

WRITINGS OF ARTHUR P STANLEY

by Arthur P. Stanley

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Arthur P. Stanley, compiled for study and devotional reading.

2 Chapters

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S. In Memoriam—thomas Carlyle

In Memoriam—thomas Carlyle The “kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field.”—Matthew 13:24. The gospel of this day starts with a comparison of the kingdom of heaven to a sower. It is the same as that with which the more celebrated parable begins, “A sower went forth to sow.” They both fix our minds on the manner in which God’s kingdom—the kingdom of truth, beauty and goodness—is carried on in the world. The kingdom of all that is good is fostered, not so much by direct and immediate plantation or grafting or building or formations of any kind, but rather by the sowing of good seed, which, in time, shall grow up and furnish a rich harvest.

It is so with regard to the truths of the Bible. They are sown in the world; the good which grows up after them is never, in outward form, like the truth which came from the actual source. Institutions spring up. They may derive their vitality from the corn and wheat which sink into the ground; but they cannot be the very thing itself. There is not a single form, or a single doctrine of Christendom, of which the outward shape is not different, in some way, from the principle of life which gave it birth.

There is only one instance of a ready-made scholastic doctrine in the whole Bible, and that has been long known to be spurious. It is not the verse of the three witnesses, but the parable of the Good Shepherd, the poetry of the Prodigal Son, the pathetic story of the Crucifixion, that have been the true seeds of the Christian life. In this way it is that the divine origin of these truths proves itself. The bright and tender words can never grow old, because they are not flowers cut and dried, but seeds and roots, which are capable of bearing a thousand applications.

Again, this is the ground of our looking forward with a hope, which nothing can extinguish, toward the transformation, the renewal of the human life, for a moment perishing, to reappear, we trust, in some future world, instinct with the capacities for good or evil with which it was endowed, or which it has acquired in the life that now is. The seminal form within the deeps of that little chaos sleeps, which will, we trust, in the almighty providence of God, restore that chaos of decayed and broken powers into conditions more elevated than now we can dream of.

Again, characters appear in the world which have a vivifying and regenerating effect, not so much for the sake of what they teach us, as for the sake of showing us how to think and how to act. What Socrates taught, concerning man and the universe, has long since passed away; but what he taught of the method and process of pursuing truth—the inquiry, the cross-examination, the sifting of what we do know from what we do not know—this is the foundation of the good seed of European philosophy for all time. What St. Paul taught concerning circumcision and election or grace is among the things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable may wrest to their own destruction, or, having served their generation, may be laid asleep; but what he taught of the mode and manner of arriving at divine truth, when he showed how “the letter killeth and the spirit maketh alive”; when he set forth how charity is the bond of all perfectness; when he showed how all men are acceptable to God by fulfilling, each in his vocation, whether Jew or Gentile,

whether slave or free, the commandments of God—he laid the true foundation of Christian faith; he planted in the heart of man the seed, the good seed, of Christian liberty and Christian duty, to bear fruit again and again amidst the many relapses and eclipses of Christendom. When Luther dinned into the ears of his generation the formula of transubstantiation and of justification by faith only, this was doomed to perish and “wax old as doth a garment”; but his acts, his utterances of indignant conscience and of far-sighted genius, became the seed of the Reformation, the hope of the world. When John Wesley rang the changes of the well-known formula of assurance, it was the word of the ordinary preacher; but, in his whole career of fifty years of testifying for holiness and preaching against vice, this was the seed of more than Methodism—it was the seed of the revival of English religious zeal. Such seeds, such principles, such infusions, not of a mechanical system, but of a new light in the world, are not of everyday occurrence—they are the work of a few, of a gifted few, and, therefore, are so much the more to be observed when anyone, who has had it in his power to scatter such seeds right and left, passes away and leaves us to ask what we have gained, what we can assimilate, of the peculiar nourishment which his life and teachings may have left for our advantage. Few will doubt that such an one was he who yesterday was taken from us. It may be that he will not be laid, as might have been expected, among the poets and scholars and sages, whose dust rests within this Abbey; it may be that he was drawn by an irresistible longing toward the native hills of his own Dumfriesshire, and that there, beside the bones of his kindred, beside his father and his mother, and with the silent ministrations of the Church of Scotland, to which he still clung amidst all the vicissitudes of his long existence, will repose all that is earthly of Thomas Carlyle. But he belonged to a wider sphere than Scotland; for, though by nationality a Scotchman, he yet was loved and honored wherever the British language is spoken. Suffer me, then, to say a few words on the good seed which he has sown in our hearts. In his teaching, as in all things human, there were, no doubt, tares, or what some would account tares, which must be left to after-times to adjust, as best they can, with the pure wheat which is gathered into the garner of God. There were imitators, parasites, exaggerators, of the genuine growth, which sometimes almost choked the original seed and disfigured its usefulness and its value; but of this we do not speak here. Gather them up into bundles and burn them. We speak only of him and of his best self. Nor would we now discourse at length on those brilliant gifts which gave such a charm to his writings, and such an unexampled splendor to his conversation. All the world knows how the words and the deeds of former times became, as Luther describes in the apostle’s language, “not dead things, but living creatures with hands and feet.” Every detail was presented before us, penetrated through and through with the fire of poetic imagination, which was the more powerful because it derived its warmth from facts gathered together by the most untiring industry. Who can ever, from this time forward, picture the death of Louis XVI, or the flight of the king and queen, without remembering the thrill of emotion with which, through the “History of the French Revolution,” they became acquainted with him for the first time? Who can wander among the ruins of St. Edmunds’s at Bury without feeling that they are haunted in every corner by the lifelike figure of the Abbot Samson, as he is drawn from the musty chronicle of Jocelyn? Who can read the letters and the speeches of Cromwell, now made almost intelligible to modern years, without gratitude to the unwearied zeal which gathered together from every corner those relics of departed greatness? What German can fail to acknowledge that, not even in that much-enduring, all-exhausting, country of research and labor—not even there has there been raised such a monument to Frederick the Second, called the Great, as by the simple Scotchman who, for the

sake of describing what he considered the last hero-king, almost made himself, for the time, a soldier and a statesman?

But, on these and many like topics, this is not the time or place to speak. It is for us to ask, as I have said, What was the good seed which he sowed in the field of our hearts, and in what respects we shall be, or ought to be, the better for the sower having lived and died among us?

It was customary for those who honored him to speak of him as a prophet. And, if we take the word in its largest sense, he truly deserved the name. He was a prophet, in the midst of an untoward generation: his prophet's mantle was his rough Scotch dialect, and his own peculiar diction, and his own secluded manner of life. He was a prophet, most of all, in the emphatic utterance of truth which no one else, or hardly anyone else, ventured to deliver, and which, he felt, was a message of good to a world which sorely needed them. He stood almost alone, among the men of his time, in opposing a stern, inflexible resistance to the whole drift and pressure of modern days toward exalting popular opinion and popular movements as oracles to be valued above the judgment of the few, above the judgment of the wise, the strong, and the good. Statesmen, men of letters, preachers, have all bowed their heads under the yoke of this, as they believed, irresistible domination, under the impression that the first duty of the chiefest man is, not to lead, but to be led—the necessary conditions of success, to ascertain which way the current flows, and to swim with it as far as it will bear us. To his mind all this proved an insane delusion. That expression of his, which has become, like many of his expressions, almost proverbial in the minds of those who like them least, will express the attitude of his mind, his answer to the question, "What are the people of England?" "Thirty millions—mostly fools." The whole framework and fabric of his mind was built up on the belief that there are not many wise, not many noble minds, not many destined by the supreme Ruler of the universe to rule their fellows; that few are chosen; that "strait is the gate and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it." But, when the few appear, when the great and good present themselves it is the duty and the wisdom of the multitude to seek their guidance. A Luther, a Cromwell, a Goethe, were to him the born kings of men. This was his doctrine of the work of heroes; this, right or wrong, was the mission of his life. It is, all things considered, a fact much to be meditated upon; it is, all things considered, a seed which is worthy of all cultivation.

There is another feeling of the age to which he also stood resolutely opposed, or, rather, a feeling of the age which was resolutely opposed to him, the tendency to divide men into two hostile camps, parted from each other by watchwords and flags, and banners and tokens, which we commonly designate by the name of party. He, perchance, disparaged unduly the usefulness, the necessity, of party organization or party spirit as a mode of the secondary machinery by which the great affairs of the world are carried on; but he was a signal example of a man who not only could be measured by no party standard, but who absolutely disregarded it. He never, during the whole course of his long life, took any active part, never, I believe, voted in those elections which, to most of us, are the very breath of our nostrils. For its own sake he cherished whatever was worth preserving; for its own sake he hailed whatever improvement was worth effecting. He cared not under what name or by what man the preservation or the improvement was achieved. This, too, is an ideal which few can attain, which still fewer attempt; but it is something to have had one man who was possessed by it as a vital and saving truth. And such a man was the Prophet of Chelsea. But there was that in him which, in spite of his own contemptuous description of the people, in

spite of his scorn for the struggles of party, endeared him, in no common degree, even to those who most disagreed with him—even to the humblest classes of our great community. He was an eminent instance of how a man can trample on the most cherished idols of the market-place, if yet he shows that he has in his heart of hearts the joys, the sorrows, the needs of his toiling, suffering fellow creatures. In this way they insensibly felt drawn toward that tender, fervid nature which was weak when they were weak, which burned with indignation when they suffered wrong. They felt that, if he despised them, it was in love; if he refused to follow their bidding, it was because he believed that their bidding was an illusion. And for that independence of party of which I spoke, there was also the countervailing source, that no man could for a moment dream that it arose from indifference to his country. He was no monk; he was no hermit dwelling apart from the passions which sway the destinies of a great nation. There is no man living to whom the thrift, the industry, the valor of his countrymen were so deeply precious. There is no man living, to whom, had it been possible for him to have been aroused from the torpor of approaching death, the news would have been more welcome than the Parliament of England had been in the last week saved from becoming a byword and reproach and shame among the nations of the earth. And all this arose out of a frame of mind which others have shared with him, but which, perhaps, few have been able to share to the same extent. The earnestness, almost the very word is his own, the earnestness, the seriousness, with which he approached the great problems of all human life, have made us feel them also. The tides of fashion have swept over the minds of many who once were swayed by his peculiar tones; but there must be many a young man whose first feelings of generosity and public spirit were roused within him by the cry as if from the very depths of his heart, “Where, now, are your Hengists and your Horsas? Where are those leaders who should be leading their people to useful employments, to distant countries, where are they? Preserving their game!” Before his withering indignation all false pretensions, all excuses for worthless idleness and selfish luxury, fell away. The word which he invented to describe them has sunk, perhaps, into cant and hollowness; but it had a truth when first he uttered it. Those falsities were shams, and they who practised them were guilty of the sin which the Bible, in scathing scorn, calls hypocrisy. And whence came this earnestness? Deep down in the bottom of his soul it springs from his firm conviction that there was a higher, a better world than that visible to our outward senses. All, whether called saints, in the middle ages, or Puritans, in the seventeenth century, or what you like in our own day, he revered them, with all their eccentricities, as bright and learned examples of those who “sacrificed their lives to their higher natures, their worsers to their better parts.” In addressing the students of Edinburgh, he bade them remember that the deep recognition of the eternal justice of heaven, and the unfailling punishment of crimes against the law of God, is at the origin and foundation of all the histories of nations. No nation which did not contemplate this wonderful universe with an awe-stricken and reverential belief that there was a great unknown, omnipotent, all-wise, and all-just Being superintending all men and all interests in it, no nation ever came to very much, nor did any man either, who forgot that. If a man forgot that, he forgot the most important part of his mission in the world. So he spoke, and the ground of his hope for Europe—of his hope, we may say, against hope—was that, after all, in any commonwealth where the Christian religion exists, nay, in any commonwealth where it has once existed, public or private virtue, the basis of all good, never can become extinct; but in every new age, and even from the deepest decline, there is a chance, and, in the course of ages, the certainty, of renovation. The divine depths of sorrow, the sanctuary of sorrow, the life and death of the divine Man, were, to him, Christianity. We stand, as it

were, beside him whilst the grave has not yet closed over those flashing eyes, over those granite features, over that weird form on which we have so often looked, whilst the silence of death has fallen on that house which was once so frequented and so honored. We call up memories which occurred to ourselves. One such, in the far past, may, perchance, come with peculiar force to those whose work is appointed in this place. Many years ago, whilst I belonged to another cathedral, I met him in St. James' Park, and walked with him to his own house. It was during the Crimean war; and after hearing him denounce, with his vigorous and, perhaps, exaggerated earnestness, the chaos and confusion into which our administration had fallen, and the doubt and distrust which pervaded all classes at the time, I ventured to ask him, "What, under the circumstances, is your advice to a canon of an English cathedral?" He grimly laughed at my question. He paused for a moment and then answered, in homely and well-known words; but which were, as it happened, especially fitted to situations like that in which he was asked to give his counsel—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." That is, no doubt, the lesson he leaves to each one of us in this place, and also to this weary world—the world of which he felt the weariness as age and infirmity grew upon him—the lesson which, in his more active days, he practised to the very letter. He is at rest, he is at rest; delivered from that burden of the flesh against which he chafed and fretted: he is at rest! In his own words, "Babylon, with its deathening inanity, rages on to the dim innocuous and unheeded forever." From the "silence of the eternities," of which he so often spoke, there still sound, and will long sound, the tones of that marvelous voice.

Let us take one tender expression, written three or four years ago—one plaintive yet manful thought, which has never yet reached the public eye: "Three nights ago, stepping out after midnight and looking up at the stars, which were clear and numerous, it struck me with a strong, new kind of feeling: 'In a little while I shall have seen you also for the last time. God Almighty's own theater of immensity—the infinite made palpable and visible to me—that also will be closed—flung too in my face—and I shall never behold death any more.' The thought of the eternal deprivation even of this, though this is such a nothing in comparison, was sad and painful to me. And then a second feeling rose upon me: 'What if Omnipotence that has developed in me these appetites, these reverences, these infinite affections, should actually have said, Yes, poor mortal, such as you who have gone so far, shall be permitted to go further. Hope! despair not!' God's will, not ours, be done."

Yes, God's will be done for us and for him. The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away.

S. Travels in Sinai and Palestine.

Travels in Sinai and Palestine.

People and Land of Israel.

Sinai and Palestine, in Connection with their History. By Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, M.A., Canon of Canterbury, with Maps and Plans. Third Edition. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street. 1856.

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

(1st. Edition, May [01 1857 191]) {The 2nd. Edition as below, is abbreviated}

[01 1857 189] Our object in the present paper is to cite some passages in the most able and interesting of recent works on the Holy Land, and at the same time to afford evidence whether or not it ought to have the confidence of the Christian and the Christian household.

Mr. Stanley's preface is devoted to his view of the connection of sacred history with the geography of the promised land. He attempts to trace its influence on national character, on forms of expression, the explanation it offers of particular events, and the evidence afforded of historical truth, with its illustrative, poetical, or proverbial uses. Most of our readers will feel that it is an attempt to invest what at best is but Gibeonite labour, "hewing wood and drawing water," with a grandeur to which it is in no way entitled. Still as such servitude had its place towards Israel and the sanctuary, the believer may reap good if he know how to turn to account these efforts, earthly as they are. The introduction treats of Egypt in relation to Israel. Part I., on the peninsula of Sinai, is a fair sample of Mr. S.'s graphic and comprehensive pen. This peninsula is, in certain respects, one of the most remarkable districts on the face of the earth.

"It combines the three grand features of earthly scenery — the sea, the desert, and the mountains. It occupies also a position central to three countries, distinguished not merely for their history, but for their geography, amongst all other nations of the world, Egypt, Arabia, Palestine. And lastly, it has been the scene of a history as unique as its situation; by which the fate of the three nations which surround it, and through them the fate of the whole world, has been determined. It was a just remark of Chevalier Bunsen, that 'Egypt has, properly speaking, no history. History was born on that night when Moses led forth his people from Goshen.' Most fully is this felt as the traveller emerges from the valley of the Nile, the study of the Egyptian monuments, and finds himself on the broad tract of the desert. In these monuments, magnificent and instructive as they are, he sees great kings and mighty deeds — the father, the son, and the children — the sacrifices, the conquests, the coronations. But there is no before and after, no unrolling of a great drama, no beginning, middle, and end of a moral progress, or even of a mournful decline. In the desert, on the contrary, the moment the green fields of Egypt recede from our view, still more when we reach the Red sea, the farther we advance into the desert and the mountains, we feel that everything henceforward is continuous, that there is a sustained and protracted interest, increasing more and more, till it reaches its highest point in Palestine, in Jerusalem, on Calvary, and on Olivet. And in

the desert of Sinai by the fact that there it stands alone. Over all the other great scenes of human history — Palestine itself, Egypt, and Italy — successive tides of great recollections have rolled, each, to a certain extent, obliterating the traces of the former. But in the peninsula of Sinai there is nothing to interfere with the effect of that single event. The Exodus is the one stream of history that has passed through this wonderful region — a stream which has for its background the whole magnificence of Egypt, and for its distant horizon the forms, as yet unborn, of Judaism, of Mahometanism, of Christianity." (pp. 3, 4). This extract exemplifies our author, and not least his unhappy practice of blending things divine and human, heavenly and earthly, which may fascinate the natural mind, but is abhorrent to the spiritual man.

Take another specimen.

"It is between those two gulfs, the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of 'Akaba, that the peninsula of Sinai lies. From them it derives its contact with the sea and therefore with the world, which is one striking distinction between it and the rest of the vast desert of which it forms a part. From hardly any point of the Sinaitic range is the view of the sea wholly excluded; from the highest points both of its branches are visible; its waters blue with a depth of colour more like that of some of the Swiss lakes than of our northern or midland seas, its tides imparting a life to the dead landscape, familiar to modern travellers from the shores of the Atlantic or German ocean, but strange and inexplicable to the inhabitants of the ancient world, whose only knowledge of the sea was the vast tideless lake which washed the coasts of Egypt, Palestine, Greece, and Italy. It must have always brought to the mind of those who stood on its shores that they were on the waters of a new and almost unknown world. Those tides come rolling in from the great Indian Ocean; and with Indian Ocean these two gulfs are the chief channels of communication from the northern world. The white shells which strew their shores, the forests of submarine vegetation, which gave the whole sea its Hebrew appellation of the 'Sea of weeds,' the trees of coral, whose huge trunks may be seen even on the dry shore, with the red rocks and red sand, which especially in the gulf of 'Akaba bound its sides, all bring before us the mightier mass of the Red or Erythrean Ocean, the coral strands of the Indian Archipelago, of which these two gulfs, with their peculiar products, are the northern off-shoots. The peninsula itself has been the scene of but one cycle of human events. But it has, through its two watery boundaries, been encircled with two tides of history which must not be forgotten in the associations which give it a foremost place in the geography and history of the world; two tides never flowing together, one falling as the other rose, but imparting to each of the two barren valleys through which they flow a life and activity hardly less than that which has so long animated the valley of the Nile. The two great lines of Indian traffic have alternately passed up the eastern and the western gulf, and though unconnected with the greater events of the peninsula of Sinai, the commerce of Alexandria, and the communications of England with India, which now pass down the Gulf of Suez, are not without interest, as giving a lively impression of the ancient importance of the twin gulf of 'Akaba. That gulf, now wholly deserted, was in the times of the Jewish monarchy the, great thoroughfare of the fleets of Solomon and Jehoshaphat, and the only point in the second period of their history which brought the Israelites into connection with the scenes of the earliest wanderings of their nation. Such are the western and eastern boundaries of this mountain tract; striking to the eye of the geographer, as the two parallels to that narrow Egyptian land from which the Israelites came forth: important to the historian, as the two links of Europe and Asia with the great ocean of the south, as the two points of contact between the

Jewish people and the civilisation of the ancient world. From the summit of Mount St. Catherine, or of Um-Shômer, a wandering Israelite might have seen the beginning and the end of his nation's greatness. On the one side lay the sea through which they had escaped from the bondage of slavery and idolatry — still a mere tribe of the shepherds of the desert. On the other side lay the sea, up which were afterwards conveyed the treasures of the Indies, to adorn the palace and the temple of the capital of a mighty empire."

Here the reader may observe the good and bad points of Mr. S. In all that is external, and that touches on human affairs, there is much which is valuable and masterly; but when he approaches the ways of God, as revealed in Scripture, there is a melancholy falling off. No Israelite has yet seen "the end of his nation's greatness," nor can see it, we may add. Indeed, that nation's sun has never yet reached its meridian, and, once risen, shall never set. "Thy sun shall no more go down." The reign of Solomon was but the partial and transient prefiguration of this destiny when a greater than Solomon, the true Son of David, whom himself typified, "shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Very unsatisfactory too is his mode of dealing with the passage of the Red Sea. The magnificence of the crisis, and its long train of associations are frankly admitted. But there is a careful insinuation of all that might reduce the fact to the level of the extraordinary but natural. With very different feelings would we refer to chapter 2: pp. 112-117, which exemplifies Mr. S.'s happiest manner in linking together the external features with the history and calling of the people. The rest of the chapter traces the peculiarities of Palestine as a land of ruins, its present condition as compared with the past, its climate and volcanic phenomena, its physical configuration, scenery, and geological features, as illustrations of scripture phrases.

Chapter 3. is devoted to Judea and Jerusalem, as is chapter 4. to the heights and passes of Benjamin; chapter 5. to Ephraim and Manasseh; chapter 6. to the maritime plain; chapter 7. to the Jordan and the Dead Sea; chapter 8. to Peraea and the transjordanic tribes; chapter 9. to the plain of Esdraelon; chapter 10. to Galilee; chapter 11, to the Lake of Merom and the source of the Jordan; chapter 12. to Lebanon and Damascus; chapter 13. to the gospel history and teaching, viewed in connection with the localities of Palestine; and chapter 14. to the Holy places, with an appendix of Hebrew and topographical words, arranged under different heads. It is curious that the finest sketches of the Canon of Canterbury are the battle scenes of ancient and mediaeval times, with which his accounts of cities and rivers, hill and dale, are plentifully bestrewed. His most frequent and perilous fault is habitual exaggeration of secondary causes, the suppression or veiling of the divine actings in the scripture history of the chosen people. We have only to add that the illustrative maps, which convey the colouring and nature of the ground, rocks, etc., of the Desert and Palestine, are interesting and valuable. With our author's corrections of the Authorised Version (save of appellatives) we do not agree. Fuller knowledge, we are persuaded, would dispose of not a few which are apparently the offspring of foreign criticism, and this is a most suspicious source, except for verbal minutiae.

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