Holy Scripture, again and again repeats that He is "the Lord (Adonai) GOD" (Ezekiel 2:4), (Note: This name, "Adonai GOD," is used in more than two hundred other places in this one prophecy.) not of Israel only, but no less of the nations around, who have forgotten or denied that they too must be His servants. "Other lords (Adonim) have had dominion" over God's elect, and over the world (Isaiah 26:13), but God does not therefore surrender His rightful lordship over all. His message whether to Israel (Ezekiel 2:4; Ezekiel 3:11; Ezekiel 3:27; Ezekiel 5:7-8; Ezekiel 5:11; Ezekiel 6:3; Ezekiel 6:11; Ezekiel 7:2; Ezekiel 7:5, &c.), or to Ammon, or Moab, or Edom (Ezekiel 25:3; Ezekiel 25:6-8; Ezekiel 25:12-13), or to Tyre or Egypt (Ezekiel 26:3; Ezekiel 26:5; Ezekiel 26:15; Ezekiel 28:2; Ezekiel 29:3; Ezekiel 29:8; Ezekiel 29:13, &c.), is always prefaced by His rightful title, "the Lord (Adonai) GOD."

It is in the Gospels however above all that the import of this title is brought out most fully. For not until the Lord Himself came in the flesh, and "took the form of a servant" (Php 2:7), and had his "ear bored" to seal His service (Exodus 21:6; Psalms 40:6; and Hebrews 10:5), was the full blessing of this relationship revealed. Till then, so deeply had men fallen, all service was counted more or less a disgrace and badge of inferiority. God was serving all; feeding even ravens, clothing lilies, opening His hand to satisfy the desire of every living thing (Psalms 145:16; Psalms 147:9; Luke 12:24; Luke 12:27). But men perceived it not. So the Lord of all revealed Himself in the service of Him who was His image, saying, "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon Him, and He shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth" (Isaiah 42:1-4; Matthew 12:17-20). He was among us "as One that serveth" (Luke 22:27), revealing, as till then it had never been revealed, the blessedness of subjection to our true and heavenly Lord, which not only gives man what he needs, a Master, to "uphold and put His Spirit on us," but which makes selfish fallen men, even if they know it not, conformed in some measure to Him, who, like a shepherd, can rule and govern, because He serves, all. None have ever spoken of service like the Lord. The Gospel which is devoted to witness of His Lordship shews this. Hear Him saying, "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord: it is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and

the servant as his Lord" (Matthew 10:24-25). "Whosoever therefore will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:26; Matthew 20:28). "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Luke 12:37). The approval of faithful service is the same in the use of ten talents or of one. "Well done, good servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:19-23). Well may all the saints rejoice in the relationship, that God is indeed their "Lord," and that, with all their weakness, they may say with Paul, "His I am, and Him I serve" (Acts 27:23). But the name "Adonai" reveals another even more blessed relationship. The title "Lord" is used, not of Master only, but of Husband. It tells, that, weak and fallen as we are, the Lord of all calls us to the closest and most endearing communion with Himself; to be "no more twain," but "joined to the Lord," and "one spirit" (Matthew 19:5-6; 1 Corinthians 6:17); that as a wife is not her own, but her husband's, so we too are "not our own," but both in body and spirit are the Lord's (1 Corinthians 6:19). The language of Holy Scripture upon this point is such as could never have entered into the heart of men, had they not been possessed and taught by God's Spirit. Take the words to Israel, the appointed figure of God's elect:—"Thus saith the LORD, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in a land that was not sown" (Jeremiah 2:2). "Thy Maker is thy husband" (Isaiah 54:5). "I am married to you, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 3:14); and again, "I was a husband unto them" (Jeremiah 31:32). "Thus saith the Lord (Adonai) GOD; ... I made thee to multiply: thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love, and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord (Adonai) GOD, and thou becamest mine. And I clothed thee with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk; I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain about thy neck; and I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thy head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil; and thou wast exceeding beautiful through my beauty, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord (Adonai) GOD" (Ezekiel 16:7-14).

Words like these are common to the prophets, revealing something of that love, wherewith the Lord has loved us, in giving Himself to us, that we may give ourselves to Him for ever. For to us too the words are spoken, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider: forget thine own people and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty, for He is thy Lord, (Adonai,) and worship thou Him" (Psalms 45:10-11). Language fails to express the unutterable preciousness of such a relationship, and the unspeakable blessings which it pledges to those who accept it, and by grace are faithful to it. For it is not only certain gifts which come upon the "beloved of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 33:12; Jeremiah 31:3); but in the relationship itself, as "married to Him," provision is made to meet our folly, so long as, spite of all our weakness, we are faithful to Him. What for instance can be more blessed than the law respecting a woman's vows, "if she have a husband," and is living with him. Though in her folly she may "bind her soul with any vow, if her husband disallows her on the day he hears it, then he shall make her vows, wherewith she hath bound her soul, of none effect: her husband hath disallowed it, and the LORD shall forgive her" (Numbers

30:6-8). Her foolish purpose "shall not stand." It is by grace "forgiven" in virtue of the will of him to whom she stands so closely related. "But every vow of a widow, or of her that is divorced, wherewith they have bound their souls shall stand" (Numbers 30:9); for with those who have been put away for their unfaithfulness, or, having been united to that which is dead, are without their "head,"—for "the husband is the head of the wife" (Ephesians 5:23),—there is no "Lord" to set aside and disallow their folly, and thus their foolish purpose "binds their souls." The Song of Songs from first to last is the appointed witness of the delight, which both lover and beloved draw from this most intimate of all relationships. The earthly joy shadows the heavenly. For if all creatures are voices, silently witnessing to us of Him who is the great Archetype,—if sun and air, and bread and wine, lilies and cedars, sowing and reaping, all are telling something of the glory and fulness of Him, who is Himself our Lord, our Refuge, and our Portion (Psalms 16:2; Psalms 16:5; Psalms 119:57; Psalms 142:5),—much more must man, who is God's image (1 Corinthians 11:7), in that which most marks him, that is in his love for one above all others, shadow forth that Highest Love, which of twain makes one, and thus fills both with gladness. God at least does not shrink from speaking of His joy in making us His own, and in giving Himself to us as ours for ever. "All the promises of God in Christ are in Him Yea, and in Him Amen" (2 Corinthians 1:20). And He hath said, "As a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Isaiah 62:5). And the Song of Songs shews how the loved one reciprocates this love, as she sings, "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me" (Song of Solomon 7:10). Blessed therefore as it is to know the Lord as "Master," it is as nothing to the joy of knowing the still nearer relationship of "Husband," to which the name "Adonai" calls us. For, as one has said, while "work is the result of one ruling or directing another, fruit is only the result of a union between two." (Note: Charles George Gordon, Reflections in Palestine, p. 74.) We may do good work as servants, if we are obedient to our Lord; but to produce and bring forth the "new man," which is His image, there must be that perfect self-surrender, and union with Him, of which the marriage bond is the appointed figure. And we may be espoused, while yet we are not married, to Him (Compare 2 Corinthians 11:2; and Revelation 19:7). But without union with our Lord we are, and must be, barren. Fruit, bearing His likeness, can never be produced by any soul until it is perfectly the Lord's.

Such are some of the blessings which gather round the name "Adonai," or "Lord:" such the privileges of knowing God as "Master," and still more as "Husband." But for this very reason, because these relationships are so intimate and full of mutual confidences,—for husbands must needs trust their wives, and masters their servants,—the least unfaithfulness in such relationships involves the greatest sin,—sin for which neither diligence, nor beauty, nor cleverness, can make the slightest compensation. In wife or servant perfect faithfulness is the first thing, and indispensable. And the more a soul is favoured, the greater the gifts entrusted to it, the closer its union with its Lord, whether as Master or as Husband, the greater is the sin of the very least and apparently most trifling unfaithfulness. An act which in a stranger might be nothing, in a trusted servant would be a crime: a look or word, or the lack of such, which would be unnoticed in those not related to us, in a loved wife might be unpardonable. Sins are relative. Hence such words as those of the prophet:—"You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for your iniquities" (Amos 3:2). Times of ignorance God winks at or overlooks (Acts 17:30), even as we overlook the faults of little children. Even unfaithfulness in those not trusted or nearly related to us does not greatly touch us. But evil in one's own house must be judged, if we would not be partakers in it. Hence, as the Lord's Supper teaches, communion involves judgment. If we

can judge and correct ourselves, we are not judged of the Lord. If we do not correct ourselves, the nearer our relation to the Lord, the surer and sorer will be His judgment and correction (1 Corinthians 11:31-32).

It is of this judgment, as well as of the blessings of nearness to the Lord, that the name "Adonai" is the special witness. For indeed blessings may be judgments, and must be, if we are unfaithful; even as judgments are blessings, for they are sent to bring souls out of their unfaithfulness. Therefore both to servant or wife, if faithless, "Adonai" must be judge. Need I quote the words of prophets, or of the Lord of prophets, to shew that the sin of His servants must bring its own judgment:—"Thus saith the LORD, If I be a Master, (Adon,) where is my fear? O priests that despise my name; and ye say, Wherein have we despised it? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar, and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? Ye offer the blind and the lame for sacrifice. Is it not evil? Offer it now to thy governor; will he be pleased with thee or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts. Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? Neither do ye kindle fire upon mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts; neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For ye said also, Behold what a weariness it is; and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame and the sick. Should I accept this at your hand? saith the LORD. Therefore now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory to my name, saith the LORD, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart" (Malachi 1:6-12; Malachi 2:1-2). What judgment can be sorer, than that one's blessings should become a curse. And yet thus it must be with those, who, called to nearness to their Lord, are unfaithful to their high calling. We know Who it is that says,—"But and if that evil servant say in his heart, My Lord delayeth His coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink and to be drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him in sunder, and shall appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And that servant, which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Matthew 24:48-51; Luke 12:45-48).

It is even worse with the unfaithful wife, though her husband's love remains unchanged. The prophets seem to labour under this burden when they would utter it:—"Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 3:20). "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God" (Jeremiah 2:19). For "thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot, and pouredst out thy fornication on every one that passed by. And it came to pass, after all thy wickedness, (woe, woe, unto thee, saith Adonai GOD,) that thou hast made thee a high place in every street. And thou hast not been as a harlot, in that thou scornest hire, but as a wife that committeth adultery, who taketh strangers instead of her husband. Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord (Adonai) GOD, Because thy filthiness was poured forth, through thy whoredoms with thy lovers, and with all the idols of thine abominations;

therefore, behold, I will gather all thy lovers, with all whom thou hast loved, and them also that thou hast hated, and I will judge thee as women that break wedlock and that shed blood are judged, and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy. And I will give thee into their hands, and they shall strip thee of thy clothes, and take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare; and they shall execute judgments upon thee, and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot any more" (Ezekiel 16:15-41). And yet, because "Adonai" is God, even thus, and from all this, shall the fallen wife be saved at last by Him who first loved her:—"As I live, saith Adonai GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Neither hath Samaria committed half thy sins. They are more righteous than thou. Yea, be thou confounded, in that thou hast justified thy sisters. Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then shalt thou remember thy ways and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger; that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord (Adonai) GOD" (Ezekiel 16:60-63). (Note: See too Isaiah 1:24-27, for similar words of threatening and promise from "Adonai.") Well may saints and angels cry with wonder, "Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD"! Who is like unto our "Master" and our "Lord"!

Such then is the relationship between the Creator and creature, which the name "Adonai," or "Lord," reveals to us. And though it falls far short of that still more wondrous vision, of the "Father" and the "Son," which is opened in the gospel, yet in the name "Master" and "Husband" we have enough, and more than enough, to make us "strong in the Lord," and to "rejoice in Him, alway" (Ephesians 6:10; and Php 4:4). For if the servant of a prophet, as his master was taken from him, could cry, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof" (2 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 2:12):—if even in a Syrian slave of old there could be such confidence and love, that the servant could call his lord, "Father," saying, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?" (2 Kings 5:13)—what should be our faith and hope in Him, who calls us His "servants," and His "beloved"? And especially in these last days, when the spirit of lawlessness is growing, and all the bonds which have held society together seem in peril of being broken, it is more than ever our wisdom to remember the "Lord," "whose service is perfect freedom," and whose love for His beloved "passeth knowledge." Blessed be His name, the day is coming, when "there shall be no more curse," but His "servants shall do Him service, and shall see His face, and His name shall be upon their foreheads" (Revelation 22:3-4). If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself (2 Timothy 2:13). He hateth putting away (Malachi 2:16). His gifts and calling are without repentance (Romans 11:29). Even unfaithful Israel shall obtain mercy (Romans 11:31). For thus saith the LORD, "In that day thou shalt call me Ishi; (that is My husband;) and shalt call me no more Baali; (that is, My lord;) and I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. And I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God" (Hosea 2:16-23). Oh, day of wonders, when "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7).

I conclude with the words of one who knew "Adonai," and who in the day of his trouble found in this name, and in the other names of God, which in his anguish seemed instinctively to rise upon his lips, that help and comfort which he had not in himself, and could not find in creatures. How

many in every age have found comfort in the words:—"Will Adonai, (my Lord and Husband,) cast off for ever? Will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? Doth His promise fail for evermore? Hath Elohim, (who is in covenant with me), forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High; (even of Him whose offspring we all are, even though as Gentiles we may have wandered from Him.) Yea, I will remember the works of Jah, (Jehovah, the righteous One, who gives Himself to be our righteousness;) surely I will remember thy wonders of old" (Psalms 77:7-11). So cried a soul of old who knew "Adonai." Would to God that those to whom these names have been matter for self-exalting criticism, rather than for faith and hope in Him, who is only truly known as we obey Him, might be brought even by trouble to know themselves, and the grace of Him, who reveals His fulness to His creatures as they need it. They that know His name will put their trust in Him. And they that trust in Him shall never be confounded.

04.06. Everlasting God, or El Olam

6 EVERLASTING GOD OR EL OLAM THE next name of God in Holy Scripture is "El Olam," which in our Authorised Version is translated "Everlasting God," (Note: Heb. ■■■■ ■■, literally, "God of the age." In the Septuagint, Θε■ς α■■νιος. In the Vulgate, "Deus aeternus.") a name but seldom repeated, and which as yet has been little noticed even by students of "the oracles of God" (Romans 3:2), but which reveals a truth and fact, as to God's ways with fallen man, shewing Him patient and wise as well as righteous and all-loving. For this name tells us that God reveals Himself to men by varying dispensations, "at sundry times and in divers manners" (Hebrews 1:1), as they can bear it; in all carrying out His one unchanging purpose, to bring us out of our fall and make us partakers of His own blessedness. We shall see, if God permit, how this name reveals this truth; though the wisdom of His ways is still hidden from not a few, who can yet bless Him that they are and shall be His for ever. This name, "El Olam," first meets us in Abram's life, after his name is changed from Abram to Abraham, when the man of faith, long barren, has received the heir of promise, Isaac, and, as a consequence, the bondmaid and her son are cast out. "At that time" the Gentile comes to Abraham, and a covenant is made with him at Beersheba, the "Well of the Oath," and "there Abraham called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God" (Genesis 21:10; Genesis 21:22; Genesis 21:33). The truth which this name teaches therefore belongs to a certain stage in the life of faith, when the life of sonship, which Isaac figures, is brought forth by Sarah, that is the Gospel (Galatians 4:22; Galatians 4:30), and the carnal seed, the fruit of law, is judged and cast out. For, as St. Paul teaches, all these are shadows of spiritual truths; the birth of Isaac of the "free woman," and the rejection of the "son of the bondmaid," being appointed figures of the change from law to gospel. We do not know at first, that, in God's dealing with His elect, there may and will be diversities of operation and a change of dispensation; and that though for a season law is needed, it must give place to gospel, and that grace itself will be succeeded by a fuller revelation of God's glory; each varied stage being needed for man's perfecting. As we advance this opens to us, and we learn, that, precious as are the truths revealed under the names "Elohim," "Jehovah," "El Shaddai," or "Adonai," there is yet more to be revealed, full of instruction for us, if like Abraham we will still walk with God.

Now both the fact that in God's dealings with His creatures there are successive "times" or "ages" or dispensations, and that this is a "mystery," or "secret," which is only opened as we grow in grace, is involved and taught in the name "El Olam." For the word "Olam," which is rendered "Everlasting," contains in itself both the idea of a "secret," and also of "time," or of "an age." The "El," which we translate "God," here, as in the names "El Shaddai" and "El Elyon," expresses "Power," (Note: See what is said of "El" in chapter 3.) even the Power of Him, "who doeth as He will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth" (Daniel 4:35). The word "Olam" has two senses, though the connexion between the two is obvious. Its first and original sense is to "conceal," or "hide," or something "hidden." (Note: See Leviticus 4:13; Leviticus 5:2; Leviticus 20:4; 1 Samuel 12:3; Psalms 90:8 and many other places. In Ecclesiastes 3:11, it is still a question how the word should be translated. Our Authorised Version translates it "world," as it

translates α■■ν in Matthew 13:39, and elsewhere: the Revised Version translates it "world," or "eternity:" the Septuagint render it by α■■ν: while Parkhurst (see his Lexicon, on the word,) translates it "obscurity," reading the whole verse as follows:—"He hath made everything beautiful in its season, but He hath even put such obscurity (olam) in the midst of them, that man cannot find out the work that God doeth from beginning to end.") Hence it came to mean "time hidden from man," or "time indefinite." In our Version it is often translated "for ever," and in certain places it may mean "time unmeasured," "for an age," or "for ages." But that strictly speaking it expresses a limited time is clear, not only from many passages where the time referred to can only be a life-time, or till the year of Jubilee, or for the period of the Jewish dispensation, but from other passages, where the word is redoubled or used in the plural, (which it could not be if it meant "for ever,") where its meaning is "for ages," or "from age to age." (Note: For instances of the plural use of the word, ■■■■■, see Psalms 77:7-8; Isaiah 45:17; Daniel 9:24; &c.) A few examples of the varied uses of the word may shew us its real force, and how it throws light upon the name of God which we are now considering. The word "Olam" then is used of a limited time in the following places among many others, though our Authorised Version in some of them has rendered it "for ever;" as for example, where we read of the "Hebrew servant whose ear is bored," of whom it is said, that "he should serve his master for ever;" and again where we have the law respecting the heathen bondslaves, whom Israel shall possess, of whom it is written, that "they shall be your bondmen for ever:" in both which places the word can only mean "for life," or "until the year of Jubilee" (Exodus 21:6; and Leviticus 25:46). (Note: In the former of these passages the word is explained by Josephus, (Antiqq. iv. 8. § 28,) and by the Rabbinists, (see the article on the word "Slave," in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, p. 1331,) to mean "until the year of Jubilee," partly from the universality of the freedom then proclaimed, and also because it was the duty of the servant, as a free-born Israelite, then to resume the cultivation of his recovered inheritance.) We find the word again in Hannah's utterance, where she says, "I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and abide there for ever;" words which she afterwards explains by saying, "As long as he liveth, he shall be lent unto the Lord" (1 Samuel 1:22; 1 Samuel 1:28). So again Achish says of David, when he came to Gath, "He shall be my servant for ever" (1 Samuel 27:12). The same word is sometimes simply translated "time," as in the law of redemption of inheritances, where we read, that "the houses in their cities the Levites may redeem at any "time" (Leviticus 25:32). It is also used in reference to the past, as in the words, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time" (Joshua 24:2); and again, "See, it hath been already of old time" (Ecclesiastes 1:10); and again where the Lord by the prophet says to Tyre, "I will bring thee down to the pit with the people of old time" (Ezekiel 26:20); and again, where the Psalmist says, "I remember the days of old" (Psalms 143:5; see too Genesis 6:4; Deuteronomy 32:7). We find a kindred use of the word where Isaiah says, "I have a long time holden my peace" (Isaiah 42:14); and again where the same prophet, speaking of the past, uses the plural form of the word, saying, "Awake, O arm of the Lord, as in the generations of old" (Isaiah 51:9 : Heb. ■■■■■). In one place the word is translated "world," as when the Psalmist says, "These are the ungodly who prosper in the world" (Psalms 73:12), meaning "in this present age," or "life-time." In all these places the word, "Olam," simply expresses "time." It has no reference whatever to what we call eternity.

Still more abundant proof of the meaning of the word is to be found in its constant use respecting the period and appointments of the Jewish dispensation. For it is used of the Aaronic priesthood

(Exodus 40:15), and of the office of the Levites (1 Chronicles 15:2), and of the Passover (Exodus 12:14; Exodus 12:17), and of the meat-offering (Leviticus 6:18), and the Tabernacle service, and other ordinances of the old outward worship, which now is "done away" (2 Corinthians 3:7), all of which in our Authorised Version are said to be "for ever." The same word is used of the inheritance given to Caleb (Joshua 14:9); of Ai being a desolation (Joshua 8:28); of the punishment of Eli's house (1 Samuel 3:13-14); and of the leprosy of Gehazi, of which it is said that it "shall cleave to him and to his seed for ever" (2 Kings 5:27). So again, of the land of Canaan it is said, that "the seed of Abraham shall inherit it for ever" (Genesis 13:15; Exodus 32:13), while the self-same word is repeated in the curse threatened upon Israel for their disobedience, as when we read, "These curses shall come on thee, and pursue thee, till thou be destroyed, and they shall be upon thee for a sign, and upon thy children for ever" (Deuteronomy 28:45-46). In like manner of Ammon and Moab it is said, "Thou shalt not seek their peace for ever" (Deuteronomy 23:6); and again, "They shall not come into the congregation of the Lord for ever" (Deuteronomy 23:3). These and countless similar uses of the word, "Olam," shew that it expresses "time," a "life-time" or an "age," but always speaks of some passing period, which runs its course and fulfils its purpose in God's dealings with the creature. The question is, What is the exact meaning of the word when it is applied to God, as in the passage where it first occurs in Abraham's life, and in the other places where it occurs in Holy Scripture (See Psalms 90:2; Isaiah 40:28; Isaiah 63:16; Jeremiah 10:10; Micah 5:2; Romans 16:26; 1 Timothy 1:17, &c.). I answer, the name itself, if only literally translated, contains and gives the key to the mystery, which is revealed, yet hidden, in it. "El Olam" is the "Age-God," or "God of Ages," (Note: Dr. Robert Young, in his new translation of the Bible, renders the word "Olam," "age-during." See his version passim, e.g. Genesis 21:33; Exodus 12:14; Exodus 12:17; Exodus 40:15, &c. I should rather render it "age-working.") that is, the God who works His will, not all at once, but through successive times and varied dispensations. For in the restoration of His fallen creatures there are stages. As "Jehovah," He is ever "I AM," the witness, not of past or future, but of the truth itself, which cannot pass, but is eternal. "El Olam" shews Him rather as the God of "times and seasons," in which He works to meet a fall, which prove that they are not the true life by "waxing old and vanishing away" (Hebrews 8:13). (Note: The following words of St. Augustine upon this point are so striking that I subjoin them. He says, "Anything whatever hath not true being, if it change. If that is not which was, a kind of death hath taken place. Something is made away with there, that was, and now is not. Something is changed, and is, that formerly was not. O Truth, Thou only art. For in all the movings of the creature I find two times, past and future. I seek the present. Nothing stayeth. ... Past and future I find in all the motion of things. In the Truth which abideth I find not past and future, but only present, and this without fear or possibility of change. Take point by point the mutations of things. Thou wilt find Hath been and Will be. Take God, and thou wilt find I am, where Hath been and Will be cannot be."—Tractat. in Johan. xxxviii. § 10.) Thus this name foretells exactly what the Apostle Paul calls the "purpose of the ages" (Ephesians 3:10-11), namely, that in His dealings with men for their salvation, while His purpose remains absolutely unchanged, God yet reveals Himself in varying degrees, according to man's capacity to receive the growing revelation; first in the flesh, then in the Spirit; now giving law, now gospel; at one time with an election, at another with a call to all people. In a word this name "El Olam" teaches, that in the restoration and redemption of mankind there is an appointed order, a first and a last, both component parts of one purpose, and that these "times" and "times of times," some past, some future, are the direct working of the "King of ages,

the only wise God" (1 Timothy 1:17; Gr. τ■ βασιλε■ τ■ν α■■νων), who thus reveals the "manifold wisdom," and "unsearchable riches," of His only-begotten Son (Ephesians 3:8; Ephesians 3:10-11). (Note: I may observe here that the title of our Lord, in Isaiah 9:6, ■■■■■, which our Authorised Version translates, "Everlasting Father," is literally, the "Father of the age," with direct reference to the "age" or "dispensation" spoken of. Bishop Louth's note here is as follows:—"The Septuagint render the words, Πατ■ρ μ■λλοντος α■■νος, i.e., 'the Father of the world to come,' and the Vulgar Latin follow this translation." The Bishop adds, "I am persuaded it is from the authority of this text, that the Kingdom of the Messiah is called in the New Testament by the title of 'the age (or world) to come.")

Let us notice some of the illustrations which Holy Scripture gives us of this "purpose of the ages," first as it is set before us under the shadow of the law, and then as it is more clearly opened in the writings of the New Testament. No one I think can have studied the complex appointments of the Mosaic law, without feeling, that, if all this ceremonial came from God, there must be some hidden wisdom, not only in what is commanded as to offerings and priesthood, but no less in the varied times and seasons, which are ordained for successive cleansings and redemptions, whether of persons or their lost inheritance, and in the law respecting the First-fruits and the First-born. Some of these are so remarkable that we can scarcely conceive that they can have been appointed without a purpose. But we are not left in doubt upon this point. The New Testament distinctly teaches that all these things are "shadows of good things to come" (Colossians 2:17; and Hebrews 10:1), and that in them God is revealing the way of man's return to Him, and the varied steps and times through which it is accomplished. I need not here speak of the "offerings" and "priesthood," for these only indirectly bear upon the name "El Olam." It will be enough to shew how the "times" and "seasons" of the law are the shadows of those "ages," through which God works, and in virtue of which He is the "God and King of ages."

I have spoken so fully on this point elsewhere, (Note: In my volume on the Restitution of All Things, pp. 30-68.) that I can hardly avoid some repetition here; but the subject is so important, and so little understood, that it will bear some repetition. Observe then how in the law both cleansing and redemption in differing cases take effect at different times. I refer to those mystic periods of "seven days" (Leviticus 12:2; Leviticus 13:5; Leviticus 13:21; Leviticus 13:26; Leviticus 14:8, &c.), "seven weeks" (Leviticus 23:15), "seven months" (Leviticus 16:29; Leviticus 23:24), "seven years" (Leviticus 25:4; Deuteronomy 15:9; Deuteronomy 15:12), and the "seven times seven years" (Leviticus 25:8-9), which last complete the Jubilee, all which are differing times for cleansing and deliverance. In the case of the leper, and of him that was unclean by the dead, there were varied times and stages of purification (Lev. 13 and 14; and Numbers 19:12). In the purification of the woman, if a son was born, her cleansing was complete at the end of forty days: if she bore a female child, not till twice forty (Leviticus 12:1-5). In some cases the debtor or bondman might go free at the return of the Sabbatic year (Exodus 21:2): in other cases not until the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:39-40). So again, if the next of kin redeemed the lost inheritance, it might be regained at once (Leviticus 25:25-27). If this was not done, and the inheritance had been sold, it was lost until the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:28). More striking still are the varied seasons, which are entitled "Feasts of the Lord" (Leviticus 23:2, &c.), when the fruits which are brought forth out of the earth are gathered in due order: first, the sheaf or handful of unleavened ears, the first to spring up out of the dark earth, which lay the shortest time under its darkness, soonest ripe to be a

sacrifice on God’s altar, was offered at the first great Feast, which is the Passover (Leviticus 23:10-11; and Luke 22:1): then, fifty days later, the leavened cakes, offered at the Feast of Weeks, that is at Pentecost (Leviticus 23:17): and lastly, in the seventh month, the Feast of Tabernacles, or of Ingathering, "in the end of the year, when all the field is gathered in" (Exodus 23:16; Leviticus 23:39; Deuteronomy 16:13). In all these Feasts the seed of nature figures the seed of grace, and the first-fruits of the one are but a shadow of the other; that "seed of the kingdom," which is "not quickened except it die," and which returns to Him who made it, "every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ’s; after which cometh the end," when it shall be seen, that, as "the first-fruit is holy, the lump is also holy" (1 Corinthians 15:22-28; Romans 11:16); according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself. I do not here attempt to explain all this. I have done so elsewhere. And this mystery of the "ages" is a "secret." I only say, these "times and seasons" all speak of better things, and are the divinely appointed witnesses of the great truth which is set before us in the name "El Olam," the "Everlasting God." But even creation, in its varied stages, tells us the same story. In it "the Age-working God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 40:28), works, not in one act, but by degrees, and through successive and appointed days or seasons. In creation each day has its own work, to bring back some part of the fallen creature, and one part before another, from emptiness and confusion, to light and form and order. Six days of labour precede the day of rest. All things do not appear at once. Much is unchanged after "light," and a "heaven," are formed upon the first and second days (Genesis 1:4-8). But these first works act on all the rest, for both the "light" and "heaven" are fellow-workers with God’s word in all the change that follows, till "all is very good." The Patriarchal lives even more clearly foretell the same mystery. There is a time when God still bears with the old world, though "the earth is filled with violence" (Genesis 6:11), and a time when that world is judged by a flood, and a new earth emerges from the waters. There is a time when Hagar, the bondmaid, and a fleshly seed, have their permitted place in the elect house, and a time when "that which is born after the flesh" is cast out, to make way for that which is "born after the Spirit" (Galatians 4:22-30). There is a time for the "sons of Levi" to "take tithes of the people according to the law," and a time for the "priesthood after the order of Melchisedek" (Hebrews 7:5; Hebrews 7:9). There is a time when Joseph is rejected by his brethren, and sold into Egypt, and a time when he is exalted to be head over the kingdom, and his brethren are brought to know and worship him. The prophets are full of the same teaching; of an "old covenant, which decayeth and waxeth old," and of a "new one, which is established upon better promises" (Jeremiah 31:31-34; and Hebrews 8:6-8); of the calling of Israel out of the nations, to be "as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time" (Hosea 9:10), and then of the "earth full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9); of the "time, times, and half a time" (Daniel 12:7; and Revelation 12:14), while God’s elect are tried, and of the "seventy weeks," the decade of Jubilees, which "are determined to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to bring in everlasting righteousness" (Leviticus 25:8; Daniel 9:24; and compare Matthew 18:22). All these are shadows of the "purpose of the ages," "which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God," all whose ways are wisdom, even if men discern it not. But even if we were without these figures, the language of the New Testament, in its use of the words, which our translators have rendered "for ever" and "for ever and ever" (Gr. εις αιωνα, and εις αιωνας αιωνων), but which are literally "for the age," or "for the ages of ages," points not uncertainly to the great truth taught by the name, "El Olam," or "Age-working God," though as yet the glad tidings of the "ages

to come" have been little opened. The Epistles of St. Paul shew that the "ages" are periods in which God is gradually working out a purpose, which was ordained in Christ before the fall, and before those "age-times" (Gr. χρ■νοι α■■νιοι: 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2), in and through which the fall is being remedied. So we read, that "God's wisdom was ordained before the ages to our glory" (1 Corinthians 2:7; πρ■ τ■ν α■■νων); that is, that God had a purpose "before the ages," out of the very fall to bring greater glory both to Himself, and to His fallen creature. Then we are told distinctly of the "purpose of the ages" (Ephesians 3:11 : κατ■ πρ■θεσιν τ■ν α■■νων); (Note: Translated in our Authorised Version, "the eternal purpose." The Revised Version gives the exact translation, in the margin.) shewing that the work of renewal would only be accomplished through successive ages. Then we read, that "by the Son, God made the ages" (Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 11:3); for it was by what the Eternal Word uttered and revealed of God's mind in each successive age, that each such age became what it distinctly was; each age, like each day of creation, being different from another by the form and measure in which the Word of God was uttered in it, and therefore also by the work effected in it, the work in each successive age, as in the different days of creation, being wrought first in one part, then in another, of the lapsed creation. Then again we read of the "mystery which has been hidden from the ages" (Ephesians 3:9), and again, that the "mystery," (for he repeats the words,) "which hath been hid from ages and generations, is now made manifest to the saints, to whom God hath willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:26-27). In another place the Apostle speaks of "glory to God in the Church by Christ Jesus, unto all generations of the age of ages" (Ephesians 3:21 : ε■ς π■σας τ■ς γενε■ς το■ α■■νος τ■ν α■■νων). He further says, that Christ is set "far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but in the coming one" (Ephesians 1:21); and again, that "now once in the end of the ages He hath appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:26 : ■π■ συντελε■■ τ■ν α■■νων); and that "on us the ends of the ages are met" (1 Corinthians 10:11 : τ■ τ■λη τ■ν α■■νων κατ■ντησεν); words which plainly speak of some of the ages as past, and seem to imply that other ages are approaching their consummation. Lastly, he speaks of "the ages to come," in which God will "shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:4-17). (Note: I may add here that in all the following passages, α■■ν, which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew ■■■■, is used for this present or some other limited age or dispensation:—Matthew 12:32; Matthew 13:39-40; Matthew 24:3; Luke 16:8; Luke 20:34-35; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 1:21; Ephesians 2:2; Ephesians 6:12; 1 Timothy 6:17; 2 Timothy 4:10; Titus 2:12.)

It is of this "purpose of the ages," that the name "El Olam" is the witness, telling of those "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached" (Acts 3:19-20), and when, in due order, through righteous judgment, cleansing, liberty, and rest, will be obtained by those who are yet in bondage, and unclean, and without their rightful inheritance. In the "ages," and in no other mystery of the gospel, do we find those "good things to come," of which the legal "times and seasons" were the shadow. The "ages," like the days of creation, speak of a prior fall: they are the "times" through which God works, because there is evil, and His rest is broken by it, but which have an end when the work appointed to be done in them has been accomplished, when all again is "very good." God's perfect rest is not in the "ages," but beyond them, when the mediatorial kingdom, which is "for the ages of ages" (Revelation 11:15), is

"delivered up" (1 Corinthians 15:24), and Christ, by whom all things are wrought in the ages, goes back to the glory which He had "before the age times" (2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2 : Gr. πρ■ χρ■νων α■ων■ων). (Note: Translated, in our Authorised Version, "before the world began." The Vulgate translation here is, "Ante saecularia tempora," which is as literal a rendering as possible.) And the well-known words, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for the ages," first spoken to Hebrews, who were passing out of one "age" into another, imply that through these "ages" a Saviour is needed, and will be found, as much as "yesterday," and "to day," that is in the past and in the present. The "God of ages" lives from age to age, or as our Version translates it "for ever and ever" (Revelation 15:7). "Because He lives, we shall live also" (John 14:19). All things are ours: death or life; things present or things to come (Romans 8:38).

Now it will be found that in all the places where this name "El Olam," occurs, there is always a reference, sometimes more hidden, sometimes more open, to the distinct stages of God's dealings with His creatures. Thus the first occurrence of this name is when Abraham learns that the bondmaid must be cast out, and that the better covenant is with the son of the freewoman. So Moses, "the man of God," calls upon this name, saying, "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God," only after he has learnt that he himself must pass away, and not enter the promised land, and cries out, "Thou turnest man to destruction: again thou sayest, Return, ye children of men" (Psalms 90:2-3). So again Isaiah, when he would comfort Israel under the hidings of God's face, asks, "Hast thou not known, that the Everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary" (Isaiah 40:28), though His work, now as in creation, advances through successive evenings and mornings unto the perfect day. So again Jeremiah, when he calls the LORD the "King of ages," who "hath made the earth by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion," speaks at once of His varying operations; now bringing clouds, and now scattering them; at one time "causing the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth," and at another "bringing forth the wind out of His treasuries" (Jeremiah 10:10; Jeremiah 10:12-13). So Micah, foreseeing the days when "many nations shall say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord," when "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks," speaks of the same name, even of "Him, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," who "shall now be great unto the ends of the earth" (Micah 4:2; Micah 5:2; Micah 5:4). St. Paul speaks yet more clearly of the same name, and of the "revelation of the mystery, which has been kept secret from the age-times, but is now made manifest, according to the commandment of the Everlasting or Age-working God" (Romans 16:25-26 : Gr. μυστ■ριον χρ■νοις α■ων■οις σεσιγημ■νον .. κατ■ ■πιταγ■ν το■ α■ων■ου θεο■); and again of the "King of ages," the blessed God, by whose grace the "glorious gospel was committed to his charge," that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:11-17 : Gr. βασιλε■ς α■■νων). And, if I err not, the same title, "God who liveth for the ages of ages," where it meets us in the final Revelation, when some are seen "with harps of gold, standing on the sea of glass," while others are yet to suffer the "seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God" (Revelation 15:1-2; Revelation 15:7), assures us of the same truth, that long as the fall and its bitter fruits remain, with vials of wrath and judgment through "ages" and "ages of ages" (Revelation 14:4), One lives through all these ages, who is ever the same, and able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25). Thus every reference to this name is significant, though few yet know its significance; for even to this day the prophet's words are true, "Verily, Thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the

Saviour" (Isaiah 45:15).

Such is this name, and it is a witness, how, in words or names which are often unnoticed, Scripture may be teaching secrets of God’s wise purpose, which are hidden even from the elect, till the time comes for their fuller revelation. My assured conviction is that the deepest things in Scripture, as in our common daily life,—things which lie at the very foundation of our being here,—are things which are not and cannot be openly spoken of to all, while yet they are assumed, and often indirectly alluded to. Certainly in the Patriarchal lives Divine secrets, which have taken ages for their revelation, were hidden under apparently unimportant acts or words, which few notice. God said to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." "That is," says the Apostle Paul, "they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Romans 9:7-8). Again it is written, "Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman." But in the history of this bondmaid and freewoman, and of their seeds, as the Apostle shews, we have the secret both of the law and gospel, and of the passing away of the one, and the abiding of the other (Galatians 4:22; Galatians 4:30). Just so the name "El Olam," rarely used, yet always in special connexions, opens a secret, ignorance of which may keep us unconscious of God’s advancing revelation, and leave us, like the Jew, still clinging to that which is abolished, when something better has already been revealed. Blessed are they, who like Abraham and Moses in the days of old, and like Paul and John when the Jewish age was vanishing away, have learnt even a little of this secret of the "ages," for it is "as a light in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts" (2 Peter 1:19).

04.07. Lord of Hosts, or Jehovah Sabaoth

7 LORD OF HOSTS, OR JEHOVAH SABAOTH THE last name of God which the Old Testament gives us is "Jehovah Sabaoth" or "LORD of Hosts." A special peculiarity attaches to this title, namely, that it is only known in the general failure of God’s elect Israel. It is never found in the books of Moses, or in that of Joshua and the Judges, or in Job, or in the Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes. It occurs but rarely in the books of Kings and the Chronicles, and not much oftener in the Psalms. But in most of the Prophets, especially in those who most keenly felt the failure of Israel in the promised land, the name meets us constantly: nearly eighty times in Jeremiah: fourteen in the two short chapters of Haggai: very nearly fifty times in Zechariah, and twenty-five in the brief concluding prophecy of Malachi.

Now this fact itself is significant, shewing that the teaching or lesson which this name conveys belongs to a certain stage in the experience of God’s elect people. Speaking generally, every name of God is revealed to meet some felt need of the creature: but some needs are sooner felt than others. All awakened souls feel in some degree that they are needy. The names "Elohim" and "Jehovah," that is God in covenant, yet righteous, may both be known at the very earliest stage and on the lowest platform. We have only to know ourselves as "void and formless," as this earth was when God began His work upon it, and we shall see something at least of the value of His first most blessed name "Elohim." As we learn that man "became a living soul," and is therefore under law, we shall see the riches laid up for us in "Jehovah," who is both righteous, and who gives to man His own righteousness. The higher relationships of God are only known as we advance in the appointed way, some of the most precious being learnt out of our very failure, and even through the judgments which it brings upon us. As we feel our need of His very life to bring forth the seed of promise, we shall know Him as the "Almighty," who gives Himself to us, and makes us partakers of His own fruitfulness. As we see how even Gentiles have a knowledge of God, we shall know Him as the "Most High," who has a priesthood far wider than that which we have first known, that is the priesthood of the election. The name "El Olam," the "God of Ages," is only learnt through a more painful experience. Abraham and Moses did not know it till the one had seen how Hagar must be cast out, and the other that he could not lead Israel into Canaan, but must himself pass away before God’s elect could inherit the land beyond Jordan. It is so with this last name, "LORD of Hosts" or "Sabaoth." It is not learnt while we are bondmen in Egypt, or while we are still in our experience only in the wilderness. It is not even learnt when we first cross Jordan, and are victorious in the promised land, that is, when we first apprehend our place as risen with Christ, and stand upon His promise, as more than conquerors over wicked spirits in heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12). It is when Israel has failed, not in Egypt or the desert only, but in the land of promise, that the name "Jehovah Sabaoth" is first learnt; and not until Israel is divided, and in peril of being led captive out of the land, does it become the name to which the prophets seem instinctively to turn for comfort and deliverance. In a word, we do not know this name, the "LORD of Hosts," till we have learnt the Church’s fall, and that the "hosts of Israel" (Numbers 1:52; Numbers 2:4; Numbers 2:6; Numbers 2:8; Numbers 2:11; Numbers 2:13, &c.) can no longer help

us, for they are bitterly divided and destroying one another. But though Israel fails, God ever remains, and as the "LORD of Hosts," there is help in Him, very specially when His elect have no other helper. Therefore, when all things shake, the Psalmist says, "The LORD of Hosts is with us, though the earth be removed, and the waters roar; and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (Psalms 46:3; Psalms 46:7; Psalms 46:11). God is and must be ever sufficient, for a ruined church as for a ruined world. And the Church, because of the deposit committed to her, may need His help even more than the unbelieving world, which is yet so far from Him.

Let us then turn to some of the places where this name occurs, that we may better see its value. We first find it, three or four times, in the earlier chapters of the First Book of Kings, commonly called the First Book of Samuel. Now that book, as indeed every other book of Holy Scripture, has its special aim. Its object is to shew how the failure of the priests in Israel led, first to a prophet taking their place, and then how the failure of the prophet, who made his sons judges, though they walked not in his ways, led to the people asking a king, to go before them and judge them like the nations; (Note: In illustration of all this, see "The Mystery of the Kingdom, traced through the Books of Kings;" Part i. pp. 44-58.) in all which, as the LORD then said to Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7). Henceforward, according to their own wish, they were to be "like the nations" (1 Samuel 8:20), with a king, who "should go before them and fight their battles," and who, to this end, "when he saw any strong or valiant man, took him unto him," thus by strength or gift, instead of in the faith of a present God, to save Israel (1 Samuel 14:52). For their wish was to have something strong before their eyes, to do those things for them which God Himself had covenanted to do,—something or some one who should take His place, as though the LORD were absent from them. It is in this state of things, with priests like Hophni and Phinehas, who "make God’s people to transgress," and with the ark, now taken by Philistines, and then left for years in Kirjath-Jearim, that the name of the "LORD of Hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubims," first appears in Holy Scripture. As is so common in the ways of God, it is a sufferer, a barren woman, who first knows this name and puts her trust in it (1 Samuel 1:2; 1 Samuel 1:11). We next find it where the army of Israel is smitten before the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:2; 1 Samuel 4:4): then in the mouth of David, "the stripling," when he meets Goliath of Gath, "not with sword or shield, but in the name of the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel" (1 Samuel 17:45). At this stage of Israel’s history, the name, "Jehovah Sabaoth," very rarely meets us. And it is possible that at this time its true meaning was little understood,—perhaps even misunderstood,—by those who yet used it. A soul which deals with God, and listens to His word, constantly utters truths which are above the speaker’s perfect apprehension; which therefore, if he attempted to explain them, might be, not mis-stated only, but even more or less denied. Peter, for example, when the Holy Ghost was given, preached that "the Spirit should be poured out upon all flesh," while yet he was unprepared to receive this as a truth, when it came before him practically in the call of the Gentiles in the person of Cornelius (Acts 2:17; Acts 10:14; Acts 10:28). It is possible enough, therefore, that, when this name, "LORD of Hosts," was first revealed to God’s elect, they may have linked the title in their thoughts with earthly hosts or with the hosts of Israel. But the utterances of the prophets, where this name occurs so often, shew us its true import, and what it is given to reveal to God’s divided and distressed people. For in the mouth of the prophets this name has no uncertain sound. It tells of One, who in the ruin of His Church on earth, is yet the Lord of heavenly hosts; who therefore, whatever may be the failure of His elect on earth, in relation to the dispensation, that is, to that which is committed to them, can

and will yet perfectly fulfil His purpose of blessing to the world, perhaps even more fully through the very failure of His people. With the prophets the "LORD of Hosts" is the "God of heaven" and of the "hosts of heaven," through whom He can fulfil His pleasure, though men on earth rebel or turn from Him. (Note: I may note here that Daniel is one of the very few prophets who do not use the title "LORD of Hosts," but has instead the name, the "God of heaven." (e.g. Daniel 2:18; Daniel 2:28; Daniel 2:37; Daniel 4:37; Daniel 5:23.) We find the same name in the decree of Cyrus; (2 Chronicles 36:23; and Ezra 1:2;) and in the prayer of Nehemiah. (Nehemiah 1:4-5; Nehemiah 2:4; Nehemiah 2:20.) It seems as if the two titles were substantially equivalent. Compare Psalms 148:1-2. We find the expression, "Host of heaven," in 1 Kings 22:19; 2 Chronicles 18:18; &c.) So Isaiah, in the days of Ahaz, "who walked after the abominations of the heathen," until Judah was smitten and led captive (2 Chronicles 28:1-5), so that "the daughter of Zion was left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, and as a besieged city," turns to this name for succour, saying, "Except the LORD of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah" (Isaiah 1:8-9). So again, "in the year that King Uzziah died,"—who had freed the people from the Philistines, and to whom the Ammonites had given gifts, "for he had built towers in Jerusalem, and had a host of fighting men, so that his name was spread far abroad" (2 Chronicles 26:6-15)—the vision which Isaiah saw was of a Lord stronger than the earthly king who had passed away,—a Lord "whose train filled the temple," and still "cried, Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:1-3). So again, when the Kings of Israel and Syria were confederate against Judah, and "the heart of the people was moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind," the LORD thus spake, saying, "Say not, A confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid; but sanctify the LORD of Hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear; and He shall be for a sanctuary. ... the zeal of the LORD of Hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 7:2; Isaiah 8:11-14; Isaiah 9:7). It is so always. It is the "LORD of Hosts" who punishes His people for their unfaithfulness (Isaiah 9:13; Isaiah 9:19). It is again the "LORD of Hosts," who, when they have been chastened, smites their adversary and brings them help and full deliverance. "Therefore thus saith the LORD of Hosts, O my people, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee: but yet a very little while and the indignation shall cease, and the LORD of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him, and his burden shall be taken from thy shoulder" (Isaiah 10:12; Isaiah 10:24-27). "Like as a lion roaring on his prey, so shall the LORD of Hosts come down to fight for Mount Zion, and for the hill thereof: as birds flying, so will the LORD of Hosts defend Jerusalem: defending also He will deliver it" (Isaiah 31:4-5). And it is very especially when His people are captive, and have no might to help themselves, that this name is most often repeated by the prophets for their comfort. As I have already said, Jeremiah in the destruction of Jerusalem uses it nearly eighty times, and Haggai constantly repeats it in his exhortations to the little remnant, who have gone up out of Babylon to build again the house of the LORD:—"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, and be strong, all ye people of the land, and work; for I am with you, saith the LORD of Hosts. For thus saith the LORD of Hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of Hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of Hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the LORD of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of Hosts. ... For I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of Hosts" (Haggai 2:4-9; Haggai 2:23). With the last of the old prophets it is the same. He pours out his complaint at

the growing corruption:—"They that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." But a little remnant yet "fear Him, and think upon His name." "And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of Hosts, in the day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Malachi 3:16-17). Thus must He ever answer the cry, "O LORD, God, of Hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people? Turn us again, O LORD, God, of Hosts, cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved" (Psalms 80:4; Psalms 80:19). And Scripture is full of illustrations of the way in which the "LORD of Hosts" uses His hosts for the correction and deliverance of His people, and for the punishment of His adversaries, with terrible displays of just judgment. David is an example. All Israel have accepted him as king:—"The LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies." Then comes the temptation to number the people, and to count how strong he is. "And Joab gave the number of the people unto David; all they of Israel were eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men." Can these mighty men of valour help, if God is forgotten? Was not David stronger, unaided and alone, when he replied to the taunt of Goliath of Gath by "the name of the LORD of Hosts," than he now is with a thousand thousand valiant men? The LORD's answer to the numbering of the people is to shew His host. "God sent an angel, the angel of the LORD, destroying throughout the coasts of Israel. And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD, standing between earth and heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem; and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men, for the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel" (1 Chronicles 21:2-16). So again when Ahab gathers his host to go against Ramoth-gilead, and the King of Judah joins him, saying, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses," the prophet of the LORD sees another host:—"And Micaiah said, I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him, on His right hand and on His left." And of this host "a spirit went forth," and, spite of all the hosts of Israel, by this spirit Ahab is deceived and drawn to his destruction. We read, "A certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the King of Israel between the joints of his harness" (1 Kings 22:19-22; 1 Kings 22:34). A chance shot, as men speak,—was it not rather an angel of the LORD?—silently accomplishes the threatened judgment. So again, in the case of Elisha, when "the King of Syria sent horses and chariots, and a great host, to take him, and they came by night and compassed the city round about. And the servant of the man of God said unto his master, Alas, my master, how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw, and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." By them the prophet is delivered. "And the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel" (2 Kings 6:11-18). So again, when the King of Assyria sent Rabshakeh with a great host against Jerusalem, and Hezekiah, who had no power to save his people, cries for help to "Him who dwelleth between the cherubim," the answer is this:—"Thus saith the LORD concerning the King of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return; for I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. ... The zeal of the LORD of Hosts shall do this. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses" (2 Kings 18:17; 2 Kings 19:21-33). Well might the Psalmist cry, "O LORD of Hosts, who is a strong LORD, like unto thee,

or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them" (Psalms 89:8-9). And it had been ever thus, though in earlier days God's people knew it less clearly: for love makes provision for the helpless babe, even while it is all unconscious of the service rendered to it. God's hosts had always been serving His elect. Lot leaves Abram, and having first pitched his tent toward Sodom, soon dwells there and is seen sitting in the gate (Genesis 13:12; Genesis 14:12; Genesis 19:1). Now the judgment of Sodom was at the very doors. "And there came two angels to Sodom, and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them. And they said, Hast thou any here? Bring them out, for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it. And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, and laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful to him; and they brought them forth without the city" (Genesis 19:1-17). So again, when Hagar flies from Abram's house, the "angel of the LORD found her in the wilderness" (Genesis 16:7-11). So too with Jacob, when an exile from his home he lighted upon a certain place, and lay down to sleep with a stone for his pillow. But help is near him; for he sees "a ladder set upon the earth, the top of which reached even to heaven, and behold, angels of God ascended and descended on it" (Genesis 28:12). So again, when he went on his way, "the angels of God met him; and when he saw them, he said, This is God's host" (Genesis 32:1-2). It is so always, where there is real need. "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them" (Psalms 34:7). But it is the New Testament which especially opens this ministry of the heavenly host to God's elect. They constantly appear, wherever there is need to be supplied or danger to be averted. "The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph" (Matthew 1:20), and to Zechariah (Luke 1:13; Luke 1:19), and to Mary (Luke 1:26; Luke 1:30), and to the shepherds (Luke 2:9-10; Luke 2:13), when "there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men;" in every instance commencing their message with the words, "Fear not;" for the opening of the spirit-world, even if it is to bring us help, ever more or less awakens the sense of the weakness of flesh and blood, and that in our present state we are little fit to deal directly with heavenly realities. Yet these heavenly hosts ever wait upon us. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14). Their ceaseless ministry to our Lord is the pattern of their ministry to us, for "we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Ephesians 5:30). How they were ever serving Him unseen, the Gospels shew. We have seen how angels sang at His birth: angels no less were near to guide His early steps, first to Egypt, and then again into the land of Israel (Matthew 2:13; Matthew 2:19): angels came and ministered to Him after His temptation (Matthew 4:11): an angel strengthened Him in the garden (Luke 22:43): angels at His grave rolled away the stone, and declared to His weeping disciples, that "He is not here, but risen" (Matthew 28:2; Matthew 28:6). And that He was conscious of this ministry, and taught His disciples to expect it, His repeated words declare:—"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:53). "Verily, verily, henceforward ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John 1:51). The Apostles' lives are full of illustrations of this heavenly service. Peter in prison (Acts 12:8), Philip guided into the desert (Acts 8:26), Paul in the storm (Acts 27:23), John in Patmos (Revelation 1:1), all are witnesses of the angelic help which is ever waiting upon the Lord's servants. To John especially it was given, not only to "hear the voice of many angels

round about the throne" (Revelation 5:11), but also to see how to these angels is committed not a little of the government of this world. "Not unto angels, but to man, hath God put in subjection the world to come" (Hebrews 2:5-6); but "the things that are," as seen by John, are in the hands of heavenly hosts, whose work it is to fulfil God's will, both in the world, and towards His people. Not only are there "angels of the Churches" (Revelation 1:20; Revelation 2:1; Revelation 2:8; Revelation 2:12; Revelation 2:18, &c.), and "angels round about the throne" (Revelation 7:11), but there are "angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow upon the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree" (Revelation 7:1); there are "angels with trumpets," the sounding of which is followed by judgments upon the earth, and sea, and the fountains of waters (Revelation 8:6-12); there are "angels with vials, in which is filled up the wrath of God" (Revelation 15:1; Revelation 15:7); there are "angels bound in the great river Euphrates," who are "prepared to slay the third part of men" (Revelation 9:14-15); there is an "angel of the waters," who says, "Thou art righteous, O Lord, for thou hast judged thus" (Revelation 16:5); there is an "angel standing in the sun," who declares the judgment of "all flesh" (Revelation 19:17-18); there is an "angel with the seal of the living God," whose work it is "to seal the servants of God upon their foreheads" (Revelation 7:2-3); there is an "angel, flying through heaven, with the everlasting Gospel, to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Revelation 14:6); there is an "angel who cries, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Revelation 14:8); and, to speak of but one other, though there are many, there is an "angel which says, Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife," and who, when John falls down to worship him, says, "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant; worship God" (Revelation 21:9). From first to last the Revelation is full of angels, who are "sent" by Him who is their Lord, "to testify these things unto His servants for the Churches" (Revelation 22:16; Gr. μαρτυρ■σαι ■μ■ν τα■τα ■π■ τα■ς ■κκλησ■αις).

There may be a stage when we are hardly fit to see these things. Even when seen, as in the case of the beloved John, the vision may be so bright that for a moment the seer falls down before a fellow-servant, as Cornelius "fell down and worshipped Peter," who "took him up, saying, Stand up, I myself also am a man" (Acts 10:25-26). Yet such a vision never is forgotten. The seer learns from it, in a way above all words, that "the light affliction, which is but for a moment, is not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18). Even the faith that there are such hosts of ministering spirits cannot but comfort the oppressed. Therefore the Apostle James, regarding the "labourers who have reaped the fields, and whose hire is kept back by fraud," by "rich men who shall weep and howl for the miseries which are coming on them," simply says, "The cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth" (James 5:4). They shall be righted, if not by man, yet by the "LORD of Hosts." All are called to know how near He is, and how near are His unseen hosts, who do His pleasure. For, as the Apostle says, "Ye are not come unto a mount that may be touched, and to the sound of a trumpet, and to the voice of words. ... But ye are come unto Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:18; Hebrews 12:22-23). This name, the "LORD of Hosts," reveals it all, that we may know what help is ever near, in Him who "gives His angels charge concerning us, to keep us in all our ways" (Psalms 91:11).

It may perhaps be said, that, though such things were known by saints of old, Christians have little or no experience of them now. But surely it is not so. There are few among the truly believing poor, who have not facts to speak of, which prove that angel help is still as near as ever. If men have not proved it, is it not because they have not needed such help, or have not confidently looked for it from the living God? Thanks be to God, not a few yet know that the "LORD of Hosts is with us." Such can only bless Him for the trials through which they have learnt this name, and can therefore say, not with their lips only, but from their heart, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God, of Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory."

04.08. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

8 FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST THE names of God which we have so far considered all belong to the Old Covenant, under which "that which may be known of God" was taught "here a little and there a little" (Isaiah 28:10), to suit the state in which men were, not knowing God as He has since revealed Himself in Christ, and by His Spirit. The perfect name is declared to us by Jesus Christ, our Lord, even "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" in which is united and summed up all that was taught of old in the names revealed to patriarchs and prophets under the Old Covenant. Here, as much as in the patriarchal lives, or in the shadows of the law, Augustine's well-known words hold good, that "the New Testament lies hid in the Old, while the Old is opened in the New." (Note: Augustine: Quoest. in Exod. § 73, on chapter xx. 19.) The "name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," only opens in its fulness what was taught in part, and under a veil, in the names "Elohim," "Jehovah," "El Shaddai," and "Adonai." This New Testament name comes to us from the mouth of the risen Christ, and is yet revealed by Him to those, who, having known Him after the flesh, and in His divided and partial manifestations, have come, through the knowledge of His cross and resurrection, to receive a mission from Him, to "go and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). For He is still amongst us, and by His Spirit can yet "make known His name" (John 17:6), that "our hearts being comforted and knit together in love," we may come in due time "unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, even of the Father, and of Christ" (Colossians 2:2). His will is that we should know Him, and that we are partakers of His very nature (2 Peter 1:4), thus called to reveal, not in word only, but in deed and life, something of that glory which is set before us in this last most wondrous name, of "the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Let us then turn to this name, and may our Lord Himself declare it to us, that the love wherewith the Father has loved Him may be in us, and He in us (John 17:26).

First then "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," is one name, not three or many. (Note: See the passages from St. Jerome and Euthymius, quoted by Cornelius a Lapide, on Matthew 28:19.) Our Lord did not say, "Baptizing them into the names," but "into the name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." For, as He said to the Scribe, "The Lord our God is one Lord" (Mark 12:29). What this name therefore declares is One God, in what, for want of a better word, we call Three Persons; a "Father," who eternally produces Himself in His "Son," and by His "Spirit," and who, in His very being, even as in His works, is a witness of unity in plurality, and of a giving forth out of Himself, and a communion with Himself, which to our fallen senses seems well-nigh impossible. We shall see what is involved in this Threefold Name as we look more closely into it. Here I only notice that it is "the Name," not "Names," of "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Now this truth, of a diversity in the unity of God, is no new truth. It has been assumed, and more or less expressed, in the varied names of God which were declared under the older revelation. We

saw how in "Elohim," who said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and again "The man is become as one of us" (Genesis 1:26; Genesis 3:22), there was, to say the least, some intimation of plurality; while in the fact that the same name, "Elohim," which is plural, is joined with singular adjectives and verbs, and that He who calls Himself "Elohim" says of Himself distinctly, "There is no God beside me" (Isaiah 45:5), we have still more direct assertion of His unity. In the contrast too between the import of the names "Elohim," who is in a covenant-relationship which never fails, and "Jehovah," who loves in virtue of quality and must judge evil, and yet makes His creatures righteous by giving them His own righteousness, and no less in the names "El Elyon," the "Most High," from whom we all proceed, and "El Shaddai," the "Pourer-forth," who gives forth from Himself His life and Spirit to His servants, there were repeated suggestions of that unutterable fulness of Love, and Wisdom, and Power, which are so wondrously expressed in "the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." I may say more. For it is not Holy Scripture only which bears this witness. In our very nature, which shews that fatherhood, sonship, and the spirit of both, are in every man, we have intimations of the mystery of Father, Son, and Spirit, in God, unless we are prepared to grant that the creature can possess and be more than the Creator. It is true that in man, in his fallen state, personality seems to be that which cuts off one man from another. Yet even here we are in one another. Even since the fall the mystery of love answers every objection to the apparent difficulty how two can be one, and one even in a third; for love ever draws two to be one, and by their mingled being forms a third, who has been in both, and proceeds from both, and in whom, in another form, the two are yet one. Still more surely do we know, for Scripture asserts it, that the woman, and therefore her seed in her, was in the man as formed in God’s image, until that deep sleep fell upon Adam, in which he lost his primal form, and that which hitherto had been united and one became divided (Genesis 2:23). This is a great mystery. Yet in it we may see how the unity, and yet the plurality also, of God are revealed in man created in His image. It is one of the many preludings which both Nature and Scripture give us of that great harmony, which is perfectly expressed in the Name of "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

I can barely touch this here, but I note it in passing; for the doctrine of the Trinity, that is of what God is, as "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," has too often been regarded, even by believers, as an isolated truth, standing apart from, and having no relation to, our human hearts and human consciousness; whereas, inasmuch as man was made in God’s image, what God is in Himself is the very ground, not only of our relation to Him, but of our very being, and of our true knowledge of ourselves and of our duties. If God is love, and love requires (for to dwell in solitude is not love) such a communion and relationship as is expressed in "the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," then our true life, if we are His sons, must have the same characteristics, and be a life of communion and relationship. On the other hand, the very cravings of our nature for communion and relationship witness, that in Him, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28), there must be the substance of that, of which our life, with its relationships and communions, is but the shadow. This is what our Lord reveals, in making known to His disciples "the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." And just in proportion as we really know that God is "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," we shall reflect something of the fellowship and love, which such a name declares to us. The world’s selfishness is the result of not knowing what He truly is, from whom we come, and for whom we were created (Colossians 1:16).

What then does this name declare? It says that God is Father,—that therefore there must be a Son,—and that the Father and the Son are One in One Spirit. Thus it speaks of a life which brings forth life,—of a life which is brought forth,—and of a still further proceeding forth of life, which nevertheless is all one. Who is sufficient for these things; for life is that which everywhere eludes our grasp. And yet our Lord Himself reveals this to us, for as we see it we reflect and are transformed into the same image.

First, God is "The Father." In Himself, as God, there is this relationship with One, who, though He is "with God," and also "is God," is no less "His Only-begotten Son" (John 1:1; John 1:14; John 1:18). Fatherhood is not confined to creatures. Rather creatures are and can be fathers, because in the Divine Nature there is both a Father and a Son. What this relation expresses of an eternal love between Him who begets and Him who is begotten,—what it tells us of a union and communion in Him who is the source and ground of all being,—in its height and depth transcends all language. Yet we have a broken shadow of it in every earthly father, and in all fatherhood, even as seen in this world, where sin is still working. "Father" tells us of a source of life; of one in whom his sons have been (Hebrews 7:10), and from whom they come, and whose image and likeness they are called to manifest. "Father" tells us of relationship, in nature and in blood; and of a love, which, because it is in virtue of relationship, must be unchanging and unchanged, even though the son becomes a prodigal; which therefore loves him, even when far off, and will fall on his neck and kiss him, while the rags of the far country still cover him (Luke 15:12-24). "Father" says much more. It speaks of one who will guide and bear with babes, "who are borne by him from the belly, and are carried from the womb" (Isaiah 46:3-4); it declares that he who bears this name must educate and rule, and "as a father charge his sons" (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12); that he must correct them also, "for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Hebrews 12:7). What shall I say more? "A father pitieth his children" (Psalms 103:13). A father "knoweth what things his children have need of, before they ask him" (Luke 12:30). "If a son ask bread of any that is a father, will the father give him a stone; or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?" (Luke 11:11; Luke 11:13). Is it not a father’s joy "to lay up for the children, and not the children for the fathers?" (2 Corinthians 12:14). Even if they perish in some crime, must not a father cry, like David, "Would God I had died for thee, my son, my son"? (2 Samuel 18:33). What then must be the relationship in God, who is perfect love, between the Father and the Son? What must He be, who is "The Father," "of whom all fatherhood in heaven and earth is named"? (Ephesians 3:15). What must be His love to His beloved Son? (Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5). What must be His will towards all, who in and by His Son are made His sons, and have come from, or been begotten by, Him?

For,—and I would call attention to this,—it is a Will that is specially declared in all these acts, which I have referred to as characteristic of a father. Whether it be the love which begets, or which guards the babes, or which righteously corrects evil, even in the sons, or which answers the children’s cry, or which lays up good things for them unasked, or which, having loved them, loves them to the end,—every act is the expression of a Will. "The Father" is the Will, in the mystery of the ever-blessed Trinity. As we look further into the name, we shall see that it contains more than a Will. But an eternal Will is the foundation, a Will which loves and cannot but love, and which shews itself in Him who comes forth from the Father, to tell us what the Father is, and to reveal Him to His creatures. For the name is not "Father" only, but "The Son," who "being the brightness of God’s glory, and the express image of His person" (Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:15), reveals the

Father and His love, by His works in all creation; "for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible" (Colossians 1:16), to tell out God's glory (Psalms 19:1); and who, when through our fall we could see no love in such wondrous works, "came forth from the Father, and came into the world" (John 16:28), that He might declare His Father's name and nature to us. Thus, as the Apostle tells us, He is "the Word," who was "with God and was God" (John 1:1); the "Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, and who hath declared Him" (John 1:18); "the Light which shineth in the darkness, though the darkness comprehends it not: the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:5; John 1:9); who says, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren" (Hebrews 2:12); "I will shew you plainly of the Father" (John 16:25). This is He who reveals the Father, and who being Himself "the Son," and thus in personal relation with a Father, not only reveals God, as "the Word," but, by His indwelling in us, makes us as persons sons together with Him. For to "as many as receive Him He gives power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe in His name, who are born, not of blood, (Note: Observe the Greek here, ■ξ α■μ■τωv, that is "of bloods," referring to the division caused by the fall. Compare ■ξ ■v■ς α■ματος, in Acts 17:26-28, where the life is referred to, which we receive as God's offspring.) nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). So, in the wondrous prayer recorded by St. John, He says, "I have manifested thy name to the men thou gavest me out of the world; for the words which thou gavest me I have given them; and I have declared unto them thy name and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them" (John 17:6; John 17:8; John 17:26).

Oh, what a revelation of the Father it is which the Son has made to men. What a Word has He been, and is, and ever will be. And what a Will in the Eternal Father has He revealed to us. Surely the heavens and earth have told us much, declaring His glory and shewing His handy work (Psalms 19:1). Sunshine and rain and fruitful seasons, filling men's hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14:17), have said with no uncertain voice that God loves all and cares for all, seeing that He is a Giver (Acts 17:24-25), even when they know Him not. But the "Son" has shewn us more, even that death and pain, which sin has brought, shall be overcome, and even now may be overcome, in as many as receive Him, because He Himself, the Lord of all, has stooped to meet us, and has even come under our curse, and Himself been made sin for us, though He knew no sin, that so He might abolish death, and be the Creator of a new creation, where sin and death shall be no more. The Gospels tell it all—how He has revealed the Father to us. For His works are the works of God. "The Son does nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do, these things also doeth the Son in like manner" (John 5:19). Are there leprous creatures, cut off from men, and crying, "Unclean, unclean"? The Son reveals the Father's Will, and makes them clean (Matthew 8:3). Are there palsied souls, grievously tormented, who can do no work for God or man? He speaks, and the palsied are restored and healed the self-same hour (Matthew 8:6; Matthew 8:13). Are there others, like Peter's wife's mother, in whom sin works as a fever, which keeps them in burning restlessness and disquietude? He yet takes such by the hand, and the fever leaves them (Matthew 8:14-15). Are there others suffering even worse, possessed with devils, who answer for the possessed, as if they were himself, and cry, "My name is Legion"? The "Son" can cast them out (Mark 5:2-15). There is no evil He cannot meet. Bodily or spiritual lameness, blindness, dumbness, deafness, dropsy (Matthew 11:5; Luke 14:2), a spirit of infirmity, which bows souls down through long and weary years (Luke 13:11),—even death, when the dead are, not only dead

"in the house" (Mark 5:39-40), but "laid in the grave," and even "stinking" (John 11:38-39),—all yield to Him who is the "Son," who thus reveals the "Father." And no less does He reveal Him in His terrible rebukes to those, who "trust in themselves that they are righteous," and "thank God that they are not as other men;" who judge of their state God-ward, not by their love, that is their likeness to their Lord, but by their privileges, that they are here "clothed with the purple and fine raiment" of the kingdom, while yet they have no pity for the lost, who are "full of sores," even "at their gates," and to whom the very "dogs" shew more kindness (Matthew 23:13; Matthew 23:29; Luke 16:19; Luke 18:9; Luke 18:11). Who has ever spoken like "The Son" to judge hypocrisy and wrong? Who has so stripped deceivers bare, spite of all their outward religiousness? Oh blessed yet awful revelation of the Father through the Son. "He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). For "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:18). But "the name" revealed by the risen Lord, and into which we are baptized, goes even further. For it is not only the name of the "Father" and of the "Son," but also of the "Holy Ghost." Now this word "Ghost" or "Spirit," elsewhere translated "Breath" or "Wind" (See Job 33:4; Ezekiel 37:5-6; Ezekiel 37:8, &c.; John 3:8), expresses a power unseen but felt, like the breath of heaven which moves the forest and the sea (Isaiah 7:2; Psalms 107:25, &c.); which may come sometimes like a strong wind which rends the mountains (1 Kings 19:11), or at others as the balmy breath which makes the waters flow (Psalms 147:18); now blowing on the gardens, that their spices may flow out (Song of Solomon 4:16); and again breathing upon the sick and dead, that they may live (Ezekiel 37:9); always free as the air we breathe, encompassing us about, and even entering into us, as the very breath of life to all creatures. Such is the "Holy Ghost," the very Breath or Spirit of the living God, the worker of the Father's Will. For as at creation He moved upon the waters (Genesis 1:2): as He strove with the old world, when the wickedness of man was great upon the earth (Genesis 6:3): as He came upon judges, prophets, and kings (Judges 6:34; Judges 14:6; Judges 15:14; 1 Samuel 16:13; Ezekiel 3:12; Ezekiel 3:14; Ezekiel 11:1; Ezekiel 11:24), out of weakness to make them strong, to carry out God's purposes towards His people; so He yet fulfils God's will in men, now convincing the world of sin, now taking of the things of Christ to shew them to disciples (John 16:8-14); giving to one the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another gifts of healing, to another divers kinds of tongues; all being the working of that one and self-same Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as He will (1 Corinthians 12:6-11). Under this name therefore we get the revelation, not only of a Will and Word in God, but of a Power also, which is indeed Almighty; a revelation of all, and even more than all, that the name "El Shaddai" taught of old; for the name now taught is "Holy Ghost," not power only, but holy power, even the power of love, which never fails, until by the sacrifice of itself it has made others partakers of the same Spirit. Such a Spirit, the "Spirit" of the "Father" and of the "Son," lifts those who receive it into a sphere, where the inequalities of this life are swallowed up in a "communion," "where there is neither Jew nor Greek, nor bond nor free" (Galatians 3:28); where, inspired by God's own Spirit, of holiness and love, we too may minister His Spirit, and, like His Son, be not only "living souls," but "quickening spirits" also (1 Corinthians 15:45), to reveal Him in a world that knows Him not. This then is the crowning name, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," the witness that there is in God all, and more than all, that the creature can need for its salvation,—a Will in the "Father," who can never change, to bless and do us good,—a Word in the "Son," who is no less changeless, to make us know the Father,—and a Power in the "Holy Ghost," who is Almighty, to fulfil the Will and Word of

God, until through judgment all things are made new. In the name, "the Father," we have that love which our inmost souls require: in the name of "the Son," the revelation of that righteousness and truth, which we no less need to save us from our adversary: in the name of "the Holy Spirit," the might and power to conform us to God's will, and to enable us, not only to enlighten, but to comfort and strengthen, others. And we need the name in all its fulness, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." We cannot take one part of it and deny the rest, without robbing God of His glory, and ourselves of the grace which He possesses for us. Have we not seen how some who say that there cannot be a Son in God, while they profess to contend the loudest for His Fatherhood, have come to deny also that He has made any sacrifice for men? They call Him Love, but would take from Him that which is love's inmost impulse, even to give forth one's life to beget another, or to sacrifice what is most precious to us for another. So again the denial of the Godhead of the Son would make the Spirit which He gives us only a creature, which, however helpful, can never make men sons of God, or restore in man God's marred image. Therefore the Church has so earnestly contended for this name, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," seeing in it the foundation of all our hopes and aspirations. The more it opens, the more it shews us of the fulness of our God. Oh the depth of the riches here revealed! "Lo, these are parts of His ways, but how little a portion is heard of Him" (Job 26:14).

Such is this name, which sums up "that which may be known of God" (Romans 1:19), revealed by Christ Himself, to those, who, having first known Him after the flesh, have come in due time, through following Him to His cross, to see and know Him in resurrection also. Only such souls ever really enter into the fulness here opened to us. Thank God, the fact, that God is what He is, does not depend upon our understanding of it: God does not change, because we cannot see His glory. But the joy and strength of His disciples depends not a little on what they know of Him, and that there is a "Son" in God, who has shewn us the "Father," and given us His "Spirit," so that we too, as sons of God, may "shew forth His virtues" (See the Greek or margin, 1 Peter 2:9). To others the Threefold Name cannot but for awhile be more or less "dark with excess of light," though, because it is revealed by Him who is our Lord, it may yet be implicitly believed, and sacramentally minister of its own love, and joy, and peace, to those, who, though yet babes in Christ, have been baptized into it. It is confessedly a "mystery," that is a truth which cannot be explained by words alone, but must be grown up into by the communication of the same life, and through the experience of a certain discipline. (Note: See Liddell and Scott's Lexicon, under the word μυστ■ριον.) And yet, though it is a mystery which is only "revealed from faith to faith" (Romans 1:17), saints have pointed out how much there is, even in present nature and in man, to reflect, though in imperfect and divided figures, something of the eternal undivided truth, which the "name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," declares to us. Temporal things, because they are broken and divided, cannot perfectly reveal what is eternal and undivided; and yet they may and do give us "shadows of the true" (Hebrews 8:5; Hebrews 9:24; Hebrews 10:1), which, though imperfect and divided, may help us to conceive how there can be a Son co-eval with the Father: how He can come forth, as the Word, to tell us of the Father and give us His Spirit, and yet ever abide in Him, in the unity of the same Spirit. Take the figure, which Scripture gives us, that "God is a sun" (Psalms 84:11), and that "our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29). In the sun we have first fire, then light, then heat; the light, differing from fire or heat, yet produced and brought forth by the fire; and the heat, differing from fire or light, yet proceeding from the fire. Yet these three are substantially one, as we can prove, and all are co-eval. But which of the three produces the others? Does the light or brightness come from the fire, or the fire from the brightness? The light or

brightness comes from the fire, not the fire from the brightness. The fire produces the light. "Thus," as St. Augustine says, "the fire is the father of the light, and they are co-eval. Give me a fire without brightness, and I may believe that the Father ever was without the Son. ... Shew me an eternal fire, and I will shew you an eternal light." (Note: Augustine, Serm. lxvii. § 11; (Ben. 117.) and Serm. lxviii. § 2; (Ben. 118.)) So, to take another illustration, which arises directly from our Lord's title as the "Word," who "in the beginning was with God, and was God" (John 1:1). Does not even man's word convey some hint, how a word may be in us, and yet come forth to convey to others what has been hidden in our hearts? I quote again from St. Augustine:—"Lo, the word which I am speaking to you I have had in my heart. It comes forth from me to you, and, if you receive it, it may enlighten and abide with you; yet it does not leave me because it comes to you. Even so the Word may come forth to us from the Father, and yet not depart from Him. ... And you may each and all receive the Word without division. If it were a cake of bread which I was giving to you, to take it in you would have to divide it, and each could only have a part. But in receiving a word, whether mine or God's, it comes whole to all and each. You may each have the whole, for the Word of God is whole everywhere." (Note: Augustine, Serm. lxix. § 7; (Ben. 119.) and Serm. lxx. § 3. (Ben. 120.)) I have already alluded to the constant argument of the same great Church teacher, that, if God is Love, there must be in Him a Lover, a Beloved, and the Spirit of Love; for there is no love without a lover and a beloved:—"Ubi amor, ibi trinitas." (Note: See the viith, ixth, and xth books of Augustine's De Trinitate, almost passim.) But even more striking are the considerations, which, as Augustine shews so fully, are suggested by the trinity in man, namely, of a will, a reason, and an affection, which, though three, are no less truly one. (Note: See the ixth and xth, xiiith, and xivth books of the De Trinitate.) I write however for those, who, because Christ says it, believe that "the Lord our God is One Lord," though He is no less certainly "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." If only we walk with Him, till heaven opens to us, and our hearts are truly knit together in love, we shall surely come into all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, even of the Father, and of Christ, and His Spirit.

I will not conclude these notes on this last name of God, as revealed by the risen Christ to disciples upon whom He had breathed, and to whom He had said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," without noticing how this same name, in a slightly different form, is taught by the Apostle Paul to "babes in Christ," of whom he says, "I could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal" (1 Corinthians 3:1), who, unlike their teacher, as yet only "knew Christ after the flesh" (2 Corinthians 5:16) and were still full of their own "envyings and strifes," and "debates and backbitings" (1 Corinthians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 12:20). To these "carnal" disciples the Apostle thus declares the Threefold Name:—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14). Need I point out how the order of the Persons in the Godhead here differs from the order as revealed by the risen Lord to those who knew something of the power of His resurrection. This is not without a purpose. As in the Law of the Offerings of old, the Sin and Trespass offerings, that is the view of Christ as Sin-bearer, though last in order of institution, were in order of use and application invariably prior to the Sweet-savour offerings, which shewed Christ in His sinless obedience, voluntarily yielding up Himself to God in everything; (Note: Compare Lev. 1-7, which gives the order of institution, with Exod. 29; Lev. 8, 9, and 14; and 2 Chron. 29; which latter chapters give the order in which the sacrifices were offered by God's people.) so in the revelation of God's name, the knowledge of what He is for sinners, and the course in which His grace and love are now made known, is

needed by carnal and imperfect souls before they can really receive the higher truth of what He is in Himself in His eternal generation. Therefore to carnal souls the Apostle says, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you. Amen." We are so familiar with the words that we are in danger of overlooking all that is taught in them, and what they imply as to the state of those to whom they were addressed by the Apostle. For the words describe a growing experience. As sinful creatures our first knowledge of God is through "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." Awakened souls always begin here. We feel that we are sinners; that we are lepers, palsied, fevered, lame, or blind. We want some help and deliverance. How are we to get it? We do not yet know God. Till we have tasted of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," God is practically a stranger to us. So, in one way or another, as poor, lost creatures, with more or less knowledge of our need, we come or are brought to Christ, or He comes to us, and we find "His grace is sufficient for us." Observe, that it is "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" with which the blessing here commences. The Apostle does not say, "The grace of the Son of God," though of course Jesus Christ is Son of God. The deep mystery of the Divine Sonship might be too deep for carnal souls. Besides, when we first come or are brought to Christ, our thoughts of Him are as of a "Lord," who has power to save or judge us, rather than of His eternal relation to the Father. At such a stage what we chiefly need is to "know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor" (2 Corinthians 8:9). As we see Him in the flesh, we learn to see "the exceeding riches of His grace" (Ephesians 2:7), and how it can save souls in every condition of will or mind, and out of every form of plague and evil. It cleanses the leper, who believed in His power, but hardly in His will, to help; who said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Matthew 8:2). It casts the evil spirit out of the man possessed with devils, whose father believed in Christ’s will, but doubted His power; whose cry was, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us" (Mark 9:22). It healed the paralytic, because of the faith of those who brought him (Matthew 9:2). It raised the dead, without any faith, either on their own part, or in those about them (Luke 7:13). It delivered another demoniac, even against his shrinking from the Lord who healed him, and in spite of his prayers to be "let alone." (Mark 5:7. See also Mark 1:24 and Luke 4:34.) It healed the ear of one who had come out only to seize and bind the Lord (Luke 22:51). It prayed even for those who slew the life which thus shewed grace to all (Luke 23:34). In all these and in countless other cases, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). And this "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" is still the same. Blessed are they who know it. Such know at least One Person of the ever-blessed Trinity. And though as yet they may know Him most imperfectly, hardly knowing He is "Son of God," with the blind man of old they can now say, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25; John 9:35); for "of His fulness they have received, and grace for grace" (John 1:16). But those who have got thus far will soon go further. Jesus is "the way" to God (John 14:6). Souls, therefore, who know the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," speedily come to know the "love of God." It is of course "the love of the Father," for Christ is witness that "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). But it is here seen as the "love of God." God thus "commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). "Hereby perceive we the love of God" (1 John 3:16). So we are brought to know another Person of the Blessed Trinity, and to "love Him, because He first loved us." There is much more that we have yet to learn; but when by grace we have "peace with God," because "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts" through Jesus Christ our

Lord (Romans 5:1; Romans 5:5), we can say with joy, "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:31-32). Therefore the Apostle concludes touching this love,—"I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

There is yet more to know. Having thus learnt the "love of God," we may and shall come to the "communion of the Holy Ghost" also; to know that God's own Spirit has come to us, to "dwell in us," in dwellings which to Him must be full of foulness and corruption; not standing outside or afar off, but even coming into sin-stained hearts, until He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body" (Php 3:21), by such love proving that He is the Holy Ghost. For it is to a "communion" that we are thus called, even the "communion of the Holy Ghost;" to have One always with us, who shares His riches with us, and makes us partakers of His own Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13), while He no less bears our burdens and helps our infirmities, by making intercession for us (Romans 8:26). What this "communion of the Holy Ghost" did for saints of old is witnessed by their works. Men walked in the consciousness, not only that heaven would one day be their home, but that even here this heaven was open to them (Luke 3:21; John 1:51; Acts 10:11). No need for them, like the heathen, by wizards and consulters with familiar spirits (Deuteronomy 18:9-12; Isaiah 8:19), to seek a communion with the unseen, for which, so long as he is in selfhood, man is unfit, and which, as sought in self-will, can only hurt him. The "communion of the Holy Ghost" gave man something far better, through the "grace of the Lord Jesus" and the "love of God," even "fellowship with the Father and with the Son" (1 John 1:3), which practically silenced and swallowed up, as Aaron's rod did the rods of the Egyptian magicians (Exodus 7:12), all inferior methods of communion with the so-called invisible. Such a "fellowship" was found to be something higher, and more powerful, and more true, than all the wonders of the old-world magic; for it witnessed that men were "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ;" it brought them "to Mount Sion, the city of the living God, to an innumerable company of angels, and to the church of the first-born, which are enrolled in heaven; and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:22-24). In such a "communion" men were taught, as they could bear it, what God hath prepared for them that love Him; "things which eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, but which are revealed by God's Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). Blessed be God, the self-same Spirit yet abides, to guide us into all truth, by taking of the things of Christ and of God, and by shewing them to us (John 16:13; John 16:15).

Thus in different measures and in different ways is the last great name of God, the name of "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," revealed and opened to believers; some apprehending it as it unveils vital relationships in God; some, as it meets the need of His creatures, who have fallen from Him. In whatever measure it is received, it must give peace. In every age it has been true, that "they who know God's name will put their trust in Him" (Psalms 9:10). Much more should we, to whom by His beloved Son He has revealed Himself as "our Father," trust Him, and rest in Him, in every trial. Shall we not pray, "Our Father, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done"? (Matthew 6:9-10). Shall we not bless Him for the assurance, that "all nations shall come

and worship before Him, and shall glorify His name" (Psalms 86:9)? Shall we not say, even while the conflict lasts, "Blessed be His glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen" (Psalms 72:19)?

04.09. Partakers of the Divine Nature

9 PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE

WHAT is the Gospel? What are the "tidings of great joy" to be proclaimed to all as the substance or result of Christ's coming? Several answers might be given, differing somewhat in form, yet true. Some perhaps would say, This is the Gospel:—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15): others, that "through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39). Others again would give the fuller statement in our Lord's own words, namely, that "God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). These words surely are the Gospel, and implicitly contain all the "good news" which God, who spake at sundry times and divers manners unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by Him who is the Son. But is this, as men generally understand it at least, the Gospel according to the Four Evangelists? What is the substance of what we rightly call the Four Gospels? Is it not, that, by the coming of the Eternal Word, a New Man has been brought forth out of our divided nature, who is truly Son of God and Son of Man, the witness that the breach which sin has made is healed, and that God has come to dwell in man, so that man may do the works of God, and that man has come to dwell in God? Is not this the fact revealed in Christ? But did the "Only-begotten of the Father" become Man that He should dwell alone as Son of God? Was it not rather that He should be the "Firstborn among many brethren," who through Him should be sons of God, and do His works, and manifest and minister the same spirit? (Note: The Early Church saw clearly the distinction between the two apparently contradictory titles, "Only-begotten," and "Firstborn." The "Only-begotten" is the Son, prior to all division: the "Firstborn" is "the male that first openeth the womb," (Exodus 13:12,) that is, the first delivered out of the fall or separation. So Athanasius, Discourses against the Arians, ii. c. 21, § 9; also Theodoret, on Colossians 1:15; and others.) This is the good news which makes the angels glad, even if men as yet only dimly apprehend it. We are called with this calling, "that Christ should be formed in us" (Galatians 4:19; Colossians 1:27), that thus we should be "partakers of the Divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). In and by Him even now are we the sons of God. It is not yet made manifest what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; and even here, "as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17). As a conclusion, therefore, to our meditations on the Names of God, which revealed to men of old, as they could bear it, His varied fulness, let us turn to see how all this fulness has been declared and seen in Christ, and may and shall be manifested in His living members, as they grow up in Him to bear His image.

First as to Christ. Every virtue and relationship in God, revealed piecemeal in the Names which Holy Scripture gives us, comes into perfect manifestation in the life and death of the Only-begotten of the Father, of whose fulness we have received, and grace for grace (John 1:16). Let us take the Names in order. Even a glance at them will shew that "Christ is all, and in all."

"Elohim" comes first, One whose name and ways declare a covenant-relation; One therefore whose love can never change, because He loves in virtue of relationship. Is not this name declared in Christ? Does He only love us if we are lovely; or does He not rather, as "Elohim," spite of all failings on our part, love us with unforsaking love, in virtue of a relationship which is not changed by our condition? What does not Christ's life witness? The world was lost and helpless. Men were all gone out of the way. Jews and Gentiles all were under sin. But all were His, for "all things were created by Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16), and as a "faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:19) He can never leave them nor forsake them. "All that the Father hath," He says, "are mine" (John 16:15; John 17:10). Some indeed are His by a special bond, even those whom the Father has given Him as "first fruits," out of the world (James 1:18; Revelation 14:4), to be "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Ephesians 5:30). These are His "chosen" (Revelation 17:14), whom He calls "His sheep, who hear His voice, and follow Him" (John 10:27-28). And having loved these, He loves them to the end. But "other sheep He has, which are not of this fold. Them also He must bring, and they shall hear His voice, and there shall be one flock and one Shepherd" (John 10:16). For they are His, not by creation only, but bought with His precious blood (1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Peter 1:19); and "the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Hebrews 13:20) is the witness that man is loved with an unchanging love, though for a season lost and fallen. Therefore Christ came; and ever since His coming He has been shewing how He loves, bringing light out of darkness, and order out of confusion; nor will He cease working until, as at the creation, God's image again is seen in man, and "all things are made new" (Revelation 21:5).

Thus does Christ reveal "Elohim." But He no less manifests "Jehovah," who loves in virtue of quality, and "will by no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 34:7). The prophet who foresees that "He shall deliver the needy, when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper" (Psalms 72:12); no less declares that He "loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity" (Psalms 45:5; Psalms 45:7; Hebrews 1:9), and that "He cometh to judge the world with equity and the people with His truth" (Psalms 96:13). Some of His elect may think, that, because they are elect, He will not judge them. But because He is the Truth, He must judge all wrong, and judge it even more in those who know and are near Him, than in those who know Him not. For He reveals Him who said of old, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore will I punish you for your iniquities" (Amos 3:2). He is indeed perfect love to those, who by confession shew, that, though ruined, they are true; but He is no less unswerving truth and justice to such as would appear what they are not, and cover sin by a cloak of religiousness. Need I give examples from His words to Pharisees and Scribes (Matthew 23:13-33), and still more to the Churches, to whom He says, "I will give to every one of you according to your works" (Revelation 2:23)? To all He is the faithful and true witness, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and out of whose mouth goeth the sharp two-edged sword, to smite the nations (Revelation 2:11-12; Revelation 2:18; Revelation 3:14; Revelation 19:15). And yet, with all this, His people's sin and judgment pain Him. Like "Jehovah," He suffers with, and grieves for, them. Again and again "He sighed" (Mark 7:34; Mark 8:12), and "groaned in spirit" (John 11:33; John 11:38), and "wept over Jerusalem, saying, If thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace" (Luke 19:41-42); and again, "How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not" (Matthew 23:37). Still more did He suffer, when "He himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24), thus making atonement for sinners by giving Himself to be their righteousness. In all such acts, He was revealing "Jehovah," who, if there is evil, must judge and take it away, even if He Himself is pained and suffers through the judgment.

Nor does our Lord less reveal "El Shaddai," the Almighty "Pourer-forth," who by the communication of His Spirit makes His servants fruitful through self-judgment. This was the name which Abram learnt "when he was ninety years old and nine" (Genesis 17:1), when, having failed to obtain the seed of promise in his own strength or by his fleshly energy, "El Shaddai" appeared, and by the communication of His own out-breath changed him from Abram into Abraham, and then, through circumcision—that is the judgment of his flesh—gave him the promised seed, with the assurance of still greater fruitfulness. But Christ fulfils this also. Surely He does this when He says, "He that eateth me shall live by me;" when He gives us "His flesh and blood, that He may abide in us and we in Him" (John 6:56-57); that so abiding, as branches in the vine, we may, "being purged by Him, bring forth much fruit" (John 15:2; John 15:5; John 15:16). Still more He gives us of His own powers, when having known Him for a season only in the flesh, like the disciples of old before the day of Pentecost, we are brought through the "little while" of "sorrow" (John 16:19-23), to know Him in the Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:16; Romans 1:3-5), when He "pours out His Spirit" (Acts 2:17; Acts 2:33), for which He bids us "tarry" (Luke 24:49), and when by it we "receive power to be witnesses for Him" (Acts 1:8), and to do His works and minister His Spirit. Then, even as "He by the eternal Spirit offered Himself to God" (Hebrews 9:14), pouring out His very life-blood that we should live through Him, they who drink into the same Spirit are willing, even as He, to be poured out even to death to bless and strengthen others (Acts 21:13; 2 Timothy 4:6). All this Christ gives us as partakers of His flesh and of His blood. But both these precious gifts involve self-judgment or God’s judgment. They who receive them unworthily "eat and drink their own damnation" (1 Corinthians 11:29; Hebrews 10:29). Therefore He calls us to "judge ourselves that we be not judged of the Lord." But what is all this but the revelation of "El Shaddai," who says, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect, and I will multiply thee exceedingly, and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant" (Genesis 17:1-2; Genesis 17:11; Genesis 17:13). And does not our Lord equally reveal "El Elyon" or the "Most High," who has a "priesthood after the order of Melchisedek," and is thus linked, not with the elect only, but with all men? Was not this the message of the Angel at His birth?—"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:10). Was not this the vision which made old Simeon glad, when he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:29-31)? Christ, as the revealer of God, fills many relationships, but none grander than that He is Man, and as Man is related, not to the elect only, but to all men. For indeed God is related to all men, for "Adam was son of God." Therefore the Gospel, which specially reveals our Lord as Son of Man, with distinct purpose traces His descent from God through Adam (Luke 3:22-38). Man is son of God, though he knows it not, and in and through Christ inherits a priesthood, which, like that of Melchisedek, rests not on law, but on relationship. Still more does our Lord reveal the "Most High," "Possessor of heaven and earth," in that, having humbled Himself, God hath greatly exalted Him, and made Him "Prince of the kings of the earth" (Revelation 1:5), King as well as Priest, "Head of all principality and power" (Colossians 2:10), and "Head of every man" (1 Corinthians 11:3). "All things are put under Him," and yet "He is not ashamed to call us brethren; for both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one" (Hebrews 2:8-11). What is all this but the revelation of the "Most High," who has acknowledged man as partaker of His nature, saying, "Israel is my son, my firstborn" (Exodus 4:22); and again, "Ye are gods, and all of you children of the Most High"?

Thus does our Lord reveal "Elohim," "Jehovah," the "Almighty," and the "Most High." Need I shew how He no less reveals "Adonai," "Master and Husband," and the "God of Ages," and the "LORD of Hosts"? Is not our universal use of the title "Lord," as applied to Christ, the witness how deeply the truth of His Lordship has penetrated men's hearts? To us He is indeed "Adonai," our "Lord." We "call Him Master, for so He is" (John 13:13). His we are, and Him we serve (Acts 27:23). He commits to each their varied talents, for which they must give an account, for every gift brings its special responsibility. But He is more than "Master." He is "Husband." The marriage of the Lamb is coming, when His Bride will make herself ready (Revelation 19:7); and even now, as the Apostle says, we are "espoused to Christ as to a husband" (2 Corinthians 11:3). Thus does He reveal "Adonai." But He is no less "El Olam," "Age-working God." Christ is witness how God works, and that by stages and degrees He speaks the word and gives His Spirit as men can bear it. He has many things to say, which disciples, while they are carnal, cannot bear (John 16:12). Therefore He comes in the flesh and in fleshly forms, and speaks by parables and signs, till men can know Him in the Spirit. Thus too He accepts circumcision, and the temple-service, and the baptism of John, as stages to opened heavens, and transfiguration, and resurrection; shewing that "there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1), and that God in Christ is still "El Olam," while He is no less "LORD of Hosts," even of angels, who serve Him first and last; for, as the Apostle says, "When the Father bringeth the First-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him" (Hebrews 1:5-6).

All this is generally seen. As Christians we all confess, that "the Son" is "the image of the invisible God," and that "the Only-begotten of the Father hath revealed Him." What is less clearly seen is, that Christ's members must likewise reveal Him, like their Lord and Head, in all His virtues and relationships. Let us note what the Scripture shews us of the saints, that we may better understand what it is to be "imitators of God as dear children" (Ephesians 5:1).

And, first, must not Christ's members, like their Head, reveal "Elohim"? Are we not to love and work for all, however ruined they may be, not in virtue of their deserts, but because as God's creatures they are related to us? "Doth not nature teach us" (1 Corinthians 11:14) to love our own, though deformed, or lame, or blind, and even to love them more because of their infirmities? Much more are God's elect set in the world to love as they have been loved, and to forgive even as they have been forgiven. Therefore we see the Apostle, blessing though reviled, intreating though defamed, to the very end labouring for the lost, and saying, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved" (1 Corinthians 4:12-13; 2 Corinthians 12:15). As Christ had toiled for him, he toiled for others, in the faith that by a loving will and a true word all things can and shall be "made new" (Revelation 21:5). But all this is the revelation of "Elohim," who worked unforsakingly on a ruined world, till in the place of darkness and confusion all was very good. Nor do the saints less reveal "Jehovah," who loves righteousness. Look at the Apostles Peter and Paul. "Great grace was upon the Church, neither was there any among them that lacked, for as many as were possessors of lands and houses sold them, and distribution was made to every man according as he had need." But two, professing to give all, "kept back a part," and thus "lied to the Holy Ghost." At once Peter judges the falsehood, saying, "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord: thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." And Ananias and his wife, hearing these words, fell down and died (Acts 4:33-35; Acts 5:1-11). So again with Paul, when he was come to Paphos, and a certain false

prophet withstood him, seeking to turn away the Deputy from the faith, the Apostle, filled with the Holy Ghost, said, "O full of all subtilty and malice, thou child of the devil, thou enemy to all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." And immediately the wrongdoer was smitten with blindness (Acts 13:6-11). So again at Corinth, while, as we have seen, there is the most unwearying love in the Apostle, so that he is willing to be "as the filth of the earth, and the offscouring of all things," if only thus he may serve his weak brethren (1 Corinthians 4:9-13), there is no less the unswerving righteousness of the LORD, in the delivery of the fornicator to Satan, "for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Corinthians 5:1-5). It is so all through his course. He is loving, but he is righteous also. Witness such words as, "Shall I come to you with a rod?" (1 Corinthians 4:21). "Put away from yourselves that wicked person" (1 Corinthians 5:13). "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness? Wherefore come out and be separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing" (2 Corinthians 6:14-17). In all this, and in other like words of the Apostle, we see "Jehovah," who "will by no means clear the guilty." And yet, like the same "Jehovah," Paul’s heart is grieved by the sin of those whom he thus rebukes. So he says, "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. For if I make you sorry, who is he that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?" (2 Corinthians 2:2-4). So again, in his parting address to the Elders of Ephesus, he refers to his "many tears," and to his service among them "night and day with tears" (Acts 20:19; Acts 20:31). For the faithful servant, like his Lord, while he must judge all disobedience, suffers even with the judged. Who is weak, and he is not weak? Who is offended, and he burns not? (2 Corinthians 10:6; 2 Corinthians 11:29). Nor is "El Shaddai," the "Pourer-forth," less seen in God’s true saints, who, "being enriched in everything to all bountifulness" (2 Corinthians 9:11), pour out to others that which they have first received from the Almighty Giver. This view of God’s elect meets us at every turn throughout the New Testament. "I have fed you," says St. Paul, "with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 3:2). "We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear to us" (1 Thessalonians 2:7-8). As themselves filled with the Spirit, the Apostles ministered it to those, who through self-judgment were prepared to receive what the "Almighty" still gives to those who "walk before Him." Thus, sometimes by the laying on of hands (Acts 8:17), sometimes by preaching (Acts 10:44), sometimes by prayer (Acts 1:14; Acts 2:2-4), they were the channels by which God’s fulness was poured out, on such as by the experience of their own helplessness had been prepared for it. The "manifestation of the Spirit" was given to them, and they "ministered the Spirit" (Galatians 3:5), that the Church might be built up, not by the works of the flesh, but by the fruits of God’s Spirit. It is so yet. Now and to the end the true elect must be "pourers-forth," and "minister the Spirit," though now as of old it is the empty only who are filled, while the rich are sent empty away. The next name, "Most High," as we might expect from its special connexion with the non-elect, has as yet been less apprehended by the Church and by believers generally than those other names of God, which, as they were earlier revealed in Scripture, are even now more easily learnt and received by God’s people. But in every age, there have been saints, who, though of the election, have known

this name, and, like Abram, have witnessed to the world that the "Most High" is indeed "Possessor of heaven and earth." This was very specially the calling of the Apostle Paul, "to whom was committed the Gospel of the uncircumcision" (Galatians 2:7-8), and who, though rejected for it, testified to his brethren (Acts 22:21-22), that God had a purpose far wider than the election, and that "in Abraham's seed, all nations should be blessed." For he had learnt, that there was a "priesthood after the order of Melchisedek," differing from and greater than that of the elect. Therefore he said, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise" (Romans 1:14); for "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" (Romans 10:12-13). Therefore with heathen Athenians he could adopt the words of their own poet, and tell them that they were "God's offspring," for "God had made of one blood all nations of men that dwell on the face of the earth, that they should seek the Lord, and find Him, who is not far from any one of us" (Acts 17:26-28). Even the Apostle of the circumcision had learnt this truth:—"God hath shewed me," he said to Cornelius, "that I should call no man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). And from that day to this there have been believers, who have learnt the same, and who, though judged as Paul was for his Gospel, can yet, like him, "give thanks for all men" (1 Timothy 2:1), in the faith that the "Most High" is the "Possessor both of heaven and earth," and that, "of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things" (Romans 11:36).

I need but glance at the three remaining names of God, to shew how the elect, as they grow up in Christ, reveal them all, and shall yet more reveal them in the coming kingdom. They reveal "Adonai," "Lord;" for though "the elders in the Church, who feed the flock," may not behave themselves "as lords over God's heritage" (1 Peter 5:1-3), yet are they called to "rule" (Romans 12:8), and if they "rule well," are "worthy of double honour" (1 Timothy 5:17), and brethren are commanded to "obey and to be subject to them" (Hebrews 13:17). Thus they manifest "Adonai," in ruling and directing others. Much more shall they reveal Him when one shall be set "over ten cities," another "over five" (Luke 19:17; Luke 19:19), because they have "watched for souls, as those that must give an account," and have faithfully cared for and guided those committed to them. And no less do God's true saints reveal "El Olam," the "Everlasting" or "Age-working God," who has dealt with fallen men as they could bear it, first without law, then under law, and then under grace, like a Father meeting His children where they are, and bearing with their infirmities, till they are prepared for better things. Pharisees or Separatists indeed, who "thank God that they are not as other men" (Luke 18:11), may cut away all the rounds of the ladder which are below them, contending that the stage which they have reached is the only one which God accepts, thus wronging those, who, being yet babes, still need the lower forms of truth, which alone can be received while men are carnal. Not so those who are like Christ, who came, and yet comes, in the flesh. Such can "become as Jews to gain the Jews," and as "weak to gain the weak" (1 Corinthians 9:20; 1 Corinthians 9:22), "feeding them with milk and not with meat" (1 Corinthians 3:1-2), knowing that there is a time even with Christ for "Jewish water-pots," "set after the manner of the purifying of the Jews;" for the "water" can be "turned to wine," when "the hour is come" for the present Lord to "manifest forth His glory" (John 2:5-11). And so with the title "LORD of Hosts." Some of Christ's members may not yet know, that in and with Him they share His place, as "far above all principality and power" (Ephesians 1:20-21), and that even here holy angels wait on them (Hebrews 1:14), while in the coming kingdom they shall "judge angels" (1 Corinthians 6:3). Yet this is the calling of God's sons. The hosts of heaven serve them. It is only "for a little while"

that "man is made lower than the angels" (Hebrews 2:7).

Thus are the elect, even as their Lord, set here to manifest the virtues, which they possess as "partakers of the divine nature," and which they shall yet more manifest in the coming kingdom, when, delivered from "the bondage of corruption," they shall be "clothed upon" with their incorruptible and perfect "house from heaven." As yet indeed many are babes; some are still unborn, though quickened with God’s life: what is seen of them is still nature only, not the Lord. Such can manifest little or nothing of their Father. But there are others, who in their measure, though they do not yet apprehend that for which they are apprehended, are shewing forth something at least of the varied grace and truth, which is theirs as sons and heirs of God. How are they welcomed by the Church and world? Christ and His saints are the answer. They are welcomed as God is welcomed. Who want or care for God, till in some need or trial they find that they are not and cannot be self-sufficient? For God is not known. Some dreadful misrepresentation of Him keeps souls from Him, or men’s pride and self-love makes them averse to that which even nature tells them of Him. So with His saints: "the world knoweth them not, even as it knew Him not" (1 John 3:1). They may live and die for others; but their light and love, because even without a word it is ever judging all untruth and self-love, make them an offence; and therefore they are rejected. Let those who live out God’s life understand their calling. So long indeed as the life of God, though quickened, is unseen in man, it offends none, for, like an unborn child, it is yet unmanifested. Even when it is first brought forth, and is still a babe, though it may cause trouble to some (Matthew 2:3), yet, like Christ, it grows here for a season, not in wisdom and stature only, but "in favour also with God and man" (Luke 2:52). As yet there is nothing in such a life to judge others. Not so after heaven opens; for then, because the Spirit of the Father rests upon His sons, and His grace and truth, not only are in, but also daily beaming forth from, them, because this light exposes all pretences, and this love condemns all self-love, those in whom it is seen will be counted, as their Master, "breakers of the law" (John 5:10), or "mad" (John 10:20), or "deceivers" (Matthew 27:63; John 7:12), by those, who, with much zeal for God, are yet in self-hood. For truth is welcome only to the true: love is welcome only to the loving. Thus the "poor of the flock" (Zechariah 11:11), who feel their need, are ever readier to welcome and receive God’s life, when it appears among them, than the Pharisees and Scribes, who are satisfied with their own supposed attainments. And yet this life, though despised of men, as unknown, yet well known, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, because it is God’s own life in flesh and blood, as in Christ the Head, so in His members, must conquer all; not by force, but by the cross, that is by patient suffering, even unto death; "by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God" (2 Corinthians 6:6-10), commending God to those who yet are far from Him. Therefore let God’s sons rejoice, that as Christ is, so are they in this world. It is but a little while and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear let him hear."

04.10. Appendix

APPENDIX IN the preceding Lectures I have referred in passing to the objections which have been urged against the unity and Divine inspiration of Holy Scripture, based chiefly, or to a great extent, on the varied names of God, more particularly the names, "Elohim," and "Jehovah," which alternate so remarkably throughout the Pentateuch. My object was not to enter on the question of the nature and inspiration of the Bible; for I was addressing believers, who accepted Christ's words as truth, that "no jot or tittle of the law should fail," and that, though "heaven and earth should pass away, His words should not pass away." I rather desired to open to my brethren what the Lord by grace had opened to me, of the riches of that Word or Book, which the Apostle describes as "a light that shineth in a dark place" (2 Peter 1:19), and which I had long proved to be "a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105). Of course I was aware of the so-called "conclusions" of "scientific criticism." I had weighed them again and again, only to be increasingly astonished at the recklessness of assertion and assumption, which takes the place of proof with some on this question. But believing that error is ever better answered simply by the truth than by pursuing and running down the falsehood, I did not care, in these pages at least, to enter into any detail of what I am convinced is a mistake, though, like most mistakes, it may contain a measure of perverted truth in it.

I may however add here a few lines to note what appears to me the fundamental error of the critics and their so-called "scientific criticism." Not one of them, so far as my experience goes, seems ever to have considered under what conditions a Divine revelation can be given to fallen creatures, or the qualifications necessary to recognise and rightly apprehend such a revelation. Hence these critics have acted, and could not but act, just like the Jews of old, who stumbled at the human form of the Divine Word, and therefore unhesitatingly judged and rejected it, though, to those who felt their need, that Incarnate Word had abundantly ministered health and deliverance, through the very form which learned scribes only mocked and stripped and crucified. For in mercy to lost men, and to reach them where they were, the Word of God had come in a form, whose earthly lineage could be plainly proved, and whose susceptibility to injury was manifest to all. Therefore its judges assumed, and thought they had proved, that it could not be Divine. Just so, and for the same reasons, has the Written Word been judged. But "the Scripture cannot be broken." As surely as Christ rose, and ministered to men His Spirit, so will His Word in Holy Scripture conquer all, spite of all the judgments of those who brand it as a "Deceiver." The fact is that every one of the objections which so-called "scientific criticism" has brought against the Bible,—that it is an outcome of man's heart, and has grown with men, and bears their likeness, and is therefore marked throughout with man's infirmities,—may equally be brought, not only against the Incarnation, but in substance also against the books of Nature and Providence; so that the Incarnation, and Nature, and Providence, may all be arraigned at the bar of man's understanding, as bearing proofs that they are faulty, and cannot be of God. Look at the Incarnation. What would learned men have found in Christ's body, had they, instead of endeavouring to learn from it as a living Teacher, only dissected it as a dead thing, as the scientific critics have been so busy

dissecting Scripture? Would they have found, with the eye of sense at least, that that body had been divinely formed, and was in a very special way God's chosen tabernacle? Could not the dissectors have shewn that it was human, born of an earthly mother, and bearing in its form marks, not only of her likeness, but of those from whom she came, that is, that it was of Jewish lineage; nay, might they not have gone further, and proved that the very particles it was composed of had, before they became parts of the body of the Lord, been component parts, either of some animal or vegetable, and concluded that therefore that Human Form could not possibly be Divine? In like manner might it not be said, that, as Nature is manifestly composed of heterogeneous substances, thrown together into their present form, to the eye of sense at least, with no little confusion, and with marks that they have all pre-existed in some other form, such a fact is proof that even Nature cannot be the handiwork of God. Certainly whatever may be said against the Bible, on the score that it is, or may have been, made up of previously existing materials, may no less be urged against Nature and the Flesh of Christ, both of which have in them precisely the same peculiarities. It is just the same with Providence, which may be and has been arraigned by some as guilty of acts unworthy of a God, and which, if done by men, would bring them to the gallows. What then? Is not Christ's flesh of God? Is not Nature also His building? Is not Providence His work, spite of its many apparent anomalies? And does not the fact, that Holy Scripture has the same apparent anomalies, which are indeed marks of the state of the creature whom it is meant to serve, witness that the one even as the others, though there yet are mysteries in all, is the work of the same One Divine Artificer? Let not believers be afraid. The books of God are not going to fail, because "scientific criticism" has been so learnedly busy, and declares itself dissatisfied with them. In truth the criticism of the critics is so open to correction, and is often based on such mere assertion and assumption, that almost every fresh critic finds something to correct and judge in all his predecessors. As with the rejectors of the Christ too, "their witness does not agree." But what will not unbelief believe, especially when it boasts its superior wisdom and enlightenment? It might astonish a simple Christian to know that the Book which has for ages fed the Church, and which has been teaching, and successfully teaching, righteousness and truth, as no other book has ever taught these, is, according to the critics, based throughout on fraud and falsehood, merely the work of a "Jehovist," and of an "Elohist," improved by a "second Elohist," then by a "Deuteronomist," and lastly by some unknown "Redactor," till it has become the confused and heterogeneous thing which it now is in the eyes of critics, fit only to be condemned and demolished by their criticism. Well may the Apostle ask, "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

For, spite of the critics, the Book, in its grandeur and fulness, still lives, and goes on feeding hungry souls, and giving living waters for the thirsty. There it stands, as saints have seen, human and yet no less Divine, meeting men at every stage, in forms which they can profit by; in the letter full of lessons for our guidance through this present world, while in spirit it reveals yet veils the depths of God's wisdom. I will not repeat here what I have said elsewhere as to the way in which the Bible, in its varied books, having first shewn us all the outcome of Adam, gives us instruction as to every stage of the appointed way out of the Fall, shewing our dangers, our failures, our deliverances, and our sins, till out of every bondage, every wandering, every conflict, and every sin, man is brought even through death into the new creation and the heavenly city of his God. Every fact recorded, nay, every word, is to the opened eye a revelation, not only from God, but of God, shewing, in the oft-repeated and manifold discovery of the creatures' need, the unfailing

fulness of that grace and truth, which is indeed sufficient for us and all creatures.

I cannot go into all this here. It will be sufficient to remind believers that, in the Gospels, our Lord again and again speaks of Moses as the author of the books which have always gone by his name; and connects with him the legislation which our modern critics refer to the so-called "Jehovist," the "Elohist," and the "Deuteronomist," and to widely different and even post-exilian periods. The following are some of our Lord's allusions to the law; first to the law of leprosy; Matthew 8:4; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14 : then as to divorce; Matthew 19:8; and Mark 10:3; Mark 10:9 : then as to reverence for parents; Mark 7:10 : then as to resurrection; Luke 20:37 : then as to circumcision; John 7:22-23 : then as to the brazen serpent; John 3:14 : and to the bread from heaven; John 6:32. In other passages, as in Matthew 23:2, and John 7:19, Moses and his law are referred to, without any distinct commandment being specified. In three other places, namely Mark 12:26; Luke 16:29; Luke 16:31; and Luke 24:44, our Lord, speaking of the Old Testament, either in whole or in part, refers to it as the "Book of Moses," "Moses and the Prophets," or "the law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms;" and lastly, in John 5:45-47, He again appeals to the "writings of Moses," as witnessing of Him, telling the Jews, that "if they believed Moses, they would also believe Him, for Moses wrote of Him." All this is nothing to the critics. We cannot therefore be surprised that the witness of the Apostles, who in not less than some thirty places refer the Pentateuch to Moses, or quote it as of Divine authority, should be set aside as curtly as the testimony of our Lord. And all this in the country of Luther! Faith in the Church has long since been gone: faith in the Scriptures is fast going. How long will even the profession of faith in Christ remain? Men must be asleep or blind if they do not see what is fast coming upon Christendom. In conclusion may I say, that I believe one main cause of objections to the Bible lies in its power over man's conscience? The Book will speak for God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. But all critics are not so open as the poor East-end lecturer, who, when asked by one of his hearers,—"Why is all your criticism turned against the Bible, instead of against Shakspeare or Homer? Why don't you let the Bible alone?" replied with English outspokenness,—"Why don't I let the Bible alone? Because the Bible won't let me alone." It ever has been a witness for God, and still will be, while men need light in a dark place. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

Meanwhile be it remembered, that, as the Bible was written by men, to whom the spirit-world had been more or less opened, and who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, it can never be fully understood, except by those to whom the same world is now opened by the same Spirit. The great opening is even now at hand. Blessed are they who by grace are waiting for it.

05.0.1. RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS

THE SECOND DEATH AND THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS BY

ANDREW JUKES

"Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? Or thy faithfulness in destruction?" -- Psa 88:10-11

CONTENTS

Preface

Introduction I. The Nature of Scripture II. The Teaching of Scripture, as to the Destiny of the Human Race --- The First-born to Save the Later-born --- Through Successive Ages --- Through Death and Judgment III. Popular Objections --- Opposed to the Teaching of the Church --- Opposed to Reason --- Opposed to Scripture IV. Concluding Remarks

Postscript

Appendix --- Note A - Scripture Use of the Words "Death" and "Destruction"

--- Note B - Extracts from the Fathers --- Note C - On Hebrews 2:9,16

05.0.2. Preface

PREFACE A thought conceived but not expressed is at best only an unborn child, not only without any influence on the world, but of whose very existence the world may be unconscious; but once brought forth it becomes part of the living working universe, to work there its appointed season, and possibly to leave its mark for good or evil on all successive time. The thought which is now expressed in these pages has long been growing in the writer’s heart. Hidden at first and unconfessed, during the last few years it has from time to time been brought forth in conversation with trusted Christian friends. But the time seems come to give it a wider circulation. Men’s hearts, now perhaps more than in any former age, are everywhere moved to enquire into the nature and inspiration of Holy Scripture, and the destiny of the human race, more especially the future state of sinners, as taught in Holy Scripture. Many are perplexed, hesitating to receive as perfect and divine a revelation, which, they are told, in the name of God consigns a large proportion of those who in some sense at least are His offspring to everlasting misery. And while the conclusion, uttered or unuttered, in many hearts is, either that this doctrine cannot really be a part of Holy Scripture, or else that what is called Holy Scripture cannot be a perfect exposition or revelation of the mind of God our Saviour, few even of those who receive the Bible as divine seem able to solve the difficulty, or throw much light on those portions of the "oracles of God," which confessedly are "dark sayings" and "hard to be understood." A friend, whose mind had been unsettled by this subject, lately expressed to the writer of these pages some part of his perplexity. The following letter was the result. The writer feels the solemn responsibility of dissenting on such a question from the current creed of Christendom; and nothing but his most assured conviction that the popular notion of never-ending punishment is as thorough a misunderstanding of God’s Word as the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and that the one as much as the other conduces directly to infidelity, though both equally claim to stand on the express words of Holy Scripture, would had led him to moot a subject which cannot even be questioned in some quarters without provoking the charge of heresy. Truth is worth all this, and much more. The writer has felt more the force of the consideration, how far, granting its truth, the doctrine of the Restitution of All Things is one to be proclaimed generally. Truth spoken before its time may be not hurtful only, but even most unlawful. The Christian truth, that "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek," and that "circumcision is nothing," would surely have been unlawful, because untimely, in the Jewish age. So even now there may be many eternal verities which are beyond what St. Peter calls "the present truth," and which may therefore "not be lawful for a man to utter." But the fact that God Himself is ever opening out His truth seems a sufficient reason for making it known as far as He opens it. Is not His opening it to His servants an intimation to them that His will is that they should declare and publish it? Age after age the day arrives to utter something which till the appointed day is come has been "a secret hid in God." The very gospel which we all believe once jarred on many minds as a doctrine directly opposed to and subversive of the law given by God to Moses. The doctrine here stated, therefore, though it runs like a golden thread through Holy Scripture, may, because as yet it has been hidden from many of God’s children, be condemned by them as contrary to God’s mind, just as Paul’s gospel, when first proclaimed, was charged with being

opposed to that old law of which it was but the fulfilment. In every age the man of faith can only say, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." Truth may, and indeed must, vary in form as time goes on, -- Christ Himself, the Truth, at different stages appears differently, -- for God has stooped to this, to give us truth as we can bear it; stooped therefore to be judged as inconsistent; because He is Love, and waits to reveal Himself till we are prepared for the revelation. But the end will justify all His ways; and some of His children can even now justify Him. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. And as in early dawn the stars grow dim, because the day is coming, so now the lesser lights which have been guides in darker days are paling before the coming Sun of Righteousness. And though those who go up to the hill-tops and watch the east may see more of the light than those who are buried in the valleys or sleep with closed shutters, all who look out at the glowing firmament may see signs of coming day. Men must be fast asleep indeed, if they do not perceive that a new age is even now upon us. The writer would only add that he will be thankful for any suggestions or corrections on the subject of the following pages. Any letter addressed to him, to the care of the Publishers, will be duly forwarded and acknowledged.

March 25, 1867

05.0.3. Introduction

THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS

&c MY DEAR C----- The account you give of your perplexity, and of the answers with which it has been met by some around you, reminds me, (if one may refer to it in such a connection,) of what happened some months ago in a Sunday-school. The boys in one of the classes were reading the chapter which records how David, as he walked on the roof of his house, saw Bathsheba. One of the boys, looking up through the school-room window at the steep roofs of the houses opposite, after a pause, said, -- "But, Teacher, how could David walk on the roof of his house?" The teacher, on this point as ignorant as his scholar, at once checked all enquiry by saying, "Don't grumble at the Bible, boy." Meanwhile the teacher of an adjoining class had overheard the conversation. Leaning over to his fellow-teacher he whispered, "The answer to the difficulty is, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible.'" Such was the solution of "the difficulty;" too true a sample, I fear, of the way in which on the one hand honest doubts are often met, as though all enquiry into what is perplexing in Scripture must be criminal; and on the other, of the absurdities which are confidently put forth as true expositions of God's mind and word. Your difficulty is, how are we, as believers in Scripture, to reconcile its prophetic declarations as to the final restitution of all things, with those other statements of the same Scripture, which are so often quoted to prove eternal punishment. Scripture, you say, affirms that God our Father is a Saviour, full of pity towards the lost, seeking their restoration; so loving that He has given for man His Only-Begotten Son, in and by whom the curse shall be overcome, and all the kindreds of the earth be blessed; and yet that some shall go away into everlasting punishment, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. How is it possible, you ask, to reconcile all this? Are not the statements directly inconsistent? And if so, must not the statements of the Bible, as of other books, be corrected by that light of reason and conscience, which is naturally or divinely implanted in every one of us?

Now I grant at once that there is a difficulty here, and further that the question how it is to be solved is one deserving our most attentive consideration. I entirely agree with you also, that "though indifference or devout timidity, calling itself submission, may set aside such enquiries as unpractical or even dangerous, though indolence under the guise of humility may refuse to look at them, and spiritual selfishness, wrapt in the mantle of its own supposed security, may forbid such investigations as presumptuous, Christ-like souls can no more be unconcerned as to what may or may not be God's mind as to the mass of humanity, than they can stand by unaffected when the destitute perish from hunger, or the dying agonize in pain." All this to me seems self-evident. But agreeing with you in this, I cannot grant that the difficulty you urge is unanswerable, or that, even if it were, you would be wise for such a reason to reject the Scriptures. Is there any revelation which God has given free from difficulties? Are there not even difficulties as to the present facts of life which are quite inexplicable? Is it not a fact that man comes into this world a fallen creature; and yet that God who made man is just, holy, and merciful? But how do you reconcile the facts? You think that man is not a sinner only because he does evil. You rather believe that he does evil

because he is a sinner, and that, guard and train him as you will, evil will come out of him because it is already in him; that in the best there is an inability to do the good they would; that in all there is a self-will and self-love, the pregnant root of sin of every kind. And yet you say that God is good. Say that the evil came through Adam's disobedience; yet how is it just to make us suffer for a trespass committed thousands of years before we were born? That there is a difficulty here is evident from the many attempts which have been made to solve it. Yet you and I believe both sides of the mystery. We believe that man by nature is corrupt, his heart wrong from his mother's womb, a dying sinful creature, who cannot change or save himself, utterly hopeless but for God's redeeming mercy; and yet that God is good, and that He does not mock us when He declares that not He, but we, are blameable. Why then, seeing that life is such a mystery, and that there are contradictions in it which seem irreconcilable, and for the true answer to which we have often to wait, should you take the one difficulty you urge as a sufficient reason for hastily rejecting those Scriptures, which you have often found to be as a light in a dark place? Rather look again and again more carefully into them. Then you will see, as I think I see, how these Scriptures, rightly divided, open out far more exalted and glorious hopes for man than his own unaided imagination or understanding has ever yet dared to guess or been able to argue out.

05.1.0. The Nature of Scripture

I. The Nature of Scripture But before I come to the testimony of Scripture, let me clear my way by a few words as to its nature and inspiration. The mystery of the Incarnate Word, I am assured, is the key, and the only sufficient one, to the mystery of the Written Word; the letter, that is the outward and human form, of which answers to the flesh of Christ, and is but a part of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. The Incarnation, instead of being, as some have said, different in principle to the other revelations of Himself which God has given us, is exactly in accordance with, and indeed the key to, all of them, in one and all the unseen and invisible God being manifested in or through His creatures, or in some creature-form; and this because thus only could God be revealed to creatures like us. Whether in Nature, or Scripture, or Christ's flesh, the law is one. The divine is revealed under a veil, and that veil a creature-form.

(1) Let me express what I can on this subject, though in these days what I have to say may lie open to the charge of mysticism. The blessed fact, which we confess as Christians, is that the Word of God has been made flesh, -- has come forth in human form from human nature. Jesus of Nazareth is Son of God; not partly man and partly God, but true man born of a woman, yet with all the fullness of the God-head bodily. So exactly is Holy Scripture the Word of God; not half human and half divine, but thoroughly human, yet no less thoroughly divine, with all treasures of wisdom and knowledge revealed yet hidden in it. And just as He, the Incarnate Word, was born of a woman, out of the order of nature, without the operation of man, by the power of God's Spirit; so exactly has the Written Word come out of the human heart, not by the operation of the human understanding, that is the man in us, but by the power of the Spirit of God directly acting upon the heart, that is, the feminine part of our present fallen and divided human nature. It is of course easy to say this is mere mysticism. God manifest in the flesh is a great mystery. And the manifestation of God's truth out of man's heart in human form is of course the same, and no less a mystery. And those who do not see how our nature like our race is both male and female, may here find some difficulty. But the fact remains the same, that our nature is double, male and female, head and heart, intellect and affection. And it is out of the latter of these, that is the heart, that the letter of Scripture has been brought forth, the human form of the Divine Word, exactly as Christ was conceived and born of the Virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Ghost, without an earthly father. In no other way could God's Word come in human form. In no other way could it come out of human nature. But it has humbled itself so to come for us, out of the heart of prophets and apostles; in its human form, like Christ's flesh, subject to all those infirmities and limitations which Christ's flesh was subject to -- thoroughly human as He was; yet in spirit, like Him, thoroughly divine, and full of the unfathomed depths of God's almighty love and wisdom.

Now just as the fact that Jesus was man, and as such grew by degrees in wisdom and stature here, and lived our life, which is a process of corruption, and had our members of shame, and was made sin for us, by no means disproves that He was also Son of God, but is only a witness of the love which brought Him here in human form; so the fact that Holy Scripture is human proves nothing against its being divine also, exactly as Christ was. I would that those who are now

dissecting Scripture, and finding it under their hands to be, what indeed it is, thoroughly and truly human, would but pause and ask themselves, what they could have found in Christ's flesh, had they tortured it as they now are torturing the letter. Had it been possible for them to have dissected that Body, -- I must say it when I see what men are doing now, -- would they have found, with the eye of sense at least, anything there which was not purely human? The scourge, the nails, the spear, the bitter cry, and death at last, proved that that wounded form was indeed most truly human. The Bishop of Natal has dissected the letter of Scripture till it is to him as the flesh of Christ would have been to a mere anatomist. It is not to him a living thing to teach him, but a dead thing to be dissected and criticized. He has proof that it is human; he has proof that it has grown; he has proof that death works in it, or at least touches it; he has seen its shameful members; he does not wish to lead any to despise the true teachings given by this human form; for he says it has been the channel through which he has received much blessing; he only wishes men to see that it is really human, which of course it must be, seeing it came out of the heart of man; but, consciously or unconsciously, he is leading men, not from the letter to the spirit, which would be well, but merely to reject and judge the letter, not seeing how that letter, like Christ's flesh, is incorruptible and shall be glorified. After all, this too perhaps must be done: it was needful that Christ should suffer and be put to death; but woe to him who rejects and slays the human form, in which, for us, God's truth has been manifested. Yet for this, too, mercy is in store, for they do it ignorantly in unbelief. The Bible then resembles, yet differs from, other books, just as the flesh of Christ, resembles and yet differs from the flesh of other men. All the utterances of good and true men are in their measure aspects of the mystery of the Incarnation, being partial revelations in human form of God's eternal Truth and Wisdom; even as every good and true man also in his measure is another aspect of the same mystery, for God has said, "I will dwell and walk in them," and so human forms and flesh and blood are by grace God's tabernacles. But the Incarnation and Manifestation of the Divine Word in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ was pre-eminent, and infinitely beyond what the indwelling of the Word is in other good men, though Christ took our flesh and infirmities, and we may be filled with all the fullness of God. In like manner the Incarnation and Manifestation of the Word of God in the letter of Scripture is pre-eminent, and differs from other books exactly as the flesh of Christ differs from the flesh of other men. Instead of believing therefore, that, because Scripture is human, and has grown with men, and has marks of our weakness and shame and death upon it, therefore it must perish and see corruption, I believe it can never perish or see corruption. I see it is human; I see that it has grown; I see it can be judged and wounded. I believe too that it has in its composition exactly so much of perishableness as Christ's flesh had when He walked here with His apostles. But it is like Christ's body, the peculiar tabernacle of God's truth. And those who walk by it day and night know this, for they have seen, as all shall one day see, it transfigured.

(2) I proceed to shew that like Christ's flesh, and indeed like every other revelation which God has made of Himself, the letter of Scripture is a veil quite as much as a revelation, hiding while it reveals, and yet revealing while it hides; presenting to the eye something very different from that which is within, even as the veil of the Tabernacle, with its inwoven cherubim, hid the glory within the veil, of which nevertheless it was the witness; and that therefore, as seen by sense, it is and must be apparently inconsistent and self-contradictory. Both these points are important; for if God's revelations of Himself are veils, even while they are also manifestations; and if therefore they are and must be open to the charge of inconsistency and contradiction; this fact will help us to

understand, not only why Scripture is what it is, but also how to interpret its varied truths and doctrines. And here, that we may see how all God's revelations are alike, let us look for a moment at those other revelations of Himself, the books of Nature and Providence, which God has given us. Are they not both veils as well as revelations, the first sense-readings of which are never to be relied on?

First, as to Nature, which has been called God's formed word, and which beyond all question is a revelation of God. Yet how does it reveal Him? Is it not also a veil, hiding quite as much as it reveals of Him? Is it not a fact that our sense-readings, even of the clearest physical phenomena, such as the rising and setting of the sun, are opposed to the truth, and need to be corrected by a higher faculty? Is it not further a fact that Nature hides almost more than it reveals of God our Saviour? Does it not seem even to misrepresent Him? Does it not seem also to contradict itself, with force against force, heat against cold, darkness against light, death against life, its very elements in ceaseless strife everywhere? On one side shewing a preserver, on the other a destroyer: here boundless provision for the support of life; there death reigning. We know that this contradiction has been so strongly felt by some, that on the ground of it they have denied that the world is the work of one superintending mind, and have argued that it must be either the result of chance or the work of eternally opposing powers. Are there not here exactly the same contradictions and the same difficulties which we find in Scripture? Either therefore we must say, Nature is an inconsistent and lying book, and therefore we will not believe the testimony either of its barren rocks or smiling cornfields; or else we must confess some veil or riddle here. It is precisely the same riddle which we find in every other revelation. For the book of Providence, which I may call God's wrought word, has the very same peculiarity. Providence surely is a revelation of God; and yet is it not, like Nature, a veil quite as much as a revelation? Look not only at those things which David speaks of, that God's servants suffer, while the wicked are in great prosperity and not plagued like other men; but look at born cripples and idiots, the deaf and dumb and blind, who, as far as we know, cannot be suffering for their own sake; -- look at the fact that in one instance crime is punished, in another unpunished, here. Is not this inconsistent? Where is the justice of it; and where, as judged by sense, is the love of sending souls into the world whose life throughout is one of suffering? Certainly here is a text in God's providential book of rule, (which I may say answers to the books of Kings, or Rule, in Scripture,) quite as hard as any of those texts in the book of Kings, which some would cut out of Scripture, as presenting us with false and unworthy views of Him. But can these critics blot the selfsame text out of God's book of rule in Providence? There it stands, just as it stands in the book of Nature also. Shall we therefore say that the revelation of God in Providence is an inconsistent one? No -- the fact is, it is a veil as well as a revelation, and all its apparent inconsistencies and contradictions can be cleared up, if not to sense, yet to faith, in the light of God's sanctuary (Psalms 73:3-17).

Even so it is with those two other revelations, which, much as they have been gainsaid, the Church has received and yet believes in, I mean the flesh of Christ and Holy Scripture. The flesh of Christ, the Incarnate Word, is beyond all question a veil (Hebrews 10:20). How much did it hide, even while to some it revealed God. How few knew what He was: how many misunderstood Him. And how inconsistent did that feeble form appear with the truth that it was God's chosen dwelling-place. The apparent inconsistency may be gathered from the fact that those to whom He came stumbled at it. And from that day to this that human form, that birth of a woman, that growth

in years and stature, those tears, that sweat, that weariness, those bitter cries, those members of shame, that dying life, all this, or part of this, has to the eye of sense seemed so inconsistent with divinity, that thousands have denied that that Form was or could be a revelation of God, even while they allow that it has done what mere humanity never did. The fact is, it was, and was intended to be, a veil as well as a revelation: and as such there could not but be apparent contradiction. The same is true of Scripture, that is, the written word, which like Nature has gone through six days of change, and like Christ's flesh has grown in wisdom and stature. Throughout it is a veil while it is a revelation; and therefore, like Nature, Providence, and the flesh of Christ, it is and must be open to the same reproach, not only of inconsistency, but of setting forth unworthy and even untrue statements of God. For indeed Scripture is a veil, which when taken in the letter, that is, as it appears to sense, makes out God to be just as far from what He really is as Nature and Providence seem to make Him; and yet all the while it reveals Him also, as nothing else has ever revealed Him. For though in Christ's flesh the revelation is complete spite of the veil, its very completeness and compactness keep us from seeing the various parts, which are set before us in Holy Scripture piecemeal (πολυμερως και πολυτροπως - Hebrews 1:1), and in a way that neither Nature nor Providence at present shew Him to us. For the law and the prophets tell us more of God and of His purposes, as to the restitution of all things and the promised times of rest and Sabbath, than Nature yet declares to our present understanding; though indeed Nature may be, and probably is, saying far more to us than any mere human eye or ear has yet apprehended.

Now if Nature and Providence, Christ's flesh and Scripture, have all this same characteristic peculiarity of being veils as well as revelations, and are therefore open to the charge of inconsistency, as read by sense, seeming to declare what is opposed to fact, may we not conclude that they have all come from the same Hand, especially when it is seen that the apparent contradictions, which are found in any of these revelations, like the tabernacle veil, invariably cover some deeper truth, which cannot safely be expressed, to fallen men at least, in any other way.

(3) The deeper question, why God has thus revealed Himself should not be passed by; for it opens the heart of God. God alone of all teachers has had two methods, law and gospel, flesh and spirit, -- one working where we are, the other to bring us in rest where He is, -- one to be done away, the other to abide (2 Corinthians 3:11), -- which at least looks like inconsistency. The reason is that God is love, and that in no other way could He ever have reached us where we were, or brought us where He is. God therefore was willing to seem inconsistent, and for awhile to come into man's likeness, to bring man back to His likeness. Here is the reason for law before gospel, for Christ's flesh before His Spirit, for all the different dispensations, and for all the types and shadows which for awhile veiled while they revealed God's living Word. Here is the reason for the human form of the Divine Word in Scripture. Had that Word come to us as it is in itself, we should no more have apprehended or seen it than we see God. Had it come to us even in angelic form, only a very few, the pure and thoughtful ever could have received it. But it stooped to reveal itself to creatures through a creature, and to come to us out of the heart of man in truly human form, so that all men, Gentile or Jew, polished or savage, might through its perfect humanity be able to receive it. God more than any of His most loving servants has become a Jew to gain the Jews, and weak to gain the weak, and under law to gain those under law; because He is love, and love must sacrifice itself, if by any means it can save and bless others. If therefore men are in the flesh, God comes to

them in flesh; if they are in darkness and shadows, God comes for them into the shadows; because they cannot comprehend the light, and because the darkness and light are both alike to Him (Psalms 139:12).

If this is not the way of His revelation, how, I ask, has He ever revealed Himself? Will any dare to say that He has not revealed Himself? Has God who is love been content to leave poor man in perfect ignorance? Or if He has told man what He is, as most surely He has, how has He done so? Did He, does He, can He, plainly tell out to all what He is? And if He did not, why did He not? Why have men always heard God first speaking in law before a gospel dawned on them? Why must it be so, or at least why does He allow it? Is it a mistake of His, which we must avoid, when we attempt to make Him known; or shall we be wise, if, in doing what He is doing, that is, in revealing Him, we imitate His way of revelation? Surely from the days of Adam, seeing what man is, and our delusions about Him, God must have desired, and we know has desired, to make Himself known; and being Almighty, All-wise, and All-loving, surely He has taken the best method of doing it. Again I ask, how has He done it, how must He do it, man being what He is? Could God consistently with our salvation have done it otherwise than it has been done? To shew Himself as He is would to man be no shewing of Him. It was needful that He should shew Himself under the forms and limitations of that creature in and to whom He sought to reveal Himself, that is by shadows before light, by law before gospel, by a letter before a quickening spirit, in a word, by the humiliation of His eternal Word stooping to come out of man's heart and in human form. And yet this could not be done without the Truth by its very humanity laying itself open to the charge of being merely human and not divine, and to the humiliation of being rejected for having our infirmities upon it. Love can bear all this, and God is love, and the truth can bear it, for truth must conquer all things. And therefore while it submits to take a human form, in which it can be judged and die, (for it must die, and to some of us has died, in the form we first apprehended it, -- a trial of faith sooner or later to be known by all disciples, who, like apostles of old in the same strait, are sorely perplexed at this dying, for they have trusted that this is He which should have redeemed Israel, --) it must also live and rise again, and glorify that human form for ever. But because it has stooped to come in human form, out of the heart of man, even as Christ came forth from Mary, for us, therefore like Him it shall be stripped and mocked. But those who are stripping it know not what they do.

05.2.0. The Testimony of Scripture

II. The Testimony of Scripture

I pass on now from the nature of Scripture to its teachings as to the destiny of the human race, and more especially of those who here either reject or never hear the gospel. I feel how solemn the enquiry is, not only because no subject can be of greater moment, but because what appears to me to be the truth differs from those conclusions which have been received by the majority of Christians. Believing, however, that the Holy Scriptures, under God and His Spirit's teaching, is the final appeal in all controversies, -- regarding it as the unexhausted mine from whence the unsearchable riches of Christ have yet still more to be dug out, -- acknowledging no authority against its conclusions, and with the deepest conviction that one jot and one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled, -- I turn to it on this as on every other point, to listen and bow to its decisions. And knowing, for by grace this Word is no stranger to me, that like Christ's flesh it is a veil as well as a revelation, -- knowing that it has many things to say which we cannot bear at first, and that, if taken partially or in the letter, it may appear to teach what is directly opposed to Christ's mind and to its true meaning; -- in this like not a few of Christ's own words, as when He said, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one" (Luke 22:36); and again, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19); and again, "He that eateth me shall live by me" (John 6:57); and again, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth" (John 11:11); all of which were misunderstood by not a few of those who first heard these words from Christ's own mouth; -- knowing too that the words of Holy Scripture, in many places where they seem contradictory, and in its "dark sayings" (Psalms 78:2; Proverbs 1:6), and "things hard to be understood" (2 Peter 3:16), ever cover some deep and blessed mystery, I see that the question is, not what this or that text, taken by itself or in the letter, seems to say at first sight, but rather what is the mind of God, and what the real meaning in His Word of any apparent inconsistency. If I err in attempting to answer this, my error will, I trust, provoke some better exposition of God's truth. If what I see is truth, like His coming who was the Truth, it must bring glory to God on high and on earth peace and goodwill to men.

What then does Scripture say on this subject? Its testimony appears at first sight contradictory. Not only is there on the one hand law, condemning all, while on the other hand there is the gospel, with good news for every one; but further there are direct statements as to the results of these, which at first sight are apparently irreconcilable. First our Lord calls His flock "a little flock" (Luke 12:32), and states distinctly that "many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 20:16; Matthew 22:14); that "strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life (εις την ζωη), and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14); that "many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:24); that while "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life (ζωην αιωνιον), he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36); that "the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46; κολασιν αιωνιον), "prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41); "the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29); "the damnation of hell" (Matthew 23:33), "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:44); that

though "every word against the Son of Man may be forgiven, the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world (εν τουτω τω αιωνι), nor in that which is to come" (Matthew 12:32); and that of one at least it is true, that "good had it been for that man if he had not been born" (Matthew 26:24).

These are the words of Christ Himself, and they are in substance repeated just as strongly by His Apostles. St. Paul declares that while some are "saved" by the gospel, others "perish" (2 Corinthians 2:15); that "many walk whose end is destruction" (Php 3:19); that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction (ολεθρον αιωνιον) from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day" (2 Thessalonians 1:8-10). To the Hebrews he says, "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Hebrews 10:26-27); that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31), for "our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29). St. Peter repeats the same doctrine, that "judgment must begin at the house of God, and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God; for if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Peter 4:17-18). He further says of "false teachers," who "deny the Lord that bought them," that they "shall bring upon themselves swift destruction," and, like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, "shall utterly perish in their own corruption" (2 Peter 2:1-12). St. John's words are at least as strong, that "the fearful, and unbelieving, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their place in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8); and that "those who worship the beast, and his image, shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and the presence of the Lamb, and they have no rest day nor night, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" (Revelation 14:9-11; εις αιωνας αιωνων).

Words could not well be stronger. The difficulty is that all this is but one side of Scripture, which in other places seems to teach a very different doctrine. For instance, there are first the words of God Himself, repeated again and again by those same Apostles whom I have just quoted, that "in Abraham's seed all the kindreds of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3; Genesis 22:18; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:8); words which St. Peter expounds to mean that there shall be "a restitution of all things," adding that "God hath spoken of this by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). St. Paul further declares this wondrous "mystery of God's will, that He hath purposed in Himself, according to His good pleasure, to rehead (ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι) and reconcile (αποκαταλλαξαι, to reconcile back again) unto Himself, in and by Christ, all things, whether they be things in heaven," that is the spirit-world, where the conflict with Satan yet is (Revelation 12:7), "or things on earth," that is this outward world, where death now reigns, and where even God's elect are by nature children of wrath, even as other men (Ephesians 1:9-10; Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 2:3). Further St. Paul asserts that "all creation, which now groans, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:19-23). In another place he declares, that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19), and that Christ "took our flesh and blood, through death to destroy

him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14); that "if by the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God and the gift of grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many:" (Romans 5:15) that "therefore as by the offence of one, or by one offence, judgment came on all to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, or by one righteousness, the free gift should come on all unto justification of life," while "they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17-18); that "as sin hath reigned unto death, so grace might reign unto eternal life," yea, that "where sin abounded, grace did yet much more abound" (Romans 5:20-21). To another church he states the same doctrine, that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22); and that "the end" shall not come "till all are subject to Him," that "God may be," not all in some, but "all in all; for He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). So he says again, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, ... 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 in earth, even in Him" (Ephesians 1:3-10). To the same purpose he writes in another epistle, "that at, (or in -- εν τω ονοματι: cf. John 14:13-14; John 16:23-24) the name of Jesus, (that is Saviour,) every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Php 2:10-11); "for to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Romans 14:9). He further declares that "for this sake he suffers reproach, because he hopes in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those who believe" (1 Timothy 4:10); that this God "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;" that therefore "thanksgivings as well as prayers should be made for all," because there is "a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Timothy 2:1-6); and lastly that "God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all" (Romans 11:32). The beloved Apostle St. John repeats the same doctrine, that "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John 4:14); for God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world by Him might be saved" (John 3:17); further he teaches that the Only-Begotten Son "is the propitiation, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world:" (1 John 2:2) that He is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), and "was revealed for this very purpose that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8), and that, as a result, "there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor pain, because all things are made new, and the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4-5; and see Revelation 5:13). For "the Father loveth the son, and hath given all things into His hand:" (John 3:35) and the Son Himself declares, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up on the last day" (John 6:37-39). And again He says, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

Now is not this apparent contradiction, -- few finding the way of life, and yet in Christ all made alive, -- God's elect a little flock, and yet all the kindreds of the earth blessed in Abraham's seed, -- mercy upon all, and yet eternal punishment, -- the restitution of all things, and yet eternal destruction, -- the wrath of God for ever, and yet all things reconciled to Him, -- eternal fire

prepared for the devil and his angels, and yet the destruction through death, not of the works of the devil only, but of him who has the power of death, that is the devil, -- the second death and the lake which burneth with fire, and yet no more death or curse, but all things subdued by Christ, and God all in all. What can this contradiction mean? Is there any key, and if so, what is it, to this mystery? The common answer is, that these opposing words only mean, that some are saved and some are lost for ever; that the saved are the elect of this and other dispensations, who as compared with the world have hitherto been but a little flock; but that, though as yet few have found the strait and narrow way, all nations shall be saved in the Millennium; further that though we read, "There shall be no more death," yet, since the wrath of God is for ever, there must be eternal death, (words by the way not to be found in all Scripture,) and that this death consists in never ending torments, so endless that after the lapse of ages on ages the punishment of the wicked shall be no nearer its end than when it first commenced; that therefore the words, "In Christ shall all be made alive," only mean that all who are here in Christ shall be made alive; that the Lamb of God, though willing to be, is not really the Saviour of the world, but only of those who are not of the world, but chosen out of it; that instead of taking away the sin of the world, He only takes away the sin of those who here believe in Him; that all things therefore shall not be reconciled to God, and that "the restitution of all things," whatever it may mean, does not mean the reconciliation to God of all men. This is the approved teaching of Christendom; this is the orthodox solution of the mystery; the simple objection to which is, that in asserting one side of Scripture, it is obliged, not only to ignore and deny the other side, but to represent God in a character absolutely opposed to that in which the gospel exhibits Him. Nor does it meet the difficulty to say, as some have said, that though a large proportion of mankind are lost for ever, the greater part will probably be saved, inasmuch as at least one-half of the race die in infancy, whose sin is perfectly atoned for by Christ’s sacrifice. What is this but saying, that, if evil has fair play, it will overmatch all that God can do to meet and remedy it? Is this indeed the glad tidings of great joy? Is this the glorious gospel of the blessed God? Is it not simply a misapprehension of God’s purpose, arising out of some mystery connected with the method of our redemption? But "the Scripture cannot be broken" thus (John 10:35). Not a few therefore have confessed that there is some difficulty here, which as yet they cannot solve or reconcile. Is the mystery beyond our present light? Or is there any, and if so, what is the key to it? The truth which solves the riddle is to be found in those same Scriptures which seem to raise the difficulty, and lies in the mystery of the will of our ever blessed God as to the process and stages of redemption: --

(1) First, His will by some to bless and save others; by a first-born seed, "the first born from the dead" (Colossians 1:18), to save and bless the later-born: --

(2) His will therefore to work out the redemption of the lost by successive ages or dispensations, or, to use the language of St. Paul, "according to the purpose of the ages:" (Ephesians 3:11) -- and

(3) Lastly, His will (thus meeting the nature of our fall,) to make death, judgment, and destruction, the means and way to life, acquittal, and salvation; in other words, "through death to destroy him that has the power of death, that is the devil, and to deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14).

These truths throw a flood of light on Scripture, and enable us at once to see order and agreement, where without this light there seems perplexing inconsistency. We should of course

get deeper views, if, instead of starting from the fall, and merely asking what is declared as to its results and remedy, we began with God, and enquired what He has revealed as to His end in making man, and how far, if at all, His purpose in creation is or has been frustrated in any way. Did the entrance of sin change or affect God’s plan? Was redemption only an after-thought to meet an undersigned or undesired difficulty? What was the object of the Incarnation? On what grounds, and for what end, is judgment committed to the Son of Man? What was intended to be accomplished by the first and second death? These are questions which must meet us, if we think of God and of His thoughts, and give Him credit for having had a purpose in creation. Christ is the answer to them all; and His Word contains, though under a veil, the perfect key to these and all mysteries; though in His Word, as in His works, the open secret is unseen, and His wisdom, as in the wondrous laws of light, may be all around us and yet for ages undiscovered. For God’s sons still think it strange and even unbecoming to enquire "what is the breadth and length and depth and height" of their heavenly Father’s purpose. But for our present object we need not ask all this. It is enough to begin with ourselves as fallen, and to enquire what Scripture reveals as to the results of our fall, and of the remedy. We shall see how God’s will, as witnessed, first in the "law of the first-fruits" and "first-born," then in the "purpose of the ages," and lastly in the mystery of "death" and "judgment," as it is opened by Christ’s cross and resurrection, clears away all that looks like contradiction between "mercy upon all" and yet "eternal judgment." By this light we see more fully God’s purpose in Christ, and how He is "Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (1 Timothy 4:10); how "to those who overcome He will grant to sit with Him on His throne" (Revelation 3:21), and make them partakers of all His glories; while others, not partakers of the first resurrection, are only brought to God by the resurrection of judgment, that is by the judgments of the coming age or ages. But till God opens, all is shut. A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above. "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 to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who knoweth the things of man but the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:9-11).

Let us look then in order at each of these three points: --

05.2.1. The First-born to Save the Later-born

The First-born to Save the Later-born (1) First, the purpose of God by the first-fruits or first-born to save and bless the later born.

This, which is in fact the substance of the gospel, like all God's secrets, comes out by degrees. Scarcely to be discerned, though contained, in the first promise of the Woman's Seed (Genesis 3:15), it shines out brightly in the covenant made with Abraham: -- "In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:18); for the seed, in whom all the kindreds of the earth are blessed, must be distinct from, and blessed prior to, those nations to whom according to God's purpose in due time it becomes a blessing. This purpose is then revealed with fuller detail in the law of the first-fruits and the first-born (Romans 11:16), though here the veil of type and shadow hides from most the face of Moses. But in Christ the purpose is unveiled for ever, and the mystery, by the first-born to save others, is by the Holy Ghost made fully manifest. Christ, says the Apostle, is the promised Seed (Galatians 3:16), the First-born (Colossians 1:18), and in and through Him endless blessing shall flow down on the later-born.

Now Christ, as Paul shews, is first-born in a double sense. He is first-born from above, first out of life, for He is the Only-Begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; "for by Him were all things created, which are in heaven and which are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Colossians 1:15-17). But He is more than this, for He is also "first-born from the dead," first out of death, "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence" (Colossians 1:18); and it is in this relation, as first-born from the dead, that He is the head of the Church, and first-fruits of the creature. All things are indeed of God, but it is no less true also that all things are by man; as it is written, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:21). Therefore as by one first-born death came into this world, so by another first-born shall it be for ever overthrown. Herein is love indeed, that the whole remedy for sin shall come through one man, even as the sin did. Thus not only is there salvation for man, but by man, for the Eternal Son is Son of Man also; who by a birth in the flesh has come into our lot, that by another birth out of the grave He might also be the first-born from the dead; and it is in virtue of this relation that He fulfils for us all those offices which are included in the word Redeemer. The law of Moses is most instructive here: for while it is true that the letter of that law cannot be explained but by the gospel, it is no less true that the gospel in its breadth and depth cannot be set forth save by the figures of the law, each jot of which covers some blessed mystery.

What then does the law teach us of this First-born from the dead; for be it observed it is ever the first-born from the grave that the law speaks of, -- therefore the woman's, not the man's, first-born, "the male which first openeth the womb" (Exodus 13:12; Exodus 34:19; Numbers 3:12-13), who might, though not necessarily, be also the father's first-born. For the law, as made for sinners only (1 Timothy 1:9), needed not to speak of the First-born as proceeding out of God, but only of the

First-born as raised up by Him out of the grave and barren womb of this present fallen and unclean nature. According to the law, the First-born had the right, though it might be lost, of being priest and king, that is of interceding for and ruling over their younger brethren (Exodus 13:2; Exodus 24:5; Numbers 3:12-13; Numbers 8:16; 1 Chronicles 5:1-2); on him devolved the duty of Goel or Redeemer, to redeem a brother who had waxen poor, and sold himself unto a stranger; to avenge his blood, to raise up seed to the dead, and to redeem the inheritance, if at any time it were lost or alienated (Leviticus 25:47-48; Deuteronomy 19:4-12; Genesis 38:8; Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Ruth 4:6-10; Leviticus 25:25; Ruth 2:20). To sustain these duties God gave him a double portion (Deuteronomy 21:17). Need I point out how Christ fulfils these particulars; how as first out of the grave, that "barren womb, which cries, Give, give" (Proverbs 30:15-16), He is the First-born through whom the blessing reaches us? In this sense no Christian doubts that God's purpose is by the First-born from the dead to save and bless the later-born. But the truth goes further still, for there are others beside the Lord who are both "first-born" and "Abraham's seed," who must therefore in their measure share this same honour with and under Christ, and in whom, as "joint-heirs with Him" (Romans 8:17), the promise must be fulfilled, that in them "all the kindreds of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). This glorious truth, though of the very essence of the gospel, which announces salvation to the world through the promised seed of Abraham, is even yet so little seen by many of Abraham's seed, that not a few of the children of the promise speak and act as if Christ and His body only should be saved, instead of rejoicing that they are also the appointed means of saving others. Even of the elect, few see that they are elect to the birthright, not to be blessed only, but to be a blessing; as first-born with Christ to share the glory of kingship and priesthood with Him, not only to rule and intercede for their younger and later-born brethren, but to avenge their blood, to raise up seed to the dead, and in and through Christ, their life and head, to redeem their lost inheritance. Thank God, if the elect know not their double portion, God knows and keeps it for them, and will in due time, spite of their blindness, fulfill His purpose in and by them. But surely it is a reproach to the heirs, that they know not their Father's purpose, and that through not knowing it they bear so imperfect a testimony as to His good-will to all His fallen creatures. The whole old law beams with light upon this point, not only in its ordinances and appointments as to the first-born and their double portion, but also in the details of the oblation of the first-fruits, which is only another aspect and presentation of the same mystery. The seed of nature figures the seed of grace, and the first-fruits of the one are but the shadow of the other, that "seed of the kingdom" which is first ripe for heaven, ripened by the true Sun (Psalms 84:11) and Light (John 8:12) and Air (John 3:8), of which the sun and light and air of present nature in all their wondrous workings are the silent but ceaseless witnesses. The type is very full and striking here; for the law, which required the first-fruits, speaks of a double first-fruits (Leviticus 23:10, Leviticus 23:17). The first, the sheaf or handful of unleavened ears, the first to spring up out of the dark and cold earth, which lay the shortest time under its darkness, soonest ripe to be a sacrifice on God's altar, was offered at the first great feast of the year, the feast of unleavened bread, which is the Passover (Leviticus 23:10-11; Luke 22:1). The other, which are also called "first-fruits," were offered in the form of leavened cakes, fifty days later at Pentecost (Leviticus 23:17). Both in the law are distinctly called "first-fruits," though they are distinguished by a separate name, the ears at Passover being called Rashith, the leavened cakes at Pentecost, Bicourim; (Note: Rashith, or "the beginning," the title given in the law to the Paschal first-fruits, is the very word used by St. Paul of Christ in the passage already quoted, -- "He is the head of the body, the Church, who is the

beginning, the first-born from the dead," &c. -- Colossians 1:18) to which the gospel exactly agrees, saying, "Christ the First-fruits" (1 Corinthians 15:23), and "we a kind of first-fruits:" (James 1:18; See also Revelation 14:4), Christ "the First-born" (Colossians 1:18), and we "the church of the first-born" (Hebrews 12:23); words which carry with them blessings unspeakable, "for if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy" (Romans 11:16), the offering of the first-fruits to God being accepted as the sanctification and consecration of the whole coming harvest.

Need I say Christ is the Paschal first-fruits and first-born. The day of His resurrection was the very day of the offering of the first first-fruits. (Note: These first first-fruits were offered "on the morrow after the Sabbath" after the Passover (Leviticus 23:11), that is the very day, "the first day of the week," on which Christ rose from the dead. I may, perhaps, add here, for it is most noteworthy, that in 2 Samuel 21:9, we are told that "all the seven sons of Saul fell together in the days of harvest, in the first day, in the beginning of barley harvest;" that is they fell on the day of the first first-fruits. The books of Kings, where this is recorded, are the books of Rule shewing out in mystery all the forms of Rule under which God's elect have been either in bondage or liberty. The first form of rule is Saul, whose name means Death or Hell. He is the figure of the rule under which we are at first, while "death reigns" by God's appointment (Romans 5:14, Romans 5:17). All his seven sons, that is, the fruits of death, fall in one day, under the reign of David, that is the Beloved; that one day being the sacred day of the Paschal first-fruits, the day of Christ's resurrection.) But who are those, who, as leavened bread, share the honour with and under Him of being the Pentecostal first-fruits? Who with Christ and through Christ are Abraham's seed?

First, the Jew is Abraham's seed, -- "the people that dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the nations" (Numbers 23:9); and though "all are not Israel who are of Israel" (Romans 9:6), Scripture will indeed be broken, if Israel is not again grafted in; when, if the casting away of them has been the riches of the world, the receiving of them, as St. Paul says, shall be life from the dead (Romans 11:15). "Israel is my son, my first-born, saith the Lord" (Exodus 4:22). All nations, therefore, shall yet be blessed in them. They are indeed only the earthly first-born, but as first-born, though of the least-loved wife, they must in their own sphere possess the double blessing (Deuteronomy 21:15-16); being not blessed only, but made blessings to the nations, whose conversion the Church is rightly looking for, but whom the Church shall not convert; for the conversion of the nations is already promised to Israel, who, dwellers among all nations, yet not of them, are even now being trained and prepared for this, and who at their conversion, converted like Paul, who is their type, (Note: 1 Timothy 1:16; προς υποτυπωσιν των μελλοντων πιστευειν -- literally, "for a type of those who shall hereafter believe." Paul is not a type of "the first trusters in Christ" (see Ephesians 1:12), that is of believers now, but of "those who shall hereafter believe," when Christ reveals Himself in glory; and his peculiar experience, for he was "as one born out of due time" (1 Corinthians 15:8), as well as his conversion in an extraordinary way by a sight of Christ's glory, were earnests and figures of what should be wrought in Israel, who shall be converted to Christ in a similar and no less sudden manner, Isaiah 66:8; Isaiah 66:12; Isaiah 66:18-19.), not by the knowledge of Christ in humiliation, but by the revelation of His heavenly glory, shall like Paul become apostles to the Gentiles, "priests to the Lord and ministers to our God" (Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 61:6), to all upon the earth. (Note: Very wonderful is the statement in the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:8), addressed both to the heavens and earth, which declares that, "when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set

the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel." Now the number of the children of Israel, when they went down to Egypt, was seventy (Genesis 46:27; Exodus 1:5; Deuteronomy 10:22); and, answering to this, in Genesis 10:1-32, which gives the account of the peoples to whom the earth was divided after the flood, we read of seventy heads of nations. Surely there is a secret here, connected with Christ's mission of the Seventy, which was distinct from and followed the mission of the Apostolic Twelve, by whom and under whom the Church is gathered out. See Luke 10:1.) But (and this concerns us) the Church is also Abraham's seed; for, as St. Paul says, "If you be Christ's you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). To the Church therefore belongs the same promise, as first-fruits with Christ, not to be blessed only, but to be a blessing, in its own heavenly and spiritual sphere. For if the Jew on earth shall be a "kingdom of priests," what is our hope but to be heavenly "kings and priests" (Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:10), as "kings," for the Lord shall say, "Be thou over five cities" (Luke 19:17-19; Psalms 45:16), to rule and order in the coming age what requires order; not only with Christ to "judge the world" (1 Corinthians 6:2), but to be "equal unto the angels" and to "judge angels" (Luke 20:36; 1 Corinthians 6:3); as "priests," for a priest is "for those out of the way" (Hebrews 5:2), to minister to those who yet are out of the way. This is the Church's calling, to do Christ's works, as He said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also" (John 14:12); with Him to be both prophet, priest, and king, and this, not here only in these bodies of humiliation, but when changed in His presence to bear His image and do His works with Him. Christ barely entered on His priestly work till He had passed through death and judgment (Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 7:15-17; Hebrews 8:4-6); so with those who are Christ's, their death and resurrection shall only introduce them to fuller and wider service to lost ones, over whom the Lord shall set them as priests and kings, until all things are restored and reconciled unto Him. It is, alas, too true that of the Church's sons, some like Esau shall sell their birthright for some present good thing, and that in this age as in the last some of the children of the kingdom shall be cast out, while others from the east and from the west press in and win the crown and kingdom; yet an elect first-born shall surely be preserved, who are sealed to this pre-eminence, to be priests to God and rulers of their brethren. To whom, I ask, shall the Church after death be priests? Shall it be to that great mass of our fellow men, who have departed hence in ignorance? Shall it be to "spirits in prison," such as those to whom after His death Christ Himself once preached? (Note: 1 Peter 3:18-20. This passage, I know, is called "difficult," that is, it is one which it is hard and even impossible fairly to reconcile with the views called Orthodox. The words, however, are not difficult. They distinctly assert that our Lord went and preached to the spirits in prison, who once had been disobedient in the days of Noah. The "difficulty" is that Protestant orthodoxy has decided that there can be no message of mercy to any after death. Protestant commentators therefore have attempted to evade the plain statements of this Scripture, and their forced and unnatural interpretations shew how very strong the passage is against them. Any one who wishes to see a summary of these interpretations may find them collected in Alfred's Greek Testament, in loco. His own comment is as follows: -- "I understand these words to say, that our Lord, in his disembodied state, did go to the place of detention of departed spirits, and did there announce His work of redemption, preach salvation, in fact, to the disembodied spirits of those who refused to obey the voice of God, when the judgment of the flood was hanging over them." The fact, that in the Prayer-book these verses are appointed to be read as the Epistle for Easter Even, that is for the day after the crucifixion, and before the resurrection of our Lord, shews plainly enough the

judgment of the English Church as to the true sense and interpretation of this passage. The Early Fathers, almost without exception, understand it to speak of Christ's descent into Hades.) Shall not His saints, made like Him, do the same works, still following Him, and with Him being priests to God? Will not their glory be to rule and feed and enlighten and clothe those who are committed to them, even as Christ has fed and clothed them? For He is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Timothy 6:15), words which indicate the many kings and rulers under Him, of whom He is head, and whom He makes heads to others.

I should perhaps be going beyond my measure were I to follow in detail all that the law says further as to the first-fruits and the first-born; but I may add here, that this same truth, that the first-blessed must save others, is set forth, though in a slightly different form, in the kindred law of redemption touching the firstlings of beasts, whether clean or unclean. The lamb redeems the ass (Exodus 13:12-13). So it must be. The clean are called, and content, to be sacrifices. For the law of redemption, which is the law of love, is this, that they who are first redeemed and blessed must bless others. And this is their joy, to be like Christ, that is to be channels of blessing to viler, weaker souls. For all higher and elder beings serve the lower and younger. The first-born therefore must serve and save others. Their calling is to be, like Christ, channels of blessing and life to thousands of later-born.

Such glories are in store, to be revealed when the two leavened cakes of first-fruits, then completed, shall together be offered up, in that great coming Pentecost, of which the fiery tongues of old, and the rushing wind, in the upper room were but the type and earnest; when the elect, Christ's mystic body, being raised with Him, the Head not born alone, but all the members with it, the Spirit shall be poured out upon all flesh, and, the first-fruits being safe, the harvest, already sanctified by the first-fruits, shall all begin to be gathered in. Oh glorious day, when our Lord and Head shall give of His treasure to His first-born, that they may with Him redeem all lands and all brethren (Leviticus 25:25; Leviticus 25:47-48); when with Him they shall judge their captive brethren, who through their unbelief have lost their own inheritance. Then shall the laver be multiplied into "ten lavers" (compare Exodus 30:18, which speaks of the wilderness, with 1 Kings 7:38-39 which describes the far larger provision made for cleansing in the glorious reign of the Man of Peace, the true Son of David), till the water of life become a "sea of crystal" (compare 1 Kings 7:38-39; 2 Chronicles 4:2-6; and Revelation 15:2), large enough even for Babylon the great to sink into it, and to be found no more at all for ever. Then shall the elect "run to and fro as sparks among the stubble" (Wis 3:7-8); and as all sparks or seeds of light, though they may come forth at long intervals from one another, are yet congenial, if they have come out of a common root, -- as they can not only mingle rays with rays and embrace each other, but in virtue of a common nature have the same power of consuming and purifying that they come in contact with, -- so shall Christ's members judge the world with Him, and consume the evil with that same fire which Christ came to cast into the earth, and with which He is yet pledged to baptize all nations. For our Lord, who gave Himself, with Himself will give us all things, grudging His children nothing of that inheritance He has obtained for them.

Here then is the key to one part of the apparent contradiction between "mercy for all," and yet "the election" of a "little flock;" between "all the kindreds of the earth blessed in Christ," and yet a "strait and narrow way" and "few finding it." Here is the answer to the question, "Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the

grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" (Psalms 88:1-12). The first-born and first-fruits are the "few" and "little flock;" but these, though first delivered from the curse, have a relation to the whole creation, which shall be saved in the appointed times by the first-born seed, that is by Christ and His body, through those appointed baptisms, whether by fire or water, which are required to bring about "the restitution of all things." St. Paul expressly declares this when He says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, ... that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in the earth, even in Him" (Ephesians 1:3-10. The same doctrine is stated in almost the same words in Ephesians 2:4-7). The Church, like Christ its Head, is itself a great sacrament; "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto men; ordained by God Himself, as a means whereby they may receive the same, and a pledge to assure them thereof;" and "the blessing" of the elect, "with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," is but the means and pledge, as the Apostle says, of wider blessing; the means by which "in the dispensation of the fulness of times" God designs to "gather together in one all things in Christ, whether they be things which are in heaven or which are in earth, even in Him;" and the pledge that He both can and will do it, as He has already done it in some of the weakest and worst; for "God hath chosen the base things of the world, yea and things which are not" (1 Corinthians 1:27-28); to shew to all that there are none so weak but He can save, and none so vile, but He can change and cleanse them. Thus when "He comes with ten thousands of His saints," He will not only by them "convince all ungodly sinners of all their hard speeches, which they have spoken against Him" (Jude 1:14-15); -- for if the thief be saved, and the Magdalene changed, who shall dare to say that the lost are uncared for or beyond the reach of God’s salvation; -- but He will by them also, as His royal priests, joint-heirs with Christ, fulfill all that priestly work of judgment and purification by fire, which must be accomplished that all may be "subdued" (1 Corinthians 15:28) and "reconciled" (Colossians 1:20). To say that God saves only the first-born would be, if it may be said, to make Him worse than even Moloch, whose slaves devoted only their first-born to the flames, founding this dreadful rite upon the true tradition that the sacrifice of a first-born should redeem the rest; a requirement, tender, as compared with that which some ascribe to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, who, according to their view, accepts the elect or first-born only, and leaves the rest to torments endless and most agonizing. The gospel of God tells us of better things, of a sacrifice indeed, even of God’s Only-Begotten Son, who, because we were dead, came into our death to quicken us, who took on Him the darkness, and death, and curse, which bound and would have for ever held us, and broke through it in the power of His eternal life, not only reconciling us by His blood, but also shewing us by His death the way out of the bondage of sin and this world, and who having thus in His own person, as Man, broken through death, gives Himself now to as many as will receive and follow Him, that in and by His life they also in the same path may come forth as first-fruits and first-born from the dead with Him. But Scripture never says that these only shall be saved, but rather that "in this seed," whose portion as the first-born is double (Deuteronomy 21:17), "all kindreds of the earth shall be blessed."

I fear that the elect, instead of bearing this witness, have too often ignored and even contradicted it. And yet the fact, that the Church for many hundred years has had an All-Souls Day as well as an All-Saints Day in her Calendar, is itself a witness that she may have been teaching far more

than some of her sons as yet have learnt from her. For why did the Church ordain a celebration for All-Souls as well as for All-Saints, but because, spite of her children's contradictions, she believed that like her Lord she is truly linked to all, and with Him is ordained at last to gather all. And why does All-Souls Day follow All-Saints (November 1st is All-Saints Day: November 2nd, All-Souls), but to declare that All Saints should reach All Souls, going before them indeed, yet going before to be a blessing to them. For indeed All Saints are to All Souls as the first-born to their younger brethren, elect to be both kings and priests to them; or as the first-fruits to the harvest, the pledge of what is to come, if not also the means to bring it about in due season. I know of course, that, through the abuse of masses for the dead, All-Souls Day has since the Reformation been dropped out of the Calendar of our English Church. I neither judge nor defend our Reformers for what they did in a time of very great difficulty. I only say that the truth once taught by All-Souls Day, if ever a truth, must be a truth for all generations. And I thank God that the Church had, and yet has, such a day; and that, if not with English saints now living, yet "with all saints," as the Apostle says, "we may be able to comprehend the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with (or into) all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:19). And in faith of that love and fulness I look for the day when All-Souls shall become the inheritance and prize and glory of All-Saints, who by grace have gone before them. Our knowledge however of this or any other mystery will serve us nothing, yea be far worse than nothing, if, instead of running for the prize which the Gospel sets before us, we sit down content merely to understand how the apparent contradictions of Scripture can be reconciled. Not so do the first-born win the prize. Christ has shewn the way, and there is no other. He died to live -- He suffered to reign -- He humbled Himself; therefore God hath greatly exalted Him (Php 2:8-9). If we be dead with Him, we shall live with Him, -- if we suffer, we shall reign with Him (2 Timothy 2:11-12), -- joint-heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with Him, that we may be glorified together (Romans 8:17). Only by the cross can the change be wrought in us, which conforms us to Christ and His image, -- which makes us, like Him, lambs for the slaughter (Romans 8:36), and as such fitted to bless and serve others. And as corn does not grow by any thinking of the process; as gold is not melted by any speculation of the nature of the fire, but by being cast into it; so the change required is only wrought in us through the baptism of fire, which is so sharp that even the blessed Paul could say, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Corinthians 15:19), a trial very different from that of the mass of professors, who suffer no more than the common lot of humanity. And indeed so narrow is the way, and so strait is the gate, that leadeth to the life and glory of the first-born, who "follow the Lamb withersover He goeth (Revelation 14:4); so entire is the loss and renunciation of the things dear to the old man, whose will is entranced by the things that are seen and temporal; so bitter is the cross that few can bear it, and pass willingly through the fires which must be passed to win that "high calling" (Php 3:8-14). Here is the patience of the saints, to bear that fire in and by which the old Adam is dissolved and slain, out of which they rise, through "blood and fire and pillars of smoke," that is the Pentecostal offering (Acts 2:19; Song of Solomon 3:6), as sacrifices to God, to stand as kings and priests before Him.

05.2.2. Through Successive Ages

Through Successive Ages

(2) I pass on to shew that God's purpose, by the first-born from the dead to bless the later-born, -- as it is written, "So in Christ shall all be made alive," -- is fulfilled in successive worlds or ages (αιωνες), or to use the language of St. Paul, "according to the purpose of the ages" (Ephesians 3:11; κατα προθεσιν των αιωνων), so that the dead are raised, not all together, but "Every man in his own order -- Christ the first-fruits -- afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming" (1 Corinthians 15:23); which latter resurrection, though after Christ's, is yet called "the resurrection from among the dead" (Php 3:11; την εξαναστασιν, κ.τ.λ.), or "the first resurrection" (Revelation 20:5).

Now it is simply a matter of fact, that Christ, the first of the first-fruits, through whom all blessing reaches us, rose from the dead eighteen hundred years ago, while the Church of the first-born, who are also called first-fruits (James 1:18; Revelation 14:4), will not be gathered till the great Pentecost. Some are therefore freed from death before others; and even of the first-fruits, the Head of the body, as in every proper birth, is freed before the other members. So far it is clear that this purpose of God is wrought, not at once, but through successive ages. But this fact gives a hint of further mysteries, and some key to the "ages of ages" (αιωνες αιωνων), which we read of in the New Testament, during which the lost are yet held by or under death and judgment, while the saints share Christ's glory, as heirs of God, in subduing all things unto Him. The fall here gives us some shadow of the restoration. For just as in Adam, all do not come out of him or die at once, but descend from or through each other, and die generation after generation, though all fell and died, as part of him, and therefore partakers of his sad inheritance; so in Christ, though all have been made alive in Him by His resurrection, all are not personally brought into His life and light at once, but one after another, and the first-born before the later-born, according to God's good pleasure and eternal purpose. The key here as elsewhere is to be found in the details of that law, of which "no jot or tittle shall pass till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5:18); the appointed "times and seasons" of which, one and all, are the types or figures of the "ages" of the New Testament; for there is nothing in the gospel, the figure of which is not in the law, nor anything in the law, the substance of which may not be found under the gospel; God's once oppressed and captive Israel being the vessel, in and by which He would shew out His purpose of grace and truth to other lost ones.

Observe, then, not only that the first-fruits are gathered, some at the feast of the Passover, and others not till Pentecost, while the "feast of ingathering," is not held until the seventh month, "in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field" (Exodus 23:16; Leviticus 23:39; Deuteronomy 16:13); but how no less distinctly both cleansing and redemption are ordained to take effect at different times and seasons. I refer to those mystic periods of "seven days" (Leviticus 12:2; Leviticus 13:5; Leviticus 13:21; Leviticus 13:26; Leviticus 14:8, &c), "seven weeks" (Leviticus 23:15), "seven months" (Leviticus 16:29; Leviticus 23:24; Numbers 29:1), "seven years" (Leviticus 25:4; Deuteronomy 15:9; Deuteronomy 15:12), and the "seven times seven

years" (Leviticus 25:8-9), which last complete the Jubilee, which are all different times for cleansing and blessing men, -- the former of which are figures of "the ages," the last, of "the ages of ages," in the New Testament; under which last blessed appointment all those who had lost their inheritance, and could not go free, as some did, at the Sabbatic year of rest, might at length, after the "times of times," that is the "seven times seven years," regain what had been lost, and find full deliverance. For in the Sabbatic year the release was for Israel only, not for foreigners (Deuteronomy 15:1-3); while in the Jubilee, liberty was to be proclaimed to all the inhabitants of the land (Leviticus 25:10). What is there in the ordinary gospel of this day, which in the least explains or fulfills these various periods, in and through which were wrought successive cleansings and redemptions, not of persons only, but of their lost inheritance? And if in the gospel, as now preached, no truth is found corresponding with these figures of the Law, is it not a proof that something is at least overlooked? God knows how much is overlooked from neglect of those Scriptures, which Saint Paul tells us are needed, "to make the man of God perfect" (2 Timothy 3:16-17), but which by others are openly despised, and by others are neglected, as the useless shadows of a by-gone dispensation. In them is the key, under a veil perhaps, of those "ages" and "ages of ages," during which so many are debtors and bondsmen under judgment, without their true inheritance. And though indeed it is true, that "it is not for us to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1:7), it is yet given us to know that there are such times and seasons, and in knowing it to gain still wider views of the "manifold wisdom of God," and of the "unsearchable riches of Christ," our Lord and Saviour.

It would far exceed my measure to attempt to shew how the law in all its "times" figured the gospel "ages." But I may give one more example to prove, that in cleansing, as in giving deliverance, God’s method is to accomplish the end through appointed seasons, which vary according to a fixed rule, -- I refer to the different periods prescribed for the purification of a woman on the birth of a male or a female child (Leviticus 12:1-5. A similar distinction of times is to be seen in the cleansing of the leper; Leviticus 14:7-10; Leviticus 14:20; and of those who were unclean by the dead; Numbers 19:12). If a son is born, she is unclean in the blood of her separation seven days, after which she is in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days, making in all forty days; but if she bear a maid child, she is unclean for twice seven days, and in the blood of her purifying six and sixty days, in all eighty days; that is double the time she is unclean for a man child. For the woman is our nature, which if it receive seed, that is the word of truth, may bring forth a son, that is "the new man;" in which case nature, or the mother, which brings it forth, is only unclean during the seven days of this first creation, and then in the blood of purifying till the end of the forty days, which always figure this dispensation; (Note: The number "forty," wherever found in Scripture, always points to the period of this dispensation, as the time of trial or temptation; e.g. Genesis 7:17; Exodus 24:18; Ezekiel 4:6; Deuteronomy 25:2-3; Mark 1:13; Exodus 16:35; Numbers 14:33; 2 Samuel 5:4; 1 Kings 11:42; Acts 1:3; Acts 13:21, &c.) for wherever Christ is formed in us, there is the hope that even "our vile body" shall be cleansed, when we reach the end of this present dispensation. But if, instead of bearing this "new man," our nature only bear its like, a female child, that is fruits merely natural, then it is unclean for a double period, till twice seven days and twice forty pass over it. Here as elsewhere the veil will I fear hide from some what is yet revealed as to the varying times when cleansing may be looked for; but even the natural eye can see that two different times are here described; and those who receive this as the Word of God will perhaps believe that there is some teaching here, even if they cannot understand it. Those too, who believe

that the Church was divinely guided in the order and appointment of the Christian Year, ought surely to consider what is involved in the fact that the purification of the woman after forty days is kept as one of the Church's holy days, under the title of "The Purification of St. Mary" (Forty days after Christmas, that is on Feb. 2). The Church of course reckons among her greatest days the conception and birth of that New and Anointed Man, who by almighty grace and power is brought forth out of our fallen human nature; but she does not forget to mark also the cleansing according to law, at the end of the mystic forty days, of that weak nature into which the Eternal Word has come, and out of which the New Man springs. There is like teaching in every time and season of the law, and its days and years figure the "ages" of the New Testament. The prophets repeat the same teaching, still further opening out this part of God's purpose, in a later age to visit those who are rejected in an earlier one, and so to work through successive worlds or ages. Thus though at the time they wrote Moab and Ammon were under a special curse, and cut off from the congregation of Israel, according to the words, "Thou shalt not seek their peace or prosperity for ever," and again, "Even to the tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever (Deuteronomy 23:3; Deuteronomy 23:6. Heb. ■■■■■; LXX., εις τον αιωνα); in obedience to which law both Ezra and Nehemiah put away, not only the wives which some Israelites had taken from these nations, but also the children born of them (Ezra 10:2-3; Ezra 10:44; Nehemiah 13:1; Nehemiah 13:23-30); though the prophets further declare the judgment of these nations, that "Moab shall be destroyed" (Jeremiah 48:42), and "Ammon shall be fuel for fire, and be no more remembered" (Ezekiel 21:28; Ezekiel 21:32); yet they declare also that "in the latter days the Lord shall bring again the captivity of Moab and of the children of Ammon" (Jeremiah 48:47; Jeremiah 49:6). Similar predictions are made respecting Egypt and Assyria (Isaiah 19:21; Isaiah 19:25), Elam (Jeremiah 49:39), Sodom and her daughters, (Note: Ezekiel 16:53-55. Compare with this Jude 1:7, where we are told that Sodom is "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" -- Gr. πυρος αιωνιου. And yet of this very "Sodom and her daughters" the prophet declares, that they shall "return to their former estate.") and other nations, who in the age of the prophets were "strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in this world," who yet are called to "rejoice with God's people" (Deuteronomy 32:43; Romans 15:10), and of whom even now an election, "though sometime far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:12-13). These nations in the flesh were enemies, and as such received the doom of old Adam; yet for them also must there be hope in the new creation, according to the promise, "Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5). For Christ, who, "being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in spirit, went in spirit and preached to the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah" (1 Peter 3:18-20), is "Jesus Christ, (that is Anointed Saviour,) the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." (Note: Hebrews 13:8. I may perhaps add here, that to me the scene recorded in Matthew 8:28-34, and in the parallel passages of the other Evangelists, is most significant. Our Lord calls His disciples to "pass over to the other side," and there heals "the man possessed with devils, who had his dwelling among the tombs, exceeding fierce, whom no man could bind, no, not with chains." Christ not only heals all forms of disease in Israel, but casts out devils also on the other side of the deep waters.)

Such is the light which the law and prophets give us as to God's purpose of salvation through successive ages. But even creation and regeneration, both works of the same God, tell no less clearly, though more secretly, the same mystery. God in each shews how he works, not in one act,

but by degrees, through successive days or seasons. In creation each day had its own work, to bring back some part of the creature, and one part before another, from emptiness and confusion, to light and form and order. All things do not appear at once. Much is unchanged, even after "light" and a "heaven" are formed upon the first and second days (Genesis 1:4-8). But these first works act on all the rest, for by God's will this "heaven" is a fellow-worker with God's Word in all the change which follows, till the whole is "very good." (Note: The firmament was called "heaven," ■■■■■, or "the arrangers," because it is an agent in arranging things on earth. "This appellation was first given by God to the celestial fluid or air, when it began to act in disposing or arranging the earth and waters. And since that time the ■■■■■ have been the great agents in disposing all material things in their places and orders, and thereby producing all those wonderful effects which are attributed to them in Scripture, but which it has been of late years the fashion to ascribe to attraction, gravitation, &c." -- Parkhurst, sub voce.) What is this but the very truth of the first-born serving the later-born? So in the process of our regeneration, there is a quickening, first of our spirits, then of our bodies, the quickening of our spirits being the pledge and earnest that the body also shall be delivered in its season (Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:11). What a witness to God's most blessed purpose; for our spirit is to our body what the spiritual are to this world. And just as the quickening of our spirit must in due time bring about a quickening even of our dead and vile bodies; so surely shall the quickening and manifestation of the sons of God end in saving those earthly souls who are not here quickened. Thus does the microcosm foretell the fate of the macrocosm, even as the macrocosm is full of lessons for the microcosm. But even had we not this key, the language of the New Testament, in its use of the word which our Translators have rendered "for ever" and "for ever and ever" (εις αιωνα and εις αιωνας αιωνων), but which is literally "for the age," or "for the ages of ages," points not uncertainly to the same solution of the great riddle, though as yet the glad tidings of the "ages to come" have been but little opened out. The epistles of St. Paul will prove that the "ages" are periods, in which God is gradually working out a purpose of grace, which was ordained in Christ before the fall, and before those "age-times" (χρονοι αιωνιοι -- 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2), in and through which the fall is being remedied. So we read, that "God's wisdom was ordained before the ages to our glory" (1 Corinthians 2:7; προ των αιωνων), that is, that God had a purpose before the ages out of the very fall to bring greater glory both to Himself and to His fallen creature; then we are told distinctly of the "purpose of the ages" (Ephesians 3:11; κατα προθεσιν των αιωνων; translated in our Authorized Version, "the eternal purpose"), shewing that the work of renewal would only be accomplished through successive ages. Then we read, that "by the Son, God made the ages" (Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 11:3), for it was by what the Eternal Word uttered and revealed of God's mind in each successive age that each such age became what it distinctly was; each age, like each day of creation, being different from another by the form and measure in which the Word of God was uttered or revealed in it, and therefore also by the work effected in it, the work in each successive age, as in different days of creation, being wrought first in one measure, then in another, first in one part, then in another, of the lapsed creation. Then again we read of the "mystery which has been hidden from the ages" (Ephesians 3:9), and again that "the mystery," (for he repeats the words,) "which hath been hid from ages and generations, is now made manifest to the saints, to whom God hath willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery; which is, Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:26). In another place the Apostle speaks of "glory to God in the church by Christ Jesus, unto all generations of the age of ages" (Ephesians 3:21; εις πασας τας γενεας του αιωνος

των αιωνων). He further says, that Christ is set "far above all principality, and power, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but in the coming one" (Ephesians 1:21); and again, that "now once in the end of the ages He hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:26; επι συντελεια των αιωνων); and that on us "the ends of the ages are met" (1 Corinthians 10:11; τα τελη των αιωνων κατηντησεν); words which plainly speak of some of the ages as past, and seem to imply that other ages are approaching their consummation. Lastly, he speaks of "the ages to come," in which God will "shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." (Note: Ephesians 2:4-7. I may add here that in all the following passages αιων is used for this present or some other limited age or dispensation: -- Matthew 12:32; Matthew 13:39-40; Matthew 24:3; Luke 16:8; Luke 20:34-35; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 1:21; Ephesians 2:2; Ephesians 6:12; 1 Timothy 6:17; 2 Timothy 4:10; Titus 2:12.)

Now what is this "purpose of the ages," which St. Paul speaks of, but of which the Church in these days seems to know, or at least says, next to nothing? I have already anticipated the answer. The "ages" are the fulfillment or substance of the "times and seasons" of the Sabbatic year and Jubilee under the old law. They are those "times of refreshment from the presence of the Lord, when He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached" (Acts 3:19); and when, in due order, liberty and cleansing will be obtained by those who now are without their rightful inheritance. In the "ages," and in no other mystery of the gospel, do we find those "good things to come," of which the legal times and seasons were the shadow" (Hebrews 10:1). Of course, as some of these "ages" are "to come," being indeed the "times and seasons which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1:7), we can as yet know little of their distinctive character, except that, as being the ages in which God is fulfilling His purpose in Christ, we may be assured their issue must be glorious. Yet they are constantly referred to in the New Testament, and the book of the Revelation more than any other speaks of them (Revelation 1:6; Revelation 1:18; Revelation 4:9-10; Revelation 5:13-14; Revelation 7:12; Revelation 10:6; Revelation 11:15; Revelation 14:11; Revelation 15:7; Revelation 19:3; Revelation 20:10; Revelation 22:5), for this book opens out the processes and stages of the great redemption, which make up the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gives Him; and this Revelation is not accomplished in one act, but through the "ages" and "ages of ages," foreshadowed by the "times" and "times of times" of the old law, the "age-times," again to use the language of St. Paul, in which the Lord is revealed as meeting the ruin of the creature. And the reason why we sometimes read of "ages," and sometimes of "the age," when both seem to refer and speak of the same one great consummation, is, that the various "ages" are but the component parts of a still greater "age," as the seven Sabbatic years only made up one Jubilee. But because the mind of the Spirit is above them, men speak as if the varied and very unusual language of Scripture, as to the "ages" or the "age of ages," contained no special mystery. They will see one day that the subject is dark, not because Scripture is silent, but only because men’s eyes are holden. (Note: Every scholar knows that the expressions, εις τους αιωνας, εις αιωνα αιωνος, εις αιωνα αιωνων, εις τους αιωνας των αιωνων, are unlike anything which occurs in the heathen Greek writers. The reason is, that the inspired writers, and they alone, understood the mystery and purpose of the "ages." They, or at least the Spirit which spake by them, saw that there would be a succession of "ages," a certain number of which constituted another greater "age." It seems to me that when they simply intended a duration of many "ages," they wrote εις τους αιωνας, or "to the

ages." When they had in view a greater and more comprehensive "age," including in it many other subordinate "ages," they wrote εις αιωνα αιωνων, that is "to the age of ages." When they intended the longer "age" alone, without regard to its constituent parts, they wrote εις αιωνα αιωνος, that is "to an aeonial age"; this form of expression being a Hebraism, exactly equivalent to εις αιωνα αιωνιον: like "liberty of glory," for "glorious liberty" (Romans 8:21), and "body of our vileness," for "our vile body" (Php 3:21). When they intended the several comprehensive "ages" collectively, they wrote εις τους αιωνας των αιωνων, that is "to the ages of ages." Each varying form is used with a distinct purpose and meaning.) At any rate, and whatever the future "ages" may be, those past (and St. Paul speaks of "the ends" of some,) are clearly not endless; and the language of Scripture as to those to come seems to teach that they are limited, since Christ's mediatorial kingdom, which is "for the ages of ages," must yet be "delivered up to the Father, that God may be all in all" (Compare Revelation 11:15, and 1 Corinthians 15:24). And the fact that in John's vision, which describes the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gives Him, our Lord is called "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending" (Revelation 21:6), seems to imply an end to the peculiar manifestation of Him as King and Priest, under which special offices the Revelation shews Him, offices which, as they involve lost ones to be saved and rebels ruled over, may not be needed when the lost are saved and reconciled. Would it not have been better therefore, and more respectful to the Word of God, had our Translators been content in every place to give the exact meaning of the words, which they render "for ever," or "for ever and ever," but which are simply "for the age," or "for the ages of ages;" and ought they not in other passages, where the form of expression in reference to these "ages" is marked and peculiar, to have adhered to the precise words of Holy Scripture? I have already referred to the passage of St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, which in our Version is rendered "throughout all ages, world without end," but which is literally, "to all generations of the age of ages" (Ephesians 3:21). But even more remarkable are the words, in St. Peter's Second Epistle, which our Version translates "for ever;" but which are literally "for the day of the age;" (Note: 2 Peter 3:18; εις ημεραν αιωνος, which, I may add here, is an exact literal translation of the words in Micah 5:2, ■■■■ ■■■■, and which in our Authorized Version are translated "from everlasting.") the key to which may perhaps be found in a preceding verse of the same chapter, where the Apostle says, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8). These and other similar forms of expression cannot have been used without a purpose. It is, therefore, a matter of regret that our Translators should not have rendered them exactly and literally; for surely the words which Divine Wisdom has chosen must have a reason, even where readers and translators lack the light to apprehend it. The "ages," therefore, are periods in which God works, because there is evil and His rest is broken by it, but which have an end and pass away, when the work appointed to be done in them has been accomplished. The "ages," like the "days" of creation, speak of a prior fall: they are the "times" in which God works, because He cannot rest in sin and misery. His perfect rest is not in the "ages," but beyond them, when the mediatorial kingdom, which is "for the ages of ages" (Revelation 11:15), is "delivered up" (1 Corinthians 15:24), and Christ, by whom all things are wrought in the ages, goes back to the glory which He had "before the age-times," (Note: 2 Timothy 1:9; and Titus 1:2; προ χρονων αιωνιων; translated, in our Version, "before the world began." The Vulgate translation here is, "Ante saecularia tempora," which is as literal a rendering as possible.) "that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28). The words "Jesus Christ, (that is, Anointed Saviour,) the same yesterday, to-day, and for the ages" (Hebrews 13:8; εις τους αιωνας), imply

that through these "ages" a Saviour is needed, and will be found, as much as "to-day" and "yesterday." It will I think too be found, that the adjective (αιωνιος) founded on this word, whether applied to "life," "punishment," "redemption," "covenant," "times," or even "God" Himself, is always connected with remedial labour, and with the idea of "ages" as periods in which God is working to meet and correct some awful fall. Thus the "aeonial covenant" (Hebrews 13:20), (I must coin a word, to shew what is the term used in the original,) is that which comprehends "the ages," during which "Jesus Christ is the same," that is, a Saviour; an office only needed for the fallen, for "they that are whole need not a physician." The "aeonial God," (language found but once in the New Testament,) (Note: Romans 16:25-26. In this passage we read, first, of "the mystery kept secret from the aeonial times, μυστηριου χρονοις αιωνιοις σεσιγημενου, translated in our English version, "Since the world began," and then of "the aeonial God," αιωνιου θεου, "by whose command this mystery is now made manifest." Is it not reasonable to conclude that the same word, twice used here in the same sentence, must in each case have the same sense. But as applied to "times," passing or past, aeonial cannot mean never-ending. In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, the epithet αιωνιος is only applied to God four times, in one of which the corresponding ■■■■ of the Hebrew is not to be found; though in all the reference is direct, either to "the age of ages," or to God's redeeming work as wrought through "the ages." The passages are Genesis 21:33, where after the birth of Isaac, the type of Christ, God is known by this name ■■■■ ■■; then Isaiah 26:4, and Isaiah 40:28, in both which the context shews the reason for the epithet; and lastly Job 33:12, in which passage the LXX. have given us αιωνιος for ■■■■■ or Elohim, in the original; which name, as we see from a comparison of Gen. 1 and 2, in the former of which God is always Elohim, in the latter Jehovah Elohim, refers to One who is working through periods of labour to change a ruined world, until His image is seen ruling it; a title not lost when the day of rest is reached, but to which another name, shewing what God is in Himself, is then added. In Exodus 3:15, we read of God's ονομα αιωνιον, that is, His name as connected with deliverance. I believe the word is never used but in this connection.) refers, as the context shews, to God as working His secret of grace through "aeonial times," that is, successive worlds or "ages," in some of which "the mystery has been hid, but now is made manifest by the commandment of the aeonial God," that is, (if I err not,) the God who works through these "ages." And so of the rest, whether "redemption" (Hebrews 9:12), "salvation" (Hebrews 5:9), "spirit" (Hebrews 9:14), "fire" (Jude 1:7), or "inheritance" (Hebrews 9:15), all of which in certain texts are called "aeonial," the epithet seems to refer to the same remedial plan, wrought out by God through "worlds" or "ages." And does not our Lord refer to this in the well-known words, "This is life eternal (η αιωνιος ζωη, that is, the life of the age or of the ages,) that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3)? Does He not say here, that to know the only true God, as the sender of His Son to be a Saviour, and to know the Son as a Saviour and Redeemer, mark and constitute the renewed life which is peculiar to the ages? Aeonial or eternal life therefore is not, as so many think, the living on and on for ever and ever. It is rather, as our Lord defines it, a life, the distinctive peculiarity of which is, that it has to do with a Saviour, and so is part of a remedial plan. This, as being our Lord's own explanation of the word, is surely conclusive as to its meaning. But even had we not this key, the word carries with it in itself its own solution; for "aeonial" is simply "of the ages;" and the "ages," like the days of creation, as being periods in which God works, witness, not only that there is some fall to be remedied, but that God through these days or ages is working to remedy it.

(Note: As to the Old Testament use of the word "age" or "ages," translated "for ever" in the English Version, a few words may be added here. We have first the unconditional promise of God, that "the seed of Abraham shall inherit the land for ever;" ■■■■; LXX., εις τον αιωνα; Exodus 32:13; The same words are used of the Aaronic priesthood; Exodus 40:15; of the office of the Levites; 1 Chronicles 15:2; of the inheritance given to Caleb; Joshua 14:9; of Ai being a desolation; Joshua 8:28; of the leprosy of Gehazi cleaving to his seed; 2 Kings 5:27; of the heathen bondsmen whom Israel possessed, of whom it is said, "They shall be their bondsmen for ever;" Leviticus 25:46. The same words are also used of the curse to come on Israel for their disobedience: -- "These curses shall come on thee, and pursue thee till thou be destroyed; and they shall be upon thee for a sign, and upon thy children for ever;" Deuteronomy 28:45-46. So of Ammon and Moab it is said: -- "Thou shalt not seek their peace for ever;" Deuteronomy 23:6; and again, "They shall not come into the congregation of the Lord for ever;" Deuteronomy 23:3; here ■■■■■■■. In all these and other similar instances, ■■■■ and its equivalent αιων mean the age or dispensation. In Exodus 21:6 where the ear of the servant, who will not go free, is bored, and he becomes a "servant for ever," ■■■■; LXX., εις τον αιωνα, the sense must necessarily be much more limited; as also in 1 Samuel 1:22. It is to be observed also that not only the singular, ■■■■, as in 1 Kings 9:3, and 2 Kings 21:7, but the plural, ■■■■■■, is used in 1 Kings 8:13 and 2 Chronicles 6:2, in reference to the temple at Jerusalem. The double expression, ■■■■■ ■■■, is variously translated by the LXX.; sometimes εις τον αιωνα και ετι, as in Daniel 12:3, where it is used of those "that turn many to righteousness;" sometimes τον αιωνα και επ αιωνος και ετι, as in Exodus 15:18, where it is used of God; sometimes εις τον αιωνα του αιωνος, as in Psalms 45:2, where it is used of Christ and His kingdom; while in Micah 4:7, the same Hebrew words, here ■■■■■■■■, are translated by the LXX., and here only, by the plural εως εις τους αιωνας. More commonly, however, ■■■■■■■■ is rendered simply εως του αιωνος by the LXX., as in Genesis 13:15, Joshua 4:7, and elsewhere. Lastly, in Daniel 7:18, we have both the singular and plural form together, ■■■■■■■ ■■■ ■■■ ■■■■■, rendered by the LXX., εως αιωνος των αιωνων. The adjective αιωνιος is used continually by the LXX., -- in reference to the Passover, Exodus 12:14; Exodus 12:17, -- the tabernacle service, Exodus 27:21, -- the priestly office of the sons of Aaron, Exodus 28:43, -- the meat-offering, Leviticus 6:18, -- and other things of the Jewish dispensation, all of which are called νομιμον αιωνιον. So in Jeremiah 23:40, we have αιωνιον oνειδεισμον, and ατιμιαν αιωνιον, used of the corrective judgments on Israel, whose restoration is also foretold. I will only add that the very remarkable language of S. Paul, 2 Corinthians 4:17, καθ υπερβολην εις υπερβολην αιωνιον, seems intended to add to the force of the word αιωνιος, which could scarcely be, if aionios meant eternal. Beza’s comment here is, "aeternitas ipsa aeternitate magis aeterna." See too Corn. a Lapide, in loco.) Be this as it may, the adjective, "aeonial" or age-long, cannot carry a force or express a duration greater than that of the ages or "aeons" which it speaks of. If therefore these "ages" are limited periods, some of which are already past, while others, we know not how many, are yet to come, the word "aeonial" cannot mean strictly never-ending. Nor does this affect the true eternity of bliss of God’s elect, or of the redeemed who are brought back to live in God, and to be partakers of Christ’s "endless life," (Note: See Hebrews 7:16. The word here used of Christ’s resurrection-life, which we share with Him, is ακαταλυτος, translated in our Version "endless"; literally "indissoluble"; a word never used in Scripture respecting judgment or punishment, but only of that life which is beyond all dissolution.) of whom it is said, "Neither can they die any more, for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children

of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36); for this depends on a participation in the divine nature, and upon that power which can "change these vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue even all things unto Himself" (Php 3:21. See also 1 Corinthians 15:53; Romans 8:29; Hebrews 7:16; Hebrews 12:28; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 John 3:2).

05.2.3. Through Death and Judgment

Through Death and Judgment

(3) It yet remains to shew that this purpose of God, wrought by Him through successive worlds or ages, is only accomplished through death and dissolution, which in His wisdom He makes the means and way to life and higher glory; for it is "by death," and by death only, that He "destroys him that has the power of death, that is the devil, and delivers them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:15). Nature everywhere reveals this law, though the divine chemistry is often too subtle to allow us to see all the stages of the transformations and the passages or "pass-overs" from life to death and death to life, which are going on around us everywhere. But the great instance cited by our Lord, that "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it brings forth much fruit" (John 12:24), forces the blindest to confess that all advance of life is through change, and death, and dissolution. The seed of the kingdom, which is above all kingdoms, and the seed of the Son, who is above all sons, does not, anymore than the seed of wheat or the seed of man, come to perfection in a moment or without many intermediate changes, but "goes from strength to strength" (Psalms 84:7), from the bursting of one shell of life to fuller life, from the opening of one seal to another, and "from glory to glory" (2 Corinthians 3:18) till all is perfected. Christ has shewn us all the way, from "the lowest parts of the earth" (Psalms 139:15), from the Virgin's womb, through birth, and infant swaddling clothes, to opened heavens, through temptation, and strong crying and tears, and the cross, and grave, and resurrection, and ascension, till He sits down at God's right hand to judge all things. And the elect yield themselves to the same great law of progress through death, and "faint not though the outward man perish, that their inward man may be renewed day by day" (2 Corinthians 4:16). Others may think they will be saved in another way than that Christ trod. His living members know it is impossible. To them, as the Apostle says, "to live is Christ" (Php 1:21); and they cannot live His life without being "partakers of His sufferings" (2 Corinthians 1:5; Php 3:10; Colossians 1:24). Therefore "we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Corinthians 4:11). Because this is so little seen, -- because so many take or mistake Christ's cross as a reprieve to nature, rather than a pledge that nature and sin must be judged and die, seeming to think that Christ died that they should not die, and that their calling is to be delivered from death, instead of by and out of it; (Note: Our translators have sometimes rendered εκ θανατου by the English words "from death;" as in Hebrews 5:7; but the force of the original is always "out of death.") -- because in a word the meaning of Christ's cross is not understood, but rather perverted and therefore death is shrunk from, instead of being welcomed as the appointed means by which alone we can be delivered from him that has the power of death, who more or less rules us till we are dead, for "sin reigns unto death" (Romans 5:21), and only "he that is dead is freed from sin" (Romans 6:7); -- because this, which is indeed the gospel, is not received, or if received in word is not really understood, even Christians misunderstand what is said of that destruction and judgment, which is the only way for delivering fallen creatures from their bondage, and bringing

them back in God’s life to his kingdom. As this is a point of all importance, lying at the very root of the cross of Christ and of His members, and giving the clue to all the judgments of Him, who "killeth and maketh alive," who "bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up" (1 Samuel 2:6; Deuteronomy 32:39), I would shew, not the fact and truth only, that for fallen creatures the way of life is and must be through death, but also the reason for it, why it must be thus, and cannot be otherwise. For the cross is not a fact or truth only, but power and wisdom also, even God’s power and wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:18-24); as power, meeting the craving of our hearts for deliverance; as wisdom, answering every question which our understanding can ask as to the mystery of this life. For both to head and heart life is indeed a riddle, which neither the Greek nor Jew, the head and heart of old humanity, could ever fully solve, though each people by its special craving shewed its wants; the Jew, as St. Paul says, requiring signs of power, for the heart wants and must have something to lean upon; the Greek, man’s head or mind, seeking after wisdom, for it felt the darkness and asked for some enlightening. To both God’s answer was the cross of Christ, which gave to each, to head and heart, what each was longing for; power to the one to escape from that which had tied and bound it, for by death with Christ we are freed from the bondage of corruption and from all that hinders the heart’s best aspirations; wisdom to the other to see why we must die, and what is the reason for all present suffering. As to the fact and doctrine, a few words may suffice, for in one form or another it is the creed of all Christendom, that for fallen man the way of life is and only can be through death and judgment. The cross the way to life -- this is confessedly the special teaching of the gospel. But what is the cross? Does Christ’s death save us unless by grace we die with him? Our Lord distinctly says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 16:25). "This is a faithful saying, If we be dead with Him, we shall live with Him: If we deny Him, He also will deny us" (2 Timothy 2:11-12). The saint must say, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20). "We are debtors, not to live after the flesh, for if we live after the flesh we shall die; but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live" (Romans 8:12-13). In baptism therefore we profess our death with Christ, that dying with Him we may also live with Him (Romans 6:3-4).

Such is the doctrine we all receive. But what is the reason for it? Why is the way of life for us through the cross, that is through death? Why cannot it be otherwise? If we see the way by which man got away from God, we shall see the way of his return, and why this must be through death; for indeed the way, by which we came away from God, must be retraced if by grace we come back to Him.

How then did man depart from God, and die to Him, and fall from His kingdom? By believing a lie. By the serpent’s double lie, -- a lie about God, that God grudges and is not true, and a lie about man, that in disobedience he shall be as God, -- the divine life in man’s soul was poisoned and destroyed, and man was separated from God, and died to God’s world (Genesis 3:1-5). And because to a being like man, made in God’s image, death cannot be the end of existence, but is only a passing out of one world into another, by this death to God, man who is a spirit, lost the place which God had given him, the Paradise, called by Paul "the third heaven," (Note: 2 Corinthians 12:2-4. Paradise is the word used by the LXX. in Genesis 2:8-9. Compare Revelation 2:7.) and was driven out, and fell into the kingdom of darkness, his inward life of ceaseless aching

restlessness; to escape which he turns to outward things, hating to come to himself even for a moment, unconsciously driven by his own inward dissatisfaction to seek diversion from himself in any outward care, pleasure, or vanity; while his body became like that of the beasts, subject to the elements of this world, and to all the change and toil which make up "the course of this world."

Such was the fall of man, and it explains why death is needful for our return to God. Death is the only way out of any world in which we are. It was by death to God we fell out of God's world. And it is by death with Christ to sin and to this world that we are delivered in spirit from sin, that is the dark world, and in body from the toil and changes of this outward world. For we are, as Scripture and our own hearts tell us, not only in body in this outward world, but in our spirits are living in a spiritual world, which surely is not heaven, for no soul of man till regenerate is at rest or satisfied; and being thus fallen, the only way out of these worlds is death: so long as we live their life, we must be in them. To get out of them, therefore, we must die: die to this elemental nature, to get out of the seen world, and die to sin, to get out of the dark world, called in Scripture "the power of darkness" (Colossians 1:13). And since the life of the one is toil and change, and the life of the other is dissatisfaction and inward restlessness, we must die to both if we would be free from the changes of this world, and from the restlessness and dissatisfaction in which by nature our spirits are. Christ died this double death for us, not only "to sin" (Romans 6:10), but also "to the elements of this world" (Colossians 2:20). And to be free, we also must die with Him to both. Only by such a death are we delivered. In pressing this point however, that death is needful for the sinner's deliverance, I need scarcely add, that death, alone, and without another life, is not and cannot of itself be enough to bring us back to God's world. We need death to get out of this world and out of the power of darkness; but we also need and must have the life of God, which is only perfected in resurrection, to live in God's world (John 3:3; John 3:5). Just as without the life of this world, we could not enter this world, or without the life of hell, enter or live in hell; so without the life of heaven we cannot enter or live there; for we cannot live in any world without the life of it. And therefore as the serpent's lie kindled the life of hell in man, before he could fall into the power of darkness, so God's life must be quickened again in man, before he can live again in God's kingdom. And, blessed be God, as the life of hell was quickened by a lie, so the life of God is quickened by the truth, even by the Word of God, who came where man was to raise up God's life in man, in and by which through a death to sin and to this world man might be freed perfectly. (Note: Not without a deep and wondrous reason is ■■■■ both Good-news and Flesh in the Hebrew; for by the one as by the other the captive creature is reached and quickened. Great indeed is the mystery of the flesh of Christ, touching which there are indeed many unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Yet the mystery is revealed from faith to faith.) In Christ the work has been accomplished. In Him by God's Word and Spirit God's life has been again raised up in man; and in the power of this life man in Christ has died both to sin and the world, and so, through death, resurrection, and ascension, by steps we yet know little of, has come back out of darkness to God's right hand. Through Christ the self-same work is yet accomplished, to bring lost man by the same process to the same blessedness. But whether in Christ, or in us, the work is only wrought through death. Man to be saved must not only be quickened by God's life, but must also die to that which keeps him far from God. And the way to bring about this death is God's judgment, who, because He loves us, kills to make alive, and "turneth man to destruction," that He may say, "Return, ye children of men." (Psalms 90:3. See also Job 19:10 and Job 9:22.) And this explains why God alone of all teachers has had two methods, and must have them,

namely, law and gospel, which appear opposed, for law condemns while the gospel justifies, each to meet one part of our need and of the devil's double lie. For man is yet held by both parts of this old lie, that God grudges and is untrue, and that man by self-will may be as God; and he needs not only to have God's life quickened again in him, whereby he may be prepared to live in God's world, but no less to have the life of hell and of this world slain in him, by which he may be delivered out of that power of darkness and of this present world, which hold him captive, that so he may come back again to God's kingdom. To meet the first, we have the promise or gospel, long before the law, though only fulfilled after law has done its work; to meet the second, we have the law which condemns, and proves that man is not as God, but a fallen, ruined creature. By the one, God's life is quickened in man; by the other, through present or future judgment, the hellish and earthly life is slain and overcome. Does not God love? The gospel is the answer. Is man as God? The law settles this. Christ's cross is the seal of both, revealing that God is love, for He gives His Son for rebels; and that man is not as God, but a sinner under death and judgment. But while the law condemns us and shews what man is, this "ministry of condemnation," needful in its place, is not and cannot be God's end. The gospel, the "ministration of righteousness and life," is God's proper work, and, therefore, as St. Paul says, "remaineth" (2 Corinthians 3:11); but the law, the "ministration of death and condemnation," God's "strange work" (Isaiah 28:21), is only a means to the end, and therefore, "to be abolished" and "done away" (2 Corinthians 3:11-13). St. Paul's teaching on this point is most express, though spite of his teaching, and spite of the gospel, not a few even of the Israel of God cannot yet steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. No less clear also is his witness as to God's promise to Abraham's seed, that it is not and cannot be altered or disannuled by the law, or by that curse and wrath and judgment which the law worketh (Romans 4:15; Romans 5:20; Romans 7:9-11; Galatians 3:10; Galatians 3:19). So in his Epistle to the Galatians, having first shewn that God's promise to Abraham included all nations, and that the law necessarily could only bring judgment, he proceeds to argue that "this covenant of promise which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect; for if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise" (Galatians 3:8; Galatians 3:15-18). The law, which is and must be judgment to men, is needed to slay and overthrow them in their own eyes. But this killing is to make alive. The judgment or condemnation cannot in any case disannul the previous covenant. "Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto." Judgment therefore must issue in blessing, not blessing in judgment. But for most the veil is yet on Moses' face, so that in looking at the "ministry of condemnation" men cannot see "the end of the Lord," and that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy (2 Corinthians 3:13; James 5:11).

I have dwelt the more on this, because so few now seem to see why for us the way of life is and must be through death; and because, if this be seen, God's end and purpose and the reason of His judgments will be more evident. God our Father judges to save. He only saves by judging what is evil. The evil must be overthrown; and through death God destroys him that has the power of death. A new creation, which is only brought in through death, is God's remedy for that which through a fall is held in death and bondage. Therefore both the "earth and heavens" must "perish and be changed" (Hebrews 1:10-12). Therefore God Himself "turns us to destruction" that we may "return" as little children (Psalms 90:3). And God's elect accept this judgment here, that their carnal mind may die, and the old man be slain with all his enmity. The world rejects God's

judgment here, and therefore have to meet it in a more awful form in the resurrection of judgment in the coming world. For while here, through the burdens and infirmities of "this vile body" (Php 3:21; το σωμα της ταπεινωσεως), our fallen spirit is more easily broken, and we die to sin more quickly; though even here we need both fires and waters, to make us die to that self-willed life which is our misery. Who can tell how much harder this death may be to those, who, having gone hence, have not the burden of "this vile body" to humble the pride of that fallen spirit, which, while unbroken, is hell, and which must die in us if we would reach God’s rest.

Such is the reason for salvation by the cross, that is through death; but the great illustration here as elsewhere is to be found in the law, that appointed "shadow of good things" (Hebrews 10:1), which in all its varied forms of sacrifice asserts the same great truth, that only by the fire of God and through death can the earthly creature be changed, and so ascend to God. The offerings were indeed of different kinds, some of a sweet savour, which were offered on the altar in the tabernacle (Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17); while others not of a sweet savour were burnt on the earth, in some place outside the camp of Israel (Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30); figuring the varied relations in which men’s works and persons might stand to God, and the varying place and manner of their acceptance to Him. But in either case, whether offered in obedience voluntarily, or required penally for trespass and disobedience, the offering was made by fire, and so perished in its first form to rise in another as pillars of smoke before God. If then all this was "the pattern of things in the heavens" (Exodus 25:40; Hebrews 9:23), we have another witness that a transformation wrought by fire is yet being carried on in the true heavens, that is the spiritual world. For no Divine change can be wrought even on God’s elect, save by "passing through the waters and through the fires" which are appointed for us, waters and fires as real, though not of this world, as those which burnt on the altar of old, or moved in the laver of the tabernacle. Our Lord can no more spare our nature than the animal was spared of old by the priest who offered it. And as He in His own body, made under the law, did not shrink from, but fulfilled, the types of suffering, so will He fulfill the same in the bodies of those who are His members, that "being made conformable unto His death, they may attain unto the resurrection from among the dead" (Php 3:10-11). In any case the way for all is through the fires, for fire is the great uniter and reconciler of all things; and things which without fire can never be united, in and through the fire are changed and become one. Therefore every coming of Christ, even in grace, is a day of judgment. Therefore there are fires even for the elect both now (1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 4:12), and in the coming day (1 Corinthians 3:13-15); for "our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29); and to dwell in Him we must have a life, which, because it is of the fire, for fire burns not fire, can stand unhurt in it. Therefore our Lord "came to cast fire into the earth," and desired nothing more than "that it should be already kindled" (Luke 12:49); therefore He says, "Everyone shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt" (Mark 9:49). For this is the very "baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire" (Matthew 3:11), that "spirit of judgment and burning," promised by the prophet, "with which the Lord shall purge away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and cleanse the blood of Jerusalem; after which He will create on every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and on all her assemblies, a cloud of smoke by day, and the brightness of flame of fire by night; and upon all, the glory shall be a defence (Isaiah 4:4-5); for "He is like a refiner’s fire, and like to fuller’s soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and He shall purify the sons of Levi as gold and silver are purged, that they may offer to the Lord an offering of righteousness." (Note: Malachi 3:3 . Luther’s well-known words are to the purpose here, for though originally written by him as a test of

prophets, they are no less true in their measure of all who are taught of God: -- Quaerendum mum experti sunt spirituales illas angustias, et nativitates divinas, mortesque, infernosque. Si audieris blanda, tranquilla, devota, (ut vocant,) et religiosa, etiamsi in tertiam coelum sese raptos dicant, non approbabis. Quia signum Filii Hominis deest, qui est Basanos, probator unicus Christianorum, et certus spirituum discretor. Vis scire locum, tempus, modum, colloquiorum divinorum. Audi: -- 'Sicut leo contrivit ossa mea,' et 'Projectus sum a facie oculorum tuorum:' 'Repleta est malis anima mea, et vita mea inferno appropinquavit.' Tenta ergo, et ne Jesum quidem audias gloriosum, ni videris prius crucifixum." -- Epist. lib ii. p. 42.) And as by the hidden fire of this present life, shut up in these bodies of corruption, we are able by the wondrous chemistry of nature through corruption to change the fruits and flesh of the earth into our blood, and from blood again into our flesh and bone and sinew; so by the fire of God can we be changed, and made partakers of Christ's flesh and blood. In and through Christ we have received this transmutation (Romans 5:11; την καταλλαγην); and through His Spirit, which is fire, is this same change accomplished in us.

(Note: It is surely a significant fact, that the two words, ■■■ and ■■■, used in Hebrew to express destruction, signify also, and are used to express, perfection; and that the word for a sacrifice by fire, ■■■■, is the same as that for a bride or wife; e.g. Numbers 28:6. By this double sense a veil covers the letter, veiling yet revealing God's purpose; for His purpose to the creature is through destruction to perfect it, and by fire to make it a bride unto the Lord. For a kindred reason some of the angels are called Seraphim, that is burning ones; for like the Lord, whose throne is flames of fire, Daniel 7:9-10, they also are as fire; as it is written, "He maketh His angels spirits, His messengers a flame of fire." Hebrews 1:7; Psalms 104:4.) And as with the first-fruits, so with the harvest. The world to be saved must some day know the same baptism. For "the Lord will come with fire," and "by fire and by His sword will He plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many" (Isaiah 66:15-16). The promised baptism or outpouring of the Spirit must be judgment, for the Spirit cannot be poured on man without consuming this flesh to quicken a better life; (Note: Isaiah 40:7; and compare Revelation 8:6-7, which describes the effect produced by the breath or spirit of the Lord sounding through the trumpets of the heavenly sanctuary.) and "His sword, which cometh out of His mouth" (Revelation 19:13-15), is that Word, which kills to make alive again. God is indeed "a man of war" (Exodus 15:3); but His warfare and wrath, unlike the "wrath of man, which worketh not the righteousness of God" (James 1:20), works both righteousness and life, and is set forth in that "warfare of the service of the tabernacle" (See Numbers 4:23; Numbers 4:30; Numbers 8:24-25; margin: and compare 1 Timothy 1:18), by which that which was of the earth was made to ascend to God through fire a sweet sacrifice. The view therefore which has been accepted by some believers, as more in accordance with Scripture than the popular notion of never-ending torments, that those who abuse their day of grace will, after suffering more or fewer stripes, according to the measure of their transgressions, be utterly annihilated by the "second death," (Note: I refer to the view advocated in such works as Eternal Punishment and Eternal Death, by the Rev. J. W. Barlow; and Endless Sufferings not the Doctrine of Scripture, by the Rev. T. Davis.) though a great step in advance of the doctrine of endless woe, is not a perfect witness of the mind of God, nor the true solution of the great mystery. God has not made man to let him fall almost as soon as made, and then, in a large proportion of his seed, to sin yet more, and suffer, and be annihilated; but rather out of and through the fall to raise him even to higher and more secure blessedness; "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22); not all at once, but through successive ages, and according to an appointed order, in which

the last even as the first shall be restored by the elect; for Christ is not only the "First," but also "with the last" (Isaiah 41:4), and will surely in the salvation of "the last" bring into view some of His glories, not inferior to those which are manifested in the salvation of "the first-born," who are His Body" (Ephesians 1:23). He is the "First," both out of life and out of death (Colossians 1:15; Colossians 1:18), and as such He manifests a peculiar glory in His elect first-born. But He is also the "Last" (Isaiah 44:6; Revelation 1:11; Revelation 1:17), and "with the last," and as such He will display yet other treasures hid in Him, for "in Him are hid all treasures" (Colossians 2:3), and "riches unsearchable" (Ephesians 3:8), which He will bring to light in due season. Their own conversion ought to give believers hopes of this. But indeed the whole mystery of regeneration and conversion, and the absolute needs-be for the cross, in its true ground and deep reason, is so little seen even by converted souls, -- so ignorant are they, that, as first-fruits, they are called, not only to be "fellow-workers with God" (1 Corinthians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 6:1), but to be a pledge and pattern of the world's salvation, -- that they misunderstand the plainest words which are spoken as to God's dealings in judgment with those who miss the glory of the first-born. For what is conversion but a passage, first through waters, then through fires (Isaiah 43:2; Matthew 3:11); a change involving a "death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness;" the death not annihilating the fallen spirit, but rather being the appointed means for bringing forth and perfecting the new life. And though the harvest may, and does, need a greater heat than the first-fruits, -- the one being gathered in autumn, in the seventh (Leviticus 23:39), -- the other in spring, in the first and third months (Leviticus 23:6; Leviticus 23:10; Leviticus 23:12; Leviticus 23:16-17), -- there is but one way to bring forth seed out of the earth, and but one means of ripening that which is brought forth. Nothing is done without the waters and the fires. Conversion is only wrought through condemnation. The law condemns and slays us (Romans 7:9-11), not to annihilate, but to bring forth a better life. And those souls, who do not know this condemnation, never fully know the "justification of life" (Romans 5:18) in resurrection. Why then should the judgment of the "second death," which is the working of the same ministry of condemnation on the non-elect, be annihilation? Will not the judgment, because God changes not, in them, as in the elect, be the means of their deliverance? To me all Scripture gives but one answer; that there is but one way; "one baptism for the remission of sins;" that "baptism wherewith we have been baptized," and of which we may say with our Head, "How am I straightened until it be accomplished" (Luke 12:50); that "burning in us, which," St. Peter teaches, "is made to prove us," and at which we should "rejoice, inasmuch as we are thus partakers of Christ's sufferings" (1 Peter 4:12 -- τη εν υμιν πυρωσει, κ.τ.λ.); that "therefore we are buried by baptism into death" (Romans 6:4); and therefore we look to be "baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire" (Matthew 3:11); not surely to annihilate, but rather through judgment to perfect us; and that, therefore, and to the same end, those not so baptized here must know the last judgment, and "the lake of fire, which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). And indeed if one thinks of the language of the true elect, and of all the "fiery trial" which they are called to pass through, -- when we hear them say, or say ourselves, "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps; thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and Thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves" (Psalms 88:6-7), -- we shall not so easily misunderstand what is said of that judgment, which is required to melt the greater hardness and impenitence of the reprobate. (See Appendix, Note A.)

It is therefore simply because God is what He is, that He is, though love, and because He is love, the curse and destruction of the impenitent. But as even in this fallen world He is able, not only to

turn our blessings into a curse (Malachi 2:2), but curses into blessings; -- as we see strength, and health, and wealth, and talents, which are blessings, all turned to curses through disobedience; and pain, and want, and sorrow, and death, which are curses, turned to real blessings; -- so in other words, because God changes not, curses by Him may yet be turned to blessings; and they who now are turning blessings into a curse may, and, I believe, will, find that God can make even curses blessings. Paul's words should help us here. He who could say, "To me to live is Christ" (Php 1:21), and whose ways were therefore a true expression of God's mind, bids the Church "to deliver some to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh and saving of their spirit" (1 Corinthians 5:5), and further tells us that he himself has done this, and "delivered" certain brethren "to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Timothy 1:20). Oh wondrous ways of God! Souls are taught not to blaspheme, by being delivered to Satan; and the spirits of Christian brethren are saved, and their flesh destroyed, by being put into the hands of God's adversary. What does this not teach us as to God's purpose towards those whom He also delivers to Satan, and disciplines by evil, since they will not learn by good. "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord" (Psalms 107:43).

I cannot even attempt here to trace the stages or processes of the future judgment of those who are raised up to condemnation; for if "the righteousness of God is like the great mountains, His judgments are a great deep" (Psalms 36:6); but what has here been gathered from the Word of God, as to the course and method of His salvation, throws great light on that "resurrection of judgment" (John 5:29), which our Lord speaks of. Of the details of this resurrection, of the nature and state of the bodies of the judged, -- if indeed bodies in which there is any image of a man, and therefore of God (for man's form bears God's image, 1 Corinthians 11:7), then are given to them, -- and of the scene of the judgment, -- very little is said in Scripture; but the peculiar awfulness of the little that is said shews that there must be something very fearful in it. And indeed, when one thinks of the eternal law, "To every seed its own body" (1 Corinthians 15:38), one can understand how terrible must be the judgment on all that grows in a future world from the seed which has been nourished here of self-love and unbelief; a judgment in comparison with which any present pain is light affliction. It is thus described: -- "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was not place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death" (Revelation 20:11-14). And yet, awful as it is, who can doubt the end and purpose of this judgment, for "God, the judge of all" (Hebrews 12:23), "changes not" (Malachi 3:6), and "Jesus Christ" is still "the same, yesterday, to-day, and for the ages" (Hebrews 13:8). And the very context of the passage, which describes the casting of the wicked into the lake of fire, seems to shew that this resurrection of judgment and the second death are both parts of the same redeeming plan, which necessarily involves judgment on those who will not judge themselves, and have not accepted the loving judgments and sufferings, which in this life prepare the first-born for the first resurrection. So we read, -- "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to him who is athirst of the fountain of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all

things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death" (Revelation 21:5-8). What does He say here but that "all things shall be made new," though in the way to this the fearful and unbelieving must pass the lake of fire. And does not the fact that the threatened judgment comes under, and is part of, the promise, "I make all things new," shew that the second death is not outside of or unconnected with it, but is rather the appointed means to bring it about in some cases. Those who overcome inherit all: they are God's sons and heirs. Like Abraham, they are "heirs of the world" (Romans 4:13); "the world is theirs" (1 Corinthians 3:22), to bless it. But the judgment of the wicked, even the second death, is only the conclusion of the same promise, which, under threatened wrath, as in the curse of old upon the serpent, involves the pledge of true blessing. (Note: Genesis 3:14-19. "How mysterious are God's ways ... Neither to Adam nor to Eve was there one word of comfort spoken. The only hint of such a thing was given in the act of cursing the serpent. The curse involved the blessing." -- The Eternal Purpose of God, by A.L. Newton, p.10.) What but this could make Paul, who so yearned over his brethren that he "wished himself accursed for them," "have hope," not fear, "that there should be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Compare Romans 9:3, and Acts 24:15.) The "second death" (Revelation 20:14) therefore, so far from being, as some think, the hopeless shutting up of man for ever in the curse of disobedience, will, if I err not, be God's way to free those who in no other way than by such a death can be delivered out of the dark world, whose life they live in. The saints have died with Christ, not only "to the elements of this world" (Colossians 2:20), but also "to sin" (Romans 6:10), that is, the dark spirit-world. By the first they are freed from the bondage of sense; by the second, from the bondage of sin, in all its forms of wrath, pride, envy, and selfishness. The ungodly have not so died to sin. At the death of the body therefore, and still more when they are raised to judgment, because their spirit yet lives, they are still within the limits of that dark and fiery world, the life of which has been and is the life of their spirit. To get out of this world there is but one way, death; not the first, for that has passed, but the second death. Even if we have not the light to see this, ought not the present to teach us something as to God's future ways; for is He not the same yesterday, today, and for ever? We know that, in inflicting present death, His purpose is through death to destroy him that has the power of death, that is the devil. How can we conclude from this, that, in inflicting the second death, the unchanging God will act on a principle entirely different from that which now actuates Him? And why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead, who for their sin suffer the penalty of the second death? Does this death exceed the power of Christ to overcome it? Or shall the greater foe still triumph, while the less, the first death, is surely overcome? Who has taught us thus to limit the meaning of the words, "Death is swallowed up in victory"? Is God's "will to save all men" (1 Timothy 2:4) limited to fourscore years, or changed by that event which we call death, but which we are distinctly told is His appointed means for our deliverance? All analogy based on God's past ways leads but to one answer. But when in addition to this we have the most distinct promise, that "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive," -- that "death shall be destroyed," -- that "there shall be no more curse," but "all things made new," and "the restitution of all things"; -- when we are further told that "Jesus Christ is the same", that is a Saviour, "yesterday, today, and for the ages"; -- the veil must be thick indeed upon man's heart, if spite of such statements "the end of the Lord" is yet hidden from us. To me too the precepts which God has given are in their way as

strong a witness as His direct promises. Hear the law respecting bondmen (Deuteronomy 15:12-15), and strangers (Exodus 22:21; Leviticus 19:33-34), and debtors (Deuteronomy 15:1-2; Deuteronomy 15:9), and widows and orphans (Exodus 22:22; Deuteronomy 24:17), and the punishment of the wicked, which may not exceed forty stripes, "lest if it exceed, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee" (Deuteronomy 25:2-3); yea even the law respecting "asses fallen into a pit:" (Exodus 21:33-34; Exodus 23:4-5) -- hear the prophets exhorting to "break every yoke," to "let the oppressed go free," and to "undo the heavy burdens:" (Isaiah 58:6) -- hear the still clearer witness of the gospel, "not to let the sun go down upon our wrath" (Ephesians 4:26), to "forgive not until seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:22), "not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good:" (Romans 12:21), to "walk in love as Christ has loved us," and to "be imitators of God as dear children:" (μιμηται θεου, Ephesians 5:1-2) -- see the judgment of those who neglect the poor, and the naked, and the hungry, and the stranger, and the prisoner (Matthew 25:41-43); -- and then say, Shall God do that which He abhors? Shall He command that bondmen and debtors be freed, and yet Himself keep those who are in worse bondage and under a greater debt in endless imprisonment? Shall He bid us care for widows and orphans, and Himself forget this widowed nature, which has lost its Head and Lord, and those poor orphan souls which cannot cry, Abba, Father? Shall He limit punishment to forty stripes, "lest thy brother seem vile," and Himself inflict more upon those who though fallen still are His children? Is not Christ the faithful Israelite, who fulfills the law; and shall He break it in any one of these particulars? Shall He say, "Forgive till seventy times seven," and Himself not forgive except in this short life? Shall He command us to "overcome evil with good," and Himself, the Almighty, be overcome of evil? Shall He judge those who leave the captives unvisited, and Himself leave captives in a worse prison for ever unvisited? Does He not again and again appeal to our own natural feelings of mercy, as witnessing "how much more" we may expect a larger mercy from our "Father which is in heaven"? (Matthew 7:6-11; and compare Psalms 103:8-14.) If it were otherwise, might not the adversary reproach, and say, Thou that teachest and judgest another, teachest Thou not thyself? Not thus will God be justified. But, blessed be His Name, He shall in all be justified. And when in His day He opens "the treasures of the hail," (Note: Job 38:22. The two questions of the book of Job are, How can man, and How can God, be justified? Job's complainings, in substance, amount to this, -- How can God be justified in treating me as He does? His three friends, who cannot answer this, urge him rather to ask, How can man be justified? Elihu answers this latter question; and God then answers Job's question by asking him if he knows what God can bring out of things which at present are dark and crooked. Job's question is not the sinner's question, but that of the "perfect man," Job 1:8; a question not unacceptable to God, who declares of Job's three friends, that "they have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job." Job 42:8.) and shews what sweet waters He can bring out of hard hailstones; when He unlocks "the place where light now dwells" shut up, and reveals what light is hid in darkness and hardness, as we see in coal and flint, those silent witnesses of the dark hard hearts, which God can turn to floods of light; when we have "taken darkness to the bound thereof" (Job 38:19-20), and have seen not only how "the earth is full of God's riches," but how He has laid up the depths in storehouses (Psalms 104:24; Psalms 33:7); in that day when "the mystery of God is finished," and He has destroyed them which corrupt the earth" (Revelation 11:18), -- then shall it be seen how truly God's judgments are love, and that "in very faithfulness He hath afflicted us" (Psalms 119:75).

05.3.0. Popular Objections

III. Popular Objections

I have thus stated what I see of God’s purpose and way; and it is, I believe, the key to all the difficulties and apparent contradictions of Holy Scripture on this subject. There are, however, certain current objections, which have weight with those who tremble at God’s Word. It is said that this doctrine is opposed to the voice of the Church, to Reason, and above all to Holy Scripture. If this last be true, the doctrine cannot stand. God’s Word is the final appeal on this and every other subject. For the rest, if the Church speak with God, woe to those who disobey her. But if by reasonings or traditions she make void the Word of God, "let God be true, and every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

Let us look at these objections: --

05.3.1. Opposed to the Teaching of the Church

Opposed to the Teaching of the Church

(1) First, it is said that the Church has never held, but on the contrary has distinctly condemned, this doctrine. But is this true? Where then, I ask, and when, has the Catholic Church ever authoritatively condemned this view of restitution? At what council, or in what decrees, received by East and West, shall we find the record and the terms of this condemnation? Of course I am aware that individuals have judged the doctrine, and that since Augustine's days the Western Church, led by his great authority, has generally received his view of endless punishment. I know too that Theophilus of Alexandria, the persecutor of Chrysostom, (Note: For details, see Neander, Church Hist. Vol. iv. pp. 474-476) and then Anastasius of Rome, who, according to his own confession, until called upon to judge Origen, knew little or nothing about him (Id. Ibid. p. 472), and later on the bishops at the "home synod" summoned by the patriarch Mennas at Constantinople, the latter acting under court influence, two hundred years after his death, condemned Origen. (Note: Both Neander and Gieseler shew, that this condemnation of Origen was passed, not at the 5th General Council of Constantinople, in 553, as some have supposed, but at the "home synod" under Mennas, in 541. See Neander, Church Hist. vol. iv. p. 265; and Gieseler, Eccl. Hist. Second Period, div. ii. ch. 2, par. 109; and notes 8 and 20. And even this "home synod," though under court influence it condemned some of Origen's views, would not consent to condemn the doctrine of Restitution, spite of the Emperor's express requirement that this doctrine should be anathematized.) But so have certain bishops in council asserted Transubstantiation, and condemned all those who on this point differed from them; and yet it would be most untrue to say that the Universal Church asserted this doctrine, or that a rejection of it involved a rejection of the Christian faith. It is so with the doctrine of endless torments. It can never be classed under "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus." Many have held it; but the Catholic Church has nowhere asserted it; while not a few of the greatest of the Greek Fathers distinctly dissent from it. (Note: See Appendix, Note B., pp. 174 - 190, for extracts from Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and many others.) The Creeds received by East and West at least know nothing of such a doctrine, and in their assertion of "the forgiveness and remission of sins," seem rather to point to another belief altogether. But suppose it were otherwise, -- suppose it could be shewn that the Church, instead of asserting "the forgiveness of sins," had taught the reverse, and had judged the doctrine of restitution, -- grant further, what I admit, that the Church generally has seen, or at least has taught, comparatively little, especially of late, respecting universal restoration, -- what does this prove, if, though yet beyond the Church's light, the doctrine is really taught in Holy Scripture? Many things have been hid in Scripture for ages. St. Paul speaks of "the revelation of the mystery, which had been hid from ages and generations" (Romans 16:25-26; Ephesians 3:5); some part of which at least, though hidden, had been "spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). There are many such treasures hidden in Scripture, open secrets like those in nature which are daily opening to us. But when have God's people as a body ever seen or received any truth beyond their dispensation?

Take as an instance Israel of old, whose ways, "ensamples of us" (1 Corinthians 10:6; τιποι ημων), prefigure the Church of this age. Did they ever receive the call of the Gentiles, or see God's purpose of love outside their own election? A few all through that age spoke of blessings to the world, and were without exception judged for such a testimony: -- "Which of the prophets have not your fathers slain?" Was God's purpose to the Gentiles therefore a false doctrine: or, because His people did not receive it, was it not to be found in their own Scriptures? The doctrine of "the restitution of all things" is to the Church what "the call of the Gentiles" was to Israel. And if the Church, like Israel, can see no truth beyond its own, and has judged those who have been witnesses to a purpose of love far wider than that of this age, -- which is not to convert the world, as some suppose, but only "to take out of the nations a people for God's name" (Acts 15:14. Compare Matthew 24:14 -- "This gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations.") -- is God's purpose, though declared in Scripture, to be damned as a false doctrine, simply because the Church is blind to it? Is Israel's path to teach us nothing? Are men's traditions as to God's purpose to be preferred to His own unerring Word? When I see that if I bow to the decisions of its widest branch, I must receive not Transubstantiation only, but the Immaculate Conception also, -- the last of which cuts away the whole ground of our redemption, for if the flesh which bore Christ was not ours, His Incarnation does not profit us, -- I can only fall back on that Word, which in prospect of coming apostasy is commended to the man of God, as the guide of his steps and the means to perfect him. (2 Timothy 3:14-17. Compare the connexion of this passage with the opening words of the chapter.) It is indeed a solemn thing to differ with the Church, or like Paul to find oneself in a "way which they call heresy," simply by "believing," not some but, "all things which are written in the law and in the prophets" (Acts 24:14). But the path is not a new one for the sons of God. All the prophets perished in Jerusalem (Luke 13:33-34). And, above all, the Lord of prophets was judged as a Deceiver (Matthew 27:63), by those whom God had called to be His witnesses. The Church's judgment, therefore, cannot decide a point like this, if that judgment be in opposition to the Word of God. But is it possible that Christians should have been allowed to err on so important a point as the doctrine of future judgment? Would our Lord Himself have used, or permitted others to use, words which, if final restitution be true, might be understood as teaching the very opposite? I say again, look at the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Has, or has not, one large section of the Church been suffered to err as to the meaning of the words, which are at the very foundation of her highest act of worship? Did not our Lord, when He said, "Take, eat, this is my body" (Matthew 26:26), know how monstrously the words would be perverted? Yet though a single sentence would have made any mistake almost impossible, He did not add another word. Why? Because the very form in which the Word is given is part of our discipline; and because without His Spirit, let His words be what they may, we never really understand Him. Transubstantiation is a mistake built on Christ's very words; and the doctrine of endless torments is but another like misunderstanding; which not only directly contradicts many other Scriptures, but practically denies and falsifies the glorious revelation of Himself, which God has given us in the gospel, and in the face of Jesus Christ. Both shew the Church's state. And though thousands of God's children have held, not these only, but many other errors, only proves the grace of Him, who spite of such errors can yet bless and make His children a blessing.

05.3.2. Opposed to Reason

Opposed to Reason

(2) It is further said that the doctrine is opposed to Reason. Several arguments are urged by those whose opinions are entitled to the most respectful attention. I confess I care little to answer these, because to me the question simply is, "What saith the Scripture;" because, too, I know that those who urge these reasons would instantly abandon them, if they believed Scripture spoke differently; for I am sure I may answer for them and say, that no reasons if opposed to Scripture would weigh with them; because, too, if it be made a question of reasoning, as much may be said against as for the doctrine of never-ending punishment. Still, as some of these reasons are perplexing simple hearts, I may notice those which are most often heard.

(i) The first is, that this doctrine militates against the atonement, for if all men shall at length be saved, God became man to redeem from that which is equally remedied without it. Surely, Christ did not die to save us from nothing. But never will any believe the redemption by Christ, who do not believe in hell also. (Pusey's Sermon on Everlasting Punishment, p. 29; and Cazenove's Essay on Universalism, p. 13.)

Now what does it say for the state of the Church, when men can argue, that if all are saved at last by Christ, they are saved as well without redemption. The objection only proves the confusion of thought which passes current for sound doctrine, and how little the nature of the fall, and the redemption by Christ, are really understood. What the Scripture teaches is, that man by disobedience and a death to God fell from God under the power of death and darkness, where by nature he is for ever lost, as unable to quicken his soul as to raise again his dead body; that in this fall God pitied man, and sent His Son, in whom is life, to be a man in the place where man was shut up, there to raise up again God's life in man, to bear man's curse, and then through death to bring man back in God's life to God's right hand; that in His own person, Christ, the first of all the first-fruits, as man in the life of God, broke through the gates of death and hell; that those who receive Him now, through Him obtain the life by which they also shall rise as firstfruits of His creatures; that "if the firstfruits be holy, the lump is also holy," and that therefore "in Christ shall all be made alive." But how does it follow hence that those who are not firstfruits, if saved at all, are saved without Christ's redemption? Christ is and must be the one and only way, by which any have been, or are, or can be, saved. But if when we were "dead in sins" and "children of wrath, even as others," God's Word could quicken and deliver us out of the horrible pit, that we might be "firstfruits of His creatures," why should we say He cannot bring back others out of death, though they miss the glory of being "firstfruits?" To say that if this be true, God became man to redeem us from what is equally remedied without it, and that if "in Christ all are made alive," their life is not through Christ's atonement, but independent of it, is simply misapprehension of the whole question. But the objection shews how much, or how little is understood even by masters of Israel. The other part of the objection that "none believe in redemption who do not believe in hell," is true, and shews why some at least are only saved by being "delivered to Satan." For none are saved till

they know or believe their ruin. Like the Prodigal, we must come to ourselves before we come to our Father (Luke 15:17; Luke 15:20). If therefore yet bound by the lie, "Ye shall be as Gods," men will not believe their fall, and that there is, and that their souls are in, a dark world, the necessary result is they cannot believe in redemption, for till they believe their fall they will neither believe nor care for deliverance. If they will not believe it, they shall know it. And if belief in hell makes belief in redemption possible, what if the knowledge of hell should also lead those who will not believe, to the knowledge of their state and of their need of Christ's redemption?

(ii) It is further argued, that, if grace does not, judgment cannot, save man. How can damnation perfect those whom salvation has not helped? Can hell do more for us than heaven? What more could God do for us, that He has not done for us? (Pusey's Sermon, pp. 9, 10.) The answer to this lies simply in what has been said above, as to the reason why the way of life for us must be through judgment. We are held captive by a lie. One part of that lie is that we are as Gods. The remedy for this is to shew us that we are ruined creatures. Till we believe or know this, we cannot return to God. Judgment, therefore, to shew us what we are, is as needful as the grace which meets the other part of the serpent's lie, and shews what God is. Therefore God kills to make alive. Therefore He turns man to destruction, that He may say, Return, ye children of men. Therefore He delivers even Christians to Satan, for the destruction of their flesh, that so they may learn what grace has not taught them. If we want further examples, Nebuchadnezzar shews us how judgment does for man what goodness cannot. Loaded with gifts, through self-conceit he loses his understanding. The remedy is to make him as a beast. Then as a beast he learns what as a man he had not learnt (Daniel 4:29-34). Let the nature of the fall be seen, and the reason why we are only saved through judgment is at once manifest. Grace saves none but those who are condemned; nor till we have felt "the ministry of death and condemnation" do we fully know "the ministry of life and righteousness." The firstfruits from Christ to us are proofs, that by death, and thus alone, is our salvation perfected. Unbelievers, who will not die with Christ, are lost, because they are not judged here. God cannot do more than He has done for man. Law and Gospel are His two covenants. But why may not the Lord, seeing that He is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for the ages," by the ministry of death and condemnation in another world do for those, who have not here received it, that same work of judgment to salvation, which in the firstfruits is accomplished in this present world? Blessed be His name, we know He will subdue all things unto Himself; and though our sin can turn His blessings into curses, He can no less turn curses into blessings, by that same power which through death destroys the power of death.

(iii) But it is further objected, that this doctrine gives up God's justice (Cazenove's Essay, pp. 22-24); for if all are saved, there will be no difference between St. Peter and Nero, virgins and harlots, saints and sinners (Jerome, on Jonah 3:6-7; quoted from Huets Origeniana, in Pusey's Sermon, p.29). This again is misapprehension or worse. God's justice is given up, because He saves by judgment. The conclusion is absurd; but it arises from the common notion, that we are saved by Christ from death, instead of by it and out of it. What Scripture teaches is, that man is saved through death; that the elect, being first quickened by the word, and then judging themselves or being judged in this world (1 Corinthians 11:31-32), by a death to sin are freed from Satan; that others, not so dying to sin, remain in the life and therefore under the curse and power of the dark world, and are therefore delivered to Satan to be punished, to know, since they will not believe, their fall, and their need of God's salvation. But all this simply asserts the justice of God,

that if men will not be judged here, they must be in the coming world. For the rest, the statement that according to this view no distinction is made between St. Peter and Nero, virgins and harlots, saints and sinners, is not only untrue, -- for is there no distinction between reigning with Christ and being cast out and shut up in hell with Satan? -- but is too like the murmur of the Elder Son at his brother's return (Luke 15:29-30), to need any answer with those who know their own hearts. It is the old objection of the Pharisee and Jew, who thought God's truth would fail if sinners of the Gentiles shared their good things; an objection deeply rooted in the natural heart, which is slow to believe that an outwardly pure and blameless life needs as much the blood of the cross as the most depraved and open sinner. The objection only shews where they are who urge it; and whatever support it may seem to have from a part of God's Word, -- as a part of God's Word, taken against the rest, seemed to justify the Jew, and was indeed the very ground on which he rejected the call of the Gentiles, -- more light will shew that it rests on partial views, and on a systematic disregard of all those truths of Scripture, which are beyond the dispensation. Some day we shall see, that "all have come short" (Romans 3:23), that as to sin and failure "there is no difference between the Jew and Greek" (Romans 10:12), that the elect are "by nature children of wrath, even as others" (Ephesians 2:3), that if saved at all, first or last we must be "saved by grace" (Ephesians 2:8); and this truth will justify all God's ways, "who hath concluded all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all" (Romans 11:32).

(iv) The last argument I notice is that from analogy. It is said that as unnumbered creatures in this world fail to attain their proper end, as a large proportion of seeds never germinate, as many buds never blossom or reach perfection, so thousands of our race may also miss their true end, and be for ever castaways. "For as the husbandman soweth much seed upon the ground, and planteth many trees, and yet the thing that is sown good in his season cometh not up, neither doth all that is planted take root; even so it is of all them that are sown in the world; they shall not all be saved" (2Es 8:41).

Now that countless creatures in their present form fail to reach that perfection, which some of their species reach, and which seems the proper end of it, is a fact beyond all contradiction. Present nature is both the witness and mirror of man's present state. But to say that nature out of this failure or destruction cannot and does not bring forth other and often fairer forms of life, -- that what here fails of its due end is therefore wholly lost, or for ever shut up in the imperfect form in which it dies and fails here, -- is opposed to fact and all philosophy. While therefore it may be fairly argued that many of our race fail to attain that perfection which is reached by some as the end of this present life, analogy will never prove that those who miss this are hopelessly destroyed, or for ever held in the ruined form or state which they have fallen into. If this indeed were the conclusion to be drawn from the failure of some seeds, why not go further and argue that since death overcomes every form of life in this world, death and not life must be the final ruler of the universe? A sad and most partial reading this of the great mystery. The truth is, nature is a mirror of the two unseen worlds. Every form of death, all disease, decay, and failure, every fruitless seed, each ruined life, is the shadow of hell, and of the working of that spirit which destroys and mars God's handiwork. On the other hand all life and joy, every birth, all that quickens and supports and helps the creature, is a reflection of the world of light, and a witness that God is meeting the disorder. Even death itself, as seen in nature, does not declare annihilation or never ending bondage in any given form of evil. Quite the reverse. Nature says, matter cannot perish: it may seem to perish, but

the apparent death is only change of form; the change, call it death or what you will, being indeed the witness of present imperfection, but not of eternal bondage in that form, nor of destruction or annihilation when that form perishes. Nature must be strangely read to draw this lesson from it; but in this argument the conclusion depends upon the extent or limit of our view, and our capacity to read the book of nature, imperfect readings of which will always lead us, as in the phenomena of sunrise and sunset, to conclusions the very opposite to reality. Analogy, so far from proving that the lost are for ever shut up in the form of evil where they now are or may be, declares not only that all things may be changed, but that what to sense appears destroyed and worthless, may contain shut up in itself what is most beauteous and valuable. Think of the precious things which chemistry brings out of refuse, -- of the flavours, scents, and colours, which are every day being extracted from what appears worthless. Who can tell what may yet be wrought by fire? Fire can free and transform what water cannot touch. All things shall be dissolved by fire (2 Peter 3:12). And even those most fair and least corruptible, as the precious stones, which are the shadows of the things of Christ's kingdom (Exodus 28:17-21; Revelation 21:19-21), shall, like that kingdom, one day give up their present beauty for a higher glory, that God may be all in all.

(v) The greatest difficulty perhaps of all is that which meets us from the existence of present evil. "The real riddle of existence," says an acute thinker, "the problem which confounds all philosophy, aye, and all religion too, so far as religion is a thing of man's reason, is the fact that evil exists at all; not that it exists for a longer or a shorter duration. Is not God infinitely wise and holy and powerful now? And does not sin exist along with that infinite holiness and wisdom and power? Is God to become more holy, more wise, more powerful, hereafter; and must evil be annihilated to make room for His perfections to expand?" (Mansels Bampton Lectures, lect. vii. p. 222). No doubt the existence of evil is a difficulty; but surely this kind of reasoning about it proves too much; for by the same reasoning it might be shewn, that God could never have done anything. Was He not "infinitely wise and holy and powerful" when "the earth was without form and void"? Why then should this state ever have been changed by Him till "all was very good"? Why should not the darkness, which once reigned, have remained for ever? Was the change needed "to make room for God's perfections to expand"? And why, when the earth was again corrupt, should God judge it with a flood; and then again bring it forth from its destruction? Why should He work for the deliverance of His people in Egypt, or "triumph gloriously" over their oppressors? Was He not "all wise, all holy, and all powerful," even while His people were oppressed? Did He become "more holy and wise and powerful" by their deliverance? If such reasoning as this is good, why should we look either for a day of judgment or the promised times of restitution? Why, but because, mysterious as the fact is, there has been a fall. All things do not continue as they were from the beginning. And therefore the Father "worketh hitherto" (John 5:17), nor rests till "all things are made new" (2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:5), and "everything is very good." And as to evil, granting that its existence is a difficulty, is it one which is so utterly incomprehensible? Is it not plain that the knowledge of evil is essential to the knowledge and experience of some of the highest forms of good; and cannot even man's reason see that sin may be a means of bringing even into heaven a meekness and self-distrust and knowledge of God, which could be gained in no other way? Does not all nature shew that while the origin of evil is unspeakable, death and corruption may both be means to bring in better things? The seed falls into the ground, and dies, and becomes rotten; but the result is a resurrection with large increase. So the juice of grapes or corn is put into the still, and thence by decomposition and fermentation, both forms of corruption, is

evolved a higher and more enduring purity and spirituality. The existence of evil therefore is not so much the difficulty, as the question, whether, if evil be essential now, it may not be always needful for the same end. And to this question our reason as yet can give no answer. Scripture however has an answer, that, though a fall has been permitted, evil shall have an end, and the creature through God's wondrous wisdom even by its fall be raised to higher glory. Scripture distinctly teaches that "the creature was made subject to vanity, not by its own will, but through Him who subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:20-21). What St. Paul says too of an election of grace before the foundation of the world, according to a predetermined purpose of redemption through Christ's precious blood (Ephesians 1:4-12), proves that God's purpose involved and could only be wrought out through a fall, for without a fall there can be no redemption. And the fact that God, with the full foreknowledge of man's sin, chose yet to encounter all this sin, with its attendant misery, out of it to bring forth and give to man His own righteousness, shews that in His judgment it was worth while to suffer the evil in order to arrive at the appointed end. Evil therefore must subserve some good purpose -- otherwise God could never permit it, or say, "I form peace, and I create evil" (Isaiah 45:7). And though as yet we cannot fully see why evil is allowed, what we know of God and of His ways, that there is perfect wisdom and economy in every part of them, assures us that there can be no error or mistake, even in that which seems to cause the ruin of the creature. Meanwhile those who believe that some now bound by death by it are being brought into more perfect and secure blessedness, by such a creed practically assert that present evil need not be eternal, since in some at least it shall be done away. If in some, why not in all? Besides, even supposing we could not tell whether evil might or might not be done away, -- supposing it were proved that it would exist for ever, as essential to the training of certain creatures, -- this existence of evil for ever would be a very different thing from the idea of the infinite or never-ending punishment of a finite being. But, thank God, we are not left to guesses. Prophecy announces a day when there shall be no more curse or death, but all things made new. In this witness we may rest, spite of the fact and mystery of present evil.

(vi) I have thus noticed what Reason is supposed to say against the doctrine of final restitution. But to me this is a question only to be settled by the Word of God; for with our knowledge or lack of knowledge of all the mystery of our being, we are not in a position to argue this point, or to say exactly what is, or what is not, reasonable. What saith the Scripture? This is the question, and the only question I care to ask here on this subject. At the same time I confess that the restitution of all things, so far from appearing to me unlikely or unreasonable, seems, spite of the mystery of the origin and existence of evil, more consistent with what we know of God than the doctrine of never-ending punishment. To say that sin, assuming it to be opposed to God, has the power of creating a world antagonistic to God as everlasting as He is, attributes to it a power equal at least to His; since, according to this view, souls whom God willed to be saved, and for whom Christ died, are held in bondage under the power of sin for ever; and all this in opposition to the Word of God, which says that God's Son "was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8), who, if the so called orthodox view be right, will succeed in destroying some of the works of the Son of God for ever. When I think too of God's justice, which it is said inflicts, not only millions of years of pain for each thought or word or act of sin during this short life of seventy years, -- not even millions of ages only for every such act, but a punishment which when millions of ages of judgment have been inflicted for every moment man has lived on earth is no nearer its

end than when it first commenced; and all this for twenty, forty, or seventy years of sin in a world which is itself a vale of sorrow; -- when I think of this, and then of man, his nature, his weakness, all the circumstances of his brief sojourn and trial in this world; with temptations without, and a foolish heart within; with his judgment weak, his passions strong, his conscience judging, not helping him; with a tempter always near, with this world to hide a better; -- when I remember that this creature, though fallen, was once God's child, and that God is not just only, but loving and long-suffering; -- I cannot say my reason would conclude, that this creature, failing to avail itself of the mercy here offered by a Saviour, shall therefore find no mercy any more, but be for ever punished with never-ending torments.

Natural conscience, which with all its failings is a witness for God, protests against any such awful misrepresentation of Him. For even nature teaches that all increase of power lays its possessor under an obligation to act more generously. Shall not then the Judge of all the earth do right (Genesis 18:25)? Shall we say that sinful men are selfish and guilty, if with wealth and power they neglect the poor and miserable; and yet that God, who is eternal love, shall do what even sinful men abhor and reprobate? For shall we, if one of our children fall and hurt itself, or be lost to us for years, bitterly reproach ourselves for want of care, and be tormented with the thought that with greater watchfulness we might have saved the child, -- shall we if at last he is found, even among thieves, a sharer of their crimes, still love him as our own child, make every possible excuse for him, and do all we can to save him, -- shall we, though he be condemned, plead for him to the end, urging the strength of those temptations with which he has been so long surrounded, -- and shall not God have at least the like pity for His lost ones? Has He left any of His children in peril of being for ever stolen from Him? Can He, if through the seduction of a crafty tempter some wander for awhile, be content that they should remain miserable slaves for ever lost to Him? He would not be a wise man who risked even an estate, nor a good man who obliged any one else to do so. Can God then ever have exposed His children to the risk of endless separation from Him? All the reason God has given me says, God could not act thus; and that if His children are for ever lost, He even more than they must be miserable. But, as I have said, we have, thank God, a better guide than our reason, even God's blessed Word, with its "more sure" promise; and because that Word declares man's final restitution, and that God will seek His lost ones "till He find them" (Luke 15:4; Luke 15:8), and that therefore a day shall come when "there shall be no more curse or death," I gladly accept God's testimony, and look for life and rest, spite of present death and judgment and destruction.

05.3.3. Opposed to Scripture

Opposed to Scripture

(3) But it is said, certain texts of Holy Scripture are directly opposed to the doctrine of universal restitution. That they seem opposed is granted. We have already seen that, taken in the letter, text clashes with text on this subject. All those texts which speak of "destruction" and "judgment" are explained by what has been said above as to the way of our salvation, and that by death alone God destroys him that has the power of death. Those passages also which speak of the "lost," as for example St. Paul's words at the commencement of his epistle to the Romans, that "as many as have sinned without the law shall perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law" (Romans 2:12), are not the declaration of the final lot of any, but of the state of all by nature, till through union with Christ they are made partakers of His redemption. In this lost state some are held far longer than others, and therefore are in a special sense "the lost" (2 Corinthians 4:3; τους απολλυμενους, sometimes translated "them that perish," as in 1 Corinthians 1:18, and 2 Corinthians 2:15), as compared with the firstborn, who are made partakers of the first resurrection. But all the saved have once been lost (Luke 15:24; Luke 15:32); for the Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). The fact therefore that of these lost, some are lost for a longer or shorter period, proves nothing against their final restoration; for the Good Shepherd must "go after that which is lost, until He find it."

There are however other passages which are relied on as unquestionably affirming never-ending punishment. That they do teach us that those who here reject the gospel do by their present rejection of Christ lose a glory, which, if now lost, is lost for ever, and do further bring upon themselves a judgment of darkness and anguish unspeakable, is, I believe, the positive teaching of the New Testament. Once let us, who hear the gospel, while we are in this life sell our birthright, and then though like Esau we may cry "with a great and exceeding bitter cry," the glory of the first-born is for ever gone from us, and we shall find no place or means for reversing our choice, though when too late we seek to do so carefully with tears. Once lost, the birthright is for ever lost. But I do not on this account believe that even the Esaus have therefore no blessing; for I read, "By faith Isaac blessed both Jacob and Esau concerning things to come" (Hebrews 11:20); and so while the birthright is for ever lost, Esau yet has hope as "concerning things to come," and will one day get a blessing, though never the blessing of the despised birthright. Only if we here suffer with Christ shall we reign with Him; only if like Him we lose our life, shall we save it for the kingdom. Still these solemn texts, which speak of grievous loss, do not, I believe, countenance or teach the current doctrine of never-ending torments. I confess I cannot perfectly explain all these texts. The exact sense of some of them may yet be open to question. But all who are familiar with Biblical controversies know that this is not a difficulty which is peculiar to the question of eternal punishment, for there is scarcely a doctrine of our faith which at first sight does not seem to clash more or less with some other plain scripture; the proof of which is to be seen in the existence of those countless sects, which have divided and yet divide Christendom. And when I remember how the opening of God's method of salvation has already solved for me unnumbered difficulties, --

when I think how the further mystery of the firstborn unveils yet deeper depths of God's purpose, -- I can well believe that what yet seems contradictory will with further light be found in perfect accordance with the tenour of the gospel. And just as evil in Nature and Providence, which is inexplicable, does not shake my faith that God is love, or that Nature and Providence are the work of One Supreme Intelligence, who is overruling all apparent anomalies in accordance with an unerring scheme of perfect love and wisdom: so the yet unsolved difficulties of Scripture do not shake my faith in that purpose of God which plainly is revealed to us. One part of God's Word cannot really contradict another.

Let us then look at the texts which are chiefly relied on as teaching the doctrine of everlasting punishment. It is remarkable that they are in every case the words of our Lord Himself.

(i) There is, first, the passage respecting the sin against the Holy Ghost, which our Lord declares "shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come." (Matthew 12:32; Mark 3:29; Luke 12:10. The words in S. Mark, which our version renders, "hath never forgiveness," in the original are, ουκ εχει αφεσιν εις τον αιωνα.) From this it is concluded that the punishment for this sin must be never-ending. But does the text say so? The whole passage is as follows: -- "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit (η του πνευματος βλασφημια) shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age (αιων), nor in the coming one." These words, so far from proving the generally received doctrine, that sin not forgiven here can never be forgiven, distinctly assert, -- first, that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, -- secondly, that some sins, those, namely, against the Son of Man, can be forgiven, apparently in this age, -- and thirdly, that other sins, against the Holy Ghost cannot be forgiven either here or in the coming age; which last words surely imply that some sins not here forgiven may be forgiven in the coming age, the sin or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost not being of this number. This is what the text asserts: and it explains why God has so long withheld the general outpouring of His promised Spirit; for man cannot reject or speak against the Spirit, until the Spirit comes to act upon him. God has two ways of teaching men; first by His Word, the letter or human form of truth, that is the Son of Man, in which case a man may reject God's call without knowing that he is really doing so; the other, in and by the Spirit, which convinces the heart, which therefore cannot be opposed without leaving men consciously guilty of rejecting God. To reject this last cuts man off from the life and light of the coming world. This sin therefore is not forgiven, "neither in this age, nor in the coming one." But the text says nothing of those "ages to come" (Ephesians 2:7), elsewhere revealed to us; much less does it assert that the punishment of sin not here forgiven is never-ending. When therefore we remember how our Lord has taught us to forgive, "not until seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:22); and when we see the length and breadth of this commandment, that is bidding us forgive as God forgives, not only till seven times seven, that is the "seven times seven years," which make the Jubilee (Leviticus 25:8), but "unto seventy times seven," that is a decade of Jubilees, the mystic "seventy weeks," which "are determined to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy" (Daniel 9:24); words which surely have had an inceptive fulfillment in the first coming of our Lord, but which, like so many other prophecies of His coming and kingdom, wait until another coming and another age for a yet more glorious

accomplishment; -- when we remember that this is the forgiveness which God approves, we may be pardoned for believing that the threatening, "It shall not be forgiven, neither in this age, nor in the coming one," does not measure or exhaust the possibilities of God's forgiveness. "I believe" indeed "in the Holy Catholic Church, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting;" but I also "believe in the forgiveness of sins," even to the end, as long as God is a Saviour and there is any sin to need forgiveness.

(ii) Again we are referred to the text, "The wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36), as another proof of never-ending punishment. But the words do not prove it. The context is, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." The passage speaks of man's state by nature and grace, and of the results of being possessed by faith or unbelief. Faith receives eternal life: unbelief rejects it; and man so long as he is in unbelief cannot see life, but has God's wrath still resting on him. But an unbeliever, though, while he is such, God's wrath abides upon him, may pass by faith out of the wrath to life and blessedness. If it were not so, all would be lost; for the lie of the serpent has possessed us all, and we are all "by nature children of wrath even as others." This text therefore cannot bear the sense some put upon it. If it could, no man once an unbeliever could have any hope of life or deliverance. All gospel-preaching would be in vain, if the unbeliever could not become a believer. That this text however should be quoted on this subject is significant, and shews the measure of light which has decided this question.

(iii) Far more difficult is the very awful passage which speaks of hell, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:42-50). But both the context of the passage, and the Old Testament use of the words, convince me that the ordinary interpretation cannot be the true one. As to the context, the words which are relied on as teaching the doctrine of never-ending punishment are directly connected by the conjunction "For" with a general statement as to sacrifice. The whole passage runs thus: -- "and whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut if off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched (το πυρ το ασβεστον); where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another." Take the ordinary interpretation, and there is no connection between never-ending punishment and the law here quoted respecting salt in sacrifice. But as spoken by our Lord the fact or law respecting the Meat-offering is the reason and explanation of what is said respecting hell-fire, -- "For every one must be salted with fire, and every sacrifice must be salted with salt."

Here as elsewhere the law throws light on the gospel, nor can these words be understood until the exact nature of the offering which our Lord refers to is apprehended. Salt, in its nature sharp and biting, yet preserving from corruption, was expressly required in every Meat-offering (Leviticus

2:13); this Meat-offering itself being an adjunct to the Burnt-offering, and, like it, not a Sin-offering, but a "sweet savour," and offered for acceptance; (Note: The offerings appointed by the Lord were as I have already noticed, divided into two distinct classes, -- first, the sweet-savour offerings, which are all offered for acceptance; and secondly, those offerings which were not of a sweet savour, and which were required as an expiation for sin. The first class, comprising the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, and the Peace-offering, were offered on the brazen altar which stood in the court of the Tabernacle. The second class, the Sin and Trespass-offerings, were not consumed on the altar, but were burnt on the earth without the camp. In the first class the faithful Israelite gives a sweet offering to the Lord; in the other the offering is charged with the sin of the offerer. In the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, and the Peace-offering, the offerer came for acceptance as a worshipper. In the Sin and Trespass-offerings, he came as a sinner to pay the penalty of sin and trespass. Unless this distinction be understood, the force of our Lord's words as to the "salting with fire" will not be apprehended.) the Burnt-offering shadowing the fulfillment of man's duty toward God; the Meat-offering, his duty toward his neighbor; both of which have been fulfilled for us in Christ, and are to be fulfilled by grace in us His members, as it is written, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit" (Romans 8:4). The passage which we are considering begins with this, man's duty to his neighbour, and the peril of offending a little one. "It were better that a millstone were hanged about one's neck, and that the life which offends were even destroyed, than that we should offend or hurt one of these little ones." Then comes the exhortation to sacrifice "hand," or "foot," or "eye," lest we come into the worse judgment, which must be known by those who will not judge themselves. "For," says our Lord, thus giving the reason for self-judgment, "every man," whether he likes it or not, if he is ever to change his present form and rise to God, "must be salted with fire." This may be done as a sweet-savour to God; though even here "every sacrifice is salted with salt," -- for even in willing sacrifice and service there is something sharp and piercing as salt, namely, the correction which truth brings with it to those who will receive it. But if this be not accepted, the purgation must yet be wrought, not as a sweet-savour, but as a sin-offering, where the bodies are burnt as unclean without the camp; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" (the "worm" alluding to the consumption of those parts which were not burnt with fire;) "for" in some way "every man must be salted with fire," even if he be not a sweet-savour "sacrifice," which is "salted with salt." But all this, so far from teaching never-ending punishment only points us back to the law of sacrifice, and to the means which must be used to destroy sin in the flesh, and to make us ascend in a new and more spiritual form as offerings to Jehovah. And the Old Testament use of the words, "The fire shall not be quenched," is still more conclusive against the common interpretation. The words occur first in the law of the Burnt-offering, where we read "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar: it shall never go out;" literally, "it shall not be quenched" (Leviticus 6:13; πυρ ου σβεσθησεται); the words being exactly the same as those our Lord quotes here. Here, beyond all question, the words can have nothing to do with never-ending punishment, or indeed with wrath of any kind; for the Burnt-offering was one of the "sweet-savour" offerings: they speak only of the one means, namely, the "fire of God," by which that which was offered to and accepted by Him as "a sweet savour" could be made to ascend upon His altar, in token of its acceptance by Him. To keep this fire ever alive was one of the priests first duties, typifying the preservation of that spiritual fire which it is Christ's work as Priest to kindle and keep alive, for by it alone can we "present our bodies a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1, and compare Luke 12:49). The

other places where the words occur are the following. They are twice spoken of the overthrow of the first Jewish temple built by Solomon (2 Kings 22:17, and 2 Chronicles 34:25): then of Edom (Isaiah 34:10); then of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 7:20; Jeremiah 17:27), and of the house of the king of Judah (Jeremiah 21:12), and the forest of the south (Ezekiel 20:47); and lastly in the passage here quoted by our Lord from the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 66:24), which speaks of the punishment of the wicked at the period of the latter-day glory. In all these cases the words express such a destruction as was figured in the Sin-offerings, which were cast out and burnt without the camp as unfit for God's altar. These are the only places in the Old Testament where the words occur, and in every instance except the last they manifestly cannot, and confessedly do not, involve the idea of endless suffering. Why in this one place only is a sense to be put upon the words, which is not only untenable in every other similar passage of the Old Testament, but would make one part of Scripture contradict another.

(iv) But the passage which is perhaps most often quoted on this question is that which speaks of the life of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked alike as "everlasting": -- "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46). The word used here, and which in our Version is translated "eternal" and "everlasting," is in either case the same in the original (αιωνιος). Hence it is argued, that "whatever be the meaning of the word in the case of the lost, the same must be its meaning in the case of the saved; and our certainty of never-ending bliss for penitent believers is gone, if the word bears not the same signification in the case of the impenitent and unbelieving." (Note: Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury, dated March 14, 1864, p. 7. A similar statement is to be found in the Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop of York, p. 14.) This at first sight seems to have some weight. Yet if it can be shewn, (as we have shewn,) that the word here used is in other Scriptures applied to what is not eternal, we may be pardoned for thinking it cannot mean eternal here; the rather as, if it did, this text would contradict other plain statements of the same Scripture. Nor, as I have said, does this affect the true eternity of bliss of the redeemed, which is based on participation with Christ in His risen life, and is distinctly affirmed in other plain Scriptures, such as, "Neither can they die any more, but are children of God, being children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36). The truth is that this word describes not the quantity or duration, but the quality, of that of which it is predicated. I need not here repeat the proofs of this. But I may add that the word which in this passage we translate "punishment" (κολασις), and which in its primary sense means simply "pruning," is that always used for a corrective discipline, which is for the improvement of him who suffers it. Those who hold the common view of the endlessness of punishment are obliged to confess this; (Note: "Of the two words, τιμωρια and κολασις," says the present Archbishop of Dublin, in his Synonyms of the New Testament, p. 30, "in τιμωρια, according to its classical use, the vindictive character of the punishment is the predominant thought; it is the Latin 'ultio'; punishment as satisfying the inflicter's sense of outraged justice, as defending his own honour, and that of the violated law; herein its meaning agrees with its etymology, being from τιμη, and ουρος, δραω, the guardianship or protectorate of honour. In κολασις, on the other hand, is more the notion of punishment as it has reference to the correction and bettering of him that endures it; see Philo, Leg. ad. Cai. par. 1; it is 'castigatio', and has naturally for the most part a milder use than τιμωρια. Thus we find Plato, Protag. 323 E, joining κολασεις and νουθετησεις: and the whole passage to the end of the chapter is eminently instructive as to the distinction between the words; .... with all which may be compared an instructive chapter in Clement of Alexandria, Strom. iv. 24; and again vii. 16, where

he defines κολασεις as μερικαι παιδειαι and τιμωρια as κακου ανταποδοσις. And this is Aristotle's distinction. Rhet. i. 10. ... It is to these and similar definitions that Aulus Gellius refers, &c. Noct. Att. vi. 14." Having thus clearly stated and proved what the exact meaning of κολασις is, the Archbishop proceeds as follows: -- "It would be a very serious error however to attempt to transfer this distinction in its entireness to the words as employed in the New Testament;" that is, it would be a serious error to give the word its proper sense. To such shifts are even learned and good men driven by their traditional views respecting endless punishment.) and this of itself proves that their doctrine is untenable; for any punishment, be it for a longer or shorter time, would not be corrective discipline, but quite another thing, if it left those who were so corrected unimproved and lost for ever. May we not then from this very passage prove, that, while they are doubly blessed who go away at the first resurrection into eternal life, they are not wholly unblessed whom the Lord yet cares to punish (Hebrews 12:6-7); the rather as He has shewn us, from the first fall till now, that His changeless way is to make even the curse a blessing.

(v) Another text often quoted on this question is, -- "Good were it for that man, if he had not been born" (Matthew 26:24). This it is said is a proof of never-ending punishment, since it would be good to be born, if, even after ages of suffering, men could at last be restored to see God. Surely the words declare an awful doom: an awful warning too they are to those now near Christ. And yet as in the doom pronounced upon our first parents, which as far as it was addressed to them had not one ray of light or word of promise in it, -- for all that God said to the woman was sorrow, pain, humiliation; all that He said to the man was curse, death, ruin, desolation; and only in His curse upon the serpent was any promise of the woman's seed given (Genesis 3:14-19), -- this woe upon Judas, which seems as dark as night, may yet consist with purposes of mercy, of which in these words we find no intimation. The fall of Judas, even as that of our first parents, which in God's wisdom opened a way for the fulfillment of that "purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Timothy 1:9), spite of its attendant judgment may not only bring in higher good, but like Israel's fall, which has been "the riches of the world" (Romans 11:12), may even end in the restoration of the fallen one to more secure blessedness. It is surely significant that one and the same awful prophecy is by the inspired writers of the New Testament applied to Judas and Israel. (Compare Psalms 69:23-25 with Romans 11:10 and Acts 1:19-20. The same passage is applied by S. Paul to Israel, and by S. Peter to Judas.) If therefore the one is not a type or figure of the other, the two are in some way connected most intimately. And yet Israel, of whom it is said, "Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway," (words which in the Psalm immediately precede the passage which is quoted by St. Peter in reference to the traitor Judas,) though hated for awhile, and "as concerning the gospel enemies for our sakes, are yet beloved for the fathers' sakes" (Romans 11:28), and shall be restored one day, and "brought up out of their graves" (Ezekiel 37:12), "for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29). And so the betrayer here, of whose "fall," like Israel's, has been the "riches of the world," may yet more shew the Lord's riches. It is no unreasonable inference, that, as the same prophecy applies to both, their ends shall not be wholly dissimilar. Certainly some of the threatenings upon Israel, -- such as, "I will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you" (Jeremiah 23:39. See the yet stronger language in Deuteronomy 30:18); nay even such words as those of our Lord Himself, "If thou hadst known in this thy day the things which belong to thy peace; but now are they hid from thine eyes" (Luke 19:42), if less awful than the woe pronounced on Judas, are dark enough, had no other light been poured on them. And so these words to Judas might

forbid all hope, were there no other words of the same Lord to make us hope for all men. It is because there are such words, that I hesitate to put a sense upon this woe on Judas, which shall make it contradict other no less true and weighty words of the same Saviour.

Let us then look again more closely at these words. While surely applying first to Judas, like all Christ's words they have a wider meaning. In the passage referred to, -- "The Son of Man goeth, as it is written of Him; but woe to that man, by whom the Son of Man is betrayed: it had been good for that man if he had not been born," -- two men, and only two, are spoken of; the "Son of Man," and "that man" by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. Are not these in substance "the old man" and "the new," "man" and "the Son of Man," of whom the one is always the betrayer of the other. Of these the one is the man of sin, the son of perdition, who cannot be saved, but must die and go to his own place; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Good had it been for this man, if he had not been born; but better is it that he has been born, that God might bring in better things. (Note: It ought not to be overlooked, too, that in the passage under consideration, "Good were it for that man if he had not been born," the word we translate "good" is καλον, not αγαθον. This surely is not by chance. And I think I see an obvious reason for the choice of the word καλον here rather than αγαθον. The καλον may be missed, while the αγαθον may by Almighty grace be yet obtainable.) Good had it been, if there had been no sin and fall, but better is it that there has been a fall, "for where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). The evil shall work for good, and pass away; while the results shall be for ever glorious. For all that rose in Adam falls in Christ, even as all that fell in Adam rose again in Christ. The evil is only for awhile. "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself abroad like a green bay-tree; yet he passed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found" (Psalms 37:35-36).

(vi) There is yet another text sometimes quoted on this subject. The words to the Rich Man in hell that "there is a great gulf fixed, so that they cannot pass who would come from thence" (Luke 16:26), are said to shut out all hope for a lost soul, when it has once entered into the place of torment. But is it so? Disciples have before now misunderstood the Lord. The question is, Are those, who thus interpret these words, understanding or only misunderstanding this most solemn parable? What is its aim? It is a similitude of something; for all the parables are similitudes, even though, like the parables of the Prodigal Son, and the Unjust Steward, both of which are in direct connection with this one, they are uttered, as is usual with St. Luke, like simple narratives, always beginning with, "A certain man," or "There was a certain man." Of what, then, is this parable of the Rich Man a similitude? Whom does the Rich Man represent? Who is the poor neglected beggar full of sores, to whom the very dogs without shew more pity and kindness than the Rich Man? Both the connection of the parable, and its particulars throughout, shew that its awful warning is addressed, not so much to the godless world, as to those who here enjoy the greatest of privileges. Observe the particulars stated respecting the Rich Man. He was one of Abraham's seed, one who even in hell could not forget his election, but still cried, "Father Abraham." He was "clothed in purple and fine linen," the raiment of the kingdom, and, as a child of the kingdom, he "fared sumptuously every day," while Lazarus, whose name means simply "needing help," was lying at his door a mass of sores, loathsome, and in want, and yet uncared for and unpitied by him who enjoyed many blessings. Who are these two men? If, with Augustine and other great leaders of the early Church, we take the dispensational view, the Rich Man is the Jew; the poor beggar at

his gate is the lost Gentile. (Note: Augustin. Quest. Evang. ii. 38, 39; Greg. M. Hom. 40, in Evang.) In the one we see the children of the kingdom, who as such were clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, and yet cared nothing for the Gentile world, lost, full of sores, and lacking everything. The one, even in hell, yet claiming to be Abraham's seed, and of whose brethren Abraham says himself, "They have Moses and the prophets," and "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead;" the other, brought through death, as dead sinners, into God's rest into those very privileges of which the good fare and fine raiment of the Rich Man were but the type and figure. Such substantially is surely the lesson of this parable, though I could never confine it, or any other parable of our Lord's to the old Jew and Gentile only, first, because "no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation," and also because the Jew, as Abraham's son, is himself the type of those who by grace have now been brought into the place of children of the kingdom, while the poor Gentile beggar is yet the pattern of those, who, though full of sores, are yet the "poor" and the "mourners," whom Christ calls "blessed," and who "shall be comforted." What the parable teaches therefore is just that truth, which the elect are so slow to believe, that the children of the kingdom, if unloving, shall spite of all present privileges be cast into outer darkness, while lost ones, now without, shall through death come and rest with Abraham. The Jews would not believe it in their day. How could God be faithful if they were cast out? The children of the kingdom now, those who judge their state Godwards, not by their love, that is their likeness to their Lord, but by their privileges, by the fact that God has given them such rich and precious blessings in Christ Jesus, are slow to believe, that, spite of their blessings, they may be cast out. Yet this is the solemn teaching of the parable. It is one of Abraham's seed who is in hell: one of the elect people, and not a poor outcast. And yet "the great gulf fixed," which severs those who once were nigh but are now cast out, though utterly impassable for man, is not so for "Him who hath the key of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, who hath the keys of death and hell" (Revelation 1:18; Revelation 3:7); and who, as He has Himself broken the bars of death for men, can yet "say to the prisoner, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves" (Isaiah 49:9). Who are we, to say that the gulf, impassable to man, cannot be passed by Christ, or that He cannot bring the last prisoner safely back, even out of the lowest prison? As well might we argue that because "the Ethiopian cannot change his skin, or the leopard his spots" (Jeremiah 13:23), -- because the evil man can never by his own act make himself good, -- therefore God can never change him. The firstfruits are a proof what God can do. I know what He has done for the elect, who were "by nature children of wrath, even as other men" (Ephesians 2:3); and He has said, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O hell, I will be thy destruction" (Hosea 13:14); and therefore this parable, awful as it is to me, as one who by grace am now called to eat of the fat things of God's house and wear the fine raiment, -- because it shews how all these blessings may be abused, and only aggravate my condemnation, if I am selfish and unloving, -- yet by no means prove that, awful as the judgment is, there is no hope for those who suffer it. There surely is hope for the Jews, though of them, and as a warning to them, this word was first spoken. And so surely, because God is God, there yet is hope, even for those who shall suffer the sorest judgment.

(Note: I subjoin what Stier, one of the most approved and spiritual of modern commentators, and himself and advocate of the doctrine of endless punishments, says respecting this parable. Having shewn that this hell and torment of the Rich Man cannot refer to "the place and condition of the eternally damned," as it only describes the state before the resurrection, (Words of the Lord Jesus,

vol. iv. p. 222: there is more to the same effect, p. 233,) he says of Abraham's words, "The repelling answer hints at the justice and well-adjusted design of love in the torments which for the present" (the italics are Stiers) "are rigidly fixed." (Id. ibid. p. 209.) He then sums up the general teaching of the parable as follows: -- "The enigma of the buried Rich Man, unrightly called wicked, and of Lazarus, covered with sores and with contempt, is well worth the attentive notice of all whom we too readily term worthy and estimable people. It is especially intended for them. The external riches are a figure of the internal, and the sores, by which the body is purified, signify something analogous in regard to the soul. ... Those who are warned in this parable ... are the proud sitters in our most holy Christian sanctuary. How many a Menkenian," (this would be better understood in England if he had said, "a Darbyite,") ..... "clothes himself in such priestly and royal attire, looking down upon the poor around who can go no higher than to pray for the forgiveness of sins! ... Such people have repented once, and therefore they are Abraham's children. But they have gradually come to neglect daily repentance and contrition, till the complete old man emerges out of their regenerate state once more, and now acts his pride in the garments of a Christian. .... Happy the sinner whose sins break out for his spiritual healing. Thrice happy would that proud and rich sinner be if he could become in time a poor Lazarus in God's sight, before his rich garments are torn off, and his full table disfurnished for ever. Woe to the converted sinner, if the poison still remaining should break out in the disease of spiritual pride, and he too should become a rich man." (Words of the Lord Jesus, vol. iv. p. 248.) And he adds in a note, "In the carnal-spiritual life a man lives in honour and joy, and is clothed in purple like the Rich Man. Dying to this higher life of carnality he becomes poor, hungry, full of sores and tribulations, like Lazarus." (Id. ibid. p. 249.) This witness is true. May Abraham's sons give ear to it.)

Meanwhile Abraham's words have surely a solemn lesson for those "brethren of the Rich Man who have not yet come into the place of torment." "They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them;" and "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." We can apply all this to the brethren of the Jew, who would not believe or imitate God's love to Gentile sinners, even though the Friend of sinners, whom they had condemned, rose from the dead and gathered sinners to Him. But does it not equally apply to those who at this day, though children of the kingdom, through their blind self-love are in danger of the second death, and who will not hear of any possible resurrection for any out of it? Is it not written, "They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them"? What do Moses and the prophets say of the redemption of the lost, and of those whose inheritance does not come back at the Sabbatic year of rest, but only at the Jubilee? What says the law in all its teaching as to the firstfruits, and in its appointments for cleansing and redemption to be wrought at different seasons? And what say the prophets as to the restoration of Sodom and her daughters, and other lost ones, who when they wrote were "aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, without hope, and without God," who yet in due time should be visited? What is the answer when Moses now is quoted on this point, or when some promise from the prophets are so obscure that we can base no certain doctrine on them." So the brethren of the Rich Man will not hear. But if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one came to them even from the second death.

(vii) But all this, it is said, is opposed to the obvious sense of Scripture; and Scripture having been given for simple and unlettered men, the simplest sense must be the true one: at all events any

sense which is not obvious cannot be relied on. This objection is urged by some as though it were unanswerable. But is the so-called obvious sense of our Lord's words always the right one? Let any one consider the New Testament quotations from the Old, and say whether the passages so quoted are applied or interpreted in their obvious sense. Have we not seen also that again and again, as in our Lord's words respecting leaven, and eating His flesh, and buying a sword, and the sleep of Lazarus, and the destroying and rebuilding of the temple, -- not to speak of His usual parabolic style, which was expressly used to hide even while it revealed heavenly mysteries (Matthew 13:10-14), the so-called obvious or literal sense is beyond all question not the true one. Besides the difficulty on this point, as we have seen, is that Scripture seems to bear two different testimonies, here saying that the wicked shall be condemned and perish; there declaring that all death shall be done away. God's two ministrations of law and gospel, and the reason for each, if we understand His purpose in them, explain the difficulty. But understood or not, the fact remains, that Scripture on this point contains apparent contradiction. Those therefore who speak so glibly of "the obvious sense of Scripture" forget how many texts must be ignored, before the doctrine of never-ending punishment can be shewn to be the mind of God. What, to take one instance, is the "obvious meaning" of such words as these: -- "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of Him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free-gift. For if through the offence of one the many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto the many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences to justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience the many were made to be sinners, so by the obedience of one shall the many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound: but 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" (Romans 5:14-21). What, I ask, is the "obvious meaning" of these words? Can a partial salvation exhaust the fullness of the blessing which St. Paul declares so unequivocally? Must we not distort his teaching if we try to make it say that the redemption in Christ is less wide in its results than the fall of Adam? Is not the argument of the passage just the reverse? Does not the Apostle, by his repeated "much more" (Romans 5:15, Romans 5:17, Romans 5:20), shew again and again that the redemption and salvation is far greater than the ruin? The language seems chosen to obviate the possibility of misapprehension. Why then not receive the teaching in its plain and obvious sense? Because other words of Holy Scripture speak just as plainly of a "wrath to come" and a "lake of fire" for "ages and ages." And the Church's children, since her fall, having like Israel of old despised prophesyings, and lacking therefore the necessary light, which this "key of knowledge" (Luke 11:52) would have given them, have cut the knot they could not untie, by denying one half of Scripture to uphold the other half; choosing, as was natural, (for men under law can only know God as inflicting its penalty,) that half which spoke of condemnation. For indeed the Word alone will never open out God's mind. We may even be hardened by the letter in some wretched misapprehension. Only by His Spirit can we really understand God's thoughts. Thus, and thus only, can we be "made able ministers of the

New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit;" able to shew how while "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life" (2 Corinthians 3:6). For it is in Scripture as in the books of Nature and Providence. Sense-readings will never solve the difficulty. Who, as he looks for the first time at death, would believe, that this and this only is the way to fuller, better, life? The fact is, it is not enough to have a revelation. We need eyes also and hearts to read that revelation. And those, who have most studied any of the books which God has given us, know that so far from the obvious sense being in every case the true one, all our sense-readings are more or less fallacious and untrustworthy, and must be corrected again and again, if we would possess the real truth. Some have proved this in one field, some in another. All must prove it if they will go onward to perfection.

(viii) There is yet one other objection. It may be said, -- If you go so far as to hope for the final salvation of men, irrespective of what they have done or have been here, why not go further, and say that devils may be saved, for if Old Adam can be redeemed, why not lost spirits also? Have not bad men the devil's nature in them? Are they not called "the children of the wicked one" (Matthew 13:38)? Is not the same evil nature in all God's children, till it is slain (Ephesians 2:3)? Yet has not the Lord died for all, that by His death He might destroy that evil nature and deliver them? And if this nature can be slain and changed (Note: Notice the language, "perish AND be changed," used in reference to present nature, in Hebrews 1:11-12.) in us, why not in Satan and the fallen angels? Shall the Jews be saved, whom our Lord calls "serpents" and "vipers" (Matthew 23:33) and of whom he says, "Ye are of your father the devil" (John 8:44), "How can ye escape the damnation of hell;" and shall God have no salvation for those, who, though now lost, have once been "perfect in beauty, full of wisdom" (Ezekiel 28:12)? Was not Satan "the anointed cherub, which covereth, with every precious stone upon him;" and is he not, though "his heart was lifted up because of his beauty, and he has corrupted himself by reason of his brightness" (Ezekiel 28:14-17), yet a fallen son, against whom "even Michael, the archangel, durst not bring a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 1:9). Where do we read that there can be no hope for such? Is it not rather distinctly written, that though "the Lord punish the host of the high ones which are on high, and they shall be gathered in a pit and shut up in prison, yet after many days they shall be visited" (Isaiah 24:21-22)? Are not therefore "the dragons and the deeps" called to "praise the Lord" (Psalms 148:7); yea, are not "the depths laid up in storehouses" (Psalms 33:7)? And who is that king who builds the city of confusion, who has God's prophet for his servant and his teacher, who for his pride is as a beast till seven times pass over him, who yet at last regains his reason and his kingdom (Daniel 4:34-37); that king of whom the Lord says, "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me like an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out" (Jeremiah 51:34)? The "Lord shall indeed slay the dragon that is in the sea" (Isaiah 27:1), and "by death destroy him that has the power of death, that is the devil" (Hebrews 2:14); but who can tell but that as death is the way of life for us, so also it may be with that first great offender, who "robbed his father, and said, It is no transgression" (Proverbs 28:24). Who but Adam and Lucifer are the two thieves crucified with Christ? And though to one only was it said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43), what proof have we that the other shall never find mercy? Was not the blood of the Lamb of God shed on the cross to "take away the sin of the world" (John 1:29)? If so, what is the sin of the world? When did it commence? And why is not the sin of "the prince of this world" (John 14:30) to be included in "the sin of the world"? Is not Christ "the Head of all principality and power" (Colossians 2:10), as well as "Lord both of the dead

and living" (Romans 14:9). Nay more, is not even the Church called with her Head to "judge angels" (1 Corinthians 6:3)? And if the judgment of the earth shall be its restoration (Psalms 96:10-13; Psalms 98:3-9), why should not the judgment of angels in like manner be their restoration, according to the promise, "By Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, whether they be things on earth or things in heaven" (Colossians 1:20)? To all this, I have nothing to say in reply; nay more, I confess I cannot see that God would be dishonoured by such a conclusion of the great mystery. "For if," as Paul says, "the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more shall the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory" (2 Corinthians 3:9). And when I think of the change which can be wrought in us, -- when I see that man contains all worlds, and is indeed the hieroglyphic of the universe, -- that not only the seen and unseen, matter and spirit, time and eternity, but hell and heaven, and the life of each, as well as the life of earth, all are in him; when I see that Lucifer and Adam, the two first great offenders, the one in his male, the other in his female, property, are but the prototypes of the two roots of evil in us, the one of our fallen spirit, the other of our fallen soul and body, and that in the elect, who are first-fruits, this hellish life can be transformed, that the selfish, envious, proud, and wrathful spirit, which hated God, can by a death to sin be brought back to God’s image, and that this vile body, after all its abominations and uncleannesses, can be changed like to Christ’s glorious body, according to the power whereby He is able to subdue even all things unto Himself; when I know that He who has this power is Love, I for one cannot limit what God shall do in grace, or say that this or that lost one shall for ever be cut off from His mercy. This at least is certain, that the seven nations of Canaan, whom Israel was called to judge, that they might possess the land beyond the Jordan, are the appointed figure in Scripture of those "wicked spirits in heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12), with whom the Church’s conflict is throughout this present age. Yet in a later age they shared a common mercy, and one at least of this cursed race displayed a faith not to be found in Israel (Matthew 15:22-28). If they, so cursed, and to be judged without pity, could yet find mercy in a later age, shall not our enemies also, with whom we fight with the sword of the Spirit, in due time through judgment find mercy? (See Appendix, Note C.) And though the Church of this age, which, brought up like Jonah out of the belly of hell, may like Jonah be angry, because the judgment threatened has not fallen as expected, God will justify His mercy to that vast assembly, where there are, as He says, so many who cannot discern between their right hand and their left, not to speak of those who are as beasts before Him (Jonah 4:11).

05.4.0. Concluding Remarks

IV. Concluding Remarks

Such then I believe is the testimony of Scripture as to the purpose and way of God our Saviour. That it will be judged as false doctrine by those, who, like Israel of old, can see no purpose of God beyond their own dispensation, is as certain as that Israel slew the prophets, and rejected the counsel of God toward sinners of the Gentiles; that it will be hateful also to fallen spirits may be seen from the way in which proud souls in every age rebel against the gospel. Their thought is that they shall continue for ever. Very humbling is it to think that all their pride and rebellion must be overthrown. Even with true souls, who have been teaching another doctrine, there must be special difficulties in receiving a truth which proves them to have been in error. Now therefore, as of old, Samaritans know Christ as "Saviour of the world" (John 4:42), while masters of Israel reject Him in this character. For teachers to learn is to unlearn; and this is not easy. Nor can we expect that those, who occupy the chief seats in the synagogue, will readily descend from them and humble themselves, not only to take the place of learners, but to be reproached for doing so. How can masters of Israel eat their own words? Even those who are willing to be taught are fearful. The consciousness that they are liable to err, and may be deceived, makes them cling to that which they are accustomed to. All these things, and still more our natural hard thoughts of God, are against the spread of the doctrine set forth in these pages. But if it be God’s purpose, it shall stand, and each succeeding age shall make it more manifest. God will at last surely cure all men of their mistrust in Him.

Meanwhile He says, "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 23:28). I do not fear therefore that the declaration of God’s righteousness and love will lead men, as some suppose, to think less of Him. "We are saved by hope" (Romans 8:24); not by fear. It is the lie, that He is a destroyer and does not love us, which has kept and yet keeps souls from Him. And though some argue that the doctrine of final restitution, even supposing it to be true, ought not to be whispered, except with great reserve, because men will abuse it, I cannot but think their prudence unwise, and that the truth, when God has revealed it, may be trusted to do its own work. Of course this truth, like every other, may be abused. What good thing is there which may not be perverted? The Bible and the gospel itself may be wrested to men’s destruction, and Christ Himself be made a savour of death to those He died for. But surely this is no reason for locking up the Bible or the gospel, or for keeping back or denying any truth which God has graciously revealed to us. And when I think of past objections to the gospel, that if grace is preached, men will abuse it and sin that grace may abound, -- when I remember how the doctrine of justification by faith has been opposed, on the ground that it must undermine all practical godliness, -- when I see how God’s election, clearly as it is revealed in Holy Scripture, is denied by some, who, wiser than God, think that such a doctrine must be perilous to man and opposed to God’s love and truth, -- I have less faith in the supposed consequences of any doctrine, assured, that, if only it be true, its truth must in the end justify it. I rather believe that if the exactness of final retribution were understood, if men saw that so long as they continue in sin

they must be under judgment, and that only by death to sin are they delivered, they could not pervert the gospel as they now do, nor abuse that preaching of the Cross which is indeed salvation.

I cannot but think too that this doctrine of final restitution would meet much of the hopeless skepticism which is abroad, and which is certainly increased by this dogma of never-ending punishment. Men turn from the gospel and from the Scriptures, not knowing what they contain, offended at the announcement, which shocks them, that God who is love consigns all but a "little flock," the "few who find the narrow way," to endless misery. Even true believers groan under the burden which this doctrine, as it is commonly received, must lay on all thoughtful and unselfish minds. "For my part," says Henry Rogers, "I fancy I should not grieve, if the whole race of mankind died in its fourth year. As far as we can see, I do not know that it would be a thing much to be lamented." (Professor Henry Rogers, in Greyson's Letters. Letter vii. To C. Mason, Esq., vol. i. p. 34.) "The same gospel," says Isaac Taylor, "which penetrates our souls with warm emotions, dispersive of selfishness, brings in upon the heart a sympathy that tempts us often to wish that itself were not true, or that it had not taught us so to feel." (Isaac Taylor's Restoration of Belief, p. 367.) Even more affecting are the words of Albert Barnes, as a witness to the darkness of the ordinary orthodox theology: -- "These and a hundred difficulties meet the mind, when we think on this great subject; and they meet us when we endeavour to urge our fellow sinners to be reconciled to God, and to put confidence in Him. I confess for one that I feel these, and feel them more sensibly and powerfully the more I look at them, and the longer I live. I do not know that I have a ray of light on this subject, which I had not when the subject first flashed across my soul. I have read to some extent what wise and good men have written. I have looked at their theories and explanations. I have endeavoured to weigh their arguments, for my whole soul pants for light and relief on these questions. But I get neither; and in the distress and anguish of my own spirit, I confess that I see no light whatever. I see not one ray to disclose to me the reason why sin came into the world, why the earth is strewed with the dying and the dead, and why man must suffer to all eternity." (Albert Barnes Practical Sermons, p. 123.)

Such confessions are surely sad enough; but they do not and cannot express one thousandth part of the horror which the idea of never-ending misery should produce in every loving heart. As Archer Butler says, "Were it possible for man's imagination to conceive the horrors of such a doom as this, all reasoning about it would be at an end; it would scorch and wither all powers of human thought." (Sermons, Second Series, p. 383.) Indeed human life would be at a stand, could this doctrine of endless torments be realized. Can such doctrine then be true? If it be, let men declare it always and in every place. But if it be simply the result of a misconception of God's Word, it is high time that the Church awake to truer readings of it.

It is not for me to judge God's saints who have gone before. Their judgment is with the Lord, and their work with their God. But when I think of the words, not of the carnal and profane, but even of some of God's dear children in that long night, when "the beast" which looked "like a lamb, but spake as a dragon," had dominion (Revelation 13:11), when I find Augustine saying, that "though infants departing from the body without baptism will be in the mildest damnation of all, yet he greatly deceives and is deceived who preaches that they will not be in damnation," meaning thereby unending punishment; (Note: "Potest proinde recte dici, parvulos sine baptismo de corpore eruentes in damnatione omnium mitissima futuros. Multum autem fallit et fallitur, qui eos in

damnatione praedicat non futuros," &c. -- De peccatorum meritis, lib. i. cap. 16, 21. Augustine constantly repeats this doctrine.) or Thomas Aquinas, that "the bliss of the saved may please them more, and they may render more abundant thanks to God for it, that they are permitted to gaze on the punishment of the wicked; (Note: "Unumquodque ex comparatione contrarii magis cognoscitur, quia contraria juxta se posita magis elucescent; et ideo ut beatitudo sanctorum eis magis complaceat, et de ea uberiores gratias Deo agant, datur eis ut poenam impiorum perfecte videant." -- Summa, Part iii. Suppl. Quaest. 94, Art. i.) or Peter Lombard, that "the elect, while they see the unspeakable sufferings of the ungodly, shall not be affected with grief, but rather satiated with joy at the sight, and give thanks to God for their own salvation; (Note: Egredientur ergo electi ad videndum impiorum cruciatus, quos videntes non dolore afficientur, sed laetitia satiabuntur, agents gratias de sua libertione, visa impiorum ineffabili calamitate," -- Sentent, lib. iv. distinct. 5, G.) or Luther, that "it is the highest degree of faith to believe that God is merciful, who saves so few and damns so many; to believe Him just, who of His own will makes us necessarily damnable;" (Note: Hic est fidei summus gradus, credere illum clementem, qui tam paucos salvat, tam multos damnat, credere justum, qui sua voluntate nos necessario damnabiles facit," &c. -- De servo arbitrio, 23, Opp. tom. iii. fol. 176. Jhanae, 1557.) -- when I remember that such men have said such things, and that words like these have been approved by Christians, I can only fall down and pray that such a night may not return, and that where it yet weighs on men’s hearts the Lord may scatter it. For it is not unbelievers only that are hurt by such teaching. Those who believe it are even more injured. For our views of God re-act upon ourselves. By an eternal law, we must more or less be changed into the likeness of the God we worship. If we think Him hard, we become hard. If we think Him careless of men’s bodies and souls, we shall be careless also. If we think Him love, we shall reflect something of His loving-kindness. God therefore gave us His image in His Only-Begotten Son, that "we with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, might be changed into the same image" (2 Corinthians 3:18). What that image was the Gospels tell. In word and deed they shew that "God is love;" "bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things; never failing" (1 John 4:8; 1 John 4:16; 1 Corinthians 13:7), when all around Him failed; to the end, as at the beginning, the life and hope of lost sinners. Oh blessed gospel -- "He who was rich yet became poor, that we by His poverty might be rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). He "who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet made Himself of no reputation, and took on Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Php 2:6-7). He came from life to death, from heaven to earth; "because we were in the flesh, He came in the flesh" (Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 4:3), to bear our burden for us; to take our shame and curse and death, that He might break our bonds, and bring us back, in, and with, and for, Himself, to God’s right hand for ever. How He did it, with what pity, truth, patience, tenderness, and love, no eye by God’s yet sees fully. Our unlikeness to Him proves how little we have seen Him; for "we shall be like Him when we see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). Yet what some have seen has made them new creatures. Men who lived for self have "laid down their lives" (1 John 3:16), yea have "wished themselves accursed for their brethren" (Romans 9:3), because His spirit possessed them, and therefore they could not but spend and be spent, like Him they loved, to save lost ones. Will the coming glory change all this? Will Christ there be another Christ from what He was here? Can He there look on ruined souls without the will to save; or is it that in glory, though the will is there, the power to save is taken from Him? And will the glory change His members too, -- change them back to love their neighbour as themselves no longer? Shall a

glimpse of Christ now make us long to live and die for others; and when, by seeing Him as He is, we are made like Him, shall our willingness to die and suffer for the lost, be taken from us? Will this be being made like Him? If what is so generally taught is the truth, -- and I can scarcely write it, -- Christ there will be unlike Christ here: He will, if not unwilling, be yet unable, to save to the uttermost. Nay more, -- so we are taught, -- instead of weeping over the lost, as He wept here, He will feel no pang, while myriads of His creatures, if not His children, are in endless torment. Then at least He will not be "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). Is this blasphemy? Then who teaches it? Surely men cannot know what they are doing when they teach such doctrine. Do they not see how, because it is a lie, it hardens, and must harden, even converted souls who really believe it? For if with Christ in heaven it will be right to look on the torments of the lost unmoved, and to rest in our own joy, and thank God that we are not as other men, the same conduct and spirit cannot be evil now. Many shew they think so. The world is lost, and they are saved; but they can live now, as they hope one day to live with Christ, so rejoicing in their own salvation, that they have no pity for the crowds, who, if not yet in hell, are going thither all around them. Even true believers are injured more than they are aware, just in proportion as they really believe in never-ending torments. If not almost hopeless about the removal of any very subtle or persistent form of error, they shew that they have little faith in the power of unwearying love to overcome it. Why should they not allow some evil to remain if the Lord of all permits it for ever in His universe; or how should they expect to overcome evil with good, when, according to their creed, God Himself either cannot or will not do so through ages of ages? Why should they not therefore after a few brief efforts leave the willful and erring to their fate, since the God of patience Himself, according to their gospel, will leave souls unchanged, unsaved, and unforgiven for ever? With their views they can only judge the evil: they do not believe that it can be overcome by good, or that those now captive to it can and must be delivered by unfailing love and truth and patience. Even the very preaching of the gospel is affected by this view; for men are hurried by it into crude and hasty work with souls, -- unlike Him who "stands at the door and knocks" (Revelation 3:20), by which they often prematurely excite and thus permanently injure the proper growth of that "new man," whom they desire to bring forth. Blessed be God, His grace is over all; and He is better than His most loving children think Him; and our mistakes about Him, though they hurt His people and the world, can never change His blessed purpose. And His Word, -- and men would see this if they searched it more, -- in the "law of the first-fruits," in the "purpose of the ages," and in salvation through "the cross," that is through dissolution; above all in the face of Jesus Christ, tells out the truth which solves the great riddle, and shews why man must suffer while he is in sin, that through such suffering and death he may be brought back in Christ to God, and be re-made in His likeness.

I conclude as I began. The question is, What saith the Scripture? If these hard views of God, which so many accept, are indeed the truth, let men not only believe them, but proclaim them ceaselessly. If they are, as I believe, only misconceptions of the truth, idols of man’s mind, as false and contrary to the revelation God has made of Himself in Christ as the idols of stone and wood and gold and silver were to the law of Moses, may the Spirit of our God utterly destroy them everywhere, and change our darkness into perfect day. No question can be of greater moment, nor can any theology which blinks the question meet the cravings which are abroad, and which I cannot but believe are the work of God’s Spirit. The question is in fact, whether God, is for us or against us; and whether, being for us, He is stronger than our enemies. To this question I have

given what I believe is God’s answer. And my conviction is that the special opening of this truth, as it is now being opened by God Himself, everywhere, is an evident sign and witness of the passing away of present things, and of the very near and imminent judgment of apostate Christendom. A time of trial and conflict plainly is coming, between a godless spiritualism on the one hand, and on the other a so-called faith, which has lost all real experience of spirit-teaching and spirit-manifestations, whose professors therefore have nothing to fall back on but a letter of tradition, which, however true, will in carnal hands be a poor defence against a host of lying spirits. Alas for those who in such a trial, while calling themselves the Lord’s, know nothing of hearing His inward voice or of being taught by His Spirit. But He yet says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith." His grace, if sought, is still sufficient for us. May He more fully guide us into His own truth, and as a means open to us yet more of His Holy Scriptures, which, like the world around, contain unknown and undiscovered treasures, even the unsearchable riches of Christ, which are laid up for lost creatures.

I remain, Yours most truly,

ANDREW JUKES.

05.5.0. Postscript

POSTSCRIPT

P.S. -- I add one or two extracts from William Law, which bear more or less directly on the subject of the preceding pages. Speaking of the fall, he says, --

"I have thus shewn the glory of man's original state in Paradise, and the lamentable change that the fall has brought upon him. From a divine and heavenly creature he is so wretchedly changed as to have inwardly the nature and dark fire of the devils, and outwardly the nature of all the beasts, a slave of this outward world, living at all uncertainties amongst pains, fears, sorrows, and diseases, till his body is forced to be removed from our sight and hid in the earth. And the reason why even the most profligate persons do not fully know and perceive their souls to be in this miserable state, is because the soul, though thus fallen, was still united to the blood of a human body, and therefore the sweet and cheering light of the sun could reach the soul, and do that for it in some degree, and for some time, which it does to the darkness, sharpness, sourness, bitterness, and wrath, which is in outward nature; that is, it could enlighten, sweeten, and clear it in a certain degree. But as this is not its own life, that is, does not arise in the soul itself, but only reaches it by means of the body, so if the soul hath in this present time got no light of its own, when the death of the body breaks off its communion with the light of this world, the soul is left a mere dark, raging fire, in the state of devils. If therefore the light of this world were to be at once extinguished, all human souls that are not in some real degree of regeneration would immediately find themselves to be nothing but the rage of fire and the horror of darkness.

Now though the light and comfort of this outward world keeps even the worst of men from any constant, strong sensibility of that wrathful, fiery, dark, and self-tormenting nature, which is the very essence of every fallen, unregenerate soul, yet every man in the world has more or less frequent and strong intimations given him that so it is with him in the inmost ground of his soul. How many inventions are some people forced to have recourse to, to keep off a certain inward uneasiness which they are afraid of, and know not whence it comes. Alas, it is because there is a fallen spirit, a dark aching fire within them, which has never had its proper relief, and is trying to discover itself and calling out for help at every cessation of worldly joy.

Why are some people, when under heavy disappointments or some great worldly shame, at the very brink of distraction, unable to bear themselves, and desirous of death of any kind? It is because worldly light and comforts no longer acting sweetly upon the blood, the soul is left to its own dark, fiery, raging nature, and would destroy the body at any rate, rather than continue under such a sensibility of its own wrathful, self-tormenting fire. Who has not at one time or other felt a sourness, wrath, selfishness, envy, and pride, which he could not tell what to do with or how to bear, rising up without his consent, casting a blackness over all his thoughts, and then as suddenly going off again, either by the cheerfulness of sun and air, or some agreeable accident, and again at times as suddenly returning upon him? Sufficient indications are these to every man that there is a dark guest within him, concealed under the cover of flesh and blood, often lulled asleep by

worldly light and amusements, yet such as will in spite of everything shew itself, and which, if it have not its proper cure in this life, must be his torment in eternity. And it was because of this hidden hell within us that our blessed Lord said when on earth, and says now to every soul, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." For as the soul is become this self-tormenting fire only because the birth of the Son of God was extinguished in it by our first parents, so there is no other possible remedy for it, either in heaven or earth, but by the coming to this Son of God to be born again of Him.

Oh, poor unbelievers, that content yourselves with this foundation of hell in your nature, or either seek for no salvation, or, what is worse, turn your backs with disregard on the One Only Saviour that God Himself can help you to, think not of saving yourselves: it is no more in your power than to save the fallen spirits that are in hell. And talk not of the mercy and goodness of God. His mercy is indeed infinite, and His goodness above all conception; but then the infiniteness of it consists in this that He offered this Saviour to mankind, because in the nature of things nothing less than this Saviour could redeem them. Therefore to choose to rely upon some other goodness of God beside that which He has offered to us in Jesus Christ, is the most dreadful mistake that can befall any man, and must, if persevered in, leave him out of the possibility of any kind or degree of salvation. For as the Son of God is the brightness and glory of the Father, so no soul made in the likeness of God is capable of any degree of brightness and glory but so far as the birth of the Son of God is in it: therefore to reject this birth, to refuse this method of redemption, is to reject all the goodness that the Divine Nature itself hath for us." (Grounds of Christian Regeneration, pp. 11-15.)

"And yet the Love that brought forth the existence of all things changes not through the fall of its creatures, but is continually at work to bring back all fallen nature and creature. All that passes for a time between God and His fallen creature is but one and the same thing, working for one and the same end, and though this is called "wrath," and that called "punishment," "curse," and "death," it is all from the beginning to the end nothing but the work of the first creating Love, and means nothing else, and does nothing else, but those works of purifying fire, which must and alone can burn away all that dark evil which separates the creature from its first-created union with God. God’s providence, from the fall to the restitution of all things, is doing the same thing as when He said to the dark chaos of fallen nature, "Let there be light." He still says, and will continue saying, the same thing, till there is not evil of darkness left in nature and creature. God creating, God illuminating, God sanctifying, God threatening and punishing, God forgiving and redeeming, are all but one and the same essential, immutable, never-ceasing working of the Divine Nature. That in God, which illuminates and glorifies saints and angels in heaven, is that very same working of the Divine Nature, which wounds, pains, punishes, and purifies, sinners upon earth. And every number of destroyed sinners, whether thrown by Noah’s flood or Sodom’s brimstone into the terrible furnace of a life insensible of anything but new forms of misery until the judgment day, must through the all-working, all-redeeming love of God, which never ceases, come at last to know that they had lost and have found again such a God of love as this. And if long and long ages of fiery pain and tormenting darkness fall to the share of many or most of God’s apostate creatures, they will last no longer than till the great fire of God has melted all arrogance into humility, and all that is self has died in the bloody sweat and all-saving cross of Christ, which will never give up its redeeming power till sin and sinners have no more a name among the creatures of God. And if long ages hereafter can only do that, for a soul departing this life under a load of sins, which days

and nights might have done for a most hardened Pharaoh or a most wicked Nero whilst in the body, it is because, when flesh and blood are taken from it, the soul has only the strong apostate nature of fallen angels, which must have its place in that blackness of darkness of a fiery wrath that burns in them and in their kingdom. To prevent this and make us children of the resurrection, Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God, came into the world, and died, and rose again for us. ... Does not this speak plainly enough what it was that man lost by his fall, namely, the birth of the Son of God in his soul? And therefore it was the the Son of God alone, and He only by the cross, could be man’s Redeemer." (Address to the Clergy, pp. 171-173, slightly abridged.)

"For in very deed the new birth is a new man, whether Christ for us, or Christ in us, which is formed by the Divine Word. And this new man is "he that is born of God and cannot sin," because he has no sin in his nature. This is "he that overcometh the world," because he is of a divine nature, and is both contrary to the world, and above it. This is he who can alone "love his brother as himself," because the love of God abideth in him. The old natural man is of the world, and enlightened only with the light of this world: he is shut up in his own envy, pride, and wrath, and can only escape from these by the cross of Christ, that is by dying with Him. This is the "self" that our Saviour calls on us to deny -- this is the "self" that we are to "hate" and "lose" that the kingdom of God may come in us, that is, that God’s will may be done in us. All other sacrifices that we make, whether of worldly goods, honours, or pleasures, are but small matters compared to that death of self, spiritual as well as natural, which must be made before our regeneration hath its perfect work." (Grounds of Christian Regeneration, pp. 69 and 99.)

"Let no one therefore take offence at the opening of this mystery, as if it brought anything new into religion; for it has nothing new in it; it alters no point of gospel-doctrine, but only sets each article of the old Christian faith upon its true ground, pressing nothing more than this, namely the necessity, if we would be saved, of the opening of the life of God within us, and of a death to that life of self which keeps us far from God. Suffer me therefore once more to beseech you, as I have so often said, not to receive this mystery as a mere notion, nor, as the world has for the most part done with the Bible, to make it a matter of opinion or speculation. This and every other doctrine is useless, and worse than useless, unless it teaches that Truth can have no real entrance into you except so far as you die to self and to your earthly nature. The gospel says all this to you in the plainest words, and the mystery only shews you that the whole system of the universe says the same thing. To be a true student or disciple of the mystery is to be a disciple of Christ; for it calls you to nothing but the gospel, and wherever it enters, either into the height or depth of nature, it is only to confirm those words of Christ, "He that followeth me not, walketh in darkness," and "Unless a man deny himself, and forsake all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." This is the philosophy opened in this mystery. It is not to lead you after itself, but to compel you by every truth of nature to turn to Christ, as the one Way, the one Truth, the one Life and Salvation of the soul; not as notionally apprehended or historically known, but as experimentally found, living, speaking, and working, in your soul. Read as long or as much as you will of this mystery, it is all labour lost, if you intend anything else by it, or would be anything else from it, but a man dead to sin and to the world, that you may live unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Way to Divine Knowledge, pp. 255-258, abridged.)

05.6.1. Appendix A - "Death" and "Destruction"

APPENDIX

Note A Scripture use of the words "death" and "destruction" The opinion of the annihilation of the wicked, which has at different times been held by some, as a refuge from the doctrine of never-ending punishment, is not only opposed to the whole analogy of our regeneration, which shews how death and judgment are the only way of life and deliverance for a fallen creature, but also so directly contradicts what is said of "death" in Scripture, that it is difficult to conceive how it could ever have been accepted by believers. Even before the reason of the Cross is seen, the very letter of Scripture, one might have thought, would have kept men from concluding that the "death," "destruction," and "perishing," of the wicked means their non-existence or annihilation. For what is "death"? What is "destruction"? How are these words invariably used in Holy Scripture?

First, as to "death," are any of the varied deaths, which Scripture speaks of as incident to man, his non-existence or annihilation? Take as examples the deaths referred to by St. Paul, in the sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. We read (Romans 6:7), "He that is dead is freed from sin." Is this "death," which is freedom from sin, non-existence or annihilation? Again, where the Apostle says (Romans 7:9), "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died," -- was this "death," wrought in him by the law, annihilation? Again, where he says (Romans 8:6), "To be carnally minded is death," is this death non-existence or annihilation? And again, when he says (Romans 8:38), "Neither death nor life shall separate us," is the "death" here referred to annihilation? When Adam died on the day he sinned (Genesis 2:17), was this annihilation? When his body died, and turned to dust (Genesis 5:5), was this annihilation? Is our "death in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1-2), annihilation? Is our "death to sin" (Romans 6:11), annihilation? When the "corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies" (John 12:24), is it annihilated; or is St. Paul right in saying (1 Corinthians 15:37), "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die?" Do not these and similar uses of the word prove beyond all question, that whatever else these deaths may be, not one of them is non-existence or annihilation? On what grounds, I ask, are we to assign a sense to this particular death which confessedly the word "death" has not and cannot have elsewhere? Where is the proof that there is and can be no resurrection from the second death? The truth is, death for man is simply an end to, and separation from, some given form of life which he has lived in. Death to God is separation from His world of light, by the destruction, through the lie of the serpent, of the divine life of light and love in us. Death to sin, the exact converse of this, is the separation from the world of darkness, by the destruction, through the truth, of the dark life of unbelief and self-love. The death wrought by the law is the end of, and separation from, our fallen carnal life of self-sufficiency; while what is commonly called death, namely the death of the body, is simply our separation from the outward world, in which we live, as partakers of its outward life, while we are in the body. Once let us see that there are three worlds, each having its own life, -- a light world, a dark world, and this outward seen world, -- and then what is said in Scripture of the new birth, or of the varied deaths we pass through, becomes at once self-evident. For the only way into any world is by a birth into it,

even as the only way out of any world is by a death to it. We have by sin died to God's light-world, to fall into and live in a spirit-world of darkness. We must by the truth, that is by Christ, die to this dark spirit-world, to return to live in God's light-world. The outward birth and death of the body, and its life, have only to do with the outward seen world. For this reason it is that the word "destruction," as used in Scripture, never means annihilation. Take for instance the words of Psalms 90:1-17, "Thou turnest man to destruction: again Thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men." Can "destruction" here be annihilation? Is it not rather that dissolution which must take place if fallen creatures are ever to be brought back perfectly to God's kingdom. So again, Job says (Job 19:10), "He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone"; and again (Job 9:22), "This one thing I said, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked." But does he mean to say that he is brought to non-existence, or that the "perfect" will be so destroyed, that they will exist no longer? So, again, St. Peter says (2 Peter 3:6), "The world that then was perished." So, again, of the present heavens and earth it is said (Hebrews 1:11-12), "They shall perish, . . . and be changed." So, again, both of Israel and Jerusalem it is said (Deuteronomy 30:18; Jeremiah 12:17; Jeremiah 15:6), that they shall be "destroyed" and "perish." But does any one suppose that therefore they will be annihilated? So, again, as to the expression, "them that perish," sometimes translated "the lost" (see 2 Corinthians 4:3; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 2:15); do we not know that these "lost," though they "perish," still exist, and exist both as "lost" ones and "saved" ones, as text on text will testify abundantly. So as to the righteous, in the well-known passage of Isaiah (Isaiah 57:1), "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart"; -- is this "perishing" non-existence? So, again, where we read, in Psalms 83:16-18, "Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek thy name, O Lord: let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame and perish; that men" (literally "they," for the word "men" is not in the Original,) "may know that Thou, whose name is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth;" -- men are to be "confounded for ever and perish, that they may know Jehovah." So as to the question, "Wilt Thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise Thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave, or they faithfulness in destruction?" -- is the true answer, Yes, or No? Is not the "losing" or "destruction" of our fallen life the only way to a better one? Does not our Lord Himself say more than once, (Matthew 10:39; Matthew 16:25; John 12:25), that the way to "save our life," or "soul," is to "lose it," or "have it destroyed," in its fallen form, that it may be re-created?

These last words should of themselves settle this question, for in one place, (Matthew 10:39), they occur in immediate connexion (see Matthew 10:28) with those other well-known words, as to "fearing him who can destroy both body and soul in hell," which are constantly quoted by some to prove, as they think, that "destruction" must be non-existence. And yet, in the very closest connexion with these words, our Lord repeats the self-same word, "destroy," (in our Authorized Version translated "lose" -- it is the word απολλυμι, on which some build so much,) to express that death and dissolution of the soul, which, so far from bringing it to non-existence, is the appointed way to save it. Christ saves it, as we have seen, by death; for being fallen into sin, what is needed is "that the body of sin should be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:6). The elect, that is the first-fruits, are the living proof of this. A "new man" is created in them, and the "old man" dies and is destroyed, while yet he in whom all this is done remains through all the same person. It may be, and is, a riddle, like "dying, and behold we live: having nothing, and yet possessing all things"; yet it is only the riddle of the Cross, that "by death God destroys him that has the power of death." Therefore, though destruction, like death, may be, and is, a ceasing

from some particular form of life which has been lived in by man, yet it is never non-existence absolutely; rather it is the means to bring the fallen creature into a new life, a chaos being ever the necessary condition for a new creation. As for the argument, founded by some on the word απολλυμι, that because it is one of the strongest in the Greek language to express destruction, therefore that destruction must be irremediable, the simple answer is, that the question is not whether the destruction is great, but whether God is not still greater, and therefore whether He is not able even out of the destruction to bring forth better things. This at least is certain, that both in the New Testament and in the Classical Greek, the word in question is used of those who though "destroyed" are yet "saved." To the passages already quoted from the New Testament I will only add one more: -- "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost:" (σωσαι το απολωλος: Luke 19:10). As an example of the Classical use of the word, I give the following from one of the Greek poets, (quoted by Justin Martyr, De Monarchia, cap. 3; and by Clement of Alexandra, Strom, lib. v. cap. 14,) bearing on this very question of the restoration of the lost: --

Και γαρ καθ υδην δυο τριβους νομιζομεν,

Μιαν δικαιων, χατεραν αδικων οδον.

Καπειτα σωσει πανθ α προσθ απωλεσεν. And the New Testament use of the word σωζω proves that it describes, not so much preservation from future or threatened judgment (in which case τηρεω would be used, as in John 17:15, Revelation 3:10, Jude 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, &c), but rather deliverance out of some present and oppressing evil. So we read (Matthew 9:21-22), "And the woman said within herself, if I may but touch His garment, σωθησομαι, I shall be made whole," that is restored to health; "and the woman εσωθη, was made whole," that is restored to health, "from that hour." So again (Mark 5:23), "And Jairus besought Him greatly, saying, I pray Thee, lay Thy hands upon her, οπως σωζη, that she may be healed." So too (Mark 6:56), "And as many as touched Him, εσωζοντο, were made whole." So too, in reference to Lazarus (John 11:12), "Lord, if he sleep, σωθησεται, he shall do well," that is, he shall be restored to health. See also Luke 8:36; Luke 18:42; Acts 4:9; James 5:15; &c. See also what is said of our Lord (Hebrews 5:7), that "in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers unto Him that was able to save Him from death," σωζειν αυτον εκ θανατου, (literally "out of death,") "He was heard in that He feared." But He was not preserved from death, but delivered out of it. Our salvation also, like our Lord’s, for we are His members, is not from death, but by it, and out of it.

05.6.2. Appendix B - Extracts from the Fathers

APPENDIX

NOTE B Extracts from the Fathers The following extracts from some of the greatest of the Greek Fathers will sufficiently shew what were their views on this subject.

I give an extract from Origen first, as, though not the earliest, he is the best known advocate of the doctrine of Universal Restitution. He writes as follows: (Comment. In Epist. ad Rom. lib. viii. cap. xi.) -- "Qui vero verbi Dei et doctrinae evangelicae purificationem spreverit, tristibus et poenalibus purificationibus semetipsum reservat, ut ignis gehennae in cruciatibus purget quem nec apostolica doctrina nec evangelicus sermo purgaverit, secundum illud quod scriptum est, Et purificabo te igne ad purificationem. Verum haec ipsa purgatio, quae per poenam ignis adhibetur, quantis temporibus, quantisve saeculis, de peccatoribus exigat cruciatus, solus scire potest Ille cui Pater omne judicium tradidit. ... Veruntamen meminisse semper debemus quod praesentem locum Apostolus quasi mysterium habere voluit, quo scilicet hujusmodi sensus fideles quique et perfecti intra semetipsos velut mysterium Dei silentio tegant, nec passim imperfectis et minus capacibus proferant." That is, -- "But he that despises the purification of the word of God, and the doctrine of the gospel, only keeps himself for dreadful and penal purifications afterwards; that so the fire of hell may purge him in torments whom neither apostolical doctrine nor gospel preaching has cleansed, according to that which is written of being "purified by fire." But how long this purification which is wrought out by penal fire shall endure, or for how many periods or ages it shall torment sinners, He only knows to whom all judgment is committed by the Father. ... But we must still remember that the Apostle would have this text accounted as a secret, so that the faithful and perfect may keep their perceptions of it as one of God’s secrets in silence among themselves, and not divulge it everywhere to the imperfect and those less capable of receiving it."

We find the same doctrine still more fully stated by Origen, in his work De Principiis, lib. i. c. 6, par. 1, 2, where he quotes Psalms 110:1, 1 Corinthians 15:25, John 17:20-23, Php 2:10, and other passages of Scripture in support of it. At the same time he did not deny, Contr. Celsum, lib. vi. c. 26, that the doctrine might be dangerous to the unconverted. He therefore, on the principle of reserving some things from those who might abuse them, speaks in Hom. xviii. in Jerem. par. 1, of "the impossibility of being renewed except in this world." Yet in the very next homily, Hom. xix. in Jer. par. 4, he calls the fear of everlasting punishment, (according to Jeremiah 20:7,) απατη, that is "a deceit," though it is beneficial in its results, and is brought about by God Himself as a pedagogical artifice "For many wise men, or such as were thought wise, having apprehended the truth, and rejected the delusion, respecting the divine punishments, gave themselves up to a vicious life, while it would have been much better for them to believe as they once did in the undying worm and the fire which is not quenched."

It is, I believe, owing to this principle of reserve in communicating certain points of religious knowledge, that we find comparatively so little on the subject of Restitution in the public writings of the early Fathers. For, in accordance with the Apostle’s words, "Which things we speak," and

again, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect," (1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 2:13) they felt that they might "speak" to mature and well-instructed souls things which it would not be wise to "write" for all. But to pass on to a second witness to the doctrine of Restitution. Clement of Alexandria, who, in the 5th and 6th books of his Stromata has written so fully on this subject of reserve, -- see especially book 6, chapter 15, -- in his notes on the Epistle of St. John, (Adumbrat. in Ep. i. Johan., printed at the end of his Treatise, Quis dives salvetur, p. 1009, Potters Edit.) has these words: --

"Nec solem autem, inquit, pro nostris peccatis Dominus propitiator est, hoc est fidelium, sed etiam pro toto mundo. Proinde universos quidem salvat, sed alios per supplicia convertens, alios autem spontanea assequentes voluntate, et cum honoris dignitate, ut omne genu flectatur Ei, coelestium, terrestrium, et infernorum, hoc est, angeli, homines, et animae, quae ante adventum Ejus de hac vita migravere temporali." That is, "The Lord, he says, is a propitiation, 'not for our sins only,' that is, of the faithful, 'but also for the whole world.' Therefore He indeed saves all universally; but some as converted by punishments, others by voluntary submission, thus obtaining the honour and dignity, that 'to Him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth,' that is angels, and men, and souls who departed this life before His coming into the world."

Other writers of the Alexandrian School might be here cited as holding substantially the same doctrine. The following passage from Theophilus of Antioch, A.D. 168, is perhaps even more striking; (Ad Autolychum, lib. ii. c. 26:)

Και τουτο δε ο θεος μεγαλην ευεργεσιαν παρεσχε τω ανθρωπω, το μη διαμειναι αυτον εις τον αιωνα εν αμαρτια οντα, αλλα τροπω τινι εν ομοιωματι εξορισμου εξεβαλεν αυτον εκ του παραδεισου, οπως δια της επιτιμιας τακτω αποτισας χρονω την αμαρτιαν και παιδευθεις εξ υστερου ανακληθη. Διο και πλασθεντος ανθρωπου εν τω κοσμω τουτω μυστηριωδως εν τη Γενεσει γεγραπται, ως δις αυτου εν τω παραδεισω τεθεντος■ ινα το μεν υπαξ η πεπληρωμενον οτε ετεθη■ το δε δευτερον μελλη πληρουσθαι μετα την αναστασιν και κρισιν. Ου μην αλλα και καθαπερ σκευος τι, επαν πλασθεν αιτιαν τινα σχη, αναχωνευεται, η αναπλασσεται, εις το γενεσθαι καινον και ολοκληρον■ ουτω γινεται και τω ανθρωπω δια θανατου■ δυναμει γαρ τεθραυσται, ινα εν τη αναστασει υγιης ευρεθη, λεγω δε ασπιλος, και δικαιος, και αθανατος. That is, "And God shewed great kindness to man, in this, that He did not suffer him to continue being in sin for ever; but, as it were, by a kind of banishment, cast him out of Paradise, in order that, having by punishment expiated, within an appointed time, the sin, and having been disciplined, he should afterwards be recalled. Wherefore also, when man had been formed in this world, it is mystically written in Genesis, as if he had been twice placed in Paradise; so that the one was fulfilled when he was placed there, and the second will be fulfilled after the resurrection and judgment. Nay further, just as a vessel, when on being fashioned it has some flaw, is remoulded or re-made, that it may become new and entire; so also it happens to man by death. For he is broken up by force, that in the resurrection he may be found whole, I mean spotless, and righteous, and immortal."

Irenaeus, A.D. 182, holds the same view, of death being a merciful provision for a fallen creature. His words, (Contr. Hoer. lib. ii. c. 23, par. 6,) are: --

"Quapropter et ejecit eum de paradiso, et a ligno vitae longe transtulit; non invidens ei lignum vitae, quemadmodum quidam audent dicere, sed miserans ejus, ut non perseveraret semper

transgressor, neque immortale esset quod esset circa eum peccatum, et malum interminabile et insanabile." That is, "Wherefore also He drove him out of Paradise, and removed him far from the tree of life, not because He envied him the tree of life, as some dare to assert, but because He pitied him, [and desired] that he should not continue always a sinner, and that the sin which surrounded him should not be immortal, and the evil interminable and irremediable."

Origen has the same doctrine, (Hom. xviii. in Jerem.) as have others of the Fathers. To the same effect is the whole work of Athenagoras, A.D. 177, On the Resurrection. The argument throughout is so connected that it is not easy to make a brief extract. The following concluding sentence of the work may however sufficiently shew the general doctrine: (De Resurr. c. xxv.)

Τουτου δ εξ αναγκης επομενου, δει παντως γενεσθαι των νεκρωθεντων η και παντη διαλυθεντων σωματων αναστασιν, και τους αυτους ανθρωπους συστηναι παλιν. ... ταυτης γαρ γενομενης και το τη φυσει των ανθρωπων προσφορον επακολουθει τελος. Τελος δε ζωης εμφρονος και λογικης κρισεως ουκ αν αμαρτοι τις ειπων το τουτοις απερισπαστως συνδιαιωνιζειν, οις μαλιστα και πρωτως ο φυσικος συνηρμοσται λογος, τη τε θεωρια του οντος και των εκεινω δεδογμενων απαυστως επαγαλλεσθαι καν οι πολλοι των ανθρωπων, εμπαθεστερον και σφοδροτερον τοις τηδε προσπεπονθοτες, αστοχοι τουτου διατελωσιν. Ου γαρ ακυροι την κοινην αποκληρωσιν το πληθος των αποπιπτοντων του τροσηκοντος αυτοις τελους, ιδιαζουσης της επι τουτοις εξετασεως, και της εκαστω συμμετρουμενης υπερ των ευ η κακως βεβιωμενων τιμης η δικης. That is, "And as this follows of necessity, there must by all means be a resurrection of the bodies which are dead or even entirely dissolved, and the same men must be formed anew. ... for if this takes place, the end befitting the nature of men follows also. And the end of an intelligent life and of a rational judgment, we shall make no mistake in saying, is to be occupied uninterruptedly with those objects to which the natural reason is chiefly and primarily adapted, and to delight unceasingly in the contemplation of Him who is, and of His decrees; notwithstanding that the majority of men, because they are affected too passionately and too violently by things below, pass through life without attaining this object. For the large number of those who fail of the end that belongs to them does not make void the common lot, since the examination relates to individuals, and the reward or punishment of lives ill or well spent is proportioned to what each has done."

We find the same doctrine just hinted at in Gregory of Nazianzus; (Orat. Quadrag. par. 36. p. 664, Ed. Paris. 1630.)

Οιδα και πυρ ου καθαρτηριον, αλλα κολαστηριον, ειτε Σοδομιτικον ... ειτε το ητοιμασμενον τω διαβολω, ... ειτε ο προ προσωπου Κυριου πορευεται, και τουτων ετι φοβερωτερον, ο τω ακοιμητω σκωληκι συντετακται, μη σβεννυμενον, αλλα διαιωνιζον τοις πονηροις. Παντα γαρ ταυτα αφανιστικης εστι δυναμεως■ ει μη το φιλον κανταυθα νοειν τουτο φιλανθρωποτερον, και του κολαζοντος επαξιως. That is, "There is another fire, I know, not for purging, but for punishing; whether it be of that kind by which Sodom was destroyed, ... or whether that prepared for the devil, ... or that which goes before the face of the Lord, and which, more to be dreaded than all, is conjoined with the undying worm, which is not quenched, but lasts perpetually, (or through the ages) for the wicked. All these are of a destructive nature. Unless even here to regard this as done in love is more in accordance with (God’s) love to man, and more worthy of Him who punishes."

Gregory of Nyssa speaks more clearly; (Dial. de Anima et Resurrect. tom. iii. p. 227, Ed. Paris. 1638.)

Χρη γαρ παντη και παντως εξαιρεθηναι ποτε το κακον εκ του οντος■ ... επειδη γαρ εξω της προαιρεσεως η κακια εινα ι φυσιν ουκ εχει, οταν πασα προαιρεσις εν τω θεω γενηται, εις παντελη αφανισμον η κακια μη χωρησει, τω μηδεν αυτης απολειφθηναι δοχειον; κ.τ.λ. And again, (Catechet. Orat. cap. 26, tom. iii. p. 85,) Christ is spoken of as τον τε ανθρωπον τνς κακιας ελευθερων, και αυτον της κακιας ευρετην ιωμενος. That is, -- "For it is needful that evil should some day be wholly and absolutely removed out of the circle of being. .... For inasmuch as it is not in the nature of evil to exist without the will, when every will comes to be in God, will not evil go on to absolute extinction, by reason of there being no receptacle of it left." And again, in his Catechetical Orations, (chapter 26,) Christ is spoken of as "the One who both delivers man from evil, and who heals the inventor of evil himself."

Both the passages, and their contexts, are well worth turning to. Referring to them Neander says, (Church Hist. vol. iv. p. 455,) "We may notice here another after-influence of the great Origen upon individual church-teachers, ... as for example on Didymus, and Gregory Naziansen. Though in the writings of Didymus, which have come to our knowledge, there are no distinct traces to be found of the doctrine of Restoration, (αποκαταστασις,) yet in his work De Trinitate, published by Mingarelli, (Bologna 1769,) an intimation of this kind may be found in his exposition and application of the passage in Php 2:10, where, in reference to the καταχθονια as well as the επιγεια, he speaks of 'every knee bowing at the name of Jesus:' (lib. iii. c. 10.) But this particular doctrine was expounded and maintained with the greatest ability in works written expressly for that purpose by Gregory of Nyssa. God, he maintained, had created rational beings in order that they might be self-conscious and free vessels for the communications of the original fountain of all good. All punishments are means of purification, ordained by divine love to purge rational beings from moral evil, and to restore them back to that communion with God which corresponds to their nature. God would not have permitted the existence of evil, unless He had forseen that by the Redemption all rational beings would in the end, according to their destination, attain to the same blessed fellowship with Himself."

Now when it is borne in mind that Gregory of Nazianzus presided at the Second General Council, and that to Gregory of Nyssa tradition ascribes all those additions to the original Nicene Creed, which were made at the same Second General Council, and which we now recite as portions of it, (Nicephor. Eccl. Hist. lib. xii. c. 13,) -- when we remember the esteem in which the name and works of this same Gregory of Nyssa have ever been held, both during his life and since his death, and that he was referred to both by the Fifth and Seventh General Councils, as amongst the highest authorities of the Church, (Tillemont, Memoires, tom. ix. p. 601,) -- we shall be better able to judge the worth of the assertion, which is sometimes made, that the doctrine of final restitution is a heresy.

Diodorus of Tarsus, the tutor of Chrysostom, in his work on the Incarnation, (De Oeconomia,) may also be cited as holding the same view; as also Theodore of Mopsuestia, the most distinguished critic of the Syrian School; (Comment. In Evang.) The passages are given in Assemanni Biblioth. Orient. tom. iii. part. i. pp. 323, 324.

Here perhaps I ought to add, that, while the doctrine of Universal Restoration was clearly held by the above-named Fathers, two even earlier Christian writers, Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, seem to have held the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked. Justin Martyr, in his First Apology, c. viii., says indeed that the wicked will undergo "everlasting punishment;" but elsewhere, (in Dial. c. Tryph. c. 5,) he plainly says, that "those who have appeared worthy of God die no more, but others are punished as long as God wills them to exist and be punished" -- εστ αν αυτας και ειναι και κολαζεσθαι ο θεος θελη. Irenaeus has the same language. "The Father of all," he says, "imparts continuance for ever and ever to those who are saved; for life does not arise from us, nor from our own nature, but is bestowed according to the grace of God. He therefore who shall keep the life given to him, and render thanks to Him who imparted it, shall receive also length of days for ever and ever. But he who shall reject it, and shew himself ungrateful to his Maker, deprives himself of continuance for ever and ever" -- ipse se privat in saeculum saeculi perseverantia. (Contr. Hoeres. lib. ii. c. 34. par. 3.) We find the same doctrine also in the Clementine Homilies, (Hom. iii. 6.)

It is instructive also to notice how Augustine, the great champion of the doctrine of endless punishment, writes of those who held Universal Restoration. He says, (De Civ. Dei, lib. xxi. c. 17.) --

"Nunc jam cum misericordibus nostris agendum esse video et pacifice disputandum, qui vel omnibus illis hominibus quos justissimus Judex dignos gehennae supplicio judicabit, vel quibusdam eorum, nolunt credere poenam sempiternam futuram, sed post certi temporis metam pro cujusque peccati quantitate longioris sive brevioris eos inde existimant liberandos." That is, -- "And now I see I must have a gentle disputation with certain tender hearts of our own religion, who are unwilling to believe that everlasting punishment will be inflicted, either on all those whom the just Judge shall condemn to the pains of hell, or even on some of them, but who think that after certain periods of time, longer or shorter according to the proportion of their crimes, they shall be delivered out of that state."

Augustine's "gentle disputation," thus introduced, occupies several succeeding chapters of the same book. In chapter 18 he alludes to some of the passages, such as Psalms 77:7-9, on which these "tender hearts" rested their hopes, and to the view, then held by some, (see chapters 18, 24, and 27,) that the saints would be the instruments for saving all. His main reply, in chapter 23, is that the punishment of the wicked, according to Matthew 25:46, is as everlasting as the kingdom prepared for the righteous. The passage is worth turning to. To me one chief point of interest in it lies in the evidence it affords, that the views which Augustine combats were in his day held, and could be defended, by true Catholics, "nostri misericordes," even in the West, and that Augustine only proposes "gently to dispute," "pacifice disputandum," with them. I may add that in another place also, (Enchirid. ad Laurent. c. 29,) Augustine refers to the "very many" (imo quam plurimi,) in his day, "who, though not denying the Holy Scriptures, do not believe in endless torments."

Even Jerome, at the end of his Commentary on Isaiah, (lib. xviii. in cap. lxvi.) could write: --

"Porro qui volunt supplicia aliquando finiri, et licet post multa tempora tamen terminum habere tormenta, his utuntur testimoniis: Quum intraverit plenitudo gentium, tunc omnis Israel salvus fiet. Et iterum: Conclusit Deus omnia sub peccato, ut omnibus misereatur. Et rursum: Benedicam te, Domine, quoniam iratus es mihi. Avertisi faciem a me, et misertus es mei. Dominus quoque loquitur ad peccatorem: Quum ira furoris fuerit, rursus sanabo. Et hoc est quod in alio loco dicitur:

Quam grandis multitudo bonitatis tuoe, Domine, quam abscondisti timentibus te. Quae omnia replicant, asseverare cupientes, post cruciatus atque tormenta, futura refigeria: quae nunc abscondenda sunt ab his quibus timor utilis est, ut, dum supplicia reformidant, peccare desistant. Quod nos Dei solius debemus scientiae derelinquere, cujus non solum misericordiae sed et tormenta in pondere sunt, et novit quem, quomodo, et quamdiu, debet judicare. Solumque dicamus, quod humanae convenit fragilitati: Domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me, neque in ira tua corripias me." That is, -- "But further, those who maintain that punishment will one day come to an end, and that torments have a limit, though after long periods, use as proofs the following testimonies of Scripture: -- 'When the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in, then all Israel shall be saved;' and again, 'God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all;' and again, 'I will praise thee, O Lord, for Thou wast angry with me; Thou hadst turned thy face from me; but Thou hast comforted me.' The Lord Himself also says to the sinner, 'When the fierceness of my wrath hath passed, I will heal him.' And this is what is said in another place: -- 'Oh, how great is thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee.' All which testimonies of Scripture they urge in reply against us, while they earnestly assert that after certain sufferings and torments there will be restoration. All which nevertheless they allow should not now be openly told to those with whom fear yet acts as a motive, and who may be kept from sinning by the terror of punishment. But this question we ought to leave to the wisdom of God alone, whose judgments as well as mercies are by weight and measure, and who well knows whom, and how, and how long, He ought to judge." To these testimonies I add one more from Facundus, bishop of hermiane, who was chosen by the bishops of Africa to represent them at Constantinople in their protest against an edict of Justinian's, which seemed to them to impugn the judgment of the Council of Chalcedon; and of whose writings Neander says, (Church Hist. vol. iv. p. 274,) that they are "eminently characterized by qualities seldom to be met with in this age, -- a freedom of spirit unshackled by human fear, and a candid, thorough criticism, superior in many respects to the prejudices of the times." The passage is interesting too, as shewing that when Facundus wrote, other bishops besides himself regarded those who held the doctrine of the final salvation of all men to be "most holy and glorious teachers." Facundus (Pro defens. trium capit. lib. iv. c. 4: in Sirmondi's Opera Varia, tom. 2. p. 384. Ed. Venet. 1728,) says, --

"His omnibus accedit et confessio Domitiani Galatae Ancyrencis olim episcopi. ... Nam in libello quem ad Vigilium scripsit, conquerens de his qui contradicebant dogmatibus Origenis, asserentis animas humanas ante corpora in quadam beata vita praeextitisse, et omnes quae fuerint aeterno supplicio destinatae in pristinam beatitudinem, cum diabolo et angelis ejus, restitui; dicit etiam haec: 'Prosiluerunt ad anathematizandos sanctissimos et gloriosissimos doctores, sub occasione eorum quae de praeexistentia et restitutione mota sunt dogmatum; sub specie quidem Origenis, omnes autem qui ante eum et post eum fuerant sanctos anathematizantes.'" That is, -- "To all this is also to be added the confession of Domitian of Galatia, formerly bishop of Ancyra. ... For in the book which he wrote to Vigilius, where he is complaining of those who contradicted the doctrine of Origen, -- who maintained that the souls of men had pre-existed in some state of blessedness before they came into bodies, and that all those who were doomed to the eternal punishment should, together with the devil and his angels, be restored to their former state of blessedness, -- he says, 'They have hastily run out to anathematize most holy and glorious teachers on account of those doctrines which have been advanced concerning pre-existence and restitution; and this indeed under pretext of Origen, but thereby anathematizing all those saints who were before and

have been after him.'"

These passages shew how widely the doctrine of Universal Restoration was held in the Church during the Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Centuries. I will now give two or three extracts, which might easily be multiplied, as evidencing the views of many of the Fathers, not only as to God's end in punishment, and the purification of all by fire, but also as to the ministry of Christ and His elect after death to the departed.

First, as to God's end in punishment, -- Clement of Alexandria (Strom. lib. vii. cap. 16,) says, -- Κολαζει προς το χρησιμον και κοινυ και ιδια τοις κολαζομενοις: that is, "He punishes for their good those who are punished, whether collectively or individually." Clement continually repeats the same doctrine: see Strom. lib. i. cap. 27; lib. vii. cap. 2, and cap. 6; Paedag. lib. i. cap. 8. So too Theodoret (Hom. in Ezech. cap. vi. vers. 6,) says, -- Εδειξε της τιμωριας τας αιτιας■ ιατρικως γαρ ο φιλανθρωπος κολαζει Δεσποτης ινα παυση της ασεβειας τον δρομον■ ταυτα γαρ παντα, φησι, ποιω, και την ερημιαν επαξω, ινα σβεσω την περι τα ειδωλα μανιαν και λυτταν. That is, "He shews here the reason for punishment; for the Lord, the lover of men, torments us only to cure us, that He may put a stop to the course of our iniquity. All these things, He says, I do, and bring in desolation, that I may extinguish men's madness and rage after idols."

Then as to the baptism by fire, -- Gregory of Nazianzus, in a passage where he is alluding to the Novatians, (Orat. xxxix. par. 19, p. 690. Ed. Paris. 1778,) says, -- Ουτοι μεν ουν, ει μεν βουλοιντο, την ημετεραν οδον και Χριστου, ει δε μη, την εαυτων πορευεσθωσαν■ τυχον εκαι τω πυρι βαπτισθησονται τω τελεταιω βαπτισματι, τω επιπονωτερω και μακροτερι, ο εσθιει ως χορτον την υλην, και δαπανα πασης κακιας κουφοτητα. That is, "These, if they will, may go our way, which indeed is Christ's; but if not, let them go their own way. In another place perhaps they shall be baptized with fire, that last baptism, which is not only very painful, but enduring also; which eats up, as if it were hay, all defiled matter, and consumes all vanity and vice." So too Gregory of Nyssa (Orat. pro Mortuis, ad. fin. p. 634, Ed. Paris. 1638,) says, -- Ως αν ουν και η εξουσια μενοι τη φυσει, και το κακον απογενοιτο, ταυτην ευρεν η σοφια του θεου την επινοιαν, το εασαι τον ανθρωπον εν οις εβουληθη γενεσθαι, ινα γευσαμενος των κακων ων επεθυμησεν, και τη πειρα μαθων οια ανθ οιων ηλλαξετο, παλινδρομηση δια της επιθυμιας εκουσιως προς την πρωτην μακαριοτητα. ... ητοι κατα την παρουσαν ζωην δια προσευχης και φιλοσοφιας εκκαθαρθεις, η μετα την ενθενδε μεταναστασιν δια της του καθαρσιου πυρος χωνειας. That is, -- "Wherefore that at the same time liberty of free-will should be left to nature and yet the evil be purged away, the wisdom of God discovered this plan, to suffer man to do what he would, that having tasted the evil which he desired, and learning by experience for what wretchedness he had bartered away the blessings he had, he might of his own will hasten back with desire to the first blessedness, ... either being purged in this life through prayer and discipline, or after his departure hence through the furnace of cleansing fire." So too Ambrose, (Serm. xx. par. 12, in Psalm 118 p. 1225, Ed. Paris. 1686.) -- "Omnes oportet per ignem probari, quicunque ad Paradisum redire desiderant; non enim otiose, scriptum est, quod, ejectis Adam et Eva de Paradisi sede, posuit Deus in exitu Paradisi gladium igneum versatilem. Omnes oportet transire per flammas, sive ille Johannes Evangelista sit, quem ita dilexit Dominus, ... sive ille sit Petrus qui claves accepit regni coelorum, &c." That is, -- "It is necessary that all should be proved by fire, whosoever they are that desire to return to Paradise. For not in vain is it written, that, when Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise, God placed at the outlet a flaming sword which turned every way. All therefore must

pass through these fires, whether it be that Evangelist John whom the Lord so loved, ... or Peter, who received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, &c." So again, (in Psalms 1:1-6 par. 54, p. 763, Ed. Paris. 1686,) he says, -- "Salvator duo genera resurrectionis posuit, ut Johannes in Apocalypsi dixit, Beatus qui habet partem in prima resurrectione; isti enim sine judicio veniunt ad gratiam. Qui autem non veniunt ad primam resurrectionem, sed ad secundam reservantur, isti urentur donec impleant tempora inter primam et secundam ressurectionem: aut si non impleverint, diutius in supplicio permanebunt." That is, -- "Our Saviour has appointed two kinds of resurrection, in accordance with which John says, in the Apocalypse, Blessed is he that hath part in the first resurrection; for such come to grace without the judgment. As for those who do not come to the first, but are reserved until the second resurrection, these shall be burnt, until they fulfil their appointed times, between the first and the second resurrection; or, if they should not have fulfilled them then, they shall remain still longer in punishment." The same views are constantly stated by Origen; (Hom. vi. par. 4, in Exod.; Hom. xxv. par. 6, in Num.; Hom. iii. par. 1, in Psalm xxxvi. 14; and elsewhere;) and in more general terms by Clement of Alexandria; (Strom. lib. vii. c. 6.) As to the ministry of Christ and His elect after death to the departed, several of the Fathers speak very distinctly.

Clement of Alexandria (Strom. lib. vi. cap. 6, p. 763, Ed. Potter,) says, -- Διοπερ ο Κυριος ευηγγελισατο και τοις εν υδου, κ.τ.λ. Further on, in the same chapter, he says, Και οι αποστολοι καθαπερ ενταυθα, ουτωσ κακει (in hades) τους εξ εθνων επιτηδειους εις επιστραφην ευηγγελισαντο, κ.τ.λ. That is, "Wherefore the Lord preached the gospel to them also who were in hades, &c. ... And His apostles also, as here, so there also, preached the gospel to those of the heathen who were ready to be converted." After which immediately follows a quotation from the Shepherd of Hermas, (lib. iii. cap. 16.) to the same effect.

We have the same doctrine stated again by Clement, in the second book of the Stromata, and the ninth chapter; (p. 452, Ed. Potter;) also by Ignatius; (Epist. ad Trall. cap. ix.) and by Irenaeus; (Hoer. lib. iv. cap. 22.) and by Justin Martyr; (Dial. c. Tryph. cap. 72.) The following passage from Gieseler, (Eccl. Hist. vol. i. par. 82,) will shew that these views have not been confined to followers of Origen. He says, -- "The opinion of the indestructible capacity for reformation in all rational creatures and the finiteness of the torments of hell, was so common even in the West, and so widely diffused among opponents of Origen, that though it might not have sprung up without the influence of his school, yet it had become quite independent of it." My own conviction, the result of some acquaintance with the Fathers, is, that the doctrine of Universal Restitution was held by many who in their public teaching distinctly asserted endless punishment. To take the great and good Chrysostom as an example. If we only looked at his statements as to the end of punishment, we should say that he must also hold Universal Restoration. For his doctrine is, that "if punishment were an evil to the sinner, God would not have added evils to the evil;" that "all punishment is owing to His loving us, by pains to recover us and lead us to Him, and to deliver us from sin which is worse than hell." (Hom. ix. in Ep. ad Romans 5:11. See also Hom. v. par. 13, de Statuis, and Hom. iii. par. 2, in Ep. ad Philemon 1:25.) Yet in his sermons he repeatedly states the doctrine of everlasting punishment; (e.g. Hom. ix. par. 1, 2, in Ep. 1 Corinthians 3:12; Hom. x. par. 6, in Ep. 2 Corinthians 5:10; and Hom. viii. par. 2, in Ep. 1 Thessalonians 4:15; &c.) His view however of what he calls an "oeconomy," (that is some particular line of conduct, whether of God or man, pursued for the benefit of certain other persons,) that "those who are to derive benefit from an oeconomy

should be unacquainted with the course of it: otherwise the benefit of it will be lost;" (Comment. in Galatians 2:5-6;) and the strong feeling which he often expresses as to the evil of communicating certain higher truths to the uninitiated; (e.g. Hom. xl. par. 2, in Ep. 1 Corinthians 15:29; and Hom. xviii. par. 3, in Ep. 2 Corinthians 8:24;) go far to explain why in sermons addressed to the multitude he has spoken as he has on this subject. We know however, that, spite of his popular language as to everlasting punishment, among the accusations brought against him when he was summoned to the Synod of the Oak, one distinct charge was his Origenism. It is certainly significant, that, in his 39th Homily on the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, he alludes to the opinion of those who asserted that St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:28, taught an αναιρεσις της κακιας, without answering it. So again with Ambrose. Not only are there passages, in his book De Bono Mortis, which, as it appears to me, can never be reconciled with the doctrine of never-ending punishment, but the whole drift of the book is in an entirely opposite direction. For he asserts that "death is the end of sin;" (cap. iv.) that, even with the wicked, "it is worse to live to sin than to die in sin; for, while the wicked man lives, he encreases his sin: if he dies, he ceases to sin." (cap. vii.) The whole 4th chapter is to prove, that "death is altogether good, as well because it is the end of sin, as because it redeemed the world." In a word, according to Ambrose, sin is the great evil, while what we call death is God’s means to deliver man from the evil; "for those who are unbelievers descend into hell, even while they live: though they seem to live with us, they are in hell." (cap. xii.) But all this is directly opposed to the popular notion of future punishment, which regards the second death as hopeless, endless torment. A thoughtful reader too cannot but be struck with the way in which in their controversies with the Manichees and others, who held the eternity of two opposing principles of good and evil, the advocates of the truth, that there is but One God, only prove their point either by asserting that all evil shall one day cease, or else by arguing that evil is really nothing. Thus in the Debate between Manes and Archelaus, (A.D. 277,) the truth that there is but One God, and He a good one, is only sustained against the Manichean view by the declaration that all evil may and will cease. "When," asks Manes, (par. 17,) "will that happen which you tell of?" "I am only a man," replies Archelaus, "and do not know what will come: nevertheless I will not leave that point without saying something on it." He afterwards says, (par. 29,) "Therefore it (death) has an end, because it began in time; and that is true which was spoken, Death is swallowed up in victory. It is plain therefore that death cannot be unbegotten, seeing that it is shewn to have both a beginning and an end." (Rouths Reliq. Sacr. vol. v. p. 111. Ed. Oxon. 1848.) The argument of Athanasius is, that evil in its own nature is nothing. "Those things," he says, "are, which are good: those things are not, which are evil. And good things have being, because their patterns are in God, who truly is; but evil things have not being, because, nothing in themselves, they are the fictions of men." And again, "As a substance, and in its own nature, evil is nothing; the Creator has made all things." (Orat c. Gentes, c. 4, & 6. Opp. tom. i. pp. 4, 6) Basil has the same doctrine: -- "Evil is no real thing, but a negation or privation." (Hom. Quod Deus non est auctor malorum, c. 5.) Gregory of Nyssa also uses very similar language. (Orat. Catech. c. 28.) And so too Augustine, replying to the Manichees, says, "Who is so blind as not to see that evil is that which is opposed to the nature of a thing? And by this principle is your heresy refuted; for evil, as opposed to nature, is not a nature. But you say that evil is a certain nature and substance. Then what is opposed to nature struggles against it and would destroy it. So that which exists tends to make non-existence. For nature itself is only what is understood, after its kind, to be something. ... If then you will consider the matter, evil consists in this very thing, namely in a defection from being, and a tendency to non-being." (De

Moribus Manich. lib. ii. par. 2, & 3.) We find the same doctrine also in his Confessions: (lib. vii. c. 12.) But if this be so, what becomes of Augustine's doctrine of never-ending punishment, which surely is never-ending existence in evil? So much then as to the view of some of the greatest teachers of the Early Church. After Augustine's time, partly through his great authority, but even more in consequence of the general ignorance both of Greek and Hebrew, which for centuries prevailed in the Western Church, and which kept men from reading the Scriptures in the original languages, the doctrine of Universal Restoration was well-nigh silenced in the West until the revival of learning in the 16th century. My own impression is that the doctrine of Purgatory, properly so called, which gradually grew up from the 5th to the 7th century, in contradistinction to the earlier view of purifying fire held by Clement of Alexandria and Origen, was a natural result of the efforts of Augustine and others to silence the doctrine of Restitution. In the 9th century, however, John Scotus Erigena once again, and in the most decided way, bore witness to the hope of Universal Restitution. Having at an early age visited Greece, he brought back with him into the West a system of doctrine which was the fruit of a careful study of the Greek Fathers, particularly of Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and Maximus. For a brief but good account of this writer's teaching, I may refer the reader to Oxenham's Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement, Second Edition, pp. 151-154, or to Neander's Church History, vol. vi. pp. 254-260. Since the Reformation many of our English divines, -- among the Puritans, Jeremiah White and Peter Sterry, -- and in the English Church, Richard Clarke, William Law, and George Stonehouse, -- in Scotland, Thomas Erskine of Linlathen and Bishop Ewing, -- and among those on the Continent, Bengel, Oberlin, Hahn, and Tholuck, -- have been believers in final restitution.

I may perhaps add here that it is confessed by the highest authorities of the Roman Church, that the opinion of the mitigation or intermission of the sufferings of the damned, which has been held by some, is nowhere condemned by the Catholic Church. Dr. Newman in his Grammar of Assent, p. 417, has quoted, without contradiction, and apparently with sympathy, the following passage from Petavius, (De Angelis, ad. fin.) -- "De hac damnatorum saltem hominum respiratione, nihil adhuc certi decretum est ab Ecclesia Catholica; ut propterea non temere tanquam absurda sit explodenda sanctissimorum Patrum haec opinio; quamvis a communi sensu Catholicorum hoc tempore sit aliena."

It ought not to be forgotten also, that our English Church, having in her original Forty-two Articles had a Forty-first, declaring of "Millenarians," that they "cast themselves headlong into a Jewish dotage," and a Forty-second, asserting, that "All men shall not be saved at length," within a very few years, in Elizabeth's reign, struck out both these Articles. Surely this is not without its significance. The Creeds, which are received both by East and West, not only make no mention whatever of endless punishment, but in their declaration of "the forgiveness of sins" seem to teach a very different doctrine.

05.6.3. Appendix C - On Hebrews 2:9,16

APPENDIX

Note C On Hebrews 2:9, Hebrews 2:16 The possibility of the recovery of fallen angels is said to be absolutely negatived by the Apostle's words, in Hebrews 2:16, that our Lord "took not on Him the nature of angels." Angels therefore, it is argued, cannot be restored. But is it true that our Lord has never taken the nature of angels? What then is taught in such Scriptures as Genesis 22:15-16; Genesis 48:16; Judges 6:12-14; Judges 6:22-23; Judges 13:21-22; Isaiah 63:9; Zechariah 3:1; Malachi 3:1; Acts 7:38; Colossians 2:10; &c; where our Lord is shewn to have appeared before His Incarnation as an angel? In the next place, is it true that the verse in question really says that our Lord "took not on Him the nature of angels?" To answer this we have only to turn to the Original, where (as the marginal note of our Authorized Version shews even to an English reader,) the words, ου γαρ επιλαμβανεται, translated in the Authorized Version "took not on Him the nature of," are seen to be simply, "is not laying hold of"; the statement being, that Christ is not now laying hold of angels, but only of the seed of Abraham. That this is the meaning of επιλαμβανεται may be shewn from countless passages, such for example as Matthew 14:31; Luke 9:47; Acts 16:19; Acts 23:19; Hebrews 8:9. See also the LXX. in Genesis 25:26; Exodus 4:4; Judges 16:3; Judges 16:21, &c. This verse therefore gives no support whatever to the doctrine based on the translation (corrected in the margin) of our Authorized English Version.

There is however a passage in the same second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which, if we take what appears to have been the original reading, teaches, as Bengel and others have shewn, a very different doctrine. I allude to Hebrews 2:8-9, where our Version reads, "that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." It is not generally known that an older reading is, "that He should taste death for all excepting God"; χωρις θεου instead of χαριτι θεου. This is the way Ambrose, A.D. 370, quotes the verse; and long before his time, when Origen wrote, A.D. 203, this was the usual reading, though in his Commentary on S. John (tom. i. par. 40,) he allows that "in some copies," (εν τισι αντιγραφοις,) the other reading was also then to be met with. The ancient Syriac Version too has followed the reading χωρις θεου. The following notes on the passage, from Cornelius a Lapide, -- who gives us Ambrose's exposition, -- from Origen, and lastly from Bengel, shew how strong the evidence is in favor of χωρις θεου.

Cornelius a Lapide's note is as follows: -- "Nota. Pro χαριτι, id est, gratia Dei, Theodoretus, Theophylactus, et Oecumenius legunt χωρις θεου, id est, sine Deo, vel excepto Deo, adduntque, ita corruptim esse hunc locum a Nestorianis; hinc enim illi probant in Christo duas fuisse personas, et Deum ab homine fuisse separatum. Verum ante Nestorium Ambrosius, (lib. de fide, cap. 4,) legit quoque το sine Deo; sicque explicat: 'Christus pro omnibus sine Deo, id est, excepto Deo, mortem gustavit, q.d. Christus pro omnibus, etiam angelis, non autem pro Deo ipso, (Deum enim excipio,) mortuus est. Non quasi angelos redemerit Christus, sed quod angelos hominibus reconciliarit, eorumque laetitiam et gloriam auxerit, dum sedes eorum, ex quibus collapsi erant daemones, per homines restauravit et replevit." Which explanation of the words shews that Ambrose accepted the

reading, χωρις θεου, though he would draw another conclusion from it.

Origen constantly quotes the passage, with the reading χωρις θεου; e.g. Comment. in Johan. tom. i. par. 40; (vol. iv. p. 41. Ed. Delarue, Paris, 1733-59;) and again tom. xxviii. par. 14, (vol. iv. pp. 392, 393.) And again in his Comment. in Epist. ad. Rom. lib. iii. par. 8; (vol. iv. p. 513.) And again lib. v. par. 7, of the same; (p. 560.) In quoting the verse in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, (lib. v. par. 7. pp. 559, 560,) he says, "Requiritur sane, si in solis hominibus superabundet gratia, in quibus abundavit aliquando peccatum; et an in nullo superabundet gratia, nisi in quo abundivit peccatum; an et in aliquibus potest superabundare gratia, in quibus nunquam vel abundaverit vel fuerit peccatum. Et si quis illud aspiciat quod dicit Apostolus, quia pacificavit Christus per sanguinem suum non solum quae in terris sunt, sed et quae in coelis, et illud, Ut sine Deo pro omnibus gustaret mortem, putabit et ibi similiter aliquem abundantiem fuisse peccati, ut nihilominus etiam gratiae superabundantia fieret."

Bengel too evidently prefers the reading χωρις. Having pointed out, (Gnomon, in loco,) how nearly identical the teaching of verses 8 and 9 is with that of 1 Corinthians 15:27, where, as he observes, "in treating of the same Psalm, the same verse, and the same words, 'All things put under Him,' the Apostle states, that the 'All' admits of one most evident and proper exception, saying, 'It is evident that He is excepted which did put all things under Him,'" -- Bengel goes on to say, that "the same exception is made in this passage, only here it is as those for whom He tasted death. 'For all, excepting God.'" He then thus sums up in favour of the reading χωρις θεου: -- "Nunc quaeritur, utra lectio genuina est. Non ignoro, χαριτι plausibilius esse, quam χωρις. Et sine labore ullo a me impetrarem, ut hoc missum facerem, et illud amplecterer. Sed ubi de verbo Dei, ubi de unico Dei verbulo agitur, ni, temporis causa statuere debemus. Facilius χωρις in χαριτι, quam χαριτι in χωρις librariorum sedulitis, planiora omnia quaerens, mutavit: et tamen χωρις remanet in monumentis antiquis, multis, gravibus. Neque lectionem hanc, neque interpretationem hic a nobis propositam, quisquam, ut spero, exagitabit lectori tamen integrum est, rem amplius expendere."

06.0.1. Types in Genesis

TYPES IN

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CONTENTS

PREFACE INTRODUCTION - THE WORK AND REST OF GOD Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-25 I. The Work of God II. The First Day III. The Second Day IV. The Third Day V. The Fourth Day VI. The Fifth Day VII. The Sixth Day VIII. The Seventh Day PART 1 - ADAM, OR HUMAN NATURE

Chapter 3

I. Adam, or Man II. Man's Way III. The Fruit of Man's Way IV. The Remedy for Man PART 2 - CAIN AND ABEL, OR THE CARNAL AND SPIRITUAL MIND

Chapters 4, 5 I. Cain and Abel, or the First and Second Birth II. The Carnal and the Spiritual III. Their Lives PART 3 - NOAH, OR REGENERATION

Chapters 6 - 11 I. Noah on the Ground of the Old Man II. Noah in the Waters III. Noah on the Earth beyond the Flood IV. Noah's Sons V. Noah's Failure PART 4 - ABRAHAM, OR THE SPIRIT OF FAITH Chapters 12 - 20 I. Abram's Separation from his Country and his Father's House II. Abram's Separation from Lot III. Abram's Conflicts to Deliver Lot IV. Abram's Trials through the Word of God and Prayer V. Abram's Efforts to be fruitful by Hagar VI. The true Way for Abram to be fruitful VII. The End of Lot VIII. Abraham in the Philistines' Land PART 5 - ISAAC, OR THE SPIRIT OF SONSHIP Chapters 21 - 26 I. The Birth of Isaac, and its Results II. The Offering up of Isaac III. Sarah's Death, and Isaac's Union with Rebekah IV. Keturah, and Isaac at Lahai-roi V. The Trials of Isaac respecting Seed VI. Isaac's Two-fold Seed, the Elder and the Younger VII. Isaac in the Philistines' Land PART 6 - JACOB, OR THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE Chapters 27 - 36 I. Jacob's Carnal Means to gain God's Ends II. The Motives to Service, and Encouragements by the Way III. The Service for Wives and Flocks IV. The Departure from Laban V. The Journey to Canaan, and Change of Name VI. The Sojourn in Succoth, and Dinah's Fall VII. The Return to Bethel VIII. The Seeds of Jacob and Esau PART 7 - JOSEPH, OR SUFFERING AND GLORY Chapters 37 - 50 I. Joseph's Dreams, and Suffering from his Brethren II. Judah's History III. Joseph in Potiphar's House IV. Joseph in Prison V. Joseph exalted over all Egypt

06.0.2. Editor's Notes

Editor’s Notes: A few small changes were made to the text when transcribed to electronic format:

Verse references were modernized.

All footnotes were placed in line with the main text.

Footnotes that are more than simple verse references were marked as a note in an off-color font.

The original footnotes contained many long extracts from the early Church Fathers in their original languages -- mostly Latin but some Greek. These extracts were edited out, but the passage references were retained for anyone who wants to look them up.

Greek and Hebrew words in the footnotes were transliterated to English characters. In some cases the Strong’s number for a transliterated word was placed in square brackets and added to the footnote text.

06.0.3. Preface

PREFACE

I wish, by way of Preface, to throw together a few thoughts on the mystic character of Scripture, and on other kindred matters.

Many are aware that the Books of Moses deal largely in typical representations, that is, figures of spiritual things, both facts and doctrines, of the Christian dispensation. We cannot read St. Paul without perceiving that he saw far more in Genesis than the mere letter. The creation with him is the figure of another work, which God accomplishes in every saved sinner. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts." Then, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new." As much as to say, that just as God began to work upon this earth, when all was dark and without form and void, and worked upon it, step by step, bringing forth fruits and forms of life, until the image of God, the man created in righteousness, was seen to rule it all; so is it with the soul of man, from "Let there be light, and there is light," till the new man in us rules every faculty. The story of Hagar and Sarah too, as is well known, has with St. Paul a sense far deeper than the mere letter. Melchisedek is another example, the import of whose name and acts is familiar to all readers of the Epistle to the Hebrews. These and St. Peter's allusion to the flood, as a figure of that judgment of the first creation which baptism declares, are too well known to need comment. In every age they have witnessed to the most unwilling that Genesis has treasures richer than those upon the surface, secrets of God's purpose and of man's ways, which the spiritual man may search, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. But though many have a general notion that Genesis contains types, few have any idea of the immense extent or depth of this hidden wisdom. Just as in nature the distinct orders under which plants are found to range are quite beyond the conception of any but a botanist, though every one must have generally noticed their great differences, or marked some peculiarity of this or that flower. Just as it needs the patient study of years to make an astronomer, though every educated man understands something of the phenomena of the heavenly bodies. So is it with the Word. And in this book of Genesis, diligence and prayer and God's Spirit will bring to light worlds of truth infinitely beyond the conception of the carnal mind; and humble faith will discover systems of wisdom as complete and wondrous in the Word, as science with all her researches has found in the material universe. We may indeed read the Scriptures, as men cultivate the earth, simply to find food to support the life which God has given. But we may also read with higher views, to know the ways of God. He who has given us the earth to bring forth food, has shewn us vast and mysterious heavens above, the contemplation of which is fitted to raise and humble and spiritualise us. In the Word are not only fruitful fields, but heavenly depths full of unnumbered lights. Often as we regard them must we confess our ignorance. Why should we scruple to do so, when even in nature the keenest eye, and the mightiest mind, is baffled on every hand. Errors even may mingle with views in the main correct, as men have erred in studying the phenomena of the heavens, and indeed must err until they have learnt to correct the readings of sense by the conclusions of a higher faculty. Yet

diligence reaps its fruits, which, though open to abuse, may also be an offering to God's glory. The form of the Word, however, and the wisdom of its form, is a subject which yet waits to receive that attention which is its just due. Four Gospels have forced some in every age to notice the distinct purpose of God in each Gospel. But for the rest of Scripture, why its form is what it is, -- why like a man, and with man, it grew from age to age, -- why it looks and is so human, -- what connection all this has with the mystery of the Holy Incarnation, -- these are questions seldom asked, or, if asked, rarely answered as befits His dignity from whom we say the Scripture came.

I do not attempt here to enter on the reasons for this form; but I notice one fact, namely, that the Word is given to us in many books or sections, each of which, I am assured, is a divine chapter, with one special end, illustrating something in God and man, or the details of some relation between the Creator and the creature. (Note: As to the form of the Old Testament, Jerome notices that the number of the books, according to the Jewish division, (five books of the Law, eight of the Prophets, and nine Hagiographia,) answers exactly to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet; and that as there are five double letters in the Hebrew, so there are five double books, namely, two Samuels, two Kings, two Chronicles, two Ezras, (which we call Ezra and Nehemiah,) and two Jeremiahs, (that is, Jeremiah and the Lamentations.) The fact that part of the book of proverbs, (Proverbs 31:10-31,) the whole of the Lamentations, and seven Psalms, (namely, Psalms 25:1-22, Psalms 34:1-22, Psalms 37:1-40, Psalms 111:1-10, Psalms 112:1-10, Psalms 119:1-176, Psalms 145:1-21) are acrostics, founded on the Hebrew alphabet, leads him to suppose that there is some mystery in these twenty-two sounds, which form all words, connected with the comprehensive character of the Word. Prol. Galeat. 1-8. Modern criticism may smile, but there is far more in this than appears at first sight.) As in the Gospels, one is to shew Christ as David's Son; the next to reveal Him, not so much as the King, as the meek and true Servant; the third, to set forth the Son of Adam; the fourth, the Son of God; each giving a distinct view of the various relationships of the same One Lord: so it is in the rest of Scripture; each book has its own end, and the order and contents of all, as they describe the progressive ways of God with man, answer to His ways in every soul, for within and without His ways are one, and His work the same from age to age. As a base or ground for what is to follow, we first are shewn what springs from man, and all the different forms of life, which either by nature or grace can grow out of the root of old Adam. This is the book of Genesis. Then we see, that be it bad or good which has come out of Adam, there must be redemption; so an elect people by the blood of the Lamb are saved from Egypt. This is Exodus. After redemption is known, we come to the experience of the elect as needing access, and learning the way of it, to God the Redeemer in the sanctuary. This we get in Leviticus. Then in the wilderness of this world, as pilgrims from Egypt, the house of bondage, to the promised land beyond Jordan, the trials of the journey are learnt, from that land of wonders and man's wisdom, to the land flowing with milk and honey. This is the book of Numbers. Then comes the desire to exchange the wilderness for the better land, from entering which for a season after redemption is known the elect yet shrink; answering to the desire of the elect at a certain stage to know the power of the resurrection, to live even now as in heavenly places. The rules and precepts which must be obeyed, if this is to be done, come next. Deuteronomy, a second giving of the law, a second cleansing, tells the way of progress. After which Canaan is indeed reached. We go over Jordan: we know practically the death of the flesh, and what it is to be circumcised, and to roll away the reproach of Egypt. We know now what it is to be risen with Christ, and to wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers in heavenly places. This is Joshua. Then

comes the failure of the elect in heavenly places, failure arising from making leagues with Canaanites instead of overcoming them. This is Judges. After which the different forms of rule, which the Church may know, pass in review in the books of Kings; from the first setting up of rule in Israel down to its extinction, when for their sin the rule of Babylon supersedes that of the elect. When this is known with all its shame, we see the remnants of the elect, each according to its measure, doing what may be done, if possible, to restore Israel; some like Ezra returning to build the temple, that is, to restore the forms of true worship; and some coming up like Nehemiah to build the wall, that is, to re-establish by Gentile permission a feeble imitation of the ancient polity; while a third remnant in Esther is seen in bonds, but faithful, providentially saved, though God's name (and this is characteristic of their state) never appears throughout the whole record. This subject would of itself fill a volume. I touch it here, not only to shew that each book has its own peculiar end, each being but the illustration of some one truth or fact, on which a revelation from God was needed by us; but to call attention also to their order and gradation, answering so exactly to the steps by which truth is ever apprehended by us in the world of thought within. In this light the position of Genesis is most suggestive. Its purport is to shew what Adam is, and what can spring out of him. And just as in our souls the Spirit of God first comes to shew us ourselves, that so "coming to ourselves," like the Prodigal, we may then "come to the Father" also; so does the Word open with the same, with Adam and his seed, that is the fruit of human nature. This, as it is the ground of all that follows, is not only an introduction: it is also an abridgment or summary of all the books. For what is the series but a revelation of God, shewing His resources by the very wants and failure of the creature. Genesis, in shewing us Adam and his outcome, man by grace and nature, reveals in embryo the whole mystery of grace and nature in the creature. It is thus an abstract of the Bible, with the long sum of the Divine counsels worked out and expressed in God's algebra.

Genesis then reveals to us all that can spring out of Adam. In the letter it gives us the story of Adam and his sons. Here we may read how Adam behaved, and what races and peoples sprung out of him. In spirit we may learn how old Adam behaves, what the old man is in each of us, and all the immense variety which can grow out of him. And what an outcome it is. Some forms of life there are which spring out of Adam or human nature, simply by nature, according to the course of nature; and some forms of life there are which spring out of Adam by grace, which are the result of a divine seed sown in that poor soil, contrary to nature, and to the common course of nature. It is a wondrous tale, yet within and without it is but one. For the development of Adam or human nature in the great world without, has its exact image and counterpart in the little world within; I call it "little," though indeed it is not little; for if "the kingdom of God is within us," there must be room enough. And what confusion it seems: life and death, evil and good, love and hate, and pride and meanness everywhere: men praying, cursing, blessing; palaces and hovels, churches and armies, schools and markets, jails, cities, asylums, unions; such are some of the fruits of old Adam, in whom all this was before it was seen, and is only seen without because it was and is within him. But whether within him or without, man finds it hard to unravel all this tangled skein of life and being; for man looks only on the outward appearance; God who looketh upon the heart knows and can trace out the whole development. In the book of Genesis He tells the story, how both human society and divine spring by grace or nature from the same root. To illustrate this subject is my aim in this volume, the details of which I will not here anticipate, further than to say that there are seven very distinct forms of life, owned by God, which this book of Genesis fully reveals to us; first Adam,

then Abel, then Noah, then Abraham, then Isaac, then Jacob, then at last Joseph. These seven are the various shades of the true light of life, as it appears when refracted through body, soul, and spirit, the triangular prism of human nature; from the red of Adam on the one hand, up to that regal purple, in which he may be said to shine who completes and is over all the rest. Connected with all these are other forms of life disowned of God, various shades, that is, and degrees of darkness; but these seven lives give us all the light which beams through this book. These are all representative men. In Adam we see the old man, human nature as it is in itself, ready to trust the tempter, and to distrust God and rob Him of His glory; then hiding from His presence, and covering its nakedness with fig leaves, and laying the blame on the very gifts which God has given it; yet pitied and visited with a promise and a gift, -- a promise that, weak as he is, the Seed of the woman shall at length prevail, -- a gift by which, naked as he is, his nakedness may be covered. All that can be said of mere human nature, -- of man as man, -- is set forth in the history of poor, fallen, yet pitied and redeemed Adam. Soon we have another stage or picture. In Adam's sons, the elder and younger, a type is given us of two seeds, the flesh and the spirit, the natural and the spiritual, which have grown by nature or by grace out of the root of old Adam. That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural. Both are seen here in all their main outlines. Then comes Noah who is more than the spiritual man; for there may be spiritual men who have not passed the mystic waters. Noah is a type of the regenerate, of those who know what it is to be taken out of one world and placed in another. His seed shew us all the works which may be, and have been, wrought by those who are regenerate. Then Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, set forth those four great forms of life, which are known and enjoyed after regeneration has been fully reached by us; Abraham being the life of faith, shewing how the man of faith goes forth, not knowing whither, yet seeking to go to Canaan; Isaac, revealing the life of sonship in the land, dwelling by wells of water, with many joys and few conflicts; Jacob, the life of service, begotten on resurrection ground, and going down into the far country, to win a bride and flocks, whom he may bring back to share his joy in heavenly places; Joseph, the last, most perfect life, the life of suffering, which first dreams of rule, and ends with all things brought into subjection to it.

How the order of these lives answers to the development of Adam in us is sufficiently known to all who understand much of that development. First, we learn old Adam; then the difference between flesh and spirit; then the way through the flood, that is, regeneration: after which faith begets sonship, and sonship service, and service that life of suffering, which now, as then, ends in glory. The series never changes, nor do its stages come by chance. Abraham or faith now and ever precedes sonship, even as sonship will ever precede that evangelic service of which Jacob is the figure. All the path we may not know, but as far as we know it, the order will be that set forth in Genesis. In each newborn man is some portion of this history fulfilled, from the day when he knows not that he is naked, when the thing which is true for him in fallen Adam is not yet realised, (for as things are true for us in Christ before we experimentally know them, so is it in old Adam,) until stage by stage the things which have been realised by man, both the old man and the new man, are all part and parcel of his own experience. Thus Genesis and its history becomes again incarnate. He, in whom man is developing after God, will have lived as in the world before the flood. He has known, because he is by nature in Adam, what it is to live in the old world, in the first creation, before its judgment. He has known too, like Noah, the judgment of the first creation, and that there is a way of safety through the deep waters. And he may know, if he is faithful, the walk and life in the new creation, and the many developments there, from sonship to service, and from

service to glory; if unfaithful, other developments, the forms of which are foretold, and which though partaking of some of the blessings of the elect are not elect. The measure therefore in which these truths will be apprehended will depend on the difference of spiritual experience or growth of different souls. Experience is proving the truth; and just in proportion as we have proved these truths, so far shall we be able to enter into the lives here depicted. Thus I can foretell that, inasmuch as all know something of human nature, all will have some understanding and apprehension of the parable set forth in Adam's life. Those who can discern the flesh and the spirit will decipher Cain and Abel: those who have reached to regeneration will understand Noah; those who know the path of faith will be at home in Abraham's trials; while the spirit of sonship will open Isaac's path. In like manner, service will explain Jacob, and suffering, Joseph; the likeness in each case being easily to be recognised by those who know and love the original. If we will do the works, we shall know of the doctrine.

---------- But is not this all mere imagination? What proof have we that there is anything but fancy to support all this? I am not careful to answer this; first, because I write for those, who, though requiring help, fully believe that some such secrets are treasured here; and also because the spiritual sense is its own proof, as a key by opening a complicated lock sufficiently proves that it has been designed for it; a proof indeed which requires some capacity in the observer, and some exercise and intelligence in the things of God, but which will, I am assured, be increasingly satisfactory to those who will test it in the daily study and meditation of the Word of God. Do I then despise the letter? God forbid. With sincerest faith I receive it, and thank God for it, throughout Scripture. Most precious is it, speaking to all in words of truth, shewing how the outward daily life on earth may be sanctified, and is watched and cared for by God. Especially now, when so many act as if the earthly calling were a path of which God took no notice, and in which faith availed us nought, most precious is the letter, as shewing God, for He changeth not, in all His providence over the outward path of those who love and fear Him; shewing how the path of lonely men, if they walk with Him, their wells, and sheep, and feasts, and wars, are all His interests; that not a marriage, birth, or death, -- not the weaning of a child, or the dismissal of a maid, -- not the bargain for a grave, or the wish respecting the place of burial, -- but He watches and directs it. Thus precious is the letter; a daily guide and comfort to us as dwellers here. But holding this, I see much more, -- that while the letter is a guide for things on earth, in spirit it veils and yet reveals to us the things of heaven; in this like the world around us, which, while supplying means for this life, in those very supplies sets before the opened eye the secrets and treasures of the world within the veil; in this too like the Lord, coming under our hands in human form, under that lowly form veiling yet revealing the glory of the eternal Son. Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, seems to me, not an illustration only, but a proof, both of the preciousness of the letter, and of the deeper spirit which everywhere underlies the letter throughout the Word of God. He was a man, but He was God. There was the human form of the Word, the outcome of David and Abraham, for He sprung out of Judah. This was the humble form which men despised; but besides and under this was the Divine, full of the unspeakable depths of the wisdom of Almighty God; giving forth draughts of that wisdom, emitting rays of that light, to as many as had capacity to receive of His fulness; and yet in mercy hiding from others awful depths which they were unfit to know; being, like the world His hands had made, an "open secret" to all around Him.

Such also is the Written Word. Coming to us in human form, as the outcome of David or of some other Israelite, and judged by most as Joseph's son, it has a higher birth, truly human indeed, and yet no less divine; in its letter, in its human form, coming down to teach men upon the earth, full of lessons of love and truth for us pilgrims here; in its spirit to shew us the things within the veil, and to lift us up to live and walk and dwell above; in the letter, even as the flesh of Christ, "never to see corruption," though rejected; and in spirit to be seen as shining with unearthly glory. I have known Christ after the flesh. I can never cease to adore the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the grace of the mystery of His Holy Incarnation, by which He has come as a man to speak to men; but I have also seen His glorious resurrection and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost. So have I known the Word in the letter. Most sweetly has it spoken. When I walked, it led; when I slept, it kept; when I awaked, it talked to me (Proverbs 6:22). It has been my guide, my staff, my bread, my counsellor, my comfort, all through this lonely pilgrimage. But I have also felt its spirit, and seen the depth within the veil, where I could but fall down, and cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty. And to turn from God's Word to man's, our own words, which in their very form confess that human language can only speak of spiritual things under outward images, might prepare us to find that God, who is a Spirit, in speaking of outward things, in them is teaching spiritual things. All our words for spiritual things are, if we mark them, figures. We take something from outward nature and apply it morally. The language which forms the medium of our intercourse with heaven, is constituted out of the forms of this world, and if we look at its letter only points us to the outward world around. Thus sin (hamartia) is simply missing the mark; grace is outward beauty; right is straight; wrong twisted: spirit is wind: transgression is a stepping over: error is only wandering. The same is true of countless other words, which, originally forms of outward life, through that mysterious correspondence which exists between all works of the Divine Word, have come to express the relations of the mind and the world within. For, indeed, His works are words. There is a word in the forms of things, by which they are prepared to represent what is inmost in our souls. There is a word in all nature, in light and darkness, cold and heat, in summer and autumn, in fruits, in storms, in sunshine. There is a word in the lives of men, yea, even in beasts and birds, each saying somewhat to us, not unintelligibly. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their word unto the end of the world. Surely "there are many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification."

Wondrous, therefore, as it is, that the facts of man's first and natural development should figure the growth and progress of his spiritual life, -- that a chain of events, such as Genesis records, should spiritually express all the manifold history of man's inward life in every age, -- it is but the wonder which meets us everywhere, that all we see, and far more than any see, -- every law of nature, the seasons, the days, every tree in its laws of growth, each beast and creeping thing, -- speak to our souls of other higher things, and have been so felt to speak by man in every age. We do not make these things significant. Light, darkness, cold, warmth, spring, and winter, are in themselves significant. Why they are so, few may understand. The fact remains still undeniable. And as the growth of seeds is to the eye of Paul a silent yet sufficient witness of higher things (1 Corinthians 15:35-36); so the growth of the human tree, as it is drawn in Genesis for us by One who knows it perfectly, tells of another higher growth in man, in which God's spiritual image may be discerned yet more perfectly. But it is not a point for debate. He who walks as becomes his calling, will sooner or later, if he can bear it, have all the proof before him. Arguments are of little

service here. He who saw Christ as the Eternal Word, whose eye, divinely taught, discerned in that human form, not so much the son of Abraham or Adam, as the Only Begotten Son, characterises himself as "the disciple which testifieth" (John 21:24); agreeably to which his Gospel, and his only, is peculiarly marked by the reiterated, "Verily, Verily;" for testimony, not proof, is all that disciples can offer the world, on those subjects which eye hath not seen, but which are revealed by God's Spirit. Paul may argue, if he will; but John, though he tells what he has seen and handled of the Word of Life, only testifies. The "Verily, Verily," has spoken to him. He relies on its finding its own witness in other hearts. To brethren, therefore, who love the Word, who have seen cure upon cure wrought by it, but have not yet seen how its very form may be transfigured and shine with heavenly glory, I say, -- Yet love and abide by the Word; it may be you shall not taste death, until you see something of this transfiguration; and if you see not here on earth, you shall see it in heaven, where He who loves you is gone to prepare a dwelling. Yet if we walk with Christ, daily walking by the Word, (for of His disciples all do not follow all His steps, and therefore see not His transfiguration,) -- if we will not leave Him, no, not for a day, but will yet walk with Him, -- not by what this or the other man saith, but by the simple Word alone, living by it hour by hour, -- we may see it changed before us. Then the raiment of the letter shall be filled and beam with heavenly glory; the human form, which we have so long taken for a true prophet indeed, but only as the outcome of David, will shew with unearthly glory that it is something far higher; and we shall see Moses and Elias, law and prophets, not in the flesh, but transfigured also, shining like Him of whom they bear witness; no longer a mere letter, much less a dead letter, but full of God and radiant with His brightness. We must indeed come down again from thence; for though, as Peter says, "it is good for us" to be there, it is better for others that we descend to those who stay on lower ground; but they who have seen the glory there, even if they come down from that mount, at once to meet a devil (See Matthew 17:1-18), will not forget the glory, or the shining raiment of Moses and Elias, or the voice from heaven, witnessing to Him, who, though He veiled Himself, was the Only Begotten Son.

Others there are, hoping in the Word, who may see their likeness in that blind man who sat beside the way by Jericho (Mark 10:46-52); like him in darkness, nigh to that cursed and mystic city, whose walls, once blown down by the blast of rams' horns, have been rebuilt to tempt some Israelites again to seek a dwelling there (Joshua 6:26). (Note: The man, also, who fell among thieves, but was cared for by the good Samaritan, was "going down from Jerusalem to Jericho." -- Luke 10:30.) And there they sit, both poor and blind; yet they sit "by the way." They have not rightly seen the Word, even in the flesh or letter. They cry, "Thou Son of David," little thinking that the Word which is so nigh them has glories greater than those of David's Son. And some disciples, whose eyes are open to see and confess the Son of God, bid the blind to hold their peace, because they give not the Son His due title. Not so the living Word. Such as seek Him shall be healed. They may not see His transfiguration, but with open eyes they shall follow in the way.

I would that all who touched the Word were thus climbing the holy mount, or having blind eyes opened by the wayside near Jericho. There are, alas, many more who say and think they see, -- who see the letter, even as the Jews saw the flesh of Christ, -- who yet nor love nor follow His ways, and yet can sit and judge, and justify to themselves their own narrow views of the eternal Word. To them the Word is Joseph's son. They know exactly whence it is. They have never seen that human form transfigured; therefore it cannot be. With such souls, all that is above them is

"imagination;" all that is below them is "carnal formalism." What they see, -- where they are, -- that is right. What they cannot receive is, if downright error, at least questionable. Such souls, instead of trying to understand what others speak, try rather to make others speak only what they understand. Thus their ignorance measures all things. But they too shall see one day, when the veil is taken away, and the Truth returns to judge all things. The question is one of fitness to receive the Word; for He who is THE TRUTH, because he knows all men, and knows what is in man, will not commit Himself to all men, because all are not prepared to receive Him (John 2:24-25). If He has told us earthly things, and we believe not; how shall we believe if He tell us of heavenly things. But just as we can receive Him, so will He reveal Himself; shewing Himself after the flesh to fleshly men (Psalms 18:25-26); in the glory of His resurrection only to the elect and spiritual (Acts 10:40-41). But whether He veils or unveils, all is love. If He unveils, it is that we, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image. If He veils Himself, it is because He knows that His brightness would destroy us; therefore He tempers for us the glory through the cloudy veil. We cannot yet bear the best things. He has many things to say, which, for a season His children cannot bear. Isaac, the seed of promise, has but milk till he is weaned: when he is weaned, a great feast is made in Abraham’s house (Genesis 21:8); even as to this day there are fat things on the lees for weaned souls, which unweaned souls receive not, only because they cannot bear them. For the spiritual man may say with Paul, "For me to depart, and be with Christ," -- for me to pass away from earthly things to the Word within the veil, to Christ out of sight of men in His heavenly glory, where Moses and Elias witness of Him, -- "this is far better. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh," -- in that which the world can apprehend, in outward forms of truth, -- "for others, this is more needful." So Paul abides on earth, saying little of what he had seen when he was caught up into Paradise; while John is permitted to record some of the wonders which an opened heaven had revealed to him.

All this, because unaccustomed, may to some seem strange. Then "as a stranger give it welcome;" receive the stranger; "for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." What is foreign to our notions, or to the notions of our age, may to us be new, while yet not new to saints. It is mere folly to condemn, because what meets us is new to us, and greater folly to mock things as mere dreams or fancies because we cannot see them. The wisdom of man is as nothing to a beast; so is the wisdom of God counted as nothing by carnal animal men. The chariots of fire were round Elisha, though his servant saw them not, until in answer to prayer the young man’s eyes were opened to see what to the seer had all along been open vision (2 Kings 6:13-17). A voice may come from a cloud, understood by sons of God, although scoffing Jews, who have no ears to hear, "said it thundered" (John 12:28-29). Even a prophet may be blind, and animal natures, like Balaam’s ass, see more than those who ought to guide them (Numbers 22:23; Numbers 22:31). Not without reason therefore is the prayer, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned; but he that is spiritual discerneth all things, while he himself is discerned of no man" (1 Corinthians 2:14-15). For the views here given, there is the authority, not of one or two, but of many saints through many hundred years. And though these things were not first shewn me by the Fathers, but opened in solitary communings with the Word of God; yet I am thankful to see that I am in the same great circle and in the same spirit with the Church of other days. With them I see the letter, and within it what I call an inward, an outward, and a dispensational application. They may call these moral, allegoric and anagogic senses; but

the thing meant remains the same, namely, a perception of the same work of God on different platforms. For they saw how God's work is reflected in many spheres, in the world within, and without, and through extended ages; His work on earth shadowing forth still higher forms of the same work of the same unchanging Lord. (Note: Readers of the Fathers know, that these different senses or applications of Scripture were generally received, and the principle of them apprehended, by the Church in earlier days. What I have called the inward application, they call moral or tropologic; what I call the outward or historic spiritual fulfilment, they call allegoric; while the future or dispensational fulfilment they call anagogic, (from anago [G321], to lead upwards or onwards,) according to the well-known lines, -- "Litera gesta docet; quod credas, allegoria; Moralis, quod agas; quo tendas, anagogia." Any one who cares to see the ground or principle of this triple interpretation of Scripture, will find the question briefly but clearly stated by Thomas Aquinas; Summ. Theol. pt. i. qu. i. art. 10. Nicholas Lira also, in the Prologue to his Notes on the Bible, goes fully into this subject.) Thankful am I that brethren gone before had eyes to see and hearts to apprehend all this. For what I owe them too I am thankful, thus proving that the members of the body from age to age are not independent of one another. Besides, some will not take truth for authority, but want authority for truth. Such may hearken to the witness of saints of other days. The spiritual sense has indeed a witness far higher than holy men: its works will prove from whence it is: but as the Son of God received John's witness, so may the spiritual sense, while possessing a higher testimony, refer to the witness of the burning and shining lights of other days. I have, therefore, added a few quotations from the Fathers. Some may hearken to Augustine, who would not receive truth as truth on its own authority. Such, having first heard the witness of men, may at length hear the witness of the Truth itself. But such lights shew where those are who need them; for the light of the heavenly city and its inhabitants is the Lamb.

Meanwhile He that hath the key of David is not far off. He can shut so that none can open, and open that none can shut. And my prayer is, that, where these things should be hidden, they may be hidden, and where they can be opened, they may be yet more opened. The book, though sealed with seven seals, opens to the once slain Lamb. And if we, as members of His body, reach to participation in His cross and resurrection, -- if with Him we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, daily dying that we may live another higher life, -- things once sealed will open, being opened by the Lamb to those who are partakers with Him in His death and resurrection. For it is the death of nature, not its improvement, which takes us through the veil. Improved nature will only better shew us the things of nature. But let nature die, -- let the flesh be judged, -- the spiritual world will dawn with glories never to pass away.

I now submit these notes to my brethren, in a deep sense of their imperfectness. I have written the things which I have seen; and they are the things which are, and the things which shall be. But I am assured that my view is but one of many, and if it is definite, it is only because I have not touched what is infinite. Of this view I have attempted to trace the fulfilment, not only within, but without, and in the dispensations. For in the world-fulfilment of some of the scenes of man's development, every eye will see the figure, which few will have eyes to discern in the little sphere of their own soul. In a larger sphere we may see what is beyond us in a smaller. In a globe of quicksilver we see the whole horizon reflected; but if this drop be shaken or sublimated so as to divide and form a hundred or a thousand smaller spheres, in each one of the globules every object will be reflected as perfectly as in the larger globe, though now the reflection on each is quite

beyond the range of our unaided vision. Thus the world-fulfilment of the outcome of Adam will be perceived by many, who cannot see the same fulfilment as wrought within themselves. Let each learn what he may. The lengths and depths of this ocean are all unfathomed and unfathomable. For myself, as one has said, to whom I am a debtor, "I now return from the utterance of words, to the chamber of my heart, to examine myself, whether in attempting right things I have spoken the truth in a wrong way. For a thing is rightly spoken, when he who speaks it, seeks by what he says to please Him alone from whom he has received it. And though I am not conscious of having said wrong things, I do not maintain that there are not any. If I have said any true things by a gift from above, it is my own fault that they are spoken so imperfectly. Yet when I look closely at the very root of my intention, I find that in this work I wished to please God; and yet the desire of human praise in some secret way may have crept in; and when at last and slowly I discern this, I find that I do a thing in one way, which I know I began in another. I believe it is worth my while to disclose this to my brethren; for since in my writing I have expressed my better thoughts, in this my confession I would not hide my failings. And because in the Church there are not wanting little ones, whom I may teach, nor yet great ones, who may pity and help my weakness, when made known to them, from the one I withdraw not the help of my words, from the other I conceal not the pain of my infirmities; by my words seeking to confer assistance on some at least of my brethren, by my confession hoping to receive aid in return from them. I therefore beg every one who reads this book, to give me before the Holy Judge the solace of his prayers, and with tears for me to wash away every filthiness he may discover in me. My reader will surpass me in his recompense, if, where he receives words by my means, he gives me tears in return." (Note: Greg. M., Moral. in Job, l. xxxv. c. 16.)

Chapter 62

06.0.4.0. Introduction - The Work and Rest of God

INTRODUCTION THE WORK AND REST OF GOD Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-25

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

"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" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

GENESIS, like all the other books of Scripture, has its own special end. Its object is to shew us the outcome or development of Adam or human nature -- to trace all the different forms of life, which, either by grace or nature, can grow out of the root of old Adam. In the letter we are shewn here how old Adam acted, and what races and peoples sprung out of him. In spirit we see how the "old man" acts in us, and all the immense variety which can and does grow out of him. Thus some forms of life are presented to us which spring out of Adam or human nature, simply by nature, according to the course of nature; and some forms of life there are which spring out of Adam by grace, which are the result of a divine seed sown in that poor soil, contrary to nature and to the course of nature. It is a wondrous tale throughout, but all its secrets are here, told out by Him from whom no secrets are hid. As a divine preface to this book, which shews us what man is, and the fruit which his earthy nature can produce under the creative word and will of God, we are shewn what this earth was, and the gradual steps of its adorning, from the time when it was "without form and void," with "darkness upon the face of the great deep," until after light and life and fruit, "the image of God," the man created in righteousness, is seen to rule it all. A fit preface; for in a man or world the work is one; and, indeed, man is himself a world, with realms within him vast and affluent. (Note: Ambros. Hex. l. i. c. 5.) Darkness and light, and a great deep, and earth and heaven, are in him. Passions move him as the storms: volcanic fires rage or smoulder in him. Thoughts too, as the work of God proceeds, stir in him, and the realms within are peopled by them, as the air with birds, the sea with fish, and the earth with living creatures. Lest, therefore, our blindness should be unable to trace God’s work in the inner world of man, God writes it in creation on the broad platform of an outer universe. Lest we should be perplexed by the long detail of the gradual development of Adam and his seed, God gives the outline of it in the work of seven days. In each there is a work of God upon an earthly creature. In each we are shewn what in successive stages can be brought by grace out of the creature. Thus the seven days of creation are a type of all God’s work. Nothing is afterwards revealed, but the seed of it is to be found in the days of labour or in the day of rest. For in Genesis is hid all Scripture, as the tree is in the seed; and in the days of creation is the seed of all Genesis. We shall see how exactly the special work of the six days and the seventh day’s rest answer in their order to the stages of development which are depicted in the seven great lives of Genesis. The tale is one, like Ezekiel’s vision, "a wheel within a wheel," with "rings high and dreadful and full of eyes on every side." To this tale of creation I would now turn. Each part will amply repay us. We may consider first the outline, then some of the details, as illustrating the new creation or regeneration.

06.0.4.1. The Work of God

I. -- THE WORK OF GOD

FIRST then there is a creation of God announced -- then a partial ruin -- then a restoration. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Of these first "heavens" nothing further is here revealed to us; (Note: Aug. de Gen. ad lit. lib. imperf. c. 3, § 9. We find the same interpretation, Conf. l. xii. 13, 17.) but of the "earth" we read that it was "without form and void," language used by the prophets to describe a state of judgment and utter ruin (Jeremiah 4:23). (Note: The same original words occur in Isaiah 34:11, there translated "confusion and emptiness." Cf. Isaiah 45:18.) In some way not revealed God's work had been destroyed. God then, in the six days, restores that earth, not made dark by Him, yet now in darkness; and on this ruined earth His work proceeds, till His image is seen, and He can rest there. Thus a creation utterly wrecked is the ground for the six days' work. On this dark and ruined mass appears what God can do. The nature and state of the mass here worked on -- the means of its change -- the steps of the work -- all speak a lesson not to be forgotten. For its nature, it is "earth;" its state, "without form and void," with "darkness on the face of the great deep." Nevertheless, it is not uncared for. God's Spirit broods over it: -- "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). (Note: Hieron. Q. Heb. So too Ambros. Hex. l. i. c. 8, § 29.) This is yet true of the creature before God's work begins. Why it is what we see it to be, is another deeper question -- one here left unsolved -- but its state remains a fact. Before God's word is heard, the creature, which is earthy, is void and formless, with an unknown deep within. Upon this deep all is darkness; yet God's Spirit is brooding there. The creature is helpless, but God is very near. (Note: See Aug. Conf. l. xiii. c. 12.) This creature begins nothing, continues nothing, perfects nothing. Of its change the agent is throughout the Word of God. Life and power is in the Word. "God said:" -- this is the means, as in the first, so in the new, creation. In both the first move is on God's part. When nothing else moved, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." In both each new transformation is the work of the Word, and its extent in exact proportion to the measure in which the creature hears it.

All this is the A B C of Christian experience. Those, in whom the work goes on, know that each succeeding step is simply by the Word. From everlasting all the work had been hid in Christ, the Eternal Word. Then, in time, that which was in the wisdom of God is wrought actually in the creature. Whether light, or a heaven, or fruits, or heavenly lights, or the living creatures, or the man in God's image, -- each form of light and life, once hid in Christ, is reproduced, manifested in the creature to the Creator's praise. What was in Christ is step by step accomplished in the earth by the transforming power of the same Word of God. (Note: Aug. de Gen. ad lit. l. i. c. 4.) Without this no change is or can be wrought. No saint can grow or live without the Word. What was in the Word from everlasting, by the Word is wrought in us, just in proportion as we are subject to it. Observe two men, both Christians; one neglects the Word, and can pass day after day, buried in earthly things, without God's Word or meditation. Compare with him the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates therein day and night. The one is barren; there is no aptness to receive, and nothing is received. The other grows like a tree planted by the rivers. As to the steps

of the work, its details must be traced, if we would have anything like a just view of the wonderful stages of regeneration. It may be well, however, to premise a few remarks as to the general character of this amazing work.

I observe then first, that the work was progressive. Not at once, but through six successive days, was the creation perfected. In nature we have first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn: the babe, the child, and then the perfect man. So is it in grace. Days of labour, stage on stage, must intervene, after which those in whom God works may surely look for rest. Further, in spirit as in letter, the work proceeds in all its stages from evening to morning, from growing darkness to growing light, with alternations of either, but ever from night to day, and not from day to night. (Note: "The evening and the morning were the first day." Genesis 1:5. And so of the other days.) The evening and the morning make the day. Though the light has come, darkness still at times seems to threaten to resume its ancient reign. The shades of temptation and the light of faith alternate for awhile, till the day of rest comes, without an evening: the one to remind us again and again of what the creature is in itself; the other, what it is in Christ, the Word of God. (Note: Greg. M. Moral. in Job l. viii. c. 10, § 21. Augustine's mystic explanation here, that the evening describes what the creature is in itself, the morning what it is in the Word of God, is only another view of the same thing; De Gen. ad lit. l. iv. c. 23, § 40.) Thus from all things wrong does the work advance step by step, till all is "very good." Let none forget this; for some there are who seeing God's end, to shew His glorious image in the creature, forgetting the steps to this end, bitterly judge themselves, because as yet the image of God is not revealed in them. Let such wait in patience. He who hath begun the good work will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

Further, each stage, though imperfect, was "good" in God's eyes. At each step it is repeated, "And God saw that it was good." (Note: In our version, and in the Hebrew, this is omitted in the work of the second day; but it is to be found here in the LXX. There may, however, be a reason for this omission on the second day.) To the awakened soul, feeling its imperfections, this is blessed, that from the first God can find something which He pronounces "good." Not till the sixth day is God's image seen. Then "behold, it is very good" (Genesis 1:31). But from the first, at every step, "God saw that it was good." At first nothing was changed: waters still reigned everywhere: but the light had broken in. Darkness at least now had a name: its character was perceived; and God saw this, that "it was good."

It is thus with God. When He looks upon us, He ever sees what is of Christ, while a carnal brother perhaps is only seeing the sin and failure in us. It is God-like to see Christ in each other in the first stage of His work. One can scarce fail to see Him when the image of God is come. The thing is to see Him, as God sees Him, in the creature's change from the first. St. Paul in his Epistles always does this. If he reproves the darkness and calls it by its name, he sees the light also. Every Epistle begins with a recognition of what was good in each Church. The same may be seen in the Epistles to the Apocalyptic Churches. So Barnabas, who "was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost," when he went to Antioch, "saw the grace of God" in the disciples (Acts 11:23-24). Pilate would have seen only their weakness. For a devil can mark our faults, but it needs the grace of God to mark the dawn of grace. And even if the fruit is not mature, if the juice be sour, grace yet will say, "The vine with the tender grape gives a good smell" (Song of Solomon 2:13). (Note: Ambros. Hex. l. ii. c. 5.)

One thing more I notice here. The work of creation has two great parts; the work of the first three days answering to, and yet remarkably differing from, the work of the last three. In each half the order is alike, and the part of creation touched is the same. The difference is, that in the first three days the work is bounding and dividing; in the last three, furnishing and adorning. (Note: Lira, Postill. in loco.) In the first three days a separation takes place between, or is caused by, that which is created of the Lord, and that which is proper to the creature; by which what is natural to the creature is restrained and bound: then the character of each is marked by a name bestowed on each, the creature being thus made to know the thoughts of God. On the first day light shines out, and is divided from the darkness. Thus darkness at once receives a bound. Then the light and darkness have each a name bestowed: -- "God called the light, Day, and the darkness, Night" (Genesis 1:5). On the second, the expanse comes in to bound and divide the waters: then comes its name: -- "God called it, Heaven" (Genesis 1:8). On the third, the earth appears, and is divided from the seas, both at once receiving a name from God in like manner (Genesis 1:10). Thus far the work is dividing and bounding. In the next three days the order is the same, but the work is furnishing. In these days we do not find "God called," but "God made" (Genesis 1:16; Genesis 1:21; Genesis 1:25); this latter half being throughout perfecting.

All this is yet fulfilled in regeneration, and will be apprehended by those who press on to "the perfect man" (Ephesians 4:13). Half the process is bounding; a dividing in the creature between that which is of self and that which is of God. At this stage we are submitting to have what is natural to us restrained, and thus learning to distinguish His work from what is ours in us. At the same time we are taught to call things as God calls them. After this, after the third day, when resurrection power is known, (for on the "third day" here as elsewhere resurrection comes out clearly,) the work is to adorn or perfect rather than to divide and bound. Light, and heaven, and earth now are not only distinguished from their opposites; but each gets furnished with the life or light suited to it. At this stage we perceive "God made," for, as the work proceeds, it is more and more seen that all is done by God. (Note: Ambros. Hexaem. l. i. c. 7.) From the first God had said, "Let there be," and "It was so:" but now it is seen, not only that "He spake and it was done," but further that "He did it." So true is it that advance in grace shews that all things are of God, and that only of His own do we give Him. We shall see this better as we come to each successive step; best of all, if we experimentally know the work within.

I now turn to the special work of each of the days in order, to trace the progressive steps of the new creation; for though the work has two great parts, first bounding, then adorning, yet each of these has steps, answering to the successive days. In these steps we shall be shewn how all the mind of God, that which was in the Son from everlasting, -- whether light, or a heaven, or fruits, or heavenly lights, or the living creatures, or the man in God’s image, -- each form of light and life, once hid in Christ, is by the Word reproduced and manifested in the creature. The depths here are unfathomed; what is upon the surface will suffice to shew lengths and breadths more than enough for us.

06.0.4.2. The First Day

II. -- THE FIRST DAY THE work begins with light. God said, "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3), and at once light shone where all before was dark. God says, "Repent ye -- the kingdom of heaven is at hand:" then our darkness displeases us, and we are turned to light. (Note: Aug. Conf. l. xiii. c. 12.) Thus of all those blessings hid in Christ from everlasting, and which are predestinated to be accomplished in the creature, light is the first that is bestowed: "God shines in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). But the "heaven" announced "at hand" is yet unformed. No sun yet shines, no fruits adorn the creature. Many steps remain before the image of God will come, the man created in righteousness, to rule all things. But the light is come, and it is good: "truly the light is sweet," though as yet we cannot add, "and a pleasant thing it is to see the sun" (Ecclesiastes 11:7). It is, however, yet "light" rather than "lights;" (Note: The word here translated "light," is different from that used on the fourth day, and which is rendered "lights." The Vulgate translates the first by lux, the latter by luminaria, thus marking the difference. The LXX also translate with two different words, using phos [G5457] in the third verse, and phosteres [G5458] in the fourteenth.) not defined as it shall be; for as the voice differs from the word, so this light differs from that sun which appears in due season. Whether it is the reflected light of faith resting on the Church’s witness, or the direct light of truth from Christ Himself within us, or whether it be something more undefined, is not yet perceived: it is at least "light," and "it is good." "God saw the light that it was good." After awhile the day-star too shall rise within (2 Peter 1:19).

Then at once comes a division between what is of God and what is not; between the natural darkness in the creature and the light which God has made (Genesis 1:4). The darkness is yet unchanged, but it is bounded by the light; each by its nature more clearly shewing what the other is: and these not mingled together, for "what fellowship hath light with darkness?" but separate, as it is written, -- "God divided the light from the darkness." This is a well-known stage. The light shines in darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not. Two conflicting powers are striving each to gain the day, making the old domain of darkness a continually shifting but ceaseless battle field.

Then a name is given by God both to light and darkness (Genesis 1:5); that is, the character of each is learnt according to the mind of God. It is not yet seen indeed how the creature’s darkness, like death, will bring to view still greater wonders of God’s work in worlds of light innumerable. This is seen at a later stage, when in our night and darkness, yea even by it, the countless forms of God’s light in heavenly places, which the day hides from sight, are made manifest. But now the darkness has at least a name. What God calls it, we call it. His thoughts are not altogether strange to us. Natural as the darkness may seem to the creature, God calls it "night," or deviation. It is a turning from the right or straight line. (Note: The word layelah [H3915], night, means deviation, from a root [H3883] signifying to wind or turn. See Parkhurst’s note on the word.) The light is "day," or movement: there is a disturbance of the darkness. Death rules no longer; life with light is come. (Note: The day, yohm [H3117], "from y-m, motion, from the agitation of the celestial fluid, under the influence of the light." "A good telescope (on a hot day, the naked eye) will shew us what a

tumult arises in the air from the agitation of the rays of light at noonday," &c. -- William Jones's Principles of Natural Philosophy, p. 241, quoted by Parkhurst, sub voce.) Besides in this name there is a form given to both. Until now light and darkness were unformed, but "day" and "night" intimate order and distribution. Night is darkness put within limits. So with light; it is not "day," till it is arranged and put in form and order. (Note: Aug. de Gen. ad lit. lib. imperf. c. 26.) When thus arranged, we can say, not of night only, but of darkness, "The day is thine, the night is thine also" (Psalms 74:16). And though as yet on the face of the creature little is wrought, though as yet salt and barren waters may extend everywhere, a change has been effected by the light, the importance of which none can fully estimate but those who from being once darkness are now light in the Lord, and which shall advance step by step till God's will is done in the earth as it is in heaven. Of this day I only add, that on it the creature's state is very slightly, if at all, realised. Whether waters cover it, -- whether there is or is not a heaven, -- (there is, I need not say, no heaven upon the first day,) -- whether firm ground exists or not, this is not yet noticed. The second day must come before the tossing waves, which are uppermost everywhere, begin to be perceived. So with us. There is at first a general sense of sin; but what is the exact state of things is not perceived. There is light and darkness; but that no heaven is formed within, no firm earth, this as yet is overlooked. And great mercy is it that we learn what we are and lack by degrees; else surely we should at first despair.

06.0.4.3. The Second Day

III. -- THE SECOND DAY THE second day's work is the forming of an expanse or heaven in the creature, by which the hitherto unbounded waters are divided from the waters. God then names the expanse (Genesis 1:6-8). At this stage the state of the creature, that it is drowned in waters, begins to be perceived.

Such is the second state or stage in the new creation. In the midst of the waters a heaven is formed in the once benighted creature. That unstable element, so quickly moved by storms, is the well-known type of the restless desires of the heart of fallen man; for "the wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Isaiah 57:20). (Note: Gregory the Great, Moral. in Job l. xxviii. c. 19, § 43.) Before regeneration, unquiet lusts everywhere prevail: the whole man or creature is drowned and buried in them. In the progress of the new creation, these waters are not at once removed: indeed, they are never wholly removed till that other creation comes, when there is "no more sea" (Revelation 21:1). They are first divided by a heaven; then bounded on the third day, when the dry land rises up out of them. This heaven represents the understanding opened, as the rising earth upon the third day shews us the will liberated. For till now, "the understanding has been darkened" (Ephesians 4:18); nay, it is written of the natural man that he has "no understanding" (Romans 3:11). But now the heaven is stretched. Christ "opens the understanding" of those who before this had been His disciples (Luke 24:45, and compare Colossians 1:9; Colossians 2:2, and 1 John 5:20). And thus another precious gift, once hid with Christ in God, now by Christ is wrought in us also. A heaven is formed within the creature; a heaven into which darkness may return, and through which clouds shall pour as well as bright sunshine; a heaven which for sin may be shut up and become like brass (Leviticus 26:19; 1 Kings 8:35), but which was made to be the home and treasure-house of sweet and dewy showers; a heaven, like Israel's path through the sea of old, sorely threatened by dark and thick waters, but, like that same path, a step to resurrection power, and worthy to be called "heaven," even by God Himself; influencing the earth in untold ways, here attracting, there repelling; the great means after light of arranging and disposing all things. (Note: Aug. de Gen. ad lit. lib. imperf. c. 14, § 45.) By it the waters are bounded. Until now, they have flowed hither and thither without a bound, and without a rest also. But the heaven is formed; then a bound is set, where hitherto the restless waters have prevailed.

Then again comes division. A heaven in the creature at once "divides the waters from the waters" (Genesis 1:7). Some remain below; some are above or in the heaven. The waters henceforth are rent in twain. Some rise, purged of their saltness, and become the fruitful clouds, in which the bow of the covenant shall be set in due season. Some are yet the barren sea. And so within. Of our desires and affections, some are raised and purified, not without sore rendings; and some are as before, unquiet and unbounded, save by the heaven over them. (Note: Ambros. Hexaem. l. ii. c. 4, § 17.)

After this the expanse receives a name from God. It is called "heaven," that is the arranger: (Note: Heb, shamayim [H8064], the placers or arrangers, from soom [H7760], to set or place; because the heavens are the agents in arranging things on earth. "This appellation was first given by God to the celestial fluid or air, when it began to act in disposing or arranging the earth and waters. And since that time the shamayim have been the great agents in disposing all material things in their places and orders, and thereby producing all those wonderful effects which are attributed to them in Scripture, and which it has been of late years the fashion to ascribe to attraction, gravitation, &c." -- Parkhurst's Heb. Lex. sub voce. It is worthy of notice that the ancient Greeks derived theous from thesis; for the same reasons. -- Herodot. l. ii. c. 52.) so called, because this heaven, in ways above our thoughts, is the great agent in arranging everything. Little do men now think of the heavens, or perceive what forces around us are at work everywhere. We speak in our wisdom of the "three kingdoms," -- the animal, vegetable, and mineral, -- as if these three were all. Genesis will shew us yet another, on which all these depend. For as the animal depends upon the vegetable, and that upon the mineral, so the mineral itself depends upon another kingdom, which was yet earlier. Some have called it the meteoric. On this the mineral world depends, as the very names of some of the metals, come down to us from days when there was greater insight, yet testify. Now this "heaven," or meteoric kingdom, -- formed of old over the earth, before the mineral, as that before the vegetable and animal, -- was called by God the arranger, to effect great marvels, by what we now call attraction, repulsion, electricity, or evaporation. And so the "heaven," which is formed within by the Word, is the arranger, and in that inward world must precede the gold and fruits and living creatures. Some have tried without this "heaven" to have gold and fruits and life. What have they got? Not God's work, but Satan's imitation. The heaven must be first within, if we would have true fruits, even as true fruits must precede the living creatures.

Further, I observe, on this second day, that the creature's state begins to be discerned. The waters now are not overlooked, as upon the first day. It is now noticed that below the heaven all is buried in them; and this discovery, though painful, is a step to better things. Still, as yet there is no earth, nothing "stablished, strengthened, settled" (1 Peter 5:10); but this, too, comes in due season.

06.0.4.4. The Third Day

IV. -- THE THIRD DAY FOR on the third day the earth emerges from the waters (Genesis 1:9). Up to this point the unquiet element, which is naturally uppermost in the creature, has prevailed everywhere. Light has come, and shewn the waste; a heaven is formed within it; but nothing fixed or firm has yet appeared. Just as in the saint there is first light, and a heaven too within, while as yet he is all instability, with nothing firm or settled. But now the firm earth rises. The state desired by Paul, -- "that we be no more tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but may grow up in all things into Him who is the Head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:14-15), -- here begins to be accomplished. Now the will, long buried and overwhelmed with tossing lusts, rises above them to become very fruitful; and the soul, once lost in passions, emerges from the deep, like "the earth which He hath founded for ever." This earth rises out of the waters. Above their storms and waves something fixed appears, setting a limit to them. Seas yet may remain; at times they roar against the land; but from this time they cannot overflow it. "He hath set a bound that they may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the earth" (Psalms 104:9). "He hath placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it" (Jeremiah 5:22). And when we think what a bound it is -- the shifting sand; when we think how, as the wise man says, "all the rivers, -- all the torrents of passion, -- run into the sea, yet it overflows not" (Ecclesiastes 1:7); when we think how oft it rages under the gales of lust, and yet the dry land fails not, nor sinks before it; we must confess God’s hand in its preservation, as in its first appearing, and that it is His word and will that keep the bound. For "He shut up the sea with bars and doors, when it broke forth, as if it had issued out of the womb: He said, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, and here shall thy waves of pride be stayed" (Job 38:8; Job 38:11). Nay, more. Here, as in all things, "out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong comes forth sweetness" (Judges 14:14). Not only do the waves not destroy the earth, but the rough gales borne from their vexed bosom are full of health and bracing. We could not afford to lose them. Trying as they are for a while, and most hurtful if we have not some protection, the gales of lust and temptation will strengthen while they move us: by them noxious exhalations are carried far away. In the world to come we shall want no storms; therefore "no sea" is there. Here we need it; therefore it is left in love to try us. Yea, these seas and their roaring may praise the Lord, for He sitteth King above the water-floods; and all their tempests within, like the wrath of man without, in ways above our present thoughts, yet praise Him (Psalms 76:10). But the work here, the rising earth, is to restrain these waves. Good may come out of their roarings; the greater good, the special work of this day, is to bound them, to form a fixed and quiet habitation. So the earth is freed. Need I repeat the lesson here, that it is by checking our desires -- by bounding the unstable element in us -- that the man is made free? (Note: Greg. M. Moral. in Job, l. xxviii. c. 19, § 43. The whole passage to the end of the book is very striking, and will amply repay any reader the trouble of turning to it.)

There is yet more for us to mark in this emerging earth. Not only does it escape the floods: it comes up also into the expanse of heaven. That creature, so long buried, now mounts up to meet

the skies, as though aspiring to touch and become a part of heaven; while on its swelling bosom rest the sweet waters, the clouds, which embrace and kiss the hills. When the man by resurrection is freed from restless lusts; when he comes up from under the dominion of passions into a state of rest and peace; not only is he delivered from a load, but he also meets a purer world, an atmosphere of clear and high blessing; where even his hard rocks may be furrowed into channels for the rain; heaven almost touching earth, and earth heaven. Not without awful convulsions can such a change be wrought. The earth must heave before the waters are gathered into one place. The Psalmist marks this, when he says, "The waters stood above the hills:" then -- "at thy rebuke they fled; at the noise of thy thunder they hasted away: they go up by the mountains, they go down by the valleys, unto the place which Thou hast founded for them" (Psalms 104:7-8). Some have felt all this within: the earth clean dissolved -- the earth broken down and moved exceedingly -- the earth reeling like a drunkard, and removed like a cottage -- preparatory to binding the host of lusts which have held sway over it, till they are gathered together as prisoners in a pit, and shut up in their prison. Many a soul shews rents and chasms like the steep mountains. Nevertheless, "the mountains bring peace, and the little hills righteousness." And this is effected on the third or resurrection day; for in creation, as elsewhere, the "third day" always speaks of resurrection. (Note: The "third day" is resurrection in one aspect, as deliverance from the grave; for there are other aspects of resurrection, as the "first" and "eighth" day. The book of Leviticus will be unintelligible till we see this. Compare Hosea 6:2; Luke 13:32; 1 Corinthians 15:4.) We shall see in the development of Adam or man that the third great life, I mean Noah’s, is regeneration; for in man, as in the earth, much is wrought ere the flood is passed. The earth rises not before the third day. Just so in the world within: much is done before this day, before we know anything of "the power of resurrection" (Php 3:10). But "after two days He will revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord" (Hosea 6:2-3).

Then the earth being raised, and so separated from the waters, a name is bestowed on both by God. "The dry land He called Earth; and the gathering together of the waters, Seas" (Genesis 1:10). Here, as elsewhere, the name is characteristic; and, in this instance, it seems easy to trace the thought intended to be conveyed by these titles. The word "seas," in the Hebrew, means tumults or agitations. (Note: Heb. yawmim [H3220], from y-m, tumult.) The word "earth," like our word "ground," describes a substance which will suffer itself to be reduced to powder, and so is fitted to take any form as God pleases; ready to be framed by the will and wisdom of the Great Potter, to be animal or vegetable, as He will. (Note: Heb. ehrets [H776]. "Various etymologies have been by learned men proposed of this word; the most probable seems to be that which derives it from r-ts, breaking in pieces, crumbling. ’The matter of earth,’ says the great Boerhaave, ’appears friable or crumbling, so long as it continues under the observation of our senses, as it always readily suffers itself to be reduced to a finer powder.’ And it is manifest, that on this remarkable property of Earth, its answering the end of its creation, or its usefulness in continually supplying the waste of vegetable and animal bodies, must depend. It is not improbable that the Greek word chthon, from the Hebrew k-th, to pound to pieces, the Latin terra, from tero, to tear away, and the English ground, from grind, all aimed at the same etymological reasons." -- Parkhurst, Heb. Lex. sub voc.) For, indeed, tree or beast, of earth they are, to earth they return. Earth is the pliant clay from which their forms come. It is "earth;" therefore a creature meet to be used, ready to be transformed into fruits or bodies, according to the will of God. Need I apply this within? Surely till

we are such "earth" or "ground," broken and ready to take what form He pleases, though the light is come, fruits will be wanting; for to this day it is "out of the ground that the Lord God makes every tree to grow" (Genesis 2:9).

Then the earth brings forth fruit (Genesis 1:11). Fruitfulness, hitherto delayed, at once follows the bounding of the waters. For, "being made free from sin, we have fruit unto righteousness, and the end everlasting life" (Romans 6:22). (Note: Origen. in Gen. Hom. i. fol. 1.) The order of the produce is instructive; first the grass, then the herb, then the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind (Genesis 1:11): as ever, the blade before the ear, the small before the great, from imperfection onwards to perfection. The first thing borne is "grass," the common emblem of the flesh (1 Peter 1:24). Is it asked how the risen creature can bring forth fruits, which are, like the goodliness of the grass, of the flesh and carnal? Because for long the regenerate man is yet "carnal," and his fruits are in the flesh, though with sincere desires for God’s glory. The development of Adam, as exhibited in the Word, not to say experience, gives proofs on proofs of this. The Corinthians, too, were "carnal," though with many spiritual gifts (Compare 1 Corinthians 1:4; 1 Corinthians 1:7 with 1 Corinthians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 3:4). But after "grass" comes "herb and tree," with "seed and fruit;" some to feed the hungry, some to cure the serpent’s bite; some hid in a veil of leaves, or bound in shapeless husks; some exposing their treasures, as the lovely vine and olive; the one to cheer man’s heart, the other to give the oil to sustain the light for God’s candlestick. Such is the faithful soul, with many-coloured fruits, "as the smell of a field which the Lord blesses" (Genesis 27:27). The form of the fruit may vary; its increase may be less or more -- some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold; for "the fruit of the Spirit may be love, or peace, or faith, or truth, or gentleness" (Galatians 5:22): but all to the praise of His grace, who bringeth forth fruit out of the earth, "fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ" (Php 1:11). (Note: Aug. Confess. l. xiii. c. 17, § 21. So too, Gregory the Great, Moral. in Job. l. vi. c. 35, § 54. So also Origen, Hom. i. in Gen., and Ambros. Hex. l. iii. c. 7, § 31.) Nor let us forget, -- "whose seed is in itself, after his kind" (Genesis 1:11). God’s fruits all multiply themselves: this is their constitution. The tree propagates itself; every fruit produces more: so every act of charity has in it the seed of other acts. As one lie breeds another, so one truth produces more. Love bears love, anger, anger, and kindness, kindness. There is another and higher fruitfulness, which we get on the last two days; yet this of the third day is lovely in its season. The law of creation cannot change. God has said, "Let the tree yield fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself." Every act, therefore, will yield its fruits; "the seed is in itself," to propagate itself in increasing measure from age to age, even for ever.

It only remains to notice that at this important stage the state of the creature is no longer unperceived. What it shall be, is not known; but what it is, seems realised on this third or resurrection day. Not till this stage is the creature known. And so throughout the last dispensation, because the creature was not known, resurrection was not apprehended. But after resurrection it is seen what the creature is in itself, and the change which God has wrought in it. On this day the light is seen, the seas are seen, the heaven is seen, and, last in order, the earth is seen with herb and tree. On this day the separating process ends; for things are known. What is now wanted is perfecting; and this is next accomplished. (Note: Augustine briefly sums up the inward fulfilment of the work of the first three days, De Gen. contra Manich. l. i. c. 25, § 43.)

Such is the work of the first three days, deepening at every step; first light upon the deep; then a heaven in the midst of the waters, which lie uppermost; then a lifting up and working upon that

which was lower still, the earth, which until now had been buried and concealed. Some have learnt this deepening process. I observe, too, that the work was comparatively slow until the third day. Upon this day God speaks twice (Genesis 1:9; Genesis 1:11); and the amount of work is equal to or exceeding that of the two preceding days. Surely it is a mighty change. Twice on the third day is it repeated, "And God saw that it was good" (Genesis 1:10; Genesis 1:12). If we have reached the third day, we shall know how good it is. If we have not reached it, let us pray and wait for it.

06.0.4.5. The Fourth Day

V. -- THE FOURTH DAY

HITHERTO we have traced but one half of the work which God accomplishes upon the creature which is subject to His word. Now, having reached "the third day," we pass from the stages in which the work for the most part is bounding and restraining, to those where the work is adorning and perfecting; when, the distinction being clearly made between what is of God and what is natural to the creature, He proceeds to furnish all the various parts with the forms of light and life suited to each. At this stage, when the earth is raised into heavenly places, many seem to think the work is done. But now begins the perfecting and adorning process, which does not cease until "the image of God" appears. So St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, exhorts to growth in grace in language exactly answering to the stages of creation which we are now to enter on; starting from, "If ye be risen," and leading on the Church to "put on the new man, which is renewed in the image of Him that created him" (Colossians 3:1; Colossians 3:10). So he says, "If ye be risen, seek things above:" look for things in heaven, to comfort and enlighten you. Lights to guide, hitherto unknown, will shine upon you, making alternate seasons rich with blessing. Then again advance: -- "Put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, longsuffering." Put on the graces which are prefigured in the dove and lamb and ox, which appear in season upon the fifth and sixth days. And then "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." So writes Paul, "without a veil;" so writes Moses, "with a veil," "which veil is done away in Christ" (2 Corinthians 3:14).

We are then to trace the stages after resurrection-life is known, through resurrection-lights, till we reach "the moving creature," first creeping, then walking, but with face earthwards; and then "the man," with open face, erect, and looking upward. The fourth day’s work is "lights set in heaven" (Genesis 1:14-15): a mighty work: more glorious far than the "light" upon the first day. Then the light was undefined. Now lights are come; the one with warmth; the other cold but shining: each defined; one direct, the other reflex; but both to rule and mightily affect, not the earth only, but even the wide waters: giving another check, too, to darkness, not only taking from it Day, but invading and conquering it by the moon and stars in its own domain of Night. And so after that the seas of lust are bounded, and the fruits of righteousness begin to grow and bud, a sun, a mighty light, is kindled in our heaven, -- Christ dwells there, God’s eternal word and wisdom, -- no longer undefined, but with mighty warmth and power, making the whole creation to bud and spring heavenward; while as a handmaid, another light, of faith, grows bright, within, -- our inward moon, the Church’s light, or truth received on testimony; for as men say, Christ is the sun, the Church the moon, so is faith our moon within to rule the night. (Note: Those instructed in the Word will not only find no difficulty in seeing how the moon, which outwardly is the Church, is faith inwardly, but further know that there must be this double application, as in the well-known case of Hagar and Sarah. Outwardly, Hagar is the Jewish dispensation, which stood on law, and Sarah is the Christian Church, which stands on faith. But these dispensations of God have their course in individual souls, and in this inward application Hagar is law, and Sarah the promise, or the gospel.

See Galatians 4:22; Galatians 4:31.) Of these two, the lesser light must have appeared the first; for each day grew and was measured "from the evening to the morning;" just as faith, with borrowed light, in every soul still precedes the direct beams of the greater light of the Word of Wisdom in us. Now both shine to pour down light. Oft should we err, if, when darkness fell, our moon of faith rose not to rule the night. Yet fair as she is, she but reminds us of present night, making us sigh for the day-star and the perfect day. Thus are "the two great lights" now given by Him who began His work by giving "light." Now He gives the word of wisdom, that is the greater light; and again the word of knowledge or faith, that is the lesser light; then tongues, or discerning of spirits, or healings, like the stars, lesser manifestations of the same one Spirit. (Note: This is Augustine's exposition, speaking of the fourth day, Confess. l. xiii. c. 18, § 23. The place here given to sacraments is worthy of notice. Augustine makes them only parts of the lesser light. They are no part of the sun, which rules the day, but only of the moon, that is, the word of faith or knowledge. See also Aug. de Gen. c. Man. l. i. c. 25, § 43. Origen's comment is the same in substance, Hom. i. in Gen.) That such lights, so different and so defined, may be within, is never known by some who yet have been enlightened. The first day's light has reached them: perhaps the heaven has come: but the waters are not bounded; the earth as yet is not fruitful. To such the difference of lights and their distinct powers must be unknown. Let it not therefore be unlooked for by them. Not till the earth has brought forth fruit are these bright lights set in heaven. The lower fruitfulness of action must precede the higher delights of heavenly contemplation. Not till some fruits appear shall we be adorned with heavenly lights. Then not only is the earth blessed with dews and showers, "the precious things of heaven;" but "precious things are now brought forth by the sun, and precious things put forth by the moon also" (Deuteronomy 33:13-14). (Note: See Isidor. in Gloss. Ordinar. Augustine notices the same, Confess. l. xiii. c. 18, § 22 and 24. He goes on to instance the young man in the Gospel (Matthew 19:16), as one who, because he bore not fruit, could not advance to see the heavenly lights.) Now we perceive wherein the borrowed light of faith, resting on witness, differs from the direct light of truth, from Christ Himself within. Henceforward even the night is bright with stars: darkness is conquered even within its own borders. Faith invades the gloom, turning it at times almost to day, an approach to the glory, when "no night is there" (Revelation 21:25); now waxing, now waning, but never to fall or fail, until "our sun shall no more go down, neither our moon withdraw itself" (Isaiah 60:19-20). Now we see, too, how the creature's darkness, like death, only brings into view the greater wonders of God's work in heavenly places. Darkness shews us that the earth has a celestial suite, bright companions in heaven night and day waiting on it; moving it with celestial influences, its air, its earth, its tides; giving colour, warmth, motion, life, everywhere. Who can count all that is given from on high, when we can see that our wondrous path is not indeed a lone one, -- that a heavenly sun attracts, -- that a heavenly moon follows, -- that, though darkness may visit us, henceforth it does not rule us, but is ruled, and that even in the night which still remains in us, we have the presence of Jesus the mediator of the better covenant, and the Church of the First-born, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and an innumerable company of holy angels, who, like the morning stars, are singing all around? In bright days their quiet song, wherein they tell God's glory, may not be heard; yet they watch and sing and go with us. The gloomy night will bring them into view, still ready to teach us if we have a heart to learn.

These lights are "for signs and for seasons and for years," and "to rule over the day and over the night also" (Genesis 1:14; Genesis 1:18). For "signs" -- first, of what we are. We have thought this

earth is fixed: but sun and moon shew that we are but wanderers here. We have supposed ourselves the centre; that it is the sun that moves. The lights will teach us in due time that he is steadfast: it is we who journey on. Again, these lights are "for a sign" how we stand, and where we are; by our relative positions toward them shewing us, if we will learn, our real situation. For the moon is new and feeble, when, between us and the sun, it trenches on his place, and sets at eventide. So is our faith: put in Christ's place, it must be weak: dark will be our night: we shall move on unillumined. Not so when in her place, not in His, but over against Him, our moon of faith rises at even, as our Sun withdraws Himself. Now she trenches not upon Him; therefore she is full of light, making the midnight almost as the noon-day. So it is said, "Blow up the trumpet in the new moon" (Psalms 81:3; Psalms 81:5); and when the moon is full "eat ye the Paschal Lamb" (Exodus 12:6, &c.); that is, let the trumpet of the gospel sound, when faith is weak: when faith is strong, rejoice together in communion. Thus are the lights "for signs" of what and where we are. Dimmed by mists, they tell also of what remains in us. Turned to darkness and to blood, they forewarn of awful fire, when the earth and the works therein shall be burned up (Luke 21:25, and 2 Peter 3:10). Signs they are, too, to the man, when at length he walks upon the earth, -- the image of God, which after fruits and lights is formed in us, -- to guide him through the wastes within the creature, as he seeks to know its lengths and breadths that he may subdue it all.

Thus are the lights "for signs:" but they are "for seasons" also (Genesis 1:14); to give healthful alternations of cold and heat, and light and darkness. Sharp winters with their frosts, chill and deadness in our affections, and the hours of darkness which recur to dim our understandings, are not unmixed evil. In the coming rest such alternations will not be needed: therefore no summer or winter or shades of night are there. Here, like the gales from the ocean, they remind us of our state, and in that state work in the creature what is really best for it. We could not bear, while as we are, unbroken day. It would, though we know it not, destroy the creature. Ceaseless summer would wear us out: therefore the lights are "for seasons," measuring out warmth and light as we can profit by it. So faith wanes and waxes, and Christ is seen and hid, each change making the creature learn its own dependence; forcing it to feel, that, though blessed, it is a creature, all whose springs of life and joy are not its own.

These lights, too, are "to rule over the day and over the night." To rule the creature, much more to rule such gifts as the day, wrought by God Himself in it, as yet has been unknown. Even to bound the natural darkness hitherto has seemed high attainment. Now we learn that the precious gifts, which God vouchsafes, need ruling; an earnest this of that which comes more fully on the sixth day. A sun "to rule the day" leads to the man "to have dominion," set to rule, not the day only, but every creature. It is no slight step, when God's aim, hitherto unknown, is learnt; that in His work this gift is for this, that for the other purpose; when it is felt that the best gifts may be misused and wasted; that they need governing, and may and must be ruled. No young Christian feels this; but as he grows up into Christ, his day not only shines, but is divinely governed. The sun now marks the hours, setting to each their bound: morning is discerned from noon, and noon from evening. O blessed day, when the creature comes to bask in sunshine; gift on gift poured on it in due order from the God of all grace!

06.0.4.6. The Fifth Day

VI. -- THE FIFTH DAY THE fifth day's work is the peopling of the sea and air (Genesis 1:20-21). Animate life now is added to inanimate. The waters swarm with life, and the air with winged tribes, which wake the woods and vales with melody. Thus, too, is it within, when on us the fifth day dawns. Now higher forms of life appear everywhere; each new form yet more revealing in the creature that which hitherto had only been treasured up in the mind of God for it. For we must never forget, that all this wondrous work, which step by step is thus produced in us, is only the developing in the creature of that which had been in Christ, the wisdom of God, from everlasting. For God will stamp Himself upon us. His will is that His fulness should be revealed in us; that as we have borne the image of the earthy, we now may bear the image of the heavenly. We have seen how several glories, -- light, a heaven, fruits, and lights, -- once hid in Him, by Him are wrought in us. Each of these was a precious gift, and worthy of the Lord, transforming the creature from its natural state of ruin to light and fair order. But now come higher blessings, forms of life unknown before, multiplying first in the air and waters, then upon the dry land.

We have seen what the waters and the heaven are within, -- the former the desires, the latter the understanding. With the waters until now little has been done save to bound them. Desires are checked in us, but this is all. Now new life moves in them, the varied fish and fowl, all figuring some of the countless forms of Christ's spirit. For such is Christ's fulness, that no one type can express it; and His will is that of this fulness we should be filled also; "to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:19). The light, or a heaven, or the seed, or sun and moon, each was but some manifestation in the creature of what had been in Him. So the turtle and the eagle, now created, are but types of some fresh gift or grace of Christ's spirit; "diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; differences of administration, but the same Lord" (1 Corinthians 12:4-5). For just as in nature matter is one in all its forms, so in the new creation is the spirit one in all its transformations. The revelation only widens as the work proceeds. In due time the lion and ox and man are seen also; each a yet further expression of something in God's mind, which by His Word through grace is wrought in us. But the forms and natures of the creatures made this day, like the light and fruits, will best explain themselves. The dove is the well-known figure of meek innocence. So at Christ's baptism the Spirit "like a dove" came and abode on Him (Matthew 3:16). The eagle's lofty flight and keen vision represent but another form of the same Divine Spirit. He who says, "I bare you upon eagles' wings" (Exodus 19:4), gives us also to "mount up with wings as eagles" (Isaiah 40:31); for "of His fulness we all receive, and grace answering to His grace" (John 1:16). The other fowls of heaven, as the law shews us, both the clean and the unclean, each taught their own lesson; expressing in the difference of their lives and natures those faculties and emotions which give a form to life (Leviticus 11:9-23). Since the fall these emotions are mostly evil. Hence, in Scripture, birds are generally a type of evil spirits (Matthew 13:4; Revelation 18:2). The dragon and the whale too are used as evil (Ezekiel 29:3; Ezekiel 32:2). But they are only evil because fallen. In themselves they simply represent certain forms of life, good if dependent, evil if independent. Just as Satan, once

an angel, is now a devil, and all his light and knowledge are accursed; so the powers of the understanding, figured by the birds, are good, and through self-will only become evil. (Note: This explains how the same type may be either good or bad. Christ is a "lion." Revelation 5:5. But Satan also is a "lion." 1 Peter 5:8. The same is true also in countless other instances.) I know the eagle-eye which loves to gaze on light, and the soaring thought which delights to mount upward, and the searching spirit which finds a pleasure in fathoming great deeps, -- "for the spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God," -- may all be misused through self, and so be spoilt; for I know no good gift of God which may not become a curse to us. But the faculty as given by the Lord is good, and the thoughts or emotions which are formed to soar upward, or to dive into that depth which yet remains in us, may all tell forth the Lord’s glory. Therefore "the dragons, and the beasts, and creeping things, and flying fowl," as much as "sun and moon, and heaven, and fruitful trees," are called to praise Him (Psalms 148:1-14). As formed upon the fifth day they speak His praise, "saying, Glory to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever" (Revelation 5:13-14). (Note: Augustine explains the "moving creatures" to be emotions. De Gen. c. Manich. l. i. c. 20. See also c. 25 of same book and Confession. l. v. c. 3, § 4, and Origen, Hom. i in Gen.) The details here would open an endless field; for the natures of these creatures vary, yet cannot be misunderstood. We have seen the dove and eagle, but others preach also, exhorting us to look for like powers to be created in us; some to sing by day, as the thrush; and some, like the nightingale, to wake the dark hours; some with clarion, like the cock, to foretell the morning, and bid the sleepers arise to greet the day; some, like vultures, far-seeing, to seek their meat from far; some, like the swallow, to live as pilgrims here; some, like cranes, to fly in ranks, and know the seasons, and watch while others sleep around; some to care for the aged, as the stork; or, like the turtle, once widowed never so to pair again. Each tells its own story of what God can work, and the rich profusion of form in which the same life may shew itself. And these increase. Some heavenly gifts, as the lights of the fourth day, can never multiply. They may rise and set, and bring round springs and winters; but they do not increase by generation. But when the fifth day comes, the forms of heavenly life then given may increase greatly. For God has said, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:22). And just as the fruits formed upon the third day, "whose seed is in themselves," reproduce themselves and grow rapidly, so do the graces of the fifth day spread wondrously. And when this has come, the image of God is near, when the work shall cease, for all is "very good."

06.0.4.7. The Sixth Day

VII. -- THE SIXTH DAY TO this last stage of the work we now proceed, when the earth also having brought forth its living creatures, man, the image of God, His last and crowning gift, is set to rule as lord of all. This is the sixth day's work. Now the life of the Lamb and Man is added to the likeness of the Dove in the redeemed creature.

These forms speak for themselves. They are but the continuation, in greater perfection, of the work of the fifth day. Then the work was in the seas and heaven: now the earth, that is the will, brings forth in like manner. I need not here repeat what I have said, upon the fifth day, as to the principle on which these living creatures are to be interpreted; how they represent emotions good in themselves, only evil when fallen and independent; the living creatures of the earth representing the emotions connected with the will; the birds of heaven those connected with the understanding. (Note: Respecting the heaven and the earth, as figuring the understanding and will respectively, see above on the second and third days. Both have their own emotions.) The instinct of mankind has always read these forms aright, nor has the difference of age or country made any difference in their interpretation. To this day, wherever the primitive language of symbol yet remains, the passions are still characterised by the names of different beasts. And those to whom heaven is opened see "the living creatures" there, in the midst of the throne of God, and round about it (Revelation 4:6; Revelation 4:8), proving that powers like to these creatures, if not in God, may yet be most holy and very near to Him. It was but the perversion of this very truth, seeing in these creatures some trace or glimpse of the Divine, which ended in the worship of the creature, as in Egypt, where the ox and other beasts were deified; just as, to this day, in mystic Egypt, those gifts which are given as witnesses for God are made to take His place; the creature, in whom some trace of God is seen, being worshipped instead of the Creator. Still the gifts are good, each added form expressing but some further fulness which was in Christ Jesus: the ox, the spirit of unselfish toil (1 Corinthians 9:9); the lion, that holy wrath in which we may judge and be angry, and yet sin not (Ephesians 4:26); the lamb, that meekness which beareth all things, which is oppressed and afflicted, and yet openeth not its mouth (Isaiah 53:6). (Note: It is well known that the early church applied these figures, the lion, the ox, the man, and the eagle, to the four Gospels, conceiving that these "living creatures" were apt representations of those peculiar relations of Christ, which are respectively set forth in the four Gospels. See Ambros. Prol. in Lucam, § 8.) These and like gifts now appear, till at length the man is seen, the "image of God," to crown and perfect all.

What is this image? It is the mind of God; for Christ is that Mind or Word to rule in us. The man is Christ, the perfect mind of God. The light, and heaven, and herb, and moving creature, were all but partial glimpses of Him, preludings of that perfect revelation which should be seen in God's image. That image now is come, to rule all things, itself containing all within itself. O the depth that opens here! Who shall take the measure of that which is the likeness of the immeasurable God? For He made the heaven, and yet He rested not, -- the earth and its fruits, and yet He rested not, -- the sun, and the moon, and the creatures of the sea, and sky, and of the earth, and yet He rested not. But He made man, His image in the earth, and then He rested; for it was "very good." This image

is the mind of God in us. When this is come, the "man" is formed, erect in walk, and looking upward, able to recognise the mind and will of One above him, with an understanding to know, and a will to love, God. This it is which marks man: a mind able to understand and bow to a superior. Lose this, and we at once become as beasts, incapable of recognising, save by force, the will of One above us; "like the horse or mule which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle" (Psalms 32:9); or like Nebuchadnezzar, in vain self-exaltation, losing his reason, and with a beast's heart, becoming as a beast (See Daniel 4:1-37). The "man" is not strength, or grace, or piercing sight; but a mind thinking God's thoughts, and in communion with Him. Strength, and grace, and sight, and light, and warmth, are in him; for the inward as the outward man is in himself a little world. But a mind to recognise and hold communion with One above him, is that which, above all, marks and makes the man. And this is the secret of his rule over others; as it is said, "Subdue, and have dominion" (Genesis 1:28). For no one can rule who is not ruled. And just as Adam, while subject to God, had power over every living creature, a power he lost as soon as he rebelled, and instead of being subject became independent; so in us the "man" has power over beasts, that is the emotions within, only while it remains subject. Let the reason take God's place, then the beasts will be unruled until God again is recognised. This, I may add, is true on every platform. It is only the recognition of One above which gives power. It is the lack of this that now makes the rulers of this world helpless. Beasts are rebelling against them, because they have rebelled. And here let none forget the weighty fact, that the best powers in the new creation need ruling. Good as the ox is to labour, he needs a lord; man, therefore, is given to subdue and guide him; as God said, "to have dominion over all fish and fowl, and every living thing that moveth on the earth" (Genesis 1:28). Proofs abound on every hand that God's gifts need rule. How often is the "ox," -- the spirit of true service, -- unless subdued by the "man," found wasting its strength, or even grossly misusing it! Have fences never been broken down by strong oxen? Have weak children never been sorely injured? Have sweet vines never been crushed or trodden under feet, which were set as plants to cheer both God and man? These things have I beheld, where the "man" is not yet seen. And so of every blessing; whether lion, lamb, or eagle, all require rule. Without it, the very abundance of gifts will only cause confusion. The Church of Corinth is a proof, enriched with knowledge, but carnal, for the "man" had not yet come. The gifts indeed were there, but the mind of God was wanting. They need one like Paul, in whom the "man" is come, to set them right. Some yet have to learn this, who have reached the fifth day stage, and to whom the eagle's eye and soaring wing are not wanting. They will find the "man" to rule must come at length, God's Mind directing God's Spirit. In a word, that as in nature the powers God gives, strength, speech, or desire, if unruled by reason, become curses; so in grace the higher powers of God's Spirit must be subject to His Mind, or Word, or Reason, that is, Christ, in us. This man was created "male and female," that so he might be a perfect image of God. God is infinite Wisdom and Love. No image of Him would be complete which did not express both. Man, as His image, is, therefore, male and female, that he may be a figure both of the wisdom and love of God; the man representing the understanding, the woman the will or love-part of the mind, which united make up that inward man or mind, by which we can both know and love, and so commune with, God. The seventh day will shew us more of this, when the taking of the woman out of the man is clearly set forth. But, seen or not, a work is now wrought in us, the type of which is the man and the woman. Saints in bygone days have thought and spoken much of this, though few now care for such matters. (Note: See Augustine's interpretation of this in his Confessions, book xiii. chaps. 24 and

32. Also in his First Book against the Manichees, chap. 25, and book ii. chaps. 11-15. Also De Opere Monach. c. 32, § 40. So too De Civitat. Dei, l. xv. c. 7, ad finem. Origen gives the same explanation, Hom. in Gen. i. fol. 4. The following passage, from a modern writer, speaks the same language: "Man, that he might be capable of being an image of God, was endowed with two faculties, designed for the reception of love and wisdom from his Maker. These are known by the names of the will and the understanding, the will being designed for the reception of the divine love, the understanding of the divine wisdom. I am aware that, although the ancient metaphysicians universally adopted this general division, some of the moderns have doubted its correctness. ... Respecting the understanding, there can be little dispute; nor, I should think, respecting the will. ... As to the will, a man assuredly wills whatever he loves. Thus every species of love that can have an abode in his mind, may be considered as belonging to a certain general faculty, which is most correctly denominated the will. The mistake seems to have arisen from confounding this general faculty, by which we are only inclined to certain actions, with the determination to action, which is the result of the operation of the will and understanding together." -- Noble on Inspiration, p. 79.) As to the food of this man, too, much is taught here (Genesis 1:29). The fruits of the third day sustain the "man" in vigour. Just as faith, which is the mother of all the virtues, is often when weak supported and nourished by her children; so the "man," the highest form of the life of Christ in us, is sustained by the lower acts and fruits of righteousness. But all this, and much more, will meet the prayerful reader, who looks for teaching from above. At this stage the work ends, and then the seventh day comes, the day of rest, without an evening; the day on which the creature is shewn in another form; when a garden is seen, with trees of life and knowledge; and God Himself walking in the midst of it, conversing with the man; and when for unquiet seas there are only sweet rivers. Who shall attempt to count the blessings here? When this comes, can anything be asked or added? A heart to praise only then is needed; nor is this wanting; for every faculty in the rest of the new creation praises God. (Note: Bernard has a very beautiful passage, on the inward application of the work of the Six Days. De Amore Dei, l. iii. c. 14, § 52.)

06.0.4.8. The Seventh Day

VIII. -- THE SEVENTH DAY TO this day of rest I now would pass, a stage attained by few, for few pursue it. For it is now, as of old: the Lord may work in many a house: He can find a rest in very few. So He works in many souls, and comes to give of His fulness; but few so entirely yield to Him, as to let Him indeed rest there. Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests in us, but few hearts give Christ a true resting-place. Yet this is the stage here drawn, the state of "full age," or "perfection" (Php 3:15; Hebrews 5:14), when, instead of growth and change, and the varying life of faith, and the struggle between the old state and the work of God within us, we reach the life of vision and of rest, where the man through grace is drawn to live in a life of love above such strivings, not converted only, or even gifted, but at rest and full of peace, and, because at rest, reflecting God and heaven, like the deep still stream, which can give back each hue and cloud of heaven, while the restless soul flows on, a brawling river, reflecting nothing, though the light has come, upon its troubled bosom. Such is this day of rest, when heaven is seen in the creature, and the "powers of the world to come" are already more than tasted (Hebrews 6:1-5). Its cause is first described. The rest is come, because through the Word of God His will is done perfectly (Genesis 2:2). No rest can come until His will is done. When it is so accomplished, whether for us or in us, for us or in us there may be rest. For us there is a rest, when we see the work perfect for us in Christ Jesus. In us there is the selfsame rest, when that work is perfected in us by the same Christ Jesus. He gives Himself for us, and thus by faith His rest is ours, so soon as our faith apprehends Him now in rest for us. But He also gives Himself to us, to work in us that which once through grace He wrought for us. Our faith, from the first day when it takes Christ for us, can rest in Him, for His work is perfect. But in us, as well as for us, in experience as in faith, the rest will come, when in us, as for us, His work and will is done. Thus the rest is in His, not in our own, will done. Our will can never give us rest. If His will rules, there will be a rest. Two wills struggling may prove life or growth, but no Sabbath. God will not, cannot rest, save where His will is done. Hence, at first, there cannot be this rest, for the flesh and the spirit strive together, and the man, who as yet is double, and lives in both, though "at peace with God by faith" (Romans 5:1), cannot know "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" (Php 4:7); the law in his members warring against the law of his mind, even though God’s true work is growing there. But in time the flesh is nailed to the cross, and now the man is no longer double, but single and simple. One life now rules him, and this is God’s; and so the day of rest begins to dawn. For this is rest, to yield ourselves to God, to turn away the foot from doing our own pleasure; not doing our own ways, nor speaking our own words, nor seeking to find our own pleasure: then shall we delight ourselves in the Lord, and the creature find joy in God, and God joy in the creature (Isaiah 58:13-14). (Note: See also the connection of the well-known words in Matthew 11:25-30. John, his witness, in bonds, seems to doubt, and asks, "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" Then that generation, whether mourned or piped to, mock; and the cities which have beheld His works reject Him. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, Father, for thus it pleaseth Thee." And then at once turning to those around, having shewn how He could find a rest in God’s will, He says, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest.")

But to speak of the rest itself. Much is said descriptive of the nature of this true Sabbath.

And, first, it is "God's rest." It is not said, "the creature rested," but "God rested" (Genesis 2:3); not as though He could be weary, but to shew His satisfaction, and to teach that as the work was His and not the creature's, so the rest was His also. For God Himself has joy in seeing His work perfect. And if in the days of labour it is seen that all progress is because He works in us, much more is this felt when the day of rest is come, as it is written, "God rested from all His work which He created and made." For He works that He may rest in us. Let us not forget the complacency with which He surveys His own workmanship, and that each fresh act of submission to His Word leads to His, even as to our, rest.

Further, this rest is "blessed." We read, "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." He blessed the day. In the six days of labour God had blessed certain gifts as the "living creatures," that is, certain powers or faculties divinely given. Now a day is blessed, that is, the creature's state, as well as some of its peculiar powers, obtains the Lord's blessing. And "God sanctified," that is, took it for Himself. In the days of labour God does not get His own. But the day or state of rest is wholly His. By it, in holy contemplation, far more than in action, is the creature perfected. God may get something from our works: He gets much more when we rest, and so pass out of self and its variableness wholly into His will. On this day there is "no evening" seen. (Note: This is observed by nearly all the Fathers: by Augustine, Serm. ix. (vol. v. p. 53, ed. 1679,) and De Gen. ad lit. l. iv. c. 18, &c.: by Jerome, Epist. xxi. De Celebratione Paschae: by Bernard, De Amore Dei, l. iii. c. 13, &c.) In the days of labour, though the night is never once mentioned, from first to last the evening reappears. The evening and the morning make the day. But on the seventh day we read of no evening. And this omission, like those noticed of Melchisedek by St. Paul, is significant and full of deep teaching. (Note: In his Epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 7:1-28) the Apostle points out how much is to be learnt from the simple fact that in the history of Melchisedek nothing is mentioned either of his birth or death: he is presented to us "without father or mother, having neither beginning of days nor end of life;" an omission very unusual in Scripture with persons of note, but here with purpose, as the Apostle teaches. Other omissions in Scripture are as instructive. Those in St. Mark's Gospel, as compared with St. Matthew, are within the reach of most readers. The contrast between the books of Kings and Chronicles is as marked; the omissions of the latter being, like the additions, full of meaning.) Evening is the state preceding and tending to night or darkness. Morning is the state succeeding it. Hence the evening suggests decline of light; a relapse or tendency, however brief, to the creature's own darkness. All the days of labour have this evening, for they need it; though even then each stage proceeds "from evening to morning;" with mornings which steadily grow into the day, unlike that fitful light from the cold north, that Northern Morning (Aurora borealis), which without warmth at times shoots up at night, to go out and fade at midnight suddenly. Such northern lights are not the morning. But now the day of days has come without an evening. Now no darkness or shades return. And good as are the days when the work goes on from evening to morning, -- yea, good as are the nights, while yet we need them, -- far more blessed is the day of rest without an evening. For then is the dawn of heaven itself, when "at even time it shall be light," for the days "shall be as one day" (Zechariah 14:7); when the soul is fit to bear unbroken day, and its very "darkness can be even as the noon day" (Isaiah 58:10). Then comes this day of days, when "the sun shall no more go down, neither shall the moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and the days and nights

of mourning shall be ended" (Isaiah 60:20); a day "as the days of heaven," whose "light is sevenfold, as the light of seven days" (Isaiah 30:26); when "no night is there" (Revelation 21:25), nor toil, nor change, but God's rest, and our rest in Him for ever; as Enoch's life, who "walked with God, and was not, for God took him," whose life, the "seventh from Adam" (Jude 1:14), being a true sabbath of rest, could know no evening. Such is this seventh day, a walk with God, uniting earth to heaven in blessedness. If we know it not, let us wait: to those who wait, it will surely come, it will not tarry. And as to God Himself, the rest reveals Him to us in another character; for names denote character, and God is known by another name upon the seventh day. Throughout the days of labour, He is "God" (Genesis 1:1-31. passim). Now on the Sabbath, He is the "Lord God" (Genesis 2:4). The title "God" tells what He does. Elohim is One whose power and oath we may rely on. It speaks rather of His works than of Himself. "Lord" or Jehovah tells what He is, in His own perfections. (Note: "God," Heb. elohim [H430], from ahlah [H422, 423], to swear, speaks of One who is pledged by oath and covenant; while the plural form of the name points us to the Three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, by whose agency the covenant is fulfilled. "Lord" is Jehovah, yhwh [H3068], the Self-existing, who is what He is, above our highest thoughts.) At first what God has done or will do, is far more to us than what He is; for we need His work; the names therefore which recall it will be those by which we best know Him. When the rest is come all this remains: His name as connected with His work cannot be forgotten: it is and ever will be precious; but we learn to add what He is to what He does for us. We all have felt how much Christ's work in the newly awakened soul takes the place of Christ's person; and how the questions which then arise are of the nature and extent of His work, more than of Himself. Then prayer and praise both speak His work. The earlier part of the Book of Psalms is full of such utterances. But we close the course by praising Him, not only "for his mighty acts," but "for His excellent greatness" (Psalms 150:2); on earth, with Paul, while God works in us, blessing Him as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," for all that blessed work in Him, in that "He hath loved and raised us up in Him" (Ephesians 1:3; Ephesians 2:4-6); in heaven to hear a higher strain, "resting not day nor night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which wast, and art, and art to come; for Thou art worthy; for Thou, O Lord, hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (Revelation 4:8; Revelation 4:11): a song praising Him for what He is, yet not forgetting what He has done; in His presence and His rest seeing Him above His works, Himself far more glorious. Work indeed reveals the worker; but if somewhat of God is known in and by His work, how much more of Him is learnt in and by His rest, when His will can shine out perfectly! Oh, to know that rest yet more, to know Him more; and to know Him more, to know yet more of rest. Nor is it God alone who shines out more fully upon the seventh day: the creature itself on that day is changed, presented to us in another higher form. For instead of "herb and tree," we have now "a garden drest," whose position is "eastward" and "in Eden" (Genesis 2:8; Genesis 2:15); words full of meaning, and suggesting rising light, and pleasures at God's right hand for evermore. For the "East" speaks plainly of advancing light and warmth; while "Eden" means pleasure, and is so translated in not a few versions. (Note: Heb. eden [H5731], i.e. delight. The LXX. and Vulgate both translate the word thus: the former rendering it truphes, the latter, voluptatis. See Augustine, De Gen. c. Manich. l. ii. c. 9, § 12. See also Ambros. de Parad. c. 3. See more respecting "the East," below, on chap. 11:2.) The "garden" too speaks far more than we can bear of that Paradise into which some like Paul have been caught up (2 Corinthians 12:4; Revelation 2:7); a state not of faith but of vision, where the things within the veil, which "it is not

lawful to utter" without the veil, are made manifest. Such is this "garden," reached on the seventh day, far more glorious than the herbs and fruits upon the third day. Now instead of "seas," we have only sweet "rivers" (Genesis 2:10-14). (Note: It is to be observed, too, that whereas in the six days we only get ehrets, earth, on the seventh day we have the additional word adamah [H127], ground, which seems to indicate more care and cultivation. Earth might be uncultivated.) The man, too, instead of subduing every beast, is seen exercising toward them something like divine power. For before this day, in the first three days, names were bestowed on parts of the creation by the Creator: -- "God called the dry land, Earth, and the waters, Seas, and the expanse He called, Heaven." But on the seventh day man is permitted to shew his likeness to his Maker by giving names to the living creatures, thus shewing his insight into God's work; -- "the Lord God brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof" (Genesis 2:19). Further, much is now shewn of the "woman," his help-mate, whose relation to the "man," as made out of him, is now discerned (Genesis 2:20-25). The apprehension, too, of the "trees of life and knowledge" is something quite peculiar to this seventh day (Genesis 2:9; Genesis 2:16-17). All these things shew the creature in a form far higher and more removed from carnal conception than any hitherto presented to us. Whether we are fit even to look at such blessings, is a question for each to lay to heart. For surely not in vain was disobedient man shut out from that Paradise, the figure of which is here presented to us, -- shut out in love, for all God does is love; -- shut out lest he should have a worse judgment. The disobedient cannot enter here. Such contemplations do not suit, and would not help them. But humble souls, at peace in Christ, may look and perhaps see some of those things which belong to the seventh day, and learn thence what may be enjoyed when we rest in God's rest, because His will is done.

What, then, are these "rivers" of which we read, not here only, but in all the prophets; which are known on the day of rest and not before, and which now take the place once occupied by salt and tossing waters? In Eden the stream is one, but "from thence it is parted," and becomes four distinct rivers (Genesis 2:10). What is this, but that stream of living waters, which one and undivided for those who enter Paradise, -- and without a name while it is there, for in its undivided flow the one stream is beyond all human description, -- without the garden is parted into four streams, giving its waters to the world as Pison, Gihon, Euphrates, and Hiddekel? For divine truth, which is the living water, to those who can see it as it is within the veil, is one full stream, in undivided flow; but to us on earth it ever comes by four distinct channels. It may be said in general that there are four sources of truth, and but four, which are accessible to men, which are like rivers, in the fertility they produce upon their banks, and in the glorious power they all possess of reflecting heaven; first, intuition, by which we get an acquaintance with moral or spiritual things, which are not objects of sense; second, perception, through the senses, by which we only get an acquaintance with material things and their properties; third, testimony, by which we learn what others have found out through perception or intuition; fourth, reasoning or reflection, a process of the understanding, by which we unfold what is contained or implied or suggested by the perceptions, intuitions, or testimony. If I err not, the first of these is Pison; the second is Gihon, or Nile, -- since the fall the stream of Egypt; (Note: In Jeremiah 2:18, the LXX. translate Gihon for Nile. Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Josephus, Isidore, and I know not how many more, tell us the same. They all agree also in saying that Pison is the Ganges.) the third is Hiddekel, that is the Tigris; (Note: The LXX. here translate Hiddekel by Tigris. So, too, in Daniel 10:4. It is easy to see

how the one name might change into the other, Hiddekel, Digalto, Tigral, Tigris.) and the fourth river or channel of truth is Euphrates. Of the first of these we know little after the fall, but "it compasseth the land of Havilah, where there is gold" (Genesis 2:11-12); (Note: Havilah means "to bring forth.") the land that is of much increase, where the waters produce much fruit while they also roll down rich treasures. As seen on the day of rest these are all good, like the birds and beasts of the fifth and sixth days; yet like those same creatures all capable of perversion, as the best things may be perverted, by the fall. We know that the fall has affected all gifts, -- that some of the best powers are become most devilish. So of these rivers some are now the streams of Egypt and Babel, instead of making glad the city and garden of the Lord. Euphrates, the great head or stream of reasoning, has become the channel of the strength and wealth of great Babylon; while Gihon, or the Nile, the channel of knowledge through the senses, is the river of Egypt, from which we are redeemed. But here they are seen pouring out their streams according to God’s purpose and to God’s glory. And if we can but reach the seventh day of rest, then again not only Pison and Hiddekel, but Gihon and Euphrates also, reasoning and sense as well as faith and intuition, all give their waters to the creature’s joy and to God’s glory. Then, to use the prophet’s words of a like day, "Israel shall be the third with Egypt and Assyria, whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance" (Isaiah 19:24-25). (Note: The Fathers, while holding the inward application of these four rivers, as representing certain powers or faculties of the soul, when it has reached the seventh day, (see Aug. de Gen. c. Manich, l. ii. c. 10, § 13; Ambros. de Par. c. 3, &c.) and connecting these with the fourfold sense of Scripture, i.e. its literal, inward, outward, and dispensational applications, which are apprehended by these faculties, (see Gloss. Ordin. in loco,) in a more outward application referred these four streams to the four Gospels, regarding each as one of the channels by which the living waters of Divine truth flowed forth into the world. (Aug. de Civit. l. xiii. c. 21.) In this application, if I err not, St. John is plainly Pison, "where there is gold, and the gold of that land is good." St. Luke, I think, is Gihon; St. Mark, Hiddekel; and St. Matthew, Euphrates. In the Epistles, also, we can trace these four rivers; in Paul’s arguments, Euphrates; in James’s moralising, Gihon; in Peter, Hiddekel; in John, Pison.) On this day we learn much of the "woman." Till the sixth day we saw no man or woman. Fruits may bud on the third or resurrection day, and yet nothing be seen of the "man" in God’s image; for he is not seen till the "dove" and "lamb" appear, that is, until the sixth day. Then we learn that the man is "male and female." Now on the day of rest we see her "taken out of him;" not from his thinking head or nervous arm, but from that region of the heart, where man is least man; where the heart’s throbs are felt, and the fount of life wells up, the conceded dwelling place of love and the affections. Thence came forth woman, the type in her very nature, as in her birthplace, of those affections; formed to yield to the man or understanding, as he to rule: the two, the understanding and will, making up the man created male and female. Now it is seen that there are two distinct lives in man, one of the intellect, the other of the affections, which, though now separate in the human mind, unite as far as may be, and by their union produce all those forms of life which grow in and out of man. By these do we commune with God; the understanding, as it is the image of God’s wisdom, being the vessel to receive His truth and wisdom; the will, as it reflects His love, to receive His goodness and love; the two together formed to bring forth spiritual fruit to God, and be the means of making known and working His mind and will in the lowest and outmost part of the creature. But the mysteries here cannot be spoken. This, however, is sure, that the divided life of the man and of the woman, full of blessing

as it is, shall turn one day to a united life, which is "neither male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus." These things are indeed unspeakable, but they are seen in measure when we reach the rest. (Note: On this subject the Fathers have written much. Ambrose, De Parad. c. 2, § 11, and c. 11, § 51. Augustine gives the same interpretation, only more fully, De Gen. c. Manichaeos, l. ii. c. 11, § 15. See also c. 13 of the same book regarding the woman. Gregory the Great gives the same interpretation, Moral. in Job, l. xxx. c. 16, § 54. As to the final union of these in Christ, see the following very remarkable passage from Clement of Rome, or rather from the epistle which goes under his name, Clem. Rom. 2 Ep. ad Corinth. ad fin. The same tradition Clement of Alexandria repeats, Strom. l. iii. c. 13.) The "trees," too, as seen upon this day, are wondrous. Trees were formed and seen upon the third day. But the clear perception of their varied ends, and of God's will respecting them, is not discovered till this day. These trees, like all else wrought by God in the creature, represent some form or manifestation of the Divine Word or Wisdom, by the Word reproduced in us; their perishable nature, -- for both grass and wood are perishable, -- setting forth some gift or grace which is least enduring, as we know that both faith and knowledge shall vanish away (1 Corinthians 13:8). Here, when through grace we reach the seventh day, we learn to distinguish between the tree of life and knowledge, and to understand how the last, through misuse and disobedience, may become a means of death to us. Knowledge is not evil. The tree itself was good, and only evil through man's weakness; like the law, (and indeed law is but knowledge,) which is "holy, just, and good," and yet "works condemnation" (Romans 7:7-13). But good as it is, let us take heed how we use it. Wisdom is the tree of life; -- "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her" (Proverbs 3:18); and he that eats of her shall live by her (John 6:57); but knowledge, even of divine things, may but reveal our nakedness. The day of rest will shew, not only that good gifts of God need ruling, but that some may only judge us more, if by them we think to be as gods in independence. (Note: Irenaeus, Contr. Hoer. l. v. c. 20, makes a very striking use of this against the Gnostics, whom he charges with preferring the tree of knowledge to the tree of life.) For higher gifts involve a deeper judgment, if they are not used aright.

I say no more, therefore, on this day, though each word here involves a mystery. He who sees the "rivers," and the "trees of Eden," and the "East," and the "keeping of the garden," and the "naming of the creatures," and the "woman for the man," will see yet more to fill him with adoring praise and wonder. For truth is throughout so closely connected, that one truth cannot be opened without opening with it many others. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Such is the Work and Rest of God, in a soul or world the same story. It is the self-same work which is only set forth more fully in the seven great lives recorded in Genesis; the order of which accords with the steps of the work and rest of God in creation. Thus, the first day revealed the creature's state, when light shone in, and shewed the earth's voidness. So Adam is the first great life in Genesis, discovering what the creature is, out of which and in which God purposes to work such great marvels. What he lacks is not yet known, nor is there yet any understanding of what by grace can be brought forth out of him; but the darkness which his fall has wrought is seen under the light of the promise, which, while it lessens the darkness, reveals its gross unsightliness. The second

day then gives a heaven to earth, an expanse into which the breath of heaven may come, and which it may fill as its own proper dwelling place, dividing the waters from the waters, shewing that some are salt and earthy, and some heavenly. So Cain and Abel are something more than the "old man." Two lives, of the flesh and spirit, as unlike each other as heaven and earth, are shewn by nature or by grace growing out of the root of old Adam. Then, the third day revealed a rising earth, with herb and fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind. And so the third great life, namely Noah's, sets forth regeneration, in which the creature is brought to know something of the power of resurrection; delivered out of that which hitherto had precluded fruit, into a state of purer and higher blessing, where, the flood of waters being already passed, vines may be planted, and become very fruitful. After this, the fourth day's work is lights; the sun and moon appear to rule the day, and still more to conquer darkness; as Abraham's life, which is the fourth great stage, shines out, not with mere light, but with the lights of faith and charity, emitting rays like sun and moon, by which the light, which we have already received, is governed, and the remaining darkness overcome. Till on the fifth day comes life in the air and sea, the eagle-eye and gentle dove are now visible; answering to which is Isaac's heavenly life, the fifth great form of life divinely given, in whose spirit of meekness and understanding the very grace itself is shewn which the dove and eagle of the fifth day are formed to represent, -- grace peculiar to the spirit of the Son, who is known as such when the Spirit "like a dove" descends and rests upon Him (Luke 3:22); and whose portrait, as drawn by the beloved Apostle John, has ever been distinguished from other manifestations of the same Life by the form and "face of an eagle." (Note: The fourth cherubic face, "as of an eagle," by the consent of all ages has been applied to St. John's Gospel, as revealing Christ in the relationship of Son of God.) After which we reach the sixth day's stage, with beasts from the earth, the sheep and oxen strong to labour; a hint of Jacob and all his long service, toiling for others, sighing to rule, yet not ruling; till at the close of this stage the man appears, the image of God, the first who is called to rule all things, like to Joseph, the last great life, the crowning work, the one who after many struggles knows both rest and glory. I do not attempt to explain all this. But light shews many a link, where the darkness of a less instructed eye only beholds discord. And the tale which to some is but an endless and entangled skein, to those who possess the clue, is full of unity as well as deepest wisdom. And I may add that as this work is fulfilled within, so is there also an accomplishment in the dispensations. In this application "one day is as a thousand years" (2 Peter 3:8). Six thousand years of labour precede the world's Sabbath. The parallel here has been often traced. Thus the first day gave light to the dark and fallen world. So the light of the promise of the woman's Seed is the great object which attracts us amid the deep gloom of the first thousand years. At this stage the waters (and in this view "the waters are peoples," Revelation 17:15,) are not only unquiet, but undivided. But the second day divides the waters, as we know the sons of God and the sons of men became distinct and divided during the second thousand years. After this, on the third day, the earth appears; something, firm and fruitful now is seen above the waters; just as Abraham and his seed were called out of the world to be as the fruitful earth amid the restless and fruitless nations. In this day we see the righteous grow like the palm-tree, and fruits of divers forms are borne to God's glory. Then come lights upon the fourth day, the sun and moon and stars, divine gifts of government and prophecy, to be a light to all nations; a sun indeed one day to be turned to darkness, and the moon into blood. After which, on the fifth and sixth days, higher life appears, beasts, first in the seas, then upon the dry land; as in the fifth and sixth thousand years a form of life appeared on earth, unlike

all that went before it; first, the beast from the sea, which St. John saw in his Revelation; and then, on the sixth day, the beast from the earth (Revelation 13:1; Revelation 13:11); and then the man to rule, the image of God on earth, to spend the blessed seventh day, the seventh thousand years, of rest in joy and heavenly blessedness. (Note: Augustine, in his First Book against the Manichees, goes very fully into this dispensational application, in chaps. xxii. and xxiii. § 33-41. Any reader who wishes to see how general this interpretation was in the early Church, will find a mass of quotations in Cotelerius' Annotations on the General Epistle of Barnabas § 15, and in the Commentary of Corn. a Lapide, On the Pentateuch, on Genesis 2:1, p. 62.)

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Lo, these are a part of His ways; but how little a portion is heard of Him (Job 26:6-14).

06.1.0. Adam, or Human Nature

PART 1 ADAM, OR HUMAN NATURE

Genesis 3:1-24 "The first man is of the earth, earthy." -- 1 Corinthians 15:47.

"The old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." -- Ephesians 4:22.

GENESIS opens wondrously; first announcing a creation; then shewing it marred; then a restoration. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." As for God, His work is perfect. If He created, His work must have been good. And yet the next thing is a darkened world. For "the earth was dark and without form and void." In some way, not revealed, God's work had been destroyed. God, then, in the six days, restores that earth, not made dark by Him, yet now in darkness; and on this ruined earth His work proceeds till His image is seen, and He can rest there. This wonder, of a work of God soon self-destroyed, meets us again in the beginning. Scarcely is God's image seen in man, before that spiritual work is marred in Adam. The creature formed to bear God's image falls, and thus becomes a platform for another work. In each case mystery shrouds the fall. How the earth became "without form and void and dark," is not told us. And how the man, God's image, falls, is a great deep: for great is the mystery of godliness, and not less the mystery of iniquity. But the fact is here. We see man made by the Divine Word; and then man, as he makes himself by disobedience. In this way the fall is shewn not to be man's normal state. Man, like Adam, may be far off from God, yet in his heart, as in Scripture, a witness will be heard, saying that this distance is through self-will. He may live in sin; but he knows that such a life is opposition to the will and purpose of his Maker. Sin is not the law of our being, but a struggle against it, as conscience tells every man. Therefore is God's work shewn before the fall, to confirm the voice which speaks in every heart, and which declares that though all men walk as Adam, sin is no part of God's work, but its opposite. Man's proper place is seen in Christ. Out of Christ we are not lost only, but rebellious. Man, through self, may be all that we see in disobedient Adam, debased and sunk from God and heaven into self, from joy and glory into misery; and yet in Christ man has been, and is, set in all that glory which God's work and rest typify; so that Paul can say, "God hath raised us up, and blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). Adam, ruling all creatures, is the type of man in Christ, as God makes him; fallen Adam, of man in self, as he makes or unmakes his own nature. The one, with glories more than eye can see, figured in the blessings bestowed in Paradise on the creature; the other, losing all through sin, with mind and will subject to, instead of ruling, lower creatures. This latter sight, what man is in self, -- how he falls and departs from his Creator, -- how the understanding errs, -- how the will is seduced, -- how these highest powers yield to lower ones, -- how the end is shame and distance from God, -- how the Lover of men in grace meets and conquers this, -- all this is shewn as in a glass, man's self being here presented to us. As Adam fell, we fall each one; for Adam lives yet in his progeny. And, fallen in him, we prove he is in us, by walking just as he walked. Adam yet re-lives old Adam's life, as Christ in us yet lives Christ's life. And just as things are true for us in Christ, which, if we are in Him, must in due time be true in us also, as death and resurrection; so,

being fallen in Adam, we shall find his fall to be true also in our experience. Adam in us still lives old Adam’s life. His life is the figure of our life when "we walk as men" (1 Corinthians 3:3).

I proceed, then, to trace his course; first within, then in its more outward application. We shall see how, in spite of every gift, man as man is prone to ruin all.

06.1.1. Adam, or Man

I. -- ADAM, OR MAN

FIRST, to trace this path in that world of thought and will which is within; for, to this day, when we sin, nothing else is done but what is here set forth in the man, the woman, and the serpent. (Note: Augustin. de Gen. c. Manich. l. ii. c. 14, § 21; Ambros. de Par. c. 15, § 73.) In this view the man is the understanding, the woman the will, (Note: I use the word "will" here for that general faculty of the mind by which we are inclined to certain actions, rather than for that determination to action, which is now generally called the "will," but which I believe to be the result of the united operation of the will and understanding. If the forms of language are any guide, (and surely they often utter the results of true and deep insight,) such words as thelema and voluntas may be quoted as witnesses that the old view of the will as the seat of love is in the main correct. Both thelema and voluntas describe the will as the organ of affection and desire, rather than of determination; and in this sense I here use the word.), the serpent some animal faculty or emotion in us -- good, when in subjection, but which may be a means, under the influence of the evil spirit, to tempt the will, and lead it to disobedience and independence, and so to misery. For the will, not the understanding, is that in us which is first assailed, seduced by some lower sense or emotion, which seems to promise more happiness. But for the will, the emotions would not be felt, but only thought about: but they are felt: hence they are passions; for we really suffer, though we should command, them. Only thus is man led away. For our understanding, -- that is, the man, -- cannot be led to consent to sin but by the will; that is, that part of the mind which loves, and which, as the woman to her husband, is formed to be subject, and ought to be obedient. (Note: Aug. de Gen. c. Manich. l. ii. c. 14, § 20; c. 18, § 28.) Here the will acts in independence. If this will stood firm, the temptation would be overcome. But the will yields, and becomes self-will, and then by it the man or understanding is seduced. The head goes wrong because the heart is first seduced, while yet the head or understanding is the man, whom the heart or woman should obey. But in every fall the heart perverts the head, the will tempts the understanding, as in every restoration it is out of the heart or will that the new life must come, "the woman’s Seed," which is divinely given to overcome the evil. And yet what zeal is shewn to enrich and deck the understanding, which, at the best, is only half our nature, while those affections are unkept, which, as being the spring and womb of every form of future life, are ever the first and special object of the tempter. Alas! we learn all this too soon by falls, in which the promise of forbidden knowledge is yet the bait to draw us aside. To know is yet the snare; and the will, once set on this, is quickly overcome. Then, "when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14-15). Thus falls the will, throwing off dependence at the suggestion of a lower nature in us, which is very near it. (Note: Augustine marks that this is done in the evening, "in the cool of the day," (Genesis 3:8,) when the sun of love and light is declining. Aug. de Gen. c. Manich. l. ii. c. 16, § 24.) The results I need not follow here; for it is the same story in the outward application. But I may note the sentence on the "woman," -- pain in bringing forth, and subjection to her husband; as it is said, "And he shall rule over thee;" on the "man," bread by the sweat of his brow, with the earth cursed

henceforth with thorns and briers (Genesis 3:16-19). For the fallen will, if it travails to bring forth other forms of life, produces them with pain and much difficulty: but, having done so, is more than ever subject to reason. (Note: Aug. de Gen. c. Manich. l. ii. c. 19, § 29.) While the understanding, -- that is the "man," -- finds the earth full of thorns: not easily does it gather truth, the bread of life; for, as the wise man says, "the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things" (Wis 9:15). On the one hand, there are the thorns and briers of perplexing questions, which, unless they are rooted out, will choke the good seed. On the other, the understanding itself is weaker, and must "sweat" for that, which once grew without labour. Thus truth, like fruit, has to be sought and waited for; the toil to gain it being ordained to strengthen, even while it corrects and humbles us. (Note: Georg. i. 121.) And if the man will not accept this sentence, the ground is quickly filled with thorns and thistles, so that he who will not eat by the sweat of his brow here, will have to gather bitter things both here and in another world. (Note: Aug. de Gen. c. Manich. l. ii. c. 20, § 30.)

I cannot write what crowds upon me here, as to the "woman," and her "Seed," who shall destroy and bruise the serpent; or how Christ, if He be "formed within" (Galatians 4:19), is made of the woman in us, that is the human will; growing thence, out of the womb of human affections, not by man, but by the Holy Ghost, who begets that new life, to be in due time born amidst beasts, out of a pure virgin affection, like Mary, in us; which is itself the fruit of numberless other affections, some grievously defiled as Rahab and Thamar, which have gone before. (Note: Rahab and Thamar are mentioned in the Lord’s genealogy, Matthew 1:1-25.) For from Adam to Christ are seventy-two generations, as from Abraham to Christ are forty-two (See Matthew 1:1-25 and Luke 3:1-38); that is, many a form of life is produced, and many an inward travail and death is known by us, before the will brings forth that life of faith, of which Abraham is the appointed figure. And after Abraham, or faith, more births will there yet be, in which the energy of nature is more or less manifest, before that form of life appears, which is of the Holy Ghost, and is the "perfect man." Some of these, as David and Solomon, are like, but yet are not, the perfect man, but only carnal forms or copies of Him; as we know that before God’s image comes in us, certain outward likenesses, and carnal prefigurings or preludings of it, in different measures will appear in us. Many a form of life grows, toils, withers, and dies, having produced another to succeed it, which again dies out, and this many times, before the image of God, the perfect man, the true Seed, comes. But it comes at last, and the serpent’s head is bruised. She, by whom came death, brings forth the Life-giver. (Note: Any one who cares to see how generally received this mystic application of Christ’s genealogy was among the Fathers, may do so by consulting the Catena Aurea on the Gospels, where the inward fulfilment is given in loco. See also the extract from the Ordinary Gloss further on upon the fifth chapter, in note 13, p. 92. Augustine just glances at this succession of forms of life in us, in his Confessions, l. i. c. 6, § 9. So Chrysostom says, "Dost thou not see every day a resurrection and a death taking place in the periods of our life?" Hom. on 1 Thessalonians 4:15, page 410 of the Oxford Translation.) And very wondrous is the woman’s name; for "Adam called his wife’s name, Eve," or Life, not while she stood, but after she had fallen, and by her fall had brought in death (Genesis 3:20). (Note: Eve, Heb. chavvah [H2332]. The LXX. here translate Zoe for Eve.) So within, the fallen will is "Eve;" fallen, and yet indeed the true "mother of all living." Only by the will is another life produced. It is the opener of all evil or good in the creature. As we love, we live. Therefore must we "keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of good or bad life" (Proverbs 4:23). So the Lord teaches, -- "From within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts," and

every form of evil living (Mark 7:21); and out of the affections grows that life which is life, and is eternal. (Note: Aug. de Gen. c. Man. l. ii. c. 21, § 31. To the same effect is the well-known prayer in the Litany, -- "to receive the word with pure affection, and (so) to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.") And yet the man, and woman too, though she is the mother of all living, are shut out of Paradise. A flaming sword keeps the way, while at its gate are placed cherubim. The fallen mind in mercy is shut out, because unfit to deal with heavenly things; while forms of truth (for these cherubim were such forms) reveal, as through a veil, some ray of glory such as the fallen mind and will can bear. For now a coat of skin in mercy covers both. Other things therefore in grace are made to agree thereto.

---------- But all this may be more clear to some, if we trace its fulfilment in the outward kingdom. The tale is one within or without, enacted before the face of the world, or carried on invisibly in the inmost soul of man.

Outwardly then we here have man as man. Human nature in its ways and griefs and hopes is drawn for us, with the exactness of One who views it as it is, and who presents the perfect figure of it in Adam to us, that, if we cannot look within, we may yet learn by Adam’s ways to know our own tendencies. We are shewn here, first, the way of man; then, the consequences; then, the remedy.

06.1.2. Man's Way

II. -- MAN'S WAY AS to the way of man, as man, it is from God to self and independence; a way not without its marked stages, -- for there is first temptation, then sin, and disobedience, -- and each of these has its own steps, but the steps and stages are all away from God. Such is the way of man. If he returns, that return is God's way for man, and not mere man's way.

First in this way comes the temptation. This at once touches a field of mystery, assuming the existence of an enemy of God and man; though how he became such, or whence or what he was, or how he had power to reach this world, and to use its creatures, is not told us. What we know is this, that man is tempted, and that by some of the common creatures which surround him here; the weaker vessel being ever first assailed, as being more likely to yield, and in yielding to draw the stronger with her. Christ was "tempted of the devil," and could say, "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Matthew 4:1-10), for the New Man sees a spiritual world. But man as man sees but the creature, some outward thing, and not a spirit under it. Some paltry thing, the smallest, commonest creature, may be, and is often, used to ruin us. A tree or beast may stir our lusts, and a garden or fruit awaken passions and desires, which may prove too strong for us. For though man, as Adam, sees but the creature, a world of spirits is working under it, by the creature tempting man to trust in self and creatures more than God.

Yet with this difference, that Adam saw only the creature, whilst Christ in His temptation recognised the devil as the direct agent in it, the two temptations varied not. The serpent's words in substance exactly answer to those recorded in the Gospel; first suggesting doubts as to God's love, then as to His truth, then openly attempting to put the creature into God's place. Such is the trial here: such was Christ's: and such is man's temptation yet. There is indeed no other.

First comes a suggestion questioning God's love; and this is put with great subtlety, suggesting that the commandment was merely arbitrary, imposed by power, rather than ordained in love: -- "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat?" (Genesis 3:1). (Note: It is noteworthy that the serpent always substitutes Elohim for Jehovah, -- "Hath Ehohim said," &c., Genesis 3:1; Genesis 3:3; Genesis 3:5. This, compared with Genesis 3:8-9; Genesis 3:13-14, &c., where in every instance we have Jehovah Elohim, is suggestive and significant.) As much as to say, He grudges; He cannot really love you. Keeping out of sight what God has done, His unnumbered gifts and proofs of love everywhere, the serpent fixes on the one thing denied, and brings this forward in the way most likely to awaken hard and evil thoughts. Yet he only puts a question as to God. He questions what God does: thus he opens the temptation.

If we question what God does, we judge God; we get out of our place, and put Him out of His. For simple as the question seemed, by it the serpent was drawing Eve to be God's judge, rather than His worshipper: -- an awful place for men, yet one into which our adversary is ever drawing us; to lead ere long to make ourselves as gods, and to make God a liar. A really humble soul never judges God. It may not have peace or joy, but at least it will not judge God; submitting rather to His sovereign will; tempted to question, yet not questioning. Such a soul has broken through the

snare. It is safe, for it will not entertain questions as to God’s ways.

Eve, however, meets the question, as men yet meet it, with knowledge. She answers with the truth of God (Genesis 3:2-3); shewing how the serpent misrepresented God. And yet she fails. What was wrong here? This, that the woman was parleying with Satan instead of worshipping. Could Satan have gone on with success, if the woman, instead of arguing the point, had at once given God His place by worship and submission? Then God and the creature would both have had their place, and the serpent’s subtlety would have been foiled. But Eve utters truth, while her soul drinks in the lie. Unconsciously she is taking the place of judging God. And truth held away from God will not preserve: on the contrary, it may very readily be used against us. Balaam had the truth; but he walked not with God. Instead of helping him, therefore, the truth only judged him (Numbers 24:17; Numbers 31:8). And we too may have some well-known text, when Satan, "that old serpent" (Revelation 12:9), suggests that God does not love us. Will it help us against the tempter’s wile, if we are parleying with him, instead of worshipping? Alas! We all know how powerless truth is, if we are admitting questions suggesting doubts as to God’s love.

Such is man’s first trial; and thus, in doubts of God’s love, comes in creature love. All the world is doing what Eve did. They think God does not love them: they must therefore love themselves. So man turns to find his joy out of God, in things which cannot satisfy. This is the fundamental lie, -- God does not love. Every other lie is possible after this. This it is which leads man away from God. Distance from Him is easy, if the poison of this lie is really rankling in us. Oh how deep this lie has gone! Who likes to be at the mercy of God in everything? Men will trust a strong box more than God, because they are not quite certain that He so loves, that at every step He will order what is best for them. God will stint them, they fear. God cannot make them happy now. This tree or that will give far more joy than God can; for love is joy, and, if God loves us not, we can but try self and creatures and creature love. The next step is the denial of God’s truth. "The serpent said, Ye shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4). Love being doubted, truth is next assailed. God now is treated as a liar. He said indeed, Ye shall die, if ye transgress. But fear not: ye shall not die.

Now here, as before, if God lose His place, something else must take it. If the truth is doubted, some lie will be believed. Where God is not trusted, Satan will be; and, indeed, the world’s happiness consists in trusting him. To this day, wherever man is doubting God, he is building his happiness upon the devil’s lie. Could men, if they believed God’s word, go on happily in a course of disobedience and self-will? But they believe a lie. Their happiness in sin rests on believing the devil. Carnal happiness apart from God could not live for a day under a faith that God is true, and will fulfil His word on those who disobey Him. The truth is, man must trust some one. Boast as he may, he cannot stand alone. The man, therefore, who doubts the love and truth of God, having given up God, must trust the creature. If, therefore, creatures ask him to sin, he will obey them; for they are now in the place of God to him. If we believe God, we are free. If we will not trust Him, we are the tool and slave of any thing or any one who is stronger or cleverer than we are. And now God’s love and truth being denied, the next step is to take God’s place openly. So the serpent says, "Ye shall be as gods" (Genesis 3:5). He now can dare to say any thing; for if the poison of the first two lies has entered, God has quite lost His character in the heart of man. Self now may therefore seek to be "as God;" so entirely is spiritual perception gone when we begin to doubt God.

Some may not see the sin of this. Sin blinds us so that we do not know what is sin. Men see no harm in seeking to be gods, in setting themselves up to know or judge both good and evil. (Note: The expression, "knowing good and evil," may mean sitting in judgment on it, as in 2 Samuel 14:17, and 1 Kings 3:9. Ambrose so takes it, De Parad. c. 11, § 52.) Self-glorying therefore is thought to be no sin, till some wretched fruit of exalting self opens our eyes to see it; while judging good and evil seems almost to be our work, so readily do we pass sentence on everything, as though neither sin nor danger were connected with it. But both are sin, for they rob God. They take His place, to put self into it. God must be the centre where He is known. Let Him be dishonoured, self will be the centre; and each fair gift is turned into a curse, the creature exalting itself at the expense of God's glory; till, as in Nebuchadnezzar, loss of understanding is the result, and man becomes as a beast for his self-exaltation, "until seven times pass over him" (Daniel 4:30-32). God does, indeed, call us to glory, but by glorifying Him, not by self-glorying. And in that day we too may judge, for man shall "judge the world," yea, "judge angels" (1 Corinthians 6:2-3). But the way thither is the way of Christ, who "grew in wisdom," while in subjection even to His earthly parents; in meekness and obedience offering Himself to God, taking man's place and giving to God His place. In such a path, blessing must be man's, for in it God is glorified. Let man arrogate the glory, blessing will depart, until God receives His own again (Compare Malachi 2:2, and Psalms 29:1; Psalms 29:11, and Psalms 96:7-10).

Still the serpent spoke some truth. They "became as gods." God Himself declares, -- "The man is become as one of us" (Genesis 3:22). And this is yet the tempter's way: he does not put forth a lie only, with the uncomeliness of a mere lie; but first a question full of plausibility, then a lie, and then a truth out of its place, working as a lie, and used to deceive us. For he can tell much attractive truth; but never for God against self, always to nourish self and self-will against the will of God. And there is a point where truth becomes the surest snare, aiding to fix us in the most awful self-deception; while held in sin, without conscience, to exalt self, it becomes our worst punishment. So a saint, when asked, "What was the most dangerous doctrine?" replied, "God's own truth held carnally and to exalt self." For His light may blind, His ark destroy, His sanctuary smite, His table be damnation (Leviticus 10:1-2; 1 Chronicles 13:9-10; 2 Chronicles 26:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:29). And a truth perverted may be the firmest chain to hold and bind and blind us for ever.

I might speak much here of other outward things, which had their weight in this temptation; such as the lust of the flesh, for "the tree was good for food;" the lust of the eye, for it "was pleasant to the eye, and fair to look upon;" and the lust of the mind, the pride of knowledge, for it was "a tree to be desired to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6). All these concur, and thus falls man: thus grows the "evil heart of unbelief;" and God, -- Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, -- gives place to that other trinity, the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Father is superseded by the world: creature love serves now instead of God's Love. The Son, God's Truth, is doubted, and at once Christ's opposite, the devil, "who abode not in the truth," must be trusted. Then the Holy Ghost is grieved and assailed; and in His place the flesh or self is glorified. (Note: The New Testament is full of these contrasts; the Father is ever set against the world, Christ against the devil, and the spirit against the flesh. See 1 John 2:15-16; 1 John 3:8; Galatians 5:17.) In this order does the evil work, as then, so now, in every man; till man actually believes that sin is blessedness: not to sin and do as he will is now considered bondage. So deceived is he, that he thinks the evil good, and counts self-pleasing to

be joy, though he finds no peace in it. (Note: For many of the best thoughts in this section, I am indebted to a paper, entitled "The Rejected Man," being No. 41 of the series, "Words of Truth.")

06.1.3. The Fruit of Man's Way

III. -- THE FRUIT OF MAN’S WAY BUT what are the real fruits of this way? The first is a bad conscience: -- "Their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked" (Genesis 3:7). Then under a sense of their shame, they seek to hide it. "They sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons."

Such a conscience, such an "opening of the eyes," though it may precede conversion to God, is not conversion. It is not even one of the good things which survived the fall. It was acquired in the fall, and in itself drives man away from God, and only proves that he now sees himself. Man cannot bear his condition, or change it; therefore he hides it. But hiding it is not repentance. Where there is true repentance, there is ever open and unreserved confession. So they made for themselves "aprons," not coats. "God made them coats" (Genesis 3:21); but they were content to hide so much only of their nakedness as they saw before them. God covers all by that which has died. But as long as the shame alone of sin is upon us, we shall seek to hide it, rather than to find atonement. Some creature or gift of God will be used, to keep us from seeing what we are, and to hide us from our own eyes. This is the reason why men so love the world, because the utter loss of outward things would shew us what poor, naked, shameful, restless, aching souls we are; while the abundance of outward things in some measure hides this from us, and keeps us from the humiliating perception of what we are. Should not then our shame be hid? Surely. God would have it covered, but with that which, while it covers, is also a witness of our true state, -- which confesses what we are, and that sin has brought death, though almighty grace out of death brings forth righteousness. This leads to a further fruit of sin. "They hid themselves from the presence of the Lord" (Genesis 3:8). God has now to call out to them, "Where art thou?" How comes it you are not with me? Oh, how much is there in these words! God finds His creatures hiding from Him. He would let them learn the position into which they have brought themselves by disobedience. Does He do this by reproaches? He simply says, -- Where art thou? How comes it you are not with me? Adam had his excuse at hand, and man’s excuse is yet the same. In this excuse of Adam’s we may see a yet further fruit of disobedience. Guilty man attempts to clear himself by throwing blame upon some other one (Genesis 3:12-13). The righteous ever justify God; the sinner’s great mark is self-justification; accusing God, or man, or Satan, without one word of self-renunciation. And, observe, the excuses were all true, but no recognition of God’s claims or open confession of guilt is to be found in them. God asks, -- How comes it you are not with me? We answer, -- Because some creature has beguiled us; which is true, but no fit answer for a sinner. Nor does it spring from, nor produce a good conscience. And truth without a good conscience will not help; rather it may become a snare, serving to root us in the most awful self-deception. Admitting sin is not confessing it. Extorted concession is not confession. But if God has not His place, all spiritual sense is gone. That which has made us err in heart, makes us err in understanding also. But there are other fruits of sin more external, and having to do with man’s body and his dwelling place. The earth is cursed, and henceforth sorrow and toil are to be man’s due portion, until he return to the dust whence he was taken (Genesis 3:16-19): a lot which seems hard, and yet is mercy; by toil to

draw man out of self, and then by death to destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil. But on this I need not enter here. This part of man's lot has ample illustration everywhere.

One consequence of sin remains, characteristic of the lot of man as man, namely, exclusion from paradise. Fallen man is driven out, lest as fallen he eat and live for ever (Genesis 3:22-24). This, too, is love. Old Adam is shut out, but the Seed can enter through the flaming sword and past the cherubim. The Head first passed, and then the members; and though man as man, that is the first Adam, without sore peril may not enter into that from whence God has excluded him, yet for man in Christ, the Second Man, the way is open, and we are invited thitherward (Revelation 2:7). Paul was caught up, how he could not tell, whether in the body or out of it, into paradise (2 Corinthians 12:3-4); and John, and others too, have passed that sword, which turns every way to shut out old Adam. For saints the way is open yet. But for man as man to seek by magic arts, as many have sought, without God's truth and love, in selfhood to enter into paradise, to hold communion with the spirits there, from which as fallen God in mercy has excluded them, only tends to make men into devils; for fallen man deceived and now akin to evil, by laws he little knows of, will come into contact with his like, even with evil, and by it will be yet more deceived, even while he thinks an angel of light is teaching him. To man, therefore, as man, the way is closed. Paradise suits him not; therefore he may not enter there. But, instead, at the gate are forms of the Divine, cherubim, veiling and yet revealing God's glory; "figures of the true," such as fallen man can bear, instead of purely spiritual communications, serving as a veil for heavenly things, and yet, like the veils of the tabernacle, which were covered with cherubims (Exodus 26:31; Exodus 36:35), in and by the veil itself revealing heavenly things. Israel, therefore, is forbidden to hold any unlawful intercourse with the spiritual world by means of "enchanters, witches, charmers, consulters with familiar spirits, wizards, or necromancers," as the nations of Canaan had done, because the Lord would speak to them by a Man, a Prophet like unto Moses (See the context, Deuteronomy 18:9-19). Such is God's provision for fallen man, -- forms of truth for those unfit for spiritual things; not leaving the creature in the spiritual world to an intercourse with spirits, for which, as fallen, it is incompetent; but giving, instead, a human form, (the cherubim had "the likeness of a man,") (Note: See Ezekiel 1:5; Ezekiel 10:15. The application of these cherubic forms, the lion, the ox, the man, and the eagle, to the four Gospels, or rather to the four views of Christ which they respectively set forth, is well known. See Irenaeus, who wrote in the second century, Adv. Hoer. l. iii. c. 11. See also Ambrose, Prolog. in Luc. § 8.) by the mystery of the Incarnation in all its forms to teach us in the flesh such things as man can profit by, and yet ordained to shew us higher things, and to be the door to open, even while it shuts, paradise; by that very door teaching man how to pass it, through the fiery sword and past the cherubim. For if we enter, we must yet pass the figures and the sword to that which is within. Any coming into heavenly places is through this narrow gate. If I do but die to my own righteousness, and seek to come into that rest and joy which is by faith, the flaming sword at once meets me. What pains has even this amount of dying and entering cost many! Much more, if faith turn to experience, shall we find how sharp that sword is. Mere flesh cannot pass it; but it may be passed, and must be passed, if we would enter paradise. And awful as it appears, by it is cut off much of that which is our sorrow here.

06.1.4. The Remedy for Man

IV. -- THE REMEDY FOR MAN

SUCH is man, -- such is his way, such are its fruits. Now let us see the remedy. This too has stages, all of God; first a Call, then a Promise, then a Gift, from Him.

First comes a Call, a voice which will be heard, to convince man of his state, saying, "Where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9). A voice which may sound in different ways, but which in all is crying to draw man back again; at first only convicting of sin, yet by this very conviction laying the foundation for man's recovery; leading man to come to himself before it is too late, that he may come to his Father, and from Him receive another life; and asking, though man oft turns a deaf ear, why we are not with Him, who still loves and yearns over us.

Then comes a Promise, full of grace and truth, touching the woman's Seed (Genesis 3:15); a promise not to old Adam, for the old man is fallen, and must pay the penalty: -- no reprieve is given to the flesh: the cross which saves us is Adam's condemnation: -- but a promise to the Seed or New Man, who shall be born, in and by whom man shall regain paradise. And as the promise is not to Adam, so, strictly speaking, there is now no trial of him. What Adam is, has been already proved. Blessed with every gift, through self he spoils all. Man therefore must die, but in the Son of Man man's line is restored and raised up again. The fall of man, like the fall of the year, by God's almighty love and wisdom opens the door for broader and richer seed-times. The very grave becomes the cradle of life, and death the way to resurrection. The new man springs out of the old, and from its grave, as a fair flower in spring out of the dark earth. For the Son of Man is indeed true man, though every man is not a son of man. (Note: Man and the Son of Man are not the same. Adam, for instance, was man, but not the son of man. The son of man is the new man, which grows by grace out of the old man. So David says: "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?" Again, "Thou preservest man and beast, but the sons of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." -- Psalms 8:4; Psalms 36:7. Augustine speaks much of this difference, Enar. in Psalm. viii.) In the Son or Seed the curse is overcome. All that rose up in man falls in and by the Son of Man; and all that fell in man is raised again in the Son of Man, the Seed, the heavenly man. The promise cannot fail to this Seed. Unlike the first covenant, which, being of law, needed two parties, the better covenant needs but one, for it is a promise, and is fulfilled by the Promiser. Henceforth blessing stands not on a creature's will, but on deeper, safer ground, even the Lord's will. "Thou shalt" now gives place to "I will." If we are heirs, it is "according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). Nor is the promise all. God adds a Gift: -- "The Lord God made them coats of skins and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21). Again He works, for sin had broken his rest; working, as ever, to restore blessedness; to cover not with fig-leave screens only that part of our nakedness which is before each of us; but to give us, upon us, in token of our state, -- for the skins spoke of death, and so confessed trespass, -- a covering which, while it puts us in our place, as sinful creatures, yet shelters us.

Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps; fire and hail; snow and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling His word; mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars; beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl; kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth; both young men, and maidens; old men, and children; let them praise the name of the Lord; for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven.

There is yet another view of man, which gives us the dispensational fulfilment of the same history. In this view Christ and the Church appear. He is "the Man," who "left father and mother and was joined to His wife." While He slept, she was made out of Him; and they two became one flesh (Ephesians 5:31-32). (Note: Aug. in Psalm. cxxvii. (E.V. 128,) § 11; Enar. in Psalm. cxxvi. (E.V. 127,) § 7. This interpretation is common to all the Fathers.) This is "the woman, which is of the Man," and this is "the Man who is also by the woman" (1 Corinthians 11:12). For Christ is both the woman's Seed and Lord: the "Man who was not deceived" (1 Timothy 2:14), but who by the woman and for her came under judgment. And in this view the expression here used as to the formation of the woman shadows forth a mystery. For we read "He builded a woman" (Genesis 2:22, Margin); (Note: Heb. banah [H1129]. Hieron. in Amos 9:6.) and of the Church it is often said, that she is "builded." "All the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:21-22). So gifts are "for the building of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12), (Note: eis oikodomen, k.t.l.) a building which grows without sound of axe or hammer. Without it the Man is not perfect: the woman is "the filling up of Him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:23). Such is the Church in its relation to Christ: one flesh, one life, one spirit, with Him; bearing His upright form, made like to Him, to be an imitator of God, with a nature more than animal, -- for "among the beasts there was no help-meet for Adam" (Genesis 2:20), nor can His Bride "bear the mark or number of the beast" (Revelation 13:17). For she is one, pure, holy Church; a body of many members, not united by likeness of outward form, -- for the eye is unlike the hand and foot, and some are outward and seen, and some are unseen, -- but linked together by the bond of common life, each in its place and measure completing the body, which is one Church, one "Mother of all living," the Bride, all whose members are encircled in the divine arms, and included in the divine love, which, because it is divine and eternal and almighty, has breadth and length and depth and height enough to hold them all. This is the Church, the woman whose "power is on her Head," and whose Head and Lord is "the image and glory of God" (1 Corinthians 11:7; 1 Corinthians 11:10), formed in the earth to rule all beasts and creatures, and to have "all things put in subjection under His feet" (Hebrews 2:8). This is indeed "a great mystery," when seen as "concerning Christ and the Church" (Ephesians 5:32); and leads to depths where fallen creatures cannot follow, for "no man knoweth the Son but the Father" (Matthew 11:27). But this we know, that in Him we have life; and what we know not now, we shall know hereafter.

06.2.0. Cain and Abel, or the Carnal and Spiritual

PART 2

CAIN AND ABEL, OR THE CARNAL AND SPIRITUAL MIND Genesis 4:1-26, Genesis 5:1-32

"That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual." -- 1 Corinthians 15:46.

"The flesh lusteth against the spirit." - Galatians 5:17.

ADAM did not live very long, before two other forms of life might be perceived proceeding from him. In these, the sons of old Adam, we have the first and second births of human nature, those forms of life, both carnal and spiritual, which by nature or grace grow out of the old man in each of us. And very different are these forms, though, like chaff and wheat, they spring both out of one root. Their order never changes. That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural. Age after age it is the same, within, or without, or in the dispensations. The outcome of Adam varies not. Some forms of life there are, which are "of old ordained to condemnation" (Jude 1:4). These are the wild natural fruits; and, the root being known, its fruit is foreseen as surely as that brambles will only bear brambles. But besides these there are other forms of life, springing out of man, the fruits of "the engrafted word" (James 1:21), which are predestined to glory. Each of these I would now trace, first within, and then more outwardly. The tale is one on every platform. The outward fulfilments are but the manifestations that such or such a life prevails within.

06.2.1. The First and Second Birth

I. -- THE FIRST AND SECOND BIRTH

WE have then here in Adam’s sons, (that is, if we trace the story in its inward application,) the ways and works of the carnal and spiritual mind, which spring from the conjunction of the understanding and will, the inward man and woman. (Note: Gloss. Ordin. in loco; Ambrose, De Cain et Abel, l. i. c. 10, § 47.) That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual (1 Corinthians 15:46). What is first developed out of man is carnal, -- that "carnal mind, (phronema sarkos,) which is enmity against God; which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). This is Cain. But there is a second birth; another life is born, which by grace springs out of the same old Adam; and this second birth, this "spiritual mind," (phronema pneumatos,) is Abel, who so lives that he obtains witness of God that he is righteous. Long ere Adam dies, -- and he must die in us, before the world of blessing rises beyond the flood of waters, -- long ere we know the risen life, we may perceive the workings of these two minds, the flesh and the spirit, striving together in us: the carnal seed, the firstborn, lusting against the spirit; while the spiritual mind, by its desires to please God, seems but to raise the flesh to greater acts of carnal opposition. (Note: Aug. de Civitat. l. xv. c. 5; Ambros. de Cain et Abel, l. i. c. 1, § 4, and c. 3, § 10.) The workings of these two minds are shewn out here. The carnal mind, like Cain, ignoring sin and the fall, is busy to improve the fallen creature; offering the fruit and cultivation of the cursed earth to God, as though such things could please Him: while the other, that is the spirit, confessing sin, by a sacrifice which involves, not the improvement of the earth, but the death and suffering of the creature, confesses death and yet looks for help in God, trusting His love and truth to meet us in our helplessness. To Cain it is quite natural to be out of paradise. The world never strikes him as being anything but what it should be. Abel’s eye cannot but see that sin is in the world, and his religion is an open confession of death, though also of atonement through death. In both the worship is offered "to the Lord" (Genesis 4:3); for the flesh can be sincere in its religion, and yet mistake grievously. Cain, as much as Abel, sought acceptance; but his desire is witnessed in the form of his oblation. The flesh seeks to be accepted as it is; not to be changed from what it is by dying to its selfhood; but to be accepted, and yet remain the same old Cain: and with a true and holy God this is impossible. Therefore the flesh is angry with the spirit, and rises, and overcomes, and for a season quenches it. But God raises it up again in Seth, that other seed, "which God appointed instead of Abel" (Genesis 4:25). Thenceforth Cain, that is the flesh, is "cursed" (Genesis 4:11); a judgment which was not pronounced on old Adam; for man as man, though fallen under death, and with the earth cursed for his sake, is not directly cursed. But Cain is cursed: -- "Cursed art thou from the earth:" even as the carnal mind is cursed which lusts against the spirit.

Then come the fruits of these two lives, for they too, each in their own way, must further develope themselves. Each bears its proper fruit in us, in an order and succession which is invariable. The names of the seed describe the progress of each, but their acts speak even more plainly. The one, the carnal mind, "goes out from the presence of the Lord" (Genesis 4:16), and busies itself with

"cities," and with "works in brass and iron;" building on the earth, instructing artificers in varied works in brass and iron, establishing itself in what it is and has, instead of dying to what it is, that it may reach better things; while the other life, that of the spirit, finds its rest in God, and suffers and dies in hope of resurrection; one form of life after another passing away and dying out, to be replaced by still better thoughts and affections. "And he died," never noted throughout Cain's line, (for the flesh hates to think of such a change as is implied in dying,) is the understood portion of all Seth's line, save of him who was not, for God took him (Genesis 5:8; Genesis 5:11; Genesis 5:14; Genesis 5:17, &c.). And the metals in which Cain's seed are workers, shew in figure the sort of truths with which the carnal mind is occupied. For the metals all figure truths; gold and silver, those which are more precious and spiritual; brass and iron, those of an inferior class, connected with the outward world, and merely natural things. In this hard world, iron is most useful. Cain's seed therefore prefer it to the gold or silver which may be used in God's tabernacle. Nevertheless, the Lord, foreseeing better days, has said, "For brass I will bring gold, and for iron silver, and for wood brass" (Isaiah 60:17); (Note: Compare also the "nations ruled with a rod of iron," Revelation 12:5; Revelation 19:15, and the "golden mercy-seat" for redeemed Israel, Hebrews 9:4-5, &c. See, too, what is said of the "river Pison, which compasseth the land of Havilah, where there is gold, and the gold of that land is good," Genesis 2:11-12. Gregory the Great explains these figures, Moral. in Job, l. iv. c. 31, § 61.) foretelling an increase and advance of truth in the last days. It is noteworthy, too, that the lives before the flood in each of these lines are of a length never known after it. So the forms of life, which succeed each other in us before we have been brought to know regeneration, are much longer in coming to their end, than those which we know after we have passed the mystic waters. But long as these first lives are, they all die out, and of the fleshly seed not one survives the first world. The other seed is carried through the flood: the life which grows out of the spiritual mind, not only is not destroyed, but is much strengthened by that judgment. But the carnal mind never reaches the new earth, where the rainbow is set as a token of the covenant.

If we look further at the names in these two lines, -- for the names in Scripture ever denote character, -- we shall learn yet more of the different forms of life, which succeed each other in us, both in the flesh and in the spirit. For flesh and spirit, though in substance unchanged, take fresh forms at different stages. A life of faith, or of sonship, or service, are all at root the same elect spirit; but this one spirit shews itself in different forms, according to the varying degrees of its development; as the self-same tree or flower looks different at different stages of its growth. These different forms, which succeed each other, are here represented to us by different men, each of whom figures one stage or form of the inward life. Cain means a possession, (Note: Heb. kayin [H7014].) a name pointing, as his life, to hopes fixed on earthly things. Abel, that is a vapour, (Note: Heb. hebel [H1893], a vapour, or vanity. So the Preacher says in Ecclesiastes, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." hebel hebelim kol hebel; and again, "Every man living is vanity," or Abel. Every living man is Abel. He who saves his life shall lose it; and he who loses, saves it.) speaks of soon passing hence, and of mounting up into another higher atmosphere. The names of this line, as raised up in Seth, tell all the different parts of the same mystery. We first have Seth, that is replaced; then Enos, that is infirm man; then Cainan, that is lamentation; then Mahalaleel, that is praising God. After this comes Jared, that is, strong, or commanding; then Enoch, that is dedication; then Methuselah, that is the spoiling of death; then Lamech, that is humbled; then Noah, quietness. Thus goes this life. Instead of Adam, there is a life replaced in a state to serve God. Then comes the sense of wretched weakness; then lamentation for this; then praise and

thanksgiving; after which comes strength to command and overcome; then a life of real dedication; then the spoiling of death; then true humiliation; and then a life of rest, which passes from the world of the curse to that beyond the deep waters. (Note: Gloss. Ord. in loco. See also Aug. de Civit. xv. c. 17, 18.) Such was the course; such is it now. I need not trace Cain's line, though there too the names are significant. But I note that in Cain's seed we find an Enoch, though at a much earlier stage than in the other line; while in both, the last but one is Lamech, that is the humbled one, or humiliation. For the flesh professes soon to reach that dedication, (Enoch is dedication,) which the spiritual seed is long waiting for; (Note: In the first line, Enoch is the son of Cain, Genesis 4:17. The elect Enoch comes in the seventh stage, Genesis 5:21, and Jude 1:14. See Greg. M. Moral. in Job, l. xvi. c. 10, § 15.) while the fact that in both seeds a stage is reached which is, and is felt to be, indeed Lamech, only shews how the flesh, as well as the spirit, may be at length both poor and humbled; the one humiliation, like the care and sorrow of the world, only to bring forth a worldly possession which runs or flows away; (Note: Lamech's sons (Cain's Lamech) were Tubal-Cain, Jubal, and Jabal. Genesis 4:19-22. Tubal-Cain means "worldly possession." Jubal and Jabal mean "that which runs or flows away." The other Lamech's son was Noah, or "rest.") the other, like that godly sorrow, which brings forth a rest and repentance never to be repented of (2 Corinthians 7:10). But this inward view of the two seeds will not be seen by all. I turn, therefore, to the outward fulfilment of the same history.

06.2.2. The Carnal and the Spiritual

II. -- THE CARNAL AND THE SPIRITUAL IN this view Adam’s sons represent the two great classes of the sons of men, in whom respectively the flesh and spirit rule, and who, by the preponderance of the one or of the other, fall under one or other of those two great classes, the carnal and spiritual, which make up the human family; who, though born by nature from the same womb, and nursed at first by the same mother, in their ways and ends are most distinct, both worshipping indeed the same God, but very differently; the one, offering Him the improvement of the creature, -- for carnal men must have a religion as well as spiritual men, -- the other, accepting judgment for sin, pouring out a life to Him, in hope of resurrection: the one, ignoring the fact of the curse, and going out to fill the earth with crimes, and arts, and energies; the other, suffering as martyrs here, and departing to find, what they had not here, a home, in another world. For "by faith Abel offered unto God" (Hebrews 11:4). He saw the curse, and instead of hiding from himself that sin and death are here, he makes this the base of his religion, looking to God for better things to come. And his seed offer still by faith. They see the curse, that they are sinful creatures, for their sin cast out of paradise. But the death of the Lamb, though it seals the judgment on sin, pledges to them that there is a way through death out of it. Therefore they are content to give up their lives. Others may seek to improve self; they will rather die to self. Their acceptance is not in self improved, but in deliverance out of self by the cross, through a Deliverer. Hence they take willingly the sinner’s place; first by baptism confessing death in them; (for baptism is burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), and we do not bury live things, but dead things;) and then living a life of daily death in hope of resurrection. Not so the other seed. Cain’s line are all for cultivating the ground, that is, improving the fallen creature. When most religious, they yet spare the flesh. They like what is beautiful in religion: they can appreciate good fruits. But let there be the shedding of blood, a life poured out, such self-mortification is with them rank superstition; while the judgment of the pride of reason and of sense is treason against Him who suffered us to become such creatures as we now are. They are not, they feel, in Eden, but in a world where sin and sorrow reign on every hand. Death is here: blink it they cannot. A curse is working in that soil, on which they spend so much labour. But they will approach God as though no sin were here; as if in soul and body all were right and normal. What have they to do with anything so horrid as the cross? No bloodshedding -- no "religion of the shambles" -- for such worshippers. Hence the efforts to seem other than they really are. Hence the wrath, if anything open their eyes to see their state in God’s sight. Then these men, who mock at the blood poured out, who say that crosses and mortifications are brutal and brutalising, will not scruple to hate a brother worshipper, if he be holier, or more accepted, than they are; like their father Cain, who would not offer the blood of the Lamb, but could stain his hands in his own brother’s blood. Surely "the way of Cain" (Jude 1:11) remains; and the objectors to a worship by blood are yet "murderers;" (Note: "He that hateth his brother is a murderer" -- 1 John 3:15.) though, like Cain, they profess not to be conscious of it.

Is, then, the improvement of the creature wrong? Are good fruits not acceptable? On the contrary, God accepts them as a meat offering, where the blood ("for the blood is the life" -- Leviticus

17:13-14,) has first been shed in a burnt offering. For man's duty to his neighbour (and the meat offering is this) is accepted, if God first has His portion. (Note: The difference of the burnt offering and meat offering was this: -- a life was offered in the one, fruits in the other. See Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16. Life is that which God claimed as His portion in creation, Genesis 9:4; as an emblem, therefore, it represents what the creature owes to God. But the fruit of the herb and of the tree was man's allotted portion, Genesis 1:29; as such, it is the figure of man's claim, or of what we owe to man. What we owe to God or to man is respectively our duty to either. Thus, in the burnt offering, the surrender of a life figured man's duty to God; while fruits, in the meat offering, represented man's duty to his neighbour.) But to think that these fruits can alone satisfy God is just Cain's error, and must meet with reprobation. God will accept anything He can -- anything which proceeds on real ground; but take a place which does not belong to you, then God, because He is true, cannot meet you there; for He deals with realities, and the course you pursue is not a reality. It does not confess your place as fallen; therefore He cannot meet it, though it may have cost you much. But only be true; and without attempting to meet God with the fruits which the cursed earth produces, only confess, by act and voice, that you are fallen, and that in this state, though sin be in the world, you yet give God credit for grace and power to meet it; then, as in Abel's case, so in yours, the faith that puts you on such ground must be accepted. Remember, Cain, because he got off true ground, lost the help of the true God. Abel, because confessing the truth of sin and death, found acceptance and all the help he needed.

06.2.3. Their Lives

III. -- THEIR LIVES AND the lives of these two seeds are as marked as their religions. As it was in Cain’s day, so is it now. The seed, whose religion is to improve the fallen creature, "goes out from the presence of the Lord," and seeks to make a ruined world happy without God, by "building cities," and "inventing harps," and "instructing every artificer in brass and iron" (Genesis 4:17; Genesis 4:21-22); in a word, by civilising the world with arts, striving to make life easy, and the world a safe dwelling place. The other are happy in God without the world; dying out of it, or rising to a better world. The one judge and slay their brother: the other do not judge even the murderer; but, inasmuch as the world is not purged from blood, they are as yet strangers and pilgrims in it. The one call lands after their own names, and cities "after the names of their sons," to make the world their own, and not the Lord’s, if possible (Compare Genesis 4:17). The other "call themselves by the name of the Lord," and would make themselves the Lord’s and not their own, with His name upon them (Genesis 4:26, margin). So the one live, -- for as I have already said, no death is recorded in any of Cain’s seed; the other die, writing death as their portion; "And he died," is recorded of every one of them, save of him "who was not, for God took him;" while they count their years by days, as it is written of each, "All the days of such a one were so many years, and he died" (See Genesis 5:1-32 passim). So run the seeds each in their course. The carnal line have by far the most to shew on earth; but the end of their cities and music is foreseen; Enoch warns of the day when the Lord shall come, and all His saints with Him; when the earthly city shall fall, and "the voice of harpers and musicians and trumpeters shall no more be heard in her; when no craftsman, of whatever craft he be, shall be found in her; because in her is found the blood of the saints, and of all that are slain upon the earth" (Revelation 18:22-24).

Further distinctions are shewn in other points recorded here. There are, however, some similarities. The last generation but one in each line is Lamech; and as name denotes character, this sameness of name marks some resemblance. For the Church and world, the carnal and spiritual seed, in the long run, and just before the judgment, become too much alike. Still they differ. Lamech "dies" in Seth’s line: he yet has faith of better things; while his speech (for the words of both are recorded) points out how deep a difference exists under the outward similarity. For Lamech in Cain’s line boasts that Cain had been preserved spite of his sin, and argues from this that he may also sin with impunity: -- "I have slain," he says, "a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt;" but since God has set a mark on Cain, lest he be destroyed, "if Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, surely Lamech seventy and seven-fold" (Genesis 4:23-24): that is, God has spared one who sinned like Cain; how much more will He preserve me, though I too am a murderer. So from grace this Lamech argues that sin may abound. The other Lamech also speaks, but it is of "the ground the Lord hath cursed," and of the "rest" out of it, which "shall comfort them:" -- "This same shall comfort us concerning our toil, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed" (Genesis 5:28-29). The one says in effect, "Where is the God of judgment?" The other confesses sin, in hope of better things. All this is timely truth for us; for the days are near of the last judgment of the first creation. The time has come when the Church and world are both

Lamech, that is "poor," with small difference to be seen anywhere. And yet under this, some misuse grace to sin, and some by grace look for a Deliverer; while a remnant escapes who see not death, and another is saved even through the judgment.

I add but a word on the dispensational fulfilment of this. In this view the two seeds, the elder and the younger, are the Jew and the Christian Church. That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural. First came the fleshly dispensation, and then the spiritual. The Jew seeking to improve the earth; Christ and the Church giving a life to God. The Jew slaying the righteous seed, which yet is raised up; the Church dying in hope of resurrection. Both of these are Adam’s sons; both acknowledge the same one God, though in very different life and worship; the one, departing to be with Christ; the other, going out "from the presence of the Lord," as "fugitives and vagabonds in the earth" (Genesis 4:16); finding no ease or rest for the sole of their feet, and fearing, where no fear is, that every one that findeth them shall slay them (Compare Genesis 4:14 and Deuteronomy 28:65-66); but, like Cain, providentially preserved, for the Jew has a mark set upon him, lest he be slain. The Lord yet preserves him wondrously. But to the end his portion is of this earth, in the first, not in the new, creation. (Note: Augustine, Contr. Faust. Man. l. xii. c. 9, and 13, goes very fully into the dispensational application of all this history, dwelling particularly on the fact that the Jew, like Cain, was preserved, and had a mark set on him. So, too, Ambrose, De Cain et Abel, l. i. c. 2. See John 8:44.) So the last shall be first, and the first last. The dead shall live, and earthly life shall pass away. And the souls under the altar shall be at rest, for they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

06.3.0. Noah, or Regeneration

PART 3 NOAH, OR REGENERATION Genesis 6:1-22, Genesis 7:1-24, Genesis 8:1-22, Genesis 9:1-29, Genesis 10:1-32, Genesis 11:1-32 "The world that then was being overflowed with water perished." -- 2 Peter 3:6.

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." -- 1 Peter 3:21.

THE line of Seth has several generations before Noah comes, in whom, through the judgment of the first creation, man is taken out of the sphere of fallen Adam, into a world beyond the flood, where he is set in new blessedness. So the spiritual mind goes through successive steps or forms, before that form of life appears which passes the waters, and thus knows regeneration. For souls may be quickened, and know that life in which the flesh lusteth against the spirit: and in spirit, like Abel, offer spiritual sacrifices, as many offered under the Jewish dispensation; and as many yet offer, who in spirit are no further advanced than those righteous souls, "who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:15); and yet not know that way through the flood, which is fellowship in Christ's death and resurrection; a stage in which the Word not only comes into our lot, and in union with us here quickens and sanctifies us as in the first creation; but in which by that same Word we come into His lot, and by Him find ourselves delivered out of this present world, as baptism typifies; through the travail pains and groans of this first creation, brought forth into another sphere, where we are not begotten or quickened only, but truly born. Such a stage arrives in its season, and of it Noah is the divinely appointed figure, in whom the whole course of regeneration is set forth, every secret of this great mystery being here drawn for us as God alone could draw it (1 Peter 3:20-21). The subject is immense, whatever view we take of it, whether inward, outward, or dispensational. Its length, and depth, and breadth cannot be told. It has "wheels within wheels, full of eyes, and looking every way." Any attempt therefore to know it must be "in part," and even of that part still less can be expressed. But if the excess of light here dazzles as yet, let us rejoice that we may possess these things with little or no knowledge of them. To be born, it is not needful to know how we are born. We must grow to manhood, or even age, ere we can think on such things. So with the new birth, we must be born again, and grow up in Christ, ere these things open to us. To apprehend therefore is well: but far better is it to be apprehended for these things in Christ Jesus (Php 3:12). Yet let him that hath anointed eyes behold the wonders of the work of God here shadowed forth for our learning.

We have then here Regeneration; the way by which man, already quickened and possessing spiritual life, is borne, through the waters, to a world of light beyond. The work is wrought within, as well as without us. Yet it is the self-same work and Worker everywhere, who, like some musician in solo or in chorus repeating the same sweet strain, repeats His work in a soul, or church, or age, making each to echo back the same melody.

Noah then is the spiritual mind, -- for he is only the continuation of Seth's line, and figures the form of life which the spiritual mind takes at this stage in its development, when it has come so far as to know the judgment of the old creation, and the way through that judgment to a cleansed and better

world. This stage, if we regard it closely, will be seen to embrace several distinct parts; for we may see Noah as in the world to be judged, still in the midst of its sins, though undefiled by them; or as going through the waters, and tossed by them, separated from the old world, and yet not come to the cleansed world; or, as on resurrection ground, coming out of the ark into that sphere where judgment is past, and he in joyful liberty. Each of these are stages of regeneration. There is, first, the discovery of the sin which is working in the first creation, upon the ground of the old man; then the experience of the judgment of that old man, during which we are tossed about, and the waves and billows of God's judgments are inwardly passed through; and lastly, the rest in resurrection life, when we feel and know ourselves in liberty and redemption beyond those dark waters. And each of these stages has its own parts, for in grace as in nature each general truth comprises many others. The outline may first be seen, then the particulars: first the dark cloud, then the countless rain-drops, full of beauties, if the sun shines. So is the truth, that heavenly rain, which, like its Maker, challenges our wonder the more we contemplate it.

06.3.1. Noah on the Ground of the Old Man

I. -- NOAH ON THE GROUND OF THE OLD MAN

Genesis 6:1-22

NOAH first is seen as still in the old world, in the midst of the sins of Adam’s sons, yet separate from them. Evil springing out of Adam had now become monstrous. "God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." But in the midst of this, "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:9; Genesis 6:12). So while the flesh or carnal mind in us goes on from step to step bringing to light its own corruption, the spiritual mind within like Noah is true to God, and bears witness against the evil of the carnal mind, which is continually more and more displaying its enormity. The fruit and corruption of the carnal mind in man, like the seed of Cain, must shew itself before we fully know regeneration; for regeneration is not the improvement but the judgment of the old man, out of which the spirit is saved by a mystic death and resurrection. As an introduction therefore to this form of life we are first shewn the state into which both the lines of Cain and Seth are now fallen. Both flesh and spirit fail. But these very sins are through God’s grace the occasion for lifting man, in Noah, into another world. For Noah, as I have said, is the spiritual mind, at the stage when it has come to know the utter corruption of the old creation, and that its deliverance must be through the death and judgment of the whole ground and works of the old man. Through sin and its judgment is man advanced. Noah is not brought out of the Adam world into the world of the rainbow beyond the deep waters, until Adam’s seed are proved to be so corrupt, that they and their world must be condemned together. And just as Noah was not taken to a world of blessing through the waters, until the evil of man had fully shewn itself; and just as the doctrine of regeneration was not preached to men, till by their rejection of God’s Son they had proved their utter fall and perversity; so within, regeneration is not reached but through the discovery of the awful evil which is the legitimate fruit and development of the old man. Regeneration cannot be truly known till we have proved the corruptness and helplessness of all that springs from old Adam. For regeneration is no improvement of the old man, but a new birth out of its death and dissolution. And indeed we shall find this law throughout, that the failure of one thing through grace brings in a better thing. Where sin abounds, grace yet more abounds. Thus that short-sighted wisdom which would prevent falling, would by so doing prevent all progress to higher things; for each advancing form of life, which God takes up, springs out of the failure of that which has preceded it. The seed falls into the ground, and dies, and becomes rotten; but the result is the resurrection of many seeds. So the juice of grapes or corn is put into the still; and thence, by decomposition and fermentation, (both forms of corruption,) is evolved a higher purity and spirituality. So is it here. The evil fruit of Adam becomes the occasion for God to lift the race in Noah to higher privileges. Now therefore is felt, what may have seemed like exaggeration till we reach this stage, that "every imagination of the thoughts of man’s heart is only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). But the spiritual mind by all this is being led, it knows not how, to liberties and glories, which as yet it has not dreamt of. Meanwhile, like Noah in the world of old, it is a witness

against all the evil which has sprung out of old Adam. Great are the confusions amongst which it dwells. Little may it be able to correct the evil. It seems, and is, part of the same creature. It may be tempted to think it will be destroyed with that sin which riots round it. But the Lord sees how different this mind is from that in which it dwells, and in His time surely will deliver it. The details in this view are most striking, as they are yet fulfilled in each regenerate soul, though, from our blindness as to the workings of our inward man, and our want of words to describe the processes of the inward life, it is difficult to express the spiritual reality; for the spiritual can only be uttered through the natural; and from the imperfection of the medium some darkness will come in. But the figure here is divinely complete, little as the mind of man as yet may be able to interpret it. The state of the creature is thus described: -- "Men multiplied on the earth, and daughters were born to them" (Genesis 6:1-2). "Men," as we have seen, are certain minds or thoughts; and a host of thoughts are now discerned to be alive within us; their "daughters" are the affections springing from them, which, by the words, "daughters of men," are shewn to be corrupt and carnal. (Note: See what is said of the "man" and the "woman," above, under the sixth and seventh days; and of Cain and Abel. Ambrose, who in his book De Noe et Arca, has gone at great length into the inward sense of all this history, makes the "sons," "viriles quaedam et fortiores disceptationes," and the "daughters," "molliores cogitationes," c. 21, § 77. Augustine is more exact in the passage cited above.) Then the "sons of God," that is, thoughts which are not of the earth, mix with "daughters of men," that is, impure affections. (Note: It is generally assumed now that by the "sons of God" here, the children of Seth are meant. I doubt it, as the Old Testament usage of the words seems to point to angels. See Job 1:6; Job 2:1; Job 38:7; and compare Luke 20:36. I am sure that in the inward fulfilment, the state described here is not only the corruption of the human spirit, but something worse, through fallen spirits. Justin M., Apol. i. § 21, ii. § 6; Irenaeus, Adv. Hoer. l. iv. c. 36, § 4; Clement of Alexandria, Strom. l. iii. § 7; Cyprian, De Hab. Virg. c. 9; Ambrose, De Noe, c. 4, § 8; Tertullian, De Hab. Mul. c. 2; and others, take the "sons of God" here to be angels. The words, ton homoion toutois tropon, in Jude 1:6-7, declaring the similarity between the sin of Sodom and that of the angels who fell, are very remarkable.) If the world within could be seen, and the workings of spirit laid open, this is what would appear before regeneration. There is awful inward confusion, the result of the mixture of the flesh and of the spirit; the affections of the flesh seducing the higher thoughts of the spirit, and so producing "giants," that is, earthborn thoughts, which are full of crime and violence. Those who by grace have reached regeneration, know perhaps as little of the exact working of the evil in them, which they have groaned over, as Noah knew of the sin and corruption of the carnal seed; but they will remember the awful sense of inward confusion which preceded their deliverance, and how their spirit, though it sought to walk with God, was constantly grieved by the dreadful workings of the fleshly mind within them. Such as know most of this stage will best see the figure, as it is drawn for us in this history.

Meanwhile, in the midst of these confusions, which are the ripe and rotting fruits of old Adam, Noah, the spiritual mind, remains incorrupt, like the remnants which survive each fallen dispensation, not only bearing witness that judgment must come, but in act and deed passing sentence upon the old creation, laying the axe to the root of the trees (Matthew 3:10), in a work of faith, which is the divinely appointed way of safety. The ark, by which he goes through the judgment, formed by cutting down and judging the pride and strength of that soil in which the curse works, figures the cross by which we are severed from the world, by which it is crucified to us, and we unto the world. As that ark was made up of many beams, so is the cross which delivers us from

the world composed of many parts; smaller crosses, all of which we need, add to its length and breadth, nor may we cut off any of them. A time will come, if we reach the risen life, when we may go forth free; but while in the old world, or amid the waves, the cross, like the ark, is our safety: we dare not shorten it. In it is light, a "window" and a "door" (Genesis 6:16). (Note: Some have supposed that this "window," tsohar [H6671], a word only occurring here, was an inward lamp or light; connecting the word with yitshar [H3323] or "oil," and that again with the chrisma [G5545] mentioned in 1 John 2:27, "the anointing," which makes the light or instruction of this world unnecessary. But the spiritual sense will be substantially the same, whichever view we take of this zohar or "window.") In it is food, "all food that may be eaten" (Genesis 6:21). In it are "heights and depths" (Genesis 6:15-16). By it alone can the flood be passed. Let us bear it, for it will bear us. (Note: Augustine, In Johan. tract. ix. c. 11; De Civitat. l. xv. c. 26. Justin Martyr, Dial. c. Tryph. c. 138.) In or by this ark the man is saved, and with him a remnant of all the beasts, both clean and unclean. This is a great mystery. Some speak as though in regeneration all the evil of the old nature were entirely left behind, so that nothing should remain of it. Hence they are surprised to see evil passions in regenerate souls. But a remnant of beasts goes through the flood of waters. These beasts, as we have seen, figure certain animal faculties or powers in the creature. Some are gentle and clean, as lambs and doves; some unclean and fierce, as wolves, or swine, or foxes. Yet even of the unclean a remnant lives. Regeneration does not wholly take away or abolish bad tempers. While man is conscious of the judgment, tossed with its waves, and so dying daily to the old nature, these evil powers or desires are so far checked as to cease for awhile to be hurtful to him. By providence and grace they are so stilled, and by circumstances so modified and weakened in us, that for a season at least they are subject to the man; the Lord thus repairing in regeneration the loss which human nature had sustained in Adam’s fall; for in Noah man recovers power over beasts: but they are not annihilated. And, indeed, just in measure as the man obeys God, are the beasts or lower powers subject to him; bears and lions and wolves, fierce and devilish spirits in us, being subject when our inward man is subject to the Lord. (Note: Origen goes at some length into this inward fulfilment. He then goes into the dimensions, and says that this inward ark is formed of truths of the cross, trees cut down, which are built together; not the truths of heathen authors, which are like leafy trees, uncut and unpruned, and under which Israel have often committed fornication, as the prophets say, and which are of no use to build this ark. He then speaks of the animals. -- Hom. ii. in Gen.. See also Cyril of Jerusalem, Catech. xvii. § 10; and Ambrose, De Noe, c. 15, § 57.)

Such is the stage which issues in regeneration; first, a discovery of the monstrous evil which is working in the creature, in the midst of which the spiritual mind by the cross is prepared for deliverance out of the sphere of the old man, the beast-like powers meanwhile being by grace restrained. At this point comes the second stage, in which, though we have not reached the cleansed world, we are yet by the waves of judgment separated from the former world. After which comes the perfect deliverance into rest and liberty beyond the waters. To these later stages we will come in order. But first I would note the outward fulfilment of the scene, which we have already traced inwardly.

In this outward view, the world that then was, on which the threatened flood of waters was hastening, figures the world around, the home of the old man, on which judgment must come for

men’s wickedness. In this world two families of men are seen, both of which in different ways have shewn their own weakness. Everything is out of course. The sons of God and the daughters of men are mingled. The wickedness of man is great upon the earth, and the thoughts of his heart are proved to be evil continually. The crowning sin is the mixture of seeds. "The sons of God" contract ungodly alliances. If the "sons of God" here spoken of were angels, the fact foreshadowed is, that fallen spirits are allowed in some mysterious way to mix with mankind; whose monstrous fruit necessitates that flood of judgment which is threatened upon the last great form of evil, when the Antichrist shall be revealed, and men will be possessed by "him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thessalonians 2:9). In a lower sense, this mixture of seeds is to be seen in that confusion between the carnal and spiritual which is so common everywhere. God’s children mingle with the world. Oh, how different are the thoughts of God to the thoughts of His sons, except they walk with Him! "God saw the wickedness of men, that it was great:" -- "the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair." So "they took of all that they chose" (Genesis 6:2). The world cannot always reach God’s sons to entangle and defile them. But the sons of God can always reach the world, and sink down to act on worldly principles. We read, "They saw," and "they chose;" that is, men walked by sight and not by faith, and by self-will, not by God’s will. And the result was, "giants, men of renown," and through them gigantic wickedness. Increased power brought increased crime: "the earth was corrupt, and full of violence." So is it now. The power and sin of Christendom are but the necessary result of this same mixture of the flesh and spirit; with just so much of truth as to enable men to trust each other, and just so much of worldly principles as to please and win the world; just so much of God’s Spirit as to bring in power, and so much of the flesh as to abuse that power to maintain carnal principles. And yet there is a remnant witnessing against the corruption, whom God through this very confusion is leading to a full deliverance out of it -- such souls at first, though quickened in spirit, like the believers in the Jewish dispensation, and though they "follow Christ in the regeneration" (Matthew 19:28), do not yet fully know that perfect deliverance out of the sphere and judgment of the old man, to which they are called by "the washing of regeneration" (Titus 3:5), which is indeed participation in Christ’s death and resurrection. But spite of their conflicts, God will bring them to this rest, and even the confusions amongst which they dwell serve God’s saints, driving them from the ground of the old man into a purer and better world. To this end the ark is the appointed means, figuring, in the outward as in the inward kingdom, the self-same cross of Jesus Christ, or more vaguely, the Church, whose strength is the cross; which, safe in the covering of atonement, (Note: The word here translated "pitch," Genesis 6:14, Heb. kopher [H3724], is the same word which is commonly used to express atonement, as in Exodus 29:36; Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 23:27-28, &c. It means, primarily and simply, a covering. The word kapporeth [H3727], mercy-seat, where the blood was sprinkled on the day of atonement, is from the same root. Our English word cover evidently comes from kopher.) bears those who trust it, through the waters. The elect are delivered, first mystically by baptism, that passage through the waters, which figures death and resurrection (1 Peter 3:20-21); and then actually, through that dying to the world and nature, which is both the judgment of the old, and the way for God’s children to the new, creation. In this ark are lower, second, and third stories (Genesis 6:16); (Note: Compare with this the three stories of the Temple, 1 Kings 6:4-8, which is but another view of the same mystery.) for within the one same faith of the cross of Christ, very different is the attainment in the knowledge of that cross, even among those who by it pass through the one baptism. Few can enter into all the

heights and depths opened to them; for few even of the saved here bear the image of their Head. Few are the sons of the Man of Rest, knowing the joys of sonship with Him, and with capacities to share all His experiences. For one such son are many who are as beasts, animal natures, rough, irrational creatures; who yet are saved, both the clean and the unclean, the Jew and Gentile, the fearful and the violent; and who are served and ruled by those in whom is seen more of the image of Him who is their Head and Lord. For it is not the spiritual only who are saved. In the one ark are found many carnal souls, living far more as beasts than as men, who yet being cleansed of God may not be cast off as common or unclean (Acts 10:15; Acts 10:28). These cannot know the heights of the cross, (Note: Greg. M. in Expos. sup Evang. Hom. xxxviii. § 8.) yet are they saved by grace, even as the spiritual; their evil natures being checked by that cross which is for them and for all the common deliverance. In one body are they saved together, all the members more or less comely (1 Corinthians 12:22-25); and though with unequal, yet each with perfect joy, they shall, whether beasts, or creeping things, or flying fowls, whether young men or maidens, or old men or children, whether fathers or babes and sucklings in Christ, yea and the dragons also, all praise the Lord, in that cleansed earth which is beyond the waters (Psalms 148:7-13). (Note: The Fathers are full of references to this outward application of this history. Augustine, Contr. Faust. Manich. l. xii. c. 14-21, goes into it at great length. So too Ambrose, De Noe et Arca; Gregory the Great, In Ezek. Hom. xvi.; and In Expos. Evang. Hom. xxxviii. § 8; Origen, Hom. ii. in Gen.; Jerome, Contr. Jovin. l. i.; Cyprian, Epist. 69, and many others. Indeed, St. Peter’s direct reference to this type (1 Peter 3:20-21), gives the clue to the whole of it.)

06.3.2. Noah in the Waters

II. -- NOAH IN THE WATERS Genesis 7:1-24 and Genesis 8:1-14

LET us now pass on to that stage in Noah's life, to that point in regeneration, when by the cross our inner man is separated from the old world, and yet not come experimentally to the better world. This is a well-known stage, and as safe, if not as blissful, as that which follows it.

Seven distinct steps are marked in it, the order of which, like all the rest, is wonderful.

(i.) First (I trace it within) man is "shut in" by the Lord: he enters the ark, but "the Lord shuts him in" (Genesis 7:16), that is, secures him. So the soul which has embraced the cross, and has long waited by it to be saved and lifted up from Adam's world, comes to a point when that cross holds him as with nails, "shut in," so that now he could not, even if he would, turn from it. Thus "shut in," prisoners of hope, are we preserved; and dark and narrow as this lot appears, we would not change it for the freedom of those without, who may mock at our straitness, but who, if not so "shut in," must all perish. Thanks be unto Him who shuts us in, -- who will not let us leave the narrow cross, which, to some a stumbling-block and to others foolishness, to them that are called is both the power and the wisdom of God; cutting us off from communication with what is without, restraining what is within, and yet saving us. Blessed are they who are thus "shut in."

(ii.) Then comes the flood: -- "The flood was upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth" (Genesis 7:17). So is it within. The day arrives when the inward deep is moved mightily. The unquiet element in us is loosed. Now the floods of temptation and lust seem to break out everywhere, Oh, what fluctuations, tossings, and swellings are there! Such a flood has arisen within as Jonah passed, when he cried, "The waters compass me" (Jonah 2:5); or such as David knew, when he said, "Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." (Psalms 42:7. See also Psalms 69:1-2; Psalms 69:15.) Now the fountains of the great deep seem broken up, and the windows of the heavens only pour down judgment. We are, as we say, "overwhelmed within us." A flood is out, destroying and changing the life of man, crushing the life of nature out of us. But this, too, painful and awful as it is, and itself the judgment of the sin of the old man, and certain destruction if we do not know the cross, leads the spirit to greater joys and greater liberty. Thus is self and selfhood destroyed in us. We tremble and are astonished and cry out for fear, and yet by such a death the Lord frees us. (Note: The experience of every age supplies illustrations of this stage; but the following letter of Terstegen is so beautiful and apposite, that I insert it here. It may comfort some: "My dear sister, -- Notwithstanding the wretched state in which you describe yourself to be, I am still quite at ease regarding it, and am under no apprehension of evil consequences. Were I concerned for you after the manner of men, and were I glad to see your own life, the life of self, preserved, I might have reason to fear, because our Lord attacks it so forcibly and severely, and pursues it so warmly, that it must soon give up the ghost, which takes place and is accomplished by the complete and eternal resignation of yourself into the free hands of God. You see and feel nothing but sin and corruption within you. Whithersoever the mind turns and directs its view,

everything is misery, grief and sin; and the way to escape from it is closed, and appears as if it were always to continue so. Ah! thinks subtle self-love, could I only find a little nook to which I might retire, and take a little rest. Listen, O soul! cease thy turning: the more thou seekest to make matters the better, the worse thou makest them. Therefore as long as it pleases God to leave you miserable, corrupt, and without strength, let it also please you. You behold your real self at present, as you are in yourself. Thank God for having thus disclosed your inward wound to your view. Previously, when the dealings of grace with you were so gentle, nature and sense occasionally participated in it; but in the way in which you are at present, they are deprived of all support. It is impossible that nature and sense should acquiesce in this total destruction. But they must die. Commit yourself, therefore, wholly to God; trust Him, and you shall be healed." -- Letter xx.)

There remains indeed another baptism. The creature cleansed by water must one day be purged by fire also. The old Adam world, the ground of the old man, being overflowed with water, perishes. But the heavens and the earth which are now beyond the water shall be baptised with fire, and that fire shall purge the floor, and crystallise the earth into transparent gold (See 2 Peter 3:6-7). So within, there is first water, then fire; and by fire the heavens as well as the earth are purified. In both the Lord appoints the flood for good; and as when we pass through the waters, because He is with us they do not overflow us, so He says, "When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:2).

(iii.) So the ark goes through the flood: we read, "The ark went upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 7:18). It goes through them. We are not saved from death and judgment, but through it, and out of it. God does not save us from temptation. He Himself may loose the doors of the great deep within us. Even yet He leads His sons to be tempted (Matthew 4:1); for temptation is a necessary step to regeneration; that we, thus knowing how helpless we are in self, how lost on the ground and home of the old man, may resign all hope in self, and, knowing the worst, may yet triumph in deliverance out of it. The regenerate soul has known the worst, and through grace has come safe out of it. And just as the Lord uses our "clay," our very faults, when touched by virtue from His lips, to open blind eyes (John 9:6), so does He use the great deep within us, which He has loosed in judgment because of abounding sin, to drive us from all hopes of creature help. Thus are we saved, not from, but through, the waters; and by death is he destroyed who has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14).

(iv.) Then comes the wind from the Lord: -- "God remembered Noah, and caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged" (Genesis 8:1). Here is a wondrous change. "Shut in," "lifted up," or "passing through the waters," the spiritual mind is safe. But now come gentle gales, the breathings of that Spirit which stills the floods and refreshes the weary voyager. The Spirit breathes, and the waters assuage. In other judgments a wind from the Lord was the agent of deliverance. The locusts of Egypt were thus destroyed: -- "The Lord turned a strong east wind, which took away the locusts" (Exodus 10:19). So the way through the Red Sea was made by the wind: -- "The Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind" (Exodus 14:21). So again shall it be in the day "when the Lord with His mighty wind shall smite the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and make men go over dryshod" (Isaiah 11:15). And so within. God remembers His servant, and the breath of the Lord works for his deliverance. From this time forth the tossings decrease. The rest now is very nigh.

(v.) For the next step is the grounding of the ark. Now it rests firmly on the unseen world, though the waste of waters is still abroad, and no portion of that better land is yet visible (Genesis 8:4). The cross has brought us to another sphere. The fact is not cognisable by sight, nevertheless it is felt, for settledness is attained to. The future home is not yet seen. A veil of waters yet covers it. But the ark has brought us to "the everlasting hills;" and God, after that we have suffered awhile, now stablishes, strengthens, settles us (1 Peter 5:10). (Note: The day of the ark's resting, if I err not, was the day of Christ's resurrection, viz., "the seventeenth day of the seventh month," which, after the redemption from Egypt, was called the first month. Here, as in all the allusions to time, are, I am assured, many mysteries; but I do not attempt to touch the subject. The Fathers, however, boldly enter on it. See Augustine, Contr. Faust. Manich. l. xii. c. 15-18, for his views on the times and numbers here; and for some very suggestive thoughts on the subject of numbers generally, see his work, De Lib. Arbitr. l. ii. c. 11. Surely if all creation be a type, numbers and time must be significant.)

(vi.) Soon more is reached. After the tossings cease, "the window is opened," and a new world appears. "The tops of the mountains are seen." Its light shines in (Genesis 8:5-6). What is seen at first appears isolated. The connexion is not seen between the points which we do see. The waters still only permit us glimpses, unconnected glimpses, of the coming world. Yet there it is -- faith is turned to sight. These hill-tops are pledges of untold and unknown scenes of future joy. For many a day we have been shut up, and our way has been simply a path of faith; but now the floods assuage, and light breaks in, and we can cry, "As we have heard, so have we seen" (Psalms 48:8). For now we belong to the new creation, now that the old man and his monstrous progeny are destroyed and dead.

(vii.) After this, and just before the going forth to enjoy the better world in full liberty, "the dove and raven are sent forth" (Genesis 8:7-8), figuring (for they are birds of heaven, and the heaven is the understanding,) certain powers or emotions of the understanding, both pure and impure. (Note: See on the work of the fifth day.) In the actions of these is shewn the working of the good and evil which to the last remains with us. For of the impure a remnant still exists. The raven, finding its food in carrion, figures those inclinations which feed on dead things. The dove is that spirit of gentleness and peace, which, though with us before, appears more boldly now as heaven opens to us, to witness, like the dove which came down on Christ, that though the cross may yet remain, there is promise of better things. The ark does not change the raven. The cross may restrain, but does not alter impure desires. To the end the dead things of the world are attractive to certain inclinations in each of us. If, therefore, this raven can be free, it will not return. But the inward man will not trust to such guidance. He wants better proof, and this the dove supplies; when the time is come for the olive to bud she brings a token. And the man understands, for now the risen world is near. Then, but not till God plainly directs it, the cross which has saved us is exchanged for the enjoyment of that resurrection rest to which it has carried us. (Note: Ambrose, throughout his whole comment, De Noe et Arca, gives the inward sense of all this history: c. 13, § 46; c. 9, § 30; c. 14, § 49; c. 17, § 59, 62, 64; c. 18, § 64.)

Such is this stage within. Without, its accomplishment is only the same workings on a larger scale. Shut up, safe in the cross, the elect of God by judgments on the world are lifted heavenward.

Death buries one and then another earthly hope. The highest hills, to which the world look for succour, all are overflowed. But the Church by the cross goes safe, though containing some, who, like the unclean raven, if they might, would leave it. Such shew their nature ere the rest is reached. (Note: Aug. in Johan. Tractat. vi. § 2.) After this the elect also have another, larger, freer, fairer, dwelling-place. But this leads us to another stage, when Noah emerges into the world beyond the waters.

06.3.3. Noah on the Earth Beyond the Flood

III. -- NOAH ON THE EARTH BEYOND THE FLOOD Genesis 8:15-22, and Genesis 9:1-17 THE scene here changes as from earth to heaven; from sin and floods to joy, and rest, and liberty. Blessed had been the transition from the old world of sin to the safe but dark and narrow ark; for, with all its straitness, blessed is the cross: we are shut up indeed and tossed, yet safe and not forgotten. But now comes a further wondrous change, from straitness to freedom, and from floods to quietness. We have felt what it is to be in the old world, grieved by its confusions and corruptions, which we cannot remedy. We have known the stage when we are separated thence by the cross, and yet have not reached the better world. Now we reach that land of rest, and stand, as Noah here, on a new and purged creation, brought forth from that earth on which we were born, to a new world where death and judgment are behind us. Man in Christ has long since reached this. Baptism is our profession of faith, that as Christ is risen, and we are in Him, we too are risen with Him (Colossians 2:12). (Note: In baptism "we are buried and risen with Christ through faith;" but this is very different from "the power of Christ's resurrection," which Paul longed for, Php 3:10. This latter is experience rather than faith.) But now in experience our spirit comes there, from the things of the old man to a sphere where Adam and his carnal seed cannot enter. In one aspect, as in Adam, we are still in the old world, still on this side death, shut out from Paradise. In another, as Noah, as the spiritual mind which has experienced the judgment of the old creation, we are risen with Christ, consciously brought with Him into another world. The blessings and responsibilities of this high calling are shewn in seven distinct particulars recorded here of Noah.

(i.) First, "They went forth" (Genesis 8:18). This is true liberty, known in word perhaps, but not in power, save by the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and the power of His resurrection. Up to this point the elect is more or less in bondage, a "prisoner of hope," secure, yet still a prisoner. But when through grace we have so passed the judgment of the first creation, and have felt the tossings cease, and then have seen the hill-tops, and received the olive-leaf, the earnest of the inheritance, from the mouth of the gentle dove, which thus assures us of a world beyond the water-floods, then our freedom is near; all things are lawful, if all things are not expedient, for us. Many a conscientious doubt as to rules, or times, or places, now is resolved for us. To the pure all is pure. Henceforth we are free; we may "go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9).

(ii.) But there is more than freedom here; for now "Noah builded an altar to the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings" (Genesis 8:20). This is worship, in the main like that of Abel, though the burnt-offering testifies rather of obedience and acceptance than of sin and trespasses; in answer to which God opens all His heart, with secrets of love never fully told in Adam's world. Now beside the altar, those who have passed the flood understand God's heart, saying, "I will not curse again." Yea, "though man's heart is still evil," God's heart speaks out, "I will not curse or smite again" (Genesis 8:21). The risen man cannot say that in selfhood his imaginations even now are other than evil continually. But he knows that, spite of this, God is saving and has saved him. Here, too, he learns how the changes in the earth are all divinely regulated: -- "While earth remains, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease"

(Genesis 8:22). Before this, as darkness fell, he may have feared that the light was for ever leaving him, and that his fits of coldness would have no limit. Now he learns that these things are part of a divine plan. Darkness brings into light heavenly things unseen before. By the cold many a weed is nipped and withered, and many a hurtful worm perishes. "While earth remains" such changes are well. When earth is passed, we may be fit for changeless things. All this in its depth is learnt at this place, by the holy altar of burnt offering. Oh, how many things are only cleared up here! The same man who said, "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are unknown," says again, "Thy way is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" (Psalms 77:13; Psalms 77:19).

(iii.) Fruitfulness is another special blessing of this stage: -- "God said, Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 9:1). Just as in creation, when the third day rose, and the waters were restrained, the earth was made fruitful; so now in Noah, the third great stage in man, the flood being passed, man increases wonderfully. "Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). Now having died to the world by the cross, and the evil fruits which grow out of old Adam being judged by the overflowing waters, the new man within increases yet more. Being purged, he brings forth much fruit (John 15:2). (Note: Ambros. de Noe, c. 21, § 77, and c. 24, § 87.)

(iv.) But the blessing goes further. Power is given over beasts: -- "The fear and dread of you shall be upon every beast, and upon every fowl, and upon all the fishes of the sea: into thy hand are they delivered" (Genesis 9:2). Animal faculties now are not only restrained by the ark or cross, but reduced to submission: the man or reason governs them. The ox strong to labour, the strength in us formed to serve, is not henceforth to spend its energies without direction. The lion and the bear, fierce thoughts, must be still. And if, when night comes down, these beasts will yet creep forth, and the young lions roar against their prey, -- for in hours of darkness these beasts at times will still be heard, -- when the sun ariseth they must lay them down in their dens, for then man goeth forth to his work and labour until the evening (Psalms 104:20-23). (Note: Ambros. de Noe et Arca, c. 24, § 87.) I know indeed that even after this, after man has passed the flood and is regenerate, lions may be loosed in judgment by the Lord: the man in us may be slain, and the beast may be seen standing by the carcase (1 Kings 13:24-25); or, as in another case, the man may be blind, and the beast, which should be guided by the man, may see more than that inward man which was formed to govern it (Numbers 22:23-31). All this may be through sin. Yet our calling as regenerate is to rule the beasts, not to be ruled by them. If the animal in us is not subject to the mind, it is because the mind or man is not subject to the Lord.

(v.) Further, on this ground flesh is given to man for food. Before the flood man’s food is "the green herb." He has "for meat every herb bearing seed, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree" (Genesis 1:29). Now it is said, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you: even as the green herb have I given you all things" (Genesis 9:3). Before the flood the bodies of beasts had been consumed by the fire of God: they had been His meat: their death had satisfied Him. Now, on resurrection ground, man too can eat, that is, find satisfaction in the same sacrifice. Before we know resurrection life, while we are yet in the world before the flood, in the home or sphere of the old man, we feed on the fruits of the earth, those fruits of righteousness, which, whether in Christ or in ourselves, naturally afford man some satisfaction. As yet the death of the creature is no satisfaction to the elect, though God is satisfied and we are clothed thereby. God’s fire may fall

and consume the offering: we give it up, but we do not really eat with Him. It is otherwise when this stage is reached. Then the death of what is animal is not only a witness, but it affords us food. We, too, can now be satisfied in the giving up of life, and great is the strength which the spiritual man derives from the meat which is thus given to him. (Note: Ambrose De Noe c. 25, § 91. See also Augustine, Contr. Faust. l. xii. c. 22, respecting the pouring out of the blood, which is commanded here, Genesis 9:4.)

(vi.) At this stage God gives authority to man to judge that which quenches the life which "was formed in God's image;" for God, having now by regeneration restored that image in man, would not have it again mutilated. At the hand of every man, therefore, He now requires the life of man, for in the image of God made He man (Genesis 9:5-6). Before the flood it was not so; on the ground of the old man, Seth's line do not avenge the blood of Abel; just as before regeneration, while we yet abide in the sphere of the old man, the spiritual mind bears witness against the sins which in us grow out of old Adam, but has not power to correct or judge them; for on that ground the evil cannot be remedied. The old man is corrupt, with his works. God's image cannot be seen in him. God will not therefore prune his branches; for He is resolved to cut him down. But after the washing of regeneration, when the image of God is again brought forth through the judgment of the old man, when the spiritual mind has reached the risen life, and looks on Adam and his works as judged of God, with Him it judges any reviving remnant of them; for, being regenerate, it has power to correct wickedness. All murder therefore now is judged; and since "he that hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15), for hate destroys the inward man, all such workings of the flesh must be sharply judged by the regenerate. Woe to us, if we use not the power committed to us, if the hateful works of the old man are suffered in us without self-condemnation.

(vii.) And now, to crown all the gifts peculiar to this stage, the covenant is re-made, and a heavenly token given of it: -- "And I, behold, I, establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you. And this is the token of the covenant: I do set my bow in the cloud; and it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more be a flood to destroy all flesh." This is the "new and better covenant," not "of law," with "Thou shalt," but "of grace," saying, "I will." "I will establish my covenant with you ... and I will remember my covenant ... and I will look on the bow in the cloud, and the waters shall no more destroy." For now man has learnt that all is of grace, resting not upon his own, but upon the Lord's, will.

Oh, that the force of this "new covenant," and all the difference between "Thou shalt" and "I will," were fully known by God's children; and that in every soul the "Thou shalt" of the old, had given place to the "I will" of the new and better, covenant! Let this be understood. The covenant of law, as given to the old man, first and last, is all "Thou shalt." So God to Adam said, "Thou shalt not eat of it; in the day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die:" and by Moses repeating the same covenant of law, each command reiterates the same, "Thou shalt:" -- "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart;" "Thou shalt not steal;" "Thou shalt not covet." Such a covenant is all "of works." There is a command to be fulfilled by man, and therefore its validity depends on man's part as well as God's being performed perfectly. Such a covenant cannot stand, for man is always sure to fail in his part. Thus the covenant of law or works to man is and must be only condemnation. But, finding fault with this, the Lord will make "a new covenant;" and this new covenant or gospel says throughout,

not "Thou shalt," but "I will." It is "the promise," as St. Paul says to the Galatians (Galatians 3:16-18; Galatians 3:21-22; Galatians 3:29). All that it requires is simple faith. "This is the covenant I will make in those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their hearts; and I will write them in their minds; and I will be merciful to their transgressions; and I will remember their sins no more; I will dwell in them; and I will walk in them; and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people." It is this "I will" which Noah now hears, and to which at this stage God adds "a token" set in heaven. This token is "the bow set in the cloud." Before the flood, the elect, though not so fully instructed, yet had "the covenant" (Genesis 6:18). But of its "token" nothing had been heard: for this is only learnt experimentally, when we have known and in spirit passed the deep waters. This token now appears "in the cloud." The cloud, brought over the earth, was not only a remembrance, but something like a remnant, of the judgment. We therefore sometimes "fear to enter the cloud" (Luke 9:34). If it might be so, we would have "tokens" of the covenant without the dark waters. But it cannot be. Only in dark and cloudy days can the bow of heaven be seen spanning the lower earth. Then, mid dark waters, when the sun breaks out, though the cloud may be dark, a bow appears amid the darkness; half a ring -- half that ring with which the regenerate soul is now married to the Lord, and assured of endless rest with Him. The lower world yet hides the rest of the ring; but on high "a rainbow" shall be seen "in a circle round the throne." (Note: So we read, iris kuklothen, Revelation 4:3. See Ambrose, De Noe, c. 27.)

Such are the joys to which we are called by the power of Christ’s resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings.

---------- And this, too, is fulfilled without. In this more outward view, Noah’s blessings here are the joys of the Church as dead and risen with Christ. The Man of Rest and His sons are brought by the washing of regeneration to things which fallen Adam never heard of. Here freedom, and worship, and increase, and power, -- power over those who are as beasts, -- is freely given to them. Here the death of the flesh, in ourselves or others, is found to be, even as good fruits, the means of strengthening life. Here, too, sin is judged. In the world saints judge not: -- "What have I to do to judge them that are without?" (1 Corinthians 5:12). In that sphere our work is to set forth grace, even while we witness that God’s judgment is hastening. But in that Church which stands on risen ground, we must "put away from ourselves the wicked person" (1 Corinthians 5:13). Would to God that this were laid to heart. But too often judgment is exercised in the world, where grace should be manifested; while excuses are offered for want of discipline in that redeemed body, where all evil should be rooted out. Labour enough is spent to correct a ruined world: nothing is done to purge a failing Church. But this leads us to another stage, where the failure of the regenerate is fully revealed to us.

06.3.4. Noah's Sons

IV. -- NOAH'S SONS Genesis 9:18-29, and Genesis 10:1-32

WE are now to see what man brings forth, when grace has brought him through the judgment of the first creation into another sphere. Spite of all his gifts, nay by his gifts, Noah, that is, regenerate man, fails even as the unregenerate. His blessings ensnare him. Here we are shewn the agents and stages of this tragedy, from Noah's first error, and his children's crimes, down to all the confusions of Great Babylon. For Babylon the Great, with all her abominations, cannot precede, but follows regeneration.

First, we are shewn what springs out of Noah, that is all the forms of life which grow out of the regenerate. We may for a moment look at this, after which the different phases of failure will be manifest. To speak then of these seeds as seen within. Noah is the spiritual mind, brought forth from the ground of the old man into a purer world. His sons represent those forms of life, which, produced by the spiritual mind in us before regeneration, -- as Shem, Ham, and Japhet, were born before the flood, -- develope themselves in us after we have known the judgment of the first creation. For regeneration bears in us more than one mind or form of life; and whichever of these is the master-life within, stamps us either as Shems, or Hams, or Japhets; just as he who lives in the animal or beast-like life may be designated as a fox, or wolf, or serpent, according to the form of life which most predominates. For there are in us many forms of life. Even the animal life (and in its place it is subservient to our blessedness) is full of variety. And no less does the higher life of the man or mind within, take, as we have seen in Adam's sons, many different forms at different stages of its development. In Adam's sons we saw the different forms of life which grow out of old Adam, that is the natural man. Now in Noah and his sons we are shewn all the forms which the regenerate mind may produce in each of us.

Now the forms of life which regeneration produces are as different as Shem, Ham, and Japhet; for man is composed of body, soul, and spirit, a wondrous compound of very different worlds; and of each a germ or seed buds out within, produced in man, as Noah's three sons, before regeneration, which after the flood shew whence and what they are, and their respective natures, whether of the body, or of the soul, or of the spirit; whether Ham, Japhet, or Shem, whose very names tell what they are, very different, yet all fruits of one common regeneration. There is, first and highest, the contemplative life, which delights in things unseen, in adoring love and holiness. There is again the active life, which is good, and does good, but deals more with external things. Besides these there is the doctrinal life, a mind occupied with truth, without the savour and power of it; a form of life, which, though growing out of the regenerate mind, is nigh to evil, and must be subdued and fought against. Shem is the first of these; Japhet, the second; the third is Ham, the father of Canaan, whom Israel have to overcome. For Shem, meaning name, represents that mind, which, knowing the Name which is above every name, -- that God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth, -- is set, as names are set for things, to witness for His Name, and so reflect something of Him. (Note: The word Shem [H8035], or name, is derived from the

verb soom [H7760], to place or put, apparently for this reason, that a name is placed or substituted for a thing, as its sensible sign. The word is also closely connected with the shamayim [H8064] or heavens. Indeed the latter word is but a masculine plural of the same word, Shem. These "heavens" are they who "declare the glory of God," and "in whom (as in Shem's family) God hath set a tabernacle for His sun." -- Psalms 19:1; Psalms 19:4.) Japhet, that is, enlargement, goes forth, in the sense of the freedom which is the portion of the regenerate soul, to spread abroad on the face of the earth something of that large blessing which God has given it. (Note: I may note how unchangeably to the present day the sons of Shem, even in the letter, that is the Asiatics, are men who love the contemplative life; while Japhet's sons, that is the European family, as much prefer the active life.) Ham, signifying burnt or black, is the mind which is "seared as with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:2): knowing but not living in the truth; and thus producing Canaan, that accursed form of life, which is the inevitable fruit of a life of doctrine without love or communion. In point of honour Shem stands first, but in their development Japhet's and Ham's sons are given before Shem's; shewing, what indeed is proved by all experience, that the highest life in us is the last to develop itself. (Compare the order in Genesis 9:18; Genesis 10:1 with that in Genesis 10:2; Genesis 10:6; Genesis 10:22.) "Of these was the whole earth overspread." And hence spring all the forms of regenerate life, good, bad, or indifferent (Genesis 9:19). (Note: Ambrose, as usual, gives the inward sense. -- De Noe, c. 15, § 55; c. 2, § 3 and 5; c. 32, § 121.)

---------- But this may be more plain to some in its outward fulfilment as seen in the professing Church. Only, when we look at evil without, let us not forget that the germ of it all is within our own heart; and that evil men around are only what they are by crushing in their souls the seed of the divine life, and by sinking into some one or other of those lower forms of life, which though working in us are not elect, that is, not our true life. This is our trial, whether we will be beasts, or Cains, or Shems, or Hams, or Japhets. Blessed are they, who, dying to that in them which is opposed to God, forsaking self and the fruits of that self, which stage after stage so perseveringly revives in us, step by step come back out of self to God, to the life which is not of self, but of Him, and to His glory. To look then at this scene without. Noah and his sons figure the regenerate Church, who with differing forms of life have one root, brought through the one baptism from the world of Adam, to new gifts and higher responsibilities. Noah represents the Church generally: his sons, its component parts and varieties; differing from one another as Peter, Paul, and John, (Note: The thought, that Peter and John are types of different forms of Christian life, is very common in the old writers; John being taken as the type of the life which is by vision of Christ; Peter, of that which is by faith and conflict. See Augustine, Tractat. in Johan. cxxiv. Popery and Protestantism shew for themselves that they are respectively Peter's and Paul's children. John's line of things is less capable of being systematised and less corruptible, and "will tarry till the Lord come." John 21:22-23.) and to differ yet more in their development, but all part and fruit of one same tree, whose produce shews its soil as well as its own distinct vegetable life and constitution. As in the case of Jacob and his sons, each son or tribe figures the distinctive character of some part of the spiritual Israel, who are either Levis, addicted to service, or Naphtalis, satisfied with favour, or Judahs, possessing the gift of rule; so is it with Noah's sons: each presents one class of the regenerate: Shem, those who love the inner life; Japhet, the men of action; Ham, the men of mere doctrine; and Canaan, those unhappy souls, who, from being hearers only, have come, still self-deceived, to be deceivers also. These three, or if we count Canaan, (and he is named,) these four, represent the great distinguishing classes into which the Church may be divided. For as in

the fourfold results of the Sower's work (Matthew 13:18-23), so here, we have three classes springing from the original seed, and a fourth class, which, though not actually from it, is yet mentioned in connection with it. There is true inward religion, and true outward religion; these are Shem and Japhet. There is also false inward religion, and false outward religion: these are Ham and Canaan. Every possible form of Christian life is the development sooner or later of one or other of these four great classes.

Let this solemn truth sink into our hearts. There is a form of life which grows out of the regenerate, which is accursed. For regeneration not only spares the beasts, though it gives us power to subdue and govern them, but it leaves in us a mind like Ham, which revives the ways of the old man in the regenerate soul. Hence the Church has had its Hams, and from them has grown up Great Babylon. (Note: Babel is the work of the seed of Ham, Genesis 10:6-10.) All history shews, not that it is likely, but certain, that in the Church's own bosom will be nursed its worst enemies. Heresy cannot exist without the truth; and "there must be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest" (1 Corinthians 11:19). Then, and after the division in the days of Peleg, Eber's son, -- for Great Babylon has then been built up, -- the elect Hebrew is as distinct from the rest of Noah's sons, as Noah himself had been from the world before the judgment. Then the word is, "Get thee out from thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land which I will shew thee" (Genesis 12:1).

It would be full of deepest interest to trace the course of these different families through their successive generations. For in them is prefigured the parentage and birth of every sect and heresy which has sprung out of and troubled the bosom of the regenerate Church. Here, had we opened eyes, we might see how from the Apostolic Church has sprung, as from a common source, all that endless train of error which is around us in the different forms of Popery and Protestantism. Here we might trace the lineage of faith and love, and not less of false spirituality, fanaticism, ignorance, rationalism, and religious formalism. These neglected genealogies give it all. Here we have the true "Theory of Development," given by One who cannot lie, and given "for our learning and instruction in righteousness" (Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16). Few, however, care to think on these things, or consider how surely certain forms of life gradually produce other forms most dissimilar; how the true spiritual seed, the men of holy contemplation, may beget a seed, as Shem begat Asshur, in whom the contemplative life is changed to one of mere reasoning, whence grows Assyria, with all its cities and its crimes. (Note: Asshur, the father of the Assyrians, was Shem's son: Genesis 10:22.) Few think how the Japhets, that is the men of active life, may produce sons who sink ere long into what is merely outward, and become as the nations; or how surely the men of mere doctrine, like Ham, will produce families in which their evil will increase, until Egypt, and Babel, and cursed Canaan are manifested; these last as truly sons of Noah as Shem, but like the chaff, though springing from the same root as the wheat, destined to be one day awfully separated.

Without pretending to go into details, a few general points in this development of the regenerate may be for profit here. And first let us mark the respective proportions of the three great families which grew out of Noah. Seventy-two names in all are given us (Genesis 10:1-32). (Note: The numbers here, I am assured, are all full of divine mysteries; as some of old have marked. Our version gives only twenty-six names here from Shem. The LXX. add one more, Cainan, between Arphaxad and Salah. St. Luke follows the LXX., Luke 3:36.) Of these, thirty-one are of Ham's,

twenty-seven of Shem's, and fourteen of Japhet's line; so much more prolific is evil than good, even in regenerate man: reminding us of the lists of sins, so greatly outnumbering the catalogue of graces, enumerated by the Apostle (Romans 1:25-31; 2 Timothy 3:2-5); and of the number of "the works of the flesh," as compared with "the fruits of the spirit" (Galatians 5:19-23). (Note: Seventeen "works of the flesh" are recorded, besides the comprehensive word, "and suchlike;" nine "fruits of the spirit.") So is it without, even as within. The evil seed, whose life is one of doctrine rather than of love to God and man, is that which under a variety of forms, for the present at least, most spreads and multiplies. "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat" (Matthew 7:13). Of these three lines, all whose outcome is shewn here, it may suffice to note a few particulars. I have not a doubt that every name recorded describes some distinct character. And though to a mere English reader any comment on names may seem fanciful, if not hazardous, yet to a thoughtful mind the names simply translated would, I believe, suggest many things. In reading Bunyan, when we meet with "Faithful," and "By-ends," and "Evangelist," and "Giant Despair," and others; or when we hear of places, such as "Slough of Despond," or "Vanity Fair," or "Mansoul," with its "Eyegate," and "Eargate," and "Mouthgate," the name suggests some mystery. But Bunyan, in writing thus, was only copying the style of Genesis, in which the names always express character; for I think no one can imagine that such names, as some here, would be given or recorded without some deep reason. But I shall not attempt to trace all the line. This, however, I would repeat, that from Ham, that is the life of mere doctrine, -- of truth without love, -- proceeds a seed, which, being called Nimrod or the rebel, "becomes a mighty one;" in whom first the patriarchal life is changed into "a kingdom at Babel," a kingdom over brethren (Genesis 10:8-10); while another branch of the same stock of Ham is the renowned Mizraim or Egypt (Genesis 10:6), (Note: It is scarcely necessary, I suppose, to add, that Mizraim is the Hebrew name for Egypt.) which as much as Babel, though in other ways, becomes a snare to God's elect. What these represent we may hereafter see; suffice it now to mark that Babel and Egypt both grow out of Ham; the greater number of whose sons bear names which are connected with, or descriptive of, war and strife and bloodshedding. (Note: To trace only the names of the sons of Cush, Ham's firstborn (Genesis 10:7): "Seba" is taking, or being taken in battle: "Havilah," labouring or bringing forth: "Sabtah," a word connected with besieging strong places, means going round or compassing: "Raamah" is a voice of thunder, as of an army shouting for the battle: "Sabtecha," the cause of slaughter: "Dedan," solitary, or perhaps, who judgeth: names all akin to strife and misery. -- Cf. Hieron. Nom. Heb.) Shem's line tell out yet more solemn truths. From him springs the Assyrian, as well as the true Israelite. Asshur no less than Eber is his son (Genesis 10:21-22); so surely does the contemplative life, which produces true holiness, tend also to beget that spirit of mere reasoning, of which Asshur, or Assyria, is the appointed type. So near is the false to the true; so quick the descent from that which is, to that which is not, acceptable. I need not repeat what I have said of Japhet. Let us not forget how soon his seed, that is the fruit of active life, degenerates into that which God counts as the world, into a mere Gentile life which knows not God (Genesis 10:2-5). (Note: "By these (i.e. Japhet's sons) were the isles of the Gentiles divided," &c.)

Such are the seeds, whose fate is foretold in that prophecy of their father Noah, with the literal fulfilment of which we are so familiar; the spiritual sense of which no less reveals the course and end of those different forms of life which have been developed in the regenerate. The fate of Ham comes first. In his seed Noah foresaw one who would be "cursed Canaan;" who though called, as

a son of this house, to liberty, would become "a servant of servants to his brethren" (Genesis 9:25). These are they who, knowing much of the truth, "walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities" (2 Peter 2:10-11). Such, though they appear to have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, again entangled therein and overcome, find their latter end worse than the beginning. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, -- The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. That the Church has such a seed needs no proof: but that it "serves brethren," -- that it subserves a good end, -- is not always seen sufficiently. Yet it must be so; for the Lord has said, "A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." Surely this is true within and without. And when we reach this stage of regeneration, like Noah, we see, that as dung upon the earth, or as the bitter bile which is secreted in the natural body, even so does the evil in the Church work for good, and the ungracious acts of false brethren serve to polish and bring out the grace in truer souls. "All things are ours, if we are Christ's" (1 Corinthians 3:22-23). Even sin and false brethren shall be our Gibeonites, "hewing wood" at least for us (Joshua 9:27), (Note: These Gibeonites were Canaanites. Aug. de Civit. l. xvi. c. 2.) preparing to our hand something which we may use in self-sacrifice.

I need not dwell on Shem or Japhet's lot: each gets the blessing which is best suited to it; Shem to have "Jehovah for his God;" Japhet to be "enlarged by God, and to dwell in Shem's tabernacles" (Genesis 9:26-27). But why of Shem is this alone pronounced? Is not Jehovah the God of all Noah's progeny? Is not the Name of the Lord known to all who are born and grow up in the house of the regenerate? Look for answer at the Church. Is God known there? Might not many, even true souls, almost as well be without God? Are they not doing all for Him, leaving Him nothing to do? Are they not thus like Japhet, with all their blessings tending to Gentilism? They may, indeed, load altars with gifts, but are not their altars inscribed, "To the Unknown God?" Is not this their thought: -- There is a God -- all we know of Him is, that we must offer to Him. "To Him," not "From Him," is their motto; and this, though He is shewing out on every hand, that He is not to be worshipped as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things; and has not left Himself without witness, in that He does good, and gives us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts 17:23-25; Acts 14:17). Shem has learnt the Name which tells all this. What God is in Himself is Shem's security. The Lord is what He is, and this is enough. He is Love, and because He is Love, He must go out of Himself in endless, countless kindnesses. Hence Shem's motto is, "From the Lord, the known God." Shem has an altar "whereof he may eat" (Hebrews 13:10), by grace spread for him. Shem can sing: -- "He prepareth a table for me even in the presence of my enemies" (Psalms 23:5). Whatever else Shem lacks, he has a God; and, having Him, in Him possesses all things. Japhet's blessing is the gift; Shem's is the Giver. Japhet rejoices in the blessing; Shem in Him who is the Blesser. If Japhet is blessed himself, it is enough for him; he knows not what it is to "thirst for God, even for the living God:" while Shem cannot rest in gifts short of God, sighing, "When shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalms 42:2). But Japhet one day shall be "enlarged," and then "he too shall dwell in Shem's tents." Then, wide as the sphere of the active life may seem, it shall find yet greater lengths and breadths in the realms of contemplation: when the name of the Lord, and what He is, appears; and "according to His Name, so is His praise in all the earth" (Psalms 48:10).

"These are the families of the sons of Noah, and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood" (Genesis 10:32). These are the developments of regenerate man, and by these come the divisions in that Church which professes "one baptism." The field here is one in which much gold lies hid. Blessed are they, who, finding it in humble prayer, use it in a still humbler walk on earth to God’s glory.

06.3.5. Noah's Failure

V. -- NOAH’S FAILURE Genesis 9:18-29, Genesis 10:1-32, Genesis 11:1-9

IT remains to note the peculiar forms of failure which are manifested in Noah and his sons, that is, in man regenerate. Sad is the contrast between Noah going forth with joy, and Noah drunken and exposing his nakedness; between "the whole earth of one lip and of one speech," and Great Babylon, with "tongues confounded," and its sons separated; between the first full joy of the regenerate soul, and the experience which follows of gifts misused and curses treasured up; or, to trace it without, between the Church as it was, when "the multitude which believed was of one heart and of one soul, neither said any that ought that he possessed was his own, and they had all things common" (Acts 2:42-47; Acts 4:32-34), and the Church as it is now, with "departures from the faith, men giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, with conscience seared, lovers of themselves, covetous boasters, proud, blasphemers, having withal a form of godliness without power" (1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Timothy 3:1-5). But such is the fruit and fall even of regenerate man.

Three chief forms of failure are described; first Noah’s, then Nimrod’s, then Great Babylon. Each differs in form, with a gradual advance in crime. In the first two, good things are misapplied. In Noah, we have blessings external to him misused, to his own hurt. In Nimrod, personal gifts are perverted to injure others. In Babel we have more open apostasy, and a systematic departure from the right position, with untrue and creature things substituted for true, and self-exaltation instead of God’s glory. In each regenerate soul all this may be. First, misuse of privileges leads to spiritual intoxication. The vine -- some precious grace of Christ in us -- tends, if misused, to make us forget ourselves, and to expose our nakedness; the failure of the ruling mind within giving an occasion to the other thoughts in us to shew themselves. Thus do our failings help to discover to us what different minds, after regeneration, yet remain in us, some of which we learn now must be judged, as being only subtle forms of the condemned old man. Shem, the mind which loves contemplation, and Japhet, that which purposes and performs true outward service, are each recognised; but Ham is cursed in his seed; the fruits of knowing and not doing are foreseen and reprobated. Nevertheless out of Ham the evil grows. Nimrod, a form of life the fruit of mere intellect, aspires to rule and be the master-mind; gifts of knowledge claim a place in us, which God cannot approve; the result of which is a "kingdom at Babel," that is, some rule or rules which cannot sanctify. After which Babel itself grows up; some form, which, though great and approved in man’s eyes, in God’s is simply confusion. We build up likenesses of truths within: we strengthen and fortify some opinion or imagination; and we may call it edification; but self is at work, usurping the Lord’s place, and self-love, and thoughts of self-exaltation, "to make us a name," are indeed perverting everything. Thus a tower of pride springs up within, which we may hope will be a means to reach to heaven, (for in building this Babel we are self-deceived, and may be seeking right things in a wrong and self-invented way,) but which will only draw us from the true high ground of light, and leave us inwardly distracted and full of confusion. All this may be, and is, within, after we are through grace truly regenerate; for no evil is without, the seed of which is not within: it may be hid, as the night is

hid in the day, if the light of heaven rules us; yet the root of self remains, and in it lies the germ of a Babel, a beast, an Antichrist, ready to make the temple of God his seat, if we depart from the cross of Jesus Christ. But the inward kingdom is not seen by all; the outward manifestation of it, therefore, may be more useful here.

To trace it then without. Noah's fall comes first. This is the failure of the true elect through the abuse of good gifts. Noah's care in the cleansed earth is the vine (Genesis 9:20). In the sphere of old Adam, and before the flood, that is, before regeneration, Noah was no planter. There his work was the ark: there, day and night, instead of planting the vine, he was cutting down the high trees; as the work of the elect in the world is to lay the axe to the root of men's pride; to lay them low, that by the experience of death they may reach a better life. But in the Church, regenerate man has other work. There the vine is to be trained, and pruned, and cultivated; there its precious juice, which gladdens God and man, is to be drunk with thankfulness and joy to God's glory. Yet this may be misused. Has the "cup of blessing" never been taken and perverted to men's own condemnation? Alas! not a few, like Noah, have profaned that wine which was given in love to "make us forget our poverty" (Proverbs 31:6-7). (Note: Augustine, De Civit. l. xvi. c. 2, and Cyprian, Epist. 63, both refer this cup of Noah to Christ's blood and the Lord's Supper. But neither Augustine, nor any of the early Fathers, so far as I am aware, speak distinctly of the failure of Noah's sons, in its bearing upon the failure of the regenerate. The reason is clear; because in their days the evil, of which Nimrod and Babel were the figure, had not developed itself in the Church, as it has since then.) The truth of Christ's sufferings for us, carnally received, used as a reprieve to the flesh, has come back as a curse to those who have so regarded it; for, "the grace of God being turned into lasciviousness" (Jude 1:4), men have but "eaten and drunk their own damnation:" while even Christ's sufferings in us may be perverted if they minister to our pride or vain self-satisfaction. If, instead of walking in watchfulness and prayer, men put some gift in the place of meekness and humbleness, if they do not "watch and keep their garments," the result is always this, -- "they have walked naked, and men have seen their shame."

Two things are brought out by this fall; sin in some, and grace in others, of the Church's children. Ham not only sees, but tells the shame abroad, without an attempt to place so much as a rag on that nakedness, which, as the sin of one so near to him, should have been his own shame. Shem and Japhet will not look upon it, but "walking backward," -- a path not taught by nature, but grace, -- cover their father's nakedness (Genesis 9:22-23). So is it yet. We see what is akin to us. The evil have an eye for evil, while the good and loving are engaged in acts of charity. Thus He, whose work it is to bring to light the hidden things of darkness, by the failure of one, often reveals another's heart. The Church's fall, the misuse of gift in some, is made the occasion for stripping the self-deceiver bare. Men sit in judgment on the evil in the Church, full of impatience and self, laying all iniquity bare, not waiting for the righteous Judge; little thinking that, whilst they are judging evil, God by the evil may be trying and judging them; or that the spirit, which exposes others' sin, may be far more hateful to Him than some misuse of privileges. For Noah's fall was a misuse of blessings: Ham's exposure of it was want of love. God may, indeed, convince of sin, but never without ministering better things. We too, at times, must strip deceivers bare; but to see evil and accuse it, without a helping hand or pitying eye, is devilish. Shem and Japhet cannot do so. With such souls, the Church's failure only brings to view graces, which, were there no failure,

could not be manifested. We mourn because the Church is fallen. But does not the Church's fall give larger opportunities for love and self-sacrifice? Every trying thing -- every humbling and shameful thing -- is but the occasion of shewing grace, if grace be there. Circumstances do but prove us. And that same trial, which shews the carnality of the carnal, only elicits grace in gracious souls; and that very infirmity, which is an occasion of falling to us, if we walk by nature, is an occasion of victory, if we walk by grace. But a worse form of evil soon appears (Genesis 10:8-10). Noah misused blessings to injure and expose himself: Nimrod exalts himself to lord it over brethren; for of those over whom he ruled all had sprung, and this within a few generations, from one common father. Little is told us of this second form of apostasy; but that little is enough. And indeed the steps by which lordship over brethren is reached are not many. The author of it is Nimrod, the son of Cush. Sprung from that seed, who, having been scorched by the truth, have "seared consciences," his very name, Nimrod or rebel, (Note: Heb. nimrod [H5248], from marad [H4775], to rebel; reminding us of ho anomos, "the lawless one," 2 Thessalonians 2:8.) points out the character of those actings, by which the family and patriarchal government instituted by God was changed into a kingdom ruled by violence. The stages are these: "He began to be a mighty one;" this is the first step in the transition from "ensamples to the flock" to "lords over God's heritage" (1 Peter 5:3); after which "a mighty hunter" follows, one who can first slay for us the wild beasts which threaten us; but who, having hunted them, will then hunt his brethren, till they too are ensnared and captivated. And all this shall be "before the Lord;" "even as Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord." It was so in Israel, when faith in God and communion failed; a king was sought under whose shadow they might dwell safely, who might "fight their battles and go before them" (1 Samuel 8:20), and do for them what God had covenanted to do. In a word, a gift of God was sought for more than God; and the result, in Saul's case, as in Nimrod's, was that the "mighty one" became a "mighty hunter," pursuing those, who, like David, because they walked with God, could not be taken by all this mightiness.

It is well known how that which first was shewn in Nimrod again reappeared on resurrection ground, and was again enacted in that redeemed family, of which the Lord said, "Ye all are brethren." As it was foretold Antichrist should come, so did he come, and the success of the "rebel," or "lawless one," is but too well known. Men arose, with mighty gifts, used first to slay the lion and the bear, but soon to bring the congregation of the Lord into bondage. They stood in the Church for God and His Christ, as though God and His Christ were absent, rather than as witnesses that "the Lord God yet dwelt among them" (Psalms 68:18; Ephesians 4:8). (Note: The connection is most noteworthy between God's "giving gifts to men," and the aim or end of this, "that the Lord God might dwell among them;" not that they should take His place. Augustine recognises the same truth in the Lord's words respecting Babel. -- De Civit. l. xvi. c. 5.) Thus did the best gifts become curses. Nimrod's course became a proverb: -- "Wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord." Is it not a proverb, that spiritual dominion, or rather that which has claimed to be such, is too often a "mighty hunter," a spirit of domination, ever seeking to enslave, and to impose a yoke, not on the bodies only, but upon the minds of brethren? Christ's true rule aims to make all free: false rule to make all slaves, under the pretence of serving them. The Church of Rome, where "the rebel's" rule has been most seen, is proof enough; but it is not there alone that the works of the "mighty hunter" may be seen. So Nimrod makes a "kingdom in the land of Shinar, whose beginning was Babel," that is, confusion. This leads to another form of evil: men's tongues are confounded, and then the one family splits and separates. But ere this is

described, a fact is named, shewing the effect of Nimrod's course on Shem's purer seed.

We read: -- "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth and Calah" (Genesis 10:11). Asshur is the son of Shem (Genesis 10:22), and here we have Asshur going forth from Nimrod's kingdom, to imitate him in building, if not a Babel, at least a Nineveh or a Calah. Nimrod's invention cannot be confined to Great Babylon. Other cities, "the cities of the nations," soon arise. Cities in type are systems or polities, very unlike those primitive pilgrim dwellings, "the tents of Shem." Here we have foreshewn the rise of those "cities of the nations," those national systems of religion, seen by the Apostle John, whose fate is connected, even as their birth, with Babylon the Great, and who, when she falls, fall with her (Revelation 16:19). Nor does the fact that these cities are the work of Asshur, the son of Shem, save them from the destruction that will one day overtake the works of Nimrod. What avails it for national churches to point to the elect seed who built them? The question is not, What seed were they? -- but, What has been the building? Whence got they their pattern? Out of what land came they? Have they built "cities," or were they content, like Paul, to be "tentmakers"? (Note: Origen, in commenting on the Tabernacle in the wilderness, that movable tent, which, until Canaan was reached, was their place of assembly and worship and sacrifice, connects that tent with Paul's vocation. -- Hom. xvii. in Num.) Alas, even Asshur finds pilgrimage hard travail: hence Asshur builds cities, and becomes almost as Babel. Asshur it is who carries Israel captive (Ezra 4:2); Asshur it is who joins with Israel's foes (Psalms 83:8); Asshur upholds the mart of nations (Ezekiel 27:3-27); therefore Asshur and his company go down into the pit (Ezekiel 32:22-23). Wherefore let Israel say, "Asshur shall not save us" (Hosea 14:3), though he is strong and buildeth mighty cities; "for ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and he also shall perish for ever" (Numbers 24:24). The third form of failure among Noah's seed is the building of Babel, with the consequent scattering and confusion of the hitherto united family (Genesis 11:1-9). This form of evil, though allied to Nimrod's, is worse; for it is no good gift misapplied, but rather a systematic departure from the original position, with imitations of the true instead of truth, and self-exaltation instead of God's glory. The course of this apostasy is soon traced; and nothing can be more striking than the contrast here drawn between the primitive state of the redeemed family, and that which their sin brought upon them. Their original state is thus described: -- "And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech." Difference of age we know there was; difference, too, in character; some were Shems, some Hams, some Japhets. But, spite of this, as yet "they all spoke the same thing;" as yet "there were no divisions among them." As in the early Church, where "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart" (Acts 4:32), there was but "one lip and one speech" among them. Love enabled them, though not of one stature, to be of one mind. As yet they could understand one another and walk together. Not long did this continue: soon apostasy begins. The first step is, "They journeyed from the east." The dayspring is in the east. There, to them that love the light, "the Sun of Righteousness ariseth with healing on His wings" (Malachi 4:2; Luke 1:78). But now the company of resurrection pilgrims are seen with their backs toward the east: their faces see not this light; they are turned away from it. (Note: Gloss Ordin. in loco.) Then "they found a plain:" they leave their first high ground. This plain, doubtless, like the plain of Sodom to Lot, had its attractions; so "they dwelt there." And now, their pilgrim character being at an end, their thoughts turn to their own glory and establishment. Great Babel is the result. "And they said one to another, Go to; let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime for mortar. And they said, Go to; let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach to

heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth." Thus arose Great Babylon. Let us not pass from this scene till we understand it, for even yet Babylon is "mystery" -- a thing unintelligible to not a few. Its preparatory stages we have noticed. Men journey from the east; then they settle down; then they begin to build. At this stage, the scene presented is man taking counsel of man, and not of God. "They spake one to another;" and the result of the deliberation is an attempt to imitate God; first in His words, then in His works. They said, "Let us make." God once had said "Let us make" (Genesis 1:26). Here man takes upon him to speak as God. Then comes out their work: "They had brick for stone, and slime for mortar." Brick is stone artificially made, -- man's imitation and substitute for God's creative work. Babylon is built of brick; so, too, Nineveh is built of brick. The prophet who foretells her downfall notes this, bidding her to "tread the clay, and make strong her brick-kilns; yet shall the fire devour them all" (Nahum 3:14-15). In Egypt, too, brick-making is common. Egyptians like nothing better than to see captive Israelites toil in making brick (Exodus 5:7-8). Great Babel is built of brick, and for cement they have slime, as it is written, "And slime had they for mortar." This slime was that sulphureous compound, of which the region of the Dead Sea, and the plain of Babylon, are even now so full -- a compound formed, as it is supposed, from the corruption of animal and vegetable substances. Well does it represent that dangerous cement -- so ready to burst out into a blaze -- that cement of self-love and lust of power, by which mystic Babylon is now held together. It is a "daubing of untempered mortar." Jerusalem is not so built, nor of her does man say, "Let us make;" but the Lord Himself says, "I will." "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and I will lay thy foundations with sapphires; and I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates carbuncles, and all thy borders pleasant stones" (Isaiah 54:11-12). So another saith, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5): and again, "Ye are God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9).

Babel is built by other hands, and with other aims. Here man is working to ascend up to heaven. Self-elevation is the aim; self-energy the means: it is but consistent that self-glory, "to make us a name," should be the motive. And withal, (let not this be forgotten,) the reason assigned seemed good; -- they wished for unity: their fear was, "lest they should be scattered;" therefore they built their high tower. We know too well how others also have builded, with the self-same aim, professing and perhaps really seeking catholic unity; and the result has only been greater scattering among those who were to be united. But when man builds for self-glory, and with imitations of the true instead of the true, the end may surely be foretold. When will men learn that catholic unity is not to be so attained? On such ground we may build, "lest we be scattered;" but the labour is in vain, and will only produce more scattering. The present state of Christendom, only more and more divided, the more carnal union is sought, should at last teach us by sight, even if we cannot walk by faith. The one remedy is Pentecostal grace, -- that Spirit which can yet change carnal disciples into spiritual, and give them a message which their carnal brethren, dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, Cretes and Arabians, who understand not each other, will yet all understand (Acts 2:7-11); because it is not in the letter which divides, but in the One Spirit of Christ, which melts, and unites, and reconciles. Nothing else will heal the confusion: no outward form, however good, can ever accomplish it. Men at last will learn this in self-despair: till they learn it, each fresh effort can only produce confusion worse confounded.

It would exceed my limits to give examples of the "brick for stone," as it is to be seen this day in Great Babylon; but this I may say, the city is not only built up, but filled also with images of all God's truths and ordinances; yea, real vessels of the sanctuary may be there; true gold carried away with captive Israelites. On her outside is the likeness of a heavenly church, the likeness of priesthood and ministry, the likeness of the ordinances, duties, and ways of holiness. On her inside is the likeness of good knowledge, the likeness of repentance and conversion, the likeness of faith, the likeness of zeal for God, the likeness of love to God and His saints, the likeness of the Lamb's meekness and innocency, the likeness of justification, the likeness of sanctification, the likeness of mortification, the likeness of peace, joy, rest, and satisfaction; for as a fallen world is full of shadows of truth, so is the fallen Church rich in forms, which to the opened eye witness of a life which should be there; but the substance, the truth, the virtue of all these is wanting to her, and she herself is found persecuting that very thing, where it is found in truth, the image of which she cries up so boastfully. This is the woman that hath bewitched the whole earth, even as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, by imitating the works of God's elect. And of what truth shall we not find the likeness in Great Babel? She has priesthood, and altars, and fine linen, and the cross, and incense, and chrism, and rule, and discipline. She has the form of every truth, to meet and seduce those who ask for the reality. Do we "look for a city which hath foundations?" Then Babel will forestall it, and be a city too. As the Father of Lights will have His city, so has the prince of darkness his, to tempt souls to rest short of the city of the mystery of life, in the city of the mystery of deceit and imitation.

Such are the failures on resurrection ground. Regeneration, so far from ending all man's wickedness, discovers in man new forms of evil. So in the Revelation which was manifested to the beloved John, he saw that red horses, and earthquakes, and blood, and hail, and fire, and beasts, and Great Babylon, were all part of the "Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:1; Revelation 6:4; Revelation 6:12; Revelation 8:7; Revelation 13:1; Revelation 17:4-5), -- a necessary result of such a seed falling into such a soil. If He is to be revealed in the earth, it must be thus. The revelation cannot, and in love may not, at once be perfected. In my soul, too, I know that red horses, and beasts, and earthquakes, and Babel, with her filthiness, must come in me after regeneration, and after Christ's first coming to my soul in grace has quickened it, before heaven opens, and He comes the second time to rule all the creature, and to make all things new. Then, when He who has come in grace comes again in great power, the revelation of Jesus Christ shall be perfected; but ere that is done, much will intervene, and the very beasts are stages in the way. The evil destroys and punishes itself throughout. In its very nature it carries the seeds of its own dissolution; while grace, out of every fall, brings forth fresh blessings, proving that, if sin abound through man's weakness, grace shall yet much more abound. Thus it was with the fall of Noah's sons. The confusion of tongues issues in the call and life of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; in each of whom the development of man proceeds, with fresh discoveries of the riches of the God of all grace.

06.4.0. Abraham, or the Spirit of Faith

PART 4 ABRAHAM, OR THE SPIRIT OF FAITH

Genesis 12:1-20, Genesis 13:1-18, Genesis 14:1-24, Genesis 15:1-21, Genesis 16:1-16, Genesis 17:1-27, Genesis 18:1-33, Genesis 19:1-38, Genesis 20:1-18 "Abraham believed God." -- Romans 4:3.

"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." -- Romans 4:20.

THE progress and development of the natural life in man is, perhaps, the best figure of the progress of the spiritual life. In both One Hand is seen. Adam, Abel, and Noah, shew how in the spiritual, just as in the natural, there is a first stage, when we are begotten and yet not quickened; then a stage, when we are quickened and yet not born, -- when we draw that nourishment which contributes to our growth through the medium of natural things, as the child in the womb receives strength through the mother; and a third stage, when, after we are quickened, we are born, out of that in which we were, into another sphere of greater liberty. Adam answers to the first; Abel, to the second; Noah, to the third of these. In Noah, man, already quickened, is brought, through the travail pains and groans of the first creation, into a sphere, where, like a new-born child, he is delivered out of the first world, into more perfect light and liberty. And this conscious exchange of one world for another, -- this coming out of one sphere into another, is regeneration.

We are now to see how after we are thus born, in the spiritual just as in the natural world, we walk first by faith, implicitly trusting another. This life of faith is perfectly figured and set forth in Abraham. Then, as dear children, in the intelligent enjoyments of sonship, all the joys and experiences of which Isaac’s life figures to us, we dwell awhile in peace by wells of water, till, fit for service, we go forth to toil like Jacob, and thence advance to suffering and glory, as is set forth in Joseph. No wonder, therefore, that Abraham’s life in every age has suggested lessons of deepest import to thousands. It is the picture of that stage when life is strong; when the heaven-born child, in the energy of heavenly youth, is being exercised in all that may increase strength and skill and blessedness; when the Father of spirits is leading His child to know both himself and Him who has created and will not forsake him. (Note: The Gloss, in the Catena Aurea, on the Genealogy of Christ in St. Matthew, -- while explaining Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as figuring certain successive forms of life in man, which end after many confusions in Christ, the image of God, wrought in us, -- interprets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as the lives of faith, hope, and charity, respectively. But this is only another way of expressing what I have said; for the spirit of sonship is hope, and true service is practical love or charity.) In saying that Abraham is the life of faith, I do not mean that there has been no faith before this stage. There must have been faith at every stage, else there could have been no blessedness. Without faith Adam could have found no peace in the promise of the Seed: Abel offered by faith: Noah was saved by faith. But there may be, and are, such acts of faith, before we reach the stage which is a walk of faith distinctively. Just as Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost, and yet had the Spirit given at His baptism, after which His

life, already of the Holy Ghost, took another form in the manifestation of that same Spirit; so in us faith works from the first, but we go some way before we reach that stage in which the walk of faith is manifested. But this walk it is of which Abraham is the type, a form of life always following the full apprehension of regeneration. (Note: Those who care to trace this further, will find some teaching in the difference between phronema pneumatos (Romans 8:6), and pneuma pisteos or pneuma huiothesias (2 Corinthians 4:13 and Romans 8:15), as used by St. Paul. The phronema pneumatos is not exactly the same thing as pneuma pisteos. We get the phronema pneumatos, that is, the minding of the spirit, at the Abel stage, before we pass the mystic flood; but after regeneration we get pneuma pisteos, or pneuma huiothesias, that is, the spirit of faith, or the spirit of adoption. The marked distinction in these expressions of St. Paul may help some to see the reality of the difference between the Abel and the Abraham stage. And as this is true within, so is it in the dispensations.) This stage is introduced by the description of the progress of regenerate man, before that line of faith appears which Abraham typifies. Therefore is the course of Shem's line given here, as the introduction to the life of Abraham (Genesis 11:10-26). For these ten generations prefixed to Abraham's life, shewing us all the steps from Shem to Terah, Abraham's father, give us all the phases or forms of the contemplative mind, after regeneration, till it produces Abraham, that is, the life of faith. Here, in the generations from Shem downwards, we are shewn how the contemplative mind, after regeneration, for a while degenerates. If the successive names are beyond us, this at least is clear, that Shem's line in Terah now worshipped idols (Joshua 24:2). (Note: Those who wish to look further into the import of the ten names, from Shem to Abram, will find a good deal on the subject in Parker's Bibliotheca Biblica, part i. pp. 286-289.) Then out of this bursts forth again the brighter stage set forth in the life and path of Abraham.

Here then, as in the previous steps, we see that this new form of life grows out of the discovery of failure in the former stage. Abel was not seen till Adam fell; nor Noah till the earth was full of violence. Each morning sprang out of a night; and so here, out of the decline of light in Noah's seed, a fresh day breaks forth again with greater light in Abraham. Just as in a tree, each new growth follows a winter; and the whole clothing of leaves, which had been put on in the former stage of growth, is put off preparatory to another great advance, which bursts forth out of the bonds of the winter, which has seemed to freeze and make the tree almost as dead; so is it in the soul of man: his development is a law of progress, but of progress through checks and conflicts; through winters which strip us, and leave us bare and apparently dead, without that clothing which has been thrown around us; yet not so dead but that the rays of heavenly light can again clothe, enlarge, and quicken us. Such is our life, progress through conflicts and apparent defeats; the harmonies of grace being as those of nature; night and day, cold and heat, in elemental strife, working out the appointed end through the balance of opposing forces everywhere. So we travel on: hindrances aiding our advance; castings down lifting us up; death bringing forth life; separation working a higher and purer unity; a wonder and a riddle even to ourselves. And this darkness, out of which that walk of faith springs forth, of which Abraham is the appointed figure, is, I suppose, common experience. The liberty we have, as dead and risen with Christ, may be and is perverted for a season; nor is the walk of faith reached till the soul has learnt some of the perversions which follow regeneration. The decline of Shem's seed shews this in type. Our souls, if we have ever reached to true Christian liberty, may witness the sad reality. As a Reformer said, "We prayed more in the days of our darkness than now." Thus practical antinomianism will more or less shew itself after regeneration. Then out of such a state comes the stage we are to trace, a walk of

obedient faith with Him who says, "Get thee out of thy country to the land that I will shew thee." All the steps of this walk are here described, from Ur of the Chaldees, where Terah lingers, till we reach the better land beyond Jordan. There trial on trial comes in the way: there faith learns itself, and that its fruit is all of God: there at length another form of life appears, in which man is yet more advanced and perfected. It is an oft-told tale, but, like man’s life, no less wondrous because it has been repeated on earth a hundred thousand times. But to trace each step in order. We shall see that here, as ever, there is first a separating process, then a perfecting one.

06.4.1. Abram's Separation from His Country

I. -- ABRAM'S SEPARATION FROM HIS COUNTRY AND HIS FATHER'S HOUSE

Genesis 12:1-20

"NOW the Lord had said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew 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 the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:1-3).

Thus begins the life of faith. As Noahs, that is, in regeneration, we come from the Adam world to a new world beyond the waters. As Abrams, that is, in the walk of faith, we start from Mesopotamia, the ground between the mystic Tigris and Euphrates, that is, tradition and reasoning. (Note: Respecting these rivers, see on the seventh day.) This walk begins not of man, but of God. It is His call, wholly of grace, which leads at once to separation. For the called one was one of an apostate race, an idolater (Joshua 24:2), and the husband of a barren woman (Genesis 11:30), in Ur of the Chaldees, that is, not far from Great Babylon, the ground of false and perverted worship and self-exaltation. Still he was of Shem's line; for the spirit of faith grows up, though amid awful confusions, out of the contemplative mind. But the fine gold of Shem ere this has changed: the contemplative mind has fallen grievously. What hopes could one of such a fallen line have of being made very fruitful and blessed in a better land? Could such a dry tree look for fruit? Yet God speaks, and, as at creation, great results follow. By this Word of God fresh life flows in and shews itself, as the sun's heat penetrating a tree causes it to come up out of the dark earth and spread heavenward. So works the call of God, itself the spring and strength of all the faith that follows it. Babels may grow from men's words one to another, saying, "Go to, and let us make." The walk of faith begins not from man: the Word is its author and finisher. As to the call, it was, and yet is, personal; addressed, not to the outward man, but to Abram, the fallen inner man. To this God says, "Get thee out, and I will bless thee." The prophets mark this: speaking of this act, the Lord says, "I called him alone, and blessed him" (Isaiah 51:2). For the call of God, to be of any use, must be personally felt and realised by the inner man. The flesh may hear of it; yea, as with those who went with Paul, it may be struck to the ground by the glory of the revelation: the senses may witness some of the outward circumstances accompanying the call: but as Paul says, "They heard not the voice of Him that spoke to me" (Acts 22:9). For the outward man knows not the call of God, and will prove that it knows it not, by abiding to the last far off from Canaan, on the ground of sense rather than on that of promise; while the spirit of faith goes forth, it knows not where, to stand in the strength of the Lord on the high and heaven-watered hills of promise, which flow with milk and honey. This call of God contains both grace and truth; grace in the promise, the New Covenant "I will," which said, "I will shew thee a land, I will make thee fruitful, I will bless thee;" truth in the separating word, "Get thee out," obedience to which was the proof that Abram believed the "I will." This promise was the gospel. So St. Paul, alluding to it, says, that in it "the gospel was

preached to Abram" (Galatians 3:8). The gospel is -- I must repeat it -- a promise of God, a report concerning future glory and an inheritance; which men may believe or disbelieve, but which is true, because it is God's word, and to meet which faith alone is needed. Men are slow to apprehend this. Feelings, or works, or something in us, is looked for as the ground of future blessing and salvation. But the Spirit and the Word with one voice testify that it is the Lord Himself who saves; and that to receive the salvation, faith, that is, taking God at His word, is the simple and blessed means. God is the Saviour; and faith takes God to be God, resting on Him in every fresh discovery of need and barrenness, and finding Him to be all He has promised, in His own unfailing "I will." But there is more than promise in the call. Promise is its strength; but linked with this there is the separating word, "Get thee out," calling for prompt obedience. Grace saves. It is the promise which sets the heart at rest; which brings us from idolatry and distance to happy confidence. But the faith, which rests on God's "I will," hears God's purpose also to separate His saved ones unto Himself. There is to be, not only peace, but separation. So the word of truth comes, commanding sanctification. Man has often divided between grace and truth, preaching God's "I will," without the accompanying "Get thee out;" or attempting to separate men to God with a "Get thee out," without a full apprehension of God's "I will." The result has proved that this is not God's call. Where He calls, both grace and truth are ever found. So with the Apostles. Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, (Galilee of the Gentiles, the people that sat in gross darkness,) saw two brethren, Simon and Andrew, casting a net into the sea; and He called them and said, "Follow me:" -- here is separation: -- "and I will make you fishers of men:" -- here is the never-failing "I will" (Matthew 4:19). So again, "Come unto me, all ye that labour:" -- here is separation, for He was "separate" (Hebrews 7:26): then follows the promise, "I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). So again, in the well-known words, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: wherefore come out and be separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:17-18). And these two points are yet in the Lord's call, nor can the spirit of faith afford to part with either. At times, indeed, for "the flesh is weak," even faith may shrink from all that the separating word claims for it. We are slow to believe that apostate things are to be forsaken, not improved. We would fain mend them, rather than leave them. How many, both in the world within and without, are attempting to put the evil to rights, when God's word respecting both is only, "Get thee out." But the Lord is faithful; and where He has appeared, the way of separation or sanctification will be trodden: and, indeed; "the spirit is willing," if the flesh is weak. But this leads us to the way in which the call was obeyed. The word was, -- "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." Abram gat him out from his country, and even from his kindred, but not from his father's house. He attempts to take his father, and his father's house, with him (Genesis 11:31). He obeys, but not wholly. So is it yet. The spirit of faith in us, when called to go forth from the outward things of Ur of the Chaldeans, -- the ground of reasoning, where Babel is built up, -- is called of God to leave, not only the more outward things, such as "thy country," but the more inward also, the "kindred and father's house." Some are more outward, as natural pleasures and affections; and some more inward, as "the old man," and "father's house." Of these the outward things are sooner left than the inward; for nature yet is strong, and the old life is still very near and dear to us. So, like Abram of old, the spirit of faith in us endeavours to take with it into the land of promise the old man of our corrupt mind which has never truly known the call of God. But this old man, though ready to start for Canaan, never reaches it. It cares not to go so far. Nay, while it lives, even the elect, if he abides with it, cannot reach his

destination. Journeying thus, Abram gets halfway to Canaan: so we read, -- "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and they came to Charran and dwelt there." And there they stopped until this old man died. Then Abram starts again: and now nothing stops him; for now, "they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came." (Compare Genesis 12:5 and Genesis 11:31.) Stephen, alluding to Abram's call, specially marks this: -- "The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I will shew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran; and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell" (Acts 7:2-4). (Note: Ambrose gives the inward sense, Ambros. de Abr. l. ii. c. 1.)

"So Abram departed." So starts the spirit of faith. Great is the struggle to leave "country and kindred and father's house." To go forth "not knowing whither we go" is trial enough. To go forth from "father's house" at once seems impossible. Thus the old man of our fallen spiritual life, though it cannot really help us to Canaan, is still clung to. Indeed, at first it seems to help us. It is written, not Abram took Terah, but "Terah took Abram" (Genesis 11:31); for often some energy, which is really corrupt, is active, apparently in a good direction, when the elect is called. But Terah never passes Jordan; he can but reach Charran. Having got thus far, he has been pilgrim long enough; and so "he dwells there." (Note: This place is mentioned as Laban's home, Genesis 27:43; as a place easily conquered by the king of Assyria, 2 Kings 19:12; and, lastly, as having an extensive trade with Tyre, Ezekiel 27:23. All this is significant.)

We are slow to learn this lesson, but it must be learnt. Even faith cannot take the old man into the place of promise. Jordan is not really passed. Often has it been tried; but the old life cannot be brought into heavenly places beyond that "stream of judgment," with its deep waterfloods. (Note: Jordan, Heb. yarden [H3383], meaning "the stream of judgment," -- if with Jerome we derive it from dan [H1777, H1835], (Hieron. Comment. in Ezekiel 47:18,) the stream which must be passed by Israel, if they would enter Canaan, is the well-known figure of that death by which we enter heavenly things. If, however, with Augustine, (Enar. in Psalm. xli. [E.V. 42,] 6,) and Gregory the Great, (Moral. in Job, l. xxxiii. c. 6, § 13,) we derive the word from yarad [H3381], to come down, and regard Jordan as the figure of that self-abasement, which is a death to self, through which every one must pass who would enter into rest, the lesson is, in substance, the same.) Thus we are in a strait. A new bond draws us heavenward, but the old one as yet has claims on us. So we start with both: we get "out of our country," and the old man for many stages bears us company; but at length he wearies of this path; Canaan is too far off: and so with him for a season faith too settles down. But in due time we are freed. The time must come at last, when we discover this much loved old man to be dead, and that he must be buried out of sight. Hitherto, spite of the call, we have acted as though the old man might be saved, or improved, or taken with us. But now the meaning of our baptism dawns upon us; the call is recollected, and we become once more pilgrims. This is no fable. Once, with the old man leading us, we went forth to go into the land of Canaan; but we only got to Charran, and dwelt there. But the old man was buried: then again we started to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan we came. But though Terah cannot enter Canaan, Lot, another form of life, closely allied to the old man of our former conversation, and from which Abram, or the spirit of faith, has at length to be separated, goes on some stages further with him (Genesis 12:4). Our blindness makes it hard to speak of this. Few

perceive that the inward man, or mind, like the body, is not one member, but many, consisting of many faculties, both of the understanding and affections, the former of which are figured by men, the latter by women, throughout Scripture. But thus it is; and Lot is one of these. As the son of Abram's elder brother, he is the continuation and fruit of what is first and natural, the same old life, only in another form; submitting awhile to be under the direction of true faith, to shew at last its true character. Lot is the natural upright mind in us, not spiritual, yet respecting truth, and, to a considerable degree, following it; scarcely to be distinguished at first from the spirit of faith in us, but with undeveloped tendencies such as the spirit of faith never manifests; just (2 Peter 2:7), yet loving what the spirit of faith loves not, and at length resting, or seeking to rest, where the spirit of faith cannot rest; till it bears sad fruits, which faith could not produce, and which at a further stage are, like Moab and Ammon, in direct opposition to God's elect Israel. (Note: Moab and Ammon are the children of Lot, Genesis 19:37-38.) Such a mind still dwells with us, though our old man, like Terah, is confessed to be both dead and buried. (Note: Origen alludes to this inward Lot, in his comment on John 8:39. Ambrose also, De Abr. l. ii. c. 2, and 6. In this view we should not forget that Lot's name signifies a covering. He is not the true inner man.) But this will not be clear to all; for souls, as bodies, live in happy unconsciousness of what is working in them. And indeed though the workings of nature and grace are a sight for some, they work on as well, perhaps even better, unperceived by us.

Having thus passed Jordan, let us mark the trials into which the spirit of faith at once is introduced. Many for lack of knowing this are stumbled, even when through grace they are in the right way, finding it so unlike that which flesh and blood would have chosen. We read here of pilgrimage and difficulty and want, yet of communion with God and happy worship. And these are still some of the chief marks of the position into which true faith brings the believer.

Pilgrimage is noticed first. "Abram passed through the land, to the place of Sichem, and to Moreh; and he removed from thence into a mountain, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east; and Abram journeyed, going and journeying still toward the south" (Genesis 12:6-9). Nahor abides without change where his fathers dwelt before him, and builds a city, which he calls after his own name (Genesis 24:10). Abram dwells in tents to the end, possessing nothing abiding here, save a burial-place. And the spirit in us which obeys God's call will even yet dwell in tents and be a pilgrim. The old man may rest in outward things and be settled, but the spirit of faith has here no certain dwelling-place. Its tent is often searched by rains and winds; yet by these very trials it grows strong and is kept from many snares. For the called one cannot be as Moab, "settled on his lees." "Moab hath been at ease even from his youth; he hath settled on his lees; he hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity; therefore his taste remaineth in him, his scent is not changed" (Jeremiah 48:11). Abram, and David, and Israel, have all been emptied from vessel to vessel. Pilgrimage is their appointed lot, because true life is always progressing, moving. In the course of this discipline, trials befall them which others never meet with; failures, too, are seen, such as we never see in the prudent, worldly man. When did Nahor go down to Egypt, or deny his wife? When did Saul, like David, go down to Achish, and play the madman? But in this same course God is seen, and man is learnt. Man, indeed, is abased, but God is glorified. The pilgrim "learns what is in his heart." He cannot easily forget what his pilgrimage has taught him of his own weaknesses. Once he might, like Eve, have believed the word, "Ye shall be as gods." Pilgrimage has proved that even faith is not a god, but only a vessel

to receive God. Thus by trial does faith learn God; and the true discovery of Him more than compensates for all the self-despair, which has been the means of making us acquainted with Him.

Thus Abram passed from place to place; from Ur to Haran, then to Sichem and Moreh, thence to Bethel and Hai, and so on. (Note: On the mystic import of each of these places, the early Fathers have written much. See Ambrose, De Abr. l. i. c. 2. As to the "mountain on the east of Bethel," Ibid. l. ii c. 3. We may compare with this Augustine's spiritual interpretation of Sichem, on the words, "I will divide Sichem." -- Enar. in Psalm. lix. (E.V. 60,) § 8. St. Paul's explanation of Salem is well known, Hebrews 7:2.) He was what some now call changeable. And further, he went "he knew not whither." This is yet the common charge against the walk of faith. How often have I heard it urged against those, who, in faith and obedience to the call of God, have made no small sacrifices, that they are changeful, here to-day, and there to-morrow; that it is difficult from year to year to know where we may find them. Others, if they are snugly housed in some "city of the nations," some great or small system or polity of man's making, may be reckoned on with some certainty. We can tell where to find them even to the end. They can boast, too, of their consistency. Where they were at first, there they are still. They have never altered a single view, because they have never taken a single step forward. But this faith, which talks of God's having called it, is unmanageable. Men in whom such a spirit rules, however comfortably they are settled to-day, may be off, we know not where, to-morrow. And what do they get by it? Plainly nothing. One thing only is plain: a man who talks of the call of God is not the man to be trusted with the care of this world's cities. He is a madman. So the world has judged long since: so it judges yet: nor indeed is it wholly in the wrong. A madman is one who sees, or thinks he sees, what others see not; and seeing such things, he walks accordingly. The called of God has seen what others see not, and he walks accordingly; and those who see not what he has seen must think him mad; and his failures and inconsistencies, the fruits of his unbelief in the path of faith, only make him more unintelligible. Nevertheless the Lord knoweth them that are His. And, much as there is for self-humiliation in the path of such, there are eyes which can see how these very changes, and even failures, only shew more clearly that the path trodden is one, not of sight or nature, but of faith. All this will probably appear very absurd to those who think that a walk of faith begins or is carried on from some calculations of its effects on others, or of the credit it may bring. That inward man, which hears God's call and walks with Him, is led often it knows not whither. Scarce understanding itself, often misunderstanding its appointed way, no wonder if others misunderstand it. But the Lord knoweth the path of His elect; and when He hath tried them, they shall come forth as gold. But the spirit of faith is not a pilgrim only: Abram has an "altar" as well as a tent; in worship receiving fresh revelations. "The Lord appeared to Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 12:7-8). In Ur of the Chaldees God had said, -- "A land which I will shew thee:" now He says, -- "A land which I will give thee." And let it be observed, that here "the Lord appeared." Before this He had "called," and "spoken" to Adam, and Cain, and Noah, and Abram; but we never hear of His "appearing" until now; for it is to the spirit of faith, above all others, that the Lord shews Himself; for faith brings man into trial, and trial needs special revelations, and these are not withheld. Angels' visits are only few and far between, because we so seldom are in the place really to require them. The special trials of this stage are, first, "the Canaanite," and then "a grievous famine," in the land (Genesis 12:6; Genesis 12:10). Canaan, the son of Ham, as we have seen, figures that mere outward religiousness which grows even out of

the regenerate man. (Note: See above, on Genesis 9:1-29 and Genesis 10:1-32.) This is felt by the spirit of faith, when it attempts to enter into heavenly things. The famine shews how the ground on which true faith must stand is indeed a "land of promise," not of present rest. The Canaanite holds it, and famine strips it, till the spirit of faith knows scarcely where to turn itself. And this is the walk with God, with the sense of sin and want sorely pressing us. We may once have hoped through obedience to be wholly freed from such. We may yet think it strange that such fiery trial should be needed, or that the rest so surely promised should yet be kept from us by others, and they the Lord's enemies. Yet such is the path; for the question is, -- Can we be satisfied with God? And many a weary step is trodden before we have made this attainment. In Abram's case the trial led to failure for a while. The Canaanite and the famine drove him down to Egypt. The faith which gets on to the ground of promise at first has not strength to be steadfast there. Indeed, it requires more grace to stand on the ground to which faith brings us, than to get upon it. Peter had faith to step out on the waters, but he had not faith to walk far when there: he had faith to follow Jesus into the high priest's palace, but he lacked faith while there to witness faithfully. Every act of faith brings us into greater trials, where greater faith will be needed. Thus it is that many who walk by faith have failures, which those know not who do not attempt so much. So it was with Abram. Two stages are marked in his failure: first, trial leads him down to Egypt, and then Egypt leads him to deny his wife. The first step led to the second; for one wrong step, like one lie, if it be not immediately retraced, requires another. The first error was walking by circumstances. Then a step is taken to avoid trial, without asking the Lord's counsel. Then the Lord, and His counsel and care, being for the time forgotten, His promise respecting the seed is forgotten also; and the result is, Sarah is soon in Pharaoh's house; while failing Abram is well entreated for her sake: -- "He had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels" (Genesis 12:15-16).

Egypt, meaning straitness, or that straitens, (Note: Heb. mitsrayim, [H4693]. This type is very generally understood. Ambrose, De Abr. l. ii. c. 4, § 13. Augustine, Enar. in Psalm. cxiii. (E.V. 114,) § 3. Gregory the Great, Moral. in Job., l. xxvi. c. 13, § 21.) is the ground of sense; outwardly, those who are living the life of sense, that is, in seen things; as Asshur or Assyria is the type of reasoning; outwardly, of those whose life being one of reasoning, by such reasonings pervert and darken truth. (Note: Asshur, ashshur [H804], means steps. Reasoning is a series of steps.) These both are snares on the right and left for Israel; though both at length to be used and blessed, as the Lord distinctly promises (Isaiah 19:23-25). For when "the Egyptian serves with the Assyrian" both are "blessed." But here Abram, the spirit of faith, tried by the difficulties on the ground of promise, goes down to seek rest in Egypt, that is, the ground of sense; rightly called straitness, for it is indeed a narrow land, not watered as Canaan with the rain of heaven (Deuteronomy 11:10-12; Zechariah 14:18), but by its river, which one day threatens to destroy the sons of Israel. Yet not to Egyptians only is Egypt an enchanting land; it has charms which are felt even by God's elect, treasures gathered up through years of proud empire, and a wisdom which left no room for faith. Here comes the elect, thinking to find some refuge; and here Sarah is at once denied with an equivocation. Women, in this inward view, are certain affections. Sarah is the affection or principle of spiritual truth. (Note: See below on Genesis 16:1-16) In Egypt Sarah is denied: those affections which the spirit of faith ought to defend and cherish most carefully, (for from them must spring the promised fruit,) are brought into danger of defilement from earthly things. For Pharaoh at once desires to have Sarah, and is only kept from violating her by the Lord's immediate judgments. So

does sense now seek to enter into the things of faith, and, could it do so, it would at once violate them. But the Lord saves them: Sarah is not defiled; and Abram, being reproved, turns again, and so departs from Egypt.

---------- But this will be clearer to some as seen without. In this view Abram is the type of those in whom faith is the ruling life, that is, the men of true faith. Such are found by God, when members of a fallen Church, serving idols, and barren, and nigh to Great Babylon. There the Lord's voice is heard, and they who hear it start at once, leaving kindred and country, to go they know not whither. These are the works of Abraham, which must be done, if indeed and in truth we would be Abraham's children: for the Truth has said, "If ye were Abraham's seed, ye would do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39); (Note: Origen's comment on this verse contains many very striking thoughts. See Com. in Johan. tom. xxi.) and his first work was to go forth with God, not knowing whither he went. So walk the men of faith, whose faith is believing in God, not in what others believe about God. Nevertheless, for awhile they seek to take some with them, who, never having personally heard the inward call of God, though ready to begin the course, will never be willing or able to cross over Jordan. With such even believers can only go half-way. But in due time the Terahs are found to be dead; when, leaving them, not without tears, the elect gird up their loins and go on over Jordan. Then come the first trials of the promised land, Canaanites and famine, which drive us down to Egypt. There, while seeking a little rest, Sarah is denied, that is, the spiritual principles of the New Covenant. Believers hope, by denying their true relation to this, to gain greater safety and liberty. Who knows not how common this is? Sarah, the principle of grace, is denied, that failing Abrams may have, as they say, greater liberty, a wider field of usefulness. Take an example. Circumstances of trial have brought believers off their true ground of promise into worldly things. Such love Sarah. Nothing is dearer to them than the covenant of grace. Yet Sarah is again and again denied. And as of old, so now, the thing is done with an equivocation: -- "Say thou art my sister." Words are used to Egyptians, which, though true in a sense, are not true in the sense in which Egyptians take them. So now, men called of God, who believe we are saved by grace, and that neither ordinances nor flesh can make a Christian, will so far practically give up Sarah as to lead the world to think that, as the world, the New Covenant can yet be theirs. This may be done in many ways. Meanwhile the men who know the truth and love it, and yet act thus, have an equivocation which they think clears them. They do not mean by certain words what others naturally gather from them. And though they see they are misunderstood, they still persist. According to these men, the equivocation, "Say thou art my sister," is all right. It is no harm running the risk of mixing or defiling the holy seed. According to these men, Sarah may be a mother of Egyptians; and no thanks to such if God's grace prevents it. The consequence is, even an Egyptian can rebuke Abram. So far from a greater sphere of usefulness, the equivocation deprives the elect of all power over the other's conscience. But Sarah cannot be a mother of Egyptians. The Lord appears to vindicate Himself and free His failing servant. "The Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarai, Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou, She is my sister? So I might have taken her to me for wife. Now therefore behold thy wife: take her and go thy way. And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him, and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had" (Genesis 12:17-20). Thus was Abram delivered: thus even now are individuals freed: thus shall the poor captive Church escape at last. The world will not have us among them, because our principles judge them: and God will

not have us there. In this one thing God and the world agree. Both, at last, say to us, "Behold thy wife: take her and go thy way." (Note: Augustine, Contr. Faust. Man. l. xxii. c. 38, traces at considerable length the dispensational fulfilment of this history. In this view Sarah is the Church, or New Covenant body, which, in its way to the land of rest, gets into the world's house for awhile, but is not suffered to be defiled there.)

Such was and is the path of faith. To not a few now living, these first stages are well known, and familiar as household words. I knew a man in Christ, above fourteen years ago, -- no question is it, whether he was in the body, -- who being called by grace, when he was serving other gods, obeyed in part, seeking to take the uncalled with him into the promised land. And I knew such a man, that, though he went forth to go into the land, yet he only got half way, and dwelt there; the old man, whom he took with him, hindering his advance, until, as days passed on, he found the old man dead; when, having buried him, he became what the men of that country called "unsettled," seeking to go further. So he went forth again to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan now he came. Heavenly things and places, once heard of, were seen; but withal, there was trial, and ere long famine. Then Egypt was turned to, and Sarah was denied, till grace restored the wandering pilgrim. And that grace is yet as near as of old. None can look for it far off or near, and look in vain. Is a ruined world around us, with monstrous births, gigantic evils, the fruit of strange unions between the sons of God and men? -- then an ark is prepared, to admit not only the Noahs, but even for unclean and creeping things, if they will enter it; which shall take them from the world of the curse, and of the thorn, to the world of the covenant and the rainbow, beyond the waters. Is the ruin deeper still, a ruined Church, which, brought through the waters, has misused its blessings and exposed its shame; which has bred fierce hunters, or built great Babels? -- God yet remains; and His grace, if sought, is yet enough for every failure, in the world, in the Church, in our flesh, or in our ways. He cannot fail. He grudges nothing. He has freely given His Only Son. In Him are hid for us eternal countless gifts. In Him, the true Restorer of all things, we are accepted; and He waits that those things, which are hid in Him for us, may by Him be wrought in us through His Spirit. And if, to know His fulness, we need to know our emptiness, -- if our ruin is the complement of His sufficient grace, -- most gladly let us glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us. But it is time to pass on to another stage in this path.

06.4.3. Abram's Conflicts to Deliver Lot

III. -- ABRAM'S CONFLICTS TO DELIVER LOT

Genesis 14:1-24

WE come now to the conflicts into which the spirit of faith is drawn, in its endeavours to deliver and save the outward man, which yet is dear to it. The letter tells of the part which Abram took in the wars which the seed of Shem carry on against the seed of Ham; for of the kings whose contests are here described, four are of Shem's, and five of Ham's seed (Genesis 14:1-16). In spirit we see here the conflicts into which our faith is drawn, through the workings of certain powers springing from the Shem and Ham within us, in hopes of freeing and saving that outward man, of which Lot is the appointed figure.

First, to mark it within. To understand this we must remember what Shem and Ham represent respectively. They are certain minds growing out of the regenerate soul, which as years roll on produce many varying forms of life. (Note: See on Genesis 10:1-32) Now we read that before Lot left Abram, and before Abram entered into this conflict, the kings of the line of Shem, -- Shinar, Elam, and the rest, -- had been engaged in overcoming certain giants and others of the line of Ham, that is, certain reasoning powers springing from the contemplative mind in us, though much debased and fallen, as Shinar and Elam were, yet strive to overcome those open and gigantic evils, which, like the Rephaim, spring out of Ham, that is, the darkened and rebellious mind. These gigantic evils are put down by Shem's seed; but another branch of Ham's race, namely, the kings of Sodom and Gomorrha, rise in rebellion; when again Shem's seed strive to restrain them, and after sore conflict do overcome them. At this point the conflict of these two seeds touches Abram, that is, the spirit of faith; for Lot, the outward mind, having departed from Abram or faith, is taken captive by the kings of Shinar and Elam, those reasoning powers which grow out of the contemplative mind, and is only delivered by an effort of faith, and even so only delivered for a season, for Lot again returns to dwell in Sodom. (Note: Ambrose traces the inward fulfilment, De Abr. l. ii. c. 7, § 41. As to the numbers here, viz. five and four, Augustine says, that five always refers to something connected with the senses. -- Enar. in Ps. xlix. (E.V. 50,) § 9; Tract. in Johan. xv. § 21, and xxiv. § 5. He instances the five barley loaves, the five husbands of the woman of Samaria, the five brothers of the rich man, and other fives, as all connected with the five senses; while four is always connected with the world. -- Serm. cclii. c. 10; De diebus Pasch. The mystical serpent of the Hindoos is generally represented with five heads, which are said to signify the five senses. See Payne Knight's Inquiry into the Symbolical Language of Mythology, p. 56.) But all this effort on Lot's behalf, fruitless as it seems, -- for Lot returns to Sodom, and settles down where he is only saved so as by fire, -- brings into view the mind of faith in its relations to those powers which are figured by the contending kings. Abram stands apart from all. From such powers faith receives no help, waiting for its portion from the Lord Himself, and when it pleases Him; and while thus refusing to be enriched on earth, suddenly receiving gifts from One, whom as yet it knows but little of. For now the Prince of Peace comes in and makes a feast; and faith strengthened by such

food is proof against all the seductions of the king of Sodom, that is, the defiled and self-loving fleshly mind. (Note: Ambros. de Abr. l. ii. c. 8, § 45.)

Such is the conflict figured here, true in thousands who cannot yet unravel it. They know that before faith comes their reasoning mind has striven to overcome certain gigantic evils in them, that some of these have been overcome, and that after this the evil apparently subdued has again burst out in them, and that again their reason has sought to master it. All this conflict they have known, and further that at a certain point, faith, which has now come, takes part in these struggles, seeking to bring the outward man to walk with the inner man. But the conflict, though felt, is not understood; and hence the picture of it here, as set forth in type, is unintelligible.

I therefore turn to trace it without, as it is fulfilled in the outward kingdom of the professing Church. The selfsame minds are there at work, but, the field being wider and more outward, their works are more visible. In this view Abram's effort to save Lot figures the conflict into which true men of faith come in their attempts to deliver those of their brethren, who, like Lot, though righteous, yet cling to outward things, -- fightings in which true believers would have no part, were it not for the declension of their brothers, who go down Sodom-ward.

Here incidentally much light is thrown on the state of that world, from which by grace the man of faith is separated.

We read that the kings of Sodom and Shinar, with their respective allies, have long opposed each other bitterly; but all their wars have ended the same way: the king of Sodom is always conquered by Shinar or Babylon. (See Genesis 10:10; Genesis 11:2.) (Note: In Joshua 7:21, addereth shinar, "the garment of Shinar," is translated the "goodly Babylonish garment." See also Daniel 1:2 and Zechariah 5:11.) The story is told at length. The king of Shinar first masters the king of Sodom. For a certain period, "twelve years," the king of Sodom pays tribute. At the expiration of this time he rebels. Then comes the king of Babylon with his allies, and smites first the Emims and other giants, and then all the country of the Amalekite; after which he routs the king of Sodom, who loses all his goods, but is not slain (Genesis 14:1-10). The import of this is most plain. Shem's sons here strive with Ham's sons; shewing what bitter strife and keen controversy there is between the religious and the irreligious world, subsequent to regeneration. For the kings of Shinar and Elam are of Shem's seed, sons of him who passed the flood, but who have fallen from contemplation into mere reasonings, and so have perverted the best things. Sodom is the seed of cursed Ham, closely allied to Mizraim or Egypt, and in a land "like the land of Egypt" (Genesis 13:10), the figure of those who turn from the truth, and live in open ungodliness and shameless self-love. (Note: In the Apocalypse, the three great forms of the world set before us are Sodom, and Egypt, and Babylon. In Revelation 11:8, the great city is seen as "Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." This is the sensual and ignorant world. In Genesis 17:1-27 and Genesis 18:1-33 the same great city is seen as Babylon: this is the religious world. In Genesis 16:1-16, which foretells the "seven last plagues," we find the plagues of each of these cities. The "noisome sore" (Revelation 16:2), the "waters turned to blood" (Revelation 16:4), the "kingdom full of darkness" (Revelation 16:10), -- these are the plagues of Egypt (Exodus 9:8-11; Exodus 7:17-20; Exodus 10:21-23). The "drying up of the Euphrates, and the invasion of the kings of the East" (Revelation 16:12), -- this is the judgment of Babylon (Jeremiah 51:13; Jeremiah 51:36;

Jeremiah 50:38; Isaiah 44:27-28). The "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and great hail" (Revelation 16:18), -- this is the destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19:24-25).) Now these two seeds, Shinar and Sodom, have at times great conflict and controversy. But always with one result; Sodom is no match for Babylon. The religious reasoning world can always master the irreligious world. Yea, though at times Sodom throws off the yoke, Babylon can always reimpose it. In these conflicts, too, Babylon (as a sword of God, for even "the wicked are His sword," Psalms 17:13,) is used to rid the world of certain gigantic evils: for the king of Babylon "smote the Rephaims, (or giants,) in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Emims, (who were also giants,) in Kiriathaim." (See Deuteronomy 2:10-11.) (Note: I may add here, for it is significant, the rest of the history of these Rephaim. They were first smitten by Babylon: a remnant, however, was left till Joshua's days. -- Joshua 12:4; Joshua 13:12; Joshua 17:15. The last of these giants seem to have been slain in the time of the kingdom under David. -- 1 Chronicles 20:4; 1 Chronicles 20:6; 1 Chronicles 20:8. They are never heard of when we get to Solomon's reign.) The religious world, in its conflicts with open irreligion, has plainly destroyed some gigantic and crying evils. But Babylonians are not therefore Israel: the religious world, though religious, is still the world. Babylonians may destroy Rephaim; at times it suits their purpose to do so, for there are evils in the world which stink even in the world's nostrils; nay, they may even "lay waste the field of the Amalekite and Mount Seir," for the flesh in some of its forms is hated by the religious world (Genesis 14:7). (Note: The Amalekite was one of Esau's sons. -- Genesis 36:1, &c. As such, as the offspring of him, who, as the rejected firstborn, has ever been one chief type of the flesh, Amalek, even as his father Esau, stands a type of the same flesh, though in rather a different aspect, and at a further stage. See more on this under Genesis 36:1-32. Mount Seir was Esau's dwelling. -- Genesis 32:3; Deuteronomy 2:5. It is "the field of the Amalekite," not the Amalekite, which the king of Shinar now lays waste. This is significant.) They can do all this, but they cannot walk with God. Nevertheless, they can overcome Sodom, though its king escapes them, to meet ere long his destruction from another hand.

Now "Lot dwelt in Sodom" (Genesis 14:12). This fact links the strifes of the religious and irreligious world with the walk of the man of faith. Abram at Hebron, a stranger with his tent, though he may hear these "rumours of wars," has no personal interest in them. Very different is it with those, who, like Lot, live in the world. To such the strifes of the religious or irreligious world must be of deepest moment. Thus many questions, with which we should have nothing to do, touch us simply because we are not where we ought to be; and thus the faithful too, who are in their place, are involved in conflicts through the captivity of their unfaithful brethren. But this is not the doctrine of the world, for Sodom and Babylon both agree that the believer should not stand aloof from such controversies. Often have I heard the grounds on which both sides claim the pilgrim. Babylon, the religious world, cannot understand how persons claiming to be the called of God can hesitate to join them in opposing open evils. Gigantic evils, such as Emims and Rephaims, -- the sphere of the flesh's dominion, "the field of the Amalekite," -- and above all, "Sodom," the wicked world, with its many crimes, seem to Babylonians reason enough for the believer to join them in subduing such adversaries. On the other hand, there are some in Sodom, righteous souls living in too great contact with the irreligious world, who, having by experience known Babylonian bondage, are content, like Lot, to make common cause even with the godless and unclean, if only they can break the yoke of the king of Babylon. And such would like to see true believers with them; but from both is Abram separate, till his brother Lot is led away captive towards Babylon. Then does he come down from the quiet hills of promise to the strifes in which his brother is, giving up his

ease to rescue a brother out of Babylonian captivity.

Thus is Abram brought into collision with Babylon, that is, the religious world. We never hear of his fighting with Sodom. His place is separation from and intercession for, not war against, it. But as respects the religious world, the believer at times, to free brethren, is forced to contend with it. And strange as it appears, that believers will not join in the strifes of Sodom or Babylon, it seems yet stranger that, if either are assailed, the religious world should be that which is fought against. But so it has been from Christ's days to these: Pharisees are judged, while open sinners are pitied. The motives of the men of faith are not seen or understood, and "though he discerneth all things, yet is he discerned of no man" (1 Corinthians 2:15). The result is, Lot is freed by Abram. The pilgrim brother (Note: Here only (Genesis 14:13), Abram is called "the Hebrew," ha ibriy [H5680], rendered by the LXX., ho perates, or the passenger.) is the means through whom deliverance comes. The man who has been alone with God is the man who can break the chains of Babylon for his unfaithful brethren. And many a gift yet comes to failing souls through brethren with whom they hold no communion, whom they judge as extreme in their views, and to whom they practically prefer the company of such as know not God. Sooner or later, however, God vindicates His own. The pilgrim brother is the helper in time of need. This leads to trial of another sort. Abram, victor over the kings of Shinar and Elam, is tempted by the other king; for "the king of Sodom came out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer;" but Abram, strengthened by Melchisedek's bread and wine, and blessed by him, refuses the king of Sodom's proffered fellowship (Genesis 14:17-24).

Such a trial meets believers yet; the rulers of the darkness of this world (Ephesians 6:12; 1 Corinthians 2:8), successfully opposed in one form, meet us in another. The hour of victory is the chosen time. Opposition to one form of evil brings us sometimes very near to other evil; and he who has been in collision with the religious world will surely be met by another spirit from the irreligious world. If the king of Shinar be slain or put to flight, the king of Sodom is at hand, though humbled, seeking the man of faith. And without God's grace, it would be natural enough for the man who had opposed Babylon to make a league with Sodom. Many have been thus ensnared; but men of faith, in the hour of temptation, are met by other help. Thank God, there is a "Priest of the Most High," who is also "King of Righteousness and Peace," who in times of danger draws nigh to the elect, and, by His gifts of "bread and wine," strengthens them. I need not tell what "bread and wine," or what "King and Priest," is represented here, (Note: See Hebrews 7:1-28. Having the comment of an Apostle here, we need no others; but the following passages in the Fathers may interest some: -- Clem. Alex. Strom. l. iv. p. 637; Cyprian, Ep. 63; Isid. Pelus. l. i. Ep. 431; Augustine, De Civit. l. xvi. c. 22.) who has said, "Lo, I am ever with you," but who peculiarly reveals Himself when we seem to be tempted above that which we are able, and by foretastes of the good things of Salem leads us to refuse "from a thread to a shoe-latchet" from Sodom's wicked rulers. For the fainting soul, even of a saint, if empty, might thirst after the dross which the king of Sodom offers us. Well does the tempter know his time, and that when the man is "an hungered," then is his opportunity (Matthew 4:2-3). Israel learnt this in the desert. Water failed them; then thoughts came in of "the vines and pomegranates of Egypt." Then the Lord gave water; and he that drank thereof thirsted no more for Egypt, but was satisfied. Then "they sent to Edom, saying, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land; we will not pass through thy fields or through thy vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of thy wells; we will go by the king's highway; we will

not turn to the right hand nor to the left until we have passed thy borders." (See Numbers 20:5; Numbers 20:17; Numbers 21:5; Numbers 21:16-22.) So it is ever. The soul must be filled. If it have not the Lord’s comforts, the vines of Egypt will be thought of. If it be full, and the living waters are tasted, the pilgrim can say, "I want not thy goods, only let me go onward along the king’s highway." And so when men of faith after conflict are faint, the rulers of the darkness of this world meet them, and might entrap them, did not the bread and wine of the King of Salem make them proof against all other blandishments. And "Melchisedek blessed Abram and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the Most High God, who hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand." He blesses the believer, and blesses the Most High; and, foreseeing faith’s long trial, reveals God’s character under that name, -- "Possessor of heaven and earth," -- which Abram at that moment most needed; as if to say, If He is thy God, if thus He meets thee by His Priest, in an hour of weakness feasting thee with bread and wine, for which others have laboured, and which cost thee nothing, then thou needest not the gifts of Sodom’s fallen king. And Abram feeling this, not only refuses to be enriched by Sodom, but becomes a giver: "He gave Melchisedek tithes of all." For gifts call forth gifts; and of that which God hath given it, faith gives a portion with gladness to the Lord’s Anointed. And withal, Abram, while prescribing this high path for himself, can see how vain it is to expect it from those who do not know God. If there is a mark of pretended grace, it is the zeal to make our walk the rule, to raise or cut down all to our standard. Where there is real grace, its possessor knows how He who came down here for men meets them where they really are, and not where they are not; and that as grace is a gift, if others lack it, no end is gained by laying on them burdens which without grace they cannot bear. So Abram says of those who went with him, -- Aner, Eschol, and Mamre, -- "Let them take their portion: I have lifted up my hand to the Lord that I will take nothing" (Genesis 14:22-24). But these may not know Him. He therefore requires none others to walk as he does. If example avails, there is his example; but life is a reality, not to be copied without power. The true believer, therefore, would rather that men should be true according to their measure and where they are, than false by pretending to be what they have not attained to. If he gloried in their flesh, it might be otherwise; but such an one glories, not in disciples, but in the cross of Christ. The King of Salem yet lives, "a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek;" and the believer who has striven with the rulers of the darkness of this world, will yet meet Him with His bread and wine in the pilgrimage. "As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God" (Psalms 48:8).

06.4.4. Abram's Trials Through the Word of God

IV. -- ABRAM’S TRIALS THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD AND PRAYER

Genesis 15:1-21 BUT conflict, though it ends in triumph, produces weariness. After great efforts and great success the spirit of faith is often suddenly, and, as it thinks, unaccountably, depressed. A reaction is felt, when dryness succeeds to that life and energy which has carried us on hitherto. At such an hour our very blessings try us. That our trials are blessings has been already learnt. Now we learn that blessings are trials too. And though in measure the elect must have proved this before, -- for God’s call, and Sarah, and Lot, and the flocks and herds, all of which were blessings, had all been trials also, -- the lesson now is learnt in reference to a class of blessings from which till now we expected nothing but peace. God’s own promise and worship are found to try Abram more deeply perhaps than anything which had as yet befallen him.

First, the promise tries him. We read, "After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram, in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?" (Genesis 15:1-2).

Now this answer expresses deep soul-trial, the time of which is specially noted -- "after these things." This is not faith’s first experience. When the word first calls us, though it costs us outward grief, the joy it gives, not to say the excitement it occasions, keeps us from dwelling on our want of fruit. The Lord has promised a land and a seed. On this we can leave our country and kindred, not knowing what the promise will cost us, or how much is to be endured before we obtain the fulfilment of it. We eat the words, and in our mouths they are sweet as honey: we know not that they may be bitter in the belly (Revelation 10:9). Even Terah, the old man, is stirred by the call, little knowing what its results may be. So we start with joy; but years on years pass away: mercies by the way are given, but we have as yet neither the promised fruit nor the inheritance. At last an hour comes when we have counted all things but dross and dung for Christ. The world has come, only to be rejected. Faith, bold to rely on God alone, will not take from it "even a shoe-latchet." At such a moment, the Lord speaks again. The old promise is heard. Still we are barren. And the soul, feeling that it is apparently as far from the fulfilment as when it first started, -- further, in one sense, for there was then some energy in the flesh, which the trials of the way and weary years have now well-nigh quenched, -- answers with something between a sigh and a prayer, saying, "Ah, Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" I have no seed, no fruit: as yet my only heir is this steward born in my house, this "Eliezer of Damascus." Shall he, this spirit of bondage, be the seed? Can this be the promised blessing? Surely there must be something better? So argues faith, even in its depression; and the Lord at once answers, that this steward, this spirit of bondage, is not the promised seed: "This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, he shall be thine heir" (Genesis 15:4). Precious words, but no less a trial to the spirit of faith, which against hope believes in hope. A "seed" and a "land" are still the hope which tries the believer. Fruit does not indeed at first much press or exercise us. We look forward to it, because God has named it; but other things surround and occupy us, and its absence for a while does not disquiet

us. At such a stage we have enough to do with the old man who goes with us, or with Egyptians, or famine, or strifes with brethren, to think much of the promised fruit. It is far otherwise when the old man has been buried, and we are left alone; when all having been forsaken, and the tempting world denied, we yet are fruitless and strangers without our inheritance. Earnestly then the soul begins to long for that which God has promised it. Fain would it see "the seed," Christ formed within us. Hitherto Christ for us has been enough, the word of God pledged on our behalf. Now Christ in us is longed for daily, the image of God, the spirit of sonship, to live and grow in us. And God replies that such too is His will; that if we go without this, we lack what He has promised us. "He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said, So shall thy seed be." "He brought him forth" out of his narrow tabernacle; faith is led beyond those limits which flesh and blood throw around it, into that expanse where the breath of heaven may touch it, and the countless lights of heaven shine on it, and in this freer air God Himself speaks again, saying to faith, "So shall thy seed be." (Note: Ambros. de Abr. l. ii. c. 8, § 48.) And although the words, "Lord, what wilt thou give me?" and, "Lord, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" shew fear as well as faith, yet "Abram believed, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3; Romans 4:6). So ends the trial through the word, while out of the trial faith reaps fresh blessing, even righteousness. Faith takes God to be God, and thus honours Him far more than by many works. And therefore God honours faith, "counting it for righteousness," more precious to Him than gold, yea, than much fine gold. Surely in a world where nearly all doubt God, the sight of a poor barren creature in utter helplessness resting on God’s promise must be a spectacle even to heavenly angels. Even the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth, seeking it, and where He finds it, He makes Himself strong in behalf of it (2 Chronicles 16:9).

Faith, however, still must be tried; and the very worship to which the reception of the word now leads, though the door to fresh blessings, opens through fresh disquietudes. The steps are these: the soul believes that it shall be even as the Lord has promised; but though it believes, it does not understand how or through what experience the blessing is to come to it. In answer, therefore, to the promise, it says, "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" The Lord replies by a command to sacrifice, and in this worship and sacrifice His way is manifested (Genesis 15:9-18). Beside the altar light breaks in. Faith may be strong and grow while yet in outward things; but light comes, while we stand before the Lord, by the holy altar of burnt-offering. At every stage we prove this truth. Noah is taught much beside his offering (Genesis 8:20-22). So, too, is David in later days (Psalms 73:16-17). Abram no less by the altar learns the reasons for the delay in the possession of the inheritance. There is opened the experience of his seed: there again the covenant is renewed and added to. The seed, it is declared, shall be a stranger here, but in God’s time it shall come with great substance to its inheritance. To look for a moment at this worship; for the spirit of faith yet worships in no other way. "The Lord said, Take me a heifer, and a she-goat, and a ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them, but the birds divided he not." This was in substance Abel’s offering, the figure of the sacrifice of Christ, both for us, and in us; though at this stage we have far more detail and greater insight into particulars. Here all the forms, "bullock, goat, and turtle-dove," that is, service, sin-bearing, and innocence, if we take the outward view, -- inwardly, all those powers which must die in us, when in and through Christ we present our bodies a living sacrifice, -- are each discerned; the different parts too are marked; the head, and legs, and inwards, all being discriminated; that is, the

thoughts, the walk, and the affections, no longer overlooked in the general thought of offering, now claim our notice as we give them to God, a willing sacrifice to His holiness. (Note: On this subject I have spoken at length in "The Law of the Offerings," pp. 77-83. See Lira's comment on the text, in loco.) Faith will not offer less than these, and in thus offering it learns the Lord's purpose. And to this day sacrifice is the key to the secrets of the Lord's heart. Many a word tries us until the sacrifice for us and in us is apprehended. Then the word is understood; then the oath is heard; then the reasons, why our God acts as He does, open upon us. To how many low and doubting thoughts is the apprehension of Christ's sacrifice for us an answer. To how many struggles is Christ's sacrifice in us the one reply. We wonder we must wait for our inheritance. We wonder we must prove what flesh is; that it is barren, dead, worthless. The slain Lamb is seen; that life and death witness that to meet God the creature must first suffer; that we must die to have God's life exhibited. If we have presented our bodies a living sacrifice, this truth will be yet more manifest. For the veil, (and "the veil is His flesh," -- that flesh in which He yet walks, for He hath said, "I will walk in them," Hebrews 10:20; 2 Corinthians 6:16,) when rent by the cross, opens to view the great mystery. Now we can see why we must suffer here: faith is almost turned to sight beside the sacrifice. And though even after such communion an hour may come when the soul again is faint because of the way, the remembrance and savour of such hours do not soon leave us: we go on in the strength of it many days.

Sweet, however, as are the ultimate results of such experience, the apprehension of the cross, in our intercourse with God, at the time costs us not a little. One distraction after another presses the spirit of faith, while it is occupied with the appointed sacrifice.

First, "the fowls come down on the carcasses" (Genesis 15:11). No sooner are the bodies of the beasts offered, and the parts laid open before the eye of God and the worshipper, than the fowls come down, to mar the offering if they can. So when the believer has set before him the sacrifice, and in the contemplation of it would fain learn to see and feel with God, the fowls, "evil spirits in heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12), powers within or without subject to the wicked one, messengers of "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), (Note: The "birds" stole away "the good seed." Our Lord explains this by, "Then cometh the devil, and catcheth away that which was sown in their hearts." Matthew 13:4; Matthew 13:19. Compare also Deuteronomy 28:26; Jeremiah 5:27; Revelation 18:2. Gregory the Great beautifully comments here, Moral. in Job, l. xvi. c. 42, § 53.) come to distract our communion, as far as may be. He that has stood beside his offering knows what distractions these winged messengers cause, while we rise up like Abram to "drive them away."

Then comes "darkness:" -- "when the sun went down, a deep sleep fell on Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him" (Genesis 15:12). While on earth, our appointed life of faith is one of alternate light and darkness. We would watch while we are beside the altar, though such darkness cover the earth that our very spirit feels it. But it is hard to watch at such times, when nature sleeps. A horror of great darkness, however, is not overcome by slumbering. We must go through the trial with our God: in it we shall learn what purposes He has in trying us.

Here the hour of trial proves an hour of light; the darkness which shuts out the world does but reveal heavenly things. Abram learns through the darkness more of God's will. Before this, he had the promise of a seed. Now he learns some details of the appointed cross, and that only "through

much tribulation" the kingdom will be won. The "smoking furnace" is seen, ready to purge away the dross; but beside it appears the "burning lamp" (Isaiah 62:1). (Note: Ambros. de Abr. l. ii. c. 9, §§ 61, 62.)

Thus in light ends this trial. The spirit of faith, awaking to its own barrenness, not only with the heart believes unto righteousness, but receives in worship enlarged promises. It may yet err in its efforts to bear fruit, but henceforth there is no more anxious disquietude.

06.4.5. Abram's Efforts to Be Fruitful by Hagar

V. -- ABRAM’S EFFORTS TO BE FRUITFUL BY HAGAR

Genesis 16:1-16

NOW comes a well-known scene. True faith, though it justifies, does not therefore prevent us (while the Lord yet waits till self-will be dead) from trying our own strength. Here these efforts and their results are shewn, proving that, even of the fruits of faith, "that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural." Here the means which the spirit of faith adopts to be fruitful, -- how it comes to use such means, -- and the result, -- all are represented perfectly. The means are these. Abram takes Hagar, hoping by her to obtain the promised fruit (Genesis 16:3). Women are always the affections of the will. Hagar is the natural self-will, Sarai, the submissive spiritual will: the former the type of that in us which affects law; the latter, of that purer and truer will which affects spiritual truth; so that, generally speaking, we may say Hagar is law, and Sarai grace (Galatians 4:22-25); (Note: Origen speaks at great length on this: Hom. xi. in Gen. The whole passage is well worth turning to.) our principles ever being what our affections are. Here we see both these wills working in connection with the spirit of faith; and faith, having so long looked in vain to Sarai, now turns to Hagar, hoping by the energy of the flesh or by works to aid, if not to accomplish, God’s promise. God’s purpose is, out of the death of self, by His own power to bring forth a heavenly life; for He knows, if we know not, that the flesh profiteth nothing, and He would in our ruin shew His resources. But without exception, though we are elect, -- though through faith righteous, -- though we have stood beside the sacrifice, -- though we talk about the cross, and profess to believe it, -- yet have we not learnt to distrust sense, and put away all fleshly hopes. The truth is on our lips, that by strength no man prevails, -- that when we are weak, then are we strong, -- that except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but that, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. As to our acceptance we may have learnt this: but as to our service, as to our fruitfulness, as to our obtaining Christ’s image, how few live in it! We cannot think that the death of our own strength, and of our own will, even when that will is to serve and please God, -- that weakness, disappointment, failure, in self, -- that this can indeed be the right way, -- this seems impossible. So we seek to live rather than to die, and strive to call forth our own energies rather than to be patient at their dissolution. It is not till we have got the fruits of such a course, -- till we have personally experienced the consequences of having seed by Hagar, -- till we have tried all we can do, and having tried it have heard God say, that this fruit which we get by Hagar, that is by the energy of the flesh, is "a wild-ass man" (Genesis 16:12), (Note: In our authorized version, Ishmael is called here "A wild man." Heb. pereh awdawm [H6501 H120], that is, literally, "a wild-ass man." So in Ezekiel 36:38, the elect are in the Hebrew called "Sheep-men;" tsone awdawm [H6629 H120], rendered in the common version, "Flocks of men.") and cannot be the heir, "for in Isaac shall the seed be called," that is, in the son or fruit of the long-barren freewoman; -- it is not till we have expressed our regrets for Hagar’s son, and have sighed, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee," and have seen all his behaviour to the true seed, and his mockery of him when at last he is given to us; -- it is not till we have gone through all this, and much more, and are worn out, and "as

good as dead," that we can give up the flesh with all its hopes, and giving them up find that the death of self, which we have so struggled against, is but the appointed way to gain the promise. So, till we are content to be dead, we take Hagar, and with various experiences of her, and with her, we keep her, till Isaac, the spirit of sonship, being weaned, the bond-maid is no longer wanted, and we learn to say, though not without a struggle even to the end, "Cast out the bond-woman and her son." But this is anticipating. We are now to see what woman, spiritually, what principles, the spirit of faith embraces here, as a means to gain the seed.

She was "a bond-maid," -- "Sarai's maid" (Genesis 16:1). And self-will is yet a "bond-woman," and "gendereth to bondage" (Galatians 4:22-25). All the elect learn this. With each a time comes, when fruit is sought "as it were by the deeds of the law," and in our own strength. We long to "bear the image of the heavenly," and we look for it through our own energy. Some fruit is borne: Hagar is not barren: but the spirit of sonship is not obtained in this way. The proof is, a bond-maid yet is in the house, and her fruit, the spirit of bondage, is not cast out.

Further, this maid was "an Egyptian." Egypt is the ground of sense, that is the outer world. To this Hagar belongs. In her we lay hold of that which in its very nature is of this world. For "the law is not made for the righteous, but for sinners" (1 Timothy 1:9); in seeking help from it, faith is using a worldly principle. But how comes faith to use such means? Several circumstances combine to lead to this.

First, "Sarai was barren; she bare no children" (Genesis 16:1). Sarai is the principle of grace, the affection of spiritual truth. From this the spirit of faith looks for seed; but years pass, and there is still barrenness. Faith does not therefore cast out Sarai; for she is ever loved and regarded as the true wife; but because she is barren, we look elsewhere, not yet knowing that these inner affections must be fruitless, till the self which yet cleaves to the spirit of faith be "as good as dead." When at last in self-despair we are thus dead, then, and not till then, Sarai will bear fruit. Indeed, if at first we could have had our way, Sarai, even as Hagar, would have been made fruitful through our energy. The principle of grace would have been as another law, requiring strength in us to make it productive; whereas the truth is, that while we are thus strong the Lord cannot let us have fruit by Sarai. From Hagar, or law, God may grant some fruit, such as it is, through the elect's own energy. But from Sarai no seed shall be so obtained: she is, and must be fruitless, till our own strength is put away. But this is learnt only by long experience. Here faith has not learnt it: therefore, seeing Sarai barren, it is tempted to have recourse to other means.

Then Hagar is at hand: -- "Sarai had a handmaid." Abram had not to seek her: there she was, already serving him. How she came to be there is hinted in the fact, incidentally noticed, that Hagar was "an Egyptian;" telling that Abram had been in Egypt, and possibly had received this woman as a reward of his unfaithfulness there respecting Sarai. Be this as it may, Hagar now is there, already occupying position in attendance on the true wife; and being there, and useful in her place, through the impatience of the elect ere long she usurps another's place. Just so the inner affection of spiritual truth has the principle of law waiting upon it as a servant. And, as a handmaid, law is in its place in Abram's house; a place whence it should not be expelled, at least until the spirit of sonship has obtained a certain growth. The evil is, that this service of law, though useful in itself, and needed for a season, through the impatience of the elect, becomes the occasion for that further trial of the flesh, which like all such trials is doomed to end in disappointment. But Sarai's

barrenness and Hagar's being at hand are not Abram's only inducements to turn to the bond-maid. The free-woman herself stirs up Abram to this: -- "Sarai said unto Abram, Behold the Lord hath restrained me from bearing. I pray thee, go in unto my maid. It may be that I may obtain seed by her" (Genesis 16:2). There is a stage when grace itself, and the promise of fruitfulness which is connected with it, by acting on our impatience, may so excite, as to lead the spirit of faith to try carnal means, even though for ends which God has promised. Indeed impatience, a zeal for God, without a corresponding faith in the zeal of the Lord of hosts, is ever leading to this. Even to faith it is hard to wait on God, and let Him do His own work in His own way. With right principles exciting us, we may be marring His work, by our haste in attempting to do it for Him. So even Sarai may, and does, mislead us, if, instead of patiently awaiting the Lord's time, that inward affection stirs us up, in connection with other means, to try our own strength. Thus did Abram hearken to Sarai; and thus excited even by the truth, and with right ends, does the elect yet try his own resources. The present age gives countless proofs of this. Christ, the true seed, is by many longed for ardently. Both in Church and world we wait for His appearing. But He tarries. Then Sarai speaks to those, who, though men of faith, are so far from "being as dead," that they are still full of self-will. The result is one scheme after another, all aiming to obtain the promised seed, by doing rather than by dying. Vain hope! Ishmaels enough may be thus gotten. Isaacs are not so born. But to trace the results, as figured here. The first is, Abram gets a son: Hagar is fruitful (Genesis 16:4); but her son is not the promised heir. For to Abram and his seed were 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). For Abram or faith has many seeds; but that form of life, which, though of faith, is produced by self-will, (and the first fruit of faith is ever such,) is not elect, and cannot be the true heir. Hagar's son is but "a wild-ass man." The spirit of faith has indeed thus produced another form of life, and thus something at first appears to have been gained. The end proves, that, as far as the true heir is concerned, all this effort has availed nothing. Faith by self-will has only got "a spirit of bondage again to fear." The "spirit of adoption" is not thus begotten. (Note: Jerome gives the inward sense, that while our faith deals with the law and the letter, Isaac is not come, but Ishmael only is born in us; whereas Isaac is come, if we enjoy spiritual things. -- Hieron. in Epist. ad Galat. l. ii. c. 4. Ambrose too, after tracing the outward, gives in substance the same inward application. -- De Abr. l. ii. c. 10, § 73.) The next result is as unsatisfactory. "When Hagar saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised." If carnal strength succeeds in bearing any fruit, the immediate result is contempt of better things. For the flesh can achieve nothing without being exalted. Sarai, therefore, instead of being "built up," as she hoped, by Hagar, reaps through her fresh humiliation. Nor is this all. For this contempt, Sarai deals hardly with the bondmaid, who therefore flees out of the elect house (Genesis 16:6). If through faith's impatience the principle of law is exalted out of its place, and thus dishonour is done to grace, that is the free-woman, a re-action follows, for grace or Sarai is best loved, and though barren never loses her rightful empire over the believing heart. The principle of law is harshly judged, and so, being abused, for awhile departs and is lost sight of. Who that knows this path but has seen how the affection of law, when contempt has through it been poured upon a higher principle, is ejected even from that place, where as hand-maid it might be most useful. So does legality lead to antinomianism, and this when law as yet cannot be dispensed with. The time comes, indeed, after Abram is circumcised and Isaac is born, when there is no further need for the bond-maid, and she is cast out for ever. But this is not yet. At present the bond-maid is needed. She is therefore sent back by the Lord to her true place as "Sarai's maid"

(Genesis 16:8-9). For "the law is good, if it be used lawfully" (1 Timothy 1:8). The sorrow comes from exalting it out of its proper place.

Thus goes the life of faith. And here exercises begin in reference to law, which only end in the final dismissal of the bond-maid. At the point where this chapter ends, this conclusion is not foreseen; for after this the elect yet beseeches that the fruit of the flesh may be his heir (Genesis 17:18). But exercises of soul here begin which only end in the perfect discovery of God’s mind upon the subject.

I need not shew how here, as throughout, this history has had its fulfilment upon every platform where God has worked in man. We are familiar with its accomplishment in the dispensations. In the history of God’s dealings with mankind, before the death of the flesh is known, and before Sarai conceives, that is, before the Gospel times, the actings of the spirit of faith are found in connection with Hagar or law throughout a whole dispensation; thus on the broadest scale developing the results of dealing with the flesh to gain the seed. We know how when the fulness of time was come, and the true Isaac was born, Ishmael, the seed according to the flesh, mocked and rejected Him; and we know how since that hour the bond-maid and her seed have been cast out, though for that seed in its time a suited blessing tarries. This fulfilment in the dispensations is so well known, that I need but allude to it. (Note: Jerome, Comment. in Ep. ad Gal. l. ii. c. 4. Ambrose, De Abr. l. ii. c. 10, § 72 and 74. Augustine, Enar. in Psalm cxix. (E.V. 120), § 7.) But there is also the fulfilment in the outward kingdom now. Here, men of faith, because the gospel is so long unfruitful, turn to law, by law and human energy to raise up a seed to fill the elect house. In the Church, because Sarai is barren till the flesh in the elect is dead, the impatience of believers, as yet not dead, by the flesh has sought and obtained a seed. But it is "a wild-ass man," with the "mark of the beast" upon it. The true seed now, as of old, only comes out of death and barrenness through resurrection power. (Note: Augustine often expounds this view; see Enar. in Psalm cxix. (E.V. 120), § 7, and elsewhere.)

Thus are we shewn here, outwardly, what men, -- inwardly, what in man, -- shall inherit the kingdom. The inward fulfilment is that which first concerns us. May we there apprehend what we are apprehended for!

06.4.6. The True Way for Abram to Be Fruitful

VI. -- THE TRUE WAY FOR ABRAM TO BE FRUITFUL

Genesis 17:1-27 THE last scene shewed the efforts of faith to be fruitful by its own energy, and in connection with self-will. The results having proved that this is not God’s way, the elect comes now to a point where the way of fruitfulness according to God is fully opened to it. The mind of God is now revealed, that the promised seed comes after the circumcision of the flesh, not by its energy, but by its mortification, and by means of a change wrought in faith itself by the inbreathing of Him who now makes Himself known to us as "God Almighty." This is the lesson of this stage, that faith’s true fruitfulness is only in God’s strength and through self-renunciation. Where we are more, God to us is less. God will be more, yea everything, to us, when we are nothing. Grace even as nature abhors a vacuum. Only let us be empty, and the breath of heaven will fill us abundantly. The revelation by which Abram learns this, and his submission, figure that instruction which faith yet receives from God, and to which it yet yields the same implicit and prompt obedience.

We have here, first, the revelation by which Abram learns the true way of fruitfulness. It comes after many weary days, -- "when Abram was ninety years old and nine" (Genesis 17:1); and even then is given by degrees, first briefly and generally, then in fuller detail, when Abram bows to welcome it. It comes not till Abram is hopeless in himself. Then, as the first brief announcement is met by worship and submissiveness, -- for "he fell on his face," -- while in this posture the fuller revelation of God’s mind is granted to him. How much is here! We are quick to be up, and while up and doing like Abram we do nothing to any purpose. We are slow to be "on our faces," yet it is here God’s mind is learnt, while in the sense and confession of our weakness we lie low before Him. But to speak of these communications. The first is this, -- "I am God Almighty: walk before me, and be perfect, and I will make my covenant with thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly" (Genesis 17:1-2).

Now this, though brief, contains the germ of all that follows, declaring that the seed depends upon God’s "I will," because He is "God Almighty;" while as to the means, singleness of eye and heart towards God, -- "Walk before me, and be thou perfect," (Note: "Perfect:" Heb. tamiym [H8549], sincere or unmixed; the same word as that used of Noah, Genesis 6:9. See also Deuteronomy 18:13.) is the great requisite. Here, as ever, there is the "I will" of God, pledging the result, and also the sanctifying word, "Walk before me," shewing the path in which the elect will find the blessing.

All this, however, is only more perfectly developed in the second and fuller revelation which God vouchsafes to His servant, when he falls down and worships. Many particulars are here revealed, as to the source and channel of the blessing, and as to the means both on God’s and man’s part. For the source, it is not in the creature, but in God. Jehovah, revealed as "God Almighty," here to barren Abram, seven times repeats His "I will:" -- "I will make my covenant with thee, and I will multiply thee, and I will make thee exceeding fruitful; and I will make nations of thee, and I will establish my covenant with thy seed after thee; and I will give to thy seed the land wherein thou art

a stranger, and I will be their God" (Genesis 17:2-8). As if He had said, Thou child of grace, hast thou not yet learnt that my word, my "I will," is that which makes thee fruitful? Now hear again my covenant, -- I will make thee fruitful: not from thyself, but from me is thy fruit found. Not by thy energy out of Hagar, -- not by blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, -- but because "I will," shalt thou have the seed. And so of the inheritance: thou hast not earned or deserved it, nor can thy strength win it thee; but this also is assured to thee, because "I will give it thee." The channel, too, by which the seed should come is declared. Faith now learns that Sarai, the barren free woman, that is, the spiritual will, is to bear the desired fruit (Genesis 17:15-19). Long has this will been fruitless in us: most dear to us, we have yet turned from it, to be built up through Hagar or self-will. But faith now learns God's way of fruitfulness, that He will "make the barren woman within us to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children." As to the means God uses for this, He first changes Abram and Sarai's names, adding to each a letter which is most significant. Abram now is changed to Abraham. A name ever implies quality. Here the Lord takes something of His own name, (for the added H is a special part of the Divine name,) and adds it to the elect, thus in a new name giving him a new character (Genesis 17:5; Genesis 17:15). (Note: In Numbers 13:16, we find a somewhat similar change: Oshea's name is changed to Jehoshua, with the same spiritual reason. See Jerome, Quoest. Hebr. in Gen. Others have observed respecting the name Jehovah, that it is formed simply of the five vowels, I, E, O, U, A, with a twice-repeated H. The vowels, or vocals, are so called, because they are sounds by themselves; unlike the consonants, which can only be sounded with a conjoined vowel. It is remarkable that the name Jehovah, the Self-Existing-One, is composed of those sounds, (and it contains all of them,) which can and do exist by themselves, and which give life and breath to the rest, if we may so speak; with the double addition of the H, the letter of out-breathing, in the middle and end of the name. Luther, in his Comment on the First XXII. Psalms, (on Psalms 5:11,) after tracing a mystic sense in the letters and form of the name, Jehovah, in which he sees a figure of the Trinity, -- the proportions of the Name (as he says) figuring the procession of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, -- says of the letter H, "The first syllable terminates in the letter He, which is a soft breathing, indicating that the proceeding in the Divine Persons is not carnal but spiritual, and all-sweet and all-gentle. For if the aspirate letter be extended in sound, it is nothing more than a certain soft proceeding of wind or gentle blast; so that it most appropriately figures forth the proceeding of the Son. And in like manner the whole name is terminated in the same letter of a soft breathing; so that we are to understand that the second proceeding is also spiritual, and not at all differing from the former, except its being the second, and proceeding from the first," &c. -- Vol. i. p. 277, of the Translation by Cole. If in the laws of number and of sound nothing is by chance, He who has been pleased to reveal Himself as Jehovah surely has a reason for the very form of this name, as indeed for all else.) What He adds is the mystic letter He, (The Hebrew equivalent of H) that sound which is only formed by an out-breathing; the addition of which, making Abram into Abraham, shewed how the elect should be made fruitful, even by the Lord's out-breath, that is the Holy Spirit. And to bear good fruit the spirit of faith even yet must be breathed on by the Lord, and by that breath be changed from Abram to Abraham. Until we are so breathed upon, though beloved and elect, faith in us is, and will be, barren. To bear fruit we must obtain the "new name;" a new character must be in-wrought, the result of the gift of the Spirit or breath of Him, who by communications of Himself moulds us to His pleasure. Surely we are His, beloved and called, long before we know the baptism of the Spirit. Like those of old we follow the Lord, at first knowing Him

after the flesh, before we reach to Pentecost and know him spiritually. We may like Peter on the Mount even see the glory of the living Word, and the law and the prophets testifying to Him, and yet after this deny Him. But the time arrives when we, who have followed Christ in the flesh, come to be tried by His cross, and to see His resurrection. Then, -- when the cross is no more a puzzle, -- when we see it is the way to life, and that the flesh verily profiteth nothing, -- when we have tarried until we are endued with power, and the Holy Ghost has come on us, the out-breathing of God, making us who have once followed Christ carnally, sparing ourselves, now willing to follow Him even to the death of self, -- then are we from Abram changed to Abraham. The Lord hath breathed on us: we can go and bring forth much fruit. Till this change is wrought, we shall be barren. When, by the Lord's revelation of Himself to us, it is accomplished, the fruit we long for is not far off.

One thing, however, yet remains to be done or suffered by the elect. Abraham, as a pledge of his entire dependence, must submit to certain appointed suffering, before he can obtain the seed. Because the Lord has covenanted with him, and has breathed on him, and so changed him, therefore Abraham must on his part suffer in his flesh, so testifying that his hope is not in the flesh or its energies, but only in Jehovah, God Almighty. So God, after His sevenfold promise, and after His gift of a new name, says, "Thou shalt therefore keep my covenant: and this is my covenant, which ye shall keep; ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you" (Genesis 17:9-11).

Now this circumcision signified the mortification of that fleshliness which yet cleaves to the elect spirit. Even the spirit needs to be judged, and "true circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter" (Romans 2:29; compare Deuteronomy 10:16; Jeremiah 4:4). In circumcision a part of the flesh was cut off: "the filth of the flesh was put away" (1 Peter 3:21). (Note: I am assured that the words, sarkos apothesis rhupou, allude to circumcision.) So faith must judge whatever of the flesh is in it, "laying aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, to receive with meekness the engrafted word" (James 1:21) -- that measure of the Divine which is communicated to it, -- that so in the strength of the Lord, and not in self, but rather in self-judgment, it may indeed be fruitful. And this spiritual circumcision, like that which was its type, is not a figure only, but an actual seal, an enduring mark impressed upon us; for as it declares that we have given up all fleshly confidence, so it shews itself in counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus; reckoning all that the flesh can achieve but as dung, if only the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and the power of His resurrection may be apprehended. So Paul says, "We are the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Php 3:3; Php 3:8-10). To the eye of sense such an operation seemed not only dangerous to life, but one which, when performed in years, even if the patient survived, would probably preclude all fruitfulness. The offering of Isaac was not a severer trial of faith, or one more apparently opposed to the fulfilment of the promise. Such a trial to the believer is self-mortification. Yet faith triumphs. We are "circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh" (Colossians 2:11): "by the spirit we mortify the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13), and so "bear in our bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Galatians 6:17). That this practical judgment of self must precede the fruit of promise is not understood, nor is it required, when we begin our pilgrimage. (Note: Origen, Hom. iii. in Gen.) At this stage it is revealed to faith. Need I say that this mortification is not our righteousness; -- that is

of faith, as it is written, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness;" -- but this self-judgment comes to seal that righteousness, "as the seal of the righteousness of the faith which a believer has, being yet uncircumcised" (Romans 4:11). Long before self is mortified, the elect is righteous; nor are we circumcised thereby to win the promise. On the contrary, God first and freely promises. He says, "I will multiply." Then He adds, "Therefore thou shalt circumcise." God does indeed look for self-judgment, but not as the ground, rather as the result, of promise. So the Spirit ever speaks: -- "I will be their God: therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Corinthians 6:16-17): so again, "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God" (1 Corinthians 6:20): and again, "Ye are risen, and your life is hid with Christ in God; mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth" (Colossians 3:3; Colossians 3:5). Would to God that this lesson were learnt; but, alas, mortification is well nigh out of date. Instead of judging the flesh, on all sides we see attempts to perfect it, and this in the hope of thus seeing the seed of promise. But some by the blood of Christ, shed first at His circumcision, have better learnt God’s mind. Only let them be faithful to it. Only let the Church’s creed, -- "He died and rose," -- be her life. Then, as with the Head, so with herself, the dying of the corn of wheat shall result in the bringing forth of much fruit. As to the time and subjects of this rite, much is here for such as can receive it. For the time, the "eighth day" is appointed (Genesis 17:12). Seven days in type include the stages or periods proper to the first creation. The eighth day, as it takes us beyond and out of these, brings us mystically into a new order of things and times, in a word into the new creation or resurrection. Those even in Abraham’s family, who are yet in the first seven days, that is, in the first creation, are not to be circumcised. (Note: With the same import all creatures newly born were counted in their blood, or unclean, for seven days, and might not, before the expiration of this period, be offered to God. Neither calf, lamb, nor kid, could be presented as an oblation before it was eight days old. -- Leviticus 22:27. Of the mystic import of the eighth day, and its connection with circumcision, see Augustine, Serm. ccxxxi. § 2; Epistol. l. ii. lv. c. 13.) Inwardly, the men of Abraham’s house are all the thoughts which are connected with and subject to the spirit of faith. Some of these were strangers, some home-born. All were now by faith and with faith to be circumcised: for now we must "bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). (Note: Ambrose gives the inward sense, De Abr. l. ii. c. 11, § 79.) Outwardly, Abraham’s house is the Church, and its inmates the varying natures which fill the house of faith. Of these all who have grown out of the seven days must be circumcised. Practical mortification of the flesh is not to be pressed on babes in Christ, till the eighth day is apprehended by them; but on all the rest the seal must come, not to make them barren, but that they may be yet more fruitful.

Now see how the spirit of faith meets this word. Abraham receives it with something not unlike questioning: -- "He fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born to him that is an hundred years old, and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" But this soon changes to prayer. At first the prayer is lacking in intelligence; for he said, "Oh! that Ishmael might live before thee" (Genesis 17:17-18). Nevertheless, he prays and bows himself, even while pleading for his own will. This struggle too passes. God speaks to his heart, telling him that though the fruit of his own energy cannot be the heir of promise, it shall receive a suited blessing; and the elect, though his soul heaves like the sea after a storm, pleads no more for his own will, but obeys promptly and explicitly. "In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and all the men of his house with him, as the Lord had said unto him" (Genesis 17:23-27).

How exactly all this is yet fulfilled, those know who from Abram have been made Abraham. The struggle of doubt and hope within, -- of our own wishes against the Lord’s will, -- the desire for the abiding of that which is of self, even when God himself promises better things, -- how all this, which so much savours of the will of the flesh, ends in prompt obedience and willing self-renunciation, is experience which not a few have learnt. Happy they who have thus mortified the flesh with its affections and lusts. Painful as the discipline may be, apparently contrary to that which we desire, the end will shew how good it is for us that we have been thus afflicted. Till we are so afflicted we shall lack the promised seed. A few words will suffice for the dispensational fulfilment here. Perfection and self-mortification were not required from men of faith until the time came for Sarah to be fruitful, that is, till Gospel days. But when the time was come for a new and wider revelation, -- when God would shew himself as El Shaddai, the Almighty, who could bring fruit even out of death and barrenness, -- when His out-breath was given in a way unknown before, making His elect partakers of the Divine Nature, and possessors of His spirit, -- then with this grace was a judgment of self demanded, which before this had not been asked of men. How truly did the elect then cry as Abraham here, -- "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee." How earnestly did Paul long for Hagar’s son, when he said, "My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Romans 10:1). But the fruit of the flesh could not be the heir, though even to them a suited blessing is covenanted. Well might Paul, as he thought upon it, break forth in wonder, "Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

06.4.7. The End of Lot

VII. -- THE END OF LOT Genesis 18:1-33 and Genesis 19:1-38

NOW comes the end of Lot, which must be known before Isaac, the spirit of sonship, is given to us. Thus, one after another of the things once walked with drop off from around Abraham as he advances. For the path of the spirit of faith is one of ever increasing separateness to God; until, being stripped of all external aids, it is without any other hope cast wholly and for everything upon the Lord alone. Terah, the old man, is first left. Then, when we escape from Egypt, Lot separates himself. After this, great efforts are made to reclaim him, shewing how much the outward man is yet clung to and yearned over. But a time comes when Lot is seen no more. This stage here begins to open to us.

What Lot is we have already seen. Inwardly, he is that mind in us, which, though righteous, leans to outward things; which, therefore, though moved for a while to go with faith, departs from it after Egypt is left, and goes down Sodom-ward. (Note: See on chapters 12 and 13.) Such a mind is in us at this stage. But the time comes in the life of faith, when Sodom, the work of Ham’s seed, must be judged in us; when divine judgment is seen to consume and overthrow all the plain of Sodom, that is, the ground of self-love. For Sodom is not judged at first. There is a time when self-love is not consumed in us. Now its doom is seen; and by this is brought out the full difference between the spirit of faith and the upright outward mind. To each the Lord now speaks. The spirit of faith, having judged itself by circumcision, receives the Lord in a way unknown before, with fresh promises, and an enlarged apprehension of God’s will; while the outward mind, still vexed with self-love, and able to receive only an inferior revelation, is rescued thence to produce a shameful fruit, which is destined to become a thorn in the way of Abraham’s true seed. After which Lot is seen no more. Having shewn what it is, the outward mind no more affects the path of faith. For a time it tries us, but a day arrives when its full unlikeness to the spirit of faith is seen in a light never to be forgotten. Thenceforth, whatever trials we may have, we know the difference between these, and knowing it walk more simply and intelligently. (Note: Origen at some length traces the inward fulfilment, Orig. Hom. vi. in Gen.)

---------- This outline of the inward sense here may suffice for those who can pursue it inwardly. The outward fulfilment will be better known. In this view, Abraham is the type of those in whom the spirit of faith is the ruling life: Lot, of those who, though righteous and saved, are rather outward than inward men, who hold the truth, but never seem to apprehend the inward spirit of it. As if to shew the contrast between these, Lot’s path is drawn here beside Abraham’s. Both are seen entertaining heavenly visitors; both gladly welcome such a visit; this is common to both: but beyond this how different the circumstances, and the results to each, of this intercourse!

There is first a difference in the form of the Divine manifestation. In Abraham’s case we read, "The Lord appeared to him at midday, and lo, three men stood by him:" in Lot’s, "There came two angels to Sodom at even" (Cf. Genesis 18:1-2; Genesis 19:1). In the first case, the Lord appears in human form, and three persons are apprehended. In the other, only two are seen. By the obedient

soul, from Abram changed to Abraham, the promise, "If any man keep my word, we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23), is fully realised. Three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, will be known, stooping in a form we can bear to come under our roof, not in darkness, but in the light, as guests to commune with us. While those who yet are in the world, like Lot, receiving their heavenly guests "at even," that is, in declining light, be their faith what it may, will in experience lose one person, and have less perfect communion. (Note: This is the common exposition of the Fathers. Gregory Nyssen, Test. c. Jud. p. 152; Ed. Par. 1638. Cyril of Alexandria, Contra Julian, l. viii. p. 268. Ambrose, De Abr. l. i. c. 5, § 33. Origen dwells much on this manifestation being vouchsafed "at mid-day," Hom. ii. in Cantica.) The ground they stand on is as distinct. Abraham is "in the plains of Mamre, in his tent-door;" Lot is "sitting in the gate of Sodom." True men of faith, as pilgrims with their tent, in obedient self-judgment rest at Mamre or Hebron, that is in vision or communion. Others, righteous but not self-judged, seek to judge "in the gate of Sodom," the defiled world-loving world. (Note: To "sit in the gate" was to take the place of authority. See Deuteronomy 21:19; Ruth 4:1; Lamentations 5:14; Psalms 69:12; Proverbs 22:22; Isaiah 29:21; Amos 5:10; Amos 5:12; Amos 5:15; Proverbs 31:23.) The one not only give up the world, but are content to be given up by it, which is far harder. The other take a place of power here, hoping, unjudged as they are, to correct the faults of others who are living in self-love. But can the Lots correct or reform the world? Rather they themselves are only "saved so as by fire" (1 Corinthians 3:15). A stage is, indeed, to be reached by grace, when the elect not only "gets him out," as Abram, from the ground of the old man, but when he can go down thither again, as Jacob, to win flocks thence, which he may bring back to Canaan. There is yet a higher stage, when, as Joseph, he can even in Egypt have it all bowed down before him, while he is its deliverer. But at the Abraham stage this cannot be. To Abram the word is, "Get thee out into a land which I will shew thee." The path of faith as such is not to cleanse the world, but to lift man out of it to dwell in heavenly things. Further on, the elect may be fit for more. As a believer, his place is the ground of promise, in marked separation from outward things. True believers, therefore, dwell apart with God, while the Lots, unjudged, and unfit to judge others, dwelling in Sodom, strive by efforts to improve it, to justify to themselves a position which they feel at least questionable. For few have known the true walk of faith, even in the measure Lot knew it when he walked with Abram, but have some misgivings when they compare their position as professed improvers of the world, which yet is not improved, with that of those who in separation from it are bearing witness of a better. So they labour in the fire, comforting themselves, that, while the Abrahams are useless to the world, they are doing something for it. What they really achieve may teach them at last that Sodom cannot even be helped, much less saved, by unchastened outward men. But Lot has not yet learnt this: while therefore Abraham is at Mamre, Lot is in the gate of Sodom, calling its sinners, "brethren" (Genesis 19:7).

Another contrast between these men may be seen in their reception of their guests, and the circumstances attending it. In both there is the same desire for communion; but while in the one case this at once is granted, in the other at first it is denied: with the one, communion is undisturbed; with the other, when at last obtained, it is marred by the intrusion of the men of Sodom. To Abraham’s request, "Pass not away, my Lord, but let me fetch a morsel of bread," the answer at once is, "So do as thou hast said." To Lot’s petition, "Turn in, my lords, I pray you, into your servant’s house," the reply is, "Nay, but we will abide in the street all night" (Cf. Genesis 18:5; Genesis 19:2). Eventually, indeed, they yield to his importunity, and he sups with them, and they

with him. But whereas in Abraham's case communion is reached, as it were, naturally without an effort, in Lot's there is a struggle of prayer before his desire is granted. By the self-mortified pilgrim communion is easily obtained. Those who live in the world, judging it rather than themselves, though they would gladly welcome the Lord or His servants, find that, before communion can be enjoyed, a temporary denial and a spiritual struggle must be experienced. Further, in Abraham's case, the communion is unbroken. No rude alarms from without disturb his quiet intercourse. In Lot's, "the men of Sodom compass the house," and Lot, distracted, "went out at the door to them, and shut the door after him" (Cf. Genesis 18:8; Genesis 19:5-6). Abraham, having but One Master to serve, can stand before Him in peace. Lot with two masters, the Lord and the world, can satisfy neither, nor is himself satisfied. Forced away from his guests by those among whom he dwells, the communion of saints, if known at all, is known with many interruptions.

Other contrasts abound throughout this scene. Of Abraham it is said, "He ran to meet them:" of Lot only that "he rose up" (Cf. Genesis 18:2; Genesis 18:6-7; Genesis 19:1). (Note: Origen, (Hom. iv. in Gen.) dwells at considerable length on this, and on the difference between the feasts prepared by Lot and Abraham.) The one, as soon as the Lord appears, instinctively draws nearer to Him: the other, though welcoming Him, does not shew the same alacrity. In the feast prepared, too, a difference may be seen. By Abraham "a calf" is slain, -- there is the pouring out of a life, -- and "fine meal" is added: in the other we find only "unleavened bread and wine," an acceptable service, yet not so costly as the former. (Note: In the authorised version we read, "Lot made a feast, and did bake unleavened bread." The word mishteh [H4960], here translated "feast," is elsewhere more correctly rendered "a banquet of wine," as in Esther 5:6; Esther 7:7. See also Isaiah 25:6. The LXX. here render it by poton, "a drinking.") And there is yet this difference in the communion of saints. Some can grasp the highest aspects of Christ's death, apprehending Him as the "ox," and the "fine flour," in which was no unevenness: others have a lower view of the same offering, seeing it only as "unleavened bread and wine." Happy is it to see Christ in any form, but happiest he, who, walking with the Lord, and giving to Him without grudging, in such acts has the fullest views of Him who has even "given himself" to us. A further contrast is to be seen in the state of the respective families of Lot and Abraham. Abraham, to the question, "Where is thy wife," can reply, in words he could not have used in Egypt, "She is in the tent." In Lot's case, the women of his house are in jeopardy, offered to the men of Sodom, in hope of staying worse abomination (Cf. Genesis 18:9; Genesis 19:8). Women, in this outward view, are principles. (Note: See what is said of Eve, on Genesis 3:1-24; also respecting "the daughters of men," on Genesis 6:1-22; also of Sarah and Hagar, on Genesis 12:1-20 and Genesis 16:1-16.) If we walk with God, we are in no danger of having our principles defiled by the world's rough handling. Not so if our home is the world: there our purest principles are in danger of being abused, nay, often they are abused, for the world, if it touches, cannot but dishonour them. I know, indeed, that in every age men like Lot have been found, who, tempted or forced by their position, prostitute their principles to the use of the ungodly. I know, too, that in so doing they hope to improve the world, and to keep it from worse abominations. So have liberty and peace, and other fruits of righteousness, been pressed upon the world, in the hope that in embracing these it may, as the world, be somewhat bettered. And what is the result? The principles are perilled or defiled, the world meanwhile being not a whit the better. But the Lots do not believe this, until bitter experience proves it. Is then nothing to be done for the ungodly world? Much surely. Do what Abraham did for Sodom, -- pray for it: nay, if you are sent, do what God's messengers did, -- testify of coming judgment, and shew the way of safety.

Bring those you can out of it. But think not that as a Lot you can reform or change it by your principles. It may defile you and them; you cannot change it. Were you a Joseph, you might do something. Being only a Lot, or outward man, though righteous, you are powerless.

Further, Abraham waiting on his guests "stood by them" in calm communion. Lot "went out," anxious for his children. Not one word is recorded addressed by him to the heavenly strangers while they are in his house (Cf. Genesis 18:8-9; Genesis 19:14). Men of faith can speak to the Lord, and in communion receive fresh promises. The Lots can but speak to their children or the world, and receive warnings, that, if they flee not, they must be destroyed. Lot's words here are very characteristic. He goes out to direct others, but his preaching is, first, not in exact accordance with the word of the Lord, and then, not in accordance with his own conduct. The Lord had said, "Hast thou any here? Bring them out." Lot only says, "Get you out" (Genesis 19:12; Genesis 19:14). It is all the difference between "Come," and "Go:" and alike as these may seem, the difference is by no means trifling. Again, his preaching is not in accordance with his walk. Lot preaches, "Get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy it;" but he himself "lingers" (Genesis 19:14; Genesis 19:16). Here we see his reason for altering the Lord's words. He could not "bring" others out if he tarried there: he must say, "Get you out." How many righteous Lots in Sodom are yet attempting thus to bear the Lord's message. Even while they say, This world is condemned, they linger in it, and are at last only separated from it by force, against their own will. Yet they hope such preaching will move others. But the truth from such lips is paralysed. Its preachers are its greatest hindrance: they may like Lot be "saved by fire," but "their works shall be burnt up, and they shall suffer loss." (1 Corinthians 3:15. Compare John 15:6, and 1 Corinthians 9:27.)

Very different too are the words addressed to Abraham out of Sodom, and to Lot yet lingering there. To both the Lord declares that city's fate, but how unlike to each the terms of the communication. To the one He speaks as to a friend, saying, "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I will do?" To Lot He says, "We will destroy this place: escape for thy life, lest thou also be consumed" (Cf. Genesis 18:17-21; Genesis 19:13-17). Such as walk with God can in quiet learn of Him. Such as walk with the world must, even as the world, be alarmed to "flee for their life, lest they be consumed." A carnal Christian cannot bear spiritual words. Paul, though he might speak wisdom among them that were perfect, could not speak to the Corinthians as unto spiritual. (1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 3:1. Compare Hebrews 5:11-14.) Even the Holy Ghost, whose office it is "to take of the things of Christ" to shew them to faithful souls, to the world speaks only "of sin, and righteousness, and judgment." (Compare John 16:8, and John 16:13-14.) Worldly Christians therefore, though they talk for ever of assurance and election, so long as they are in the world will hear God's voice warning and alarming them. Out of Sodom they shall hear of peace; in it, the word, and it is in love, must be a warning, lest they also be consumed.

Even more unlike are the prayers of these men. Abraham, with confessions that he is "but dust and ashes," waiting on God in Christ-like intercession, yields his will to God's will. Lot, full of self, styling himself God's "servant," prays only for self, in a prayer which throughout is a struggle to obtain his own will (Cf. Genesis 18:23-33; Genesis 19:18-19). The Lord had said, "Stay not in all the plain:" and Lot answered, "Oh! not so, my Lord;" that is, not thy will but mine be done: (is there not too much of such prayer?) to justify which he speaks of grace; "Not so, my Lord, for thy servant hath found grace in thy sight." This is ever so: Christians in the world plead grace as a reason for self-indulgence and for obtaining their own will. Then, again, what confusion is in the prayer. He

speaks of the "mercy shewn in saving his life," and yet of "some evil (he knows not what) taking him;" not saying, "I will not," but "I cannot:" -- "I cannot escape to the mountain, lest I die." Thus he pleads for his own way to the end, his last request being for Zoar, a little matter, -- "Is it not a little one?" -- the gracious answer to which is one of the unnumbered proofs, that as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is the Lord’s mercy to all them that fear Him. But one fact more is known of Lot. Sodom is judged: the condemnation of this world is clearly seen. Then Abraham gets up early to the place where he stood before the Lord, as though yet waiting on Him. Lot, unsatisfied with his self-chosen refuge, gets up to the mountain, without a command, only to fall there grievously. (Note: Compare the Lord’s command to Israel, to go up into the land, which they disobeyed, with the result of the self-will of the same men, who afterwards chose to go up presumptuously, without a divine command. -- Deuteronomy 1:26-44.) Wine first, and then his daughters, cast him down. So when outward men, through mere alarm of judgment, attempt without command to walk where faith walks, their very gifts will cause their fall. The higher the ground, the harder for them to occupy it. There the cup of blessing, misused by Lot’s daughters, that is, by the evil working of those principles which have been produced and are most cherished by outward men, will give occasion for those very principles first to corrupt, and then to be themselves corrupted by, those who cherished them. Thus will righteous Lots unintentionally produce out of their own self-defiled principles a seed to their own shame and the grief of God’s elect; a seed which Israel may be forbidden to dispossess (Deuteronomy 2:9-12; Deuteronomy 2:19-21), but which cannot come into the congregation of the Lord (Deuteronomy 23:3-4), to the end dwelling nigh to the wilderness, short of the land beyond Jordan.

Such is the end of Lot. Henceforth he is no longer a snare to the man of faith. Within, when once the outward mind has shewn its full unlikeness to that spirit of faith, with which for a while it seemed so closely linked, it ceases to be a hindrance: it may live, but henceforth it does not trouble faith. So without, the fall of outward men may grieve, but it will not stumble the men of faith. It may even help them, as the removal of dead wood serves the vine no less than the purging and pruning of the fruitful branch. "All things are yours." "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

06.4.8. Abraham in the Philistines' Land

VIII. -- ABRAHAM IN THE PHILISTINES' LAND

Genesis 20:1-18

ONE trial more remains for faith before Isaac, the spirit of sonship, is manifested. Terah and Egypt have long since been left; Sodom is judged; Lot too is gone, no more to trouble us. In other words, the old man, and sense, and self-love, and the outward man, have all been given up or overcome. At this point another trial meets us. Abraham, saved from Egypt, and Sodom, and Lot, comes into the Philistines' land; and there, through fear lest he should be killed for his wife's sake, is tempted to deny his true relation to her. "Abraham said of Sarah, She is my sister: and Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent and took her." But God interferes, making known to the Philistine, that, because she belongs to another, he may not touch her. Sarah, therefore, is restored untouched to Abraham, who with her receives considerable presents from Abimelech (Genesis 20:1-16).

Thrice does the elect fail thus. In Egypt Abraham has already once given up his wife. Now with the Philistines he repeats the same act. Isaac, too, at a later date fails in like manner (Genesis 26:6-11). (Note: David also "changed his behaviour before Abimelech." -- See Psalms 34:1 title; and 1 Samuel 21:13.) There must be, therefore, some peculiar tendency in the elect to that form of failure or error, which for our instruction is recorded here. What is it? Can we be guilty of it? Or may we say that Abraham's sons do not fail here as their father did?

Throughout this book every man or woman, sprung from Adam, figures (if we take the inward application) some mind or affection which by nature or grace springs out of human nature. Abraham is the spirit of faith. Sarah, speaking broadly, is the principle of the New Covenant. What is Abimelech? He was a Philistine. On turning to the chapter (Genesis 10:13-14) which gives us the development of the seeds which multiplied on resurrection-ground, we read that the Philistines were the children of Mizraim or Egypt. Egypt is sense; (Note: See on Genesis 12:1-20) outwardly, those who live the life of sense, that is, in seen things. The Philistine is only the same spirit, in rather a different aspect, and at a further stage. Thus, if Egypt figures worldly wisdom, that knowledge through the senses which cannot really know God, the Philistine represents the further attainments of the same, when it is seen attempting to enter into heavenly things. For the Philistine stretches out toward the land of Canaan; (Note: A glance at any map, shewing the relative position of the Philistines, and Egypt, and Canaan, will make this clearer to those who are not familiar with the localities of the countries named here.) but he would enter that land without circumcision, (Note: The Philistines are continually mentioned as "uncircumcised." -- See 1 Samuel 17:26; 1 Samuel 17:36; 1 Samuel 31:4; 2 Samuel 1:20, &c. Those who can trace the mystic significance of numbers will observe that there were "five lords of the Philistines." -- Joshua 13:3; Judges 3:3; 1 Samuel 6:4; 1 Samuel 6:16; 1 Samuel 6:18. Five always refers to something connected with the senses. See note in Genesis 14:1-24.) without passing the wilderness, and without crossing Jordan or the Red Sea. Such is the Philistine, knowledge derived from sense, which seeks to enter into heavenly things without death and resurrection. It is a race famed for giants (1 Samuel 17:4-7;

2 Samuel 21:15-16; 2 Samuel 21:18; 2 Samuel 21:20), but with all their might they cannot possess the promised land. Knowledge derived from sense is not elect: it cannot inherit, though it may seek to intrude into, heavenly things. (Note: Origen gives the same interpretation, taking the Philistine to represent worldly knowledge or philosophy, Hom. xiv. in Gen. xxvi.)

What is figured here then is this. The spirit of faith, delivered from outward hindrances, discovers that even the knowledge which aims at heavenly things may be a snare to it. An attempt is made by knowledge to take the things of faith, and hereby faith's best things are seriously imperilled. For knowledge may not take the things of faith. Nevertheless, when faith fails to hold its proper truth, knowledge attempts to lay hold on that which as exclusively belongs to faith as Sarah did to Abraham. But this is not allowed, and cannot be. The New Covenant or spiritual truth belongs only to the spirit of faith. On the other hand, if faith owns this relationship, then knowledge may strengthen faith, and give it many gifts, which may serve for the veiling or adorning of the truth. For even as Abimelech gave gifts to Abraham, after that he confessed the true relationship in which he stood to Sarah, so may knowledge enrich faith with many useful things, if only the true relationship between faith and the covenant of grace is not denied. It is not lawful by knowledge to take hold of the things of faith, but some of the things of knowledge may be received by faith, and of these a covering may be made for the protection of the things of faith. Faith, holding the truth, can possess the things which knowledge gives, but mere knowledge cannot enter into spiritual truth. For example, take the truth of the cross. Mere earthly knowledge never embraces it. But faith, firmly holding this truth, may be confirmed and enriched by many considerations, which properly belong to the province of mere worldly knowledge, that is, the Philistine. For even nature says, that the ground must be pierced by spade and plough before it will yield its best fruits, -- that thorns may grow without a chastened earth, but that corn-fields only smile after the ploughers have ploughed upon its back and made long furrows. Every creature slain to support our life, the threshing needed to separate the wheat from the chaff which covers it, the crushing of the grape to produce the precious wine, -- these "voices in the world" (1 Corinthians 14:10) all preach the cross, and that life and joy are through death and sorrow everywhere. Thus can faith in us receive from knowledge many things which serve to enrich and strengthen it, while knowledge on its part cannot possess spiritual truth. On the other hand, faith freed from outward things now finds that even knowledge may be a snare to it; for knowledge attempts to take the things of faith, and faith failing to hold them firmly thereby imperils the promised seed. Had the Lord not interposed, it might have been doubtful whether Isaac were Abraham's seed or Abimelech's. But God interferes: the things of faith are preserved inviolate. Faith may fail: God never fails.

Outwardly too the scene here is fulfilled, when, through the failure of believers to avow their special privileges, men of mere worldly knowledge are deceived so as to think that as worldlings they can possess the things of faith. That believers fail thus is a fact, shameful and humbling, but as certainly a fact as that Abraham denied Sarah in the Philistines' land. In this outward view, the Philistine represents those in whom the spirit of worldly knowledge is the ruling life, who, like the Philistine, stretch out to enter holy things without spiritual circumcision, without death and resurrection. (Note: Origen, Hom. vi. in Genesis 20:1-18, gives the outward view. Augustine traces a yet more general application, seeing in Abimelech the rulers of this world, who seek to take the Church, not knowing its true relationships, but are not permitted to violate it. -- Contra Faustum, l.

xxii. c. 38.) In the presence of such, through fear of man, the believer is often tempted practically to deny Sarah, by giving worldlings reason to think that as the world, that is, by mere knowledge, without faith, the New Covenant can properly belong to them. The result is that worldlings, knowing no better, think that the New Covenant is something, which they may know carnally, and accordingly they so attempt to know it. For this the elect are to blame. Words are used, which, though true in a sense, are not true in the sense in which they are taken by worldly men, and by these the world is deceived. Had Abraham avowed Sarah's relation to him, that she was his wife, Abimelech would in all probability not have attempted to meddle with her. And if believers would but say that certain truths belong to certain men, the world would not so often attempt to grasp what is not theirs. But this is shrunk from. And from fear of giving offence, by suggesting that there is anything which worldly men cannot comprehend, they are by the Church's culpable equivocation brought into real danger. Not knowing that Sarah belongs to men of faith, they attempt to lay hold of her by knowledge, that is, as Philistines. The soul which believes is not a Philistine. Such a one may freely take Sarah, for such a one is an Abraham, though perhaps only just commencing his path from Ur of the Chaldees. But for others without faith this is not allowed. Sarah cannot be wife or mother of Philistines. This is important truth. In our poor pride we cannot believe that anything can be too high or pure for us, or that through our earthliness heavenly things may be a curse, or that as the air of heaven is death to the fish of the sea raised into it, so the things of the Spirit of God may only destroy and ruin us. And yet when we think of the way in which He who is Love has given, and still gives, the light of truth to a world which lies in darkness, -- how He gave it by degrees, under thick veils and shadows, for the space of many hundred years; not surely because He grudged the light, but because mankind could only bear little; -- when we think how, even when the Light Himself appeared, after so many thousand years of thick darkness, He yet came under a veil of flesh and blood, allowing only a few who loved Him, and just in proportion as they loved Him, to see His true brightness, when His raiment did shine as the sun, and He was transfigured before them; -- when we think of the heathen world, why, with a God of love, they are so left; and of the many Christians, who are God's beloved children, whom yet He leaves in dimness all their days, seeming even at times providentially to keep them from more light, though light is all around; -- when we remember that He who acts thus is the only wise and loving God, we may be sure that the light of truth is awful as well as blessed, and that there are good reasons for giving it little and little, and for leaving man for a season "in the lowest parts of the earth." The truth is, things in earth or heaven are good or otherwise to us, not according to their own intrinsic goodness, but according to our fitness to deal with them. Being what we are, God's best things would consume us. Therefore in love (for indeed God's judgments are love) is fallen man shut out from open vision of heavenly things. Therefore is the Incarnation the way the Lord has met us, a veil covered with cherubic forms, hiding yet revealing heavenly things. Therefore are carnal men kept back from spiritual things, because carnally received they would increase their condemnation. And great as are the sins and judgment of the world, far greater would they be, did not God sometimes interfere to check them in their advance on holy things. Carnal knowledge of grace would not improve them. In mercy therefore are they withheld from it. But men of faith have failed to declare this as they should, so that worldly men like Abimelech can reprove the Abrahams. And however believers may justify to themselves the equivocations, by which the world are deceived to think that as the world they may have part or lot in the New Covenant, neither God nor man will hold them guiltless. The Lord may indeed forgive the sin, but Abraham must confess it, so that

henceforth, if he cannot help, at least he may not by his blessings be a snare to others. This lesson learnt, the believer is not far from the attainment of that fruitfulness which he has so long waited for. Being so far purged, he is fit to bear good fruit; and the fruit is borne, not to his own joy only, but like Isaac to the joy of many others. For when Isaac comes, a covenant is made with Philistines (Genesis 21:27-34). If they cannot be Sarah's sons, they shall in their place at least receive some blessing through Abraham. We shall see this when we come to Isaac's life. Would to God that all through grace had reached it. Then the Lord shall hear the heavens, and the heavens hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and wine and oil, and they shall hear Jezreel. For He will sow her unto Himself in the earth, and will say to them that were not His people, Ye are my people, and they shall say, The Lord is our God.

06.5.0. Isaac, or the Spirit of Sonship

PART 5 ISAAC, OR THE SPIRIT OF SONSHIP Genesis 21:1-34, Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67, Genesis 25:1-34, Genesis 26:1-35 "Now we, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." -- Galatians 4:28.

"We have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." -- Romans 8:15.

AT this stage, when Adam, and Cain and Abel, and Noah, and Abraham and Lot, have already shewn themselves; when in the inward life we have known the old man, and the strivings of flesh and spirit, and regeneration; and the spirit of faith has been freed from much that impeded it in the earlier stages of its pilgrimage; -- at this stage appears another form of life, rightly called Isaac or laughter, (Note: Heb. yitschaq [H3327], from tsachaq [H3227], to laugh.) because it brings great joy with it, the spirit of sonship, the fruit of Abraham or faith, another development of the elect spirit, another shade of the light of life in man. For not only do many forms of life grow out of the old man, before the true spirit of sonship or adoption is born in us; but even the elect spirit, which in due time is to produce this, (though from the first it contains it as the root holds the flower, and as Levi was in the loins of Abraham when Melchisedek met him,) does not bring it forth until other forms of life have first been produced and manifested. The stem must bud and grow before the fruit comes forth. So Adam, and Abel, and Noah, and Abraham, that is, the old man, and flesh and spirit, and regeneration, and the life of faith, must precede in our souls (as the root and stalk precede the fruit) that spirit of sonship which Isaac represents, as Isaac or sonship must again precede that evangelic service which Jacob typifies. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are types of the divine life in man, manifesting itself in the spirit, in the understanding, and in the body respectively; -- for this is only another way of saying that they are the spirit of faith, of sonship, and of service: for sonship is the bringing of the divine life into our understanding, and service is bringing it into our outward and bodily acts; -- and this cannot be done at once, but by degrees and successively. Sonship is come, when the things which are in the spirit are in the understanding also. Service is come, when the things which have been in the understanding are seen in the body and wrought outwardly. The subject, like all which is of God, is infinite. We only make it definite by not touching the infinite. (Note: It may interest some to mark how Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as they figure the divine life in man, also figure something of the life of God Himself. That they have been so regarded by some is well known. The Fathers hesitate not to say, that in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they see types of the ways and works of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The quotations given below, on the dispensational view of Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 24:1-67, &c., are examples of this. Blind leaders of the blind may urge this exposition as opposed to that which I have given here. But the one is the very reason and ground of the other. Our life as saints is but the result of our being made partakers of the divine nature. If He lives and walks in us, our ways must resemble His ways, and hence the life of the elect will be a reflection of His life.)

Each of these then is the same elect spirit, only seen at different stages of its development, and taking at each stage a different form, by which the same One Spirit may shew itself in its sevenfold

variety. The Holy Ghost in all supplies the common light-power; but the creature gives to the colourless light a medium by which it may variously reflect itself. For as the same one light of the sun appears to us different, through the reflecting medium of the atmosphere of the planet which intercepts it, by which, according to the peculiar fitness of each for reflection, one star differeth from another star in glory; so in us the one same Spirit of God shews variously through the different mental atmospheres which are furnished by the successive stages of man's development. Fair indeed is the form of life now reached in Isaac, in whom to faith is added knowledge, -- for the spirit of sonship is a spirit of understanding also, -- an Isaac indeed, that is, joy, to all who possess it, and bringing gladness not to Abraham's house alone, but to many afar off.

Let us note some of the features of this much longed-for child, the circumstances of his birth, and the treatment which he at once meets with.

06.5.1. The Birth of Isaac, and Its Results

I. -- THE BIRTH OF ISAAC, AND ITS RESULTS

Genesis 21:1-34

THREE facts are recorded: -- Isaac is born contrary to nature; then, while yet he is a babe, his blood is shed in circumcision; then at his weaning he is mocked by Hagar’s son. Such is and must be every Isaac’s history.

First, he is born out of the common course of nature, when Abraham and Sarah are both "as good as dead;" for Abraham was now "a hundred years old," and Sarah was "barren" and "past age" (Genesis 21:5; Genesis 21:7; Hebrews 11:11-12). Then the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as He had spoken. So comes this form of life in us, through despair of self, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13). It springs indeed from faith, but not till faith itself by long fruitlessness has learnt its own nothingness, that it is but the channel, not the spring. While therefore the strength of the flesh remains, though other fruit is borne, Isaac is not given us. But Abraham’s fleshly strength is now all gone: self-will is no longer looked to as the means of bearing fruit: the true relationship to Sarah is confessed: then out of that long-barren womb comes the promised seed. Isaac is conceived. A new life grows within, soon to shew itself to the joy of faith and of the inward spiritual will.

Then, whilst yet a babe, Isaac’s blood is shed in circumcision. "Abraham circumcised Isaac, being eight days old, as God had commanded him" (Genesis 21:4). Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he received this seal (Genesis 17:24): for the spirit of faith, when it first starts, and even when it has crossed Jordan, may be without self-judgment, unchastened, unmortified. How many, in whom faith lives, are yet unjudged, and have not reached to "the putting away of the filth of the flesh" by inward circumcision. But with the spirit of sonship or adoption this cannot be; from the very first this pure life is truly circumcised; and that uncleanness, which faith may carry with it many days, is cut off at once from the new form of life which now is given to us.

Other trials follow, first "weaning," then "mocking." While he is a babe, Sarah herself "gives her son suck." Pure milk at first is Isaac’s food. But "the child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned." Then "the son of the bond-maid mocks" the heir. "He that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit" (Genesis 21:7-9; Galatians 4:29). So is it now. While this new life is young, it needs milk. At such a stage the carnal seed of faith does not trouble it. But it grows and is weaned. Then a feast indeed is spread, and then the bond-maid’s son at once rises up in mockery. If we have reached to sonship, and are in spirit "weaned children," and the milk of our mother can be exchanged for strong meat, then will faith perceive how the fruits of Hagar rise against the purer fruit which Sarah now has brought forth. (Note: Augustin. Quoest. in Gen. l. i. n. 50. Origen notices the same thing. -- Hom. vii. in Gen.) Then begin fresh trials to faith; for faith now sees that its own first fruits are opposed to the purer spiritual life. How many men of faith have not yet a glimpse of this. We go far before we

know that the life which faith first produces in us, a seed loved by us, the fruit of our own efforts, and to get which even Sarah has stirred us up, is at heart a mocker and a persecutor. While it is alone, the real mind of this son of the bond-maid is undetected, save by the eye of God. But when the true fruit of grace is come, faith itself perceives the mockings of Hagar's son. Thus is sonship opposed from the first, not least by that which Abraham himself, that is the spirit of faith, has brought forth and nourished up; by a mind in us, which though of faith is carnal, the fruit of union with Hagar or law, and rather natural than spiritual. But Isaac though mocked, is the heir; and his coming casts out that which had hitherto occupied the house of faith.

Let us mark the results of the coming in of this new life, both in and out of Abraham's house.

Within the house of faith, Isaac's birth soon leads to the final dismissal of Hagar, with whom her son is sent away. While the new life is yet a sucking babe, Ishmael remains; but when he begins to mock, because "a great feast" is made for the child, who now can bear strong meat, then Sarah says, "Cast out this bond-maid and her son, for the son of this bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac" (Genesis 21:10; Galatians 4:30). Sarah yet speaks so, when her son is weaned. While she is barren, while the promise tarries, while as yet the spirit of sonship is not come or only a sucking babe, she endures the presence of the bond-maid and her seed. But when Isaac is mocked, the bond-maid is cast out. Both bondage and law are now dismissed. For a time they have had their place and use with faith. But their work is done when the spirit of sonship is come. They depart now to return no more. But this casting out "was very grievous to Abraham," not so much on Hagar's as on her son's account (Genesis 21:11). At this stage the giving up of self-will or law is not so trying to faith as the giving up of that form of life which faith has produced out of self-will. But to give up this life, which we ourselves have produced, is "very grievous" even to men of faith. We cling to what we have or are, and are slow to believe that there can be a something better than that we now rejoice in. We cannot think that a life which springs from faith can be cast out, not yet seeing that faith's first fruit is carnal. Faith would, therefore, if it might, keep Ishmael; but the fruit of law and bondage must be given up. Up and onward is the path for evermore. One after another of the things of childhood must be put away (1 Corinthians 13:11). "God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad: in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken to her voice" (Genesis 21:12). Trying, therefore, as it is to cast out the bond-maid, let us hearken to all that Sarah saith unto us; for "in Isaac only shall the seed be called:" yet also upon the son of the bond-maid will the Lord bestow a suited blessing; for he shall live and beget a mighty seed, because he also, though carnal, is the fruit of faith (Genesis 21:13).

Isaac's birth has results also out of Abraham's house. The Philistine, seeing a son born contrary to nature, comes to Abraham, and seeks peace. "It came to pass at that time that Abimelech spake to Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest. Now, therefore, swear unto me that thou wilt not deal falsely with me. And Abraham said, I will swear" (Genesis 21:22-24). No sooner does the spirit of sonship come, than worldly knowledge in us feels and confesses that God is with faith. Thenceforth, therefore, it submits. And the spirit of faith shews kindness to the strange land in which it dwells. Worldly knowledge is put into its place, but not destroyed. It even receives good things from faith (Genesis 21:27). It is not allowed to think that the wells are its work. The offered lamb is witness that the waters have been drawn by faith's energy (Genesis 21:30). But withal no unkindness is shewn towards the Philistine. Worldly knowledge still lives, and faith yet sojourns many days in near contact to it (Genesis 21:34).

Such is this scene within. Without, in substance it is the same thing. In this view Sarah and Hagar are the two covenants. True men of faith beget a double seed. Some are Hagar's and some are Sarah's children. Those begotten through law are yet the bond-maid's sons. Those whose life is of grace are children of the free-woman. Every church or house of faith will produce both of these. As long as the Isaacs are unweaned, the Ishmaels live with them. But the feast of fat things, provided when Sarah's son are weaned, ever calls forth the hatred and mockery of the children of the bond-woman. Then comes a separation, painful indeed to men of faith, which yet God sanctions, saying, "Hearken to all that Sarah saith unto thee." So the Ishmaels go forth into a dry land, with some portion of the bread of men of faith; but the water for them is only in bottles (Genesis 21:14-19), -- doctrine for them is only in certain forms, -- and this is soon spent, and though a well is at hand, and they are faint, their eyes see it not. For they are not accustomed to draw for themselves. And so, when the water in the bottles is spent, because they have only a bottle, they almost perish. Isaac lives by wells, and digs them often, and has strifes for them with Philistines. The bond-maid's sons look not for such streams, and see them not, even though a well is close to them; till God, who yet loves them, sends them help, to point out the well, and give them drink out of it. So they live and grow and dwell in a thirsty land. There with worldly principles, that is "an Egyptian wife" (Genesis 21:21), like Nimrod and Esau, they are "archers," (Genesis 21:20. Compare Genesis 49:22-23; Judges 5:10-11; Psalms 11:2; Psalms 91:4-5.) quick to hunt, ready for controversy and to judge evil; blessed nevertheless for Abraham's sake, and forming a great nation and a mighty people. (Note: Origen goes into this outward fulfilment at considerable length, Orig. Hom. vii. in Gen.) The fulfilment of all this in the dispensations is well known. When in the course of ages the New Covenant out of the death of the flesh brought forth the promised seed, and sons indeed were born in the Church, then the fleshly seed, because it mocked, was cast out. St. Paul himself expounds this view: -- "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Romans 9:7-8). (Note: Origen gives this dispensational fulfilment also, Orig. Hom. vii. in Gen. The same interpretation is given by Gregory Nyssen, In Baptism. Christi, tom. ii. pp. 805, 806. Ed. Paris, 1615.) In the Acts of the Apostles we may see how the spirit of faith seems to yearn over Hagar's rejected sons, feeling it "very grievous" to give them up. Nevertheless they were dismissed. And then, like Ishmael, though the well of water was nigh at hand, they could not see it; "for blindness in part was come upon Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in" (Romans 11:25). The fleshly Jew was cast out; and then the Gentile, seeing the blessings so richly poured on faith, confessed its power and sought peace. I cannot doubt that the facts of this chapter have a bearing also on the coming age. In this yet future view, Isaac is "the sons of God." The whole creation groaneth and travaileth, waiting for the manifestation of these heavenly children (Romans 8:19-23). When they are born from that long dead and barren womb, whence they shall issue when their time is come, then indeed shall be a day of laughter, then shall the bondmaid truly be cast out, then shall the world be glad, and the Lord be known by a new name, "the Everlasting God" (Genesis 21:33). (Note: Never before Isaac's birth is the Lord called by this name, el olam [H410 H5769], "the Everlasting God." By this name He is revealed, not so much the God of a particular family or people, as of an age or dispensation. It asks, "Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not of the Gentiles also?" Ainsworth translates here, "Deus aeternitatis vel

mundi.") Such a day has in spirit already dawned on some. Oh, may its rising hasten over all the earth.

06.5.2. The Offering Up of Isaac

II. -- THE OFFERING UP OF ISAAC

Genesis 22:1-24

WE have seen what were Isaac's first trials, -- spiritually, the earliest experiences which the spirit of sonship or adoption meets here; first, judgment in the flesh, then weaning, then mocking: we are now to see its trials, when, being weaned, it has grown to somewhat of maturity. This much longed-for life, our Isaac or joy, though an heir of grace and promise, is born to be a sacrifice, not that it may perish, but that greater blessings may be reached by it through this self-sacrifice. This too is yet a stage in the way, for the way is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

We read, "It came to pass that after these things God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee unto the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Genesis 22:1-2). Ishmael is not offered, but cast out. Isaac is to be offered up as a sacrifice. This is indeed that cross of Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world; the surrender of that meek life in us, which has been formed by divine power out of faith's nothingness, the special offering of those in whom this Son is come, and who, "if sons, are heirs, if so be that they suffer with Him, that they may also be glorified together" (Romans 8:17); a view of the cross much more inward than any known before, so much deeper and nearer to us than Abel's lamb, or Noah's tree which takes us through the waters, that to some it seems to be almost another thing, while yet it is the self-same cross, only now apprehended far more inwardly. And first to mark Abraham's part in this scene, that is, the part which the spirit of faith takes in this sacrifice. Isaac yields himself, but it is of Abraham God asks him. Abraham it is who girds the ass, and cleaves the wood, and gives up his Isaac, when the Lord requires the sacrifice. For it is faith which gives up the life it has produced to Him by whose strength it has produced it. The Lord would shew how He can fill the heart; how after the flesh and world are left, faith can, if only He remains to it, give up His gifts also, and again be nothing that God may be all, assured that in being nothing it shall obtain all things. This is the trial here. Can faith give up that much loved life, that son so long waited for, of whom it had been said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." It is not to leave this or that outward thing; -- this was done long ago, when we came out of Ur of the Chaldees; -- it is not the trial of weary pilgrimage, wandering from day to day without a certain dwelling place; it is not even the giving up of Hagar's son, the fruit of our own energy, to which our God now summons us. It is nothing less than to give up that life, to which all God's promises have so long directed us, -- which He has given to be our joy, and from which He Himself has bid us expect such blessings, not to ourselves only, but to others, -- in the assurance that as He gave it at the first, He will, though now He seems to take it from us, give it back again. Faith therefore shrinks not even here, but binds its own fruit, and gives it back to God, accounting that He, who can raise up the dead, will restore the precious life which He first quickened out of our barrenness. To do this, Abraham leaves his servants and the ass (Genesis 22:5), even as faith, when it is tried,

leaves behind it all those thoughts, which, like the servants, by their presence, might oppose the sacrifice. (Note: Chrysostom thus comments on this: -- "Suffer not aught of worldly thoughts to occupy thy soul then. Bethink thee that Abraham also, when offering this sacrifice, suffered nor wife, nor servant, nor any other to be present. Neither then do thou suffer any of thy slavish and ignoble passions to be present with thee; but go up alone into the mountain where he went up; and should any such thoughts attempt to go up with thee, command them with authority, and say, 'Sit ye here, and I and the lad will worship and return to you.' And leaving the ass and the servants below, and whatever is void of reason and sense, go up, taking with thee what is reasonable," &c. Hom. v. on 2 Corinthians 2:17, p. 74 of the Oxford Translation.) Thus it travels on to Mount Moriah, that is to ground chosen of God, (Note: Moriah means "chosen of God." Heb. moriyah [H4179], a contraction for mareh yahh [H4758 H3050]. It was in after times the site of the temple. 2 Chronicles 3:1.) for faith dares not choose its own crosses, or where or when it will endure suffering. But if in the journey of life trial is appointed, so grievous as to threaten to crush that inward life which is so precious to us, -- be the trial what it may, pain, contempt, or misrepresentation, or, what is far more trying to the elect, confusion of soul, inward distraction, desolation, darkness, -- whatever it be, if it be God-appointed, let us go onward, the spirit of sonship shall not perish. But let us take heed that we are not on self-chosen ground. Self-chosen penances, self-inflicted pains, are not the sacrifice faith offers upon Mount Moriah; rather do they savour of horrid Moloch, to whom even Solomon may bow, but whose worship is abomination. Great as those sacrifices may seem which are imposed by self-will, much more precious are those which God calls us to. One day in which we yield our will to Him is of more value than years of toiling self-will. Such yieldings of our will are safe. The life which has sprung from faith cannot perish thus. For Isaac does not perish here. Being lifted up, he is, as Paul says, "received back again" (Genesis 22:12; Hebrews 11:19). The spirit of sonship does not die: having been bound upon the altar, it is brought back again, as from the dead, with greatly increased blessedness. This is that inward death and resurrection, which all who possess the spirit of sonship must know in due time; to be offered up, and yet to live; to lose our life, and yet to keep it. Thus are we crucified with Christ, nevertheless we live, yet not we, but Christ liveth in us. We bear about in the body the dying of the Lord, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal bodies. We come back to walk awhile with them who tarry with the ass, and have never reached to Mount Moriah, in the knowledge of that, of which those who have so tarried may indeed hear, and even speak about, but have never realised; as men who have endured a real death, and who by it have learned to judge all things here in the light of heaven.

Isaac, though offered, does not die; but something does die there on Mount Moriah. A ram is caught and offered there, and Abraham calls the name of the place Jehovah Jireh (Genesis 22:13-14). These beasts figure, as we have already seen, the different animal faculties and powers, which are implanted in the creature; against some of which the inward man has to fight, while others may be in measure tamed and made subservient; either, as the ass, to bear the man upon his way, or, as the ox or lamb, to pour out their blood in sacrifice. Of those whose blood is accepted of God, there are some which at times we find it hard to capture. Many a mere animal desire, which we would fain catch and bind, escapes us, even though we pursue it, till, having laid our Isaac on the altar of the Lord, the animal hitherto uncaught is suddenly placed within our reach. Then is it caught and bound by faith; then is it slain, and with joy we say, Jehovah Jireh. "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Now we know that the sacrifice of our Isaac shall not

destroy this meek life. What is animal only dies. The man, God's image in us, is not only unhurt, but receives yet more blessing. And what blessing! "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17). For "the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this, 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 on the sea-shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Genesis 22:15-17). Oh, what a gate there is within, held long by our adversary! But the seed of faith shall henceforth keep it, and the enemy be driven out. "And in thy seed shall all nations be blessed." The whole creature shall be a gainer by Isaac's sacrifice. His birth brought blessing to the Philistines' land. His offering shall be felt even beyond Jordan. For the promise is that many far off shall be blessed in him; and lo! at once others are fruitful and blessed in him. So we read, "It came to pass that after these things it was told Abraham, Behold, Milcah, she also hath borne children to thy brother Nahor" (Genesis 22:20-24). I do not doubt that this increase of Nahor's line is recorded here as the commencing fulfillment of the Lord's promise. For I know that faith cannot offer thus without great blessing coming through it on the other and lower faculties of the regenerate soul. Not even the beasts shall be barren, for God hath said, "If ye hearken to these judgments, there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle" (Deuteronomy 7:14; Exodus 23:26). The inward life shall radiate to that which is without, and even the outward man be a gainer through the grace of the spirit.

Such is the scene within. The other fulfilments of it are well known. In the outward kingdom of the visible Church, the sons of God have laid down their lives, not to perish, but to live a higher life. Not only have God's sons lived in spite of sacrifice, but great fruit has thence been found, even among those who before this were barren and scarcely knew God. Need I trace the same act in a higher sphere as fulfilled in Him, who above all others was the well-beloved Son. (Note: This view of Isaac's sacrifice is common to nearly all the Fathers. Augustine continually alludes to it - Contra Maximin. Arian. l. ii. c. 26, § 7, and De Civit. l. xvi. c. 32. So too Tertullian, Adv. Jud. c. 11; Origen, Hom. viii. in Gen.; Ambrose, De Abr. l. i. c. 8, § 71 and 72; and others.) This view, as indeed the dispensational fulfilment throughout all Genesis, leads us to considerations full of deepest mystery, when we see that God Himself has sacrificed, and that not a mere creature, but His Only-begotten Son. How the sacrifice of Christ in us, when we reach to know the spirit of sonship and its offering, is but the reflection and result of the same thing in God, -- how the path of saints is therefore God's own path, and their ways a feeble shadow of His ways, -- how every good thing in us is but His work, who, being the living and unchanging God, repeats His ways and works of love on every platform, and who, because He is love, cannot but sacrifice, for love involves sacrifice in its very nature, and God is love, -- in a word, how the patriarchal lives, figuring the divine life in man, figure the life of God Himself, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, -- may be seen in the sanctuary, but cannot well be spoken of in an evil world and by such poor tongues as ours. Blessed be His glorious name for ever. We can at least fall down and adore Him for His unutterable love, assured that the whole earth shall be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen. And may He give unto us to know yet more the power of Christ's resurrection through fellowship of His sufferings. Then shall these things be seen in us also. The world indeed will not know us, "for it knew Him not;" yet shall

it be blessed and made fruitful by our sacrifice. Like the sun, then, far greater than we seem to men, let us shine on, though others here, deceived in us as in the light of heaven, know not our true greatness.

06.5.3. Isaac's Union with Rebekah

III. -- SARAH'S DEATH AND ISAAC'S UNION WITH REBEKAH Genesis 23:1-20 and Genesis 24:1-67 THE stage now reached, though fulfilled in the inward life of all in whom the spirit of sonship has been offered as a sacrifice, is one hard to describe, partly because of our very imperfect apprehension of what is wrought within, but more because we lack words to express even what we see and feel of these mysteries. Even in the outward world every day we are discovering our need of new words to describe what we apprehend of its powers and agencies, and are slowly labelling as best we can its phenomena, of which after all we know next to nothing. In our outward birth and growth too there are countless things, not only unknown, but unspeakable. How much more, therefore, must we expect to find ourselves unable to describe what is done in the inward world and in the development of the spiritual man. For we want not only heavenly eyes and ears, but a heavenly language for heavenly facts. Nevertheless some things may be said "in part," respecting the fact so fully figured here; for "we know in part, and prophesy in part;" but even this part will shew some of the depths and lengths of the work of our sanctification. To trace it then within. We have here the death of one woman and the introduction of another into the elect house. Sarah dies, and Rebekah is sought and brought into Sarah's tent, and becomes Isaac's wife (Genesis 23:2; Genesis 24:67). Men are always certain minds: the women, the affections, more vaguely the principles, with which they are allied; (Note: To avoid repetition, I refer to what has been already said respecting the typical force of "the woman." I feel how much our present imperfect terminology hinders the exact expression of the full meaning here.) for our principles are what our affections are; hence we are not wrong, as we see in Hagar and Sarah, in saying that the women figure certain truths. Now Isaac is the spirit of sonship in us: Rebekah, that affection or principle by embracing which this spirit in us becomes fruitful. This scene therefore represents those experiences and exercises of soul which precede and lead to the union of the spirit of sonship with that inward affection or principle of truth by which it bears fruit. The figure here perhaps will be best expressed, if in these brief and imperfect notes I speak of the women simply as certain truths. Truth comes successively or by degrees; in forms, and in successive forms, suited to the form of that elect spirit to which it is to be united. Thus new principles, or rather fresh forms embodying the same principles, are taken into union by the various forms of the elect spirit, at the successive stages of its development. The form of truth answers to the spirit which receives it; and thus truth substantially the same continually puts on fresh appearances. Truth cannot differ from itself; but as the same elect spirit at different stages takes different forms, so the truth which is embraced by that elect at different stages is seen in different forms also. It dies out in one form and lives in another, and yet all the forms may live to God. For as He is the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and not the God of the dead, but of the living, so is He the God of Sarah and Rebekah and Rachel also, for all in spirit live to Him. Sarah's outward form may die, and as an outward form the truth she figures may die also, but death only gives to the spirit greater liberty, so that her death sets forth the greater spiritualising, even through the destruction of its outward form, of that truth or affection which she represents. (Note: Gregory the Great alludes to this -- Moral. in Job, l. vi. c. 37, § 56.) And then another form of

truth is found, suited to the advancing development of the elect spirit, that is, to Isaac. And thus the elect who as the spirit of faith is joined to truth under the Sarah form, when Abraham is old, when faith is matured, at the next stage as the spirit of sonship is united to Rebekah, not another truth, but another form of it. In this scene we are shewn how this truth is brought into union with that spirit which is already waiting for it. It is not done without much inward exercise. For every truth is at first more in connection with the natural than with the spiritual man; just as Rebekah was in Laban's house in Mesopotamia, midway between the Tigris and Euphrates. Thus at first each truth is in the memory, in the land between Euphrates and Tigris, that is, between the channels of reasoning and of testimony; (Note: Respecting these rivers, see on Genesis 2:1-25 above.) and while there it dwells in Laban's house, in the sphere of our outward and natural man. Here it cannot be fruitful with Isaac. Truth therefore needs to be carried hence, and conveyed more towards the interior or inward spiritual man; where, united to the true life in us, it may become fruitful and produce fresh forms of life. All that hinders this, -- how Laban strives to prevent Rebekah's departure out of Mesopotamia, -- how the outward man in various ways holds truths, and would hinder their passing from the sphere of the outward into that of the inward man, -- cannot be told, though it is fulfilled every day. The spiritual man may discern within him something of the process; but words are wanting to tell it aright, and not less hearers who could profit by it.

I therefore turn to trace this scene, as it is fulfilled on the wider platform of an age or dispensation. The work is one; but some will see it without, whose eyes are not opened to understand it as it is fulfilled within them. In this view Isaac is that Son who was born contrary to nature, and mocked, and offered up: who yet was brought back as from the dead, at whose coming the bond-maid's seed were cast out, and a covenant of peace made with the Gentiles. This is the Heir for whom the Bride is sought by Abraham's servant out of a far country. In this servant who is sent to seek the Bride, we have the figure of the faithful ministers of the house of faith. (Note: This outward fulfilment is much enlarged on by the Fathers. Gregory the Great, Apud Paterium, super Gen. l. i. c. 53. So too Origen at great length, Hom. x. in Gen. So Augustine, Serm. de Temp. 75. (al. App. 8.)) His commission is to go into that land whence Abraham had been called, and thence to bring a bride. This is one end of service here, not only to serve within the house of faith, but at the Master's command to go down among those who are afar off, to gain some of then. But the servant doubts and declares his fears, -- "Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me" (Genesis 24:5); even as faithful servants yet at times will question whether their service will effect anything. To which the Master answers again foretelling both the company His servants shall have on their journey, and the result also, saying, "The Lord God of heaven, even He shall send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my Son from thence;" and then, lest the servant shrink from the responsibility, bidding him only to go and deliver his message; -- "then shalt thou be clear." And surely many a servant's heart might fail, did he not know that obedience, not success, is that for which the Master holds him answerable. The servant's equipment is then described. "He took ten camels of his master, and of all the goods of his master in his hand he took something" (Genesis 24:10). (Note: I follow the rendering of the LXX. and Vulgate here, which seems to be the most correct. See Greg. M. apud Pater. in Gen. l. i. c. 53.) He does not start unprovided with means, or lacking precious credentials to witness of his master's wealth; nor does he take the jewels of the house of faith alone, but rough things also, suited to the desert land through which he is to pass, to bear these good things safely. These camels within, as we have seen, figure certain animal powers or emotions; outwardly, therefore, they are that form which is

the expression of these emotions; just as the bride, who within represents certain principles, outwardly is that form which embodies these principles, that is, the Church. Thus do faithful servants yet go forth, taking of the things of Christ, to shew them to those who are afar off; content to use rough means, like the unclean camels here, to come to those, who, because they are yet in outward things, could not be reached otherwise. (Note: The camel was one of the "unclean" beasts. Leviticus 11:4. Gregory the Great goes at length into the import of this, Moral. in Job, l. i. c. 28, § 40.) Some vain servants will not use camels, shewing that they are not wise, even if they are faithful; for without these they do not reach outward men; unlike to Abraham's servant here, unlike to Paul, who was "all things to all men to gain some of them" (1 Corinthians 9:20-23), who used all he had, rough things as well as smooth, sometimes speaking "as a fool" (1 Corinthians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 11:21; 2 Corinthians 11:23), and sometimes spiritually, because he really yearned for souls, and was full of true knowledge of the love of the Master's heart. To him "nothing was common or unclean" (Acts 10:15; Acts 10:28); for "to the pure all things are pure" (Titus 1:15-16).

Thus equipped, the servant goes to that land, between Tigris and Euphrates, whence the elect had come forth. We read that "he arose and went," -- brief words, marking the zeal and promptness of his obedience. Then, having reached the city of Nahor, he prepares to fulfil his work and deliver the message, with which he is entrusted. First he prays: -- "And he said, O Lord God of my master, I pray Thee send me good speed to-day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham" (Genesis 24:12). Whilst he is praying, one comes out of the city to the place where he is standing. To her he speaks words, on which he has already asked God's blessing. Then finding such a response from the damsel as he had asked for, he again worships, bowing his head, and blessing his master's God. Then, when he comes to the house of the desired bride, he will not eat till he tells his tale: -- "There was set meat before him, but he said, I will not eat, till I have told my errand." So he opens his mouth, and tells of his master, his glory and greatness, and how he seeks a wife out of this distant land (Genesis 24:33-49). Who cannot see true service here, beginning with prayer, not for its own so much as for its master's sake, that kindness may be shewn to the absent lord, and not resting till its work is done, and it has uttered something of all his glory; how "He is become great, and has flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and camels, and asses." Thus of old did faithful servants toil, and verily blessed are such servants. And now to look at the Bride who is thus sought. She is one of Abraham's natural kindred, not a Canaanite, but of the same family as Isaac has sprung from; only that she is yet in Mesopotamia, and he in the land beyond Jordan (Genesis 24:3-4). Further, she is an "appointed" person. Twice is it repeated that the woman is not chosen of man, but "the one whom the Lord hath appointed out for his servant Isaac" (Genesis 24:14; Genesis 24:44).

All this is true of the true Bride elect. Is she not of the same family as Isaac, and also elect according to God's foreknowledge for Him? "Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same; for verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham" (Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:16). And as such, He seeks His bride not from angels, the spirits beyond Jordan, but from among the dwellers here. Though Himself brought nigh, He forgets not those far off; and out of them His bride is chosen for Him. The servant finds her at a well (Genesis 24:13). It is while drawing water that she first hears of Isaac. So with many others. Jacob finds his bride, Moses also, by a well, where they had come to draw water (Genesis 29:2-10; Exodus 2:15-16). Rebekah not only first hears of Isaac, she also

first sees him, by a well, "by the well Lahai-roi" (Genesis 24:62). By no chance are the wives found by wells of water. By no chance did Christ "sit thus upon a well" (John 4:6). Surely if we have been "betrothed in righteousness" (Hosea 2:19), it was by wells of water that the Lord's servant met us. For "understanding is a well of life to him that hath it" (Proverbs 16:22), and what are means of grace but wells also. We may indeed sit by these wells in vain. Like mocking Ishmael, we may lie close beside them, and yet see no water. But the soul which daily comes to draw, which comes empty, saying, "My soul is athirst," and is exercised to draw and carry home a full vessel, which desires unasked to make others around who seem in need partakers of the same, and freely gives it them, -- such a one, like Rebekah, will find by the waters a guide to lead her to purer and better lands; while those who draw not will scarcely meet him who comes to tell of a lord who waits to receive a stranger. And indeed it is by her use of this well, that the servant recognises the person whom he is in search of. For the mark, by which he was to know the bride elect, was, that when he asked for drink, she should give it, and then shew her interest in him by caring for his camels (Genesis 24:14; Genesis 24:18-19). (Note: Greg. M. apud Pater. in Gen. l. i. c. 53.) True servants, even as their Lord, who said, "Give me to drink" (John 4:7; John 4:10), like Him, asking something only to give back better things, yet appear at first to come to ask more than to give. We do not see when first they speak that they are givers. But souls who will respond to the claim of love made on them, and are prompt in their attention to the rough and outward things of Abraham's servant, (for all are busy with the "camels" before they see the "jewels,") shall ere long see the ear-rings and bracelets also, and be decked, though yet in the far country, with some of the precious things of Abraham's house. So we read, "Then the man took a golden ear-ring, and two bracelets, and he put the ear-ring on her face, and the bracelets on her hands" (Genesis 24:22; Genesis 24:47). What are these but the precious things of faith, "more precious than of gold which perisheth," brighter than outward pearls or costly array, "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is of great price" (1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 3:4). And this is "put upon the hands," as well as "in the ears." True ministry does not leave the hands of the elect without some fit ornament. Not content only to fill the ears, it seeks to occupy the hands also with something not less valuable. (Note: Ambros. de Abr. l. i. c. 9, § 89. So too Greg. M. ubi supra.) At this stage the bride receives but one ear-ring and two bracelets. After this, when the damsel is already given to him, the servant puts, not one jewel only, but many "precious things of silver and of gold and of fine raiment" upon her (Genesis 24:53). For there is growth in grace, and "to him that hath shall be given," and she that hath received an ear-ring by the well shall, if she will follow towards Canaan, receive yet more an hundredfold. This done, she is led to confess who she is. When Isaac's jewels are on her, she says, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor" (Genesis 24:24). Not before she is adorned does she utter this. So now. A confession there must be from us, -- the servant looks for it, -- that the bride acknowledge she is one of a fallen people, from whom the seed for God has been separated. But this is not drawn from her until she has received pledges that she is an object of love, and possesses earnests of that to which she is appointed.

After which she declares that she and her house are able and willing to receive the messenger. He said, "Tell me, I pray thee, is there room for us? And she said, We have room enough for thee to lodge in" (Genesis 24:23; Genesis 24:25). (Note: Greg. M. ubi supra.) How many, if questioned, "Is there room enough?" must confess, if they spake truly, "We have no room; my father's house, the outward man, is filled up with other things." Like that church at whose door the Master stands, which, thinking itself rich and increased with goods, cares not to open to Him, how many, filled up

with self, have no room to receive Him who seeks to lead them heavenward. Not so the soul which has Isaac’s bracelets upon her. She has received the gift; she cannot reject him by whom the gift has come.

Then "she runs and tells them of her mother’s house, saying, Thus and thus spake the man unto me" (Genesis 24:28; Genesis 24:30). Not content to have received some good thing herself, she tells others, nay, she "runs" to tell them. Those who have received of the Lord’s good things cannot keep silence. They must run and tell others among whom they dwell the good tidings. There may indeed be a speaking about the Lord without grace. Not only are there hearers, but talkers also, who are not doers. But where the heart is full, it must unburden itself, and make others partakers with it, "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And now the bride is yet more adorned, not as at first with a single ear-ring or a single bracelet for each hand. Now the servant puts much more on her, "jewels of silver and gold," and (what has not yet been mentioned) "fine raiment" also (Genesis 24:53). "To her was granted to be arrayed in fine linen; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8). So again it is said, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider; forget also thine own people and thy father’s house: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work; the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee" (Psalms 45:10-11; Psalms 45:14). Raiment, as being that which first meets the eye, and also a sign of our station and employments, represents our habits here. Indeed "habit" is but dress. Here the dress is one marked by great costliness, -- "clothing of gold, with raiment of needle-work." And the "fine linen" yet is "raiment of needle-work," wrought "on both sides," with countless stitches, each in itself almost invisible, by which, stitch on stitch, the work is wrought out, until it displays that pattern which pleases the master’s eye. This now is put upon the bride, while "her brother and mother also receive precious things," (Note: Greg. M. ubi supra.) for the world too profit by the Church’s call, though they will not leave their Mesopotamia to find a better land.

One thing yet remains to be done. The bride must leave her kindred and father’s house. The servant came, not to make his home there, but to take some from that far country to share in Isaac’s lot. But the bride has friends who would delay her going, saying, "Let her abide with us, at least a few days," -- brothers, who, though they welcomed the messenger, would yet keep him in that land where they will continue to live, and where they die (Genesis 24:54-58). But the servant cannot stay. Then they say, "We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. And they said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go." By the well she could not have said all this. She did not say it even when the first jewels were put upon her. But now she has heard of the glory of her lord, and that he waits for her, and, spite of flesh and blood and its hindrances, she says, "I will go." Nor are these vain words. "She arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels," -- for she too must use a camel yet, though she shall surely "light off it when she beholds Isaac" (Genesis 24:61; Genesis 24:64). Thus "she followed the man." But the rough things which bear her shall soon be changed for the heart of Isaac and the secret of his tabernacle. O blessed day! Then indeed all the tears, and sufferings, and labours, which must be travelled through, shall seem as a dream, not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. O Lord, Thou hast called us to this end. Keep us as Thine own, unspotted from the world, till we are for ever with Thee. Amen.

06.5.4. Keturah, and Isaac at Lahai-roi

IV. -- KETURAH, AND ISAAC AT LAHAI-ROI

Genesis 25:1-11 AT this point Abraham takes another wife. Here, as throughout, every fact and word presents the exactest figure of that which is wrought within at this stage of man's development. But before we come to this, let us recall one peculiarity of that development.

I allude to this, that as our inward life changes its form at every fresh stage, -- from Adam to Abel, then from Seth to Noah, then to Abraham, and from him to Isaac and other sons, -- so the truth embraced at each successive stage differs in form according to the varying form of the elect spirit which embraces it. Sarah is Abraham's wife; in other words, the spirit of faith lays hold of truth under the Sarah form, that is, the promise; but the spirit of sonship loves another form of the same, as we read, "Isaac took Rebekah, and brought her into Sarah's tent, and she became his wife, and he loved her" (Genesis 24:67). (Note: See above what has been said on this subject, on Genesis 23:1-20) But there is more than this; for faith not only embraces truth under a form somewhat different from that which the spirit of sonship apprehends; but the spirit of faith itself, as it fulfils its course, lays hold of several different principles. Isaac has but one wife; as in us the spirit of sonship never embraces any but the one true principle of the New Covenant. But Abraham and Jacob each have more. For faith at first takes law, hoping thereby to be fruitful in its own strength; (Note: See above, on Genesis 16:1-16.) while Jacob or service, as we shall see, though wishing only to have the spiritual, finds that it has unintentionally embraced that which is first and natural. (Note: See below, on Genesis 29:1-35) The stage we now have reached is marked by Abraham taking another wife. We read, "Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah; and she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah" (Genesis 25:1-2). Now, after Sarah's death, that is, after the form in which we have first embraced the New Covenant as a form is dead, for it yet lives in spirit; -- when we see that forms of truth, even the best, are given to serve us for a season, and then as forms to pass away; -- when this is not only believed but known, and a new form of truth, suited to the growing spirit of sonship, is found and loved by it; -- at this point Abraham takes another wife: that spirit of faith, so long without fruit, which in its haste tried law, and "when as good as dead" begot the seed of promise out of the barren free-woman, now takes another form of truth, by which it rapidly produces many sons. The question is, What form of truth? What principle is it that Keturah represents?

Now, though we have not an Apostle's word to tell us, as in the case of Hagar and Sarah, the spiritual import of this third wife, we have or may have, if we will wait, that same Teacher, even the Spirit, which was in saints of old; for the Light of their light remains undimmed, nearer to us than its most faithful witnesses, soon to shine, (Is not the morn already breaking?) not upon a few, but over the whole earth. Of course, if a soul though elect has reached only to the Noah stage, this scene will not be understood. Even though Abram lives in us, if we are only now leaving Ur of the Chaldees, -- if Terah is with us, -- if the bond-maid is not gone, -- nay more, if Sarah yet is in the flesh, -- Keturah cannot be known, for she only comes when Sarah as an outward form has

passed away. But if this is done, then Keturah will come; and indeed has come in thousands who are fruitful by her in spirit, though in their understanding they do not know her name. For Keturah is that practical truth, which, neither law nor promise, neither bond-maid nor free-woman, succeeds to both at this stage of faith's life, when the truth which Sarah represents has passed from an outward form into a higher state. St. Paul's epistles are full of Keturah. All those exhortations which are not mere law, and which as clearly are not the promise, though they are meant to follow it, are this third wife, given to be embraced by those in whom Sarah or the New Covenant has already borne fruit. But this sort of truth does not attract the believer, until Sarah passes into a higher sphere. Then we take Keturah to wife. She is, as her name imports, a "savour of a sweet smell." (Note: Heb. qeturah [H6989], incense. Compare this with what St. Paul says of practical truth, Php 4:18, and Hebrews 13:16. Origen, having argued that some mystery must be hid under this union of Abraham with Keturah, -- first, from the fact, that he who was "as good as dead" in his hundredth year, now at a hundred and thirty-seven begets many sons; secondly, from the analogy of the other two wives, both of whom, according to St. Paul, were certain principles; thirdly, because he who marries truth, though it may die out in one form, will always hold it in another; in which sort of marriage the older we are the more fruit we may bear, as Abraham here did, -- then defines what principles Keturah represents. -- Hom. xi. in Gen.) And her fruits are sweet to God and man, though, like Midian, they may soon be corrupted and even oppose the chosen line. How many lovely fruits have there been borne, the offspring of faith, and that not by law, but by the precious truth which Keturah represents, -- fruits of ascetic life, which have proved in the event to be prejudicial, or at least opposed, to the highest inward life. Indeed the word "ascetic" means in itself simply practical. (Note: Grk., asketikos.) Its conventional sense declares the common end of such efforts, answering exactly to the course and destiny of Keturah's sons. (Note: See Numbers 25:16-17, and Judges 6:1-2, for examples of the way in which Midian, one of Keturah's sons, may injure and oppress the elect seed.) Such fruits, sweet as they are, one and all are liable to rapid deterioration. They possess indeed some of the good things of faith (Genesis 25:6), but from the first they are distinguished by faith from the spirit of sonship, which is the true heir. Isaac is not Keturah's son. Sonship is not of law, nor of that practical truth, which, though not law, is somewhat akin to it. Sonship will no more come of these than figs will grow from slips of myrtle, or vines from planting acorns. Yet Keturah's sons, like oaks and myrtles, are lovely too, and, pleasant in their season, though they cannot inherit all Abraham's good things.

"Then Abraham gave up the ghost and died" (Genesis 25:8). The spirit of faith, like that truth which it has so long been united to, now passes away as an outward form from forms, to live as a spirit with God who is a Spirit. Isaac now succeeds to Abraham's place. The form, in which the elect life henceforth shews itself, is not faith so much as understanding, for the spirit of sonship is also a spirit of understanding. He, in whom it lives, not only believes, but to faith has added knowledge and intelligence, even "the mind of Christ." For when Isaac is come, we are no more under the schoolmaster, as servants or children not knowing a father's will; but as sons, and because we are sons, are led in the spirit of sonship into all knowledge and spiritual understanding, even to the full assurance of understanding in the acknowledgment of the mystery of God the Father and of Christ (Colossians 2:2). Up to this point, though the spirit of sonship has come, it has been comparatively feeble, and faith has been the ruling life. But now faith is no more in the flesh, but is changed from an earthly form into a spirit. Isaac therefore takes Abraham's place; that is, faith is succeeded in our souls by spiritual understanding, which like Isaac inherits all Abraham's wealth, and is his heir,

possessing all the riches of true faith (Genesis 25:5). I feel how little words can express the spiritual reality represented here. Those only who know the blessed fact within will be able really to see the force of Abraham’s death and Isaac’s succession to all his goods; faith now lost in sight, while in its place the spirit of understanding, which is the spirit of sonship, inherits the things of faith. (Note: Saints of old spoke much of this. They may seem at times to have drawn the line too widely between pistis [G4102] and gnosis [G1108], and pistikos and gnostikos; but there is important truth in the distinction. That we know so little of faith changing to knowledge, shews where we are. See John 8:31-32, where our Lord promises to "those who believed on Him," that "if they would continue in His word, they should know the truth, and the truth should make them free." Compare also St. Paul’s faith in Christ dead and risen again, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, with his longing desire "to know Him, and the power of His resurrection," Php 3:10; and his prayer for those of whose "faith he had heard," that "the Father of glory would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him," &c. Ephesians 1:15; Ephesians 1:17-18. See also 1 Corinthians 2:5-6. Those who wish to consult the Fathers will find some striking thoughts on this subject, Clem. Alex. Strom. l. vi. c. 9, and l. vii. c. 10, and Origen. in Job, t. xix. pp. 263, 264. Ed. Huet.)

Soon Isaac has even more. "It came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac." If we ask, How? we are told only this, that "he dwelt by the well Lahai-roi" (Genesis 25:11): this was his blessing. And this is a blessing yet. To us few blessings would be greater than a spiritual dwelling by this same living well. Lahai-roi means "the life of vision." (Note: So Gesenius and others translate the name. The LXX. render it to phrear tes horaseos, "the well of vision." I may add that, in Genesis 16:13-14, where the name first occurs, the true translation in Genesis 16:13 seems to be, -- "Have I even seen, (i.e. have I my sight preserved,) after my vision?" Therefore the well was called Beer-Lahai-roi, "the well of the life of vision;" because here life was preserved after seeing the angel of the Lord.) It was the place where life and vision were preserved after the angel of the Lord had spoken and revealed himself. It figures that depth of the word, into which we drink, when "the well of the living and seeing," that is the spiritual sense, is really opened to us. (Note: Greg. M. apud Paterium, l. i. supr. Gen. c. 53; Orig. Hom. xi. in Gen.) Nature cares not to drink of such a spring. The waters are too deep for the carnal, who, if they see them, only wonder and pass on. But Isaac loves the well. In his eyes it is not his least blessing, that he may dwell and drink here. Blessed it is, like Abraham, to dwell at Bethel and Hebron, by faith to rest in worship and happy fellowship. Blessed is it to see Salem and her king; in peace to eat the holy bread and wine. Blessed is it to know Beer-sheba, the well of the oath; to drink the refreshing streams which the word of the covenant makes to flow around us. But more blessed far is Beer-Lahai-roi, the well of the life of vision, where we learn to live among and see unseen things. None dwell here but the pure in heart. None else see God, or the hidden things of God. Others will see the world, or themselves, or their own or others’ sins, or even certain doctrines. But the "pure in heart see God" (Matthew 5:8); and there, beholding His glory, are changed step by step into His image, to see as He sees things which eye hath not seen, even the things which the Spirit reveals to them who walk with God. O Lord, give unto me thus to dwell at Lahai-roi; to know yet more and more of this blessed life of vision; not only to visit the well, and depart, but, like Isaac, to abide and learn there, until in Thy presence, still blessed in Thee, this "life of vision" shall be mine for evermore.

Such is this scene within. Like all the rest it has its fulfilments in the outward world, and in the dispensations also.

Outwardly, Abraham here represents men of faith, now matured and richly blessed: Keturah’s sons, those children of faith whose spiritual life has sprung out of the affection of practical truth, rather than out of either law or promise. Such souls, the distinctive mark of whose life is a peculiar reverence for religious practices tending to asceticism, will in the next generation shew marks of deterioration, in a greater zeal for what is outward than for what is truly spiritual; and become, like Midian, snares to Israel (Numbers 25:17-18), though a Moses may find a wife there (Exodus 2:15-16; Exodus 2:21), and a Jethro of this seed be "for eyes" to the elect, when they come into the wilderness (Exodus 18:1; Exodus 18:24; Numbers 10:29-32). But they are not the chosen heirs. Sarah’s sons, the children of promise, are the seed which shall inherit all things. In the dispensations also this scene is fulfilled. When Sarah, that is, the Gospel dispensation, has, even as Hagar or law, run its full course; when the marriage of the Bride is come; then appears not only one seed or son in Abraham’s house, but many seeds. So shall it be when the Son obtains His rights; when faith is changed to sight, and the children of the promise are blessed, and know the life of vision; while others, born after the marriage of the Bride, are witnesses that in Abraham all nations shall be blessed. Then not only shall the favoured "vine and fig-tree" be glad, but "the field shall be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord;" (though the vine still differ from the oak, and the fig and olive from the pine-tree;) "for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth" (Psalms 96:12-13). When that day dawns, may we be with that Son, whom the Father hath appointed Heir of all things, to share His joys, blessed not only by Him, but with Him, drinking of the water of life, "the life of vision," for ever. Amen.

06.5.5. The Trials of Isaac Respecting Seed

V. -- THE TRIALS OF ISAAC RESPECTING SEED Genesis 25:12-23 THE stage now reached is one of high blessing. Abraham no longer lives in earthly form. Faith henceforward is no more in the flesh, but is changed from an outward form into a spirit which sees God; while Isaac takes Abraham’s place: that is, faith is succeeded in our souls by spiritual understanding, which, like Isaac, dwells at Lahai-roi, and is Abraham’s heir, possessing all the riches of true faith. Yet even here the elect must still be tried. He desires fruit, but for long years Rebekah is barren (Genesis 25:21). Infinite love ordains it thus for good. With such rich gifts the soul requires some check to keep it healthy. Thus delays, which try our patience, are needful for us, as the shade and cool of evening, which seems to stay their growth, is needful to the plants as much as warmth and sunshine. Such delays are really rests; for unbroken joy, like constant sunshine, would parch the spirit; while in these rests our God and Father teaches His elect their own insufficiency, and that all their fresh springs are in Him alone. The trial here then is again respecting fruit, and it touches Isaac both directly and indirectly. At the very time he is lamenting his own barrenness, Ishmael, the seed of Hagar, is seen to increase rapidly. Thus there is grief, first, from the elect’s own weakness, and then, from the rapid growth of the carnal seed; to find the fruit of the spirit so late in manifesting itself, and the fruit of the flesh so early, strong, and numerous. The spread of Ishmael’s seed comes first; that carnal spirit, which springs from the union of faith with law within us, begets many forms of life. "These are the generations of Ishmael, whom Hagar, Sarah’s handmaid, bare unto Abraham: these are their names, according to their generations; Nebajoth, and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah, twelve princes according to their nations" (Genesis 25:13-16). Thus spreads the carnal seed. The elect, the spirit of sonship and understanding in us, may be at Lahai-roi. Grace may have bestowed a well of vision. Instead of naked Adam, there may be the spirit which like Isaac has offered itself to God, which is beloved and blessed of Him. Yet all this checks not the growth of the flesh, and that even while the elect spirit in us is mourning its own barrenness. For the fleshly seed breaks forth as it will: it has "children at its desire" (Psalms 17:14); it "is not in trouble like other men, neither is it plagued like other men; therefore pride compasseth it as with a chain, violence covereth it as a garment" (Psalms 73:5-6). The sons of God must often say, "My time is not yet, but your time is always ready" (John 7:6; John 7:8): "we are weak, but ye are strong; we are despised, but ye are honourable" (1 Corinthians 4:10). The flesh has no such delays. It brings forth its fruits of wrath and envy and emulation, even though the spirit dwells at Lahai-roi. And the very grace bestowed upon the inner man seems at times only to excite the flesh to greater activity and open opposition.

Meanwhile the spirit waits from year to year, sighing for, yet not seeing, the seed the Lord has promised it. Isaac is sorely tried. For twenty years Rebekah, the beloved of his heart, is "barren," and produces no fruit (Genesis 25:21). (Note: Compare Genesis 25:20, -- "Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife," with Genesis 25:26, -- "Isaac was threescore years old when she bare Esau and Jacob.") Then, having conceived, she feels two different lives, opposing each

other within, even before they shew themselves. Thus barrenness first causes grief. That is removed. Then fruitfulness brings with it fresh disquietude. A cross there must be, to keep us low, and to shew the unfailing resources of God our Saviour.

Rebekah is spiritual truth. (Note: See on Genesis 24:1-67) Such truth should not only be a living and active principle in us, but should produce other forms of life. For this end is it given. Nevertheless, for years after sonship is mature in us, it brings forth no fruit. It rests in peace at Lahai-roi, but the new life of service, which it should produce, is not yet manifested. Nor does Isaac feel this at first. But Hagar's seed increase. Rebekah still has no child. Then he cries to the Lord for help, and is heard. "The Lord was entreated of him, and Rebekah conceived seed." So is it yet. That form of truth, which the spirit of sonship has embraced as a living principle by which to be fruitful, lives within us for awhile before it bears fruit. But the elect still waits on God. Faith may try carnal means, may take a Hagar: the spirit of sonship cannot do so. It may be fruitless, but it will not embrace law. It is in itself a proof of God's almighty power. To Him therefore it cries for strength, and Rebekah is no more barren; in God's strength she bears fruit. But this fruitfulness has its pains also. Rebekah no sooner conceives, than she is sorely disquieted. "The children struggled within her, and she said, If it be so, why am I thus?" (Genesis 25:22). And so the truth which the spirit loves, when at length it labours to bring forth another life, is felt to contain two distinct elements. Till it conceives, we do not perceive this. Nevertheless, it is so. We say of that truth which Rebekah figures, that it is spiritual; and so it is. But we are deceived if we think that therefore, as apprehended by us, it is unmixed and wholly free from outward things. Our understanding can only possess forms of truth, and to these certain fallacies connected with the senses invariably connect themselves. Hence, when at this stage the spirit in us by the truth has begotten a new life, the inherent difference of the elements which go to form the truth makes itself felt, even before these differing elements are distinctly developed into separate forms of outward life. At the faith stage this is not known. But now, when the spirit of understanding is come, it is first felt, and then its cause is understood. Happy should we be, could we bear only Jacobs; but formed as we are, if our principles are fruitful, the seed will to the end be diverse, and inward struggling must be the result.

Here then we learn the reason of that inward strife or conflict, which so often re-appears in the progress of the elect spirit. The Lord Himself teaches us why it must be; at the same time promising that the first and natural shall in the end give place to the spiritual: -- "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manners of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger" (Genesis 25:23). Thus even Isaac begets him whom God hateth, (Note: "Esau have I hated." -- Malachi 1:2-3; Romans 9:12-13.) and thus, though sonship is come, do we feel the same old contest which was waged from the beginning, -- "the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would;" and this not from Hagar's seed alone, but even in the fruit of Isaac, the true and beloved heir. So it must be while we are in this tabernacle. A seed cast into the earth draws into union with its life the nature of the soil wherein it shoots forth. According to its soil the selfsame plant varies its hue and form. In it is both the vegetable life, and the life's clothing, which is of the earth earthy. So the wind, which breathes from the south, comes mixed with odours, testifying over what it has passed, and what it bears with it. So with the spiritual seed. The womb it grows in is of the earth. Hence with the heavenly in us the earthy grows also. We

forget this, and therefore are troubled. But He, who hath loved us, "knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust," and will work His pleasure in us spite of that flesh, the deformity of which His indwelling makes even more apparent. (Note: After alluding to the outward fulfilment of this scene, as one which needed no comment, Origen then gives the inward application. -- Orig. Hom. xii. in Gen. So too Augustin. in Psalms 136:1-26. (E. V. 137,) § 18.)

Such is the scene within. In the world without, Rebekah is that body which is formed by the truth, that is, the true Church, whose barrenness oft-times afflicts God's sons, while Ishmael's seed, the children of law, increase and multiply. But the true Church is fruitful through prayer. Then comes fresh grief, to find in the same one mother a double and conflicting seed, who, like the chaff and the wheat, though from one root and stalk, are destined to a very different end, the one to be gathered safely into the garner, the other to be rejected and burnt up (Matthew 3:12). But the very nature of the Church, even as of truth, whilst upon earth, involves the presence of an outer as well as an inner element; and this, though we may not see it in the Church's constitution, (though it is there,) will surely come out and shew itself in her double seed. (Note: Augustine often refers to this outward fulfilment. See his comment on the words, "the fruit of the womb is His reward" in Psalm cxxvi. (E. V. 127,) 3. See also Serm. 4, Class. i. De Jac. et Esau; and Tract. xi. § 10, in Johan. iii. 3, 4.) What son of God has ever loved and preached the truth, without discovering ere long that from the self-same seed, within the same household of God, proceed two diverse families; one, akin to that part of the truth which is outward; the other, to that which is more inward and spiritual. Thus, in the one Church two seeds grow and strive, causing no little pain to their perplexed mother. If hereby she is led to the Lord, though perplexed, in His presence she is taught His purpose and learns to trust in Him.

06.5.6. Isaac's Twofold Seed

VI. -- ISAAC’S TWOFOLD SEED, THE ELDER AND THE YOUNGER Genesis 25:24-34

TWO new forms of life now appear. Those minds, the legitimate fruit of the spirit of sonship in us, whose mutual opposition has been felt ere they were seen, now manifestly shew themselves. There is still a double seed, -- "two sons," -- "the elder and the younger," who shew through life their essential unlikeness to each other, until at last the younger overcomes. These "two" at each stage are always flesh and spirit: "that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural" (1 Corinthians 15:46). But as we advance, and man is more and more developed, both flesh and spirit are apprehended and shew themselves in different forms. We have seen how man becomes regenerate man, and how regenerate man is developed into the man of faith, and again how the man of faith through many trials is developed into man possessing the spirit of sonship and understanding. So the flesh at each stage re-appears in some new form. Cain, Ishmael, and Esau, all are "that which is first and natural." But in Cain we have the fleshly mind as it grows out of Adam, that is, the mere natural man. Ishmael is the same carnal mind, as it springs, through intercourse with law, out of a true man of faith. Esau is this same flesh, as it grows out of one in whom the spirit of sonship lives and walks with God. So strong is this root in us, so quick stage after stage to shew itself, not only in that which is of the flesh, but in connection also with that which is elect and spiritual; a sad witness of the rock whence we are hewn, and the hole of the pit whence we are digged. In Isaac’s sons, then, we see the flesh and spirit, as they grow out of one in whom the spirit of sonship is the ruling life. Here we have the flesh at the best. Esau is in many respects lovely and lovable; outwardly, a great advance on Cain, yet at heart still carnal, sensual, devilish. Jacob on the other hand does not shew so well as some of the earlier forms of the elect life. For the spirit here is not the spirit of faith or sonship, but of service, instinctively "laying hold with its hands," to bring the natural man, or so much of it as it can win, into subjection to a higher life. In this attempt the spirit goes through much toil, which, though in its result it advances the elect, in the performance brings to light weaknesses which we have not seen hitherto. We do not at first know what may be brought, not out of our flesh only, but out of our spirits, by trying circumstances. But if we labour as Jacobs to see "the elder serve the younger," our attempts will open a page within, humbling indeed, but not less profitable.

These sons, the different forms of life, which at this stage of sonship are produced by the elect soul, are now manifested. They are thus described at their birth: -- "The first came out red, all over like a hairy garment, and they called his name Esau: and after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel, and his name was called Jacob" (Genesis 25:24-26). To look at the elder first. He was "red," or ruddy, as the word is rendered by our translators in the only two other places where we find it (1 Samuel 16:12; 1 Samuel 17:42). (Note: Heb. admoniy [H132], from the same root as Edom. The LXX. translate it purrakes.) It describes natural health and strength, in contrast to that weakness out of which Abraham and all the elect are made strong. So fair is the flesh at this stage. Some think that the carnal mind, because "it profiteth nothing" (John 6:63), and "cannot please God" (Romans 8:8), must therefore be without attractions, an unsightly deformed

thing. In some forms it is vile indeed; but in others, and especially as Esau, it is for a season beautiful. But its beauty soon corrupts. Ere long Esau is Edom, that is, the red one (Genesis 25:30; Genesis 36:1; Genesis 36:8); his hue, like the "red horse," and "scarlet beast" (Revelation 6:4; Revelation 17:3), bespeaking that fierce life within, which will come out through all its coverings. Then we see that Edom is little else than Adam; slightly altered, but at bottom the same old man, which is of the earth, earthy. (Note: In the Hebrew, the difference between Edom and Adam, edom [H123] and adam [H121], is only in the vowel points, both names being most closely connected with adamah [H127], or earth.) Such is the flesh, at its best; fair at first, but degenerating as it grows, until it shews all its inbred violence.

Esau's other mark was "hair." He was "all over like a hairy garment" (Genesis 25:25). (Note: The name Esau is by some translated "hairy." See Gesenius on the word. Jerome however (Nom. Heb.) renders it by "operans," from another root.) This too figures grace and strength. The Lord, describing the growth and comeliness of Jerusalem, says, "Thy hair was grown" (Ezekiel 16:7); while "well-set hair" is set in contrast to "baldness," as strength to weakness, and beauty to burning (Isaiah 3:24). Esau has all this strength; but it avails as nothing in obtaining heavenly things. Therefore the priests at consecration had to "shave all their flesh" (Numbers 8:7). Therefore the leper, before he could be cleansed must "cut off all his hair, his beard, his eye-brows, even all his hair" (Leviticus 14:8-9). For, in consecration or cleansing, the strength of the flesh is to be put away, because, while that strength lasts, God cannot be fully known. Besides hair, from marking strength, if excessive, shews wildness; as the growth of Nebuchadnezzar's hair, until "it was like eagle's feathers," indicated his thorough brutality (Daniel 4:33). (Note: Greg. M. Moral. in Job. l. v. c. 33, § 59.) So does strength in the flesh tend, if it increase, to make us like to beasts, rough, brutal, wild, and unclean. The flesh, as Esau, becomes all this; so nearly akin is even its beauty to that which is wild and animal. Of the younger less is said. We only read that "his hand took hold of Esau's heel," whence "his name was called Jacob" (Genesis 25:26). This name, in its very form and composition, figures that which Jacob represents, namely, the divine working in the natural, (Note: The word is formed from aqeb [H6119], the heel, (that part of Adam which was to be bruised, that is, his fleshly part,) with the addition of the letter yod, a letter, which, like he, in Hebrew is symbolic of the divine; as we see in its addition to the name Oshea, changing it to Jehoshua. -- Numbers 13:8; Numbers 13:16. This idea, of the divine working in the natural, is exactly that set forth in Jacob. See Augustine, Serm. iv. Class. i. § 28.) and his unconscious act reveals what Jacob is, as the hair and colour mark what Esau signifies. Jacob is that life which "takes hold with the hand," that is, the spirit of service, in contradistinction to the earlier forms of the elect spirit. This is the form which the spiritual mind assumes, when Isaac or sonship produces its legitimate fruit. Jacob is worker throughout, busy with his hand, not so much a life of faith or sonship as of untiring service; toiling to win and bring into subjection things which till now had been given up as altogether beyond the elect's reach. In all this much of earthly craft is seen; and Jacob, because of his haste, is lovingly disciplined, until he learns the folly of many of his schemes to bring about what God had promised. And yet throughout he is blessed in his work. First one and then another of the things once subject to Laban or the outward man are brought to serve Jacob. This of course is not seen yet. But the first act, the "laying hold with his hand," shews in what new form the younger or spiritual life is now to be manifested.

Such are these sons at birth. As they grow, their characteristic unlikeness yet more shews itself. Esau is "a cunning hunter, a man of the field;" Jacob, "a plain man, dwelling in tents" (Genesis 25:27). The one is the revival of the same wild life, which we have already known at an earlier stage and coarser form in Nimrod and Ishmael. The other continues that pilgrim life, which Abraham's tent and altar have so long exhibited. Their acts shew what each is, and place the real difference of these two minds in a light never to be forgotten. For "Esau came from the field, and was faint; and he said unto Jacob, Feed me with that red pottage, for I am faint. And Jacob said, Sell me thy birth-right. And Esau said, Lo, I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birth-right do me? So Esau sold his birth-right to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau food, even pottage of lentiles, and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birth-right" (Genesis 25:29-34). (Note: In the authorised version the 34th verse is rendered, "Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles." But the more correct translation seems to be that which I have given above, viz. "food, even pottage," &c. The same word, lechem [H3899], is used of the offerings, where they are called "the food of God," Leviticus 21:17; and of "the tree with its fruit" or "with its food," in Jeremiah 11:19, eets balachmow.) These "lentiles" were the food of beasts more than of men; and the "famine" mentioned here (Genesis 26:1) may explain how Jacob came to be seething such pottage. It is elsewhere named as being used in a time of dearth, and there was "death in the pot," until the prophet healed it by casting in "fine flour" (2 Kings 4:38-41). For corn and wine, not lentiles, are the bread we should possess; as Isaac says, "With corn and wine have I sustained him" (Genesis 27:37). Not for such meat however, but for lentile pottage, fit rather for swine than men, Esau sells his inheritance. Whoever else may gain it, he cares not to keep it. And having done this, without one expression of regret, he "rises and goes his way," as if satisfied. Such is the flesh in every age. For a momentary gratification it will give up the hope of heavenly glory. Promises, because they tarry, are counted less than vanity, while the husks which the swine eat are esteemed a fit blessing.

Circumstances however as usual give the occasion for this: -- "Esau came from the field, and he was faint;" his pursuits there, though exciting, do not satisfy him. At such a moment the pottage is seen, and becomes through his emptiness the occasion of bringing out the true value he puts on spiritual things. So the flesh, spending its strength in worldly pursuits, following this or that natural emotion or creature faculty, till it is quite wearied, and feeling at times that the field thus used does not satisfy, instead of turning to cast itself upon a present God, too often by its very sense of emptiness is drawn to some passing bait, for which at such moments it will give up the birth-right. For spite of its excitements, nay, through them, the flesh is often faint, and feels that its field, if it is to afford solid satisfaction, needs the sower's seed and patient culture. Could it at such a time turn to the Lord, all would be well; but instead of this, the faintness is made the occasion for self to choose its own remedy. The result is the mess of pottage is seized, and the birth-right thus for ever lost to it. But this, though the occasion, was not the cause. That lay far deeper: -- "Esau despised his birth-right" (Genesis 25:34). His own words betray him, -- "What profit shall this birth-right do me?" He says, "This birth-right," as Joseph's brethren, when they would mock him, say, -- "This dreamer cometh" (Genesis 37:19); or again as Israel, when they turned away from Moses, -- "As for this Moses, we know not what has become of him" (Exodus 32:1). It is not mere pressure of circumstances, but real contempt of the blessing, which in every age makes the flesh so ready to give up the hope of coming glory. Ignorant of God and the joy of His love, but loving the things of time and sense which this world offers, the flesh prefers the barley to the gem: no

wonder therefore that it so lightly parts with what it does not value. Talk to the flesh of the "comfort of love," of "fellowship of spirit," of that "kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," of "the inheritance which is reserved in heaven for us, incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away," -- such themes will touch no answering chord, or raise a single wish or aspiration? Rather it shrinks from such as from a burden, and turns to earth, to its dust and dross, or its morsels of meat such as the flesh loveth. In these is its heaven, in these it would rest, and eat and drink and go its way.

Still the flesh will have its excuse. Grovelling as it is, it cannot give up heaven without an attempt at self-justification. Like Esau it says, "I am at the point to die" (Genesis 25:32). I cannot live unless I act thus. I cannot exist on so vague a thing as the promise. I may be losing the birth-right, but of what use is it, if I cannot live here? Necessity compels me. I cannot help it. Thus argues the flesh; but the excuse is not held good. In all such reasonings God is shut out. Esau is in the Lord’s eyes "a profane person" (Hebrews 12:16). Of Jacob less is seen here; but his acts shew a mind as unlike to Esau as may be, and set on other things; the one giving up his birth-right for meat; the other giving up his meat, if by any means he may obtain the inheritance. Jacob may fail in the way he seeks the blessing; he may trust too much to his schemes, not yet disciplined to wait on God to receive of Him what He has promised. But there cannot be a question whether he values the birth-right. His very errors shew that it is more to him than all other things. Such is the spirit of service in us, striving to overcome the flesh, without God, and in its own energy; but ready at all times to give up the world, parting with present good to obtain better things. Many a weary step does this attempt cost Jacob. Even after years of travail, Esau is yet to him "my lord Esau" (Genesis 32:4; Genesis 32:18); so hardly does the elder serve the younger, so slowly even at this stage is the flesh overcome. And yet "Isaac loves Esau" (Genesis 25:28), and would if possible bless the first-born. For though sonship is come, and we live in the spirit, we love the flesh, and cling to the fruits of nature which yet grow in us. This occurs at every stage. The spirit of faith prays "that Ishmael might live before God" (Genesis 17:18). Even when Isaac is weaned, the rejection of the bond-maid’s son is to Abraham "very grievous" (Genesis 21:11). And now when these natural fruits are Esau, when the flesh is seen in the comeliness it possesses after the spirit of sonship rules the elect house, it is hard to give up what seems so fair. The day comes when Esau is known; even then, spite of his ways and the grief which his Hittite wives cause, -- spite of our knowledge that he is rejected, -- that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, and that though attractive it must be cast out, -- we yet love Esau, and would make him the heir, and bless him, even though we know it cannot be.

---------- But enough of this inward view. Without, Isaac’s sons are those in whom respectively the flesh or spirit is the ruling life; who, though born in the house of the Son, and from one womb, after many struggles are for ever separated. The one, pursuing the rough things of the world, (for in this view "the field is the world," Matthew 13:38,) (Note: Greg. M. Moral. l. v. c. 11, § 20. Augustine often refers to the same outward fulfilment. See Serm. iv. Class. i. De Jacob & Esau; Enar. in Psalms 46:1-11 § 6; and elsewhere.) faint with such pursuits, sell their hope of glory for the meat which perisheth: while the younger or spiritual seed give up such meat, if by any means they may obtain better things. From the same Church spring both these seeds. For awhile one house is able to contain both. But a few years see them widely apart; the one with a kingdom and kingly sons in Mount Seir, the other with flocks won out of Laban’s hand, returning as pilgrims to dwell in the

promised land.

Soon shall the toil and grief be done. Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad (Psalms 14:7). Then one shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel (Isaiah 44:5). Fear not therefore, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord, and be not dismayed, O Israel; for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest, and at ease, and none shall make him afraid (Jeremiah 46:27). In the dispensations too this is fulfilled. The two sons, the natural and the spiritual seed, the Jew and Christian Church, are both the fruit of that Word of God, who is the Son and Heir, the true Isaac. All through the Jewish dispensation, born with it, was there a younger seed, not carnal but spiritual. All the holy prophets were of this line. In due time the younger or spiritual gained the birth-right openly. But before this, the younger was in the house, and in him God's covenant was fulfilled, though the elder was cast out. So St. Paul quotes Esau as a proof of Israel's fall (Romans 9:10-13). (Note: This dispensational fulfilment is continually alluded to or expounded by the Fathers; by Augustine, De Civit. l. xvi. c. 35; Id. Quoest. in Gen. 73; by Ambrose, De Cain et Abel, l. i. c. 2, and In Psalm. cxviii. Serm. 20; by Irenaeus, Contr. Hoer. l. iv. c. 38; by Cyprian, Adv. Jud. l. i. § 19; by Origen, Hom. xii. in Gen., and by many others.) He at least in Rebekah's sons could see a figure of the dispensations.

06.5.7. Isaac in the Philistines' Land

VII. -- ISAAC IN THE PHILISTINES' LAND

Genesis 26:1-35

HERE Isaac comes into collision with the Philistine, and the result is something like a repetition of Abraham's conduct under the same circumstances. In the main the two scenes are alike, shewing the dangers which await the elect spirit when it leaves its own high ground to go down towards Egypt. The difference is that in Abraham we see the trial, as it meets us at the faith stage of our spiritual life. Isaac shews the same, when instead of faith the spirit of sonship and understanding is come and rules within us.

Now the Philistine, as we have already seen, represents that spirit which seeks by knowledge to enter into heavenly things. (Note: See on Genesis 20:1-18 and the notes there.) Unknown before the flood, such a mind too surely grows out of the evil nature which still lives in us after we are regenerate. This mind is the Philistine in us, who is left to prove, and does more than once severely prove, the true elect (Judges 3:1-4). For the ground of promise often tries us: most truly is it the "land of promise," not of attainment, or of perfect rest. If, then, in addition to the common trials of the way, extraordinary pressure comes, and the springs fail, and the fields wither, the temptation is strong to leave the ground of promise, to find on the ground of sense or worldly knowledge that which for a season the promise does not minister to us. Egypt holds out strong inducements to go there; and this not only in the days of Abraham, that is, at the stage when faith is our ruling life; but also in Isaac's days, that is, when the spirit of sonship is come and is even fruitful in us.

Now "there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham" (Genesis 26:1). Pressed by this, Isaac moves towards Egypt, but stops or is stopped at Gerar in the Philistines' land. "The Lord appeared, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: and I will be with thee, and I will bless thee, and to thee and to thy seed I will give all these countries; and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham, and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven; and I will give unto thy seed all these countries, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." But "Isaac dwells in Gerar" for awhile; and here each of his peculiar blessings is seriously imperilled through the Philistines; till pushed by them from place to place he returns again to Beersheba, where the Lord again appears to him, saying, "Fear not, for I am with thee." On this ground the Philistine takes his proper place, submitting to the elect's superiority; after which Isaac finds fresh wells of water, beside which again he dwells in peace (Genesis 26:2-33).

All this is yet fulfilled in those who by grace have reached this stage of man's development. After long enjoyment of Beer-Lahai-roi, and the good things of Canaan, comes a time of dearth and dryness. The soul is parched: the usual blessing is withheld. The ground of promise seems to yield us nothing. Then we think of the good things of sense, not dependent like the hills of promise upon

the dews and rain of heaven, but, like Egypt, ever rich in itself, in its own abundant and apparently unfailing river. So we turn to go down thither. Once turned, a few steps bring us into the Philistines' land, that is, the ground of worldly knowledge, -- a descent which can be effected only too easily. (Note: See on Genesis 20:1-18) Here the elect's best blessings, first, intercourse with God, then possession of Rebekah, and lastly, provision sufficient for him, are each and all more or less affected, though spite of all failure Isaac by grace is not only sustained but even enriched here (Genesis 26:12). For the elect can gather much from science or knowledge, though mere knowledge cannot enter into spiritual things. The whole experience on this ground is here described, fulfilled in spirit in thousands who in their understanding are all but unconscious of it.

Intercourse with God is Isaac's first blessing. "The Lord appeared to him, and said, Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee" (Genesis 26:3). This was the presence of the Lord, better than all His gifts. But this belongs to certain ground. In Egypt, nay among the Philistines, half way to Egypt, the elect cannot enjoy this. If Isaac walks with God, the Lord appears. Walking with Philistines, the Lord's presence is unperceived by him. But no sooner does he come back to the old ground of promise, than heavenly revelations are at once again restored to him. So we read, "Isaac went up from thence to Beersheba, and the Lord appeared to him the same night; and Isaac builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 26:23-25).

It is so still. The ground of promise often tries us, but conscious intercourse with the Lord is here abundantly enjoyed by us. Driven by trial we get off this ground, turning to sense; and we find, that though this or the other trial ceases, God's revelations cease also. On the ground of promise, God is needed. To stand there, did not God interfere, would be far beyond our spirit's powers. Our very need therefore calls out for God, and in the need He reveals Himself as He could not otherwise. But if, instead of this, trial is an excuse to leave the ground of promise, to take refuge either in sense or knowledge, though we reap the good things such ground can give us, for a season we lose the Lord's better manifestations.

Isaac's next blessing was Rebekah. In Gerar "Isaac said, She is my sister" (Genesis 26:7). He shrinks from owning his true relation to her, while the ground he takes subjects her to the risk of dreadful profanation. Very strange it seems that men like Abraham or Isaac should so lightly have imperilled what must have been most dear to them. Could we see into the world within, we should perceive how that truth, which is to us what Rebekah was to Isaac, is imperilled by us with just as little thought, with no more apparent remorse or inward self-condemnation. Our inward man, when pressed by dryness and dearth, forsakes the ground of promise, and seeks relief in mere knowledge. Then the truth we love, our Rebekah, is risked, through the mind in us, which by knowledge would enter heavenly things. But the truth may not be so known or embraced. The spirit of sonship, is that which alone may lay hold of spiritual truth. Mere knowledge would only pervert it. God therefore interferes to prevent such adulteration. We have already seen this at the faith stage. Here we learn that even when the spirit of sonship is come, we are still liable to the very same temptation. Grace, indeed, again averts a fall, but the elect cannot but be humbled as he reviews such stages of his pilgrimage.

Further, upon this ground Isaac's more outward blessings, his "bread and his water," are the occasion of strife and envying. He sows, and the Philistines envy his fruits: he digs wells, and they labour to stop and fill them up (Genesis 26:12-15). Then he removes and digs again, but the

herdsmen of Gerar still strive. He digs yet again, and the Philistines yet more strive with him. On the ground of knowledge the elect can never rest. He may reap much there; he may open living wells, "for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (Psalms 24:1); the fields of knowledge, therefore, the Philistines' land, may be subdued, and much may be obtained thence; but on this ground there are disturbing thoughts withal, which can only be escaped by returning to the true ground of promise, where the Lord's oath again comforts us. There Philistine herdsmen cannot come: (Note: As to these "herdsmen," see on Genesis 13:1-18.) there the restlessness of mere knowledge cannot trouble us. Beside "the well of the oath," we rest in peace. Here the Philistine in us submits himself, and takes his proper place. So we read, "Then Abimelech came to him, and said, We saw the Lord was with thee: let there now be an oath between us and thee, that thou wilt do us no hurt. And Isaac made them a feast, and they sware one to another, and they rose up and departed from him" (Genesis 26:23-31). Knowledge is rebuked, but no violence is offered to it. For the elect is now on ground where "the oppositions of knowledge, falsely so-called" (1 Timothy 6:20), (Note: The notes on Genesis 20:1-18 have already shewn the views of the Fathers as to the spiritual import of the "Philistine." I may add the following: Orig. Hom. xiv. in Gen. xxvi. He pursues the subject at considerable length.) cannot disquiet him.

I have thus briefly traced this scene within. But the same thing is continually being re-enacted in the outward Church. Sons of God through trials leave their own high ground, seeking greater ease among those who without circumcision are reaching toward heavenly things; for sweet and blessed as the "well of vision" is, it does not exempt us from trials of faith, and other difficulties. Then the temptation is strong to descend to lower ground, to seek shelter in the things of sense, and in the ways of men of this world. (Note: Compare the scene, Genesis 20:1-18) There direct revelations cease: there the Church, and the truth which it embodies, is in danger of profanation; for worldly men, like Abimelech, and that with pure intentions, will seek carnally to know what, as worldlings, never can be theirs. Sons of God yet think too lightly of the shame and peril incurred here; but did not the Lord Himself most graciously interfere, such a course would bring only worse judgment upon the world, and disgrace on God's children. Nevertheless on this ground bread is found, and wells are dug; though envy assails us for the one, while against the other there is open opposition. "The bread is my flesh: he that eateth me, even he shall live by me:" and again, "The water which I will give, shall be in you a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." Bread is the outward form of the word of truth: water is its quickening and refreshing spirit (John 7:38-39). The chief strife is ever for the waters. The "staff of bread" (Psalms 105:16) may be grudged, but it is not destroyed; but the waters are actually choked; Philistines, who never worked to dig wells, will gladly work to stop them. Out of the world we may dig as we please, and sweet and calm are the hours spent at the "well of the oath," or beside the "well of vision." There no envying hand mars the joy by fouling the spiritual stream. It is far otherwise when we are among Philistines. Philistine herdsmen count wells an evil: they are deep and dangerous pits: not only sheep, but men also, -- so they judge, -- may perish in them. Have not some souls, while pretending or attempting to dig for hidden fountains, hurt themselves or others by leading them, from the firm ground of the letter, into uncertain and slippery quagmires of mystic nonsense, or into dry depths which yielded no water? Some have slipped: the well is therefore to be stopped, and the stagnant pool preferred, lest some blind leader of the blind should fall into it. Who is there that in the faith of the "deep

which coucheth beneath" (Deuteronomy 33:13), reckoning on a vein of living water, out of sight perhaps, but yet not far off from them that seek it, has dug below the surface, and brought into view the hidden streams of the Spirit's pure and living waters, but has met with strife at the hand of Philistines for the waters, clear and refreshing though they be, which he has opened out. And the strife is from "herdsmen" who have charge of flocks, and who should know the value of living waters. But they know it not. And like the Scribes, they "take away the key:" they "neither enter themselves, and those who would enter in, they hinder" (Luke 11:52). (Note: Orig. Hom. xiii. in Gen. So also Gregory the Great, Moral. in Job, l. xvi. c. 18, § 23. Ambrose dwells on the spiritual import of each of the wells named here, De Isaac et Anima, c. iv. § 20-22.) Thus are the Isaacs troubled still, and God's most precious gifts, given for our cleansing and refreshment, are made occasions of contention; so that such words as hatred and strife become, even in the mouths of the elect, almost synonymes for these pure wells of living waters, (Note: "Isaac called the name of the well Esek, or contention, because they strove with him. And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called it Sitnah," or hatred. -- Genesis 26:20-21.) till they return from this low ground and communion with worldlings to the ground of promise where men of this world care not to come. There the Lord again appears in peace: the "well of the oath" is safe from the distractions which infest us among the men of this world. There the uncircumcised must see that God is with the pilgrim, and though they will not walk with him there, they cease to fight against him. He offers them a feast of fat things: they may grudge and strive with him; he will return them love for their hatred. Another age may shew yet other fulfilments, when the pilgrimage among the Gentiles being ended, the opposing world shall seek and find peace. Then shall the earth be glad, and the sons of God shall dwell by living waters where none can harass them. Lord, Thou only canst bring us to that rest. Bring us thither, whom Thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood. Amen.

Such is Isaac's course, that is the path and experience of the spirit of sonship in us; very different to the energies of faith, freed from the peculiar struggles which mark each stage of Abraham's history; differing widely too from Jacob's path, knowing nothing of that long toil for flocks and children in the far country; but coming in at once to rich blessing, as Abraham's heir inheriting all faith's good things; yet with its special blessings having special trials of its own, first mocked and laughed at, then called to be a sacrifice, to give up as an obedient son its own will in everything, to be even as a lamb appointed unto death, only in the act of perfect self-sacrifice to find deliverance; then, when fruitful, to be pained, at home by its own seed, abroad by seeing the living waters which faith had opened choked by aliens; such is the path; for there is no form of spiritual life which in its progress towards the perfect man must not be tried to the uttermost. The form of the trial varies with the growing form of the elect life, for that which tries us at first is not the trial of the riper and more advanced spirit; but a cross and trial there must be at every stage, to purify the elect from the hereditary evil which still so perseveringly cleaves to him. Many therefore are the inward groans and deaths, which must be passed through in the journey towards perfection. For as the vine draws its sap from the impure earth, and so yields a fluid fruit, first sour, then sweet, which, being crushed in the wine-press, is then turned into wine by fermentation, and thus by successive changes spiritualised and advanced into a more powerful and enduring form of being; so in the great change of man's renewal unto God, the new life, growing out of and in part and for

a season sustained by the defiled and earthly nature, is dissolved and purified by successive changes and ferments, till it is transformed and rectified into that which is immortal. But many stages are there in the labour, and many times does nature halt before this final rest. And often do we think the work is done, and the promised rest is come, while yet we are far indeed from seeing it. But it shall come at last to those who by grace yield themselves to God in everything.

06.6.0. Jacob, or the Spirit of Service

PART 6 JACOB, OR THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

Genesis 27:1-46, Genesis 28:1-22, Genesis 29:1-35, Genesis 30:1-43, Genesis 31:1-55, Genesis 32:1-32, Genesis 33:1-20, Genesis 34:1-31, Genesis 35:1-29, Genesis 36:1-43 "Jacob served for a wife, and kept sheep." -- Hosea 12:12.

"Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!" -- Numbers 23:23.

WE come now to another form of life. Five great stages we have already passed. Jacob is the sixth, in whom is shewn a further very distinct development of the same spiritual life. Essentially they are alike, as root, and shoot, and leaf, and bud, and flower, and fruit, and seed, are all the same life; they differ in form, each being a fresh manifestation of that sevenfold Spirit which indeed is yet one (Revelation 1:4; 1 Corinthians 12:4; 1 Corinthians 12:11).

Jacob, as we have already seen, (Note: See on Genesis 25:24-34) represents that spirit of service, which is not the first and natural, but the spiritual fruit of true sonship; which from the first is distinguished by using its hand; "laying hold," and labouring to bring the first-born, and what is akin to the first-born, into subjection to a higher life. The figure is most distinct, and stands in striking contrast to all the forms of life which we have already gone through. Abraham, the spirit of faith, goes forth from the ground of the outward man to walk with God beyond Jordan. He leaves his kindred behind, coming out from Mesopotamia, that is the ground between tradition and reasoning, (Note: Respecting these rivers, from which Mesopotamia, or Aram Naharaim, took its name, see on Genesis 2:1-25) forsaking the outer world to walk with God, and to stand in His strength upon the heavenly ground of promise. This is the life of faith, to pass from earthly into heavenly things. And Abraham’s experience is all in keeping with this beginning. For faith, having turned its back on the outward man, returns to it no more, but abides beyond Jordan. Isaac lives yet more completely in Canaan; for our walk as sons of God is not with the natural man or in the outward world. Isaac’s life begins and ends beyond Jordan. A son and heir, he dwells in peace in heavenly places. Once only through trial he nearly leaves this ground, driven to its very borders, in the direction of the Philistine. But his life is a life in Canaan. In Jacob the view presented to us is very different. Here the elect is seen, not as coming by faith from the ground of the outward man, nor as Isaac dwelling in Canaan in peace by wells of water; but rather going down from thence to the ground of the outward man, from which the spirit of faith has come up and separated itself, there to serve for a bride and flocks, whom it may bring, as the fruit of service, back with it into heavenly places. Jacob’s life is service throughout; a life, beginning in the midst of the blessings of the elect in heavenly places, which yet goes down thence to toil in outward things, to bring under the power of the spiritual life in us faculties which till now have only served the outward man; a form of life which only comes after sonship is known, which is indeed its fruit, though most unlike it; for it goes down from heavenly things to earthly, to labours amongst the unclean, from whom

God’s elect have been separated. (Note: Ambrose points out the distinction between these two lives, De Joseph. c. i. § 1.)

Such a life may seem to undo what has been done, for Jacob goes down to the very ground which Abraham had forsaken: yet are the paths in substance one; and both, unlike as they appear, are but different parts of one and the same series; both are the same life at different stages; now rising like a plant to hold its fruit above the earth in air and sunshine, now again casting its fruit into the earth, in both pursuing only one end. For life is growth, and involves a constant change. Hence the same life, which at one stage, as Abrahams, draws us away from outward things, at another stage, as Jacobs, brings us back to them. Being life, it cannot preserve a dead consistency. The elect change, because they are alive. Hence the fact, of their having once and for ever by faith forsaken outward things, shall by no means keep them from going back in service to toil for that which by faith they have forsaken. Besides, things are safe at one stage which are dangerous at another; as Egypt, which was a snare to Abraham, is none to Joseph, but becomes the scene of all his glory.

06.6.1. Jacob's Carnal Means to Gain God's Ends

I. -- JACOB’S CARNAL MEANS TO GAIN GOD’S ENDS

Genesis 27:1-46

FIRST we see how Jacob attempts to supplant the flesh or first-born. His mode of action is fully shewn, and the results, which leave Esau, without the blessing indeed, but yet "my lord Esau." The more excellent way comes out in Joseph. There the victory over the first-born is won, not by striving or supplanting, but by suffering. Not the strength of nature, not doing but dying, in a word the cross, is the elect’s true sceptre over the flesh and outward world. But this is not known at this stage. Here we see the first ways by which the younger strives to overcome the elder, namely by craft and energy.

Three men appear in this scene, who yet live, and still repeat the same acts in the elect house.

First Isaac seeks to bless Esau. He will, if possible, give the blessing to the first-born or natural life. "Isaac called his elder son, and said unto him, My son, make me savoury meat, that I may eat and bless thee" (Genesis 27:4). But this first-born is slow in bringing what is asked; and the blessing, spite of Isaac’s inclination, passes according to a higher purpose upon the younger son. And so the spirit of sonship in us struggles, if it might be so, to make the flesh blessed. Spite of our knowledge that flesh must fail, we yet would make it the heir, and bless it, though we know it cannot be. In vain have Cain and Terah lived and died: in vain has the spirit of faith struggled to save Ishmael: the same desire remains when Isaac is old, stronger now perhaps than at any former stage. For Abraham only prays for Ishmael, but Isaac determines himself to bless the first-born. But flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom (1 Corinthians 15:50). The sons of God may excite the flesh to seek the blessing. It is in vain. The true kingdom is in and of the spirit, in things which the flesh loves not, and where it cannot come. And Isaac, foiled in his purpose, at once and without hesitation confirms the blessing upon the head of Jacob. He answers, "I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed" (Genesis 27:33); nor do Esau’s cries for a moment change this deep conviction. He "trembles" indeed, for the struggle of his own with God’s will moves him exceedingly; but his judgment is untouched; the blessing is fixed: he neither can nor will reverse it. So now, spite of our wish to bless the flesh, through its delays we find our purpose set aside. Then instead of seeking to reverse the gift, we fully acquiesce in the fact, that the spirit is the true possessor of it. The spirit of sonship confirms the rejection of the flesh. It receives a blessing, but it cannot have the inheritance. But Jacob is the chief figure here. Elect, unbroken, still Jacob, not yet transformed into Israel, the man whose own hand is at work, not yet a prince with God, as he becomes afterwards, -- just as he is, young and eager to be blessed, without a thought of his own unfitness to use the blessing he longs for, not fearing Esau, as he does in later days, he seeks at once by craft to supplant him, and take the blessing. Thus the spirit of service in us at the first, loving the blessing, and intent at once to rule the carnal old man, little thinks of its own unchastened state, or of the flesh’s power, if it be roused by opposition, but pursues the same old plan to be blessed, making itself as much like the rejected first-born as possible, putting skins on

its hands and neck to be rough, then taking Esau's raiment, then personating Esau. Instead of waiting God's time, it will by roughness and guile, contrary to the better nature within, attempt to rule the flesh or first-born, putting on the manners and appearance of the carnal seed, to gain by roughness what roughness has no claim to. For because he was such as he was, Esau fails; and yet Jacob will make himself like this thereby to gain the blessing. But he cannot do this without compunction. He says, "I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing" (Genesis 27:12). Nevertheless "he puts the skins of the kids upon him" (Genesis 27:16). The flesh's roughness is put on, to gain what we think will be lost, if we walk on in humble quietness. This part of the figure is most striking. When Adam fell, God gave him a "coat of skins" (Genesis 3:21), a witness of death, and yet a covering through the slain Lamb. In like manner the prophets wore hairy garments (2 Kings 1:8; Matthew 3:4), testifying the same truth of a fallen nature and its remedy. This Jacob uses to be more flesh-like. He wears the rough garment, like false prophets, to deceive (Zechariah 13:4). (Note: See Greg. M. in Ezech. l. i. h. 6. He does not notice that Jacob did this to make himself like Esau.) The death of the creature is made his cloak, to be more like that creature, whose doom is sealed by that which covers him. Even thus is the gospel abused. The fact that the lamb was slain, the very pledge that our flesh must not be lived in, is used at first by the spirit of service in us as a means to make us more like Esau, more rough, and more beast-like. And this especially when we would serve. As sons of God, our dangers and temptations meet us on another side; but as workers we try fleshly means, even when the desire of our heart is to overcome the flesh, and to live and walk in the spirit. This was not done by Jacob alone. His mother, Rebekah, moved him to practise this deception (Genesis 27:6-10). Rebekah is that form of truth which the spirit of sonship loves; (Note: See on Genesis 24:1-67 and Genesis 25:12-23.) and this truth, acting on the spirit of service in us, through our impatience and tendency to trust ourselves, excites, and so tempts us. Thus it was in Abraham's case. Sarah herself stirred him up to seek seed by the bondwoman. (Note: See on Genesis 16:1-16) So even spiritual truth may mislead, if, instead of keeping us in hope and patience, it excites us to godless haste and carnal policy. In service especially we are prone to this, in the efforts which we first make to overcome the elder son. The truth itself excites us to steps, which shew our zeal, but practically deny the zeal of the Lord of Hosts (Isaiah 9:7). The result is always chastening. We learn at last that we only mar God's work when we attempt to do it for Him, and that if we do wrong, we must also suffer wrong.

Nevertheless Jacob is blessed. The grace, which before his birth gave him the promise, abides "without repentance" (Romans 11:29). God's purpose is not turned aside. This "worm Jacob" (Isaiah 41:14) must be chastened, yet He blesses him. "And Isaac said, The smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed" (Genesis 27:27). The "image of God" is not yet come, but the "herb and fruit tree" is yielding fruit and odour after its kind. And sweet is the smell of this spirit of service in us, spite of all its haste and imperfections. It is "even as a very fruitful field;" not heaven, but earth fair and sweet to look upon. Sweet is the field, though much is unripe there. Sweet is the vine, when its sour and "tender grape gives a good smell" (Song of Solomon 2:13). Sweet is the olive, while as yet it yields no oil, for the wounds of man, or for the light on God's candlestick (Exodus 27:20; Luke 10:34). Sweet is the rose, though but a prickly brier, with tokens in its thorns of a curse still working in it. Sweet is the lowly lily, which toils not and spins not, a witness of the beauty which the Lord delights to put on meek and pure natures. Sweet is the violet, hiding itself, of choice preferring shade, and loving the quiet low ground; not feigning humility as a step to grandeur here, but content if only it can reflect the hue of heaven in its humble blossoms.

Sweet again is the corn as it comes to the growth; not yet bread-corn, ready to be bruised, but still unripe and growing. Such is this son, whose early life, spite of its faults, is, "as the smell of a full field, which the Lord blesses;" not fit for the garner, but growing and green; freed at least from thickets and stones and pools of stagnant water; where instead of the thorn may come up the fir tree, instead of the brier the myrtle tree, to be unto the Lord for a praise and a name, even for an everlasting sign, which shall not be cut off (Isaiah 55:13). (Note: Gregory the Great interprets all these varied flowers, In Ezech. l. i. h. 6, § 3. Ambrose alludes to the same subject, Hex. l. iii. c. 8, § 36.)

Thus Esau still without, while Jacob is already come with savoury meat, loses the inheritance. When he comes it is too late. Then he cries, "Bless me, even me also, O my father." For the flesh, though stirred up to seek the blessing, loses it by tarrying so long in pursuing outward things. Then it cries with a loud and bitter cry. But the hope of glory is gone; though a lower blessing, if sought, is not denied to it. Then it "lives by its sword," delighting in strife, and in its struggles with the spirit at times has the dominion over it. But it cannot be the heir. The coming world and the inheritance is for ever forfeited.

Such is the scene within, so far at least as it is given me to utter it. Outwardly too it is fulfilled. Abraham’s sons, who pursue external things in the field of this world, much as the Son may wish to bless them, lose the blessing, while the spiritual seed, though seeking very carnally, press in and seek and make it theirs. And who is it, even to this present day, that stirs up the heirs of promise, to make themselves like carnal men? Alas, it is Mother Church, that body which is the outward form of spiritual truth. She it is who moves her best-loved sons, making them rough men to gain what rough men cannot have. Therefore must she lose her sons. Her craft and carnal means to obtain holy ends, -- and the haste and impatience of those she loves, in and by themselves and in their own strength to seize the blessing, -- ere long divide the mother from her sons, while in sore travail through many days they suffer long discipline. The Esaus stay behind: the Jacobs go forth to toil, to win flocks and herds. Even the carnal and rejected sons receive some blessing. They, no less than their spiritual brothers, have the "fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven" promised them. What is "of the earth," sacramental forms, they put in the first place. The "dew of heaven" is with them the second and lower blessing. (Note: Compare the order of the respective blessings, Genesis 27:28 and Genesis 27:39. Augustine, who constantly quotes Isaac’s two sons as the figure of the double seed, the carnal and spiritual, in the Christian Church, goes at great length into this, Serm. iv. Class. 1, De Jacob et Esau, §§ 14, 31. Some would do well to mark the place here given by Augustine to sacraments. Compare with Confess. l. xiii. c. 18, § 23.) It comes indeed on all alike, on tares and wheat, but each uses it to strengthen its proper life; the one drinking in the dew to nourish thorns, the other by the same dew "out of an honest and good heart" to bring forth good things. But I need not pursue this; for in this view the fulfilment to our shame is around us everywhere.

---------- The dispensations too reflect the scene. The Divine Word, the true Son, produced a double seed. Then He looked for refreshment of heart from him, who, as being the first-born, possessed the first claim. But this son, the Jew, yet tarries without, and comes not until the younger son has gone in, and the word is fulfilled, "A people whom I have not known, they have

served me" (Psalms 18:43). In this view, Esau's raiment, which Jacob put on, without which Esau approached his father, is full of significance. That robe of righteousness (Note: Jewish tradition tells us that this raiment of Esau's was the ensign of primogeniture, transmitted from father to son. Ambrose expounds the dispensational application of it, De Jacob, &c., l. ii. c. 2, § 9. Gregory the Great gives the same interpretation, In Ezech. l. i. h. 6, § 3.) which the Jew should have had on, but had not, is worn by the Gentile church, even while it misuses the doctrine of the cross, to make itself resemble the carnal seed. For the Church has sought to be rough like the Jew, using the very death of the Lamb, to make itself carnal rather than spiritual. Yet the blessing remains with the Church, in an order exactly the reverse of that granted to the elder son. To Esau the word is, earth first, then heaven. To Jacob, heaven first, then the blessings of this world. To Jacob, thus; -- "God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine." To Esau, thus; -- "Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above." For the Jew seeks first a rest on earth; the Church, a rest in heaven now, and God's will on earth, when the kingdom of God shall be in the earth even as it is in heaven. (Note: Tertullian, tracing this fulfilment, calls especial notice to the varying order in the two blessings, Adv. Marcion. l. iii. c. ult. But this dispensational application is given by nearly all the Fathers; by Irenaeus, Contr. Hoer. l. iv. c. 21; (al. 38;) by Hippolytus, as quoted by Jerome, Epist. Crit. 125, ad Damasum; by Augustine, Serm. iv. Class. 1, De Jacob et Esau, and elsewhere; by Origen, Hom. xiv. in Gen.; by Gregory the Great, In Ezech. Hom. 6; and by others. Some not only see the Church in Jacob, but Christ also, the Church's head, like Jacob standing in the first-born or old man's place, and obtaining the blessing by putting on the likeness of sinful flesh for us, figured in the kids' skins. So Augustine, Lib. contr. Mendac. c. x. § 24, and Serm. 79 de Tempore, (al. 11, Append.) and Irenaeus, Contr. Hoer. l. iv. c. 21. (al. 38.) But in this deeper sense, which, indeed, is to be traced all through Genesis, we touch on things unspeakable.) So the last shall be first, and the first shall be last; and by strength shall no man prevail.

06.6.2. The Motives to Service

II. -- THE MOTIVES TO SERVICE AND ENCOURAGEMENTS BY THE WAY

Genesis 28:1-22

WE have seen Jacob in the promised land, by craft and energy rather than by patience seeking to overcome the elder son. We have seen the result, -- only greater opposition. The elder is not brought to serve the younger by such policy. We now see Jacob flying before his brother, going down from the ground of promise to toil in Laban's house, a course in which he is blessed, -- for by it he reaches others whom he brings back with him to the promised land, -- but which never conquers Esau: the victory over the first-born is won by a very different wrestling.

Esau and Laban are both forms of the flesh; (Note: For Esau, see on Genesis 25:24-34. For Laban on Genesis 24:1-67.) the one being the carnal mind as it grows out of a true son; the other, our outward natural man. These differ, though both are of the flesh; as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob differ, though forms of one spirit. Esau is the loveliest form of the flesh, the carnal mind as it grows in us after the spirit of sonship is our ruling life, stirred at times even to seek for heavenly things, yet at heart profane, and loving this present world. Laban is our outward natural man, which dwells in outward things, and is content to dwell there. Each of these in turn tries us. At one stage the outward man is our greatest difficulty. At another it is the carnal mind within, growing up in closest connection with spiritual things, which, because more inward, is far more dangerous and much harder to overcome. Jacob here learns the strength of each. As worker, he strives, not to be ruled, but to rule over these. But Esau is yet so strong that Jacob is forced for awhile to give way and fly before him; while Laban, so far from serving, is served, though at length much that was once in his power follows a better guide. Esau too must yield at last, but not till hasty Jacob has become halting Israel. At the stage before us Jacob flees to Laban. His motives and encouragements here are both laid open to us. We see the mixture of motive which there is in truest service; how little credit the elect can take to themselves either for what they do or suffer.

Three distinct influences were at work upon Jacob, all uniting to urge him down to Laban's house.

First, Rebekah urges the step, through fear of Esau (Genesis 27:42-45). In this view Jacob's service appears the result, not of longing for fruit, but simply of Esau's violence. And God only knows how much we are led to busy ourselves in attempts to subdue the faculties and affections of the outward man, by the fact of a carnal mind still strong within from which we flee to toil in outward things. Some affection of the outward man, some natural faculty which is engaged in outward things, -- Laban's daughters and flocks, -- are sought and won. Is not this good? Surely, very good. Nevertheless it may result from the power of the carnal mind within, which distresses the spirit, and forces it, with a vague hope of thus acquiring power, into efforts to rule our outward man. But not thus is Esau overcome. Our zeal to subdue the faculties and affections of the outward man, blessed as such service is, and much as it enriches us, -- for Jacob wins both wives and flocks and herds from Laban, -- will never make Jacob Esau's lord. We may have toiled with

Laban, and be increased, and possess his goods as our rightful portion, earned by hard labour; yet this will not master Esau: after this, Esau is yet "my lord Esau." This is learnt as we advance. Here we see that Jacob's service to Laban in one view is a result of Esau's violence. The very strength of the carnal mind within drives the spirit in us to efforts to subdue the outward man.

Another motive is desire for fruit. Isaac says, "Arise, go down to Padan-Aram, and take a wife thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother; and God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people" (Genesis 28:2-3). In this view our service aims to bring forth fruit. The spirit of sonship urges us on to attempt to subdue natural affections, that we may increase spiritually. Thus our service is not urged on through fear only; there is also a pure desire for increased fruitfulness. On this motive, I need not dwell; all know it, in whom the spirit of service has come and grown strong.

Jacob's service has yet another end. If Rebekah, and Isaac have each their purpose in it, no less has God His, to work something in Jacob as well as by him, to chasten his spirit, and wean him from his self-confidence. For the spirit of service needs breaking in. If when first awakened to the prospect of overcoming that in us which is of the flesh and "first and natural," it could effect this at once and in its own strength, it would thereby most surely be a loser. Self-will would come in, and self-satisfaction, making the very victory a worse defeat. It would be our kingdom rather than God's; and our spirit, unbroken and unchastened, could not be truly blest. For not by strength, but in weakness, does God's kingdom come; not in obtaining our will, but in His will. It is only by the death of all our hopes in self, and this after we have tried our energies to the uttermost, that we are brought really to rest in God. In the walk of faith and sonship we have already proved this. In the effort to subdue our carnal mind and outward man, that is, as Jacobs, the same lesson must be learnt again. Only by sad experience is the spirit of service purged from its tendency to self-confidence and self-exaltation.

Thus Jacob goes forth to toil. Meanwhile, Esau, hearing Iaaac's charge to Jacob, that he should not take a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites, now takes to himself another wife, a daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's carnal son. Thus Jacob's course affects Esau, no less than Esau's violence had affected Jacob. We read "when Esau saw that Isaac had sent Jacob into Padan-Aram, to take a wife from thence, and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, and that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-Aram; Esau, seeing that the daughters of Canaan (whom he had already married -- Genesis 26:34-35; Genesis 27:46) pleased not Isaac his father, went unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife" (Genesis 28:6-9). This yet is Esau's way. The carnal mind, having been excited by the elect to seek the blessing, and having failed to obtain it, learning that Canaanitish wives, the evil principles which it has embraced, are obnoxious to the spirit, and seeing the spirit bent on obtaining better fruit, does not, indeed, put away the former wives, but adds to them another from Abraham's carnal seed, that is, some principle, which has sprung from the union of faith with law, and which, though Abraham's or faith's seed, is yet its carnal seed. Thus does Esau seek better fruit; and this act shews a desire for some measure of reformation. But spite of its aim, it is a mistake. The carnal mind will never be improved by adopting principles which are only the carnal fruit of true faith. The elder cannot be heir; flesh is flesh, and, improved as it may be, cannot inherit heavenly things. To return to Jacob, his way seems hard enough. Alone, with a staff in his hands,

but all unused to journeying, he turns his face towards Laban’s house. Night comes on, and he lies down to sleep, with stones for pillows. In the darkness God is near. If He chastens with one hand, He sustains with the other. So Jacob sees a vision, such as our Lord promises to an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile (Genesis 28:12; John 1:51). He sees heaven opened, and angels of God ascending and descending upon a son of man. He sees how one chastened for sin, in darkness, still weaker than the first-born, and to be yet more humbled, is yet the care of God. Earth is shut, but heaven is opened; there is a path, linking the seen with the unseen, leading upward, and assuring present help. The Lord is not seen to come down, as afterwards, -- for at a later stage, we read, "He went up, after He had talked with him" (Genesis 35:13), -- but the promise is heard, and the Lord appears "above the ladder;" above, yet in communication with him. Then the sevenfold promise again is heard, "Behold, I am with thee, and will help thee in all places whither thou goest, for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Genesis 28:13-15). The spirit of service is yet thus refreshed. It needs, and must receive, correction, but a hand of love administers it. Solitude and darkness may be its lot; but in the darkness the Lord brings into view and opens heavenly things. (Note: The Fathers call especial notice to the stone which Jacob took for a pillow, Greg. M. Moral. in Job, l. v. c. 31, § 54. Augustine gives the same interpretation, In Johan. Tract. vii. § 23.) Light shines out, and fills the soul. Fears, enmities, and sorrows, for a season at least are lost to view. God fills the eye. And afterwards as our spirit journeys on, faint and travel-stained, through the appointed pilgrimage, the recollection of that hour of conscious communion comes back to us as a point of light and joy to cheer and strengthen us. Such moments are memorable indeed. We go far in the strength of that communion. We may, indeed, meet such a revelation, not with the strong grasp of faith, but like Jacob, with a half-fearing cry, "How terrible is this place!" Our surprise may shew how unaccustomed we are to see the Lord. Our language, "If God will be with me," may betray our feeble faith, which can utter an "if," in reply to God’s unfailing "I will." But the vision is never to be forgotten. Our spirit "lifts up its feet," and journeys on with fresh alacrity. (Note: Jacob "lifted up his feet," &c., Genesis 29:1, margin. Heb. yisah reglaayw [H5375 H7272]. The Samaritan, Chaldee, and LXX. versions, all translate this verbatim.)

It is the same story without. God’s servants go forth to service with very mixed and different ends. The desire for fruit is not our only motive. Our service may be also a result of the opposition of carnal men within the Church. Christ may be "preached of strife," as well as of "love" (Php 1:16-17); and even our truest attempts to shew love be mixed with much that is selfish and uncharitable. Such poor worms are we at the best. In seeking to be catholic, we are often most sectarian. So in seeking to be loving and to win souls to Christ, we are too often unchristlike and unloving. But we learn even by our mistakes, -- by falling, to walk upright -- by many sad blots, at last to write fairly. And so out of our mixed motives God brings forth good; for far above our thoughts He is working something in, as well as by, His servants. If none else are served, the Lord’s servants themselves should be served and profited by their own ministry. Who would have thought that a course of toil could be both a labour of love, voluntarily entered upon, and bringing its own reward, and at the same time an appointed means to humble us. All our Christian path is such; but this stage above all others shews, that our most devoted service, undertaken to please God, and to bear fruit to the praise of His faithfulness, in another aspect may be God’s disciplining rod. Those especially who have engaged in service, and have spent their lives, willingly, but at great cost to themselves, in some peculiar and trying toil and testimony, will on looking back on

their path, as they draw towards its close, feel how the trials of their way have been precisely that discipline which their souls most needed. I believe all suffering will on one side be found to be corrective, even though it comes upon us in the course of the most willing and holy and accepted service. The service may be blessed, the reward great, yet in its sorrows, in those very crosses for which we shall receive a full reward, God may be teaching us obedience by the things which we suffer. Thus God’s servants start, and in darkness find how near He is, and that there is a ladder joining earth to heaven, the seen to the unseen, by which their spirits can rise to Him, be they where they may, and His Spirit in return come down upon them. This is seen when we would serve. Not Abraham, or even Isaac, but Jacob beholds this ladder reared up. For the spirit of faith, and even sonship, are slow to learn what the Incarnation means. But God’s servants could never serve at all in outward things, if in some measure at least this vision were not vouchsafed to them. Therefore, as they go forth to serve, they are shewn what Christ’s flesh means, and what a link between highest and lowest, the outermost and innermost, is everlastingly assured to us thereby. (Note: Augustine several times alludes to this, explaining this ladder by our Lord’s words to Nathaniel, John 1:51. -- Serm. 122, § 2. The way in which he proceeds in another place to apply this vision, as an example of ministry, which, after the pattern of the angels and of Christ’s Incarnation, should come down to earth as well as rise to heaven, is most striking. -- In Johan. Tract. vii. § 23.) Do the angels descend as well as ascend? Has the Lord of angels Himself by His flesh come down, and been made a Jew to gain the Jews? Then His servants too may come down to earth, and may leave their own high and heavenly ground to win earthly souls; may assume a fleshly form for fleshly souls, and become as Jews to Jews, and as babes to babes, for others (1 Corinthians 9:19-20), in the assurance that everything and anything on earth may be sanctified by the word of God and prayer and thanksgiving. Henceforth every spot is holy ground. We cannot call any man, however outward, common or unclean. For heaven is linked with earth. Shall we then, who are of the earth, count any on earth alien to us? Rather with Jacob we say even of the untilled field, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not" (Genesis 28:16). Not till this is seen are we fitted for service in the outward world.

06.6.3. The Service for Wives and Flocks

III. -- THE SERVICE FOR WIVES AND FLOCKS Genesis 29:1-35 and Genesis 30:1-43

WE now come to the service in Padan-Aram. Evangelic service is here photographed; for the Light Himself has drawn each minutest particular, the trials, mistakes, successes, and results, as none but light could draw them. Jacob is seen in Laban's house, toiling there, first to gain his daughters, then his flocks and herds. First, the daughters of Laban are won; that is, certain affections or truths, which by nature are akin and subject to our outward man, are embraced by the spirit, and so become fruitful. Then Laban's flocks and herds are gained; that is, the animal faculties and emotions, which hitherto have been altogether under the power of the outward man, henceforth obey the spirit, and follow, though still animal and irrational, the directions of the spirit rather than of the outward man. This is not done without long toil. Many a night does Jacob watch, and many a weary day. "In the day the drought consumes him, and the frost by night: sleep departs from his eyes, and slumber from his eyelids" (Genesis 31:40). But the work is done at last. Laban's daughters and flocks and herds serve Jacob, and he "increases exceedingly."

Such is the scene, and the outline is clear: the details need a man's, not to say an angel's, eye. For service is pictured here. Ministering spirits, therefore, according to their measure, will understand this. To others, because the reality is unknown, the picture must needs be more or less a puzzle.

We are first shewn Laban's state, when Jacob comes; then the service rendered to him; and lastly, the results of it. We may trace it within and without. The outward fulfilment will, as ever, be clearest to earthly eyes.

First, to trace it within. Laban's state is seen, that is the state of the outward man, when Jacob or the spirit of service begins to act on him. In reply to the question, "Is he well?" the answer given is, "He is well" (Genesis 29:6); for the natural man, till by dealings with the elect it begins to know itself, is ever self-satisfied. And yet, "it was not much he had before Jacob came" (Genesis 30:30). A well, some sheep, and two daughters, were the better part of his possessions. And the water was scarce, for as a rule the well was closed; while his fairest daughter was occupied with the cattle, in outward more than inward things (Genesis 29:1-9). These figures are all familiar to us. Wells, and sheep, and daughters have again and again passed before our eyes. (Note: For "wells" see on Genesis 21:1-34, Genesis 25:1-11, and Genesis 26:1-35. For "flocks," on Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 13:1-18, and Genesis 22:1-24. For "daughters," on Genesis 6:1-22 and Genesis 16:1-16, and elsewhere.) Women are affections; but, as our principles are ever what our affections are, they also figure certain principles. Hagar, Sarah, and others, have made this clear. Here two women are seen; the elder, the first and outward affection or principle of the natural man; the younger, the later more inward principle: and of these even the fairest is yet in outward things. Nevertheless Laban welcomes Jacob: -- "He ran to meet him, and brought him into his house" (Genesis 29:13). For the outward man at first is glad to be served, and for awhile is strengthened, though in the end weakened and impoverished, by the efforts of Jacob, the spiritual inward man.

Jacob’s service then begins by assisting Rachel, the younger daughter, to open the covered well. Then he gives drink to Laban’s flocks. After this, he proceeds to serve with a fixed aim, first for the daughters, then the flocks, of Laban. The course and results of this service are most significant.

Laban’s daughters are toiled for first, more strictly the younger daughter, though Jacob in fact obtains both. "Leah was tender or weak-eyed, (Note: Our version, "tender-eyed," is not very plain. The LXX. translate, ophthalmoi astheneis: the Vulgate, "lippis oculis.") but Rachel was beautiful and well-favoured. And Jacob loved Rachel, and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter" (Genesis 29:15-18). He wishes for Rachel alone; but at length, after seven years’ service, and when he hopes to have her, he is deceived by Laban, and put off with Leah. "It came to pass in the evening, that Laban took Leah, and brought her to Jacob, and he went in unto her. And in the morning, behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, What is this that thou hast done unto me? Did I not serve thee for Rachel? Wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the first-born." Jacob gets Rachel after all; but against his will and unknown to him he first embraces Leah. It must be so. "It is not so done in that country to give the younger before the first-born."

Laban’s daughters as we have seen, are the affections or principles of the outward man. At each stage, as believer, or son, or servant, the elect spirit embraces one or more of these. Like seed, it finds a soil: it does not make it; and that soil is throughout human and natural. Thus is our fallen nature laid hold of by the Spirit, and out of its affections, earthly as they are, good fruit is borne to God’s glory. The mystery of the Incarnation is the outward witness of this. And He who abhorred not the Virgin’s womb, -- who said, "I will dwell in you and walk in you," -- who took our nature and our infirmities upon Him, -- out of the woman in us yet brings forth spiritual fruit. But the elect’s aim is to gain, not the elder or first-born, but the younger or more inward and spiritual affection of the natural man. The first-born has few or no attractions for him. The spirit desires rather to gain what is lovely and spiritual of the outward man. Seven years he labours for this, and "they seemed but a few days for the love he had unto her" (Genesis 29:20); for when the spirit is full of love, time is nothing: love makes our life, like that of the angels, wholly out of time. But there is a sort of necessity for taking the first and natural before the spiritual. While we only desire the inward, we are put off with the outward, which we do not love. We may think we have got Rachel, but it is Leah. The old man has been too cunning for us. For we are in the dark, (Note: "It came to pass in the evening," &c., Genesis 29:23. Respecting the "evening," see on Genesis 2:1-25) and know not what we are doing. When, however, light breaks in, we learn how, with all our love for the younger, we have been deceived. Oh, how many, who have only got Leah, think it is Rachel, simply because they are in the dark. If they love Rachel, she too shall be theirs. In due time, after our carnal haste has been met by what is first and natural, we shall obtain the spiritual. But action precedes contemplation; a life on outward principles must come before an inward life; and the outward though not so fair, is more fruitful: not by one alone, but by both of these, is Israel built up. (Note: Augustine, Gregory the Great, Bernard, and others, agree substantially in this interpretation. Augustine pursues the subject at very great length, Contra Faustum Man. l. xxii. cc. 51-58. Gregory the Great writes briefly, In Ezech. l. ii. h. 2, § 10. Bernard gives a similar exposition, Lib. de Modo bene vivendi, ad Sororem, c. 53. Compare also the passage from the Catena Aurea on the genealogy of Christ in St. Matthew.)

Surely there is a "needs be" for this. Laban could not have crossed Jacob's purpose, had not God permitted it. Unwearied love is watching Jacob's steps. Not chance but love gives him weak-eyed but fruitful Leah, as well as fair Rachel; love to Laban, to win yet more of his seed, to win the outward as well as the inward affections of the natural man; love to Jacob, for he is unfit for the best things: an outward principle is the only one by which at present he can bear fruit. We may wish for the best things, like Jacob here; but for our profit we are at first united to outward principles. It was but now that we made ourselves rough like the first-born: justly therefore are we put off with Laban's first-born. When we are more spiritual, the spiritual shall be within our reach. (Note: Augustine is so diffuse here that one can scarcely make a satisfactory extract. See Contr. Faust. Man. l. xxii. c. 53.) Thus do the principles which we receive, -- and mere head-knowledge is not reception, for as Jacob loved and was acquainted with Rachel long before he got her, so is there an acquaintance with truth, which precedes that union with it which results in fruitfulness, -- thus do the principles we hold shew what we are. Happy is it, when being spiritual we can bear spiritual things. But far safer is it for us, and a pledge of God's true loving-kindness, that while we are yet carnal we should only reach carnal things.

Jacob next serves for Laban's flocks, until, after six years more labour, a great part of the cattle have changed masters, and are henceforth Jacob's flock. It appears that Jacob, having got Rachel, wished to leave. Then Laban answers, "I pray thee, tarry; for I have learnt by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me anything: if thou wilt do this for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock. I will pass through thy flock, removing thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and of such shall my hire be. And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word" (Genesis 30:31-34). The bargain is that Jacob is to have the "speckled and spotted," and of these ere long by his art he gains the larger and stronger flock. Out of flocks of one colour, he gets others speckled and ring-straked; and the flocks change masters only by changing colours. "Jacob took rods of poplar and almond and chestnut tree, and peeled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. And he set the rods which he peeled before the flocks in the gutters, in the watering troughs when they came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle, ring-straked, speckled, and spotted" (Genesis 30:37-39).

Even so are the flocks yet won. Those animal emotions, which hitherto have been altogether under the power of our outward man, by the spirit's efforts receive another hue, and shew in their very appearance the spirit's handywork. Animal emotions of course are animal to the end, but on them a great outward change has passed, so that even the old man must confess they do not look as they used to look. Jacob has changed their hue. This is done by setting rods of varied colours before their eyes. These "rods" are portions of the Word; (Note: See what is said of the trees of knowledge and life, on Genesis 2:1-25) and like that, which, when stretched out over the sea, opened a path for Israel (Exodus 14:16), or that, which, though dry, when laid up before the Lord, budded and blossomed and brought forth almonds (Numbers 17:8), these feeble rods effect great things: by them, as by "the rod out of the stem of Jesse" (Isaiah 11:1), the weak are made strong. These, partly peeled, partly unpeeled, -- peeled, that is with the inward sense opened, so that what is covered and hidden within may be brought to light, -- unpeeled, that is in the letter alone, with the outward covering still untouched, as at first we always see the Word, -- are set before the

flocks, where the living streams are opened, that the offspring or fruit may take another hue. (Note: Gregory the Great explains these rods, Moral. in Job, l. xxi. c. 1. Ambrose gives a similar interpretation, De Jacob. l. ii. c. 4, § 19. Justin Martyr too alludes to these rods, as figuring the doctrine of the cross, Dial. c. Tryph. c. 86.) The animal in us is only thus won; nor can the spirit claim anything of the old man's, save that on which it has exerted a transforming influence. As the results of this service, Jacob obtains, not Laban's daughters and flocks only, but fruit by each of these. First he gets fruit by the daughters. These children by Leah and Rachel and the bond-maids are the different forms of life which are produced by the spirit of service in us out of different principles; Leah and Rachel representing the higher principles, outward or inward; the bondmaids, other lower principles, subservient to the former, but which are also embraced and produce their own fruit. First come four sons by Leah, whose names point out the peculiar form of life which each shadows forth; Reuben, intelligence; (Note: Reuben, i.e. "filius visionis." Jerome, Nom. Heb. "Seeing" is the common figure for intelligence. Cf. Numbers 21:8-9; John 3:14-15; Luke 24:31; John 6:36; John 6:40; John 6:46-47.) then Simeon, obedience; (Note: Simeon, i.e. "auditio." Jerome, Nom. Heb. "Hearing," or "hearkening," is synonymous with obedience. See 1 Samuel 15:22; John 10:2-3; John 10:16; John 10:27; John 18:37; Isaiah 55:2; Jeremiah 7:23-24; Jeremiah 7:26.) then Levi, service; (Note: Levi, i.e. "conjunctio." Jerome, Nom. Heb. The force of this name, "joining," as representing service, may be seen in many Scriptures: -- Isaiah 56:3; Isaiah 56:6; Numbers 18:2; Matthew 6:24; Jeremiah 50:5; Zechariah 2:11. See also Genesis 2:24 and Matthew 19:5, where the word "joining" shews the very intimate and sanctified service connected with the marriage tie.) then Judah, rule. (Note: Judah, i.e. "confessio." See Psalms 100:1-5. This and the succeeding names need no illustration. I may add here, that in the naming of Leah's first four sons, she connects the fruitfulness with "the Lord," saying, "I will praise the Lord," &c.; while in the naming of the last two she speaks of "God," saying, "God hath given me my hire," &c. Compare Genesis 29:32-33; Genesis 29:35, with Genesis 30:18; Genesis 30:20. See also Genesis 30:24, where Rachel says, "The Lord shall add," &c. This is not without a reason. We have noticed a similar change in Genesis 1:1-31 and Genesis 2:1-25) Then come the sons of Rachel's maid; first Dan, that is "judgment" or justice; then Naphtali, that is victorious "strugglings." After this the fruit of Leah's maid; first Gad, a "troop" or power; then Asher, or "happiness." Then Leah herself again has sons; Issachar, or a "reward," representing the actual joy of labour, as the Psalmist says, "In keeping thy commandments there is great reward;" then Zebulon, "dwelling together," or communion; then Dinah, whose name signifies the same as Dan, but in whom, as a daughter, justice is seen as a principle rather than an active life. After this Rachel brings forth a son, the lovely fruit of a life of patient suffering; "And she said, God hath taken away my reproach: and she called his name Joseph," that is "addition" or increase. All these are the fruits of service in us, some better than others, some destined to cause grief; all needing rule and culture, yet owned and formed by the Lord to shew forth his praise. (Note: The reader who cares to pursue this subject, will find it treated at great length, and with much spiritual insight, in a volume entitled, "The Patriarchs, as setting forth the things of the Sermon on the Mount;" being the Christian Advocate's publication for 1849, by Thomas Worsley, Master of Downing College, Cambridge.)

Jacob's service gained more than this. Laban's flocks, as well as his daughters, come at last into Jacob's hands. Not only do the affections and principles of the natural man come under the spirit's government, and produce spiritual fruit, but even the animal emotions after long watchings are gained, and out of them also there is much increase to God's glory. The results of this on Laban

are, that he is increased at first (Genesis 30:27-30), but impoverished in the long run (Genesis 31:1). When the spirit of service comes to deal with the natural man, and works with him and for him, for a season the outward man is enriched; but further service, if it continue long enough, will as surely weaken him. And the old man not seeing God's hand in this, that it is "God who has taken away his cattle" (Genesis 31:9), is angry because he is made poor; but he cannot hurt the inward man, and all his wrath only hastens the further accomplishment of the Lord's promise.

I have thus traced this scene within, because if this inward view be known, the other more outward fulfilment of it will of course be manifest. But some will see it without, better than within. Without, Jacob's service sets forth the labour of those, who, though heirs, seek to win out of the far country, and from the power of the natural man, children and flocks whom they may take back to a better land. They come down to Laban's ground; for only thus, by coming down among natural men, can elect servants reach those whom they are looking for. Here they toil for children and flocks. Like Jacob, they would fain have Rachel only, that is a spiritual church; but in the world, and while serving there, they find that they must have outward principles also and an outward church. As Isaacs, or sons, we may have Rebekah only, though even by her we have a twofold seed; but if we come to be servants, whose "hand must take hold," we shall find that we must take blear-eyed Leah as well as fair Rachel. Those who know only sonship may judge as carnal the Jacobs who have been led on by grace to reach a further stage; but if they advance to apprehend what they are apprehended for, they themselves may, and surely will, attain to Jacob's life. Then will they find that, even when they think to pass by the elder, in the outward world and in service it is impossible. In service we must have the two wives; an outward church, and outward and natural principles, as well as spiritual. We may wish to escape this, but in the result we shall not be able to boast over our father Jacob. I speak that which I know, and testify what I have seen; and I know that though at first it would be more in accordance with the mind of true servants not to have Leah, there is a stage when she too is needful and fitting, and therefore not without divine permission is given to us; and not she alone, but the two handmaids also, that is, even lower and yet more servile principles. (Note: Augustine, whose comment throughout is striking, interprets the handmaids, Contr. Faustum, l. xxii. c. 55.) So we serve, and the Lord builds the house: sons are given, very diverse, though sprung from one common father, and heirs of one inheritance; some are Reubens, good mediums for light, like water, but "unstable as water," excitable and prone to defile their father's bed (Genesis 49:4); some are Simeons, quick to give ear, but apt, in their zeal for obedience, to perform cruel things (Genesis 49:5-6); some are Levis, joined to the Lord in service, entering into His presence with oblations presented for their more outward brethren (Deuteronomy 33:10); some are Judahs, gifted for rule, and to be praised, because their hand shall be upon the neck of all their enemies (Genesis 49:8; Genesis 49:10); some are Dans, ready to judge Israel (Genesis 49:16); some Naphtalis, satisfied with favour, and full of the blessing of the Lord (Deuteronomy 33:23); some are Gads, overcome at first, but strong at last (Genesis 49:19); some Ashers, who dip their feet in oil, and are acceptable to their brethren (Deuteronomy 33:24); some Issachars, crouching down between their burdens (Genesis 49:14); some Zebuluns, occupied with the outward things and commerce of the great salt sea of this world (Genesis 49:13); some the children of Rachel, like Joseph, sorely shot at, but whose bow abides in strength, because the arms of their hands are made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob

(Genesis 49:23-24). The fairest come the last; but all, better or worse, make up one house of Israel. This service further wins flocks. We serve to gain even animal and irrational natures, whose colour is changed indeed, but who remain to the end rough and animal; not true sons, but needing to be fed and led by such; who nevertheless, speckled and spotted though they be, under the Spirit's guidance may be brought safely into a better land. At first we feed a flock which is not ours; but in due time, not without long toil, those, who once obeyed and served the world, obey a better guide. True servants labour night and day: by night the frost, and by day the drought, consumes them. Some of the flock at times are torn by beasts, and they bear the loss (Genesis 31:39-40); but at last a flock is won whose change of colour shews the presence of more than human skill. (Note: Jacob's words, Genesis 31:8-12, shew that the means he used to change the colour of the flocks were shewn him in "a vision.") And the colour of the flocks is changed, now as of old, by that which is set before their eyes, where the living waters are poured forth. Men yet become like what they look at. "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image" (2 Corinthians 3:18): and at last, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). But the world, like Laban's sons, cannot perceive God's hand in this; they say "Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's:" while true servants confess that the work is God's, saying, "God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me" (Genesis 31:1; Genesis 31:9).

---------- The dispensations too reflect this scene. In this view we have here the experience of Christ's Spirit as servant in this world. He comes into the outward world to serve. When He comes water is scarce: then He opens the well, and feeds the flocks, and seeks union with the seed of the natural man. Fain would He have the younger daughter alone; but He must, such are the requirements of the natural man, first take the elder or first-born. So Leah or law comes first: and then Rachel, that is the gospel dispensation. Leah is fruitful, while Rachel has yet no son. But at length the Gospel yields fruit; and then the old or natural man, who had been improved while Jacob had children by Leah, that is, throughout the Jewish age, is much impoverished and loses his wealth, after Rachel is fruitful, that is, in gospel days. In a word, as Sarah and Hagar prefigure these two dispensations in their connection with the spirit of faith, and thus in reference to heavenly things, Jacob's wives set forth the same dispensations, in connection with the spirit of service, and so in reference to earthly things. (Note: This dispensational view is common to many of the Fathers: Ambrose, De Jacob. l. ii. c. 5 § 25. Gregory the Great, Moral. in Job. l. xxx. c. 25, § 72. Irenaeus, Adv. Hoer. l. iv. c. 21, (al. 38,) § 3.) Surely it is a wondrous tale, respecting which many unspeakable words remain, which it is not possible to utter here.

06.6.4. The Departure from Laban

IV. -- THE DEPARTURE FROM LABAN

Genesis 31:1-55

WE are now to see the efforts of Jacob to lead what he has won in Mesopotamia into Canaan, with Laban's attempts to hinder it. As fulfilled within, we have here the travail of the spirit to set our affections on things above, and not on earthly things (Colossians 3:2), and the hindrance to this which the old man offers, the open opposition or secret craft, by which he would keep our affections, which are by nature akin to him, still bound in outward things. As fulfilled without, we see the toil of true servants to lead those whom they have gained out of the world into a better land, and all the hindrance which worldlings throw in their way, the seductions held out, and the reasons which are urged, to keep them in outward things. It is a scene known to all who have toiled long in the world, and at length have set their face to go with what they have won into the better land. As fulfilled within, some parts of this scene, through our ignorance of the inward world, may be beyond our intelligence. Our lack also of fitting words prevents anything like a perfect interpretation to the understanding, although the spirit may see all (1 Corinthians 14:14-15). But the scene is still fulfilled wherever souls have laboured for fruit, and are striving to come from outward to inward things. Laban envies Jacob's wealth, and attempts in one way or another to get it back again. For the old man in us, though strengthened at first and improved for awhile by the labours of our inward and spiritual man, finds at length that the spirit's work, if continued, instead of strengthening, rather weakens it. It is vexed to see the power the spirit has gained over so many of the affections and emotions of the outward man; that Jacob rules where Laban once did. Thus a strife now manifests itself between our outward and inward man (Genesis 31:1-2). The old man's ways perplex the inward man. For our spirit, like Jacob, when it begins to work upon the old man, is not at all aware what the result will be. We sincerely hope by service to improve the old man. But though Laban's daughters are won, though the affections or principles of the natural man are subjected and united to the inward man, the old man remains unchanged, to the end ever ready to play us false and to deceive us (Genesis 31:7). And painful as this is, so it must be. The Lord would not have our spirit remain for ever bound to the outward man or to outward things in their present state; for the outward man and the ground he dwells on are yet unpurged, and though the spirit may win much there, it cannot purge that ground or save the outward man. In due time we learn this. Then a voice is heard, saying to our spirit, "Return to the land, and I will be with thee" (Genesis 31:3). Thus at one stage having served the old man and outward things, at another we are called again to inward and spiritual things. Knowing this, let us leave souls to walk with God, instead of making, as we are so prone to do, our present standard the one rule. For have not we ourselves in faith been led now to give up and leave all outward things, again in service to seek them, and then again to leave them, to set our affections, where our faith has long since been set, on heavenly things. But Rachel, though willing to go to Canaan, takes some idols with her, "her father's images" (Genesis 31:19; Genesis 31:30); not the gods representing the powers of nature, such as "the star of your god Remphan" (Acts 7:43), Baal, or Ashtaroth; but rather household

gods, (Note: Heb. teraphiym [H8665], answering to the Latin Penates.) forms of departed kindred, which, though at first regarded only as patterns and memorials of honoured forefathers, were soon turned into idols, as guides and precedents to be obeyed and followed instead of the true God. Our inward affections yet cling to such, even when drawn by grace to seek better things; not indeed to the grosser outward idols, but to household idols of pride of birth, past greatness, gentility, custom, fashion, or such like. In other words, our principles, even the best, are not at once wholly purged from all the evils which belong to the outward man. Some of these are still taken with us, although the spirit knows that, not only they cannot help, but are even a shame to us. The old man meanwhile does all he can to hinder the affections being set on heavenly things; just as Laban attempted to stop Jacob, saying, "Wherefore didst thou flee? Thou hast now done foolishly. Wherefore didst thou not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth and harp and tabrets?" (Genesis 31:23-28). So the old man argues. Why leave him? At all events, why not accept his assistance on the way to heavenly things? Can he not make music and laughter for us, and cheer us on by his pipes and harps and tabrets? No. By these he may yet keep us where he is; they will not help our spirit to heavenly things. Yet the old man fairly asks, -- "And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my teraphim?" (Genesis 31:30). Why do the affections, while even reaching towards heaven, yet cling so fast to idol vanities? We shall see how these idols, though hid from Laban, cannot be hid from God, and must be put away before Jacob can come to worship and dwell at Bethel (Genesis 35:1-4). As for Laban, he still is unchanged, and dies, as he has lived, in Mesopotamia. Henceforth he may not hinder Jacob, but neither may Jacob seek to hurt him in any way (Genesis 31:44-55). Each returns to his place. The old man, poorer than at first, settles down again in outward things; while the inward man, enriched by his labour, journeys on afresh, with what he has gained, to heavenly things.

If we turn now to look without, we shall see the more manifest workings of these same opposing minds; Laban figuring those in whom the outward man, Jacob, those in whom the spirit of service, is the ruling life. The Jacobs have won flocks and herds; and this stirs up the wrath and ill-will of worldly men. But their anger serves God’s end. By it the elect are forced to seek a better land. So true servants lead the way, and those, who are already "counted strangers" in the world, follow them (Genesis 31:15); not wholly blameless, for, unknown to its guides, the Church takes some of the idols of the world with it, as if these could succour it (Genesis 31:32). (Note: Theodoret, who sees in Jacob’s departure the flight of the church out of the world, and whose comment in substance is that given above, thinks that Rachel stole the idols to free her father from his superstitions. In Gen. Qu. 90. Ambrose too hints the same, De Jacob. l. ii. c. 5 § 25. But God’s command respecting these idols, Genesis 35:2, implies that they were yet objects of idolatrous reverence to some in Jacob’s house. Chrysostom regards this theft of the idols as an instance of the force of bad habit, even in true souls. Hom. lvii. in Gen.) Laban meanwhile is busy too. He yet possesses flocks, the colour of which remains unchanged spite of Jacob’s art. And while Jacob is fleeing, Laban is shearing. The one thing here recorded of him is that "he was shearing sheep" (Genesis 31:19). So do outward men yet count "sheep-shearing" pleasant work. The Jacobs and Davids feed the flock: the Labans and Nabals and Absaloms prefer shearing them (1 Samuel 25:2; 1 Samuel 25:4; 2 Samuel 13:23-24). Worldlings, like the king of Moab, may be "sheep-masters" (2 Kings 3:4), but they have not a pastor’s heart: the fleece, and not the flock, is what they care for;

and their zeal for the fleece opens a door for true servants like Jacob to flee away heavenward. Then comes the world’s pursuit. Vexed as they are at the power gained by the elect, they are more vexed to see them go, and the way they go thence. Why should they think of seeking any other land? but after all, if people must go, why not accept all the assistance which might be rendered them? Why not have some music and mirth? Why go in a way so unlike the fashions of that land? Thus natural men would stop the elect, or at least would have them go toward heavenly things with their aid and forms and pageantries; and those who go not thus are "foolish" (Genesis 31:27-28); but Jacob can seek his true home without Laban’s aid. All that worldlings can do to help our way is as useful or as useless as Laban’s pipes and harps. So true servants depart. God by them has visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name (Acts 15:14). This done, the elect journey on; while the world, unchanged by what has been done for it, goes back to its old ground and again settles there. (Note: Gregory the Great gives the outward view, Moral. in Job. l. xxx. c. 25, § 72.) A voice yet cries, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider; forget thine own people and thy father’s house. Then instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth" (Psalms 45:10; Psalms 45:16).

06.6.5. The Journey to Canaan

V. -- THE JOURNEY TO CANAAN, AND CHANGE OF NAME Genesis 32:1-32 and Genesis 33:1-6

JACOB'S departure from Padan-Aram is an important step, and yet but a step, towards entering the promised land. After Laban is left, it still remains in the face of Esau to go up over Jordan. Leaving outward things is not possessing heavenly things. Not a few have left the world, who are not come to the good land; and yet forsaking the outward world is one stage, and most necessary, for all who at last attain to heavenly things.

Here Jacob, escaped from Laban, is seen, hastening with his children and flocks to enter the promised land. At this point Esau again appears, as determined to stop his entrance into Canaan, as Laban had been to oppose his departure out of Mesopotamia. As fulfilled within, the scene represents the opposition which is offered by the carnal mind to the efforts of the spirit to set our affection on things above: as fulfilled without, it shews the resistance of carnal professors to the efforts of true servants to bring those whom they have won out of the world into the enjoyment of heavenly things. It is a scene of deepest interest; for here, in, and partly by, this trial, in sore wrestlings of spirit Jacob becomes Israel; and the man, whose "hand laid hold," at last in weakness is made a "prince with God." The opposition here proceeds from Esau. Laban had been the hindrance to Jacob's leaving Mesopotamia; for it is our outward man which stands in the way of our spirit's departure from outward things; but it is the carnal mind within which threatens to stop our attempts to enter heavenly things. (Note: Respecting Laban and Esau, that they are the outward man and carnal mind, respectively, see on Genesis 28:1-22.) And thus after we have turned from the outward man, and have left his old ground between tradition and reasoning, another opponent, more closely related to our spirit, remains, in that carnal mind, which grows within us even out of the true elect. And this Esau now threatens our way, if he can, to oppose our possessing the promised land. To prepare the spirit for such opposition, the Lord here vouchsafes a vision of angel guards. "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him; and Jacob said, This is God's host" (Genesis 32:1-2). Some such perception of heavenly help is yet vouchsafed to make us persevere. But the vision soon fades away, and the unseen hosts, because out of sight, are in measure out of mind; while the strength which is against us is felt distinctly, and the fact, that, spite of the spirit's fruitfulness, the carnal mind is yet strong. We cannot journey this path without most painfully feeling that the flesh as Esau is yet "my lord Esau." In outward things this may be forgotten. The fact meets us in its painful reality as soon as we are set on entering heavenly things; and our spirit, which should rejoice, if not in the hosts of the Lord, yet in the Lord of hosts, is cast down by the evil which is so sorely felt, and which outweighs at times the fact of heavenly help. Hence the elect is perplexed and full of fears. He knows not how, with such an unwearying enemy so near him, he shall ever find rest. "Jacob was greatly distressed." Again and again he repeats the bitter words, "My lord Esau" (Genesis 32:4-5; Genesis 32:18-19, &c.).

This, coming here, is very striking. Why should he, who at an earlier stage neither feared nor courted Esau, now feel such dread of him? Because in the first joy of learning God's purpose, believing the promise that "the elder shall serve the younger," our spirit never fears the flesh, not knowing its own weakness or the might of the carnal mind. If we can get the blessing, we think that we can use it. It never occurs to us that a certain preparation of spirit is needed for the right enjoyment of what God has promised us. Esau therefore, though he may affect our course, is not thought of. We have yet to learn the difference between "apprehending" and "being apprehended" (Php 3:12). So we go and toil to subdue the outward man, and as we toil we learn our weakness and foolishness. We are forced to confess that Esau is lord. Our fruitfulness has not given us power over the carnal mind. The elder does not yet serve the younger. To effect this, planning Jacob must become halting Israel.

Yet it is here, in painful, abject weakness, -- when we most feel the power of the flesh, and that our spirit cannot govern it, -- here, when Esau most clearly is the stronger, -- here in self-despair is Jacob made a "prince of God:" not while toiling in outward things, -- not until the humiliating fact is plain past all question, that the carnal mind is far too strong for us, -- not till this is confessed, openly confessed once and again, and this while spite of all opposition we yet press on to heavenly things, -- is our spirit out of weakness made strong, and we learn that to have God's power we must ourselves be powerless. So much for the time of this change. For the means, the greatest of all is prayer, persevering, wrestling prayer. Jacob does indeed what he can by prudence to escape and calm down Esau's enmity, giving up to Esau some of the flocks (Genesis 32:13-20), that is, allowing some of the animal emotions which have been won from the outward man to fall under the power of the carnal mind, -- a step, the faith of which I will not judge, -- but his hope is not in this, but simply in God alone. So he prays, "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed to thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude" (Genesis 32:9-12). Thus he prays, and turns again to prayer, wrestling alone in spirit until the shadows flee away (Genesis 32:24); taking God's word against all that seems like opposition, saying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." For God had said, "I will surely bless thee;" and Jacob, with his will for God's will, holds God to this His own will. This is the trial yet, -- Can we believe, that when He says, "I will surely do thee good," He really wills it? Can we back this His "I will" by our "I will," in the confidence that when we will with Him we must be conquerors? Then, though we may have much to ask, even of the name of Him whom we would not let go except He blessed us (Genesis 32:29); and we wake up, as the darkness breaks, to think how little we have known of Him whom we have wrestled with, and who has given Himself into our hands "in the likeness of man," (Note: "There wrestled a man with him," Genesis 32:24. Cf. Php 2:7.) and that He may have a new name involving far more than anything which has as yet been revealed to us (Revelation 3:12); (Note: Augustine dwells much on this, taking the words, "Let me go," as meaning, "Let me go in the form you have known me, that you may know me in a higher and more spiritual way;" Serm. v. Class. 1, § 6.) though we may feel all this, the change is wrought: Jacob is now Israel, for "as a prince we have power with God and man, and have prevailed." (Note: Hieron.

in Psalm. cxiii. "Anima videns Deum," is one of the translations which Jerome gives of the name Israel; but he confesses elsewhere, (Quoest. Heb. in Gen.) that our common rendering, "a prince with God," is more correct, as derived from sarah [H8280] and el [H410].) But a price has to be paid for this. Jacob, to have God's strength, must lose his own strength. The man "whose hand lays hold" is not a "prince of God," until the hollow of his thigh is out of joint (Genesis 32:25). When he is weak, then is he strong. The power of Christ only rests on him in his infirmities (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Who has learnt this lesson of the cross? Are there not souls, who have toiled and accomplished much as respects their outward man, who have served for Laban's flocks, yet are conscious that Esau, the carnal mind, not only lives, -- for he will yet live, -- but is keeping their spirit from the full enjoyment of heavenly things? Will their fruits give them the power they lack? Never. Would we be Israels? These are the conditions, -- to go up over Jordan, and wrestle alone, and be smitten in the fleshly part, and lamed, and halting; so shall we have power with God and man; and because so few will submit to this, there are many Jacobs, but few Israels. (Note: Greg. M. in Ezech. l. ii. h. 2, § 12.)

Such is this stage as known within. Without, it is the experience of those who are toiling on, to take their flocks and children into the promised land. The world now is left behind. Its pursuit has not stopped the elect, who is now close to heavenly things. Then fleshly professors arise, false brethren, like Esau, born in the house of the Son, and yet like him profane men, whose very wrath drives the elect in self-despair to God, till from Jacobs they are transformed into Israels. The details in this view I need not repeat: -- how the elect divide the flocks, by such division hoping to go more safely; -- how, spite of this, some of the rough and animal natures we have won, though freed from the world, are given into the hand of carnal brethren, in the hope that thus the true heirs may be saved; -- how such planning cannot give us rest; -- how prayer is the true and unfailing means of strength; -- how wrestling and darkness must be our experience; -- how in feebleness and pain we meet our carnal brethren; -- how those, who have once bitterly opposed, receive us graciously; -- how the proffered aid of such is declined, lest the babes and flocks be overdriven; for "if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock would die" (Genesis 33:13); -- all this and much more here is known to those, who have attempted to guide flocks out of the world into heavenly places. The way remains the same as of old; and the just shall walk in it safely, though transgressors fall therein.

Chapter 108

06.6.6. The Sojourn in Succoth, and Dinah's Fall

VI. -- THE SOJOURN IN SUCCOTH, AND DINAH’S FALL Genesis 33:17-20 and Genesis 34:1-31 AT this stage, after so many labours and prayers, escaped from Laban and Esau, and standing on the ground of promise as "a prince of God," Jacob might have expected that he and his would now be permitted to rest in quietness. But at this point new foes appear, by whom the worker is severely wounded, when he least expects, and where he most acutely feels it. For the virgin daughter of Jacob now falls, seduced by the Hivite who yet is in the land.

We see here the special snare which assails the elect, when, having escaped from the dominion of the world and the flesh, he now has entered heavenly things. Wicked spirits assail some of our best affections, and succeed in corrupting what the world and the flesh had not corrupted. For no ground is exempt from snares; nay, more, the higher and better the ground, the more grievous may be the failure there. Satan rages most against the best. He will go into swine, if cast out of men (Matthew 8:31); but he would rather stay in men, and still more in an angel, if it were possible. He will go into earth, if cast out from heaven; but he struggles hard to dwell in heavenly things (Revelation 12:7-12). And yet we act as though attainment made us secure; as though, because we have forsaken the outward man, and are changed from Jacob into Israel, and have been delivered from the power and dominion of the flesh, no further peril still awaited us; whereas, here, out of the reach of the flesh and outward man, our purest affections may be defiled by other more devilish, because more inward, forms of evil. This is the lesson learnt by Jacob here, as we too often learn it, by actual failure and shameful humiliation.

First to mark what led to this fall. Jacob yields to the temptation, peculiar to this stage, of resting in his attainments instead of still pressing on. He seems to think, that, being now free from Laban and Esau, and come to the borders of Canaan, he has advanced far enough. He settles where he is. He "builds a house," and "buys a field" (Genesis 33:17; Genesis 33:19), and thus prepares the way for Dinah’s ruin. And the soul which by grace has come thus far, and has escaped from the dominion of the carnal mind and outward man, is tempted to think, that, because "a prince of God," it is now safe; that therefore it may sit down, and rest secure in its attainments. But not in attainments, but in attaining, are we safe. Thus even the strivings of our flesh, grievous as they are, may serve our spirit, by keeping us from resting before the time, while our gifts and blessings may be as snares to us. We are apt to think that our flesh is only a dead weight, while we regard all freedom of spirit as good and to be coveted. Longer experience teaches us to be thankful for all, for the strivings of the flesh, as well as for the grace of the inward man; for cold and heat, for strifes and peace, for falls and risings, yea for all things; to rejoice in infirmities, and distresses, and fightings and fears within, as well as in visions of the Lord and revelations (2 Corinthians 12:1; 2 Corinthians 12:10); to be watchful in times of blessing and rest; above all, to be humble at every fresh gift, knowing that it is in gifts and attainments we fail most signally. We know this, and yet no sooner have we attained some blessing, than we attempt to rest in it, and so by our own act prepare the way for fresh disquietudes. For this settling led to Dinah’s fall. If Jacob may buy a field and settle there, his daughter will go and see the daughters of the land. The result is, she is

defiled; for "Shechem, the son of Hamor, the Hivite, saw her; and he took and lay with her, and defiled her" (Genesis 34:1-2).

Dinah, the daughter of Leah, represents those affections of the elect, which spring from outward principles. (Note: See on Genesis 30:1-43.) The Hivite is an evil spirit of Canaan's seed; if I do not err, the spirit of religious formalism. For Canaan was the spirit of mere external worship; (Note: See on Genesis 10:1-32) and the Hivite is the same spirit, only at a further stage (Genesis 10:15-17). This spirit, which lives "till the redemption of the purchased possession" (Ephesians 1:14), is sure to appear whenever we come to heavenly things. Then, if we rest in attainments, formalism creeps in, and by it some of our purest affections are defiled. (Note: Gregory the Great alludes to this inward fulfilment, Reg. Past. pt. iii. c. 29, admon. 30.) This leads to bitter inward conflict, which, though from zeal for God, is not approved of Him. For polluted affections cannot be cleansed by anger. Dinah is fallen, though Jacob's sons may rage. In the next place, there may be a kind of anger against sin which in God's sight is worse than the sin and fall which occasions it; and of which, at a further stage, like Jacob, we learn to say, "Cursed be their anger, for it was cruel" (Genesis 49:7). (Note: In the history of Saul, Hivites again appear in a scene similar to this, in which they are judged by one who is zealous for the house of Israel, while his judgment of them is pronounced cursed. Saul, "in his zeal to the children of Israel, slew the Gibeonites," who were Hivites (Joshua 9:3; Joshua 9:7), and for this mistaken zeal a curse comes on his house. See the history, 2 Samuel 21:1-14.) God knows how much of inward conflict is the result of pride; mere vexation at seeing how easily we may be defiled. Zeal and judgment are easier than confession. But violence with ourselves on account of failure will not amend it. We need as much patience towards the failure within us, as towards the evil which is without us in the different forms of worldliness.

Such are the fruits of resting in attainments, and of supposing that because the world and flesh are left, and we are Israels, we may be secure. Often have I beheld this scene, not only in the inward experience of souls, who have gone far and laboured long and well, but in the failure of more than one true congregation, which, delivered from the world and carnal men, has been seduced by worse spirits. Heavenly places are no defence from such a fall. It is when we already stand on the ground of promise that Canaan's seed harass us.

---------- But the outward fulfilment here may to some be more striking; and in this view most important is the lesson, not only to halting Jacobs, but to zealous Levis. Jacob has now reached the promised land. True servants have brought those whom they have won into heavenly places. The outward world has long since been left. Carnal brethren too, who like Esau have sought to stop us, by grace are overcome. At this stage, so sweet is the rest, that the elect settles where he is instead of pressing onwards. Then the virgin of Israel falls. Some body, which is the outward expression of a truth, and the fruit of loving service, is found to be corrupted and seduced by wicked deceivers. Formalism creeps into the church, (Note: It is to be remembered that Dinah is Leah's daughter, not Rachel's, and so figures a congregation which is the offspring of outward truth. See on Genesis 29:1-35) the natural result of settling down and resting in attainments. Would any congregation be seduced, if the fathers and young men toiled and journeyed on? But the church halts and is seduced; then, as a first step, the seducers are admitted to certain holy ordinances; for a fallen church always brings in many to such forms, although they are confessedly submitted to for wrong and selfish ends; and then some of the true heirs of promise, grieved to the

heart at such awful profanation of the church and things of God, finding judgment easier than confession, arise with cruel zeal to judge and cut off the seducers. Instead of asking of the Lord how the fallen can be helped, they take the iron sword of truth, and rage with it bitterly. (Note: Respecting iron, see on Genesis 4:22.) The fiercest wrath which I have ever seen has been that of brethren judging the evil. But such zeal does not cleanse a fallen church, and much of the wrath is against facts, as if Dinah had not fallen, to save their own credit. Alas! such zeal, common as it is, profits not at all; and at length we learn that such judgment is "cursed," and that confession would befit us far better. Yet how many count it holy zeal to contend against the defilers of a fallen church, even when her whoredom has been manifest. (Note: I have met with very little on the spiritual sense of this chapter among the Fathers; probably for the same reason that they say so little of Noah's fall, or of Nimrod, or Babylon; namely, that the scene described was not familiar to them. They had not seen, as we have, the fall of the Church and the useless wrath of some of Jacob's sons. See the Glossa Ordinaria here. Augustine is quoted as giving the same interpretation; but I have not been able to find the passage.) Is the sword then never to be used -- is there to be no cutting off, no judgment or excommunication of offenders? Judgment surely there must be at times, and divine zeal against evil, as we see in Abraham (Genesis 14:14); but not to maintain a fiction, as though a harlot could again be made a chaste virgin; far less to supersede that confession which becomes us for that fall of the church which is our common shame.

Nevertheless out of this wretched scene the Lord can work His own purpose. Even by such distresses as this are the elect rescued from resting in attainments and hastened on to Bethel. And the Simeons and Levis, though their wrath is cursed, are blessed; their ways are a reproach to the truth, and "make them to stink among the inhabitants of the land" (Genesis 34:30); their haste to judge also carries its own judgment with it: "I will," says the Spirit of God, "divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel" (Genesis 49:7); -- a lot which always overtakes such spirits; -- but the grace, which redeemed them, keeps them, and through many trials saves them at last.

---------- The same act comes out in the dispensations. Israel ceased to be a pilgrim, and so the first wife's daughter fell. The virgin of Israel plainly was defiled. Nevertheless the Pharisees and Scribes, the Simeons and Levis of their day, instead of confessing, raged against the shame, cutting off and judging those who had corrupted Israel. Thus Pharisaism was "the concision," not "the circumcision" (Php 3:2-3). But the fallen daughter of Israel could not by such means be restored. The Spirit of the Lord went not with such zealots, but said, -- all Christ's life was saying it, -- "Cursed is their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel." For such judgment answered no end, save to make poor Israel to stink among the nations. "They pleased not God, and were contrary to all men" (1 Thessalonians 2:15). What a lesson for all succeeding generations! When shall we learn that Pharisaic judging helps no one? When shall we, not possess only, but be possessed by, the Spirit of the Lord?

06.6.7. The Return to Bethel

VII. -- THE RETURN TO BETHEL

Genesis 35:1-22

WE have seen how attainments, through resting in them, may become a snare to the elect, and lead to grievous defilement. Now again we see how falls may help us on. Jacob's rest brought shame: the shame advanced and freed him. Such is our path, and such the grace of God, that our falls and mistakes may be a means to nurture our true growth; as a tree extracts fresh strength from the soil which is enriched by its own decaying leaves and fallen blossoms. In this way are we led on; by blessings learning our weakness; by weakness, the riches of our God.

Thus Dinah's fall advanced Jacob. He could not, amidst such shame and conflict, rest longer where he was. And by this self-same thing, what zeal is wrought in us, what vehement desire and clearing of ourselves, yea, what fear and carefulness (2 Corinthians 7:11)! But Jacob is helped by other means. God's word comes directly commanding him to go up to Bethel (Genesis 35:1). Such a word of God comes, often as we are faint and fail, and, by recalling God's purpose, effects a change, first in ourselves, then in our position. For "Jacob said to his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments; and let us arise and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an altar unto God who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave to Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hands, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem" (Genesis 35:2-4). So the word both leads us on and sanctifies. The uncleansed cannot advance, for certain stages are only reached as we are sanctified. But by the word true servants judge themselves. Before God speaks, idols may be suffered: when His voice is heard, they are confessed and put away. The progress now is very marked. There is advance in reference to each of the blessings enjoyed by the elect servant. Of these the first is "the everlasting hills" of promise, and in these "the blessings of heaven above and of the deep which lieth under:" the second is "the wife of youth," "blessings of the breasts and womb," the fountain from whence springs forth the stream of Israel: the third is the Lord Himself, "the God of thy fathers, even the Almighty who shall help and bless thee" (Genesis 49:25-26). Here there is advance respecting each of these, involving trial and grief, yet real blessing also.

First, Jacob's advance opens to his view lengths and breadths of the land as yet unknown (Genesis 35:6; Genesis 35:16; Genesis 35:21). There is true progress in the knowledge and possession of what the Lord has promised him; not without apparent danger, but "the terror of the Lord was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob" (Genesis 35:5). Thus, when, under a sense of failure and defilement, we again press on, fields on fields of promise open to us, which we have heard of, but till now have never realised. The Canaanite is indeed upon this ground, that is false spirituality, ready to assail and wound us in the way. (Note: For the Canaanite, see above, on Genesis 34:1-31) But God preserves His own. "So Jacob came to Bethel, he and all the people with him, and built an altar, and called the place

El-bethel." So far from losing by his advance, it gives him deeper acquaintance with and insight into the treasures of the "everlasting hills."

Here, on the ground where he had seen earth joined to heaven, with angels of God ascending and descending upon man, the elect receives fresh revelations. "The Lord appeared," saying "I am God Almighty," and promising afresh possession of the land, not to Jacob only, but to his seed after him (Genesis 35:9-12). In struggles of spirit, Jacob had met the Lord, and had asked to know the name of Him who wrestled with him (Genesis 32:29). But until now, that name, revealed to faith (Genesis 17:1), in the toil of service had not been apprehended. "God Almighty" had not "appeared" to Jacob. Now He appears, revealing Himself by the name which alone could quiet the busy worker. And as Abraham, hearing this name, was content at once to give up the strength of the flesh, and to judge himself by circumcision; so Jacob by the same blessed name is freed: henceforth his hand ceases to lay hold, to allow the Almighty to effect and order all for him.

Then at this stage three women are removed, whose life directly or indirectly had affected Jacob more than any others. Deborah, Rachel, and Bilhah, the first the nurse, the second the wife, the third the handmaid, are all now taken from him. The first two die; the last is defiled; for Reuben, Leah’s first-born, "went and lay with Bilhah, his father’s concubine" (Genesis 35:8; Genesis 35:16-19; Genesis 35:22).

What has been said of Sarah’s death will explain the inward fact expressed by the death of these women. (Note: See on Genesis 23:1-20) Men are always certain minds: the women, the affections or principles of truth with which they are united. These, whether men or women, all die out; that is, they pass away as outward forms, thereby to be more spiritualised. This is what now takes place with Jacob’s nurse and wife. Those truths or affections, which are set forth by these women, now as outward forms die and pass away; not to perish, for truth never perishes, but through the dissolution of the outward form to exist in a higher and purer way; while Bilhah, Rachel’s maid, who represents that lower and servile principle, by which nevertheless some good fruit has been brought forth, is now defiled by Jacob’s first-born, that is, by the unlawful workings of other fruits of true service. (Note: See on Genesis 29:1-35 respecting Bilhah and Reuben. These things are all but ineffable, and cannot fully be expressed.) Deborah, the nurse, dies first. A nurse is one whose office it is to care for babes and sucklings. Deborah therefore is that which serves such as have need of milk. As having belonged too to Laban’s house, and been engaged with Rebekah before she left Padan-Aram, Deborah would partake of the character of that land, and so be rather outward and natural, such truth in fact as babes and sucklings need. Now, having fulfilled her work, she passes away. Rachel too, as an outward form, now departs in bearing fruit; even as that spiritual principle, which she represents, is changed from an earthly form to a spirit through its very fruitfulness; giving birth to another form of life, which is indeed "a child of strength," though at first it seems "a child of sorrow." (Note: Benoni, the name which Rachel gave to her son, means, "son of my sorrow;" but his father called him Benjamin, that is, "son of the right hand." As to the "right hand," compare Psalms 80:17 and Psalms 110:1.)

Few, however, will apprehend this. Adam’s way, in trusting the creature more than God, in listening to the tempter, in choosing knowledge more than life, in hiding from God, or in laying the blame on some other, will be known by all who have come to themselves; for old Adam is in all his progeny. The picture therefore will be plain. But the form of life set forth in Jacob is not in all, much

less that stage of it which is here presented to us. Still this stage, though attained by few, is to be reached. Let us not judge it impossible, simply because as yet it is beyond us. Rather let us press on that we may know it; and such as cannot follow here now may follow hereafter.

Such is this scene within. Without, the details will to not a few be more manifest. In this view we see how the very fall of the Church awakens some to further progress. True servants cannot rest where pollution is made manifest. Then comes some word of God, recalling His purpose, which leads to the putting away of idols and uncleannesses. Thus are the elect stirred up afresh, and pass on to know yet more of God and of their own privileges. Then comes fresh grief, for surely it is a grief to find bodies we have loved, and which in different ways have helped us, as outward bodies ready to be dissolved, or, what is worse, to be defiled by some in Israel. Yet this too must be known by true servants, when they come to some of the higher stages in heavenly things. The outward Church is found to be corrupted by the first-born sons, who should have been its help and safeguard; who, puffed up with pride, usurp another's place, to their own great loss and to the shame of all in Israel; (Note: See Gloss. Ordin. in loco.) while the true Church is seen as an outward form to die, only to live a higher life with God and in God. Some true servants have seen and known all this. It is well, that, ere they see it, they are from Jacobs made Israels, and know the Lord as "God Almighty."

---------- The dispensations too reflect this scene. After the defilement of the first wife's daughter, that is, the Jewish dispensation, the Spirit of Christ as Worker led on the elect to greater knowledge and enjoyment of heavenly places. There Rachel, the beloved wife, dies; that is, the Church, as an outward form, in due time is seen to pass away; while the Worker yet survives through many griefs to see Joseph's glory and dominion over all the land of Egypt. A little while, and our eyes shall see that glory, and the things which now distract us shall for ever pass away. As we can bear it, bring us into that day, O Lord; and while darkness is yet safer for us, be Thou, yea, and for ever, our everlasting dwelling-place.

06.6.8. The Seeds of Jacob and Esau

VIII. -- THE SEEDS OF JACOB AND ESAU Genesis 35:23-29 and Genesis 36:1-43 AS a fit conclusion to Jacob's course, we have his seed summed up (Genesis 35:23-29), in contrast to Esau's generations (Genesis 36:1-43). Here are the results of these two lives; Jacob's sons setting forth the fruits of that spirit of service, which springs from true sonship; Esau's line, the fruits of the flesh or carnal mind, as it appears at this stage of man's development. (Note: See on Genesis 25:24-34) Each form of life can only bear its proper fruit. That of the flesh still fleshly, and that of the spirit spiritual.

Jacob's fruit in all is twelve sons, six by Leah, two by Rachel, and two by each of the handmaids; all fruits of the same elect spirit, but differing according to the principle or affection which produces them; the sons of Leah, the first-born, representing those fruits which are produced by the elect from forms of outward truth, such as understanding, obedience, service, rule, joy, and communion, for so the names are interpreted: Rachel's children, those later fruits of patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, which grow from the contemplative life; the handmaids' sons, the fruits of those more servile principles, which, as they are owned and blessed of God, bear justice, conflict, power, or happiness. (Note: For the names of these sons, and their interpretation, see on Genesis 29:1-35 and Genesis 30:1-43) The spirit of service bears all these, and in them, spite of many errors and imperfections, the Lord is glorified.

Esau's line is then displayed, first his sons by Canaanitish wives, and then his fruit by Ishmael's daughter. The names of his immediate sons all express some good quality; for the fruit of the flesh, in its Esau form is good in its way, though not good as measured by the divine standard. For "all flesh is grass" (1 Peter 1:24); and grass at the best is soon dried up and withered. But some of their names imply polish at least, if not a recognition of God and respect for His protection. Eliphaz, and Reuel, and Korah, and Jaalam, express in their names good things which even the elect might wish for. (Note: Jerome interprets all these names, (Nom. Heb.) but it is difficult to speak with certainty of all. I do not therefore give them; but the following seem to be beyond dispute: -- Eliphaz, "God is my endeavour;" Reuel, "the friend of God;" Korah, "smooth" or "polished;" Jaalam, "hidden" or "protected.") In the grandsons there is a falling off: Omar, Gatam, and Kenaz, describe a worse condition; (Note: Omar, "a speaker;" Gatam, "their clamour;" Kenaz, "a hunter" or "drinker.") while the names of the subsequent kings of this race, as Bela, Jobab, and Husham, are all variations of misery. (Note: Bela, "a devourer;" Jobab, "a howling;" Husham, "raging.") Such are the fruits of the religious flesh, at first in measure good, but soon degenerating, till their corruption proves that religious flesh is but flesh, and fair Edom only a variation of old Adam.

Nevertheless this line is great in the world. Even in the first generation, the children of one wife, Aholibamah, all become "dukes" (Genesis 36:18); the grandsons all have this title (Genesis 36:15-17), which, only varied with that of "king," is kept through all this genealogy. So is it yet within. The fruits of the true spirit are little valued in the world. The carnal fruits which grow out of

the elect are such as, being in measure of the world, the world can appreciate: with just so much of outward goodness as the flesh when trained and taught by the spirit can appreciate, and yet enough of the world to please the world, with a zeal for seen and present things. Such fruits must be great in the world: they may even be counted good fruit, but their end will shew their true nature; for by them the things of the house of the elect are taken to make a kingdom for self out of the land of Canaan (Genesis 36:6-8).

---------- This is better seen without. In this view the sons of Esau and Jacob set forth in figure the further growth of those opposing seeds, which, though born in the house of the Son, and from one common mother, end far apart, the one as kings in Mount Seir, the other as keepers of sheep upon the ground of promise. Jacob's sons are not all alike; the elect, as they grow, develope many differences; some Reubens, some Judahs, some Dans, but all making one Israel, who return after long toil to dwell in heavenly places. Esau's children differ as much: even as the carnal seed out of the Son exhibit great variety, one common mark, however, being upon them all, that sooner or later they all attain to rule of some sort, building up a kingdom out of the land, while the elect remain to the end as humble shepherds in Canaan. "Eight kings in succession reigned in Edom, before any king reigned over the children of Israel" (Genesis 36:31-39). St. Paul marks this of the Church's carnal seed: "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us" (1 Corinthians 4:8-12); for carnal brethren want a kingdom now, and the desire and need of rule is sooner felt, and rule is sooner developed with them, and, as they think, perfected, than with the spiritual. Thus are they great in the world; their course in almost all things being in direct contrast to that of the elect. The one leaves Canaan to dwell in Mount Seir; the other comes back from toil in the world, to dwell in Canaan. Jacob brings all the souls he has gotten, and "comes to Isaac his father to Mamre, which is Hebron" (Genesis 35:27). "Esau took his wives, and all that he had gotten in the land of Canaan, and went and dwelt in Mount Seir" (Genesis 36:6-8). (Note: The LXX. read here, kai eporeuthe ek tes ges Chaanan.) The elect, having felt the power of the world far more than carnal brethren ever feel it, (for the carnal seed never try to win it,) come back with what they have won to rest in heavenly places; while the Esaus, born in the house of the Son, and enriched with so much of its truth as they can use for self exaltation, go forth never to return, preferring in their own strength to establish an earthly kingdom.

Thus Esau dwelt in Mount Seir (Genesis 36:8). This ground had for long been the stronghold of gigantic Horims, against whom the king of Shinar had come up, and smote them, without dispossessing them (Genesis 14:5-6); but "the children of Esau destroyed them before them, and dwelt in their stead even to this day" (Deuteronomy 2:12; Deuteronomy 2:22). Hither Esau seems to have been drawn by his marriage with Aholibamah, for she was one of Seir's daughters; (Note: Esau's wife Aholibamah was "the daughter of Anah, the daughter," or (as the Samaritan version, the LXX., and other ancient versions read), "the son of Zibeon;" Genesis 36:2. In Genesis 36:20-24, we read that "Anah, the son of Zibeon," was one of the "sons of Seir, the Horite, who inhabited the land.") and here, having dispossessed Seir's sons, Esau reigns in the kingdom of that ungodly line to which he had allied himself. The Church's carnal seed have just done this. Having first formed an alliance with the world, they end by taking its kingdom; driving out certain gigantic evils, against which Babylon the great had struggled unsuccessfully, to found a kingdom of bloodshed and force, which, though famed far and near for its strength and terribleness (See Jeremiah 49:16; Obadiah 1:3), and destined even to give a king to Israel by whom the true King

shall be mocked and set at nought (Luke 23:11), is doomed to be destroyed, as it is written, -- "For his violence against his brother Jacob shame shall cover him, and he shall be cut off for ever" (Obadiah 1:10). Of this kingdom much might be said. The names of the sons of Seir, whom Esau dispossessed, and whose names and acts are not recorded in vain, shew the forms of evil which are opposed and can be destroyed even by carnal Christians. The names I cannot touch here; (Note: Jerome (Nom. Heb.) has attempted an interpretation.) but I may observe that to one act peculiar prominence is given. Mules, we are told, were discovered by one of Seir's race: -- "Anah found mules, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father in the wilderness" (Genesis 36:24). (Note: Our authorised version, after all objections to it, seems to be correct. The LXX. do not translate the word, which we render "mules," but simply read iamein, which is the Hebrew, yemiym [H3222] written in Greek letters. Aquila and Symmachus do the same. The Rabbins explain the word to mean mules. So does the Arabic verbion.) This mixture of seeds so opposed to nature (Genesis 1:24), and law (Leviticus 19:19; Deuteronomy 22:9-11), but which soon found such favour that king's sons used mules by way of distinction (2 Samuel 13:29; 2 Samuel 18:9), began among the sons of Seir. Not by chance is the fact recorded in their genealogy. Not in vain is it linked with Esau's seed, as characteristic of the race to which he had allied himself.

I cannot say more of these lines, though I am assured that every point contains a lesson for us. I will only add a few facts, which are plain and standing types of what has been and must be. Under David's rule, Edom was subject to Israel (2 Samuel 8:14). In the days of the failure of the kingdom, even before Babylon led Israel captive, Edom rebelled (2 Kings 8:20; 2 Kings 8:22). Later on, towards the end of the dispensation, a son of Edom was ruling in Jerusalem, and Edomites were reckoned Jews. (Note: Herod was an Edomite or Idumaean. For proof of the Edomites being considered Jews, see Josephus, Antiq. l. xiii. c. 9, § 1, and Whiston's note on the passage.) The elect had fallen so low, that the rule of the carnal seed was scarcely felt to be a degradation. How far the carnal seed of the Church is now confounded on all hands with the spiritual, -- how busy it is to build the temple, -- how it rules, and seeks to slay the Heir, -- how instead it only destroys the Innocents, -- how spite of its crimes for a while it seems to prosper, -- how all these things shew where we are, -- I leave for others, whose eyes by grace are opened, to weigh and consider.

Such then is Jacob's course, for every age the type of that evangelic service which is the fruit of faith and sonship; too full of human craft at first, "laying hold with its hand," to perform the work by human energy; but schooled through much grief and many disappointments, to learn its own faults and weakness and insufficiency, till, lame and smitten in the flesh, at length it becomes a "prince of God," and prevails mightily. Such service is dear to God. No form of life more represents the ways and mind of heaven; for it stoops, like angels, to serve; yea, like the Lord of angels, it comes down from the hills and wells of Canaan to outward men to save some of them. In all this, much failure comes out; and the worker, like every sower of seed, has his feet defiled in the miry ways of the field of this world; yet he works on, sowing the seed with tears, to return at length in joy, bearing his sheaves with him. Mark again what is, and what is not, Jacob's work. He serves, and so wins flocks and children, whom he may lead to Canaan. He does not attack or dispossess the monstrous Horims; for the opposition to gigantic evils in the world, though it may be the work of some of the children of the True Son, is Esau's labour, not Jacob's. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. There yet are souls, whose only idea of service is to grapple, like Esau, with the monstrous evils which have grown up in this world, and to set up some rule or order instead, in

which the things of Isaac’s house are taken to make a kingdom in Seir, out of the land of Canaan. Such work must not be judged. Israel may not meddle with Esau’s children, who have dispossessed the Horims (Deuteronomy 2:4-5; Deuteronomy 2:12). But this is not Jacob’s work. He serves to bring souls from the ground midway between tradition and reasoning to know the ground of promise, -- work, which to carnal eyes seems less and meaner than Esau’s, but which is only accomplished by a wrestling which the carnal seed know nothing of. But what Esau ever doubted that the kingdom in Seir was far grander and better than the tents and flocks of Jacob in Canaan? But it is time we should pass on from Jacob to Joseph, in whom a still further development of the elect appears.

06.7.0. Joseph, or Suffering and Glory

PART 7 JOSEPH, OR SUFFERING AND GLORY Genesis 37:1-36, Genesis 38:1-30, Genesis 39:1-23, Genesis 40:1-23, Genesis 41:1-57, Chapters 37 - 50 "The afflictions of Joseph." -- Amos 6:6.

"Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." -- Romans 8:17.

HERE begins the story of Joseph, in whom the fairest form of human life is seen. Six stages have passed, in which we have traced how Israel, a Prince of God, grows out of old Adam. We have seen human nature, and flesh and spirit, and regeneration, and faith, and sonship, and service. Now comes the last form of life, -- a life which from the first dreams of rule, and which attains it through suffering; a wonderful change from naked Adam; and yet an outcome from him, brought forth by God's ingrafting. Joseph does not leave his home, to walk in simple faith, he knows not whither; nor can he rest in peace, a son and heir, by wells of water enjoying the sweets of sonship; nor does he serve night and day to win flocks and herds, who may be led up out of the world to Canaan. Joseph is none of these, but a life which surely follows these; never seen but where faith has brought forth sonship, and sonship service; itself the fruit of service, one of its last and fairest fruits; which from the first has dreams, not of service, but rule; which yet, spite of its dreams, is called to suffer many things; which suffers long, and is sorely tried, but at last out of suffering attains to rule all things; the world and brethren bowed at its feet, forced to confess the might of that they once ridiculed.

We have nothing like this before. In Abraham the elect forsakes the world to walk in heavenly places. At this faith stage, Egypt, so far from being ruled, is rather a snare to the believer. Nor can Isaac rule this land: the spirit of sonship is content to rest at peace in heavenly places. In Jacob or service something is done in outward things; some flocks and herds are won there. But Egypt, the ground of sense, is not subdued: service is not sufficient for such an achievement. But in Joseph, the spirit opposed, and fettered, and bound, conquers by passive power, and is at length exalted over all things. Joseph stands where Abraham falls. The ground which is a snare to mere believers, is none to patient sufferers. Suffering conquers that which tries our faith, and by it, and by it alone, the ground of sense is ruled at last.

Such as live and walk in the spirit know that we too are called with this calling, -- to rule, not to be ruled by, sense, that the kingdom may be in the earth even as it is in heaven; for Christ our Head has reached to this, and we as His members are predestined to be conformed to Him. But few get beyond faith or sonship; few reach to service, and fewer still to glory in tribulation, by the cross to rule the world, and to walk among the things of sense, confessedly superior to them all. Some unknown, yet well-known, have done it; and others, who yet are captive to sense, cannot forget the dreams, once divinely given, by which their hearts and hopes were stirred to look and wait for perfect victory. Let such abide their time. They shall shew that if we suffer with Christ we also shall with Him be glorified (Romans 8:17). The whole path is here set forth: how it goes with man in this

path, -- how his very brethren mock him, -- how the world deals with him before he rules it, -- how trials increase the more he walks with God, -- how the battle is won at length, -- all this is told, as none but God, whose own work it is, could tell it. Being is proved to be far more than doing. And, like the light, which serves us by simply being light, the spirit which beareth all things, by the virtue that flows forth from it unconsciously, commands a place and power which is felt by all to be of God. And indeed there is no service like this unconscious service, which naturally flows from what we are through the divine indwelling.

06.7.1. Joseph's Dreams

I. -- JOSEPH’S DREAMS, AND SUFFERING FROM HIS BRETHREN

Genesis 37:1-36

FIRST, we see the reception this new life meets from Jacob’s sons: -- "They hated Joseph because his father loved him more than all his sons" (Genesis 37:3-4). All know the story: how Joseph’s brethren plot against his life, and strip him, and mock him, and sell him into Egypt. The same life still is treated thus, as we may see, within, and without, and in the dispensations. To trace it first within. We are here shewn how our purest inward life for a while is crossed and hindered, not so much by worldly things, as by other activities which are the fruit of true service. It is Jacob’s sons who sell Joseph. These sons are the varied fruits which are brought forth by the elect, -- whether knowledge, or service, or rule, or the like, -- by union with Leah, that is by outward principles. (Note: See on Genesis 29:1-35) These fruits are forms of active life, and these, if ungoverned are prone to cause confusion, and to oppress and hinder the higher aspirations of that pure and passive life in us, which now begins to dream of rule. The young Christian may not understand this. He can see how the old man, as Terah, or the religious flesh, as Esau, may hinder our path; but how true service can yield any fruits which oppose the highest life in us, is at first incomprehensible. But so it is. The fruits of an active life may cross a yet more inward life, and the mind which Joseph represents be opposed, as he was, by other activities, which, though true fruits of the spirit, need to be ruled rather than to rule. Thus Joseph is sold into Egypt. And so this spirit in us for a while is sorely overborne, forced under the bondage of sense, while it is thought that some beast or evil spirit has destroyed that life, whose early promise was so lovely. But it cannot be thus destroyed. It may be bound in deepest dungeons; at last it must be free.

Such is the scene within. Without, it shews the path of souls whose passive character, so unlike the ways of Jacob’s house, is for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed, judging all around them, even while they are judged, and, though sorely grieved, in the end made stronger than all. Such souls, as they hinder God less, gain power which others never know; though the same passivity, which makes them open to God, lays them open to peculiar trial from their more active brethren. First, they see evil among brethren: -- "Joseph brought unto his father their evil report" (Genesis 37:2); and this involves double trouble; he who sees the evil is judged for seeing, and hated for reproving it. This of itself is no little cross, to outrun sympathy, to grieve friends, to offend brethren. Yet such is the price which must be paid for light; such the penalty of being faithful beyond the measure of our brethren. Then a coat of many colours is given him, for which his brethren hate him more and more (Genesis 37:3), not seeing that if they too walked in obedience, they also might be adorned like him. But they feel that he is preferred, and the secret sense of their inferiority, instead of humbling, only enrages them. If we walk with God in truth, and turn from evil, not afraid to rebuke it even among our brethren, a fair robe will soon be put upon us, not only, as in

Adam, to hide our shame and nakedness, but to clothe us in "garments of glory and beauty," even that "fine linen which is the righteousness of saints" (Exodus 28:2; Revelation 19:8). The "many colours" will all be there; for colours are but the various shades and reflections of light, and he who walks in the light must needs reflect it, giving back each ray that is not lost and absorbed. In the priests, the garment was perfect white; and upon the Mount, One was seen "whose raiment was shining, so as no fuller on earth could whiten it" (Mark 9:3); but the many colours, if not so heavenly, may better reveal to human eyes the wondrous fulness which there is in light. (Note: In this "coat of many colours," Bernard sees the varied gifts of the Spirit; Apol. de vit. Rel. c. 3.) The Josephs are yet thus adorned, and for this are the more hated by their brethren who are not with Jacob. (Note: It is plain, from the narrative, and from Jacob's command to Joseph to "go and see how his brethren were," that they were absent from their father; he at Hebron, they at Shechem and Dotham; Genesis 37:12-17. These places, like all the rest, are significant.) "They could not speak peaceably unto him." "They hated him yet the more, because of his words."

Then comes the well-known dream of power one day to be enjoyed (Genesis 37:6-10); for the passive life, which lives near God, from its very nature is prone to dream, and can receive far more than active souls of heavenly mysteries. And for this they who live this life are always reproached as "dreamers," enthusiastic mystics, and I know not what else. Are not many dreams uncertain, and are not many of the things which this dreamer sees, or professes to see, just such uncertainties? Who can with confidence speak of a dream, or prove that these mystic views, so derogatory to the glory of those who now are strongest, are anything but fancies? "Art thou greater than our father Jacob?" Can any new form of life be superior, or accomplish more than has been already done in the good old path of service? So ask the elder sons, and not waiting for an answer at once they mock the "dreamer." They "will see what will become of his dreams" (Genesis 37:19-20). And they do see, though not at all as they expected.

Meanwhile the Josephs are fettered and bound. Instead of ruling or serving, they are shut up where they can help no one; while Ishmaelites, the carnal seed of men of faith, are used to do the dirty work, which the elect have planned but dare not perpetrate (Genesis 37:28). (Note: The Ishmaelites and Midianites were those sons of Abraham whom he sent away from Isaac. See Genesis 25:6. Ishmael was Hagar's son; Midian, Keturah's. We see from Judges 8:12; Judges 8:24, that the Midianites were called Ishmaelites, or confounded with them, in Gideon's days.) Their coat is dipped in blood, and a tale is told, as if some wild beast or devil had overcome them; a falsehood which in itself is trial, as some have learnt who have suffered under false reports, by which their best friends are deceived. Such suffering at the time looks despicable enough. All martyrdoms are said to have looked but meanly, when they were suffered. For stripping and bonds are ever shameful; and the elect are stripped and bound; -- "when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." But though cast out, they yet are blessed, some eyes discerning that the Lord Himself is with them, if brethren are not; while within there is the peace of God, for none can rob the true soul of that inward satisfaction which the truth itself ministers. This a the appointed way, the high road of the holy cross, -- suffering first, and then a kingdom; to be wronged, misrepresented, punished, cast out; and then to have every secret wrong redressed, and every deed of truth and love manifested; -- this is yet the royal way, the end of which is assured even from its beginning: while to do as others do, even of the elect, (for where is worse sin than among the sons of Israel?) though they who walk thus may be "saved so as by fire,"

involves sure chastening, self-reproach, and humiliation.

---------- The dispensations too reflect the scene. We know how the sons of the first wife rejected the second wife's First-born. How the sons of Israel mocked the Heir, -- how Egypt, that is the Gentile world, received its future Lord, -- how, spite of all, He could not be hid, but was exalted to be head over the kingdom, while His brethren believe Him to be dead, -- all this, and much more, is figured here of the life of Him who was "separated from His brethren;" who said, "They hated me without a cause" (John 15:25); "Me they hate, because I testify against them that their works are evil" (John 7:7). He came unto His own (John 1:11), toiling in the field of this world, finding no rest there, yet seeking lost brethren. And He found them, and was rejected. He uttered similitudes of His kingdom, but His words to them were as dreams. Their answer was, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). They that passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads (Mark 15:29). They stripped Him of His robe (Matthew 27:28), and sold Him for silver (Matthew 26:15), and sat down to eat, even while they prepare to make away with Him (John 18:28). (Note: The Fathers are full of allusions to Joseph as a type of Christ. Ephrem Syrus, De laud. Patr. Jos., traces at length the application of the history to the first and second comings of Christ. So too Ambrose, De Joseph, passim; Tertullian, Adv. Judaeos, c. xi.; Augustine, Qu. in Gen. l. i. n. 123 and 148, and Ep. ad Hesych. cl. 3, n. 199; Chrysostom, Hom. 62, in Gen.; and many others. But this figure speaks for itself.) So must His members suffer; and though at times the way seems long, He, who hath begun the good work, will surely finish it (Php 1:6); for One in a certain place has testified of man, "Thou hast put all things under his feet;" and this covenant cannot be broken (Hebrews 2:8).

06.7.2. Judah's History

II. -- JUDAH'S HISTORY

Genesis 38:1-30 AT this stage in Joseph's course, while that pure life, spite of its dreams of rule, is yet rejected, Judah's path is shewn in contrast, in whom we have the whole story of rule as it springs out of the first and natural principle. If the spirit of service produces fruit in us, the mind to rule will in due time be developed. Other fruits will first be seen, such as Reuben, and Simeon, and Levi, but then comes Judah or rule; (Note: See on Genesis 29:1-35) a mind in us which attempts some rule, but which, being the fruit of Leah, is outward rather than purely spiritual. I feel that words are lacking here; yet some must know how at a certain stage a mind is born in us, which seeks to rule our other powers. Here, as ever, the natural comes before the spiritual. Joseph is Rachel's son, in whom we see that rule which springs out of the spiritual principle; and which, "by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by love unfeigned" (2 Corinthians 6:6), shews that a passive life is indeed of all the strongest. Judah is rule as it springs out of Leah, that is, from first and outward principles; strong at first, but forced to bow to Joseph at last; for though "Judah prevailed over his brethren, and of him came the first ruler, the birthright was Joseph's" (1 Chronicles 5:2). Yet for a season Judah prevails, while Joseph must wait in weakness till Judah's shame is seen. The story is full of shame, so much so that some look upon its insertion as a blot in Holy Scripture. But a mirror contracts nothing of the uncleanness which it reflects. The sun is not defiled by shining alike on stye and palace. Besides, "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour" (2 Timothy 2:20). And Judah's life is one of these, which as much as others, perhaps above all others, contains a moral never to be forgotten.

Like all the rest, this story must be fulfilled, within, and without, and in the dispensations.

Within, we see in Judah, that mind intent to rule, which springs up in us from outward principles. Such a mind, if we could see within, yet refulfils all Judah's course. It "goes down," and "turns aside," and "takes to wife the daughter of a certain Canaanite;" that is, it embraces some mere formal and outward principle (Genesis 38:1-2; and compare Genesis 10:6; Genesis 12:6). But such an attachment to outward forms does little in ruling the elect; the fruit is judged as evil, though an attempt is made to improve it by union with Thamar, who, as the second wife, is the figure of spiritual principles (Genesis 38:6-9). (Note: Respecting the younger or second wife, see on Genesis 16:1-16 and Genesis 29:1-35) This attempt does not succeed. The fruits of such forms are evil, and ere long come to their end; while spiritual truth is regarded with fear and suspicion, as if it were the cause of the judgment on what is evil in us. Yet after all this very truth bears fruit, and by it, through awful corruptions, another form of life is brought forth. Who can tell what confusions and falls within accompany the first attempts we make to rule ourselves? We may know perhaps that forms are first embraced, and that these bear wretched fruit, which God in mercy takes away; but who can tell the confusions which then are wrought within, and all the profanation and adulteration which the eye of God witnesses? Yet out of this too can He bring forth good, and by

Judah’s fall prepare the way for purer rule and better discipline. But this inward view is "hard to be uttered." We may perhaps learn more by tracing the outward fulfilment.

---------- In this view we see in Judah’s course the story of rule in the Church, as it grows from outward principles; for Judah is Leah’s son, and Leah is the outward Church, that is, the form of outward principles, which to her other children adds rulers also, whose ways, though they may be "praised by brethren" (Genesis 49:8), demand the deepest self-abasement. This is their course: -- they take a Canaanitish wife, that is, the principle of mere external worship, (Note: Respecting the Canaanite, see on Genesis 10:15-17) thereby to build up the kingdom. By this they bring forth sons, whom God judges, after an attempt has been made to improve them by introducing a younger wife, that is, the spiritual principle. But this line have little love for spiritual truth: ere long it is an object of fear and suspicion, if not of loathing, to them. Rulers of this stock instinctively feel that there is in spiritual truth and in a spiritual Church something which does not suit them. At first they hoped better things from it, but they have tried it, and in their hands at least it does not answer. Yet even while they reject it, they speak it fair: it would not do to declare their thoughts to all on such matters. They promise therefore that it shall again be tried, but at present Judah’s sons are not prepared for such a help-meet. Spiritual truth therefore is put away. Meanwhile the old system of formal worship is found to be lifeless (Genesis 38:12); to console themselves for which the rulers turn to "sheepshearing:" for this comfort remains to them, that, let what will be dead, the fleece at least remains theirs. And here, not knowing what they are doing, the rulers of the outward Church accidentally meet and lay hold on spiritual truth; and against their will the succession of rule is continued, as the fruit of those more spiritual principles, which they themselves had put away. God knows how often this has been done, -- how often the true Church, which is the body of spiritual truth, has erred, just as Thamar erred here. She feels her rejection by that old line, out of which men looked to see the kingdom. She likes not to trust in God alone, continuing as a widow night and day in prayers and supplications; but seeks by carnal policy such a connection with the old rulers, as may make her sons their heirs and true successors. The result is, Judah has seed by Thamar, that is, the old line of rule is continued in connection with spiritual principles. Thus does the rejected Church get apostolic succession, and bear in the line of rule the twofold seed again; though in this case there is a special mystery; something of the younger being seen, even before the firstborn is brought forth (Genesis 38:27-30). In other cases the carnal seed comes fully first: in outward rule, when it is brought forth from spiritual principles, the spiritual just appears, and then is forced to give place to what is carnal. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. He that hath eyes, let him look around at the fruit of outward rule by spiritual principles; and he shall see that there is yet always first a glimpse of the spiritual, and then the firstborn or carnal seed breaks forth and supersedes it. (Note: Ambrose, at very great length, goes into the mystery of this birth by Thamar; In Luc. l. iii. § 20-29. He only traces the fulfilment, as it is seen in the dispensations; but of course it has its manifestation on every platform. Irenaeus, also, Contr. Hoer. l. iv. c. 25, al. 42, gives the same interpretation.) But the old line of rulers disown the offspring. The mother shall be burnt. As for the children, they know nothing of them. But their wrath is vain. Proofs are forthcoming, whose the seed is. The "signet, and bracelets, and staff" (Genesis 38:25), spite of the rage of the old rulers, declare the parentage. The lineage is very manifest. Those spiritual churches which have desired the "succession" of the outward kingdom, and have got it, though not legitimately, can shew by indisputable proofs, by the very ornaments which are in their possession, the stock from which their children spring. The dispensations even more clearly reflect this scene. In this aspect,

Judah, the son of Leah, sets forth the fruit of the Jewish dispensation, regarded as a kingdom. Leah, the first wife, was that dispensation, which, after law and priesthood, bore Judah, that is, the kingdom, also. This Judah took a Canaanite to wife. "Thy birth," said the prophet to Jerusalem, "and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan" (Ezekiel 16:3). That kingdom was allied to forms, and grew, loving an external worship in which was no spirit. An evil seed was the result, who either could not or would not have fruit by spiritual principles, when these were offered to them. For even of old the spiritual Church was offered to the Jew. In prophets and righteous men it came near to them, but they would not receive it. (Note: Just as, in the type of Jacob, Rachel was loved long before she was fruitful, and, during all the years while Leah had her children, was, though without children, yet in Jacob's house; so here Thamar lives and is introduced to Judah's house, before she has any fruit by Judah or his sons. See Augustine, Retract. i. 13 and Contr. Faust. l. xxii. c. 84.) So Thamar, the younger wife, was put away: the sons of the first wife would not be built up by her. Then Judah's wife, that is the old dispensation, died and came to its end; her sons having first been cut off for sin by sore judgments. Then by Judah's fall the Church is made fruitful, not without some failure perhaps on her part, from a too great looking to Judah as the only source from which the kingdom could be continued. (Note: How little the early Church at Jerusalem saw of the distinct glories of this dispensation, how it clung to circumcision and the law, might be shewn from many scriptures. It was some time before even the Apostles were clear respecting the call of the Gentiles. Their thoughts still hung upon the Jewish line. See Acts 11:1-30, Acts 15:1-41 &c.) Yet Judah knows it not. As Paul declares, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day. And David saith, Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway" (Romans 11:8-10). But "their fall is the riches of the world." "Through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy" (Romans 11:11-17). A seed has sprung out of Judah, which, when it is conceived, Judah judges, not suspecting that it is his own offspring. Yea, he is ready to destroy it with the mother; but proof is at hand that it is Abraham's seed. The "signet" and "staff," though Judah may rage, will prove beyond all contradiction the lineage of the Church's children. Then again appears the twofold line, which in this case, as the fruit of rule, is developed with certain remarkable peculiarities; something of the younger or spiritual line being seen here for a moment before the first-born or carnal breaks forth and supersedes it. (Note: Augustine goes at great length into the dispensational fulfilment of this story, Contr. Faust. l. xxii. cc. 84-86. Chrysostom also, Hom. 62 in Gen., refers to the mystery here.) But I have said enough of this. The story is throughout a mystery of the kingdom; and as such is alluded to in that Gospel, which is peculiarly devoted to set forth our Lord in connection with the kingdom (Matthew 1:3), shewing how the line of heirs should change, while yet the kingdom should be continued to Judah's sons and Abraham's seed.

Such is Judah's course. And yet in every age Judah's sons have been ready to boast, "We were not born of fornication" (John 8:41). The Jew said so, and since then the Church has been forward to repeat the boast with just as little ground for glorying. Those who know her story best must own, that, if the true seed of the kingdom has sprung out of her, there have been also most awful confusions. I know God's grace can master all; and Judah's fall, even as Adam's, may give occasion to bring in better things. Out of the adulterer's lust may grow the living child, in its bodily perfections displaying God's wisdom, and in its soul's salvation His love, which delights to save to the uttermost. But in each case sin is judged as sin. Our place is, not to boast, -- for God knows,

we have cause for deepest self-abasement, -- but to walk humbly with God, that He may forgive and deliver us from our own and also our fathers' sins.

06.7.3. Joseph in Potiphar's House

III. -- JOSEPH IN POTIPHAR'S HOUSE

Genesis 39:1-23 THE fruits of outward rule having now been seen in Judah, we return to that more inward and spiritual life, which at last attains to rule all things. Joseph, rejected by his brethren, is here "brought down to Egypt" (Genesis 39:1). That pure life, oppressed and crushed by other more outward fruits of true service, that is, by Jacob's elder children, is now enslaved in things of sense, for Egypt is the ground of sense, and Joseph is now brought down here. (Note: Respecting Egypt, see on Genesis 12:1-20.) The tree is destined to be both high and wide; its root is therefore laid deep in the earth: it is to bloom in bright sunshine, but it is first reared in deep shadow; and at this stage shade is safer than sun, while the very shadow proves that there is sunshine not far off. So the mind which dreams of rule must serve, and first know the bondage to sense in all its bitterness. In this way, and thus alone, does our spirit obtain the longed-for power over natural things. Those only who have felt the bondage ever reach the true deliverance.

First to trace the scene within. That mind in us which waits to rule by pureness and long-suffering, already crossed by other fruits of service, now feels the power of the things of sense, and ere long is sorely tempted by them. Against its will it is brought down to Egypt, and there is bound and sold as a slave, like Joseph (Genesis 39:1). The sensual mind overrules the spirit; and sense, instead of being governed, still holds the spirit captive. Can the spirit hope for rule after this? Is not such bondage a token of the final triumph of the flesh or natural man? Not so. God Himself appoints this way: -- "It was not you, but God, that sent me hither, to save your lives by a great deliverance" (Genesis 45:7-8). He first empties, that He may fill; for the spirit to the end requires such discipline. Joseph does not, indeed, like Jacob, use carnal means to gain his ends; but his way of telling his dreams shews that as yet he lacks that self-despair and brokenness which God waits for. Besides, God loves the world. He will have the kingdom in our earth even as it is in heaven. Egypt may be Egypt to the end, yet in it the Lord will shew what He can accomplish. Our spirit therefore is brought down and bound, and made to feel how little, spite of faith and sonship and service, the ground of sense is overcome; that at last the evil there, having been felt, may be subdued, the spirit meanwhile by the trial being yet more chastened and purified. This state is open to special trial. The spirit cannot feel the power of the natural man, without being subject to temptation through its affections. So the Egyptian's wife sought to corrupt Joseph (Genesis 39:7-12); that is, some natural affection, the exact character of which we are not told, for her name is not given us, is felt within, seeking to seduce the spirit. Some affections of nature may indeed be won and blessed: Joseph himself at a later stage has an Egyptian wife, who bears him good fruit (Genesis 41:50-52). The evil here is that this affection, which now tempts the elect, is wedded to the natural man, and as such seeks only to corrupt the spirit, not at all to obey or serve it. Very sifting is this trial. Secret, repeated, even violent are the solicitations, which assail us in the very duties we owe to the natural man, tempting us to embrace some worldly principle, and so to give up the narrow path of holy separateness. But the seductions of natural affection by grace are overcome, though it costs us a struggle to escape their importunity. Then the immediate result is worse bondage. The

spirit, like Joseph, is charged with acts for which the flesh is answerable; and there is that within us, like the Egyptian, which believes the charge, and at once condemns the spirit as an evil-doer.

Some can trace all these confusions within. We ask our Lord that we may know the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings. He draws us by His Spirit thus to pray. A dream of power over self and sin flits before our inward man. We think a few short stages will bring us to the end, -- that His love, who has promised, will quickly give us victory. Instead of this, we discover fresh evil. The flesh, in forms strange and as yet unknown, assails and holds us captive. But we will not yield to nature and its affections. What then? Our sorrow is increased. We are thrust still lower, and a voice within untruly blames the spirit, charging its bondage on it as the result of its unfaithfulness. Could we then hear the Lord, He would tell us, all was well, -- that this discipline, painful as it is, is really indispensable. Had Joseph been happy with the Egyptian, he would not so soon have ruled Egypt. Were the flesh never to rise against the spirit, its evil would remain undiscovered, and therefore unsubdued. In men whose nature is rough and strong, how often the very strength of the flesh forces the spirit to rise to overcome it; while weaker natures, whose evil comes out less, remain less changed, because less conscious of the evil. The elect therefore must feel the evil. Only thus do they obtain the full deliverance.

---------- But let us look now at this scene without. Here is set forth a stage of the early experience of those who by patience and pureness look for spiritual power. Such souls have many griefs. Not only are they rejected by their brethren, they also must suffer in the world. They are there, but not by choice. Far rather would they abide in heavenly places. But the sin of the elect forces them away; and the very world, bad as it is, is kinder to them than brethren. Then in the world such souls are made a blessing: -- "The Lord blessed the Egyptian’s house for Joseph’s sake" (Genesis 39:5). Their character makes itself felt. Ere long they exercise some power even in that worldly circle. Then comes the temptation to swerve from holy separateness. The principle (women are principles) of that society in which they are forced to move becomes a tempter to them; or, to put it more outwardly, that body, which is the outward form or expression of some worldly principle, seeks with open arms to gain and lead them astray. What peculiar form of worldliness this is, we are not told; for, as I have already observed, the name of this Egyptian woman is not here given us. It may be any worldly principle, whether that which animates the literary world, or the musical world, or the fashionable world, or the mercantile world, or the scientific world, or any of those other many minor worlds, which, like the households of Egypt, are all constituent parts of the one great world of sense which Egypt represents. That body, to which the elect stands in nearest contact, will be his tempter; assailing him peculiarly while he is engaged about his business in the world. It would make our outward calling an occasion to undo us. It is very urgent, and will not be denied. But a voice has said, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17). The Josephs therefore will not be drawn aside: in holy truth they reject all those advances which would seduce them from their integrity; and for this the world now hates them more, and, to save its credit, stirs up its acknowledged masters to judge what it cannot corrupt. The elect are accused of wishing to loose the bonds of society, and under this false charge for a while are shut up as evil-doers. But "in all things they approve themselves, in much patience, in

afflictions, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the word of truth, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; by honour and dishonour; by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, yet well-known; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Corinthians 6:4-10).

Dispensationally too this scene has been fulfilled. The Spirit of Christ, as a patient sufferer in the world, suffered, served, was blessed, and made a blessing. The world, with its offers of love, sought to seduce it in vain. The Spirit of Christ in His true Church could not be thus corrupted. So it was basely slandered and falsely accused; and the lords of this world, misinformed of the elect's acts and purpose, opposed and grieved and bound them. Those, who know the story of the coming of this Spirit into the world, will at once recognise the details of this dispensational fulfilment. (Note: On the spiritual sense of this chapter I have found but little in the Fathers. Ambrose, (De Joseph, c. 6, § 31,) and Gregory the Great, (Moral. in Job, l. ii. c. 36, § 59,) just allude to Joseph's temptation here, as a figure of what Christ suffered on earth. It is, however, but an allusion.)

Thus journey on the Lord's beloved. Happy are they who have learnt, not only to trace these journeys, but to be partakers of them. Then, while they look to the things unseen, the light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Faithfulness cannot go unrewarded. The blessing may seem to tarry, but for every delay there shall be the largest interest.

06.7.4. Joseph in Prison

IV. -- JOSEPH IN PRISON

Genesis 40:1-23

HERE follow yet further temptations, through which the spirit in us is yet more perfected. If it resists the solicitations of natural affection, the natural man is stirred up against it, and the spirit is more than ever straitened. Like Joseph, it is sorely bound. Then, in its bonds, it is brought into contact with certain servants of Pharaoh, that is, certain forms or powers of the natural man, which by it are served, and even in some degree disciplined. Inwardly, we see here how certain natural activities are subdued, while the spirit is yet shut up in grievous bondage: outwardly, how certain natural men are schooled and taught by the elect while the world neglects or frowns upon them. Of this work within I can say but little here, because of our dim perception of that immense complexness of thought and being, which go to make up man. Adam's path may be clearly seen by us, and some of the earlier stages of man's development; while the later steps, which are more inward and deal with the many varieties of the carnal and spiritual mind, may be beyond our vision. Even if seen, the nice distinction between these varied forms of thought and life is hard to be uttered, in our present state and with our imperfect language. Without, our eyes can see the immense variety of tribes which have come forth from Adam, all of which are but various forms or manifestations of man or human nature. But within, though secret and hidden, the outcome is the same. Old Adam in us brings forth as many different minds, each of which throughout this book is figured and set before us in some son of Adam, or Noah, or Shem, or Ham, or Japhet; some outward, some inward, some sensual, some natural, some spiritual, and this in different measures; the elect all representing some form of the spiritual mind in us; the non-elect, some form of that mind which is earthly, sensual, devilish.

Now Egypt is the ground of sense, and Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the highest part or ruling power of the natural man; (Note: See on Genesis 12:1-20) his servants being those inferior or subordinate activities, whose office it is to serve this natural man. I do not pretend to interpret with perfect precision here, but we shall not be far wrong if we regard these servants as the senses; for the natural man (I do not mean the body) imbibes, receives, and digests the things the senses give him. But these senses at a certain stage are felt to need restraint. They have been useful in their place, but something occurs which makes the natural man perceive that they require discipline. He finds that his servants are not wholly trustworthy: their fallacies begin to be discerned. Hence they are restrained, and thus brought into contact with the spirit, which in its bondage instructs them, and so prepares them to instruct the natural man. For now they learn that there is a power to know God's mind above their own; their lot too is shewn, that some will be restored to serve the natural man, and others must be mortified; while a way is thus opened by which the natural man, through its own servants, may in due time receive an intimation of that higher faculty, which as yet is shut up and bound within.

---------- But this fulfilment within can hardly be uttered. Let us therefore look at the same scene as it is very manifestly fulfilled in the wider sphere of the outward world around us. In this view, we see here the griefs and works of those, who, while looking for spiritual power, because they will not be corrupted by the world, are for a season shut up from outward usefulness. Neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Jacob, ever suffered thus. Faith, sonship, and service, with all their trials, are not so pressed as the pure and loving soul which dreams of rule. The Josephs are mocked and sold even by brethren. Then, in the world, they are first tempted, and, if they will not yield, are made to suffer grievous bondage. What the elect feels at this stage, none know but God. To get even a glimpse of this sorrow needs an instructed eye. Such a path may appear to be free from all doubtings, a course which throughout shall be so plain as to cost us little exercise. In vain we read the Psalms: in vain we see "John in prison" doubting what "John baptizing" never questioned. (Compare Matthew 11:2-3 with John 1:28-29.) We too at last are shut up. Till we have felt it, we cannot conceive that sickness of heart, which at times will steal upon the patient sufferer; that sense of loneliness, that faintness of soul, which comes from hopes deferred and wishes unshared, from the selfishness of brethren, and the heartlessness of the world. We ask ourselves, If the Lord were with me, should I suffer thus, not only the scorn of the learned and the contempt of the great, but even the indifference and neglect of those whom I have served, who yet forget me? So Joseph might have asked; and so till now may the elect ask, as they stand alone without man's encouragement or sympathy, not turned aside by falsehood or scorn, with their face set as a flint, yet deeply feeling what it costs them. In this trial the elect meets other men (Genesis 40:1-4). The spiritual are not the only sufferers. The world at times must judge its own children, and worldling and Christian may both be under its frown. Here, as on Calvary, we have before us three sufferers, alike rejected by the world, though most unlike each other. God's elect fall in with just two sorts of men, both Egyptians, and both sufferers, whose end is very different; the one after a brief term of bondage being released and blessed; the other remaining in bondage, till suddenly they are cut off. To outward eyes there is little difference between them. The world, if it think of them, passes one common judgment on all. Those who are shut up must doubtless deserve punishment. Besides, who has not heard of the attempts of the elect to loose the bonds of society, and thus to subvert the world's happiness? So the precious are mingled with the vile. Then some, who in their prosperity would never have met or thought of Joseph, in their sorrow learn the might of truth and grace, as they see a man of like passions with themselves, and in the same affliction, shedding the sunshine of his own peace on all around, bound, yet free, and poor, yet making many rich, without a murmur, forgetting himself and his own griefs, in loving efforts to serve and comfort others. But Joseph does more. He interprets their dreams, and makes them understand the thoughts of their hearts and what the Lord is saying to them (Genesis 40:5-7). Not in their bright days, but in hours of darkness and grief, does the Lord's voice come home with power to the men of this world. Some dream, -- it may be of the day, -- some inward consciousness of a voice from God, -- reaches even sensual men, when all is dark around, which, with an authority which cannot be stifled or silenced, though they cannot explain it, with strange light flashes in upon them, forcing them to feel that God Himself is speaking. Then they need an interpreter to expound to them their thoughts; and God's elect, long schooled to know God's voice, help the perplexed ones to solve their own secret. They declare that if He speaks, He will also interpret (Genesis 40:8); and that worldlings, though often they cannot understand, are never left without a witness; for He speaks not only to His own, but to all, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. The word differs

indeed to each, for the revelation must be according to our state, but to each the Lord has some message; which in our sunny days may not be heard, but will come with power to our souls in our dark hours and nights of heaviness. To Jacob there is a dream of protection in service, a ladder uniting the rough and untilled earth to highest heaven, testifying that God and His angels come down from highest to lowest, and that true servants with Him may go anywhere. To Joseph, dreams of glory and might; to the butler, a dream of restoration and blessing; to the baker, of losing what he had wrought. And as the dream is, so is the fulfilment. I cannot but think, that, to a degree few suppose, the impressions which reach us from another world, are often true forebodings to men of what is about to come upon them. Doubtless Satan, as an angel of light, in this as elsewhere to discredit God, seeks at times to deceive us with wrong and false suggestions. But I speak of the settled and growing conviction, which makes to some their calling and election sure, and to others seems already to forestall the day of judgment. Be this as it may, revelations from the Lord depend upon our state, and each receives that message which is best suited to him. The faithful sufferer has visions of glory, well understood; Egyptians have visions of mercy or judgment, both awhile a riddle to them, till the elect, without fear or favour to either, interprets to each their deep and awful significance. As to these dreams, which are of everlasting truth, they shew the fate and end of those two classes, into which the slaves of this world may be divided. In this view, worldlings make up two classes, and but two, the saved and lost. The thoughts and ways, may I not say, the inward life of each, is here remarkably displayed. Before the one, a vine is set, which appears to bud, and blossom, and bring forth clusters. He does not plant it or make it to grow; but his eyes are turned and feast upon its beauty. As he looks it seems to grow. Then he takes of its fruit, and, not content to have it for himself alone, he ministers it to others near him. Thus one class of worldlings, in their hour of trouble, have an eye opened to behold Christ as "the Vine which cheereth God and man" (John 15:1; Judges 9:13). As they look, the Vine they are intent on seems to grow before them; one beauty after another opens out to their astonished view; first the blossoms, and then the clusters, and then the precious wine, which with glad hearts they take and give to other worldlings. What can they render to the Lord for all His mercies? They will take the cup of salvation, and confess they owe their all to Him. And yet, with an eye open to see the Vine, and a hand stretched out to grasp it, and to give its cheering blood to all around, the man is yet in sadness and fear, not seeing that such a vision is the certain pledge of life and liberty. Then God’s elect explain the dream. If such things are seen, the prisoner may be of good cheer. He that sees this Vine on "the third day" shall go forth free. Soon shall his bondage cease, and in the power of the resurrection he shall live to serve others (Genesis 40:20). (Note: The "third day" is always connected with resurrection. See on the third day.)

How different the scene before the other’s eyes. He sees himself, carrying on his head baked meats, the work of his own hands. He has toiled to make "all manner of things for Pharaoh," but none for God. Carelessly he exposes the produce of his toil where it may be stolen from him. It is "on his head," not in his hands; "in baskets full of holes," (Note: Heb. saliy choriy [H5536, H2751], translated in the text of the authorised version "white baskets;" but in the margin "baskets full of holes." The Hebrew root, chor [H2352 or H2356], is a hole or perforation, evidently expressing the holes or interstices between the twigs, of which the baskets were made. Jarchi explains it of wicker-baskets, made of twigs which were white from having the bark peeled off.) whence the birds of the air can come and steal away his labours. While some poor worldlings in their fears behold the Vine, others are occupied and burdened with what they themselves have wrought to

please the world. They see their work, not for God, but for the world. As they look, they see their treasure is in danger, for it has been "put into a bag with holes" (Haggai 1:6); and ere long evil spirits, (so our Lord Himself explains the "birds," Matthew 13:4; Matthew 13:19,) deprive them of the fruits of all their labour. One would have thought that such things would need no interpreter. But it is not so. The poor prisoner looks with fear, but he understands not. What must the elect say to such? Can he say, Peace, Peace, where there is no peace? What can he say, but that, if no change comes, "the end of such things is death" (Romans 6:21).

Thus even in his bondage does the elect shew out God's thoughts, cheering some of the slaves of this world, if he can only warn others. Those he comforts in due time are freed, and in their joy forget the man through whom the comfort reached them (Genesis 40:23). The Lord's prisoners differ greatly. Some there are, who hear the truth, and go forth from bondage, and yet are not spiritual. Such men never suffer like purer souls. They could not bear it; therefore it is not laid upon them. For the vessel of wood, it is enough that it be washed with water: the precious gold can bear, and therefore must be purged by, fire; for it is written, "Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean; and all that abideth not the fire, ye shall make go through the water" (Numbers 31:23; Leviticus 15:12). Thus, while these are freed, the beloved of the Lord remains in bonds; fitted for service or rule, and yet cut off from it. It seems as if Joseph thought the butler would help him; but many weary days elapse before he remembers Joseph. Let spiritual souls understand their calling. They may comfort others: let them not think they shall therefore be remembered in the world.

Dispensationally too this is fulfilled. In this view, Joseph in an Egyptian prison is Christ come into the world, where He can meet the two peoples, that is, the Jew and Gentile. The Jews, even as we, need many figures to represent all the different aspects or relations in which they may be seen. As the brethren of Christ in the flesh, who reject and sell Him, they are again and again set forth in the sons of the first wife. As the line of the kingdom, they are seen in Judah and his sons. As a sensual people, uncircumcised in heart (See Jeremiah 9:26), and ignorant of God's secrets, even when He speaks, an Egyptian captive awaiting judgment is their appointed figure. Christ, the true Joseph, meets these two peoples, Jew and Gentile. In former days they had each served Egypt or the world with meat and drink in different measures. When He comes, they are shut up, unable to serve others. God has spoken to both, but they cannot understand. (Note: Those who are familiar with the early Fathers know how confidently they spoke to the Gentiles, as men who ought to have had better thoughts of God, even from their own poets, and the voice of nature. See Justin Martyr's Cohortatio ad Graecos, § 14, and the following sections; also his De Monarchia, § 2, &c. The Pedagogue of Clement is full of this thought throughout, that the Divine Word was the invisible teacher of men at all periods and in all lands. St. Paul seems to express the same thought, Acts 14:15-17; Acts 17:23-28; Romans 1:19-20.) For the book of prophecy and God's purpose, though given by Him to men, was not opened rightly till the Spirit of Christ opened it. In these visions or dreams, one people saw a vine, and gathered, and then presented, its precious juice to others. This people, which is the Gentile, though for a while shut up, shall be released, and bear forth the cup of blessing to the world; while the other people, though burdened and toiling, shall be robbed of the bread they have prepared, -- this is the Jew, -- and then be judged and cast out. But the Gentile people, though freed, ill requite Joseph. In their joy they forget that, though

they are free, He does not rule yet where He surely must rule. They seem to think their service to Pharaoh will suffice, till, by the discovery of their own impotence to solve his difficulties, they are forced to remember Him to whom all in heaven and earth shall bow. When will Gentile Christendom awake to the fact that there is One, who has served them, and waits to rule? When will they welcome Him to judge all things? (Note: The Ordinary Gloss sums up the substance of this chapter. -- In loco.)

06.7.5. Joseph Exalted Over All Egypt

V. -- JOSEPH EXALTED OVER ALL EGYPT

Genesis 41:1-57

WE come now to the exaltation of the elect. After long suffering, first from the ungoverned violence of activities which spring from true service (Genesis 37:1-36), then through temptations from the affections of the natural man (Genesis 39:1-23), then through bondage and pain (Genesis 40:1-23), the spirit is freed and glorified. All Egypt bows to Joseph. He counsels its prince, and in due times arranges all its doings. Of the inward fulfilment I can write but little, though in each detail this scene deserves the closest attention. This, however, I may say, that we are here shewn how the natural man is subdued at last, and in all its parts is governed by the spirit. The steps detailed are briefly these. Pharaoh, that is, the highest faculty of the natural man, (Note: See on Genesis 12:1-20 and Genesis 40:1-23.) is now greatly disturbed by visions. He dreams that all his strength is swallowed up. He sees lean kine devouring fat ones, while the lean are none the better for it. He sees thin ears consuming the full, till nought remains. He feels assured, though he cannot read the riddle, that it portends evil (Genesis 41:17-24). Cattle and corn are two great gifts for man's blessing, namely, the animal faculties which may be used or abused, and the fruits which are the result of the cultivation of the creature. (Note: See on Genesis 8:1-22 and Genesis 9:1-29.) Here the natural man begins to perceive that these may perish, and leave their present possessor in utter misery. By the elect these creatures were offered to God; but in Egypt they are never so offered, but beast eats beast, and none is better for it. The fruits of the earth, too, (and where is it cultivated as in Egypt?) are seen now consuming one another. Surely it is an awful sight. In this juncture the wisdom of Egypt is summoned to aid, but it can render no assistance. Then from the butler, that is, some sense which serves the natural man, (Note: See on Genesis 40:1-23.) the natural man himself learns of one who is near and can unravel such difficulties. The spirit's witness is heard with awe, and its counsel at once is obeyed through fear of coming judgment. Wherever the natural man is to be governed, this must be known. It invariably occurs wherever the spirit is destined to be the ruler. Egypt's pride must bow. Troubles, therefore, which it is not able to avert, press on it. The natural man is brought into perplexity, that it may submit itself and hear the spirit's teachings. The details I cannot open here; for it is one thing to see, another to utter such mysteries. I will only note that Joseph now receives a wife (Genesis 41:45); that is, certain natural affections or principles are embraced and rendered subject to the spirit; while some of the riches which God so wondrously bestows are treasured up, as a means of at least abating and better meeting the impending judgment (Genesis 41:47-49).

---------- As fulfilled without, this scene is open to all; and in this view we are here shewn the means by which worldlings are brought to allow the exaltation of the spiritual. Sooner or later the great of this world stand by their river, that is, watch the transient course of earthly blessings, and thereby are grieved with sad visions, as they see the good destroyed and preyed on by the evil. But they cannot understand their own riddle, much less devise a remedy which shall suffice to

meet the crisis; till, at the suggestion of some who have already profited by their wisdom, the Lord's beloved are found, not mere men of faith, or sons of God, or zealous servants only, but men who have long since dreamt of rule, and then for their truth and grace been separated from their brethren, and falsely charged, and sold, and shut up; who by all this have been prepared of God in due time to enlighten and guide and help many. By such both blessings and judgments are used to save the world. Egypt does not become Canaan, but a wondrous change is effected through its length and breadth; while some are united to them by a nearer and dearer tie, as a beloved Church, in which children are begotten who shall inherit Canaan. I do not care to dwell on historic applications; but I may say, that the christianising of Europe, through the influence which saintly souls exercised on a violent age, is one example of the outward fulfilment here; after which came that awful famine of the word of the Lord, which, had not abundant treasures been laid up, would have consumed the world. (Note: See Gloss Ord. in loco.) But the same story is fulfilling every day; and those who at one stage are mocked as dreamers, and misrepresented, and shut up, and cast out by brethren, end by ruling those whom their brethren cannot rule, and by saving and serving those who mocked them.

Dispensationally the fulfilment here concerns us much. We saw how in this view the saved butler prefigured Gentile Christendom. (Note: See on Genesis 40:1-23.) Here we see how this liberated people, whose eyes were opened to behold the Vine, even while ministering it to the world, unfaithfully keeps to itself the secret of what the true Joseph has done for it. But a tine comes, in the providence of God, when the rulers of this world, represented in Pharaoh, begin to be sorely troubled. Visions haunt rulers, of weak things destroying strong, of hungry creatures eating up the fat and flourishing. The oxen strong to labour are seen to be consumed; and, what is worse, the thin and hungry ones are none the fatter for it. The seven good ears, of which it is twice noticed that "they came up upon one stalk" (Genesis 41:5; Genesis 41:22), (Note: Nothing like this is seen in "the thin ears.") are devoured by the poor and weak, in whom is seen no bond of union. The strong and good, having union among themselves, are destroyed by those who are alike in misery, but have no bond of fellowship. Surely it is an awful dream, which the world's rulers are beginning to see, and not without perplexity. What does it portend? Such is the question this day with some to whom the butler has given the cup, but who do not know Joseph. It portends a trouble, which the world unaided cannot meet; one for which the learning and counsels of Egypt will find no remedy. For God Himself shall bring all Egypt to such self-despair, as will render the need of His Elect Servant's presence and help plain to all. At this day a million men in Europe are needed to keep order; to keep, while it may be so, the weak and hungry from devouring the strong before them. Sooner or later, spite of all its boastings, the world will discover that it needs Christ; that neither its present rulers nor magicians can solve their own riddle. Sooner or later they must confess their own weakness, and admit that a power not in them, -- the government of Christ and His Spirit, -- alone can save the world. Blessed be God, the day is at hand, when the Despised One shall rule: the night has been dark, but the light of day cannot be far off. When the night is darkest, the morning is at hand; and the child is born, when the travail pains are sharpest. The world has long travailed and been in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the Son of God, and the redemption of the body. His day shall surely come. Then, while earth bows itself, shall His Virgin Bride be given to Him. Then shall the earth be glad, for He cometh to judge the world with equity,

and the people with His truth. Through judgment shall the world be saved. His wisdom shall rescue it, even while it passes through "the consumption which is decreed on all the earth" (Isaiah 28:22). (Note: Ambrose, (De Joseph, c. 7 § 40,) and Augustine, (Enar. in Ps. lxxx. § 8,) both allude to this dispensational fulfilment.)

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, who is like unto Thee, who dwellest on high, yet humblest Thyself to behold the things which are in heaven and in earth; who takest the poor from the dust, and the needy from the dunghill, to set them with princes, even with the princes of Thy people? The whole earth shall be full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord Most High.

Here, for the present, I conclude these Notes, unable to write of that glory which shall ere long be manifested. The works of Christ cannot be fully written yet. If they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. But the part of His work here written, (for it is He who works in us,) may shew how great is that transformation, which He is able and willing to perform in those who yield their will to Him. Only let us give ourselves to Him, and wait for Him. For it is love which keeps us so long waiting for the powers of the world to come, lest being used in self-hood they should be a curse, and so increase our condemnation. There have been some, who, having received some special gift or energy, have in self-will denied the gift its true development, and, substituting their own hasty purpose for that of Him who called them, have used the spirit to their own private ends, thus injuring themselves unspeakably. Therefore let each humbly submit himself in all things to God, that He may fulfil His will and work as He pleases. O Lord, through life and death fulfil Thy work in us, that to us to live may be Christ, according to Thy pleasure, that so Thou mayest be seen and rest in us, and we be hid and rest in Thee, for ever. Amen.

4.2. Abram's Separation from Lot

II. -- ABRAM’S SEPARATION FROM LOT

Genesis 13:1-18

WE saw in creation a separating process, before a perfecting one: we shall see it again and again in man’s development. Abram separated from Ur, and from Terah, and from Egypt, has further to be separated from Lot also, before he can be perfected; for it is only "after that Lot was separated from him, that the Lord said unto him, Lift up now thine eyes, for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it." The particulars of this separation are fully given; and painful as it is, happy are they in whom it is accomplished.

Abram and Lot, as we have seen, within, represent the spiritual and the upright natural mind respectively, which seem at first so closely united, that for awhile we are scarcely conscious of any distinction or difference between them; so unitedly do they move and act together, like the shell and kernel of a nut, which in its unripe state are scarcely to be distinguished, still less to be separated, but which, in proportion as they ripen, acquire and manifest a distinct separateness. So Lot, our upright natural mind, for a season, takes step for step with the spirit of faith in our advance to good things; but as we proceed we see they are not one, for nature at its best desires and longs for that which faith has given up. From the first God sees they are distinct; for Abram "walks with God," but Lot, (again and again is it noticed,) "walks with Abram." (See Genesis 12:4; Genesis 13:1; Genesis 13:5, &c.) Nevertheless, long after faith perceives the old man to be dead, it yet strives, if possible, to bring the natural mind into unity with itself; toiling that the outward should be as the inward, the natural as the spiritual, for it feels the bond of kindred to this outward man, saying as Abram to Lot, "We are brethren" (Genesis 13:8). (Note: Ambrose, De Abr. l. ii. c. 6, § 28. Origen, Hom. vi. in Gen.) It seeks, therefore, first by grace to take it heavenward; yet the giving of it up may be the real way to greater perfection in the inner man: for the outward man being thus allowed to go his way, the spirit of faith may be freer and have less distraction. So Paul, while praising a single life, and the higher privilege of an entire victory over natural affections and the natural man, writes to the Corinthians, that if they cannot at once restrain those affections, which though lawful are merely natural, they may yield to them (1 Corinthians 7:7-9). What is this but letting Lot, the outward man, have his way, for the greater peace and freedom of the inner man. So the spirit of faith in us, finding this outer man to be, like Lot, though "righteous," yet earthy, gives it its way; and thus gradually learns both to be and to feel itself more distinct and really separated from it; though for stages after this, faith yet sighs over it, and makes more than one effort to save it from the judgments which it brings upon itself. (Note: The inward fulfilment of each particular here is traced at considerable length by Ambrose; De Abr. l. ii. c. 6, § 31.)

Such is the general import of this scene, as wrought within; but the particulars are, for such as can read them in this light, no less instructive. For instance, the ground where this takes place is not in Egypt, but when Abram has come back again to the place whence trial had driven him; for, be it observed, Abram is brought back to that very point from which he had swerved to go down to

Egypt, even "to the place where his tent was at the first" (Genesis 13:3). Places figure certain states; indeed, the word "state" simply means a "standing place." (Note: Status, from stare, to stand.) So the soul comes back to the ground it once held, with increased apprehension of its value, after the experiences of Egypt. And here, on the ground of promise, it is that Lot finds an occasion to depart from Abram; here, while the spirit of faith would stand on the promise, the outward man makes some gift the occasion of going his own way. Thus does the advance of our spirit ever bring out and test the old man. None have so proved what the natural man is as those who have come into the light of heavenly things. For heavenly things and places, if they do not excite, at least expose, the flesh. The natural man, which can be quiet in natural things, cannot rest when we approach to what is spiritual; so true is it that what is good for the pure is evil to the impure, so that heaven is hell to some, and darkness and blindness are mercy to those who do not love the light. Thus Abram's advance brought out what was in Lot; but Lot's gifts or riches helped to bring about the separation, being not the cause, indeed, but the occasion of strife. Abram and Lot were both rich, although in different ways. "Lot had flocks, and herds, and tents." Abram had these, but was "very rich in silver and in gold" also (Genesis 13:2; Genesis 13:5). The outward man can and does possess much; but the gold and the silver, that is, the higher forms of truth, are not those which he obtains, or even wishes for. (Note: See above, respecting the metals, on chap. 4. Ambrose writes of the different riches of Abram and Lot, De Abr. l. ii. c. 5, § 20 and 24.) The "flocks" lead to the strife. What are these but those animal emotions which, as they belong to Abram or Lot, are under the power either of the spirit of faith or of the outward man; and the thoughts which direct these, and keep them from wandering, are their "herdsmen," who strive together for mastery. (Note: I am almost afraid to speak of this, though saints of old have done so; but the following passage from the comment of Ambrose on this chapter, will prove that the interpretation in the text is at least no novelty: -- De Abr. l. ii. c. 6, § 27.) And faith, not yet possessing, but waiting for, power, yields for a season, receiving in the place of Lot greater revelations of the loving will of God. For "the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land thou seest, to thee will I give it. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee" (Genesis 13:14-17). (Note: Ambros. de Abr. l. ii. c. 7, § 37.) And so when we reach this stage, and Lot departs, -- when the spirit of faith is made to feel its difference even from the upright outward mind, -- we find that there are lengths and breadths, toward the north and south, toward the sun-setting, and toward the sun-rising, in directions toward coldness and warmth, toward light and darkness, of which as yet we have not so much as heard; and all this again and again secured by the unfailing "I will." So faith goes on. Having already reached Bethel, it now comes on as far as Hebron. Bethel is "the house of God;" Hebron is "fellowship" (Genesis 13:18). (Note: The import of the name Bethel (bethel [H1008]) is well known. Hebron (chebron [H2275], from chabar [H2266], to be joined together,) means fellowship. Hebron is called Mamre, see Genesis 35:27, meaning vision. See on chap. 18.) Having known worship, faith now apprehends communion. In due time it gets still further, but at present it rests at Hebron.

Such is this scene within. Its fulfilment in the world without may to some be more intelligible. In this view Abram is the man of faith, who, having already left the ground of nature, after some

declension is again escaping from the world. Such men of faith, coming up out of Egypt, have to come back to the very point whence trial had driven them (Genesis 13:4). They "come up" (Genesis 13:1), (Note: In Scripture, going into Egypt is always "going down," and coming out of it is always "coming up." Within the borders of the land also, when the elect goes farther into its interior, it always is "going up." See Genesis 35:1; Joshua 7:2-4. So too from the interior to Jerusalem is "going up." -- 1 Kings 12:27-28; 2 Kings 20:5; 2 Kings 20:8; Matthew 20:18; Mark 10:33. The reason for this lies, first, in the form of the country, and yet more in the spiritual reality of which Canaan and Egypt were formed to be types. Origen goes at great length into this, Hom. xv. in Gen. xlv. ad init.) for Egypt is low ground, and the ground of promise, on which they would again stand, needs some patient climbing if we would possess it. They come, step by step, "from Egypt to the South," then "from the South," then "to Bethel," and so on (Genesis 13:1-3); (Note: Augustine, Annot. in Job, vol. iii. p. 669, refers to the mystic sense of "the South.") for not by a single step can a believer get right when his failure in faith has taken him out of the way. But having reached Bethel, worship begins again: -- "Abram called upon the name of the Lord." In Egypt Abram had no altar, for communion with the world mars communion with the Lord; but as soon as the pilgrimage is renewed, the altar again has its appointed feast and offering. This is a point on which some have much to learn. They hope for communion with the Lord while still in worldliness, as if the Lord’s altar could stand yet in Egypt, and attendance at it be the common privilege of believers and unbelievers; so little difference do they see between Pharaoh’s kingdom and the promised land, between this world and heavenly places. But such things cannot be as yet. Israel may indeed "sigh and cry," even in the house of bondage; but worship and communion belong to higher ground. So when Pharaoh said to Moses, "Go and sacrifice to God in this land," Moses said, "It is not meet to do so; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?" (Exodus 8:26-27). Here is the reason why the elect cannot worship with Egyptians. Because the worship of the Church and world are so opposed, that the one is "an abomination" to the other. Israel slays and sacrifices what Egyptians worship. Israel sees that the ox and lamb must shed their blood. Israel knows why this is, and does not grudge it. Egyptians cannot understand it. The ox is their god. Hence the Church, if bound by the world, ceases to worship, or else, like the unfaithful remnant in Jeremiah’s days, worships as Egyptians do (Jeremiah 44:15-17). But here the man of faith is come to Bethel, "to the place of the altar," and there "he calls upon the Lord." But this high ground has its own trials. Those who, like Lot, until now have walked with men of faith, when they come to this point find reasons for going back; and this, though trying to the elect, is good, for as outward men drop away from us, the Lord more and more reveals Himself.

What Lot is we have already seen. Inwardly, he represents that upright outward mind, which goes some steps with faith towards heavenly things. Outwardly, he represents those in whom this outward mind is the ruling life, whose souls live in religious outward things. Of this class some ever start with men of faith. The Abrams "walk with God;" the Lots "go with Abram" (Genesis 12:4; Genesis 13:1; Genesis 13:5). These last are the men who take right steps because others take them, who make sacrifices because others do so, rather than because a present God calls for such a step or such a sacrifice. Such, sooner or later, will shew what they are, righteous souls, but wholly unable to walk where the men of faith walk, leaving them as soon as they resolutely press on to the best things, and destined to beget a seed, like Moab and Ammon, to be a thorn in the side of the seed of the men of faith. And gift ever helps on this division: to this day "flocks and

herds" are an occasion for manifesting the tastes, and thus of separating the inward and spiritual from the righteous outward man; while the cause lies in this, that one seeks heaven, the other is still in measure hankering after this world. Yet the gifts are only the occasion: the cause was this, that one had an eye turned to the plain of Jordan, while the other looked onward into the hills of promise. For we read, that "Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw the plain of Jordan, that it was like the land of Egypt" (Genesis 13:10). In this to him lay its attractiveness. Hence, as soon as the "herds" and "flocks" gave an excuse, he at once separates himself, and goes down Jordan-ward. These "flocks," in this view, are those lower natures, those animal souls, who are ruled and led, some by outward, some by spiritual men, -- for each have their own flocks, -- and the strifes of the herdsmen, who lead these respective flocks, are the occasion for the Lots to leave the Abrams. Oh! what strife has there been about flocks! It is not numbers, nor an abundance of gift, which can make brethren dwell together in unity. Rather will gifts be an occasion for strife; for schism is the growth, not of spiritual poverty, but of spiritual wealth. Hence, at Corinth, where "they lacked no gift," there was strife among the herdsmen, the more because the gifts abounded, while they were "yet carnal." (Compare 1 Corinthians 1:7 with 1 Corinthians 3:1.) And this happens not in Egypt, but as soon as the men of faith seek unflinchingly to go up to the higher ground the Lord has promised them. Lot does not depart from Abram in Egypt. While Christians are in the world, its habits and institutions, and the barriers which these raise between man and man, are enough to preclude strifes between brethren. Besides, the outward man has enough while in the world to satisfy his outward tastes. But when Egypt is left, brethren are thrown together in a way hitherto all unknown. Now comes the test to prove their grace, for few things search us more than collision with our brethren. (Note: So Thomas a Kempis says, "It is no small matter to dwell in a religious community or congregation, to converse therein without complaint, and to persevere therein faithfully unto death." -- Book i. chap. 17.) Then the lack of outward things stirs up the outward man. Well do worldly-minded Christians know this, and wisely do they choose the lower ground, where their natural tastes find more that is in accordance with them; where outward things keep them from coming to themselves, and what they are remains undiscovered by them; where thus their weakness may be mistaken for strength, and circumstances take the place of grace. For, indeed, till we are stript of things around, we little know what spirit dwells in us; so much do the things of time and sense without keep us from discovering what really we are within. Hence, some never know what restless selfish souls they have, until the things which have kept them from themselves are for ever taken from them. Others, who by trials get glimpses of themselves, instead of going on to search out the evil hidden in them, that they may overcome it, seek rather to hide it from themselves and others, and, to do this, continually seek more and more of outward things. But faith is content to learn itself, if it may learn God. It would rather be weak with Him than strong without Him.

Thus, for awhile, is the path of faith more lonely. The true believer is more than ever cast on God. The Lots "choose" according to the sight of their eyes; and so, by degrees, get from communion with the godly to communion with the godless. Unlike souls, sooner or later, must separate. If there be not one spirit, no bond or arrangement can keep men long together. Each is gravitating to his own place by a law which none can gainsay, -- dust to dust, and the spirit to God, who is a spirit. Let us not forget the steps of Lot. First "he saw;" then "he chose;" then "he journeyed from the east," like some before him; then "he pitched towards Sodom;" then "he dwelt there" (Genesis 13:10-12). (Note: In our version, the words miquedem, in Genesis 13:11, which, in Genesis 11:2,

are translated "from the east," are here simply translated "east." The LXX. in both places render it apo anatolon. The Vulgate also gives, "ab oriente," which the Douay Version follows, translating, "from the east.") In a word, he walked by sight, then by self-will, then away from the light, then towards the unclean world, at last to make his home in it. This is the path of Lots in every age. And such, though "righteous" and "saved," are only "saved so as by fire" (1 Corinthians 3:15). The separation accomplished, the Lord appears, not to the righteous one who goes towards Sodom, but to him who still abides in the path of faith. To souls left by brethren, the Lord draws near, to tell us that if, by standing on the ground of promise, we lose brethren, we do not lose Him. "The Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes." As if to say, Lot hath of his own will lifted up his eyes: he hath seen what he can from his stand-point. Now lift up thine eyes, and see from my stand-point. "Look from the place where thou art, northward, southward, eastward, westward." Fear not to look whence the cold cometh, and towards the place of heat, towards the light, and towards darkness. As yet little knowest thou of all these. But "all that thou seest, to thee will I give it." And mark the advance in the revelation here. First, the promise respecting the land was, "A land which I will shew thee:" then, when come into the land, the promise ran, "To thy seed will I give it:" now it is, "To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." (Compare Genesis 12:1; Genesis 12:7 and Genesis 13:15.) Then follows the exhortation, "Arise, walk through the land," -- learn by experience what it is, -- "in the length of it and in the breadth of it, for I will give it thee."

Such is another stage of faith’s way; and trying as the separation here described is, both in the inward and outward world, it is one we must know, if we would know the best things. Surely he who thus loses brethren or children or lands receives a hundredfold.

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