WRITINGS OF ALFRED EDERSHEIM - VOLUME 1

by Alfred Edersheim

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Alfred Edersheim (Volume 1), compiled for study and devotional reading.

99 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 01.00.1. PROPHECY AND HISTORY
2. 01.00.2. Preface.
3. 01.01. Lecture 1
4. 01.02. Lecture 2
5. 01.03. Lecture 3
6. 01.04. Lecture 4.
7. 01.05. Lecture 5.
8. 01.06. Lecture 6.
9. 01.07. Lecture 7.
10. 01.08. Lecture 8.
11. 01.09. Lecture 9.
12. 01.10. Lecture 10.
13. 01.11. Lecture 11.
14. 01.12. Lecture 12.
15. 01.13. Footnotes
16. 02.01. SKETCHES OF JEWISH SOCIAL LIFE
17. 02.02. Chapter 2 - Jews and Gentiles in "The Land"
18. 02.03. Chapter 3 - In Galilee at the time of our Lord
19. 02.04. Chapter 4 - Travelling in Palestine--Roads, Inns, Hospitality, Custom...
20. 02.05. Chapter 5 - In Judaea
21. 02.06. Chapter 6 - Jewish Homes
22. 02.07. Chapter 7 - The Upbringing of Jewish Children
23. 02.08. Chapter 8 - Subjects of Study - Home Education in Israel; Female Educ...
24. 02.09. Chapter 9 - Mothers, Daughters, and Wives in Israel
25. 02.10. Chapter 10 - In Death and After Death
26. 02.11. Chapter 11 - Jewish Views on Trade, Tradesmen, and Trades' Guilds
27. 02.12. Chapter 12 - Commerce
28. 02.13. Chapter 13 - Among the People, and with the Pharisees
29. 02.14. Chapter 14 - The "Fraternity" of Pharisees
30. 02.15. Chapter 15 - Relation of the Pharisees to the Sadducees and Essenes,....
31. 02.16. Chapter 16 - Synagogues: Their Origin, Structure and Outward Arrangem...
32. 02.17. Chapter 17 - The Worship of the Synagogue
33. 02.18. Chapter 18 - Brief Outline of Ancient Jewish Theological Literature
34. 03.01.0. The Bible History, Old Testament
35. 03.01.00. Volume 1, Introduction
36. 03.01.000. Volume 1, Preface
37. 03.01.01. Volume 1, Chapter 01
38. 03.01.02. Volume 1, Chapter 02
39. 03.01.03. Volume 1, Chapter 03

40. 03.01.04. Volume 1, Chapter 04
41. 03.01.05. Volume 1, Chapter 05
42. 03.01.06. Volume 1, Chapter 06
43. 03.01.07. Volume 1, Chapter 07
44. 03.01.08. Volume 1, Chapter 08
45. 03.01.09. Volume 1, Chapter 09
46. 03.01.10. Volume 1, Chapter 10
47. 03.01.11. Volume 1, Chapter 11
48. 03.01.12. Volume 1, Chapter 12
49. 03.01.13. Volume 1, Chapter 13
50. 03.01.14. Volume 1, Chapter 14
51. 03.01.15. Volume 1, Chapter 15
52. 03.01.16. Volume 1, Chapter 16
53. 03.01.17. Volume 1, Chapter 17
54. 03.01.18. Volume 1, Chapter 18
55. 03.01.19. Volume 1, Chapter 19
56. 03.01.20. Volume 1, Chapter 20
57. 03.01.21. Volume 1, Chapter 21
58. 03.01.22. Volume 1, Chapter 22
59. 03.01.23. Volume 1, Chapter 23
60. 03.02.00. Volume 2, Preface
61. 03.02.01. Chapter 1 - Palestine Eighteen Centuries Ago
62. 03.02.01. Volume 2, Chapter 01
63. 03.02.02. Volume 2, Chapter 02
64. 03.02.03. Volume 2, Chapter 03
65. 03.02.04. Volume 2, Chapter 04
66. 03.02.05. Volume 2, Chapter 05
67. 03.02.06. Volume 2, Chapter 06
68. 03.02.07. Volume 2, Chapter 07
69. 03.02.08. Volume 2, Chapter 08
70. 03.02.09. Volume 2, Chapter 09
71. 03.02.10. Volume 2, Chapter 10
72. 03.02.11. Volume 2, Chapter 11
73. 03.02.12. Volume 2, Chapter 12
74. 03.02.13. Volume 2, Chapter 13
75. 03.02.14. Volume 2, Chapter 14
76. 03.02.15. Volume 2, Chapter 15
77. 03.02.16. Volume 2, Chapter 16
78. 03.02.17. Volume 2, Chapter 17
79. 03.02.18. Volume 2, Chapter 18
80. 03.02.19. Volume 2, Chapter 19
81. 03.02.20. Volume 2, Chapter 20

82. 03.02.21. Volume 2, Chapter 21
83. 03.03.00. Volume 3, Preface
84. 03.03.01. Volume 3, Chapter 01
85. 03.03.02. Volume 3, Chapter 02
86. 03.03.03. Volume 3, Chapter 03
87. 03.03.04. Volume 3, Chapter 04
88. 03.03.05. Volume 3, Chapter 05
89. 03.03.06. Volume 3, Chapter 06
90. 03.03.07. Volume 3, Chapter 07
91. 03.03.08. Volume 3, Chapter 08
92. 03.03.09. Volume 3, Chapter 09
93. 03.03.10. Volume 3, Chapter 10
94. 03.03.11. Volume 3, Chapter 11
95. 03.03.12. Volume 3, Chapter 12
96. 03.03.13. Volume 3, Chapter 13
97. 03.03.14. Volume 3, Chapter 14
98. 03.03.15. Volume 3, Chapter 15
99. 03.03.16. Volume 3, Chapter 16

Chapter 1

01.00.1. PROPHECY AND HISTORY

PROPHECY AND HISTORY IN RELATION TO THE MESSIAH. The Wartburton Lectures for 1880-1884 BY ALFRED EDERSHEIM.

AUTHOR OF Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah

01.00.2. Preface.

Preface. THE VOLUME herewith presented to the reader contains the Lectures delivered during the years 1880-84 in the Chapel of Lincoln's Inn on the foundation of Bishop Warburton. Its object, as expressed in the Will of the founder, is 'to prove the truth of revealed religion in general, and of the Christian in particular, from the completion of those prophecies in the Old and New Testaments which relate to the Christian Church, especially to the apostacy of Papal Rome.' From the wide range of subjects thus opened, it was necessary to select one - and naturally that, which would most directly meet the present phase of theological discussion, and so best fulfil the purpose for which the Lectureship had been instituted. Not, indeed, that the primary object should be negative, either in the defence of Catholic truth from its assailants, or in the refutation of objections brought against it. For all proper defence of truth must aim after this positive result: more clearly to define, and more accurately to set forth, that which is certainly believed among us. And this, in the good guidance of our God, is the higher meaning and issue of theological controversy. As every schism and separation indicate some truth which had been neglected, or temporarily ignored, by the Church, so each controversy marks some point on which the teaching of the Church had been wanting in clearness, accuracy, or fulness. And so every controversy, however bitter or threatening in its course, ultimately contributes to the establishment of truth not merely, nor even principally, by the answer to objections which it calls forth, but by the fuller consideration of what had been invalidated, and the consequent wider and more accurate understanding of it. Thus, long after the din of controversy has ceased, with all of human infirmity attending it, and the never ending conflict between truth and error has passed to another battle-field, the peaceful fruits of the contest remain as a permanent gain. In the end it may be so, that much that has proved indefensible - and which all along had only been held because it was traditional, and had never before been properly considered - may have to be given up; and that, the old truth may have to be resented in new forms, as the result of more accurate investigation and more scientific criticism. Yet still every contest, whatever its trials or the seeming loss, ultimately issues in what is better than victory - in real advance. But to each of us, who in loving loyalty has sought to contribute, according to his capacity, to the defence and further elucidation of what we cherish as the Revelation of God to man, comes this comfort of no small inward reassurance. We may have only partially succeeded in our effort; we may have even failed of success. But every defence and attempt at clearer elucidation, unless wholly ungrounded in reason or criticism, at least shows that defence and a clearer and higher position are possible, even though we may not have reached to it; and it points out the direction which others, perhaps more successful than we, may follow. Thus here also 'both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.' For, the end is certain - not that full and free criticism may be suppressed, but that it may be utilised, that so on the evening of the battle there may be assured peace, and the golden light shine around the old truth in her new garments of conquest, revealing the full perfection of her beauty.

Some contribution, however humble, towards this end, has been the object of these Lectures. Their form and limits prevented anything like the complete and scientific treatment which I could have wished. Yet the main questions concerning the Old Testament and its Messianic hope have been faced, and, in some respects, viewed under a new aspect. On Prophetism, as essentially distinguished from heathen divination; on Prophecy, as distinct from prophecies; on its wider relation to fulfilment; as well as on other cognate subjects, the views here expressed will, I venture to think, be found different from those hitherto presented. It need scarcely be stated, that at the present time the questions connected with the Old Testament occupy the foreground of theological discussion. Whether, or not, there is in the Old Testament any prophecy in the true and, as we had regarded it, the Scriptural sense; whether there were of old any directly God-sent prophets in Israel, with a message from heaven for the present, as well as for the future; whether there was any Messianic hope from the beginning, and any conception of a spiritual Messiah; nay, whether the state of religious belief in Israel was as we had hitherto imagined, or quite different; whether, indeed, there were any Mosaic institutions at all, or else the greater part of what we call such, if not the whole, dated from much later times - the central and most important portion of them, from after the Exile; whether, in short, our views on all these points have to be completely changed, so that, instead of the Law and the Prophets, we should have to speak of the Prophets and the Law; and, instead of Moses and the Prophets, of the Prophets and the Priests; and the larger part of Old Testament literature should be ascribed to Exilian and post-Exilian times, or bears the impress of their falsifications: - these are some of the questions which now engage theological thinkers, and which on the negative side are advocated by critics of such learning and skill, as to have secured, not only on the Continent, but even among ourselves, a large number of zealous adherents. In these circumstances it would have seemed nothing short of dereliction of duty on the part of one holding such a lectureship - indeed, inconsistent with its real object - to have simply passed by such discussions. For, in my view at least, they concern not only critical questions, but the very essence of our faith in ‘the truth of revealed religion in general, and of the Christian in particular.’ To say that Jesus is the Christ, means that He is the Messiah promised and predicted in the Old Testament; while the views above referred to respecting the history, legislation, institutions, and prophecies of the Old Testament, seem incompatible alike with Messianic predictions in the Christian sense, and even with real belief in the Divine authority of the larger portion of our Bible. And, if the Old Testament be thus surrendered, it is difficult to understand how the claims of the New, which is based on it, can be long or seriously sustained. Hence, while attempting to show the prophetic character of the Old Testament and its fulfilment in Jesus Christ, it seemed necessary to secure our position against attack both in front and rear. For the latter purpose I have sought to establish (in Lecture III.) what the primitive belief of the Church really was, by a reference to those portions of the Gospel-narratives which the most extreme negative criticism admits to be an authentic record of the faith of the early Christians, and by making similar examination of the apostolic testimony to the Gospel-facts in such of the apostolic writings of which the genuineness is not called in question. Having thus ascertained what was the earliest tradition of the Church concerning the Christ, say about thirty years after the Crucifixion, I proceeded to inquire what light was thrown upon it by references in Talmudic writings, at the same time describing the earliest recorded intercourse between Jewish Teachers and Christians. By the side of this, there was a second, and, as running parallel to the first, a confirmatory line of evidence from witnesses, not only independent, but hostile. Here it has been sought to ascertain, on the one hand, the full

import of the account given by Josephus of John the Baptist, which is generally admitted to be genuine; and, on the other, what light the well-known Epistle of Pliny the Younger about the Christians reflects upon the observances and the underlying belief of the Early Church. While thus the testimony of Josephus was seen to flash light upon the beginning of Christianity, that of Pliny reflected it back to about the year 80 or 90 of our era, the intermediate period - say, from about 60 of our era - being covered by what is admitted to have been the universal tradition of the Primitive Church.

Having thus secured my position in front, I also endeavoured to establish it in the rear, by an examination of the theories of recent criticism in regard to the structure and order of the Old Testament, more especially of the Pentateuch legislation and the historical books, for the purpose of vindicating the Mosaic authorship of that " legislation, and its accordance with the notices in the historical books. F1 Here an account was first given (in Lecture VII.) of the history and progress of recent criticism of the Pentateuch, from its inception to the present time, together with certain general objections to the latest theory of Wellhausen, and an indication of the wide-reaching sequences to which such views would lead. Next (in Lecture VIII.), the theory of Wellhausen was examined more in detail. The general position on our side of the question having been indicated, it was sought to show, by an analysis of the condition of Israel during the course of its history, that the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch legislation is accordant with the notices in the historical books of the Old Testament. Then the theory of our opponents was further combated, first, by certain fundamental objections to it, alike in principle and in detail; secondly, by some arguments intended to show the primitive and Mosaic character of the legislation and institutions of the Pentateuch; and, lastly, by a consideration of what, from an historical point of view, we should have expected to find - or else not to find in the Pentateuch, if its date and construction had been as modern negative criticism asserts. The arguments in these respects are supported and supplemented by two longer Notes (at the end of Lecture VIII.), and by two Appendices, embodying chiefly the results of the critical labours of some German scholars. The second Note to Lecture VIII. will be found of great interest and importance to the critical student, giving, as it does, a revised list of the passages by which Dr. Hoffmann has proved that Ezekiel had before him, and had quoted from, those portions of the Pentateuch, the publication of which Wellhausen ascribes to the time of Ezra. Similarly, Appendix II. furnishes an abstract of the summary of Kleinert, giving a general analysis of the Pentateuch; stating its own witness, and that of the other parts of the Old Testament, to its composition; the various phases through which recent Pentateuch criticism has passed, and the reasons by which it is supported; also an enumeration of the passages which are supposed to form what is regarded as the latest portion of the Pentateuch; and, finally, an account of some of the modifications which the Rabbis found it necessary to introduce in that part of the legislation, in order to adapt it to the practical requirements of later times.

After this detailed statement only a brief account appears necessary of the general argument followed in these Lectures. At the outset, it was felt that no good purpose could be served by endeavouring once more to follow the line of reasoning which previous lecturers had so ably and learnedly traced. Besides, the general position taken as to the relation between Prophecy and prophecies, between fulfilment and prediction, and as to the order in which they should be studied, forbade any such attempt on my part. On the other hand, I wished, first, to study anew, and clearly to define, the points just mentioned, and then to trace the history of the great Messianic hope in

the Old Testament, through all its stages, from its inception in the Paradise- promise to the last prophetic announcement by John the Baptist. Thus, ‘Prophecy and History in relation to the Messiah’ was to form the subject of the course. In pursuance of this, the first Lecture is intended to indicate the general ground taken up tracing the origin of Christianity to the teaching of the Old Testament, and showing that the great Messianic hope, of which Jesus presented the realisation, could not have originated in His time, nor close to it, nor yet in the centuries which had elapsed since the return from the Exile. Lecture II. carries the argument a step further, by showing that the Kingdom of God’ had been the leading idea throughout the whole Old Testament. At the same time, the form in which prophecy of old was presented to successive generations, and the relation between prophecy and fulfilment, are discussed, while the character of prophetism is defined, and the development of heathenism by the side of Israel, and the ideal destiny of the latter, are traced. In a Note appended to Lecture II. the ordinary interpretation of Genesis 3:3 is defended against the criticism of Professor Kuenen. Lecture III. establishes the position, that the New Testament presents Christ as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, by showing that this is borne out by unquestioned Christian, and by most important Jewish and heathen testimony (the Rabbis, Josephus, Pliny). Lecture IV. defines and lays down some fundamental principles in regard to ‘prophecy’ and ‘fulfilment,’ and discusses certain special prophecies. It also explains the Biblical terms applied to the prophets, and the functions of ‘the sons of the prophets;’ and, lastly, refers to some prophecies in the New Testament. Lecture V. distinguishes between prophetism and heathen divination; exhibits the moral element in prophecy; and discusses the value of the two canons which the Old Testament furnishes for distinguishing the true from the false prophet. Lecture VI. treats both of the progressive character of prophecy, and of the spiritual element in it, and shows how both prophecy and the Old Testament as a whole point beyond themselves to a spiritual fulfilment in the Kingdom of God - marking also the development during the different stages of the history of Israel, to the fulfilment in Christ. Lectures VII. and VIII. are devoted to a defence of the views previously set forth concerning the Old Testament, and contain an examination of recent negative criticism, in regard to the Pentateuch and the historical books. Lecture IX. resumes the history of the Messianic idea. It discusses the general character of the post-exilian literature, and gives an analysis of the Apocrypha and of their teaching, of the new Hellenist direction, and of the bearing of all on the Messianic hope. A doctrinal and critical comparison is also made between the Apocrypha and the Old Testament, and the points of’ difference are marked and explained. In Lecture X. the various movements of Jewish national life are traced in their bearing on the Messianic idea - especially the ‘Nationalist’ movement, of which, in a certain sense, the so-called Pseudepigraphic writings may be regarded as the religious literature. Lecture XI. gives an account and analysis of these Pseudepigraphic writings, marking especially their teaching concerning the Messiah and Messianic times. Lastly, Lecture XII. sets forth the last stage in Messianic prophecy - the mission and preaching of John the Baptist, and the fulfilment of all prophecy in Jesus the Messiah. To this analysis of the general argument, little of a personal character requires to be added. The literature of the subject has been sufficiently indicated in the foot-notes; it is not so large as to have made a special enumeration necessary at the beginning of this volume. For obvious reasons I have, so far as possible, avoided all reference to living English writers, whether on one or the other side of the questions treated Lastly - as regards the manner in which the subject has been treated in this book, every writer must be fully conscious, and, where the highest truth is concerned, painfully sensible, of shortcomings in his

attempt to realise the ideal which he had set before himself. In the present instance there were special difficulties-first, as already stated, from the form of these Lectures, and the space to which they were necessarily confined, which prevented that more full discussion which, in some parts, I could have desired. Besides this, I must mention at least one other disadvantage under which I laboured. From the circumstance that this course of Lectures not only extended over four years, but that the Lectures in each year had to be delivered at periods widely apart, occasional repetitions of the argument could not be avoided. That the statement and defence of views so widely differing from what may be described as the current of modern criticism, may call forth strong, perhaps even violent, contradiction, I must be prepared to find. This only will I say, that, within the conditions prescribed by this course, I have earnestly sought to set forth what I believe to be the truth of Revelation concerning Jesus the Messiah, as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, and the hope of Israel in all ages. To Him I would now commend this volume on its way to its unknown readers. As the motto for it I would fain choose the opening sentence with which the first Gospel introduces the history, and on which it grounds the Messianic claims, of Jesus: Β■βλος γεν■σεως ■Ιησο■ Χριστο■ υ■ο■ Δαβ■δ υ■ο■ ■Αβρα■μ. And as my concluding words, I would transcribe these of the Venerable Bede: ‘Si autem Moyses et prophetae de Christo locuti aunt, et eum per passionem in gloriam intraturum praedixerunt, quomodo gloriatur se esse Christianum, qui neque qualiter Scripturea ad Christum pertineant, investigat; neque ad gloriam, quam cum Christo habere cupit, per passionem attingere desiderat?’

Chapter 3

01.01. Lecture 1

Lecture 1.

On The Origin of Christianity in the Old Testament.

What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He? Matthew 22:42.

IT requires little consideration to convince us that the question which we propose to discuss in the present course of Lectures, is, from the religious point of view, of supreme interest and importance. In truth, it concerns no less than the very origin of Christianity. Passing beyond the modifications and development which contact with the varied culture of many nations or outward events have effected in the course of these eighteen centuries; passing also through the obscurity around the early age of Christianity, due to insufficient or inexact records, we can happily reach clearer light. We know the period of the rise of Christianity, and, as it seems to me, we can better understand its connection with that which preceded its birth than with that which followed it, and surrounded its infancy. Accordingly, it is in this manner that we here propose to study its origin: inquiring into its connection with that which had gone before, and of which it is the outcome, rather than treading our uncertain steps through the intricate mazes of often dubious tradition and apparently conflicting evidence up to the circumstances of its birth. Thus, the great question before us is this: Christianity, whence is it? The answer will in measure also decide that other: Christianity, what is it, divine or human; a revelation from heaven, or the outcome of determining circumstances? And its issue: is it the Church Universal, or only a new school of thought? The difference to which we have referred as regards the mode of conducting our inquiry into the origin of Christianity, is the necessary sequence of the standpoint which we occupy in it, and connected with the results which we have in view. From earliest times the historical Church has traced its origin to that which had preceded it. Accordingly it has declared that Christianity was not indeed the counterpart, but the unfolding and the fulfilment of the Old Testament, and it has claimed that the Church was the true Israel of God. It has regarded the whole history of Israel as big with the promise of the world’s salvation, and its institutions and promises as pointing to the establishment of a universal kingdom of God upon earth by means of the Messiah. Hence it has set forth, in no hesitating language, that there is unity, continuity, and progress in the teaching of the Old Testament, and that all in it is prophetic [1] of the Christ. As against this view, which admittedly is both grand in its conception and logically consistent in its application, a certain school of modern criticism has followed a different mode of inquiry into the origin of the Church, and reached almost opposite results. Seeking to track the stream upwards, it has been declared that Christianity, as at present we know it, has been shaped by the circumstances, the people, and the culture with which on its introduction it was brought into contact; that its origins were very simple, and due to natural, local and temporary causes; in fact, that it is the result of a gradual accretion of different elements, all historically explicable, around a small and not very important nucleus of facts. The theory just indicated has, it must be confessed, many attractions. It promises to destroy or supersede the miraculous by tracing to the operation of ordinary causes what otherwise would seem due to direct

Divine agency, finding for it what is called ‘a rational explanation,’ that is, one level with our ordinary perceptions. And the contention is the more important since the Church view of the origin of Christianity implies, if correct, also unquestionable inferences about the Divine character of the Old Testament. Moreover, the new view is in seeming accordance with the general spirit of modern investigation, which everywhere discards preconceived purpose and unity of design, and explains that which .is by the gradual operation of inherent forces, adapting themselves under the influence of surrounding circumstances. Lastly, it has the advantage of being set forth by writers not only of acknowledged learning, hut of exceeding skill in pleading their case. By the weight of their authority, they too often set forth as undoubted results of critical research what others, even of their own school, have called in question, and which therefore, on any theory, cannot be grounded on indubitable or even clear evidence. Still more frequently, wide-reaching conclusions have been reared on what, after all, is a very narrow basis of facts; most weighty considerations on the other side being either overlooked or ignored. In this manner it has become possible to construct a wholly new theory of the genesis of the Old and New Testament which presents the attraction of unity and consistency, is capable of removing all difficulties, whether real or suggested, and, in fact, is devised to meet them. But strange as it may seem, it is this very facility of explaining and arranging everything which awakens our doubt and suspicion. In real life things do not move in precisely straight or rectangular lines, nor yet with the order and regularity of a tale. Many and varied influences are always at work, and the theory which professes precisely to fit, and exactly to explain, all phenomena though they had to be reconstructed for the purpose, resembles rather the invention of a speculator than the observed course of history. [2] Happily we shall avoid in our present inquiry all speculation, whether critical or metaphysical, seeking to answer what in the first place is an historical question by means of historical investigation. As a preliminary step, we purpose in the present Lecture to make it clear that the New Testament really points back to the Old. To put it more precisely: we hold that Christianity in its origin appealed to an existing state of expectancy, which was the outcome of a previous development; and further, that those ideas and hopes of which it professed to be the fulfilment had not first sprung up in the immediately preceding period — that is, in the centuries between the return from the Babylonish exile and the Birth of Christ — but stretched back through the whole course of Old Testament teaching.

If we were to view the introduction of Christianity into Palestine, and its spread throughout the heathen world, as an isolated fact, it would seem simply and absolutely inexplicable. For it cannot be conceived that One should have arisen and claimed to be the Messiah; appealed in confirmation to Moses and the prophets; professed to institute a kingdom of God upon earth; and in so doing gained the ear of the multitude and gathered devoted disciples; that, moreover, the temporal and spiritual rulers of Israel should have entered into controversy with Him, not as to the foundation, but merely as to the justice of His claims: and yet that all this should have represented an entirely new movement. We would at least have expected some reference to this circumstance. In thus describing in general outline what Christ professed, did, and experienced, I am not asserting what even the most negative criticism will deny. For even if we were to eliminate from our Synoptic Gospels any part that is called in question by the most extreme criticism, and banish the fourth Gospel to the end of the second century, regarding it as a tissue of ecclesiastical symbolism — sufficient would still remain to establish this position, that Christ professed to be the Old Testament Messiah and to bring the Kingdom of God; that He gathered adherents; and that

the justice of His claims was resisted by the Jewish authorities; while at the same time the fact of a Messiahship, and the expectation of a Kingdom of God, were never called in question. I am warranted in going a step farther and saying, that the unquestioned facts in the Gospel history not only imply the existence of Messianic ideas and expectations, but their depth and intenseness. Only such a state of feeling could explain how One Who taught such evidently unwelcome doctrine was so widely listened to and followed. And the argument as to this Messianic expectancy at the time would only become stronger in measure as we denied the claims of Jesus. For, if even the minimum of such ideas had been a novelty — if no Messianic expectations existed at the time — surely the maximum as formulated by Jesus, and so opposed to Jewish prejudices, could never have been asserted. All this seems almost self-evident. Yet, to make sure of our position, let me here remind you of what may be termed the most superficial, as certainly they are the least questionable, facts in the Gospel history. Surely, the crowds which from all parts of the country, and from all classes of society, flocked to the preparatory preaching of the Baptist, and submitted to the rite which he introduced, as not only the New Testament but Josephus attests, at least indicate that the proclamation of the Kingdom of God had wakened an echo throughout the land. And again, as we watch the multitudes which everywhere followed the preaching of Jesus; remember how they would fain have proclaimed Him King; and how even at the close of His ministry they greeted Him with Hosannas at His entry into Jerusalem, and this in face of the danger threatening them in such a movement from the presence of one so anti- Jewish and so suspicious as Pilate, we cannot but feel convinced not only of the existence, but of the intenseness, of the Messianic hope among the people at large.

It is, indeed, true that all such ideas and hopes are influenced, at least in their intensity and expression, by the circumstances of the time. They gain in depth and earnestness in proportion to the national abasement and suffering. Never did the Messianic hopes of the inspired Prophets rise higher; never was their faith wider in its range, or brighter in its glow; never their utterance of it more passionately assured, than when Israel had sunk to the lowest stage of outward depression. Because the conviction of the prophets and of Israel was so unshakably firm as regarded the glorious future, therefore it was that in such times they most deeply felt and most earnestly expressed the need of fleeing into the strong refuge of a certain future, the realising expectancy of which put a song into their mouth in the night time. So also was it in the long centuries of disappointment, and of apparently increasing unlikelihood that the Hope of Israel should ever become a Reality, that the Apocalyptic visions of the Pseudepigraphic writers gained in vividness and realism of colouring. Similarly, the most pathetically expectant elegies of mediæval Rabbinism date from the times of persecution. In truth it scarcely seems exaggeration to say, that throughout the history of Israel we can trace the times of bitterest sorrows by their brightest Messianic expectations, as if that golden harvest waved richest where the ploughshare had drawn the furrows deepest, and the precious seed been watered by blood and tears. And so the Talmud connects the coming of the Messiah with the time of bitterest woes, when Galilee would be laid waste, and the very mangers turned into coffins, when war and famine had desolated the land, and all righteousness and truth disappeared. [3] Similarly, the mystic Midrash [4] sees in the dove in the clefts of the rocks, to whom comes the call, ‘Let me hear thy voice,’ a picture of Israel as, fleeing before the hawk, it descries, in the rock-cleft, a serpent, and in agony of fear and distress beats its wings and raises piteous cries, which presently bring it the help and deliverance of its Lord. But this intensification of the Messianic hope in times when national glory seemed farthest

removed, is only another evidence of the universality and depth of the Messianic hope. And if final proof were required of its existence, it is surely to be found in the circumstance that such hopes were independent of Jesus of Nazareth; that they equally attached themselves to false Messiahs, of whom not less than about sixty are mentioned, and who, despite the absurdity of their pretensions, carried after them such large numbers of the people; and, in the case of so clumsy an impostor as Bar Kokhba, even some of the leading Rabbis, kindling fanaticism to the extent of a conflict which severely tasked the resources of imperial Rome. Nay, is it not so that this hope has survived eighteen centuries, not only of bitter persecution, but of chilling disappointment? Though disowned by the nerveless rationalism of modern Jews, it kindles up in every service of the Synagogue; it flings its many- coloured light over every product of Rabbinic literature; and as year by year each family of the banished gathers around the Paschal table, the memorial of Israel's birth-night and first deliverance, it still rises in the impassioned plaintive cry of mingled sorrow and longing which rings into the desolate silence of these many centuries: 'This year here — next year in Jerusalem!' A hope so wide-reaching, so intense and enduring cannot, I submit, have been the outcome of one particular phase in the history of the people. Its roots must have struck far deeper than one period of the nation's life; it must be the innermost meaning of their history, the final expression of that long course of teaching in the Law and in the Prophets which, all unconsciously to themselves, has become the very life-blood of Israel's faith. But on a point of such importance we are not left to general inferences. Even at this preliminary stage of our inquiry, we can appeal to unquestionable evidence that the ideas and hopes which Jesus of Nazareth professed to realise did not arise at His period, nor yet close to it. More than this, we are prepared to show grounds for maintaining that the great Messianic expectation did not originate in the period between the close of the Old Testament Canon and the Birth of Christ. In such case the plain inference would be, that it must be traced up to the Old Testament itself, in the course of whose teaching we must seek its origin, growth, and gradual development. In regard to the first point just referred to, it may, I think, be fairly argued, that if the idea of the Messiah and His kingdom had originated in the period of Christ, if indeed it had been new, the teaching of Jesus would have either reflected this, at least 'in its main features, or else indicated and vindicated the fact and the grounds of divergence from the past. In this respect it is most significant, that while Christ so emphatically accentuated the differences between His own and the teaching of the Pharisees, as regarded the most important matters of the Law, He never referred to any such as subsisting between His own and the Messianic ideas of his contemporaries — at least, in their general conception. On the contrary, all implies that, so far from these Messianic expectations first emerging at or near that period, they had been long existing, and indeed had lost their definiteness in a more vague and general expectancy which assumed the colouring of the times. A similar inference comes to us from a consideration of the preparatory Messianic announcement by the Baptist, the questions which it elicited, and the indefinite form of his answers. It represents a very strong but a general expectancy, rather than such definite expectations as one would associate with their recent origination. On the other hand, it is quite evident that Jesus of Nazareth, as He is presented to us in the Gospel history, did not meet the special form which the Messianic thinking of His contemporaries had taken, when called upon to assume a concrete form in accordance with the general direction of the time. For not only did they reject His teaching, denounce Him as an impostor, and crucify Him as a blasphemer, but even His own disciples and followers neither anticipated nor fully understood, in many respects even misunderstood, His doctrine, were utterly

unprepared for His death, and had no expectation of His resurrection. In other words, each of the three great elements in His history came as a surprise upon them.

Whatever outward agreement may therefore be traced between the sayings of Christ and contemporary thought, this at least is quite evident, that tie did not embody the precise Messianic ideal of His time. And here we must observe an important distinction. In one sense Jesus Christ certainly was a man of His time: He spoke the language of His time, and He addressed Himself by word and deed to the men, the ideas, and the circumstances of His time. Had it been otherwise, He would not have been an historical personage, nor could He have been a true Christ. The more closely therefore we trace the features of His time in His words and actions, in the people introduced on the stage of the Gospel history, and in the general mise en scène, the more clearly do we prove the general historical truthfulness of the narrative — that it is true to the time. But in another and higher sense Jesus Christ was not the man of His time, spake not, acted not, aimed not, as they; and hence the great body of the people rejected, denounced, and crucified, while even His own so often misunderstood and were surprised by Him.

What has just been stated naturally leads to the last point in our present inquiry. It has been shown that the Messianic idea could not have originated in the time of Jesus Christ, nor presumably in that immediately preceding. But between the time of Jesus Christ and the close of the Old Testament Canon — or, to avoid controversy, let us say the time of Ezra — roughly speaking, four and a half centuries intervened. Could it be that the great hope of Israel had sprung up during any part of the troubled history of that period? Without at present entering into detailed examination, sufficient reasons can be shown to make this the most unlikely hypothesis. For, —

First. It is impossible to believe that such a hope could have newly sprung up without leaving at least some mark of its origin, and some trace of its growth in the history and literature of the time. Whatever darkness may rest on certain aspects in the development of thought and religion at that period, especially at the beginning of it, or on such questions as the institution of the so-called ‘Great Synagogue,’ or the influence and development of the new direction of external legalism, or of the national and anti-Grecian party, yet all these tendencies are marked in the history and literature of that period. And it seems unthinkable that the one great, the all-dominant idea in the religion of Israel, the hope of a Jewish Messiah-King, who would bear rule over a world converted to God, should have originated without one trace of its birth and gradual development. But as a matter of fact there is not in the history, nor yet in the literature of that period any appearance of a small commencement, a growth, or a gradual development of the Messianic idea, such as would be requisite on the theory in question. On the other hand, it deserves special notice that such a development is very clearly traceable throughout the Canon of the Old Testament, and that pari passu with the progress of Israel’s history. It is needless to say that this tells its own most important lesson, both as regards the internal unity of the Old Testament and the origin and development of the Messianic idea. But at present we are only so far concerned with it as to mark that no such progression appears either in Apocryphal, Pseudepigraphic, Alexandrian, or Rabbinic literature, In some respects, indeed, there is retrogression rather than progression in this matter, and this not only in the writings of Philo, where the Messianic idea is, so to speak, sublimated into generalities, but in the Apocrypha, where it is only obscurely referred to. But alike in the one case and in the other, not only is its existence implied, but a previous fuller development of it. As regards Rabbinic literature, it is universally known that any references to the great Messianic hope

of Israel occurring in its pages appear in the most developed form. The only question, therefore, can be in reference to that special kind of literature which bears the name of Pseudepigraphic Writings, [5] and which may in general be described as Apocalyptic in character. Naturally we expect to find the Messianic hope most fully expressed in such works. But although we mark variety and addition of detail in the various books, there is no trace of any development in the underlying conception of the Messiah and His kingdom. As a crucial instance we may here refer to the Book of Daniel, the authorship and date of which are in controversy. According to the testimony of 'the Church, the Book of Daniel — or at least the greater portion of it — dates from the time of the Exile; according to a large section of modern critics, from about that of Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.). In the one case it would belong to the Biblical, in the other to the Pseudepigraphic writings. We have our own decided convictions on this point. But for the present argument it matters not which of the two views is the correct one. Clearly in the Book of Daniel we have the idea of the Messiah and His kingdom in its full development. If the Book of Daniel belongs to the Canon, then the idea must have existed fully developed in Biblical times; if, on the contrary, it should be regarded as the earliest of the Pseudepigraphic writings, it affords undoubted evidence that the Messianic idea did not gradually develop, but existed in its fullest form in the earliest literary monument of that class. But we can go back farther than this. For, —

Secondly. If the Messianic hope had sprung up during or immediately after the exile, we should scarcely have expected it to cluster round the House of David, nor to centre in the 'Son of David.' For nothing is more marked than the decadence and almost disappearance of the House of David in that period. A national hope of this kind could scarcely have sprung up when the royalty of David was not only matter of the past, but when its restoration was comparatively so little thought of or desired, that the descendants of the Davidic house seem in great measure to have become lost in the mass of the people. And the argument becomes all the stronger as we notice how, with the lapse of time, the Davidic line became increasingly an historical remembrance or a theological idea, rather than a present power or reality. Throughout the Old Testament Davidic descent is always the most prominent element in all Messianic pictures, while in later writings it recedes into the background, as something in the long past which must be brought forth anew. In this respect, also, it is characteristic that the name 'Son of David' was the most distinctive title claimed by, and given to Jesus, while in the case of all spurious Messianic movements this occupied only a subordinate, if any, place.

Thirdly. We may press the argument yet one step farther, and express a strong doubt whether, if this hope had originated in the post exilian period, it would have connected itself with any distinctly monarchic aspirations. The general genius of Judaism is against it, and throughout the whole post-exilian history and literature there is certainly not a trace of any wish for the restoration of the old, or the establishment of any new monarchy. This silence is of itself significant. On the other hand, we have on at least three critical occasions — in the time of Pompey, during the governorship of Gabinius (about 66 B.C.), and after the death of Herod — the distinct expression of objections to monarchical rule and of preference for an oligarchy as conformable to ancient traditions. [6] And if it be supposed that such objections mainly applied to the Herodian house, the attentive student of that period cannot fail to observe that the rapid change of public opinion in regard to the Maccabees from that of unbounded popular enthusiasm to the extreme of general hatred may be dated from their permanent assumption of the royal along with the high-priestly

dignity. But, be this as it may, the Davidic house and royalty at any rate may be said to have disappeared from the horizon of practical politics.

It were, indeed, an interesting speculation for which the elements are not wholly wanting, to inquire to what kind of personality the Messianic hope would have attached itself if it had first originated in the post-exilian period. Certainly not to a scion of the Davidic house, probably not to any king. The Messiah would have been a conqueror. This was a political necessity, and in accordance with national thought and ambition, not to speak of the hope of the realisation of a grand contrast between Israel's past and their future. The Messiah would certainly have been a proud and avenging conqueror, whose rule of the conquered would have been anything but that of peace, liberty, and happiness to them. But he would have been a conqueror with whose administration the office of a Chief Rabbi would have strangely blended. He would have been first a Rabbi, then a conqueror, and then again a Rabbi; or his conquests would have been dictated and shaped by the requirements of Rabbinism, and applied and utilised in its service.

We remember that, according to the latest theory which, at least for the present, finds most favour on the Continent, if not among ourselves, the largest and most important part of the Pentateuch, embracing, roughly speaking, the sections from Exodus 25 to Numbers 36, dates from after the Babylonish exile. As containing the great body of the ritual laws and ceremonial observances, it is called the 'Priest- Codex,' and it is supposed to have been introduced by the influence of the priesthood, and to mark in many respects an entirely new departure in, and transformation of, the old Israelitish religion. [7] If the priesthood had such power as to bring in a wholly new document, which initiated a new direction, and if they could gain for it the recognition, ever afterwards unquestioned, of forming the fundamental part of the ancient legislation and religion of Israel — a supposition sufficiently exacting, and which would seem to require the weightiest proofs — we are surely warranted in expecting that some mark of this tendency should have appeared in that Messianic idea which formed the great hope of the people, if it had originated at that time. If they were able to transform the past in the interest of the present, would they not have exercised the same influence as regards the future? But here, as on so many other points, the theory in question signally fails. The priestly element, which is said to have transformed the Pentateuch legislation, does not appear as in any way connected with the ideal goal of Israel — except from the Christian, theological point of view of the ideal Priesthood of Christ. This, surely, is a very strange phenomenon which demands an explanation, whatever view may be taken of the origin of the Messianic idea. If it originated in strictly Old Testament times, those who could introduce the Priest-Codex into the Mosaic legislation would have had no difficulty in finding a place for the expression of their views in connection with the grand hope of Israel's religion; and if it originated in the exilian or immediately post-exilian period, these views could scarcely have failed to impress themselves upon it.

But, truth to say, this is only one of the historical difficulties of the theory about the late origin of the Priest-Codex. The great objection to it is, that, while it explains certain phenomena in the past religious history of Israel — at least, as these are presented by the advocates of the theory — it not only leaves unaccounted for, but seems inconsistent with, the whole subsequent religious development. And the more carefully the grounds are examined in detail on which the late origin of the 'Priest- Codex' is inferred, the more incompatible with the undoubted facts of the subsequent history will the conclusions be found. Not the origin of the idea of an exclusive central place of

worship, but the institution of synagogues everywhere; not drawing together, but expansion, and provision for the ‘dispersed,’ who not only were, but, it must have been felt, would remain — at any rate, to Messianic times — the majority of the people; not privileges and rights for the priesthood, whom the whole history shows to have been as an order an uninfluential minority, shorn even of some of its ancient prerogatives — in short, not Sacerdotalism but Rabbinism: such was the outcome of the exilian and post-exilian period. And although this transformation was in tile first place necessarily carried out by the priests and Levites, there can be no doubt that, even in the case of Ezra, the title ‘priest’ falls into the background behind that of ‘scribe,’ (Ezra 7:11-28; Nehemiah 8:1-18) [8] and that his activity and tendency have been rightly indicated when he is designated as ‘the father of all the Mishnic doctors.’ [9]

But, here we return from our digression: Rabbinism, which is the true outcome of the post-exilian period, is, in its inmost tendency, not only anti-monarchical and anti- sacerdotal, but, strange as it may sound, even anti-Messianic. The Rabbis found Messianism, just as they found the Aaronic priesthood and sacrifices; and they adopted it. They were patriotic and imaginative, and their Haggadists, preachers, and mystics elaborated the idea with every detail which legend, an unrestrained Eastern fancy, or national pride, could suggest. But when we pass beneath the surface, we find that Rabbinism does not well know what to make of this doctrine; that it is a foreign element in it, which may be added to, but will not amalgamate with, the system. The latter is a hard and dry logical development of the Law to its utmost sequences. Beyond the four corners of its reasoning, Rabbinism acknowledges no authority whatever, on earth — be it priestly or royal — or in heaven. And when Rabbi Eliezer appealed, and that successfully, in favour of his doctrines to the Voice from Heaven (the so-called Bath Qol), the assembled Rabbis were not silenced by it, but declared that, since the Law had been given on Mount Sinai, it was ‘not in heaven;’ (Deuteronomy 30:12) [10] to which, therefore, no appeal could be made. Apart from its somewhat profane witticism, this answer meant that there was finality about the Law as interpreted by the Rabbis by which even the Almighty Himself was bound.

It certainly affords evidence, were such needed, that Rabbinism recognised no authority, not even that of an audible voice from heaven, outside its own hard and dry logic. The only place which the Messianic doctrine could hold in such a system was, that it furnished hope of a temporal deliverance, or even of the national supremacy of Israel, which would make Rabbinism dominant; or else that it opened the prospect of a new law. And this essential antagonism between the Messianic idea as embodied by Christ, and Rabbinism, explains the life and death contest which from His first manifestation ensued between Jesus of Nazareth and the leaders of His people.

Briefly to sum up the conclusions to which the foregoing reasoning points: Christianity in its origin appealed to a great Messianic expectancy, the source and spring of which must be sought not in the post-exilian period, but is found in the Old Testament itself. The whole Old Testament is prophetic. Its special predictions form only a part, although an organic part, of the prophetic Scriptures; and all prophecy points to the Kingdom of God and to the Messiah as its King. The narrow boundaries of Judah and Israel were to be enlarged so as to embrace all men, and one King would reign in righteousness over a ransomed world that would offer to Him its homage of praise and service. All that had marred the moral harmony of earth would be removed; the universal Fatherhood of God would become the birthright of redeemed, pardoned, regenerated humanity; and all this blessing would centre in, and flow from, the Person of the Messiah.

Such at least is the promise of the Old Testament which the New Testament declares to have been fulfilled in Christ Jesus. And if it were not so, then surely can it never more be fulfilled. For not even the most fanatic Jew would venture to assert, that out of the Synagogue could now come to our world a King reigning in righteousness, a Son of David, a Branch of Jesse; and that the present Synagogue would so enlarge itself as to embrace in its bosom all nations of the earth. And thus, unless the old hope of the kingdom has been realised in Christianity, it can never be realised at all. Then also is the Old Testament itself false in its inmost principle, and false the hope of humanity which it bears. Or otherwise, if it be maintained that ours is not the true meaning of these prophecies, but that they pointed to a great Jewish King and a great Israelitish kingdom, to which all nations were to become subject — then, in such case, the Old Testament — that is, if we take it as seriously meaning what it says — would not be of God. If it had only flattered Jewish national pride; if it had held out only the wretched prospect of a victorious Jewish King, not one in righteousness and peace; if, instead of the universal Fatherhood of God in Christ, it had only spoken of the universal dominion of Israel over men — then would it not have brought good news, and be neither Divine nor yet true. And so it still is, that the New Testament without the Old, and the Old Testament without the New, is not possible. Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus in Novo patet. And so we all feel it, when in our Christian services we not only sing the Psalter and read the Old Testament, as of present application but speak of Abraham as ‘our forefather.’ To compare the colourless, declamatory and unspiritual ancient Accadian or Babylonian hymnology with the Psalms seems, even from the literary, much more from the religious point of view, utterly impossible. Conceive our highest spiritual aspirations and our best services expressing themselves in the language of these compositions, or of any possible development of them! No, the Old Testament element could not in this nineteenth century have kept its place in our theology and our worship, otherwise than by an inherent fitness; because the New Testament is the organic development and completion of the Old. And on this Advent Sunday [11] we realise all this anew. In the winter’s gloom the leafless trees stretch their bared arms towards the coming spring; and as they sway in the winter’s storm we seem to hear their cry for the new light and the new life. So in the world’s Advent-time did the leafless tree of heathenism stretch its arms, in unconscious longing and with un-understood moaning, towards where the Sun of Righteousness was to rise in the Golden East. He has risen, and with healing in His wings. Anon it will be Christmas on our earth. Heaven’s choirs greeted its first coming with prophetic jubilee; and, in happy type, did the worship of Jewish shepherds and the votive offerings of heathen sages mingle their homage with angelic song — ‘For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder.’ (Isaiah 9:6)

NOTE. In connection with what has been said at pp. 17, 18 about the gradual fading out of religious thought as attaching to the Davidic line, we mark the manner in which it is referred to in the ‘Wisdom of the Son of Sirach’ (Ecclus.). Generally, its praise falls far below that of the Aaronic line. But, specifically, we notice that in Sir 45:25 we read that the Divine promise to David is ‘the inheritance of the King from son to son only’ (υ■ο■ ■ξ υ■ο■ μ■νου), while that of Aaron is ‘to his seed’ — that is, as we understand it: the direct Davidic line having probably become extinguished with Zerubbabel, the promise to David is now declared to have only applied to his direct line: ‘from son to son only,’ while that to Aaron extended in any line: ‘to his seed,’ generally. (See Geiger in vol. 12: of the Zeitschr. d. deutsch. Morgenländ. Gesellsch., p. 540).

01.02. Lecture 2

Lecture 2.

On the Kingdom of God as the Leading Idea of the Old Testament, and on Certain Recent Criticism concerning the Arrangement and Date of the Canan.

Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. — John 1:45.

APART from its intrinsic interest and its connection with the narrative of which it forms an episode, this answer of Philip to Nathanael has an important bearing on our present inquiry. It expresses the conclusions at which we have arrived in our former Lecture, and so shows that we have not misrepresented the meaning of the New Testament in saying that it looked back for its origin to the Old Testament. Even in the Fourth Gospel, which a certain school of critics regards as anything but a Judaic document, the early disciples present the claims of Jesus as of Him, 'of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write.' But although the New Testament writers, and, as we may now say, the Jewish people generally, founded their Messianic expectancy on the Old Testament, it is another question whether, in so doing, they rightly understood its meaning. and surrounded its infancy. Accordingly, it is in this manner that we here propose to study its origin: inquiring into its connection with that which had gone before, and of which it is the outcome, rather than treading our upon earth through the Messiah, as the New Testament writers, rightly or wrongly, saw fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth; or is this view of the Old Testament only a later gloss put upon it by Christianity? This must be the subject of our next inquiry. In one respect we might here content ourselves with appealing to the facts established in the preceding Lecture. Evidently the Messianic hope existed at the time of Christ, and that not only among one section, party, or school, but among all classes, thoroughgoing Sadducees perhaps excepted. We might even go farther and assert that the highest springs of the great Nationalist movement, which finally issued in the war with Rome, lay not so much in the aspirations of patriotism and love of independence, as in a misunderstanding and misapplication of the Messianic expectancy. And in proof we might even appeal to the circumstance that some of the disciples of Jesus, notably 'Simon the Zealot,' seem originally to have belonged to the Nationalist party, the focus of which was in Galilee. But apart from this, we have also direct evidence, that not only the New Testament writers and later Rabbis, but the people generally, traced the Messianic expectation to the teaching of the Old Testament. Even so unscrupulous a partisan as Josephus can in this instance be cited as a witness on our side, whose testimony is the more important for the manifest reluctance and indirectness with which, in works intended for Roman readers, he refers to the Messianic hope. I am not here thinking of the controverted passage about Christ, [12] but of such (among other) allusions to Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament, as when referring to the predictions of Balaam he infers from their partial fulfilment, even in his own time,' that the rest will have their completion in the time to come;' [13] or when, commenting on Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, (Daniel 2:1-49) he evades giving an interpretation of the fate of the fourth kingdom, which

he evidently identifies with Rome, on the ground that he had undertaken to describe the past and the present but not the future, for the understanding of whose ‘uncertainties,’ ‘whether they will happen or not,’ he refers the curious to the Book of Daniel itself, which they would find among the sacred writings. [14] Evidently, then, there was in the view of Josephus, as well as of his contemporaries, a prophetic future for Israel after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the stone cut out without hands predicted to destroy the iron empire of Rome, of which he refused to give the interpretation, must have been the Messianic kingdom. [15] Thus, there was universal Messianic expectancy, and that expectancy was traced to Old Testament prophecy. And, recalling our previous arguments as to the extreme unlikeliness of such a hope springing up in the period between Ezra and Christ, we might content ourselves with challenging those who deny its Old Testament origin to point out the period and the circumstances of its beginning and development.

Still, it is at least conceivable, whatever the presumption to the contrary, that the whole Jewish nation may have been mistaken in their Messianic interpretation of the Old Testament. Yet we have here something beyond an unbroken consensus of Messianic interpretation. If the present historical arrangement of the Old Testament Canon may be trusted — not, indeed, in reference to the precise date and authorship of each book (which are here not in question), but as regards the general chronological succession of the Law and the Prophetic writings — it seems almost impossible to deny that the Old Testament in its different parts is organically connected; and that, as previously stated, alike the connecting, the impelling, and the final idea of it is that of a universal kingdom of God upon earth; and that this idea unfolds together with the development of religious knowledge and life in Israel. The distinction of terms just made is of such importance in the argument as to warrant a seeming digression. Man’s life and understanding develop; God’s purpose unfolds. The term ‘purpose’ is indeed anthropomorphic, and in its strict meaning could not be applied to God, [16] since ‘purpose’ not only implies a reference to the future, but thinking of the future with the view of acting upon it in a certain definite manner. On the other hand, strictly speaking, we cannot associate (either metaphysically or theologically) the idea of ‘future’ with the Divine Being, nor yet such planning as implies uncertainty about the future and adaptation to its eventualities. If, therefore, we use the term, it is for convenience’ sake, and with the reservations just made. What we know is, that, so far as regards God, all is from the first before Him; and that, in history, it opens up — unfolds to man’s understanding, in the course of his development. This may be illustrated from the first intimation of the great Old Testament hope, the so-called Prot-Evangelion, in Genesis 3:14-15. The substantial accuracy of our translation, ‘He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,’ stands, I think, firm on critical grounds. The rendering advocated by Professor Kuenen, [17] This shall lie in wait for thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for his heel,’ would, irrespective of linguistic considerations, yield such feebleness of meaning as almost to transform the pathos of God’s final judgment upon sin into bathos. It does not seem worthy of record in what professes to be a Revelation, nor yet accordant with the solemnity of a Divine punitive sentence, to decree and declare that in .the physical contest between man and the serpent the former is to aim at the head of the serpent, while the latter would, in its stealthy approach, aim at his heel. But if the words mean, as the Church has always understood them, that there must ever be a great conflict between Humanity and the principle of evil, as represented by the Serpent, and that in it Humanity will be ultimately victorious, in and through its Representative: crush the head of the Serpent, although in this not without damage, hurt, and the poison of death — all is changed. In that case the sentence is full of meaning. It sets forth a principle; it ennobles

our human nature by representing it as moral; it bears a promise; it contains a prophecy; it introduces the Golden Age. It is the noblest saying that could be given to Humanity, or to individual men, at the birth of their history. In it the Bible sets forth at its very opening these three great ethical principles, on which rests the whole Biblical teaching concerning the Messiah and His Kingdom: that man is capable of salvation; that all evil springs from sin, with which mortal combat must be waged; and that there will be a final victory over sin through the Representative of Humanity. And this first promise does not afterwards develop; it contains initially all that is to be unfolded in the course of the fullest development, so that we might exclaim, with an ancient writer: 'Here begins the book of the wars of the Lord;' or with Luther: 'Here rises the Sun of Consolation.' This gradual unrolling in the sight of men, as they were able to read it, of what from the first had been written on the prophetic scroll accounts for the peculiar form in which the future is so often presented in prophecy. It explains how so many of the predictions concerning the kingdom of God are presented under a particularistic and national aspect. It was necessary — alike as regarded the people and the prophets; and it belonged to the Old Testament standpoint, quite as much as its sacrifices, rites, institutions, and ceremonial laws. We believe they had a deeper and an eternal meaning which at that time and to that people could only be set forth in such manner. Similarly, the predictive descriptions of the kingdom and the king came to Israel in that nationalistic form in which alone they could have been intelligibly presented. Zion, Israel Moab, or else the then present enemies of the people of God, and their conquest, had- to them a meaning which our later, Christian, ideas could have never possessed, and which, indeed, it would have been impossible to convey otherwise than in such form. And this also must be kept in view, that all these prophecies did historically start from Israel, and that those nations did at that time actually represent the enemies of the kingdom of God. Nor is it meant that all such predictions applied to the kingdom of God. Many of them were what is called temporal: that is, they applied only to those times and to the circumstances and nations there mentioned. But, just as the type is always based on the symbol — the application to the future on the meaning in the present — so are the prophecies of the kingdom presented in the forms of, and with application to, the then present And in evidence that this view is not arbitrary, we point to the circumstance that so often these promises, couched in the particularistic form, alternate with, or merge into others where the horizon is temporarily enlarged and the application is universalistic. This evidences that the world-wide idea of the kingdom was present to the mind of Israel as matter of faith and hope, even though it would ordinarily be clothed in the forms of the time. From this point of view we perceive the higher need of some facts which recent criticism has established, although a certain school has derived from them inferences adverse to the prophetic character of the Old Testament.

First, we perceive that generally, though not always, [18] the fulfilment must not be expected to correspond literally with the prophecy. This was the idea of prophecy entertained by the old supra-naturalistic school, and was strictly connected with its mechanical views of inspiration generally. Were it not for our sincere respect for the earnest though ill-directed faith which prompted these notions, we would seriously complain of the misrepresentation of Biblical truth which was their consequence, affording an easy victory to its opponents. But we object, with good reason, that a certain school of critics argues as if the view referred to were the only one possible, and that it directs all its arguments to disprove what we do not, and, in the nature of it, could not hold. It is not controversially — merely in answer to our opponents-but positively, as the outcome of the views previously explained, that we would formulate these principles in regard to the

fulfilment of Messianic prophecy: [19] that prophecy can only be properly understood from the standpoint of fulfilment; that prophecy always starts from historical data in the then present; and that the fulfilment in each case not only covers but is wider than the mere letter of the prophecy — wider than either the hearers, or perhaps the speaker of it, had perceived. All this in a preliminary way — to be further explained in the sequel.

Secondly. This view of 'fulfilment' leads up to another point, on which we must enter more fully. Here also our opponents have rightly apprehended the facts, while they have laid upon us wrongful inferences from them. For these three things follow from the premises previously stated: that prophecy is not predicted history — which, indeed, would be a quite unworthy view of it; that prophecy had always a present meaning and present lessons to those who heard it; and that, as this meaning unfolded in the course of history, it conveyed to each succeeding generation something new, bringing to each fresh present lessons. Nay, even in its final fulfilment each prophecy has lessons to them who have witnessed its accomplishment. In short, prophecy cannot he compressed within the four comers of a fact: it is not merely tidings about the future, It is not dead, but instinct with undying life, and that life is divine. There is a moral aspect in prophecy to all generations. Under one aspect of it, it prepares for the future, and this is the predictive element of it. Under its other aspect it teaches lessons of the present to each generation; and this is its moral aspect.

It is therefore not discordant with our belief in prophecy, but the reverse, when our attention is called to the fact that, as presented in Scripture, the Prophets were not merely — perhaps not even primarily — foretellers of future events, but that their activity also extended to the then present: that they were reprovers, reformers, instructors. Certainly: for they were God's messengers. But from this it does not follow that the futuristic element had no place in their calling; There is no inconsistency between the two. On the contrary, it was the underlying view of the future which gave meaning and emphasis to their admonitions about the present. I am quite aware that I must be prepared to furnish a formula which will equally cover, and give unity to, these two parts of their activity. My answer is that, when the prophet foretells, he presents the future in the light of the present; and, when he admonishes or reproves, he presents the present in the light of that future which he sees to be surely coming. Thus he is always, and in all aspects of it, the messenger of God to every generation.

It will now be perceived what was meant by the statement that the kingdom of God was the connecting, pervading, and impelling idea of the Old Testament. On the supposition of the trustworthiness of the arrangement of the Old Testament into the Law and the Prophets, Divines of all schools have traced the unfolding — both extensively and intensively — of this idea in the progressive development of the history of Israel through its three stages: the patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the prophetic. [20] And so the history and institutions of Israel would lead up to the doctrinal teaching of the New Testament. It might, indeed, be objected, that in our view of the arrangement of the Old Testament as Law and Prophets there was not progression but retrogression, since the prophetic writings seem to set forth more simple and primitive notions as regards sacrifices and ritual ordinances than those which underlie the directions and arrangements of the 'Priest-Codex.' And it has been argued that this also proves that the right order would be: the Prophets and the Law, not the reverse, and that the Priest-Codex itself must be of late date. But these are ill-grounded inferences. Seeming retrogression may be real

progression, because correction, where principles bad been misunderstood, misapplied, or lost from view. If two or three thousand years after this, and in the absence of historical details of the change, it should be argued that, instead of Mediævalism and the Reformation, the historical succession should be the Reformation and Mediævalism, because, as regarded the priesthood, the centralisation of worship, ritual ordinances, and the like, the Reformation marked the more simple and primitive, and must therefore have preceded Mediævalism, the inference would be both fallacious and false. May we not say the same in regard to this argument for the inversion of the order, Law and Prophets?

Let us try to mark the unfolding of the great idea which the Bible places in its forefront, and which, as we have stated, infolds all the religious truth that has come to man in the course of his development. Closely considered, the primeval promise already set before man the outlook on the Kingdom of God in its ethical character. And that kingdom was not placed on a particularistic or Judaic, but on a universalistic basis. From this point of view we can observe where the one spring divided, and follow the parting streams of Jewish and heathen .development as they issued from the one source. A new meaning here attaches, not only to the fact and the response of conscience to the demands of right, but also to the (however imperfect or even misdirected) striving after the right in the heathen world. We can now understand the appeal to the evidential force of God's works in nature, and much more to that for God in the conscience, as made, not only in the well-known passage of Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Romans 2:14-15), but also in the Old Testament, as in the sublime appeal to the heathen in Isaiah 40:21-26, in regard to the works of creation, and in that derived from conscience in Psalms 94:9-10 : 'He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that chastens the nations (viz. inwardly, through their consciences), shall He not punish — He that teacheth man knowledge?' The creator of the human eye and ear must be the living God, Who sees and hears. He Who implanted reason and conscience in man is thereby evidenced as the Rewarder of good and evil, and shall He not eventually so manifest Himself?

It is thus that the Old Testament, starting with a universalistic object, can and does make its appeal to heathendom, both concerning God and for God. And what was the response made both to the first and to the second of these appeals? Only this: In its search after God, the ancient world reached, indeed, beyond the gods many, and came very near, almost touched, the idea of Unity. But this Supreme Unity, to which ultimately men and gods were subject, was not a Personality, not the Living and True God, our reconciled Father — but Fate, blind, impersonal, immovable; and in this struggle between Fate and Virtue lay the mystery, and the misery, and the ultimate self-despair of heathenism. Or again, as regarded the second appeal of the Old Testament to heathendom — that for God in the conscience, we recall the despairing expressions of a Tacitus, [21] and the idea of a Cicero, [22] that if ever the ideal of goodness and virtue, for which Humanity had longed, and hitherto with such bitter disappointment, were to appear on earth, all men would fall down before it in universal homage. We recall it to mark the sad contrast of history. Just as the Ideal of Old Testament expectation, for which universal Judaism in its highest aspirations had longed, came to His own, but only to be rejected of them, so did the ideal of all goodness and virtue, the One universally-admitted perfect Man for whom heathenism in its highest aspirations had yearned — receive, not universal homage, but universal rejection, when Jesus was nailed to the cross. In truth, the Jewish and Gentile developments are not so far apart as we sometimes

imagine. They were at one in their beginning, and they are at one in their ending. And the course of their development also was closely parallel, although in heathenism the issue appeared in the negative; in Judaism, on the other hand, in a positive form. But the unconscious cry of both was after the Life, the Light, the real, the true: after moral deliverance and the Kingdom of God.

Turning from the course of heathen to that of Jewish development, we recall the apt observation, that the Biblical conception of Revelation really looks back upon the account of the Creation, when our world was called into being by the Word, and its life imparted by the Spirit of God. This internal connection between the Word or Revelation and Creation also implies that in Revelation we shall find the same general order which we observe in the physical world — especially the law of historical progress — that is, as we now understand it, progression in history. The one underlying idea of Revelation is, as we have seen, the great ethical prospect in that primeval promise which the Bible places at its forefront — the outlook on a universal Kingdom of God. This primeval promise and principle alike forms the beginning and is the goal; it is the heading and the summary of Revelation. And it was this foundation-truth which unfolded throughout the course of Israel's development — in their history, rites, and institutions, as well as in the more direct communications through the Prophets. We can only indicate this here in briefest outline. The ideal object of Israel's calling, and hence of their history and institutions, seems expressed in the first promise to their father Abraham: 'In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' [23] This promise is so fundamental as to be thrice repeated to Abraham [24]; it is renewed to Isaac (Genesis 26:4); and reiterated to Jacob. (Genesis 28:14) If this promise had any real Divine meaning, it must have been intended to mark, as it were, the planting-ground for the Kingdom of God, whence in the fulness of time and of preparation it would be transplanted into the heathen world; in other words, the blessings of that kingdom were to be imparted through Israel to the world at large. There is nothing narrow or particularistic, but a grand universalism, even about this earliest presentation of the promise in a concrete form. And that such was the object and mission of Israel, is clearly indicated on the eve of the Sinaitic legislation: 'Ye shall be My property from among all nations, for all the earth is mine; ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' (Exodus 19:5) As Israel was ideally, so all nations were through their ministry to become really the possession of God: a kingdom of priests, a holy people; for all the earth, as well as Israel, was God's. And the realisation of this would be the kingdom of God on earth.

All the institutions of Israel were in strict accordance with this ideal destiny. Alike the laws, the worship, the institutions, and the mission of Israel were intended to express these two things: acknowledgment of God and dependence upon God. Thus viewed, the whole might be summed up in this one term, which runs through the whole Old Testament: 'The Servant of Jehovah.' The patriarchs were the Servants of the Lord; Israel was the Servant of the Lord; and their threefold representative institutions expressed the same idea. The Priest was to be wholly the Servant of the Lord. Hence the smallest transgression of the ordinances of his calling involved his destruction or removal. The King was not to bear rule in the manner of heathen princes, but to be the Servant of the Lord, in strictest subordination to Jehovah. Hence Saul, despite his nobler qualities, was really the Antichrist; and David, despite his grievous faults, the typical Christ of Israel's royalty, because of his constant acknowledgment of God's kingship. And the Prophet was simply the Servant of the Lord, telling nought but God's Word, in such strict adherence to the letter of his commission, that its slightest breach brought immediate punishment. And the Messiah, as

summing up in Himself ideal Israel — its history, institutions, mission, and promises — was to be the Servant of the Lord. Hence the prophecies which most clearly portray Him — those of Isaiah — might be headed by this title: The Book of the Servant of Jehovah; the idea rising, through people, prophet, king, even through a foreign instrumental doer of His behest, up to Him as the Servant of the Lord, the ideal Sufferer by and for the unrighteousness of. man, the ideal Sacrifice and Priest for his sins, the ideal Teacher in his ignorance, Comforter in his sorrow, Restorer in his decay, and Dispenser of all blessing to the world at large — the Spirit-anointed One, out of Whose fulness all were to receive, and Who would fulfil all that Israel had meant and prepared. Or, going backwards, He was to be the Son of Man, the Second Adam, whose victory would restore what sin had lost: the true Son of God, God manifest in the flesh. This, we believe, the Old Testament meant, and Jesus of Nazareth came to fulfil. In saying this, I am at least not misrepresenting what the Gospels indicate as the meaning of the Old Testament, and as that which stood out before the Christ as the object of His Mission. I cannot express it better than in the language of one who belonged to a school of critics from which I widely differ, but whose deep insight and spiritual appreciativeness contrast markedly with the levity of others of the same direction. 'The call of Jesus,' he writes, [25] 'points back, first-to John, and then, much further, into the Old Testament. The conception of the Kingdom of God, which to our modern consciousness seems somewhat obscure … is one of the fundamental ideas of the Old Testament. It was the pride of Israel, not merely because Israel believed in the privileges it would confer on themselves, but because alone of all nations Israel was capable of believing in the possibility of a covenant between heaven and earth, between God and man, in a welding of Divine purposes with the counsels of earth, and in the fact that, even within the modest boundaries of a small nation, the rule of earthly affairs was not unworthy of God. To be sure, this also constituted Israel's sorrow and source of suffering in the course of history; the limitation not only of its free political and purely human, but even of its religious development; the appointed bitter criticism of a Reality which ever fell short and ever contradicted the Ideal. But in this very sorrow and never-ceasing criticism of earthly lamentation and limitation, Israel became the guide and leader in that infinite striving which, by believing in and seeking after the coming Kingdom of God, and by the final real Advent of the Messiah upon earth, would and did join Idea and Reality — the life of God and that of man, heaven and earth. The one pervading and impelling idea of the Old Testament is the royal reign of God on earth… Almost a thousand years before Christ rises the longing cry after the future Kingdom of God — a kingdom which is to conquer and to win all nations, and to plant in Israel righteousness, knowledge, peace, and blessing — that Kingdom of God in which God, or his Vicegerent, the Messiah, is to be King over the whole earth, and all generations are to come up and worship the Lord of Hosts.' On this only too brief extract I might have been content to rest the case. But I must not forget, even in this preliminary statement, that, since the eloquent words just quoted were written, the study of the Old Testament has entered into an entirely new phase — at any rate so far as its influence on English theological thinking is concerned. The critical conclusions arrived, or at least aimed at, are of the most wide-reaching character. As stated in the previous Lecture, they have this advantage, that they promise to explain every difficulty — though to our mind this is anything but evidence of their truth; that they are propounded by men of great critical learning, and presented by them as the undoubted outcome of the best critical research; and that they are supported by arguments which, to those unacquainted with the details of the controversy, must appear most specious. While reserving for another occasion [26] such answer as may be necessary for the general argument of

these Lectures, I must be allowed, even at this stage, to express some general objections. It is not said to create a prejudice, but as a matter of fact, that critics even of the same school are still in hopeless contradiction, not as to minor details, but on such primary questions as the authorship of different parts of the Pentateuch, or their respective dates, on both of which divergent conclusions are advanced — and with equal certitude. From which, I think, we may at least infer that no sure ground has yet been reached m regard to them. Further, some of the arguments are, almost admittedly, unsatisfactory, such as that which would infer the age or composition of certain parts of the Pentateuch from linguistic peculiarities. And the conclusion seems, at least to me, quite clear that the whole question will have to be decided mainly on internal grounds. Lastly, the arguments are not unfrequently mixed up with such extraordinary speculations as not only to weaken the force of the general reasoning, but to make us distrustful of the whole direction. [27]

Indeed, primâ facie, some of the main conclusions propounded by that school of critics seem to involve the strongest improbabilities. Most of us are in some measure cognisant how books are written. Let us compare with this, for example, the account which Wellhausen — the representative of that school best known among us — gives of the origin of the Pentateuch. [28] Truth to say, it is so complicated that it would be impossible to compress it in one sentence, and so involved as to make it difficult to present it in a quite clearly intelligible manner. Suffice it that the Pentateuch (or rather Hexateuch) is made up of a number of books which themselves have undergone several ‘redactions,’ and been successively incorporated into yet other books, with still other ‘redactions.’ Each of these is represented by a special letter, indicative of its authorship or characteristics. Thus we have sources respectively initialed, E, E2, J, J2, D, Jeremiah 2:1-37, PC, and Q, besides the final redaction of them all. Some of these have not only undergone revisions, but P, for example, is ‘a conglomerate, the work of a whole school;’ while D consists of a centrepiece that had undergone two editions, with additions, respectively, before and after it. As we try to realise the multiplicity of books — not consulted, used, or quoted, but incorporated in the composition of the Pentateuch; remember, that of some of these books only small fragments are preserved, and even those in small pieces cunningly distributed here and there; and finally think of the various additions they have received, and redactions to which they have been subjected — the mind becomes bewildered. No other book has ever been composed in this manner. It may be as Wellhausen says; but in that case the Pentateuch is certainly, from a literary point of view, a unique production. We know that in the composition of a work many sources may be used and various authorities quoted, yet literary history would be searched in vain for another patchwork of the kind in which half-a-dozen or more books are cut up and pieced together in so cunning a manner. Viewed as a purely literary question, the story of the Pentateuch, as told by some of these critics, is not only unparalleled, but transparently improbable.

It need scarcely be said that this post-dating and inversion of the Pentateuch has most important sequences. In the first place, it presents the ancient religion of Israel as something quite different from what we had been formerly led to regard it; indeed, as a form of nature-religion, barbarous, and kindred to those of the nations around. And so the most fundamental questions, such as in regard to human sacrifices, the worship of Baal, and other points of the kind, have to be discussed anew. [29] On the other hand, if the previously received order has to be inverted and we are henceforth to write, the Prophets and the Law — if the Pentateuch, viewed as Mosaic legislation, is, to speak plainly, a deception, we cannot wonder if the so-called Prophets are a delusion. I do

not misrepresent Kuenen when I state this as the outcome of the book already referred to, that there is no such thing as Prophetism or Prophets in the sense which the Church attaches to these terms; that what are called fulfilled prophecies are simply a mistake; while unfulfilled prophecies are a delusion. But not only was the future towards which the Prophets looked a delusion, [30] but their activity in the then present did not advance the welfare of the people, and Prophetism was alike ignorant of State policy and dangerous to the State. These self-appointed enthusiasts must, according to the new theory, be placed far below the Roman tribunes of the people. [31] Their only contribution was an ethical monotheism, although, as Professor Kuenen adds, 'Even without their aid Polytheism would, perhaps, have made way for the recognition and the worship of one only God.' And with strange historical boldness, the commencement of such a reformation is discerned in the Roman Empire at the beginning of the Christian era, although Kuenen declares it doubtful whether the monotheism of the people, not of the philosophers, would have been what he calls 'ethical.' [32] But in cutting away all ground in Old Testament prophecy for an expectation of the kingdom, Professor Kuenen's theory surely condemns itself. For, as a matter of fact, this expectancy did exist, not only in the time of Jesus, but certainly two centuries before. And even Kuenen hesitates to accept the view of Schultz, that many of the Messianic interpretations originated among 'the Jews among whom the Prophet of Nazareth laboured.' But if so, what explanation of them can be offered? Only this:

'In the centuries which preceded the establishment of Christianity a new conception of the words of the Prophets and Psalmists must have been formed, which, in distinction from the actual meaning of these men, could be called the second sense of Scripture.' [33] Probably few persons would call such perversion of the real meaning its second sense. But it is surely a strange use of language when Professor Kuenen calls this the 'allegorical exegesis,' and adds that 'allegorical exegesis is the inseparable companion of the process of the clarification of religious views.' [34] Most students would reverse this epigrammatic generalisation, and characterise such 'allegorical exegesis' as contributing rather to the process of darkening than that of 'clarifying' religious views. But the point to which I wish at present to call special attention is, that, when challenged to show how these Messianic interpretations had originated, Professor Kuenen has no better answer to offer than the assertion, that a new conception must have been formed in the centuries which preceded Christianity.

It is perhaps well that all the sequences of so bold and thoroughgoing a theory should clearly appear. And it will afford yet other evidence of the internal and inseparable connection between the Old and New Testament. Nor has Professor Kuenen denied that such did exist, at least, in the mind of Christ and His Apostles. But he declares that in this they had wholly misunderstood and misinterpreted the real and primary meaning of the Old Testament. To quote his own words: 'If they [Jesus Christ and the Apostles] had continued still to occupy altogether the standpoint of the old prophets and poets, Jesus of Nazareth would not have been accepted as the Messiah.' Then must the Synagogue have been right in rejecting the claims of Jesus, and in crucifying Him as a Deceiver of the people!

Surely, this is a startling conclusion. And yet, we repeat, it is well that the issue should be so narrowed, and the real alternative stand out in plain language. With belief in the Christ as presented in the New Testament, the prophetic character of the Old Testament is also established; with the rejection of prophecy in the Old Testament the claims of Christ, as set forth in the New

Testament, fall to the ground. Which of these shall it be? Let history decide.

NOTE ON Genesis 12:3.

Professor Kuenen has maintained, in the most unhesitating manner, that the usual rendering of this verse is incorrect, and that it should read, ‘The families of the earth shall bless themselves with Abraham’ i.e. ‘Shall wish for themselves, or for one another, the blessing which Jahveh bestowed upon him.’ He grounds this interpretation on the fact that, in three out of the five passages in which the word occurs, (Genesis 12:2; Genesis 12:8; Genesis 18:18; Genesis 28:13; Genesis 28:15) the verb ‘blessing’ is in the Niphal, while in two of the passages (Genesis 22:16-24; Genesis 26:3-4) it is in the Hithpael. He holds that, if it meant ‘be blessed,’ the Pual form ought to have been used. Even if it were so, Kuenen’s final inferences would be unwarrantable, as appears from the circumstance that so orthodox a commentator as Delitzsch holds the same view as to the meaning of the verb, and yet firmly retains the Messianic interpretation, which indeed rests, not upon the verb, but upon the words ‘in thee and in thy seed.’ Let me try to put this in a clearer light. First. Despite the authority of Kuenen, Delitzsch, and others, 1 must still hold the grammatical admissibility of the rendering ‘shall be blessed.’ This has been ably vindicated by Professor Stanley Leathes in his Warburton Lectures. [35] It is the rendering of the LXX, substantially that of the Targum Onkelos (■■■■■■, on thy account), and the Jerusalem Targum (■■■■■■■, by thy merit), which certainly cannot be accused of any Christian leaning, as well as that of Kimchi, as regards the Niphal form, and among modern Jewish writers notably of Kalisch. These authorities may at any rate be taken as evidence of the admissibility of such a rendering. Secondly. But the main difficulty of Kuenen’s interpretation lies in this, that he regards the expression ‘to bless in’ as equivalent to ‘bless with anyone,’ in the signification ‘to wish for oneself or for others the blessing which the person in question enjoys.’ Now this view must be incorrect, if we are to judge of it by the instances quoted by Kuenen. In Isaiah 65:16, Jeremiah 4:2, the expression is ‘blessing themselves in God,’ where certainly it cannot mean: to wish for oneself the blessing which the person in question enjoys, but the blessing which proceeds from a person. In Deuteronomy 29:18 it cannot of course have the meaning for which Kuenen contends. In Psalms 72:17, even if we reject its Messianic application, it cannot possibly mean that all nations ‘shall wish for themselves the blessing which Solomon enjoyed,’ but rather that of which Solomon was the medium of communication. All the passages, therefore, quoted by Kuenen go against him. The ‘usual meaning of the phrase’ cannot be determined by Genesis 48:20 (‘in thee. shall Israel bless’), where the expression is used almost figuratively, as appears from the explanation which immediately follows,’ Elohim place thee like Ephraim and like Manasseh;’ not, as in our A.V., ‘make thee’ but ‘set thee;’ viz. in the same favourable position. Generally, then, it will appear that the rendering for which Kuenen contends is, as regards the crucial word, ‘in thee and in thy seed,’ inadmissible. Besides, I would remark that, if the writer had meant to convey that the nations should wish for themselves the blessing which Jehovah bestowed on Abraham, he might have chosen a less ambiguous mode of expression than this, ‘shall bless themselves with Abraham.’ Lastly. It must be evident that, even if Kuenen were correct in explaining ‘they shall wish for themselves the blessing which God bestowed on Abraham,’ it would not by any means prove that this blessing refers to outward things, such as either the possession of the land, or any similar good. It can scarcely be imagined that at any later period of Israelitish history a writer would have put into the mouth of the nations as their highest wish that of sharing the outward fortunes of

Israel, unless, indeed, he looked forward to a prophetic future. But in that case the interpretation would be that of a prophetic blessing, or in principle come back upon the view for which we have contended. On the linguistic, as well as the general critical aspect of the question, compare also the interesting remarks of Hoffmann, Schrift-Bew. 2:1, pp. 103, 104, &c.

01.03. Lecture 3

Lecture 3.

The Faith and Rites of the Primitive Church are Confirmed by Indubitable Christian, and by Important Non-Christian Evidence. Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? And they said: Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. — Matthew 16:13-16.

IT cannot be regarded as a real digression from the line of our argument if, before proceeding, we guard ourselves against a preliminary objection, since, if it were established, our whole reasoning would be disposed of. Hitherto we have contended that the New Testament in its origin looks back upon the Old; that the one all- pervading idea of the Old Testament is, that of the Kingdom of God through the Messiah; and that the Apostles and primitive disciples saw the realisation of it in the mission, the history, and the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. But what if this point were called in question, and there be no real ground for believing that the views which we impute to them were held by the primitive Christians? And the inquiry into the primitive belief of the Church gains in importance as we remember that the primitive records in the Gospels have been assailed on many sides: their date and authorship have been disputed; they have been described as partly spurious, partly interpolated; as exaggerated, or else coloured by prevailing superstitions; and as designed to foist later ideas upon primitive teaching, and to bring professedly apostolic authority to bear on existing controversies. Besides, what evidence is there outside the four Gospels (or some allusions in the Epistles) — all of them being in the nature of interested witnesses — that these supposed facts really formed the data on which primitive Christian belief rested? It is evident that these questions concern the very existence of the citadel to which we have been seeking to trace the avenues.

Some of the points just mentioned lie, indeed, outside our present inquiry. Our argument only requires us to make sure of the primitive belief of the Church in the facts recorded in the Gospels, and on which the conviction was grounded that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy. It does not require us to establish that this belief was well founded, nor yet that the facts themselves on which it rested were absolutely and literally true. We have at present to deal with the authenticity of the Gospel-records only as expressive f the primitive faith, not with the grounds on which that faith rested. The latter inquiry is, indeed, of the deepest importance, nor would we shrink from making it were this the right place for it. [36] But our present business is only to show that the primitive disciples believed certain facts (whether true or false), on the ground of which they regarded Jesus as the Messiah. Nor is it even necessary for our argument to prove that all that is recorded in the four Gospels represents the primitive tradition and belief of the Church. This also is a most important question, but it forms not the subject of our present inquiry. For our purpose it is enough if sufficient is established on which to ground the conviction that Jesus was the Messiah: sufficient that looked back into the past of Old Testament prophecy, and forward into

the future of New Testament history. But even in this narrowed aspect of the question an affirmative answer will advance us a long way. It will establish the historic continuity of the New with the Old Testament; it will make quite clear what the primitive Christians did certainly believe about the Christ, why they regarded Jesus as the Messiah, and how far their primary belief led them. And more than this, and beyond the scope of our present argument, it will afford presumptive evidence of the reality of the facts on which primitive belief rested. For, if it were proved by the general consensus of primitive tradition that certain facts concerning Jesus were universally held to have occurred, and that certain doctrines were founded on them as inferences from these facts, and certain rites introduced as memorials of them — or, conversely, if certain doctrines or rites can be historically established as primitive which look back upon certain Gospel facts as their necessary basis — then we have such presumptive evidence in their favour that it will be requisite for negative criticism not only historically to prove their incorrectness, but also historically to account for this general consensus of belief regarding them in the primitive Church, and for the origin of the doctrines and rites which were their outcome. And here, as already stated, we are not limited to the mere historical record of these facts in the Gospels or Epistles. We have other, and quite as strong, evidence that they formed part of the primitive faith of the Church in the doctrines and rites which demonstrably looked back upon them. If we can prove from undoubted and even non-Christian testimony that certain doctrines were held and certain rites practised, which necessarily refer to certain facts recorded in the Gospel-history, we have pro tanto confirmation of the reception of these facts — that is, that they formed part of the primitive belief of the Church. We have thus two lines of evidence: that from the unquestioned record of primitive tradition in the Christian writings, and that from the unquestionable evidence of the existence of certain doctrines and practices in the primitive Church. The one will rest on Christian, the other on non-Christian documents; and as regards the latter, it may be found sometimes to stretch beyond the evidence of doctrines and rites to that of some of the facts recorded in the Gospels.

If in the view of some we needlessly narrow the evidence in favour of primitive doctrines and rites by confining it to non-Christian (Jewish and heathen) testimony, there is in the present argument good ground for so doing. It is, indeed, not likely that those possessing at once sufficient information on the subject and calmness of judgment would regard the picture of the primitive Church, or rather of the two fundamentally dissimilar Churches, which M. Renan has painted in his ‘Conferences d’Angleterre,’ [37] as a portraiture of the original state of matters; still less, that they would accept his views as to the ‘posthumous’ conciliation of what he calls the Church of Peter with that of Paul — the Church of Rome with that of Jerusalem — and of their union, which the ‘Book of Acts’ is supposed, by a pious fraud, to represent as accomplished from the first. The historical assumptions are here too evident, the facts on the other side too numerous, and the explanatory hypothesis is too ingenious, to allow ourselves to be carried away by the brilliant diction and the epigrammatic generalisations of the eloquent Frenchman. It would require far more than this to lead us to attribute to the simple-mindedness of the early Christians such an act of haute politique in what to them was matter of deepest spiritual conviction; or to ascribe to them deliberate fraud in that for which they were ready to pour forth their life’s blood. And the more you accentuate — as is the wont of that school — the supposed fundamental differences between Petrine and Pauline teaching; the more you insist on the intensity with which each party clung to its principles, the less likely does a ‘reconciliation,’ such as that described, appear. Not a peaceful fusion that covered the differences, but a life-and-death struggle, would be the likely result with

such combatants. But while the line of defence is on all sides good, yet there is such difference of views and such contention about the apostolic, and, on many points, such unclearness about many things in the post-apostolic, Church, that we willingly forego in our present argument all reference to either, so as to avoid what after all would be a needless complication. We shall, therefore, not go beyond the period of the Gospels; and appeal for the rest to non-Christian evidence, in proof that the main facts, on which the conviction rested that Jesus was the Old Testament Messiah, formed part of the primitive belief of the Church. In other respects, also, it is equally interesting and important to draw the line of distinction between Evangelic and Apostolic times, and between Evangelic and Apostolic literature — the latter including 'the Book of Acts.' The doctrine (διδαχ■) which is the outcome of the one we may designate as the faith and rites of the primitive Christians; that of the other, as the dogmas and practices of the Apostolic Church. In regard to the latter, we may say that the one grand principle underlying all is that of Apostolicity. I hasten to add that I use the term, not in the sense which in recent theological discussions has been attached to it, but in what is its real meaning — Christsentness. In this sense, apostolicity has a twofold application: as apostolicity of office and apostolicity of teaching. Whatever diversity of gifts or of administration may have existed or been tolerated, above them all was apostolicity of office, which Paul, as well as Peter, John, and James, energetically vindicated for themselves against all gainsayers. Whatever was not apostolic or apostolically sanctioned was to be repudiated. And by the side of this supremacy of the apostolic office we have that of apostolic teaching. Whatever differences in views or practices may have been tolerated — and there is evidence of the most wide- hearted liberality in both respects — yet, what of doctrine or practice was apostolic must be absolutely received, while the opposite was absolutely banned. Evidently, we have already passed, or at least are passing, out of the formative into the historic period. The age of historic memorial has already begun, when appeal is made to the teaching and the practice of Apostles, apostolic men, and apostolic Churches. Not so during the first or formative period of the Church. Then the teaching was directly that of Christ, and the rites and practices were simply the outcome of that teaching. And this also is distinctive. Under the Old Testament, doctrine was in great measure the outcome of rites; under the New, rites are the outcome of doctrine. The relation is in accordance with the character of each: in the one case, from without inwards; in the other, from within outwards. The application of these principles is wide-reaching, and, as will appear in the sequel, closely bears on our present argument. To the Christian heart it must at all times be most painful to follow in detail the criticism of the Gospels as made by the more advanced negative school. Quite irrespective of the valid answer which, we are fully convinced, can, on scientific grounds, be given to their objections, and the good defence which can be made of the positions taken up by the Church, there are preliminary considerations which will, with good reason, weigh with thoughtful persons more heavily than merely logical arguments and ingenious hypotheses. The school in question proceeds in its criticism of the Gospels on the avowed principle, that where they do not preserve the original tradition, they interpolate or intentionally falsify for a definite purpose — that purpose bearing mainly on the supposed two hostile tendencies in the Church of Judaic and Gentile Christianity, the supposed object being to advocate either the one or the other tendency, or else to conciliate them. To adopt the expressive term of German critics: where our present Gospels deviate from the original traditions, they are mainly Tendenz-Schriftenz [38] (tendency writings). But, to my thinking, it seems inconceivable, from the intellectual, and still more from the moral point of view, that the early Christians — and,

indeed, it must have been the leading men among them — should have deliberately falsified facts and invented incidents, and that in connection with the Personality of Jesus, Who to them was the all in all. That the writers of our Gospels should have so altered the original traditions and documents (which, according to our opponents, they elaborated into their works), seems, to say the least, intellectually highly improbable, and morally absolutely incredible. That they who so thought of the Christ should, for ecclesiastical purposes, or to bring about a 'conciliation' — which in itself seems psychologically and historically an unlikely undertaking — have falsified and invented, constitutes the very climax of improbabilities. They may have been misinformed; they may have been mistaken; they may have viewed things from the standpoint of their time; they may have exaggerated: all this is conceivable, though historical proof would be required for it — but to associate with them 'Tendency-Literature' seems morally impossible. [39] But our argument is not merely à priori. We have quite a series of witnesses who give incidental confirmation to much in the Gospels. Paul, who became a Christian some years after the Crucifixion, must have been acquainted with the traditions and views about Jesus current among those early believers whom he had persecuted. And there is evidence throughout his writings, that after his conversion he had taken pains further to acquaint himself with the historical grounds, that is, with the facts in Christ's history, on which the belief of the Church rested. Indeed this must have been a primary necessity to a nature so logical as his, and to one who had to advocate among Greeks and philosophers a doctrine so inherently unlikely as the Divine Mission, the atoning Death, and the Resurrection of Christ. And his teaching — even limiting ourselves to those epistles which the most severe negative criticism admits as genuine, [40] is in every point grounded upon the data of the Gospels, and hence pro tanto a confirmation of them. Besides, the bases of his doctrinal system also rest on the teaching of Jesus, as we gather its spirit from the reports in the Gospels. We remind ourselves here of such teaching as concerning the valuelessness of mere outward observances; concerning the Law as presented by the Leaders of Israel; concerning the opening of the Kingdom of God to the Gentile world; concerning the insufficiency and inefficacy of outward distinctions and advantages; concerning the rule of the Spirit within the heart, and His transformation of our nature; concerning the need of absolute self-surrender to God, like that of Christ; concerning the character and purpose of Christ's Death; His institution of the Last Supper; His Resurrection, and His coming again. All this, and more that could be mentioned, carries with it a train of obvious sequences evidential of the historical character of the Gospels. But even this is not all. The reference of Paul to the Twelve Apostles, (1 Corinthians 15:5) and to the 'brethren of the Lord,' are not the only direct references to incidents in the Gospel narrative. Even on the admission of negative critics, we have in the undoubted Pauline epistles direct verbal references to passages in the Gospels. Thus, Matthew 5:39, &c., is the basis of Romans 12:17; Romans 12:21; we are reminded of Matthew 13 in Galatians 5:9; of Matthew 22:40 in Galatians 5:14; of Mark 11:23 by 1 Corinthians 13:2; of Mark 13:26 by 1 Thessalonians 4:17; of Luke 6:27, &c., by 1 Corinthians 4:12, &c.; comp. Romans 12:14; and of Luke 12:40 in 1 Thessalonians 5:2. [41] These verbal as well as real coincidences are of the most important evidential bearing on the Gospel narratives. And to these might be added similar references in the other epistles of Paul, which have not been here adduced, because their authenticity has been questioned by certain critics, our present object being to present only such evidence as is undisputed. Suffice it to state that references to Matthew, Mark, and Luke have been traced in the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians. [42]

Similar references to the Synoptic Gospels — to which we here confine ourselves — occur in other apostolic writings, notably in the Epistle of James and the Book of Revelation. In the former class we mention the following: Matthew 5:3 as compared with James 1:9; Matthew 5:7 with James 2:13; Matthew 5:9 with James 3:18; Matthew 5:12 with James 1:2, and also James 5:10; Matthew 5:34-37 with James 5:12; Matthew 6:19 with James 5:2; Matthew 7:24-27 with James 1:22; [43] Matthew 12:7 with James 2:13; Matthew 21:21-22 with James 1:6; Matthew 22:39 with James 2:8; and Matthew 23:12 with James 4:6; James 4:10. [44] The references in the 'Book of Revelation' are not confined to the Gospel according to Matthew, but extend to the other two Synoptists. Thus, we have reference to Matthew 10:32 in Revelation 3:5; to Matthew 11:15, and to Matthew 13:9 and Matthew 13:43 in Revelation 2:7; to Mark 13:22 in Revelation 13:13-14; to Mark 13:24, &c., in Revelation 6:12; to Luke 12:36-38 in Revelation 3:20; to Luke 12:39-40 in Revelation 3:3, and Revelation 16:15; and to Luke 23:30 in Revelation 6:16. [45] But all this presents only a small part of the evidence at our disposal. We can appeal to the simplicity, vividness, and naturalness of so many of the Gospel narratives; to their psychological truthfulness, their internal connection and reference one to another; to the utter impossibility of accounting for them by notions or expectations prevailing at the time; to the agreement between the narratives in the different Gospels; to the accordance of the persons and surroundings with what we know of the history and the manners of the time, and to many little traits which can scarcely be described, but to which the student of history is sensitive, all bearing their witness to the Gospels. And beyond it all stands out the Figure of the historical Christ, as He was in the days of His Flesh, and as He is to all time and now: Himself the best evidence of the Gospel narratives. And when from this we descend to the position which even negative criticism concedes to us, we remember that, according to its admissions, the earliest document, or documents, in which primitive tradition found expression dates from less than thirty years after the Crucifixion, and was derived from eyewitnesses of these events and disciples of Jesus. [46] And we feel that this canon of our opponents has a far wider application than they give it: that 'doubt is only warrantable where scientific reasons can be asserted for it.' Further, when we examine what, with frequent forgetfulness of their own canon, the most advanced of that school have selected out of our Gospels as the original narrative, [47] we perceive that, while much more might be inferred from their own admissions, they have left us quite sufficient to establish the grounds on which the primitive Church recognised Jesus as the Messiah promised in the Old Testament.

[2]. From this we turn to a far different class of evidence: that from the testimony of avowed enemies. We cannot, indeed, expect that either Jews or Romans would furnish us with details about Christian doctrine, unless, in the case of the former, for controversial purposes. But to a certain extent they bear" testimony as to facts and practices, and if their witness bears out what we find in the New Testament, this may surely be regarded as giving important support to the fuller account of such persons, practices, or doctrines in the New Testament itself. We can only in the briefest manner follow this line of evidence.

A. The Talmud — though containing very early, even pre-Christian notices, is, as a whole, of much later date than the New Testament. Moreover, its statements are utterly unhistorical, and it is charged with bitter enmity to the new faith. Accordingly we cannot look for any positive testimony in its pages. But there are important admissions, ascribed to Rabbis belonging to the Apostolic or Early Post-Apostolic age, which are at least negatively of great evidential value. Thus miracles on

the part of Jesus seem to be admitted, and they are not accounted for .either by delusion or imposture. However accounted for, we find the belief in the miraculous power of Jesus confirmed. Indeed, miraculous cures are also attributed to the disciples of Christ, and the strict prohibition to avail one's self of them, even if life itself were in danger, only affords additional evidence of the general credence of them. Again, we have undoubted reference to early Christian writings. Whether allowed or forbidden to be saved from the fire — and there were voices on either side — these writings had evidently been intended for the reading of Jews, and must therefore have been written in the Aramæan. Nor can we be mistaken in supposing that they were either documents treating of the history and claims of Christ, or at any rate connected with the original primitive Christian documents. A distinct quotation, or rather misquotation, of Matthew 5:17 occurs in Shabb. 116b, as from the 'Evangilyon' — which in the word-play not uncommon in Talmudic writings is styled the Aven or else Avan Gilyon, 'mischief of blank (empty) paper' (■■■ ■■■■■, or else ■■■). [48] This testimony reaches up into the first century, and it is comparatively unimportant for our argument whether the quotation was from Matthew or from a document earlier or later than our Gospel. [49] Similar remarks apply to what we regard as a reference to the Gospel of John on the part of Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrqanos. [50] In both cases we have — to take the lowest standpoint — confirmation, that what we read in the Gospels as the teaching and mission of Christ formed part of the primitive belief of the Church. And we feel that in so far they also afford confirmation of the Gospels themselves. The whole subject is so interesting and novel — at any rate to English readers — that we may be allowed to present it, at least in outline, following, so far as may be, the arguments and admissions of Jewish writers, [51] in order to avoid controversy.

It is the contention of certain Jewish writers that at first there was not the same separation between the Synagogue and the primitive disciples as at a later period, and that such would not have ensued had it not been for the Pauline direction and the Anti-Jewish Gentile movement which was its sequence. We mark the concessions which this implies, while we emphatically deny that what is called the 'Pauline direction' is correctly represented in them. And we recall the account in the Book of Acts of the bitter hostility to the infant Church, and the consequent persecutions, which preceded the so-called 'Pauline direction,' and in which, indeed, Saul of Tarsus was himself a principal agent. But we also know that this enmity actually preceded the Death of Christ, and was the cause of it. And as regards the teaching of Paul, we are prepared to maintain that, throughout, it had its root and spring in the teaching of the Master concerning traditionalism and Pharisaism. But this in their contention is certainly true, that at first there was much more close religious intercourse between Jews and Christians. Nay, to quote the words of a recent Jewish writer [52]: 'It cannot be denied that the movement which originated within Judaism, and attached itself to the Name of Jesus, drew for a short time also many of the Teachers of the Law into the vortex.' As a further fact against the Jewish assertion, that Judaism stood in close peaceful relation to the primitive Church, we must here take note of their own admission, that Gentile and Jewish Christian controversialists received far different treatment at the hands of the Synagogue. The former were treated with a kind of benevolent pity; the latter provoked the bitterest hostility, [53] to such extent that the people were warned against all intercourse with those who were regarded as blasphemers. [54] At the same time we mark differences in the statements of the Rabbis concerning such intercourse, and this, not only on the part of different teachers, but even of the same teachers, apparently on different occasions. In general, the principle prevailed that no

intercourse of any kind should be held with those heretics; and that even the preservation of life might not be sought by their healing. [55] Sacred as the occurrence of the Divine Name was to the Jew, the Rabbis would have deemed it duty to burn the Gospels and similar heretical books, even though containing the hallowed mention; nay, they would rather have fled into a heathen temple for protection from a murderer or a serpent, than taken refuge among Christians. [56] In other circumstances, however, opinions would appear changed. At the end of the third and beginning of the fourth century, when Christianity had already become a power, we find that the celebrated Rabbi Abbahu not only called in Christian medical aid, though his colleagues happily averted his purpose, which the Talmud declares would have led to his being killed; but that, when asked whether the writings of the heretics might on the Sabbath be saved from the fire, he replied sometimes affirmatively, at others negatively. But then this Rabbi Abbahu was a sort of ideal personage: handsome, liberal, who favoured Grecian culture, lived at Cæsarea, and was in favour with the Roman authorities. While the Jewish Patriarchate had sunk very low under Gamaliel IV., Abbahu was a sage among sages, and, what was most meritorious, he knew how to inflict the most crushing defeats upon the Nazarenes. [57] No wonder that, according to Talmudic story, the Christians would fain have done away with him — a fate which, as we have seen, was only averted by the timely intervention of his colleagues. To be sure, they must have been very peculiar controversialists those Christians, if we are to credit the Talmudic accounts of their ratiocination. But, although neither the Christian philosopher nor yet the Jew Tryphon in Justin's 'Dialogue' seems powerful in argument, it is scarcely possible to conceive that statements so utterly puerile as the Talmudists report should have been urged in serious controversy. No wonder the Midrash applied to them the opening words of Ecclesiastes 1:8, declaring these arguments wearisome, wearing; [58] nor yet, that when the colleagues of another noted Rabbinic controversialist, Joshua ben Chananyah [59], mourned, as he lay dying, that now there would not be any to resist the daring of the Christians, the dying teacher should have comforted them by saying, that if their council had perished, the wisdom of their opponents had become rotten. [60] But the Midrash on Ecclesiastes 1:8 tells us many things which seem to indicate that the words of these heretics must have been more weighty than the arguments reported by the Rabbis. Thus, we find the great Eliezer ben Hyrqanos [61] was so gravely suspected as to be actually arraigned before the civil magistrate on the charge of Christianity, from which accusation he only escaped by a misunderstanding on the part of the magistrate. [62] In truth he made certain important admissions in regard to it. Thus, when his disciples in vain endeavoured to comfort him in his deep sorrow, the Great Rabbi Akiba at last suggested, that Eliezer might on some occasion have listened with pleasure to an exposition by the heretics. The Talmud relates this interpretation, which will scarcely bear repetition. But in view of what we have recorded in another place concerning Eliezer, and what we regard as his references to John's Gospel, [63] we may be allowed to doubt whether it represents the whole that had passed. We can scarcely suppose an Eliezer affected by discussions, concerning many of which the Rabbinic students could question their teacher in such terms as these, that he had driven back his opponents with a straw, but what had he to say to them? [64] And in truth the remark of these disciples as to the insufficiency of such replies seems well founded, and, at least on the occasion here referred to, the Christian argument must have turned on the most important points. [65]

Eliezer was the brother-in-law of Gamaliel II., and flourished in the first century. He may have been acquainted with Saul of Tarsus. His citation before the magistrate for suspected Christianity took

place during the Trajan persecution. This brings us to the period of Pliny, whom we shall presently adduce as a witness in our favour. It thus connects, in a most interesting manner, the story of the Jewish Rabbi with the evidence of the heathen governor. Meanwhile, I can only express my personal belief that the excommunication which the Rabbis laid upon Eliezer, and their opposition to his teaching, must have been due to far weightier causes than such differences of teaching as are recorded, and which were never otherwise visited with such punishment. [66] But Rabbi Eliezer was not the only great teacher affected by the Christian movement, nor yet Rabbis Abbahu and Joshua ben Chananyah the only Jewish controversialists. Rabbi Saphra, whom Abbahu had praised to the Jewish Christians in most extravagant terms, was apparently worsted by them in an argument based on Amos 3:2, which, I presume, they must have quoted by way of urging that some great national sin must rest on Israel to account for the sufferings that had come upon them. [67] But we can ascend to an earlier age for evidence of Christian influence on Jewish teachers. As a Jewish writer argues, [68] Akiba would not have suggested to Eliezer the possibility of such a cause of his misfortunes, if intercourse and discussions with Jewish Christians had been of only exceptional occurrence. Rabbi Ishmael belonged to the illustrious circle of sages who flourished after the destruction of Jerusalem. In his hatred of Jewish Christians and desire to see their sacred writings burned, he yielded nothing to his colleague, Tarphon. [69] Nevertheless, his almost equally learned nephew, Ben Dama, solicited his permission to study 'Grecian wisdom' [■■■■ ■■■■■■] — may it not have been Christian writings? — and was in such relationship towards Jewish Christians, that, when bitten by a serpent, he would fain have availed himself of the miraculous healing by one of them, appealing to Scripture for its lawfulness, but was prevented by his uncle, and so perished. [70] A similar story is told of Rabbi Joshua, one of the most celebrated teachers, and who, in his youth, was said to have been among the Levite singers in the Temple. [71] His nephew, Chanina, came under the influence of the Christians of Capernaum; and, to withdraw him from it, his uncle had to send him to Babylonia, where he afterwards exercised the greatest influence. [72] The same Rabbi Joshua is said to have also rescued a disciple of Rabbi Jonathan from the toils of the heretics. The details of the story will scarcely bear repetition. If true, the Christians, by whom the young Rabbi had been entangled, must have been Nicolaitans. But there is more than this to be told. The ordinance of the patriarch Gamaliel (II.), which directed that thenceforth admission to the Academy should only be allowed to such whose 'interior' was like their 'exterior,' [73] has been understood to refer — at least in part — to the fact that many who frequented the Rabbinic schools were under the influence of the new faith, and would have spread the new opinions. [74] This affords striking evidence of the effect which Christianity exercised at its rise upon very many of the best Jewish minds, and gives confirmation to the account of the spread of the faith in the opening chapters of the Book of Acts. Nay, there is evidence that 'heretical,' that is, Christian, prayers were sometimes actually introduced into the worship of the Synagogue by those who led the devotions, against which the sharpest precautions were to be taken, [75] Surely, then, Christianity must have had many and most influential adherents among the Jews at its rise. But even so the evidence is not complete. We find that the same Gamaliel put to the assembled sages the question, which of them could compose a prayer against the new faith which should be inserted in the most solemn part of the worship — the so- called eighteen benedictions. It has been well argued that while the necessity for, and the introduction of such a prayer in the liturgy are in themselves most significant, the appeal of the patriarch to the sages must have implied the challenge — not which of them could, but which of them would, compose such a prayer. And,

indeed, the correct repetition of this formula was henceforth made a test of orthodoxy. [76] But perhaps the best practical proof of the existence of such intercourse and influence is this, that apparently there were meeting-places for regular religious discussions, and that a special literature seems to have been the outcome of them. The former are mentioned under a twofold name: probably designating assemblies of different character. It is not easy to understand the precise meaning and distinction of these two designations. We read of the Be Abhidan ('House of Abhidan'), and of 'the writings of the Be Abhidan;' and we also read of the Be Notsrephi or Nitsrephi ('House of Notsrephi'). [77] Both names seem corruptions of other words, or, rather, as the custom was, word-puns by which a name was converted into an opprobrious epithet. [78] They are universally regarded as having been places for religious discussions between Jews and Christians of different parties. The Be Abhidan is supposed to represent a corruption of Ebionites (■■■■■= ■■■■■■), although the Ebionites were also known by their proper name; [79] or it may possibly refer to a Gnostic sect, such as the Ophites. [80] On the other hand, it is easy to recognise in the Be Notsrephi a perversion of the term Be Notsri, Christian, and to see in it a designation of the Church. The subject is not, however, wholly free from difficulty. The Talmud describes one sage (Samuel) as going to the Be Abhidan, but not to the Be Notsrephi, while another (Rabh) would not attend the former, much less the latter, [81] Other Rabbis plead age and fear of suffering bodily injury as excuse for their absence from such meetings. And we can readily believe that gatherings for discussion may, among hot-blooded Easterns, have often ended in scenes of violence. Indeed, one Rabbi tells us that he had agreed with his theological opponents that the victor in controversy should be allowed to take bloody vengeance on his adversary, which the successful Rabbi had also done, although this seems to have required considerable effort — whether of the theological or physical kind, does not clearly appear. To sum up at least some of the results of this long digression. While admitting that Talmudic writings are utterly untrustworthy as regards historical accuracy, this much at least seems established from them, that miraculous power of healing was attributed to Jesus and to the early Christians; that their sacred writings — presumably in Aramæan — existed, were known, and circulated; that there was extensive religious communication between the disciples of Christ and the most eminent Teachers of the Law, and frequent, if not regular, discussions with them; and that many of the leaders of the Jewish world, and naturally many more of the people, were affected by the new movement. In fact, it was supposed that Divine punishment had visited a great Rabbi who confessed to having derived pleasure from their interpretations; while others had to flee or to die, in order to escape the dangerous heresy. Even to hold intercourse with these heretics, who were for ever excluded from eternal life, was regarded as already the first step towards becoming a Christian convert, and was to be carefully avoided.

Thus far all accords with the impressions derived from the Christian records. But we have other and more direct evidence to produce. B. From the Talmud we pass to the Jewish historian Josephus, whom we may describe as in early life the contemporary of Paul. Indeed, there is ground for believing that, as a young man, Josephus was in Rome during Paul's first imprisonment there, [82] His systematic ignoring of Christianity will scarcely seem strange when we remember the character of the man, the ulterior object of his writings, and the relations between Christianity and Judaism, on the one hand, and heathenism, on the other. But there are three passages in the works of Josephus, occurring in all existing manuscripts, which bear testimony respectively to John the Baptist, [83] to James the brother of Jesus, [84] and to Christ Himself. [85] Without

entering on detailed criticism, suffice it to say that, while the passage about Christ must have had some genuine substratum, [86] it appears to be so altered and interpolated in its present form as for all practical purposes to be spurious. More credit attaches to the passage about James, the Lord's brother. But even this is in its present form so doubtful that we prefer leaving it unnoticed, as, in any case, not affecting the present argument. On the other hand, sober-minded critics of all schools are now generally agreed that the passage in Josephus concerning John the Baptist is genuine and trustworthy. [87] For evidential purposes [88] it may be described as bearing testimony on these four points:

1st, the exalted character of John and his preaching of repentance;

2ndly, his baptism and its relation to the forgiveness of sins;

3rdly, the crowds which from all parts flocked to him and were deeply moved by his preaching; and, lastly, that John was executed by Herod, because he feared that the preaching of the Baptist might issue in a new movement or rebellion against himself, since the people 'seemed ready to do anything by his counsel.' This fourfold testimony covers, with one exception, all the main facts recorded in the Gospels about the Baptist, although with such variations as we might expect from the standpoint of the Jewish historian. Thus far, then, it affords important confirmation of the Gospel history. And even the notable omission to which we have referred, that of any allusion to the announcement by the Baptist of the coming Messianic Kingdom, is rather apparent than real. For this rebellion which Herod is said to have dreaded, in consequence of the people's readiness to do anything by John's counsel, must have referred to his proclamation of the near Advent of the Messianic Kingdom and King. Josephus does not give a hint of any political element in the preaching of John; on the contrary, he sums it up as enjoining 'righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God,' 'and so to come to baptism.' If therefore a new political movement was apprehended from such preaching, the inference seems almost irresistible that John had announced the near Kingdom. And here we remember that the claims of Jesus to the Messiahship gave rise to the charge of setting up another King, and that the bare suggestion of the birth of such a Messiah so excited the fears of Herod's father as to lead to the murder of the Innocents at Bethlehem. And, even at the last, when such a claim might seem almost impossible, Pilate discussed it with Jesus; and such deep hold had it taken, that at a later period Domitian summoned the relatives of Jesus to his presence, to see whether their appearance betokened danger to his sovereignty. Hence we can readily believe that this would, under Pharisaic instigation of his fears, be the deeper motive in Herod's conduct towards the Baptist, and that the reproof about Herodias would only represent the climax of offence, and the final occasion of the Baptist's imprisonment, [89] Thus viewed, the silence of Josephus on what would have obliged him to refer to Christianity is itself of evidential value. But there is even more to be learned from the testimony of Josephus. It not only attests, and that by a witness hostile to Christianity, the exalted character of the Baptist, and implies his announcement of the near Messianic Kingdom, but it affords at least indirect evidence that Jesus brought something new, instituted a new kingdom, such as we know it from the Gospels. We infer this not only from what Josephus records as the subject-matter of John's preaching, but from the rite of baptism which, according to his testimony, John had instituted. We need not here discuss the historically untenable suggestion that the Baptist or his baptism were connected with Essenism. Suffice it to say, that the baptism of the Essenes was not for the people generally, but for the initiated; not once for repentance, but daily

for superior sanctity. Indeed, Essenism had nothing to say to men, except to come out and join the Sect; and it fundamentally differed, on almost all important points, from the teaching of John. But if the preaching and baptism of John were not Essene, neither were they Judaic. Rabbinism knows no preaching of repentance such as that to which John called his hearers, or, as Josephus describes it, wherein what the Rabbis would have denounced as sinners — the unlearned, soldiers, and publicans — would have been allowed to continue in their condition, only with changed minds and conduct. Nor was any such baptism either practised or known in Judaism. There were the legal washings connected with Levitical defilements, and the baptism of heathens on becoming Proselytes of Righteousness. But a baptism of Jews as connected with repentance was wholly unprecedented. It inaugurated something different from all the past, something new. Whether viewed in connection with the typical purification preparatory to Israel's reception of the Law at Mount Sinai, or as symbolic of the better washing — in the language of Josephus, 'after that the soul had previously been cleansed by righteousness' — it marked the commencement of a new development, the preparation for a new kingdom, in which righteousness would reign. And in this respect also the silence of Josephus is most significant. Thus, when read in connection with the Gospel narrative, the language of Josephus not only implies the Baptist's proclamation of the coming Messiah, but also that He would found a new kingdom for which baptism was the appropriate preparation.

C. One step still remains. We have had testimony from hostile, and certainly not impartial Jews; we shall now have it from a hostile but impartial heathen. We have been carried to the threshold of the history of Jesus, and have had a look forward into it; we shall now be transported to the period after His death, and from that standpoint have a look backwards on the Gospel narrative. The testimony of Josephus covers the period from the time of Paul to that of Trajan — more exactly from A.D. 37 or 38 to after the year 100 of our era. But before that period expires the testimony of another unimpeached and unimpeachable witness begins. I allude here to the well-known Epistle which Pliny the Younger addressed to the Emperor Trajan. [90] The facts are briefly as follows. Under the reign of Trajan (98-117), the younger Pliny, who had already filled the highest offices, became Governor of Bithynia. The precise date of his governorship, and consequently of his Epistle to the Emperor about the Christians, is not quite certain, though the possible difference is only that of a few years — say, between 106 and 111 A.D. But this does not adequately represent the state of the case. For, as some of those by whose examination Pliny ascertained the tenets and practices of the Christians had left the Christian community so long as twenty years previously, the testimony of the younger Pliny concerning Christianity really reaches up to between 86 and 90 of our era that is, to more than ten years before the death of Josephus. [91] The two witnesses are, therefore, so to speak, historically connected. The chief points in the information supplied by the Epistle of Pliny may be summarised as follows: The Governor applies to the Emperor for guidance, being in doubt what conduct to pursue towards the Christians. He had not previously been present at any judicial examination of Christians (which at least shows that they were well known), and did not well know with what strictness to bear himself in the matter. Hitherto his practice had been to question the accused, and if they professed themselves Christians, to repeat the question a second and third time, threatening the punishment of death. Those who remained constant were forthwith punished; this, not so much on account of their opinions, of which he seemed still in doubt, as for their obstinacy. But Christianity only spread, and Pliny was beset with anonymous as well as regular information against many, of all ages, of every rank, and

of both sexes. Of the persons thus brought before Pliny's tribunal, many denied being Christians, when he applied the crucial test of making them offer heathen worship, and revile the Name of Christ; neither of which, as he had learned, Christians would have left the community three or more, and some even more than twenty years before. Although these persons had no hesitation in performing heathen rites, and reviling Christ, they maintained that even while Christians their practices had been wholly harmless, such as Pliny proceeds to describe. And, to be quite sure of it, Pliny next subjected two of the actual Deaconesses to torture, but elicited nothing beyond 'a depraved and excessive superstition' (superstitionem pravam et immodicam). In these circumstances, and finding that the number of those who would have to suffer was far greater than he had imagined, and that the new faith had not only taken hold on the towns and villages, but even spread to the country districts, Pliny apples to the Emperor for direction.

Putting aside our natural feeling of indignation at the conduct of Pliny towards those of both sexes, and of all ages and ranks, who were faithful to their convictions unto torture and death, let us see what light this unquestioned historical document — which takes us, say, to about half a century after the death of Christ — casts on the New Testament record.

[1]. It tells us of a vast number of believers, in all ranks and of all ages, in the province over which Pliny ruled. According to his account, 'the temples had been almost forsaken;' their sacred solemnities intermitted, and it was the most rare thing to find purchasers for the victims (rarissimus emptor inveniebatur).

[2]. As regards the tenets, or rather the observances, of the Christians, we cannot, indeed, expect to derive precise dogmatic statements from criminal informations laid before a heathen judge. The confession of the two Deaconesses under torture may have contained an account of their faith. Pliny describes it as a 'debased and excessive superstition.' But the account given by apostates bore reference to the practices of Christians. It deserves special notice that even these persons had nothing evil to say of their former coreligionists. But what they report of their practices is most instructive. a. The Christians are described as meeting for worship on a stated day. It is impossible to avoid the inference that this was the first day of the week; and as its corollary, that this day was observed as the memorial of Christ's Resurrection. Thus, the Sunday worship and the underlying belief in the Resurrection, are attested within about half a century of the death of Jesus. b. They are said on these occasions to have offered Divine Worship to Christ, and this, whether we understand the language of Pliny as denoting specifically the singing of hymns or the offering of prayer, [92] to Christ as to a God (quasi Deo). and hence cannot be understood as meaning that the Christians worshipped Jesus as a God in the same sense in which Pliny would offer worship to the Emperor. Moreover, it must be kept in view that, according to Pliny, it was distinctive of these same Christians rather to suffer martyrdom than to offer even the supposed inferior homage to the Roman Emperor, although they fully owned his supreme civil authority. Hence the Christian worship of Jesus must have been consciously and literally offered to Christ as a Divine Person. We have, therefore, testimony that the central point in their worship — that which these former Christians singled out as the distinctive characteristic, was worship of Jesus, with the underlying tenet that He was the Son of God, 'Very God of Very God.' c. They are said on these occasions to have bound themselves 'by an oath' (sacramento), against the commission of all crime or sin, and to all truthfulness and uprightness. We would suggest that this 'oath,' at their solemn meetings, must bear some reference to moral obligations undertaken at the Holy Communion. In any case,

we have here testimony of the distinctive holiness of the early Christians, as organically connected with their worship and belief; in short, to the moral theology of the New Testament as the outcome of its dogmatic teaching. d. Lastly, we have in the account of these former Christians a notice of certain common meals — not in the worship of the Christians, but after it — referring probably to the love-feasts or agapes of 1 Corinthians. We are the more confirmed in this view, since these common meals seem to have been regarded as not of vital importance, for they are said to have been intermitted after the publication of Pliny's edict. The importance of the historic testimony just analysed can scarcely be overrated. It not only gives historic reality to the picture of the early Church, such as from the New Testament we would trace its outlines; but it fully confirms the power and spread of the new faith, as the Book of Acts and the Apostolic Epistles set them before us. Moreover, it presents, in regard to the Resurrection as the great central truth of Christian faith, the Person of Christ as the grand central Object of Christian worship, and the Holy Eucharist as the main part of Christian ritual, the exact counterpart of the New Testament account. The Christianity of the year 86 or 90 of our era is, so to speak, the coin which bears the device of the mint of the New Testament. If we were to translate into fact the history which closes with the four Gospels — say in the year 30 of our era — we would have precisely Pliny's account of the Christians in the year 86 or 90. We have here the Sunday worship, with its and Messianic activity of Jesus; the Divine Worship of Christ, with its upward look to the Saviour at the Right Hand of the Father, having all power; the earnest, conscious striving against all sin and after all holiness, amidst the corrupt, festering mass of heathenism around — a new creation in Christ Jesus by the Holy Ghost, whose living temples Christians are, and this as an integral part of their worship, the outcome of their faith; then, the simple common meetings for prayer and the Holy Sacrament, and, when possible, love-feasts of brotherly fellowship; finally, the enduring perseverance of the Church, even to the loss of all things and to death itself.

Narrow as the line of evidence may seem which we have followed, it has, we trust, fully established the main proposition of this Lecture. What we have learned about the Gospels has not in any part been invalidated, but in many respects confirmed, by such trustworthy notices as we have gathered from Talmudic writings. Then, the testimony of Josephus concerning John and his Baptism has flashed light forward on the beginning of Christ's Ministry, on its object and character; whilst the testimony of Pliny has flashed light backwards to the end of Christ's Ministry, to His Resurrection, and to the faith and practice of the early Church. John the Baptist and Jesus Christ are true historical personages, and the influence of their activity is precisely such as the New Testament describes it. And what we have learned about the power of Christianity and its spread, about the life of Christians, and their readiness to be faithful unto death, sets before us in vivid colouring an historical picture of that primitive Church which saw in Jesus of Nazareth the fulfilment of the Old Testament promises, and the reality of that kingdom which had been the hope of the Fathers.

NOTE TO LECTURE 3.

Text of the letter of Pliny the Younger to the Emperor Trajan. [93]

C. Plinius Trajano, — Solemne est mihi, Domine, omnia, de quibus dubito, ad Te referre. Quis enim potest melius vel cunctationem meam regere, vel ignorantiam instruere, Cognitionibus de Christianis interfui nunquam: ideo nescio, quid et quatenus aut puniri soleat, aut quæri. Nec

mediocriter hæsitavi, sitne aliquod discrimen ætatum, an quamlibet teneri nihil a robustioribus differant: deturne pœnitentiæ venia, an ei, qui omnino Christianus fuit, desisse non prosit: nomen ipsum, si flagitiis careat, an flagtia cohærentia nomini puniantur. Interim in iis, qui ad me tanquam Ohristiani deferebantur, hunc sum secutus modum. Interrogavi ipsos, an essent Christiani: confitentes iterum ac tertio interrogavi, supplicium minatus: perseverantes duci jussi. Neque enim dubi. tabam, qualecunque esset quod faterentur, pertinaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri. Fuerunt alii similis amentiæ: quos, quia cives Romani erant, annotavi in urbem remittendos, Mox ipso tractatu, ut fieri solet, diffundente se crimine, plures species inciderunt. Propositus eat libellus sine auctore, multorum nomina coutinens, qui negarent, ease se Christianos aut fuisse. Cum præeunte me Deos appellarent, et imagini Tuæ, quam propter hoc jusseram cum simulacris numinum afferri, thure ac vino supplicarent, præterea maledicerent Christo, quorum nihil cogi posse dicuntur, qui aunt revera Christiani, dimittendos ease putavi. Alii ab indice nominati, ease se Christianos dixerunt, et mox negaverunt: fuisse quidem, sed desisse, quidam ante triennium, quidam ante plures annos, non nemo etiam ante viginti quoque. Omnes et imaginem Tuam, Deorumque simulacra vene1~ti aunt: ii et Christo maledixerunt. Affirmabant autem, hanc fuisse summam vel culpæ suæ, vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secure invicem: seque sacramento, non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent; quibus peractis morem sibi discedendi fuisse, rursusque coëundi ad capiendum cibum, promiscuum tamen et innoxium; quod ipsum facere desisse post edictum meum, quo seeundum mandata Tua hetærias ease vetueram. Quo magis necessarium credidi, ex duabus ancillis, quæ ministræ dicebantur, quid esset veri, et per tormenta quærere. Sed nihil aliud inveui, quam superstitionem pravam et immodicam: ideoque dilata cognitione ad consulendum Te decurri. Visa eat enim mihi res digna consultatione, maxime propter periclitantium numerum. Multi enim omnis ætatis, omnis ordinis, utriusque sexus etiam, vocantur in periculum, et vocabuntur. Neque enim civitates tantum, sed vicos etiam atque agros superstitionis istius contagio pervagata est. Quæ videtur sisti et corrigi posse. Certe saris constat, prope jam desolata templa coepisse celebrari, et sacra solemnia diu intermissa repeti, pastumque venire victimarum, cujus adhuc rarissimus emtor inveniebatur. Ex quo facile eat opinari, quæ turba hominum emendari possit, si sit pœniteniæ locus.

01.04. Lecture 4.

Lecture 4.

On some Fundamental Principles Regarding the Study of Prophecy and its Fulfilment, Together with Remarks on Certain Special Prophecies. [94] He shall grow as a root out of a dry ground. — Isaiah 53:2.

I pray thee, of whom speaketh the Prophet this? — Acts 8:34. IN the preceding Lecture I have endeavoured to meet an objection which, if established, would have been fatal to our whole reasoning. Having thus, so to speak, cleared the ground before us, we can proceed with our main argument. Nor could we rest it on better foundation than the two Scripture passages just quoted, of which the one points to the grand central Figure in Old Testament prophecy; while the other refers to the question of its counterpart in the Person of Jesus Christ.

It is not difficult to transport ourselves into the scene of the interview between the Ethiopian eunuch and the Evangelist Philip. We have only to follow the most southern of the three — anciently, perhaps, only two — roads, which led from Jerusalem to Gaza. Beyond Eleutheropolis it passed through the ‘desert,’ that is, through a tract, now — and, as there is reason to believe, in New Testament times — uninhabited. Close by the road, in Wady el-Hasy, is a sheet of water, possibly the place of the eunuch’s baptism. It can scarcely surprise us that this stranger, who had just been to Jerusalem to worship, should on this lonely road have busied himself with the Old Testament, nor yet that, in his peculiar circumstances and near the boundary of the Land of Promise, he should in preference have turned to its prophecies, especially to that section in the roll of Isaiah where those boundaries were enlarged till they became wide as the world itself. Nor does it seem strange that, as in thought he climbed the sacred height and stood before the great central Figure of that mysterious Sufferer, he could not recognise His features. To this day has Israel failed to see in that Face marred more than any man’s its Messiah-King, the Crown of its glory — only seen in it the impress of its own troubled history. And how could this stranger know it, who had but lately stood wondering in that gorgeous Temple, thronged by thousands of worshippers, and looked, as the crowd of white-robed priests ministered at the great altar of burnt-offering, and beyond it, from out the inner Sanctuary, floated the cloud of incense and shone the light of the ever-burning golden candlestick, while the voice of Levite-psalms filled the house with solemn melody. To lift one’s eyes from that scene to the sin-burdened Sufferer, as to the ideal of it all — Who, in His stripes, bore the sin of the world, and so was the crowned Servant of Jehovah — implied a contrast which only Divinely-guided history could resolve, and only God-taught faith comprehend.

We do not wonder then at his question: Of whom does the prophet speak? It is the same which in its ultimate idea, as the mystery of suffering, has engaged all thinking. Very really, it is the same which these eighteen centuries and more has divided us; which the Jew has sought to answer as he stood before the prophetic picture of Isaiah, and the Christian as he gazed on the crucified Christ. How perplexing it has proved to the Synagogue appears not only from the widely-divergent

— rather absolutely contradictory — interpretations which the most learned of the Rabbis have given to this prophecy, but even from their own admissions after they had attempted to solve its mystery. The philosophic Ibn Ezra speaks of this Parashah as one ‘extremely difficult.’ Isaac b. Elijah Cohen says: ‘I have never in my life seen or heard of the exposition of a clear or fluent commentator, in which my own judgment and that of others who have pondered on the same subject might completely acquiesce.’

And, to make only one other quotation from Dr. Pusey’s Preface to the Catena of Jewish Interpretations on Isaiah 53:1-12, Ibn Amram says: ‘There is no little difficulty in giving a sense to those most obscure words of Isaiah in the present; they manifestly need a prophetic spirit.’ That, from the Jewish standpoint, such should be the case, every unprejudiced student will readily understand. And we may further remark, that the latest attempt of a certain school of critics to add to the Christian and the Jewish a third interpretation, in some sense more Jewish than that of the Jews, has only resulted in another, and yet more manifest, exegetical impossibility. But amidst these perplexities there seems at least one clear guiding light. The prophecy speaks not only of suffering, but of conquering, and of conquering by suffering. Now suffering is human; conquering is divine: but to conquer by suffering is theanthropic. But amidst all our diversity there is, we are thankful to know, substantial agreement on one and, as it might seem, the most important point. There is no fundamental divergence between Jew and Christian as regards the translation of this chapter. In this it differs from certain other passages designated as Messianic, such as Genesis 49:10, Psalms 2:12, or the proper meaning of the word almah in Isaiah 7:14 — which are respectively rendered in the Authorised Version by, ‘Until Shiloh come;’ ‘Kiss the Son lest he be angry;’ and ‘Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son.’ We would go a step further. Even as regards the so-called Messianic prophecies generally, there is, with few exceptions, a similar general agreement as to the translation of the words; or at least generally little that is fundamental is involved in the divergences. In other words, if it were only a question of the meaning of the original, we might hope soon to be at one. More especially is this the case as regards the climax of all Messianic predictions, Isaiah 53:1-12. In the words of Dr. Pusey: ‘Next to nothing turns upon renderings of the Hebrew. The objections raised by Jewish controversiahsts … in only four, or at most five words, turn on the language.’ And the matter seems, at first sight, the more perplexing that there is substantial agreement, not only as regards the wording, but also the main contents of this prophecy. All admit that the subject of this prophecy is portrayed as lowly in His beginnings; suffering sorrow, contempt, and death; that He would be accounted a transgressor, yet that His sufferings were vicarious, those of the just for the unjust, and this by God’s appointment; that in meek silence and willing submissiveness He would accept His doom; that His soul was an offering for sin which God accepted; that He made many righteous; that He intercedes for trangressors; that He is highly exalted in proportion to His humiliation; and that kings would submit to Him, and His reign abide. To quote once more the language of Dr. Pusey: ‘The question is not, “What is the picture?” in this all are agreed; but, “Whose image or likeness does it bear?” To put it otherwise: the question is not as to the meaning of the passages, but as to their application. ‘Of whom speaketh the prophet this?’ — of himself? — of his contemporaries, or some part of them? — or of some other One, who sums up in Himself the leading features of all, and yet passes beyond them, just as all fruit in the reality of its fulfilment passes beyond its visible germ- promise, unfolding all its indicated possibilities.

How then are we to account for the differences existing between us? The truth is, we start, indeed, from the same premises, but into widely different directions. We all start not without preconceived opinions, as some would call them — or guiding principles, as I would designate them. The Jew starts with his preconceived opinions as to what must or must not be in accordance with his general views of the teaching of the Old Testament. The Christian starts with the historical facts concerning Christ and Christianity in his mind. To the one this, to the other that, is the guiding principle in the application of what both have agreed to be the meaning of the words and the contents of a prophecy. And it cannot well be otherwise. The honest inquirer can only seek to know which of the two directions is the right one. This question, indeed, is of widest application. It covers the entire range of prophecy, and is decisive in the controversy between the Synagogue and the Church, on which, we would here remind ourselves, depend far graver issues than merely intellectual victory. But in answering this question as to the guiding principle in the interpretation of prophecy, it is evident that we must get behind individual prophecies — consider them not merely as isolated, but as a whole, trying to ascertain whether or not the Old Testament, as a whole, is prophetic of the Messiah, and whether or not the historical Christ and Christianity present the real fulfilment of that prophecy. It is not, I hope, too fine a distinction to make between prophecy as referring to Christ, and prophecy as fulfilled in Christ. The two mark different standpoints in our view of prophecy, the one being the prospective or speculative, the other the retrospective or historic view of it. But it seems to me that Christian divines have not only quitted their high vantage-ground of historical fact, but acted contrary, alike to sound reasoning and the example of the New Testament, in disputing whether or not certain individual prophecies referred to Christ, instead of first presenting their actual historical fulfilment in Him. Had they begun with this, they would have exhibited the fundamental principle which underlies all prophecy, and shown the true sense in which these predictions must refer to Christ.

It is altogether a narrow principle which has been applied to the study of prophecy, and which too often results in disputes about words instead of presenting the grand and indubitable facts of fulfilment. There are persons who argue very strangely in regard to this matter. It is sometimes supposed that those who uttered a prophecy, perhaps even those who heard it, must have understood its full meaning, its complete Messianic bearing, or at least have had full conception of the personal Messiah as now in the light of fulfilment we know Him. [95] And when it is shown that this could not have been the case, it is forthwith rashly concluded that the Messianic application for which we contend is erroneous. But it is a kind of Jewish literalism which lies at the basis of this erroneous view of prophecy, a narrow and utterly unspiritual view of it, a mechanical view also, which treats fulfilment in its relation to prophecy as if it were a clock made to strike the precise quarters of the hour. But it is not so. The fulfilment is always both wider and more spiritual than the prediction. It contains it and much more, and it can only be properly understood when viewed in its relation to prophecy as a whole. For it is evident that, if we were to maintain that those who uttered or who heard these predictions had possessed the same knowledge of them as we in the light of their fulfilment, these things would follow:

First. Prophecy would have superseded historical development, which is the rational order, and God’s order.

Secondly. In place of this order we would introduce a mechanical and external view of God’s revelation, similar to that which in theology has led to the fatal notion of a mechanical inspiration,

and which in natural science (viewed from the theological standpoint) scouts the idea of development, and regards all as absolutely finished from the beginning — views which have been the bane of much that otherwise would have been sound in Natural Theology and Apologetics, and which have proved destructive to the old supernaturalism, involving in its fall much that was true, and which has now to be digged out of the ruins and built up anew.

Thirdly. It would eliminate from God's revelation the moral and spiritual element— that of teaching on His part, and of faith and advancement on ours. Fourthly. It would make successive prophecies needless, since all has been already from the first clearly and fully understood.

Lastly. Such a view seems in direct contradiction to the principle expressly laid down in 1 Peter 1:10-11, as applicable to prophecy. On the other hand, the principle that prophecy can only be fully understood from the standpoint of fulfilment, seems not only in accordance with all that one would expect — since otherwise prophecy would have been simply foretold history, without present application and teaching — but it must be evident that, if such had been the object in view, it would have been more natural, and, as it would seem, have secured the purpose more fully, to have told it out plainly, without the use of figure or metaphor, in language that could not have been misunderstood or misinterpreted. And so it almost seems as if some persons would fain have it, and that not only in regard to prophecy, but they complain that the New Testament should have told them everything plainly, giving every particular, even to the minutest direction as to the modes of our organisation, the order of our services, and the details of our Church life. But it is not so, and it never can be so, if, as we believe, our religion is of God. What in these demands is true has been granted, though not in the way in which it was expected. The history of the Church has taught us much of that which the New Testament contains, and the enlightened Christian consciousness has learned, as through bilingual inscriptions, to read the characters and the language in which much of the past was written. History has unfolded much that the New Testament had infolded, and under the ever-present guidance of the Holy Spirit we have learned to understand it. Nor does the objection hold good, that in such case they of old must in measure have been ignorant of the truth. In their measure they were not ignorant of it, but their measure is not ours. We believe in development and progress, rightly understood. Divine truth and revelation are, indeed, always the same: one, full, and final; and nothing can be added thereto. But with the development of our wants and with our progress its meaning unfolds, and it receives ever new applications. We understand things more fully — if you like, differently — from our fathers, not because they are different, but because we are different, because questions have arisen to us which had not come to them, because mental and moral wants press upon us which had not presented themselves to them. And what is this but to assert the constant teaching of God? We bring not a new truth, but unfold the old; and from its adaptation, ever fresh and new to all times, to all men, to all wants, we gather fresh and living evidence of its Divine origin. It is in this manner that prophecy in its application to Christ should be studied: first, the living Person, then His portraiture; first, the fulfilment, then the prophetic reference; first, the historical, then the exegetical argument. These remarks are not intended to deprecate the application of individual prophecies to Christ; only to correct a one-sided and mechanical literalism that exhausts itself in fruitless verbal controversies in which it is not unfrequently worsted, and to give to our views the right and, as we believe, the spiritual direction. For, even an exegetical victory would not decide that inward direction of heart and life which makes the Christian. We fully and gladly add that even in strict

exegesis many special predictions can be only Messianically interpreted. But we believe still more that the Old Testament as a whole is Messianic, and full of Christ; and we wish this to be first properly apprehended, that so from this point of view the Messianic prophecies may be studied in detail. Then only shall we understand their real purport and meaning, and perceive, without word-cavilling, that they must refer to the Messiah. And in this, as in all other things, we take our best guidance from the New Testament. When we ask ourselves whence those quiet God-fearing persons — a Simeon, Anna, Zacharias, Elisabeth, a Joseph, and, with reverence be it added, the Virgin-Mother — took their direction before the manifestation of Christ; and, during its course, His disciples and followers, we unhesitatingly answer, from the Old Testament. But from the Old Testament as a whole; not, in the first place, from individual predictions, since in the nature of things these could only be fulfilled in the gradual development of His history. Nay, even when a prediction was actually fulfilled, as that of Zechariah in Christ's entry into Jerusalem, the reference to it is followed by this significant explanation of John (John 12:16): 'These things understood not His disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him.' And this also explains how that which to our minds constitutes the central point in all Messianic predictions — the sufferings of the Christ — so far from being prominent in the minds of His disciples, was ever that which they could not understand. It was only after His Resurrection, on that blessed evening-walk to Emmaus, that He could say to those two simple-hearted disciples, who were so sad at the things which had come to pass: 'Oh fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.' And it was again after that that He more fully taught His Apostles: 'These are the words which I have spoken unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.' They could not recognise any one single feature, however salient, till the whole Figure stood before them bathed in the heavenly light. Then could each one of them be recognised as it had been portrayed by the prophets. They learned fulfilled prophecies in the light of fulfilled prophecy. And so shall we also best learn it.

Two things here strike the observant reader of the New Testament: first, the sparseness of prophetic quotations in the Gospels; and, secondly, their peculiarity. So far as I remember, only the one prophecy concerning His birth at Bethlehem was ever adduced to guide men to the Christ. And this prediction, itself a locus classicus universally accepted, was logically necessary. But even so, it had nothing special to direct to Jesus as the Christ. In all His teaching, except when in the Synagogue of Nazareth, He pointed to His message of the kingdom as fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, He did not base His Messianic claims on any special prophecies. He ever based them on what He was, on what He said, on what He did; on the message of love from the Father which stood incarnate before them in His Person, on the opening of the kingdom of heaven to all believers, on the forgiveness, the peace, and the healing to body and soul, which He brought. That was the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy; this the kingdom for which all had been preparing, and which all had announced. And because He was the fulfilment of all, therefore was He the Messiah promised: the desire of all nations, towards which their conscious and unconscious longings had tended, and the glory of His people Israel, the crowning glory of all their spiritual teaching. Because He was the fulfilment of the Old Testament ideal, the deeper reality of its

history and institutions, therefore did all the prophecies refer to Him. And when that stood fully out, then could His Apostles (as in their preaching in the Book of Acts) point to the prophecies as referring to Him. This is the unfolding in the New, of what was infolded in the Old Testament.

Secondly, the observant reader of the New Testament will be struck by the peculiarity of the Old Testament quotations in the Gospels. As regards their form they are mostly neither exactly from the original Hebrew nor from the Septuagint. This in accordance with universal custom. For popular use the Scriptures were no longer quoted in the Hebrew, which was not spoken, nor from the LXX, which was under Rabbinic ban, but targumed, rendered into the vernacular; the principle being very strongly expressed that, in so doing, it was not the letter, but the meaning ‘of the passage which was to be given. [96] But as regards the substance of these quotations, we feel as if mostly those passages had been adduced which we would least have expected to be quoted. The reason of this lies in the well-known fundamental principle of the Synagogue, that ‘all the prophets only prophesied of the Messiah’ — nay, that all events in the history of Israel and all their institutions were prophetic, and pointed forward to a fuller realisation in the Messiah. To whatever extravagance of detail this may have been carried, I have no hesitation in saying that the underlying principle is not only tenable, but both sound and true. This may be the proper place for some remarks on Prophecy in general, in the Biblical sense of the term, and on the Prophets in the Old Testament application of the designation.

[1]. Prophecy, in general — perhaps I should have said Prophetism — may, in the Biblical sense of the term, be defined as the reflection upon earth of the Divine ideal in its relation to the course of human affairs. According as the one or the other of these is the primary element, it refers to the future, or else to the present or the past. In the one case it is mainly predictive, in the other mainly parenetic. This from our human standpoint, where we view things as future, present, or past — not from that of Divine reality where all is present. In this general statement regarding prophecy, nothing has been said as to the medium through which this reflection of the Divine Light is to be made upon earth — whether institutions, events, or persons — and in the latter case, both through those who are in harmony, and those who are out of harmony with the Divine: true or false prophets. In point of fact, prophecy, or the reflection of the Divine upon earth, may be, and really was, through each and all of these media. And the more fully we consider it, the more appropriate and even necessary will it appear to us that such should have been the case. For so will history — which is not a fortuitous succession of events, but their orderly evolution from certain well-defined causes towards a Divinely willed end — most properly attain its destined goal.

It may seem a bold statement, and yet, to me at least, it seems logically clear, that our view of prophecy implies only one premise which is indeed a postulate. It is that of the Living and the True God But this is precisely what the Old Testament teaches us concerning Jehovah. By the Living and the True God, I mean, not an abstraction, but a Person, a Moral Being; the Creator and Owner of all; the Centre of all, with Whom all is in living connection; or, in the words of Paul’s quotation, He ‘in Whom we live and move and have our being.’ I am aware that if the view of prophecy here indicated can be historically established, it would, on the other hand, lead by induction to historic evidence of such a God. But I leave this for the present aside, and put my argument, or rather my mode of viewing it, on this wise. The presence of a Living and True God in living connection with His creatures, seems to imply, as a necessary corollary, a Divine ideal in reference to the course of human events. From this again it would seem to follow, that there is at least strong presumption

in favour of a Revelation, which is the communication to men of the Divine ideal. And Revelation and miracles are only different aspects of such Divine communication. But there can at least be no question that, if there be a Divine ideal with reference to the course of human events, that ideal must in the end, and as the goal of history, become the real; and, according to Holy Scripture, which in this respect also answers to our former definition of Revelation, this is and will be the Kingdom of God, when the Divine ideal in reference to man shall have become the real. And so it is that all Scripture is prophetic; that all prophecy has its ultimate fulfilment in the Kingdom of God; and that all prophecy points to it, or is Messianic in its character.

Wide-reaching as these statements are in their sequences, they must appear reasonable, at least to every Theist, and they are in accordance with what Holy Scripture sets forth as its object and contents.

[2]. From these more abstract considerations we turn, somewhat abruptly, to the concrete manner in which Prophetism is presented in the Old Testament. From one point of view, three classes are there designated as Prophets: — Those who were avowedly the prophets of other gods, as of Baal or Ashtaroth; those who, while professedly the prophets of Jehovah (or Jahveh), were not really such — some conscious, some apparently not conscious of imposture; and, lastly, those who were really' sent' by Jehovah. As all these, however widely differing in character, bear the same name of 'prophets,' it follows — not, as some would have it, that the Old Testament considers them all as equally prophets (which would be the heathen view of it), but that the title 'prophet' must be regarded as simply a generic designation, which implied no judgment either as to the character or the claims of those who bore it. More light comes to us from the root-meaning of the terms by which these, prophets' are designated in the Hebrew. To a certain extent they show us what ideas originally attached to the functions of a prophet, although we should always keep in view how easily and quickly a word moves away from its original meaning to its common application. Leaving aside such descriptive appellations as 'man of God,' 'messenger of God,' or the like, which afford no help towards the definition of the term 'prophet,' there are three words by which that office is chiefly described in the Hebrew, Nabhi, Roeh, and Chozeh. The etymology and meaning of the word Nabhi have been in dispute. According to some, it means primarily a spokesman; according to the majority of critics, it is derived from the verb nabha, which means to 'well forth' or 'bubble up.' Although the latter seems the more correct, yet there is practically little difference between the two interpretations. The idea which we necessarily attach to this 'bubbling up,' or 'welling forth,' is, that the prophet was so filled with Divine inspiration that it 'bubbles up' out of his speech, that he 'wells it forth;' [97] in which sense the New Testament also speaks of believers, in virtue of their reception of the Holy Spirit, as those out of whom 'flow rivers of living water.' (John 7:38) It will be perceived that this description of the prophet as 'welling forth' the Divine — truly or falsely — is so general as to be universally applicable; and, indeed, the term seems kindred to those used by other nations of antiquity.

Thus viewed, the Prophet is the medium of supposed or real Divine communication — from whatever Deity it be — and the 'weller-forth' is also 'the spokesman.' It is in this sense that, when Moses was sent to bear the Divine communication to Pharaoh, Aaron was promised to him as his Nabhi — his weller-forth, spokesman, or medium of communication. (Exodus 7:1; comp. Exodus 4:16) This may also help us to understand the meaning of an institution and of a designation in the Old Testament which is of the deepest interest: that of 'schools of the prophets' and 'the sons of

the prophets.' I would suggest that 'the sons of the prophets' stood related to the prophets as the prophets themselves to the Divine. [98] They were the medium of prophetic communication, as the prophets were the medium of Divine communication. And the analogy holds true in every particular. As the prophet must absolutely submit himself to God, and be always ready to act only as the medium of Divine communication, so must the 'son of the prophet' be ready to carry out the behests of the prophet, and be the medium of his communication, whether by word or deed. As a prophet might be divinely employed temporarily, occasionally, or permanently, so the sons of the prophets by the prophets. God might in a moment raise up and qualify suitable men to be His prophets or means of communication, since only inspiration was required for this. But the prophets could not exercise such influence in regard to their' sons.' Accordingly, special institutions, 'the schools of the prophets,' were required for their training and preparation. Besides this primary object, these establishments would serve important spiritual and religious purposes in the land, alike as regarded their testimony to Prophetism, their cultivation of the Divine, their moral discipline, readiness of absolute God-consecration and implicit submission to Him, and general religious influence on the people. But the analogy between prophets and sons of the prophets went even farther than we have indicated. For the moral qualifications for the two offices, however fundamentally differing, were in one respect the same. For both offices the one condition needful was absolute obedience; that is, viewed subjectively, passiveness; viewed objectively, faithfulness. Alike the prophet and the son of the prophet must, in the discharge of his commission, have absolutely no will or mind of his own, that so he may be faithful to Him Whose medium of communication he is. Hence — perhaps sometimes purposely, to preach this to an unbelieving generation — the strange symbolisms occasionally connected with the prophetic office, and, on the other hand, the severe and, as it might otherwise seem, excessive punishments with which the smallest deviation from the exact terms of the commission was visited. For, not only each special prophetic mission, but the very meaning and basis of the prophetic office, depended on the exact transmission of the communication. But we remember that the designation Nabhi is not the only one by which the prophetic functions are described in the Old Testament. Of the two other terms employed, Roeh describes the prophet as a seer, while Chozeh presents him rather as one who gazes. Although etymological distinctions are apt to run into each other, and in the present instance have actually done so, I would venture to suggest that, originally, the Roeh or seer may have been the prophet as seeing that which then existed, although unseen by ordinary men; while the Chozeh or gazer would represent the prophet as, in rapt vision, gazing on the yet future. In any case, the term Nabhi would not only be the more general and generic designation, but indicate a higher standpoint, as implying that the prophet acted as the medium of Divine communication.

Very interesting and instructive is the progression from the one to the other designation as marked in 1 Samuel 9:9. From this it appears that he who in the time of the writer was called Nabhi had previously been designated as Roeh or seer. A rash inference has been drawn from the circumstance that nevertheless the term Nabhi appears in the Pentateuch as applied, not only to Aaron in regard to Moses, (Exodus 7:1) but to Abraham in regard to God, (Genesis 20:7) and that, indeed, it repeatedly occurs in the Books of Numbers and Deuteronomy. (Numbers 11:29; Numbers 12:6; Deuteronomy 13:1; Deuteronomy 13:3; Deuteronomy 13:5; Deuteronomy 18:15; Deuteronomy 18:18; Deuteronomy 18:20; Deuteronomy 18:22; Deuteronomy 34:10) But this does not necessarily imply that the Pentateuch was written after the term Nabhi had taken the place of Roeh, for, in point of fact, it never really did take that place; and the writer of 1 Samuel does not

assert that the term Nabhi had previously been unknown, but that before the time of Samuel the designation of the prophet in common use had been that of Roeh or seer. This seems to us to mark a lower religious standpoint, when the prophet was chiefly regarded as a seer of what was unseen by others. Thus, it would be in character with the period of spiritual decay from the time of Joshua to that of Samuel. But with the ministry of Samuel there was a return to the original idea of the prophet as the medium of Divine communication, when the functions of Roeh or Chozeh were either subsidiary, or only special aspects of the prophetic office.

[2]. Leaving aside, for the present, the question of the means indicated in the Old Testament for distinguishing the true prophet of Jehovah from the pretended, or from prophets of Baal, it will be seen that the generic term Nabhi might be equally applied to these three classes. They were all Nebhiim, or organs of communication, of what professed to be the Divine. Further, this definition of the Nabhi will help us to understand the real functions of the prophetic office. We no longer regard the prophet as merely the foreteller of future events, nor yet identify prophecy with prediction. This would introduce a heathen and mantic element, contrary to the whole spirit of the Old Testament, and foreign to it also in this, that it withdraws from its most important institutions the moral and spiritual, which is the primary principle of the Old Testament. Nor do we, on the other hand, so accentuate the recorded facts concerning the work of the prophets as to regard them merely as those who announced to their age the Mind and Will of Jahveh — taught, admonished, warned (the parenetic element). This would lead up to the gradual effacement of the distinctive idea of Prophetism. No, nor yet do we see in it a combination of the two elements, the predictive and the parenetic, but a welding of them into one. The prophet is the medium of Divine communication. When he preaches he does not merely refer to the present; nor yet when he foretells does he refer exclusively to the future. He occupies, with reverence be it said, in a sense, the Divine standpoint, where there is neither past, present, nor future. And here we must come back upon explanations in a former Lecture. The Prophet, as preacher, views the present in the light of the future; as foreteller, the future in the light of the present. He points out present sin, duty, danger, or need, but all under the strong light of the Divine future. He speaks of the present in the name of God, and by His direct commission; of a present, however, which, in the Divine view, is evolving into a future, as the blossom is opening into the fruit. And when he foretells the future, he sees it in the light of the present; the present lends its colours, scenery, the very historic basis for the picture.

This, as we have seen, will help to explain alike the substance and the form of the prophetic message. To the prophetic vision the present is ever enlarging, widening, extending. These hills are growing, the valley is spreading, the light is gilding the mountain tops. And presently the hills are clothed with green, the valleys peopled with voices; the present is merging into the future, although exhibited in the form of the present. The prophet is speaking of Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Assyria; and these are gradually growing into the shapes of future foes, or future similar relations. And in the midst of such references here and there appears what applies exclusively to that Messianic Kingdom which is the goal and final meaning of all, and of all prophecy. It is an entire misunderstanding to regard such prophecies as not applying to the Messianic future, because they occur in the midst of references to contemporary events. As the rapt prophet gazes upon those hills and valleys around him, they seem to grow into gigantic mountains and wide tracts, watered by many a river and peopled with many and strange forms, while here and there the golden light lies on some special height, whence its rays slope down into valleys and glens; or else, the

brightness shines out in contrasted glory against dark forest, or shadowy outline in the background. And the Prophet could not have spoken otherwise than in the forms of the present. For, had he spoken in language, and introduced scenery entirely of the future, not only would his own individuality have been entirely effaced, but he would have been wholly unintelligible to his contemporaries, or, to use the language of Paul, he would have been like those who spoke always in an unknown tongue. To make ourselves more clear on these points, let us try to transport ourselves into the times and circumstances of the prophets. Assume that the problem were to announce and describe the Messianic Kingdom to the men of that generation, in a manner applicable and intelligible to them, and also progressively applicable to all succeeding generations, up to the fulfilment in the time of Christ, and beyond it, to all ages and to the furthest development of civilisation. The prophet must speak prophetically yet intelligibly to his own contemporaries. But, on the other hand, he must also speak intelligibly, yet prophetically to the men of every future generation — even to us. We can readily understand how in such case many traits and details cannot have been fully understood by the prophets themselves. But we are prepared to affirm that all these conditions are best fulfilled in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and that, if the problem be to announce the Messianic Kingdom in a manner consistent with the dogmatic standpoint then reached, the then cycle of ideas and historical actualities and possibilities, and yet suitable also to all generations, it could not have been better or equally well done in any other manner than that actually before us in the Old Testament. As a matter of fact, the present generation, and, as a matter of history, all past generations — admittedly the whole Jewish Church and the whole Christian Church — have read in these prophecies the Messianic future, and yet every successive generation has understood them, more or less clearly, and in a sense newly. If I might venture on an illustration: the reading of prophecy seems like gazing through a telescope, which is successively drawn out in such manner as to adapt the focus to the varying vision. And yet the telescope is the same to all generations. We do not propose the clumsy device of a twofold application of prophecy, to the present and to the future, but, taking the prophetic standpoint, we regard the present as containing in germ the future, and the future as the child of the present, so that it can be presented in the forms of the present; or, to revert to a statement in a previous Lecture, it is not a progression, nor even a development, but an unfolding of the present. Viewed in relation to the Messianic Kingdom, it is one and the same thing, which to the eye of the prophet now is, and ever shall be. We might almost apply to prophetism this in the Epistle to the Hebrews: ‘Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.’ Canaan is a prophetic land, and Israel a prophetic people, of whom God says to the world: ‘Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.’ And their whole history is prophetic. It is not merely one or another special predictioa that is Messianic: everything — every event and institution — is prophetic and Messianico- prophetic, and what we one-sidedly call special predictions are only special points on which the golden light rests, and from which it is reflected. And it is in this sense that we understand and adopt the fundamental principle of the Synagogue, repeated in every variety of form, that every event in Israel’s history, and every prophecy pointed forward to the Messiah, and that every trait and fact of the past, whether of history or miracle, would be re-enacted more fully, nay, in complete fulness, in the times of the Messiah.

We repeat, that this fundamental view of the Old Testament prophecy, or rather of the prophetic character of the Old Testament in contradistinction to the theory of merely isolated predictions in single verses or clauses, or even in isolated chapters, must not be misunderstood as if it implied

that there are not absolute and definite predictions in the Old Testament. Unquestionably there are such, that had no basis in the then present — as when a sign was to be given, or an immediate judgment or deliverance enounced. But the principles which we have laid down are most wide-reaching in their bearing. They find their application also to what are called the types of the Old Testament, which are predictions by deed, as prophecies are predictions by word, and in the study of which the reference to the future must be learned from their teaching in the then present: their typical from their symbolical meaning. And the same principles also apply to what of prophecy we have in the New Testament. This bears chiefly on these three points: the Second Coming of Christ, the Antichrist, and the visions of the Apocalypse. The subject is so interesting, that without applying in detail the principles laid down in this Lecture, we may be allowed at least to indicate their bearing on each of these three groups of prophecy. As regards the Second Coming of Christ, it will scarcely be questioned that it was somehow connected with statements, which we now see to have primarily referred to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Equally there can be no doubt, that the men of Christ's time expected His Advent, and also that every age since has done the same; and, indeed, was intended to do so. The application of our principles seems to introduce harmony into all this. It was the all-engrossing and all-influencing fact, to be viewed through the telescope of prophecy. And the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple was not only a symbol, but in an initial sense the very coming of Christ into His Kingdom. That coming of Christ into His Kingdom, which had been denied in explicit words, and negatived by public deed, when by wicked hands they slew Him, was vindicated, and, so to speak, publicly enacted when the Roman soldier threw the torch into the Temple, and when afterwards Jerusalem was laid level with the dust. As regards the men of that land and generation, it was the public proclamation, the evidence, that the Christ Whom they had rejected had come into His Kingdom. By the lurid light of those flames no other words could be read than those on the Cross: 'This is the King of the Jews.' I say, then, the burning of Jerusalem was to that generation — and whatever kindred events successively came within the focus of the telescopic vision of following generations, were to them, the fulfilment of that prophecy, of which the final completion will be the Personal reappearance of Christ at the end of the Æon.

Similar inferences come to us when we turn to the prophecies concerning the Antichrist. In that generation the mystery of iniquity was already working. Antichrist had already come, in those Gnostic heresies, defacements and displacements of Divine truth, and in the political antagonism, which almost threatened the extinction of the Church. And in every generation does 'the mystery of iniquity' work; and it worketh now — nay, as the holy Apostle explains, it shall work — in the children of disobedience, and so long and wherever there are such, till that which now letteth is taken away, and the dammed-up waters rush into those ready channels, from which they had so long been held, and so Antichrist be fully revealed. Or, lastly, as regards the prophetic visions of the Apocalypse, it is not difficult to perceive that the forms and imagery — so to speak, the groundwork — are taken from the then present: either from the Temple and its services, or from current Apocalyptic imagery, or else from the political history of the time, from Nero, and the events then occurring. But because critics recognise, for example, Nero and that period, it would surely be a very rash conclusion that these visions are so jejune as to present merely an Apocalyptic description of that time. To sum up in practical conclusions what has been stated in this Lecture. It is in the light of the wider view of fulfilled prophecy which, as a whole and in all its parts, refers to the Kingdom of God upon earth, that we must study individual predictions. They

pass far beyond anything actual at the time of their utterance to the underlying ideal. They are not exaggerated Orientalisms for simple facts, but there was one grand moving idea set forth with ever unfolding clearness: the hope of a great Fatherhood of God, of a great brotherhood of man, in which the grand connecting link, alike with God and man, should be the One Who embodied all that was ideally possible in man, and Who manifested all that could be manifested of God; Who united the highest point in the human with the utmost condescension of the Divine — God and man; Who brought God's reconciliation to man, and by it reconciled man to God, combining in Himself these two: the suffering of man and the conquering of God, and organically united them in conquering by suffering; One Who, by so doing, made possible, and introduced the Messianic Kingdom of God, through the willing submission of man. Thus the God-Man fully realised the theanthropic idea of the whole Old Testament. As each event in His history kindled into light, it shone upon the individual prophecies, and made them bright. And here let us mark the inward connection of these Messianic prophecies. If, putting aside controversial criticism, we range them side by side, and in their order, we perceive that which modern philosophic science seeks, in all its departments: a grand unity. This unity cannot be accounted for on the modern negative theory, which treats the prophecies as disjecta membra, having each sole application to some one historical event of the past. Even as regards the older view of prophetism, which I have disclaimed, Kuenen himself has admitted at least its attractiveness and grandeur. But further, there is not only unity, but manifest progression. The fundamental idea does not change, but it unfolds, and applies itself under ever-changing and enlarging circumstances, developing from particularism into universalism; from the more realistic preparatory presentation to the spiritual which underlay it, and to which it pointed; from Hebrewism to the world-Kingdom of God. And, lastly, this Messianic idea is the moving spring of the Old Testament. It is also its sole raison d'etre, viewed as a revelation. Otherwise the Jewish people and their history could only have an archaeological or a political interest for us. Hebrewism, if it had any Divine meaning, was the religion of the future, and Israel embodied for the world the religious idea which, in its universal application, is the Kingdom of God.

Or, else, if we discard this view of prophecy altogether, then must we also surrender the Old Testament itself as of any Divine authority, or as other than a form of ancient religion. For we can never believe that a narrow, national, and exclusive creed and institutions could have been Divine in the strict sense, or intended to be permanent — 'for it is not possible that the blood of bulls or of goats should take away sins.' (Hebrews 10:4) But if you remove the Old Testament, then the New Testament which is built on it must also fall. For not only do Christ and His Apostles avowedly stand upon Old Testament ground, but the Church itself is built 'upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.' (Ephesians 2:20) This issue we can safely leave to the arbitrament of time, or rather, as Christian believers, in the hands of our God. Modifications of form and of presentation may, and will come — other perhaps than we either expect or fear. But we have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken (Hebrews 12:28) — the revelation of which, whether as prophecy under the Old, or fulfilment under the New Testament, is, with reverence be it said, worthy of God to have given, worthy of Christ to have manifested, worthy of humanity to be received and submitted to; worthy also, let us add, to be accepted by us in the reverence of a humble, earnest, and personal faith.

01.05. Lecture 5.

Lecture 5.

On Prophetism and Heathen Divination, the Moral Element in Old Testament Prophecy, and the Biblical Canons for Distinguishing the True from the False Prophet. [99] And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. — Luke 24:44-45.

WE may almost be pardoned the wish that . Luke had, at least in this instance, not so closely adhered to his plan of narration, and told us in detail to what special lines of prophetic thought Christ had pointed the minds which He opened, and what special prophecies, dimly apprehended of old, He had now illumined with the radiance of His risen glory. Yet it is perhaps best for the Church that to all time only these gigantic measurements should have been laid to the Scriptures of the Old Testament: that they form one organic whole, being bound together by the prophetic element which is common to them all; that their prophecy is of the Christ, that He should suffer and rise again, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations — in other words, that they tell of His humiliation, exaltation and reign; of the story of sin, righteousness, and judgment; of man, Christ, and God; or, in more scientific language, that they contain the anthropology, soteriology, and eschatology — in short, the history of the Kingdom of God. But whatever prophetic Scriptures Christ may have opened at that time, their Messianic interpretation would, to judge by the Old Testament quotations in the Gospels, not have been according to the straitness of the letter, which regarded a prophecy as exhausted by one special event, but in the expansiveness of the spirit, which, starting from a definite event as the terminus a quo of fulfilment, followed the prophetic element in it through its unfolding to its finality in the Kingdom of God, which is the goal of all prophecy. As the words of our Lord imply, the whole Old Testament is prophetic, not only in its special predictions, but even in its history, from the ‘Out of Egypt I have called My Son,’ to ‘A prophet like unto me shall the Lord your God raise up unto you.’ Thus the Old Testament pointed beyond itself to the perfectness which it announced and for which it prepared. (That perfectness consists in the removal of all the evil which sin has wrought, in the restoration of man to God, and in the fulness of blessings which flows from fellowship between God and man. This is the Kingdom of God.) To announce it and to prepare for it, was” the object of the Old Testament. More especially was Prophetism the moral and spiritual element in the Old Testament, which was intended to meet the people in their successive stages of development, to point out to them the lessons of the past, to explain the meaning of the present, and so to prepare them for that future which it announced. God’s dealings with Israel in the past were ever on the lips of the prophets. In their hands the Law lost its deadness of the letter and became instinct with a new life. Circumcision, sacrifices, the priesthood, and all the other religious institutions in Israel — and what institution in Israel was not religious? — were shown to have a spiritual background, to point to spiritual realities, and to have a spiritual counterpart in that blessed future which the

prophets were specially commissioned to announce, that so through the lessons of the past and the discipline of the present they might prepare men for that future which was the end and goal of all. To this moral element in prophetism as its inmost characteristic the present Lecture will be devoted, leaving another aspect of it for future consideration.

[1]. All prophecy has the moral and spiritual element, I shall not say for its aim, but as its basis and essential quality. The distinction seems important in this, as in the case of miracles, especially those of our Lord. An endeavour has sometimes been made to vindicate for them what is called a moral object. But this would be to transfer our human modalities to what is Divine. The Divine has no object outside its own manifestation. The moral is its quality, not its aim. And it is the moral and spiritual in man, the remnant of the Divine in him, and that which renders him capable of restoration, which, consciously or unconsciously, stretches forth its hands towards God, rises towards its spring, tends heavenwards. Consciously or unconsciously, it underlies not only the idea of, but all the great institutions that are common to all religions. It forms the fundamental idea of sacrifices, priesthood, prayers, prophetism, and of that grand thought of a reign of universal peace and happiness which, in one form or another, exists in all religions. In part these may be regarded as the result and survival of a primeval tradition; and, in part, they are the outcome of the deepest aspirations, and (why should I not say it?) of the true Divine instincts of the human spirit.

Even that which in some respects is farthest from, and yet is also nearest to, prophecy — heathen divination-was not destitute of this moral element. [100] It were a narrow and mistaken view, judging it by its later development, to regard heathen divination as merely imposture or delusion. In its fundamental idea it represented deep consciousness of distance from God; a longing to know His will, to be guided by it, and to have fellowship with Him; and, finally, a feeling that God was indeed near to man, that He cared for him, and guided the events of his life. These are also among the premisses on which the Old Testament proceeded. Only, starting from the same premisses, the Old Testament pointed in a totally different direction, and accordingly reached the opposite results from heathenism. Heathenism endeavoured to attain its desire by divination (mantic), [101] which sought all either in nature or from man; while the Old Testament pointed for all to the living God. Heathen divination was either by means external, such as signs, auguries, the stars, conjuring the dead; or else by means internal, such as dreams, visions, and the ecstatic state. But neither in the one nor the other case did it seek its satisfaction in spiritual fellowship with God. That element was wholly wanting. The direct opposite of this is characteristic of the Old Testament and its prophecy. Here everything is spiritual, comes from, and points to God. Divine revelation meets the moral wants of man, and directs him to God. This one thing appears most clearly throughout the whole Old Testament: that there is absolutely no power in any outward things to produce prophecy, nor yet has the prophet himself any power to produce it within himself by any means of his own, but that in all cases it comes straight from God, to whom, when, how, and where He pleases; that a man becomes a prophet as God gives him the message, and is such only and so long as God continues to send it. On the other hand, God did meet this deep want and longing of His children by sending His prophets and putting His Word into their mouths. Hence to receive or else to resist them could not be matter of indifference, since they were the direct ambassadors of God; but it involved either obedience to Him, or else guilt. And in the New Testament we have in this also progressed to the finality of widest fulfilment. Of old there were intermittent springs, now we have a perennial fountain; then the Holy Spirit fell on individuals at special times, now He

dwells permanently in all His people; then there were prophets, now we have One ever-living Prophet, an everlasting link that binds us to God, One Who not only brings the promises, but in Whom they are Yea and Amen. [102]

Otherwise, also, the points of contact between heathenism and revealed religion are most important. They seem to start from the same point (as terminus a quo), for the outgoings of the human spirit are ever the same. But the road they take, and hence their end (the terminus ad quem), are widely different, for they are under very different guidance. These common underlying ideas: a sense of guilt, longing after the Divine, and belief in His connection with our earth, equally express themselves in heathen and in Jewish sacrifices, in the belief in the Golden Age, and in the expectation of the Kingdom of God. As regards the latter, there is indeed this characteristic difference, that, except as directed by the Jewish Sibyl, the Golden Age is past, while in Revelation it is the goal towards which all God's manifestations and all man's developments tend. But these institutions and ideas were the outcome of the common consciousness, wants, aspirations, and expectations of all mankind, and, as we believe, the result of a common original tradition. But how differently they were developed, and to what different goal they led in heathenism and under the Old Testament, appears best when we compare the final outcome of the two: in the one case Jesus Christ, in the other the heathen world. And, as regards this period of comparison, Hoffmann has well expressed it, that what Cæsar Augustus is for the understanding of Roman history, that Jesus Christ is for that of the history of Israel. And the absolute contrast of final results between the two developments starting from the same point is due to this, that, as Paul indicates, heathenism sought not the realisation of its wishes and wants by seeking it from God — they retained not God in their knowledge nor glorified Him — whereas revelation in the Old Testament pointed to the living and true God, to simple faith or receptiveness, and to submission to His Word and Will, and then met that faith by a reality which bound heaven to earth, made sacrifices a type of Christ, prophecy a direct message from God, and the great hope of the future a Kingdom of God on a ransomed earth. And to go one step further: Even as regards the knowledge of God, heathenism closely approximated to, yet remained at infinite distance from the Old Testament. In its highest outcomings heathenism reached to a unity, but it was the unity of a principle, or an abstraction — an It, not He; Fate, not Jehovah. And even under the Old Testament the standpoint of present knowledge was only that of Jehovah as the God of all the earth and the Father of His people Israel. It was prophecy which pointed beyond this to the finality of all in the Christ, and to God as in Him the God and Father of all His people. In a world of which politically and religiously the one great characteristic was the most rigid nationalism, it stood alone in the moral grandeur of setting forth the brotherhood of humanity, the sonship of adoption, and the universal Fatherhood of God.

It is this moral element as leading up to God, whereas heathenism led away from God, which is characteristic of Revelation and of the Old Testament in every one of its institutions, and which also clearly marks the difference between mantic and prophecy. And this leads back to a question left unanswered in the former Lecture. It will be remembered that, so far from seeing anything incompatible — a dilemma in which we must make our choice — between the prophet as preacher to his times, or as the predicter of future events, we perceived in these two aspects a deeper unity. We are now prepared to go further, and to recognise the necessity of this union of the preacher and the predicter in the prophet. It is due to the moral element in prophecy. Moreover, we have

here the means of understanding and applying that test by which the Old Testament would have us distinguish the true from the false prophet. Commonly two passages are quoted for this purpose. But, as generally interpreted, it must be admitted that the tests which they are supposed to supply would be vague and unsatisfactory. For in Deuteronomy 13:1-5, we have only this characteristic of the false prophet, that he leads the people away from Jehovah and after other gods; while in Deuteronomy 18:9-22, the canon is laid down, that if the thing predicted did not come to pass, the prophet had not spoken from God, but presumptuously and from himself. At first sight it might seem as if both these tests were practically worthless. For, this test that the false prophet led away from God, might, from the standpoint of Anti- Jehovahism, seem to involve a petitio principii; while, as regards the test of a prediction by its fulfilment, many years might have to elapse before it could be applied, so that it would scarcely afford the means for present discernment whether a prophet spoke from the Lord or from himself. But further consideration will correct this superficial view. For, first, we mark in these two canons a distinction between prophet and prophecy. The latter might be either prediction in the narrowest sense, or else prophecy in the wider sense. If prediction in the narrower sense, it would, with rare exceptions, which mark special high-points in prophetism, be a sign or an announcement of immediate judgment or deliverance. In that case, the second canon — that of fulfilment or non-fulfilment (Deuteronomy 13:9-18) — would naturally apply. On the other hand, prophecy in the wider sense would grow out of exhortation, warning, or consolation, and, in the nature of it, form part of, or be connected with, a whole group of teaching. To it the first Canon — about leading away from God — would, as we shall presently show, be applicable as a moral test. And that the second Canon in Deuteronomy 18:22, chiefly referred to predictions of signs or judgments in the immediate future, appears from this, that the words, ‘if the thing follow not, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously,’ are immediately succeeded by these, ‘Thou shalt not be afraid of him (or, of it).’ Manifestly this addition would only have meaning if the prediction referred to the immediate future. But what of predictions in the more distant future? The test of these is, as already hinted, furnished by the first canon (Deuteronomy 13:1-5), which, be it carefully marked, applies not to prophecy, but to the prophet. Israel is emphatically warned, that even if signs or wonders were wrought, the guidance of a prophet was not to be followed if he led away from the Living and True God. This canon embodies most important and wide reaching principles, distinctive of the Old Testament as compared not only with heathenism, but we had almost said with every other school of thought. It sets forth the dominance of the moral and spiritual over every other consideration. Power, even that of working miracles, is but of inferior consideration: truth, right, God — the Divine, the spiritual — are everything. This is a height not only far beyond the ideas which we commonly attach to the Old Testament, but, I venture to add, beyond the horizon of modern society, which worships power as such, whatever its origin or character may be. It is the spirit of that Pan- Jehovahism which found utterance in the sublime proclamation, unique in its meaning and bearing; equally marvellous as coming from little Judæa and down-trodden Israel, and as spoken at that age into all the world; marvellous as a dogma, a prayer, a call, and a prophecy; marvellous also as a summary of the Law and the Gospel, of Providence and Grace; of the past, the present, and the future: ‘Jehovah reigneth, let the earth be glad; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.’ (Psalms 97:1) The words of the original, in their rugged grandeur, seem like steps hewn in the eternal ice, leading up to some Alpine height. We need not quote this Psalm further, nor compare it with the others in the Psalm-range, among which it rears its crest. But I

venture to assert that none but a Jehovahist, an Old Testament prophet, could have so written, because none but he had the living burning conviction that Jehovah He is God. Such a history as that of the Old Testament produced such belief; and such belief produced such expectancy and utterance. It produced a Moses, an Elijah, a Daniel, and, even when crumbling into decay, had its unnumbered martyrs. Such utterances could not have been those of uncircumcised heathen lips, nor can we conceive them as the conviction or outcome of heathen minds, whose highest speculations have nothing of the true Divine life pulsating in them.

First God, then everything else: be it man, kingdoms, demons, power, even Word as from God, or signs and miracles! This is the truth which Israel's history had evolved, which Israel's institutions embodied, which Israel's prophecies set forth, and by which, in turn, according to Deuteronomy, Israel's prophecy was to be tested. This then is the meaning of the canon in Deuteronomy 13:1-18. Try the prophet by his confession of God. And similarly, we read it in the New Testament: 'Try the spirits, whether they are of God… Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the Antichrist.' (1 John 4:1-3.) Nor was the application of this canon so difficult as at first sight it may appear. In the case of a prophet or a prophecy which, avowedly, led away from God, there could be neither doubt nor question. But even in the case of a prophet, professedly of God, who brought a message as from Him, the mode of decision is indicated. The Old Testament offers a leading case, hitherto too much overlooked, which furnishes, so to speak, a supplement and an explanation of its canon. In the 28th chapter of Jeremiah, a prophet is introduced, who prophesied differently alike from his predecessors and from Jeremiah. It is after the deportation to Babylon, and Hananiah is within the sacred precincts of the Temple, in the presence of priests and people, and in that of Jeremiah himself, predicting the speedy restoration of the holy vessels, of the king and the people, that had been carried to Babylon. Apparently Jeremiah does not charge him with being only and always a false prophet. But the question arose, whether in this special instance Hananiah, differing from all others, acted as a true or was a false prophet? To apply the canon in Deuteronomy: would it lead to, or away from, following Jehovah, the Living and True God? The answer could not be difficult. It was the Will of God, frequently expressed, that in the then state of the people, their captivity, and the cessation of the Temple-service, should not be of short duration; and that Judah should willingly submit to God in this judgment, and to the instruments which He had appointed to execute it. But the prediction of Hananiah was in precisely the opposite direction from this leading of God, and to have given credence to it would have led away from God. It is this to which Jeremiah referred when, after expressing as a patriot Israelite his intense desire that the prophecy of Hananiah might prove to have been God-sent, he added: 'Nevertheless hear this… The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old, prophesied both against many countries, and against many kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.' This, in the then state of Israel and the world, was evidently in accordance with the mind of God; there was moral evidence that it was of God. 'But,' continued the prophet: 'the prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of that prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that Jehovah hath truly sent him' (Jeremiah 28:6-9). In other words, such prophesying, as leading away from Jehovah, wanted the moral evidence. Let it be tried by the test of fact.

Looking back upon it, I shall not call this the vindication, but the manifestation and assertion of the moral element in prophecy. This self-limitation of prophetism, this submission of itself to the criterion of God-obedience, not only contrasts with all divination, but is absolutely grand in its moral elevation, and affords yet another evidence of its Divine character. Once more we come, as we might have expected, on New Testament lines. For it was this moral element which our Lord presented to His enemies as evidence of His own Prophetic Mission, when He said: 'If any man will do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh His glory that sent him, the same is true. (John 7:17-18)

Closely connected with this moral test, there is another aspect of the moral element in prophetism, another self-limitation and submission to God. In heathenism, prediction was absolute; in the Old Testament, prophecy was never absolute, but always subject to moral conditions. Commenting on Ezekiel 33:1-33, which declared that the prediction of death to the wicked and life to the righteous were not absolute, but would be reversed on their moral change, Jerome aptly observes: 'Nor does it follow that because a prophet foretold, that which he foretold should come to pass; for he does not foretell in order that it might take place, but lest it should take place ('nec statim sequitur ut quia propheta prædixit, veniat quod prædixit. Non enim prædicit ut veniat, sed ne veniat'). It, is in this sense that Holy Scripture, taking the human point of view, so often speaks of God's repenting. All the prophets who announced judgment also called to repentance, and all such calls — as so many in the prophecies of Isaiah; in Jeremiah 4:3-5; Ezekiel 18:30-32; Joel 2:12-14, and in other passages — were accompanied by the promise that in case of obedience the predicted judgments would be averted. More especially do we here recall the words of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 18:7-10): 'At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it — if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build, and to plant it: if it do evil in My sight that it obey not My voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.'

It is not fate that presides over prophecy, nor does fatality follow it. But there is a Living and True God Who reigneth, and the moral is the rule and characteristic of all prophecy. The Old Testament has settled, or rather anticipated, this great theological problem of so many ages: the combination and compatibility of God's sovereignty and decree with man's liberty and responsibility — not by either of our two clumsy devices or modes of cutting the knot, — that from above in what is called Predestinarianism, or that from below in what is known as Arminianism — but by putting the two in juxtaposition. And this lesson of what may be called the moral conditionalness of prophecy is specially indicated in that marvellous allegorical history, the Book of Jonah, which more than any other reaches beyond the Old Testament standpoint, and anticipates the lessons and facts of the New Testament. Nor, I trust, will it be considered presumptuous to suggest that this moral conditionalness — with all the possibilities resulting in this case — would, in part, be the answer to such a question as this: What, if the Jews, instead of rejecting and crucifying, had received Jesus as the Messiah? And it is in this sense that I would understand the words in which our Lord explained the true position of the Baptist:

'And if ye are willing to receive (it, or him), this is Elias, which, was for to come.' (Matthew 11:14) But even thus I have not yet given a full view of the moral element in prophecy. For this purpose I

must refer to at least two other points. For, first, prophetism, while confirming the historical reality of all the institutions of the Law, presented their spiritual bearing, without which it declared the observance of the letter to be not only meaningless, but an absolute perversion of their Divine purpose. Beyond the opus operatum and the letter were the Spirit and the spiritual reality to which they pointed. Circumcision of the flesh pointed to that of the lips and the heart; by the side of Israel after the flesh was Israel after the Spirit; by the side of the Levitical, another Priesthood, to which 'Holiness to the Lord' was the consecration. Sacrifices were meaningless without brokenness of heart and spirit, and they pointed to one great sacrifice of suffering. Festivals, fasts, and all other rites were a perversion and an abomination, unless pervaded by the moral and spiritual element.

Secondly. Prophetism emphatically presented it self, not as a finality, but rather as a preparation for a higher, better, and more spiritual state of things. Even as in the New Testament we are told that those miraculous Charismata of the Spirit: prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, belonged to a still imperfect or preparatory state of the Church, so did prophecy, while with one hand pointing back to the Law of Moses, and with the other to prophetism, tell of a time when God would make a new Covenant with His people, and give them a new Law, not graven on stone, but written on the heart, of which the seal would be circumcision of the heart: a Covenant of which the fundamental fact would be a new deliverance, not from the bondage of Egypt, but from that of sin, when He would forgive their iniquities and remember their sins no more — or, to quote the imagery of another prophet, when He would sprinkle clean water upon them and they would be clean. (Ezekiel 36:25) Then would prophecy indeed cease; no man would any more teach his neighbour, for they would all know Him, from the least to the greatest of them. Nor would the spirit of prophecy rest then only upon a few chosen individuals, but the wish of Moses of old would be fulfilled concerning all Israel, and the Holy Spirit be outpoured on all their sons and daughters, nay, even on the slaves and handmaidens, so that all would prophesy (Joel 2:28-29) — for in those days would He cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David, Who would execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

Thus prophecy pointed beyond itself, and to a spiritual fulfilment connected with the Advent of the promised Messiah. And not only so, but it also pointed to that period as that of the Kingdom o! God, not now of narrow Judaic dimensions, but wide as the world; not of national glory, but of spiritual righteousness. This is the highest moral element, the moral climax in prophecy, and in that sense is Jesus the Messiah also most fully the Prophet. But this line of argument stretches too far to be followed to its end in the present course of Lectures. In conclusion we may gather together the threads of this argument in a few plain and easily-answered questions. Is it not so that the goal which the Old Testament indicated when pointing beyond itself, beyond its rites, institutions, and prophetism, to a spiritual fulfilment, has, as a matter of fact, been attained in the New Testament and in Christ? In His own language: is it not so, that the salvation which is of the Jews has come to all men, since, not in Jerusalem only, but everywhere, the true worshippers worship the Father in Spirit and in truth? And is not all this because of, in, and through Jesus of Nazareth? Then 'Is not this the Christ,' the Messiah? and did not Philip truthfully say it,' We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write'? And, lastly, have not all things been fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Him?

Here we might, under ordinary circumstances, have paused for the present. But the terrible circumstances in which we find ourselves at this time, not only require language the most explicit and emphatic, but excuse that which is most impassioned. A great crime is being enacted over the world, which cries to Heaven for vengeance, and to the Church for testimony and self-vindication. While we speak of that salvation which is of the Jews, and of the joyous fulfilment of all promises in Christ, other thoughts obtrude themselves, and, like heavy clouds, crowd our horizon, and darken out the light of our gladness. For once more has the wild howl of unchained passion against Israel risen above the sweet music of the dying Saviour's last prayer:

'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

Once more has the blood- stained hand of rapine, lust, and murder sought to shake from out the jewelled memorial cup, in which the Church had gathered and held up in a constant Prayer of Intercession, the tears which Jesus had shed over the Jerusalem that would not receive Him — tears, that can never be dried up. And once more has the white raiment of the Church been fouled with blood; her fair name been made a byword, and her hymn of charity drowned by wild orgies. The hand raised to point to the Cross drops in anguish. How can we strike Judah's lyre when her captives lie murdered, mangled in our streets? How can we respond with the Antiphony of Fulfilment to the Hymn of Promise made to the virgin daughter of Zion when her maidens are outraged, her old men murdered, and her dwellings plundered by those who bear the Name of Him in Whom all these promises are Yea and Amen? The Church veils her face in mourning; a thrill of horror, a pang of anguish, a cry of indignation pass through universal humanity. Whether and what in the wonder- working Providence of Him who brings good out of evil may be the outcome of this to Israel, we cannot say. But in the name of God, let us clear ourselves of all complicity in this sin and shame. We who do believe in Christ, and because we believe in Him, as the true Messiah — we protest with one heart and mind against this and all like movements! In the name of Christianity, in the name of our Church, in the name of this land of liberty and light, in the name of universal humanity, we abhor it, we denounce it, we protest against it. And yet more, as we believe, so we pray: Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and by Thy glorious reign put an end to bloodshed, rapine, and sin! [103]

01.06. Lecture 6.

Lecture 6.

On the Spiritual Element in Prophecy: the Old Testament Pointed to a Spiritual Fulfilment in the Kingdom of God. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. — 1 Peter 1:10-11.

IT needs not a detailed analysis of these verses to show how closely their teaching agrees with the record of Peter's preaching. For, in his first sermon on the day of Pentecost, and especially in his second on the occasion of his healing the lame man in the Temple, his argument addressed to the Jews was, as might have been expected, to this effect: There is nothing new or unexpected in what you see and hear; it is simply the fulfilment of prophecy, for 'all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have foretold of these days.' But the Apostolic statement which we have chosen as text for this Lecture goes farther than this. It implies: Firstly, That all prophecy was the outcome of the Spirit of Christ in the prophets; secondly, that it pointed to the sufferings of the Messiah, and the glory that should follow; and, lastly, that while the prophets understood the general Messianic bearing of their prophecy, the details of the manner and time of its fulfilment were not understood by them, but remained reserved to the historical unfolding of the latter days. This takes us another step in our argument. It sets before us the historical character of prophecy, as progressing pari passu with the history of Israel, till at last its meaning fully appears in its fulfilment. Accurately considered, this forms indeed part of that moral element which in the last Lecture was shown to be the great characteristic of Prophecy. For it was not something mechanical and dead, thrust upon the world, as it were, but an active power for good, which grew with the moral growth of the people, and unfolded with their capacity for receiving and understanding it. From the first all was present — as James puts it: (Acts 15:18) 'Known to God from the first beginning,' or, in Paul's language, (Ephesians 3:9-10) 'part of the mystery hid from all ages in God,' and finally made known in Christ. And each advance in history was preceded by Prophecy, of which the object was not only the announcement of events, but preparation for them. And because the prophets, although they knew that their prophecies pointed to the end, understood not the time nor the manner of their fulfilment, therefore do we find so often the beginning and the end, the immediate and the final fulfilment, laid quite closely together, without apparent connection or transition — the Assur or Edom of the then present by the side of the final foes of the Kingdom; the Israel of the present along with that of the future; the restored services of the Temple beside the renewed worship of a Temple made without hands, and the heavenly beside the earthly Jerusalem. All this awaited the 'Let there be light' of the last days. Meantime that which was known to God from the beginning was successively revealed by Him through His prophets, for the spiritual training of His people. In the language of Amos (Amos 3:7), 'Surely Jehovah God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secrets to His servants the prophets;' and in that of Isaiah (Isaiah 42:9), 'Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I

declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.' And so Prophecy and History proceeded, the one as the forerunner of the other, the Spirit of Christ in the prophets ever pointing forward to the period of fulfilment. Then would all the great lines of prophecy meet, and in their meeting would their meaning become manifest.

If this historical view of prophecy characterised the preaching of Peter as the Apostle of the Jews, it is not less apparent in what may be termed the Biblical representatives of the opposite, or Alexandrian, direction: Stephen and the Epistle to the Hebrews; and in Paul, who in a marvellous degree combined the Palestinian and the Grecian direction. This explains how the largest part of Stephen's address to the Council was occupied by an historical sketch of God's Revelation, and of Israel's progressive disobedience thereto. Similarly, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, after a general introduction, Hebrews 3:1-19, Hebrews 4:1-16, and Hebrews 11:1-40, trace the prophetic view of Israel's history, while the intermediate chapters give that of Israel's institutions — and so the main proposition in Hebrews 2:1-18, is carried to its practical application in the concluding part of the Epistle. Lastly, we mark the same line of argument in the preaching of Paul to the Jews. Thus, in his first sermon in the Synagogue of Antioch, in Pisidia, the prophetic history of Israel from the Exodus to David is passed in review; then the predictions are referred to, which accompanied and explained this history, and pointed from David, nay from Moses and the Law, to Christ, the conclusion being an application of the prophetic warnings of Isaiah and Habakkuk to their contemporaries, as that of which the fulfilment threatened Paul's hearers. (Acts 13:17-41) There is, indeed, another line of thought regarding prophecy, followed by Paul, and, so far as I know, by him alone, in which the absolute or dogmatic view of it is taken, the Law with its demands being presented as the schoolmaster unto Christ, while the provisions regarding sin and satisfaction — sacrifices and atonement — are shown to point to Christ as their fulfilment. To this aspect we shall refer in the sequel. We may safely assume that the historic and prophetic character of the Old Testament, as preparing for, and pointing to, the Messiah, would not be seriously questioned by the Synagogue — at least, by the orthodox part of it — however strenuously the fulfilment of the prophetic Scriptures in Christ might be denied. But ff the Divine authority of the Old Testament is accepted, it appears to me only possible to challenge the New Testament conclusion on one of three grounds: — First, it might be contended that the Old Testament must be taken in an exclusively literal sense. We have already shown that this could not have been the case in reference to the prophecies of the coming Kingdom of God. But it might be argued against our general view of the prophetic character of the Old Testament, that at least the ordinances and institutions of the Old Testament had no further meaning beyond themselves, no absolutely spiritual bearing — were merely external, and not intended to be superseded by a new and spiritual dispensation to which they pointed. Or else, secondly, it might be maintained that what may be called the Christian view of the Messianic idea in the Old Testament is entirely imaginary and erroneous. Or, thirdly, it might be said that even if that view were correct, the Old Testament picture of the Messiah was essentially different from that presented by Jesus of Nazareth. As concerns these three objections, I think I may say that the last may be dismissed without discussion. For, if it were proved that the Old Testament pointed beyond itself to a larger and a spiritual Law, rites, and institutions, and if, besides, it were shown that the Christian view of the messianic idea in the Old Testament is correct, few would, I suppose, be disposed to question the inference that Jesus Christ did embody the Old Testament ideal as conceived by the Church. In such case we would have only to appeal to history, and it would almost seem logically impossible

to resist the argument from the historical Church. And if it were further objected that a great majority of Christ's contemporaries did not recognise in Him the Old Testament picture of the Messiah, this answer would be sufficient, that these men had no longer the proper Messianic ideal before their minds; that their conception of Him was no longer true to the Old Testament, nor yet spiritual, but that traditionalism had overgrown and crushed out the Old Testament teaching in its higher bearing: in one sentence, — that the religion of the Old Testament had already become transformed into Judaism. Our Lord indeed bade them search the Old Testament Scriptures as bearing testimony to Him, but their eyes were holden by the hand of their Pharisaic leaders, and their heart was hardened not to perceive their meaning. And this: that the contemporaries of Christ, or at least a majority of them, under the teaching of traditionalism, did not any longer occupy the Old Testament standpoint in its spiritual presentation of the Messiah, we are prepared to affirm as a substantive proposition. Accordingly, we have here to deal really with only these two questions: Did the Old Testament in its ordinances and rites point to something spiritual, and indicate that its observances were only temporary, intended to merge into a new and spiritual dispensation? And, again, as quite kindred, and, indeed, connected with it: Is what may be called the Christian view of the Messianic idea and ideal in the Old Testament the correct one? The first of these questions has in part been touched upon in the previous Lecture, but it must now receive more systematic and detailed consideration.

I. The Old Testament embodies not only a code of outward observances, but points beyond their letter to a deeper spiritual meaning in the present, and to a higher spiritual fulfilment in the future. This does not involve, even in part, the old principle of allegorical interpretation which characterised Alexandrian Judaism or Jewish Hellenism, although I am ready to admit that this embodied a certain aspect of truth, as is even witnessed by the manner in which it prospered and bore good fruit. But Alexandrian allegorism was not only exegetically ungrounded; it had no historical basis, and was purely imaginative in its origin and character, with all of attractiveness, but also of logical defect, which this implies. It invented — or at least discovered — the interpretation for the sake of the truth which it wished to teach. Not so the mode of interpretation which we propose to adopt. Method is not fanciful, but historical, inasmuch as it proceeds on that which actually was, and seeks to explain institutions, not by what they may be supposed to mean, but by the meaning which in other parts of the Old Testament, notably in the prophetic writings and the Psalms, is expressly attached to them. This will appear as we pass in review the principal institutions of the Old Testament. [104]

We have already seen that the initiatory rite of the Covenant, circumcision, was, even in the Pentateuch, presented in its symbolic aspect, and shown to point to another circumcision, that of the lips and the heart, which in the future would become a great spiritual reality to all men. It is in this view of circumcision that Moses speaks of himself as of 'uncircumcised lips,' that is, as unprepared for great spiritual work, (Exodus 6:12) while in Leviticus 26:41 we read of 'uncircumcised hearts,' and in Deuteronomy the command to circumcise the heart is explained as equivalent to being 'no more stiff-necked.' (Deuteronomy 10:16) Quite in accordance with this view, Jeremiah expresses his call to repentance in the words: 'Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem.' (Jeremiah 4:4) And that this was intended to point to something very real, appears from the circumstance that it forms the great Divine promise of the latter days: 'Jehovah thy God will

circumcise thine heart… to love Jehovah thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul.' (Deuteronomy 30:6) Circumcision then was not a merely outward rite, but symbolic of a spiritual reality; and it pointed beyond itself to the time of its spiritual accomplishment. Accordingly we find that in the prophetic writings it is associated with the glory of the latter days. Thus Isaiah calls on the Holy City to awake and put on her beautiful garments, for that henceforth the uncircumcised and the unclean would no more enter her gates. (Isaiah 52:1) And that the outward rite could not have been referred to, appears from this, that Jeremiah foretells that the days would come when Jehovah would equally punish the circumcised with the uncircumcised, for that while the Gentiles were uncircumcised, 'all the house of Israel were uncircumcised in the heart. (Jeremiah 9:26) But what is this other than the New Testament argument of Paul: 'He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.' [105] And as in regard to circumcision, so, and perhaps even more emphatically, as to sacrifices. The spiritual, as distinguished from the merely external, view of sacrifices is always prominently brought forward. Even the well-known (and too often misapplied (1 Samuel 15:22)) words of Samuel to Saul: 'To obey is better than sacrifices, and to hearken than the fat of rams,' [106] not only imply that sacrifices had a deeper meaning and bearing than the mere outward act, but that this was generally known and admitted. But when we pass beyond this to the prophetic writings and the Psalms, which, as Professor Delitzsch well reminds us, must be taken into account in all such discussions, the teaching of the Old Testament unmistakably is, that sacrifices pointed to a higher reality Psalms 50. reads like a withering irony on the mere opus operatum of sacrifices, as if God would eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats. In Psalms 51. the penitent pleads: 'Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.' It is in the same spirit and manner that Isaiah, (Isaiah 1:11-14) Jeremiah, (Jeremiah 7:20) Amos, (Amos 5:21-22) Hosea, (Hosea 6:6) and Micah (Micah 6:6-8) speak of sacrifices as in themselves of no value. And we are carried beyond this chiefly negative view in this most important retrospect of the Prophet Jeremiah, 'I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people. (Jeremiah 7:22-23) It almost seems as if it were intended to teach the absolute worthlessness of sacrifices, viewed by themselves, and to point to the substitution of a spiritual worship in their room. We seem to be catching a faint whisper of these words in the Epistle to the Hebrews: 'It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.' And beyond this did the prophets speak of another sacrifice which would be of intrinsic value. Thus we read it in Psalms 40:1-17 :, 'Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire… Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, oh my God.' However the exegesis of this passage may be disputed, we believe that it presents this threefold view of sacrifices: their symbolical and transitional character; the moral element in them; and the great Sacrifice of inherent value by the self- surrender of the Righteous One — and that it points forward to, and finds its fullest explanation in, the great prediction of Isaiah 53:1-12. The argument, which we have sought to set forth, gains greatly in cogency as we remember that these utterances were not caused by any depreciation, on the part of the prophets, either of sacrifices or of the other ritual observances of the Old Testament. On the contrary, if we read in Psalms 51:1-19 : that the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, we find it immediately

followed by this: ‘Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offerings and whole burnt-offerings; then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.’ And, again, it is the same Psalmist who so earnestly pants after spiritual fellowship with the Living God, who also longs to go up to the hill of God, to His tabernacle and altar. (Psalms 42:1-11, Psalms 43:1-5)

Most important in this respect are the references in the prophecies of Daniel and Malachi, but especially those in the book of Ezekiel, to ritual and Levitical ordinances. They prove beyond question that the prophetic standpoint did not imply any depreciation of the ordinances and institutions of the Law. And yet by the side of all this we find what some have, in perhaps exaggerated language, termed an anti- ritual direction. The solution of this seeming difficulty must not be sought in the supposed priority of the Prophets to the Law, but in another consideration which forms one of the main points in prophecy. Ultimately all prophecy points to ‘the last [latter] days,’ or the end of days (the Acharith hayyamim). This was to be the goal of the religious development and of the history of Israel. Thus we read it in the prophecy of Hosea, (Hosea 3:5) that after many days in which Israel would be without king or sacrifices — true or false — they would return and seek Jehovah their God and David their king, and fear Jehovah and His goodness in the latter days (the Acharith hayyamim). It was not for a gradual development into a more spiritual worship that the Prophets looked; their gaze was bent on the Acharith hayyamim. They expected not a religious reformation but a renovation, not the cessation of sacrifices but the fulfilment of their prophetic idea in the latter days, which were those of the expected Messiah and of His Kingdom. But, for the reason previously indicated, that they knew not the manner nor the time of fulfilment, these two — the present and the future — lay as yet in close, and to them, though not to us, undistinguished, contiguity. Thus Jeremiah introduces the sacrificial services into a restored Jerusalem, the starting point of his prophecy being the return from the Babylonish captivity, and its goal-point that from the final dispersion of Israel, or the latter days. (Jeremiah 17:26; Jeremiah 31:14; Jeremiah 33:10-16) The same undistinguished conjunction appears in the prophetic Book of Isaiah. In Isaiah 56:1-12 of it we have a burning description of ‘the latter days.’ Then would the sons of the strangers join themselves to Jehovah and be brought to the Holy Mountain, and their burnt- offerings and sacrifices be accepted on His altar, because His house would be called a house of prayer for all nations. It is not an enlargement but a transformation of the Jewish dispensation which is here anticipated; not a conversion to Israel, but to Israel’s God; not a merging of all nations into Israel, but a breaking down of separating walls; not a universal Synagogue, but a universal Church, in which all that had been national, preparatory, symbolic, typical, would merge into the spiritual reality of fulfilment. But what is this prophecy from the Book of Isaiah other than a prediction of the words of Christ concerning those other sheep of His not of the Jewish fold, whom He must bring, and who should hear His voice, that so there might be one flock and one Shepherd — words (John 10:16) which He consecrated by His latest prayer. (John 17:20-21) Assuredly, it seems as difficult to understand how the fourth Gospel which records this can be regarded as un-Jewish, as how these prophecies of Isaiah can be represented as merely Jewish and anti-Gentile. To pass over other and kindred prophetic utterances, those in Isaiah 60:1-22 must claim our attention, as specially illustrative in our present argument. Here we find in strange juxtaposition two apparently contradictory series of facts. The prophecy opens with what almost seems a denunciation of Temple and sacrificial worship. Heaven was God’s throne, and earth His footstool: where then was the house which man would build for Him, unless it were in the

heart of the humble and contrite? Similarly, as regarded sacrifices, he that offered a lamb or an oblation was in the view of the prophet as if he had killed some unclean animal. And yet, by the side of these apparent denunciations, we have a glowing description of the restoration of that very Temple and of its sacrifices, yet of such kind that the Gentiles would, not as proselytes of righteousness, but as proselytes to God, have their part in all, by the side of spiritually converted Israel. Surely, clearer evidence than this could not be given, that the present was ever regarded as prophetic of the future; that the future was presented in the language and forms of the present; and that the sacrifices, which symbolised spiritual realities, were also typical of that future in 'the latter days,' when around the Great Sacrifice, and in the great World-Temple of the Church, all nations would be gathered. To the same effect is what the Old Testament says concerning the Levitical priesthood. It is not the Epistle to the Hebrews only, but the Old Testament itself, which teaches that, beyond the letter, there was a deeper significance attaching to the Old Testament idea of the priesthood; and that, beyond the present institutions and ministry in the outward Temple, it pointed to higher spiritual realities, of which it was both symbolic and prophetic. Even the circumstance that the Levites were appointed in place of the first-born in Israel, (Numbers 8:16-17) is most significant. Like the claim to the first-fruits, it indicated the claim of Jehovah upon His people. This fundamental principle includes all detailed instruction that was afterwards given. Accordingly, we find that in Exodus 19:5-6, all Israel are designated Jehovah's peculiar possession, although only on condition of being faithful to the covenant. It is in this sense also that we understand it, that all Israel 'shall be to me a kingdom of priests.' The same view of the meaning of the priesthood, as typical of God- consecration, is expressed in the Book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 7:6; Deuteronomy 14:2; Deuteronomy 32:9), in the Psalms, (Psalms 135:4) and in the prophetic books. (Isaiah 12:1-6; Isaiah 43:1) But the final fulfilment of this fundamental idea was reserved for the future — and is presented in that mysterious priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, (Psalms 110:4) and in that prophecy concerning 'the latter days,' when, with reference to a far other than the Aaronic priesthood, one probably including the Gentiles also, this promise was to become true: 'And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith Jehovah.' (Isaiah 66:21) And as we recall the circumstances of Israel in relation to Babylon, and the stage of revelation when these words were uttered, and compare, or rather contrast them with the narrow Judaism of the time of Christ, we can in some measure realise the spiritual altitude of these prophecies, and feel that we must look in the pages of the New Testament for their fulfilment. But it is not only one or another institution, but the whole Old Testament, which points beyond itself and to a higher fulfilment in the future. Here we specially mark how frequently and emphatically the Law is referred to, not as a code of outward commandments, but in its deeper and spiritual bearing on the inward man. This especially in the Book of Psalms, which may be described as being equally of the Law and the Prophets, converting the teaching of both into spiritual life-blood. Here we would refer, as a most characteristic instance, to the teaching of the Psalms in regard to holiness and forgiveness, which, as in the New Testament, are conjoined, A prominent influence in reference to these two is ascribed to the Law — necessarily, not as a code of outward commandments, but in its spiritual aspect. Thus in Psalms 19 : the Law of the Lord is spoken of as 'converting the heart,' the prayer being immediately added for forgiveness of secret sins. Similarly, in Psalms 51 the prayer for forgiveness is joined to one for the creation of a new heart by the Spirit. This conjunction of the prayer for forgiveness with that for regeneration is exceedingly characteristic of the spirituality of

religious aspiration. Psalms 119. may be described as a grand eulogy of the Law in this aspect of it. And when, with the time of Israel's completed inward departure from God, came that of their greatest outward need, the Prophet was not commissioned to give them any new commandment, still less to admonish to strict observance of the old, but to bring the promise, which characteristically was to this effect, that God would give them a new heart to know Him that He was Jehovah, (Jeremiah 24:7) And that it was not in any wise connected with ignoration of the Law, nor, on the other hand, expected in conjunction with a return to its merely outward ordinances, appears from this, that the great promise of 'the latter days' — of the Messianic time of completion was, that Jehovah would then make a new covenant with Israel, not according to that when He brought them out of Egypt, but one in which He would put His Law in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts. And most important as adding yet another element: then would one man no longer teach his neighbour, but all be taught directly of God. (Jeremiah 31:31-34) This indicates the existence of the old elements, while at the same time it points to an entire change in the future. Then would not only the old Covenant and the old Law, but even prophetism be superseded, or rather fulfilled. All this in the 'latter days,' or Messianic time, when, as Zechariah predicts, all ritual ordinances would merge in that universal consecration to God, in which 'Holiness unto Jehovah,' the inscription on the High-Priest's mitre, would, so to speak, be that on all vessels in common use in Jerusalem. (Zechariah 14:20-21) But what does all this mean, when translated into the prose language of history, but the fulfilment of the Law in its spiritual aspect, such as we find it described in the Epistles of Paul and, indeed, throughout the whole New Testament? But even this is not all. If Psalms 51:1-19 : had combined these two, the spiritual renewal of the heart and the forgiveness of sins, we are told that in the days of the promised New Covenant this would be the gift of God to all His people. Thus Jeremiah connects with the prediction of the new Law, which was to be written on the heart when man's teaching would give place to universal knowledge of God, this promise deeply significant, even if in its then form it applied to Israel: 'For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.' (Jeremiah 31:34) Similarly Ezekiel, the priest-prophet, speaks of the time when God would sprinkle clean water upon them, and cleanse them from their filthiness, give them a new heart, put His Spirit within them, take away their stony heart, and make them to walk in His statutes. (Ezekiel 36:25-27) And that these promises would find their fulfilment in the time of the Messiah, the Son of David, is thus expressly stated by the same prophet in the following chapter of his predictions: 'And David my servant shall be king over them: and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in My judgments, and observe My statutes, and do them.' (Ezekiel 37:24) And this is what Ezekiel emphatically designates as the covenant of peace, the everlasting covenant which God would make. (Ezekiel 37:26-28) Lastly, with this also agrees both the saying of Zechariah (Zechariah 13:1): 'In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness,' and this of Micah (Micah 7:19-20), that God would cast all their sins into the depths of the sea, and thus 'perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham' which He had 'sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.'

Detailed as these references have been, they have only brought us, as it were, to the threshold. For beyond all these individual predictions we have the glowing descriptions by all the prophets, but especially in the Book of Isaiah, of the time of the new covenant, with its blessings to Israel and to mankind. That these bear reference to a spiritual world-wide dispensation in the Messianic days needs scarcely argument, any more than that all the conditions of it have been fulfilled in that

dispensation which was introduced under the New Testament. It could scarcely be imagined that at any future period Judaism, whether of the Rabbinic or the Rationalistic kind, would unfold into such a universal religion and Kingdom of God, as the Prophets describe. In such case the alternative must be, either to renounce the Old Testament hope, or to translate it into the platitudes of a vapid Deism. Or else if we cling to the spiritual hope set before us by the Prophets, then must we look for the wider fulfilment of all in that dispensation which is set before us in the New Testament, even though it may not yet appear as a concrete reality, but as that towards which we are tending, and which forms the promise and the goal of the present development. From Judaism, which is either an anachronism, or a revolt against the inmost idea of the Old Testament, we turn again to the Old Testament, and in regard to it claim to have established these positions: that the Old Testament itself pointed to spiritual realities of which the external and the then present were confessedly and consciously the symbols. And, secondly, that in this it pointed for the fulfilment of all to the 'latter' or Messianic days.

Another, and a kindred argument, comes to us from what we have previously referred to as the absolute or dogmatic view of the prophetic character of the Old Testament, as taken by Paul. In this aspect he regards the whole Old Testament as prophetic of the New, 'the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.' (Romans 3:21) From what might be called the purely rational standpoint, it might be argued, and, indeed, was argued in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the ceremonial and ritual Law could not have been intended as permanent, nor its provisions have been regarded as sufficient for the atonement of sin. But Paul takes even higher ground than this. As he explains it, the Law could not reach within, and, therefore, did not remove, rather did it call out, that sin on which it pronounced the sentence of death. Accordingly, the object of the Law could only have been to call forth longing after salvation. It follows, that the Law could only have been intended as a temporary institution and to be a schoolmaster unto Christ. But the grace to which it pointed was from the first, and long before the Law, conveyed unto the fathers in the promise which could not have been annulled by that which came after, and which was only intended for temporary purposes and to serve as preparation for the future. Such is the argument of the Epistle to the Romans, of a portion of the 2nd to the Corinthians, and especially of that to the Galatians, the main position being summed up in these words: 'Is the Law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.' (Galatians 3:21-26)

II. The detailed answer which we have sought to give to the first question we had proposed to ourselves, in measure also implies that to the second great inquiry: whether or not what may be called the Christian view of the Messianic idea and ideal is true to the Old Testament. What we have still to say, may perhaps be best presented in the form of a rapid review of the historical development through which the fundamental religious ideas passed in Israel. The ante-patriarchal age may be described as the stage of infancy. During its course the general foundations were laid, and that condition of things was established to which the provisions of the Divine Covenant would

in the future apply. The grand facts which then emerged to view were these: Man's original God-relation, as God- created, and still God-like; law, sin, death, and the promise of final recovery. But sin was not only an outward transgression of an outward command. Springing from evil thoughts within, sin would progress to its furthest limits, and that which had begun in disobedience to the Divine Father would end in murder of the human brother. Yet by the side of sin appeared also from the first, and on the ground of the Divine promise, the origines of worship; Divine warning also, and Divine acknowledgment, as well as Divine judgment. Next emerged the grand outlines of the distinction between those who called upon God, and who followed the merely material, and with the increase of the latter, the corruption of the former, and thereupon a universal judgment, yet with preservation of the believing righteous. From this sprung a new order of society, still bearing, however, the Cain seal of judgment, which resulted in the confusion of tongues, and the severance of mankind into separate nations. By the side of these origines might range, as their counterpart, the historic fulfilment in the New Testament, beginning with the Incarnation of the Christ, and ending with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

What here distinguishes and gives such unique grandeur to the Old Testament narrative, is that it professes to give not the physical, philosophical, literary, nor political, but the purely moral and spiritual history of our origines, at the same time laying the foundations of the most distant future. Even the hope of such a future is significant, since heathenism as such had no Acherith hayyamim. To the Old Testament the future is everything: the condition of its existence, the rationale of its aim, the impelling power of its development. It comes into our world, young, fresh, and tending towards a Divine manhood. And, dim as the primæval promise may be, it is the Gospel. For it tells us that man is not to be for ever oppressed by sin, but that sin is in the end to be utterly crushed, and that out of the moral contest between the Representative of humanity and that of sin, of which the condition is suffering to the former, victory and universal deliverance would come. The next period was the patriarchal stage, or the age of childhood. It is characterised by all a child's simplicity of faith, and absoluteness of obedience. The great future now appeared mainly through its contrast to the present. The lonely wanderer was to become the father of all nations; the homeless pilgrim, the heir of all the land, nay, of all the earth. This sets forth another feature in the development of the Kingdom of God: that of the contrast between the seen and the unseen, the present and the future, appearance and reality. And this also is most fully exhibited in the history of Christ and His Church. Moreover, on further consideration, it will be perceived that this must be the necessary outcome of the prevalence of evil, and of that contest of suffering which is the characteristic of the Kingdom of God, when introduced into the world. But at the same time the original promise began also to assume more definite form. These two things were now clearly marked in the further unfolding of the promise: that its starting-point was to be in the individual, 'in Thee;' and that its goal- point was 'all nations,' which were to be blessed in Him. But to mark this starting- point was to enter into covenant, as God did with Abraham, as father of the faithful. The sign of it was circumcision, which indicated that, while this covenant was to be transmitted from father to son, its transmission was not to be merely by hereditary descent, but that it also implied personal submission to God's ordinance, and voluntary taking up of the covenant obligations. From this point onwards alike the starting and the goal-point are marked with ever increasing clearness. The period which we next reach, and which may be designated as that of Israel's youth, was the constituent period of the Covenant history. The promise which had found its location in an individual, and then in the patriarchal family, was now to enter the field of the world, being, so to

speak, embodied in a nation, whose life, history, and predictions were to be identified with the Kingdom of God. The idea, which was symbolically and typically presented in the history and institutions of Israel was — as we have seen — that of the Servant of the Lord, in opposition to that service of sin which was unto death. This, with all of struggle and suffering, but also with the ultimate victory, attaching to it. The whole subsequent history of Israel was the outcome and development of that in the patriarchal and ante-patriarchal period. Alike the ceremonial, the ritual, and the moral Law, as well as the promises, have their explanation and starting-point in the idea of the Servant of the Lord. The same contrast between the seen and the unseen, the present and the future, which had emerged in patriarchal history, characterised that of Israel in their relation to the other nations of the world. And the varying events which befell Israel were determined by their faithful adherence, or the opposite, to the Divine idea which they were intended to embody.

Another stage, and we reach the period of the monarchy, which was that of Israel's manhood and maturity. To the idea of priesthood and of prophetism, which had during the previous period been expressed in outward form, that of royalty was now added, but still with the underlying principle of the King as 'the servant of the Lord.' The great promise connected first with the patriarchs as God's anointed, and then with Israel as a royal nation, now attached itself to Israel's king, and became, so to speak, individualised in David and his seed. The picture presented in the history of David is still that of the suffering servant of Jehovah. But, by the side of it, that of the reigning servant of God is also placed. And as we follow the outward history of Israel, its great spiritual lessons appear with increasing clearness. The fate of the people is more distinctly shown to be dependent upon faithfulness to the covenant; the prophets point out with growing clearness the spiritual character of the Law and its institutions; above all, the great hope of Israel in regard to the spiritual kingdom and the king over all nations, is presented with ever-increasing particularity and definiteness as being the goal of fulfilment. The prophetic line which indicated the starting point was now well-nigh completely traced; that in regard to the goal-point yet remained to be more fully marked. This was done in the last stage of Israel's history before the great pause of expectancy — that of the exile. It was the period of Israel's decay; but, as always, the casting off of Israel was to become the bringing in of the Gentiles. Israel was now placed in closest contact with the great world-monarchies, and those new relations gave rise to another stage, in which the grand hope entered, so to speak, on its world-mission and history. Israel was to become a John the Baptist to the heathen world; a voice in the wilderness crying to them of the coming Christ. Once more did Providence and grace work together. The greatest miracle was accomplished without sign of outward miracle. The Jewish dispersion, the spread of Grecian culture, and the establishment of the rule of Imperial Rome, were the three great factors, acting independently yet harmoniously towards one great object. Then, after the pause of expectancy, when, as regarded literary preparation, Grecianism, and, as regarded political preparation, the rule of ancient Rome, had united all mankind, the Old Testament in its Greek rendering, and the New Testament in its old and new world- meaning, could go forth into the arena of the world. And so the days of Cæsar Augustus became those of the coming of Christ, and of the final fulfilment of prophecy.

Clearly as, from the standpoint of fulfilment, we perceive all this, we can readily understand how till after the coming of Christ it would appear only dimly even to those who believed. But there is one book in the Old Testament which, more than any other, must have kept alive these thoughts and hopes in Israel. It is the Book of Psalms. Let it be borne in mind that this was at the same time the

liturgy, the hymnody, and in great measure the dogmatics of the Old Testament Church. Then realise that its first beginnings date from the primitive and, in some respects, barbaric times of Saul. And yet, in a sense, it has been, and still is to the Church and to individuals, what it had been to Israel during the changeful periods of their troubled history. Its grandeur of God-conception, its intense pathos of suffering, its sweet tenderness of feeling, its child-like simplicity of faith, and the absoluteness of its trustfulness, still best express our deepest religious experience. And, beyond these subjective characteristics, are the objective earnestness of its God-proclamation into the wide world, its view of the City of God as the ideal State, its expectancy of the fulfilment of all the promises, and of the beatification of the world. Above all does it set forth in clear lineaments the portraiture of the Messiah-King. Thither all the lines of thought run up. The wail of the righteous Sufferer leads up to the agonies of the Cross; the shout of the king to the gladness of the Resurrection-morning. Over and above the noise of many waves and the rebellion of heathen nations rises loud, clear, and for ever, the God-assertion of His kingdom upon earth, and the God-proclamation of the Christ into all the world. The answering voices of the Church and of ransomed nations, that stretch forth their hands towards Him, respond: ‘He hath made us, and for Himself; we are His flock and the sheep of His pasture;’ all nations shall worship Him — ride forth prosperously, and reign forever, ‘David’s greater Son!’

01.07. Lecture 7.

Lecture 7.

On the History of the Recent Criticism of the Pentateuch, and on Some Difficulties Connected with its Results. But we hoped that it was He which should have redeemed Israel – Luke 24:1.

WE have reached that stage in the inquiry proposed in these Lectures, when we might have been expected to gather together the individual predictions in the Old Testament, with the view of presenting in them a prophetic picture of the Messiah. But the exigencies of the time, and indeed of the present argument, impose on me another duty than once more to attempt what, in one or another part of it, has been so often and so well done by my predecessors. In truth, it must have been felt in the course of this argument, that those great questions regarding the date and component parts of the Pentateuch, or rather of the Mosaic legislation, and its relation to the Prophets, which are at present so largely engaging the attention alike of scholars and of general readers of the Old Testament, are of vital importance in our present inquiry.

Notwithstanding the interest awakened in the subject, it may be doubted whether the history and progress of this question are sufficiently known, intelligently to follow its discussion. Accordingly, I propose to give a brief sketch of its history, before considering the results arrived at — avoiding, so far as possible, merely technical details. [107]

What may be called the traditional or Church-view of the Mosaic date and authorship of the Pentateuch (entertained not only by the Roman Catholic, the Greek, and by all the Protestant Churches, but also by the Synagogue) prevailed with but little and not influential exception or dissent [108] till the second half of the last century. The first systematic attempt to trace different documents, in the first place, in the book of Genesis (inclusive of Exodus 1:1-22, Exodus 2:1-25) was made by Jean Astruc (1684-1766), a French physician, the son of a Protestant pastor, and afterwards a convert to Roman Catholicism. His work, ‘Conjectures sur les mêmoires originaux dont il paroit que Moyse s’est servi pour composer le livre de la Genèse,’ appeared anonymously at Brussels in 1753, when the author was nearly seventy years old. [109] Starting from the exclusive use in different parts of Genesis of the terms Elohim and. Jehovah, he ascribed the portions in which either the one or the other designation occurred to separate documents, which he respectively marked by the letters A and B. Those parts in which there were repetitions of the same narrative, and the name of God did not occur, he ascribed to another document. (Comprising Genesis 7:1-24, Genesis 20:1-18, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67) which he called C. Finally, those narratives which seemed to him foreign to the history of the Jewish people he ranged in yet a fourth column, D, which, however, really comprised various documents (eight in number), and which he marked by the letters E to M. Thus the book of Genesis was composed of eleven documents (A, B, C, and E to M). [110] The investigations of Astruc soon found a more congenial soil, and received fuller development, in Germany. Here (after a few not influential predecessors) [111] we have specially to name J. G. Eichhorn, [112] whose ‘Introduction to the Old Testament’ (in 5 vols.) appeared at Leipsic in 1780-1783, and rapidly passed through several

editions. [113] The work of Eichhorn lays down the main principles and lines which have since been followed in German criticism of the Pentateuch. After stating the various reasons for his distinction of the two documents which he traces in Genesis, Eichhorn endeavours to prove that each of them is again based upon a previous document, arriving at the final conclusion that the Jehovah-document had finished with the death of Joseph, the Elohim-document with the public appearance of Moses, [114] and that these two documents may have been put together by someone before Moses (p. 94) — although not in their completeness, but often in fragmentary form, in accordance with the plan of the compiler, and with not unfrequent glosses and interpolations. These three elements (the Elohistic, the 3ehovistic, and glosses) Eichhorn traces in detail through the Book of Genesis (pp. 107-110). The author next proceeds to vindicate the genuineness of Genesis [115] and to defend its high antiquity (pp. 135-172) by arguments well worthy of consideration. Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, Eichhorn regards as older than all the other books in the Old Testament, proving this both from their language and contents (pp. 187-193), and from later history. These books cannot be post-Mosaic, notably they have neither been written nor compiled by Ezra, although these Mosaic documents have passed through many hands and received glosses and additions. But all this before the time of Ezra, since otherwise the Samaritans would not have accepted the Pentateuch (pp. 204-205). Other reasons confirmatory of this view are given. It is further shown that these books could not have been composed at the time of Josiah, (2 Kings 22:1-20) nor yet between that of Joshua and David, but must have originated from documents by Moses and some of his contemporaries, although (as already remarked) not without later interpolations, alterations, and additions. The notices of these by Eichhorn mark the points of departure for later and more destructive criticism. The arguments by which all these views are supported in detail are very interesting and deserve the attention of modern critics. Emphatic is the testimony of Eichhorn in favour of what is now known as the 'Priest-Code,' [116] and very detailed the examination of Numbers, which is followed (p. 322) by a refutation of objections and a demonstration of the authenticity of the Pentateuch which, it is declared 'not even the most boundless scepticism could regard as fictitious' — the analysis closing with the literary history of the subject.

I have been thus detailed in the analysis of Eichhorn's argument, as not only the beginning of modern criticism, but because it deserves more serious attention than it has of late received. To complete this part of our account, we add that K. D. Ilgen [117] sought to show the existence of a second 'Elohist,' against which Eichhorn protested, and that the contention of Ilgen was further followed out by Hupfeld, and by Ewald in his 'History of Israel.' To mark yet another step — De Wette [118] claimed a separate authorship for Deuteronomy; Bleek [119] showed, that the Book of Joshua really formed part of what originally was a Hexateuch; while Ewald and others extended the proposed criticism to all parts of this work. The denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was, as might be expected, further developed by successive critics, whose special views it were out of place to describe in detail — the final result being briefly this, that the existence in Mosaic times of almost any part of the Pentateuch was denied.

[2]. Prom this review of the history, we pass to a sketch of the present state of the controversy. Generally speaking, the various views advocated may be grouped under three headings: —

A. The first of these bears the name of the 'Fragments-hypothesis.' According to its advocates, we can discover so many interpolations, glosses, and repetitions in the Pentateuch, that the work

must be regarded as a collection of separate documents, thrown together without order or care by one or more redactors, with the view of preserving all the literary remains of the past. With this theory, which is now generally abandoned, the names of Vater, [120] of our own countryman Dr. A. Geddes, and of A. Th. Hartmann, [121] are connected.

B. According to the second theory, which is designated the ‘Supplement- hypothesis,’ the work of the Elohist was the oldest in the collection, and then supplemented by that of the Jehovist, Deuteronomy having been added at a later period. With this view the names of Tuch, [122] Bleek, Lengerke, [123] and formerly also of Delitzsch, [124] are identified. This hypothesis also has been virtually abandoned by modern critics.

C. The third theory, known as the ‘Document-hypothesis,’ is that which at present is most generally received. According to its advocates the whole or most of the Pentateuch consists of various documents, which have been redacted by two or more persons — the original documents themselves being classed as the ‘First Elohist,’ the ‘Second Elohist,’ the ‘Jehovist,’ and the ‘Deuteronomist.’

It will be noticed that, in its outline, this hypothesis is both general and vague. It leaves room for the widest differences in regard to the documents, all, or some, of which may, in our Pentateuch, appear in their original or in an altered form — ‘redacted’ and ‘re-redacted;’ or may have been incorporated in a previous work, and then re-incorporated in another. Moreover, the theory itself does not settle the question as to the date of the composition, emendation, redaction, or incorporation of the various documents — leaving all these points undetermined, or rather in dispute, between the various critics. And yet, manifestly the most important question is that about the date of the contents of the Pentateuch: whether, broadly speaking, it truly represents, as a whole, the Mosaic legislation, or else must be pronounced, in regard to any such pretension, as in the main a later forgery. On this point it seems, to me at least, difficult to understand how the alternative and question at issue can be misapprehended, although it is only fair to say that there are scholars, both on the Continent and among ourselves, who hold the late date and non-Mosaic composition of so large a part of the Pentateuch, and yet utterly refuse the sequences which seem to me the logical inference from these views. Lastly, it should be added that there are still scholars in Germany and, no doubt, in our own country, who defend the unity and Mosaic authorship, or at least redaction, of the whole Pentateuch. It must, however, be admitted that their opponents have justice on their side in charging them with want of consistency in their views. [125]

We have said that there was room within the document-hypothesis for the most divergent views on many important questions. Till lately it might, indeed, have been boasted that, although many, and, as we should have thought, serious differences prevailed on matters of detail, there was substantial agreement on all leading points, such as the relative age of the chief documents composing the Pentateuch; the existence of certain sections which are older than any of the documents of which the Pentateuch is composed; [126] and the combination of the other principal documents into one work which was completed before the time of the Deuteronomist. But this agreement no longer exists, so far as the most important, points are concerned, unless it were in this, that only small fragments in the Pentateuch are dated from Mosaic times, and that even these have been arranged and rearranged in strangest manner. But, by the side of this, there are on many questions absolute and irreconcilable differences between various critics. These concern:

the number of documents in the Pentateuch, and the number of ‘redactors,’ who, in a certain sense, may be regarded as additional writers; the relation, order, and succession of these documents and of their redactions; and, lastly, the respective date or age of some of these documents and redactions. In evidence of the differences prevailing, the various views on the supposed age of the documents composing the Pentateuch have been arranged in seven, or, more strictly speaking, ten [127] separate classes, to each of which the name, or names, of distinguished critics are attached. In other words, on the important question of the arrangement and relative age of some of the documents composing the Pentateuch, seven, or, more properly, ten, diverging views prevail; [128] while in regard to some of them it may be said that opposite conclusions have been derived by equally competent scholars from the same data. From all this the impartial observer will derive at least this inference, that, where these conclusions so differ, they cannot rest on irrefragable grounds, but must to a large extent have been influenced by subjective considerations. But all other differences pale into insignificance by the side of the fundamental divergence introduced by what is popularly known as the theory of Wellhausen. We call it by his name, not because it originated with him, but because of his lucid and popular advocacy, and his thorough application of it to all questions connected with Hebrew history and literature; and because its recent presentation, both in Germany and in this country, has identified the theory with his name. On the other hand, it is only fair to state, even at this stage, that many scholars whose names are identified with Hebrew learning have, on critical grounds, refused to accept his conclusions. The genesis of the theory is not without interest. Vatke [129] and George [130] contended, chiefly on philosophical grounds, that the Book of Deuteronomy, which was supposed to date from the time of Josiah, was older than the legislation of the other books in the Pentateuch. This position was next advocated on critical grounds by other writers. Thus E. Reuss (since 1833) laboured to establish that the notices in the historical books [131] implied what was contradictory to the provisions of the so-called Mosaic law, and hence that the latter could not have existed at the time; [132] that the prophets of the eighth and ninth centuries B.C. knew nothing of a Mosaic code; that Jeremiah was the first prophet who spoke of a written Law; and that his references were exclusively to Deuteronomy; and, lastly, that Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 4:45-49, Deuteronomy 5:1-33, Deuteronomy 6:1-25, Deuteronomy 7:1-26, Deuteronomy 8:1-20, Deuteronomy 9:1-29, Deuteronomy 10:1-22, Deuteronomy 11:1-32, Deuteronomy 12:1-32, Deuteronomy 13:1-18, Deuteronomy 14:1-29, Deuteronomy 15:1-23, Deuteronomy 16:1-22, Deuteronomy 17:1-20, Deuteronomy 18:1-22, Deuteronomy 19:1-21, Deuteronomy 20:1-20, Deuteronomy 21:1-23, Deuteronomy 22:1-30, Deuteronomy 23:1-25, Deuteronomy 24:1-22, Deuteronomy 25:1-19, Deuteronomy 26:1-19, Deuteronomy 27:1-26, Deuteronomy 28:1-68) was the oldest portion of the Pentateuch-legislation, being the very book which the priests in the time of Josiah pretended (prétendaient) to have found in the Temple; while Ezekiel (Ezekiel 40:1-49, Ezekiel 41:1-26, Ezekiel 42:1-20, Ezekiel 43:1-27, Ezekiel 44:1-31, Ezekiel 45:1-25, Ezekiel 46:1-24, Ezekiel 47:1-23, Ezekiel 48:1-35) was anterior to the redaction of the ritual code and of the laws (the ‘Priest-Code’) which the Jewish priesthood afterwards introduced into the Pentateuch. The most important argument on which this theory rests is the supposed ignoring of the Mosaic Law in the historical books, and the inconsistency of its provision with the state of matters then existing. Pull reference will be made to this in the sequel. At present we only add, that this argument was capable of wide application, notably to all the religious institutions referred to in the Pentateuch: sacrifices, the priesthood, the central place of worship, and the great festivals.

The theory just described broke with all the past. For, whereas Deuteronomy had formerly been regarded as being, on any supposition, the latest book in the Pentateuch, it was now declared to be the earliest, while the Levitical legislation in the Pentateuch was relegated to the times of the Exile. It follows that there must have been an immense difference between the times before, and those after, Josiah, when Deuteronomy first emerged. It would further follow that the earlier period of Jewish history was one of religious barbarism, confusion, and mostly worship of nature, when the voice of the prophets brooded over the moral chaos, and sought to introduce order in it. To other sequences of a theory so destructive, and which, even at this stage, I venture to designate as utterly incompatible with the facts of the case, reference will be made in the sequel. The theory of Reuss was at first coldly received, and only gained adherents when developed by his pupils. One of them, K. H. Graf (1869), maintained [133] that the 'original document'

[the old historical work of the Elohist] had been successively recast by the Jehovist and the Deuteronomist, while the code of the middle books in the Pentateuch (Exodus 12:1-28; Exodus 12:43-51; Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-43, Exodus 40:1-38; Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38, Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20, Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34, Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46, Leviticus 27:1-34; Numbers 1:1-54, Numbers 2:1-34, Numbers 3:1-51, Numbers 4:1-49, Numbers 5:1-31, Numbers 6:1-27, Numbers 7:1-89, Numbers 8:1-26, Numbers 9:1-23, Numbers 10:1-28; Numbers 15:1-41; Numbers 16:1-50, Numbers 17:1-13, Numbers 18:1-32, Numbers 19:1-22; Numbers 28:1-31, Numbers 29:40, Numbers 30:1-16, Numbers 31:1-54; Numbers 35:16-26) was certainly post-exilian. This view he afterwards modified, retracting what he had said about the 'original document' (the Grundschrift), which, in direct contradiction to his former contention, he now declared to have been post-exilian, and, indeed, to form the latest part of the Pentateuch. Graf was followed in much the same direction by Kayser. [134]

We have now, lastly, to sketch the system of Wellhausen, which may most conveniently be studied in his 'History of Israel,' [135] of which only the first volume has as yet appeared; [136] and in the article 'Israel' in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' [137] where it is presented with much greater moderation of language and form than in the 'History.' [138] To avoid the possibility of personal bias in our account of Wellhausen's views, we propose, so far as possible, to follow the sketch of Professor Strack, verifying it by constant reference to Wellhausen's writings. At the outset we are warned not to look in the Pentateuch for anything really Mosaic. Even the Decalogue is not Mosaic; in truth, the song of Deborah, in Judges 5:1-31, may be the oldest historical monument in the Old Testament. [139] It is indeed true that the foundation-document which Wellhausen calls the 'Priest-Code,' [140] assumes the guise of the Mosaic age, seeking, so far as possible, to mask itself (p. 9), and that it seriously pretends to be the legislation of the wilderness, assuming an archaic appearance so as to hide the real date of its composition (p. 10). But the true critic has no difficulty in seeing through this disguise. The 'book of the Covenant' (Exodus 20:1-26; Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-19) is 'Jahvistic.' The Jehovist (JE) — who must not be confounded with the Jahvist (J) — dates from the golden age of kings and prophets, before the Assyrian conquest of Israel or Judah, The substance of the two works, J and E, of which that of the

Jehovist is composed, dates from before the prophets, but each of them has been repeatedly re-edited before the work appeared in the form of J-E, or the Jehovist. We are bidden to remark that J presents more of the real original state of things, and shows less trace of prophetic influence than E (p. 371). The document J breaks off suddenly at the blessing of Balaam, although there may be traces of the work in Numbers 25:1-5, and Deuteronomy 34:1-12 : But when we speak of JE (the Jehovist work), we must remember that, as already stated, the documents do not appear in their original form, but have been edited and re-edited with additions; in fact, they are J3E3. Deuteronomy, or rather the original D, appeared shortly before the eighteenth year of Josiah, when it only contained Deuteronomy 12:1-32, Deuteronomy 13:1-18, Deuteronomy 14:1-29, Deuteronomy 15:1-23, Deuteronomy 16:1-22, Deuteronomy 17:1-20, Deuteronomy 18:1-22, Deuteronomy 19:1-21, Deuteronomy 20:1-20, Deuteronomy 21:1-23, Deuteronomy 22:1-30, Deuteronomy 23:1-25, Deuteronomy 24:1-22, Deuteronomy 25:1-19, Deuteronomy 26:1-19. Then, 'not before the exile,' D underwent a twofold redaction, of which the first prefaced D by Deuteronomy 1:1-46, Deuteronomy 2:1-37, Deuteronomy 3:1-29, Deuteronomy 4:1-49, and tacked to it Deuteronomy 27:1-26, while the next redaction added at the beginning Deuteronomy 5:1-33, Deuteronomy 6:1-25, Deuteronomy 7:1-26, Deuteronomy 8:1-20, Deuteronomy 9:1-29, Deuteronomy 10:1-22, Deuteronomy 11:1-32, and at the end Deuteronomy 28:1-68, Deuteronomy 29:1-29, Deuteronomy 30:1-20. The combination of these two editions and the insertion of the work into JE was probably made at the same time and by the same Deuteronomist as the combination of J and E into JE (p. 370). But this is not nearly all. The section Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46, is said to represent what originally was a separate and distinct code of laws, the writer of which made manifold use of previous documents. It dates from the close of, or after the Exile, and is more cognate to Ezekiel than to the 'Priest-Code,' into which, after due redaction, it was inserted. In fact, the redaction was made by the same hand as the Priest-Code (pp. 388, 391, 396). Putting aside JE and D, we have still to consider the 'Priest-Code' itself, which embraces the legislation of the middle books of the Pentateuch. (Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38, Exodus 31:1-18; Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-43, Exodus 40:1-38; Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38, Leviticus 8:11-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20, Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34, Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:46, Leviticus 27:1-34; Numbers 1:1-54, Numbers 2:1-34, Numbers 3:1-51, Numbers 4:1-49, Numbers 5:1-31, Numbers 6:1-27, Numbers 7:1-89, Numbers 8:1-26, Numbers 9:1-23, Numbers 10:1-36; Numbers 15:1-41, Numbers 16:1-50, Numbers 17:1-13, Numbers 18:1-32, Numbers 19:1-22; Numbers 25:1-18, Numbers 26:1-65, Numbers 27:1-23, Numbers 28:1-31, Numbers 29:1-40, Numbers 30:1-16, Numbers 31:1-54, Numbers 32:1-42, Numbers 33:1-56, Numbers 34:1-29, Numbers 35:1-34, Numbers 36:1-13, with few exceptions.) It is posterior to Ezekiel (his supposed legislation: Ezekiel 40:1-39, Ezekiel 41:1-26, Ezekiel 42:1-20, Ezekiel 43:1-27, Ezekiel 44:1-31, Ezekiel 45:1-25, Ezekiel 46:1-24, Ezekiel 47:1-23, Ezekiel 48:1-35), and must be viewed, not as the product of one person, but 'as a conglomerate, as it were, the outcome of a whole school.' In its language and contents, as well as by direct

references, it is interwoven with an historical document Q (the book of the four — quatour — covenants), to which originally the following had belonged: Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46; Leviticus 9:1-24; Leviticus 10:1-5; Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34; Numbers 1:1-16; Numbers 1:48-54, Numbers 2:1-34, Numbers 3:1-9; Numbers 3:15-51, Numbers 4:1-49, Numbers 5:1-41, Numbers 6:1-27, Numbers 7:1-89, Numbers 8:1-26, Numbers 9:1-23, Numbers 10:1-28; Numbers 16:1-50, Numbers 17:1-13, Numbers 18:1-32; Numbers 25:6-19; Numbers 26:1-65, Numbers 27:1-23, Numbers 32:1-42, Numbers 33:50-56, Numbers 34:1-29, Numbers 35:1-34, Numbers 36:1-13 : The whole Pentateuch — unknown as such till then — was finally published by Ezra in or about the year 444, (Nehemiah 8:1-18, Nehemiah 9:1-38, Nehemiah 10:1-40) although many minor amendments and considerable additions may have been made at a later date. [141] It should, however, be added, that other critics of that school, such as Reuss, Graf, Kayser, hold that only the work P, or even its main part, was published by Ezra, the rest at a later period. But, as Strack rightly objects: in that case it seems impossible to explain how D, which is supposed, in many points, to contradict P, could have remained ‘latent’ for a considerable period after the Exile; and still more, to understand how the Samaritans had accepted the Pentateuch at a period not later than Nehemiah. [142] These objections might evidently be applied and extended to many other points in the system.

[3]. Probably the first impressions derived from the analysis of the system of Wellhausen will be that of its extreme elaborateness and intricacy. Indeed, we fear that with all our care we have failed to make it quite intelligible in its details — the main fact only standing out, that the great body of Mosaic legislation, such as we have been wont to regard it, is declared to be post-exilian. The theory reflects great credit on the industry, and especially the ingenuity of its author; but common sense instinctively rejects it as incredible. A work so elaborately tesselated, into which so many different documents, redacted and re-redacted, have been so cunningly inserted, that one piece breaks off in the middle of a chapter, or even of a verse, to- which a piece from a different document is joined, and so on, till the mind becomes bewildered amidst documents and redactions: such a piece of literary mosaic has never been done, so far as we know, and we refuse to believe that it could have been done. Whatever objections may be raised against what is called the ‘traditional’ view, whatever difficulties may attach to the conciliation of the supposed differences between notices in the historical books and the enactments of the Mosaic code, the theory of Wellhausen is not the thread to lead us out of, rather that to lead us into, the labyrinth. Viewed quite from the outside, it only adds to our difficulties. Indeed, although the distinction between the two great documents known as those of the Elohist and the Jahvist does not depend merely on the distinctive use of the designations Elohim and Jehovah — being supported by other and weighty considerations — it makes us almost doubt what weight should be attached to this fundamental distinction. We put aside this, that the different use of the two Names has been explained as expressing a difference of meaning, each presenting a special relation of God to man — because, to our thinking, this explanation does not fully meet the case. But, supposing the workmanship of the composition and redaction of the Pentateuch to have been so manifold and So cunning as Wellhausen’s theory implies — indeed, in almost any case of multiple composition, unless of the most clumsy kind — it seems almost impossible to believe that one of the later writers or redactors, into whose hands E and J had come, might not sometimes have interchanged, for reasons of his own, the two designations; or else himself have used them

promiscuously, as he leaned towards one or the other document, or the exigencies of the narrative pointed to the use of either one or the other. Hence it seems extremely difficult entirely to rely on the great test, with which the absolute separation of documents originally started. And more than this requires to be taken into account. Ewald had long ago remarked, [143] that the last writer or redactor of the Pentateuch could not have thought that it contained any mere repetitions or contradictory accounts of the same facts. This most reasonable canon gains immensely in application as we recall, on Wellhausen's theory, the elaborateness of workmanship, the immense skill displayed in it, and the multiplicity of composition and redaction in the Pentateuch. Only a very clumsy litterateur would have left so many contradictions and inconsistencies unnoticed, if indeed they existed. And it seems utterly inconceivable — nothing short of impossible — that, in a work which had passed through so many hands, all of them admittedly able, and which, on Wellhausen's supposition, was, at least in great part, designed — shall we not say, falsified — for a definite purpose, so much should have been lift, which was transparently inconsistent with, and opposed to, the purpose in view. And when we go a step further, and recall that the historical books which contain the notices that are said to be in direct contradiction to the Pentateuch legislation, [144] were at least manipulated by those to whom we owe the Pentateuch, it seems still more impossible to believe that these notices could have been considered, or, indeed, could have been, quite inconsistent [145] with the arrangements introduced by the Pentateuch. These writers must have seen some mode of conciliating the seeming discrepancies, or else — and this seems not too bold a statement, on Wellhausen's theory — they would have unhesitatingly removed them.

These considerations cannot, we feel assured, be overlooked when thinking of such a theory as that under review. There are others which must weigh with every serious mind and every critical student. I have previously expressed, with all gravity, my personal feeling that, if the theory in question, with all that it implies, were true, it would seem logically impossible to maintain the claims of Christ as the Old Testament Messiah of Moses and the Prophets, and the Son of David. This is not said with the view of foreclosing inquiry, or influencing its results. On the contrary, I would insist, as strongly as our opponents, that every question should be examined on its own merits, irrespective of preconceived opinions or possible consequences. In fact, I claim for our side equal, if not greater, independence, since those acquainted with the controversy will scarcely deny that much of the reasoning on the other side has been prompted by, and grounded, on à priori conclusions about the possibility of the miraculous, prophetism, the supposed relation between God and Israel, and similar matters. But, while not wishing to prejudice inquiry by the consideration of the consequences involved, these are sufficiently grave to render extreme care and caution imperative. When we read, as the outcome of the theory we are combating, that 'what has gained for the history of Israel pre-eminently the designation of sacred is mostly due to what a later period has painted over the original picture,' [146] we feel that the whole basis of our religion is being seriously shaken. For, if the largest portions of the Old Testament are myths, legends, and forgeries, it would be difficult to retain any belief in the trustworthiness of the rest. And, in truth, this school of criticism has spoken with sufficient plainness on the subject. We are assured that we do not owe to Moses any of the laws or historical notices in the Pentateuch; nor yet, in all probability, to David any of the Psalms, nor to Solomon any of the Proverbs. The historical books are often recast and retouched in the spirit of the later Law, and indeed unreliable. [147] And here I must add that the manipulations of passages in the historical (and in the prophetical) books which

appear inconsistent with the new theory of the date and authorship of the Pentateuch, [148] are sometimes, to say the least, peculiar. It is easy to get rid of such passages by declaring them interpolations or corrupted texts, but solid reasons of an absolute character must be adduced for the assertion, and not merely such à priori assertions as that they are inconsistent with the proposed Pentateuch theory. It were easy in this manner to cut off, so to speak, the head of every opponent so soon as he emerges; but the justice of the procedure has in each case to be vindicated before the tribunal of criticism. And, although the impression made by the accentuation of difficulties and seeming inconsistencies, which are all removed by the new theory, may be that of a brilliant discovery, we distrust it from its inception, not only for the reasons already adduced, and for those which will be stated in the sequel, but for its very brilliancy, and the ease with which everything may be fitted into its Procrustes- bed.

Similar violence is done to much in the prophetic writings and the Psalms by the new school of criticism. [149] More especially is this the case in regard to Ezekiel. A careful investigation, [150] the results of which have not yet been met by the school of Wellhausen, has established that Ezekiel reflects back upon the Pentateuch, and not the reverse. Nor can we even at this stage for a moment hesitate not only to dissent from the theory of Wellhausen with regard to the post-exilian date of the legislation in the Priest-Code, but also to express our conviction that Deuteronomy could not have been composed so late as about the time of its recovery in the reign of King Josiah. To begin with, the statement that the account of its finding (2 Kings 22:8) means that it had not previously existed, but been just written, is merely an à priori gloss upon the text — a suggestio mali, for which the text itself affords no warrant. It might seem almost as reasonable to deny the truth of the whole narrative as that of the part which speaks of the finding of the Law. Moreover, this view of 2 Kings 22:8 is not only inconsistent with what is expressly characterised in 2 Kings 5:13 as the sins of their fathers in not formerly obeying ‘the words of this book,’ but the whole account about the finding of the Book of the Law presupposes a general knowledge and belief in the existence of such a code, which it would be most unreasonable to assume could have been palmed off by Hezekiah as Mosaic, or received by the people as such, if no one had ever heard of the existence of a written Mosaic legislation. Lastly, there are many provisions in the so-called Priest-Code inconsistent with the idea of its post-exilian origin, [151] just as there are notices in Deuteronomy incompatible with the theory of its composition in the time of Josiah. [152] But to these points we shall have to refer at greater length in the sequel.

Let it not be said that the line of argument which we have hitherto followed proceeds, in great measure, upon à priori considerations, which we have contended our opponents must not bring to that criticism of the facts on which their theory rests. For there is great difference between establishing an hypothesis on à priori considerations which determine our criticism of facts, and proving by à priori considerations that such an hypothesis is not only highly improbable but morally impossible. The latter method is lawful; not so the former. If a document, such as a will, were propounded in a court of law, it would not do to argue that its provisions were spurious — introduced by a later falsifier — because they seemed to the advocate incredible, such as that such a person could not have made certain charitable bequests; or, to apply it in the present argument, that miracles, prophetism, direct revelation, and the like, are contrary to our ideas. In both cases direct evidence would be required. And if such direct evidence were offered from the incompatibility of these provisions with certain supposed indications in the document, it would not

do to brand as spurious and falsified other indications in the same document which are in accordance with the provisions invalidated, on the ground that they accord with provisions which, on the hypothesis of the advocate, are spurious. [153] This were vicious reasoning in a circle, and evidence on which a jury would not pronounce against a document. On the other hand, it would be quite lawful for the advocate who defended the document to show, that the opposition to it proceeded on a theory and on grounds intrinsically so improbable and so inconsistent as to involve moral impossibility. But the issues of this controversy are so important that I must emphasise what, from fear of seeming to prejudge the question, may have been too lightly touched. There are, no doubt, many, scholars and general readers, who would earnestly refuse to attach to the theory in question the absolutely destructive sequences which seem to me logically involved in it. But quite irrespective of this, that Christ and the Apostles, in appealing as so often they did to Moses and the Prophets, must, on the theory in question, have been in such grave and fundamental error as cannot be explained on the ground of popular modes of speaking, and seems incompatible with the manner in which the New Testament would have us think of them — there are other and most weighty considerations. If there really is no Mosaic legislation; if the largest, the central, and most important part of what professes to be such, was the invention of the priesthood about the time of Ezra, foisted upon Moses for a specific purpose; if there was not a 'Tabernacle,' in our sense of it, with its specific institutions, nor a central place of worship, nor the great festivals, nor a real Aaronic priesthood; and if the so-called historic books have been coloured and elaborated deuteronomistically, or in that spirit; if they are full of spurious passages and falsifications — as, for example, in the history of Solomon; and if every now and then 'a prophet is put in' (einqelegt wird) who expresses himself in the spirit of Deuteronomy and in the language of Jeremiah and Ezekiel; [154] if the 'anonymous prophets of 1 Kings 20:1-43 have all been afterwards inserted for the purpose of a detailed vaticinium ex eventu, because Israelitish history is never complete without this kind of garnish'; [155] if, in short, what has gained for the history of Israel pre-eminently the designation of sacred is mostly due to what a later period 'has painted over the original picture:' then, there is in plain language only one word to designate all this. That word is fraud. [156] Then, also, on the supposition that, what we had regarded as the sacred source of the most sacred events, was in reality the outcome of fraud, must the Gospel narratives and the preaching of Christ lose their historical basis, and rest in large measure on deception and delusion. For Holy Scripture, as the communication of God to man by man, does indeed contain a distinctively human element, but that element cannot have been one of human imposture. In thus arguing we are not setting up any extravagant theory of Inspiration, nor are we ignoring either the repeated redactions which the Old Testament has undergone, nor yet the fact that scarcely any religious documents of that period can be expected to have come down to us without bearing the marks of redaction. We are simply proceeding on a broad line of demarcation, visible to all men: that between falsehood and truth. Nor is it to the point to argue that pseudonymic literature was so common in antiquity. Even were this the case in regard to what we call the 'canonical' writings, there is clearly a great difference between the assumption of a spurious name and the assertion of spurious facts, such as that to have been given or ordered of God by Moses, which was the invention of the priesthood in the time of Ezra.

'Every literary untruth,' writes one of the distinguished modern historians, 'brought forward for the purpose of deception, was treated in the first centuries of the Church, by all those Fathers whose writings have come down to us, as an abominable sin.' The Apocrypha and the so-called

Pseudepigraphic Writings form no part of the Canon, and therefore-cannot be quoted as instances in point. Such books in the Old Testament as we sometimes, though erroneously, associate with certain names, will, on examination, be found not strictly to claim such precise authorship. Besides, as already stated, the Old Testament Canon has undergone repeated investigation and discussion. [157] And we know sufficient of the discussions in those early Jewish assemblies which fixed the Old Testament Canon, to assure us, that a book would not have been inserted which was known to be false in its title — still less, one that was fraudulent in its object. And these assemblies — at]least the earlier of them — sat close on, if not in the very time, that the fraud is supposed to have been published! Or, to go back a step, and to Old Testament times, how can we reconcile the introduction of such a fraud as the 'invention' of the Book of Deuteronomy in the time of Josiah with the denunciations of his contemporary Jeremiah, who inveighs in such stern language against the Prophets that prophesied lies in God's Name, when He had not sent them, neither had commanded them, nor spoken unto them, but they prophesied a false vision, a thing of nought, the deceit of their own hearts, and so caused the people to err? (Jeremiah 14:14; Jeremiah 23:16; Jeremiah 23:31-32)

We have yet another consideration to urge before closing this preliminary part of our inquiry. If we were to accept the views of the school of criticism to which we have referred, much more than what has already been stated would seem logically to follow. When we have relegated the so-called Levitical legislation to the time of Ezra, and resolved all that is really distinctive in the Biblical history of Israel into legends and myths, a blank remains which must be filled up. What was the history of Israel, and what their religious institutions? Take away all the sacred element, and Israel appears as only a horde of barbarians and of slaves, lately emancipated, and not distinguishable from the Canaanites around. In such case their religion was really the old indigenous nature-worship (as they call it 'naturwüchsig'), in which Jahveh is really Moloch and Baal; sacrifices, often those of human beings; and where all the abominations of the races in Palestine have their place. In drawing such sequences we are not making inferences of our own. We do not, indeed, impute them to Wellhausen, although he designates the Ark as 'an idol;' [158] but the sequences mentioned have been made; they are stated in the most pronounced manner; and they have, in consequence of the new theory, become present and pressing questions, [159] which are being discussed as 'the chief problems of ancient Israelitic religious history.' [160] Moreover, they really are the logical sequences of the new treatment of Jewish history, although they had been propounded before that theory was broached. Such statements as those of Kuenen, [161] that the religion of Israel was only one of the old religions — neither more nor less; and that Judaism and Christianity belong, indeed, to the principal religions, but that between them and all others there is not any specific difference — point out the direction which has been followed. And such titles of books as 'The Fire and Blood Service of the Ancient Hebrews, the ancestral, legal, and orthodox Worship of the Nation,' [162] 'The Human Sacrifices of the Ancient Hebrews,' [163] Mythology and Revelation.' [164] 'Mythology among the Hebrews' [165] — or the attempt to show that the original sanctuary of Mecca was founded by emigrants from the tribe of Simeon in the time of David, and that the religion there enacted was that of Abraham [166] point out the manner in which this direction has been followed.

I have mentioned the titles of these books, of which many are not recent, because they most readily present to the general reader the character of the views which, as before stated, are

undoubtedly at present among the burning questions in connection with the new theory of the history and religion of ancient Israel. It is distinctly asserted, that 'the worship of Moloch was that of Abraham, Moses, Samuel, and David,' and that 'the idolatry inveighed against was the primeval national religion of Israel.' One of the latest writers of the Wellhausen school, Stade, [167] seems even to doubt (although in this against Wellhausen), whether there had ever been any Hebrew clan in Egypt, while Jahveh is represented as a national deity by the side of other gods, and much in the worship and religious life of the ancient Hebrews as kindred to that in the cognate nations. I have stated the case briefly, because, without affectation, it is painful to state it at all. The curious reader must be referred to the works of Kuenen, Stade, and others, to learn how such views are carried out, by different writers to different lengths, [168] and by what strange Scriptural references they are supported. But to what extremes a perverted ingenuity may lead a critic, will appear from the following instance. There is not a name among modern scholars which deservedly stands higher, as regards Semitic learning and literature, than that of Paul de Lagarde. Yet this is one of the conclusions propounded, and these are the grounds on which it has been arrived at, by perhaps the greatest living Semitic scholar. [169] Deriving the term Levite from the verb lavah, to cleave to another, to accompany him, Lagarde refers to Isaiah 14:1; Isaiah 56:3, in both of which this verb (rendered in the A. V. 'joined to') is connected with strangers.' From this he infers that the Levites were those who, according to Exodus 12:38 (Numbers 11:4?), had 'joined' themselves to Israel on their exodus from Egypt — the 'mixed multitude,' which Lagarde regards as Egyptians. The latter notice he accepts as historical, on the ground that otherwise the Jews, the most vainglorious of men and conceited of nations, would not have admitted that theirs was not pure 'blue blood.' On the other hand, he pronounces the account in Exodus 2:1-10, which gives the Israelitish genealogy of Moses, as not worthy of more serious notice than the fable of the Persians that Alexander the Great was the son of Darius. And Lagarde further argues that, regarding Moses not as an Israelite, but as an Egyptian, we can understand how he sought and found support from the Levites, his Egyptian compatriots [why not, if they were his Israelitish tribesmen?]; how the Levites, as the better educated Egyptians, could undertake the intellectual training of the Israelites [where is this stated?]; why the Levites did not appear in the promised land as a real tribe [as if no other reasons had been given for their scattering]; while, lastly, it also explained the manner in which the exodus was referred to in Egyptian documents. And as in ancient times the Ark of the Covenant had marched before the Israelites, those who 'accompanied' it were the Levites. [170]

I have reproduced in detail an hypothesis so manifestly untenable, and supported by such flimsy reasoning, because the great name of Lagarde attaches to it, and because it affords a convenient example, how sweeping, and yet how unsatisfactory, in many instances, is that criticism which is destructive of the history and sacred legislation of the Old Testament. As an almost parallel instance of critical violence we might refer to Wellhausen's treatment of the history of Solomon in 1 Kings 11:1-13. [171] But in view of the issue before us in this great controversy, supported by such arguments, a certain degree of warmth of language may be excused on the part of those who hold and cherish the truth of the Old Testament. Much more will have to be done, before they shall have shaken from their hinges those 'everlasting doors' by which Christ the King of Glory has entered in. As we think of the blessings of life with which His coming has enriched the barrenness of our earth, or of the spring of hope with which it has gladdened the winter of our hearts, we tremble as we realise what the hand of science, falsely so called, might have taken from us. For if, indeed, they were words, not of Divine truth, but of delusion or of deceit, when, on that Sabbath

evening walk to Emmaus, ‘beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself,’ then may we fold up within our hearts that pang of bitterest disappointment: ‘But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel.’ But, thank God, it is not so. As with a thousand chimes from heaven, the voices of the Law and Prophets ring it out into all the world on this Advent Sunday: [172] Ring out the old, Ring in the new — as on a thousand altars we worship the mystery of the Incarnation, and ten thousand hearts are filled with the joyous assurance that their sins are forgiven. For Christ has come: the reality of all types, the fulfilment of all promises, the Son of David, the Saviour of the world.

‘For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace!’

01.08. Lecture 8.

Lecture 8.

Some Further Considerations Regarding the Composition and Date of the Pentateuch. But neither so did their witness agree together. — Mark 14:59.

IT will, I trust, not be deemed an entirely unwarrantable application of these words, when we recall them in connection with the great controversy about the date and authorship of the Mosaic legislation. For if the witness of critics on the other side could be established, no reasonable appeal for the Messiahship of Jesus could be made to Divine prophecy, in a book where even human history was so mendacious, and where the pretensions as to the origin of so-called Divine institutions and laws were so fraudulent. At most — and we hesitate as we express it — we would have to apologise for Jesus and His Apostles as occupying a lower critical standpoint. But it would seem a strange postulate to regard Him as the Christ, the Son of God, or His Apostles as divinely inspired. And yet this inference would be carried too far, if it were supposed necessarily to imply what may be called the old traditional standpoint, either as regards inspiration or the authorship and composition of the Pentateuch, with which alone we are here concerned. The traditional view errs by excess perhaps as much, though not with such fatal consequences, as the new by deficiency. As regards the mode of Divine communication in the Holy Scriptures, or, to narrow it: objectively, revelation; subjectively, inspiration — the human element must be taken as fully into account as the Divine. And specifically, in reference to the Pentateuch — or rather, the Hexateuch — it is not requisite, nor in any way implied, that it represents one homogeneous work. As the history of our Lord is derived from four different Gospel-sources, which, in turn, look back upon the universally accredited tradition of the Church and on special sources of information, and as the Gospels view the same Divine Life from different standpoints, and mutually supplement each other — so may the Pentateuch consist of several original documents or sources, welded together by one or more redactors. And there may even be emendations and additions — glosses, if you like to call them so [173] — by redactors, revisers, or final editors. This is simply the historical aspect of the Book as it presently exists, and with which criticism has to busy itself. It concerns the human element in it, but is in no wise inconsistent with, nor yet invalidates, the higher and Divine element in revelation and inspiration. “But what we have to insist upon is the general truthfulness and reliableness of the Book, alike as regards its history and legislation: that it is, what it professes, an authentic record of the history of Israel, and a trustworthy account of what was really the Mosaic legislation. This is to draw a sufficiently broad line of demarcation, and to take up a sufficiently intelligible position, with which, I believe, all the facts of the case will be found to accord. In order better to understand this, it is necessary to transport ourselves, more fully than is generally done, not only into Mosaic times, but into those which followed the occupation of Canaan by the Israelites. Let us first state the general position taken up by us in this argument. It is held, that the legislation of the Pentateuch is of mosaic authorship and of Divine authority; [174] that the settlement of Israel in the land was followed by a period of religious decay and decadence, which called for the interposition of the Prophets, who pointed back to the Law, and explained and

applied its deeper spiritual meaning; that this decadence continued, with brief interruptions, throughout the period of the Kings, thus further calling for the continued activity of the Prophets, and making it intelligible how, in the utter breakdown of the Law with its provisions, they should have pointed forward to another Law to be written in the heart; and that, in the decadence of Israel and its conformity to heathenism, instead of the transformation of heathenism into a kingdom of God, through the chosen race, the Prophets, should have set before them the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth as the great hope of Israel and of the world. But probably this is to state the case in too general terms. We are apt, unconsciously to ourselves, to transport our modern and Western ideas into the premisses from which our conclusions as to the earlier history of Israel are drawn. Let us remember that the Israelites, at the time of their entrance into Canaan, were the wilderness- generation, a purely nomadic race, with all of intellectual disadvantage — indeed, infancy — which this implies. During their years of wandering they had not been brought into fructifying contact with any of the cultured nations of antiquity. What they had inherited from their fathers was, morally, mostly of the evil gotten in Egypt. The intellectual culture derived from them may, indeed, have become more generally spread in that second generation, to which the results of that culture, and the general ideas awakened by it, would come as an heirloom. But, from the nomadic habits of the people and the general circumstances of the sojourn in the wilderness, this inherited culture would decrease in intensity, even if it increased in extent. And this decline, once begun, would be furthered, rather than hindered, by the close contiguity of the mass of the people at their halting-places, by the briefness of their sojourn at each of them, and by all the circumstances attending an Eastern progress from one station to another. Morally viewed, we have to deal with a people semi-barbarous, and, therefore, prone to all superstition and excess, whose newly re- awakened religion had been tainted by Egyptian idolatry, and deteriorated by the educational influence of the evil example of their fathers and mothers. We have before us an Eastern nation, sensuous and sensual by nature, lately emancipated, with declining culture, and which, as we have abundant evidence, is ready at the first temptation to lapse into gross idolatry, and to pass into the most unbridled licentiousness, which, in turn, formed part of that idolatry which was essentially a nature-worship. Licentious nature-worship was — alike physically, mentally, and morally — the natural religion of the races inhabiting those lands. When we realise these various elements, we feel what absolutely Divine truth and power must have been about the religion of the Pentateuch — the direct Divine element of Revelation in it — -to make of such a people and in such circumstances what, after all, Israel was; still more, what Israel might have become, and what, even in its miserable failure, it has become to mankind at large. The evidential force here is analogous to that from the influence of the Gospel on the Jewish and heathen world, — perhaps even stronger. And the production of such moral effects seems necessarily to imply direct Divine guidance, such as appears in what are called the miraculous portions of Israel's earlier history. Here also the Divine wisdom — if, consistently with reverence, the expression may be employed — appears in the special religious institutions of Israel. Let it be remembered that the special legislative, religious (and even political) institutions of the Pentateuch bear reference to what was then future, rather than to what was then present — to the settled, rather than the migratory, state of the people. Many — I had almost said, most — of these institutions had no place in the wilderness. This holds specially true in regard to what constitutes the central and really all-determining institution of the Mosaic religious legislation: sacrificial worship. On its existence

depend in great measure the appointment of one exclusive central place of worship, the institutions connected with the priesthood, as well as those about the great annual festivals. Take away sacrifices, and most of the distinctive peculiarities attaching to these three institutions cease; suspend them even partially, and the other three great institutions will also be partially suspended, or require extraneous supplementation, such as we find it in the historical books. Indeed, the religious institutions of the Pentateuch might be likened to the wood laid in order on the altar, and the actual observance of the Pentateuch sacrifices as the fire — significantly sent from heaven at the consecration of the Temple — which is to set the whole in flame. But there is not any point which, to my mind, is better established, than that sacrifices were not offered in connection with the Tabernacle durig the pilgrimage in the wilderness. [175] The only sacrifices mentioned in connection with the Tabernacle are those brought at its consecration and at that of the priesthood, and the offering of incense. It requires little consideration to understand that it could not have been otherwise. Hence the name, which the Tabernacle bears, is not ‘Tabernacle of sacrifices,’ although these were really to form the central part of its worship; but its common designation is ‘Tabernacle of Meeting’ (Ohel Moed [176]) — that is, between God and Israel, the place where God would meet with His people, as expressly stated in Exodus 25:22; Exodus 29:42-43; Exodus 30:6; Exodus 30:36; Numbers 7:89; Numbers 17:4. To this designation the other ‘Tabernacle of Witness,’ or ‘Testimony’ (as in Numbers 9:15; Numbers 17:8; Numbers 18:2) is subsidiary, although parallel. It follows that, during the wilderness period, the sacrificial worship — although existing initially (in the consecration services), and institutionally (in the altar of the Tabernacle and throughout the legislation), and also symbolically and by anticipation present (in the burnt incense) — would not stand out before the people as a real, de facto, service; and that, in the absence of it, this bond, which held together all the other fundamental institutions, would likewise be loosened. For without such sacrifices the idea of one exclusive sanctuary could scarcely have been truly carried out (indeed, it would have no present real meaning), nor yet that of one priesthood, nor yet that of great central festivals. Thus we have, even at this stage of our inquiry, to accentuate, in most emphatic language, that, when the Israelites took possession of the land, they were unaccustomed to a sacrificial worship in the great central sanctuary. They did not bring this great idea with them into the land, as an actual reality — and this, as we remember, must have involved the loosening of all the ideas connected with the other great institutions, organically connected with sacrifices. Even the manner in which this central sanctuary was spoken of, might further contribute to loosen the hold which the idea itself might have had upon the people from its Divine institution, and from the actual existence among them of the Tabernacle, constructed, consecrated, and divinely honoured as it was. Such general references as: ‘in all places where I record My Name, I will come unto Thee;’ [177] and, ‘the place which the Lord your God shall choose,’ so frequent in Deuteronomy, [178] might, especially in the circumstances after the conquest of Canaan, rather tend to decentralise the idea of the Sanctuary. For, while directing that sacrifice should be offered only in the place which God had selected, it was not stated that this would to all time be one and the same place. [179] As we recall that this non-observance of sacrifices in the regular services of the Tabernacle during the wilderness period was, unquestionably, a necessity imposed by the circumstances, we feel the more deeply the wisdom by which, notwithstanding the present impossibility of realisation, the idea of sacrificial worship in the sanctuary was fixed in the popular mind as the central fact in their religious institutions. And this, together with what has already been stated about the condition of the new generation in Israel

which entered into Canaan, will show the need of a repetition of the Law in Deuteronomy — but now, with modifications and special adaptation to the new circumstances of territorial settlement. And realising the whole condition of things on the entrance into Canaan, we see the absolute value of the two great sacraments of the Old Testament: circumcision and the Sabbath (with their kindred domestic institutions of tithing, as God-consecration of property, the sabbatic year, &c.). These fixed the permanent landmarks of Israel in the period of unsettledness and confusion which followed — to some extent, necessarily — after the death of Moses.

What has been stated in regard to the intellectual and moral condition of the people, and the nonexistence of regular sacrificial worship in the Tabernacle, must now be applied to the actual state of things in the period following. In general we must repeat, that the religious institutions of Israel were adapted not to what Israel then was, but rather to what Israel was intended to become. If Israel had developed in the right direction, if it had come up to its institutions, then — but only then — would these institutions have been possible, and have become a practical reality. But it will not be denied that, so far from rising to them, the next period witnessed a great and growing religious decline among the people.

It is not difficult to transport ourselves into the circumstances of the time. The first necessity of Israel was to fight, so to speak, for existence. They had to obtain possession of the land; and they could only achieve this by continual warfare. For they were not confronted by merely one, nor even by a few hostile nations. The land was divided among a large number of independent clans, each under its own king. They might, at least in part, combine against Israel, but for all practical purposes they were separate nations. A victory might be decisive in one locality; but an advance of only a few miles would bring Israel into new territory where the whole contest had once more to be gone through. Accordingly, this period must have been one of constant preoccupation, constant movement, and constant contact with new elements. And the absolute removal of the heathen elements from the land would have been most difficult — well nigh impossible, since they would spring up behind the Israelites on leaving a district, and before them as they advanced into another territory. It was certainly not a period when new institutions, which had never before been actually carried into practice, could be established. And to this must be added the gradual spiritual decline of the people, and the influence upon them of the surroundings of that heathenism, towards which, as we have seen, they were so predisposed — intellectually, sensuously, and sensually. And here we can in some measure realise the religious importance and the necessity of such a religious ceremony in the centre of the land as the renewal of the covenant on Ebal and Gerizim. (Joshua 8:30-35) We have seen that the circumstance that the great religious institutions of Israel were not immediately introduced in practice, must have tended to weaken their hold upon the people, to whom they were as yet rather a theory than a reality. Indeed, it would render their future establishment, at least, in their integrity and purity, increasingly improbable. This, even irrespective of the ever growing religious decay already referred to. Every month that passed, and every additional contact with the heathen world, would render the absolute prevalence of the Mosaic restitutions practically more difficult, or rather render it increasingly likely that these institutions would appear tinged and modified by the circumstances around. And when the tribes were finally settled, they presented the appearance of so many separate republics, not even joined together into a Confederation, but consisting of as many independent States. There was not any central authority nor bond. Everywhere we mark tribal jealousies and hostilities. Foreign invasions

and wars specially affected individual tribes, and only on rare occasions did a sense of common danger unite even a few of them to a common resistance. The ‘judges’ were only of districts, not of the whole land. Such a state of things could not contribute to the establishment of a central Sanctuary, with exclusive sacrificial worship, one universal priesthood, and the observance of great national festivals in the Sanctuary. It must have tended in quite the opposite direction, and been a mighty factor in preventing the establishment of the Mosaic religious legislation. Even the strict law of inheritance, which confined the tribal lands to members of the tribe, must, in the circumstances, have helped this disintegration of the nation, and, with it, increased the difficulty of central religious institutions. The other civil institutions of the Mosaic code, such as the rule of local authorities — elders, and heads of families and clans — would tend in the same direction. And in this growing religious disintegration, to which so many elements were constantly contributing, we perceive the importance — indeed, the necessity — of the succession of unnamed prophets, to whom reference is made in the historical books, and who were the predecessors of the great prophets of later times, in truth, it seems almost impossible that, without Divine interposition, even the remembrance of Mosaic institutions could have been preserved in Israel. And it did continue, although these institutions now appeared in forms increasingly tinged by surrounding circumstances, while Israel settled to still lower and lower depths. Even if we were to concede to our opponents that the Canaanitish term for the national Deity, Baal, was at that period applied to Jehovah, that un-Jewish rites mingled in the worship of Israel, and un-Jewish notions appeared in the popular expression of religion, what is this but to own the existence of those influences for which we have accounted on historic grounds? For it will not be denied that these Canaanitish elements did not exist alone, nor even as primary and prevailing, but that by their side there was what we may call Jehovahism as the leading principle — only tinged and tainted, on some occasions even overgrown, by these foreign elements. Indeed, to contend for more than this would be to prove too much, since, according to our opponents, the historical books, which contain all these notices, have undergone a revision which would not have left in them an entirely heathen presentation of the religious state of Israel. And we find a precisely parallel case in the history of the Christian Church, which at one period was similarly tainted and overgrown by heathen elements. Without entering into details, it is sufficiently known that many purely heathen practices were, so to speak, Christianised, and that many notions of pagan origin mingled with the religious belief and observances of the Church in early ages. Their presence would not lead us to infer that the idea of the Christianisation of certain tribes and countries was an after-invention, but rather that in certain circumstances, and at a certain stage of civilisation and religious condition, the retention or introduction of foreign elements by the side of the purer teaching of Christianity was possible, and even natural, however incongruous the two may seem. But we have to go further. It is evident that tribal separation, tribal jealousies, and local interests would contribute to the decentralisation of the Sanctuary during the period before David — and, similarly, also after the secession of the ten tribes, and the consequent rivalry and hostility of the two kingdoms. We can only repeat that all this would not have happened, if Israel had lived up to its institutions, which, in a sense, were intended to form and mould the people into a political as well as religious unity, for the higher purposes of the Theocracy, in which politics and religion were intended to coincide. But Israel did not rise to the level of its institutions; rather brought them down to its own ever lowering standpoint, although there were individuals, let us hope not a few, who aimed after the higher conformity. Besides these tribal, even communal, separations and jealousies, we have to

remember, that intercourse between different parts of the country was more rare and difficult than we can well imagine. As we infer from many notices in the historical books, a journey of a few miles into a neighbouring tribe, still more into a comparatively remote part of the country, was contemplated, and prepared for. with the same solemnity, as half a century ago a removal to one of our most distant colonies, or a continental tour. When in all these circumstances we try to realise the religious condition of the tribesmen before David, the picture may seem strange to modern eyes, but it will be true to the historical notices in the books of Joshua, of the Judges, and of Samuel. We think of the people as arranged in quite separated little communities, between which the intercourse was both rare and difficult, while tribal rivalries and jealousies converted separation into isolation. In each of these little communities, or even districts, a sparse and stationary population tilled the soil. They had been there for generations, and they inherited the traditions, the prejudices, the superstitions, the habits of their forefathers — often without knowing their origin; still more frequently, without perceiving or even suspecting their real meaning, or their possible inconsistency with their ancestral religious principles and ordinances, which in measure were to them a dim sacred tradition. In each district the tone for good Or for evil was given by the ‘great’ people, who were well-to-do farmers or sheepmasters on their own land, without much money, but also with few and simple wants, which their own resources or those of the district could supply. There were good and earnest, and there were corrupt and idolatrous ‘great’ men and women; simple, primitive, almost idyllic districts, like Bethlehem in the Book of Ruth; and corrupt, debauched places like the Gibeah of Benjamin, of Judges 19:1-30 and Judges 20:1-48. The departure of a member of the community, or the chance arrival of a stranger, was a great event. Yet, despite this isolation and separation, they were also conscious of the higher, though too often ideal unity of Israel; and so far under the influence of its legislation, that on great political emergencies all Israel gathered at the Central Sanctuary — or sometimes, to a well- known chieftain; and that the more earnest in Israel, like the parents of Samuel, appeared annually before the Lord, probably at the Feast of Passover. Even these are theocratic institutions which look back upon the Mosaic legislation. But far more than in any single notice or reference does this connection with theocratic institutions, and hence with the Mosaic legislation — the two being inseparably connected, even on the theory of our opponents — impress itself on the mind by the tout ensemble presented in the historic books. It is not one or another fact, but everything there, which seems to look back on the theocratic past. We instinctively feel that, whether for good or evil, everything is viewed in connection with it. Every personality, every speech, every action, every event is presented from the standpoint of accord with, or opposition to, the theocratic past. The books as a whole breathe the spirit of the Mosaic history and legislation, and lean upon it; and, surely, it is a sound canon that individual passages, even though seemingly difficult, must be interpreted by the spirit of the whole book. And as we enter yet more fully into the circumstances of the time and people, the religious condition of these communities, and of the families composing them, stands out more distinctly in our view. We can perceive how the great Central Sanctuary, with the institutions depending upon it, was, to most men, rather an ideal than a practical reality. And yet the two sacraments of circumcision and the Sabbath kept it ever before them, and became a permanent and unsurmountable wall of separation from that heathen world which was in such close proximity. And here we perceive the immense importance of the Mosaic arrangement, by which the Levites were scattered throughout the country, while, at the same time, they had, or might have had, in their Levite- and priest-cities, centres which ought to have kept

alive the spirit and traditions of their order. Even this, that the Levites were, according to the ancient arrangement, as a tribe and hereditarily, to be dependent for support on their religion, would tend to keep the old faith alive. In every district or community the Levite was the living impersonation of it in the sight of all men. He con- nected in the present the past with the future. Thus we find him hired as a kind of domestic chaplain in a wealthy, religious, or superstitious household; while, on occasions, he emerges into view in connection with some event or undertaking. He belongs to all Israel, and all Israel — not his tribesmen — must take care of him, or avenge his wrongs. He does not often appear, nor yet prominently, because in reality no prominence belongs to him. No doubt some of his distinctive functions were occasionally usurped by others, without their thinking of usurpation in what they did. All this is quite natural. A sacrifice might be killed by any one: it was the sprinkling of the blood on the great altar of the Tabernacle, which was the distinctively priestly function. Family or communal feasts would naturally be sacrificial; and even if it were proved that these sacrifices were offered by laymen, there would not necessarily have been an infraction of the old order; or if there was — such a generalising of the old order would not surprise us, in the peculiar circumstances of the people, the land, and the Central Sanctuary, as we have described them; far less would it prove the theocratic order and Mosaic legislation to have never existed. And if it be still urged that the Mosaic priesthood ought to have occupied a more distinctive place in history, we have only to picture to ourselves the country Aaronite or Levite, as he was; for, in the circumstances, the distinction between the two would naturally be, to a great extent, effaced. He is poor, expropriated, alone without possessions (unless through marriage) in a community of more or less well-to-do peasant-proprietors, mainly dependent for support on hospitality and charity. He is not even like the friar in an Italian or Spanish village, but rather like the Greek ‘pope’ in a remote district of Roumania or of one of the Turkish provinces; and in the history of those countries the village ‘pope’ would not form a distinguished or prominent figure. And yet the ‘pope’ has great advantages. True, he has not any training or education to speak of, but at least there is a religious literature, not quite inaccessible to him. In any case, he has the service-books and the lectionaries of his Church. But, from the circumstances previously described, we do not wonder at what seems implied in 2 Chronicles 17:9, that, in the great reformatory movement under Jehoshaphat, the priests and Levites, deputed to traverse the country with the princes, had to take with them from Jerusalem the book of the Law. This seems to convey that, even in the more religious southern kingdom of Judah, and in the time of Jehoshaphat, this primal religious document was only rarely found in country districts. In other words, we have a state of general ignorance and absence of religious literature, except in the capital. But why this piece of gratuitous information in the Book of Chronicles, if there was no Mosaic Law in existence, since the compilers of Chronicles are supposed, at least, to have belonged to the same school which produced the Priest-Code? [180] People do not generally go out of their way gratuitously to inform us, that a work, which has been palmed off as the original and fundamental constitution of their religion, was unknown in the country districts so long as five hundred years ago. And the Priests and Levites were at still further disadvantage in the country-districts, since neither services nor places of worship were provided for them. We can scarcely wonder that the ancient sacred places, ‘the heights,’ were reconsecrated as centres of communal worship. One has said that these ‘heights’ took the place of the synagogues of a later period, and that they stood related to the Central Sanctuary as the synagogues to the Temple. This is an exceedingly practical mode of putting it; and we again recall that in ancient times former

heathen temples and ceremonies were similarly Christianised. Nor yet can we wonder at the non-observance of the great festivals, far less infer from it that they had not been Mosaically instituted. [181] We have already seen that their observance was dependent on universal resort to a great Central Sanctuary. And when it was established, and the people finally settled, these feasts had already fallen into desuetude. As regards the Feast of Tabernacles, some indication of it may possibly be traced in Judges 21:19. And this also would be significant. But from Judges 21:21 the feast seems to have been chiefly of a local character, and its observances remind us more of the later festivities on the 15th of Ab (Taan. 4:8) than of the Biblical festival. [182] Naturally, it could only have been celebrated after the entrance into Canaan, when, according to an historical notice, it seems to have been observed in the days of Joshua the son of Nun. (Nehemiah 8:17) After this, we find it again celebrated by Solomon. (2 Chronicles 7:8-10; comp. 2 Kings 8:65, 66) Subsequently, the times of religious reformation and unification were too brief and troubled, the intrusion of foreign religious elements of too long standing and too general, and the people as a whole in too great measure religiously denationalised, to admit of so radical a change, as would have been implied in a national celebration of that feast. Indeed, we might almost say that the Feast of Tabernacles would, in the then state of the people, have been a moral anachronism.

It was otherwise with the Feast of Passover, with which we may reasonably suppose that of Weeks to have been connected. Manifestly, this would be the first and most natural to be re-introduced. Accordingly we find notices of it, not only in the time of Joshua, although, as we mark, before the possession of the land, (Joshua 5:11) but in that of King Hezekiah, (2 Chronicles 30:21) and of King Josiah. (2 Chronicles 35:18-19; 2 Kings 23:21-22) Several points strike us as peculiar in these last notices — more especially this, that they seem to imply a kind of observance of these feasts in the days of the Judges, specifically in those of Samuel, (2 Chronicles 35:18) as well as in the days of the kings of Judah and of Israel. Another point seems even more noteworthy. In 2 Chronicles 30:21 the Passover under Hezekiah is recorded, although, significantly, only on the part of those children of Israel that were in Jerusalem, (2 Chronicles 30:21; comp. 2 Chronicles 7:1-22, 2 Chronicles 8:1-15, 2 Chronicles 9:1-31, 1 Chronicles 10:1-19, 2 Corinthians 11:1-23) consisting (according to verse 25) of worshippers from Judah, Priests and Levites, a number of persons from the northern kingdom, and proselytes (‘strangers’ both out of Judah and Israel). [183] Yet, a few chapters afterwards, the same Book of Chronicles, in recording the Passover under Josiah, has it, that no Passover like it had been kept since the days of Samuel the Prophet. (2 Chronicles 35:18) Similarly, while in Nehemiah 8:17 the Feast of Tabernacles then celebrated is said to have been unique — at least in its mode of observation — since the days of Joshua, 2 Chronicles 7:8; 2 Chronicles 7:10, which, even according to our opponents, is kindred to Nehemiah, records the celebration of this seven-days’ feast with extraordinary pomp in the time of Solomon. From every point of view, these seemingly conflicting statements appear at first sight incomprehensible. On the theory of our opponents as to the date and character of these books, it seems inexplicable that such inconsistent statements should have been inserted, or left in the text, and that the writers should have gratuitously gone back a thousand years to the time of Joshua for the Feast of Tabernacles, and to the time of Samuel for that of the Passover, when in the one case they might have mentioned the Solomonic observance, and in the other that of Hezekiah, and when, on the theory under review of the introduction of these observances, it would have been their manifest interest to make the gap as small as possible. [184] To these difficulties we can, on

our view of the case, offer what seems to us a sufficient and a natural solution. The passages in question do not affirm that there had not been any celebration of the Passover between Josiah and Samuel, nor of the Feast of Tabernacles between Nehemiah and Joshua, but that there had not been any of the same kind since those days. We are allowed to infer that there may have been others — less national or less truly Mosaic; we may even speculate, that while, and when, there was a Central Sanctuary, a certain number of the people may have been wont to attend them, even though the observances may have become more local or undergone modification, perhaps owing to the very circumstance that they were no longer kept as general national festivals. With this agrees, not only the notice about the annual attendance at Shiloh of Samuel's parents, (1 Samuel 1:3) but also the institution by Jeroboam in the northern kingdom of festivals rival to the great annual Mosaic feasts. (1 Kings 12:27; 1 Kings 12:33) This, indeed, is only expressly affirmed in regard to the Feast of Tabernacles, which Jeroboam transferred from the seventh to the eighth month. But this notice is evidently connected with the account of the dedication of the house of high places, which Jeroboam combined with his spurious Feast of Tabernacles, no doubt, in imitation of what Solomon had done on a similar occasion. Manifestly, if there had not been a more or less common observance of that feast in Judah, Jeroboam would not have dreaded the resort of his subjects to the Temple, nor instituted a rival feast. Moreover, the expression used at the setting up of the two calves: 'Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,' seems to point to the observance of a kind of Passover feast — an institution which is not likely to have been wholly neglected, when a substitute was sought for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Without entering into particulars, I think I am warranted in saying that the historical notices about the festivals are exactly as might have been expected in the circumstances of the land and people: And our reasoning regarding the scanty mention of the great national festivals seems supported by the frequent references to domestic and communal celebrations, such as the observance of Sabbaths and New Moons, which evidently seems to have been general, because it did not involve the necessity of any central national attendance. And the general conclusion which we derive from a review of the actual state of matters in Israel is to the effect that, so far from the notices in the historical books being inconsistent with a previous Mosaic legislation, they are not only compatible with it, but even presuppose its existence, and that, without such previous religious institutions, the principal events and the leading personages in Jewish history — not only a Boaz, a Samuel, or a David, but even a Gideon, a Saul, or a Joab — would be unintelligible. On the other hand, the theory of our opponents implies premisses which, on consideration, it will be found difficult to accept. Let us still bear in mind that Israel came out of Egypt, a land most advanced in literature, and where religious institutions were settled and established. It seems scarcely credible, on purely historical grounds, that their leaders should not have attempted to introduce something of the same kind in Israel — some religious legislation and order; the more so, as this would constitute a bond of national union, and a distinctive badge of their newly-acquired nationality, which would effectually separate them from that heathen world, active hostility to which was the primary condition of their existence. To this antecedent likelihood of a Mosaic legislation and religious order, we have to add other considerations in the same direction. Can we believe that Israel was settled for centuries in their land; had developed from federal to monarchical institutions, and been brought into contact with so many neighbouring races, and yet that up to their 'golden age' they had possessed only a rudimentary code of religious legislation;

that it then suddenly appeared developed at the period of commencing decay, while its greater part was constructed during the banishment of Israel, when the people were so scattered that even the remembrance of the location of the Ten Tribes was lost? Assuredly, that does not seem the fitting moment for a great part of the religious institutions to have been invented, or even formulated, nor for the history of the nation to have been recast, and most of its religious poetry composed. We are asked to believe that so many of the priestly and Temple arrangements, which had not existed while Israel was in their own land, and worshipped in their Temple, originated when Israel was scattered, and had neither centre of religious unity nor of worship; further, that the comparatively small minority which returned to Palestine, and to whose lamentable condition the books of Ezra and Nehemiah bear abundant witness, could impose a fictitious and, in many respects, new, Mosaic law on the great majority of the people — and they the more educated, who, as we know, remained behind in the lands of the dispersion; and, lastly, that this new law, which they introduced, contained, as we shall show, so much that was impossible in the new circumstances of the land and people, while it omitted reference to much that we would have expected in a legislation originating in those times. At the risk of repetition, I must further urge one part of this argument, leaving the other for the sequel. Let it be kept in view, that it was only a small and comparatively uninfluential minority which returned with Ezra and Nehemiah. The rest remained behind, and rapidly spread over the face of the world. Yet the legislation, supposed to have been then introduced, made no provision for, took not the slightest notice of, the wants of the great majority, not even to the provision of synagogues, which we know to have been among the first requirements of the ‘dispersed’ — nay, even of those who returned to Palestine. Surely, this seems so strange as to be almost incredible. In times which called for the widest comprehension, they concocted the narrowest conceivable legislation, and that, in the interest of the small number of priests who returned to Palestine; and they not only succeeded in introducing it as the Mosaic Law, but in imposing it upon the educated majority, without eliciting a single contradiction, or raising a single question as to its authenticity — until the ingenuity of critics more than two thousand years later discovered the forgery I Was there not a single individual, among those outside the circle where this fraud was perpetrated, wise enough to discover, or honest enough to expose it — no one, priest or layman, of those who did not return to Palestine? And what had all this time become of JE, or of Deuteronomy, which in some form must have existed, and the provisions of which are supposed to be inconsistent with this new Priest-Code? Were these documents latent, lost, or unknown, except within the small circle of the priestly forgers? There are other questions connected with what is called the Priest-Code of Ezekiel, (Ezekiel 40:1-49, Ezekiel 41:1-26, Ezekiel 42:1-20, Ezekiel 43:1-27, Ezekiel 44:1-31, Ezekiel 45:1-25, Ezekiel 46:1-24, Ezekiel 47:1-23, Ezekiel 48:1-35) so important, that we shall have to refer to them separately. Meantime we would challenge evidence of the extraordinary literary activity attributed to the exilian period. We are acquainted with the literary activity of the Prophets at the beginning of that period; but these Prophets had their root in the past, not in the new development. What we know of the undoubted post-exilian literature does not encourage belief in any extraordinary and novel literary activity of the exilian age, and it seems absolutely incompatible with it, that no chronicle or record has been kept of that period. We know actually less of the history of the Jews during that time than of their condition while in Egypt, and before they became a people, insomuch that, as already stated, the very tracks of the Ten Tribes have been lost. This is the proper place to refer — of necessity quite briefly — to an argument which has been advanced on the other side, although it is

not easy to understand that it should be so confidently used. It is to the effect, that the age of the various portions in the Pentateuch may be distinguished by linguistic differences. This pretension, which in any case would necessitate extreme delicacy of literary tact, has been initially discredited by the circumstance that scholars of admittedly equal competence have, on linguistic grounds, declared certain parts to be of latest date, which others have, for the same reason, adjudged to be earliest. [185] It is, indeed, possible to distinguish, at least with approximate reliableness, the style of different authors, and to determine with general accuracy whether a book belongs to one or another period of literature, although a clever forger of what was intended to be passed as an ancient work (as in the case of the 'Priest-Code') might easily mislead critics more than two thousand years later, and who had such scanty data by which to judge as the small compass of Biblical literature which we possess. In point of fact, according to Wellhausen's theory, the forgers did so succeed, and that not only in inducing their own contemporaries to accept as archaic what was quite recent, but they similarly eluded the vigilance of succeeding generations, of all the Rabbis, of all the Church, and of all critics — none of whom, till the present century, discovered, or even suspected, the exilian composition of the Priest-Code. And this scantiness of Biblical literature for comparison is admitted, at least by many on the other side, [186] to make it almost impossible to determine whether an expression is old or modern, and whether an ancient usus of expression may not have been continued or taken up anew, or vice versâ, or else what may be due to local or educational circumstances. All this has of late been practically illustrated. By a careful examination of the language, a competent scholar, E. Ryssel, set himself to prove [187] the high antiquity of certain portions in that part of the Pentateuch known as the work of the Elohist. Next, and in answer to him, another competent scholar, F. Giesebrecht, [188] endeavoured by a fresh examination to show, that it was of much later date; [189] while, lastly, one of our own scholars, Professor Driver, has, I think, conclusively established, [190] that those linguistic peculiarities, on which Giesebrecht relies, do not necessarily prove such a late date as he contends for. From all which the impartial observer will at least conclude, that the arguments on either side cannot be of absolute stringency, and that no certain deduction as to the date of composition can be derived from linguistic considerations. And this inference of common sense is remarkably illustrated by the very interesting comparison which Professor Stanley Leathes has made of the usus of certain words by English writers, [191] which will be found in a note at the end of this Lecture.

Before submitting some considerations which seem to me incompatible with the theory of our opponents, it may be well to take a brief retrospect of the argument, as advanced by them. We have already indicated that we have assigned only a very secondary place to the supposed inconsistencies and contradictions within the Pentateuch-legislation itself: firstly, because they depend on an often arbitrary separation of documents and notices, and the assignment to them of dates ex hypothesi, while there is no real inconsistency between them; and, secondly, because it would involve detailed discussions for which this is not the place. Indeed, it seems to me that, without the second branch of the argument — as to the alleged inconsistencies of the Mosaic legislation with the condition of things, as set forth in the historical books — the first, which seeks to prove essential differences within the Pentateuch itself, and on that ground to separate it into documents, widely differing in date — the most important being post-exilian — would lack any historical basis, and degenerate into discussions, in which critical and speculative ingenuity on the one side might be pitted against the same qualities on the other. In fact, however Wellhausen may,

in the Introduction to his ‘History,’ strive to give prominence to the demarcation of the various layers of which he supposes the Pentateuch to be composed, the account which he gives of the genesis of his own convictions regarding the character of the Pentateuch shows, that he was mainly led by a review of Israel’s history, derived from the historical books, to that disintegration and classification of the Pentateuch, which seemed to him to accord with the data he had gathered from the historical books. For, otherwise there would not seem anything in the results of modern criticism inconsistent with the supposition, stated at the outset of this Lecture, of different sources or documents in the Pentateuch, yet all embodying Mosaic legislation, adapted to the varying conditions of different periods, or to circumstances arising in the history of Israel — especially, when we take into account later redactions of the book as a whole. It seems to me, therefore, that, in an argumentative defence of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch-legislation, main consideration should be given to its relation to the notices derived from the historical books. This has been the object of our detailed analysis of the condition of Israel in Canaan, with the view of showing that, what might seem inconsistencies, are in reality rationally accounted for by — in fact, the natural outcome of — the then existing state of things. To this it may be added, that in general the argumentum ex silentio, even if circumstances could not be otherwise satisfactorily explained, can never be satisfactory or convincing. It may raise doubts, but it cannot establish any facts. The nonobservance of a law does not prove its non-existence. Thus, to repeat an oft- quoted instance, in Jeremiah 16:6, the practice is referred to, without special disapprobation, of cutting and making themselves bald for the dead; while it is expressly interdicted in Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 14:1), which yet, according to our opponents, existed in the time of that prophet. On the other branch of the argument I have still some considerations to offer, which shall be presented in popular form. I venture to suggest that, if there is one fact more clearly established than another in the history of civilisation, it is, that the earliest period in the life of all nations is what may be designated as the theological, or else mythological; and that the first on the scene for guidance, rule, and instruction, are the priests. These are in due time followed by what may be generally classed as teachers, or prophets. Nor is this order infringed, either in the Old Testament, or in the later history of Israel. There also we have first the legislation connected with the Sanctuary, and Priests. And these are afterwards followed by the period of the Prophets. In turn, after the cessation of prophecy, the Prophets give place to teachers and Rabbis. But the theory of our opponents requires us to invert this universal order. It asks us to believe, that in Israel alone it was not first Priests, then Prophets; but first Prophets, then Priests. And the difficulty of such inversion is all the greater since, according to these writers, the period when the Prophets began was one of religious barbarism in Israel, while they were surrounded by nations, such as the Phoenicians, Egyptians, and Assyrians, whose religious rites and institutions were not only fixed, but in a very advanced stage of development. Moreover, the question naturally suggests itself: If the so-called Mosaic legislation was of much later date and very different authorship; and if the history in the historical books has been painted over in the interest of later institutions, does it not seem a strange and unaccountable blunder to have left the picture of religious society in such colouring as to have suggested the objection, that the Mosaic legislation could not then have existed? We can understand that, if there had been a Mosaic legislation, it might have been followed by a period of such decay as is implied in the books of Joshua, the Judges, and Samuel. But what we cannot understand is, how those who introduced a legislation so fundamentally different from, and a religious order and ritual so discordant with, much that characterises society in these books, and

who wished to ascribe that legislation and ritual to Moses, could have allowed so incongruous a state of society to appear in histories which owed to them, if not their origin, yet their redaction. This leads up to another point to which previous reference has been made from a different point of view. It has been argued that the references by the Prophets, and in the Psalms, [192] to sacrifices, ritual observances, feasts, and such like, are antagonistic to those, at least, in the Priest-Code. [193] And it has been answered, that the views expressed by the Prophets presuppose the existence of such institutions, and that their polemics were directed not against these institutions, but against their externalisation, and the separation of their outward observance from their inward meaning, by which their Divine purpose was perverted to opposite results. But the argument admits of further application. Taking the Law simply by itself, and those sayings of the Prophets by themselves, it will be admitted that the latter mark a progress upon the bare text of the former. Their views of the Law, as spiritual and inward; of the priesthood, as one of holiness of circumcision, as of the heart; and of sacrifices, feasts, and fasts, as not merely outward observances, unconnected with a corresponding state of mind, mark an advance on a former state of externalism. We can understand it, if the Mosaic Law had already existed; but not, if the main part of the so-called mosaic legislation originated afterwards. For, in that case, it would mark a retrogression from the more spiritual standpoint of the Prophets to that Law, which yet was evidently connected with their activity. This connection will at least not be denied in regard to Ezekiel. What has been called his ‘Priest-Code’ [194] may be viewed as a symbolical and ideal presentation of the ‘New Jerusalem’ — the form of the vision being determined, on the principle explained in a former Lecture, by the peculiar modes of thinking and the then circumstances of the Prophet and the people. But even so, and still more — viewing it, from the standpoint of our discussion, as a piece of legislation, it bears reference to the Pentateuch order, and more especially to that portion of it known as the ‘Priest-Code.’ Historically speaking, it stands, according to our opponents, midway between the Jehovist and the Deuteronomist on the one hand, and the Priest-Code on the other. Indeed, it is said to have formed the model, and in part the kernel, of the ‘Priest-Code.’ This is a decisive position to take up, but also one which has been proved indefensible. No other part of the controversy has been more exhaustively treated than this of the relation between Ezekiel and the Priest-Code, whether Ezekiel looked back on the Priest-Code, or the Priest-Code on Ezekiel. The contention of Wellhausen is the latter; but it has been shown on conclusive evidence that Ezekiel looks back on the Priest-Code, which, therefore, must have been prior to the Prophet. But, in that case, we shall have to put the Priest-Code a long way back, since, according to our opponents, there is the widest difference between it and the other documents in the Pentateuch, which mark a very different stage and a very different date from the Priest-Code. The detailed proof for the assertion that Ezekiel looks back upon the Priest-Code, and not the reverse, cannot be attempted in this place, and the reader must be referred to where it is specifically discussed. [195] But it would be unfair to the argument, not at least to state the evidence which Hoffmann has adduced in proof that Ezekiel had known the Priest-Code. He quotes not fewer than eighty-one passages from the Priest-Code, which have exact verbal parallels in eighty-three passages in Ezekiel. [196] These prove, even if we were to make some deductions from them, that the one document must have referred to the other. And this is further confirmed by the peculiar use of a particle (Khi ■■■■ ‘when’), which only in the Priest-Code in the Pentateuch, and, with few isolated exceptions, only in Ezekiel, is placed after the subject which it determines. In evidence, that Ezekiel had derived all this from the Priest-Code,

and not the reverse, Hoffmann adduces these two facts: first, that Ezekiel employs a number of other expressions which occur in writings that are undoubtedly older than his prophecies, [197] while the Priest-Code contains no other passages in which such parallelism with other portions of Scripture occurs; and, secondly, that the Priest- Code has merely such parallelisms to Ezekiel as occur only in the latter, but none of those which Ezekiel has in common with other writings such as Jeremiah and Deuteronomy.

We have to submit yet another consideration, which, indeed, is not new, [198] but will, we believe, have its due weight with those who view the subject, not so much from the technical standpoint, as from that of general considerations and common sense. Let it be remembered that the ritual portion in Ezekiel differs in many and important particulars from the laws and arrangements of the so-called Priest-Code. We can understand such modifications by a prophet in his vision of the future, if the arrangements of the Priest-Code had been already in existence; but a later composition by priests of a Code, professedly Mosaic, which contravened the arrangements of an acknowledged Prophet, seems incredible. And this the more, when we remember that, according to our opponents, the arrangements of the Priest-Code were also inconsistent with an earlier legislation, which also professed to be Mosaic — so that the priests who, to speak plainly, foisted the Priest-Code upon Moses, also made Moses contradict himself as well as Ezekiel. And yet it is admitted on all hands that the ‘redaction,’ which welded into one whole the various parts of which the Pentateuch is composed, displays extraordinary skill. Indeed, the dilemma becomes even more acute. Let it still be borne in mind, that the difference between the earlier legislation and that of the Priest-Code is said, on certain points, to be very great. If so, how are we to account for the introduction of the Priest-Code as the Law of Moses, long after the differing institutions of the earlier legislation had been received as Mosaic? Or, again, if the Priest-Code which modified the earlier legislation was the latest production, and intended to be finally binding, how is it that the Priest-Code was not placed after Deuteronomy in the Pentateuch, when they had the arranging of it? We can understand that Deuteronomy may have been a second and popular version of the earlier Law, when, in view of the immediate entrance into the land, certain of the ordinances, given thirty-eight years before, had to be modified, or, rather, adapted to the new circumstances of the people. But we cannot imagine the publication by the later priesthood of a code professedly Mosaic, by the side of one more ancient, and also professedly Mosaic, which taught differently. Why retain the older code at all, after it had become antiquated for so long a time? why call it Mosaic? why insert it in the Pentateuch? If the priests were able to introduce such an entirely new code, in which the privileges of their order and other arrangements were so much more emphasised than in the old legislation, why retain the latter, and insert it into the Canon? or why should Ezra, for example, have read it in the hearing of all the people — or, did he read it? — and why should he have told them, that the exile had been the punishment of their transgression of the Mosaic ordinances, when, according to our opponents, he was himself bringing in a new code, on many points inconsistent with the old one?

Such questions might easily be multiplied. But I have still to add to the argument some considerations bearing, not exclusively on the date of the Priest-Code, but on my general position, that the Pentateuch as a whole must be considered as embodying the Mosaic legislation. For, — [1]. The laws and arrangements of the Pentateuch are only adapted to an agricultural people. Trade and commerce, except of the most primitive kind, are not even contemplated. Not only is

there an entire absence of strictly commercial laws, but some of the institutions seem almost incompatible with trade, Among these we only name the prohibition of charging interest on loans or debts, and the arrangement by which all real property, houses as well as lands, reverted to their original owners after a certain number of years, and, indeed, as I infer, could never have passed from the possession of members of one tribe to that of another. It is impossible to conceive that, in a developed state of national life, arrangements should originate which would make the possession of capital absolutely valueless, by depriving the capitalist of all interest and the trader of almost any profit, or by which, within a limited time, at longest fifty years, every house and piece of ground would be restored to the family of the original settlers in the land, so that a family could not have acquired a freehold, although it had been in their actual possession possibly for nearly two generations, [199] unless it could be shown that their ancestry had been the original settlers in the place. Such arrangements could not have been introduced even after the separation of the two Kingdoms of Israel and Judah; they seem incredible as proposed in the time of King Josiah, and impossible as originating, or reproduced, [200] in or after the Exile, considering that only two of the twelve tribes returned to Palestine.

[2]. The same character of primitiveness appears in regard to the administration of justice. In some respects it differed materially, although not in the sense of our opponents, from the arrangements introduced at a later period by the Kings. According to the Pentateuch, the ‘elders’ of a place would act as judges. Apparently they were the men of greatest repute, dignity, and age, and selected by each community from its own members. They sat in the gate, and heard and decided causes. From this primitive tribunal the parties in a case had not the right of appeal. This lay only with the judges. If any cause were too hard for them, they might refer it to the central authority in the Sanctuary, no doubt to the High Priest and those around him, who were the religious or national leaders of what was intended to have been a tribal federation. When the nation became consolidated, and monarchy was introduced, we find, indeed, the ancient institution of the eldership continued. But the elders now administered chiefly communal affairs. They were the political or the religious representatives of a district, who would act for the community at large, only in cases of urgency or danger, or punish a criminal, if his delinquency involved the community as a whole. But the general administration of justice seems to have devolved on regular judges appointed by the king, of which new order we have distinct mention, if not in the time of David, (1 Chronicles 23:4) yet in that of Solomon and of Jehoshaphat. (2 Chronicles 1:2; 2 Chronicles 19:5) But if the Pentateuch legislation was posterior to that period, if it even dated in part from the time of Josiah, it could not have been proposed to discard the more orderly, and go back to the primitive rude mode of administering justice by an eldership sitting at the entering of the gate. In point of fact we find under Ezra judges by the side of the primitive institution of ‘elders.’ (Ezekiel 10:14) The argument which has just been urged in regard to the Pentateuch arrangements about judges would equally apply to the very primitive mode of punishments proposed, or allowed, in the Mosaic legislation. Some of these, such as the right of blood-vengeance, or the executing of a rebellious son, could not have been introduced, or renewed, scarcely been allowed to continue, at an advanced period in the life of a nation. To the same class belong those Divine punishments of ‘cutting off,’ so frequently threatened, which we would not expect to find in a legislative code that had originated otherwise than that of the Pentateuch.

[3]. But, indeed, it is not in one direction only nor another that we find it impossible to reconcile the theory of a late, in part exilian, origin and date of it with the character of the Pentateuch legislation. The same conclusion is constantly forced upon us. We find it difficult to believe that in any but the most primitive legislation [201] an arrangement would have been introduced, which rendered it imperative on all males three times in the year to quit their occupations, and undertake a pilgrimage to the Central Sanctuary, however remote their habitations from it. In point of fact, these three annual attendances seem never to have been exactly observed. And we remember that the kings of Israel, immediately after the separation of the two kingdoms, made the inconvenience of such an ordinance one of the grounds for setting up a rival worship. A similar remark applies, and even more strongly, to the laws which enjoined the offering of a sacrifice in the Central Sanctuary, on the many occasions in the life of every family which called for 'purification.' We can understand the introduction of such laws in the infancy of Israel, but not at an advanced period. Least of all can we comprehend how they could have been enacted, or renewed, after Israel was 'dispersed,' and the observance of such laws to the vast majority matter of absolute impossibility.

I might prosecute this argument in reference to the provision for the poor, and some of the ritual and Levitical laws of the Pentateuch; but a striking evi-dence, that some at least of those arrangements could not have originated during and after the Exile, comes to us from the later Synagogue. We know that the traditional law was intended not only to develop and protect, as by a fence around it, the Law of Moses, but also to apply and supplement it. One of the avowed reasons for this 'second law' was that, in the state of matters which had evolved in the course of time, and especially since the return from the Captivity, new circumstances had emerged, to which the primitive Law of Moses no longer applied, or which it had apparently not contemplated. And there was, as we can see, reason for this contention. It is most curious and instructive to watch the ingenuity with which traditionalism sought to reconcile the old with the new, and to show that there was essential agreement, even identity, between the Law of Moses and the ordinances of the Scribes. For it was the theory of traditionalism that all these cases had been Divinely foreseen, although not expressed, and provided for by oral, although not by written, legislation. One instance — although in regard to the Deuteronomic legislation [202] — may illustrate our meaning. The Mosaic Law had directed the absolute extinction of debt on every Sabbatic or Jubilee year. This, because the Mosaic legislation recognised not the ordinary commercial relations of debtor and creditor, but treated the borrower as one who in his need had received charitable assistance from his richer brother. The Rabbinic Code sought to alleviate the inconvenience of this primitive arrangement by ruling that the remission of debt was to take place, not at the beginning, but only on the last day of the seventh year. And it added this curiously characteristic provision, that while the creditor intimated to the debtor the remission, he might at the same time hold open his hand for the receipt of payment. [203] But even so it was found that 'all needful business transactions were so hindered, that the great Hillel introduced what in Rabbinic Law is called the Prosbul (πρ■ς βουλ■, before the Council), which was a document, duly attested, bearing these words: I, A B, hereby declare before you, the Judges of C, that I shall have the right to claim at any time payment of whatever debt may be due to me by D. [204] This curious provision, dating nearly half a century before our era, may help to show how impossible it would have been to originate at any later period so primitive a legislation as that of the Pentateuch. Indeed, as previously stated, even the Deuteronomic legislation, introduced just before the entry into Canaan, seems already to mark a widening and adaptation of the earlier code. And we may reasonably assume that, if Israel had

been faithful to its mission, and developed in accordance with its institutions, the central authority at the Sanctuary, whether the priesthood or the Prophets, would have been able to adapt the primitive legislation to the growing wants of the people. To these considerations of what we would not have expected to find in the Pentateuch, if its legislation had been other than primitive and Mosaic, we shall, in conclusion, add a few others, indicating what we might reasonably have expected to find, if any considerable part of it had dated from a late, but especially from the exilian or post-exilian, period.

[1]. In such a legislation the fact of the exile could not have been wholly ignored. We cannot conceive a complete, and minutely detailed, code of religious arrangements, in which no provision whatever had been made for, not even notice taken of, the wants of the great majority, dispersed in all lands. We know that the institution of the Synagogue originated in the necessities of the period of the exile; and we also know how rapidly that institution spread, as meeting the most pressing religious requirements. Is it possible then to imagine a legislation introduced at that very time, which would completely ignore the institution of the Synagogue, and the felt need from which it sprang? Yet the greatest critical ingenuity has failed to discover a reference to it, either in one or another part of the Pentateuch legislation. On the other hand, we ask ourselves what could be the meaning, is those times, of the Urim and Thummim, which no longer existed; of all the fictions about the Ark of the Covenant, which also no longer existed; of the laws about the Levitical cities, about the spoil taken in war, and, as regards the Deuteronomist, of the laws about the Ammonite and the Moabite, which in those days could have no application, and whose relations to Israel seem, indeed, in later times, to have completely changed? [205]

[2]. A legislation originating in later times must have embodied, if not avowedly, yet really, the results of the past development. The whole religious history of a people cannot be effaced. Many things will here occur as products of the past, to which we would have expected some reference in the new legislation. It is the primal position in the theory of our opponents, that the Law was after the Prophets. Yet, admittedly, there are in the Law only faint references to what was the constant and great theme of prophetic preaching, — the Messianic hope. There is enough to show that the thought was not absent; nothing, to convey what place it occupied in Jewish thinking. Similarly, we would have expected, if not more distinct, yet different references to royalty; nor can we understand how every indication of a monarchy of such long duration, and of so significant a character as that of the Davidic line, could have been entirely blotted out of the record.

Lastly, even our opponents contend that, during the Babylonish captivity, the theological views of the exiles underwent development. With certain important reservations, we are prepared to admit the correctness of this statement. As might be expected, these new elements came to occupy, in the centuries immediately following, the most prominent place in Jewish teaching. We specially allude here to four points. To the period of the Exile we have to trace: the institution of the Synagogue; the real commencement of traditionalism; the development of certain doctrines, notably those concerning angelic and demoniac influences; and the wider application of the religion of Israel to the nations of the world, consequent on the new relation of the people to the world-monarchies. Such development would, as we can readily see, naturally commence during the banishment of the Jews in the Assyrian Empire. on the other hand, the influence of these new elements proved, in a sense, entirely transforming in the religious history of Israel. And yet no trace of factors, which so powerfully affected the nation, can be discovered in the code of religious

legislation, of which a large part is said to have originated at, or after, that period.

We must bring to an abrupt termination a discussion which has, perhaps, been prolonged beyond the bounds proper in this course of Lectures. On a review of the whole, we are the last to deny the ingenuity and brilliancy with which Professor Wellhausen has applied and popularised the theory of Reuss and Graf. He has the merit, not only of developing, but of applying it in all directions. In fact, he has wholly reconstructed, on the basis of it, the history of Israel, and resolved its problems in accordance with it. But in this very thing lies, in our view, the fatal flaw of the theory. We do not profess to be able to explain every difficulty that may be urged; nor, indeed, do we believe that, with the materials at our command, it is possible to do so. But with all deference for the learning and ability of the scholars who have adopted the views of Wellhausen, we must be allowed to express, in plain language, our conviction that their theory lacks the one element which is primary: it lacks a reliable historical basis.

NOTE 1. TO LECTURE 8.

'… It may be interesting to observe from the following instances the possible diversity of language which may obtain in works, known to be from the same author.

'"L'Allegro" is a poem of 152 lines; it contains about 450 words. "Il Penseroso" is a poem of 176 lines, and contains about 578 words. "Lycidas" is a poem of 193 lines, which are longer than those of either of the other two, most of them being heroics; its words are about 725.

'It is plain, therefore, that Milton must have used for "Il Penseroso" 128 words not in

"L'Allegro," and for "Lycidas" 275 not in "L'Allegro," and 147 not in "Il Penseroso."

'But what is much more remarkable, is the fact that there are only about 125 words common to "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso;" only about 135 common to "Lycidas" and "L'Allegro;" only about 140 common to "Lycidas" and "Il Penseroso;" only about 61 common to all three.

'That is, — Milton must have used for "I1 Penseroso" 450 words not in "L'Allegro;" and for "Lycidas," 590 not in "L'Allegro." He must have used for "Lycidas" some 585 words not in "Il Penseroso," and more than 660 not occurring in both together.

'Also, there must be in "L'Allegro" some 325 words not in "Il Penseroso," and 315 not in "Lycidas;" and there must be in "Il Penseroso" nearly 440 words not in "Lycidas."

'Again: Tennyson's "Lotos Eaters" contains about 590 words; "Œnone" has about 720. Thus the latter must contain 130 words not in the former; but a comparison shows that there are only about 230 words common to the two poems. That is, there must be 490 words in "Œnone" which are not in the "Lotos Eaters," and there must be in the "Lotos Eaters" about 360 words not occurring in "Œnone." That is, the shorter poem has 360 words which the longer one does not contain.' The foregoing is an extract from Professor Stanley Leathes' book' The Witness of the Old Testament to Christ' (Boyle Lectures for 1868), pp. 282, 283. It should be stated that Professor Leathes uses the above analysis in defence of the unity of the Book of Isaiah. In the present argument, however, it is not quoted with reference to the Book of Isaiah, on which I am not called here to express any opinion. Accordingly, the lines of Professor Leathes, making application of the analysis to the Book of Isaiah are omitted (marked by dots). His analysis is adduced as a practical illustration of the

position, that no stable argument as regards a book — more especially, as regards its precise date or authorship — can be derived from the use (or non-use) of words occurring in it.

NOTE 2. TO LECTURE 8.

Passages collated by Dr. D. Hoffmann to exhibit the parellelism of expression in the Priest-Code and the prophecies of Ezekiel (“ Magazin für die Wissensehaft des Judenthums,” vol. 6:, 1879, pp. 210-213). [206]

Priest-Code.

Ezekiel.

[1]. Genesis 1:21 [2]. Genesis 1:30 [3]. Genesis 6:11 [4]. Genesis 6:18 [5]. Genesis 7:14 [6]. Genesis 9:2 [7]. Genesis 9:14 [8]. Genesis 17:7 [9]. Genesis 17:23 (and in other places) [10]. Genesis 36:7 (and in other places) [11]. Exodus 1:7

[12], [13], Exodus 6:3; Exodus 6:6

[14], [15]. Exodus 6:6; Exodus 6:8 [16]. Exodus 6:8 [17]. Exodus 1:7 (and in other places) [18]. Exodus 1:8 [19]. Exodus 2:5 [20]. Exodus 12:11 [21]. Exodus 12:12 [22]. Exodus 12:20.

[1]. Ezekiel 47:9 [2]. Ezekiel 29:5 (comp. Ezekiel 33:27, Ezekiel 34:5, Ezekiel 39:4) [3]. Ezekiel 8:17 (comp. Ezekiel 7:23) [4]. Ezekiel 16:62 [5]. Ezekiel 17:23 [6]. Ezekiel 38:20 [7]. Ezekiel 1:28 [8]. Ezekiel 16:60 [9]. Ezekiel 2:3 (and in other places) [10]. Ezekiel 20:38 [11]. Ezekiel 9:9 [12]. Ezekiel 20:5 (comp. Ezekiel 5:9) [13]. Ezekiel 20:6

[14] [15]. Ezekiel 20:28; Ezekiel 20:42 [16]. Ezekiel 20:38 (and in other places) [17]. Ezekiel 11:15 (comp. Ezekiel 25:10; Ezekiel 33:24)

[18], [19]. Ezekiel 14:9; Ezekiel 14:13 (and in other places) [20]. Ezekiel 24:23 [21]. Ezekiel 5:10 (and in other places)

[22], [23]. Ezekiel 6:6; Ezekiel 6:14 (and in other places)

[23]. Exodus 13:12 [24]. Exodus 25:8 [25]. Exodus 26:3

[26], [27]. Exodus 28:17-18; Exodus 28:20 [28]. Exodus 31:18 [29]. Leviticus 1:6 [30]. Leviticus v.15 [31]. Leviticus 10:9 [32]. Leviticus 10:10 [33]. Leviticus 11:44 (and in other places) [34]. Leviticus 13:45 [35]. Leviticus 16:12 [36]. Leviticus 17:8 (and in other places) [37]. Leviticus 17:13 [38]. Leviticus 18:5 [39]. Leviticus 18:6 (and in other places) [40]. Leviticus 18:19 [41]. Leviticus 19:7

[24]. Ezekiel 20:26 [25]. Ezekiel 43:9 [26]. Ezekiel 1:9 [27]. Ezekiel 28:13 [28]. Ezekiel 20:12 (comp. 5:20) [29]. Ezekiel 24:6 [30]. Ezekiel 14:13 [31]. Ezekiel 44:21 [32]. Ezekiel 22:26 (comp. Ezekiel 42:20, Ezekiel 44:23) [33]. Ezekiel 4:14 [34]. Ezekiel 24:17 [35]. Ezekiel 10:2

[36], [37]. Ezekiel 14:4; Ezekiel 14:7 [38]. Ezekiel 24:7 [39]. Ezekiel 20:11 (comp. Ezekiel 5:13, 21) [40]. Ezekiel 23:10 (and in other places) [41]. Ezekiel 18:6

[42]. Leviticus 19:13 [43]. Leviticus 19:16 [44]. Leviticus 19:26 [45]. Leviticus 19:36 [46]. Leviticus 20:6 [47]. Leviticus 20:9 [48]. Leviticus 20:10 [49]. Leviticus 20:27

[50],

[51],

[52], [53]. Leviticus 20:10; Leviticus 20:12; Leviticus 20:14; Leviticus 20:17 [54]. Leviticus 21:1-3 [55]. Leviticus 21:10 [56]. Leviticus 21:14 [57]. Leviticus 22:2 [58]. Leviticus 23:8 [59]. Leviticus 25:14 [60]. Leviticus 25:36-37 [61]. Leviticus 25:46 [62]. Leviticus 25:48

[42]. Ezekiel 4:14 [43]. Ezekiel 18:18 [44]. Ezekiel 22:9 [45]. Ezekiel 33:25 [46]. Ezekiel 45:10 [47]. Ezekiel 14:8 (comp. Ezekiel 15:7, and other places) [48]. Ezekiel 18:13 [49]. Ezekiel 16:38-40 [50]. Eze 23:-47

[51], [52]. Ezekiel 22:9; Ezekiel 22:11 [53]. Ezekiel 44:25 [54]. Ezekiel 44:20 [55]. Ezekiel 44:22 [56]. Ezekiel 14:7

[57], [58]. Ezekiel 4:14, Ezekiel 44:31, Ezekiel 18:7 [60]. Ezekiel 18:8 (comp. Ezekiel 18:13, Ezekiel 18:17, Ezekiel 22:12) [61]. Ezekiel 34:4 [62]. Ezekiel 11:15

[63]. Leviticus 26:2 [64]. Leviticus 27:10 [65]. Numbers 5:12 [66]. Numbers 14:34 [67]. Numbers 14:34(and in other places).

[68]. Numbers 14:30 [69]. Numbers 14:35 [70]. Numbers 15:21 [71]. Numbers 15:31 [72]. Numbers 15:39 [73]. Numbers 16:9 [74]. Numbers 18:4-5 [75]. Numbers 18:13 [76]. Numbers 18:14 [77]. Numbers 18:20 [78]. Numbers 19:13

[79], [80]. Numbers 27:14; Deuteronomy 32:51 [81]. Numbers 31:35 [82]. Numbers 24:6

[63]. Ezekiel 23:38 [64]. Ezekiel 48:14 [65]. Ezekiel 20:27 [66]. Ezekiel 4:6

[67], [68]. Ezekiel 14:10; Ezekiel 44:10 [69]. Ezekiel 44:12 (and in other places) [70]. Ezekiel 5:13 (and in other places) [71]. Ezekiel 44:30 [72]. Ezekiel 16:59 (comp. Ezekiel 17:16, Ezekiel 17:18-19) [73]. Ezekiel 6:9 [74]. Ezekiel 44:11 [75]. Ezekiel 40:45-46 [76]. Ezekiel 44:30 [77]. Ezekiel 44:29 [78]. Ezekiel 44:28 [79]. Ezekiel 36:25

[80], [81]. Ezekiel 47:19; Ezekiel 48:28 [82]. Ezekiel 27:18 [83]. Ezekiel 47:20

2. List of passages adduced by Dr. Hoffmann, showing the passages in which expressions used by Ezekiel occur in other Books of the Old Testament: —

Ezekiel.

Other Biblical Books.

[1], [2]. Ezekiel 2:6; Ezekiel 3:9 [3]. Ezekiel 4:13 [4]. Ezekiel 5:11 (and other places) [5]. Ezekiel 6:11 [6]. Ezekiel 6:13 [7]. Ezekiel 7:18 [8]. Ezekiel 7:19

[9], [10]. Ezekiel 11:16-17 (and in other places) [11]. Ezekiel 14:8 [12]. Ezekiel 16:53 (and in other places)

[1]. Jeremiah 1:17 [2]. Jeremiah 24:9 (comp. Deuteronomy 30:1) [3]. Deuteronomy 13:9 [4]. Jeremiah 24:10 [5]. Deuteronomy 12:2 [6]. Psalms 55:6 [7]. Zephaniah 1:18 [8]. Deuteronomy 28:64 [9]. Deuteronomy 28:37 [10]. Deuteronomy 30:3

[13]. Ezekiel 16:60

[14], [15]. Ezekiel 18:2; Ezekiel 18:4

[16], [17]. Ezekiel 20:6; Ezekiel 20:15 [18]. Ezekiel 20:33 [19]. Ezekiel 22:7 [20]. Ezekiel 22:12 [21]. Ezekiel 22:26 [22]. Ezekiel 22:27 [23]. Ezekiel 23:46 [24]. Ezekiel 24:6 [25]. Ezekiel 25:16 [26]. Ezekiel 26:13 [27]. Ezekiel 28:25 [28]. Ezekiel 30:2-3 [29]. Ezekiel 36:30 [30]. Ezekiel 37:23

[31], [32]. Ezekiel 39:23-24 [33]. Ezekiel 44:24

[11] Jeremiah 2:2 [12]. Jeremiah 31:28-29 [13]. Deuteronomy 6:8 (and in other places) [14]. Deuteronomy 5:15 (and in other places) [15]. Deuteronomy 27:16 [16]. Deuteronomy 27:25 [17]. Zephaniah 3:4 [18]. Zephaniah 3:3 [19]. Deuteronomy 28:25 (comp. Jeremiah 15:4, and in other places) [20]. Nahum 3:1, 21. Zephaniah 2:5

[22]. Amos 5:23 [23]. Deuteronomy 30:3

[24]. Joel 1:15

[25]. Joel 2:19 [26]. Deuteronomy 29:16 [27]. Deuteronomy 31:17 [28]. Deuteronomy 21:6

01.09. Lecture 9.

Lecture 9.

The Messianic Idea in the Later Stages of Israel's History: the Apocrypha and their Relation to the Past and the Future. For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days. — Hosea 3:4-5. FROM the consideration of Prophecy and of its teaching, and from the vindication of its place in the Old Testament Canon, we proceed to follow the history of the Messianic idea in Israel after the strictly prophetic period. And as regards the condition of Israel during one part, or the great hope set before them in the other part, of this period, a more accurate prophetic description could not have been given than that by Hosea. (Hosea 3:4-5)

We have reached the age of the Exile. The last notes of the old prophetic voices followed the wanderers into their banishment; the last glow of the torch which they had held aloft threw, amidst the encircling gloom, its fitful light on the future But soon it was extinguished, and silence and darkness fall upon the scene. For a brief time this was once more broken — and yet scarcely broken — at the time of the return of the exiles into Palestine. Broken: for we have such prophetic utterances as those of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, [207] the redaction of certain portions of the Old Testament canon, and the beginning and groundwork of such historical, didactic, [208] and prophetic works, as, with later additions and insertions, may have been edited at a subsequent period. And yet we say that the silence and darkness were scarcely interrupted; for — (1) The whole tone and style of the post-exilian period differs from that of the pre-exilian. A comparison of the prophecies of Malachi, for example, with some of those of the earlier prophets will impress us that we are no longer in the golden age of prophetism. In this I am not referring to their prophetic character, nor to the inspiration of their writings. My remarks apply to the form — the human media — through which the Divine Revelation was communicated. And further, while I do not feel called upon here to express an opinion as to the precise date of the groundwork, or of the final redaction, of those historical, didactic, and prophetic writings to which I have referred, it seems to me that they must date either from the end of the exilian or the beginning of the post-exilian period; or else, from a much later time — the close of the Persian, and the beginning of the Macedono- Grecian period, about the end of the fourth century before Christ. For, from the purely literary point of view, and thinking of their writers, we would expect such a renewal of religious literature only in a period of general religious revival and enthusiasm, such as at the return from the Exile; or else in one of rejuvenescence, such as that which marked and followed the accession of Alexander the Great — that Napoleon of the ancient world, whose conquests re-formed and transformed not only the political, but the social and intellectual condition of the world. But there are, to my mind, conclusive grounds against the later date of any integral part of the Old Testament canon. [209] But whether or not the final redaction of such works as Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah — not to speak of others, such as Esther, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes — belong to the earlier period, or to the

Alexandrian, it is at least remarkable, that the first known revival of Jewish religious literature — I mean the earliest of the Apocrypha — dates from the period soon after Alexander the Great. We may here be allowed a brief digression, it such it be, to note three, to me at least, deeply interesting inferences. The oldest book among the Palestinian Apocrypha is 'The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach' (Ecclesiasticus). This, whether, according to my view of it, we place its composition — not its translation into Greek, which was later — at the end of the third century before Christ, or, according to that of others, regard it as a century younger. It is, as already stated, Palestinian. But about the same time (somewhere about 280) we place the beginning of the Greek (LXX) version of the Old Testament — that of the Pentateuch. This translation would, in the nature of things, be speedily followed by that of the other portions of the Canon, existing at the time, and which, in the prologue to Ecclesiasticus, are already distinguished as 'the Law, and the Prophets, and the other books of our fathers' (the Hagiographa). Such speedy further version is also otherwise likely. We know that in the second, and, most probably, even in the third century before Christ, there was considerable literary activity among the Jews of Alexandria. Not less than six names of Jewish writers, with notices or extracts of their works, are preserved, [210] all of them, whether historical or poetic, connected with religious subjects. In such circumstances it is not credible that the translation into Greek of the historical, poetic, and prophetic portions of Scripture should have been neglected, And when we turn to the Book of Sirach we find that its language is borrowed in places, not only from that of the Pentateuch version of the LXX, but from their rendering of the Books of Proverbs, of Jeremiah, and of Isaiah. [211] We might go even a step further, and call attention to certain peculiarities in the Greek rendering of Sirach. [212] For the use of any one marked peculiarity, evidently derived from the LXX rendering, on the part of one so capable of writing Greek as the Son of Sirach, not only implies the existence of this LXX version, but leads up to the supposition of its recent introduction. Now, if we suppose the younger Sirach to have arrived in Alexandria some time after 247 B.C., there would remain, roughly speaking, about half a century after the LXX version of the Pentateuch (about 280 B.C.) for the translation of the other parts of the Canon. And, as before stated, the existence of a religious Jewish literature in Alexandria about the end of the third century before Christ seems necessarily to imply a previous translation of the portions of the Canon then existing. We have dwelt at such length on this point, not only from its intrinsic interest, but for its obvious important bearing on questions connected with the Old Testament Canon. We hasten to add that, about a century after the 'Wisdom of Sirach,' the earliest Palestinian Apocryphon, we have (somewhere about 150 B.C.) the earliest preserved Alexandrian Apocryphon, the Book of Wisdom. Alike the original composition of the Book of Sirach (between 310 and 291 B.C.) and the fact of the Alexandrian Pentateuch version (about 280 B.C.) — not to speak of later works — impress us with the conviction that they could not have stood isolated. By this I mean, that they cannot have been the first outburst of a religious literature after a long period of silence. They must have been immediately preceded in Palestine by a revival of religious literary activity. The most cursory reading of Ecclesiasticus will convince that this is not a first religious book. It expresses, so to speak, not a fresh and primitive, but a developed religious state of a certain character. Aphorisms of this kind are, so to speak, the sediment, or else the precipitate, of a religious development. It seems therefore inherently not unlikely, that the redaction, not the composition, of the latest Old Testament literature may date from the revival at the beginning of the Alexandrian period.

I have said only the redaction, and this leads me to my second inference. For if we compare the oldest Palestinian Apocryphon — the Book of Sirach — or the spirit that underlies the LXX version of the Pentateuch, with what are the youngest portions of the Old Testament, say with the prophecies of Daniel, Dot, to place side by side works that are kindred, such as The Wisdom of the Son of Sirach and the Book of Proverbs or Ecclesiastes — we instinctively feel, that there is a great gap between them — a difference not only of degree but of kind. From this we again argue, that the youngest Old Testament literature cannot, so far as its groundwork is concerned, date from the period of the revival of Jewish religious literature, although its redaction may. But in that case even this groundwork of the youngest portions of the Old Testament must date from the beginning of the post-exilian period. During the interval between it and the Alexandrian period there was nothing in the political situation to rouse intellectual activity, nothing in the social, to encourage it, nothing in the religious, to be reflected in it — no outstanding event, no outstanding personality, with which to connect it. On that period rest silence and darkness. We may call it the formative age, corresponding to that of infancy and childhood in the life of the individual, when, so to speak, the physical basis was laid for the life of the nation.

Yet a third remark seems here in place. From the period succeeding the return from the Exile — which, so far as regards the form of Old Testament literature, we would designate as its silver, if not iron age — to the Alexandrian period, roughly speaking, about a century intervened. This interval, which can scarcely be said to have a history, in the true sense, nor, so far as we have certain evidence, a literature of its own, was, as just stated, the formative period of the nation in its new circumstances. Its certain outcome, as apparent in the next period, was something quite different from what had preceded it in, what may be called, Old Testament times. In religious literature its outcome was the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigraphic writings; in religion and life, that new direction which, in distinction to that of the Old Testament, is best characterised as Judaism, which in its full development we know as Traditionalism and Rabbinism. And yet, in, or near to, a period, the outcome of which is admittedly so different, a certain school of critics would have us place a large portion of the legislation, and of the historical and didactic, if not the prophetic writings of the Old Testament! But we must turn aside from the many and interesting questions which here occur, and limit our remarks to these three points:

(1) What bearing had the period beginning with the Exile on the great Messianic hope?

(2) What monuments of it are left to us as its outcome, especially in Apocryphal literature? And (3) What influence did this literature produce on the people in regard to their spiritual training?

[1]. What bearing had the period beginning with the Exile on the great Messianic hope? It seems a defective, if not a false, view of it to regard the Babylonish exile as simply a Divine punishment for the sins, especially the idolatry, of Israel. I venture to assert that there is nothing merely negative, or exclusively punitive, in the Divine dealings in history, especially in what bears on the Kingdom of God. Every step taken is also a step in advance, even though, in making it, something had to be put down and crushed. It was not otherwise with the Babylonian exile. Assuredly, one aspect of it was punitive of Israel’s sin. But that, by which this punishment was effected, also brought Israel a step nearer the goal of its world-mission. In the first great period of its national history Israel had, so to speak, been gathered into a religious unity by the Law. Its watchword had been holiness, or God-separation; its high-point, the priesthood; its character, a symbolism, that ultimately bore

reference to the Messiah and His kingdom. In the second period of its history Israel had been under special and constant Divine teaching. Its watchword had been the great hope of the future, or spiritual conquest for God; its high-point, prophetism; its character and object, the formation of spiritual conceptions, with ultimate outlook on the Messiah and His kingdom. And if in the first period Israel was constituted with reference to its great typical object, and, in the second, it was brought within view- point of the nations of the world, as indicating its spiritual mission and goal-point — it was placed in the third and last period in actual contact with them. That period ran to some extent parallel with the previous one, which had begun with the establishment of monarchy in Israel. For, the idea of the kingdom of God could scarcely have been realised without an historical basis in the kingdom of Israel, and the very defects and failures of it, as well as its contests with the kingdoms of this world, would the more clearly point to an ideal reality, set before its view in the grand hope of a universal kingdom of God. But with the deportation to Babylon that stage had not only ended, but was completed. It was now no longer Israel within view of the kingdoms of the world, and in sight of its object and mission; but Israel amidst the kingdoms of the world, where it could best learn what was the meaning of a universal world-kingdom of God. If Israel had been faithful to its mission, it would have widened to embrace the kingdoms of the world. Israel unfaithful to it, was merged in them, subdued by them. Yet even so, it also fulfilled, in its punishment, its mission — in dying gave up its pearl — bringing mankind a step nearer to the truer realisation of the kingdom of God in its world-wide bearing.

Yet here also Israel had failed. It was the beginning of its last fatal failure. Not only did Israel not understand its mission; but it had not heart for it. In the first of the three periods — that of the Law holiness, priesthood, and symbolism — Israel had failed through a bare externalism. In the second of the periods — that of teaching, prophetism, and the prospect of conquest of the world for God — Israel had failed, on the one hand, through apostasy to heathenism, and on the other, through national pride, selfishness, and vain-glory. And in the third and final period of completion, Israel utterly and finally failed m misunderstood the teaching of God, and perverted its mission: failed, even in its repentance of past sins, which was not godly sorrow that needeth not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world which worketh death. Israel's final apostasy in the time of Christ began not at His appearance; this, was only the logical outcome of all that had preceded. And Israel's final rejection also began not with the subjection to Rome, still less with the burning of the City and Temple, but with the return from the Exile. When Israel went into Babylon, it was once more like the going into Egypt. The return to Palestine was another Exodus. But, oh, how different from the first! That had been marked by the glowing religion of the Old Testament; this, by what we know as Judaism. Israel returned from the Exile not as Israel, but as the Jews; such as history has ever since presented them. They expanded not to the full meaning of their mission in relation to the world; they shrivelled, and became mummified into the narrowest particularism, alike mental, national, and religious. Israel was baptised in the wilderness unto Moses to a new and promising spiritual life; it was ossified in the Exile to a religion of Pharisaism, exclusiveness, and national isolation and pride. No wonder that new forms had to be created for the Divine Spirit, and that no longer Palestinianism but Hellenism became the great factor and connecting link between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world. Thus the old fig-tree withered at its roots. The Diaspora, rather than the Palestinian minority, became the missionaries of the world; Hellenist thought, culture, and modes of presentation, not Pharisaism or Rabbinism, became the medium through which the kingdoms of the world were to be made the Kingdom of God. And so we can in

some measure understand the meaning of the Diaspora, and of that large and ever-widening circle of Hellenist thought, as well as its mission in the world.

[2]. I have spoken of Israel as emerging on the other side the Babylonian flood, not as Israel, but as the Jews. And of this their later literature bears ample evidence. We have here to reckon with three different tendencies. We notice, first, the working of the old spirit, which in due time would appear as traditionalism and Rabbinism. This means reaction. Next, we have the new spirit, which in due time would appear as Hellenism. This means renewal and re-formation. Lastly, we have the ideal spirit, which, grasping the great hope of the future and of the Messianic Kingdom, would in due time appear either as Jewish Nationalism — in the great Nationalist party (or in close connection with it) — or else, as a pure Apocalypticism. But as yet these three tendencies lay in great measure unseparated in the chaos over which the spirit of the future was brooding — waiting till outward events would differentiate them.

Two centuries had passed since the return from Babylon. At the end of them we find ourselves suddenly in the midst of a new-born activity in religious literature. We have suggested this, as possibly the period of the final redaction — not composition — of some, though perhaps not of all, the youngest portions in the Old Testament Canon. The new literature springs forth in Palestine, but chiefly in Alexandria. It is debased in literary character, chiefly imitative of the Old Testament writings, and, as we would naturally have expected, of the youngest portions among them, so that one might almost infer the comparative lateness of an Old Testament book from its imitation by one or more of the Apocrypha. Briefly to characterise them from this point of view:

1st (III.) Esdras is mainly a compilation from 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah 2 nd

(IV.) Esdras must not come into account, as it really belongs to the Pseudepigraphic writings. Tobit reads almost like a Judaic and apocryphal counterpart of the story of Job, not unmixed with others. Judith contains reminiscences of Deborah, Jael, and even Ruth, but seems modelled on the Book of Esther. The additions to the Book of Esther connect themselves with that work. The Wisdom of Solomon seems to me, in the conception of its ideas, often to present a counterpart to the Book of Job — only that in the one case the philosophy is Eastern and Jehovistic, in the other Western and Grecian. At the same time it also presents, in many of its leading elements, a Grecian development of the two great Solomonic books. The Book of Sirach is connected chiefly with that of Proverbs, but also with Ecclesiastes. Baruch, together with the Epistle of Jeremy, connect themselves with Lamentations, and partially also with Daniel; the Song of the Three Children, and the stories of Susanna, and of Bel and the Dragon, are connected with Daniel; the Prayer of Manasses with Chronicles. The First Book of the Maccabees reminds us more of Nehemiah than of Ezra. The Second Book of the Maccabees is chiefly an epitome of a larger work by one, Jason of Cyrene. It is Alexandrian, as 1st Maccabees is Palestinian and Hebrew. It must be understood that our remarks refer to the cast and tone, not to the contents of these books. In regard to the former, they seem counterparts, or else continuations, of the later portions of the Old Testament Canon. But, in thought and direction, the differences between them and any parts of the Old Testament are so numerous and great, as to afford indirect evidence of the canonicity of the latter. Indeed, one of the earliest Apocrypha expressly laments the absence of Prophets and of Inspiration. [213] The collection of Apocrypha, as we have it in our English Version, is not only ill translated in many parts, but ill thrown together, being arranged neither according to country,

contents, nor age. Their number is really only thirteen, and our collection both contains what should not, and omits what should, have a place in it. Such portions as the Song of the Three Children, the History of Susanna, and that of the Destruction of Bel and of the Dragon, are really only an apocryphal addition to the Greek version of the Book of Daniel. As regards country or — perhaps more accurately — language, the Apocrypha should be arranged into Palestinian and Alexandrian. The former comprise the Hebrew original, of which our present Book of Sirach is a translation, Judith, the First Part of Baruch, [214] the First Book of Maccabees, and, to judge by its contents, perhaps Tobit. I have enumerated them, chiefly, in the probable order of their composition, although considerable doubt attaches to the subject, especially as regards the age of Baruch and of Tobit. But it deserves notice, and it confirms the views previously expressed, that all these books date after the national revival to which we have referred: the Book of Sirach, as I believe, from after the Alexandrian age; the rest probably from the Maccabean period — the 1st of Maccabees from the beginning of the first century before Christ. As to the others, nothing certain can be predicated. Baruch and Tobit breathe the spirit of later Judaism, although as yet in a more free form than when traditionalism had finally laid its yoke upon the people. With the exception of the books just mentioned, the other Apocrypha were written in Greek. The oldest of them seems the Book of Wisdom, which dates about a century, or probably a century and a half, before Christ. It implies a considerably advanced state of intellectual life preceding it. In truth, it forms an advanced post on the road of that Hellenism which may generally be characterised as the attempt to reconcile the Old Testament with Greek thought. From this there was only a further step — both easy and natural: to seek to combine what had been shown to be harmonious. To complete this brief review of the Apocryphal writings, it seems appropriate to group them, not only according to country and age, but according to their contents. The task is, however, one of extreme difficulty. Generally speaking, they might, indeed, be distinguished as historical (or pseudo-historical), didactic, and pseudo- prophetic, or rather parenetic, since their object was, under prophetic pretension, to convey admonition or consolation, always with marked reference to the circumstances of the time, the condition of heathenism, and the relation of Israel to it. This anti-heathen element is a very marked characteristic of the Apocrypha, which, variously applied, might serve the purposes of controversy, of apologetics, of confirmation in the faith, of proselytism, and even of Messianic anticipation. More important still is what we gather from the Apocrypha to have been the doctrinal views prevalent at the time. A brief reference to the differences between them and the Old Testament may here be in place. [215] To begin with: a very marked distinction is made between such writings and the canonical, which are not only designated, in the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus, as ‘the Law, the Prophets, and the other books of the fathers,’ but for which exclusively inspiration is claimed. Quite in accordance with this is the exceptional manner in which Biblical writers and Biblical works are referred to, [216] or quoted. Thus the Apocrypha themselves mark their line of separation from the canonical books. And this is the more noteworthy, that the Book of Sirach is often quoted in Rabbinic writings in a manner similar to that in which citations are made from canonical books. The distinction in favour of the Old Testament is fully vindicated, the more closely we examine the teaching of the Apocrypha. The presentation of the Divine Being is no longer as in the Old Testament. Sometimes it is Grecian in its form, as chiefly in the Book of Wisdom, and, in minor degree, in some portions of Ecclesiasticus; in other books, as in Judith and Baruch, it is Judaic, narrow, and nationalistic; while in Tobit we have almost the later Rabbinic view of the propitiation of God by alms. Similar remarks apply to the presentation of the doctrines

of Creation and of Providence. As regards the doctrine of Angels, the Apocrypha have much more developed teaching, which in the case of Tobit descends to the low level of superstition. [217] As might be expected, both Grecianism and Hebrewism appear even more markedly in what such books as Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus have to tell us of man. The pre- existence of the soul, and its fall and degradation through its connection with the body, are taught side by side with a reluctant and almost solitary reference to the fall of man as presented in the Bible. But of the doctrine of original sin, as fully expressed in the New Testament, the Apocrypha, as Rabbinism, have nothing to tell us. In regard to moral duties, the tone of the Book of Proverbs “is now absolutely secularised. A respectable religiosity and a sort of common-sense decency take the place of fervour of love and entireness of devotion. Reward in this life, or at most either in the Messianic world or in the life to come, are the leading motives; externalism of work, rather than deep inward spiritual views, characterises the righteousness described. By the side of this we find in the Apocrypha of Grecian cast (Wisdom and partly Ecclesiasticus) a classification of the virtues after the philosophic model; while the Judaic Apocrypha (Judith and Tobit) represent on many points a low standard, not only in the story of Judith, but generally in regard to the relation between man and God. In Ecclesiasticus we find throughout a twofold, somewhat incompatible, direction: the Hellenistic by the side of the Judaic. This strange eclecticism may have been due to the original author of the book, or, as seems more likely, been introduced by the translator. As regards the ‘after death’ the characteristics of the Grecian Apocrypha, already noted, once more appear. Ecclesiasticus is not only less pronounced on these subjects than some of the canonical books, but is, to say the least, strangely silent on the “after death.” The Book of Wisdom, while acknowledging the immortality of the soul and the judgment, so systematically ignores the resurrection of the body as to lead to the inference of its denial. The same may even more strongly be predicated of 1st Maccabees, which, indeed, has been regarded as representing the views of the Sadducees; while 2nd Maccabees, in this respect, markedly reproduces the views of the Pharisees. [218] In reference to the Messianic hope, we can only say that its personal aspect, as regards the Messiah, if present at all, [219] recedes behind that of Israelitish, national prospects. Of these, alike in the anti-Gentile sense, [220] and in the exaltation of Israel, [221] there is the fullest anticipation.

Thus we have in the Apocrypha — which, as already stated, must be regarded as embodying the outcome of the previous period — a marked divergence, on all main points, from the lines followed in the Canonical Books of the Old Testament. The latter, as has been well remarked, [222] led up to the manger of Bethlehem; the Apocrypha may, as regards dogmatic views, be considered only a kind of preface to later Judaism. The other peculiarities of the Apocrypha can only be lightly touched in this place. They are such as to interest the student, and may open up wider questions. We mark the tone of self-consciousness which Judaism assumes towards a decrepit heathenism, and this, in face of a hostile and unscrupulous political majority. There is something truly noble in this conscious superiority and defiance, when, on the eve of the coming battle, the despised, defeated minority speaks in the haughty language of assured victory. It is the Old Testament spirit, even though it be cramped in narrow, nationalistic forms. We are here thinking of much in the Palestinian Apocrypha. But this element is not wanting in any of the other Apocrypha, although naturally it least appears in those of Grecian tone. Other, and minor, points are also interesting. Thus the story of Susanna, which some writers have regarded as most strongly anti- Sadducean, is in fundamental contradiction with Rabbinic law. According to the Mishnah, [223] false witnesses

were to suffer the punishment of death, in obedience to the Law of Moses, (Deuteronomy 19:19; Deuteronomy 19:21) only if an alibi could be proved against them — that they had been in another place than that where they had sworn to have witnessed the crime. But in the Book of Susanna the perjured elders are put to death simply on being convicted of false witness. [224] Another interesting question is as to the alterations which, whether from misunderstanding, or in a Grecian sense, the younger Sirach may have made when translating into Greek the Hebrew work of his grandfather. Of such even a comparison with the Syriac translation of the book gives evidence; [225] the latter — although containing many needless and jejune paraphrases — having evidently been made with a copy of the Hebrew original before the translator.

[3]. From these points of chiefly critical interest we turn to the third great question which we had proposed to ourselves: that of the spiritual influence which this apocryphal literature exercised upon the people. They were, indeed, Apocrypha — 'Sepharim genuzim' — hidden books, 'books withdrawn;' but we have evidence that they largely circulated among the people, [226] And while they were really the outcome of the development during the preceding period, they must also have truly reflected, though in part they may have helped to form, the spirit of their own time. And it is the general 'spirit of the time' (the Zeitgeist), which we encounter and recognise throughout this literature — as appearing in alliance with Judaism: a 'time- spirit' that would fain believe, it could be Jewish. In the new contact with the outer world of Grecianism, it could not be otherwise than that Grecian, philosophical or philosophising, ideas should — perhaps sometimes unconsciously-intrude into Jewish religious thinking. But there they would appear not as metaphysical or speculative, but rather as a rationalistic element. What we call rationalism is never philosophy; it is an attempt to pervade religion with the philosophy of what is misnamed common sense. A jejune, but popularly attractive; treatment this of the great questions of life, which are to be reduced to a kind of arithmetical problems, easily to be solved by well-known rules; an attempt to turn all things in heaven and on earth into ponderable quantities and measurable substances, to which the common Philistine standards can be applied — in utter ignorance that the spirit had long fled from the dead substances which are to be so weighed and measured. This kind of philosophic religion, or religious philosophy, strongly tinged with Eastern elements — alike the sensuous, contemplative, ironical, and blasé view of life — had in some measure appeared in the Book of Ecclesiastes — only there as ultimately overcome by the Divine. In the Book of Ecclesiasticus we have mostly the bare prose of all this. Similarly, the rationalistic, or rationalising, tendency in religion, impregnated in Alexandria with Grecian philosophic elements, explains much in the Book of Wisdom, although this is by far the loftiest of these productions, and a long way off from such a work as the so-called Fourth Book of Maccabees. And we have enough, and more than enough, of it in the philosophico-religious platitudes of a Josephus.

It is this same 'time-spirit' in the Apocrypha which, according to circumstances, appears in historical, apologetic, or controversial form. It is an attempt at vindication of the Old; vindication, as regards those that are without; vindication also, as regards existing ideas, with which the Old has to be conciliated, and that, whether these ideas be Grecian or Judaic. Thus, the First Book of Maccabees, which is really historical, is also apologetic, in its long speeches and Jewish reasonings; while the object of 2nd Maccabees seems partly to be eirenical, with the view of preventing a schism between the West and Jerusalem, and partly apologetic of the Old in its Palestinian form, in such legends as about the hiding of the sacred fire, and the mode in which it

was rekindled on the altar. 3rd (I.) Esdras is certainly apologetic: the story about the intellectual contest of the three young men, [227] in which Zerubbabel came out victorious, being intended not only to fill up a gap in the history, but to supply a rational motive for the decree of Darius (1Es 4:42 &c.). Similar remarks apply to the apocryphal additions to the Book of Esther. Of Ecclesiasticus and the Book of Wisdom we have already spoken. Tobit is a haggadic Midrash, conceived in the spirit of the Judaism which was assuming a definite shape. Judith is partly controversial, partly consolatory. Both Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremy are parenetic, apologetic, and strongly controversial; and so are the additions to the Book of Daniel.

We cannot pursue this inquiry farther, nor yet close it without at least stating that there was yet another, and a very powerful, element in the spirit of the time, which found expression in its literature. This element was the all-engrossing anticipation of the prophetic future, set before Israel throughout the Old Testament, but especially in the visions of Daniel. The literature to which it gave birth is represented by such of the Apocalyptic or, as they are called, Pseudepigraphic writings as have been preserved. This must form the next subject for consideration. For the present we only notice, that the spirit of the Apocrypha apparently also influenced the Pseudepigrapha. The Messianic future portrayed in their visions is Judæo-national, not universalistic. And this marks one essential difference between these Apocalyptic visions and the inspired prophecies of the Old Testament. We have observed the same in the Apocrypha, only with wider application. There the Messianic hope had quite lost its definiteness, and been transformed into a Jewish hope. The central figure in the picture of the kingdom is the Jewish nation, not the Person of the Messiah.

All this, in connection with the general religious views which, as the outcome of the past and the preparation for the future development, find their expression in the Apocrypha. The religion of the Old Testament was that of the great prophetic future; the religion and hope of the Apocrypha are of the Israelitish past, which vain- gloriously seeks in the future a realisation, commensurate to its past disappointment. The hope of the Old Testament centred in the Person of the Messiah; that of the Apocrypha, in the nation of the Jews. It is Judaism and the Synagogue with which we have henceforth to do. But not thither had the finger of prophecy pointed. Not to the Jews but to the spiritual Israel; not to the Synagogue but to the Church, belonged the inheritance of the promises and the future of the world.

01.10. Lecture 10.

Lecture 10.

On the Different Movements of National Life in Palestine in their Bearing on the Messianic Idea; on the Nationalist Movement in its Connection with Pseudepigraphic Literature: the Pseudepigrapha, and their Character. And now I stand here … for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly seeking God night and day, hope to attain. — Acts 26:6.

IT were a serious mistake to infer from the post-canonic literature, which we call the Apocrypha — the leading characteristics and contents of which have been briefly sketched in the previous Lecture — that the Messianic idea had died out in Israel after the close of the Old Testament Canon, or even that it had not existed, and indeed, constituted the very life of the nation. It is true that the Apocrypha preserve silence about the Person of the Messiah. But this, not because the Messianic idea was ignored, but because it was apprehended and presented in another form. It was now no longer the Person of the Messiah, but the Messianic times, which engaged the expectancy of the people. This, perhaps, partly from want of real faith in such a Person; partly, to avoid what might issue in politically dangerous movements. In part it may also have been due to the outward condition of Israel, alike in Palestine and in' the Dispersion.' The hope of the people may, in the pride of self-consciousness, have perhaps rested the more eagerly on the rapt visions of Israel's future, as presented by the Prophets, that it stood in such felt painful contrast to a present, which depended on only brute material force, but could in no way be vindicated from the Divine, or absolute, point of view. But chiefly it also arose from this, that the altered aspect of Messianic expectancy was in accordance with the Hellenist spirit, which some of the Apocrypha represent, and from which scarcely any of them are wholly free. But, for all this change of form, the Messianic hope itself burned none the less brightly that it was concentrated on the Messianic times, when Israel's enemies would be vanquished, and Israel's day of glory arise — and when, so far as this was possible, Israel's blessings would be shared by the nations, although in vassalage to the chosen people. I have called attention to the marked anti-heathen element in the Apocrypha. In measure, it was also necessarily an anti-Gentile element, and it gave its colouring to the Messianic idea. The Messiah was no longer a Prince of peace and the Reconciler of the world. The Messianic times were still those of 'the kingdom' — but of one of conquest, of the reinstatement and triumph of Israel, and of the subjection of the Gentile world. And the more we consider the condition of things, the less shall we wonder that a people which had grown unspiritual should, in the pride of their religious superiority, have no longer dwelt on the Messianic aspect so constantly presented by the Prophets, and, instead of it, accentuated that prophetic future which they now interpreted as belonging to Israel after the flesh, not to the world. The difference between the Messianic hope of the Old Testament and of the later time was that between the utterances of inspired men who spoke the message of God, and uninspired men who spoke of it with the feelings of personal injury burning in their hearts, and the thoughts of the times dominating and moulding the expression of their views. It was still 'the kingdom' — but Judaic, not

universalistic: the beginning of that, which was afterwards developed by Rabbinism to all its sequences.

Thus viewed, the Messianic idea underlies all the Apocrypha. Nay, it is found, though in highly elevated, not materialistic, form, even in the extreme representative of Hellenism — Philo — as much as in the utterances of the most bigoted Rabbis. In their realistic mode of viewing, and their Oriental manner of expressing, it, the Rabbis said, that in Messianic days the wheat would grow in Palestine to the height of palm- trees, and that a Jerusalem would rise with walls of gold and precious stones, and in which all manner of jewels would be strewed about for the use of every Israelite; that this new Jerusalem would be wide as all Palestine, and Palestine as all the world, while the Holy City would be the capital of all nations. But, after all, the underlying idea — although in a materialistic form, suited to their standpoint and training — was the same which, not only the Apocrypha, [228] but Philo wished, in elevated and philosophic manner, to convey when he described that future, in which all Israel — or perhaps all who owned Israel's Law — would be suddenly converted to virtue. Upon this their masters, ashamed to hold those in bondage who were so much better than themselves, would release them. Then would all the banished be freed in one day, and, as by one impulse, 'the dispersed' throughout the world would assemble, and return to Palestine, led by a Divine, superhuman apparition, invisible to others, but visible to themselves. In Palestine the waste places and the wilderness would be inhabited, and the barren land transformed into fruitfulness. [229] And in another treatise, [230] Philo speaks of that happy time in a manner peculiar to himself. The happier moral condition of man would ultimately affect the wild beasts, which, relinquishing their solitary habits, would first become gregarious; then, imitating the domestic animals, gradually come to respect man as their master, nay, become as affectionate and cheerful as 'Maltese dogs.' This is evidently an anticipation of the literal fulfilment of the Isaiah prophecy about the wolf and the lamb dwelling together. All this would react on the condition of man. There would be universal peace through the subdual of all enemies — of some in supernatural manner, anticipated in a realistic form (by divinely sent swarms of hornets) — and extraordinary wealth, health, and vigour would be the boon of Messianic times. Thus, strictly viewed, there was really not an absolute gulf between the realism of the Rabbis and the most advanced of philosophising Hellenists. And, indeed, it might be argued that the Rabbis had only intended to make use of symbolic language, but meant no more by it than Philo — although it seems difficult to suppose that, in the expectancy of the unlettered masses, the descriptions of the Messianic bliss would be taken otherwise than literally. And such was the spell of the Messianic idea, such the hold it had upon the genius and life of the Jewish nation, that — as we have seen — even so unscrupulously selfish a writer as Josephus could not suppress an reference to it — and this, in works intended for his Roman masters. And how could it be otherwise? The Jew must cease to be a Jew — in any other than the negative sense of opposition to other creeds — if he gives up the Messianic hope which is the central idea of his religion. In this aspect of it, the Messianic application of Genesis 49:10 seems a priori established and incontestable. The sceptre could not depart from Judah, nor the staff of command from between his feet before, nor yet could they remain after, the willing obedience of the nations to God. The particular must then given place to the general; the national to the universal. This, and nothing else, is of God. We have followed the history of the great promise through its stages of inception, presentation, and development, till it had reached its largest circumference, when the kingdom of God was shown to be the world-monarchy, with outlook upon the Great Throne, the judgment of the Ancient of Days, and the

coming of the Son of Man. Then the period of promise had run its course, and merged into that of expectancy. That period really commenced with the Babylonish captivity. It seems difficult fully to realise the changes wrought during its course. In the round numbers of prophetic language, we call it the seventy years' captivity. But it was both of longer and shorter duration than this. From the deportation of the ten tribes, after the destruction of Samaria in 721 B.C., one hundred and eighty-five years elapsed to the decree of Cyrus, about 536 B.C. The first taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldees and the deportation of Joiachim and of a number of the Jews took place in 598 B.C., that is, sixty-two years before the decree of Cyrus; the second taking of Jerusalem, the death of Zedekiah, and the second deportation of Jews, in 588, that is, fifty-two years before the decree of Cyrus; and, lastly, the final deportation of the Jews dates from the year 584 B.C., or forty-eight years before Cyrus. But even as regards the longest of these periods, that of sixty-two years, the change which Israel underwent seems disproportionate to the time — especially as we remember that, with the cessation of the Temple-services, the main institutions of the Mosaic religion had become impossible. We can only conjecture that the exiles from Judah may have found in the land of their captivity new religious institutions, which had been established, or at least commenced, by the earlier exiles under prophetic direction, and that these institutions proved capable of adaptation to the religious wants of the people. At the same time the former temptations to idolatry were not only removed by the Exile, but the new circumstances in which Israel found themselves, the sufferings of banishment, and the longing for their own land and the services of their beautiful Sanctuary, which would be kindled, together with what they witnessed around — all this would crush and wholly remove any leaning towards that great national sin, which had brought on them such Divine judgment. This course of things seems at least much more likely than the theory that the Jews, who were deported in a state of idolatrous apostacy, had derived from Babylon so many entirely new elements of their religion. If a real change, and not a revival of the old, had taken place, we should have expected it in another direction; and post exilian Judaism would have been very different from that rigid Monotheism and purism which we find alike in the Pentateuch and in the practice of those who returned into Palestine.

But, in the nature of them, these can be only conjectures. For silence and darkness rest upon the period of the Exile. The bands of exiles disappear in the vast Assyrian empire, and though we hear echoes of the prophets' voices from the banks of its rivers, and distant dirges of psalmody from harps that had been hung on their willows, we know absolutely nothing of the people itself. When after the dark night morning once more breaks, we perceive, as the mist gradually lifts from valley and hillside, new forms and scenes. Only a small part of the nation — and that chiefly the poorest and least advanced, though religiously the most earnest — has returned, and on those who have remained behind, the mist has again fallen for a time. And they who have returned seem quite other than those who had gone into exile. Not only has every trace of idolatry disappeared, but a fresh, and almost a formative, religious activity has sprung up. The Canon of Scripture is revised and completed; the old institutions are adapted to the new circumstances. Yet so far from any alteration even in the letter of the old, it is developed to the uttermost, and enforced with a rigour that knows no mercy. And a new national life has also commenced — not under the rule of the house of David, to which, despite the intenseness of national feeling, it bore no longer any relationship. This new life fundamentally differed, in one aspect, from that before the Exile, when, speaking generally, religion was dominated by political considerations, whereas political considerations were now dominated by religion. That which then opened was, if I may make the

comparison, a kind of Old Testament Puritan period, or rather a Judæan Covenanter period: so truly does history repeat itself in its fundamental tendencies. Those early 'Nationalists,' who resisted the foreigner, and ultimately gathered around the Judæan Martel — the 'hammer of God' — Judas the Maccabee, were the Chasidim, or 'pious ones.' Intensely religious, intensely Judæan also, they forsook the Maccabees when the religious element receded behind the political, even though the latter was Judæan. And increasingly they went into opposition to their Jewish rulers, till, at last, forsaking or despairing of the national aspect of their cause, they became only a religious party, — the Pharisees. But, after this religious secession, there still remained a strictly 'Nationalist' party. Its adherents obeyed, indeed, the religious direction and ordinances of the Pharisees, but they refused to be confined within the bounds of a purely religious sect, and cherished other and wider aims. It is true that this party afterwards, when driven to bay, ran into wild excesses, and during the last siege of Jerusalem into a kind of fanatical Robespierreism. Josephus, through whose representations, or rather misrepresentations, we chiefly know them, was utterly incapable of sympathising with their loftier ideas, and he denounced them as robbers and sicarii. Still, they represented, although in grievously perverted form, much of what was noblest in the national and religious aspirations of Israel. Of this there is evidence even in the circumstance, that in the immediate family circle of our Lord, and among His earliest followers, there were those who had belonged to the nationalist party. Thus to some at least, perhaps to many, in Palestine the nationalist direction was, what Hellenism afterwards became to so many in the West: a schoolmaster unto Christ. We recall here the name of Simon Zelotes, the Cananean, who evidently had been k member of the Nationalist party; and that of Jude, the brother of our Lord, in so far as his general epistle contains one, or more probably two, quotations from that class of writings known as the Pseudepigrapha, which seem to be, in one direction, closely connected with the nationalist movement, or rather with the spirit which underlay it. To this class of religious literature, and to the tendencies which it represents, viewed in connection with the history of Israel, our attention must now be directed, — in the present Lecture, in only a general manner. The Pseudepigraphic writings represent a peculiar phase in Jewish religious thinking. They express the Messianic hope in its intensest, as well as its most external — I had almost said, realistic — form. They differ in their direction from Pharisaism with its worship of the letter, as issuing in Traditionalism and Rabbinism, as widely, as from the reaction against it in rationalising and supercilious Sadduceeism. Nor have they anything in common with the partly mystical, partly Parsee direction of Essenism, which, in one aspect of it, might almost be designated as a Judæan Stoicism. But the element most closely kindred to the Pseudepigraphic writings is that which is presented by the nationalist movement; perhaps we might rather have said, in the nationalist direction. For its deepest underlying thought was, that Palestine was the land of God, and Israel the people of God; that Jehovah, and Jehovah alone, was King; that His was the sole universal kingdom, against which those outside Israel were in high-handed rebellion. All else — even their excesses — were their inferences from this fundamental position. It will be perceived that this thought lies very close to that idea which formed the foundation of our Lord's teaching and mission — the kingdom of God; or, to put it more specifically, the sole Kingship of our Father in Heaven. Only, the Nationalists of Palestine, like the Roundheads or the Scottish Covenanters of our own history, would have made it an outward reality by means of the sword, and have upheld it by the sword. They would have hewn its way through all opposition, and, if need were, written their own formula of that kingdom in letters of blood on the eternal rocks of history and in the inmost shrine

of their sanctuary. But, according to the Word of the Lord, which, in this respect also, is significant in regard to this movement: taking the sword, they perished by the sword. Not so did the God-sent Christ understand, nor yet would He so establish the kingdom of His Father in Heaven. Christ was King — but as meek and lowly, and as, symbolically, making His Royal entry into Jerusalem riding on an ass, the foal of an ass. In view of the opposition of a hostile world, He also must found His kingdom in blood — but in His own Blood, which His enemies shed; not in theirs, which He shed. He also must conquer all enemies, and subdue them to His kingdom; yet not by outward means, but by the moral power of the Truth, and by the constraining influence of His Spirit, working inward and willing submission. His kingdom was not of this world; therefore did His followers not fight for it. The true kingdom of God was within: it was righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Such was the Christ, as presented in the Gospels.

We pause to mark the historical contact with — and in this, all the more, the contrast to — the men and parties of His time. In its highest aspirations, the Nationalist movement stood perhaps nearest to the fundamental thought of Christ's mission. Yet, as regards the direction and expression of that thought, it was in absolute contrast to Him. Similarly, His teaching embraced, in its absolute reverence for, and implicit obedience to, the Law, all that was ideally and potentially highest in the direction of Pharisaism. Yet it was in fundamental opposition to the false and unspiritual direction of the Pharisees, in their worship of the letter and bondage of externalism. Or, to pass to the other pole — wide as were the sympathies of Christ, and absolute as was the emancipation from the rule of man, and the liberty of the individual, which He proclaimed, yet His were principles of positive freedom in inward subjection to God, not of mere opposition and negation, such as found expression in the gainsaying, the indifferentism, and the superciliousness of the Sadducees. And, again, in the guardianship of the Sanctuary of the Soul, in its consecration to God, in the avoidance of all that defiled it, or hindered its aspirations and communing with God, in contempt of the world and renunciation of its attractions, Christ touched all that was true and high in Essenism. Yet He was at infinite distance from its foreign and heathen elements, its mysticism, and depreciation of matter, associated as this was with materialistic views of the soul and of all good. His was another way to purity and God-fellowship than theirs; His, other views of the body and of matter: not its contempt, but its God-consecration. And as we thus view the historical Christ — the unlettered carpenter's Son from far-off Nazareth — it is surely impossible not to recognise the transcendent greatness of that contest for the ideal which He sustained, untainted by the thoughts of His time, uninfluenced by its motives and ambitions, undeterred by its threats and torture — pure, holy, and spiritual And so all ages look up to the absolute light, the infinite loneliness, the unspeakable grandeur of His Divine Majesty. But to the Nationalist, as we have learned to know him, every embodiment, every outward manifestation of what contravened his deepest idea and highest ideal, was absolutely intolerable. What business had the Roman in Palestine; how dared the idolater profane by his presence the sacred soil that was God's; how could he claim to rule the people, whose sole King was the Jehovah of the mighty Arm and outstretched Hand, that erst had cloven the sea, and Whose breath would subdue nations under Him? Even to admit it as a fact, nay, to tolerate it, was an act of unfaithfulness to God, of deep unbelief, of apostacy. So patriotism and religion — both in abnormal forms — mingled. They whetted their daggers to the sound of psalms, and sharpened their swords to the martial music of prophetic utterances, which to them seemed only denunciations and imprecations on the enemy. And they laid them down to dream in those Apocalyptic visions, which form the subject-matter of so much in the Pseudepigraphic

writings. To be sure, these were the visions of Latter-Day Prophets, not the deeds of the men of action. But the Nationalists sought, in their own rough way, to translate them into history. Yet they contained much besides that which these men heard in them. For, in some respect, the nationalist idea had burned deep into the soul of the Jewish people. In one sense, every true Jew was a Nationalist, and could not help being such, so long as he was a Jew. Nay, it clung to him with all the instincts of centuries of descent, and hereditary disposition; with all the remembrances of his upbringing and surroundings; and with all the latent enthusiasm of his Eastern and Jewish nature — and that, even if he tried to shake off his Judaism. We see it in that knotty problem, which gave every Jew a pang of conscience: whether it was lawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar; we hear it in the proud answer with which they would fain have silenced themselves as well as Christ: 'We be Abraham's children, and have not been in bondage to any man.' Nay, so mighty was it, that Paul, appealing from argument to the irrepressible voice of the heart, could, in a Roman assembly and in presence of the Procurator himself, appeal to that Romanised voluptuary, Agrippa, and his un-Jewish sister Berenice, in such words as these concerning the great common hope: 'King Agrippa, believest thou the Scriptures? I know that thou believest!'

It was this deeper appeal to the Scriptures, or rather to the great Messianic hope contained in them, which in these Apocalyptic Pseudepigrapha presented an element, that found a response in many that were quiet in Israel, and also in some measure kept before their minds the great hope of the future, as so-called Millenarian books do in our generation. Just as many a one must have listened to the stern preaching of the Puritan in his conventicle, or of the Covenanter on the hill-side, who yet would not have sent a Round head to battle nor a claymore to the field — even although their hearts might beat faster, and their cheeks flush, at the tale of their deeds; so were there many in Israel — under the shadow of its glorious Temple, in the lonely towns of the Judæan wilderness, and in the far-off places of Galilee — to whom these Apocalyptic visions would bring thoughts, remembrances, hopes of the Messiah and the Messianic Day: of Israel's deliverance, of God's reign, and of the conversion of the world. And all the more dangerous might such thoughts become from their conjunction with Nationalist aims and deeds. Thus we can perceive a new meaning in, and an absolute and pressing need for, the warnings contained in the last Discourses of Jesus about the danger of false Christs. And so the Nationalists, in the frenzy of their despair, plunged with the one hand the dagger in the hearts of supposed 'trimmers,' 'backsliders,' and secret enemies of God — whose very existence and presence among them turned aside the interposition of the Lord — while they lifted the other hand on high, appealing to, and expecting at every moment, the visible help of the God of Israel, Who would rive the heavens, and in some terrible catastrophe annihilate the enemy in the very hour of his triumph and pride. But mark the contrast. In the same hour did the Disciples, who so well knew how stedfastly to believe and calmly to die, warned and directed by Christ, withdraw from the doomed City to the quietness and retirement of Pella. And there and then, in the orderly course of God's trackless Providence, was that effected which, if it had been done immediately after the Death of Christ, would have been a violent and dangerous disruption; but which was now a peaceful, natural, and necessary separation of the Church of the New Testament from the ancient Synagogue. And this also was of God — and is to us evidential of the Mission of His Christ.

What has been stated will in measure explain the object and the subject-matter of the so-called Pseudepigraphic writings. They take up, and further develop in a peculiar direction, the predictions

of the Old Testament; they present them in visions of the future, shaped in that peculiar imagery and language which we call Apocalyptic; and they do so, not as the outcome of the inferences or speculations of their writers, but as bringing direct communications from Heaven, connected with such names as Enoch, Moses, Isaiah, Baruch, or Solomon. This, however, with notable exceptions; since perhaps the most interesting of these books is that which embodies the so-called Sibylline Oracles. This describes one aspect of these writings. Another, is their intensely Jewish character — not merely as setting forth the advantages and the future bliss of Israel, but in their references to the nations of the world: either hortatory, we might almost call it missionary, or else denunciatory; sometimes scornful, but always triumphant in tone. There are other tendencies, and of a party character, in these writings — mostly, as it seems to me, in opposition to the Pharisaic direction. Some of them are certainly of Hellenist origin — that is, they were the work not only of Western Jews, but are the outcome of Hellenist thought. But even those which may be regarded as springing from the soil of Palestine, have not a Pharisaic cast. On the contrary, they all breathe, more or less, the new spirit. This is very remarkable, and further bears witness to what has already been stated as important in the study of the origines of Christianity: that, with all its parade and pomp of Messianic assertion, Traditionalism and Rabbinism had no heart for, and very little sympathy with, the great Messianic hope of Israel. Theirs was another and, in many respects, antagonistic direction, in which the Messiah could only bear the part of a political deliverer. Yet another noteworthy point, of a different character, may here be mentioned. All the canonical books of the Old Testament have come down to us in Hebrew or Chaldee. But, as in the case of the Apocrypha, none of the Pseudepigraphic writings have been preserved in that language, although some of them were no doubt written in the tongue of Palestine. We have them either in the Greek, or else in Ethiopic, in Latin, or other version. This also forms a line of demarcation, not to be quite ignored by those who would dispute the canonicity of some of the Old Testament writings. The Pseudepigraphic writings cover the period from about 170 before, to about 90 after Christ. Those preserved to us are eight in number: The Book of Enoch, the Sibylline Oracles, the Psalter of Solomon, Little Genesis , 4 th Esdras (our 2nd Esdras), the Ascension and Vision of Isaiah, the Assumption of Moses, and the Apocalypse of Baruch. Although, in their present form, some of them contain interpolated portions of a much later date, they are all deeply interesting and instructive. For, first, they give us an insight into the thoughts and expectations of the time — away from Pharisaism, Sadduceeism, and Essenism. Secondly, they present to us the continuance of the great Messianic hope. If certain of the Apocrypha, such as the story of the Maccabees or of Judith, would to the old Jewish world have been what Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs' is to many of us, some of those visions of Israel and of the kingdom may have been eagerly read in Israel as a kind of apocalyptic 'Pilgrim's Progress.' We can imagine a Nationalist poring, with burning cheeks, over these visions and predictions; or some in the far-off lands of the Dispersion dwelling with intense delight on what presented such a blessed contrast to all they saw, and were constrained to experience, in the heathen world around. But our thoughts ever recur to those quiet, deeply pious ones on Palestine's sacred soil, who may have thought with rapt anticipation of the prophetic truths which these works recalled, and the happy possibilities which they suggested. We know that an Apostle quotes from two of these writings — the Book of Enoch (Jude 1:14; Jude 1:16) and the Assumption of Moses. (Jude 1:9) And it awakens a scarcely less deep interest to find, that such of the Pseudepigraphic writings as date after Christ bear evident mark of Paul's influence, and this, notwithstanding their own decided anti- Christian tendency. But what, above all else, appeals to

us, is the picture of the messiah and of the Messianic kingdom which these works present. To this our attention must next be directed — as also to the relation which the Pseudepigrapha bear, on the one hand, to the prophecies of the Old Testament, and, on the other, to the reality, as first heralded by the Baptist, and then fully set forth in Christ.

01.11. Lecture 11.

Lecture 11.

Analysis and Contents of the Pseudepigraphic Writings, their Teaching Concerning the Messiah and Messianic Times. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? … He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. — John 1:19; John 1:23.

THESE words and, still more, the thoughts, of him who uttered them, seem to transport us into an atmosphere, different from that of the writings to which attention has been called in the two preceding Lectures. In truth, from the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphic writings to John the Baptist, there is an immense step backward, as well as forward — a retrogression to the Old Testament: yet not merely to rekindle the old light, but to kindle a new one by its flame. That this may appear more clearly, we shall have to give a more detailed account than in the last Lecture of the Pseudepigraphic writings — describing their character, titles, and general contents. [231]

[1]. There cannot, I fear, be any doubt but that many works belonging to this class of literature have perished. It is natural to suppose that writings of this kind would exercise a peculiar fascination on many minds. They were about that future into which we so eagerly peer, and about Israel and its relation to those hateful dominant Gentiles, whose pride was so soon to be laid low. That future belonged to those Jewish readers, who were the ‘elect,’ and it was painted in such wondrous outline, and with such bright colouring. Even the mystical symbolism of the language and imagery was an additional charm. It implied a peculiar knowledge, which would form an inner select circle among the ‘elect,’ who would daily make proselytes, as they unfolded the wonders of their discoveries, or produced a new book — a rare acquisition in those days — or discussed the different interpretations offered. But of all this literature only the following eight books have remained — none of them (as already stated) in Hebrew or Aramæan, and most of them only in first, or even second translation. a. Probably the oldest of them is the so-called ‘Book of Enoch,’ numbering 108 chapters. It consists, besides a Prologue and an Epilogue, of five portions, giving an account of the fall of the angels, of Enoch’s rapt journeys through heaven and earth, together with certain apocalyptic portions about the Kingdom of Heaven and the Advent of the Messiah. The oldest part of it is supposed to date from about 150 B.C.; the second oldest from the time of Herod the Great; the date of the others cannot be fixed. b. ‘The Sibylline Oracles,’ in Greek hexameters, consist in their present form of twelve books. They are full of interpolations — the really ancient portions forming part of the first two books, and the largest part of book 3: (vv.97-807). These sections are deeply imbued with the Messianic spirit. They date from about 140 before our era, while another small portion of the same book is supposed to date from the year 32 B.C. c. The small collection known as the ‘Psalter of Solomon’ consists of eighteen Psalms, and probably dates from more than half a century before our era. The work, which I regard as fragmentary, breathes ardent Messianic expectancy. d. ‘Little Genesis,’ or ‘The Book of Jubilees,’ dates probably from about the time of Christ. It is a kind of supplement to the Book of

Genesis, and breathes a strong anti- Roman spirit. e. From about the same time, or a little earlier, dates the so-called ‘Assumption of Moses’ — unfortunately only a fragment of twelve chapters. It consists of an historical and an apocalyptic portion, and is strongly anti-Pharisaic in spirit, especially as regards purifications. This is very remarkable; nor is it less interesting to find that this is one of the works from which Jude quotes (Jude 1:9), the other being the Book of Enoch (Jude 1:14-15); and even more so, that Paul seems to have been familiar with it. His account of the corruptness of the men in ‘the last times’ (2 Timothy 2:1-5) so clearly corresponds with that in the ‘Assumption of Moses’ (vii. 3-10), that it is difficult to believe the language of the Apostle had not in part been borrowed from it. f. and g. On the other hand, there are two of the Pseudepigrapha which bear evident reference to the writings of Paul. Both of them date after the destruction of Jerusalem; but ‘The Apocalypse of Baruch’ is probably older than 4 Esdras (our apocryphal 2 Esdras). The ‘Apocalypse of Baruch’ is also unfortunately not quite complete. It consists of eighty-seven chapters. Our interest is stirred by noticing how closely some of its teaching runs alongside that of Paul — either controversially, as in regard to the doctrine of justification; or conciliatorily and intermediately, as in regard to the consequences of the fall in original guilt; or imitatively, as in regard to the resurrection of the body. If the author of the ‘Apocalypse of Baruch’ must have read the Epistles of Paul to the Romans and the First to the Corinthians, the influence of Pauline teaching appears even more strongly, almost exaggeratedly, in the statements of 4 Esdras in regard to the fall and original sin. h. Lastly among these works, we have to mention the so-called ‘Ascension and Vision of Isaiah,’ describing the martyrdom of the prophet, and containing certain Apocalyptic portions about what he saw in heaven. Although based on an older Jewish document, the book is chiefly of Christian heretical authorship.

[2]. Such are the monuments left us of the ancient Apocalyptic — or, as from their assumption of spurious authorship it is called, Pseudepigraphic — literature. Its interest is threefold.

1st. Historical. They set before us another direction than either in the Apocrypha or in Hellenism. As previously stated, the Apocrypha are either historical — including the legendary — or else philosophising. They carry us back to the glories of Judaism, or else seek to reconcile it with present thought and philosophy — which, indeed, is the final object of Hellenism. But this Apocalyptic literature represents a quite different tendency. It lays, so to speak, one hand on the Old Testament hope, while with the other it gropes after the fulfilment in that dim future, of which it seeks to pierce the gloom.

2ndly. The Pseudepigrapha are of theological interest, as showing what the Jews before and about the time of Christ — or at least one section of them — were expecting concerning the Messiah and Messianic times. One might indeed long to know something more of the personal views and feelings of yet another class — that represented in New Testament history by such names as Zacharias, Elizabeth, Anna, Simeon, and even Joseph and the Virgin Mother. But beyond the thought that their steadfast gaze was bent on the Eastern sky, where sure prophecy taught them that the Sun of Righteousness would rise, we have not the means of associating with them anything more definite than intense, simple, and receptive expectancy.

3rdly. Yet another, and only in one sense inferior, interest attaches to these writings. We may designate it as exegetical. For, if these books represent the symbolism and the form in which Apocalyptic thoughts presented themselves to a large portion of the Jewish people, it will readily

be understood, that knowledge of it must also be of great importance in the study of the Apocalyptic portions of the New Testament — not, indeed, as regards the substance, but the form and imagery of them. For our present argument, however, we only require to present a general account of the teaching of these writings concerning the Messiah, and the Messianic kingdom. Here we are not obliged to limit our review to such of them as are strictly pre- Christian, since the views on this subject entertained in the first century of our era could not have been materially different from those in the preceding century. [232]

[1]. As regards the promise of the Messiah. Here we turn in the first place, and with special interest, to the 'Sibylline Oracles.' In the third book of these, which (in such portions as I shall quote from) dates from about 140 B.C., the Messiah is described as 'the King sent from heaven,' who would 'judge every man in blood and splendour of fire.' [233] And the vision of Messianic times opens with a reference to 'the King whom God will send from the Sun.' [234] We cannot fail here to perceive a reference to Psalms 72:1-20, especially as we remember that the Greek (LXX) rendering, which must have been present to the Hellenist Sibyl, fully adopted the Messianic application of the passage to a premundane Messiah. We also think of the picture drawn in the prophecies of Isaiah. According to the Sibylline books, King Messiah was not only to come, but He was to be specifically sent of God. He is supermundane, a King and a Judge of superhuman glory and splendour. And, indeed, that a superhuman kingdom, such as the Sibylline Oracles paint, [235] should have a superhuman King, seems only a natural and necessary inference. One other remark — though somewhat aside from the subject — must be allowed. If, as certain modern critics contend, the Book of Daniel is not authentic, but dates from Maccabean times and refers to the Maccabees, it may well be asked to what king the Sibylline Oracles point, which certainly date from that period; and what is the relationship between the supposed Maccabean prophecies of the Book of Daniel, and the certainly Messianic anticipations of the undoubted literature of that period?

Even more distinct than the utterances of the Sibylline Oracles are those of the so- called 'Book of Enoch,' the oldest portion of which dates, as already stated, from about the year 150 B.C. Our difficulty here is, that a certain class of critics have, although I believe wrongly, assigned a portion of the book, which is full of the most interesting references to the Messiah as 'the Woman's Son,' 'the Son of Man,' 'the Elect,' 'the Just One,' to Christian authorship and interpolation. In order not to occupy any controverted ground, I propose to omit all references to these portions. But even in the admittedly oldest part the Messiah is designated as 'the Son of God,'[323] not, indeed, in the Christian sense of Eternal Sonship, but as indicating superiority over all creatures; and this is further expressed by a symbolic description of the Messiah as He Whom 'all the beasts of the field and all the fowls of heaven dread, and to Whom they cry at all times.' [236] A still more emphatic testimony comes to us from the 'Psalter of Solomon,' which dates from more than half a century before Christ. The King who is to reign is described as of the house of David. [237] He is the Son of David, Who comes, at a time known only to God, to reign over Israel. He is a righteous King, taught of God. He is Christ the Lord; He is pure from sin, and thus can rule His people, and banish His enemies by His Word. God renders Him strong in the Holy Ghost, wise in council, with might and righteousness. 'This is the beauty of the King of Israel, Whom God hath chosen to set Him over the house of Israel to rule it.' And yet we remember that no descendant of David was in view in those dark times.

[2]. I must be even more brief in my account of the teaching of the Pseudepigrapha about the blessedness which Israel would experience in Messianic days. In the Book of Enoch [238] Israel is represented as in the Messianic days coming in carriages, and borne on the wings of the wind from East, and West, and South. Again, the Jewish Sibyl connects these three events: the coming of the Messiah, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the restoration of the Dispersed, [239] when all nations would bring their wealth to the house of God. [240] The Psalter of Solomon bursts into this strain:

'Blessed are they who shall live in those days in the reunion of the tribes which God brings about.' Then 'the King, the Son of David,' having purged Jerusalem and destroyed the heathen, would by His Word gather together a holy people and rule over it with justice, and judge the tribes, allotting to them tribal possessions, when 'no stranger would any longer dwell among them.' (Psalms 17:1-15 : passim.) In the 'Book of Jubilees' we are told, that God would gather all Israel 'from the midst of the heathen, build among them His Sanctuary, and dwell with them.' That Sanctuary was 'to be for ever and ever,' and God would appear in view of every one, and every one would acknowledge that He was 'the God of Israel, and the Father of all the children of Jacob, and King upon Mount Zion from everlasting to everlasting.' [241] We pause for a moment at these words of perhaps a contemporary of Christ, to realise what indignation it must have called forth in the hearts of those who expected all this, when the charge, however false, was spread that He Who professed to be the Messiah, but was really only the carpenter of Nazareth, had actually proposed to destroy the Temple, instead of bestowing upon it eternal glory. On the utterances of the 4th Book of Esdras it is not necessary to speak at length, as the work forms part of our collection of Apocrypha. This only will we say, that if ch. 13:27-50 is carefully examined, it will be seen how deeply tinged is the prophetic description which it contains with the teaching of the Gospels and the Words of our Lord concerning 'the last things' — although, not as He put it, but in a Judaic form. In fact, it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion, that the writer had been acquainted with the Discourses about the 'Last Things.' The inference to which this leads as to the date of the Gospels of SS. Matthew and Luke need scarcely be indicated.

[3]. What has been said about the 'Last Things' reminds us of another point connected with the Messianic reign, to which these Pseudepigrapha refer. In common with all Jewish writings, they speak of a period of woe, commonly called the 'Sorrows of the Messiah.' This was to precede the Advent of the Christ. But it would not be difficult to point out the essential differences in regard to this between Jewish thinking and the Discourses of Christ on the subject, much misunderstood as they have been.

We can only notice the account given in the Pseudepigrapha of the 'signs' which were to usher in the Advent of the Messiah. Among these, the Sibylline Books mention a kind of warfare visibly going on in the air, [242] swords in the starlit sky, the falling from it of dust, the extinction of the sun, and the dropping of blood from the rocks. In 4th Esdras [243] we find the expression of distinctly Judaic views, although once more tinged by New Testament influence, especially as regards the moral aspect of these 'signs.' The Book of Jubilees [244] gives a detailed description of the wickedness and physical distress then prevailing upon earth. According to the Sibylline Books, [245] when these signs in air and sky would appear most fully, and the unburied bodies that covered the ground were devoured by birds and wild beasts, or swallowed up by the earth, God would send the King Who would put an end to all unrighteousness. After this would the last

war against Jerusalem ensue, when God would fight from heaven against the nations, and they ultimately submit themselves to Him. [246]

Substantially the same views appear in the Book of Enoch expressed in symbolic language, [247] We are told that, in the land, now restored to Israel, the Messiah-King would reign in a new Jerusalem, purified from all heathen elements, and transformed. That Jerusalem had been shown to Adam before his fall, but after that withdrawn, as well as Paradise. It had been again shown to Abraham, to Moses, and to Ezra. Its splendour baffled description. As regards the relation of the heathen nations to that kingdom, views differed according to the more or less Judaic standpoint of the writers. In the Book of Jubilees, Israel is promised possession of the whole earth, and 'rule over all nations according to their pleasure.' In the 'Assumption of Moses' this ascendancy of Israel is conjoined with vengeance upon Rome. On the other hand, in the Sibylline Oracles the nations are represented as, in view of the blessings upon Israel, turning to acknowledge God, when perfect mental enlightenment, absolute righteousness, as well as physical well-being, would prevail under the rule (literal or moral) of the Prophets. This, as we know, was the Hellenist Messianic ideal. Lastly — and this marks another point of divergence from the New Testament — the Pseudepigrapha uniformly represent the Messianic reign as eternal, and not broken by any apostasy. Then would the earth be renewed, and the Resurrection follow. The latter would, at least according to the Apocalypse of Baruch, be under the same conditions in which men had died, so as to prove that it was really a resurrection of the old. Only after that would the transformation of the risen take place — the just appearing in angelic splendour, while the wicked would fade away.

After this brief review, it will, I hope, be admitted that the evidence is complete of the existence of a Messianic hope during the interval between the close of the Canon and the coming of Christ — and this, alike in the Grecian and the Palestinian Jewish world. To say that it had grown out of Old Testament prophecy, and was intertwined with the life of the Jewish people, seems now only a truism. On the other hand, it must also be clear, that the Old Testament Messianic idea had undergone great, I had almost said terrible, modifications. As regards its form of presentation, it had become external and almost ossified. The figurative language of the Prophets had been perverted into a gross literalism, which gave its coloring to the picture of the Messiah and of His kingdom and reign. As regards the substance of the prophetic hope, we remark that there was not any enlargement, nor spiritual development, of the Old and preliminary dispensation, nor yet any reference to the new law to be written in the heart, and to the new spiritual blessings in forgiveness and righteousness. In short, we perceive not any outlook on a new state and condition of things: only an apotheosis of the old. The grand universalism, when all mankind would become children of the Heavenly Father, is lost behind a mere triumph of Judaism, thus giving place to an exclusive and narrow nationalism. Lastly, the moral elements regarding sin, repentance, spiritual preparation, and universal mercy — in short, the distinctively Christian and, we may add, eternal elements, are wanting. Not so did the Old Testament present the Messianic hope; not so could it have presented it as good tidings to all men.

Before proceeding to point to the period of fulfilment in Christ, we may here pause to mark the contrast between the Messianic idea, as presented in almost contemporary literature, and the preaching of the Baptist, and still more, that of the Christ Whom he announced. We think of that herald-voice in the wilderness calling to repentance and spiritual preparation; still more, of the Christ Himself, with the words, 'Our Father' ever on His lips; with the deeds of eternal compassion

and eternal mercy ever in His life; with the love of absolute self-surrender and self- sacrifice in His death; and we realise this as the meaning and outcome of His Mission — that He has opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. We think of His world-Mission and of the regeneration of man, and of His teaching to all mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles. We remember that, of the many hopes which He kindled, of the many expectations of which He brought the realisation, He, a Jew and the Jewish Messiah, was only silent on one, but this the only one which occupied His contemporaries — the glorification of Israel, and its exaltation. His kingdom was to be within the soul: of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Surely, this Christ, Whom the Gospels present to us — so Jewish, and yet so utterly un- Jewish — this King of Israel and Desire of all nations, was in very truth the fulfilment and the completion of the Old Testament promise — the Sent-of-God — not merely Jeshua, the Carpenter's Son of Nazareth in Galilee, nor yet the outcome of the Messianic thoughts and expectancy of His time and of its conceptions. And as we realise the essential difference between this Christ of all humanity, Who meets the inmost wishes and the deepest craving of our hearts — and that of the Jewish ideal, we feel that both He and His teaching must have been of God.

01.12. Lecture 12.

Lecture 12.

The Last Stage in Messianic Prophecy; John the Baptist; His Character and Preaching. The Fulfilment in Christ. And thou, child, shall be caned the prophet of the Highest: for thou shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways. Luke 1:76. THE more we succeed in transporting ourselves into those times, the less shall we wonder that multitudes flocked to the preaching of the Baptist, from ‘Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan.’ It was, indeed, in more than the barely literal sense, ‘A Voice crying in the wilderness.’ Never before in the history of Israel had there been such absence of every prospect of a new life. If, on the eve of the rising of the Maccabees, heathen opposition had been more systematic and cruel, imperilling the very existence of Judaism, there was at least a reaction in Israel, a conflict, and the possibility, if not the prospect, of national deliverance. But only wild fanatics could, unless maddened by despair, have hoped to shake off the rule of Rome, represented by the insolence and tyranny of a Pilate. With such a governor in place of the Son of David, with the High Priesthood almost hereditary in the proverbially corrupt and avaricious family of Annas, the condition of things seemed hopeless; while within Israel itself the life-blood of the Old Testament could scarcely pulsate any longer through the ossified arteries of Traditionalism and Rabbinism. The self-righteousness and externalism of the Pharisees, the indifference and pride of the Sadducees, the semi-heathen mysticism of the Essenes, the wild extravagance into which Nationalism was running, — all this was, indeed, making the once pleasant land a moral wilderness. And now, of a sudden, ‘the Voice’ was heard in the wilderness! It was not that of Pharisee, Sadducee, Essene, or Nationalist — and yet the Baptist combined the best elements of all these directions. He insisted on righteousness, though not in the sense of the Pharisees; nay, his teaching was a protest against their externalism, since it set aside the ordinances of Traditionalism, though not after the manner of the Sadducees. John also practised asceticism and withdrew from the world, though not in the spirit of the Essenes; and as regarded Nationalism, none so zealous as the Baptist for the Kingship of Jehovah and the rule of heaven, though not as the Nationalists understood it. The Baptist was an altogether unique personality in that corrupt age. Even a Herod Antipas heard him; even a Josephus recorded his life and work; even the Pharisees and priests from Jerusalem sent a deputation to inquire — nay, to ask him (so truthful was he, and so little suspected of mere fanaticism) — whether he was ‘the coming One,’ or Elijah, or one of the prophets. Let us see what light his history and preaching reflect on the great Messianic hope of old, and on its fulfilment in the New Testament.

[1]. The character and life of the Baptist prove him to have been sent of God. It is not easy to speak of him in moderate language. Assuredly, among those born of women there was none greater than he. We can picture to ourselves his child-life: how, specially God-given, he was trained in the home of those parents whom Holy Scripture describes as ‘righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.’ When he had attained the legal age, he would (or might) take part in the services of the Temple as a priest; and he must have witnessed them, long before that period. In Jerusalem he must have been brought into

contact with the world of Jewish thought and religious life. But neither of these could hold, nor yet turn him aside from that calling for which at his Annunciation the Angelic message had designated him.

What the years of solitude and meditation in the wilderness, that followed, were to him, we can only infer from his after-life and preaching. That they were years of self- discipline, we learn from his self-abnegation, which rises to the sublimity of entire self-forgetfulness. That they did not issue in mental and moral hardening, to which such ascetic life might naturally lead, we infer even from his openness to doubt, and from the intense sensitiveness of his conscience, which appears in that sublimely heroic and most deeply touching incident of his closing life — the embassy of inquiry which he sent to Christ from his dungeon. And that he was most true and most truthful, who can doubt that considers what it must have cost such a man at the close, nay, near the martyrdom, of such a life, openly to have stated his difficulties, and to have publicly sent such a message. That he was simple, absolutely self- surrendering, and trustful, almost as a child, every act of his life testifies. That he feared not the face of man, nor yet courted his favour, but implicitly acted under a constraining sense of duty as in the sight of God, his bearing alike towards the Pharisees and before Herod amply proves. But above all, it is his generosity, and his unselfishness, and absolute self-abnegation, which impress us. In a generation pre- eminently self-righteous, vain-glorious, and self-seeking, when even on the last journey to Jerusalem the two disciples nearest to Christ could only think of pre- eminence of place in the kingdom, and when, in the near prospect of suffering to the Master, a Peter could ask: What shall we have? when, even at the last meal, the disciples marred the solemn music of this farewell by the discord of their wrangle about the order of rank in which they were to be seated at the Supper — the Baptist stands alone in his life and in his death: absolutely self-forgetful. Here we would specially remind ourselves of the two high-points in the personal history of John. The first of these is marked by the events recorded in John 3:25-30. Nay, the ascent to it had begun even before that. It was on the very first Sabbath of John's emphatic testimony to Jesus as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, that the two who stood beside him, his most intimate and close disciples — shall we not also call them his friends — John and Andrew, following the heavenly impulse that drew their souls, forsook their master for the yet silent Christ. It was only the beginning of a far wider defection. Not long afterwards his remaining disciples — and we almost love them for this generosity of their wrongful zeal of affectionate attachment — came to him with these, to them, so distressing tidings: 'Master, He who was with Thee beyond Jordan to Whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same baptiseth, and all men come to Him.' So then it seemed as if every tangible token of success in a life of such self-denial and labour were to be utterly taken away! The multitude had turned from him to another, to Whom he had borne witness; and even the one solitary badge of" his distinctive mission — baptism — was no longer solely his. But immediately we have the sublime answer which the Baptist made to his disciples: 'Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.' Not to murmur, but even to rejoice in his seeming failure of success, so that his preparatory work merged in the greater Mission of the Christ; and — not in the hour of exaltation, when most of us feel as if we could find room for nobler sentiments, but in the hour of failure, when we, mostly all, become intensely self-conscious in our disappointments — to express it, not in the resignation of humility, but with

the calm of joyous conviction of its rightness and meetness: that he was not worthy to loose the latchet of His sandal this implies a purity, simplicity and grandeur of purpose, and a strength of conviction, unsurpassed among men. And, to me at least, the moral sublimity of this testimony of John seems among the strongest evidences in confirmation of the Divine claims and the Mission of Christ.

There was yet another high-point in the life of the Baptist — though in a very different direction. Here evidence comes to us from the opposite pole in his inner life: not from the strength, but from the trial of his faith. Months had passed since his dreary imprisonment at Macchærus and yet not one step would, or perhaps could, the Christ take on behalf, or for the vindication, of him who had announced Him as the coming King. And the tidings which reached the Baptist in his lonely dungeon about the new Christ, as One Who ate and drank with publicans and sinners, were seemingly the opposite of what he had announced, when he had proclaimed Him as the Judge Whose axe would cut down the barren tree, and Whose fan would throughly sift His floor. Or — oh, thought too terrible for utterance! — might it all have been on a dream, an illusion? In that dreadful inward conflict the Baptist overcame, when he sent his disciples with the question straight to Christ Himself. For such a question, as addressed to a possibly false Messiah, could have had no meaning. John must have still believed in Him when he sent to Christ with the inquiry — reported both by Matthew (Matthew 11:2-6), and Luke (Luke 7:18-23): 'Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?' But at what cost of suffering must it have been that the Baptist did overcome, and what evidence of truthfulness, earnestness, and nobility of heart and-purpose does it reveal! And there is yet another aspect of it. Assuredly, a man so entirely disillusioned as the Baptist must have been in that hour, could not have been an impostor, nor yet his testimony to Christ a falsehood. Nor yet could the record which shows to us such seeming weakness in the strong man, and such doubts in the great testimony-bearer, be a cunningly devised fable. I repeat, that here also the evidential force of the narrative seems irresistible, and the light most bright which the character and history of the Baptist shed on the Mission of Christ.

[2]. In what has been said we have already in part anticipated the next point in our argument. And yet something remains here to be added. For the character and life of the Baptist cannot be viewed as isolated from his preaching. On the contrary, they reflect the strongest light on it, even as, conversely, his preaching reflects light on his character and life. One who was, and lived, as the Baptist must also have been true in his preaching; one who believed, and therefore preached, as the Baptist must have been true in his life. And both his preaching and his life shed light on the great Old Testament hope, and on its realisation in Christ. When we ask ourselves what had determined the Baptist, after so many years of solitude in the wilderness, to come forth into such blazing light of publicity, to which his eyes had been so unaccustomed, and to face those multitudes, to whom he had so long been a stranger, with a message so novel and startling, his own account of it leaves us not in doubt of the motive for a change so complete, and, as we view it, so uncongenial to him. Unhesitatingly, to every kind of audience and inquiry, and with unwavering assurance, he tells it — yet not in fanatical language — that a direct call had come to him from God; a direct mission and definite message had been entrusted to him from heaven. It was to announce the Christ, and to prepare for Him. His public appearance, his call to repentance, his proclamation, his warnings, his baptism, his instruction to his converts — all imply, that in his inmost soul he felt, and that he acted, as sent directly from God. And not only so, but he also

expressly tells us that he had a sign Divinely given him, by which actually to recognise Him, Whose near Advent was to be the burden of his preaching. ‘And I knew Him not; but He that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost.’ From this it at least follows, that the Baptist himself entertained no doubt of his Divine commission to his special work.

One theory in explanation of his assertion we shall, I think, all dismiss almost instinctively. Certainly the Baptist did not speak conscious falsehood; certainly, he was not an impostor. Of the other alternative remaining we may, with almost equal confidence, put aside the supposition that his had been the dream of a fanatic. This is contradicted by all the facts of his life. There is not anything connected with it which we could designate as fanatical. And there is much to be urged in the opposite direction. To begin with: it were difficult to understand how fanaticism could at once attach itself to One Whom, as he tells us, he had not even known before He came to him for baptism, and Whose life had hitherto been one of the utmost privacy, and under so unpromising circumstances as a carpenter’s home in the far-off Nazareth of that Galilee, which the Judæans held in such supreme contempt.

Other considerations also are opposed to the theory of fanaticism. A fanatic would, in the circumstances, have at once identified himself with, and attached himself to Him, Whom he proclaimed as the Messiah; and he would have appeared prominent in His following. John remained alone, content to do his humble work, and willing to retire from the scene when he had done it. Again, a fanatic would have been alienated by the loss of his own adherents, and disappointed when he had to retire into obscurity and forsakenness. John accepted it, and rejoiced in it, as the goal of his mission. A fanatic would, in the peculiar circumstances, have been thoroughly, and also irretrievably, disillusioned by imprisonment and the prospect of martyrdom. And the Baptist was disillusioned of many of the expectations which he had apparently connected with the kingdom, when he had announced that the axe was already laid to the root of the tree. He was disillusioned of these, and therefore he sent his final inquiry to Christ; but he was not disillusioned of the Christ, and therefore he sent his disciples to Him. But why should we hesitate to believe what so naturally suggests itself in view of the character and life of the Baptist: that this good, true, unselfish, strong man, spoke what was real, and therefore acted what was true, when he declared himself to have been Divinely commissioned to announce, and to prepare for, the coming Saviour?

And, as we further look at it, is it not quite opposed to the theory of fanaticism, and quite accordant with belief in his true Divine commission, that what the Baptist enjoined as preparation” for the kingdom was so simple and unfanatical. He preached not asceticism, nor long days of fasting and devotion; not enforced poverty, nor prescribed sacrifices, but repentance, and then a return into ordinary life, — only with a new moral purpose, and a new resolve to sanctify every occupation, however lowly or full of temptation, by a simple and earnest walk with God. It is not thus that a Jewish fanatic of those days would have spoken to the soldiers of Herod, nor to the publicans of Rome, nor to sinners, nor even to the self- righteous who gathered to his baptism, and asked his direction. Nor is it in such manner that a Jewish fanatic of those days would have spoken — nor yet even the most advanced in what represents the extreme opposite, or Hellenist, direction — when he addressed the Jewish people as a ‘generation of vipers,’ or referred to them as a tree to

the root of which the axe was laid. We cannot find anything elsewhere, in any sense, parallel or even analogous to it. For such language we must go back to an Isaiah or a Jeremiah. Nor yet would a Jewish fanatic of those days have said to the Jewish people: ‘Begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.’ From all that we have learned of the history of Israel; from all that we have gathered of its literature, whether in the Apocrypha or the Pseudepigrapha, we can at least draw this one unassailable conclusion — that anything more un-Jewish than what John preached, or more unlike his times, could not be imagined. Assuredly, it must have come to him as a new fact, and a new message, directly from heaven.

And, lastly, as we compare the descriptions in the Pseudepigrapha, the utterances of the Rabbis, and the well-known expectations entertained by the people, with what John the Baptist announced concerning the coming kingdom, as one not of outward domination and material bliss, but of inward righteousness and acknowledgment of God — even the most prejudiced must admit, that if he were a Jewish fanatic, it was at least not in the language of Jewish fanaticism that he spoke by the banks of Jordan. A similar conclusion is reached when we approach the subject from the opposite direction, and ask ourselves what light the preaching of the Baptist reflects on his character and life. Here the one clear outstanding fact is, that the burden of John’s preaching was the announcement of the Advent of the kingdom and of its King. And this, not as something new, nor yet, on the other hand, as answering to the expectations of his contemporaries, but solely as the fulfilment of the Old Testament promise. All else in his work and preaching was either preparation for, or the sequence from, this announcement. At the very outset of his mission this is placed in the forefront: ‘As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.’ And this key-note of his preaching is heard in almost every recorded utterance of his. It would be difficult, without a detailed examination, to convey how constantly the Baptist recurs to Old Testament prophecy, and how full his language and its imagery are of it. His mind seems saturated with the Old Testament Messianic hope, especially as presented in the prophecies of Isaiah, and we cannot but conclude that, during those many years of his solitary life in the wilderness, this had been the very food and drink of his soul. If with reverence be it said — the Mission of Jesus Christ might be summed up in the words: ‘Our Father which art in heaven,’ that of His forerunner is contained in these: Lo, the kingdom of God, promised of old to our fathers To make this statement more clear, let us think of the Old Testament sources of the few recorded sentences in the Baptist’s preaching. For such expressions of his as: ‘generation of vipers,’ we refer to Isaiah 59:5; for the ‘planting of the Lord,’ of which he speaks, to Isaiah 5:7; the reference to these ‘trees’ recalls Isaiah 6:13; Isaiah 10:15; Isaiah 10:18; Isaiah 10:33; Isaiah 40:24; that to the ‘fire’ reminds us of Isaiah 1:31; Isaiah 9:18; Isaiah 10:17; Isaiah 5:24; Isaiah 47:14; the ‘floor’ and the ‘fan’ are those of Isaiah 21:10; Isaiah 28:27, &c.; Isaiah 30:24; Isaiah 40:24; Isaiah 41:15, &c.; the duty of the penitent to give ‘bread and raiment to the poor’ is that enjoined in Isaiah 58:7; while ‘the garner’ of which John speaks is that of Isaiah 21:10. Besides these we mark the Isaiah reference in his baptism (Isaiah 52:15; Isaiah 1:16), and especially that to ‘the Lamb of God’ (Isaiah 53:1-12); while, lastly, in reply to his final inquiry through his disciples, Christ points to a solution of his doubts, in accordance with the prophecies of Isaiah 35:5-6; Isaiah 61:1; Isaiah 8:14-15. And — to sum up in one sentence this part of our argument — if what has been stated in detail is incompatible with the theory that John spoke and acted as a Jewish fanatic, it is, on the

other hand, the fact, that his character, life, and history, as set before us in the Gospels, are absolutely consistent with the declaration which he so solemnly made, and upon which he died, — that he had been directly sent of God to announce the near fulfilment in Christ Jesus of that great Messianic hope of the Old Testament which had set his own soul on fire.

One step in the argument still remains — although I almost shrink from taking it. I have in the preceding course of Lectures endeavoured to show how the great hope of the Old Testament gradually unfolded; I have followed its progression through the long ages to the period when the last prophet came, who summed up all Old Testament prophecy, concentrated and reflected its light, and pointed to Him in Whom was the fulfilment. If I were to attempt describing how completely the Reality answers to the portraiture by the Prophets, I would have to pass in review the entire history of 'the Man of Sorrows' the Sacrifice of the Great High Priest, the teaching of the Prophet of the New Covenant, the spiritual glory of the King in His beauty, and the provision which He has made, to which not they of that generation, but all the faithful and true-hearted, from East and West, and North and South, are bidden welcome, together with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Here we must pause — since any attempt at comparison between our Lord and even those who stood closest to Him, and were most transformed into His likeness, seems almost irreverence. This only

I say, that if we think of the Baptist, or of his utterances, by the side of those of Christ, we feel that, however pure and elevated, they still occupy merely Old Testament ground. Christ stands alone in His Kingdom. John is within the porch; Christ has stepped forth into the free air, into the new light and the heavenly life. And He has brought it to us and to all men. In conclusion, I desire simply to indicate three great points which seem to mark the fulfilment of all in Christ. They are: — First, the finality of the New Testament. We are no longer in presence of preparatory institutions, nor do we expect any further religious development in the future. All is now completed and perfected. Secondly, we mark the universality of the New Testament dispensation and Church, as no longer hemmed in by national boundaries, or narrowed by national privileges, nor yet hindered by any limitation, intellectual or spiritual. It is a universal Church: for all men, for all times, for all circumstances. Thirdly, we are in view of this great characteristic — spirituality. To every one of us the Kingdom of God, with its blessings, comes directly from God; everyone is to be taught from above, and taught by the Holy Spirit; and .to each the teaching is in its principle, perfect; in its character, heavenly; and in its nature, a spiritual life planted within the heart, unfolding and developing even to the completeness of the better state, and the 'many mansions' of the Father's house. If Christ had taught mankind no more than this, 'Our Father, which art in heaven,' — if He had opened no other vision, given no other hope than that of the 'many mansions,' — He would have reflected the light of heaven upon earth, removed its woes, lightened its burdens, sweetened its sorrows, and smoothed its cares. Even so would He have been to mankind the fulfilment of the great Messianic hope of a universal brotherhood of peace and of holiness. But He has been more than this. He hath done what He hath said; He hath given what He hath promised. In Him is the Reality of all, and to all ages. In the fullest meaning of it, He is 'the Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of His people Israel.' APPENDICES.

1. EICHHORN'S ARRANGEMENT OF GENESIS.

Passages with the Name of Elohim

Parts Intercalated

Passages with the Name Jehovah

Genesis 1:1 to Genesis 2:8 Genesis 5:1-28 Genesis 5:30-32 Genesis 6:1-2 Genesis 6:4 Genesis 6:9-22 Genesis 7:11-16 (without the three last words) Genesis 7:18 Genesis 7:10 (perhaps) Genesis 7:20-22 Genesis 7:24 Genesis 8:1-19 Genesis 9:1-17 Genesis 9:28-29 Genesis 11:10-26

Genesis 2:4 to Genesis 3:24

Genesis 4:1-26 Genesis 5:29 Genesis 6:8 Genesis 6:5-8 Genesis 7:1-9 Genesis 7:16 (the three last words)

Genesis 7:10 Genesis 7:17 Genesis 7:19 (perhaps) Genesis 7; Genesis 23 Genesis 8:20-22 Genesis 9:18-27 Genesis 10:1-32 Genesis 10:1-9

Genesis 11:27-32 Genesis 19:29-38 Genesis 20:1-17 Genesis 21:2-32 Genesis 22:1-10 Genesis 22:20-24 Genesis 23:1-20 Genesis 25:7-11 Genesis 25:19-20 Genesis 26:34-35 Genesis 28:1-9 Genesis 28:12; Genesis 28:17-22 (partly) Genesis 30:1-13 Genesis 30:17-19 Genesis 30:20 (the half) Genesis 30:21-24 (in the middle) Genesis 31:2 Genesis 31:4-48 Genesis 31:50-55 Genesis 32:1-32 Genesis 33:1-17 Genesis 33:18-20

Genesis 14 :

Genesis 12-13:18 Genesis 15. Genesis 16. Genesis 18-19:28 Genesis 20:18 Genesis 21:1 Genesis 21:33-34 Genesis 22:11-19 Genesis 24:1-67 Genesis 25:1-7 Genesis 25:12-18 Genesis 25:21-34 Genesis 26:1-33 Genesis 27:1-46 Genesis 28:10-22 Genesis 29:1-35 Genesis 30:14-16 Genesis 30:20 (the half) Genesis 30:24 (the end) Genesis 31:1 Genesis 31:3 Genesis 31:49

Genesis 33:31 Genesis 35:1-29, Genesis 36:1-36, Genesis 40:1-23, Genesis 41:1-57, Genesis 42:1-38, Genesis 43:1-34, Genesis 44:1-34, Genesis 45:1-28, Genesis 46:1-34, Genesis 47:1-27, Genesis 48:1-22, Genesis 49:29-33, Genesis 1:12, Genesis 1:15, Genesis 50:15-26 Perhaps (Genesis 33:18-20, Genesis 34:1-31

Genesis 36:1-43 Perhaps Genesis 49:1-27 Genesis 38:1-30 Genesis 39:1-23 Genesis 47:28-31 Genesis 49:1-28 Genesis 50:1-12 Genesis 50:14 2. ANALYSIS OF THE PENTATEUCH AND OF ITS CRITICISM. A GENERAL sketch, by way of analysis of the Pentateuch and of its criticism, may be helpful, if not to the student, yet to the general reader. For the materials of it I am indebted to Kleinert, ‘Abriss der Einleitung zum Alten Testament.’ To this analysis I propose to add an enumeration of the passages, which Wellhausen designates as composing QP; and, lastly, a brief notice of some of the Laws — especially in the

‘Priest-Code’ — which the Rabbis found necessary to modify, for the purpose of adapting them to the later circumstances of the people. I. Analysis of the Pentateuch-Legislation (according to Bertheau and others). The Pentateuch-Legislation forms one connected whole, which consists of these three parts: —

[1]. The fundamental Institutions of civil and religious life: Exodus 20:1-26, Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-33; and Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27. Closely connected with these are the sections: Exodus 34:11-26; Exodus 13:2-16; Numbers

33:51, &c. The (first) Exodus group of Laws (Exodus 20:1-26, Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-33) is based on the manifestation of Jehovah, as the Deliverer from Egyptian bondage; the Leviticus-group on that of Jehovah as the Holy One.

[2]. The Laws relating to Worship (the Sanctuary, priesthood, sacred observances and seasons), which constitute the main portion of the legislation between Exodus 25:1-40 : And Numbers 19:1-22 : They involve a detailed system of symbolism as regards objects, measurements, and numbers. Such notices as Leviticus 7:37-38; Leviticus 11:46-47; Leviticus 13:59; Leviticus 14:54-55; Leviticus 15:32-33, show, that the groups of Laws to which they are attached must have circulated as rubrics among the priesthood.

[3]. The Deuteronomic Laws, Deuteronomy 5:1-33, Deuteronomy 6:1-25, Deuteronomy 7:1-26, Deuteronomy 8:1-20, Deuteronomy 9:1-29, Deuteronomy 10:1-22, Deuteronomy 11:1-32, Deuteronomy 12:1-32, Deuteronomy 13:1-18, Deuteronomy 14:1-29, Deuteronomy 15:1-23, Deuteronomy 16:1-22, Deuteronomy 17:1-20, Deuteronomy 18:1-22, Deuteronomy 19:1-21, Deuteronomy 20:1-20, Deuteronomy 21:1-23, Deuteronomy 22:1-30, Deuteronomy 23:1-25, Deuteronomy 24:1-22, Deuteronomy 25:1-19, Deuteronomy 26:1-19, referring to the civic relations of the people. In part they reproduce the legislation of the middle books of the Pentateuch but with the special object of making religion more matter of the heart, and of softening manners; while, in part, they are intended to adapt the former legislation to the settlement.of the people in Canaan. This part of the Pentateuch was intended for popular instruction; it contains a sort of popular ‘constitution;’ and lays special stress on one central sanctuary. The legislation of the middle books is arranged in sections, grouped, especially, around Numbers 7:1-89, Numbers 10:1-36; and, whereas in Deuteronomy it is generally Moses who is introduced as the speaker, in the middle books it is almost always God Who speaks. II. Testimony of the Pentateuch itself as to its Authorship. The Pentateuch ascribes its authorship to Moses. Here we note the following, as expressly attributed to him: —

[1]. The Book of ‘The Covenant’ (Exodus 34:10-26), in Exodus 24:4; Exodus 24:7; comp. Exodus 20:1.

[2]. ‘The Covenant’ (Exodus 20:2 to Exodus 23:33), in Exodus 34:27.

[3]. The account of ‘the Journeys’ (Numbers 33:3-49), in Numbers 33:2.

[4]. The ‘Book’ concerning Amalek [248] in Exodus 17:14.

[5]. ‘The Book of the Law’ in Deuteronomy 31:9-11; Deuteronomy 24:1-22, Deuteronomy 25:1-19, Deuteronomy 26:1-19.

[6]. ‘The Song’ of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1-52) in Deuteronomy 21:22. All these notices apply to particular sections of the Pentateuch, except Deuteronomy 31:9-11; Deuteronomy 24:1-22, Deuteronomy 25:1-19, Deuteronomy 26:1-19, which may refer to the whole Law.

III. References to the Pentateuch in other parts of the Old Testament.

[1]. The Law [Thorah] of the Lord is referred to as in actual existence, and as well known: Psalms 12:6; Psalms 17:4; Psalms 18:22; Psalms 19:7; Psalms 37:31; and in Psalms 119:1-176; Amos 2:4; Hosea 4:6; Hosea 6:7; Hosea 8:1; Jeremiah 9:12; Jeremiah 11:2; Jeremiah 16:11; Jeremiah

18:18; Jeremiah 31:32; Jeremiah 44:10; Jeremiah 44:23; Zephaniah 3:4; and in the following passages in the historical books: 2 Samuel 22:23; 1 Kings 6:12 &c.; 1 Kings 9:4; 1 Kings 11:33; 2 Kings 10:31; 1 Chronicles 22:12; 2 Chronicles 15:3; 2 Chronicles 19:10; Ezra 7:10.

(The above are irrespective of verbal references, and allusions to notices and events in the Pentateuch.)

2ndly. There are references to the Pentateuch as written or a 'book,' in Psalms 40:7-8; Hosea 8:12; Jeremiah 8:8; comp. Jeremiah 31:33. And in the historical books: Joshua 1:8; Joshua 8:31; Joshua 24:26; 2 Kings 11:12; 2 Kings 14:6; 2 Kings 22:8; 2 Kings 23:3; 2 Kings 23:21; 2 Kings 23:24; 2 Chronicles 17:9; Nehemiah 9:3.

3rdly. There are references to the Law as specifically that of Moses in Malachi 4:4; Daniel 9:11; Daniel 9:13; and in the historical books: Joshua 1:7; Joshua 8:3 l; Joshua 22:5; Joshua 23:6; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; 2 Kings 18:6; 2 Kings 18:12; 2 Chronicles 23:18; 2 Chronicles 25:4; 2 Chronicles 34:14; 2 Chronicles 35:12; Ezra 3:2; Ezra 6:18; Ezra 7:6; Nehemiah 8:1; Nehemiah 8:14.

(The Commandments, as commanded by the Prophets — Ezra 9:11 — are distinguished from the Law of Moses in 2 Kings 17:13; Zechariah 7:12; comp. Daniel 9:10-11; that of the Pentateuch being specifically designated as 'the Law,' Nehemiah 10:34.) IV. Testimony of Tradition concerning the Pentateuch.

[1]. The earliest testimony of the Synagogue and the Church is to the effect, that Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch, with the exception of the last eight verses, which were added by Joshua. So in Babha B.14b. According to Josephus [249] and Philo, [250] the last eight verses are also Mosaic. According to Ber. 12b; Meg. 22a; Taan. 27a, the division into Parashahs and verses is also due to Moses.

[2]. The later Judæo-Christian tradition is thus expressed by Tertullian: [251]

'Hierosolymis Babylonica expugnatione deletis omne instrumentum Judaicæ literaturæ per Esdram constat restauratum esse.' [252] V. Modern Orthodox View. The whole Pentateuch, with the exception of the closing section, was written by Moses. This closing section is variously defined as commencing at Deuteronomy 31:1; Deuteronomy 31:24; Deuteronomy 32:44; Deuteronomy 32:48; and Deuteronomy 33:1. The view just described is supported by the following arguments: —

[1]. That it is that of the Synagogue and of the New Testament.

[2]. That it is borne out by the references in the Old Testament which we have already quoted.

[3]. That the Pentateuch has a unique literary character of its own, differing from that of the other books in the Old Testament.

[4]. That the historical notices, as also the subsequent books, of the Old Testament necessarily presuppose the existence of the Pentateuch.

[5]. That the account in the four last books of the Pentateuch gives the impression of having been written by an eye-witness, and that Genesis could not have been composed posterior to these

books.

[6]. That the theory which treats the Pentateuch as consisting of different documents, dating from different periods, is unproved, unsatisfactory, and open to many objections, and leaves room for every variety of differing opinions, thus showing its unreliableness.

(The difference in the use of the Names of God, and other supposed marks of different authorship are explained as intentional. At the same time, many writers on the orthodox side have admitted the existence of later glosses in the Pentateuch.) VI. General Objections of Negative Criticism to the Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch.

[1]. Moses appears in the Pentateuch as belonging to a period of history that is past; his character is discussed, and his death related. (Comp. here Exodus 6:26-27; Exodus 11:3; Deuteronomy 33:4; Numbers 12:3; Numbers 12:6; Deuteronomy 34:1-12)

[2]. Not only the pre-Mosaic, but the Mosaic history is told not in a regular manner, but incompletely, and not always clearly, while large periods of it are altogether omitted.

[3]. There are in the Pentateuch twofold relations of the same events, contradictions, and also narratives which expressly refer to other sources.

[4]. From the geographical point of view, the notices are such as to show that the Pentateuch dates after the settlement in Canaan; while, from the historic point of view, there are references to the time of Moses as one already past, and to events and names which imply a later date.

[5]. The legislation of the Pentateuch is not only exclusively adapted to the settlement in Canaan, but seems to imply a lengthened development following upon the latter.

These and similar objections have, it is hoped, been sufficiently met in Lectures VII. and VIII., or, at least, principles have been laid down which are of easy application to such objections; while reasons have been adduced which render the theory of a late composition of the Pentateuch untenable.

VII. Analysis of the supposed Structure of the Pentateuch. The modem (more or less negative) School of Critics, to which frequent reference has been made, supposes the Pentateuch to embody, besides certain ancient pieces, three great, and some subsidiary, documents — the whole having been afterwards ‘redacted’ into one work.

A. The supposed very ancient (partly Mosaic) pieces and fragments in the Pentateuch are stated to be the following: —

[1]. The Decalogue, Exodus 20:1-17.

[2]. The substance of the song, Exodus 15:1-27 [3]. A number of legislative and dogmatic utterances, and remains of ancient popular poems.

[4]. The main body of ritual laws: Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34, Leviticus 17:1-16; Numbers 19:1-22

[5]. The sketch of the tabernacle, Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38, Exodus 31:1-18.

[6]. Diverse fragments of popular books, chiefly biographical.

[7]. The ‘Book of the Covenant,’ Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-33.

[8]. The .law about the Amalekites in Deuteronomy 25:17-19.

[9]. The main body of the Laws in Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27.

[10]. The basis of Deuteronomy 33:1-29 :

B. But the main body of the Pentateuch is supposed to consist of the following three documents: —

[1]. The work of the Elohist, also called the ‘1st Elohist,’ ‘the original document,’ ‘the Book of the Origins,’ ‘the Annalist,’ &c. This document is supposed to embrace the main body of ritual laws (all Leviticus), and a continuous historical narrative, from Genesis 1 to Deuteronomy 34 :, although scanty in extent and details. The historical narrative marks three stages. In the first, God is designated as Elohim; in the second, as E1 Shaddai; and only from the Exodus onwards as Jahveh. Corresponding to these are three stages of the Covenant: that of peace with the world; of promise to the fathers; and of the Law with Israel. No ritual observances appear enjoined previously to the Legislation on Mount Sinai, although the principal epochs are marked by theocratic institutions. The style and conception of the work are easily distinguishable: in older times, simple and reverent; in Mosaic times, priestly. The legislation is carried out almost upon a system — hence, frequently of an abstract character. The genealogies are marked by a regard for special numbers.

(The widest differences prevail as to the date of the historical and the ritual portions of this work, and whether they are due to one or two authors; as also which of the two is the older. On these points details would be here out of place. We only remark that opinions differ as to the date of the composition of one or another part of the work, the differences being so great as to vary from the time of Saul to that after the Exile.)

[2]. The work of ‘the Jehovist;’ or the ‘Supplementer;’ the ‘fourth’ or else ‘fifth narrator;’ the ‘prophetic narrator,’ &c. In this document the name Jahveh appears from the first. An observance of Theocratic ordinances is said to be assumed in it as from the first; the style is vivid; the views expressed concerning the nature of man and revelation are of a developed character — m short, the book is declared to bear the prophetic impress. According to some, these Jehovist portions do not form part of an independent work, but are only intended to supplement the work of the Elohist; while, according to others, the work of the Jehovist was an independent and original composition. Some also hold that the work was mainly a compilation from materials already existing. The work is described as mainly historical, and containing the oldest civil laws and old national hymns. It was composed after the separation of Judah and Israel (between 975 and 775 B.C.), and by a Judæan.

[3]. The work of the Deuteronomist, variously dated from the time of the Judges to that of Manasseh or of Josiah. The writer is supposed to have known the work of the Jehovist. To these three must be added: —

C. Certain subsidiary documents in the Pentateuch: —

[1]. ‘The Book of the Wars of Jehovah’ (Numbers 21:14). According to some this was a very ancient collection of war- and popular poems; according to others, a larger historical work which the Jehovist incorporated into his own book.

[2]. ‘The Younger Elohist,’ or the ‘third,’ or else the ‘theocratic narrator,’ whose work is supposed to comprise those parts of Genesis which accord with the original Elohist in the use of the name Elohim, but have not any of the other peculiarities of this writer, as well as some other portions in the other books of the Pentateuch. According to some, the author was an Ephraimite. Certain critics place its composition in the time of Hezekiah, and suppose that it formed a kind of basis for the labours of the Jehovist.

[3]. According to some critics, the ritual portions in the book of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 40:1-49, Ezekiel 41:1-26, Ezekiel 42:1-20, Ezekiel 43:1-27, Ezekiel 44:1-31, Ezekiel 45:1-25, Ezekiel 46:1-24, Ezekiel 47:1-23, Ezekiel 48:1-35) form the basis of the ritual legislation in the work of the Elohist, especially in that part of it beginning with Leviticus 17:1-16

[4]. Some critics speak of a Deuteronomer (in distinction to the Deuteronomist), who completed the work in the spirit and style of the Deuteronomist, but at a later time and under different circumstances, adding Deuteronomy 34:10-12; Deuteronomy 29:21-27; Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Deuteronomy 31:24-29; perhaps also Deuteronomy 28:28-37 and Deuteronomy 28:49-57, as well as the address, Deuteronomy 1:1-46, Deuteronomy 2:1-37, Deuteronomy 3:1-29, Deuteronomy 4:1-49.

D. Finally we have the Redaction of the whole work. — There had been a preliminary redaction by the Jehovist. According to some, the final redaction of the Pentateuch was made by the Deuteronomist, while others regard it as posterior to Deuteronomy, and variously place it in the time of Josiah (Ewald); shortly before the Exile (Kuenen); under Ezra (Bertheau); or after Ezra (Graf, Kayser). In this redaction the plan of the Elohist is supposed to have been followed, and extended to the whole Pentateuch.

VIII. The Document QP according to Wellhausen. This document is said to consist of the following sections and verses in the Pentateuch: [253] — Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-5: (omitting Genesis 1:29); Genesis 6:9-22; Genesis 7:11-24, Genesis 8:1-5 (omitting Genesis 7:12, Genesis 7:16-17, Genesis 7:22-23, Genesis 8:2); Genesis 8:13-19; Genesis 9:1-17, Genesis 9:28-29; Genesis 10:1-7, Genesis 10:20, Genesis 10:22-23, Genesis 10:31-32; Genesis 11:10-32 (omitting Genesis 11:29); Genesis 12:4-5; Genesis 13:6, Genesis 13:11-12; Genesis 19:29; Genesis 11:30; Genesis 16:3, Genesis 16:15-17; Genesis 21:2-5; Genesis 21:23; Genesis 25:7-17 (omitting Genesis 25:11 a), Genesis 25:19-20, Genesis 25:26; Genesis 26:34-35; Genesis 27:46, Genesis 28:1-9; Genesis 29:24, Genesis 29:29 (??); Genesis 31:18 (beginning with ‘and all his goods’); Genesis 35:9-15 (omitting the word ‘again’ in Genesis 35:9), Genesis 35:22-29; Genesis 36:6-8; Genesis 36:40 to the words ‘these are the generations of Jacob’ in Genesis 37:2, Genesis 46:6-7 (probably also Genesis 46:8-27); Genesis 47:5-11 (omitting Genesis 47:6), Genesis 47:27-28; Genesis 48:3-6 (perhaps Genesis 48:7); Genesis 49:1-33; (ver. Genesis 49:28?) Genesis 49:29-33; Genesis 50:12-13. Exodus 1:1-5; Exodus 1:7 (omitting the words ‘multiplied and waxed’), Exodus 1:13-14, and the first half of Exodus 1:14 a; Genesis 2:23-25 (beginning at ‘the children of Israel sighed’); Exodus 6:2-30, Exodus 7:1-13, Exodus 7:19-23; Exodus 8:1-3, Exodus 8:11-15; Exodus 9:8-12; Exodus 12:1-20, Exodus 12:28, Exodus 12:37 a, Exodus 12:40-41; Exodus 12:43-51, Exodus

13:1-2, Exodus 13:20; Exodus 14:1-2 and in 4 the words ‘and they did so,’ Exodus 14:8-9 (omitting the word ‘all ‘before ‘the horses,’ and ending with ‘and his army’), Exodus 14:10 (containing, however, only the words ‘and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord’), Exodus 14:15 (omitting the words ‘Wherefore criest thou unto me?’), Exodus 14:28 (??); Exodus 16:1-3, Exodus 16:9-13 a, Exodus 16:16-18 a, Exodus 16:22-26, Exodus 16:31, Exodus 16:35 a; Exodus 17:1 (omitting the words ‘there was no water for the people to drink’); Exodus 19:1 (a supplementation), Exodus 19:2 a; Exodus 24:15, from ‘and a cloud covered the mount’ to the words ‘Moses went into the midst of the cloud’ in Exodus 24:18; Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38, Exodus 31:1-18 (?); Exodus 34:29-32, Exodus 34:33-35 (?); Exodus 34:35-40. Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38, Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20, Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34, Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46, Leviticus 27:1-34. Numbers 1:1-8; Numbers 13:1-17 a, Numbers 13:21, Numbers 13:25-26 a and first half of b, Numbers 13:32 to ‘and all the people that we saw in it,’ &c.; Numbers 14:1-2, Numbers 14:5-7, Numbers 14:10, Numbers 14:26-29 (?), Numbers 14:34-36; Numbers 15:1-41; Numbers 16:1-2 (in part), Numbers 16:8-11, Numbers 16:16-22, Numbers 16:35; Numbers 17:1-13; Numbers 18:11 a, Numbers 18:2, Numbers 18:31 b, Numbers 19:6, Numbers 19:12 (probably), Numbers 19:22-29; Numbers 21:4 (the beginning), Numbers 21:10-11(?); Numbers 25:6-31; Numbers 32:16-19 (leaving out the word ‘ready-armed’ in Numbers 32:17), Numbers 32:24, Numbers 32:28-36. Deuteronomy 32:48-52; Deuteronomy 34:1 a, Deuteronomy 34:7 a(?), Deuteronomy 34:8-9. Joshua 4:19; Joshua 5:10-12; Joshua 9:17-21; Joshua 9:15 b; Joshua 13:15-33 (secondarily); Joshua 18:1 (inserted here); Joshua 14:1-5 (3 secondarily); Joshua 14:15; (excepting Joshua 14:13-19 and some other things); Joshua 16:4-8; Joshua 17:1-4; Joshua 17:7; Joshua 17:9 (leaving out the words ‘these cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh’); Joshua 18:11-25; Joshua 19:1-51 : (leaving out Joshua 19:47, Joshua 19:49-50, also the enumeration of the names of cities and perhaps other parts); Joshua 20:1-9 : (the Deuteronomic additions to it are very late); Joshua 21:1-42; Joshua 22:9-34.

(In this analysis no notice has been taken of R — i.e. the Redactor, to whom certain connecting words or verses are attributed — notably these five: in Genesis 35:9 the word ‘again’; Exodus 16:6-8; Exodus 16:36; Exodus 20:11; in Joshua 9:27 the words ‘for the congregation and’; and Joshua 16:9. The reader will now, in some measure, understand what was meant when, in the text of these Lectures, the Pentateuch, as reconstructed by Wellhausen, was described as the most curiously tesselated, or rather mosaic, piece of workmanship; and when it was asserted that there exists no parallel instance of any such composition; nay, that, from a literary point of view, such construction of it seems incredible.) IX. Later Rabbinic Modifications and Adaptations of specific Laws, especially in the ‘Priest-Code.’

These modifications and adaptations are (at least in part) here enumerated, chiefly because they afford presumptive evidence that what we know as the Mosaic Legislation could not have been of late date, since, in many points, it was so little adapted to the circumstances of later times, that the Rabbinic Law had to introduce modifications and additions to render the old Mosaic Law practicable. Generally, also, the reader may be interested in having placed before him some of

these Rabbinic adaptations of the Mosaic Law. Not to speak of the original sources in the Talmud and Midrashim, as well as in dogmatic works, from which our knowledge must here be derived, even such literature of the subject as is generally accessible to the student is scattered over many tractates, brochures, and articles, or else incidentally treated in books on kindred subjects, so that a full apparatus criticus would be very difficult. But the following may be mentioned as most easily accessible: Saalschütz, d. Mos. Recht; Hamburger's Real-Encyklopædie; and, in reference to certain points bearing on the criticism of the Pentateuch, the Articles by Hoffmann in the Magazin für d. Wissensch. d. Judenthums (as regards the Sacrificial Laws, vol. 4:, 1877, pp. 1-17; 62-76; 125-141; 210-218; as regards the Law of Witnesses, vol. 5: pp. 1-14; and as regards the theory of Wellhausen and of his school, vol. 6:, 1879, pp. 1-19; 90-114; 219-237; vol. 7:, 1880, pp. 137-156; 237-254); and especially D. Castelli, La Legge, 1884. To the latter I am here especially indebted, although my standpoint is the opposite of his; and I have followed the lead of Castelli in the brief and general review, which was all that could be attempted in this place.

[1]. The 'Priest-Code.' In the text of these Lectures the view has been expressed that the Mosaic arrangements must have been prospective, and that at the time of their introduction, the services of the Tabernacle could not have been regularly carried out. On the opposite theory of the introduction of the Priest-Code at the time of Ezra, and for the purposes of the priesthood, we would have expected detailed arrangements. But, as a matter of fact, such are not found in the Priest-Code, while they are supplemented at a later period. Thus, as regards the sacrificial function of the High-Priest, no distinction is apparently made between him and ordinary priests, and only the services of the Day of Atonement are assigned to him in Leviticus 16:2-3, whereas, in Rabbinic Law, he had, besides other functions, the precedence of officiating every other day in the Sanctuary (Yom. 14a). Similarly, the Pentateuch is silent about the order and succession of the various priestly families in the ministry of the Sanctuary. We remember that this was only fixed by the arrangement of the priesthood into twenty-four courses in the time of David, while tradition ascribes to Moses an arrangement into eight or else sixteen 'courses,' which relieved each other every week. But it seems incredible that, if the Priest-Code had dated from the time of Ezra, it would not have contained some such arrangement.

Again, it militates against the supposed later origin of the Pentateuch, that whereas Leviticus 21:7 forbids the marriage of a priest, among others, with one who is generally designated as 'profane,' the Talmud explains this, quite in the spirit of the times of Ezra and later, as one who was the offspring of an unlawful marriage by a priest, adding prohibition of marriage with a proselyte, one who had been a slave, had previously contracted an unlawful marriage, or been divorced, according to the provisions of the law of Levitate. Of all this the Priest-Code says nothing, although we would certainly have expected it on the theory in controversy. In the opposite direction evidence of the older date of the Mosaic legislation comes to us from the later Rabbinic modification of the ancient law that ordered a sinning daughter of Aaron to be burned — and this, alike as regards the mode of her execution, and the cases to which the law applied. On the other hand, the same later spirit, as compared with the Priest-Code, appears in the permission of summary vengeance on priests who officiated in a state of Levitical defilement, [254] Similarly, the early Mosaic code, which fixed the commencement of the Levitical ministry at thirty, and its termination at fifty, years of age, (Numbers 4:3, Numbers 4:23, Numbers 4:30, — see, however, Numbers 8:24.) was already modified in 1 Chronicles 23:24; 1 Chronicles 23:27, (Comp. Ezra 3:8)

while the Talmud adds that the limitation to fifty years of age applied only to the wilderness-period, when the severe work of the transport of the Tabernacle required full strength. [255] But these modifications seem utterly incompatible with the origination of the Priest-Code in the time of Ezra. Lastly, on this point, it is evident that if the Priest-Code had been of such late date — if, indeed, it had not been quite prospective — it would have provided for all those priestly officials whose services were afterwards found requisite, and who, according to Rabbinic Law, formed a staff of hierarchic officers attached to the Temple. [256] From the priesthood we naturally pass to the provision made for its support. Here also the details and provisions found necessary in later legislation prove the early date and prospective character of the Pentateuch-legislation. Thus, whereas Numbers 18:12 assigns to the priesthood the first-fruits of the wheat, the later Law extends this to seven kinds of grain, to dates, and fruits, and pomegranates, [257] Similarly, the general statement that the first of the dough was to be offered to the Lord, is interpreted in the Mishnah as meaning that it was to be given to the priests. [258] And from the direction in Numbers 15:19, together with that in Deuteronomy 18:4, it was further inferred that firstfruits of everything were to be given to the priest before any other offering, or before any use was made of the produce. Indeed, strictness in this respect was one of the distinctive marks of the Pharisee. This was called the Terumah gedolah, the proportion of which was not fixed, but supposed to amount to at least one-sixtieth. [259] On the other hand, the Talmud limits the provision of Leviticus 27:32, which seems to assign to the priesthood the tenth of the herds and flocks, by declaring that the proprietors were to make of these a sacrificial meal, in which the fat was to be burned on the altar, and the blood sprinkled, while only that part of them was to go to the priests which was theirs in votive offerings. [260] Moreover, the Rabbis fixed, in connection with Deuteronomy 14:22-29, what was called a second tithe, of which a festive meal was to be made in Jerusalem every year, while every third year it was to be given to the poor (the poor's tithe), [261] And in connection with all this the Mishnah has those elaborate provisions collected in the tractate Demai, which fix the ordinances in reference to the produce, concerning which it is doubtful whether tithes had been given or not. A slight consideration will convince that, if the priest-arrangements had originated in later times, some provision would have been made to secure that the High-priests should possess revenues larger than those of the common priests. This, especially in the period after Ezra, when the civil government mainly devolved upon them. Accordingly we find that the Talmud directs that, if the High-priest had not property of his own, the other priests were to contribute so much, that his income should exceed that of any single common priest. Similarly, the High-priest was to have precedence over every other priest in regard to the sacrifices and gifts offered in the Sanctuary. On the other hand, the Pentateuch makes no difference between the High-priest and common priests as regards property or revenues.

If we were to read the Pentateuch without fully entering into the symbolic meaning of sacrificial worship, we could only wonder at the absence of any mention of public prayer in its services. We can understand it from the standpoint of the Pentateuch, as the original Mosaic legislation, but not from that of later times, especially those which witnessed the institution of Synagogue-worship. Accordingly, the Rabbinic law fixed, not only certain times for prayer, but also introduced prayer in the services of the Temple. A somewhat similar development appears in the Rabbinic enlargement of the prohibition in Leviticus 22:8 into special directions how animals were to be slaughtered for human food. [262] We mark similar enlargements, showing the alterations of later times as compared with the primitive arrangements of the Pentateuch, even in regard to the preparation of

the incense, which, according to Exodus 30:34-38, was to consist of four ingredients, while the Talmud adds to these other seven perfumes, besides salt and other materials. [263] The preparation is said to have been a secret, hereditary in one family. The same inferences come to us when comparing the detailed rubrics concerning the mode of sacrificing, and the various rites at the festivals, with the very primitive and general directions of the Pentateuch. We mark in them what a later time required, when all these observances were carried into constant and universal practice. Even so simple an arrangement as that which regulated the annual Temple-tribute, had not been provided for, but was fixed by the Rabbinic law.

Evidence as to the later requirements of more detailed ordinances than those in the Pentateuch in regard to festive sacrifices — and especially what was known as the chagigah — multiplies upon us as we compare the directions of the Rabbis with the provisions of the Mosaic Law. They indicate further need, due to the circumstances of later times. In any case, some more detailed provisions must have been made, if the Priest-Code had been of late origin. And beyond all this we may here refer to the rites in the admission of proselytes, to the details about what rendered an animal fit or unfit for sacrifices, and to other ritual questions, the difficulties of which would occur in later practice. Even as regards the supposed new institution, or at least transformation, of the festivals of the first and fifteenth day of the seventh month, we mark how entirely different, or at least how largely elaborated, they appear in Rabbinic tradition — that is, as actually observed in later times. The same might be predicated of the observances of the Day of Atonement. Nor — to extend our view beyond the Priest-Code — do we here require to remind ourselves of the similar transformation in regard to the Sabbatic law, while we might almost ask ourselves why there should not have been in the Priest-Code, if it were of later date, some allusion to such a festival as that of Esther (Purim), or any, however disguised, reference to the taking of Jerusalem by the enemy, which might have been introduced in some connection with the Day of Atonement.

Evidence in the same direction comes to us as we compare the principles laid down in the Mosaic Legislation as to the dedication of animals, things, or persons to the Sanctuary, as also concerning vows, with those of later times, as explained in the traditional Law. The same remarks might be made in regard to the mode of trying a woman suspected of adultery; in regard to the directions given about phylacteries, and the fringes to be worn on the garments, the Sabbatic year, that of Jubilee, and other ordinances, in all of which the Rabbinic Law marks the practical requirements or questions arising in later times as compared with the simplicity of the earlier Mosaic Law.

[2]. Very partial as this review has necessarily been, it is hoped that it may effectually support the argument in favour of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch legislation. And it might have been extended, to show that other portions of the Pentateuch also must have been of earlier date than recent criticism has assigned to them. Even Castelli admits the existence of such a difference between the Pentateuch legislation generally and that of tradition, [264] and that the latter must, in many respects, be regarded as an adaptation of the ancient Law to later circumstances and to questions then arising. [265] But it may, I think, be most reasonably argued that such further development and conciliation would, in very many cases, not have been requisite — that the new wants would have been at least initially indicated-if the introduction and teaching of the Pentateuch had dated from the year 444, and if it had received so many further accretions after that period. [266]

01.13. Footnotes

Footnotes [1]--I am here using the term in the ordinary sense, not in that which will be explained in the sequel.

[2]--It is exceedingly interesting to me to find that a distinguished critic belonging to a very different school (Professor Nöldeke) has similarly expressed his objection to the new arrangement of the Pentateuch, proposed by Wellhausen. He denies any ‘development along a straight line.’ (‘In der gesetzlichen Litteratur ist keine geradlinige Entwickelung zu erkennen.’) Comp. Herzog, Real-Encykl., 2nd edition, vol. xi. p. 444.

[3]--Sanh 97a.

[4]--On Song of Solomon 2:14

[5]--The Old Testament, in contradistinction to the Apocrypha, are a series of spurious writings mostly professing to be derived from Old Testament personages or else dealing with Old Testament events, but all of them Apocalyptic, though in varying measure, and bearing distinctly, though in different degree, on the Messianic Kingdom. For their fuller characterisation and enumeration, see Lecture X.

[6]--Jos. Ant. xiv.3. 2; comp. xiv.5. 4; War, ii.6. 2.

[7]--The Pentateuch question is discussed in subsequent Lectures.

[8]--Otho, Lex..Rabb., p. 173.

[9]--This Lecture was delivered on the first Sunday in Advent, 1880.

[10]--In Antiq. xviii.3.3.

[11]--Ant. iv.6.5.

[12]--Ant. x.10.4.

[13]--For a full discussion of the Messianic allusions in the writings of Josephus, I take leave to refer to my article on ‘Josephus’ in Smith and Wace’s Dictionary of Christian Biography, vol. iii. p. 458.

[14]--In. the popular use of the term ‘purpose,’ it is only less objectionable than the words ‘plan’ and ‘scheme’ which are so often applied by theologians to the Divine Being. In our A. V. the word ‘purpose’ occurs ha reference to God both in the Old and the New Testament. In the former it occurs only in Isaiah and Jeremiah (Numbers 14:34, margin, is a wrong rendering), The equivalents for it in Isaiah are ■■■ to counsel, or take counsel, and ■■■to form — in this aspect: to form ideally, to predestine, of which usus Isaiah 22:11; Isaiah 37:26; Isaiah 43:7; Isaiah 46:11, are instances. In Jeremiah the word used is ■■■ to think, with the solitary exception of Jeremiah 4:28, where it is ■■■which has more the’ meaning of meditating. In the New Testament it only

occurs in the Pauline writings, where it uniformly stands for πρ■θεσις (or its verb) in the sense of placing before one's self. It seems to me best explained by the expression ε■ς α■τ■ το■το in Romans 9:17. But neither in the Old nor the New Testament does it mean what we call 'purpose.'

[15]--Prophets and Prophecy in Israel, p. 376.

[16]--The chief exceptions are when not a general sketch of, but a special feature in the great prophetic future is set before us (such as Micah 5:1, in the A.V. Micah 5:2, or certain parts of Psalms 22:1-31.) In such cases we would naturally expect absolute literality. [17]--Subject, of course, to the exception mentioned in the previous note. [18]--So — it may be said, without enumerating them — by all writers. But, as instances, Oehler (Theologie d. A. Test.) may be mentioned as an instance on the one side, and Anger (Vorles. ii d. Gesch. d. Mess. ldee), on the other side.

[19]--Annal. iii.18, iv.1, xvi.16.; Hist. iii.72.

[20]--De finibus bon. V. 24, 69. Comp. Döllinger's Heidenth, u. Judah. p. 732, and, generally, the admirable section pp. 728-734.

[21]--The rendering of this passage seems sufficiently established. See Note at the end of this Lecture.

[22]-- Genesis 12:3; Genesis 18:18; Genesis 22:18. This relation of Abraham to the world at large seems, as Dr. Bacher rightly infers, implied in the Talmudic statement (Baba B, p. 91a), that at the death of Abraham all the great ones of the world stood as mourners, and exclaimed: 'Woe to the world which has lost its guide; woe to the ship which has lost its helmsman' (Bacher, The Agada d. Bab. Amoræer, p. 13).

[23]--Keim, Jesu von Nazara, ii. pp. 35, 36.

[24]--See Lectures VII. and VIII. and Appendix II.

[25]--For some instances of this, see Lecture VIII.

[26]--In his various writings, especially in the Geschichte Israel's, and in the article 'Israel' in vol. xiii. of the present edition of the Encyclop.

[27]--On these points see the recent very interesting tractate by König, Die Hauptprobleme d. altier, Religionsgesch.

[28]--Kuenen, u. s., p. 568.

[29]--Kuenen, u. s., pp. 587, 588.

[30]--Kuenen, u. s. pp. 589, 590.

[31]--The words are those of Schultz, but adopted by Kuenen, u. s., p. 540.

[32]--U. s., p. 543.

[33]--Pp. 34, 35.

[34]--Perhaps I may be allowed to say that this is a task which I have in view, in another book.

[35]--See especially the second and third ‘Conference,’ and notably pp. 134, etc. I may be allowed here to quote a sentence from a well-known Jewish writer which seems to me apposite: ‘It is certainly no exaggeration if I say that from one aspect I prefer the orthodox representation of the origines of Christianity to that of Renan’ (Joël, Bl. in el. Relig.-Gesch. ii. p. 9). He then proceeds to show the serf- contradictory character of some of Renan’s views.

[36]--Comp. Wittichen, Leben Jesu, p. 47.

[37]--The argument is in no way affected by the undoubted existence of religious interpolations in early writings, and the introduction of spurious ones, or other ‘pious frauds.’ For neither was this done by Apostolic men, nor yet did they set forth foundation-facts or truths which were universally and unquestioningly received, nor yet were their authors prepared to stake their lives on the veracity of their accounts. But the main element is the moral — that Spirit of Truth sent by the Father into the hearts of the Apostles to lead them into all truth.

[38]--According to Wittichen (u. s., p. 14) these are, Romans (with the exception of the greater part of the two last chapters), Corinthians, Galatians, 1 Thessalonians, parts of Colossians and of 2 Timothy, Philemon, and Philippians.

[39]--I have taken (and re-arranged) these references from Wittichen (n. s., p. 50), whom, in general, I have followed in his argument, and that the more readily because he represents the very extreme of negative criticism. I have thus sought to support my argument on grounds taken from our most pronounced opponents, and based it on their admissions.

[40]--Holtzmann, Kritik d. Eph. u. Col. brief, pp. 248-250. Most of the instances there mentioned are certainly very striking, although a few seem strained.

[41]--These references to the Sermon on the Mount are peculiarly interesting.

[42]--Wittichen, u. s. p. 54. For other instances, see Canon Westcott, Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, p. 174, Note 2. In general comp. ib. pp. 173-179.

[43]--Wittichen, u. s.

[44]--Wittichen, p. 47.

[45]--I refer here especially to the detailed compilation which Wittichen has made, while at the same time I would use the strongest expressions in my power to indicate my absolute disagreement with the conclusion at which this critic has arrived.

[46]--Shabb. 116a. The quotation appears in a curious connection: — A Christian philosopher (judge) under the influence of bribery first arguing ‘since your dispersion from your land the Law of Moses has been taken away and another law given,’ and then next day, having received a larger bribe on the other side, reversing his decision and saying that in the passage at the end of

[following in] the book (the Gospel) he saw it was written, ‘I have come not to diminish from the Law of Moses, nor yet have I come to add to the Law of Moses.’ Professor Delitzsch, Anlag.. d. ersten Evang. p. 22, seems to adopt the reading ■■■ ■■■■■■instead of ■■■, which would alter the meaning to ‘but to add to the Law of Moses have I come..

[47]--See, in general, the brochure of Professor Delitzsch just quoted, which has much of interest on these points.

[48]--I must here refer the reader to the quotations and the discussion of the point in my Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, vol. ii. pp. 193, 194.

[49]--I refer here to Joël, Blicke in d. Relig. Gesch. i. and ii., but especially to Friedländer, Patrist. u. Talmud. Stud., whose reasoning I have tried to follow. I may here be allowed specially to refer to a statement by Joël, u. s. p. 58, of some interest as regards the criticism of the Synoptic Gospels, although tinged with that spirit of hypercriticism which characterises so many writers of that school. Joël maintains that the Talmud derived its knowledge of the origines of Christianity from such parts of Evangelic tradition as had reached it, and from what had been witnessed in the second century. He regards Sanh. xi.4, and Tos. Sanh. xi.7, which enacted that one who had incited to apostacy was to be brought before the great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, kept there till one of the great feasts, and executed on the Feast-day, as an ex post facto Halachah, due to this that Rabbi Akiba had known from the synoptic tradition that Christ had been crucified on the Passover Day, and that he had wished to give the Law for it. This seems to me very doubtful (comp. Siphré on Deuteronomy 21:22). Still more so is the explanation that — what he regards as a younger Mishnah — Sanh iv.1, which orders that a process involving life or death was not to be begun on the eve of a Sabbath or of a feast day, was brought in, because the fourth Gospel places (according to Joël) the death of Christ on the day before the feast. This is quite too ingenious — besides being wholly unsupported. But even if the theory of the origin of those Mishnahs were correct, Sanh. iv. 1 might as readily be ascribed to the desire of controverting the Evangelical tradition about the death of Christ-as to any regard for the supposed chronology of the fourth Gospel.

[50]--Friedländer, u. s. p. 78.

[51]--Friedländer, u. s. pp. 62, 67, 68.

[52]--So even Tryphon in Justin's Dial., c. 88.

[53]--Ab. Z. 27b.

[54]--Shabb. 116a.

[55]--Abh. Z. 28a.

[56]--Qohel. R. ed. Warsh, p. 80a.

[57]--Comp. on this point also Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, vol. ii. p. 194.

[58]--Chag. 5b.

[59]--u. s. pp. 193, 194.

[60]--Ab. Z. 16b. The words of Eliezer which gave rise to the misunderstanding have been differently rendered by Jewish scholars. Comp. Toettermann, Eliez. b. Hirc. p. 21.

[61]--See the account in my Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, vol. ii. pp. 193, 194.

[62]--Ber. R. 8, ed. Warsh. p. 18a; Comp. Sanh. 88b.

[63]--It seems, in fact, to have been a Scriptural discussion of the Plurality of Persons in the Divine Being.

[64]--The whole of this subject is very ably discussed by Toettermann.

[65]--Ab. Z. 4a. This inference is, of course, my own. In the Talmud Abbahu is represented as giving by a parabolic illustration a satisfactory explanation of the verse.

[66]--Friedländer, u. s., p. 77.

[67]--Comp. Shabb. 116a.

[68]--Comp. Abh. Z. 27b, Midr. on Eccl. i.9.

[69]--In general, see the collation of passages giving his history in the Seder Haddoroth, ed. Warsh. 1878; part ii. p. 93a, col. b.

[70]--Midr. on Ecclesiastes 1:9. And yet Ber. 63 a shows that he was not in good relations with Palestine, while the conjunction of his name in that passage with those of Abbahu and Saphra may have a peculiar meaning.

[71]--Ber. 28a.

[72]--Comp. Freudenthal, p. 78, and especially p. 141, note 11.

[73]--Ber. 29a, 33b, 34a.

[74]--Ber. 28b, 29a. In connection with this there is a curious and enigmatic story about the author of this formula having forgotten it next year, and requiring several hours to recall it. The context also is somewhat mysterious, and almost seems to point to hesitation about the whole matter. The remarks of Joël on the subject (ii. 93, 94) are not quite satisfactory.

[75]--See here Delitzsch, u. s. pp. 19, 90; Fürst, Kultur u. lit. Gesch. p. 235, note 741; Dukes, Rabb. Blumenlese, p. 163; Levy, Neuhebr. Wörterb. vols. i. and iii. sub voc.: and especially the Aruch, ed. Kohut, vol. ii. pp. 45-47. Joël, u.s. ii. pp. 91, 92, strongly maintains that the Be Abhidan referred simply and exclusively to Ebionite meetings. On the occasion he makes an interesting sad not unlikely suggestion as to the origin of the name Minim (heretics) for Christians. He supposes that the original designation for those Jews who believed in Jesus was Maaminim, which he regards as equivalent to πιστο■, and that, when the hostility towards the Christians began, the first part of the word was dropped, and the Christians were called Minim, which would mean the adherents of a falsehood.

[76]--This is not the place to speculates to the words from which these puns may have been derived. No doubt they were intended as opprobrious designations.

[77]--In Baba K. 117a, R. Huna is said to have arrived ■■■ ■■■■■■.

[78]--In the Targum ■■■■■stands for τ■θων. But as in one of the three Talmudic passages in which Be Abhidan is mentioned (Shabb. 153a; the other two are Shabb. 116a, Abh. Z. 17b), the Emperor (Hadrian) is said to have questioned R. Joshua why he did not attend those discussions, the inference seems suggested that general religious disputations may also have been held in

those places. For the reason stated by Levy (vol. i. p. 9b, it seems impossible to suppose that Parsee doctrines were there discussed.

[79]--Shabb. 116a.

[80]--On the life, writings, and testimony of Josephus I must take leave to refer to my article in Smith and Wace's Dictionary of Biography, vol. iii pp. 441-460.

[81]--Ant. xviii.5. 2.

[82]--Ant. xx.9. 1.

[83]--Ant. xviii.3. 8.

[84]--This is substantially the conclusion of most modern critics, such as Ewald, Renan, Joël. The latter (u. s. ii. p. 52) says, not without presumptive good reason, that the writings of Josephus may originally have contained more than our present copies. But he goes beyond the bounds of the likely when he suggests extensive falsifications, especially in regard to the Pharisees.

[85]--Even Wittichen, Leben Jesu, p. 4, declares it, 'without doubt authentic;' so also Dr. Mill in his classical work on the Myth. Interpret. of the Gospels, p. 289, note 36, and Lardner, in his Co//. of Jewish and Heathen Testim. (Works, vol. vii. pp. 113-119). In general, the remarks of Dr. Mill on those passages in Josephus (u. s. pp. 289-292), and the whole chapter in Lardner's great work (pp. 113-137, ed. 1788) should he carefully considered by students.

[86]--The passage in Josephus concerning the Baptist reads as follows: — But to some of the Jews it appeared that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and, indeed, as a just punishment on account of what had been done to John, who was surnamed the Baptist. For Herod ordered him to be killed, who was a good man and had called upon the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism. For so would the baptising be acceptable to Him if they made use of it, not for the putting away (remission, expiation) of some sins, but for the purification of the body after the soul had been previously cleansed by righteousness.

[87]--Comp. Schürer, Neutest. Zeitgesch. pp. 238, 239.

[88]--The evidential value of the statements of Tacitus (Ann. xv.44) has been very moderately set forth by Wittichen (comp. Lardner, u. s. pp. 253-255). They attest the origin of Christianity in Judæa by Christ; the crucifixion of Christ by Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius; the revival of the movement which seemed suppressed; its transplantation to Rome, its separation from the Synagogue; and its opposition to heathenism.

[Wittichen accentuates, although on insufficient grounds, that the Christians are charged not with scelera, or crimes, but with flagitia.] On the epistle of Pliny comp. Lardner, u. s. pp. 287-318. The Latin text is given at the end of this Lecture. Joël (Blicke in d. Relig. Gesch. ii passim, but especially Sect. v.) has, in my view, without sufficient reason, denied the existence of a sharply-defined distinction between the Synagogue and the Church at the time of Nero.

[89]--The supposed silence of Josephus can, therefore, not be of any evidential force against Christianity.

[90]--See here Lardner, u. a, p. 308.

[91]--Plinii, lib. x. epist. 96

[al. 97].

[92]--In revising this Lecture for publication I found that some parts of the argument had been more fully set forth in a Sermon preached before the University of Oxford. As the latter has not been published, and the two Lectures treat, in some parts .of them, of substantially the same subject, I have thought it best to incorporate in this such portions of my University Lecture as more fully expound the views which I wished to present. At the same time, in now elaborating an argument which had been indicated in a former Lecture, it was impossible to avoid occasional repetition of what had been previously stated.

[93]--Thus G. Baur in his very thoughtful Geschichte d. Messianischen Weissagungen — a book which contains the substance of much that a very large proportion of a certain class of critics have since had to say — only in more moderate language than theirs.

[94]--Nidd. 49a.

[95]--The use of the word in 1 Chronicles 25:1-8 deserves special consideration as implying a wider and more general application.

[96]--I am here only treating of one aspect of the question; but, as it seems to me, the most important.

[97]--An explanation may be allowed as to the difference as regards fulness of treatment between some of these Lectures and others which follow. In the more detailed Lectures I had to proceed upon lines that were new, setting forth views derived from fresh study of the great subject. These required therefore to be fully explained and vindicated. In the other Lectures I travelled, perhaps necessarily, along lines which, more or less, others had followed. Hence the treatment could be more concise. And, indeed, a fuller discussion of all the subjects referred to would have necessitated a treatment quite beyond the plan and scope of this course of Lectures. For a similar reason I have made large use of the works of the ablest writers on the various branches of the subject, such as Oehler (Theol. d. A. Test. 2 vols.); König (d. Offenb. Begr. d. A. Test.), and his last very able book, d. Hauptquellen d. Isr. Relig.-Gesch., without, however, adopting his views on the Pentateuch; Küper (Prophetenthum. d A. Bandes); Riehm (d. Mess. Weissag.); Köhler (Prophet d. Hebr. u. d. Mantik d. alten Griechen); and, besides others which will be incidentally mentioned, Bredenkamp (Gesetz u. Propheten). To the latter I am specially indebted in this and the following Lecture. This general acknowledgment must suffice instead of burdening the pages with references.

[98]--It is, therefore, only in a modified sense that I can adopt the saying of Rückert, that all prophecy moves around these three words — guilt, judgment, redemption. It touches the human at these three points because there the moral in man, consciously or unconsciously, stretches forth its hands towards God.

[99]--Compare here generally the very thoughtful essay by Dr. K. Köhler, d. Prophet, d. Hebr. u. d. Mantik el. alten Griechen.

[100]--Compare the article ‘Prophet’ by Kleinert in Riehm’s Handwörterb. d. Bibl. Alt. vol. ii. pp. 1230, &c.

[101]--It should be explained that this Lecture was written and delivered when the so- called Anti-Semitic movement was at its height (Feb. 1882), and a thrill of horror passed through us all, as day by day we read of those deeds of cruelty and bloodshed inflicted upon innocent, suffering Israel. No language could be too strong to express abhorrence of such a movement. The passage is retained in this book not only as a standing protest, but because an agitation, which is equally the humiliation of the Church and a foul blot on the civilisation of this century, has not yet passed away, and even finds encouragement where other than might have been expected.

[102]--On what follows, see specially Bredenkamp. u. s

[103]--Romans 2:28-29. We may here note as an illustrative passage per contra, Ber. R. 48, where Abraham is said to be seated at the gate of Gehenna, so as to prevent those of Israel who were circumcised falling into its flames. But, as regards grievous sinners in Israel, he puts upon them the foreskins of such children as have died before they could be circumcised, and then casts them into Gehenna.

[104]--Fairly interpreted they only convey that in the alternative between obedience and the mere opus operatum of sacrifices, the former is the more important; but they do not imply any depreciation of sacrifices such as some critics contend for. The critical exaggeration in this case resembles that in regard to the Pauline teaching about the Law.

[105]--In the historic part of this outline I have largely availed myself of the contributions of Professor Strack in Zückler’s Handb. d. Theol. Wissenech. vol. i., and in the article ‘Pentateuch’ in vol. xi. of the 2nd ed. of Herzog’s Real- Encyklop., as well as of other works — especially the various Introductions to the Old Testament, and Reuss, Gesch. d. h. Sehr. d. A. T. (passim — for the history, pp. 71 &c., 452 &c., 475 &c.).

[106]--In that number the following may be reckoned: Isaac Israeli (in the tenth century); Luther, in his Table-Talk, implies, if not the possibility of doubt, yet the unimportance of the question of Mosaic authorship (Diestel, Gesch. d. A. Test. p. 250); Karlstadt (unfavourably known in Luther-history; de canon. Ser. S. libris, 1520); A. Masius (ob. R. C.), Comm. on Josh. in Crit. S. vol. i. (died 1573); Hobbes, Leviathan (1651); La Peyrère, Syst. Theol. ex Præadam. hyp. (1655); Spinoza, Tract. Theol.-pol. (1670); R. Simon, Hist. Crit. du V. Test. (1678) — the two latter remarkable works, specially that of Simon (comp. Diestel, u. s, pp. 352 &c., 357, 540, 541); Le Clerc (Clericus, 1657-1736), Sentim. de quelques Theol. de Holl., and then specially in the Diss. de Script. Pent.; Vitringa (1659- 1722), Observ. S. lib. i.; Floury, Mæurs des Isr., 1760; and Le François Preuves de la Relig. Chrét. i. 2.

[107]--A very full analysis of the work is given by Böhmer (article ‘Astruc’ in Herzog’s Real-Encykl. (2nd ed., vol. i.).

[108]--These letters do not, however, mark their respective dates and succession.

[109]--Jerusalem, Briefe ii. d. Mos. Schr., 1762.

[110]--However we may differ from his views, Eichhorn was one of the most learned and brilliant, and happily also one of the most successful theological writers of Germany. He became Professor at Jena in 1775, when only twenty-three years of age; he lectured twenty-four hours (and more) every week — -even at the close of his life, eighteen hours a week; treated of and wrote on a great variety of historical subjects not connected with theology, and died in 1827 at the age of seventy-five. His investigations are thorough, lucid, and able. He may not only be designated the father of modern German criticism, but his investigations have been of such permanent influence that, until the latest development of Pentateuch- criticism, the remark of Diestel (u. s. p. 610) held true that, apart from questions about authorship and date, criticism has not since advanced any really new element. And, however we may dispute some of his conclusions, or differ from the direction which criticism has since taken, we cannot but agree with Bertheau (Herzog's Real-Encykl. iv. p. 115) that Eichhorn's main object was apologetic, in de fence — as he conceived it — of the Bible against the Deists and Materialists of his time. This, indeed, impresses itself on my own mind in almost every part of his 'Introduction,' and he has even anticipated and answered objections which E. Reuss (u.s.) has lately restated and urged as if they had never been met.

[111]--The edition from which I quote is the fourth (1823, 1824).

[112]--Eichhorn, vol. iii 91.

[113]--This is vindicated in detail, pp. 110-135.

[114]--Specially Leviticus 1:1. to 2:34.

[115]--Urkunden d. Jerus. Tempel-Arch., 1798.

[116]--Die Quellen d. Gen., 1853.

[117]--Beitr. z. Einl. in d. A. Test., 1806.

[118]--First in Rosenmüller's Bibl. Repertor. 1822.

[119]--Comm. z. Pent., 1802-1805.

[120]--Hist. Krit. Forsch, 1810.

[121]--Comm. ii. d. Gin ., 1838.

[122]--Kanaan, 1844.

[123]--Comm. ii. d. Gen.

[124]--Comp. Diestel, u. s. pp. 616-618; and Strack, .Real-Encyk. xi.. p. 442.

[125]--Such as the Decalogue, the Book of the Covenant: Exodus 20:22-26, Exodus 23:1., the principal part of Exodus 15:1-27, and other pieces.

[126]--The former in the Real-Encykl., the latter in Zöckler's Handbuch.

[127]--See the points of agreement and disagreement in Zöckler (u. s.), pp. 135-138.

[128]--Die Bibl. Theol.

[129]--Die Aelter. Jüd. Feste — both works in 1855.

[130]--Judges, Samuel, and partly Kings.

[131]--See Reuss, Gesch. d. h. Schr. pp. 87, 92, 231, 249-254. The details do not care to reproduce.

[132]--Die Gesch. Bücher d. A. T., 1866.

[133]--Das Vorexil. B. d. Urgesch. Isr., 1874.

[134]--Gesch. Israel's, Berlin, 1878.

[135]--Vol. xiii. pp. 396, &c.

[136]--442 pages.

[137]--To these two works must now be added the Prolegomena zur Gesch. Isr. (1883), which is only a second edition, with quite unimportant changes, of the 'History,' and with a new Preface, the tone of which, irrespective of theological opinions, even the most ardent admirers of Wellhausen must deplore; and, lastly, the book called Skizzen und Vorarbeiten (1884), of which the first fasciculus is devoted to an abstract of Israelitish history. This is, in reality, a slightly altered form of the article in the Encycl. Brit. But a curious literary question arises in connection with it. While the article in the Encycl. is apparently a translation of the German original now given, there are, as I have found on comparison of some parts, modifications in the wording, some of them slight, but all producing a decidedly softening effect as regards the argument in its English garb. To one important alteration I will here call attention. In the Encycl. Brit., p. 398b, we read of the Ark of the Covenant, 'It was a standard [the italics are always ours] adapted primarily to the requirements of a wandering and warlike life; brought back from the field, it became a symbol of Jehovah's presence, the central seat of His worship.' In the Skizzen u. Vorarb., however, the passage reads thus: 'It [the Ark] was an idol, which was primarily intended [berechnet] for a wandering and camp-life; brought back from the field, it still remained, as token of the presence of Jehovah, the central point of His worship.' Is the difference between the two passages due to a later modification or to a fuller expression of his views by Wellhausen? The difference between them is, at least, sufficiently marked and important.

[138]--Gesch., p. 309.

[139]--Note that 'the original document,' or 'the first Elohist,' is Wellhausen's Priest- Code; the 'second Elohist' is his E, while the Jahvist (not Jehovist, who is JE) is J.

[140]--Encycl. Brit. xiii. pp. 418 b, 419 a; Gesch. pp. 423-425.

[141]--Nehemiah 13:28; Jos. Ant. xi. 7. 8.

[142]--Theol. Stud. u. Krit. 1831, p. 604.

[143]--I am quite aware that the earlier historical books are only supposed to have been recast Deuteronomistically, i.e. in the spirit of Deuteronomy, while Chronicles is said to have been done in that of the Priest-0ode. But Wellhausen himself says, in regard to Judges, Samuel, and Kings, that in them 'the fact of a radical difference between the ancient practice and the

[Deuteronomic] Law as a whole is not denied, although in some instances the past is recast (umgedichet) in conformity with the ideal,' so that the existence of the contrast side by side is admitted. Besides, it seems to me impossible to believe that those who were influential enough to manufacture and introduce the Priest-Code and Chronicles — not to speak of so much else — would have been unable to remove from the other historical books what was grossly inconsistent with the assertions on which their whole system was based. And Wellhausen himself admits a reference to the Priest-Code in the account of the Temple (1Ki 6:-8.), which, for reasons which do not clearly appear, he declares to be full of corrections and interpolations, and from which in 1 Kings 8:64 and 2 Kings 16:14-15, the notice of Solomon's altar of brass had been removed, 'in order to avoid collision with the altar of brass [earth?] of Moses (p. 294). Similarly 1 Samuel 2:22 is a Priest- Code.interpolation, because it speaks of the 'tabernacle,' which, according to Wellhausen, never existed, and was only an invention of the Priest-Code. The notices 1Sa 4:-6, are even represented to be inconsistent with the existence of the Tabernacle, while the reference in 1 Kings 8:4 is manipulated in a particular manner (pp. 43-46). Such notices as, for example, Joshua 9:27 are declared 'anachronisms.'

[144]--It is even more difficult to believe that a twofold account, grossly inconsistent with each other, should have been placed side by side in the historical books. Such, however, Wellhausen finds in the Song of Deborah as compared with the preceding historical account of the event, and in the narrative about Gideon closing Joshua 8:1-3 as compared with that which he supposes to open with Joshua 8:4. I venture to assert that unprejudiced readers will not discover any such inconsistencies between the supposed twofold narratives as the hyper-ingenuity of Wellhausen has discovered. Naturally, it will be otherwise if the narratives are approached with Wellhausen's theory on the wind.

[145]--Wellhausen, Gesch. p. 309.

[146]--See page 212 and the notes.

[147]--See the notes above referred to. Many instances of critical violence might here be quoted. Thus it is difficult to understand how Exodus 20:24 can be quoted in proof that there was no central place of sacrifice, but that these might be offered in any place, or to accept this explanation of the expressly limiting words, 'in all places where I record My Name': 'This means no more than that people did not like it to appear that the place where the intercession between heaven and earth took place had been arbitrarily chosen, but regarded it as somehow (irgendwie) selected by the Deity itself for its service' (Gesch. p. 81). Similarly — to mention only one other instances — it seems difficult to discover in Neh 8:-10, any warrant for the statement that the Pentateuch had been unknown till then, and was now for the first time published and introduced. There are many other similar instances of critical violence, but these cannot be examined in detail in this book.

[148]--Comp. Strack in the Real-.Encykl. p. 458, and the authorities there referred to.

[149]--Comp. Hoffmann, Mag. für d. Wissensch. d. Judenth ., 1879, pp. 210-215. The remarkable series of articles of which this forms part, and the special relation between Ezekiel and the Priest-Code, will be referred to in the next Lecture.

[150]--Among these Strack mentions the Urim and Thummim (Exodus 28:30; Leviticus 8:8; Numbers 27:21 as comp. with Ezra 2:68; Nehemiah 7:65); the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:8, &c.);

Levite cities (Numbers 35:1, &c.); and the law concerning spoil (Numbers 31:26, &c.); while Bredenkamp (u. s. p. 186) points out this inconsistency in Wellhausen's theory, that the 'Priest-Code' orders only the functions of the Levites during the wanderings in the wilderness, but makes no reference to such when settled in the land of Palestine.

[151]--Among these Strack mentions: the friendly reference to Egypt, Deuteronomy 23:8, as compared with the later views in Isaiah 30:1, &c.; 31:1; Jeremiah 2:18; Jeremiah 2:36; the friendly reference to Edom in Deuteronomy 23:8; and the hostile reference to Moab and Ammon in Deuteronomy 23:4-5 as compared with the opposite in Jeremiah 49:17-18; Jeremiah 48:47; Jeremiah 49:6; and as regards Edom, also Joel 4:19; Obad.; and Isaiah 63:1-6. Similarly, he points to the ordinances, Deuteronomy 24:16-18; Deuteronomy 25:17-19; Deuteronomy 20:10-15; Deuteronomy 20:19-20, as unsuited to the time of Josiah, and hence incompatible with the idea of their invention at that period.

[152]--In the preface to his Prolegomena (page v.) Wellhausen gives a peculiar reply to the charge that he 'first arranges for himself the basis on which he proceeds, by an arbitrary treatment of the text from which he quotes, in which he introduces alterations according to his pleasure.' To this he answers: 'I decide à potiori, and then seek to estimate in accordance with it every such instance.' But this answer only involves another vicious begging of the question, and aggravates instead of removing the charge brought against him. Indeed, it seems a strange process to found charges against the Pentateuch upon certain notices in the historical books, and then to brand as spurious other notices which run counter to his theory. Why are these not the potius, or, at least equally 'berechtigt' (warranted) as the others; and may there not be a higher conciliation of what at first sight seems inconsistent, without resorting to the declaration that one or the other must be spurious?

[153]--Gesch. p. 299.

[154]--P. 308, note 2.

[155]--I cannot help expressing how painfully such language affects one as this in the same note, which I prefer to give in the original: 'Die realistische Vergröberung des prophetischen Einflusses tritt am plumpsten in der Legende, 2 Reg. i. auf, wo Elias zu einem übermenschlichen Popanz entstellt ist.' The reader will now understand what I meant by the difference between the language held in the Encycl. Brit. and in the Geschichte .

[156]--For particulars about these revisions, and about the Canon generally, see Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, vol. ii. pp. 684-690.

[157]--Skizzen u. Vorarb. zu d. Bibel, 1884, p. 11.

[158]--See the Introduction to König's Hauptprobl. d. altisrael Relig.-Gesch., 1884.

[159]--This, indeed, is the exact title of the little book referred to in the previous note, in which these questions are very ably treated, although I must guard myself against being understood as accepting all the concessions which the learned writer makes.

[160]--In his principal works, De Godsdienst van Israël, 1869. See König, u. s.

[161]--Daumer, 1842.

[162]--Ghillany, 1842.

[163]--Noack, 1853.

[164]--Goldziher, 1876.

[165]--Docy, 1864.

[166]--Gesch. d. Folk. Isr., 1881, pp. 5, 113, 114, 128.

[167]--Thus, for example, Kuenen controverts the Canaanitish derivation of the name Jehovah, but he denies the Mosaic origin of the prohibition of image-worship.

[168]--In the Abhandl. el. Königl. Gesellsch. el. Wissensch. zu Göttingen, vol. xxvi. (1880), Erklärung hebr. Wörter, pp. 20 &c.

[169]--Comp. 1 Samuel 6:15; 2 Samuel 15:24. By the side of this we may place the hypothesis of Maybaum (Entwickwl. d. altier. Priesterth p. 11) as to the origin of the later ‘legend’ about the descent of the priesthood from one tribe, traced up to one ancestor. The explanation is, that groups of families had gathered around the great religious centres in the land. In these families the priesthood became hereditary. We are asked to trace this in the family of Kohath. We know that Hebron was a priest-city; but, according to Exodus 6:18, Hebron was also a son of Kohath. Here is the origin of the Kohathites. As for the Gershonites, according to Exodus 6:16, Gershon was a son of Levi; but, according to Judges 18:30, Gershon, the son of Moses [so, after the better reading], was the father of that Jonathan who founded a priest-family in Dan. Thus, we are assured, the son of Moses was turned into a son of Levi, in order to trace back all the Levitas to three family groups! And this is serious criticism! According to Wellhausen, the ancient tribe of Levi, and also its territory, disappear in the time of the Judges, but the ancient name was somehow taken up again by a priestly caste which originated several centuries later (comp. Hoffmaun, Mag. für d. Wissesch d. Jud. 1880, p. 156).

[170]--Gesch. pp. 298, 299.

[171]--The Lecture was delivered on an Advent-Sunday, and the reference to it is retained to explain the special expressions employed.

[172]--I might not, in principle, shrink from even such a word as ‘interpolations’ — if I had only space and time to define what may be meant by that term, with what important explanations and limitations it may be applicable, and to what portions in the Old Testament it might be referred. In general I must here remind the reader, that I am not definitely stating my views of the composition of the Pentateuch, which, even considering the space at my command, could not be done, but only marking the delimitations of my standpoint.

[173]--This so far as regards the kernel of the Mosaic legislation, is energetically maintained also by König (Offenbar. Begr. d. A. Test, vol. ii. p. 333), although that writer is an adherent of the Wellhausen theory, so far as it applies to the date of the Priest-Codex. König insists on the supernatural revelation of God to Moses, on the miraculous exodus from Egypt, and on the reality of the Covenant made by God with Israel on Sinai. All this, as well as that the Prophets reflected

upon a preceding common basis, as against Kuenen, Stade, and others (u. s pp. 334-336).

[174]--Comp. Amos 5:25. See here D. Hoffmann in the Magaz. für d. Wissensch. d. Judenth. (Jahrg. vi, 1879, pp. 7 &c.). The two occasions, Exodus 17;15 and 24:4, were special and exceptional, and before the setting up of the Tabernacle. Similarly, we have the sacrifices of Jethro (Exodus 18:12), in the feast of which Moses, Aaron, and the elders took part. But all these instances bear evidence of their exceptional character. But the contention of Wellhausen (Gesch. pp. 58 &c.), that the polemics of Amos 5:22 &c., and of the other prophets, prove that they knew nothing of any Mosaic and Divine institution of sacrifices as the central part of worship, seems to me based on wrong reasoning. Their polemics are not against sacrifices, but against sacrifices brought as a meritorious.opus operatum by an impenitent and law-breaking people. It is against the externalisation, nay, the perversion of sacrifices, that they protest. If a Puritan inveighed, as has not unfrequently been done in Scotland, against the crowds that thronged the Communion Table, and against the pomp of solemnity by which its celebration was surrounded, it would not follow that the Holy Communion had not been regarded as of New Testament institution.

[175]--Really = Ohel hivvaed (Pappenheim), misleadingly rendered in the A. V. ‘tabernacle of the congregation.’

[176]--Exodus 20:24. I accept the common reading, azkir.; not that proposed, tazkir. The Rabbis regard the passage as prohibiting the use of the name Jehovah, outside the Temple (Mekhilta, ed. Weiss. p. 80b).

[177]--Comp., for example, Deuteronomy 12:1-32.

[178]--According to the Talmud, sacrifices on heights and by the firstborn were only forbidden after the erection of the Tabernacle; the former was again allowed till they came to Shiloh, and once more, when the Tabernacle was at Nob and at Gibeon, but wholly prohibited when it came to Jerusalem (Zebhach. 112 b, about the middle).

[179]--Wellhausen’s date for Chronicles — three hundred years after the Exile — is manifestly impossible. Even if we regard Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah as originally one book, it could not be dated later than (with Dillmann) about 330. And the supposed final additions (after 440) to the Pentateuch would bring it close to that date.

[180]--That the great festivals were connected with the seasons of the year, had its deep symbolism, just as we connect Christmas with winter, Easter with the bursting forth of spring, and Trinity with the ripening of the rich harvest.

[181]--I cannot see any reference to the Feast of Tabernacles in 1 Sam. i. 20 (marg.). For the feast of the 15th of Ab, see The Temple and its Services, pp. 286, 287. The same dances are stated to have been held on the Day of Atonement.

[182]--On the historical character of this Passover-notice, comp. Bertheau, Bücher d. Chron. pp. 386-388; and Zöckler (ad loc.) in Lange’s Bibe/-Werk, vol. viii.

[183]--I ought here to state, that with reference to the harmony of the different parts of the Pentateuch — JE, PC, and D — in regard both to sacrifices and the .festivals, I must refer the reader to the full argumentation of D. Hoffmann in the Magaz. für d. Wissensch. d. Judenth . vol.

vi., 1879, pp. 91-114. As I cannot here enter into details, I must content myself with the results of the discussion.

[184]--There are not a few instances of this; but I have here in my mind such contentions as about Genesis, certain parts of which First ascribed to pre-Mosaic times, Wellhausen to the exilian period.

[185]--See, for example, Dr. S. Maybaum, Entwickel. d. altisr. Priesterth. p. 2. But I must specially refer those interested in the question to the more exhaustive treatment of this point by Maybaum in the Zeitschr. für Völkerpsychol. u. Sprachwiss. (vol. xiv. 1883, Heft 3, pp. 193, &e.). I regret that want of space prevents my giving even the barest notion of his argument, which K6znig (Hauptprobl p. 16) has too lightly set aside in a single sentence

[186]--De Elohistæ Pentateuchici Sermone, 1878. Ryssel contends that, with the exception of traces in certain sections, belonging to the second period of the language (700-540 B.C.), all else ‘ad origines litterarum gentis Israeliticm referendas ease.’

[187]--F. Giesehrecht in the Zeitschr. für d. Alte Test., 1881,179.177-276.

[188]--I cannot but think that König has treated this subject too cursorily, .and that his support of the theory of Reuss on linguistic, as well as generally on other, grounds is not satisfactory nor convincing (see the argument in his work: Der Offenbarungsbegr. d. A. Test, 1882, pp. 322-332).

[189]--In the Journal of Philol. for 1882, ch. xi. pp. 201-936.

[190]--Stanley Leathes, Witness of the Old Testament to Christ, p, 282, &c.

[191]--How this contention can be made to agree with Wellhausen’s view that few, perhaps none, of the Psalms date from before the Exile, it is not for me to say.

[192]--The references to the Law, both in the historical books and in the prophets, are enumerated in App. II. at the end of this volume.

[193]--Ch. 40.-48.

[194]--I must here specially refer to Hoffmann in the Magaz. f. Wiss. d. Judenth., 1879, pp. 209, &c. His argument Strack states to have never been really met. In a previous article (u. s. pp. 90, &c.) Hoffmann discusses, among other things, the bearing of sayings in the other prophets and in Ezekiel upon the Priest-Code, 8o far as regards sacrifices and the festivals.

[195]--As a comparatively small number of readers may have access to Hoffmann’s Articles, I give, in Note 2 to this Lecture, Hoffmann’s complete list, adducing, however, only the passages, as any reader of the Hebrew Bible will be able to see the parallelisms for himself.

[196]--The list of these k also given in Note 2 to this Lecture.

[197]--See it in Strack, u. s.

[198]--The essential differences between this and the law of entail, under which property may indeed be mortgaged, but can never pass out of the possession of the head of a family into that of another owner, lie on the surface.

[199]--This must always be kept in view in regard to what are admitted to have been the earlier parts of the Pentateuch.

[200]--Wellhausen assigns even Exo 20:-23, to a period when the people were not only settled in the land, but had become a thoroughly agricultural nation. (See Strack, Real-.Encykl. p. 446.)
[201]--For the later Rabbinic modifications of the ‘Priest-Code; see App. II.

[202]--Sheb. x.8, and the Jer. Talm.

[203]--Sheb. x.3, 4; Gitt, 36a.

[204]--Comp. 2 Chronicles 26:8, and the fact that David was of Moabitish descent.

[205]--Where the same verse is adduced several times, the reference is to different expressions in the same verse, which have to be compared with parallel expressions in Ezekiel, marked by the same number. I have compared the references, and corrected some mistakes in Hoffmann’s text, due, of course, only to slips or errors of the press. The convincing force of this argument will he felt on comparison of the passages, and is enhanced by the close contiguity of so many of the parallelisms in Ezekiel.

[206]--These are only mentioned as instances, and no attempt is here made to indicate the compass of the post-exilian Biblical prophetic writings.

[207]--For the same mason as that indicated in the previous note, only a general indication of the literature is given, without specifying the books, or parts of books, which I have in view.

[208]--I would here mention, not only the difference in tone of the Apocrypha, but their exclusion from the Canon, especially that of The Wisdom of the Son of Sirach, not to speak of the consensus of tradition.

[209]--For the names of these writers, the character of their works, and translations from them, I take leave to refer to my History of the Jewish Nation, pp. 370-372.

[210]--See this in Böhl, Forsch,, nach e. Volksbibel, pp. 82-84. But the whole of the section about the Septuagint is very interesting and deserves careful consideration.

[211]--Comp. especially Sir 48:18 with the LXX of Isaiah 37:8; also Sir 48:24 with Isaiah 40:1.

[212]-- 1Ma 4:46, 1Ma 9:27, 1Ma 14:41.

[213]--Ch. i.-iii.8. A very striking parallelism has been noted between Baruch and the Pseudepigraphic Psalter of Solomon.

[214]--See the full and clear analysis in the Introduction to Dr. Bissell’s Comment. an the Apocrypha, pp. 43-49.

[215]--Comp. here Sir 24:23-27; Sir 48:24; Sir 49:2, Sir 49:4, Sir 49:7, Sir 49:10; 1Ma 12:9; 2Ma 2:13; 2Ma 6:23; 1Es 1:28; 1Es 6:1; Bar 2:21.

[216]--The sneer of Nöldeke (Alttest. p. 105) on this point 8eema to me singularly unjust, as well as out of taste.

[217]--Comp. on this, Bissell, u.s.

[218]--Possibly, Sir 47:11; more probably, Sir 48:10-11; doubtfully, Bar 4:22.

[219]--As in Sir 36:1-10; Sir 39:23; Bar 4:25, Bar 4:31-35.

[220]--As in Sir 36:11-17; Bar 4:22-25, Bar 4:36-37; v.; comp. Tob 13:1-18; Tob 14:1-15. (passim).

[221]--Bissell, p. 48.

[222]-- 1Ma 1:4. So in all other Talmudic references to the question. See Bähr, Ges. ii. falseAe Zeugen, pp. 29 &c.

[223]--The 'Daniel come to judgment' of The Merchant of Venice is the Daniel of the Book of Susanna — that is, the Biblical Daniel, although at a very early, pre- biblical, period of his life.

[224]--Comp., for example, the form of the prayer in Sir 1:22-24, with that in the Syriac version, which evidently gives the Hebrew original. See Geiger, in the Zeitschr. d. deutsch, morgenl. Gesellsch. Vol. xii. pp. 536 &c.

[225]--Ecclesiasticus is often quoted in Talmudic writings; and 1 Maccabees , 3 Esdr., and the additions to Esther by Josephus.

[226]--The common quotation, 'Magna est veritas, et prævalebit,' is from 3 (I.) Esdr. iv.41.

[227]-- Tob 13:16-18.

[228]--Philo, De Execrationibus, par. 8, 9 (ed. Mangey, ii. 435, &c.).

[229]--De Præmiis et Pœnis (ed. Mangey, ii. 421-428.

[230]--I refer here only to such of the Pseudepigrapha as exist in a more or less complete form, not to those of which we have only fragment.;Comp. the literature of the subject — especially the edition of the Pseudepigrapha by O. F. Fritzsche, Lips. 1871; J. A. Fabricius, Codex Pseudepigr. Vet. Test., 2rid ed., 1722; Hilgenfeld, Messias Judæorum, Lips. 1869; and Drummond, The Jewish Messiah. For later Hebrew Pseudepigrapha — though not in the strict sense of the term — see Jellinek, Beth ha Midrash, 6 Parts, 1857-73. But, indeed, the literature of the subject is large, and, comparatively speaking, not always easy to master,

[231]--On this subject generally, I must refer to my book on The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, which I have naturally followed in this outline.

[232]--vv. 286, 287. Some have, however, referred this to Cyrus.

[233]--ver. 652.

[234]--vv. 652-807, passim.

[235]--cv.2.

[236]--xc.37.

[237]--xvii.5, 23-25, 32-35, 38, 47.

[238]--lvii., comp. xc. 33.

[239]--iii. 652-735.

[240]--iii. 766-783.

[241]--comp. xxxiii.

[242]--iii.795-806.

[243]--v.1-3; vi 18-28.

[244]--xxiii.

[245]--iii.633-652.

[246]--vv. 660-697.

[247]--xc.16-38, passim.

[248]--Supposed to be referred to in Deut. xxv.17-19.

[249]--Ant. iv. 8. 48.

[250]--De Hab. Mulieb. iii.

[251]--De Vita Mosis, iii.39.

[252]--Comp. 4 Esdr. xiv.18 &c.

[253]--The letters a and b indicate the first or the second half of a verse. Comp. for this analysis Jahrb. für Deutsche Theol., 1876; Strack, in Herzog's Encykl., vol. xi. p. 457; and Hoffmann in the Magazin für d. Wissensch. d. Judenth., 1879, p. 4.

[254]--Leviticus 22:2-9; comp. Sanh. 81b.

[255]--Chol. 24a.

[256]--On the various Temple officials, see The Temple, its Ministry and Services.

[257]--Bikkur. i.3.

[258]--Chall. ii.5, 7; comp. Jos. Ant. ii.4.4.

[259]--Ter. iii.6; iv.3.

[260]--Zebhach. 56b.

[261]--Rosh ha-Sh.12b.

[262]--Chol. 27a; 32a.

[263]--Kerith. 6a; Jer. Yom. 41d.

[264]--Castelli (La Legge, pp. 90, 91) marks retrogression upon the Bible in the multiplication and aggravation of observances and commandments; and progression in the mitigation of the primitive

civil and criminal code. In truth, it is neither the one nor the other — but evidence of the ancient date of the Pentateuch legislation, which was afterwards adapted both to new circumstances and new forms of thought.

[265]--By the side of this element there is that other of unceasing elaboration of the Law, with the view of preventing any possible breach of it, and, in fact, adding to its requirements, so as to ensure a perfect obedience of them.

[266]--For the criticism of the objections raised by Wellhausen from a comparative view of the contents of the Pentateuch, I can in this place only once more refer to the Articles of Hoffmann, previously mentioned.

02.01. SKETCHES OF JEWISH SOCIAL LIFE

SKETCHES OF JEWISH SOCIAL LIFE by Alfred Edersheim, D. D., Ph. D.

Contents Chapter 1 Palestine Eighteen Centuries Ago Chapter 2 Jews and Gentiles in "The Land"

Chapter 3 In Galilee at the time of our Lord Chapter 4 Travelling in Palestine--Roads, Inns, Hospitality, Custom-House Officers, Taxation, Publicans Chapter 5 In Judaea Chapter 6 Jewish Homes Chapter 7 The Upbringing of Jewish Children

Chapter 8 Subjects of Study - Home Education in Israel; Female Education - Elementary Schools, Schoolmasters, and School Arrangements.

Chapter 9 Mothers, Daughters, and Wives in Israel Chapter 10 In Death and After Death Chapter 11 Jewish Views on Trade, Tradesmen, and Trades' Guilds Chapter 12 Commerce Chapter 13 Among the People, and with the Pharisees Chapter 14 The "Fraternity" of Pharisees Chapter 15 Relation of the Pharisees to the Sadducees and Essenes, and to the Gospel of Christ Chapter 16 Synagogues: Their Origin, Structure and Outward Arrangements Chapter 17 The Worship of the Synagogue Chapter 18 Brief Outline of Ancient Jewish Theological Literature

02.02. Chapter 2 - Jews and Gentiles in "The Land"

Chapter 2 - Jews and Gentiles in "The Land"

Coming down from Syria, it would have been difficult to fix the exact spot where, in the view of the Rabbis, "the land" itself began. The boundary lines, though mentioned in four different documents, are not marked in anything like geographical order, but as ritual questions connected with them came up for theological discussion. For, to the Rabbis the precise limits of Palestine were chiefly interesting so far as they affected the religious obligations or privileges of a district. And in this respect the fact that a city was in heathen possession exercised a decisive influence. Thus the environs of Ascalon, the wall of Caesarea, and that of Acco, were reckoned within the boundaries of Palestine, though the cities themselves were not. Indeed, viewing the question from this point, Palestine was to the Rabbis simply "the land," * all other countries being summed up under the designation of "outside the land." In the Talmud, even the expression "Holy Land," so common among later Jews and Christians, ** does not once occur.

* So mostly; the expression also occurs "the land of Israel."

** The only passage of Scripture in which the term is used is Zechariah 2:12, or rather 2:16 of the Hebrew original.

It needed not that addition, which might have suggested a comparison with other countries; for to the Rabbinist Palestine was not only holy, but the only holy ground, to the utter exclusion of all other countries, although they marked within its boundaries an ascending scale of ten degrees of sanctity, rising from the bare soil of Palestine to the most holy place in the Temple (Chel. i. 6-9). But "outside the land" everything was darkness and death. The very dust of a heathen country was unclean, and it defiled by contact. It was regarded like a grave, or like the putrescence of death. If a spot of heathen dust had touched an offering, it must at once be burnt. More than that, if by mischance any heathen dust had been brought into Palestine, it did not and could not mingle with that of "the land," but remained to the end what it had been--unclean, defiled, and defiling everything to which it adhered. This will cast light upon the meaning conveyed by the symbolical directions of our Lord to His disciples (Matthew 10:14), when He sent them forth to mark out the boundary lines of the true Israel--"the kingdom of heaven," that was at hand: "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet." In other words, they were not only to leave such a city or household, but it was to be considered and treated as if it were heathen, just as in the similar case mentioned in Matthew 18:17. All contact with such must be avoided, all trace of it shaken off, and that, even though, like some of the cities in Palestine that were considered heathen, they were surrounded on every side by what was reckoned as belonging to Israel. The Mishnah (Shev, vi. 1; Chall. iv. 8) marks, in reference to certain ordinances, "three lands" which might equally be designated as Palestine, but to which different ritual regulations applied. The first comprised, "all which they who came up from Babylon took possession of in the land of Israel and unto Chezib" (about three hours north of Acre); the second, "all that they who came up from Egypt took possession of from Chezib and unto

the river (Euphrates) eastward, and unto Amanah" (supposed to be a mountain near Antioch, in Syria); while the third, seemingly indicating certain ideal outlines, was probably intended to mark what "the land" would have been, according to the original promise of God, although it was never possessed to that extent by Israel. * For our present purpose, of course, only the first of these definitions must be applied to "the land." We read in Menachoth vii. 1: "Every offering, ** whether of the congregation or of an individual (public or private), may come from 'the land,' or from 'outside the land, be of the new product (of the year) or of old product, except the omer (the wave-sheaf at the Passover) and the two loaves (at Pentecost), which may only be brought from new product (that of the current year), and from that (which grows) within 'the land.'" To these two, the Mishnah adds in another passage (Chel. i. 6) also the Biccurim, or first-fruits in their fresh state, although inaccurately, since the latter were likewise brought from what is called by the Rabbis Syria, *** which seems to have been regarded as, in a sense, intermediate between "the land" and "outside the land."

* The expressions in the original are so obscure as to render it difficult to form a quite definite judgment. In the text we have followed the views expressed by M. Neubauer.

** Neither of the English words: "sacrifice," "offering," or "gift" quite corresponds to the Hebrew Korban, derived from a verb which in one mood means to be near, and in another to bring near. In the one case it would refer to the offerings themselves, in the other to the offerers, as brought near, the offerings bringing them near to God. The latter seems to me both etymologically and theologically the right explanation. Aberbanel combines both in his definition of Korban.

*** Syria sent Biccurim to Jerusalem, but was not liable to second tithes, nor for the fourth year's product of plants (Leviticus 19:24). The term Soria, or Syria, does not include that country alone, but all the lands which, according to the Rabbis, David had subdued, such as Mesopotamia, Syria, Zobah, Achlab, etc. It would be too lengthy to explain in detail the various ordinances in regard to which Soria was assimilated to, and those by which it was distinguished from, Palestine proper. The preponderance of duty and privilege was certainly in favour of Syria, so much so, that if one could have stepped from its soil straight to that of Palestine, or joined fields in the two countries, without the interposition of any Gentile strip, the land and the dust of Syria would have been considered clean, like that of Palestine itself (Ohol. xviii. 7). There was thus around "the land" a sort of inner band, consisting of those countries supposed to have been annexed by King David, and termed Soria. But besides this, there was also what may be called an outer band, towards the Gentile world, consisting of Egypt, Babylon, Ammon and Moab, the countries in which Israel had a special interest, and which were distinguished from the rest, "outside the land," by this, that they were liable to tithes and the Therumoth, or first-fruits in a prepared state. Of course neither of these contributions was actually brought into Palestine, but either employed by them for their sacred purposes, or else redeemed.

Maimonides arranges all countries into three classes, "so far as concerns the precepts connected with the soil"--"the land, Soria, and outside the land"; and he divides the land of Israel into territory possessed before and after the Exile, while he also distinguishes between Egypt, Babylon, Moab, and Ammon, and other lands (Hilch. Ther. i. 6). In popular estimate other distinctions were likewise made. Thus Rabbi Jose of Galilee would have it (Bicc. i. 10), that Biccurim * were not to be brought from the other side of Jordan, "because it was not a land flowing with milk and honey."

* For a full explanation of the distinction between Biccurim and Therumoth see my work on The Temple: Its Ministry and Services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ. But as the Rabbinical law in this respect differed from the view expressed by Rabbi Jose, his must have been an afterthought, probably intended to account for the fact that they beyond Jordan did not bring their first-fruits to the Temple. Another distinction claimed for the country west of the Jordan curiously reminds us of the fears expressed by the two and a half tribes on their return to their homes, after the first conquest of Palestine under Joshua (Joshua 22:24-25), since it declared the land east of Jordan less sacred, on account of the absence of the Temple, of which it had not been worthy. Lastly, Judaea proper claimed pre-eminence over Galilee, as being the centre of Rabbinism. Perhaps it may be well here to state that, notwithstanding strict uniformity on all principal points, Galilee and Judaea had each its own peculiar legal customs and rights, which differed in many particulars one from the other.

What has hitherto been explained from Rabbinical writings gains fresh interest when we bring it to bear on the study of the New Testament. For, we can now understand how those Zealots from Jerusalem, who would have bent the neck of the Church under the yoke of the law of Moses, sought out in preference the flourishing communities in Syria for the basis of their operations (Acts 15:1). There was a special significance in this, as Syria formed a kind of outer Palestine, holding an intermediate position between it and heathen lands. Again, it results from our inquiries, that, what the Rabbis considered as the land of Israel proper, may be regarded as commencing immediately south of Antioch. Thus the city where the first Gentile Church was formed (Acts 11:20-21); where the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26); where Paul so long exercised his ministry, and whence he started on his missionary journeys, was, significantly enough, just outside the land of Israel. Immediately beyond it lay the country over which the Rabbis claimed entire sway. Travelling southwards, the first district which one would reach would be what is known from the gospels as "the coasts (or tracts) of Tyre and Sidon." St. Mark describes the district more particularly (Mark 7:24) as "the borders of Tyre and Sidon." These stretched, according to Josephus (Jewish War, iii,35), at the time of our Lord, from the Mediterranean towards Jordan. It was to these extreme boundary tracts of "the land," that Jesus had withdrawn from the Pharisees, when they were offended at His opposition to their "blind" traditionalism; and there He healed by the word of His power the daughter of the "woman of Canaan," the intensity of whose faith drew from His lips words of precious commendation (Matthew 15:28; Mark 7:29). It was chiefly a heathen district where the Saviour spoke the word of healing, and where the woman would not let the Messiah of Israel go without an answer. She herself was a Gentile. Indeed, not only that district, but all around, and farther on, the territory of Philip, was almost entirely heathen. More than that, strange as it may sound, all around the districts inhabited by the Jews the country was, so to speak, fringed by foreign nationalities and by heathen worship, rites, and customs.

Properly to understand the history of the time and the circumstances indicated in the New Testament, a correct view of the state of parties in this respect is necessary. And here we must guard against a not unnatural mistake. If any one had expected to find within the boundaries of "the land" itself one nationality, one language, the same interests, or even one religion publicly professed, he would have been bitterly disappointed. It was not merely for the presence of the Romans and their followers, and of a more or less influential number of foreign settlers, but the

Holy Land itself was a country of mixed and hostile races, of divided interests, where close by the side of the narrowest and most punctilious Pharisaism heathen temples rose, and heathen rites and customs openly prevailed. In a general way all this will be readily understood. For, those who returned from Babylon were comparatively few in number, and confessedly did not occupy the land in its former extent. During the troubled period which followed, there was a constant influx of heathen, and unceasing attempts were made to introduce and perpetuate foreign elements. Even the language of Israel had undergone a change. In the course of time the ancient Hebrew had wholly given place to the Aramaean dialect, except in public worship and in the learned academies of theological doctors. Such words and names in the gospels as Raka, Abba, Golgotha, Gabbatha, Akel-Dama, Bartholomaios, Barabbas, Bar-Jesus, and the various verbal quotations, are all Aramaean. It was probably in that language that Paul addressed the infuriated multitude, when standing on the top of the steps leading from the Temple into the fortress Antonia (Acts 21:40; Acts 22:1 ff). But along with the Hebraic Aramaean--for so we would designate the language--the Greek had for some time been making its way among the people. The Mishnah itself contains a very large number of Greek and Latin words with Hebraic terminations, showing how deeply Gentile life and customs around had affected even those who hated them most, and, by inference, how thoroughly they must have penetrated Jewish society in general. But besides, it had been long the policy of their rulers systematically to promote all that was Grecian in thought and feeling. It needed the obstinate determinateness, if not the bigotry, of Pharisaism to prevent their success, and this may perhaps partly explain the extreme of their antagonism against all that was Gentile. A brief notice of the religious state of the outlying districts of the country may place this in a clearer light. In the far north-east of the land, occupying at least in part the ancient possession of Manasseh, were the provinces belonging to the tetrarch Philip (Luke 3:1). Many spots there (Mark 8:22; Luke 9:10; Matthew 16:13) are dear to the Christian memory. After the Exile these districts had been peopled by wild, predatory nomads, like the Bedawin of our days. These lived chiefly in immense caves, where they stored their provisions, and in case of attack defended themselves and their flocks. Herod the Great and his successors had indeed subdued, and settled among them, a large number of Jewish and Idumaean colonists--the former brought from Babylon, under the leadership of one Zamaris, and attracted, like the modern German colonists in parts of Russia, by immunity from taxation. But the vast majority of the people were still Syrians and Grecians, rude, barbarous, and heathens. Indeed, there the worship of the old Syrian gods had scarcely given way to the more refined rites of Greece. It was in this neighbourhood that Peter made that noble confession of faith, on which, as on a rock, the Church is built. But Caesarea Philippi was originally Paneas, the city devoted to Pan; nor does its change of name indicate a more Jewish direction on the part of its inhabitants. Indeed, Herod the Great had built there a temple to Augustus. But further particulars are scarcely necessary, for recent researches have everywhere brought to light relics of the worship of the Phoenician Astarte, of the ancient Syrian god of the sun, and even of the Egyptian Ammon, side by side with that of the well-known Grecian deities. The same may be said of the refined Damascus, the territory of which formed here the extreme boundary of Palestine. Passing from the eastern to the western bounds of Palestine, we find that in Tyre and Ptolemais Phrygian, Egyptians, Phoenician, and Greek rites contended for the mastery. In the centre of Palestine, notwithstanding the pretence of the Samaritans to be the only true representatives of the religion of Moses, the very name of their capital, Sebaste, for Samaria, showed how thoroughly Grecianised was that province. Herod had built in Samaria also a

magnificent temple to Augustus; and there can be no doubt that, as the Greek language, so Grecian rites and idolatry prevailed. Another outlying district, the Decapolis (Matthew 4:25; Mark 5:20, Mark 7:31), was almost entirely Grecian in constitution, language, and worship. It was in fact, a federation of ten heathen cities within the territory of Israel, possessing a government of their own. Little is known of its character; indeed, the cities themselves are not always equally enumerated by different writers. We name those of most importance to readers of the New Testament. Scythopolis, the ancient Beth-shean (Joshua 17:11, Joshua 17:16; Judges 1:27; 1 Samuel 31:10, 1 Samuel 31:12, etc.), was the only one of those cities situated west of the Jordan. It lay about four hours south of Tiberias. Gadara, the capital of Peraea, is known to us from Matthew 8:28; Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26. Lastly, we mention as specially interesting, Pella, the place to which the Christians of Jerusalem fled in obedience to the warning of our Lord (Matthew 24:15-20), to escape the doom of the city, when finally beleaguered by the Romans. The situation of Pella has not been satisfactorily ascertained, but probably it lay at no great distance from the ancient Jabesh Gilead. But to return. From what has been said, it will appear that there remained only Galilee and Judaea proper, in which strictly Jewish views and manners must be sought for. Each of these will be described in detail. For the present it will suffice to remark, that north-eastern or Upper Galilee was in great part inhabited by Gentiles--Phoenicians, Syrians, Arabs, and Greeks (Josephus, Jewish War, iii,419-427), whence the name "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Matthew 4:15). It is strange in how many even of those cities, with which we are familiar from the New Testament, the heathen element prevailed. Tiberias, which gave its name to the lake, was at the time of Christ of quite recent origin, having been built by the tetrarch Herod Antipas (the Herod of the gospel history), and named in honour of the Emperor Tiberius. Although endowed by its founder with many privileges, such as houses and lands for its inhabitants, and freedom from taxation--the latter being continued by Vespasian after the Jewish war--Herod had to colonise it by main force, so far as its few Jewish inhabitants were concerned. For, the site on which the city stood had of old covered a place of burial, and the whole ground was therefore levitically unclean (Josephus, Ant, xviii,38). However celebrated, therefore, afterwards as the great and final seat of the Jewish Sanhedrim, it was originally chiefly un-Jewish. Gaza had its local deity; Ascalon worshipped Astarte; Joppa was the locality where, at the time when Peter had his vision there, they still showed on the rocks of the shore the marks of the chains, by which Andromeda was said to have been held, when Perseus came to set her free. Caesarea was an essentially heathen city, though inhabited by many Jews; and one of its most conspicuous ornaments was another temple to Augustus, built on a hill opposite the entrance to the harbour, so as to be visible far out at sea. But what could be expected, when in Jerusalem itself Herod had reared a magnificent theatre and amphitheatre, to which gladiators were brought from all parts of the world, and where games were held, thoroughly anti-Jewish and heathen in their spirit and tendency? (Josephus, Ant., xv,274). The favourites and counsellors by whom that monarch surrounded himself were heathens; wherever he or his successors could, they reared heathen temples, and on all occasions they promoted the spread of Grecian views. Yet withal they professed to be Jews; they would not shock Jewish prejudices; indeed, as the building of the Temple, the frequent advocacy at Rome of the cause of Jews when oppressed, and many other facts show, the Herodians would fain have kept on good terms with the national party, or rather used it as their tool. And so Grecianism spread. Already Greek was spoken and understood by all the educated classes in the country; it was necessary for intercourse with the Roman authorities, with the many civil and military officials, and

with strangers; the "superscription" on the coins was in Greek, even though, to humour the Jews, none of the earlier Herods had his own image impressed on them. * Significantly enough, it was Herod Agrippa I, the murderer of St. James, and the would-be murderer of St. Peter, who introduced the un-Jewish practice of images on coins. Thus everywhere the foreign element was advancing. A change or else a struggle was inevitable in the near future.

* The coin mentioned in Matthew 1:1, which bore an "image," as well as a "superscription," must therefore have been either struck in Rome, or else one of the tetrarch Philip, who was the first to introduce the image of Caesar on strictly Jewish coins. And what of Judaism itself at the period? It was miserably divided, even though no outward separation had taken place. The Pharisees and Sadducees held opposite principles, and hated each other; the Essenes looked down upon them both. Within Pharisaism the schools of Hillel and Shammai contradicted each other on almost every matter. But both united in their unbounded contempt of what they designated as "the country-people"--those who had no traditional learning, and hence were either unable or unwilling to share the discussions, and to bear the burdens of legal ordinances, which constituted the chief matter of traditionalism. There was only one feeling common to all--high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlettered: it was that of intense hatred of the foreigner. The rude Galileans were as "national" as the most punctilious Pharisees; indeed, in the war against Rome they furnished the most and the bravest soldiers. Everywhere the foreigner was in sight; his were the taxes levied, the soldiery, the courts of ultimate appeal, the government. In Jerusalem they hung over the Temple as a guard in the fortress of Antonia, and even kept in their custody the high-priest's garments, * so that, before officiating in the Temple, he had actually always to apply for them to the procurator or his representative! They were only just more tolerable as being downright heathens than the Herodians, who mingled Judaism with heathenism, and, having sprung from foreign slaves, had arrogated to themselves the kingdom of the Maccabees.

* The practice commenced innocently enough. The high-priest Hyrcanus, who built the Tower of Baris, kept his dress there, and his sons continued the practice. When Herod seized the government, he retained, for reasons readily understood, this custody, in the fortress of Antonia, which he had substituted for the ancient tower. On similar grounds the Romans followed the lead of Herod. Josephus (Ant. xviii,93) describes "the stone chamber" in which these garments were kept, under seal of the priests, with a light continually burning there. Vitellius, the successor of Pilate, restored to the Jews the custody of the high-priestly garments, when they were kept in a special apartment in the Temple.

Readers of the New Testament know what separation Pharisaical Jews made between themselves and heathens. It will be readily understood, that every contact with heathenism and all aid to its rites should have been forbidden, and that in social intercourse any levitical defilement, arising from the use of what was "common or unclean," was avoided. But Pharisaism went a great deal further than this. Three days before a heathen festival all transactions with Gentiles were forbidden, so as to afford them neither direct nor indirect help towards their rites; and this prohibition extended even to private festivities, such as a birthday, the day of return from a journey, etc. On heathen festive occasions a pious Jew should avoid, if possible, passing through a heathen city, certainly all dealings in shops that were festively decorated. It was unlawful for Jewish workmen to assist in anything that might be subservient either to heathen worship or heathen rule, including in the latter the erection of court-houses and similar buildings. It need not

be explained to what lengths or into what details Pharisaical punctiliousness carried all these ordinances. From the New Testament we know, that to enter the house of a heathen defiled till the evening (John 18:28), and that all familiar intercourse with Gentiles was forbidden (Acts 10:28). So terrible was the intolerance, that a Jewess was actually forbidden to give help to her heathen neighbour, when about to become a mother (Avod. S. ii. 1)! It was not a new question to St. Paul, when the Corinthians inquired about the lawfulness of meat sold in the shambles or served up at a feast (1 Corinthians 10:25, 1 Corinthians 10:27-28). Evidently he had the Rabbinical law on the subject before his mind, while, on the one hand, he avoided the Pharisaical bondage of the letter, and, on the other, guarded against either injuring one's own conscience, or offending that of an on-looker. For, according to Rabbi Akiba, "Meat which is about to be brought in heathen worship is lawful, but that which comes out from it is forbidden, because it is like the sacrifices of the dead" (Avod. S. ii. 3). But the separation went much beyond what ordinary minds might be prepared for. Milk drawn from a cow by heathen hands, bread and oil prepared by them, might indeed be sold to strangers, but not used by Israelites. No pious Jew would of course have sat down at the table of a Gentile (Acts 11:3; Galatians 2:12). If a heathen were invited to a Jewish house, he might not be left alone in the room, else every article of food or drink on the table was henceforth to be regarded as unclean. If cooking utensils were bought of them, they had to be purified by fire or by water; knives to be ground anew; spits to be made red-hot before use, etc. It was not lawful to let either house or field, nor to sell cattle, to a heathen; any article, however distantly connected with heathenism, was to be destroyed. Thus, if a weaving-shuttle had been made of wood grown in a grove devoted to idols, every web of cloth made by it was to be destroyed; nay, if such pieces had been mixed with others, to the manufacture of which no possible objection could have been taken, these all became unclean, and had to be destroyed.

These are only general statements to show the prevalent feeling. It was easy to prove how it pervaded every relationship of life. The heathens, though often tolerant, of course retorted. Circumcision, the Sabbath-rest, the worship of an invisible God, and Jewish abstinence from pork, formed a never-ending theme of merriment to the heathen. Conquerors are not often chary in disguising their contempt for the conquered, especially when the latter presume to look down upon, and to hate them. In view of all this, what an almost incredible truth must it have seemed, when the Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed it among Israel as the object of His coming and kingdom, not to make of the Gentiles Jews, but of both alike children of one Heavenly Father; not to rivet upon the heathen the yoke of the law, but to deliver from it Jew and Gentile, or rather to fulfil its demands for all! The most unexpected and unprepared-for revelation, from the Jewish point of view, was that of the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, the taking away of the enmity of the law, and the nailing it to His cross. There was nothing analogous to it; not a hint of it to be found, either in the teaching or the spirit of the times. Quite the opposite. Assuredly, the most unlike thing to Christ were His times; and the greatest wonder of all--"the mystery hidden from ages and generations"--the foundation of one universal Church.

02.03. Chapter 3 - In Galilee at the time of our Lord

Chapter 3 - In Galilee at the time of our Lord

"If any one wishes to be rich, let him go north; if he wants to be wise, let him come south." Such was the saying, by which Rabbinical pride distinguished between the material wealth of Galilee and the supremacy in traditional lore claimed for the academies of Judaea proper. Alas, it was not long before Judaea lost even this doubtful distinction, and its colleges wandered northwards, ending at last by the Lake of Gennesaret, and in that very city of Tiberias which at one time had been reputed unclean! Assuredly, the history of nations chronicles their judgment; and it is strangely significant, that the authoritative collection of Jewish traditional law, known as the Mishnah, and the so-called Jerusalem Talmud, which is its Palestinian commentary, * should finally have issued from what was originally a heathen city, built upon the site of old forsaken graves.

* There are two Talmuds--the Jerusalem and the Babylonian--to the text of the Mishnah. The Babylonian Talmud is considerably younger than that of Jerusalem, and its traditions far more deeply tinged with superstition and error of every kind. For historical purposes, also, the Jerusalem Talmud is of much greater value and authority than that of the Eastern Schools. But so long as Jerusalem and Judaea were the centre of Jewish learning, no terms of contempt were too strong to express the supercilious hauteur, with which a regular Rabbinist regarded his northern co-religionists. The slighting speech of Nathanael (John 1:46), "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" reads quite like a common saying of the period; and the rebuke of the Pharisees to Nicodemus (John 7:52), "Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet," was pointed by the mocking question, "Art thou also of Galilee?" It was not merely self-conscious superiority, such as the "towns-people," as the inhabitants of Jerusalem used to be called throughout Palestine, were said to have commonly displayed towards their "country cousins" and every one else, but offensive contempt, outspoken sometimes with almost incredible rudeness, want of delicacy and charity, but always with much pious self-assertion. The "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men" (Luke 18:11) seems like the natural breath of Rabbinism in the company of the unlettered, and of all who were deemed intellectual or religious inferiors; and the parabolic history of the Pharisee and the publican in the gospel is not told for the special condemnation of that one prayer, but as characteristic of the whole spirit of Pharisaism, even in its approaches to God. "This people who knoweth not the law (that is, the traditional law) are cursed," was the curt summary of the Rabbinical estimate of popular opinion. To so terrible a length did it go that the Pharisees would fain have excluded them, not only from common intercourse, but from witness-bearing, and that they even applied to marriages with them such a passage as Deuteronomy 27:21. But if these be regarded as extremes, two instances, chosen almost at random--one from religious, the other from ordinary life--will serve to illustrate their reality. A more complete parallel to the Pharisee’s prayer could scarcely be imagined than the following. We read in the Talmud (Jer. Ber, iv. 2) that a celebrated Rabbi was wont every day, on leaving the academy, to pray in these terms: "I thank Thee, O Lord my God and God of my fathers, that Thou hast cast my lot among those who

frequent the schools and synagogues, and not among those who attend the theatre and the circus. For, both I and they work and watch--I to inherit eternal life, they for their destruction." The other illustration, also taken from a Rabbinical work, is, if possible, even more offensive. It appears that Rabbi Jannai, while travelling by the way, formed acquaintance with a man, whom he thought his equal. Presently his new friend invited him to dinner, and liberally set before him meat and drink. But the suspicions of the Rabbi had been excited. He began to try his host successively by questions upon the text of Scripture, upon the Mishnah, allegorical interpretations, and lastly on Talmudical lore. Alas! on neither of these points could he satisfy the Rabbi. Dinner was over; and Rabbi Jannai, who by that time no doubt had displayed all the hauteur and contempt of a regular Rabbinist towards the unlettered, called upon his host, as customary, to take the cup of thanksgiving, and return thanks. But the latter was sufficiently humiliated to reply, with a mixture of Eastern deference and Jewish modesty, "Let Jannai himself give thanks in his own house." "At any rate," observed the Rabbi, "you can join with me"; and when the latter had agreed to this, Jannai said, "A dog has eaten of the bread of Jannai!"

Impartial history, however, must record a different judgment of the men of Galilee from that pronounced by the Rabbis, and that even wherein they were despised by those leaders in Israel. Some of their peculiarities, indeed, were due to territorial circumstances. The province of Galilee--of which the name might be rendered "circuit," being derived from a verb meaning "to move in a circle"--covered the ancient possession of four tribes: Issachar, Zebulon, Naphtali, and Asher. The name occurs already in the Old Testament (compare Joshua 20:7; 1 Kings 9:11; 2 Kings 15:29; 1 Chronicles 6:76; and especially Isaiah 9:1). In the time of Christ it stretched northwards to the possessions of Tyre on the one side, and to Syria on the other; on the south it was bounded by Samaria--Mount Carmel on the western, and the district of Scythopolis (in the Decapolis) on the eastern side, being here landmarks; while the Jordan and the Lake of Gennesaret formed the general eastern boundary-line. Thus regarded, it would include names to which such reminiscences attach as "the mountains of Gilboa," where "Israel and Saul fell down slain"; little Hermon, Tabor, Carmel, and that great battle-field of Palestine, the plain of Jezreel. Alike the Talmud and Josephus divide it into Upper and Lower Galilee, between which the Rabbis insert the district of Tiberias, as Middle Galilee. We are reminded of the history of Zaccheus (Luke 19:4) by the mark which the Rabbis give to distinguish between Upper and Lower Galilee--the former beginning "where sycomores cease to grow." The sycomore, which is a species of fig, must, of course, not be confounded with our sycamore, and was a very delicate evergreen, easily destroyed by cold (Psalms 78:47), and growing only in the Jordan valley, or in Lower Galilee up to the sea-coast. The mention of that tree may also help us to fix the locality where Luke 17:6 was spoken by the Saviour. The Rabbis mention Kefar Hananyah, probably the modern Kefr Anan, to the north-west of Safed, as the first place in Upper Galilee. Safed was truly "a city set on an hill"; and as such may have been in view of the Lord, when He spoke the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:14). In the Talmud it is mentioned by the name of Zephath, and spoken of as one of the signal-stations, whence the proclamation of the new moon, made by the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem, and with it the beginning of every month, was telegraphed by fire-signals from hill to hill throughout the land, and far away east of the Jordan, to those of the dispersion. The mountainous part in the north of Upper Galilee presented magnificent scenery, with bracing air. Here the scene of the Song of Solomon is partly laid (Song of Solomon 7:5). But its caves and fastnesses, as well as the marshy ground, covered with reeds, along Lake Merom, gave shelter to robbers, outlaws,

and rebel chiefs. Some of the most dangerous characters came from the Galilean highlands. A little farther down, and the scenery changed. South of Lake Merom, where the so-called Jacob's bridge crosses the Jordan, we come upon the great caravan road, which connected Damascus in the east with the great mart of Ptolemais, on the shore of the Mediterranean. What a busy life did this road constantly present in the days of our Lord, and how many trades and occupations did it call into existence! All day long they passed--files of camel, mules, and asses, laden with the riches of the East, destined for the far West, or bringing the luxuries of the West to the far East. Travellers of every description--Jews, Greeks, Romans, dwellers in the East--were seen here. The constant intercourse with foreigners, and the settlement of so many strangers along one of the great highways of the world, must have rendered the narrow-minded bigotry of Judaea well-nigh impossible in Galilee.

We are now in Galilee proper, and a more fertile or beautiful region could scarcely be conceived. It was truly the land where Asher dipped his foot in oil (Deuteronomy 33:24). The Rabbis speak of the oil as flowing like a river, and they say that it was easier in Galilee to rear a forest of olive-trees than one child in Judaea! The wine, although not so plentiful as the oil, was generous and rich. Corn grew in abundance, especially in the neighbourhood of Capernaum; flax also was cultivated. The price of living was much lower than in Judaea, where one measure was said to cost as much as five in Galilee. Fruit also grew to perfection; and it was probably a piece of jealousy on the part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that they would not allow it to be sold at the feasts in the city, lest people should forsooth say, "We have only come up in order to taste fruit from Galilee" (Pes. 8 b). Josephus speaks of the country in perfectly rapturous terms. He counts no fewer than 240 towns and villages, and speaks of the smallest as containing not less than 15,000 inhabitants! This, of course, must be gross exaggeration, as it would make the country more than twice as thickly populated as the densest districts in England or Belgium. Some one has compared Galilee to the manufacturing districts of this country. This comparison, of course, applies only to the fact of its busy life, although various industries were also carried on there--large potteries of different kinds, and dyeworks. From the heights of Galilee the eye would rest on harbours, filled with merchant ships, and on the sea, dotted with white sails. There, by the shore, and also inland, smoked furnaces, where glass was made; along the great road moved the caravans; in field, vineyard, and orchard all was activity. The great road quite traversed Galilee, entering it where the Jordan is crossed by the so-called bridge of Jacob, then touching Capernaum, going down to Nazareth, and passing on to the sea-coast. This was one advantage that Nazareth had--that it lay on the route of the world's traffic and intercourse. Another peculiarity is strangely unknown to Christian writers. It appears from ancient Rabbinical writings that Nazareth was one of the stations of the priests. All the priests were divided into twenty-four courses, one of which was always on ministry in the Temple. Now, the priests of the course which was to be on duty always gathered in certain towns, whence they went up in company to the Temple; those who were unable to go spending the week in fasting and prayer for their brethren. Nazareth was one of these priestly centres; so that there, with symbolic significance, alike those passed who carried on the traffic of the world, and those who ministered in the Temple.

We have spoken of Nazareth; and a few brief notices of other places in Galilee, mentioned in the New Testament, may be of interest. Along the lake lay, north, Capernaum, a large city; and near it, Chorazin, so celebrated for its grain, that, if it had been closer to Jerusalem, it would have been

used for the Temple; also Bethsaida, * the name, "house of fishes," indicating its trade.

* Three were two places of that name, one east of the Jordan, Bethsaida Julias, referred to in Luke 9:10; Mark 8:22; the other on the western shore of the Lake of Galilee, the birthplace of Andrew and Peter (John 1:44). See also Mark 6:45; Matthew 11:21; Luke 10:13; John 12:21.

Capernaum was the station where Matthew sat at the receipt of custom (Matthew 9:9). South of Capernaum was Magdala, the city of dyers, the home of Mary Magdalene (Mark 15:40, Mark 16:1; Luke 8:2; John 20:1). The Talmud mentions its shops and its woolworks, speaks of its great wealth, but also of the corruption of its inhabitants. Tiberias, which had been built shortly before Christ, is only incidentally mentioned in the New Testament (John 6:1, John 6:23, John 21:1). At the time it was a splendid but chiefly heathen city, whose magnificent buildings contrasted with the more humble dwellings common in the country. Quite at the southern end of the lake was Tarichaea, the great fishing place, whence preserved fish was exported in casks (Strabo, xvi,2). It was there that, in the great Roman war, a kind of naval battle was fought, which ended in terrible slaughter, no quarter being given by the Romans, so that the lake was dyed red with the blood of the victims, and the shore rendered pestilential by their bodies. Cana in Galilee was the birthplace of Nathanael (John 21:2), where Christ performed His first miracle (John 2:1-11); significant also in connection with the second miracle there witnessed, when the new wine of the kingdom was first tasted by Gentile lips (John 4:46-47). Cana lay about three hours to the north-north-east of Nazareth. Lastly, Nain was one of the southernmost places in Galilee, not far from the ancient Endor.

It can scarcely surprise us, however interesting it may prove, that such Jewish recollections of the early Christians as the Rabbis have preserved, should linger chiefly around Galilee. Thus we have, in quite the apostolic age, mention of miraculous cures made, in the name of Jesus, by one Jacob of Chefar Sechanja (in Galilee), one of the Rabbis violently opposing on one occasion an attempt of the kind, the patient meanwhile dying during the dispute; repeated records of discussions with learned Christians, and other indications of contact with Hebrew believers. Some have gone farther, and found traces of the general spread of such views in the fact that a Galilean teacher is introduced in Babylon as propounding the science of the Merkabah, or the mystical doctrines connected with Ezekiel’s vision of the Divine chariot, which certainly contained elements closely approximating the Christian doctrines of the Logos, the Trinity, etc. Trinitarian views have also been suspected in the significance attached to the number "three" by a Galilean teacher of the third century, in this wise: "Blessed be God, who has given the three laws (the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa) to a people composed of three classes (Priests, Levites, and laity), through him who was the youngest of three (Miriam, Aaron, and Moses), on the third day (of their separation-- Exodus 19:16), and in the third month." There is yet another saying of a Galilean Rabbi, referring to the resurrection, which, although far from clear, may bear a Christian application. Finally, the Midrash applies the expression, "The sinner shall be taken by her" (Ecclesiastes 7:26), either to the above-named Christian Rabbi Jacob, or to Christians generally, or even to Capernaum, with evident reference to the spread of Christianity there. We cannot here pursue this very interesting subject farther than to say, that we find indications of Jewish Christians having endeavoured to introduce their views while leading the public devotions of the Synagogue, and even of contact with the immoral heretical sect of the Nicolaitans (Revelation 2:15).

Indeed, what we know of the Galileans would quite prepare us for expecting, that the gospel should have received at least a ready hearing among many of them. It was not only, that Galilee was the great scene of our Lord’s working and teaching, and the home of His first disciples and apostles; nor yet that the frequent intercourse with strangers must have tended to remove narrow prejudices, while the contempt of the Rabbinists would loosen attachment to the strictest Pharisaism; but, as the character of the people is described to us by Josephus, and even by the Rabbis, they seem to have been a warm-hearted, impulsive, generous race--intensely national in the best sense, active, not given to idle speculations or wire-drawn logico-theological distinctions, but conscientious and earnest. The Rabbis detail certain theological differences between Galilee and Judaea. Without here mentioning them, we have no hesitation in saying, that they show more earnest practical piety and strictness of life, and less adherence to those Pharisaical distinctions which so often made void the law. The Talmud, on the other hand, charges the Galileans with neglecting traditionalism; learning from one teacher, then from another (perhaps because they had only wandering Rabbis, not fixed academies); and with being accordingly unable to rise to the heights of Rabbinical distinctions and explanations. That their hot blood made them rather quarrelsome, and that they lived in a chronic state of rebellion against Rome, we gather not only from Josephus, but even from the New Testament (Luke 13:2; Acts 5:37). Their mal-pronunciation of Hebrew, or rather their inability properly to pronounce the gutturals, formed a constant subject of witticism and reproach, so current that even the servants in the High Priest’s palace could turn round upon Peter, and say, "Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee" (Matthew 26:73)--a remark this, by the way, which illustrates the fact that the language commonly used at the time of Christ in Palestine was Aramaean, not Greek. Josephus describes the Galileans as hard-working, manly, and brave; and even the Talmud admits (Jer. Cheth. iv. 14) that they cared more for honour than for money. But the district in Galilee to which the mind ever reverts, is that around the shores of its lake. * Its beauty, its marvellous vegetation, its almost tropical products, its wealth and populousness, have been often described. The Rabbis derive the name of Gennesaret either from a harp--because the fruits of its shores were as sweet as is the sound of a harp--or else explain it to mean "the gardens of the princes," from the beautiful villas and gardens around.

* The New Testament speaks so often of the occupation of fishers by the Lake of Galilee, that it is interesting to know that fishing on the lake was free to all. The Talmud mentions this as one of the ten ordinances given by Joshua of old (Baba Kama,80 b). But we think chiefly not of those fertile fields and orchards, nor of the deep blue of the lake, enclosed between hills, nor of the busy towns, nor of the white sails spread on its waters--but of Him, Whose feet trod its shores; Who taught, and worked, and prayed there for us sinners; Who walked its waters and calmed its storms, and Who even after His resurrection held there sweet converse with His disciples; nay, Whose last words on earth, spoken from thence, come to us with peculiar significance and application, as in these days we look on the disturbing elements in the world around: "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me" (John 21:22).

02.04. Chapter 4 - Travelling in Palestine--Roads, Inns, Hospitality, Custom-House Officers,...

Chapter 4 - Travelling in Palestine--Roads, Inns, Hospitality, Custom-House Officers, Taxation, Publicans

It was the very busiest road in Palestine, on which the publican Levi Matthew sat at the receipt of "custom," when our Lord called him to the fellowship of the Gospel, and he then made that great feast to which he invited his fellow-publicans, that they also might see and hear Him in Whom he had found life and peace (Luke 5:29). For, it was the only truly international road of all those which passed through Palestine; indeed, it formed one of the great highways of the world's commerce. At the time of which we write, it may be said, in general, that six main arteries of commerce and intercourse traversed the country, the chief objective points being Caesarea, the military, and Jerusalem, the religious capital. First, there was the southern road, which led from Jerusalem, by Bethlehem, to Hebron, and thence westwards to Gaza, and eastwards into Arabia, whence also a direct road went northwards to Damascus. It is by this road we imagine St. Paul to have travelled, when retiring into the solitudes of Arabia, immediately after his conversion (Galatians 1:17-18). The road to Hebron must have been much frequented by priestly and other pilgrims to the city, and by it the father of the Baptist and the parents of Jesus would pass. Secondly, there was the old highway along the sea-shore from Egypt up to Tyre, whence a straight, but not so much frequented, road struck, by Caesarea Philippi, to Damascus. But the sea-shore road itself, which successively touched Gaza, Ascalon, Jamnia, Lydda, Diospolis, and finally Caesarea and Ptolemais, was probably the most important military highway in the land, connecting the capital with the seat of the Roman procurator at Caesarea, and keeping the sea-board and its harbours free for communication. This road branched off for Jerusalem at Lydda, where it bifurcated, leading either by Beth-horon or by Emmaus, which was the longer way. It was probably by this road that the Roman escort hurried off St. Paul (Acts 23:31), the mounted soldiers leaving him at Antipatris, about twenty Roman miles from Lydda, and altogether from Jerusalem about fifty-two Roman miles (the Roman mile being 1,618 yards, the English mile 1,760). Thus the distance to Caesarea, still left to be traversed next morning by the cavalry would be about twenty-six Roman miles, or, the whole way, seventy-eight Roman miles from Jerusalem. This rate of travelling, though rapid, cannot be regarded as excessive, since an ordinary day's journey is computed in the Talmud (Pes 93b) as high as forty Roman miles. A third road led from Jerusalem, by Beth-horon and Lydda, to Joppa, whence it continued close by the sea-shore to Caesarea. This was the road which Peter and his companions would take when summoned to go and preach the gospel to Cornelius (Acts 10:23-24). It was at Lydda, thirty-two Roman miles from Jerusalem, that Aeneas was miraculously healed, and "nigh" to it--within a few miles--was Joppa, where the raising of Tabitha, Dorcas, "the gazelle" (Acts 9:32-43), took place. Of the fourth great highway, which led from Galilee to Jerusalem, straight through Samaria, branching at Sichem eastwards to Damascus, and westwards to Caesarea, it is needless to say much, since, although much shorter, it was, if possible, eschewed by Jewish travellers; though, both in going to (Luke 9:53, Luke

17:11), and returning from Jerusalem (John 4:4, John 4:43), the Lord Jesus passed that way. The road from Jerusalem straight northwards also branched off at Gophna, whence it led across to Diospolis, and so on to Caesarea. But ordinarily, Jewish travellers would, rather than pass through Samaria, face the danger of robbers which awaited them (Luke 10:30) along the fifth great highway (comp. Luke 19:1, Luke 19:28; Matthew 20:17, Matthew 20:29), that led from Jerusalem, by Bethany, to Jericho. Here the Jordan was forded, and the road led to Gilead, and thence either southwards, or else north to Peraea, whence the traveller could make his way into Galilee. It will be observed that all these roads, whether commercial or military, were, so to speak, Judaean, and radiated from or to Jerusalem. But the sixth and great road, which passed through Galilee, was not at all primarily Jewish, but connected the East with the West--Damascus with Rome. From Damascus it led across the Jordan to Capernaum, Tiberias, and Nain (where it fell in with a direct road from Samaria), to Nazareth, and thence to Ptolemais. Thus, from its position, Nazareth was on the world's great highway. What was spoken there might equally re-echo throughout Palestine, and be carried to the remotest lands of the East and of the West.

It need scarcely be said, that the roads which we have thus traced are only those along the principal lines of communication. But a large number of secondary roads also traversed the country in all directions. Indeed, from earliest times much attention seems to have been given to facility of intercourse throughout the land. Even in the days of Moses we read of "the king's highway" (Numbers 20:17, Numbers 20:19, Numbers 21:22). In Hebrew we have, besides the two general terms (derech and orach), three expressions which respectively indicate a trodden or beaten-down path (nathiv, from nathav, to tread down), a made or cast-up road (messillah, from salal, to cast up), and "the king's highway"--the latter, evidently for national purposes, and kept up at the public expense. In the time of the kings (for example, 1 Kings 12:18), and even earlier, there were regular carriage roads, although we can scarcely credit the statement of Josephus (Antiq, viii,7,4) That Solomon had caused the principal roads to be paved with black stone--probably basalt. Toll was apparently levied in the time of Ezra (Ezra 4:13, Ezra 4:20); but the clergy were exempt from this as from all other taxation (Ezra 7:24). The roads to the cities of refuge required to be always kept in good order (Deuteronomy 19:3). According to the Talmud they were to be forty-eight feet wide, and provided with bridges, and with sign-posts where roads diverged.

Passing to later times, the Romans, as might have been expected, paid great attention to the modes of communication through the country. The military roads were paved, and provided with milestones. But the country roads were chiefly bridle-paths. The Talmud distinguishes between public and private roads. The former must be twenty-four, the latter six feet wide. It is added that, for the king's highway, and for the road taken by funerals, there is no measure (Babba B. vi. 7). Roads were annually repaired in spring, preparatory for going up to the great feasts. To prevent the possibility of danger, no subterranean structure, however protected, was allowed under a public road. Overhanging branches of trees had to be cut down, so as to allow a man on a camel to pass. A similar rule applied to balconies and projections; nor were these permitted to darken a street. Any one allowing things to accumulate on the road, or dropping them from a cart, had to make good what damage might be incurred by travellers. Indeed, in towns and their neighbourhood the police regulations were even more strict; and such ordinances occur as for the removal within thirty days of rotten trees or dangerous walls; not to pour out water on the road; not to throw out anything on the street, nor to leave about building materials, or broken glass, or

thorns, along with other regulations for the public safety and health.

Along such roads passed the travellers; few at first, and mostly pilgrims, but gradually growing in number, as commerce and social or political intercourse increased. Journeys were performed on foot, upon asses, or in carriages (Acts 8:28), of which three kinds are mentioned--the round carriage, perhaps like our gig; the elongated, like a bed; and the cart, chiefly for the transport of goods. It will be understood that in those days travelling was neither comfortable nor easy. Generally, people journeyed in company, of which the festive bands going to Jerusalem are a well-known instance. If otherwise, one would prepare for a journey almost as for a change of residence, and provide tent, victuals, and all that was needful by the way. It was otherwise with the travelling hawker, who was welcomed as a friend in every district through which he passed, who carried the news of the day, exchanged the products of one for those of another district, and produced the latest articles of commerce or of luxury. Letters were only conveyed by special messengers, or through travellers. In such circumstances, the command, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers," had a special meaning. Israel was always distinguished for hospitality; and not only the Bible, but the Rabbis, enjoin this in the strongest terms. In Jerusalem no man was to account a house as only his own; and it was said, that during the pilgrim-feasts none ever wanted ready reception. The tractate Aboth (1.5), mentions these as two out of the three sayings of Jose, the son of Jochanan, of Jerusalem: "Let thy house be wide open, and let the poor be the children of thy house." Readers of the New Testament will be specially interested to know, that, according to the Talmud (Pes. 53), Bethphage and Bethany, to which in this respect such loving memories cling, were specially celebrated for their hospitality towards the festive pilgrims. In Jerusalem it seems to have been the custom to hang a curtain in front of the door, to indicate that there was still room for guests. Some went so far as to suggest, there should be four doors to every house, to bid welcome to travellers from all directions. The host would go to meet an expected guest, and again accompany him part of the way (Acts 21:5). The Rabbis declared that hospitality involved as great, and greater merit than early morning attendance in an academy of learning. They could scarcely have gone farther, considering the value they attached to study. Of course, here also the Rabbinical order had the preference; and hospitably to entertain a sage, and to send him away with presents, was declared as meritorious as to have offered the daily sacrifices (Ber. 10, b). But let there be no misunderstanding. So far as the duty of hospitality is concerned, or the loving care for poor and sick, it were impossible to take a higher tone than that of Rabbinism. Thus it was declared, that "the entertainment of travellers was as great a matter as the reception of the Shechinah." This gives a fresh meaning to the admonition of the Epistle addressed specially to the Hebrews (Hebrews 13:2): "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Bearing on this subject, one of the oldest Rabbinical commentaries has a very beautiful gloss on Psalms 109:31 : "He shall stand at the right hand of the poor." "Whenever," we read, "a poor man stands at thy door, the Holy One, blessed be His Name, stands at his right hand. If thou givest him alms, know that thou shalt receive a reward from Him who standeth at his right hand." In another commentary God Himself and His angels are said to visit the sick. The Talmud itself counts hospitality among the things of which the reward is received alike in this life and in that which is to come (Shab. 127 a), while in another passage (Sot. 14 a) we are bidden imitate God in these four respects: He clothed the naked (Genesis 3:21); He visited the sick (Genesis 18:1); He comforted the mourners (Genesis 25:11); and He buried the dead (Deuteronomy 34:6). In treating of hospitality, the Rabbis display, as in so many relations of life,

the utmost tenderness and delicacy, mixed with a delightful amount of shrewd knowledge of the world and quaint humour. As a rule, they enter here also into full details. Thus the very manner in which a host is to bear himself towards his guests is prescribed. He is to look pleased when entertaining his guests, to wait upon them himself, to promise little and to give much, etc. At the same time it was also caustically added: "Consider all men as if they were robbers, but treat them as if each were Rabbi Gamaliel himself!" On the other hand, rules of politeness and gratitude are equally laid down for the guests. "Do not throw a stone," it was said, "into the spring at which you have drunk" (Baba K,. 92); or this, "A proper guest acknowledges all, and saith, 'At what trouble my host has been, and all for my sake!'--while an evil visitor remarks: 'Bah! what trouble has he taken?' Then, after enumerating how little he has had in the house, he concludes; 'And, after all, it was not done for me, but only for his wife and children!'" (Ber. 58 a). Indeed, some of the sayings in this connection are remarkably parallel to the directions which our Lord gave to His disciples on going forth upon their mission (Luke 10:5-11, and parallels). Thus, one was to inquire for the welfare of the family; not to go from house to house; to eat of such things as were set before one; and, finally, to part with a blessing.

All this, of course, applied to entertainment in private families. On unfrequented roads, where villages were at great intervals, or even outside towns (Luke 2:7), there were regular khans, or places of lodgment for strangers. Like the modern khans, these places were open, and generally built in a square, the large court in the middle being intended for the beasts of burden or carriages, while rooms opened upon galleries all around. Of course these rooms were not furnished, nor was any payment expected from the wayfarer. At the same time, some one was generally attached to the khan--mostly a foreigner--who would for payment provide anything that might be needful, of which we have an instance in the parabolic history of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:35). Such hostelries are mentioned so early as in the history of Moses (Genesis 42:27; Genesis 43:21). Jeremiah calls them "a place for strangers" (Jeremiah 41:17), wrongly rendered "habitation" in our Authorised Version. In the Talmud their designations are either Greek or Latin, in Aramaic form--one of them being the same as that used in Luke 10:34 --proving that such places were chiefly provided by and for strangers. *

* In the ancient Latin Itineraries of Palestine, journeys are computed by mansiones (night-quarters) and mutationes (change of horses)--from five to eight such changes being computed for a day's journey. In later times we also read of the oshpisa--evidently from hospitium, and showing its Roman origin--as a house of public entertainment, where such food as locusts, pickled, or fried in flour or in honey, and Median or Babylonian beer, Egyptian drink, and home-made cider or wine, were sold; such proverbs circulating among the boon companions as "To eat without drinking is like devouring one's own blood" (Shab. 41 a), and where wild noise and games of chance were indulged in by those who wasted their substance by riotous living. In such places the secret police, whom Herod employed, would ferret out the opinions of the populace while over their cups. That police must have been largely employed. According to Josephus (Anti. xv,366) spies beset the people, alike in town and country, watching their conversations in the unrestrained confidence of friendly intercourse. Herod himself is said to have acted in that capacity, and to have lurked about the streets at night-time in disguise to overhear or entrap unwary citizens. Indeed, at one time the city seems almost to have been under martial law, the citizens being forbidden "to meet together, to walk or eat together,"--presumably to hold public meetings, demonstrations, or banquets.

History sufficiently records what terrible vengeance followed the slightest suspicion. The New Testament account of the murder of all the little children at Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16), in hope of destroying among them the royal scion of David, is thoroughly in character with all that we know of Herod and his reign. There is at last indirect confirmation of this narrative in Talmudical writings, as there is evidence that all the genealogical registers in the Temple were destroyed by order of Herod. This is a most remarkable fact. The Jews retaliated by an intensity of hatred which went so far as to elevate the day of Herod’s death (2 Shebet) into an annual feast-day, on which all mourning was prohibited. But whether passing through town or country, by quiet side-roads or along the great highway, there was one sight and scene which must constantly have forced itself upon the attention of the traveller, and, if he were of Jewish descent, would ever awaken afresh his indignation and hatred. Whithersoever he went, he encountered in city or country the well-known foreign tax-gatherer, and was met by his insolence, by his vexatious intrusion, and by his exactions. The fact that he was the symbol of Israel’s subjection to foreign domination, galling though it was, had probably not so much to do with the bitter hatred of the Rabbinists towards the class of tax-farmers (Moches) and tax-collectors (Gabbai), both of whom were placed wholly outside the pale of Jewish society, as that they were so utterly shameless and regardless in their unconscientious dealings. For, ever since their return from Babylon, the Jews must, with a brief interval, have been accustomed to foreign taxation. At the time of Ezra (Ezra 4:13, Ezra 4:20, Ezra 7:24) they paid to the Persian monarch "toll, tribute, and custom"--middah, belo, and halach--or rather "ground-tax" (income and property-tax?), "custom" (levied on all that was for consumption, or imported), and "toll," or road-money. Under the reign of the Ptolemies the taxes seem to have been farmed to the highest bidder, the price varying from eight to sixteen talents--that is, from about 3,140 pounds to about 6,280 pounds--a very small sum indeed, which enabled the Palestine tax-farmers to acquire immense wealth, and that although they had continually to purchase arms and court favour (Josephus, Ant. xii,154-185). During the Syrian rule the taxes seem to have consisted of tribute, duty on salt, a third of the produce of all that was sown, and one-half of that from fruit-trees, besides poll-tax, custom duty, and an uncertain kind of tax, called "crown-money" (the aurum coronarium of the Romans), originally an annual gift of a crown of gold, but afterwards compounded for in money (Josephus,Ant. xii,129-137). Under the Herodians the royal revenue seems to have been derived from crown lands, from a property and income-tax, from import and export duties, and from a duty on all that was publicly sold and bought, to which must be added a tax upon houses in Jerusalem.

Heavily as these exactions must have weighed upon a comparatively poor and chiefly agricultural population, they refer only to civil taxation, not to religious dues. But, even so, we have not exhausted the list of contributions demanded of a Jew. For, every town and community levied its own taxes for the maintenance of synagogue, elementary schools, public baths, the support of the poor, the maintenance of public roads, city walls, and gates, and other general requirements. It must, however, be admitted that the Jewish authorities distributed this burden of civic taxation both easily and kindly, and that they applied the revenues derived from it for the public welfare in a manner scarcely yet attained in the most civilized countries. The Rabbinical arrangements for public education, health, and charity were, in every respect, far in advance of modern legislation, although here also they took care themselves not to take the grievous burdens which they laid upon others, by expressly exempting from civic taxes all those who devoted themselves to the study of the law. But the Roman taxation, which bore upon Israel with such crushing weight, was

quite of its own kind--systematic, cruel, relentless, and utterly regardless. In general, the provinces of the Roman Empire, and what of Palestine belonged to them, were subject to two great taxes--poll-tax (or rather income-tax) and ground-tax. All property and income that fell not under the ground-tax was subject to poll-tax; which amounted, for Syria and Cilicia, to one per cent. The "poll-tax" was really twofold, consisting of income-tax and head-money, the latter, of course, the same in all cases, and levied on all persons (bond or free) up to the age of sixty-five--women being liable from the age of twelve and men from that of fourteen. Landed property was subject to a tax of one-tenth of all grain, and one-fifth of the wine and fruit grown, partly paid in product and partly commuted into money. *

* Northern Africa alone (exclusive of Egypt) furnished Rome, by way of taxation, with sufficient corn to last eight months, and the city of Alexandria to last four months (Jewish War, ii,345-401).

Besides these, there was tax and duty on all imports and exports, levied on the great public highways and in the seaports. Then there was bridge-money and road-money, and duty on all that was bought and sold in the towns. These, which may be called the regular taxes, were irrespective of any forced contributions, and of the support which had to be furnished to the Roman procurator and his household and court at Caesarea. To avoid all possible loss to the treasury, the proconsul of Syria, Quirinus (Cyrenius), had taken a regular census to show the number of the population and their means. This was a terrible crime in the eyes of the Rabbis, who remembers that, if numbering the people had been reckoned such great sin of old, the evil must be an hundredfold increased, if done by heathens and for their own purposes. Another offence lay in the thought, that tribute, hitherto only given to Jehovah, was now to be paid to a heathen emperor. "Is it lawful to pay tribute unto Caesar?" was a sore question, which many an Israelite put to himself as he placed the emperor’s poll-tax beside the half-shekel of the sanctuary, and the tithe of his field, vineyard, and orchard, claimed by the tax-gatherer, along with that which he had hitherto only given unto the Lord. Even the purpose with which this inquiry was brought before Christ--to entrap Him in a political denunciation--shows, how much it was agitated among patriotic Jews; and it cost rivers of blood before it was not answered, but silenced. The Romans had a peculiar way of levying these taxes--not directly, but indirectly--which kept the treasury quite safe, whatever harm it might inflict on the taxpayer, while at the same time it threw upon him the whole cost of the collection. Senators and magistrates were prohibited from engaging in business or trade; but the highest order, the equestrian, was largely composed of great capitalists. These Roman knights formed joint-stock companies, which bought at public auction the revenues of a province at a fixed price, generally for five years. The board had its chairman, or magister, and its offices at Rome. These were the real Publicani, or publicans, who often underlet certain of the taxes. The Publicani, or those who held from them, employed either slaves or some of the lower classes in the country as tax-gatherers--the publicans of the New Testament. Similarly, all other imposts were farmed and collected; some of them being very onerous, and amounting to an ad valorem duty of two and a half, of five, and in articles of luxury even of twelve and a half per cent. Harbour-dues were higher than ordinary tolls, and smuggling or a false declaration was punished by confiscation of the goods. Thus the publicans also levied import and export dues, bridge-toll, road-money, town-dues, etc.; and, if the peaceable inhabitant, the tiller of the soil, the tradesman, or manufacturer was constantly exposed to their exactions, the traveller, the caravan, or the pedlar encountered their vexatious presence at every bridge, along the road, and at the entrance to cities. Every bale had to

be unloaded, and all its contents tumbled about and searched; even letters were opened; and it must have taken more than Eastern patience to bear their insolence and to submit to their "unjust accusations" in arbitrarily fixing the return from land or income, or the value of goods, etc. For there was no use appealing against them, although the law allowed this, since the judges themselves were the direct beneficiaries by the revenue; for they before whom accusations on this score would have to be laid, belonged to the order of knights, who were the very persons implicated in the farming of the revenue. Of course, the joint-stock company of Publicani at Rome expected its handsome dividends; so did the tax-gatherers in the provinces, and those to whom they on occasions sublet the imposts. All wanted to make money of the poor people; and the cost of the collection had of course to be added to the taxation. We can quite understand how Zaccheus, one of the supervisors of these tax-gatherers in the district of Jericho, which, from its growth and export of balsam, must have yielded a large revenue, should, in remembering his past life, have at once said: "If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation"--or, rather, "Whatever I have wrongfully exacted of any man." For nothing was more common than for the publican to put a fictitious value on property or income. Another favourite trick of theirs was to advance the tax to those who were unable to pay, and then to charge usurious interest on what had thereby become a private debt. How summarily and harshly such debts were exacted, appears from the New Testament itself. In Matthew 18:28 we read of a creditor who, for the small debt of one hundred denars, seizes the debtor by the throat in the open street, and drags him to prison; the miserable man, in his fear of the consequences, in vain falling down at his feet, and beseeching him to have patience, in not exacting immediate full payment. What these consequences were, we learn from the same parable, where the king threatens not only to sell off all that his debtor has, but even himself, his wife, and children into slavery (Matthew 18:25). And what short shrift such an unhappy man had to expect from "the magistrate," appears from the summary procedure, ending in imprisonment till "the last mite" had been paid, described in Luke 12:58.

However, therefore, in far-off Rome, Cicero might describe the Publicani as "the flower of knighthood, the ornament of the state, and the strength of the republic," or as "the most upright and respected men," the Rabbis in distant Palestine might be excused for their intense dislike of "the publicans," even although it went to the excess of declaring them incapable of bearing testimony in a Jewish court of law, of forbidding to receive their charitable gifts, or even to change money out of their treasury (Baba K. x. 1), of ranking them not only with harlots and heathens, but with highwaymen and murderers (Ned. iii. 4), and of even declaring them excommunicate. Indeed, it was held lawful to make false returns, to speak untruth, or almost to use any means to avoid paying taxes (Ned. 27 b; 28 a). And about the time of Christ the burden of such exactions must have been felt all the heavier on account of a great financial crisis in the Roman Empire (in the year 33 or our era), which involved so many in bankruptcy, and could not have been without its indirect influence even upon distant Palestine. Of such men--despised Galileans, unlettered fishermen, excommunicated publicans--did the blessed Lord, in His self-humiliation, choose His closest followers, His special apostles! What a contrast to the Pharisaical notions of the Messiah and His kingdom! What a lesson to show, that it was not "by might nor by power," but by His Spirit, and that God had chosen the base things of this world, and things that were despised, to confound things that were mighty! Assuredly, this offers a new problem, and one harder of solution than many others, to those who would explain everything by natural causes. Whatever they may say of

the superiority of Christ's teaching to account for his success, no religion could ever have been more weighted; no popular cause could ever have presented itself under more disadvantageous circumstances than did the Gospel of Christ to the Jews of Palestine. Even from this point of view, to the historical student familiar with the outer and inner life of that period, there is no other explanation of the establishment of Christ's kingdom than the power of the Holy Ghost.

Such a custom-house officer was Matthew Levi, when the voice of our Lord, striking to the inmost depths of his heart, summoned him to far different work. It was a wonder that the Holy One should speak to such an one as he; and oh! in what different accents from what had ever fallen on his ears. But it was not merely condescension, kindness, sympathy, even familiar intercourse with one usually regarded as a social pariah; it was the closest fellowship; it was reception into the innermost circle; it was a call to the highest and holiest work which the Lord offered to Levi. And the busy road on which he sat to collect customs and dues would now no more know the familiar face of Levi, otherwise than as that of a messenger of peace, who brought glad tidings of great joy.

02.05. Chapter 5 - In Judaea

Chapter 5 - In Judaea

If Galilee could boast of the beauty of its scenery and the fruitfulness of its soil; of being the mart of a busy life, and the highway of intercourse with the great world outside Palestine, Judaea would neither covet nor envy such advantages. Hers was quite another and a peculiar claim. Galilee might be the outer court, but Judaea was like the inner sanctuary of Israel. True, its landscapes were comparatively barren, its hills bare and rocky, its wilderness lonely; but around those grey limestone mountains gathered the sacred history--one might almost say, the romance and religion of Israel. Turning his back on the luxurious richness of Galilee, the pilgrim, even in the literal sense, constantly went up towards Jerusalem. Higher and higher rose the everlasting hills, till on the uppermost he beheld the sanctuary of his God, standing out from all around, majestic in the snowy pureness of its marble and glittering gold. As the hum of busy life gradually faded from his hearing, and he advanced into the solemn stillness and loneliness, the well-known sites which he successively passed must have seemed to wake the echoes of the history of his people. First, he approached Shiloh, Israel's earliest sanctuary, where, according to tradition, the Ark had rested for 370 years less one. Next came Bethel, with its sacred memorial of patriarchal history. There, as the Rabbis had it, even the angel of death was shorn of his power. Then he stood on the plateau of Ramah, with the neighbouring heights of Gibeon and Gibeah, round which so many events in Jewish history had clustered. In Ramah Rachel died, and was buried. *

* This appears, to me at least, the inevitable inference from 1 Samuel 10:2-3, and Jeremiah 31:15. Most writers have concluded from Genesis 35:16, Genesis 35:19, that Rachel was buried close by Bethlehem, but the passage does not necessarily imply this. The oldest Jewish Commentary (Sifre, ed. Vienna, p. 146) supports the view given above in the text. M. Neubauer suggests that Rachel had died in the possession of Ephraim, and been buried at Bethlehem. The hypothesis is ingenious but fanciful.

We know that Jacob set up a pillar on her grave. Such is the reverence of Orientals for the resting-places of celebrated historical personages, that we may well believe it to have been the same pillar which, according to an eye-witness, still marked the site at the time of our Lord (Book of Jubil. cxxxii Apud Hausrath, Neutest. Zeitg. p. 26). Opposite to it were the graves of Bilhah and of Dinah (c. p. 34). Only five miles from Jerusalem, this pillar was, no doubt, a well-known landmark. by this memorial of Jacob's sorrow and shame had been the sad meeting-place of the captives when about to be carried into Babylon (Jeremiah 40:1). There was bitter wailing at parting from those left behind, and in weary prospect of hopeless bondage, and still bitterer lamentation, as in the sight of friends, relations and countrymen, the old and the sick, the weakly, and women and children were pitilessly slaughtered, not to encumber the conqueror's homeward march. Yet a third time was Rachel's pillar, twice before the memorial of Israel's sorrow and shame, to re-echo her lamentation over yet sorer captivity and slaughter, when the Idumaean Herod massacred her innocent children, in the hope of destroying with them Israel's King and Israel's kingdom. Thus was

her cup of former bondage and slaughter filled, and the words of Jeremy the prophet fulfilled, in which he had depicted Rachel's sorrow over her children (Matthew 2:17-18). But westward from those scenes, where the mountains shelved down, or more abruptly descended towards the Shephelah, or wolds by the sea, were the scenes of former triumphs. Here Joshua had pursued the kings of the south; there Samson had come down upon the Philistines, and here for long years had war been waged against the arch-enemy of Israel, Philistia. Turning thence to the south, beyond the capital was royal Bethlehem, and still farther the priest-city Hebron, with its caves holding Israel's most precious dust. That highland plateau was the wilderness of Judaea, variously named from the villages which at long distances dotted it; * desolate, lonely, tenanted only by the solitary shepherd, or the great proprietor, like Nabal, whose sheep pastured along it heights and in its glens.

* Such as Tekoah, Engedi, Ziph, Maon, and Beersheba, which gave their names to districts in the wilderness of Judaea. This had long been the home of outlaws, or of those who, in disgust with the world, had retired from its fellowship. These limestone caves had been the hiding-place of David and his followers; and many a band had since found shelter in these wilds. Here also John the Baptist prepared for his work, and there, at the time of which we write, was the retreat of the Essenes, whom a vain hope of finding purity in separation from the world and its contact had brought to these solitudes. Beyond, deep down in a mysterious hollow. stretched the smooth surface of the Dead Sea, a perpetual memorial of God and of judgment. On its western shore rose the castle which Herod had named after himself, and farther south that almost inaccessible fastness of Masada, the scene of the last tragedy in the great Jewish war. Yet from the wild desolateness of the Dead Sea it was but a few hours to what seemed almost an earthly paradise. Flanked and defended by four surrounding forts, lay the important city of Jericho. Herod had built its walls, its theatre and amphitheatre; Archelaus its new palace, surrounded by splendid gardens. Through Jericho led the pilgrim way from Galilee, followed by our Lord Himself (Luke 19:1); and there also passed the great caravan-road, which connected Arabia with Damascus. The fertility of its soil, and its tropical produce, were almost proverbial. Its palm-groves and gardens of roses, but especially its balsam-plantations, of which the largest was behind the royal palace, were the fairy land of the old world. But this also was only a source of gain to the hated foreigner. Rome had made it a central station for the collection of tax and custom, known to us from Gospel history as that by which the chief publican Zaccheus had gotten his wealth. Jericho, with its general trade and its traffic in balsam--not only reputed the sweetest perfume, but also a cherished medicine in antiquity--was a coveted prize to all around. A strange setting for such a gem were its surroundings. There was the deep depression of the Arabah, through which the Jordan wound, first with tortuous impetuosity, and then, as it neared the Dead Sea, seemingly almost reluctant to lose its waters in that slimy mass (Pliny, Hist. Nat. vi. 5,2). Pilgrims, priests, traders, robbers, anchorites, wild fanatics, such were the figures to be met on that strange scene; and almost within hearing were the sacred sounds from the Temple-mount in the distance. *

* According to the Jerusalem Talmud (Succ. v. 3) six different acts of ministry in the Temple were heard as far as Jericho, and the smell of the burning incense also could be perceived there. We need scarcely say that this was a gross exaggeration.

It might be so, as the heathen historian put it in regard to Judaea, that no one could have wished for its own sake to wage serious warfare for its possession (Strabo, Geogr. xvi. 2). The Jew would

readily concede this. It was not material wealth which attracted him hither, although the riches brought into the Temple from all quarters of the world ever attracted the cupidity of the Gentiles. To the Jew this was the true home of his soul, the centre of his inmost life, the longing of his heart. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning," sang they who sat by the rivers of Babylon, weeping as they remembered Zion. "If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" (Psalms 137:5-6). It is from such pilgrim-psalms by the way as Psalms 84:1-12 or from the Songs of Ascent to the Holy City (commonly known as the Psalms of Degrees), that we learn the feelings of Israel, culminating in this mingled outpouring of prayer and praise, with which they greeted the city of their longings as first it burst on their view:

Jehovah hath chosen Zion;

He hath desired it for His habitation.

This is my rest for ever:

Here will I dwell, for I desire after it!

I will abundantly bless her provision:

I will satisfy her poor with bread.

I will also clothe her priests with salvation:

And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

There will I make the horn of David to bud:

I ordain a lamp for Mine anointed.

His enemies will I clothe with shame:

But upon himself shall his crown flourish.

Psalms 132:13-18

Words these, true alike in their literal and spiritual applications; highest hopes which, for nigh two thousand years, have formed and still form part of Israel’s daily prayer, when they plead: "Speedily cause Thou ’the Branch of David,’ Thy servant, to shoot forth, and exalt Thou his horn through Thy salvation" (this is the fifteenth of the eighteen "benedictions" in the daily prayers). Alas, that Israel knows not the fulfilment of these hopes already granted and expressed in the thanksgiving of the father of the Baptist: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began" (Luke 1:68-70).

Such blessings, and much more, were not only objects of hope, but realities alike to the Rabbinist and the unlettered Jew. They determined him willingly to bend the neck under a yoke of ordinances otherwise unbearable; submit to claims and treatment against which his nature would otherwise have rebelled, endure scorn and persecutions which would have broken any other nationality and crushed any other religion. To the far exiles of the Dispersion, this was the one fold,

with its promise of good shepherding, of green pastures, and quiet waters. Judaea was, so to speak, their Campo Santo, with the Temple in the midst of it, as the symbol and prophecy of Israel's resurrection. To stand, if it were but once, within its sacred courts, to mingle with its worshippers, to bring offerings, to see the white-robed throng of ministering priests, to hear the chant of Levites, to watch the smoke of sacrifices uprising to heaven--to be there, to take part in it was the delicious dream of life, a very heaven upon earth, the earnest of fulfilling prophecy. No wonder, that on the great feasts the population of Jerusalem and of its neighbourhood, so far as reckoned within its sacred girdle, swelled to millions, among whom were "devout men, out of every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5), or that treasure poured in from all parts of the inhabited world. And this increasingly, as sign after sign seemed to indicate that "the End" was nearing. Surely the sands of the times of the Gentiles must have nearly run out. The promised Messiah might at any moment appear and "restore the kingdom to Israel." From the statements of Josephus we know that the prophecies of Daniel were specially resorted to, and a mass of the most interesting, though tangled, apocalyptic literature, dating from that period, shows what had been the popular interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. The oldest Jewish paraphrases of Scripture, or Targumim, breathe the same spirit. Even the great heathen historians note this general expectancy of an impending Jewish world-empire, and trace to it the origin of the rebellions against Rome. Not even the allegorising Jewish philosophers of Alexandria remained uninfluenced by the universal hope. Outside Palestine all eyes were directed towards Judaea, and each pilgrim band on its return, or wayfaring brother on his journey, might bring tidings of startling events. Within the land the feverish anxiety of those who watched the scene not unfrequently rose to delirium and frenzy. Only thus can we account for the appearance of so many false Messiahs and for the crowds which, despite repeated disappointments, were ready to cherish the most unlikely anticipations. It was thus that a Theudas could persuade "a great part of the people" to follow him to the brink of Jordan, in the hope of seeing its waters once more miraculously divide, as before Moses, and an Egyptian impostor induce them to go out to the Mount of Olives in the expectation of seeing the walls of Jerusalem fall down at his command (Josephus, Ant. xx,167-172). Nay, such was the infatuation of fanaticism, that while the Roman soldiers were actually preparing to set the Temple on fire, a false prophet could assemble 6,000 men, women, and children, in its courts and porches to await then and there a miraculous deliverance from heaven (Josephus, Jewish War, vi,287). Nor did even the fall of Jerusalem quench these expectations, till a massacre, more terrible in some respects than that at the fall of Jerusalem, extinguished in blood the last public Messianic rising against Rome under Bar Cochab.

For, however misdirected--so far as related to the person of the Christ and the nature of His kingdom--not to the fact or time of His coming, nor yet to the character of Rome--such thoughts could not be uprooted otherwise than with the history and religion of Israel. The New Testament process upon them, as well as the Old; Christians and Jews alike cherished them. In the language of St. Paul, this was "the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come" (Acts 26:6-7). It was this which sent the thrill of expectancy through the whole nation, and drew crowds to Jordan, when an obscure anchorite, who did not even pretend to attest his mission by any miracle, preached repentance in view of the near coming of the kingdom of God. It was this which turned all eyes to Jesus of Nazareth, humble and unpretending as were His origin, His circumstances, and His followers, and which diverted the attention of the people even from the Temple to the far-off lake of despised

Galilee. And it was this which opened every home to the messengers whom Christ sent forth, by two and two, and even after the Crucifixion, every synagogue, to the apostles and preachers from Judaea. The title "Son of man" was familiar to those who had drawn their ideas of the Messiah from the well-known pages of Daniel. The popular apocalyptic literature of the period, especially the so-called "Book of Enoch," not only kept this designation in popular memory, but enlarged on the judgment which He was to execute on Gentile kings and nations." * "Wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" was a question out of the very heart of Israel. Even John the Baptist, in the gloom of his lonely prison, staggered not at the person of the Messiah, but at the manner in which He seemed to found His kingdom. ** He had expected to hear the blows of that axe which he had lifted fall upon the barren tree, and had to learn that the innermost secret of that kingdom--carried not in earthquake of wrath, nor in whirlwind of judgment, but breathed in the still small voice of love and pity--was comprehension, not exclusion; healing, not destruction.

* The following as a specimen must suffice for the present: "And this Son of man, whom thou hast seen, shall stir up the kings and the mighty from their layers, and the powerful from their thrones, and shall loose the bridles of the mighty and break in pieces the teeth of sinners. And He shall drive the kings from their thrones and from their empires, if they do not exalt nor praise Him, nor gratefully own from whence the kingdom has been entrusted to them. And He shall drive away the face of the mighty, and shame shall fill them: darkness shall be their dwelling and worms their bed, and they shall have no hope of rising from their beds, because they do not exalt the name of the Lord of spirits...And they shall be driven forth out of the homes of His congregation and of the faithful" (Book of Enoch, xlvi. 4,5,6,8). A full discussion of this most important subject, and, indeed, of many kindred matters, must be reserved for a work on the Life and Times of our Lord.

** The passage above referred to has a most important apologetic interest. None but a truthful history would have recorded the doubts of John the Baptist; especially when they brought forward the real difficulties which the mission of Christ raised in the popular mind; least of all would it have followed up the statement of these difficulties by such an encomium as the Saviour passed upon John. As for the Rabbis, the leaders of public opinion, their position towards the kingdom was quite different. Although in the rising of Bar Cochab the great Rabbi Akiba acted as the religious standard-bearer, he may be looked upon as almost an exception. His character was that of an enthusiast, his history almost a romance. But, in general, the Rabbis did not identify themselves with the popular Messianic expectations. Alike the Gospel-history and their writings show not merely that anti-spiritual opposition to the Church which we might have expected, but coldness and distance in regard to all such movements. Legal rigorism and merciless bigotry are not fanaticism. The latter is chiefly the impulse of the ill-informed. Even their contemptuous turning away from "this people which knoweth not the law," as "accursed," proves them incapable of a fanaticism which recognises a brother in every one whose heart burns with the same fire, no matter what his condition otherwise. The great text-book of Rabbinism, the Mishnah, is almost entirely un-Messianic, one might say un-dogmatical. The method of the Rabbis was purely logical. Where not a record of facts or traditions, the Mishnah is purely a handbook of legal determinations in their utmost logical sequences, only enlivened by discussions or the tale of instances in point. The whole tendency of this system was anti-Messianic. Not but that in souls so devout and natures so ardent enthusiasm might be kindled, but that all their studies and pursuits went in the contrary direction. Besides, they knew full well how little of power was left them, and they dreaded losing

even this. The fear of Rome constantly haunted them. Even at the destruction of Jerusalem the leading Rabbis aimed to secure their safety, and their after history shows, frequently recurring, curious instances of Rabbinical intimacy with their Roman oppressors. The Sanhedrim spoke their inmost apprehensions, when in that secret session they determined to kill Jesus from fear that, if He were allowed to go on, and all men were to believe on Him, the Romans would come and take away both their place and nation (John 11:48). Yet not one candid mind among them discussed the reality of His miracles; not one generous voice was raised to assert the principle of the Messiah's claims and kingdom, even though they had rejected those of Jesus of Nazareth! The question of the Messiah might come up as a speculative point; it might force itself upon the attention of the Sanhedrim; but it was not of personal, practical, life-interest to them. It may mark only one aspect of the question, and that an extreme one, yet even as such it is characteristic, when a Rabbi could assert that "between the present and the days of the Messiah there was only this difference, Israel's servitude."

Quite other matters engrossed the attention of the Rabbis. It was the present and the past, not the future, which occupied them--the present as fixing all legal determinations, and the past as giving sanction to this. Judaea proper was the only place where the Shechinah had dwelt, the land where Jehovah had caused His temple to be reared, the seat of the Sanhedrim, the place where alone learning and real piety were cultivated. From this point of view everything was judged. Judaea was "grain, Galilee straw, and beyond Jordan chaff." To be a Judaean was to be "an Hebrew of the Hebrews." It has already been stated what reproach the Rabbis attached to Galilee in regard to its language, manners, and neglect of regular study. In some respects the very legal observances, as certainly social customs, were different in Judaea from Galilee. Only in Judaea could Rabbis be ordained by the laying on of hands; only there could the Sanhedrim in solemn session declare and proclaim the commencement of each month, on which the arrangement of the festive calendar depended. Even after the stress of political necessity had driven the Rabbis to Galilee, they returned to Lydda for the purpose, and it needed a sharp struggle before they transferred the privilege of Judaea to other regions in the third century of our era (Jer. Sanh. i. 1,18). The wine for use in the Temple was brought exclusively from Judaea, not only because it was better, but because the transport through Samaria would have rendered it defiled. Indeed, the Mishnah mentions the names of the five towns whence it was obtained. Similarly, the oil used was derived either from Judaea, or, if from Peraea, the olives only were brought, to be crushed in Jerusalem. The question what cities were really Jewish was of considerable importance, so far as concerned ritual questions, and it occupied the earnest attention of the Rabbis. It is not easy to fix the exact boundaries of Judaea proper towards the north-west. To include the sea-shore in the province of Samaria is a popular mistake. It certainly was never reckoned with it. According to Josephus (Jewish War, iii,35-58) Judaea proper extended along the sea-shore as far north as Ptolemais or Acco. The Talmud seems to exclude at least the northern cities. In the New Testament there is a distinction made between Caesarea and the province of Judaea (Acts 12:19, Acts 21:10). This affords one of the indirect evidences not only of the intimate acquaintance of the writer with strictly Rabbinical views, but also of the early date of the composition of the Book of Acts. For, at a later period Caesarea was declared to belong to Judaea, although its harbour was excluded from such privileges, and all east and west of it pronounced "defiled." Possibly, it may have been added to the cities of Judaea, simply because afterwards so many celebrated Rabbis resided there. The importance attaching to Caesarea in connection with the preaching of the Gospel and the history

of St. Paul, and the early and flourishing Christian churches there established give fresh interest to all notices of the place. Only those from Jewish sources can here engage our attention. It were out of place here to describe the political importance of Caesarea, as the seat of the Roman power, or its magnificent harbour and buildings, or its wealth and influence. In Jewish writings it bears the same name by which we know it, though at times it is designated after its fortifications (Migdal Shur, M. Zor, M. Nassi), or after its harbour (Migdal Shina), once also by its ancient name, the tower of Straton. The population consisted of a mixture of Jews, Greeks, Syrians, and Samaritans, and tumults between them were the first signal of the great Jewish war. The Talmud calls it "the capital of the kings." As the seat of the Roman power it was specially hateful to the Jews. Accordingly it is designated as the "daughter of Edom--the city of abomination and blasphemy," although the district was, for its riches, called "the land of life." As might be expected, constant difficulties arose between the Jewish and Roman authorities in Caesarea, and bitter are the complaints against the unrighteousness of heathen judges. We can readily understand, that to a Jew Caesarea was the symbol of Rome, Rome of Edom--and Edom was to be destroyed! In fact, in their view Jerusalem and Caesarea could not really co-exist. It is in this sense that we account for the following curious passage: "If you are told that Jerusalem and Caesarea are both standing, or that they are both destroyed, believe it not; but if you are told that one of them is destroyed and the other standing, then believe it" (Gitt. 16 a; Meg. 6 a). It is interesting to know that on account of the foreign Jews resident in Caesarea, the Rabbis allowed the principal prayers to be said in Greek, as being the vernacular; and that, from the time of the evangelist Philip, good work was done for Christ among its resident Jews. Indeed, Jewish writings contain special notice of controversies there between Jews and Christians. A brief summary of Jewish notices of certain other towns in Judaea, mentioned also in the New Testament, may throw some additional light on the sacred narratives. In general, the Mishnah divided Judaea proper into three parts--mountain, Shephelah, and valley (Shev. ix 2), to which we must add the city of Jerusalem as a separate district. And here we have another striking evidence of the authenticity of the New Testament, and especially of the writings of St. Luke. Only one intimately acquainted with the state of matters at the time would, with the Rabbis, have distinguished Jerusalem as a district separate from all the rest of Judaea, as St. Luke markedly does on several occasions (Luke 5:17; Acts 1:8, Acts 10:39). When the Rabbis speak of "the mountain," they refer to the district north-east and north of Jerusalem, also known as "the royal mount." The Shephelah, of course, is the country along the sea-shore. All the rest is included in the term "valley." It need scarcely be explained that, as the Jerusalem Talmud tells us, this is merely a general classification, which must not be too closely pressed. Of the eleven toparchies into which, according to Josephus (Pliny enumerates only ten), Judaea proper was arranged, the Rabbis take no notice, although some of their names have been traced in Talmudical writings. These provinces were no doubt again subdivided into districts or hyparchies, just as the towns were into quarters or hegemonies, both terms occurring in the Talmud. The Rabbis forbade the exportation of provisions from Palestine, even into Syria.

Travelling southward from Caesarea we are in the plain of Sharon, whose beauty and richness are so celebrated in Holy Scripture (Song of Solomon 2:1; Isaiah 35:2). This plain extends as far as Lydda, where it merges into that of Darom, which stretches farther southwards. In accordance with the statements of Holy Scripture (Isaiah 65:10) the plain of Sharon was always celebrated for its pasturage. According to the Talmud most of the calves for sacrifices were brought from that district. The wine of Sharon was celebrated, and, for beverage, supposed to be mixed with

one-third of water. The plain was also well known for the manufacture of pottery; but it must have been of an inferior kind, since the Mishnah (Baba K. vi. 2) in enumerating for what proportion of damaged goods a purchaser might not claim compensation, allows not less than ten per cent for breakage in the pottery of Sharon. In Jer. Sotah viii. 3, we read that the permission to return from war did not apply to those who had built brick houses in Sharon, it being explained that the clay was so bad, that the houses had to be rebuilt within seven years. Hence also the annual prayer of the high-priest on the Day of Atonement, that the houses of the men of Sharon should not become their graves. Antipatris, the place where the foot soldiers had left St. Paul in charge of the horsemen (Acts 23:31), had once been the scene of a very different array. For it was here that, according to tradition (Yoma,69 a), the priesthood, under Simon the Just, had met Alexander the Great in that solemn procession, which secured the safety of the Temple. In Talmudical writings it bears the same name, which was given it by Herod, in memory of his father Antipater (Ant. vi,5.2). The name of Chephar Zaba, however, also occurs, possibly that of an adjoining locality. In Sanh. 94 b, we read that Hezekiah had suspended a board at the entrance of the Beth Midrash (or college), with the notification that whoever studied not the Law was to be destroyed. Accordingly they searched from Dan to Beersheba, and found not a single unlettered person, nor yet from Gebath to Antipatris, boy or girl, man or woman, who was not fully versed in all the legal ordinances concerning clean and unclean.

Another remarkable illustration of the New Testament is afforded by Lydda, the Talmudical Lod or Lud. We read that, in consequence of the labours of St. Peter and the miracle wrought on Aeneas, "all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron...turned to the Lord" (Acts 9:35). The brief notice of Lydda given in this narrative of the apostle’s labours, is abundantly confirmed by Talmudical notices, although, of course, we must not expect them to describe the progress of Christianity. We can readily believe that Lydda had its congregation of "saints," almost from the first, since it was (Maas. Sh. v. 2) within an easy day’s journey west of Jerusalem. Indeed, as the Talmud explains, the second tithes (Deuteronomy 14:22, Deuteronomy 26:12) from Lydda could not be converted into money, but had to be brought to the city itself, so "that the streets of Jerusalem might be garlanded with fruits." The same passage illustrates the proximity of Lydda to the city, and the frequent intercourse between the two, by saying that the women of Lydda mixed their dough, went up to Jerusalem, prayed in the Temple, and returned before it had fermented. Similarly, we infer from Talmudical documents that Lydda had been the residence of many Rabbis before the destruction of Jerusalem. After that event, it became the seat of a very celebrated school, presided over by some of the leaders of Jewish thought. It was this school which boldly laid it down, that, to avoid death, every ordinance of the Law might be broken, except those in regard to idolatry, incest, and murder. It was in Lydda, also, that two brothers voluntarily offered themselves victims to save their co-religionists from slaughter, threatened because a body had been found, whose death was imputed to the Jews. It sounds like a sad echo of the taunts addressed by "chief priests," "scribes and elders," to Jesus on the cross (Matthew 27:41-43) when, on the occasion just mentioned, the Roman thus addressed the martyrs: "If you are of the people of Ananias, Mishael, and Azarias, let your God come, and save you from my hand!" (Taan. 18,6). But a much more interesting chain of evidence connects Lydda with the history of the founding of the Church. It is in connection with Lydda and its tribunal, which is declared to have been capable of pronouncing sentence of death, that our blessed Lord and the Virgin Mother are introduced in certain Talmudical passages, though with studiously and blasphemously altered names. The statements are, in their present form,

whether from ignorance, design, or in consequence of successive alterations, confused, and they mix up different events and persons in Gospel history; among other things representing our Lord as condemned at Lydda. *

* May there not perhaps be some historical foundation even for this statement? Could the secret gathering of "the chief priests and Pharisees," mentioned in John 11:47, have taken place in Lydda (compare vers. John 11:54-55)? Was it there, that Judas "communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him unto them?" There were at any rate obvious reasons for avoiding Jerusalem in all preliminary measures against Jesus; and we know that, while the Temple stood, Lydda was the only place out of Jerusalem which may be called a seat of the Rabbinical party. But there can be no reasonable question that they refer to our blessed Lord and His condemnation for supposed blasphemy and seduction of the people, and that they at least indicate a close connection between Lydda and the founding of Christianity. It is a curious confirmation of the gospel history, that the death of Christ is there described as having taken place "on the eve of the Passover," remarkably bearing out not only the date of that event as gathered from the synoptical gospels, but showing that the Rabbis at least knew nothing of those Jewish scruples and difficulties, by which modern Gentile writers have tried to prove the impossibility of Christ’s condemnation on the Paschal night. It has already been stated that, after the destruction of Jerusalem, many and most celebrated Rabbis chose Lydda for their residence. But the second century witnessed a great change. The inhabitants of Lydda are now charged with pride, ignorance, and neglect of their religion. The Midrash (Esther 1:3) has it, that there were "ten measures of wretchedness in the world. Nine of those belong to Lod, the tenth to all the rest of the world." Lydda was the last place in Judaea to which, after their migration into Galilee, the Rabbis resorted to fix the commencement of the month. Jewish legend has it, that they were met by the "evil eye," which caused their death. There may, perhaps, be an allegorical allusion in this. Certain it is, that, at the time, Lydda was the seat of a most flourishing Christian Church, and had its bishop. Indeed, a learned Jewish writer has connected the changed Jewish feeling towards Lod with the spread of Christianity. Lydda must have been a very beautiful and a very busy place. The Talmud speaks in exaggerated terms of the honey of its dates (Cheth. iii. a), and the Mishnah (Baba M. iv. 3) refers to its merchants as a numerous class, although their honesty is not extolled. *

* The Mishnah discusses how much profit a merchant is allowed to take on an article, and within what period a purchaser, who finds himself imposed upon, may return his purchase. The merchants of Lydda are certainly not placed in this discussion in the most advantageous light.

Near Lydda, eastwards, was the village of Chephar Tabi. We might be tempted to derive from it the name of Tabitha (Acts 9:36), if it were not that the names Tabi and Tabitha had been so common at the time in Palestine. There can be no question of the situation of Joppa, the modern Jaffa, where Peter saw the vision which opened the door of the Church to the Gentiles. Many Rabbis are mentioned in connection with Joppa. The town was destroyed by Vespasian. There is a curious legend in the Midrash to the effect that Joppa was not overwhelmed by the deluge. Could this have been an attempt to insinuate the preservation and migration of men to distant parts of the earth? The exact location of Emmaus, for ever sacred to us by the manifestation of the Saviour to the two disciples (Luke 24:13), is matter of controversy. On the whole, the weight of evidence still inclines to the traditional site. *

* Modern writers mostly identify it with the present Kulonieh, colonia, deriving the name from the circumstance that it was colonised by Roman soldiers. Lieut. Conder suggests the modern Khamasa, about eight miles from Jerusalem, as the site of Emmaus.

If so, it had a considerable Jewish population, although it was also occupied by a Roman garrison. Its climate and waters were celebrated, as also its market-place. It is specially interesting to find that among the patrician Jewish families belonging to the laity, who took part in the instrumental music of the Temple, two--those of Pegarim and Zippariah--were from Emmaus, and also that the priesthood were wont to intermarry with the wealthy Hebrews of that place (Er. ii. 4). Gaza, on whose "desert" road Philip preached to and baptized the Ethiopian eunuch, counted not fewer than eight heathen temples, besides an idol-shrine just outside the city. Still Jews were allowed to reside there, probably on account of its important market.

Only two names yet remain to be mentioned, but those of the deepest and most solemn interest. Bethlehem, the birthplace of our Lord, and Jerusalem, where He was crucified. It deserves notice, that the answer which the Sanhedrists of old gave to the inquiries of Herod (Matthew 2:5) is equally returned in many Talmudical passages, and with the same reference to Micah 5:2. It may therefore be regarded as a settled point that, according to the Jewish fathers, Messiah, the Son of David, was to be born in Bethlehem of Judah. But there is one passage in the Mishnah which throws such peculiar light on the Gospel narrative, that it will be best to give it in its entirety. We know that, on the night in which our Saviour was born, the angels' message came to those who probably alone of all in or near Bethlehem were "keeping watch." For, close by Bethlehem, on the road to Jerusalem, was a tower, known as Migdal Eder, the "watch-tower of the flock." For here was the station where shepherd watched their flocks destined for sacrifices in the Temple. So well known was this, that if animals were found as far from Jerusalem as Migdal Eder, and within that circuit on every side, the males were offered as burnt-offerings, the females as peace-offerings. *

* Formerly those who found such animals had out of their own means to supply the necessary drink-offerings. But as this induced some not to bring the animals to the Temple, it was afterwards decreed to supply the cost of the drink-offerings from the Temple treasury (Shek. vii. 5).

R. Jehudah adds: "If suited for Paschal sacrifices, then they are Paschal sacrifices, provided it be not more than thirty days before the feast" (Shekal. vii 4; compare also Jer. Kid. ii. 9). It seems of deepest significance, almost like the fulfilment of type, that those shepherds who first heard tidings of the Saviour's birth, who first listened to angels' praises, were watching flocks destined to be offered as sacrifices in the Temple. There was the type, and here the reality. At all times Bethlehem was among "the least" in Judah--so small that the Rabbis do not even refer to it in detail. The small village-inn was over-crowded, and the guests from Nazareth found shelter only in the stable, * whose manger became the cradle of the King of Israel.

* In Echa R. 72 a, there is a tradition that the Messiah was to be born "in the Castle Arba of Bethlehem Judah." Caspari quotes this in confirmation that the present castellated monastery, in the cave of which is the traditional site of our Lord's birth, marks the real spot. In the East such caves were often used as stables.

It was here that those who tended the sacrificial flocks, heaven-directed, found the Divine Babe--significantly the first to see Him, to believe, and to adore. But this is not all. It is when we

remember, that presently these shepherds would be in the Temple, and meet those who came thither to worship and to sacrifice, that we perceive the full significance of what otherwise would have seemed scarcely worth while noticing in connection with humble shepherds: "And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds" (Luke 2:17-18). Moreover, we can understand the wonderful impression made on those in the courts of the Temple, as, while they selected their sacrifices, the shepherds told the devout of the speedy fulfilment of all these types in what they had themselves seen and heard in that night of wonders; how eager, curious crowds might gather around to discuss, to wonder, perhaps to mock; how the heart of "just and devout" old Simeon would be gladdened within him, in expectation of the near realisation of a life's hopes and prayers; and how aged Anna, and they who like her "looked for redemption in Israel," would lift up their heads, since their salvation was drawing nigh. Thus the shepherds would be the most effectual heralds of the Messiah in the Temple, and both Simeon and Anna be prepared for the time when the infant Saviour would be presented in the sanctuary. But there is yet another verse which, as we may suggest, would find a fuller explanation in the fact that these shepherds tended the Temple flocks. When in Luke 2:20 we read that "the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God," the meaning in that connection * seems somewhat difficult till we realise that, after bringing their flocks to the Temple, they would return to their own homes, and carry with them, joyfully and gratefully, tidings of the great salvation.

* Compare here Luke 2:17-18, which in point of time precede Luke 2:20. The term diagnorizo, rendered in the Authorised Version "make known abroad," and by Wahl "ultro citroque narro," does not seem exhausted by the idea of conversation with the party in the "stable," or with any whom they might meet in "the field."

Lastly, without entering into controversy, the passage from the Mishnah above quoted in great measure disposes of the objection against the traditional date of our Lord's birth, derived from the supposed fact, that the rains of December would prevent the flocks being kept all night "in the field." For, in the first place, these were flocks on their way to Jerusalem, and not regularly pasturing in the open at that season. And, secondly, the Mishnah evidently contemplates their being thus in the open thirty days before the Passover, or in the month of February, during which the average rainfall is quite the largest in the year. *

* The average rainfall in Jerusalem for eight years amounts to fourteen inches in December, thirteen in January, and sixteen in February (Barclay, City of the Great King, p. 428).

"Ten measures of beauty," say the Rabbis, "hath God bestowed upon the world, and nine of these fall to the lot of Jerusalem"--and again, "A city, the fame of which has gone out from one end of the world to the other" (Ber. 38). "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, and eternity." This--explains the Talmud--"is Jerusalem." In opposition to her rival Alexandria, which was designated "the little," Jerusalem was called "the great." It almost reminds one of the title "eternal city," given to Rome, when we find the Rabbis speaking of Jerusalem as the "eternal house." Similarly, if a common proverb has it, that "all roads lead to Rome," it was a Jewish saying, "All coins come from Jerusalem." This is not the place to describe the city in its appearance and glory. But one almost feels as if, on such a subject, one could understand, if not condone, the manifest exaggerations of the Rabbis. Indeed, there are indications that they scarcely expected their

statements to be taken literally. Thus, when the number of its synagogues is mentioned as 460 or 480, it is explained that the latter number is the numerical equivalent of the word "full" in Isaiah 1:21 ("it was full of judgment"). It is more interesting to know, that we find in the Talmud express mention of "the Synagogue of the Alexandrians," referred to in Acts 6:9 --another important confirmation, if such were needed, of the accuracy of St. Luke's narratives. Of the hospitality of the inhabitants of Jerusalem accounts are given, which we can scarcely regard as much exaggerated; for the city was not reckoned to belong to any tribe in particular; it was to be considered as equally the home of all. Its houses were to be neither hired nor let, but freely thrown open to every brother. Nor did any one among the countless thousands who thronged it at feast-times ever lack room. A curtain hung before the entrance of a house intimated, that there was still room for guests; a table spread in front of it, that its board was still at their disposal. And, if it was impossible to accommodate within the walls of Jerusalem proper the vast crowds which resorted to the city, there can be no doubt that for sacred purpose Bethany and Bethphage were reckoned as within the circle of Jerusalem. It calls forth peculiar sensations, when we read in these Jewish records of Bethany and Bethphage as specially celebrated for their hospitality to pilgrim-guests, for it wakes the sacred memories of our Lord's sojourn with the holy family of Bethany, and especially of His last stay there and of His royal entrance into Jerusalem. In truth, every effort was used to make Jerusalem truly a city of delight. Its police and sanitary regulations were more perfect than in any modern city; the arrangements such as to keep the pilgrim free to give his heart and mind to sacred subjects. If, after all, "the townspeople," as they were called, were regarded as somewhat proud and supercilious, it was something to be a citizen of Jerushalaimah, as the Jerusalemites preferred to write its name. Their constant intercourse with strangers gave them a knowledge of men and of the world. The smartness and cleverness of the young people formed a theme of admiration to their more shy and awkward country relatives. There was also a grandeur in their bearing--almost luxury; and an amount of delicacy, tact, and tenderness, which appeared in all their public dealings. Among a people whose wit and cleverness are proverbial, it was no mean praise to be renowned for these qualities. In short, Jerusalem was the ideal of the Jew, in whatever land of exile he might tarry. Her rich men would lavish fortunes on the support of Jewish learning, the promotion of piety, or the support of the national cause. Thus one of them would, when he found the price of sacrifices exceedingly high, introduce into the Temple-court the requisite animals at his own cost, to render the service possible for the poor. Or on another occasion he would offer to furnish the city for twenty-one months with certain provisions in her struggle against Rome. In the streets of Jerusalem men from the most distant countries met, speaking every variety of language and dialect. Jews and Greeks, Roman soldiers and Galilean peasants, Pharisees, Sadducees, and white-robed Essenes, busy merchants and students of abstruse theology, mingled, a motley crowd, in the narrow streets of the city of palaces. But over all the Temple, rising above the city, seemed to fling its shadow and its glory. Each morning the threefold blast of the priests' trumpets wakened the city with a call to prayer; each evening the same blasts closed the working day, as with sounds from heaven. Turn where you might, everywhere the holy buildings were in view, now with the smoke of sacrifices curling over the courts, or again with solemn stillness resting upon the sacred hills. It was the Temple which gave its character to Jerusalem, and which decided its fate. There is a remarkable passage in the Talmud, which, remembering that the time to which it refers was in all probability the very year in which our Lord died on the cross, reads like an unwilling confirmation of the Gospel narrative:

"Forty years before the destruction of the Temple, its doors opened of their own accord. Jochanan, * the son of Saccai, rebuked them, saying: O Temple, why openest thou of thine own accord? Ah! I perceive that thine end is at hand; for it is written (Zechariah 11:1): 'Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars'" (Yoma 39 b). "And, behold, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matthew 27:51)--blessed be God, not merely in announcement of coming judgment, but henceforth to lay open unto all the way into the Holiest of All.

* Caspari suggests that this was the same as the high-priest Annas, the name having only the syllable indicating the name of Jehovah prefixed.

02.06. Chapter 6 - Jewish Homes

Chapter 6 - Jewish Homes

It may be safely asserted, that the grand distinction, which divided all mankind into Jews and Gentiles, was not only religious, but also social. However near the cities of the heathen to those of Israel, however frequent and close the intercourse between the two parties, no one could have entered a Jewish town or village without feeling, so to speak, in quite another world. The aspect of the streets, the building and arrangement of the houses, the municipal and religious rule, the manners and customs of the people, their habits and ways--above all, the family life, stood in marked contrast to what would be seen elsewhere. On every side there was evidence that religion here was not merely a creed, nor a set of observances, but that it pervaded every relationship, and dominated every phase of life.

Let us imagine a real Jewish town or village. There were many such, for Palestine had at all times a far larger number of towns and villages than might have been expected from its size, or from the general agricultural pursuits of its inhabitants. Even at the time of its first occupation under Joshua we find somewhere about six hundred towns--if we may judge by the Levitical cities, of about an average circumference of two thousand cubits on each side, and with probably an average population of from two to three thousand. But the number of towns and villages, as well as their populousness, greatly increased in later times. Thus Josephus (Life,45) speaks of not fewer than two hundred and forty townships in Galilee alone in his days. This progress was, no doubt, due not only to the rapid development of society, but also to the love of building that characterised Herod and his family, and to which so many fortresses, palaces, temples, and towns owed their origin. Alike the New Testament, Josephus, and the Rabbis give us three names, which may be rendered by villages, townships, and towns--the latter being surrounded by walls, and again distinguished into those fortified already at the time of Joshua, and those of later date. A township might be either "great," if it had its synagogue, or small, if it wanted such; this being dependent on the residence of at least ten men, who could always be reckoned upon to form a quorum for the worship of the synagogue (the so-called Batlanin *); for service could not be celebrated with any less number of males.

* From "betal," to cease--as the glossary to Baba B. 82 a explains: men without reproach, who gave up their work to give themselves wholly to the work of the synagogue. Such had a claim to support from the synagogue revenues. The villages had no synagogue; but their inhabitants were supposed to go to the nearest township for market on the Monday and Thursday of every week, when service was held for them, and the local Sanhedrim also sat (Megill. i. 1-3). A very curious law provided (Cheth. 110), that a man could not oblige his wife to follow him if he moved either from a township to a town, or the reverse. The reason of the former provision was, that in a town people lived together, and the houses were close to each other; hence there was a want of fresh, free air, and of gardens, which were enjoyed in townships. On the other hand, a woman might object to exchange residence in a town for one in a township, because in a town everything was to

be got, and people met in the streets and market-place from all the neighbourhood.

Statements like these will give some idea of the difference between town and country life. Let us first think of the former. Approaching one of the ancient fortified towns, one would come to a low wall that protected a ditch. Crossing this moat, one would be at the city wall proper, and enter through a massive gate, often covered with iron, and secured by strong bars and bolts. Above the gate rose the watch-tower. "Within the gate" was the shady or sheltered retreat where "the elders" sat. Here grave citizens discussed public affairs or the news of the day, or transacted important business. The gates opened upon large squares, on which the various streets converged. Here was the busy scene of intercourse and trade. The country-people stood or moved about, hawking the produce of field, orchard, and dairy; the foreign merchant or pedlar exposed his wares, recommending the newest fashions from Rome or Alexandria, the latest luxuries from the far East, or the art produce of the goldsmith and the modeller at Jerusalem, while among them moved the crowd, idle or busy, chattering, chaffing, good-humoured, and bandying witticisms. Now they give way respectfully before a Pharisee; or their conversation is hushed by the weird appearance of an Essene or of some sectary--political or religious,--while low, muttered curses attend the stealthy steps of the publican, whose restless eyes wander around to watch that nothing escape the close meshes of the tax-gatherer’s net. These streets are all named, mostly after the trades or guilds which have there their bazaars. For a guild always keeps together, whether in street or synagogue. In Alexandria the different trades sat in the synagogue arranged into guilds; and St. Paul could have no difficulty in meeting in the bazaar of his trade with the like-minded Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2-3), with whom to find a lodging. In these bazaars many of the workmen sat outside their shops, and, in the interval of labour, exchanged greetings or banter with the passers-by. For all Israel are brethren, and there is a sort of freemasonry even in the Jewish mode of salutation, which always embodied either an acknowledgment of the God of Israel, or a brotherly wish of peace. Excitable, impulsive, quick, sharp-witted, imaginative; fond of parable, pithy sayings, acute distinctions, or pungent wit; reverent towards God and man, respectful in the presence of age, enthusiastic of learning and of superior mental endowments, most delicately sensitive in regard to the feelings of others; zealous, with intensely warm Eastern natures, ready to have each prejudice aroused, hasty and violent in passion, but quickly assuaged--such is the motley throng around. And now, perhaps, the voice of a Rabbi, teaching in some shady retreat--although latterly Jewish pride of learning forbade the profanation of lore by popularising it for the "unlearned"--or, better far, at one time the presence of the Master, gathers and keeps them spell-bound, forgetful alike of the cravings of hunger and of the lapse of time, till, the short Eastern day ended, the stars shining out on the deep blue sky must have reminded many among them of the promise to their father Abraham, now fulfilled in One greater than Abraham.

Back to the town in the cool of even to listen to the delicious murmur of well or fountain, as those crowd around it who have not cisterns in their own houses. The watchman is on the top of the tower above the gateway; presently, night-watchers will patrol the streets. Nor is there absolute darkness, for it is customary to keep a light burning all night in the house, and the windows (unlike those of modern Eastern dwellings) open chiefly on street and road. Those large windows are called Tyrian, the smaller ones Egyptian. They are not filled in with glass, but contain gratings or lattices. In the houses of the rich the window-frames are elaborately carved, and richly inlaid. Generally the woodwork is of the common sycamore, sometimes of olive or cedar, and in palaces

even of Indian sandal-wood. The entablature is more or less curiously carved and ornamented. Only there must be no representation of anything in heaven or on earth. So deep was the feeling on this point, that even the attempt of Pilate to introduce by night into Jerusalem the effigies of Caesar on the top of the Roman standards led to scenes in which the Jews showed themselves willing to die for their convictions (Josephus, Ant, xviii,59); while the palace of Herod Antipas at Tiberias was burned by the mob because it was decorated with figures of animals (Josephus, Life,62-67). These extreme views, however, gave way, first, before the tolerant example of Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul, who made use of a public bath, although adorned by a statue of Venus, since, as he put it, the statue was intended for the embellishment of the bath, and not the bath for the sake of the statue. If this argument reminds us that Gamaliel was not a stranger to Christianity, the statement of his grandson, that an idol was nothing if its worship had been disclaimed by the heathen (Ab. Sar. 52), recalls still more strongly the teaching of St. Paul. And so we gradually come down to the modern orthodox doctrine, which allows the representation of plants, animals, etc., but prohibits that of sun, moon, and stars, except for purposes of study, while, though doubtfully, it admits those of men and even angels, provided they be in sunken, not in raised workmanship. The rule of these towns and villages was exceedingly strict. The representatives of Rome were chiefly either military men, or else fiscal or political agents. We have, indeed, a notice that the Roman general Gabinius, about half a century before Christ, divided Palestine for juridical purposes into five districts, each presided over by a council (Josephus, Ant. xiv,91); but that arrangement was only of very short duration, and even while it lasted these councils seem to have been Jewish. Then every town had is Sanhedrim, * consisting of twenty-three members if the place numbered at least one hundred and twenty men, or of three members if the population were smaller. **

* The name "Sanhedrim," or "Sunedrion," is undoubtedly of Greek derivation, although the Rabbis have tried to paraphrase it as "Sin" (=Sinai) "haderin," those who repeat or explain the law, or to trace its etymology, as being "those who hate to accept the persons of men in judgment" (the name being supposed to be composed of the Hebrew equivalents of the words italicised).

** An ingenious attempt has lately been made to show that the Sanhedrim of three members was not a regular court, but only arbitrators chosen by the parties themselves. But the argument, so far as it tries to prove that such was always the case, seems to me not to meet all the facts.

These Sanhedrists were appointed directly by the supreme authority, or Great Sanhedrim, "the council," at Jerusalem, which consisted of seventy-one members. It is difficult to fix the limits of the actual power wielded by these Sanhedrims in criminal cases. But the smaller Sanhedrims are referred to in such passages as Matthew 5:22-23, Matthew 10:17; Mark 13:9. Of course all ecclesiastical and, so to speak, strictly Jewish causes, and all religious questions were within their special cognisance. Lastly, there were also in every place what we may call municipal authorities, under the presidency of a mayor--the representatives of the "elders"--an institution so frequently mentioned in Scripture, and deeply rooted in Jewish society. Perhaps these may be referred to in Luke 7:3, as sent by the centurion of Capernaum to intercede for him with the Lord.

What may be called the police and sanitary regulations were of the strictest character. Of Caesarea, for example, we know that there was a regular system of drainage into the sea, apparently similar to, but more perfect than that of any modern town (Josephus, Ant. xv,340). The

same holds true in regard to the Temple-buildings at Jerusalem. But in every town and village sanitary rules were strictly attended to. Cemeteries, tanneries, and whatever also might be prejudicial to health, had to be removed at least fifty cubits outside a town. Bakers' and dyers' shops, or stables, were not allowed under the dwelling of another person. Again, the line of each street had to be strictly kept in building, nor was even a projection beyond it allowed. In general the streets were wider than those of modern Eastern cities. The nature of the soil, and the circumstance that so many towns were built on hills (at least in Judaea), would, of course, be advantageous in a sanitary point of view. It would also render the paving of the streets less requisite. But we know that certain towns were paved--Jerusalem with white stones (Josephus, Ant. xx,219-223). To obviate occasions of dispute, neighbours were not allowed to have windows looking into the courts or rooms of others nor might the principal entrance to a shop be through a court common to two or three dwellings.

These brief notices may help us better to realise the surroundings of Jewish town life. Looking up and down one of the streets of a town in Galilee or Judaea, the houses would be seen to differ in size and in elegance, from the small cottage, only eight or ten yards square, to the mansions of the rich, sometimes two or more stories high, and embellished by rows of pillars and architectural adornments. Suppose ourselves in front of a better-class dwelling, though not exactly that of a patrician, for it is built of brick, or perhaps of undressed, or even of dressed stone, but not of marble, nor yet of hewn stone; nor are its walls painted with such delicate colours as vermilion, but simply whitewashed, or, may be, covered with some neutral tint. A wide, sometimes costly, stair leads from the outside straight up to the flat roof, which is made to slope a little downwards, so as to allow the rainwater easily to flow through pipes into the cistern below. The roof is paved with brick, stone, or other hard substance, and surrounded by a balustrade, which, according to Jewish law, must be at least two cubits (three feet) high, and strong enough to bear the weight of a person. Police-regulations, conceived in the same spirit of carefulness, prohibited open wells and pits, insufficient ladders, rickety stairs, even dangerous dogs about a house. From roof to roof there might be a regular communication, called by the Rabbis "the road of the roofs" (Babba Mez. 88 b). Thus a person could make his escape, passing from roof to roof, till at the last house he would descend the stairs that led down its outside, without having entered any dwelling. To this "road of the roofs" our Lord no doubt referred in His warning to His followers (Matthew 24:17; Mark 13:15; Luke 17:31), intended to apply to the last siege of Jerusalem: "And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein." For ordinary intercourse the roof was the coolest, the airiest, the stillest place. Of course, at times it would be used for purposes of domestic economy. But thither a man would retire in preference for prayer or quiet thinking; here he would watch, and wait, and observe whether friend or foe, the gathering of the storm, or--as the priest stationed on the pinnacle of the Temple before the morning sacrifice--how the red and golden light of dawn spread along the edge of the horizon. From the roof, also, it was easy to protect oneself against enemies, or to carry on dangerous fight with those beneath; and assuredly, if anywhere, it was "on the housetops" where secrets might be whispered, or, on the other hand, the most public "proclamation" of them be made (Matthew 10:27; Luke 12:3). The stranger's room was generally built on the roof, in order that, undisturbed by the household, the guest might go out and come in; and here, at the feast of Tabernacles, for coolness and convenience, the leafy "booths" were often reared, in which Israel dwelt in memory of their pilgrimage. Close by was "the upper chamber." On the roof the family would gather for converse, or else in the court

beneath--with its trees spreading grateful shade, and the music of its plashing fountain falling soothingly on the ear, as you stood in the covered gallery that ran all around, and opened on the apartments of the household.

If the guest-chamber on the roof, which could be reached from the outside, without passing through the house, reminds us of Elisha and the Shunammite, and of the last Passover-supper, to which the Lord and His disciples could go, and which they could leave, without coming in contact with any in the house, the gallery that ran round the court under the roof recalls yet another most solemn scene. We remember how they who bore the man "sick of the palsy," when unable to "come nigh unto Jesus for the press," "uncovered the roof where He was," "and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus" (Mark 2:4; Luke 5:19). We know, from many Talmudical passages, that the Rabbis resorted in preference to "the upper room" when discussing religious questions. It may have been so in this instance; and, unable to gain access through the door which led into the upper room, the bearers of the sick may have broken down the ceiling from the roof. Or, judging it more likely that the attendant multitude thronged the court beneath, while Jesus stood in the gallery that ran round the court and opened into the various apartments, they might have broken down the roof above Him, and so slowly let down their burden at His feet, and in sight of them all. There is a significant parallelism, or rather contrast, to this in a Rabbinical story (Moed K. 25 a), which relates how, when the bier on which a celebrated teacher was laid could not be passed out at the door, they carried up their burden and let it down from the roof--on its way, not to a new life, but to burial. Otherwise, there was also a stair which led from the roof into the court and house. Approaching a house, as visitors ordinarily would do, from the street, you would either pass through a large outer court, or else come straight to the vestibule or porch. Here the door opened into the inner court, which sometimes was shared by several families. A porter opened to callers on mentioning their names, as did Rhoda to Peter on the eventful night of his miraculous deliverance from prison (Acts 12:13-14). Our Lord also applies this well-known fact of domestic life, when He says (Revelation 3:20), "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Passing through this inner court, and through the gallery, you would reach the various rooms--the family room, the reception room, and the sleeping apartments--the most retired being occupied by the ladies, and the inner rooms used chiefly in winter. The furniture was much the same as that now in use, consisting of tables, couches, chairs, candlesticks, and lamps, varying in costliness according to the rank and wealth of the family. Among articles of luxury we mention rich cushions for the head and arms, ornaments, and sometimes even pictures. The doors, which moved on hinges fastened with wooden pins, were barred by wooden bolts, which could be withdrawn by check keys from the outside. The dining apartment was generally spacious, and sometimes employed for meetings.

We have been describing the arrangements and the appearance of towns and dwellings in Palestine. But it is not any of these outward things which gives a real picture of a Jewish home. Within, everything was quite peculiar. At the outset, the rite of circumcision separated the Jew from the nations around, and dedicated him to God. Private prayer, morning and evening, hallowed daily life, and family religions pervaded the home. Before every meal they washed and prayed: after it they "gave thanks." Besides, there were what may be designated as special family feasts. The return of the Sabbath sanctified the week of labour. It was to be welcomed as a king, or with

songs as a bridegroom; and each household observed it as a season of sacred rest and of joy. True, Rabbinism made all this a matter of mere externalism, converting it into an unbearable burden, by endless injunctions of what constituted work and of that which was supposed to produce joy, thereby utterly changing its sacred character. Still, the fundamental idea remained, like a broken pillar that shows where the palace had stood, and what had been its noble proportions. As the head of the house returned on the Sabbath-eve from the synagogue to his home, he found it festively adorned, the Sabbath lamp brightly burning, and the table spread with the richest each household could afford. But first he blessed each child with the blessing of Israel. And next evening, when the Sabbath light faded out, he made solemn "separation" between the hallowed day and the working week, and so commenced his labour once more in the name of the Lord. Nor were the stranger, the poor, the widow, or the fatherless forgotten. How fully they were provided for, how each shared in what was to be considered not a burden but a privilege, and with what delicacy relief was administered--for all Israel were brethren, and fellow-citizens of their Jerusalem--those know best who have closely studied Jewish life, its ordinances and practices. But this also is rather a sketch of religious than of family life. At the outset, we should here say, that even the Hebrew name for "woman," given her at her creation (Genesis 2:23), marked a wife as the companion of her husband, and his equal ("Ishah," a woman, from "Ish," a man). But it is when we consider the relations between man and wife, children and parents, the young and the aged, that the vast difference between Judaism and heathenism so strikingly appears. Even the relationship in which God presented Himself to His people, as their Father, would give peculiar strength and sacredness to the bond which connected earthly parents with their offspring. Here it should be borne in mind that, so to speak, the whole purpose of Israel as a nation, with a view to the appearance of the Messiah from among them, made it to each household a matter of deepest interest that no light in Israel should be extinguished through want of succession. Hence, such an expression as (Jeremiah 22:10), "Weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more," was applied to those who died childless (Moed K. 27). Similarly, it was said that he who had no child was like one dead. Proverbial expressions in regard to the "parental relation" occur in Rabbinical writings, which in their higher application remind us that the New Testament writers were Jews. If, in the impassioned strain of happy assurance concerning our Christian safety, we are told (Romans 8:33), "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth," we may believe that St. Paul was familiar with a saying like this: "Shall a father bear witness against his son?" (Abod S. 3). The somewhat similar question, "Is there a father who hateth his own son?" may recall to our minds the comfort which the Epistle to the Hebrews ministers to those who are in suffering (Hebrews 12:7), "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

Speaking of the relation between parents and children, it may be safely asserted, that no crime was more severely reprobated than any breach of the fifth commandment. The Talmud, with its usual punctiliousness, enters into details, when it lays down as a rule that "a son is bound to feed his father, to give him drink, to clothe him, to protect him, to lead him in, and to conduct him out, and to wash his face, his hands, and his feet"; to which the Jerusalem Gemara adds, that a son is even bound to beg for his father--although here also Rabbinism would give preference to a spiritual before a natural parent, or rather to one who teaches the law before a father! The general state of Jewish society shows us parents as fondly watching over their children, and children as requiting their care by bearing with the foibles, and even the trials, arising from the caprices of old

age and infirmity. Such things as undutifulness, or want of loving consideration for parents, would have wakened a thrill of horror in Jewish society. As for crimes against parents, which the law of God visited with the utmost penalty, they seem happily to have been almost unknown. The Rabbinical ordinances, however, also specified the obligation of parents, and limited their power. Thus a son was considered independent whenever he could gain his own living; and, although a daughter remained in the power of her father till marriage, she could not, after she was of age, be given away without her own express and free consent. A father might chastise his child, but only while young, and even then not to such extent as to destroy self-respect. But to beat a grown-up son was forbidden on pain of excommunication; and the apostolic injunction (Ephesians 6:4), "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," finds almost its literal counterpart in the Talmud (Moed K. 17 a). Properly speaking, indeed, the Jewish law limited the absolute obligation of a father (a mother was free from such legal obligation) to feed, clothe, and house his child to his sixth year, after which he could only be admonished to it as one of the duties of love, but not legally constrained (Chethub. 49 b; 65 b). In case of separation of the parents, the mother had charge of the daughters, and the father of the sons; but the latter also might be intrusted to the mother, if the judges considered it for the advantage of the children. A few notices as to the reverence due to age will appropriately close this brief sketch of Jewish home life. It was a beautiful thought--however some may doubt its exegetical correctness--that just as the pieces of the broken tables of the law were kept in the ark, so old age should be venerated and cherished, even though it should be broken in mind or memory (Ber. 8 b). Assuredly, Rabbinism went to the utmost verge in this matter when it recommended reverence for age, even though it were in the case of one ignorant of the law, or of a Gentile. There were, however, diverging opinions on this point. The passage, Leviticus 19:32, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man," was explained to refer only to sages, who alone were to be regarded as old. If R. Jose compared such as learned of young men to those who ate unripe grapes and drank of new wine, R. Jehudah taught, "Look not at the bottles, but at what they contain. There are new bottles full of old wine, and old bottles which contain not even new wine" (Ab. iv. 20). Again, if in Deuteronomy 13:1-2, and also, Deuteronomy 18:21-22 the people were directed to test a prophet by the signs which he showed--a misapplication of which was made by the Jews, when they asked Christ what sign He showed unto them (John 2:18, John 6:30)--while in Deuteronomy 17:10 they were told simply "to do according to all that they of that place inform thee," it was asked, What, then, is the difference between an old man and a prophet? To this the reply was: A prophet is like an ambassador, whom you believe in consequence of his royal credentials; but an ancient is one whose word you receive without requiring such evidence. And it was strictly enjoined that proper outward marks of respect should be shown to old age, such as to rise in the presence of older men, not to occupy their seats, to answer them modestly, and to assign to them the uppermost places at feasts.

After having thus marked how strictly Rabbinism watched over the mutual duties of parents and children, it will be instructive to note how at the same time traditionalism, in its worship of the letter, really destroyed the spirit of the Divine law. An instance will here suffice; and that which we select has the double advantage of illustrating an otherwise difficult allusion in the New Testament, and of exhibiting the real characteristics of traditionalism. No commandment could be more plainly in accordance, alike with the spirit and the letter of the law, than this: "He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death." Yet our Lord distinctly charges traditionalism with "transgressing" it

(Matthew 15:4-6). The following quotation from the Mishnah (Sanh. vii. 8) curiously illustrates the justice of His accusation: "He that curseth his father or his mother is not guilty, unless he curses them with express mention of the name of Jehovah." In any other case the sages declare him absolved! And this is by no means a solitary instance of Rabbinical perversion. Indeed, the moral systems of the synagogue leave the same sad impression on the mind as its doctrinal teaching. They are all elaborate chains of casuistry, of which no truer description could be given than in the words of the Saviour (Matthew 15:6): "Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

02.07. Chapter 7 - The Upbringing of Jewish Children

Chapter 7 - The Upbringing of Jewish Children The tenderness of the bond which united Jewish parents to their children appears even in the multiplicity and pictorialness of the expressions by which the various stages of child-life are designated in the Hebrew. Besides such general words as "ben" and "bath"-"son" and "daughter"--we find no fewer than nine different terms, each depicting a fresh stage of life. The first of these simply designates the babe as the newly-"born"--the "jeled," or, in the feminine, "jaldah"--as in Exodus 2:3, Exodus 2:6, Exodus 2:8. But the use of this term throws a fresh light on the meaning of some passages of Scripture. Thus we remember that it is applied to our Lord in the prophecy of His birth (Isaiah 9:6): "For a babe" (’jeled’) is born unto us, a son (’ben’) is given to us"; while in Isaiah 2:6 its employment adds a new meaning to the charge: "They please themselves (or strike hands) with the ’jalde’--the ’babes’--of strangers"--marking them, so to speak, as not only the children of strangers, but as unholy from their very birth. Compare also the pictorial, or else the poetical, use of the word "jeled" in such passages as Isaiah 29:23, Isaiah 57:4; Jeremiah 31:20; Ecclesiastes 4:13; 1 Kings 12:8; 2 Kings 2:24; Genesis 42:22; and others. The next child-name, in point of time, is "jonek," which means, literally, "a suckling," being also sometimes used figuratively of plants, like our English "sucker," as in Isaiah 53:2 : "He shall grow up before Him as a sucker"--"jonek." The word "jonek" occurs, for example, in Isaiah 11:8, and in Psalms 8:2. On the other hand, the expression in the latter passage, rendered "babes" in our Authorised Version, marks a yet third stage in the child’s existence, and a farther advancement in the babe-life. This appears from many passages. As the word implies, the "olel" is still "sucking"; but it is no longer satisfied with only this nourishment, and is "asking bread," as in Lamentations 4:4 : "The tongue of the ’jonek’ cleaves to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the ’olalim’ ask bread." A fourth designation represents the child as the "gamul," or "weaned one" (Psalms 131:2; Isaiah 11:8, Isaiah 28:9), from a verb which primarily means to complete, and secondarily to wean. As we know, the period of weaning among the Hebrews was generally at the end of two years (Chethub. 60), and was celebrated by a feast. After that the fond eye of the Hebrew parent seems to watch the child as it is clinging to its mother--as it were, ranging itself by her--whence the fifth designation, "taph" (Esther 3:13, "The ’taph’ and the women in one day"; Jeremiah 40:7; Ezekiel 9:6). The sixth period is marked by the word "elem" (in the feminine, "almah," as in Isaiah 7:14, of the virgin-mother), which denotes becoming firm and strong. As one might expect, we have next the "naari," or youth--literally, he who shakes off, or shakes himself free. Lastly, we find the child designated as "bachur," or the "ripened one"; a young warrior, as in Isaiah 31:8; Jeremiah 18:21, Jeremiah 15:8, etc. Assuredly, those who so keenly watched child-life as to give a pictorial designation to each advancing stage of its existence, must have been fondly attached to their children.

There is a passage in the Mishnah (Aboth. v. 21), which quaintly maps out and, as it were, labels the different periods of life according to their characteristics. It is worth reproducing, if only to serve as introduction to what we shall have to say on the upbringing of children. Rabbi Jehudah, the son of Tema, says: "At five years of age, reading of the Bible; at ten years, learning the Mishnah; at

thirteen years, bound to the commandments; at fifteen years, the study of the Talmud; at eighteen years, marriage; at twenty, the pursuit of trade or business (active life); at thirty years, full vigour; at forty, maturity of reason; at fifty, of counsel; at sixty, commencement of agedness; at seventy, grey age; at eighty, advanced old age; at ninety, bowed down; at a hundred, as if he were dead and gone, and taken from the world." In the passage just quoted the age of five is mentioned as that when a child is expected to commence reading the Bible--of course, in the original Hebrew. But different opinions also prevailed. Generally speaking, such early instruction was regarded as only safe in the case of very healthy and strong children; while those of average constitution were not to be set to regular work till six years old. There is both common sense and sound experience in this Talmudical saying (Cheth. 50), "If you set your child to regular study before it is six years old, you shall always have to run after, and yet never get hold of it." This chiefly has reference to the irreparable injury to health caused by such early strain upon the mind. If, on the other hand, we come upon an admonition to begin teaching a child when it is three years old, this must refer to such early instructions as the of certain passages of Scripture, or of small isolated portions and prayers, which a parent would make his child repeat from tenderest years. As we shall show in the sequel, six or seven was the age at which a parent in Palestine was legally bound to attend to the schooling of his son.

But, indeed, it would have been difficult to say when the instruction of the Hebrew child really commenced. Looking back, a man must have felt that the teaching which he most--indeed, one might almost say, which he exclusively--valued had mingled with the first waking thoughts of his consciousness. Before the child could speak--before it could almost understand what was taught, in however elementary language--before it would even take in the domestic rites of the recurring weekly festival, or those of the annual feasts--it must have been attracted by the so-called "Mesusah," which was fastened at the door-post of every "clean" apartment, * and at the entrance of such houses as were inhabited by Jews exclusively. The "Mesusah" was a kind of phylactery for the house, serving a purpose kindred to that of the phylactery for the person, both being derived from a misunderstanding and misapplication of the Divine direction (Deuteronomy 6:9, Deuteronomy 11:20), taking in the letter what was meant for the spirit. But while we gladly concede that the earlier Jewish practice was free from some of the present almost semi-heathenish customs, ** and further, that many houses in Palestine were without it, there can be little doubt that, even at the time of Christ, this "Mesusah" would be found wherever a family was at all Pharisaically inclined.

* The "Mesusah" was not affixed to any that were not "diroth cavod"--dwellings of honour. Thus not to bath rooms, wash-houses, tanneries, dyeworks, etc. The "Mesusah" was only attached to dwelling-places, not to synagogues.

** The tractate Massecheth Mesusah cannot be regarded as an authority for early times. But even the "Sohar" contains much that is little better than heathen superstition on the supposed efficacy of the "Mesusah." Among later superstitions connected with it, are the writing of the name "Cuso bemuchsas cuso" (supposed to be that of Israel’s watching angel), the etymology of that name, etc.

For, not to speak of what seems an allusion to it, so early as in Isaiah 57:8, we have the distinct testimony of Josephus (Ant. iv,213) and of the Mishnah to their use (Ber. iii. 3; Megill. i. 8; Moed K.

iii. 4; Men. iii.7--in the last-mentioned place, even with superstitious additions). Supposing the "Mesusah" to have been somewhat as at present, it would have consisted of a small, longitudinally-folded parchment square, on which, on twenty-two lines, these two passages were written: Deuteronomy 6:4-9, and Deuteronomy 11:13-21. Inclosed in a shining metal case, and affixed to the door-post, the child, when carried in arms, would naturally put out its hand to it; the more so, that it would see the father and all others, on going out or in, reverently touch the case, and afterwards kiss the finger, speaking at the same time a benediction. For, from early times, the presence of the "Mesusah" was connected with the Divine protection, this verse being specially applied to it: "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore" (Psalms 121:8). Indeed, one of the most interesting ancient literary monuments in existence--"Mechilta," a Jewish commentary on the book of Exodus, the substance of which is older than the Mishnah itself, dating from the beginning of the second century of our era, if not earlier--argues the efficacy of the "Mesusah" from the fact that, since the destroying angel passed over the doors of Israel which bore the covenant-mark, a much higher value must attach to the "Mesusah," which embodied the name of the Lord no less than ten times, and was to be found in the dwellings of Israel day and night through all their generations. From this to the magical mysticism of the "Kabbalah," and even to such modern superstitions as that, if dust or dirt were kept within a cubit of the "Mesusah," no less a host than three hundred and sixty-five demons would come, there is a difference of degree rather than of kind. But to return. As soon as the child had any knowledge, the private and the united prayers of the family, and the domestic rites, whether of the weekly Sabbath or of festive seasons, would indelibly impress themselves upon his mind. It would be difficult to say which of those feasts would have the most vivid effect upon a child’s imagination. There was "Chanukah," the feast of the Dedication, with its illumination of each house, when (in most cases) the first evening one candle would be lit for each member of the household, the number increasing each night, till, on the eighth, it was eight times that of the first. Then there was "Purim," the feast of Esther, with the good cheer and boisterous merriment which it brought; the feast of Tabernacles, when the very youngest of the house had to live out in the booth; and, chiefest of feasts, the week of the Passover, when, all leaven being carefully purged out, every morsel of food, by its difference from that ordinarily used, would show the child that the season was a special one. From the moment a child was at all capable of being instructed--still more, of his taking any part in the services--the impression would deepen day by day. Surely no one who had ever worshipped within the courts of Jehovah’s house at Jerusalem could ever have forgotten the scenes he had witnessed, or the words he had heard. Standing in that gorgeous, glorious building, and looking up its terraced vista, the child would watch with solemn awe, not unmingled with wonderment, as the great throng of white-robed priests busily moved about, while the smoke of the sacrifice rose from the altar of burnt-offering. Then, amid the hushed silence of that vast multitude, they had all fallen down to worship at the time of incense. Again, on those steps that led up to the innermost sanctuary the priests had lifted their hands and spoken over the people the words of blessing; and then, while the drink-offering was poured out, the Levites’ chant of Psalms had risen and swelled into a mighty volume; the exquisite treble of the Levite children’s voices being sustained by the rich round notes of the men, and accompanied by instrumental music. The Jewish child knew many of these words. They had been the earliest songs he had heard--almost his first lesson when clinging as a "taph" to his mother. But now, in those white-marbled, gold-adorned halls, under heaven’s blue canopy, and with such surroundings, they

would fall upon his ear like sounds from another world, to which the prolonged threefold blasts from the silver trumpets of the priests would seem to waken him. And they were sounds from another world; for, as his father would tell him, all that he saw was after the exact pattern of heavenly things which God had shown to Moses on Mount Sinai; all that he heard was God-uttered, spoken by Jehovah Himself through the mouth of His servant David, and of the other sweet singers of Israel. Nay, that place and that house were God-chosen; and in the thick darkness of the Most Holy Place--there afar off, where the high-priest himself entered on one day of the year only, and in simple pure white vesture, not in those splendid golden garments in which he was ordinarily arrayed--had once stood the ark, with the veritable tables of the law, hewn and graven by the very hand of God; and between the cherubim had then throned in the cloud the visible presence of Jehovah. Verily this Temple with its services was heaven upon earth! Nor would it have been easy to lose the impression of the first Paschal Supper which a child had attended. There was that about its symbols and services which appealed to every feeling, even had it not been that the law expressly enjoined full instruction to be given as to every part and rite of the service, as well as to the great event recorded in that supper. For in that night had Israel been born as a nation, and redeemed as the "congregation" of the Lord. Then also, as in a mould, had their future history been cast to all time; and there, as in type, had its eternal meaning and import for all men been outlined, and with it God’s purpose of love and work of grace foreshadowed. Indeed, at a certain part of the service it was expressly ordained, that the youngest at the Paschal table should rise and formally ask what was the meaning of all this service, and how that night was distinguished from others; to which the father was to reply, by relating, in language suited to the child’s capacity, the whole national history of Israel, from the calling of Abraham down to the deliverance from Egypt and the giving of the law; "and the more fully," it is added, "he explains it all, the better." In view of all this, Philo might indeed, without exaggeration, say that the Jews "were from their swaddling clothes, even before being taught either the sacred laws or the unwritten customs, trained by their parents, teachers, and instructors to recognise God as Father and as the Maker of the world" (Legat. ad. Cajum, sec. 16); and that, "having been taught the knowledge (of the laws) from earliest youth, they bore in their souls the image of the commandments" (Ibid. sec. 31). To the same effect is the testimony of Josephus, that "from their earliest consciousness" they had "learned the laws, so as to have them,as it were, engraven upon the soul" (Ag. Apion, ii,18); although, of course, we do not believe it, when, with his usual boastful magniloquence, he declares that at the age of fourteen he had been "frequently" consulted by "the high priests and principal men of the city...about the accurate understanding of points of the law" (Life,7-12; compare also Ant. iv,31; Ag. Apion, i,60-68, ii,199-203). But there is no need of such testimony. The Old Testament, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament, leading us progressively from century to century, indicate the same carefulness in the upbringing of children. One of the earliest narratives of Scripture records how God said to Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah to do justice and judgment" (Genesis 18:19)--a statement which, we may note by the way, implies the distinction between the seed of Abraham after the flesh and after the spirit. How thoroughly the spirit of this Divine utterance was carried out under the law, appears from a comparison of such passages as Exodus 12:26, Exodus 13:8, Exodus 13:14; Deuteronomy 4:9-10, Deuteronomy 6:7, Deuteronomy 6:20, Deuteronomy 11:19, Deuteronomy 31:13; Psalms 78:5-6. It is needless to pursue the subject farther, or to show how even God’s dealings with His people were regarded as

the basis and model of the parental relationship. But the book in the Old Testament which, if properly studied, would give us the deepest insight into social and family life under the old dispensation--we mean the book of Proverbs--is so full of admonitions about the upbringing of children, that it is sufficient to refer the reader generally to it. He will find there the value of such training, its object, in the acquisition of true wisdom in the fear and service of Jehovah, and the opposite dangers most vividly portrayed--the practical bearing of all being summed up in this aphorism, true to all times: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6); of which we have this New Testament application: "Bring up (your children) in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). The book of Proverbs brings before us yet another phase of deepest interest. It contains the fullest appreciation of woman in her true dignity, and of her position and influence in the family-life. It is quite true, as we shall presently show, that the obligation to train the child rested primarily upon the father, and that both by the law of God and by the ordinances of the Rabbis. But even the patriarchal story will prepare an attentive reader to find, especially in the early upbringing of children, that constant influence of woman, which, indeed, the nature of the maternal relationship implies, provided the family-life be framed on the model of the Word of God. Lovelier pictures of this than the mother of Samuel and the pious Shunammite hostess of Elisha can scarcely be conceived. But the book of Proverbs shows us, that even in the early times of the Jewish monarchy this characteristic of Old Testament life also appeared outside the bounds of the Holy Land, wherever pious Israelites had their settlements. The subject is so deeply interesting, historically and religiously, and perhaps so new to some readers, that a slight digression may be allowed us.

Beyond the limits of the Holy Land, close by Dumah, lay the land or district of Massa (Genesis 25:14), one of the original seats of the Ishmaelites (1 Chronicles 1:30). From Isaiah 21:11 we gather that it must have been situate beyond Seir--that is, to the south-east of Palestine, in Northern Arabia. Whether the Ishmaelites of Massa had come to the knowledge of Jehovah, the true God; whether Massa was occupied by a Jewish colony, which there established the service of the Lord; * or whether, through the influence of Hebrew immigrants, such a religious change had been brought about, certain it is, that the two last chapters of the book of Proverbs introduce the royal family of Massa as deeply imbued with the spiritual religion of the Old Testament, and the queen- mother as training the heir to the throne in the knowledge and fear of the Lord. **

* From 1 Chronicles 4:38-43 we infer colonisation in that direction, especially on the part of the tribe of Simeon. Utterances in the prophets (such as in Isaiah 21:1-17 and Micah 1:1-16) seem also to indicate a very wide spread of Jewish settlers. It is a remarkable fact that, according to mediaeval Jewish and Arab writers, the districts of Massa and Dumah were largely inhabited by Jews.

** There can be no question that the word rendered in the Authorised Version (Proverbs 30:1 and Proverbs 31:1) by "prophecy" is simply the name of a district, "Massa."

Indeed, so much is this the case, that the instruction of the queen of Massa, and the words of her two royal sons, are inserted in the book of Proverbs as part of the inspired records of the Old Testament. According to the best criticism, Proverbs 30:1 should be thus rendered: "The words of Agur, the son of her whom Massa obeys. Spake the man to God-with-me--God with me, and I was strong." *

* Or, according to another rendering, "Spake the man: I diligently searched after God, and I am become weary." This, of course, is not the place for critical discussion; but we may say that we have followed the general conclusions adopted alike by Delitzsch and Zockler, and by Ewald, Hitzig, and Bertheau.

Then Proverbs 31:1-31 embodies the words of Augur's royal brother, even "the words of Lemuel, king of Massa, with which his mother taught him." If the very names of these two princes--Agur, "exile," and Lemuel, "for God," or "dedicated to God"--are significant of her convictions, the teaching of that royal mother, as recorded in Proverbs 31:2-9, is worthy of a "mother in Israel." No wonder that the record of her teaching is followed by an enthusiastic description of a godly woman's worth and work (Proverbs 31:10-31), each verse beginning with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet (the Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters), like the various sections of Psalms 119:1-176 --as it were, to let her praises ring through every letter of speech. As might have been expected, the spirit of the Apocryphal books is far different from that which breathes in the Old Testament. Still, such a composition as Ecclesiasticus shows that even in comparatively late and degenerate times the godly upbringing of children occupied a most prominent place in religious thinking. But it is when we approach the New Testament, that a fresh halo of glory seems to surround woman. And here our attention is directed to the spiritual influence of mothers rather than of fathers. Not to mention "the mother of Zebedee's children," nor the mother of John Mark, whose home at Jerusalem seems to have been the meeting-place and the shelter of the early disciples, and that in times of the most grievous persecution; nor yet "the elect lady and her children," whom not only St. John, "but also all they that know the truth," loved in truth (2 John 1:1), and her similarly elect sister with her children (2 John 1:13), two notable instances will occur to the reader. The first of these presents a most touching instance of a mother's faith, and prayers, and labour of love, to which the only parallel in later history is that of Monica, the mother of St. Augustine. How Eunice, the daughter of the pious Lois, had come to marry a heathen, * we know as little as the circumstances which may have originally led the family to settle at Lystra (Acts 16:1; compare Acts 14:6, etc.), a place where there was not even a synagogue.

* The language of the New Testament leads to the inference that Timothy's father was not only by birth, but continued a Greek--being not merely a heathen, but not even a Jewish proselyte. At most then two or three Jewish families lived in that heathen city. Perhaps Lois and Eunice were the only worshippers of Jehovah there; for we do not even read of a meeting-place for prayer, such as that by the river-side where Paul first met Lydia. Yet in such adverse circumstances, and as the wife of a Greek, Eunice proved one to whom royal Lemuel's praise applied in the fullest sense: "Her children arise up and call her blessed," and "Her works praise her in the gates"-- of the new Jerusalem. Not a truer nor more touching portraiture of a pious Jewish home could have been drawn than in these words of St. Paul: "I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice"; and again, "From a child thou hast know the Holy Scriptures" (2 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 3:15). There was, we repeat, no synagogue in Lystra where Timothy might have heard every Sabbath, and twice in the week, Moses and the Prophets read, and derived other religious knowledge; there was, so far as we can see, neither religious companionship nor means of instruction of any kind, nor religious example, not even from his father; but all around quite the contrary. But there was one influence for highest good--constant, unvarying, and most powerful. It was that of "mother of Israel." From the time that

as a "taph" he clung to her--even before that, when a "gamul," an "olel," and a "jonek"--had Eunice trained Timothy in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. To quote again the forcible language of St. Paul, "From an infant" * (or baby) "thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

* The Greek term means literally "a baby," and is so used, not only by classical writers, but in all the passages in which it occurs in the New Testament, which are as follows: Luke 1:41, Luke 1:44, Luke 2:12, Luke 2:16, Luke 18:15; Acts 7:19; 2 Timothy 3:15; and 1 Peter 2:2. From the Apocrypha, from Josephus, and from the Talmud we know what means of instruction in the Scriptures were within reach of a pious mother at that time. In a house like that of Timothy's father there would, of course, be no phylacteries, with the portions of Scripture which they contained, and probably no "Mesusah," although, according to the Mishnah (Ber. iii. 3), the latter duty was incumbent, not only upon men but upon women. the Babylon Talmud (Ber. 20 b) indeed gives a very unsatisfactory reason for the latter provision. But may it not be that the Jewish law had such cases in view as that of Eunice and her son, without expressly saying so, from fear of lending a sanction to mixed marriages? Be this as it may, we know that at the time of the Syrian persecutions, just before the rising of the Maccabees, the possession of portions or of the whole of the Old Testament by private families was common in Israel. For, part of those persecutions consisted in making search for these Scriptures and destroying them (1Ma 1:57), as well as punishing their possessors (Josephus, Ant. xii,256). Of course, during the period of religious revival which followed the triumph of the Maccabees, such copies of the Bible would have greatly multiplied. It is by no means an exaggeration to say that, if perhaps only the wealthy possessed a complete copy of the Old Testament, written out on parchment or on Egyptian paper, there would scarcely be a pious home, however humble, which did not cherish as its richest treasure some portion of the Word of God--whether the five books of the Law, or the Psalter, or a roll of one or more of the Prophets. Besides, we know from the Talmud that at a later period, and probably at the time of Christ also, there were little parchment rolls specially for the use of children, containing such portions of Scripture as the "Shema" * (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Deuteronomy 11:13-21; Numbers 15:37-41), the "Hallel" (Psalms 113:1-9, Psalms 114:1-8, Psalms 115:1-18, Psalms 116:1-19, Psalms 117:1-2, Psalms 118:1-29), the history of the Creation to that of the Flood, and the first eight chapters of the book of Leviticus. Such means of instruction there would be at the disposal of Eunice in teaching her son.

* The "Shema"--so called from the first word, "Shema" ("Hear, O Israel")--forms part of the regular prayers; as the section called "Hallel" ("praise") was appointed to be sung at certain seasons. And this leads us to mention, with due reverence, the other and far greater New Testament instance of maternal influence in Israel. It is none less than that of the mother of our blessed Lord Himself. While the fact that Jesus became subject to His parents, and grew in wisdom and in favour both with God and man, forms part of the unfathomable mystery of His self-humiliation, the influence exerted upon His early education, especially by His mother, seems implied throughout the gospel history. Of course, His was a pious Jewish home; and at Nazareth there was a synagogue, to which, as we shall by-and-by explain, a school was probably attached. In that synagogue Moses and the Prophets would be read, and, as afterwards by Himself (Luke 4:16), discourses or addresses be delivered from time to time. What was taught in these synagogue-schools, and how, will be shown in another chapter. But, whether or not Jesus had attended such a school, His mind

was so thoroughly imbued with the Sacred Scriptures--He was so familiar with them in their every detail--that we cannot fail to infer that the home of Nazareth possessed a precious copy of its own of the entire Sacred Volume, which from earliest childhood formed, so to speak, the meat and drink of the God-Man. More than that, there is clear evidence that He was familiar with the art of writing, which was by no means so common in those days as reading. The words of our Lord, as reported both by St. Matthew (Matthew 5:18) and by St. Luke (Luke 16:17), also prove that the copy of the Old Testament from which He had drawn was not only in the original Hebrew, but written, like our modern copies, in the so-called Assyrian, and not in the ancient Hebrew-Phoenician characters. This appears from the expression "one iota or one little hook"--erroneously rendered "tittle" in our Authorised Version--which can only apply to the modern Hebrew characters. That our Lord taught in Aramaean, and that He used and quoted the Holy Scriptures in the Hebrew, perhaps sometimes rendering them for popular use into Aramaean, there can be little doubt on the part of careful and unprejudiced students, though some learned men have held the opposite. It is quite true that the Mishnah (Megill. i. 8) seems to allow the writing of Holy Scripture in any language; but even Simeon, the son of Gamaliel (the teacher of St. Paul), confined this concession to the Greek--no doubt with a view to the LXX, which was so widely spread in his time. But we also know from the Talmud, how difficult it was for a Rabbi to defend the study or use of Greek, and how readily popular prejudice burst into a universal and sweeping condemnation of it. The same impression is conveyed not only from the immediate favourable change which the use of the Aramaean by St. Paul produced upon the infuriated people (Acts 21:40), but also from the fact that only an appeal to the Hebrew Scriptures could have been of authority in discussion with the Pharisees and Scribes, and that it alone gave point to the frequent expostulations of Christ: "Have ye not read?" (Matthew 12:3, Matthew 19:4, Matthew 21:13, Matthew 21:16, Matthew 21:42, Matthew 22:31). This familiarity from earliest childhood with the Scriptures in the Hebrew original also explains how at the age of twelve Jesus could be found "in the Temple; sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46). In explaining this seemingly strange circumstance, we may take the opportunity of correcting an almost universal mistake. It is generally thought that, on the occasion referred to, the Saviour had gone up, as being "of age," in the Jewish sense of the expression, or, to use their own terms, as a "Bar Mizvah," or "son of the commandment," by which the period was marked when religious obligations and privileges devolved upon a youth, and he became a member of the congregation. But the legal age for this was not twelve, but thirteen (Ab. v. 21). On the other hand, the Rabbinical law enjoined (Yoma,82 a) that even before that--two years, or at least one year--lads should be brought up to the Temple, and made to observe the festive rites. Unquestionably, it was in conformity with this universal custom that Jesus went on the occasion named to the Temple. Again, we know that it was the practice of the members of the various Sanhedrims--who on ordinary days sat as judicatories, from the close of the morning to the time of the evening sacrifice (Sanh. 88 b)--to come out upon the Sabbaths and feast-days on "the terrace of the Temple," and there publicly to teach and expound, the utmost liberty being given of asking questions, discussing, objecting, and otherwise taking intelligent part in these lectures. On the occasion of Christ’s presence, these discussions would, as usual, be carried on during the "Moed Katon," or minor festive days, intervening between the second and the last day of the Paschal week. Joseph and Mary, on the other hand, had, as allowed by the law, returned towards Nazareth on the third day of the Paschal week, while Jesus remained behind. These circumstances also

explain why His appearance in the midst of the doctors, although very remarkable considering His age, did not at once command universal attention. In point of fact, the only qualification requisite, so far as learning was concerned, would be a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures in the Hebrew, and a proper understanding of them.

What we have hitherto described will have conveyed to the reader that the one branch of instruction aimed after or desired by the Jews at the time of Christ was religious knowledge. What was understood by this, and how it was imparted--whether in the family or in the public schools--must form the subject of special investigation.

02.08. Chapter 8 - Subjects of Study - Home Education in Israel; Female Education ...

Chapter 8 - Subjects of Study - Home Education in Israel; Female Education - Elementary Schools, Schoolmasters, and School Arrangements.

If a faithful picture of society in ancient Greece or Rome were to be presented to view, it is not easy to believe that even they who now most oppose the Bible could wish their aims success. For this, at any rate, may be asserted, without fear of gainsaying, that no other religion than that of the Bible has proved competent to control an advanced, or even an advancing, state of civilisation. Every other bound has been successively passed and submerged by the rising tide; how deep only the student of history knows. Two things are here undeniable. In the case of heathenism every advance in civilisation has marked a progressive lowering of public morality, the earlier stages of national life always showing a far higher tone than the later. On the contrary, the religion of the Bible (under the old as under the new dispensation) has increasingly raised, if not uniformly the public morals, yet always the tone and standard of public morality; it has continued to exhibit a standard never yet attained, and it has proved its power to control public and social life, to influence and to mould it.

Strange as it may sound, it is strictly true that, beyond the boundaries of Israel, it would be scarcely possible to speak with any propriety of family life, or even of the family, as we understand these terms. It is significant, that the Roman historian Tacitus should mark it as something special among the Jews *--which they only shared with the ancient barbarian Germans--that they regarded it as a crime to kill their offspring!

* Tacitus, Hist. v. 5. In general this fifth book is most interesting, as showing the strange mixture of truth and error, and the intense hatred of the Jewish race even on the part of such men as Tacitus. This is not the place to describe the exposure of children, or the various crimes by which ancient Greece and Rome, in the days of their highest culture, sought to rid themselves of what was regarded as superfluous population. Few of those who have learned to admire classical antiquity have a full conception of any one phase in its social life--whether of the position of woman, the relation of the sexes, slavery, the education of children, their relation to their parents, or the state of public morality. Fewer still have combined all these features into one picture, and that not merely as exhibited by the lower orders, or even among the higher classes, but as fully owned and approved by those whose names have descended in the admiration of ages as the thinkers, the sages, the poets, the historians, and the statesmen of antiquity. Assuredly, St. Paul’s description of the ancient world in the first and second chapters of his Epistle to the Romans must have appeared to those who lived in the midst of it as Divine even in its tenderness, delicacy, and charity; the full picture under bright sunlight would have been scarcely susceptible of exhibition. For such a world there was only one alternative--either the judgment of Sodom, or the mercy of the Gospel and the healing of the Cross. *

* Let it not be thought that we have been guilty of the slightest exaggeration. The difficulty here is to tell the truth and yet find moderate terms in which to express it. That Christianity should have laid its hold on such a society, found there its brightest martyrs and truest followers, and finally subdued and transformed it, is quite as great a miracle as that of the breaking down of the middle wall of partition among the Jews, or their spiritual transformation of mind and heart from self-righteousness and externalism. In either case, to the student of history the miracle will seem greater than if "one rose from the dead." When we pass from the heathen world into the homes of Israel, even the excess of their exclusiveness seems for the moment a relief. It is as if we turned from enervating, withering, tropical heat into a darkened room, whose grateful coolness makes us for the moment forget that its gloom is excessive, and cannot continue as the day declines. And this shutting out of all from without, this exclusiveness, applied not only to what concerned their religion, their social and family life, but also to their knowledge. In the days of Christ the pious Jew had no other knowledge, neither sought nor cared for any other--in fact, denounced it--than that of the law of God. At the outset, let it be remembered that, in heathenism, theology, or rather mythology, had no influence whatever on thinking or life--was literally submerged under their waves. To the pious Jew, on the contrary, the knowledge of God was everything; and to prepare for or impart that knowledge was the sum total, the sole object of his education. This was the life of his soul--the better, and only true life, to which all else as well as the life of the body were merely subservient, as means towards an end. His religion consisted of two things: knowledge of God, which by a series of inferences, one from the other, ultimately resolved itself into theology, as they understood it; and service, which again consisted of the proper observance of all that was prescribed by God, and of works of charity towards men--the latter, indeed, going beyond the bound of what was strictly due (the Chovoth) into special merit or "righteousness" (Zedakah). But as service presupposed knowledge, theology was again at the foundation of all, and also the crown of all, which conferred the greatest merit. This is expressed or implied in almost innumerable passages of Jewish writings. Let one suffice, not only because it sounds more rationalistic, but because it is to this day repeated each morning in his prayers by every Jew: "These are the things of which a man eats the fruit in this world, but their possession continueth for the next world: to honour father and mother, pious works, peacemaking between man and man, and the study of the law, which is equivalent to them all" (Peah. i. 1). And literally "equivalent to them all" was such study to the Jew. The circumstances of the times forced him to learn Greek, perhaps also Latin, so much as was necessary for intercourse; and to tolerate at least the Greek translation of the Scriptures, and the use of any language in the daily prayers of the Shema, of the eighteen benedictions, and of the grace after meat (these are the oldest elements of the Jewish liturgy). But the blessing of the priests might not be spoken, nor the phylacteries nor the Mesusah written, in other than the Hebrew language (Megil. i. 8; Sotah, vii. 1,2); while heathen science and literature were absolutely prohibited. To this, and not to the mere learning of Greek, which must have been almost necessary for daily life, refer such prohibitions as that traced to the time of Titus (Sotah, ix. 14), forbidding a man to teach his son Greek. The Talmud itself (Men. 99 b) furnishes a clever illustration of this, when, in reply to the question of a younger Rabbi, whether, since he knew the whole "Thorah" (the law), he might be allowed to study "Greek wisdom," his uncle reminded him of the words (Joshua 1:8), "Thou shalt meditate therein day and night." "Go, then, and consider," said the older Rabbi, "which is the hour that is neither of the day nor of the night, and in it thou mayest study Grecian wisdom." This, then, was one source of danger averted. Then,

as for the occupations of ordinary life, it was indeed quite true that every Jew was bound to learn some trade or business. But this was not to divert him from study; quite the contrary. It was regarded as a profanation--or at least declared such--to make use of one's learning for secular purposes, whether of gain or of honour. The great Hillel had it (Ab. i. 13): "He who serves himself by the crown (the 'Thorah') shall fade away." To this Rabbi Zadok added the warning, "Make study neither a crown by which to shine, nor yet a spade with which to dig"--the Mishnah inferring that such attempts would only lead to the shortening of life (Ab. iv. 5). All was to be merely subsidiary to the one grand object; the one was of time, the other of eternity; the one of the body, the other of the soul; and its use was only to sustain the body, so as to give free scope to the soul on its upward path. Every science also merged in theology. Some were not so much sciences as means of livelihood, such as medicine and surgery; others were merely handmaidens to theology. Jurisprudence was in reality a kind of canon law; mathematics and astronomy were subservient to the computations of the Jewish calendar; literature existed not outside theological pursuits; and as for history, geography, or natural studies, although we mark, in reference to the latter, a keenness of observation which often led instinctively to truth, we meet with so much ignorance, and with so many gross mistakes and fables, as almost to shake the belief of the student in the trustworthiness of any Rabbinical testimony. From what has been stated, three inferences will be gathered, all of most material bearing on the study of the New Testament. It will be seen how a mere knowledge of the law came to hold such place of almost exclusive importance that its successful prosecution seemed to be well-nigh all in all. Again, it is easy now to understand why students and teachers of theology enjoyed such exceptional honour (Matthew 23:6-7 : Mark 12:38-39 : Luke 11:43, Luke 20:46). In this respect the testimonies of Onkelos, in his paraphrastic rendering of the Scriptures, of the oldest "Targumim," or paraphrastic commentaries, of the Mishnah, and of the two Talmuds, are not only unanimous, but most extravagant. Not only are miracles supposed to be performed in attestation of certain Rabbis, but such a story is actually ventured upon (Bab. Mes. 86 a), as that on the occasion of a discussion in the academy of heaven, when the Almighty and His angels were of different opinions in regard to a special point of law, a Rabbi famed for his knowledge of that subject was summoned up by the angel of death to decide the matter between them! The story is altogether too blasphemous for details, and indeed the whole subject is too wide for treatment in this connection. If such was the exalted position of a Rabbi, this direction of the Mishnah seems quite natural, that in case of loss, of difficulties, or of captivity, a teacher was to be cared for before a father, since to the latter we owed only our existence in this world, but to the former the life of the world to come (Bab. Mez. ii. 11). It is curious how in this respect also Roman Catholicism and Pharisaism arrive at the same ultimate results. Witness this saying of the celebrated Rabbi, who flourished in the thirteenth century, and whose authority is almost absolute among the Jews. The following is his glossary on Deuteronomy 17:11 : "Even if a Rabbi were to teach that your left hand was the right, and your right hand the left, you are bound to obey." The third inference which the reader will draw is as to the influence which such views must have exercised upon education, alike at home and in schools. It is no doubt only the echo of the most ancient mode of congratulating a parent when to this day those who are present at a circumcision, and also the priest when the first-born is redeemed from him, utter this: "As this child has been joined to the covenant" (or, as the case may be, "attained this redemption"), "so may it also be to him in reference to the 'thorah,' the 'chuppah' (the marriage-baldacchino, under which the regular marriage ceremony is performed), and to good works." The wish marks with twofold emphasis the

life that is to come, as compared with the life that now is. This quite agrees with the account of Josephus, who contrasts the heathen festivals at the birth of children with the Jewish enactments by which children were from their very infancy nourished up in the laws of God (Ag. Apion, i,38-68, ii,173-205).

There can be no question that, according to the law of Moses, the early education of a child devolved upon the father; of course, always bearing in mind that his first training would be the mother's (Deuteronomy 11:19, and many other passages). If the father were not capable of elementary teaching, a stranger would be employed. Passing over the Old Testament period, we may take it that, in the days of Christ, home-teaching ordinarily began when the child was about three years old. There is reason for believing that, even before this, that careful training of the memory commenced, which has ever since been one of the mental characteristics of the Jewish nation. Verses of Scripture, benedictions, wise sayings, etc., were impressed on the child, and mnemonic rules devised to facilitate the retention of what was so acquired. We can understand the reason of this from the religious importance attaching to the exact preservation of the very words of tradition. The Talmud describes the beau ideal of a student when it compares him to a well-plastered cistern, which would not let even a single drop escape. Indeed, according to the Mishnah, he who from negligence "forgets any one thing in his study of the Mishnah, Scripture imputes it to him as if he had forfeited his life"; the reference here being to Deuteronomy 4:9 (Ab. iii. 10). And so we may attach some credit even to Josephus' boast about his "wonderful memory" (Life, ii,8). In teaching to read, the alphabet was to be imparted by drawing the letters on a board, till the child became familiar with them. Next, the teacher would point in the copy read with his finger, or, still better, with a style, to keep up the attention of the pupil. None but well-corrected manuscripts were to be used, since, as was rightly said, mistakes impressed upon the young mind were afterwards not easily corrected. To acquire fluency, the child should be made to read aloud. Special care was to be bestowed on the choice of good language, in which respect, as we know, the inhabitants of Judaea far excelled those of Galilee, who failed not only in elegance of diction, but even in their pronunciation. At five years of age the Hebrew Bible was to be begun; commencing, however, not with the book of Genesis, but with that of Leviticus. This not to teach the child his guilt, and the need of justification, but rather because Leviticus contained those ordinances which it behoved a Jew to know as early as possible. The history of Israel would probably have been long before imparted orally, as it was continually repeated on all festive occasions, as well as in the synagogue.

It has been stated in a former chapter that writing was not so common an accomplishment as reading. Undoubtedly, the Israelites were familiar with it from the very earliest period of their history, whether or not they had generally acquired the art in Egypt. We read of the graving of words on the gems of the high-priest's breastplate, of the record of the various genealogies of the tribes, etc; while such passages as Deuteronomy 6:9, Deuteronomy 11:20, Deuteronomy 24:1, Deuteronomy 24:3, imply that the art was not confined to the priesthood (Numbers 5:23), but was known to the people generally. Then we are told of copies of the law (Deuteronomy 17:18, Deuteronomy 28:58, etc.), while in Joshua 10:13 we have a reference to a work called "the book of Jasher." In Joshua 18:9 we find mention of a description of Palestine "in a book," and in Joshua 24:26 of what Joshua "wrote in the book of the law of God." From Judges 8:14 (margin) it would appear that in the time of Gideon the art of writing was very generally known. After that, instances

occur so frequently and applied to so many relationships, that the reader of the Old Testament can have no difficulty in tracing the progress of the art. This is not the place to follow the subject farther, nor to describe the various materials employed at that time, nor the mode of lettering. At a much later period the common mention of "scribes" indicates the popular need of such a class. We can readily understand that the Oriental mind would delight in writing enigmatically, that is, conveying by certain expressions a meaning to the initiated which the ordinary reader would miss, or which, at any rate, would leave the explanation to the exercise of ingenuity. Partially in the same class we might reckon the custom of designating a word by its initial letter. All theses were very early in practice, and the subject has points of considerable interest. Another matter deserves more serious attention. It will scarcely be credited how general the falsification of signatures and documents had become. Josephus mentions it (Ant. xvi,317-319); and we know that St. Paul was obliged to warn the Thessalonians against it (2 Thessalonians 2:2), and at last to adopt the device of signing every letter which came from himself. There are scarcely any ancient Rabbinical documents which have not been interpolated by later writers, or, as we might euphemistically call it, been recast and re-edited. In general, it is not difficult to discover such additions; although the vigilance and acuteness of the critical scholar are specially required in this direction to guard against rash and unwarrantable inferences. But without entering on such points, it may interest the reader to know what writing materials were employed in New Testament times. In Egypt red ink seems to have been used; but assuredly the ink mentioned in the New Testament was black, as even the term indicates ("melan," 2 Corinthians 3:3; 2 John 1:12; 3 John 1:13). Josephus speaks of writing in gold letters (Ant. xii,324-329); and in the Mishnah (Meg. ii. 2) we read of mixed colours, of red, of sympathetic ink, and of certain chemical compositions. Reed quills are mentioned in 3 John 1:13. The best of these came from Egypt; and the use of a penknife would of course be indispensable. Paper (from the Egyptian "papyrus") is mentioned in 2 John 1:12; parchment in 2 Timothy 4:13. Of this there were three kinds, according as the skin was used either whole, or else split up into an outer and an inner skin. The latter was used for the Mesusah. Shorter memoranda were made on tablets, which in the Mishnah (Shab. xii. 4) bear the same names as in Luke 1:63.

Before passing to an account of elementary schools, it may be well, once and for all, to say that the Rabbis did not approve of the same amount of instruction being given to girls as to boys. More particularly they disapproved of their engaging in legal studies--partly because they considered woman’s mission and duties as lying in other directions, partly because the subjects were necessarily not always suitable for the other sex, partly because of the familiar intercourse between the sexes to which such occupations would have necessarily led, and finally--shall we say it?--because the Rabbis regarded woman’s mind as not adapted for such investigations. The unkindest thing, perhaps, which they said on this score was, "Women are of a light mind"; though in its oft repetition the saying almost reads like a semi-jocular way of cutting short a subject on which discussion is disagreeable. However, instances of Rabbinically learned women do occur. What their Biblical knowledge and what their religious influence was, we learn not only from the Rabbis, but from the New Testament. Their attendance at all public and domestic festivals, and in the synagogues, and the circumstance that certain injunctions and observances of Rabbinic origin devolved upon them also, prove that, though not learned in the law, there must have been among them not a few who, like Lois and Eunice, could train a child in the knowledge of the Scripture, or, like Priscilla, be qualified to explain even to an Apollos the way of God more perfectly.

Supposing, then, a child to be so far educated at home; suppose him, also, to be there continually taught the commandments and observances, and, as the Talmud expressly states, to be encouraged to repeat the prayers aloud, so as to accustom him to it. At six years of age he would be sent to school; not to an academy, or "beth hammedrash," which he would only attend if he proved apt and promising; far less to the class-room of a great Rabbi, or the discussions of the Sanhedrim, which marked a very advanced stage of study. We are here speaking only of primary or elementary schools, such as even in the time of our Lord were attached to every synagogue in the land. Passing over the supposed or real Biblical notices of schools, and confining our attention strictly to the period ending with the destruction of the Temple, we have first a notice in the Talmud (Bab. B. 21 b), ascribing to Ezra an ordinance, that as many schoolmasters as chose should be allowed to establish themselves in any place, and that those who had formerly been settled there might not interfere with them. In all likelihood this notice should not be taken in its literal sense, but as an indication that the encouragement of schools and of education engaged the attention of Ezra and of his successors. Of the Grecianised academies which the wicked high-priest Jason tried to introduce in Jerusalem (2Ma 4:12-13) we do not speak, because they were anti-Jewish in their spirit, and that to such extent, that the Rabbis, in order to "make a hedge," forbade all gymnastic exercises. The farther history and progress of Jewish schools are traced in the following passage of the Talmud (Bab. B. 21 a): "If any one has merit, and deserves that his name should be kept in remembrance, it is Joshua, the son of Gamaliel. Without him the law would have fallen into oblivion in Israel. For they used to rest on this saying of the law (Deuteronomy 11:19), ’Ye shall teach them.’ Afterwards it was ordained that masters be appointed at Jerusalem for the instruction of youth, as it is written (Isaiah 2:3), ’Out of Zion shall go forth the law.’ But even so the remedy was not effectual, only those who had fathers being sent to school, and the rest being neglected. Hence it was arranged that Rabbis should be appointed in every district, and that lads of sixteen or seventeen years should be sent to their academies. But this institution failed, since every lad ran away if he was chastised by his master. At last Joshua the son of Gamaliel arranged, that in every province and in every town schoolmasters be appointed, who should take charge of all boys from six or seven years of age." We may add at once, that the Joshua here spoken of was probably the high-priest of that name who flourished before the destruction of the Temple, and that unquestionably this farther organisation implied at least the existence of elementary schools at an earlier period.

Every place, then, which numbered twenty-five boys of a suitable age, or, according to Maimonides, one hundred and twenty families, was bound to appoint a schoolmaster. More than twenty-five pupils or thereabouts he was not allowed to teach in a class. If there were forty, he had to employ an assistant; if fifty, the synagogue authorities appointed two teachers. This will enable us to understand the statement, no doubt greatly exaggerated, that at the destruction of Jerusalem there were no fewer than four hundred and eighty schools in the metropolis. From another passage, which ascribes the fall of the Jewish state to the neglect of the education of children, we may infer what importance popular opinion attached to it. But indeed, to the Jew, child-life was something peculiarly holy, and the duty of filling it with thoughts of God specially sacred. It almost seems as if the people generally had retained among them the echo of our Lord’s saying, that their angels continually behold the face of our Father which is in heaven. Hence the religious care connected with education. The grand object of the teacher was moral as well as intellectual training. To keep children from all intercourse with the vicious; to suppress all feelings of

bitterness, even though wrong had been done to one’s parents; to punish all real wrong-doing; not to prefer one child to another; rather to show sin in its repulsiveness than to predict what punishment would follow, either in this or the next world, so as not to "discourage" the child--such are some of the rules laid down. A teacher was not even to promise a child anything which he did not mean to perform, lest its mind be familiarised with falsehood. Everything that might call up disagreeable or indelicate thoughts was to be carefully avoided. The teacher must not lose patience if his pupil understood not readily, but rather make the lesson more plain. He might, indeed, and he should, punish when necessary, and, as one of the Rabbis put it, treat the child like a young heifer whose burden was daily increased. But excessive severity was to be avoided; and we are told of one teacher who was actually dismissed from office for this reason. Where possible, try kindness; and if punishment was to be administered, let the child be beaten with a strap, but never with a rod. At ten the child began to study the Mishnah; at fifteen he must be ready for the Talmud, which would be explained to him in a more advanced academy. If after three, or at most five, years of tuition the child had not made decided progress, there was little hope of his attaining to eminence. In the study of the bible the pupil was to proceed from the book of Leviticus to the rest of the Pentateuch, thence to the Prophets, and lastly to the Hagiographa. This regulation was in accordance with the degree of value which the Rabbis attached to these divisions of the Bible. In the case of advanced pupils the day was portioned out--one part being devoted to the Bible, the other two to the Mishnah and the Talmud. Every parent was also advised to have his child taught swimming.

It has already been stated that in general the school was held in the synagogue. Commonly its teacher was the "chazan," or "minister" (Luke 4:20); by which expression we are to understand not a spiritual office, but something like that of a beadle. This officer was salaried by the congregation; nor was he allowed to receive fees from his pupils, lest he should show favour to the rich. The expenses were met by voluntary and charitable contributions; and in case of deficiency the most distinguished Rabbis did not hesitate to go about and collect aid from the wealthy. The number of hours during which the junior classes were kept in school was limited. As the close air of the school-room might prove injurious during the heat of the day, lessons were intermitted between ten a.m. and three p.m. For similar reasons, only four hours were allowed for instruction between the seventeenth of Thamuz and the ninth of Ab (about July and August), and teachers were forbidden to chastise their pupils during these months. The highest honour and distinction attached to the office of a teacher, if worthily discharged. Want of knowledge or of method was regarded as sufficient cause for removing a teacher; but experience was always deemed a better qualification than mere acquirements. No teacher was employed who was not a married man. To discourage unwholesome rivalry, and to raise the general educational standard, parents were prohibited from sending their children to other than the schools of their own towns. A very beautiful trait was the care bestowed on the children of the poor and on orphans. In the Temple there was a special receptacle--that "of the secret"--for contributions, which were privately applied for the education of the children of the pious poor. To adopt and bring up an orphan was regarded as specially a "good work." This reminds us of the apostolic description of a "widow indeed," as one "well reported for good works"; who "had brought up children, lodged strangers, washed the saints’ feet, relieved the afflicted, diligently followed every good work" (1 Timothy 5:10). Indeed, orphans were the special charge of the whole congregation--not thrust into poor-houses,--and the parochial authorities were even bound to provide a fixed dowry for female orphans.

Such were the surroundings, and such the atmosphere, in which Jesus of Nazareth moved while tabernacling among men.

02.09. Chapter 9 - Mothers, Daughters, and Wives in Israel

Chapter 9 - Mothers, Daughters, and Wives in Israel In order accurately to understand the position of woman in Israel, it is only necessary carefully to peruse the New Testament. The picture of social life there presented gives a full view of the place which she held in private and in public life. Here we do not find that separation, so common among Orientals at all times, but a woman mingles freely with others both at home and abroad. So far from suffering under social inferiority, she takes influential and often leading part in all movements, specially those of a religious character. Above all, we are wholly spared those sickening details of private and public immorality with which contemporary classical literature abounds. Among Israel woman was pure, the home happy, and the family hallowed by a religion which consisted not only in public services, but entered into daily life, and embraced in its observances every member of the household. It was so not only in New Testament times but always in Israel. St. Peter's reference to "the holy women" "in the old time" (1 Peter 3:5) is thoroughly in accordance with Talmudical views. Indeed, his quotation of Genesis 18:12, and its application: "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord," occur in precisely the same manner in Rabbinical writings (Tanch. 28,6), where her respect and obedience are likewise set forth as a pattern to her daughters. *

* The following illustration also occurs: A certain wise woman said to her daughter before her marriage: "My child, stand before thy husband and minister to him. If thou wilt act as his maiden he will be thy slave, and honour thee as his mistress; but if thou exalt thyself against him, he will be thy master, and thou shalt become vile in his eyes, like one of the maidservants."

Some further details may illustrate the matter better than arguments. The creation of woman from the rib of Adam is thus commented on (Shab. 23): "It is as if Adam had exchanged a pot of earth for a precious jewel." This, although Jewish wit caustically had it: "God has cursed woman, yet all the world runs after her; He has cursed the ground, yet all the world lives of it." In what reverence "the four mothers," as the Rabbis designate Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, and Rachel, were held, and what influence they exercised in patriarchal history, no attentive reader of Scripture can fail to notice. And as we follow on the sacred story, Miriam, who had originally saved Moses, leads the song of deliverance on the other side of the flood, and her influence, though not always for good, continued till her death (compare Micah 6:4). Then "the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom" contribute to the rearing of the Tabernacle; Deborah works deliverance, and judgeth in Israel; and the piety of Manoah's wife is at least as conspicuous, and more intelligent, than her husband's (Judges 13:23). So also is that of the mother of Samuel. In the times of the kings the praises of Israel's maidens stir the jealousy of Saul; Abigail knows how to avert the danger of her husband's folly; the wise woman of Tekoah is sent for to induce the king to fetch his banished home; and the conduct of a woman "in her wisdom" puts an end to the rebellion of Sheba. Later on, the constant mention of queen mothers, and their frequent interference in the government, shows their position. Such names as that of Huldah the prophetess, and the idyllic narrative of the Shunammite, will readily occur to the memory. The story of a woman's devotion forms the subject of the Book of Ruth; that of her pure and faithful love, the theme or the imagery of the Song of

Songs; that of her courage and devotion the groundwork of the Book of Esther: while her worth and virtues are enumerated in the closing chapter of the Book of Proverbs. Again, in the language of the prophets the people of God are called "the daughter," "the virgin daughter of Zion," "the daughter of Jerusalem," "the daughter of Judah," etc.; and their relationship to God is constantly compared to that of the married state. The very terms by which woman is named in the Old Testament are significant. If the man is Ish, his wife is Ishah, simply his equal; if the husband is Gever, the ruler, the woman is, in her own domain, Gevirah and Gevereth, the mistress (as frequently in the history of Sarah and in other passages), or else the dweller at home (Nevath bayith, Psalms 68:12). *

* Similar expressions are Sarah and Shiddah, both from roots meaning to rule. Nor is this inconsistent with the use of the word Baal, to marry, and Beulah, the married one, from Baal, a lord--even as Sarah "called Abraham lord" (1 Peter 3:6, the expression used of her to Abimelech, Genesis 20:3, being Beulah). Of course it is not meant that these are the only words for females. But the others, such as Bath and Naarah, are either simply feminine terminations, or else, as Bethulah, Levush, Nekevah, Almah, Rachem, descriptive of their physical state. Nor is it otherwise in New Testament times. The ministry of woman to our blessed Lord, and in the Church, has almost become proverbial. Her position there marks really not a progress upon, but the full carrying out of, the Old Testament idea; or, to put the matter in another light, we ask no better than that any one who is acquainted with classical antiquity should compare what he reads of a Dorcas, of the mother of Mark, of Lydia, Priscilla, Phoebe, Lois, or Eunice, with what he knows of the noble women of Greece and Rome at that period. Of course, against all this may be set the permission of polygamy, which undoubtedly was in force at the time of our Lord, and the ease with which divorce might be obtained. In reference to both these, however, it must be remembered that they were temporary concessions to "the hardness" of the people’s heart. For, not only must the circumstances of the times and the moral state of the Jewish and of neighbouring nations be taken into account, but there were progressive stages of spiritual development. If these had not been taken into account, the religion of the Old Testament would have been unnatural and an impossibility. Suffice it, that "from the beginning it was not so," nor yet intended to be so in the end--the intermediate period thus marking the gradual progress from the perfectness of the idea to the perfectness of its realisation. Moreover, it is impossible to read the Old, and still more the New Testament without gathering from it the conviction, that polygamy was not the rule but the rare exception, so far as the people generally were concerned. Although the practice in reference to divorce was certainly more lax, even the Rabbis surrounded it with so many safeguards that, in point of fact, it must in many cases have been difficult of accomplishment. In general, the whole tendency of the Mosaic legislation, and even more explicitly that of later Rabbinical ordinances, was in the direction of recognising the rights of woman, with a scrupulousness which reached down even to the Jewish slave, and a delicacy that guarded her most sensitive feelings. Indeed, we feel warranted in saying, that in cases of dispute the law generally lent to her side. Of divorce we shall have to speak in the sequel. But what the religious views and feelings both about it and monogamy were at the time of Malachi, appears from the pathetic description of the altar of God as covered with the tears of "the wife of youth," "the wife of thy covenant," "thy companion," who had been "put away" or "treacherously dealt" with (Malachi 2:13-17). The whole is so beautifully paraphrased by the Rabbis that we subjoin it:

"If death hath snatched from thee the wife of youth,

It is as if the sacred city were,

And e’en the Temple, in thy pilgrim days,

Defiled, laid low, and levelled with the dust.

The man who harshly sends from him

His first-woo’d wife, the loving wife of youth,

For him the very altar of the Lord

Sheds forth its tears of bitter agony." Where the social intercourse between the sexes was nearly as unrestricted as among ourselves, so far as consistent with Eastern manners, it would, of course, be natural for a young man to make personal choice of his bride. Of this Scripture affords abundant evidence. But, at any rate, the woman had, in case of betrothal or marriage, to give her own free and expressed consent, without which a union was invalid. Minors--in the case of girls up to twelve years and one day--might be betrothed or given away by their father. In that case, however, they had afterwards the right of insisting upon divorce. Of course, it is not intended to convey that woman attained her full position till under the New Testament. But this is only to repeat what may be said of almost every social state and relationship. Yet it is most marked how deeply the spirit of the Old Testament, which is essentially that of the New also, had in this respect also penetrated the life of Israel. St. Paul’s warning (2 Corinthians 6:14) against being "unequally yoked together," which is an allegorical application of Leviticus 19:19; Deuteronomy 22:10, finds to some extent a counterpart in mystical Rabbinical writings, where the last-mentioned passages is expressly applied to spiritually unequal marriages. The admonition of 1 Corinthians 7:39 to marry "only in the Lord," recalls many similar Rabbinical warnings, from which we select the most striking. Men, we are told (Yalkut on Deuteronomy 21:15), are wont to marry for one of four reasons--for passion, wealth, honour, or the glory of God. As for the first-named class of marriages, their issue must be expected to be "stubborn and rebellious" sons, as we may gather from the section referring to such following upon that in Deuteronomy 21:11. In regard to marriages for wealth, we are to learn a lesson from the sons of Eli, who sought to enrich themselves in such manner, but of whose posterity it was said (1 Samuel 2:36) that they should "crouch for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread." Of marriages for the sake of connection, honour, and influence, King Jehoram offered a warning, who became King Ahab’s son-in-law, because that monarch had seventy sons, whereas upon his death his widow Athaliah "arose and destroyed all the seed royal" (2 Kings 11:1). But far otherwise is it in case of marriage "in the name of heaven." The issue of such will be children who "preserve Israel." In fact, the Rabbinical references to marrying "in the name of heaven," or "for the name of God,"--in God and for God--are so frequent and so emphatic, that the expressions used by St. Paul must have come familiarly to him. Again, much that is said in 1 Corinthians 7:1-40 about the married estate, finds striking parallels in Talmudical writings. One may here be mentioned, as explaining the expression (1 Corinthians 7:14): "Else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." Precisely the same distinction was made by the Rabbis in regard to proselytes, whose children, if begotten before their conversion to Judaism, were said to be "unclean"; if after that event to have been born "in holiness," only that, among the Jews, both parents required to profess Judaism, while St. Paul

argues in the contrary direction, and concerning a far different holiness than that which could be obtained through any mere outward ceremony.

Some further details, gathered almost at random, will give glimpses of Jewish home life and of current views. It was by a not uncommon, though irreverent, mode of witticism, that two forms of the same verb, sounding almost alike, were made to express opposite experiences of marriage. It was common to ask a newly-married husband: "Maza or Moze?"--"findeth" or "found"; the first expression occurring in Proverbs 18:22, the second in Ecclesiastes 7:26. A different sentiment is the following from the Talmud (Yeb. 62 b; Sanh. 76 b), the similarity of which to Ephesians 5:28 will be immediately recognised: "He that loveth his wife as his own body, honoureth her more than his own body, brings up his children in the right way, and leads them in it to full age--of him the Scripture saith: 'Thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace' (Job 5:24)." Of all qualities those most desired in woman were meekness, modesty, and shamefacedness. Indeed, brawling, gossip in the streets, and immodest behaviour in public were sufficient grounds for divorce. Of course, Jewish women would never have attempted "teaching" in the synagogue, where they occupied a place separate from the men--for Rabbinical study, however valued for the male sex, was disapproved of in the case of women. Yet this direction of St. Paul (1 Timothy 2:12): "I suffer not a woman to usurp authority over the man" findeth some kind of parallel in the Rabbinical saying: "Whoever allows himself to be ruled by his wife, shall call out, and no one will make answer to him."

It is on similar grounds that the Rabbis argue, that man must seek after woman, and not a woman after a man; only the reason which they assign for it sounds strange. Man, they say, was formed from the ground--woman from man's rib; hence, in trying to find a wife man only looks after what he had lost! This formation of man from soft clay, and of woman from a hard bone, also illustrated why man was so much more easily reconcilable than woman. Similarly, it was observed, that God had not formed woman out of the head, lest she should become proud; nor out of the eye, lest she should lust; nor out of the ear, lest she should be curious; nor out of the mouth, lest she should be talkative; nor out of the heart, lest she should be jealous; nor out of the hand, lest she should be covetous; nor out of the foot, lest she be a busybody; but out of the rib, which was always covered. Modesty was, therefore, a prime quality. It was no doubt chiefly in jealous regard for this, that women were interdicted engaging in Rabbinical studies; and a story is related to show how even the wisest of women, Beruria, was thereby brought to the brink of extreme danger. It is not so easy to explain why women were dispensed from all positive obligations (commands, but not prohibitions) that were not general in their bearing (Kidd. 1. 7,8), but fixed to certain periods of time (such as wearing the phylacteries, etc.), and from that of certain prayers, unless it be that woman was considered not her own mistress but subject to others, or else that husband and wife were regarded as one, so that his merits and prayers applied to her as well. Indeed, this view, at least so far as the meritorious nature of a man's engagement with the law is concerned, is expressly brought forward, and women are accordingly admonished to encourage their husbands in all such studies.

We can understand how, before the coming of the Messiah, marriage should have been looked upon as of religious obligation. Many passages of Scripture were at least quoted in support of this idea. Ordinarily, a young man was expected to enter the wedded state (according to Maimonides) at the age of sixteen or seventeen, while the age of twenty may be regarded as the utmost limit

conceded, unless study so absorbed time and attention as to leave no leisure for the duties of married life. Still it was thought better even to neglect study than to remain single. Yet money cares on account of wife and children were dreaded. The same comparison is used in reference to them, which our Lord applies to quite a different "offence," that against the "little ones" (Luke 17:2). Such cares are called by the Rabbis, "a millstone round the neck" (Kidd. 29 b). In fact, the expression seems to have become proverbial, like so many others which are employed in the New Testament.

We read in the Gospel that, when the Virgin-mother "was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily" (Matthew 1:18-19). The narrative implies a distinction between betrothal and marriage--Joseph being at the time betrothed, but not actually married to the Virgin-mother. Even in the Old Testament a distinction is made between betrothal and marriage. The former was marked by a bridal present (or Mohar, Genesis 34:12; Exodus 22:17; 1 Samuel 18:25), with which the father, however, would in certain circumstances dispense. From the moment of her betrothal a woman was treated as if she were actually married. The union could not be dissolved, except by regular divorce; breach of faithfulness was regarded as adultery; and the property of the women became virtually that of her betrothed, unless he had expressly renounced it (Kidd. ix. 1). But even in that case he was her natural heir. It is impossible here to enter into the various legal details, as, for example, about property or money which might come to a woman after betrothal or marriage. The law adjudicated this to the husband, yet with many restrictions, and with infinite delicacy towards the woman, as if reluctant to put in force the rights of the stronger (Kidd. viii. 1, etc.). From the Mishnah (Bab. B. x. 4) we also learn that there were regular Shitre Erusin, or writings of betrothal, drawn up by the authorities (the costs being paid by the bridegroom). These stipulated the mutual obligations, the dowry, and all other points on which the parties had agreed. The Shitre Erusin were different from the regular Chethubah (literally, writing), or marriage contract, without which the Rabbis regarded a marriage as merely legalised concubinage (Cheth. v. 1). The Chethubah provided a settlement of at least two hundred denars for a maiden, and one hundred denars for a widow, while the priestly council at Jerusalem fixed four hundred denars for a priest’s daughter. Of course these sums indicate only the legal minimum, and might be increased indefinitely at pleasure, though opinions differ whether any larger sums might be legally exacted, if matters did not go beyond betrothal. The form at present in use among the Jews sets forth, that the bridegroom weds his bride "according to the law of Moses and of Israel"; that he promises "to please, to honour, to nourish, and to care for her, as is the manner of the men of Israel," adding thereto the woman’s consent, the document being signed by two witnesses. In all probability this was substantially the form in olden times. In Jerusalem and in Galilee--where it was said that men in their choice had regard to "a fair degree," while in the rest of Judaea they looked a good deal after money--widows had the right of residence in their husband’s house secured to them. On the other hand, a father was bound to provide a dowry (nedan, nedanjah) for his daughter conformable to her station in life; and a second daughter could claim a portion equal to that of her elder sister, or else one-tenth of all immovable property. In case of the father’s death, the sons, who, according to Jewish law, were his sole heirs, were bound to maintain their sisters, even though this would have thrown them upon public charity, and to endow each with a tenth part of what had been left. The dowry, whether in money, property, or jewellery, was entered into the marriage contract, and really belonged to the

wife, the husband being obliged to add to it one-half more, if it consisted of money or money's value; and if of jewellery, etc., to assign to her four-fifths of its value. In case of separation (not divorce) he was bound to allow her a proper aliment, and to re-admit her to his table and house on the Sabbath-eve. A wife was entitled to one-tenth of her dowry for pin-money. If a father gave away his daughter without any distinct statement about her dowry, he was bound to allow her at least fifty sus; and if it had been expressly stipulated that she was to have no dowry at all, it was delicately enjoined that the bridegroom should, before marriage, give her sufficient for the necessary outfit. An orphan was to receive a dowry of at least fifty sus from the parochial authorities. A husband could not oblige his wife to leave the Holy Land nor the city of Jerusalem, nor yet to change a town for a country residence, or vice versa, nor a good for a bad house. These are only a few of the provisions which show how carefully the law protected the interests of women. To enter into farther details would lead beyond our present object. All this was substantially settled at the betrothal, which, in Judaea at least, seems to have been celebrated by a feast. Only a bona fide breach of these arrangements, or wilful fraud, was deemed valid ground for dissolving the bond once formed. Otherwise, as already noted, a regular divorce was necessary.

According to Rabbinical law certain formalities were requisite to make a betrothal legally valid. These consisted either in handing to a woman, directly or through messengers, a piece of money, however small, or else a letter, * provided it were in each case expressly stated before witnesses, that the man thereby intended to espouse the woman as his wife.

* There was also a third mode of espousal--simply by cohabitation, but this was very strongly disapproved by the Rabbis. The marriage followed after a longer or shorter interval, the limits of which, however, were fixed by law. The ceremony itself consisted in leading the bride into the house of the bridegroom, with certain formalities, mostly dating from very ancient times. Marriage with a maiden was commonly celebrated on a Wednesday afternoon, which allowed the first days of the week for preparation, and enabled the husband, if he had a charge to prefer against the previous chastity of his bride, to make immediate complaint before the local Sanhedrim, which sat every Thursday. On the other hand, the marriage of a widow was celebrated on Thursday afternoon, which left three days of the week for "rejoicing with her." This circumstance enables us, with some certainty, to arrange the date of the events which preceded the marriage in Cana. Inferring from the accompanying festivities that it was the marriage of a maiden, and therefore took place on a Wednesday, we have the following succession of events:--On Thursday (beginning as every Jewish day with the previous evenint), testimony of the Baptist to the Sanhedrim-deputation from Jerusalem. On Friday (John 1:29), "John seeth Jesus coming unto him," and significantly preacheth the first sermon about "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." On Saturday (John 1:35), John's second sermon on the same text; the consequent conversion of St. John and St. Andrew, and the calling of St. Peter. On Sunday (John 1:43), our Lord Himself preacheth His first Messianic sermon, and calls Philip and Nathanael. On "the third day" after it, that is, on Wednesday, was the marriage in Cana of Galilee. The significance of these dates, when compared with those in the week of our Lord's Passion, will be sufficiently evident. But this is not all that may be learned from the account of the marriage in Cana. Of course, there was a "marriage-feast," as on all these occasions. For this reason, marriages were not celebrated either on the Sabbath, or on the day before or after it, lest the Sabbath-rest should be endangered. Nor

was it lawful to wed on any of the three annual festivals, in order, as the Rabbis put it, "not to mingle one joy (that of the marriage) with another (that of the festival)." As it was deemed a religious duty to give pleasure to the newly-married couple, the merriment at times became greater than the more strict Rabbis approved. Accordingly, it is said of one, that to produce gravity he broke a vase worth about 25 pounds; of another, that at his son's wedding he broke a costly glass; and of a third, that being asked to sin, he exclaimed, Woe to us, for we must all die! For, as it is added (Ber. 31 a): "It is forbidden to man, that his mouth be filled with laughter in this world (dispensation), as it is written, 'Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing.' When is that to be? At the time when 'they shall sing among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.'"

It deserves notice, that at the marriage in Cana there is no mention of "the friends of the bridegroom," or, as we would call them, the groomsmen. This was in strict accordance with Jewish custom, for groomsmen were customary in Judaea, but not in Galilee (Cheth. 25 a). This also casts light upon the locality where John 3:29 was spoken, in which "the friend of the bridegroom" is mentioned. But this expression is quite different from that of "children of the bridechamber," which occurs in Matthew 9:15, where the scene is once more laid in Galilee. The term "children of the bridechamber" is simply a translation of the Rabbinical "bene Chuppah," and means the guests invited to the bridal. In Judaea there were at every marriage two groomsmen or "friends of the bridegroom"--one for the bridegroom, the other for his bride. Before marriage, they acted as a kind of intermediaries between the couple; at the wedding they offered gifts, waited upon the bride and bridegroom, and attended them to the bridal chamber, being also, as it were, the guarantors of the bride's virgin chastity. Hence, when St. Paul tells the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 11:2): "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," he speaks, as it were, in the character of groomsman or "bridegroom's friend," who had acted as such at the spiritual union of Christ with the Corinthian Church. And we know that it was specially the duty of the "friend of the bridegroom" so to present to him his bride. Similarly it was his also, after marriage, to maintain proper terms between the couple, and more particularly to defend the good fame of the bride against all imputations. It may interest some to know that his custom also was traced up to highest authority. Thus, in the spiritual union of Israel with their God, Moses is spoken of as "the friend of the bridegroom" who leads out the bride (Exodus 19:17); while Jehovah, as the bridegroom, meets His Church at Sinai (Psalms 68:7; Pirke di R. El. 41). Nay, in some mystic writings God is described as acting "the friend of the bridegroom," when our first parents met in Eden. There is a touch of poetry in the application of Ezekiel 28:13 to that scene, when angels led the choir, and decked and watched the bridal-bed (Ab. de R. Nathan iv. and xii.). According to another ancient Rabbinical commentary (Ber. R. viii), God Almighty Himself took the cup of blessing and spoke the benediction, while Michael and Gabriel acted the "bridegroom's friends" to our first parents when they wedded in Paradise. With such a "benediction," preceded by a brief formula, with which the bride was handed over to her husband (Tob 7:13), the wedding festivities commenced. And so the pair were led towards the bridal chamber (Cheder) and the bridal bed (Chuppah). The bride went with her hair unloosed. Ordinarily, it was most strictly enjoined upon women to have their head and hair carefully covered. This may throw some light upon the difficult passage, 1 Corinthians 11:1-10. We must bear in mind that the apostle there argues with Jews, and that on their own ground, convincing them by a reference to their own views, customs, and legends of the propriety of the practice which he

enjoins. From that point of view the propriety of a woman having her head "covered" could not be called in question. The opposite would, to a Jew, have indicated immodesty. Indeed, it was the custom in the case of a woman accused of adultery to have her hair "shorn or shaven," at the same time using this formula: "Because thou hast departed from the manner of the daughters of Israel, who go with their head covered;...therefore that has befallen thee which thou hast chosen." This so far explains verses 1 Corinthians 11:5-6. The expression "power," as applied in verse 1 Corinthians 11:10 to the head of woman, seems to refer to this covering, indicating, as it did, that she was under the power of her husband, while the very difficult addition, "because of the angels," may either allude to the presence of the angels and to the well-known Jewish view (based, no doubt, on truth) that those angels may be grieved or offended by our conduct, and bear the sad tidings before the throne of God, or it may possibly refer to the very ancient Jewish belief, that the evil spirits gained power over a woman who went with her head bare. The custom of a bridal veil--either for the bride alone, or spread over the couple--was of ancient date. It was interdicted for a time by the Rabbis after the destruction of Jerusalem. Still more ancient was the wearing of crowns (Song of Solomon 3:11; Isaiah 61:10; Ezekiel 16:12), which was also prohibited after the last Jewish war. Palm and myrtle branches were borne before the couple, grain or money was thrown about, and music preceded the procession, in which all who met it were, as a religious duty, expected to join. The Parable of the Ten Virgins, who, with their lamps, were in expectancy of the bridegroom (Matthew 25:1), is founded on Jewish custom. For, according to Rabbinical authority, such lamps carried on the top of staves were frequently used, while ten is the number always mentioned in connection with public solemnities. * The marriage festivities generally lasted a week, but the bridal days extended over a full month. **

* According to R. Simon (on Chel. ii. 8) it was an Eastern custom that, when the bride was led to her future home, "they carried before the party about ten" such lamps.

** The practice of calling a wife a bride during the first year of her marriage is probably based on Deuteronomy 24:5.

Having entered thus fully on the subject of marriage, a few further particulars may be of interest. The bars to marriage mentioned in the Bible are sufficiently known. To these the Rabbis added others, which have been arranged under two heads--as farther extending the laws of kindred (to their secondary degrees), and as intended to guard morality. The former were extended over the whole line of forbidden kindred, where that line was direct, and to one link farther where the line became indirect--as, for example, to the wife of a maternal uncle, or to the step- mother of a wife. In the category of guards to morality we include such prohibitions as that a divorced woman might not marry her seducer, nor a man the woman to whom he had brought her letter of divorce, or in whose case he had borne testimony; or of marriage with those not in their right senses, or in a state of drunkenness; or of the marriage of minors, or under fraud, etc. A widower had to wait over three festivals, a widow three months, before re-marrying, or if she was with child or gave suck, for two years. A woman might not be married a third time; no marriage could take place within thirty days of the death of a near relative, nor yet on the Sabbath, nor on a feast-day, etc. Of the marriage to a deceased husband’s brother (or the next of kin), in case of childlessness, it is unnecessary here to speak, since although the Mishnah devotes a whole tractate to it (Yebamoth), and it was evidently customary at the time of Christ (Mark 12:19, etc.), the practice was considered as connected with the territorial possession of Palestine, and ceased with the destruction of the

Jewish commonwealth (Bechar. i. 7). A priest was to inquire into the legal descent of his wife (up to four degrees if the daughter of a priest, otherwise up to five degrees), except where the bride's father was a priest in actual service, or a member of the Sanhedrim. The high-priest's bride was to be a maid not older than six months beyond her puberty. The fatal ease with which divorce could be obtained, and its frequency, appear from the question addressed to Christ by the Pharisees: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" (Matthew 19:3), and still more from the astonishment with which the disciples had listened to the reply of the Saviour (Matthew 19:10). That answer was much wider in its range than our Lord's initial teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:32). To the latter no Jew could have had any objection, even though its morality would have seemed elevated beyond their highest standard, represented in this case by the school of Shammai, while that of Hillel, and still more Rabbi Akiba, presented the lowest opposite extreme. But in reply to the Pharisees, our Lord placed the whole question on grounds which even the strictest Shammaite would have refused to adopt. For the farthest limit to which he would have gone would have been to restrict the cause of divorce to "a matter of uncleanness" (Deuteronomy 24:1), by which he would probably have understood not only a breach of the marriage vow, but of the laws and customs of the land. In fact, we know that it included every kind of impropriety, such as going about with loose hair, spinning in the street, familiarly talking with men, ill-treating her husband's parents in his presence, brawling, that is, "speaking to her husband so loudly that the neighbours could hear her in the adjoining house" (Chethub. vii. 6), a general bad reputation, or the discovery of fraud before marriage. On the other hand, the wife could insist on being divorced if her husband were a leper, or affected with polypus, or engaged in a disagreeable or dirty trade, such as that of a tanner or coppersmith. One of the cases in which divorce was obligatory was, if either party had become heretical, or ceased to profess Judaism. But even so, there were at least checks to the danger of general lawlessness, such as the obligation of paying to a wife her portion, and a number of minute ordinances about formal letters of divorce, without which no divorce was legal, * and which had to be couched in explicit terms, handed to the woman herself, and that in presence of two witnesses, etc.

* The Jews have it that a woman "is loosed from the law of her husband" by only one of two things: death or a letter of divorce; hence Romans 7:2-3.

According to Jewish law there were four obligations incumbent on a wife towards her husband, and ten by which he was bound. Of the latter, three are referred to in Exodus 21:9-10; the other seven include her settlement, medical treatment in case of sickness, redemption from captivity, a respectable funeral, provision in his house so long as she remained a widow and had not been paid her dowry, the support of her daughters till they were married, and a provision that her sons should, besides receiving their portion of the father's inheritance, also share in what had been settled upon her. The obligations upon the wife were, that all her gains should belong to her husband, as also what came to her after marriage by inheritance; that the husband should have the usufruct of her dowry, and of any gains by it, provided he had the administration of it, in which case, however, he was also responsible for any loss; and that he should be considered her heir-at-law.

What the family life among the godly in Israel must have been, how elevated its tone, how loving its converse, or how earnestly devoted its mothers and daughters, appears sufficiently from the gospel story, from that in the book of Acts, and from notices in the apostolic letters. Women, such

as the Virgin-mother, or Elisabeth, or Anna, or those who enjoyed the privilege of ministering to the Lord, or who, after His death, tended and watched for His sacred body, could not have been quite solitary in Palestine; we find their sisters in a Dorcas, a Lydia, a Phoebe, and those women of whom St. Paul speaks in Php 4:3, and whose lives he sketches in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus. Wives such as Priscilla, mothers such as that of Zebedee’s children, or of Mark, or like St. John’s "elect lady," or as Lois and Eunice, must have kept the moral atmosphere pure and sweet, and shed precious light on their homes and on society, corrupt to the core as it was under the sway of heathenism. What and how they taught their households, and that even under the most disadvantageous outward circumstances, we learn from the history of Timothy. And although they were undoubtedly in that respect without many of the opportunities which we enjoy, there was one sweet practice of family religion, going beyond the prescribed prayers, which enabled them to teach their children from tenderest years to intertwine the Word of God with their daily devotion and daily life. For it was the custom to teach a child some verse of Holy Scripture beginning or ending with precisely the same letters as its Hebrew name, and this birthday text or guardian-promise the child was day by day to insert in its prayers. Such guardian words, familiar to the mind from earliest years, endeared to the heart by tenderest recollections, would remain with the youth in life’s temptations, and come back amid the din of manhood’s battle. Assuredly, of Jewish children so reared, so trained, so taught, it might be rightly said: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."

02.10. Chapter 10 - In Death and After Death

Chapter 10 - In Death and After Death A sadder picture could scarcely be drawn than that of the dying Rabbi Jochanan ben Saccai, that "light of Israel" immediately before and after the destruction of the Temple, and for two years the president of the Sanhedrim. We read in the Talmud (Ber. 28 b) that, when his disciples came to see him on his death-bed, he burst into tears. To their astonished inquiry why he, "the light of Israel, the right pillar of the Temple, and its mighty hammer," betrayed such signs of fear, he replied: "If I were now to be brought before an earthly king, who lives to-day and dies to-morrow, whose wrath and whose bonds are not everlasting, and whose sentence of death, even, is not that to everlasting death, who can be assuaged by arguments, or perhaps bought off by money--I should tremble and weep; how much more reason have I for it, when about to be led before the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, Who liveth and abideth for ever, Whose chains are chains for evermore, and Whose sentence of death killeth for ever, Whom I cannot assuage with words, nor bribe by money! And not only so, but there are before me two ways, one to paradise and the other to hell, and I know not which of the two ways I shall have to go--whether to paradise or to hell: how, then, shall I not shed tears?" Side by side with this we may place the opposite saying of R. Jehudah, called the Holy, who, when he died, lifted up both his hands to heaven, protesting that none of those ten fingers had broken the law of God! It were difficult to say which of these two is more contrary to the light and liberty of the Gospel--the utter hopelessness of the one, or the apparent presumption of the other. And yet these sayings also recall to us something in the Gospel. For there also we read of two ways--the one to paradise, the other to destruction, and of fearing not those who can kill the body, but rather Him who, after He hath killed the body, hath power to cast into hell. Nor, on the other hand, was the assurance of St. Stephen, of St. James, or of St. Paul, less confident than that of Jehudah, called the Holy, though it expressed itself in a far different manner and rested on quite other grounds. Never are the voices of the Rabbis more discordant, and their utterances more contradictory or unsatisfying than in view of the great problems of humanity: sin, sickness, death, and the hereafter. Most truly did St. Paul, taught at the feet of Gamaliel in all the traditions and wisdom of the fathers, speak the inmost conviction of every Christian Rabbinist, that it is only our Saviour Jesus Christ Who "hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel" (2 Timothy 1:10). When the disciples asked our Lord, in regard to the "man which was blind from his birth": "master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:1-2) we vividly realise that we hear a strictly Jewish question. It was just such as was likely to be raised, and it exactly expressed Jewish belief. That children benefited or suffered according to the spiritual state of their parents was a doctrine current among the Jews. But they also held that an unborn child might contract guilt, since the Yezer ha-ra, or evil disposition which was present from its earliest formation, might even then be called into activity by outward circumstances. And sickness was regarded as alike the punishment for sin and its atonement. But we also meet with statements which remind us of the teaching of Hebrews 12:5, Hebrews 12:9. In fact, the apostolic quotation from Proverbs 3:1-35 is made for exactly the same purpose in the Talmud (Ber. 5 a), in how different a spirit will appear from the following summary. It appears that two of the Rabbis had

disagreed as to what were "the chastisements of love," the one maintaining, on the ground of Psalms 94:12, that they were such as did not prevent a man from study, the other inferring from Psalms 66:20 that they were such as did not hinder prayer. Superior authority decided that both kinds were "chastisements of love," at the same time answering the quotation from Psalms 94:1-23 by proposing to read, not "teachest him," but "teachest us out of Thy law." But that the law teaches us that chastisements are of great advantage might be inferred as follows: If, according to Exodus 21:26-27, a slave obtained freedom through the chastisement of his master--a chastisement which affected only one of his members--how much more must those chastisements effect which purified the whole body of man? Moreover, as another Rabbi reminds us, the "covenant" is mentioned in connection with salt (Leviticus 2:13), and also in connection with chastisements (Deuteronomy 28:58). "As is the covenant," spoken of in connection with salt, which gives taste to the meat, so also is "the covenant" spoken of in connection with chastisements, which purge away all the sins of a man. Indeed, as a third Rabbi says: "Three good gifts hath the Holy One--blessed be He!--given to Israel, and each of them only through sufferings--the law, the land of Israel, and the world to come." The law, according to Psalms 94:12; the land, according to Deuteronomy 8:5, which is immediately followed by Deuteronomy 8:7; and the world to come, according to Proverbs 6:23. As on most other subjects, the Rabbis were accurate and keen observers of the laws of health, and their regulations are often far in advance of modern practice. From many allusions in the Old Testament we infer that the science of medicine, which was carried to comparatively great perfection in Egypt, where every disease had its own physician, was also cultivated in Israel. Thus the sin of Asia, in trusting too much to earthly physicians, is specially reproved (2 Chronicles 16:12). In New Testament times we read of the woman who had spent all her substance, and suffered so much at the hands of physicians (Mark 5:26); while the use of certain remedies, such as oil and wine, in the treatment of wounds (Luke 10:34), seems to have been popularly known. St. Luke was a "physician" (Colossians 4:14); and among the regular Temple officials there was a medical man, whose duty it was to attend to the priesthood who, from ministering barefoot, must have been specially liable to certain diseases. The Rabbis ordained that every town must have at least one physician, who was also to be qualified to practise surgery, or else a physician and a surgeon. Some of the Rabbis themselves engaged in medical pursuits: and, in theory at least, every practitioner ought to have had their licence. To employ a heretic or a Hebrew Christian was specially prohibited, though a heathen might, if needful, be called in. But, despite their patronage of the science, caustic sayings also occur. "Physician, heal thyself," is really a Jewish proverb; "Live not in a city whose chief is a medical man"--he will attend to public business and neglect his patients; "The best among doctors deserves Gehenna"--for his bad treatment of some, and for his neglect of others. It were invidious to enter into a discussion of the remedies prescribed in those times, although, to judge from what is advised in such cases, we can scarcely wonder that the poor woman in the gospel was nowise benefited, but rather the worse of them (Mark 5:26). The means recommended were either generally hygienic--and in this respect the Hebrews contrast favourably even with ourselves--or purely medicinal, or else sympathetic, or even magical. The prescriptions consisted of simples or of compounds, vegetables being far more used than minerals. Cold-water compresses, the external and internal use of oil and of wine, baths (medicated and other), and a certain diet, were carefully indicated in special diseases. Goats’-milk and barley-porridge were recommended in all diseases attended by wasting. Jewish surgeons seem even to have known how to operate for

cataract.

Ordinarily, life was expected to be protracted, and death regarded as alike the punishment and the expiation of sin. To die within fifty years of age was to be cut off; within fifty-two, to die the death of Samuel the prophet; at sixty years of age, it was regarded as death at the hands of Heaven; at seventy, as that of an old man; and at eighty, as that of strength. Premature death was likened to the falling off of unripe fruit, or the extinction of a candle. To depart without having a son was to die, otherwise it was to fall asleep. The latter was stated to have been the case with David; the former with Joab. If a person had finished his work, his was regarded as the death of the righteous, who is gathered to his fathers. Tradition (Ber. 8 a) inferred, by a peculiar Rabbinical mode of exegesis, from a word in Psalms 62:12, that there were 903 different kinds of dying. The worst of these was angina, which was compared to tearing out a thread from a piece of wool; while the sweetest and gentlest, which was compared to drawing a hair out of milk, was called "death by a kiss." The latter designation originated from Numbers 33:38 and Deuteronomy 34:5, in which Aaron and Moses are respectively said to have died "according to the word"--literally, "by the mouth of Jehovah." Over six persons, it was said, the angel of death had had no power--viz., Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they had seen their work quite completed; and over Miriam, Aaron, and Moses, who had died by "the kiss of God." If premature death was the punishment of sin, the righteous died because others were to enter on their work--Joshua on that of Moses, Solomon on that of David, etc. But, when the time for death came, anything might serve for its infliction, or, to put it in Rabbinical language, "O Lord, all these are Thy servants"; for "whither a man was to go, thither his feet would carry him."

Certain signs were also noted as to the time and manner of dying. Sudden death was called "being swallowed up," death after one day’s illness, that of rejection; after two days’, that of despair; after four days’, that of reproof; after five days’, a natural death. Similarly, the posture of the dying was carefully marked. To die with a happy smile, or at least with a bright countenance, or looking upward, was a good omen; to look downward, to seem disturbed, to weep, or even to turn to the wall, were evil signs. On recovering from illness, it was enjoined to return special thanks. It was a curious superstition (Ber. 55 b), that, if any one announced his illness on the first day of its occurrence, it might tend to make him worse, and that only on the second day should prayers be offered for him. Lastly, we may mention in this connection, as possibly throwing light on the practice referred to by St. James (James 5:14), that it was the custom to anoint the sick with a mixture of oil, wine, and water, the preparation of which was even allowed on the Sabbath (Jer. Ber. ii. 2). When our Lord mentioned visitation of the sick among the evidences of that religion which would stand the test of the judgment day (Matthew 25:36), He appealed to a principle universally acknowledged among the Jews. The great Jewish doctor Maimonides holds that this duty takes precedence of all other good works, and the Talmud goes even so far as to assert, that whoever visits the sick shall deliver his soul from Gehenna (Ned. 40- a). Accordingly, a Rabbi, discussing the meaning of the expression, "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 13:4), arrives at the conclusion, that it refers to the imitation of what we read in Scripture of His doings. Thus God clothed the naked (Genesis 3:21), and so should we; He visited the sick (Genesis 18:1); He comforted the mourners, (Genesis 25:11); and He buried the dead (Deuteronomy 34:6); leaving us in all this an ensample that we should follow in His footsteps (Sota 14 a). It was possibly to encourage to this duty, or else in reference to the good effects of

sympathy upon the sick, that we are told, that whoever visits the sick takes away a sixtieth part of his sufferings (Ned. 39 b). Nor was the service of love to stop here; for, as we have seen, the burial of the dead was quite as urgent a duty as the visitation of the sick. As the funeral procession passed, every one was expected, if possible, to join the convoy. The Rabbis applied to the observance of this direction Proverbs 14:32, and Proverbs 19:17; and to its neglect Proverbs 17:5 (Ber. 18 a). Similarly, all reverence was shown towards the remains of the dead, and burying-places were kept free from every kind of profanation, and even from light conversation.

Burial followed generally as soon as possible after death (Matthew 9:23; Acts 5:6, Acts 5:10, Acts 8:2), no doubt partly on sanitary grounds. For special reasons, however (Acts 9:37-39), or in the case of parents, there might be a delay even of days. The preparations for the burial of our Lord, mentioned in the gospels--the ointment against His burial (Matthew 26:12), the spices and ointments (Luke 23:56), the mixture of my rrh and aloes--find their literal confirmation in what the Rabbis tell us of the customs of the period (Ber. 53 a). At one time the wasteful expenditure connected with funerals was so great as to involve in serious difficulties the poor, who would not be outdone by their neighbours. The folly extended not only to the funeral rites, the burning of spices at the grave, and the depositing of money and valuables in the tomb, but even to luxury in the wrappings of the dead body. At last a much-needed reform was introduced by Rabbi Gamaliel, who left directions that he was to be buried in simple linen garments. In recognition of this a cup is to this day emptied to his memory at funeral meals. His grandson limited even the number of graveclothes to one dress. The burial-dress is made of the most inexpensive linen, and bears the name of (Tachrichin) "wrappings," or else the "travelling-dress." At present it is always white, but formerly any other colour might be chosen, of which we have some curious instances. Thus one Rabbi would not be buried in white, lest he might seem like one glad, nor yet in black, so as not to appear to sorrow, but in red; while another ordered a white dress, to show that he was not ashamed of his works; and yet a third directed that he should have his shoes and stockings, and a stick, to be ready for the resurrection! As we know from the gospel, the body was wrapped in "linen clothes," and the face bound about with a napkin (John 11:44, John 20:5-7). The body having been properly prepared, the funeral rites proceeded, as described in the gospels. From the account of the funeral procession at Nain, which the Lord of life arrested (Luke 7:11-15), many interesting details may be learned. First, burying-places were always outside cities (Matthew 8:28, Matthew 27:7, Matthew 27:52-53; John 11:30-31). Neither watercourses nor public roads were allowed to pass through them, nor sheep to graze there. We read of public and private burying-places--the latter chiefly in gardens and caves. It was the practice to visit the graves (John 11:31) partly to mourn and partly to pray. It was unlawful to eat or drink, to read, or even to walk irreverently among them. Cremation was denounced as a purely heathen practice, contrary to the whole spirit of Old Testament teaching. Secondly, we know that, as at Nain, the body was generally carried open on a bier, or else in an open coffin, the bearers frequently changing to give an opportunity to many to take part in a work deemed so meritorious. Graves in fields or in the open were often marked by memorial columns. Children less than a month old were carried to the burying by their mothers; those under twelve months were borne on a bed or stretcher. Lastly, the order in which the procession seems to have wound out of Nain exactly accords with what we know of the customs of the time and place. It was outside the city gate that the Lord with His disciples met the sad array. Had it been in Judaea the hired mourners and musicians would have preceded the bier; in Galilee they followed. First came the women, for, as an ancient Jewish

commentary explains--woman, who brought death into our world, ought to lead the way in the funeral procession. Among them our Lord readily recognised the widowed mother, whose only treasure was to be hidden from her for ever. Behind the bier followed, obedient to Jewish law and custom, "much people of the city." The sight of her sorrow touched the compassion of the Son of Man; the presence of death called forth the power of the Son of God. To her only He spoke, what in the form of a question He said to the woman who mourned at His own grave, ignorant that death had been swallowed up in victory, and what He still speaks to us from heaven, "Weep not!" He bade not the procession halt, but, as He touched the bier, they that bore on it the dead body stood still. It was a marvellous sight outside the gate of Nain. The Rabbi and His disciples should reverently have joined the procession; they arrested it. One word of power burst inwards the sluices of Hades, and out flowed once again the tide of life. "He that was dead sat up on his bier, and began to speak"--what words of wonderment we are not told. It must have been like the sudden wakening, which leaves not on the consciousness the faintest trace of the dream. Not of that world but of this would his speech be, though he knew he had been over there, and its dazzling light made earth’s sunshine so dim, that ever afterwards life must have seemed to him like the sitting up on his bier, and its faces and voices like those of the crowd which followed him to his burying. At the grave, on the road to which the procession repeatedly halted, when short addresses were occasionally delivered, there was a funeral oration. If the grave were in a public cemetery, at least a foot and a half must intervene between each sleeper. The caves, or rock-hewn sepulchres, consisted of an ante-chamber in which the bier was deposited, and an inner or rather lower cave in which the bodies were deposited, in a recumbent position, in niches. According to the Talmud these abodes of the dead were usually six feet long, nine feet wide, and ten feet high. Here there were niches for eight bodies: three on each side of the entrance, and two opposite. Larger sepulchres held thirteen bodies. The entrance to the sepulchres was guarded by a large stone or by a door (Matthew 27:66; Mark 15:46; John 11:38-39). This structure of the tombs will explain some of the particulars connected with the burial of our Lord, how the women coming early to the grave had been astonished in finding the "very great stone" "rolled away from the door of the sepulchre," and then, when they entered the outer cave, were affrighted to see what seemed "a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment" (Mark 16:4-5). Similarly, it explains the events as they are successively recorded in John 20:1-12, how Mary Magdalene, "when it was yet dark," had come to the sepulchre, in every sense waiting for the light, but even groping had felt that the stone was rolled away, and fled to tell the disciples they had, as she thought, taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre. If she knew of the sealing of that stone and of the Roman guard, she must have felt as if the hatred of man would not deprive their love even of the sacred body of their Lord. And yet, through it all, the hearts of the disciples must have treasured hopes, which they scarce dared confess to themselves. For those other two disciples, witnesses of all His deeds on earth, companions of His shame in Caiaphas’ palace, were also waiting for the daybreak--only at home, not like her at the grave. And now "they both ran together." But on that morning, so near the night of betrayal, "the other disciple did outrun Peter." Grey light of early spring had broken the heavy curtain of cloud and mist, and red and golden sunlight lay on the edge of the horizon. The garden was still, and the morning air stirred the trees which in the dark night had seemed to keep watch over the dead, as through the unguarded entrance, by which lay "the very great stone" rolled away, John passed, and "stooping down" into the inner cave "saw the linen clothes lying." "Then cometh Simon Peter," not to wait in the outer

cave, but to go into the sepulchre, presently to be followed thither by John. For that empty sepulchre was not a place to look into, but to go into and believe. That morn had witnessed many wonders--wonders which made the Magdalene long for yet greater--for the wonder of wonders, the Lord Himself. Nor was she disappointed. He Who alone could answer her questions fully, and dry her tears, spake first to her who loved so much.

Thus also did our blessed Lord Himself fulfil most truly that on which the law and Jewish tradition laid so great stress: to comfort the mourners in their affliction (comp. James 1:27). Indeed, tradition has it, that there was in the Temple a special gate by which mourners entered, that all who met them might discharge this duty of love. There was a custom, which deserves general imitation, that mourners were not to be tormented by talk, but that all should observe silence till addressed by them. Afterwards, to obviate foolish remarks, a formula was fixed, according to which, in the synagogue the leader of the devotions, and in the house some one, began by asking, "Inquire for the ground of mourning"; upon which one of those present--if possible, a Rabbi--answered, "God is a just Judge," which meant, that He had removed a near relative. Then, in the synagogue, a regular fixed formula of comfort was spoken, while in the house kind expressions of consolation followed. The Rabbis distinguish between the Onen and the Avel--the sorrowing or suffering one, and the bowed down, fading one, or mourner; the former expression applying only to the day of the funeral, the latter to the period which followed. It was held, that the law of God only prescribed mourning for the first day, which was that of death and burial (Leviticus 22:4-6), while the other and longer period of mourning that followed was enjoined by the elders. So long as the dead body was actually in the house, it was forbidden to eat meat or drink wine, to put on the phylacteries, or to engage in study. All necessary food had to be prepared outside the house, and as, if possible, not to be eaten in presence of the dead. The first duty was to rend the clothes, which might be done in one or more of the inner garments, but not in the outer dress. The rent is made standing, and in front; it is generally about a hand-breadth in length. In the case of parents it is never closed up again; but in that of others it is mended after the thirtieth day. Immediately after the body is carried out of the house all chairs and couches are reversed, and the mourners sit (except on the Sabbath, and on the Friday only for one hour) on the ground or on a low stool. A three-fold distinction was here made. Deep mourning was to last for seven days, of which the first three were those of "weeping." During these seven days it was, among other things, forbidden to wash, to anoint oneself, to put on shoes, to study, or to engage in any business. After that followed a lighter mourning of thirty days. Children were to mourn for their parents a whole year; and during eleven months (so as not to imply that they required to remain a full year in purgatory) to say the "prayer for the dead." The latter, however, does not contain any intercession for the departed. The anniversary of the day of death was also to be observed. An apostate from the Jewish faith was not to be mourned; on the contrary, white dress was to be worn on the occasion of his decease, and other demonstrations of joy to be made. It is well known under what exceptional circumstances priests and the high-priest were allowed to mourn for the dead (Leviticus 21:10-11). In the case of the high-priest it was customary to say to him, "May we be thy expiation!" ("Let us suffer what ought to have befallen thee";) to which he replied, "Be ye blessed of Heaven" (Sanh. ii. 1). It is noted that this mode of address to the high-priest was intended to indicate the greatness of their affection; and the learned Otho suggests (Lexic. Rabb, p. 343), that this may have been in the mind of the apostle when he would have wished himself Anathema for the sake of his brethren (Romans 9:3). On the return from the burial, friends, or neighbours prepared a meal for the

mourners, consisting of bread, hard-boiled eggs, and lentils--round and coarse fare; round like life, which is rolling on unto death. This was brought in and served up in earthenware. On the other hand, the mourners' friends partook of a funeral meal, at which no more than ten cups were to be emptied--two before the meal, five at it, and three afterwards (Jer. Ber. iii. 1). In modern times the religious duty of attending to the dying, the dead, and mourners, is performed by a special "holy brotherhood," as it is called, which many of the most religious Jews join for the sake of the pious work in which it engages them.

We add the following, which may be of interest. It is expressly allowed (Jer. Ber. iii. 1), on Sabbaths and feast-days to walk beyond the Sabbath limits, and to do all needful offices for the dead. This throws considerable light on the evangelical account of the offices rendered to the body of Jesus on the eve of the Passover. The chief mourning rites, indeed, were intermitted on Sabbaths and feast-days; and one of the most interesting, and perhaps the earliest Hebrew non-Biblical record--the Megillath Taanith, or roll of fasts--mentions a number of other days on which mourning was prohibited, being the anniversaries of joyous occasions. The Mishnah (Moed K. iii. 5-9) contains a number of regulations and limitations of mourning observances on greater and lesser feasts, which we do not quote, as possessing little interest save in Rabbinical casuistry. The loss of slaves was not to be mourned. But what after death and in the judgment? And what of that which brought in, and which gives such terrible meaning to death and the judgment--sin? It were idle, and could only be painful here to detail the various and discordant sayings of the Rabbis, some of which, at least, may admit of an allegorical interpretation. Only that which may be of use to the New Testament student shall be briefly summarised. Both the Talmud (Pes. 54 a; Ned. 39 b), and the Targum teach that paradise and hell were created before this world. One quotation from the Jerusalem Targum (on Genesis 3:24) will not only sufficiently prove this, but show the general current of Jewish teaching. Two thousand years, we read, before the world was made, God created the Law and Gehenna, and the Garden of Eden. He made the Garden of Eden for the righteous, that they might eat of the fruits thereof, and delight themselves in them, because in this world they had kept the commandments of the law. But for the wicked He prepared Gehenna, which is like a sharp two-edged destroying sword. He put within it sparks of fire and burning coals, to punish the wicked in the world to come, because they had not observed the commandments of the law in this world. For the law is the tree of life. Whosoever observeth it shall live and subsist as the tree of life. *

* Other Rabbinical sayings have it, that seven things existed before the world--the law, repentance, paradise, hell, the throne of God, the name of the Messiah, and the Temple. At the same time the reader will observe that the quotation from the Targum given in the text attempts an allegorising, and therefore rationalistic interpretation of the narrative in Genesis 3:24.

Paradise and hell were supposed to be contiguous, only separated--it was said, perhaps allegorically--by an handbreadth. But although we may here find some slight resemblance to the localisation of the history of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:25-26), only those acquainted with the theological thinking of the time can fully judge what infinite difference there is between the story in the Gospel and the pictures drawn in contemporary literature. Witness here the 22nd chapter of the book of Enoch, which, as so many other passages from pseudo-epigraphic and Rabbinical writings, has been mangled and misquoted by modern writers, for purposes hostile to Christianity. The Rabbis seem to have believed in a multitude of heavens--most of them holding

that there were seven, as there were also seven departments in paradise, and as many in hell. The pre-existence of the souls of all mankind before their actual appearance upon earth, and even the doctrine of the migration of souls, seem also to have been held--both probably, however, chiefly as speculative views, introduced from foreign, non-Judaean sources. But all these are preliminary and outside questions, which only indirectly touch the great problems of the human soul concerning sin and salvation. And here we can, in this place, only state that the deeper and stronger our conviction that the language, surroundings, and whole atmosphere of the New Testament were those of Palestine at the time when our Lord trod its soil, the more startling appears the contrast between the doctrinal teaching of Christ and His apostles and that of the Rabbis. In general, it may be said that the New Testament teaching concerning original sin and its consequences finds no analogy in the Rabbinical writings of that period. As to the mode of salvation, their doctrine may be broadly summed up under the designation of work-righteousness. In view of this there is, strictly speaking, logical inconsistency in the earnestness with which the Rabbis insist on universal and immediate repentance, and the need of confession of sin, and of preparation for another world. For, a paradise which might be entered by all on their own merits, and which yet is to be sought by all through repentance and similar means, or else can only be obtained after passing through a kind of purgatory, constitutes no mean moral charge against the religion of Rabbinism. Yet such inconsistencies may be hailed as bringing the synagogue, in another direction, nearer to biblical truth. Indeed, we come occasionally upon much that also appears, only in quite another setting, in the New Testament. Thus the teaching of our Lord about the immortality of the righteous was, of course, quite consonant with that of the Pharisees. In fact, their contention also was, that the departed saints were in Scripture called "living" (Ber. 18 a). Similarly, it was their doctrine (Ber. 17 a, and in several other passages)--though not quite consistently held--as it was that of our Lord (Matthew 22:30), that "in the world to come there is neither eating nor drinking, neither fruitfulness nor increase, neither trade nor business, neither envy, hatred, nor strife; but the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads, and feast themselves on the splendour of the Shechinah, as it is written, 'They saw God, and did eat and drink'" (Exodus 24:11). The following is so similar in form and yet so different in spirit to the parable of the invited guests and him without the wedding garment (Matthew 22:1-14), that we give it in full. "R. Jochanan, son of Saccai, propounded a parable. A certain king prepared a banquet, to which he invited his servants, without however having fixed the time for it. Those among them who were wise adorned themselves, and sat down at the door of the king's palace, reasoning thus: Can there be anything awanting in the palace of a king? But those of them who were foolish went away to their work, saying: Is there ever a feast without labour? Suddenly the king called his servants to the banquet. The wise appeared adorned, but the foolish squalid. Then the king rejoiced over the wise, but was very wroth with the foolish, and said: Those who have adorned themselves shall sit down, eat, drink, and be merry; but those who have not adorned themselves shall stand by and see it, as it is written in Isaiah 65:13." A somewhat similar parable, but even more Jewish in its dogmatic cast, is the following: "The matter (of the world to come) is like an earthly king who committed to his servants the royal robes. They who were wise folded and laid them up in the wardrobes, but they who were careless put them on, and did in them their work. After some days the king asked back his robes. Those who were wise restored them as they were, that is, still clean; those who were foolish also restored them as they were, that is, soiled. Then the king rejoiced over the wise, but was very wroth with the careless servants, and he said to the wise: Lay

up the robes in the treasury, and go home in peace. But to the careless he commanded the robes to be given, that they might wash them, and that they themselves should be cast into prison, as it is written of the bodies of the just in Isaiah 57:2; 1 Samuel 25:29, but of the bodies of the unjust in Isaiah 48:22, Isaiah 57:21 and in 1 Samuel 25:29." From the same tractate (Shab. 152 a), we may, in conclusion, quote the following: "R. Eliezer said, Repent on the day before thou diest. His disciples asked him: Can a man know the hour of his death? He replied: Therefore let him repent to-day, lest haply he die on the morrow."

Quotations on these, and discussions on kindred subjects might lead us far beyond our present scope. But the second of the parables above quoted will point the direction of the final conclusions at which Rabbinism arrived. It is not, as in the Gospel, pardon and peace, but labour with the "may be" of reward. As for the "after death," paradise, hell, the resurrection, and the judgment, voices are more discordant than ever, opinions more unscriptural, and descriptions more repulsively fabulous. This is not the place farther to trace the doctrinal views of the Rabbis, to attempt to arrange and to follow them up. Work-righteousness and study of the law are the surest key to heaven. There is a kind of purgation, if not of purgatory, after death. Some seem even to have held the annihilation of the wicked. Taking the widest and most generous views of the Rabbis, they may be thus summed up: All Israel have share in the world to come; the pious among the Gentiles also have part in it. Only the perfectly just enter at once into paradise; all the rest pass through a period of purification and perfection, variously lasting, up to one year. But notorious breakers of the law, and especially apostates from the Jewish faith, and heretics, have no hope whatever, either here or hereafter! Such is the last word which the synagogue has to say to mankind. Not thus are we taught by the Messiah, the King of the Jews. If we learn our loss, we also learn that "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Our righteousness is that freely bestowed on us by Him "Who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." "With His stripes we are healed." The law which we obey is that which He has put within our hearts, by which we become temples of the Holy Ghost. "The Dayspring from on high hath visited us" through the tender mercy of our God. The Gospel hath brought life and immortality to light, for we know Whom we have believed; and "perfect love casteth out fear." Not even the problems of sickness, sorrow, suffering, and death are unnoticed. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The tears of earth’s night hang as dewdrops on flower and tree, presently to sparkle like diamonds in the morning sun. For, in that night of nights has Christ mingled the sweat of human toil and sorrow with the precious blood of His agony, and made it drop on earth as sweet balsam to heal its wounds, to soothe its sorrows, and to take away its death.

02.11. Chapter 11 - Jewish Views on Trade, Tradesmen, and Trades' Guilds

Chapter 11 - Jewish Views on Trade, Tradesmen, and Trades' Guilds

We read in the Mishnah (Kidd. iv. 14) as follows: "Rabbi Meir said: Let a man always teach his son a cleanly and a light trade; and let him pray to Him whose are wealth and riches; for there is no trade which has not both poverty and riches, and neither does poverty come from the trade nor yet riches, but everything according to one's deserving (merit). Rabbi Simeon, the son of Eleazer, said: Hast thou all thy life long seen a beast or a bird which has a trade? Still they are nourished, and that without anxious care. And if they, who are created only to serve me, shall not I expect to be nourished without anxious care, who am created to serve my Maker? Only that if I have been evil in my deeds, I forfeit my support. Abba Gurjan of Zadjan said, in name of Abba Gurja: Let not a man bring up his son to be a donkey-driver, nor a camel-driver, nor a barber, nor a sailor, nor a shepherd, nor a pedlar; for their occupations are those of thieves. In his name, Rabbi Jehudah said: Donkey-drivers are mostly wicked; camel-drivers mostly honest; sailors mostly pious; the best among physicians is for Gehenna, and the most honest of butchers a companion of Amalek. Rabbi Nehorai said: I let alone every trade of this world, and teach my son nothing but the Thorah (the law of God); for a man eats of the fruit of it in this world (as it were, lives upon earth on the interest), while the capital remaineth for the world to come. But what is left over (what remains) in every trade (or worldly employment) is not so. For, if a man fall into ill-health, or come to old age or into trouble (chastisement), and is no longer able to stick to his work, lo! he dies of hunger. But the Thorah is not so, for it keeps a man from evil in youth, and in old age gives him both a hereafter and the hopeful waiting for it. What does it say about youth? 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew strength.' And what about old age? 'They shall still bring forth fruit in old age.' And this is what is said of Abraham our father: 'And Abraham was old, and Jehovah blessed Abraham in all things.' But we find that Abraham our father kept the whole Thorah--the whole, even to that which had not yet been given--as it is said, 'Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.'"

If this quotation has been long, it will in many respects prove instructive; for it not only affords a favourable specimen of Mishnic teaching, but gives insight into the principles, the reasoning, and the views of the Rabbis. At the outset, the saying of Rabbi Simeon--which, however, we should remember, was spoken nearly a century after the time when our Lord had been upon earth--reminds us of His own words (Matthew 6:26): "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" It would be a delightful thought, that our Lord had thus availed Himself of the better thinking and higher feeling in Israel; so to speak, polished the diamond and made it sparkle, as He held it up in the light of the kingdom of God. For here also it holds true, that the Saviour came not in any sense to "destroy," but to "establish the law." All around the scene of His earthly ministry the atmosphere was Jewish; and all that was pure, true, and good in the nation's

life, teaching, and sayings He made His own. On every page of the gospels we come upon what seems to waken the echoes of Jewish voices; sayings which remind us of what we have heard among the sages of Israel. And this is just what we should have expected, and what gives no small confirmation of the trustworthiness of these narratives as the record of what had really taken place. It is not a strange scene upon which we are here introduced; nor among strange actors; nor are the surroundings foreign. Throughout we have a life-picture of the period, in which we recognise the speakers from the sketches of them drawn elsewhere, and whose mode of speaking we know from contemporary literature. The gospels could not have set aside, they could not even have left out, the Jewish element. Otherwise they would not have been true to the period, nor to the people, nor to the writers, nor yet to that law of growth and development which always marks the progress of the kingdom of God. In one respect only all is different. The gospels are most Jewish in form, but most anti-Jewish in spirit--the record of the manifestation among Israel of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, as the "King of the Jews." This influence of the Jewish surroundings upon the circumstances of the gospel history has a most important bearing. It helps us to realise what Jewish life had been at the time of Christ, and to comprehend what might seem peculiarities in the gospel narrative. Thus--to come to the subject of this chapter--we now understand how so many of the disciples and followers of the Lord gained their living by some craft; how in the same spirit the Master Himself condescended to the trade of His adoptive father; and how the greatest of His apostles throughout earned his bread by the labour of his hands, probably following, like the Lord Jesus, the trade of his father. For it was a principle, frequently expressed, if possible "not to forsake the trade of the father"--most likely not merely from worldly considerations, but because it might be learned in the house; perhaps even from considerations of respect for parents. And what in this respect Paul practised, that he also preached. Nowhere is the dignity of labour and the manly independence of honest work more clearly set forth than in his Epistles. At Corinth, his first search seems to have been for work (Acts 18:3); and through life he steadily forbore availing himself of his right to be supported by the Church, deeming it his great "reward" to "make the Gospel of Christ without charge" (1 Corinthians 9:18). Nay, to quote his impassioned language, he would far rather have died of hard work than that any man should deprive him of this "glorying." And so presently at Ephesus "these hands" minister not only unto his own necessities, but also to them that were with him; and that for the twofold reason of supporting the weak, and of following the Master, however "afar off," and entering into this joy of His, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:34-35). Again, so to speak, it does one’s heart good when coming in contact with that Church which seemed most in danger of dreamy contemplativeness, and of unpractical, of not dangerous, speculations about the future, to hear what a manly, earnest tone also prevailed there. Here is the preacher himself! Not a man-pleaser, but a God-server; not a flatterer, nor covetous, nor yet seeking glory, nor courting authority, like the Rabbis. What then? This is the sketch as drawn from life at Thessalonica, so that each who had known him must have recognised it: most loving, like a nursing mother, who cherisheth her own children, so in tenderness willing to impart not only the Gospel of God, but his own life. Yet, with it all, no mawkishness, no sentimentality; but all stern, genuine reality; and the preacher himself is "labouring night and day," because he would not be chargeable to any of them, while he preached unto them the gospel of God (1 Thessalonians 2:9). "Night and day," hard, unremitting, uninteresting work, which some would have denounced or despised as secular! But to Paul that wretched distinction, the invention of modern superficialism and unreality, existed not. For to the

spiritual nothing is secular, and to the secular nothing is spiritual. Work night and day, and then as his rest, joy, and reward, to preach in public and in private the unsearchable riches of Christ, Who had redeemed him with His precious blood. And so his preaching, although one of its main burdens seems to have been the second coming of the Lord, was in no way calculated to make the hearers apocalyptic dreamers, who discussed knotty points and visions of the future, while present duty lay unheeded as beneath them, on a lower platform. There is a ring of honest independence, of healthy, manly piety, of genuine, self-denying devotion to Christ, and also of a practical life of holiness, in this admonition (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12): "Make it your ambition to be quite, to do your own" (each one for himself, not meddling with others' affairs), "and to work with your hands, as we commanded you, that ye may walk decorously towards them without, and have no need of any one" (be independent of all men). And, very significantly, this plain, practical religion is placed in immediate conjunction with the hope of the resurrection and of the coming again of our Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). The same admonition, "to work, and eat their own bread," comes once again, only in stronger language, in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, reminding them in this of his own example, and of his command when with them, "that, if any would not work, neither should he eat"; at the same time sternly rebuking "some who are walking disorderly, who are not at all busy, but are busybodies" (we have here tried to reproduce the play on the words in the original).

Now, we certainly do not pretend to find a parallel to St. Paul among even the best and the noblest of the Rabbis. Yet Saul of Tarsus was a Jew, not merely trained at the feet of the great Gamaliel, "that sun in Israel," but deeply imbued with the Jewish spirit and lore; insomuch that long afterwards, when he is writing of the deepest mysteries of Christianity, we catch again and again expressions that remind us of some that occur in the earliest record of that secret Jewish doctrine, which was only communicated to the most select of the select sages. *

* We mean the book Jezirah. It is curious that this should have never been noticed. The coincidences are not in substance, but in modes of expression. And this same love of honest labour, the same spirit of manly independence, the same horror of trafficking with the law, and using it either "as a crown or as a spade," was certainly characteristic of the best Rabbis. Quite different in this respect also--far asunder as were the aims of their lives--were the feelings of Israel from those of the Gentiles around. The philosophers of Greece and Rome denounced manual labour as something degrading; indeed, as incompatible with the full exercise of the privileges of a citizen. Those Romans who allowed themselves not only to be bribed in their votes, but expected to be actually supported at the public expense, would not stoop to the defilement of work. The Jews had another aim in life, another pride and ambition. It is difficult to give an idea of the seeming contrasts united in them. Most aristocratic and exclusive, contemptuous of mere popular cries, yet at the same time most democratic and liberal; law-abiding, and with the profoundest reverence for authority and rank, and yet with this prevailing conviction at bottom, that all Israel were brethren, and as such stood on precisely the same level, the eventual differences arising only from this, that the mass failed to realise what Israel's real vocation was, and how it was to be attained, viz., by theoretical and practical engagement with the law, compared to which everything else was but secondary and unimportant. But this combination of study with honest manual labour--the one to support the other--had not been always equally honoured in Israel. We distinguish here three periods. The law of Moses evidently recognised the dignity of labour, and

this spirit of the Old Testament appeared in the best times of the Jewish nation. The book of Proverbs, which contains so many sketches of what a happy, holy home in Israel had been, is full of the praises of domestic industry. But the Apocrypha, notably Ecclesiasticus (Sir 38:24-31), strike a very different key-note. Analysing one by one every trade, the contemptuous question is put, how such "can get wisdom?" This "Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach" dates from about two centuries before the present era. It would not have been possible at the time of Christ or afterwards, to have written in such terms of "the carpenter and workmaster," of them "that cut and grave seals," of "the smith," or "the potter"; nor to have said of them: "They shall not be sought for in public counsel, nor sit high in the congregation; they shall not sit on the judges' seat, nor understand the sentence of judgment; they cannot declare justice and judgment; and they shall not be found where parables are spoken" (Sir 38:33). For, in point of fact, with few exceptions, all the leading Rabbinical authorities were working at some trade, till at last it became quite an affectation to engage in hard bodily labour, so that one Rabbi would carry his own chair every day to college, while others would drag heavy rafters, or work in some such fashion. Without cumbering these pages with names, it is worth mentioning, perhaps as an extreme instance, that on one occasion a man was actually summoned from his trade of stone-cutter to the high-priestly office. To be sure, that was in revolutionary times. The high-priests under the Herodian dynasty were of only too different a class, and their history possesses a tragic interest, as bearing on the state and fate of the nation. Still, the great Hillel was a wood-cutter, his rival Shammai a carpenter,; and among the celebrated Rabbis of after times we find shoemakers, tailors, carpenters, sandalmakers, smiths, potters, builders, etc.--in short, every variety of trade. Nor were they ashamed of their manual labour. Thus it is recorded of one of them, that he was in the habit of discoursing to his students from the top of a cask of his own making, which he carried every day to the academy.

We can scarcely wonder at this, since it was a Rabbinical principle, that "whoever does not teach his son a trade is as if he brought him up to be a robber" (Kidd. 4.14). The Midrash gives the following curious paraphrase of Ecclesiastes 9:9, "Behold, the life with the wife whom thou lovest" (so literally in the Hebrew): Look out for a trade along with the Divine study which thou lovest. "How highly does the Maker of the world value trades," is another saying. Here are some more: "There is none whose trade God does not adorn with beauty." "Though there were seven years of famine, it will never come to the door of the tradesman." "There is not a trade to which both poverty and riches are not joined; for there is nothing more poor, and nothing more rich, than a trade." "No trade shall ever disappear from the world. Happy he whom his teacher has brought up to a good trade; alas for him who has been put into a bad one." Perhaps these are comparatively later Rabbinical sayings. But let us turn to the Mishnah itself, and especially to that tractate which professedly embodies the wisdom and the sayings of the fathers (Aboth). Shemaajah, the teacher of Hillel, has this cynical saying (Ab. i. 10)--perhaps the outcome of his experience: "Love work, hate Rabbiship, and do not press on the notice of those in power." The views of the great Hillel himself have been quoted in a previous chapter. Rabbi Gamaliel, the son of Jehudah the Nasi, said (Ab. ii. 2): "Fair is the study of the law, if accompanied by worldly occupation: to engage in them both is to keep away sin; while study which is not combined with work must in the end be interrupted, and only brings sin with it." Rabbi Eleazar, the son of Asarjah, says, among other things: "Where there is no worldly support (literally, no meal, no flour), there is no study of the law; and where there is no study of the law, worldly support is of no value" (Ab. iii. 21). It is worth while

to add what immediately follows in the Mishnah. Its resemblance to the simile about the rock, and the building upon it, as employed by our Lord (Matthew 7:24; Luke 6:47), is so striking, that we quote it in illustration of previous remarks on this subject. We read as follows: "He whose knowledge exceeds his works, to whom is he like? He is like a tree, whose branches are many and its roots few, and the wind cometh, and uproots the tree and throws it upon its face, as it is said (Jeremiah 17:6)...But he whose works exceed his knowledge, to whom is he like? To a tree whose branches are few, but its roots many; and if even all the winds that are in the world came and set upon such a tree, they would not move it from its place, as it is written (Jeremiah 17:8)." We have given this saying in its earliest form. Even so, it should be remembered that it dates from after the destruction of Jerusalem. It occurs in a still later form in the Babylon Talmud (Sanh. 99 a). But what is most remarkable is, that it also appears in yet another work, and in a form almost identical with that in the New Testament, so far as the simile of the building is concerned. In this form it is attributed to a Rabbi who is stigmatised as an apostate, and as the type of apostasy, and who, as such, died under the ban. The inference seems to be, that if he did not profess some form of Christianity, he had at least derived this saying from his intercourse with Christians. *

* Elisha ben Abbuja, called Acher, "the other," on account of his apostasy. The history of that Rabbi is altogether deeply interesting. We can only put the question: Was he a Christian, or merely tainted with Gnosticism? The latter seems to us the most probable. His errors are traced by the Jews to his study of the Kabbalah. But irrespective of this, two things are plain on comparison of the saying in its Rabbinical and in its Christian form. First, in the parable as employed by our Lord, everything is referred to Him; and the essential difference ultimately depends upon our relationship towards Him. The comparison here is not between much study and little work, or little Talmudical knowledge and much work; but between coming to Him and hearing these sayings of His, and then either doing or else not doing them. Secondly, such an alternative is never presented by Christianity as, on the one hand, much knowledge and few works, and on the other, little knowledge and many works. But in Christianity the vital difference lies between works and no works; between absolute life and absolute death; all depending upon this, whether a man has digged down to the right foundation, and built upon the rock which is Christ, or has tried to build up the walls of his life without such foundation. Thus the very similarity of the saying in its Rabbinical form brings out all the more clearly the essential difference and contrariety in spirit existing between Rabbinism, even in its purest form, and the teaching of our Lord. The question of the relation between the best teaching of the Jewish sages and some of the sayings of our Lord is of such vital importance, that this digression will not seem out of place. A few further quotations bearing on the dignity of labour may be appropriate. The Talmud has a beautiful Haggadah, which tells how, when Adam heard this sentence of his Maker: "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee," he burst into tears, "What!" he exclaimed; "Lord of the world, am I then to eat out of the same manger with the ass?" But when he heard these additional words: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," his heart was comforted. For herein lies (according to the Rabbis) the dignity of labour, that man is not forced to, nor unconscious in, his work; but that while becoming the servant of the soil, he wins from it the precious fruits of golden harvest. And so, albeit labour may be hard, and the result doubtful, as when Israel stood by the shores of the Red Sea, yet a miracle will cleave these waters also. And still the dignity of labour is great in itself: it reflects honour; it nourisheth and cherisheth him that engageth in it. For this reason also did the law punish with fivefold restitution the theft of an ox, but only with fourfold that of a sheep; because the

former was that with which a man worked.

Assuredly St. Paul spoke also as a Jew when he admonished the Ephesians (Ephesians 4:28): "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." "Make a working day of the Sabbath: only be not dependent upon people," was the Rabbinical saying (Pes. 112). "Skin dead animals by the wayside," we read, "and take thy payment for it, but do not say, I am a priest; I am a man of distinction, and work is objectionable to me!" And to this day the common Jewish proverb has it: "Labour is no cherpah (disgrace)"; or again: "Melachah is berachah (Labour is blessing)." With such views, we can understand how universal industrious pursuits were in the days of our Lord. Although it is no doubt true, as the Rabbinical proverb puts it, that every man thinks most of his own trade, yet public opinion attached a very different value to different kinds of trade. Some were avoided on account of the unpleasantnesses connected with them, such as those of tanners, dyers, and miners. The Mishnah lays it down as a principle, that a man should not teach his son a trade which necessitates constant intercourse with the other sex (Kidd. iv. 14). Such would include, among others jewellers, makers of handmills, perfumers, and weavers. The latter trade seems to have exposed to as many troubles as if the weavers of those days had been obliged to serve a modern fashionable lady. The saying was: "A weaver must be humble, or his life will be shortened by excommunication"; that is, he must submit to anything for a living. Or, as the common proverb put it (Ab. S. 26 a): "If a weaver is not humble, his life is shortened by a year." This other saying, of a similar kind, reminds us of the Scotch estimate of, or rather disrespect for, weavers: "Even a weaver is master in his own house." And this not only in his own opinion, but in that of his wife also. For as the Rabbinical proverb has it: "Though a man were only a comber of wool, his wife would call him up to the house-door, and sit down beside him," so proud is she of him. Perhaps in the view of the Rabbis there was a little of female self-consciousness in this regard for her husband’s credit, for they have it: "Though a man were only the size of an ant, his wife would try to sit down among the big ones." In general, the following sound views are expressed in the Talmud (Ber. 17 a): "The Rabbi of Jabne said: I am simply a being like my neighbour. He works in the field, and I in the town. We both rise early to go to work; and there is no cause for the one setting himself up above the other. Do not think that the one does more than the other; for we have been taught that there is as much merit in doing that which is little as that which is great, provided the state of our hearts be right." And so a story is told, how one who dug cisterns and made baths (for purification) accosted the great Rabbi Jochanan with the words: "I am as great a man as thou"; since, in his own sphere, he served the wants of the community quite as much as the most learned teacher in Israel. In the same spirit another Rabbi admonished to strict conscientiousness, since in a sense all work, however humble, was really work for God. There can be no doubt that the Jewish tradesman who worked in such a spirit would be alike happy and skilful.

It must have been a great privilege to be engaged in any work connected with the Temple. A large number of workmen were kept constantly employed there, preparing what was necessary for the service. Perhaps it was only a piece of Jerusalem jealousy of the Alexandrians which prompted such Rabbinical traditions, as, that, when Alexandrians tried to compound the incense for the Temple, the column of smoke did not ascend quite straight; when they repaired the large mortar in which the incense was bruised, and again, the great cymbal with which the signal for the

commencement of the Temple music was given, in each case their work had to be undone by Jerusalem workmen, in order to produce a proper mixture, or to evoke the former sweet sounds. There can be no question, however, notwithstanding Palestinian prejudices, that there were excellent Jewish workmen in Alexandria; and plenty of them, too, as we know from their arrangement in guilds in their great synagogue. Any poor workman had only to apply to his guild, and he was supported till he found employment. The guild of coppersmiths there had, as we are informed, for their device a leathern apron; and when it members went abroad they used to carry with them a bed which could be taken to pieces. At Jerusalem, where this guild was organised under its Rabban, or chief, it possessed a synagogue and a burying-place of its own. But the Palestinian workmen, though they kept by each other, had no exclusive guilds; the principles of "free trade," so to speak, prevailing among them. Bazaars and streets were named after them. The workmen of Jerusalem were specially distinguished for their artistic skill. A whole valley--that of the Tyropoeon--was occupied by dairies; hence its name, "valley of cheesemongers." Even in Isaiah 7:3 we read of "the field of the fullers," which lay "at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway" to Joppa. A whole set of sayings is expressly designated in the Talmud as "the proverbs of the fullers." From their love of building and splendour the Herodian princes must have kept many tradesmen in constant work. At the re-erection of the Temple no less than eighteen thousand were so employed in various handicrafts, some of them implying great artistic skill. Even before that, Herod the Great is said to have employed a large number of the most experienced masters to teach the one thousand priests who were to construct the Holy Place itself. For, in the building of that part of the Temple no laymen were engaged. As we know, neither hammer, axe, chisel, nor any tool of iron was used within the sacred precincts. The reason of this is thus explained in the Mishnah, when describing how all the stones for the altar were dug out of virgin-earth, no iron tool being employed in their preparation: "Iron is created to cut short the life of man; but the altar to prolong it. Hence it is not becoming to use that which shortens for that which lengthens" (Midd. iii. 4). Those who know the magnificence and splendour of that holy house will be best able to judge what skill in workmanship its various parts must have required. An instance may be interesting on account of its connection with the most solemn fact of New Testament history. We read in the Mishnah (Shek. viii. 5): "Rabbi Simeon, the son of Gamaliel, said, in the name of Rabbi Simeon, the son of the (former) Sagan (assistant of the high-priest): The veil (of the Most Holy Place) was an handbreadth thick, and woven of seventy-two twisted plaits; each plait consisted of twenty-four threads" (according to the Talmud, six threads of each of the four Temple-colours--white, scarlet, blue, and gold). "It was forty cubits long, and twenty wide (sixty feet by thirty), and made of eighty-two myriads" (the meaning of this in the Mishnah is not plain). "Two of these veils were made every year, and it took three hundred priests to immerse one" (before use). These statements must of course be considered as dealing in "round numbers"; but they are most interesting as helping us to realise, not only how the great veil of the Temple was rent, when the Lord of that Temple died on the cross, but also how the occurrence could have been effectually concealed from the mass of the people. To turn to quite another subject. It is curious to notice in how many respects times and circumstances have really not changed. The old Jewish employers of labour seem to have had similar trouble with their men to that of which so many in our own times loudly complain. We have an emphatic warning to this effect, to beware of eating fine bread and giving black bread to one’s workmen or servants; not to sleep on feathers and give them straw pallets, more especially if they were co-religionists, for, as it is added, he who

gets a Hebrew slave gets his master! Possibly something of this kind was on the mind of St. Paul when he wrote this most needful precept (1 Timothy 6:1-2): "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are believing and beloved, partakers of the benefit." But really there is nothing "new under the sun!" Something like the provisions of a mutual assurance appear in the associations of muleteers and sailors, which undertook to replace a beast or a ship that had been lost without negligence on the part of the owner. Nay, we can even trace the spirit of trade-unionism in the express permission of the Talmud (Bab. B. 9) to tradesmen to combine to work only one or two days in the week, so as to give sufficient employment to every workman in a place. We close with another quotation in the same direction, which will also serve to illustrate the peculiar mode of Rabbinical comment on the words of Scripture: "'He doeth no evil to his neighbour-'-this refers to one tradesman not interfering with the trade of another!"

02.12. Chapter 12 - Commerce

Chapter 12 - Commerce The remarkable change which we have noticed in the views of Jewish authorities, from contempt to almost affectation of manual labour, could certainly not have been arbitrary. But as we fail to discover here any religious motive, we can only account for it on the score of altered political and social circumstances. So long as the people were, at least nominally, independent, and in possession of their own land, constant engagement in a trade would probably mark an inferior social stage, and imply either voluntary or necessary preoccupation with the things of this world that perish with the using. It was otherwise when Judaea was in the hands of strangers. Then honest labour afforded the means, and the only means, of manly independence. To engage in it, just sufficient to secure this result, to "stand in need of no one"; to be able to hold up one's head before friend and foe; to make unto God moral sacrifice of natural inclination, strength and time, so as to be able freely and independently to devote oneself to the study of the Divine law, was a noble resolve. And it brought its own reward. If, on the one hand, the alternation of physical and mental labour was felt to be healthy, on the other--and this had been the main object in view--there never were men more fearlessly outspoken, more unconcerned as to mere personality or as to consequences, more independent in thought and word than these Rabbis. We can understand the withering scorn of St. Jude (Jude 1:16) towards those "having men's persons in admiration," literally, "admiring faces"--an expression by which the LXX translate the "respect" or "regard," or "acceptance" of persons (the nasa panim) mentioned in Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 10:17; Job 13:10; Proverbs 18:5, and many other passages. In this respect also, as so often, St. Paul spoke as a true Jew when he wrote (Galatians 2:6): "But of these who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: the face of man God accepteth not." The Mishnah, indeed, does not in so many words inform us how the change in public feeling, to which we have referred, was brought about. But there are plenty of hints to guide us in certain short caustic sentences which would be inexplicable, unless read in the light of the history of that time. Thus, as stated in the previous chapter, Shemaajah admonished: "Love work, hate Rabbiship, and do not press on the notice of those in power." Similarly, Avtaljon warned the sages to be cautious in their words, for fear of incurring banishment for themselves and their followers (Ab. i. 10,11). And Rabbi Gamaliel II had it (ii. 3): "Be cautious with the powers that be, for they only seek intercourse with a person for their own advantage. They are as if they loved you, when it serves for their profit, but in the hour of his need they do not stand by a man." In the same category of sayings for the times we may rank this of Rabbi Matithja: "Meet every one with a salutation of peace, and prefer to be the tail of lions, but be not the head to foxes." It is needless to multiply similar quotations, all expressive of an earnest desire for honourable independence through personal exertion.

Quite different form those as to trades were the Rabbinical views about commerce, as we shall immediately show. In fact, the general adoption of business, which has so often been made the subject of jeer against Israel, marks yet another social state, and a terrible social necessity. When Israel was scattered by units, hundreds, or even thousands, but still a miserable, vanquished,

homeless, weak minority among the nations of the earth--avoided, down-trodden, and at the mercy of popular passion--no other course was open to them than to follow commerce. Even if Jewish talent could have identified itself with the pursuits of the Gentiles, would public life have been open to them--we shall not say, on equal, but, on any terms? Or, to descend a step lower--except in those crafts which might be peculiarly theirs, could Jewish tradesmen have competed with those around? Would they even have been allowed to enter the lists? Moreover, it was necessary for their self-defence--almost for their existence--that they should gain influence. And in their circumstances this could only be obtained by the possession of wealth, and the sole road to this was commerce.

There can be no question that, according to the Divine purpose, Israel was not intended to be a commercial people. The many restrictions to the intercourse between Jews and Gentiles, which the Mosaic law everywhere presents, would alone have sufficed to prevent it. Then there was the express enactment against taking interest upon loans (Leviticus 25:36-37), which must have rendered commercial transactions impossible, even though it was relaxed in reference to those who lived outside the boundaries of Palestine (Deuteronomy 23:20). Again, the law of the Sabbatic and of the Jubilee year would have brought all extended commerce to a standstill. Nor was the land at all suited for the requirements of trade. True, it possessed ample seaboard, whatever the natural capabilities of its harbours may have been. But the whole of that coast, with the harbours of Joppa, Jamneh, Ascalon, Gaza, and Acco or Ptolemais, remained, with short intervals, in the possession of the Philistines and Phoenicians. Even when Herod the Great built the noble harbour of Caesarea, it was almost exclusively used by foreigners (Josephus, Jew. War,409-413). And the whole history of Israel in Palestine points to the same inference. Only on one occasion, during the reign of Solomon, do we find anything like attempts to engage in mercantile pursuits on a large scale. The reference to the "king’s merchants" (1 Kings 10:28-29; 2 Chronicles 1:16), who imported horses and linen yarn, has been regarded as indicating the existence of a sort of royal trading company, or of a royal monopoly. A still more curious inference would almost lead us to describe Solomon as the first great "Protectionist." The expressions in 1 Kings 10:15 point to duties paid by retail and wholesale importers, the words, literally rendered, indicating as a source of revenue that "from the traders and from the traffick of the merchants"; both words in their derivation pointing to foreign trade, and probably distinguishing them as retail and wholesale. We may here remark that, besides these duties and the tributes from "protected" kings (1 Kings 9:15), Solomon’s income is described (1 Kings 10:14) as having amounted, at any rate, in one year, to the enormous sum of between two and three million sterling! Part of this may have been derived from the king’s foreign trade. For we know (1 Kings 9:26, etc.; 2 Chronicles 8:17, etc.) that King Solomon built a navy at Ezion-geber, on the Red Sea, which port David had taken. This navy traded to Ophir, in company with the Phoenicians. But as this tendency of King Solomon’s policy was in opposition to the Divine purpose, so it was not lasting. The later attempt of King Jehoshaphat to revive the foreign trade signally failed; "for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber" (1 Kings 22:48; 2 Chronicles 20:36-37), and soon afterwards the port of Ezion-geber passed once more into the hands of Edom (2 Kings 8:20). With this closes the Biblical history of Jewish commerce in Palestine, in the strict sense of that term. But our reference to what may be called the Scriptural indications against the pursuit of commerce brings up a kindred subject, for which, although confessedly a digression, we claim a hearing, on account of its great importance. Those most superficially acquainted with modern theological controversy are aware, that certain

opponents of the Bible have specially directed their attacks against the antiquity of the Pentateuch, although they have not yet arranged among themselves what parts of the Pentateuch were written by different authors, nor by how many, nor by whom, nor at what times, nor when or by whom they were ultimately collected into one book. Now what we contend for in this connection is, that the legislation of the Pentateuch affords evidence of its composition before the people were settled in Palestine. We arrive at this conclusion in the following manner. Supposing a code of laws and institutions to be drawn up by a practical legislator--for unquestionably they were in force in Israel--we maintain, that no human lawgiver could have ordered matters for a nation in a settled state as we find it done in the Pentateuch. The world has had many speculative constitutions of society drawn up by philosophers and theorists, from Plato to Rousseau and Owen. None of these would have suited, or even been possible in a settled state of society. But no philosopher would ever have imagined or thought of such laws as some of the provisions in the Pentateuch. To select only a few, almost at random. Let the reader think of applying, for example, to England, such provisions as that all males were to appear three times a year in the place which the Lord would choose, or those connected with the Sabbatic and the Jubilee years, or those regulating religious and charitable contributions, or those concerning the corners of fields, or those prohibiting the taking of interest or those connected with the Levitical cities. Then let any one seriously ask himself, whether such institutions could have been for the first time propounded or introduced by a legislator at the time of David, or Hezekiah, or of Ezra? The more we think of the spirit and of the details of the Mosaic legislation, the stronger grows our conviction, that such laws and institutions could have been only introduced before the people actually settled in the land. So far as we are aware, this line of argument has not before been proposed; and yet it seems necessary for our opponents to meet this preliminary and, as we think, insuperable difficulty of their theory, before we can be asked to discuss their critical objections. But to return. Passing from Biblical, or, at least, from Old Testament to later times, we find the old popular feeling in Palestine on the subject of commerce still existing. For once Josephus here correctly expresses the views of his countrymen. "As for ourselves," he writes (Ag. Apion, i,60-68), "we neither inhabit a maritime country, nor do we delight in merchandise, nor in such a mixture with other men as arises from it; but the cities we dwell in are remote from the sea, and having a fruitful country for our habitation, we take pains in cultivating that only." Nor were the opinions of the Rabbis different. We know in what low esteem pedlars were held by the Jewish authorities. But even commerce was not much more highly regarded. It has been rightly said that, "in the sixty-three tractates of which the Talmud is composed, scarcely a word occurs in honour of commerce, but much to point out the dangers attendant upon money-making." "Wisdom," says Rabbi Jochanan, in explanation of Deuteronomy 30:12, "'is not in heaven'--that is, it is not found with those who are proud; neither is it 'beyond the sea'--that is, it will not be found among traders nor among merchants" (Er. 55 a). Still more to the point are the provisions of the Jewish law as to those who lent money on interest, or took usury. "The following," we read in Rosh Hash. 8. 8, "are unfit for witness-bearing: he who plays with dice (a gambler); he who lends on usury; they who train doves (either for betting purposes, or as decoys); they who trade in seventh year's products, and slaves." Even more pungent is this, almost reminding one of the Rabbinic gloss: "Of the calumniator God says, 'There is not room in the world for him and Me'"--"The usurer bites off a piece from a man, for he takes from him that which he has not given him" (Bab. Mez. 60 b). A few other kindred sayings may here find a place. "Rabbi Meir saith: Be sparing (doing little) in business, but busy in the Thorah" (Ab. iv. 2). Among

the forty-eight qualifications for acquiring the Thorah, "little business" is mentioned (vi. 6). Lastly, we have this from Hillel, concluding with a very noble saying, worthy to be preserved to all times and in all languages: "He who engages much in business cannot become a sage; and in a place where there are no men, strive thou to be a man."

It will perhaps have been observed, that, with the changing circumstances of the people, the views as to commerce also underwent a slow process of modification, the main object now being to restrict such occupations, and especially to regulate them in accordance with religion. Inspectorships of weights and measures are of comparatively late date in our own country. The Rabbis in this, as in so many other matters, were long before us. They appointed regular inspectors, whose duty it was to go from market to market, and, more than that, to fix the current market prices (Baba B. 88). The prices for produce were ultimately determined by each community. Few merchants would submit to interference with what is called the law of supply and demand. But the Talmudical laws against buying up grain and withdrawing it from sale, especially at a time of scarcity, are exceedingly strict. Similarly, it was prohibited artificially to raise prices, especially of produce. Indeed, it was regarded as cheating to charge a higher profit than sixteen per cent. In general, some would have it that in Palestine no one should make profit out of the necessaries of life. Cheating was declared to involve heavier punishment than a breach of some of the other moral commandments. For the latter, it was argued, might be set right by repentance. But he who cheated took in not merely one or several persons, but every one; and how could that ever be set right? And all were admonished to remember, that "God punisheth even where the eye of an earthly judge cannot penetrate."

We have spoken of a gradual modification of Rabbinical views with the changing circumstances of the nation. This probably comes out most clearly in the advice of the Talmud (Baba M. 42), to divide one’s money into three parts--to lay out one in the purchase of land, to invest the second in merchandise, and to keep the third in hand as cash. But there was always this comfort, which Rab enumerated among the blessings of the next world, that there was no commerce there (Ber. 17 a). And so far as this world was concerned, the advice was to engage in business, in order with the profit made to assist the sages in their pursuits, just as Sebua, one of the three wealthy men of Jerusalem, had assisted the great Hillel. From what has been said, it will be inferred that the views expressed as to Palestinian, or even Babylonian Jews, did not apply to those who were "dispersed abroad" among the various Gentile nations. To them, as already shown, commerce would be a necessity, and, in fact, the grand staple of their existence. If this may be said of all Jews of the dispersion, it applies specially to that community which was the richest and most influential among them--we mean the Jews of Alexandria.

Few phases, even in the ever-changeful history of the Jewish people, are more strange, more varied in interest, or more pathetic than those connected with the Jews of Alexandria. The immigration of Jews into Egypt commenced even before the Babylonish captivity. Naturally it received great increase from that event, and afterwards from the murder of Gedaliah. But the real exodus commenced under Alexander the Great. That monarch accorded to the Jews in Alexandria the same rights as its Greek inhabitants enjoyed, and so raised them to the rank of the privileged classes. Henceforth their numbers and their influence grew under successive rulers. We find them commanding Egyptian armies, largely influencing Egyptian thought and inquiry, and partially leavening it by the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Greek. Of the so-called Temple of Onias

at Leontopolis, which rivalled that of Jerusalem, and of the magnificence of the great synagogue at Alexandria, we cannot speak in this place. There can be no doubt that, in the Providence of God, the location of so many Jews in Alexandria, and the mental influence which they acquired, were designed to have an important bearing on the later spread of the Gospel of Christ among the Greek-speaking and Grecian-thinking educated world. In this, the Greek translation of the Old Testament was also largely helpful. Indeed, humanly speaking, it would have scarcely been possible without it. At the time of Philo the number of Jews in Egypt amounted to no less than one million. In Alexandria they occupied two out of the five quarters of the town, which were called after the first five letters of the alphabet. They lived under rulers of their own, almost in a state of complete independence. Theirs was the quarter Delta, along the seashore. The supervision of navigation, both by sea and river, was wholly entrusted to them. In fact, the large export trade, especially in grain--and Egypt was the granary of the world--was entirely in their hands. The provisioning of Italy and of the world was the business of the Jews. It is a curious circumstance, as illustrating how little the history of the world changes, that during the troubles at Rome the Jewish bankers of Alexandria were able to obtain from their correspondents earlier and more trustworthy political tidings than any one else. This enabled them to declare themselves in turn for Caesar and for Octavius, and to secure the full political and financial results flowing from such policy, just as the great Jewish banking houses at the beginning of this century were similarly able to profit by earlier and more trustworthy news of events than the general public could obtain. But no sketch of commerce among the early Jews, however brief, would be complete without some further notice both of the nature of the trade carried on, and of the legal regulations which guarded it. The business of the travelling hawker, of course, was restricted to negotiating an exchange of the products of one district for those of another, to buying and selling articles of home produce, or introducing among those who affected fashion or luxury in country districts specimens of the latest novelties from abroad. The foreign imports were, with the exception of wood and metals, chiefly articles of luxury. Fish from Spain, apples from Crete, cheese from Bithynia; lentils, beans, and gourds from Egypt and Greece; plates from Babylon, wine from Italy, beer from Media, household vessels from Sidon, baskets from Egypt, dresses from India, sandals from Laodicea, shirts from Cilicia, veils from Arabia--such were some of the goods imported. On the other hand, the exports from Palestine consisted of such produce as wheat, oil, balsam, honey, figs, etc., the value of exports and imports being nearly equal, and the balance, if any, in favour of Palestine.

Then, as to the laws regulating trade and commerce, they were so minute as almost to remind us of the Saviour’s strictures on Pharisaic punctiliousness. Several Mishnic tractates are full of determinations on these points. "The dust of the balances" is a strictly Jewish idea and phrase. So far did the law interfere, as to order that a wholesale dealer must cleanse the measures he used once every month, and a retail dealer twice a week; that all weights were to be washed once a week, and the balances wiped every time they had been used. By way of making assurance doubly sure, the seller had to give rather more than an ounce in addition to every ten pounds, if the article consisted of fluids, or half that if of solids (Baba B. v. 10,11). Here are some of the principal ordinances relating to trade. A bargain was not considered closed until both parties had taken possession of their respective properties. But after one of them had received the money, it was deemed dishonourable and sinful for the other to draw back. In case of overcharge, or a larger than the lawful profit, a purchaser had the right of returning the article, or claiming the balance in money, provided he applied for it after an interval not longer than was needful for showing the

goods to another merchant or to a relative. Similarly, the seller was also protected. Money-changers were allowed to charge a fixed discount for light money, or to return it within a certain period, if below the weight at which they had taken it. A merchant might not be pressed to name the lowest price, unless the questioner seriously intended to purchase; nor might he be even reminded of a former overcharge to induce him to lower his prices. Goods of different qualities might not be mixed, even though the articles added were of superior value. For the protection of the public, agriculturists were forbidden to sell in Palestine wine diluted with water, unless in places where such was the known usage. Indeed, one of the Rabbis went so far as to blame merchants who gave little presents to children by way of attracting the custom of their parents. It is difficult to imagine what they would have said to the modern practice of giving discount to servants. All agreed in reprobating as deceit every attempt to give a better appearance to an article exposed for sale. Purchases of corn could not be concluded till the general market-price had been fixed. But beyond all this, every kind of speculation was regarded as akin to usury. With the delicacy characteristic of Rabbinical law, creditors were expressly prohibited from using anything belonging to a debtor without paying for it, from sending him on an errand, or even accepting a present from one who had solicited an advance. So punctilious were the Rabbis in avoiding the appearance of usury, that a woman who borrowed a loaf from her neighbour was told to fix its value at the time, lest a sudden rise in flour should make the loaf returned worth more than that borrowed! If a house or a field were rented, a somewhat higher charge might be made, if the money were not paid in advance, but not in the case of a purchase. It was regarded as an improper kind of speculation to promise a merchant one-half of the profit on the sales he effected, or to advance him money and then allow him one-half of the profits on his transactions. In either case, it was thought, a merchant would be exposed to more temptation. By law he was only entitled to a commission and to compensation for his time and trouble.

Equally strict were the regulations affecting debtor and creditor. Advances were legally secured by regular documents, drawn out at the expense of the debtor, and attested by witnesses, about whose signature minute directions are given. To prevent mistakes, the sum lent was marked at the top, as well as in the body of the document. A person was not taken as security for another after the loan was actually contracted. In reference to interest (which among the Romans was calculated monthly), in regard to pledges, and in dealing with insolvent debtors, the mildness of the Jewish law has never been equalled. It was lawful, under certain restrictions, to take a pledge, and in the event of non-payment to sell it: but wearing apparel, bedding, the ploughshare, and all articles required for the preparation of food were excepted. Similarly, it was unlawful, under any circumstances, to take a pledge from a widow, or to sell that which belonged to her. These are only some of the provisions by which the interest of all parties were not only guarded, but a higher religious tone sought to be imparted to ordinary life. Those who are acquainted with the state of matters among the nations around, and the cruel exactions of the Roman law, will best appreciate the difference in this respect also between Israel and the Gentiles. The more the Rabbinical code is studied, the higher will be our admiration of its provisions, characterised as these are by wisdom, kindliness, and delicacy, we venture to say, far beyond any modern legislation. Not only the history of the past, the present privileges, and the hope connected with the promises, but the family, social, and public life which he found among his brethren would attach a Jew to his people. Only one thing was awanting--but that, alas! the "one thing needful." For, in the language of St. Paul (Romans 10:2), "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to

knowledge."

02.13. Chapter 13 - Among the People, and with the Pharisees

Chapter 13 - Among the People, and with the Pharisees

It would have been difficult to proceed far either in Galilee or in Judaea without coming into contact with an altogether peculiar and striking individuality, differing from all around, and which would at once arrest attention. This was the Pharisee. Courted or feared, shunned or flattered, reverently looked up to or laughed at, he was equally a power everywhere, both ecclesiastically and politically, as belonging to the most influential, the most zealous, and the most closely-connected religions fraternity, which in the pursuit of its objects spared neither time nor trouble, feared no danger, and shrunk from no consequences. Familiar as the name sounds to readers of the New Testament and students of Jewish history, there is no subject on which more crude or inaccurate notions prevail than that of Pharisaism, nor yet any which, rightly understood, gives fuller insight into the state of Judaism at the time of our Lord, or better illustrates His words and His deeds. Let us first view the Pharisee as, himself seemingly unmoved, he moves about among the crowd, which either respectfully gives way or curiously looks after him.

There was probably no town or village inhabited by Jews which had not its Pharisees, although they would, of course, gather in preference about Jerusalem with its Temple, and what, perhaps would have been even dearer to the heart of a genuine Pharisee--its four hundred and eighty synagogues, its Sanhedrims (great and small), and its schools of study. There could be no difficulty in recognising such an one. Walking behind him, the chances were, he would soon halt to say his prescribed prayers. If the fixed time for them had come, he would stop short in the middle of the road, perhaps say one section of them, move on, again say another part, and so on, till, whatever else might be doubted, there could be no question of the conspicuousness of his devotions in market-place or corners of streets. There he would stand, as taught by the traditional law, would draw his feet well together, compose his body and clothes, and bend so low "that every vertebra in his back would stand out separate," or, at least, till "the skin over his heart would fall into folds" (Ber. 28 b). The workman would drop his tools, the burden-bearer his load; if a man had already one foot in the stirrup, he would withdraw it. The hour had come, and nothing could be suffered to interrupt or disturb him. The very salutation of a king, it was said, must remain unreturned; nay, the twisting of a serpent around one’s heel must remain unheeded. Nor was it merely the prescribed daily seasons of prayer which so claimed his devotions. On entering a village, and again on leaving it, he must say one or two benedictions; the same in passing through a fortress, in encountering any danger, in meeting with anything new, strange, beautiful, or unexpected. And the longer he prayed the better. In the view of the Rabbis this had a twofold advantage; for "much prayer is sure to be heard," and "prolix prayer prolongeth life." At the same time, as each prayer expressed, and closed with a benediction of the Divine Name, there would be special religious merit attaching to mere number, and a hundred "benedictions" said in one day was a kind of measure of great piety. But on meeting a Pharisee face to face his identity could still less be doubted. His self-satisfied, or else mock-modest or ostentatiously meek bearing would betray him, even irrespective of his superciliousness towards others, his avoidance of every touch

of persons or things which he held unclean, and his extravagant religious displays. We are, of course, speaking of the class, or, rather, the party, as such, and of its tendencies, and not of all the individuals who composed it. Besides, there were, as we shall by-and-by see, various degrees among them, from the humblest Pharisee, who was simply a member of the fraternity, only initiated in its lowest degree, or perhaps even a novice, to the most advanced chasid, or "pietist." The latter would, for example, bring every day a trespass-offering, in case he had committed some offence of which he was doubtful. How far the punctiliousness of that class, in observing the laws of Levitical purity, would go, may be gathered from a Rabbi, who would not allow his son to remain in the room while he was in the hands of the surgeon, lest he might be defiled by contact with the amputated limb, which, of course, was thenceforth dead. Another chasid went so far in his zeal for Sabbath observance, that he would not build up again his house because he had thought about it on the Sabbath; and it was even declared by some improper to intrust a letter to a Gentile, lest he should deliver it on the holy day! These are real, but by no means extreme cases. For, a Rabbi, contemporary with the apostles, was actually obliged to denounce, as incompatible with the continuance of society, the vagaries of the so-called "Chasid Shoteh," or silly pietist. What was meant by these will appear from such instances as the refusal to save a woman from drowning for fear of touching a female, or waiting to put off the phylacteries before stretching out a hand to rescue a child from the water!

Readers of the New Testament will remember that the very dress of the Pharisees differed from that of others. Simple as the garb of Orientals is, it must not be thought that, in those days, wealth, rank, and luxury were not recognisable quite as much, if not more, than among ourselves. No doubt the polished Grecian, the courtly Herodian, the wealthy Sadducee, as well as many of the lady patronesses of the Pharisees (Josephus, Ant. xvii,32-45), would have been easily recognised. At any rate, Jewish writings give us such descriptions of their toilette, that we can almost transport ourselves among the fashionable society of Tiberias, Caesarea, Jerusalem, or that of "the dispersed," who were residents of Alexandria or of the wealthy towns of Babylonia.

Altogether, it seems, eighteen garments were supposed to complete an elegant toilette. The material, the colour, and the cut distinguished the wearer. While the poor used the upper garment for a covering at night, the fashionable wore the finest white, embroidered, or even purple garments, with curiously-wrought silk girdles. It was around this upper garment that "the borders" were worn which the Pharisees "enlarged" (Matthew 23:5). Of these we shall speak presently. Meantime we continue our description. The inner garment went down to the heels. The head-dress consisted of a pointed cap, or kind of turban, of more or less exquisite material, and curiously wound, the ends often hanging gracefully behind. Gloves were generally used only for protection. As for ladies, besides differences in dress, the early charge of (Isaiah 3:16-24) against the daughters of Jerusalem might have been repeated with tenfold emphasis in New Testament times. We read of three kinds of veils. The Arabian hung down from the head, leaving the wearer free to see all around; the veil-dress was a kind of mantilla, thrown gracefully about the whole person, and covering the head; while the Egyptian resembled the veil of modern Orientals, covering breast, neck, chin, and face, and leaving only the eyes free. The girdle, which was fastened lower than by men, was often of very costly fabric, and studded with precious stones. Sandals consisted merely of soles strapped to the feet; but ladies wore also costly slippers, sometimes embroidered, or adorned with gems, and so arranged that the pressure of the foot

emitted a delicate perfume. It is well known that scents and "ointments" were greatly in vogue, and often most expensive (Matthew 26:7). The latter were prepared of oil and of home or foreign perfumes, the dearest being kept in costly alabaster boxes. The trade of perfumer was, however, looked down upon, not only among the Jews, but even among heathen nations. But in general society anointing was combined with washing, as tending to comfort and refreshment. The hair, the beard, the forehead, and the face, even garlands worn at feasts, were anointed. But luxury went much farther than all this. Some ladies used cosmetics, painting their cheeks and blackening their eyebrows with a mixture of antimony, zinc, and oil. The hair, which was considered a chief point of beauty, was the object of special care. Young people wore it long; but in men this would have been regarded as a token of effeminacy (1 Corinthians 11:14). The beard was carefully trimmed, anointed, and perfumed. Slaves were not allowed to wear beards. Peasant girls tied their hair in a simple knot; but the fashionable Jewesses curled and plaited theirs, adorning the tresses with gold ornaments and pearls. The favourite colour was a kind of auburn, to produce which the hair was either dyed or sprinkled with gold-dust. We read even of false hair (Shab. vi. 3), just as false teeth also were worn in Judaea. Indeed, as in this respect also there is nothing new under the sun, we are not astonished to find mention of hair-pins and elegant combs, nor to read that some Jewish dandies had their hair regularly dressed! However, the business of hairdresser was not regarded as very respectable, any more than that of perfumer. *

* The learned Lightfoot has expressed a doubt whether the name "Magdalene" is to be rendered "from Magdala" or "the hairdresser." We have noted in a previous chapter, that the inhabitants of Magdala engaged in such and similar business. But the Rabbinical passages to which Lightfoot refers are not satisfactory, since they are evidently dictated by a special animus against Christ and Christianity. As for ornaments, gentlemen generally wore a seal, either on the ring-finger or suspended round the neck. Some of them had also bracelets above the wrist (commonly of the right arm), made of ivory, gold, or precious stones strung together. Of course, the fashionable lady was similarly adorned, adding to the bracelets finger-rings, ankle-rings, nose-rings, ear-rings, gorgeous head-dresses, necklaces, chains, and what are nowadays called "charms." As it may interest some, we shall add a few sentences of description. The ear-ring was either plain, or had a drop, a pendant, or a little bell inserted. The nose-ring, which the traditional law ordered to be put aside on the Sabbath, hung gracefully over the upper lip, yet so as not to interfere with the salute of the privileged friend. Two kinds of necklaces were worn--one close-fitting, the other often consisting of precious stones or pearls, and hanging down over the chest, often as low as the girdle. The fashionable lady would wear two or three such chains, to which smelling-bottles and various ornaments, even heathen "charms," were attached. Gold pendants descended from the head-ornament, which sometimes rose like a tower, or was wreathed in graceful snake-like coils. The anklets were generally so wrought as in walking to make a sound like little bells. Sometimes the two ankle-rings were fastened together, which would oblige the fair wearer to walk with small, mincing steps. If to all this we add gold and diamond pins, and say that our very brief description is strictly based upon contemporary notices, the reader will have some idea of the appearance of fashionable society. The sketch just given will be of some practical use if it helps us more fully to realise the contrast presented by the appearance of the Pharisee. Whether sternly severe, blandly meek, or zealously earnest, he would carefully avoid all contact with one who was not of the fraternity, or even occupied an inferior degree in it, as we shall by-and-by show. He would also be recognisable by his very garb. For, in the language of our Lord, the Pharisees made "broad their

phylacteries," and "enlarged the borders of their garments." The latter observance, at least so far as concerned the wearing of memorial fringes on the borders of the garments--not the conspicuous enlargement of these borders--rested really on a Divine ordinance (Numbers 15:37; Deuteronomy 22:12). In Scripture these fringes are prescribed to be of blue, the symbolical colour of the covenant; but the Mishnah allows them also to be white (Men. iv. 1). They are not unfrequently referred to in the New Testament (Matthew 9:20, Matthew 14:36, Matthew 23:5; Mark 6:56; Luke 8:44). As already stated, they were worn on the border of the outer garment--no doubt by every pious Israelite. Later Jewish mysticism found in this fringed border deep references to the manner in which the Shechinah enwrapped itself in creation, and called the attention of each Israelite to the fact that, if in Numbers 15:39 we read (in the Hebrew), "Ye shall look upon him" [not "it," as in our Authorised Version] "and remember," this change of gender (for the Hebrew word for "fringes" is feminine) indicated--"that, if thou doest so, it is as much as if thou sawest the throne of the Glory, which is like unto blue." And thus believing, the pious Jew would cover in prayer his head with this mysterious fringed garment; in marked contrast to which St. Paul declares all such superstitious practices as dishonouring (1 Corinthians 11:4). *

* The practice of modern Jews is somewhat different from that of ancient times. Without entering into details, it is sufficient here to say that they wear underneath their garments a small square, with fringes, called the little tallith (from "talal," to overshadow or cover), or the "arbah canphoth" (four "corners"); while during prayer they wrap themselves in the great tallith, or so-called prayer-cloak.

If the practice of wearing borders with fringes had Scriptural authority, we are well convinced that no such plea could be urged for the so-called "phylacteries." The observance arose from a literal interpretation of Exodus 13:9, to which even the later injunction in Deuteronomy 6:8 gives no countenance. This appears even from its repetition in Deuteronomy 11:18, where the spiritual meaning and purport of the direction is immediately indicated, and from a comparison with kindred expressions, which evidently could not be taken literally--such as Proverbs 3:3, Proverbs 6:21, Proverbs 7:3; Song of Solomon 8:6; Isaiah 49:16. The very term used by the Rabbis for phylacteries--"tephillin," prayer-fillets--is comparatively modern origin, in so far as it does not occur in the Hebrew Old Testament. The Samaritans did not acknowledge them as of Mosaic obligation, any more than do the Karaite Jews, and there is, what seems to us, sufficient evidence, even from Rabbinical writings, that in the time of Christ phylacteries were not universally worn, nor yet by the priests while officiating in the Temple. Although the words of our Lord seem only expressly to condemn the making broad of the phylacteries, for purposes of religious ostentation, it is difficult to believe that He Himself had worn them. At any rate, while any ordinary Israelite would only put them on at prayer or on solemn occasions, the members of the Pharisaic confraternity wore them all day long. The practice itself, and the views and ordinances connected with it, are so characteristic of the party, that we shall add a few further particulars. The "tephillin" were worn on the left arm, towards the heart, and on the forehead. They consisted--to describe them roughly--of capsules, containing, on parchment (that for the forehead on four distinct parchments), these four passages of Scripture: Exodus 13:1-10, Exodus 13:11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Deuteronomy 11:13-21. The capsules were fastened on by black leather straps, which were wound round the arm and hand (seven times round the former, and three times round the latter), or else fitted to the forehead in a prescribed and mystically significant manner. The wearer of them could not be

mistaken. But as for their value and importance in the eyes of the Rabbis, it were impossible to exaggerate it. They were reverenced as highly as the Scriptures, and, like them, might be rescued from the flames on a Sabbath, although not worn, as constituting "a burden!" It was said that Moses had received the law of their observance from God on Mount Sinai; that the "tephillin" were more sacred than the golden plate on the forehead of the high-priest, since its inscription embodied only once the sacred name of Jehovah, while the writing inside the "tephillin" contained it not less than twenty-three times; that the command of wearing them equalled all other commands put together, with many other similar extravagances. How far the profanity of the Rabbis in this respect would go, appears from the circumstance, that they supposed God Himself as wearing phylacteries (Ber. 6 a). The fact is deduced from Isaiah 62:8, where the "right hand" by which Jehovah swears is supposed to refer to the law, according to the last clause of Deuteronomy 33:2; while the expression "strength of His arm" was applied to the "tephillin," since the term "strength" appeared in Psalms 29:11 in connection with God's people, and was in turn explained by a reference to Deuteronomy 28:10. For "the strength" of God's People (Psalms 29:11) is that which would cause all to "be afraid" of Israel (Deuteronomy 28:10); and this latter would be due to their seeing that Israel was "called by the name of Jehovah," this ocular demonstration being afforded through the "tephillin." Such was the evidence which traditionalism offered for such a monstrous proposition. The above may serve as a specimen alike of Rabbinical exegesis and theological inferences. It will also help us to understand, how in such a system inconvenient objections, arising from the plain meaning of Scripture, would be summarily set aside by exalting the interpretations of men above the teaching of the Bible. This brings us straight to the charge of our Lord against the Pharisees (Mark 7:13), that they made "the Word of God of none effect" through their "traditions." The fact, terrible as it is, nowhere, perhaps, comes out more strongly than in connection with these very "tephillin." We read in the Mishnah (Sanh. xi. 3), literally, as follows: "It is more punishable to act against the words of the Scribes than against those of Scripture. If a man were to say, 'There is no such thing as "tephillin,"' in order thereby to act contrary to the words of Scripture, he is not to be treated as a rebel. But if he should say, 'There are five divisions in the prayer-fillets' (instead of four in those for the forehead, as the Rabbis taught), in order to add to the words of the Scribes, he is guilty." Assuredly, a more signal instance could scarcely be found of "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," and of, even on their own showing, "laying aside the commandment of God," in order to "hold the tradition of men" (Mark 7:7-8).

Before passing from this subject, it may be convenient to explain the meaning of the Greek term "phylacteries" for these "tephillin," and to illustrate its aptness. It is now almost generally admitted, that the real meaning of phylacteries is equivalent to amulets or charms. And as such the Rabbinists really regarded and treated them, however much they might otherwise have disclaimed all connection with heathen views. In this connection we are not going to enter into the unsavoury subject of their heathen superstitions, such as where to find, how to detect, and by what means to get rid of evil spirits, or how to conjure up demons--as these are indicated in the Talmud. Considering the state of civilisation at the time, and the general prevalence of superstition, we should perhaps have scarcely wondered at all this, had it not been for the claims which the Rabbis set up to Divine authority, and the terrible contrast exhibited between their teaching and that--we will not say of the New, but--of the Old Testament. In reference to the "phylacteries," even the language of Josephus (Ant. iv,212-213) savours of belief in their magical efficacy; although in this

matter also he is true to himself, showing us, at the same time, that certain proverbial views of gratitude were already in vogue in his time. For, writing of the phylacteries, which, he maintains, the Jews wore in remembrance of their past deliverance, he observes, that this expression of their gratitude "served not only by way of return for past, but also by way of invitation of future favours!" Many instances of the magical ideas attaching to these "amulets" might be quoted; but the following will suffice. It is said that, when a certain Rabbi left the audience of some king, he had turned his back upon the monarch. Upon this, the courtiers would have killed the Rabbi, but were deterred by seeing that the straps of his "tephillin" shone like bands of fire about him; thus verifying the promise in Deuteronomy 28:10 (Jer. Ber. v. 1). Indeed, we have it expressly stated in an ancient Jewish Targum (that on Song of Solomon 8:3), that the "tephillin" prevented all hostile demons from doing injury to any Israelite.

What has been said will in some measure prepare the reader for investigating the history and influence of the Pharisees at the time of Christ. Let it be borne in mind, that patriotism and religion equally combined to raise them in popular esteem. What made Palestine a land separate and distinct from the heathen nations around, among whom the ruling families would fain have merged them, was that Jewish element which the Pharisees represented. Their very origin as a party stretched back to the great national struggle which had freed the soil of Palestine from Syrian domination. In turn, the Pharisees had deserted those Maccabees whom formerly they had supported, and dared persecution and death, when the descendants of the Maccabees declined into worldly pomp and Grecian ways, and would combine the royal crown of David with the high-priest’s mitre. And now, whoever might fear Herod or his family, the Pharisees at least would not compromise their principles. Again, were they not the representatives of the Divine law--not only of that given to Israel on Mount Sinai, but also of those more secret ordinances which were only verbally communicated to Moses, in explanation of, and addition to the law? If they had made "a hedge" around the law, it was only for the safety of Israel, and for their better separation from all that was impure, as well as from the Gentiles. As for themselves, they were bound by vows and obligations of the strictest kind. Their dealings with the world outside their fraternity, their occupations, their practices, their bearing, their very dress and appearance among that motley crowd--either careless, gay, and Grecianising, or self-condemned by a practice in sad discord with their Jewish profession and principles--would gain for them the distinction of uppermost rooms at feasts, and chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi ("my great one, my great one"), in which their hearts so much delighted. In very truth they mostly did represent, in some one or other degree of their order, what of earnestness and religious zeal there was in the land. Their name--probably in the first instance not chosen by themselves--had become to some a byword, to others a party title. And sadly they had declined from their original tendency--at least in most cases. They were not necessarily "scribes," nor "lawyers," nor yet "teachers of the law." Nor were they a sect, in the ordinary sense of the term. But they were a fraternity, which consisted of various degrees, to which there was a regular novitiate, and which was bound by special vows and obligations. This fraternity was, so to speak, hereditary; so that St. Paul could in very truth speak of himself as "a Pharisee of the Pharisees"--"a Pharisee the son of a Pharisee." That their general principles became dominant, and that they gave its distinctiveness alike to the teaching and the practices of the Synagogue, is sufficiently know. But what tremendous influence they must have wielded to attain this position will best appear from the single fact, which has apparently been too much overlooked, of their almost

incredibly small numbers. According to Josephus (Ant. xvii,32-45), the number of the fraternity amounted at the time of Herod only to about six thousand. Yet this inconsiderable minority could cast Judaism in its mould, and for such terrible evil give its final direction to the nation! Surely the springs of such a movement must have reached down to the very heart of Jewish religious life. What these were, and how they affected the whole community, deserves and requires not merely passing notice, but special and careful attention.

02.14. Chapter 14 - The "Fraternity" of Pharisees

Chapter 14 - The "Fraternity" of Pharisees To realise the state of religious society at the time of our Lord, the fact that the Pharisees were a regular "order," and that there were many such "fraternities," in great measure the outcome of the original Pharisees, must always be kept in view. For the New Testament simply transports us among contemporary scenes and actors, taking the then existent state of things, so to speak, for granted. But the fact referred to explains many seemingly strange circumstances, and casts fresh light upon all. Thus, if, to choose an illustration, we should wonder how so early as the morning after the long discussion in the Sanhedrim, which must have occupied a considerable part of the day, "more than forty men" should have been found "banded together" under an anathema, neither to eat nor to drink "till they had killed Paul" (Acts 23:12, Acts 23:21); and, still more, how such "a conspiracy," or rather "conjuration," which, in the nature of it, would be kept a profound secret, should have become known to "Paul's sister's son" (Acts 23:16), the circumstances of the case furnish a sufficient explanation. The Pharisees were avowedly a "Chabura"--that is, a fraternity or "guild"--and they, or some of their kindred fraternities, would furnish the ready material for such a "band," to whom this additional "vow" would be nothing new nor strange, and, murderous though it sounded, only seem a farther carrying out of the principles of their "order." Again, since the wife and all the children of a "chaber," or member, were ipso facto members of the "Chabura," and Paul's father had been a "Pharisee" (Acts 23:6), Paul's sister also would by virtue of her birth belong to the fraternity, even irrespective of the probability that, in accordance with the principles of the party, she would have married into a Pharisaical family. Nor need we wonder that the rage of the whole "order" against Paul should have gone to an extreme, for which ordinary Jewish zeal would scarcely account. The day before, the excitement of discussion in the Sanhedrim had engrossed their attention, and in a measure diverted it from Paul. The apologetic remark then made (Acts 23:9), "If a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God," coming immediately after the notice (Acts 23:8) that the Sadducees said, there was "neither angel nor spirit," may indicate, that the Pharisees were quite as anxious for dogmatic victory over their opponents as to throw the shield of the "fraternity" over one of its professed members. But with the night other and cooler thoughts came. It might be well enough to defend one of their order against the Sadducees, but it was intolerable to have such a member in the fraternity. A grosser outrage on every principle and vow--nay, on the very reason of being of the whole "Chabura"--could scarcely be conceived than the conduct of St. Paul and the views which he avowed. Even regarding him as a simple Israelite, the multitude which thronged the Temple had, on the day before, been only restrained by the heathens from executing the summary vengeance of "death by the rebel's beating." How much truer was it as the deliberate conviction of the party, and not merely the cry of an excited populace, "Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live!" But while we thus understand the conduct of the Pharisees, we need be under no apprehension as to the consequences to those "more than forty men" of their rash vow. The Jerusalem Talmud (Avod. Sar. 40 a) here furnishes the following curious illustration, which almost reads like a commentary: "If a man makes a vow to abstain from food, Woe to him if he eateth, and, Woe to him if he does not eat! If he eateth, he sinneth against

his vow; if he does not eat, he sins against his life. What then must he do? Let him go before ’the sages,’ and they will absolve him from his vow." In connection with the whole of this matter it is, to say the least, a very curious coincidence that, at the very time when the party so acted against St. Paul, or immediately afterwards, three new enactments should have been passed by Simeon, the son of Gamaliel (Paul’s teacher), which would exactly meet the case of St. Paul. The first of these ordained, that in future the children of a "Chaber" should not be necessarily such, but themselves require special and individual reception into the "order"; the second, that the previous conduct of the candidate should be considered before admitting him into the fraternity; while the third enjoined, that any member who had left the "order," or become a publican, should never afterwards be received back again.

Three words of modern significance, with which of late we have all become too familiar, will probably better help us to understand the whole state of matters than more elaborate explanations. They are connected with that ecclesiastical system which in so many respects seems the counterpart of Rabbinism. Ultramontanism is a direction of religious thought; the Ultramontanes are a party; and the Jesuits not only its fullest embodiment, but an "order," which, originating in a revival of the spirit of the Papacy, gave rise to the Ultramontanes as a party, and, in the wider diffusion of their principles, to Ultramontanism as a tendency. Now, all this applies equally to the Pharisees and to Pharisaism. To make the analogy complete, the order of the Jesuits also consists of four degrees * --curiously enough, the exact number of those in the fraternity of "the Pharisees!"

* When speaking of the four degrees in the order of Jesuits, we refer to those which are professed. We are, of course, aware of the existence of the so-called "professi trium votorum" of whom nothing definite is really known by the outside world, and whom we may regard as "the secret Jesuits," and of that of lay and clerical "coadjutors," whose services and vows are merely temporary.

Like that of the Jesuits, the order of the Pharisees originated in a period of great religious reaction. They themselves delighted in tracing their history up to the time of Ezra, and there may have been substantial, though not literal truth in their claim. For we read in Ezra 6:21, Ezra 9:1, Ezra 10:11 and Nehemiah 9:2 of the "Nivdalim," or those who had "separated" themselves "from the filthiness of the heathen"; while in Nehemiah 10:29 we find, that they entered into a "solemn league and covenant," with definite vows and obligations. Now, it is quite true that the Aramaean word "Perishuth" also means "separation," and that the "Perushim," or Pharisees, of the Mishnah are, so far as the meaning of the term is concerned, "the separated," or the "Nivdalim" of their period. But although they could thus, not only linguistically but historically, trace their origin to those who had "separated" themselves at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, they were not their successors in spirit; and the difference between the designations "Nivdalim" and "Perushim" marks also the widest possible internal difference, albeit it may have been gradually brought about in the course of historical development. All this will become immediately more plain. At the time of Ezra, as already noted, there was a great religious revival among those who had returned to the land of their fathers. The profession which had of old only characterised individuals in Israel (Psalms 30:4, Psalms 31:23, Psalms 37:28) was now taken up by the covenanted people as a whole: they became the "Chasidim" or "pious" (rendered in the Authorised Version, "saints"). As "Chasidim," they resolved to be "Nivdalim," or "separated from all filthiness of heathenism" around. The one

represented, so to speak, the positive; the other, the negative element in their religion. It is deeply interesting to notice, how the former Pharisee (or "separated one"), Paul, had this in view in tracing the Christian life as that of the true "chasid," and therefore "Nivdal"--in opposition to the Pharisees of externalism--in such passages as 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 and 2 Corinthians 7:1, closing with this admonition to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness * of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." And so St. Paul's former life and thinking seem ever to have served him as the type of the spiritual realities of his new state. **

* The Greek word for "filthiness" occurs in this passage only, but the verb from which it is derived seems to have a ceremonial allusion attaching to it in the three passages in which it is used: 1 Corinthians 8:7; Revelation 3:4, Revelation 14:4.

** If St. Paul was originally a Pharisee, the accounts given by the earliest tradition (Euseb. H. E. ii. 23), compared with that of Josephus (Ant. xx,197-203), would almost lead us to infer that St. James was a "Chasid." All the more significant would then be the part he took in removing the yoke of the law from the Gentile converts (Acts 15:13-21).

Two points in Jewish history here claim our special attention, without attempting to unravel the whole somewhat tangled web of events. The first is the period immediately after Alexander the Great. It was one of the objects of the empire which he founded to Grecianise the world; and that object was fully prosecuted by his successors. Accordingly, we find a circle of Grecian cities creeping up along the coast, from Anthedon and Gaza in the south, northwards to Tyre and Seleucia, and eastwards to Damascus, Gadara, Pella, and Philadelphia, wholly belting the land of Israel. Thence the movement advanced into the interior, taking foothold in Galilee and Samaria, and gathering a party with increasing influence and spreading numbers among the people. Now it was under these circumstances, that the "Chasidim" as a party stood out to stem the torrent, which threatened to overwhelm alike the religion and the nationality of Israel. The actual contest soon came, and with it the second grand period in the history of Judaism. Alexander the Great had died in July 323 BC. About a century and a half later, the "Chasidim" had gathered around the Maccabees for Israel's God and for Israel. But the zeal of the Maccabees soon gave place to worldly ambition and projects. When these leaders united in their person the high-priestly with the royal dignity, the party of the "Chasidim" not only deserted them, but went into open opposition. They called on them to resign the high-priesthood, and were ready to suffer martyrdom, as many of them did, for their outspoken convictions. Thenceforth the "Chasidim" of the early type disappear as a class. They had, as a party, already given place to the Pharisees--the modern "Nivdalim"; and when we meet them again they are only a higher order or branch of the Pharisees--"the pious" of old having, so to speak, become pietists." Tradition (Men. 40) expressly distinguished "the early Chasidim" (harishonim) from "the later" (acheronim). No doubt, those are some of their principles, although tinged with later colouring, which are handed down as the characteristics of the "chasid" in such sayings of the Mishnah as: "What is mine is thine, and what is thine remains thine as well" (P. Ab. V. 10); "Hard to make angry, but easy to reconcile" (11); "Giving alms, and inducing others to do likewise" (13); "Going to the house of learning, and at the same time doing good works" (14). The earliest mention of the Pharisees occurs at the time of the Maccabees. As a "fraternity" we meet them first under the rule of John Hyrcanus, the fourth of the Maccabees from Mattathias (135-105 BC); although Josephus speaks of them already two reigns earlier, at the time of Jonathan (Ant. xiii,171-173). He may have done so by anticipation, or

applying later terms to earlier circumstances, since there can be little doubt that the Essenes, whom he names at the same time, had not then any corporate existence. Without questioning that, to use a modern term, "the direction" existed at the time of Jonathan, * we can put our finger on a definite event with which the origin of "the fraternity" of the Pharisees is connected. From Jewish writings we learn, that at the time of Hyrcanus a commission was appointed to inquire throughout the land, how the Divine law of religious contributions was observed by the people. **

* In proof of this, it may be stated that before the formal institution of the "order," R. Jose, the son of Joezer, declared all foreign glass vessels, and indeed the whole soil of heathen lands, "unclean," thus "separating" Israel from all possible intercourse with Gentiles.

** It may be to the decrees then enacted by Hyrcanus that Josephus refers (Ant. xiii,293-298), when he speaks of their "abolition" after Hyrcanus broke with the Pharisaical party. The result showed that, while the "therumah," or priestly "heave-offerings," was regularly given, neither the first or Levitical tithe, nor yet the so-called "second" or "poor's tithe," was paid, as the law enjoined. But such transgression involved mortal sin, since it implied the personal use of what really belonged to the Lord. Then it was that the following arrangements were made. All that the "country people" ('am ha-aretz) sold was to be considered "demai"--a word derived from the Greek for "people," and so betraying the time of its introduction, but really implying that it was "doubtful" whether or not it had been tithed. In such cases the buyer had to regard the "therumah," and the "poor's tithe" as still due on what he had purchased. On the other hand, the Pharisees formed a "Chabura," or fraternity, of which each member--"Chaber," or "companion"--bound himself to pay these tithes before use or sale. Each "Chaber" was regarded as "neeman," or "credited"--his produce being freely bought and sold by the rest of the "Chaberim." Of course, the burden of additional expense which this involved to each non-"chaber" was very great, since he had to pay "therumah" and tithe on all that he purchased or used, while the Pharisee who bought from another Pharisee was free. One cannot help suspecting that this, in connection with kindred enactments, which bore very hard upon the mass of the people, while they left "the Pharisee" untouched, may underlie the charge of our Lord (Matthew 23:4): "They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." But the rigorous discharge of tithes was only one part of the obligations of a "Chaber." The other part consisted in an equally rigorous submission to all the laws of Levitical purity as then understood. Indeed, the varied questions as to what was, or what made "clean," divided the one "order" of Pharisees into members of various degrees. Four such degrees, according to increasing strictness in "making clean," are mentioned. It would take too long to explain this fourfold gradation in its details. Suffice it, that, generally speaking, a member of the first degree was called a "Chaber," or "Ben hacheneseth," "son of the union"--an ordinary Pharisee; while the other three degrees were ranked together under the generic name of "Teharoth" (purifications). These latter were probably the "Chasidim" of the later period. The "Chaber," or ordinary Pharisee, only bound himself to tithing and avoidance of all Levitical uncleanness. The higher degrees, on the other hand, took increasingly strict vows. Any one might enter "the order" if he took, before three members, the solemn vow of observing the obligations of the fraternity. A novitiate of a year (which was afterwards shortened) was, however, necessary. The wife or widow of a "Chaber," and his children, were regarded as members of the fraternity. Those who entered the family of a "Pharisee" had also to seek admission into the "order." The

general obligations of a "Chaber" towards those that were "without" the fraternity were as follows. He was neither to buy from, nor to sell to him anything, either in a dry or fluid state; he was neither to eat at his table (as he might thus partake of what had not been tithed), nor to admit him to his table, unless he had put on the garments of "Chaber" (as his own old ones might else have carried defilement); nor to go into any burying-place; nor to give "therumah" or tithes to any priest who was not a member of the fraternity; nor to do anything in presence of an "am ha-aretz," or non-"Chaber," which brought up points connected with the laws of purification, etc. To these, other ordinances, partly of an ascetic character, were added at a later period. But what is specially remarkable is that not only was a novitiate required for the higher grades, similar to that on first entering the order; but that, just as the garment of a non-"chaber" defiled a "Chaber" of the first degree, that of the latter equally defiled him of the second degree, and so on. *

* It is impossible here to reproduce the Talmudical passages in evidence. But the two obligations of "making clean" and of "tithing," together with the arrangement of the Pharisees into various grades, are even referred to in the Mishnah (Chag. ii. 5,6 and , and Demai ii. 2,3). To sum up then: the fraternity of the Pharisees were bound by these two vows--that of tithing and that in regard to purifications. As the most varied questions would here arise in practice, which certainly were not answered in the law of Moses, the "traditions," which were supposed to explain and supplement the Divine law, became necessary. In point of fact, the Rabbis speak of them in that sense, and describe them as "a hedge" around Israel and its law. That these traditions should have been traced up to oral communications made to Moses on Mount Sinai, and also deduced by ingenious methods from the letter of Scripture, was only a further necessity of the case. The result was a system of pure externalism, which often contravened the spirit of those very ordinances, the letter of which was slavishly worshipped. To what arrant hypocrisy it often gave rise, appears from Rabbinical writings almost as much as from the New Testament. We can understand how those "blind guides" would often be as great a trouble to their own party as to others. "The plague of Pharisaism" was not an uncommon expression; and this religious sore is ranked with "a silly pietist, a cunning sinner, and a woman Pharisee," as constituting "the troubles of life" (Sot. iii. 4). "Shall we stop to explain the opinions of Pharisees?" asks a Rabbi, in supreme contempt for "the order" as such. "It is as a tradition among the Pharisees," we read (Ab. de R. Nathan,5), "to torment themselves in this world, and yet they will not get anything in the next." It was suggested by the Sadducees, that "the Pharisees would by-and-by subject the globe of the sun itself to their purifications." On the other hand, almost Epicurean sentences are quoted among their utterances, such as, "Make haste, eat and drink, for the world in which we are is like a wedding feast"; "If thou possessest anything, make good cheer of it; for there is no pleasure underneath the sod, and death gives no respite...Men are like the flowers of the field; some flourish, while others fade away."

"Like the flowers of the field!" What far other teaching of another Rabbi, Whom these rejected with scorn, do the words recall! And when from their words we turn to the kingdom which He came to found, we can quite understand the essential antagonism of nature between the two. Assuredly, it has been a bold stretch of assertion to connect in any way the origin or characteristics of Christianity with the Rabbis. Yet, when we bring the picture of Pharisaism, as drawn in Rabbinical writings, side by side with the sketch of it given by our Lord, we are struck not only with the life-likeness, but with the selection of the distinctive features of Pharisaism presented in His

reproofs. Indeed, we might almost index the history of Pharisaism by passages from the New Testament. The "tithing of mint and anise," to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law, and "the cleansing" of the outside--these twofold obligations of the Pharisees, "hedged around," as they were, by a traditionalism which made void the spirit of the law, and which manifested itself in gross hypocrisy and religious boasting--are they not what we have just traced in the history of "the order?"

02.15. Chapter 15 - Relation of the Pharisees to the Sadducees and Essenes,...

Chapter 15 - Relation of the Pharisees to the Sadducees and Essenes, and to the Gospel of Christ On taking a retrospective view of Pharisaism, as we have described it, there is a saying of our Lord which at first sight seems almost unaccountable. Yet it is clear and emphatic. "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do" (Matthew 23:3). But if the early disciples were not to break at once and for ever with the Jewish community, such a direction was absolutely needful. For, though the Pharisees were only "an order," Pharisaism, like modern Ultramontanism, had not only become the leading direction of theological thought, but its principles were solemnly proclaimed, and universally acted upon--and the latter, even by their opponents the Sadducees. A Sadducee in the Temple or on the seat of judgment would be obliged to act and decide precisely like a Pharisee. Not that the party had not attempted to give dominance to their peculiar views. But they were fairly vanquished, and it is said that they themselves destroyed the book of Sadducean ordinances, which they had at one time drawn up. And the Pharisees celebrated each dogmatic victory by a feast! What is perhaps the oldest post-Biblical Hebrew book--the "Megillath Taanith," or roll of fasts--is chiefly a Pharisaic calendar of self-glorification, in which dogmatic victories are made days when fasting, and sometimes even mourning, is prohibited. Whatever, therefore, the dogmatic views of the Sadducees were, and however they might, where possible, indulge personal bias, yet in office both parties acted as Pharisees. They were well matched indeed. When a Sadducean high-priest, on the Feast of Tabernacles, poured out the water on the ground instead of into the silver funnel of the altar, Maccabean king though he was, he scarce escaped with his life, and ever afterwards the shout resounded from all parts of the Temple, "Hold up thy hand," as the priest yearly performed this part of the service. The Sadducees held, that on the Day of Atonement the high-priest should light the incense before he actually entered the Most Holy Place. As this was contrary to the views of the Pharisees, they took care to bind him by an oath to observe their ritual customs before allowing him to officiate at all. It was in vain that the Sadducees argued, that the daily sacrifices should not be defrayed from the public treasury, but from special contributions. They had to submit, and besides to join in the kind of half-holiday which the jubilant majority inscribed in their calendar to perpetuate the memory of the decision. The Pharisees held, that the time between Easter and Pentecost should be counted from the second day of the feast; the Sadducees insisted that it should commence with the literal "Sabbath" after the festive day. But, despite argument, the Sadducees had to join when the solemn procession went on the afternoon of the feast to cut down the "first sheaf," and to reckon Pentecost as did their opponents.

We have here referred to only a few of the differences in ritual between the views of the Sadducees and those of the Pharisees. The essential principle of them lay in this, that the Sadducees would hold by the simple letter of the law--do neither more nor less, whether the consequences were to make decisions more severe or more easy. The same principle they applied in their juridical and also in their doctrinal views. It would take us too much into detail to explain the former. But the reader will understand how this literality would, as a rule, make their

judicial decisions (or rather such as they had proposed) far more strict than those of the Pharisees, by a rigidly literal application of the principle, "an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth." The same holds true in regard to the laws of purification, and to those which regulated inheritance. The doctrinal views of the Sadducees are sufficiently known from the New Testament. It is quite true that, in opposition to Sadducean views as to the non-existence of another world and the resurrection, the Pharisees altered the former Temple-formula into "Blessed be God from world to world" (from generation to generation; or, "world without end"), to show that after the present there was another life of blessing and punishment, of joy and sorrow. But the Talmud expressly states that the real principle of the Sadducees was not, that there was no resurrection, but only that it could not be proved from the Thorah, or Law. From this there was, of course, but a short step to the entire denial of the doctrine; and no doubt it was taken by the vast majority of the party. But here also it was again their principle of strict literality, which underlay even the most extreme of their errors. This principle was indeed absolutely necessary to their very existence. We have traced the Pharisees not only to a definite period, but to a special event; and we have been able perfectly to explain their name as "the separated." Not that we presume they gave it to themselves, for no sect or party ever takes a name; they all pretend to require no distinctive title, because they alone genuinely and faithfully represent the truth itself. But when they were called Pharisees, the "Chaberim," no doubt, took kindly to the popular designation. It was to them--to use an illustration--what the name "Puritans" was to a far different and opposite party in the Church. But the name "Sadducee" is involved in quite as much obscurity as the origin of the party. Let us try to cast some fresh light upon both--only premising that the common derivations of their name, whether from the high-priest Zadok, or from a Rabbi called Zadok, whose fundamental principle of not seeking reward in religion they were thought to have misunderstood and misapplied, or from the Hebrew word "zaddikim"--the righteous--are all unsatisfactory, and yet may all contain elements of truth.

There can be no question that the "sect" of the Sadducees originated in a reaction against the Pharisees. If the latter added to the law their own glosses, interpretations, and traditions, the Sadducee took his stand upon the bare letter of the law. He would have none of their additions and supererogations; he would not be righteous overmuch. Suffice it for him to have to practise "zedakah," "righteousness." We can understand how this shibboleth of theirs became, in the mouth of the people, the byname of a party--some using it ironically, some approvingly. By-and-by the party no doubt took as kindly to the name as the Pharisees did to theirs. Thus far, then, we agree with those who derive the title of Sadducees from "zaddikim." But why the grammatically-unaccountable change from "zaddikim" to "zaddukim?" May it not be that the simple but significant alteration of a letter had, after a not uncommon fashion, originated with their opponents, as if they would have said: "You are ’zaddikim?’ Nay, rather, ’zaddukim’" from the Aramaean word "zadu" (wasting or desolation)--meaning, you are not upholders but destroyers of righteousness? This origin of the name would in no way be inconsistent with the later attempts of the party to trace up their history either to the high-priest Zadok, or to one of the fathers of Jewish traditionalism, whose motto they ostentatiously adopted. History records not a few similar instances of attempts to trace up the origin of a religious party. Be this as it may, we can understand how the adherents of Sadducean opinions belonged chiefly to the rich, luxurious, and aristocratic party, including the wealthy families of priests; while, according to the testimony of Josephus, which is corroborated by the New Testament, the mass of the people, and especially

the women, venerated and supported the Pharisaical party. Thus the "order" of the "Chaberim" gradually became a popular party, like the Ultramontanes. Finally, as from the nature of it Pharisaism was dependent upon traditional lore, it became not only the prevailing direction of Jewish theological study, but the "Chaber" by-and-by merged into the Rabbi, the "sage," or "disciple of the sages"; while the non-"chaber," or "am ha-aretz," became the designation for ignorance of traditional lore, and neglect of its ordinances. This was specially the case when the dissolution of the Jewish commonwealth rendered the obligations of the "fraternity" necessarily impossible. Under such altered circumstances the old historical Pharisee would often be no small plague to the leaders of the party, as is frequently the case with the original adherents and sticklers of a sect in which the irresistible progress of time has necessarily produced changes. The course of our investigations has shown, that neither Pharisees nor Sadducees were a sect, in the sense of separating from Temple or Synagogue; and also that the Jewish people as such were not divided between Pharisees and Sadducees. The small number of professed Pharisees (six thousand) at the time of Herod, the representations of the New Testament, and even the curious circumstance that Philo never once mentions the name of Pharisee, confirm the result of our historical inquiries, that the Pharisees were first an "order," then gave the name to a party, and finally represented a direction of theological thought. The New Testament speaks of no other than these two parties. But Josephus and Philo also mention the "Essenes." It is beyond our present scope either to describe their tenets and practices, or even to discuss the complex question of the origin of their name. From the nature of it, the party exercised no great influence, and was but short-lived. They seem to have combined a kind of higher grade Pharisaism with devotional views, and even practices, derived from Eastern mysticism, and more particularly from the Medo-Persian religion. Of the former, the fact that the one object of all their institutions was a higher purity, may here be regarded as sufficient evidence. The latter is apparent from a careful study of their views, as these have been preserved to us, and from their comparison with the Zoroastrian system. And of the fact that "Palestine was surrounded by Persian influences," there are abundant indications. As a sect the Essenes never attained a larger number than four thousand; and as they lived apart from the rest, neither mingling in their society nor in their worship, and--as a general rule--abstained from marriage, they soon became extinct. Indeed, Rabbinical writings allude to quite a number of what may probably be described as sectaries, all of them more or less distinctly belonging to the mystical and ascetic branch of Pharisaism. We here name, first, the "Vathikin," or "strong ones," who performed their prayers with the first dawn; secondly, the "Toble Shachrith," or "morning baptists," who immersed before morning prayer, so as to utter the Divine Name only in a state of purity; thirdly, the "Kehala Kadisha," or "holy congregation," who spent a third of the day in prayer, a third in study, and a third in labour; fourthly, the "Banaim," or "builders," who, besides aiming after highest purity, occupied themselves with mystical studies about God and the world; fifthly, the "Zenuim," or "secret pious," who besides kept their views and writings secret; sixthly, the "Nekije hadaath," "men of a pure mind," who were really separatists from their brethren; seventhly, the "Chashaim," or "mysterious ones"; and lastly, the "Assiim," "helpers" or "healers," who professed to possess the right pronunciation of the sacred Name of Jehovah, with all that this implied.

If in any of the towns of Judaea one had met the strange apparition of a man dressed wholly in white, whose sandals and garments perhaps bore signs of age--for they might not be put away till quite worn out--but who was scrupulously clean, this man was an Essene. The passers would stop

short and look after him with mingled reverence and curiosity. For he was but rarely seen in town or village--the community separating from the rest of the people, and inhabiting desert places, specially the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea; and the character of the "order" for asceticism and self-denial, as well as for purity, was universally known. However strictly they observed the Sabbath, it was in their own synagogues; and although they sent gifts to the altar, they attended not the Temple nor offered sacrifices, partly because they regarded their arrangements as not sufficiently Levitically clean, and partly because they came to consider their own table an altar, and their common meals a sacrifice. They formed an "order," bound by the strictest vows, taken under terrible oaths, and subject to the most rigorous disciplines. The members abstained from wine, meat, and oil, and most of them also from marriage. They had community of goods; were bound to poverty, chastity, and obedience to their superiors. Purity of morals was enjoined, especially in regard to speaking the truth. To take an oath was prohibited, as also the keeping of slaves. The order consisted of four grades; contact with one of a lower always defiling him of the higher grade. The novitiate lasted two years, though at the end of the first the candidate was taken into closer fellowship. The rule was in the hands of "elders," who had the power of admission and expulsion--the latter being almost equivalent to death by starvation, as the Essene had bound himself by a terrible oath not to associate with others. Their day began with sunrise, when they went to prayer. Before that, nothing secular might be spoken. After prayer, they betook themselves to agricultural labour--for they were not allowed to keep herds and flocks--or else to works of charity, specially the healing of the sick. At eleven o'clock they bathed, changed their dress, and then gathered for the common meal. A priest opened and closed it with prayer. They sat according to age and dignity; the eldest engaging in serious conversation, but in so quiet a tone as not to be heard outside. The young men served. Each had bread and salt handed him, also another dish; the elders being allowed the condiment of hyssop and the luxury of warm water. After the meal they put off their clothes, and returned to work till the evening, when there was another common meal, followed by mystical hymns and dances, to symbolise the rapt, ecstatic state of mind.

It is needless to follow the subject farther. Even what has been said--irrespective of their separation from the world, their punctilious Sabbath-observance, and views on purification; their opposition to sacrifices, and notably their rejection of the doctrine of the resurrection--is surely sufficient to prove that they had no connection with the origin of Christianity. Assertions of this kind are equally astonishing to the calm historical student and painful to the Christian. Yet there can be no doubt that among these mystical sects were preserved views of the Divine Being, of the Messiah and His kingdom, and of kindred doctrines, which afterwards appeared in the so-called "secret tradition" of the Synagogue, and which, as derived from the study of the prophetic writings, contain marvellous echoes of Christian truth. On this point, however, we may not here enter.

Christ and the Gospel among Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes! We can now realise the scene, and understand the mutual relations. The existing communities, the religious tendencies, the spirit of the age, assuredly offered no point of attachment--only absolute and essential contrariety to the kingdom of heaven. The "preparer of the way" could appeal to neither of them; his voice only cried "in the wilderness." Far, far beyond the origin of Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, he had to point back to the original Paschal consecration of Israel as that which was to be now exhibited in its reality: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." If the first great miracle of Christianity was the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, the

second--perhaps we should have rather put it first, to realise the symbolism of the two miracles in Cana--was that it found nothing analogous in the religious communities around, nothing sympathetic, absolutely no stem on which to graft the new plant, but was literally "as a root out of a dry ground," of which alike Pharisee, Sadducee, and Essene would say: "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him."

02.16. Chapter 16 - Synagogues: Their Origin, Structure and Outward Arrangements

Chapter 16 - Synagogues: Their Origin, Structure and Outward Arrangements

It was a beautiful saying of Rabbi Jochanan (Jer. Ber. v. 1), that he who prays in his house surrounds and fortifies it, so to speak, with a wall of iron. Nevertheless, it seems immediately contradicted by what follows. For it is explained that this only holds good where a man is alone, but that where there is a community prayer should be offered in the synagogue. We can readily understand how, after the destruction of the Temple, and the cessation of its symbolical worship, the excessive value attached to mere attendance at the synagogue would rapidly grow in public estimation, till it exceeded all bounds of moderation or reason. Thus, such Scriptural sayings as Isaiah 66:20, Isaiah 55:6 and Psalms 82:1 were applied to it. The Babylon Talmud goes even farther. There we are told (Ber. 6 a), that the prayer which a man addresses to God has only its proper effect if offered in the synagogue; that if an individual, accustomed to frequent every day the synagogue, misses it for once, God will demand an account of him; that if the Eternal finds fewer than ten persons there gathered, His anger is kindled, as it is written in Isaiah 50:2 (Ber. 6 b); that if a person has a synagogue in his own town, and does not enter it for prayer, he is to be called an evil neighbour, and provokes exile alike upon himself and his children, as it is written in Jeremiah 12:4; while, on the other hand, the practice of early resorting to the synagogue would account for the longevity of people (Ber. 8 a). Putting aside these extravagances, there cannot, however, be doubt that, long before the Talmudical period, the institution of synagogues had spread, not only among the Palestinian, but among the Jews of the dispersion, and that it was felt a growing necessity, alike from internal and external causes.

Readers of the New Testament know, that at the time of our Lord synagogues were dotted all over the land; that in them "from of old" Moses had been read (Acts 15:21); that they were under the rule of certain authorities, who also exercised discipline; that the services were definitely regulated, although considerable liberty obtained, and that part of them consisted in reading the prophets, which was generally followed by an "exhortation" (Acts 13:15) or an address (Luke 4:17). The word "synagogue" is, of course, of Greek derivation, and means "gathering together"--for religious purposes. The corresponding Rabbinical terms, "chenisah," "cheneseth," etc., "zibbur," "vaad," and "kahal," may be generally characterised as equivalents. But it is interesting to notice, that both the Old Testament and the Rabbis have shades of distinction, well known in modern theological discussions. To begin with the former. Two terms are used for Israel as a congregation: "edah" and "kahal"; of which the former seems to refer to Israel chiefly in their outward organisation as a congregation--what moderns would call the visible Church--while "kahal" rather indicates their inner or spiritual connection. Even the LXX seem to have seen this distinction. The word "edah" occurs one hundred and thirty times, and is always rendered in the LXX by "synagogue," never by "ecclesia" (church); while "kahal" is translated in seventy places by "ecclesia," and only in thirty-seven by "synagogue." Similarly, the Mishnah employs the term

"kahal" only to denote Israel as a whole; while the term "zibbur," for example, is used alike for churches and for the Church--that is, for individual congregations, and for Israel as a whole. The origin of the synagogue is lost in the obscurity of tradition. Of course, like so many other institutions, it is traced by the Rabbis to the patriarchs. Thus, both the Targum Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum represent Jacob as an attendant in the synagogue, and Rebekah as resorting thither for advice when feeling within her the unnatural contest of her two sons. There can be no occasion for seriously discussing such statements. For when in 2 Kings 22:8 we read that "the book of the law" was discovered by Shaphan the scribe in "the house of the Lord," this implies that during the reign of King Josiah there could have been no synagogues in the land, since it was their main object to secure the weekly reading, and of course the preservation, of the books of Moses (Acts 15:21). Our Authorised Version, indeed, renders Psalms 74:8, "They have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land." But there is good authority for questioning this translation; and, even if admitted, it would not settle the question of the exact time when synagogues originated. On the other hand, there is not a hint of synagogue-worship either in the law or the prophets; and this of itself would be decisive, considering the importance of the subject. Besides, it may be said that there was no room for such meetings under the Old Testament dispensation. There the whole worship was typical--the sacrificial services alike constituting the manner in which Israel approached unto God, and being the way by which He communicated blessings to His people. Gatherings for prayer and for fellowship with the Father belong, so far as the Church as a whole is concerned, to the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. It is quite in accordance with this general principle, that when men filled with the Spirit of God were raised up from time to time, those who longed for deeper knowledge and closer converse with the Lord should have gathered around them on Sabbaths and new moons, as the pious Shunammite resorted to Elisha (2 Kings 4:23), and as others were no doubt wont to do, if within reach of "prophets" or their disciples. But quite a different state of matter ensued during the Babylonish captivity. Deprived of the Temple services, some kind of religious meetings would become an absolute necessity, if the people were not to lapse into practical heathenism--a danger, indeed, which, despite the admonitions of the prophets, and the prospect of deliverance held out, was not quite avoided. For the preservation, also, of the national bond which connected Israel, as well as for their continued religious existence, the institution of synagogues seemed alike needful and desirable. In point of fact, the attentive reader of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah will discover in the period after the return from Babylon the beginnings of the synagogue. Only quite rudimentary as yet, and chiefly for the purposes of instructing those who had come back ignorant and semi-heathenish--still, they formed a starting-point. Then came the time of terrible Syrian oppression and persecutions, and of the Maccabean rising. We can understand, how under such circumstances the institution of the synagogue would develop, and gradually assume the proportions and the meaning which it afterwards attained. For it must be borne in mind, that, in proportion as the spiritual import of the Temple services was lost to view, and Judaism became a matter of outward ordinances, nice distinctions, and logical discussion, the synagogue would grow in importance. And so it came to pass, that at the time of Christ there was not a foreign settlement of Jews without one or more synagogues--that of Alexandria, of which both the Talmuds speak in such exaggerated language, being specially gorgeous--while throughout Palestine they were thickly planted. It is to these latter only that we can for the present direct attention. Not a town, nor a village, if it numbered only ten men, who could or would wholly give themselves to divine things, * but had one or more

synagogues.

* The so-called "Batlanim." The exact meaning of the term has given rise to much learned discussion.

If it be asked, why the number ten was thus fixed upon as the smallest that could form a congregation, the reply is that, according to Numbers 14:27, the "evil congregation" consisted of the spies who had brought a bad report, and whose number was ten--after deducting, of course, Joshua and Caleb. Larger cities had several, some of them many, synagogues. From Acts 6:9 we know that such was the case in Jerusalem, tradition having also left us an account of the synagogue of "the Alexandrians," to which class of Jews Stephen may have belonged by birth or education, on which ground also he would chiefly address himself to them. The Rabbis have it that, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, that city had not fewer than 480, or at least 460, synagogues. Unless the number 480 was fixed upon simply as the multiple of symbolical numbers (4 x 10 x 12), or with a kindred mystical purpose in view, it would, of course, be a gross exaggeration. But, as a stranger entered a town or village, it could never be difficult to find out the synagogue. If it had not, like our churches, its spire, pointing men, as it were, heavenward, the highest ground in the place was at least selected for it, to symbolise that its engagements overtopped all things else, and in remembrance of the prophetic saying, that the Lord’s house should "be established in the top of the mountains," and "exalted above the hills" (Isaiah 2:2). If such a situation could not be secured, it was sought to place it "in the corners of streets," or at the entrance to the chief squares, according to what was regarded as a significant direction in Proverbs 1:21. Possibly our Lord may have had this also in view when He spoke of those who loved "to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets" (Matthew 6:5), it being a very common practice at the time to offer prayer on entering a synagogue. But if no prominent site could be obtained, a pole should at least be attached to the roof, to reach up beyond the highest house. A city whose synagogue was lower than the other dwellings was regarded as in danger of destruction. Of the architecture of ordinary synagogues, not only the oldest still in existence, but the recent excavations in Palestine, enable us to form a correct idea. Internally they were simply rectangular or round buildings, with a single or double colonnade, and more or less adorned by carvings. Externally they had generally some sacred symbol carved on the lintels--commonly the seven-branched candlestick, or perhaps the pot of manna. *

* "Of the tabernacle in which the ark rested at Shiloh, from the time of Joshua to that of Samuel, no trace, of course, remains. But on the summit of a little knoll we find the remains of what was once a Jewish synagogue, afterwards used as a church, and subsequently as a mosque. On the lintel over the doorway, between two wreaths of flowers, is carved a vessel, shaped like a Roman amphora. It so closely resembles the conventional type of the ’pot of manna,’ as found on coins and in the ruins of the synagogue at Capernaum, that it doubtless formed part of the original building. It is a not improbable conjecture that the synagogue may have been erected on the sacred spot which for so many generations formed the centre of Jewish worship."--Those Holy Fields.

There is one remarkable instance of the use of the latter emblem, too important to be passed over. In Capernaum, our Lord’s "own city" (Matthew 9:1), there was but one synagogue--that built at the cost of the pious centurion. For, although our Authorised Version renders the commendation of the

Jewish elders, "He loveth our nation, and has built us a synagogue" (Luke 7:5), in the original the article is definite: "he hath built us the synagogue"--just as in a similar manner we infer that Nazareth had only one synagogue (Matthew 13:54). The site of the ancient Capernaum had till comparatively recently been unknown. But its identification with the modern Tell Hum is now so satisfactory, that few would care to question it. What is even more interesting, the very ruins of that synagogue which the good centurion built have been brought to light; and, as if to make doubt impossible, its architecture is evidently that of the Herodian period. And here comes in the incidental but complete confirmation of the gospel narrative. We remember how, before, the Lord Jesus had by His word of blessing multiplied the scanty provision, brought, it might be accidentally, by a lad in the company of those five thousand who had thronged to hear Him, so that there was not only sufficient for their wants, but enough for each of the twelve apostles to fill his basket with the fragments of what the Saviour had dispensed. That day of miraculous provision had been followed by a night of equally wondrous deliverance. His disciples were crossing the lake, now tossed by one of those sudden storms which so frequently sweep down upon it from the mountains. All at once, in their perplexity, it was the Master Whom they saw, walking on the sea, and nearing the ship. As the light of the moon fell upon that well-known form, and, as He drew nigh, cast His shadow in increasing proportions upon the waters which, obedient, bore His feet, they feared. It was a marvellous vision--too marvellous almost to believe it a reality, and too awful to bear it, if a reality. And so they seem to have hesitated about receiving Him into the ship. But His presence and voice soon reassured them, and "immediately the ship was at the land." That "land" was the seashore of Capernaum. The next morning broke with the usual calm and beauty of spring on the lake. Presently white sails were spreading over its tranquil waters; marking the approach of many from the other side, who, missing "the Prophet," Whom, with the characteristic enthusiasm of the inhabitants of that district, they would fain have made a king, now followed Him across the water. There could be no difficulty in "finding Him" in "His own city," the home of Peter and Andrew (Mark 1:21, Mark 1:29). But no ordinary dwelling would have held such a concourse as now thronged around Him. So, we imagine, the multitude made their way towards the synagogue. On the road, we suppose, the question and answers passed, of which we have an account in John 6:25-28. They had now reached the entrance to the synagogue; and the following discourse was pronounced by the Lord in the synagogue itself, as we are expressly told in John 6:59 : "These things said He in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum." But what is so remarkable is, that the very lintel of this synagogue has been found, and that the device upon it bears such close reference to the question which the Jews put to Jesus, that we can almost imagine them pointing up to it, as they entered the synagogue, and said: "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat" (John 6:31). For, in the words of Canon Williams, "The lintel lying among the ruins of the good centurion’s synagogue at Capernaum has carved on it the device of the pot of manna. What is further remarkable, this lintel is ornamented besides with a flowing pattern of vine leaves and clusters of grapes, and another emblem of the mystery of which our Lord discoursed so largely in this synagogue."

Before parting from this most interesting subject, we may place beside the Master, as it were, the two representatives of His Church, a Gentile and a Jew, both connected with this synagogue. Of its builder, the good centurion, Canon Williams thus writes: "In what spirit the large-hearted Roman soldier had made his offering, the rich and elaborate carvings of cornices and entablatures, of columns and capitals, and niches, still attest." As for the ruler of that same synagogue, we know

that it was Jairus, whose cry of anguish and of faith brought Jesus to his house to speak the life-giving "Talitha cumi" over the one only daughter, just bursting into womanhood, who lay dead in that chamber, while the crowd outside and the hired minstrels made shrill, discordant mourning.

Thus far as to the external appearance of synagogues. Their internal arrangement appears to have been originally upon the plan of the Temple, or, perhaps, even of the Tabernacle. At least, the oldest still standing synagogue, that of the Cyrenian Jews, in the island of Gerbe, is, according to the description of a missionary, Dr. Ewald, tripartite, after the model of the Court, the Holy, and the Most Holy Place. And in all synagogues the body of the building, with the space around, set apart for women, represents the Court of the Women, while the innermost and highest place, with the Ark behind, containing the rolls of the law, represents the sanctuary itself. In turn the synagogue seems to have been adopted as the model for the earliest Christian churches. Hence not only the structure of the "basilica," but the very term "bema," is incorporated in Rabbinical language. This is only what might have been expected, considering that the earliest Christians were Jews by nationality, and that heathenism could offer no type for Christian worship. To return. As concerned the worshippers, it was deemed wrong to pray behind a synagogue without turning the face to it; and a story is told (Ber. 6 b) of Elijah appearing in the form of an Arab merchant, and punishing one guilty of this sin. "Thou standest before thy Master as if there were two Powers [or Gods]," said the seeming Arab; and with these words "he drew his sword and killed him." A still more curious idea prevailed, that it was requisite to advance the length of at least "two doors" within a synagogue before settling to prayer, which was justified by a reference to Proverbs 8:34 (Ber. 8 a). The inference is peculiar, but not more so, perhaps, than those of some modern critics, and certainly not more strange than that of the Talmud itself, which, on a preceding page, when discussing the precise duration of the wrath of the Almighty, concludes that Balaam had been the only person who knew it exactly, since it is written of him (Numbers 24:16), that he "knew the thoughts of the Most High!" Another direction of the Talmud was to leave the synagogue with slow steps, but to hasten to it as rapidly as possible, since it was written (Hosea 6:3, as the Rabbis arranged the verse), "Let us pursue to know the Lord." Rabbi Seira tells us how, at one time, he had been scandalised by seeing the Rabbis running on the Sabbath--when bodily rest was enjoined--to attend a sermon; but that, when he understood how Hosea 11:10 applied to the teaching of the Halachah, he himself joined in their race. And so Rabbi Seira, as it seems to us, somewhat caustically concludes: "The reward of a discourse is the haste" with which people run to it--no matter, it would appear, whether they get in to hear it, or whether there is anything in the discourse worth the hearing. As a rule, synagogues were built at the expense of the congregation, though perhaps assisted by richer neighbours. Sometimes, as we know, they were erected at the cost of private individuals, which was supposed to involve special merit. In other cases, more particularly when the number of Jews was small, a large room in a private house was set apart for the purpose. This also passed into the early Church, as we gather from Acts 2:46, Acts 5:42. Accordingly we understand the apostolic expression, "Church in the house" (Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 1:2), as implying that in all these and other instances a room in a private house had been set apart, in which the Christians regularly assembled for their worship. Synagogues were consecrated by prayer, although, even thus, the ceremony was not deemed completed till after the ordinary prayers had been offered by some one, though it were a passing stranger. Rules of decorum, analogous to those enforced in the Temple, were enjoined on those who attended the synagogue. Decency and cleanliness in dress,

quietness and reverence in demeanour, are prescribed with almost wearisome details and distinctions. Money collections were only to be made for the poor or for the redemption of captives. If the building were in a dangerous condition, the synagogue might be broken down, provided another were built as rapidly as possible in its place. But even so, the sanctity of their place remained, and synagogue-ruins might not be converted into mourning places, nor used as thoroughfares, nor might ropes be hung up in them, nor nets spread, nor fruits laid out for drying. The principle of sanctity applied, of course, to all analogous uses to which such ruins might have been put. Money collected for building a synagogue might, if absolute necessity arose, be employed by the congregation for other purposes; but if stones, beams, etc., had been purchased for the building, these could not be resold, but were regarded as dedicated. A town synagogue was considered absolutely inalienable; those in villages might be disposed of under the direction of the local Sanhedrim, provided the locale were not afterwards to be used as a public bath, a wash-house, a tannery, or a pool. The money realised was to be devoted to something more sacred than the mere stone and mortar of a synagogue--say, the ark in which the copies of the law were kept. Different from synagogues, though devoted to kindred purposes, were the so-called "oratories" or "places where prayer was wont to be made" (Acts 16:13). These were generally placed outside towns and in the vicinity of running water or of the sea (Josephus, Ant. xiv,256-258), for the purpose of the customary lustrations connected with prayer (Philo ii. 535). The separation of the sexes, which was observed even in the Temple at the time of Christ, was strictly carried out in the synagogues, such division being made effectual by a partition, boarded off and provided with gratings, to which there was separate access. The practice seems simply in accordance with Eastern manners and modes of thinking. But the Rabbis, who seek Scripture authority for every arrangement, however trivial, find in this case their warrant in Zechariah 12:11-14, where "the wives" are no less than five times spoken of as "apart," while engaged in their prayerful mourning. The synagogue was so placed that, on entering it, the worshippers would face towards Jerusalem--mere "orientation," as it is now called, having no meaning in Jewish worship. Beyond the middle of the synagogue rose the platform or "bima," as it was anciently, or "almmeor," as it is presently named. Those who were called up to it for reading ascended by the side nearest, and descended by that most remote from their seats in the synagogue. On this "bima" stood the pulpit, or rather lectern, the "migdal ez," "wooden tower" of Nehemiah 8:4, whence the prescribed portions of the law and of the prophets were read, and addresses delivered. The reader stood; the preacher sat. Thus we find (Luke 4:20) that, after reading a portion from the prophet Isaiah, our Lord "closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down," before delivering His discourse in the synagogue of Nazareth. Prayer also was offered standing, although in the Temple the worshippers prostrated themselves, a practice still continued in certain of the most solemn litanies. The pulpit or lectern--"migdal" (tower), "chisse" and "churseja" (chair or throne), or "pergulah" (the Latin "pergula," probably elevation)--stood in the middle of the "bima," and in front of "the ark." The latter, which occupied the innermost place in the synagogue, as already noticed, corresponded to the Most Holy Place in the Temple, and formed the most important part. It was called the "aron" (ark), the "tevah," or "tevutha" (chest, like that in which Noah and Moses were saved), or the "hechal" (little temple). In reality, it consisted of a press or chest, in which the rolls of the law were deposited. This "ark" was made movable (Taan. ii. 1,2), so as to lift out on occasions of public fasting and prayer, in order to have it placed in the street or market-place where the people gathered. Sometimes there was also a second press for

the rolls of the prophets, in which the disused or damaged rolls of the law were likewise deposited. In front of the ark hung the "vilon" ("velum," veil), in imitation of that before the Holy Place. Above it was suspended the "ner olam," or ever-burning lamp, and near to it stood the eight-branched candlestick, lit during the eight days of the feast of the dedication of the Temple (John 10:22), or Candlemas. The practice of lighting candles and lamps, not merely for use, but in honour of the day or feast, is not unknown in the synagogues. Of course, in regard to this, as to other practices, it is impossible to determine what was the exact custom at the time of our Lord, although the reader may be able to infer how much and what special practices may have been gradually introduced. It would lead beyond our present scope to describe the various directions to be observed in copying out the synagogue-rolls, which embodied the five books of Moses, or to detail what would render them unfit for use. No less than twenty such causes are mentioned by the Rabbis. At present the vellum, on which the Pentateuch is written, is affixed to two rollers, and as each portion of the law is read it is unrolled from the right, and rolled on to the left roller. The roll itself was fastened together by linen wrappers or cloths ("mitpachoth"), and then placed in a "case" ("tik," the Greek "theke"). All these articles are already mentioned in the Mishnah. Later practices need not here occupy our attention. Lastly, it should be noted, that at first the people probably stood in the synagogues or sat on the ground. But as the services became more protracted, sitting accommodation had to be provided. The congregation sat facing the ark. On the other hand, "the rulers of the synagogue," Rabbis, distinguished Pharisees, and others, who sought honour of men, claimed "the chief seats," which were placed with their backs to the ark, and facing the worshippers. These seats, which bear the same name as in the New Testament, were made objects of special ambition (Matthew 23:6), and rank, dignity, or seniority entitled a Rabbi or other influential man to priority. Our Lord expressly refers to this (Matthew 23:6) as one of the characteristic manifestations of Pharisaical pride. That both the same spirit and practice had crept into some of the early churches, appears from the warning of St. James (James 2:2-3) against an un-Christ-like "respect of persons," which would assign a place high up in "synagogues" of Christians to the mere possession of "goodly apparel" or the wearing of the "gold ring."

Hitherto we have chiefly described the outward arrangements of the synagogues. It will now be necessary, however rapidly in this place, to sketch their various uses, their worship, and their officials, most of which are also referred to in various parts of the New Testament.

02.17. Chapter 17 - The Worship of the Synagogue

Chapter 17 - The Worship of the Synagogue

One of the most difficult questions in Jewish history is that connected with the existence of a synagogue within the Temple. That such a "synagogue" existed, and that its meeting-place was in "the hall of hewn stones," at the south-eastern angle of the court of the priest, cannot be called in question, in face of the clear testimony of contemporary witnesses. Considering that "the hall of hew stones" was also the meeting-place for the great Sanhedrim, and that not only legal decisions, but lectures and theological discussions formed part of their occupation, we might be tempted to conjecture that the term "synagogue" had been employed in its wider sense, since such buildings were generally used throughout the country for this two-fold purpose as well as for worship. Of theological lectures and discussions in the Temple, we have an instance on the occasion when our Lord was found by His parents "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46). And it can scarcely be doubted, that this also explains how the scribes and Pharisees could so frequently "come upon Him," while He taught in the Temple, with their difficult and entangling questions, up to that rejoinder about the nature of the Messiah, with which He finally silenced them: "If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?" (Matthew 22:45). But in reference to the so-called "Temple-synagogue," there is this difficulty, that certain prayers and rites seem to have been connected with it, which formed no part of the regular Temple services, and yet were somehow engrafted upon them. We can therefore only conclude that the growing change in the theological views of Israel, before and about the time of Christ, made the Temple services alone appear insufficient. The symbolical and typical elements which constituted the life and centre of Temple worship had lost their spiritual meaning and attraction to the majority of that generation, and their place was becoming occupied by so-called teaching and outward performances. Thus the worship of the letter took the place of that of the spirit, and Israel was preparing to reject Christ for Pharisaism. The synagogue was substituted for the Temple, and overshadowed it, even within its walls, by an incongruous mixture of man-devised worship with the God-ordained typical rites of the sanctuary. Thus, so far from the "Temple-synagogue" being the model for those throughout the country, as some writers maintain, it seems to us of later origin, and to have borrowed many rites from the country synagogues, in which the people had become accustomed to them. The subject has a far deeper than merely historical interest. For the presence of a synagogue within the Temple, or rather, as we prefer to put it, the addition of synagogue-worship to that of the Temple, is sadly symbolical. It is, so to speak, one of those terribly significant utterances (by deed), in which Israel, all unconsciously, pronounced its own doom, just as was this: "His blood be upon us and our children," or the cry for the release of Barabbas (the son of the father), who had been condemned "for sedition" and "murder"--no doubt in connection with a pseudo-Messianic rising against the Roman power--instead of the true Son of the Father, who would indeed have "restored the kingdom to Israel." And yet there was nothing in the worship itself of the synagogue which could have prevented either the Lord, or His apostles and early followers, from attending it till the time of final separation had come. Readers of the New

Testament know what precious opportunities it offered for making known the Gospel. Its services were, indeed, singularly elastic. For the main object of the synagogue was the teaching of the people. The very idea of its institution, before and at the time of Ezra, explains and conveys this, and it is confirmed by the testimony of Josephus (Ag. Apion, ii,157-172). But perhaps the ordinary reader of the New Testament may have failed to notice, how prominently this element in the synagogue is brought out in the gospel history. Yet the word "teaching" is used so frequently in connection with our Lord's appearance in the synagogue, that its lesson is obvious (see Matthew 4:23; Mark 1:21, Mark 6:2; Luke 4:15, Luke 6:6, Luke 13:10; John 6:59, John 18:20). The "teaching" part of the service consisted mainly in reading a section from the law, with which the reading of a portion from the prophets, and a sermon, or address, were conjoined. Of course, the liturgical element could in such services never have been quite wanting, and it soon acquired considerable importance. It consisted of prayer and the pronouncing of the Aaronic blessing (Numbers 6:24-26) by priests--that is, of course, not by Rabbis, who were merely teachers or doctors, but by lineal descendants of the house of Aaron. There was no service of "praise" in the synagogues.

Public worship * commenced on ordinary occasions with the so-called "Shema," which was preceded in the morning and evening by two "benedictions," and succeeded in the morning by one, and in the evening by two, benedictions; the second being, strictly speaking, an evening prayer.

* Our description here applies to the worship of the ancient, not of the modern synagogue; and we have thought it best to confine ourselves to the testimony of the Mishnah, so as to avoid the danger of bringing in practices of a later date. The "Shema" was a kind of "belief," or "creed," composed of these three passages of Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Deuteronomy 11:13-21; Numbers 15:37-41. It obtained its name from the initial word "shema": "Hear, O Israel," in Deuteronomy 6:4. From the Mishnah (Ber. 1. 3) we learn, that this part of the service existed already before the time of our Lord; and we are told (Ber. iii. 3), that all males were bound to repeat this belief twice every day; children and slaves, as well as women, being exempted from the obligation. There can be no reasonable doubt on the subject, as the Mishnah expressly mentions the three Scriptural sections of the "Shema," the number of benedictions before and after it, and even the initial words of the closing benediction (Ber. ii. 2, i. 4; Tamid, v. 1). We have, therefore, here certain prayers which our Lord Himself had not only heard, but in which He must have shared--to what extent will appear in the sequel. These prayers still exist in the synagogue, although with later additions, which, happily, it is not difficult to eliminate. Before transcribing them, it may be quoted as a mark of the value attached to them, that it was lawful to say this and the other daily prayers--to which we shall hereafter refer--and the "grace at meat," not only in the Hebrew, but in any other language, in order to secure a general understanding of the service (Sotah, vii. 1). At the same time, expressions are used which lead us to suppose that, while the liturgical formulae connected with the "Shema" were fixed, there were local variations, in the way of lengthening or shortening (Ber. i. 4). The following are the "benedictions" before the "Shema," in their original form:

1. "Blessed be Thou, O Lord, King of the world, Who formest the light and createst the darkness, Who makest peace and createst everything; Who, in mercy, givest light to the earth and to those who dwell upon it, and in Thy goodness day by day and every day renewest the works of creation.

Blessed be the Lord our God for the glory of His handiwork and for the light-giving lights which He has made for His praise. Selah! Blessed be the Lord our God, Who hath formed the lights." *

* This "benediction," while acknowledging the Creator, has such frequent reference to God in connection with the "lights," that it reads like a confession of Israel against the idolatries of Babylon. This circumstance may help to fix the time of its origination.

2. "With great love hast Thou loved us, O Lord our God, and with much overflowing pity hast Thou pitied us, our Father and our King. For the sake of our fathers who trusted in Thee, and Thou taughtest them the statutes of life, have mercy upon us and teach us. Enlighten our eyes in Thy law; cause our hearts to cleave to Thy commandments; unite our hearts to love and fear Thy name, and we shall not be put to shame, world without end. For Thou art a God Who preparest salvation, and us hast Thou chosen from among all nations and tongues, and hast in truth brought us near to Thy great Name--Selah--that we may lovingly praise Thee and Thy Oneness. Blessed be the Lord Who in love chose His people Israel."

After this followed the "Shema." The Mishnah gives the following beautiful explanation of the order in which the portions of Scripture of which it is composed are arranged (Ber. ii. 2). The section Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is said to precede that in Deuteronomy 11:13-21, so that we might "take upon ourselves the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, and only after that the yoke of the commandments." Again: Deuteronomy 11:13-21 precedes Numbers 15:37-41, because the former applies, as it were, both night and day; the latter only by day. The reader cannot fail to observe the light cast by the teaching of the Mishnah upon the gracious invitation of our Lord: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). These words must indeed have had a special significance to those who remembered the Rabbinic lesson as to the relation between the kingdom of heaven and the commandments, and they would now understand how by coming to the Saviour they would first take upon them "the yoke of the kingdom of heaven," and then that of "the commandments," finding this "yoke easy" and the "burden light." The prayer after the "Shema" was as follows: * * In the form here given it is older than even the prayer referred to in the Mishnah (Ber. ii. 2).

"True it is, that Thou art Jehovah our God and the God of our fathers, our King and the King of our fathers, our Saviour and the Saviour of our fathers, our Creator, the Rock of our salvation, our Help and our Deliverer. Thy Name is from everlasting, and there is no God beside Thee. A new song did they that were delivered sing to Thy Name by the seashore; together did all praise and own Thee King, and say, Jehovah shall reign world without end! Blessed be the Lord Who saveth Israel!" The anti-Sadducean views expressed in this prayer will strike the student of that period, while he will also be much impressed with its suitableness and beauty. The special prayer for the evening is of not quite so old a date as the three just quoted. But as it is referred to in the Mishnah, and is so apt and simple, we reproduce it, as follows:

"O Lord our God! cause us to lie down in peace, and raise us up again to life, O our King! Spread over us the tabernacle of Thy peace; strengthen us before Thee in Thy good counsel, and deliver us for Thy Name’s sake. Be Thou for protection round about us; keep far from us the enemy, the pestilence, the sword, famine, and affliction. Keep Satan from before and from behind us, and hide us in the shadow of Thy wings, for Thou art a God Who helpest and deliverest us; and Thou, O

God, art a gracious and merciful King. Keep Thou our going out and our coming in, for life and for peace, from henceforth and for ever!" (To this prayer a further addition was made at a later period.) The "Shema" and its accompanying "benedictions" seem to have been said in the synagogue at the lectern; whereas for the next series of prayers the leader of the devotions went forward and stood before "the ark." Hence the expression, "to go up before the ark," for leading in prayer. This difference in position seems implied in many passages of the Mishnah (specially Megillah, iv.), which makes a distinction between saying the "Shema" and "going up before the ark." The prayers offered before the ark consisted of the so-called eighteen eulogies, or benedictions, and formed the "tephillah," or supplication, in the strictest sense of the term. These eighteen, or rather, as they are now, nineteen, eulogies are of various dates--the earliest being the first three and the last three. There can be no reasonable doubt that these were said at worship in the synagogues, when our Lord was present. Next in date are eulogies 4,5,6,7,9, and 16. Eulogy 7, which in its present position seems somewhat incongruous, dates from a period of great national calamity--perhaps the time of Pompey. The other eulogies, and some insertions in the older benedictions, were added after the fall of the Jewish commonwealth--eulogy 12 especially being intended against the early Jewish converts to Christianity. In all likelihood it had been the practice originally to insert prayers of private composition between the (present) first three and last three eulogies; and out of these the later eulogies were gradually formulated. At any rate, we know that on Sabbaths and on other festive occasions only the first three and the last three eulogies were repeated, other petitions being inserted between them. There was thus room for the endless repetitions and "long prayers" which the Saviour condemned (Mark 12:40; Luke 20:47). Besides, it must be borne in mind that, both on entering and leaving the synagogue, it was customary to offer prayer, and that it was a current Rabbinical saying, "Prolix prayer prolongeth life." But as we are sure that, on the Sabbaths when Our Lord attended the synagogues at Nazareth and Capernaum, the first three and the last three of the eulogies were repeated, we produce them here, as follows:

1. "Blessed be the Lord our God and the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; the great, the mighty, and the terrible God; the Most High God, Who showeth mercy and kindness, Who createth all things, Who remembereth the gracious promises to the fathers, and bringeth a Saviour to their children’s children, for His own Name’s sake, in love. O King, Helper, Saviour, and Shield! Blessed art Thou, O Jehovah, the Shield of Abraham."

2. "Thou, O Lord, art mighty for ever; Thou, Who quickenest the dead, art mighty to save. In Thy mercy Thou preservest the living; Thou quickenest the dead; in Thine abundant pity Thou bearest up those who fall, and healest those who are diseased, and loosest those who are bound, and fulfillest Thy faithful word to those who sleep in the dust. Who is like unto Thee, Lord of strength, and who can be compared to Thee, Who killest and makest alive, and causest salvation to spring forth? And faithful art Thou to give life unto the dead. Blessed be Thou, Jehovah, Who quickenest the dead!"

3. "Thou art holy, and Thy Name is holy; and the holy ones praise Thee every day. Selah! Blessed art Thou, Jehovah God, the Holy One!"

It is impossible not to feel the solemnity of these prayers. They breathe the deepest hopes of Israel in simple, Scriptural language. But who can fully realise their sacred import as uttered not only in the Presence, but by the very lips of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who Himself was their answer? The

three concluding eulogies were as follows:

17. "Take gracious pleasure, O Jehovah our God, in Thy people Israel, and in their prayers. Accept the burnt-offerings of Israel, and their prayers, with thy good pleasure; and may the services of Thy people Israel be ever acceptable unto Thee. And oh that our eyes may see it, as Thou turnest in mercy to Zion! Blessed be Thou, O Jehovah, Who restoreth His Shechinah to Zion!"

18. "We praise Thee, because Thou art Jehovah our God, and the God of our fathers, for ever and ever. Thou art the Rock of our life, the Shield of our salvation, from generation to generation. We laud Thee, and declare Thy praise for our lives which are kept within Thine hand, and for our souls which are committed unto Thee, and for Thy wonders which are with us every day, and Thy wondrous deeds and Thy goodnesses, which are at all seasons--evening, morning, and mid-day. Thou gracious One, Whose compassions never end; Thou pitying One, Whose grace never ceaseth--for ever do we put our trust in Thee! And for all this Thy Name, O our King, be blessed and extolled always, for ever and ever! And all living bless Thee--Selah--and praise Thy Name in truth, O God, our Salvation and our Help. Blessed art Thou, Jehovah; Thy Name is the gracious One, to Whom praise is due."

19. (We give this eulogy in its shorter form, as it is at present used in evening prayer.) "Oh bestow on Thy people Israel great peace, for ever; for Thou art King and Lord of all peace, and it is good in Thine eyes to bless Thy people Israel with praise at all times and in every hour. Blessed art Thou, Jehovah, Who blesseth His people Israel with peace."

Another act, hitherto, so far as we know, unnoticed, requires here to be mentioned. It invests the prayers just quoted with a new and almost unparalleled interest. According to the Mishnah (Megillah, iv. 5), the person who read in the synagogue the portion from the prophets was also expected to say the "Shema," and to offer the prayers which have just been quoted. It follows that, in all likelihood, our Lord Himself had led the devotions in the synagogue of Capernaum on that Sabbath when He read the portion from the prophecies of Isaiah which was that day "fulfilled in their hearing" (Luke 4:16-21). Nor is it possible to withstand the impression, how specially suitable to the occasion would have been the words of these prayers, particularly those of eulogies 2 and 17. The prayers were conducted or repeated aloud by one individual, specially deputed for the occasion, the congregation responding by an "Amen." The liturgical service concluded with the priestly benediction (Numbers 6:23-24), spoken by the descendants of Aaron. In case none such were present, "the legate of the Church," as the leader of the devotions was called, repeated the words from the Scriptures in their connection. In giving the benediction, the priests elevated their hands up to the shoulders (Sotah, vii. 6); in the Temple, up to the forehead. Hence this rite is designated by the expression, "the lifting up of the hands." *

* The apostle may have had this in his mind when, in directing the order of public ministration, he spoke of "the men...lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting" (1 Timothy 2:8). At any rate, the expression is precisely the same as that used by the Rabbis.

According to the present practice, the fingers of the two hands are so joined together and separated as to form five interstices; and a mystic meaning attaches to this. It was a later superstition to forbid looking at the priests' hands, as involving physical danger. But the Mishnah

already directs that priests having blemishes on their hands, or their fingers dyed, were not to pronounce the benediction, lest the attention of the people should be attracted. Of the attitude to be observed in prayer, this is perhaps scarcely the place to speak in detail. Suffice it, that the body was to be fully bent, yet so, that care was taken never to make it appear as if the service had been burdensome. One of the Rabbis tells us, that, with this object in view, he bent down as does a branch; while, in lifting himself up again, he did it like a serpent--beginning with the head! Any one deputed by the rulers of a congregation might say prayers, except a minor. This, however, applies only to the "Shema." The eulogies or "tephillah" proper, as well as the priestly benediction, could not be pronounced by those who were not properly clothed, nor by those who were so blind as not to be able to discern daylight. If any one introduced into the prayers heretical views, or what were regarded as such, he was immediately stopped; and, if any impropriety had been committed, was put under the ban for a week. One of the most interesting and difficult questions relates to certain modes of dress and appearance, and certain expressions used in prayer, which the Mishnah (Megillah, iv. 8,9) declares either to mark heresy or to indicate that a man was not to be allowed to lead prayers in the synagogue. It may be, that some of these statements refer not only to certain Jewish "heretics," but also to the early Jewish Christians. If so, they may indicate certain peculiarities with which they were popularly credited. Of the services hitherto noticed, the most important were the repetition of the eulogies and the priestly benediction. What now followed was regarded as quite as solemn, if, indeed, not more so. It has already been pointed out, that the main object of the synagogue was the teaching of the people. This was specially accomplished by the reading of the law. At present the Pentateuch is for this purpose arranged into fifty-four sections, of which one is read on each successive Sabbath of the year, beginning immediately after the feast of Tabernacles. But anciently the lectionary, at least in Palestine, seems to have been differently arranged, and the Pentateuch so divided that its reading occupied three, or, according to some, three and a-half years (half a Jubilee-period). The section for the day was subdivided, so that every Sabbath at least seven persons were called up to read, each a portion, which was to consist of not less than three verses. The first reader began, and the last closed, with a benediction. As the Hebrew had given place to the Aramaic, a "meturgeman," or interpreter, stood by the side of the reader, and translated verse by verse into the vernacular. It was customary to have service in the synagogues, not only on Sabbaths and feast-days, but also on the second and fifth days of the week (Monday and Thursday), when the country-people came to market, and when the local Sanhedrim also sat for the adjudication of minor causes. At such week-day services only three persons were called up to read in the law; on new moon’s day and on the intermediate days of a festive week, four; on festive days--when a section from the prophets was also read--five; and on the day of atonement, six. Even a minor was allowed to read, and, if qualified, to act as "meturgeman." The section describing the sin of Reuben, and that giving a second account of the sin of the golden calf, were read, but not interpreted; those recounting the priestly blessing, and, again, the sin of David and of Amnon, were neither read nor interpreted. The reading of the law was followed by a lesson from the prophets. At present there is a regular lectionary, in which these lessons are so selected as to suit the sections from the law appointed for the day. This arrangement has been traced to the time of the Syrian persecutions, when all copies of the law were sought for and destroyed; and the Jewish authorities are supposed to have selected portions from the prophets to replace those from the law which might not be produced in public. But it is evident that, if these persecuting measures had been rigidly enforced, the sacred

rolls of the prophets would not have escaped destruction any more than those of the law. Besides, it is quite certain that such a lectionary of the prophets as that presently in use did not exist at the time of our Lord, nor even when the Mishnah was collated. Considerable liberty seems to have been left to individuals; and the expression used by St. Luke in reference to our Lord in the synagogue at Capernaum (Luke 4:17), "And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written," most accurately describes the state of matters. For, from Megillah iv. 4, we gather that, in reading from the prophets, it was lawful to pass over one or more verses, provided there were no pause between the reading and the translation of the "meturgeman." For here also the services of a "meturgeman" were employed; only that he did not, as in reading the law, translate verse by verse, but after every three verses. It is a remarkable fact that the Rabbis exclude from public reading the section in the prophecies of Ezekiel which describes "the chariot and wheels." Rabbi Elieser would also have excluded that in Ezekiel 16:2. The reading of the prophets was often followed by a sermon or address, with which the service concluded. The preacher was called "darshan," and his address a "derashah" (homily, sermon, from "darash," to ask, inquire, or discuss). When the address was a learned theological discussion--especially in academies--it was not delivered to the people directly, but whispered into the ear of an "amora," or speaker, who explained to the multitude in popular language the weighty sayings which the Rabbi had briefly communicated to him. A more popular sermon, on the other hand, was called a "meamar," literally, a "speech, or talk." These addresses would be either Rabbinical expositions of Scripture, or else doctrinal discussions, in which appeal would be made to tradition and to the authority of certain great teachers. For it was laid down as a principle (Eduj. i. 3), that "every one is bound to teach in the very language of his teacher." In view of this two-fold fact, we can in some measure understand the deep impression which the words of our Lord produced, even on those who remained permanently uninfluenced by them. The substance of His addresses was far other than they had ever heard of, or conceived possible. It seemed as if they opened quite a new world of thought, hope, duty, and comfort. No wonder that even in contemptuous Capernaum "all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth"; and that the very Temple-guard sent to make Him prisoner were overawed, and before the council could only give this account of their strange negligence: "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). Similarly, the form also of His teaching was so different from the constant appeal of the Rabbis to mere tradition; it seemed all to come so quite fresh and direct from heaven, like the living waters of the Holy Spirit, that "the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:28-29).

02.18. Chapter 18 - Brief Outline of Ancient Jewish Theological Literature

Chapter 18 - Brief Outline of Ancient Jewish Theological Literature The arrangements of the synagogue, as hitherto described, combined in a remarkable manner fixedness of order with liberty of the individual. Alike the seasons and the time of public services, their order, the prayers to be offered, and the portions of the law to be read were fixed. On the other hand, between the eighteen "benedictions" said on ordinary days, and the seven repeated on the Sabbaths, free prayer might be inserted; the selection from the prophets, with which the public reading concluded--the "Haphtarah" (from "patar," to "conclude")--seems to have been originally left to individual choice; while the determination who was to read, or to conduct the prayers, or to address the people, was in the hands of the "rulers of the synagogue" (Acts 13:15). The latter, who were probably also the members of the local Sanhedrim, had naturally charge of the conduct of public worship, as well as of the government and discipline of the synagogues. They were men learned in the law and of good repute, whom the popular voice designated, but who were regularly set apart by "the laying on of hands," or the "Semichah," which was done by at least three, who had themselves received ordination, upon which the candidate had the formal title of Rabbi bestowed on him, and was declared qualified to administer the law (Sanh. 13 b). The Divine Majesty was supposed to be in the midst of each Sanhedrim, on account of which even that consisting of only three members might be designated as "Elohim." Perhaps this may have been said in explanation and application of Psalms 82:6 : "I have said, Ye are Elohim; and all of you children of the Most High." The special qualifications for the office of Sanhedrist, mentioned in Rabbinical writings, are such as to remind us of the directions of St. Paul to Timothy (1 Timothy 3:1-10). A member of the Sanhedrim must be wise, modest, God-fearing, truthful, not greedy of filthy lucre, given to hospitality, kindly, not a gambler, nor a usurer, nor one who traded in the produce of Sabbatical years, nor yet one who indulged in unlawful games (Sanh. iii. 3). They were called "Sekenim," "elders" (Luke 7:3), "Memunim," "rulers" (Mark 5:22), "Parnasin," "feeders, overseers, shepherds of the flock" (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2), and "Manhigei," "guides" (Hebrews 13:7). They were under the presidency and supreme rule of an "Archisynagogos," or "Rosh-ha-Cheneseth," "head of the synagogue" (Yom. vii. 1; Sot. vii. 7), who sometimes seems to have even exercised sole authority. The designation occurs frequently in the New Testament (Matthew 9:18; Mark 5:35-38; Luke 8:41, Luke 8:49, Luke 13:14; Acts 18:8, Acts 18:17). The inferior functions in the synagogue devolved on the "chassan," or "minister" (Luke 4:20). In course of time, however, the "chassanim" combined with their original duties the office of schoolmaster; and at present they lead both the singing and the devotions of the synagogue. This duty originally devolved not on any fixed person, but whoever was chosen might for the time being act as "Sheliach Zibbur," or "legate of the congregation." Most modern writers have imagined, that the expression "angel of the Church," in the epistles to the seven churches in the book of Revelation, was used in allusion to this ancient arrangement of the synagogue. But the fact that the "Sheliach Zibbur" represented not an office but a function, renders this view untenable. Besides, in that case,

the corresponding Greek expression would rather have been "apostle" than "angel of the Church." Possibly, however, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews may refer to it, when he designates the Lord Jesus "the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession" (Hebrews 3:1). Besides these functionaries, we also read of "Gabaei Zedakah," or collectors of charity, to whom the Talmud (B. Bathra,8 b) by a jeu de mots * applies the promise that they "shall be as the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:3), since they lead many to "righteousness."

* Zedakah means righteousness, but is also used for "charity."

Alms were collected at regular times every week, either in money or in victuals. At least two were employed in collecting, and three in distributing charity, so as to avoid the suspicion of dishonesty or partiality. These collectors of charity, who required to be "men of good repute, and faithful," are thought by many to have been the model for the institution of the Diaconate in the early Church. But the analogy scarcely holds good; nor, indeed, were such collectors employed in every synagogue. In describing the conduct of public worship in the synagogues, reference was made to the "meturgeman," who translated into the vernacular dialect what was read out of the Hebrew Scriptures, and also to the "darshan," who expounded the Scriptures or else the traditional law in an address, delivered after the reading of the "Haphtarah," or section from the prophets. These two terms will have suggested names which often occur in writings on Jewish subjects, and may fitly lead to some remarks on Jewish theology at the time of our Lord. Now the work of the "meturgeman" * was perpetuated in the Targum, and that of the "darshan" in the Midrash.

* Hence also the term "dragoman."

Primarily the Targum, then, was intended as a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the vernacular Aramaean. Of course, such translations might be either literal, or else more or less paraphrastic. Every Targum would also naturally represent the special views of the translator, and be interesting as affording an insight into the ideas prevalent at the time, and the manner in which Scripture was understood. But some Targumim are much more paraphrastic than others, and indeed become a kind of commentary, showing us the popular theology of the time. Strictly speaking, we have really no Targum dating from the time of our Lord, nor even from the first century of our era. There can be no doubt, however, that such a Targum did exist, although it has been lost. Still, the Targumim preserved to us, although collated, and having received their present form at later periods, contain very much that dates from the Temple-period, and even before that. Mentioning them in the order of their comparative antiquity, we have the Targum of Onkelos, on the five books of Moses; the Targum of Jonathan, on the prophets (inclusive of Joshua, Judges, and the books of Samuel and of the Kings); the so-called (or pseudo) Jonathan on the Pentateuch; and the Jerusalem Targum, which is but a fragment. Probably the latter two were intended to be supplemental to the Targum Onkelos. Late criticism has thrown doubt even on the existence of such a person as Onkelos. Whoever may have been the author, this Targum, in its present form, dates probably from the third, that of Jonathan on the prophets from the fourth century. In some respects more interesting than the Targumim are the Midrashim, of which we possess three, dating probably, in their present form, from the first or second century of our era, but embodying many parts much older. These are--mentioning them again in the order of their antiquity--"Siphra" (the book), a commentary on Leviticus; "Siphri," a commentary on Numbers and Deuteronomy; and "Mechiltha," a commentary on certain portions of Exodus. But we have even a monument

more interesting than these, of the views of the ancient Pharisees, and of their Scriptural interpretations. Some of the fathers referred to a work called "Lesser Genesis," or the "Book of Jubilees." This had been lost to theological literature, till again discovered within the present century, although not in the original Hebrew, nor even in its first or Greek translation, but in an Ethiopic rendering from the latter. The work, which no doubt dates from the era of our Lord, covers the same ground as the first book of Moses, whence the name of "Lesser Genesis." It gives the Biblical narrative from the creation of the world to the institution of the Passover, in the spirit in which the Judaism of that period would view it. The legendary additions, the Rabbinical ideas expressed, the interpretations furnished, are just such as one would expect to find in such a work. One of the main objects of the writer seems to have been the chronology of the book of Genesis, which it is attempted to settle. All events are recorded according to Jubilee-periods of forty-nine years, whence the name "Book of Jubilees," given to the work. These "Jubilees" are again arranged into "weeks," each of seven years (a day for a year); and events are classified as having taken place in a certain month of a certain year, of a certain "week" of years, of a certain "Jubilee"-period. Another tendency of the book, which, however, it has in common with all similar productions, is to trace up all later institutions to the patriarchal period. *

* Although the "Book of Jubilees" seems most likely of Pharisaic authorship, the views expressed in it are not always those of the Pharisees. Thus the resurrection is denied, although the immortality of the soul is maintained.

Besides these works, another class of theological literature has been preserved to us, around which of late much and most serious controversy has gathered. Most readers, of course, know about the Apocrypha; but these works are called the "pseudo-epigraphic writings." Their subject-matter may be described as mainly dealing with unfulfilled prophecy; and they are couched in language and figures borrowed, among others, from the book of Daniel. In fact, they read like attempts at imitating certain portions of that prophecy--only that their scope is sometimes wider. This class of literature is larger than those not acquainted with the period might have expected. Yet when remembering the troubles of the time, the feverish expectations of a coming deliverance, and the peculiar cast of mind and training of those who wrote them, they scarcely seem more numerous, nor perhaps even more extravagant, than a certain kind of prophetic literature, abundant among us not long ago, which the fear of Napoleon or other political events from time to time called forth. To that kind of production, they seem, at least to us, to bear an essential likeness--only that, unlike the Western, the Oriental expounder of unfulfilled prophecy assumes rather the language of the prophet than that of the commentator, and clothes his views in mystic emblematic language. In general, this kind of literature may be arranged into Greek and Hebrew--according as the writers were either Egyptian (Hellenistic) or Palestinian Jews. Considerable difficulty exists as to the precise date of some of these writings--whether previous or subsequent to the time of Christ. These difficulties are, of course, increased when it is sought to fix the precise period when each of them was composed. Still, late historical investigations have led to much accord on general points. Without referring to the use which opponents of Christianity have of late attempted to make of these books, it may be safely asserted that their proper study and interpretation will yet be made very helpful, not only in casting light upon the period, but in showing the essential difference between the teaching of the men of that age and that of the New Testament. For each branch and department of sacred study, the more carefully, diligently, and

impartially it is pursued, affords only fresh testimony to that truth which is most certainly, and on the best and surest grounds, believed among us.

It were, however, a mistake to suppose that the Rabbinical views, extravagant as they so often are, were propounded quite independently of Scripture. On the contrary, every traditional ordinance, every Rabbinical institution, nay, every legend and saying, is somehow foisted upon the text of the Old Testament. To explain this, even in the briefest manner, it is necessary to state that, in general, Jewish traditionalism is distinguished into the "Halachah" and the "Haggadah." The "Halachah" (from "halach," to "walk") indicates the settled legal determinations, which constituted the "oral law," or "Thorah shebeal peh." Nothing could here be altered, nor was any freedom left to the individual teacher, save that of explanation and illustration. The object of the "Halachah" was to state in detail, and to apply to all possible cases, the principles laid down in the law of Moses; as also to surround it, as it were, with "a hedge," in order to render every unwitting transgression impossible. The "Halachah" enjoyed not only the same authority with the law of Moses, but, as being explanatory, in some respects was even more highly esteemed. Indeed, strictly speaking, it was regarded as equally with the Pentateuch the revelation of God to Moses; only the form or manner of revelation was regarded as different--the one being committed to writing, the other handed down by word of mouth. According to tradition, Moses explained the traditional law successively to Aaron, to his sons, to the seventy elders, and to the people--care being taken that each class heard it four times (Maimonides' Preface to Seraim,1 a). The Talmud itself attempts to prove that the whole traditional law, as well as the writings of the prophets and the Hagiographa, had been communicated to Moses, by quoting Exodus 24:12 : "I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them." "The 'tables of stone,'" argues Rabbi Levi (Ber. 5 1), "are the ten commandments; the 'law' is the written law (in the Pentateuch); the 'commandments' are the Mishnah; 'which I have written,' refers to the prophets and the Hagiographa; while the words, 'that thou mayest teach them,' point to the Gemara. From this we learn, that all this was given to Moses on Sinai."

If such was the "Halachah," it is not so easy to define the limits of the "Haggadah." The term, which is derived from the verb "higgid," to "discuss," or "tell about," covers all that possessed not the authority of strict legal determinations. It was legend, or story, or moral, or exposition, or discussion, or application--in short, whatever the fancy or predilections of a teacher might choose to make it, so that he could somehow connect it either with Scripture or with a "Halachah." For this purpose some definite rules were necessary to preserve, if not from extravagance, at least from utter absurdity. Originally there were four such canons for connecting the "Haggadah" with Scripture. Contracting, after the favourite manner of the Jews, the initial letters, these four canons were designated by the word "Pardes" (Paradise). They were--1. To ascertain the plain meaning of a passage (the "Peshat"); 2. To take the single letters of a word as an indication or hint ("Remes") of other words, or even of whole sentences; 3. The "Derush," or practical exposition of a passage; and 4. To find out the "Sod" (mystery), or mystical meaning of a verse or word. These four canons were gradually enlarged into thirty-two rules, which gave free vent to every kind of fancifulness. Thus one of these rules--the "Gematria" (geometry, calculation)--allowed the interpreter to find out the numerical value of the letters in a word--the Hebrew letters, like the Roman, being also numerals--and to substitute for a word one or more which had the same numerical value. Thus, if in Numbers 12:1 we read that Moses was married to an "Ethiopian woman" (in the original,

"Cushith"), Onkelos substitutes instead of this, by "gematria," the words, "of fair appearance"--the numerical value both of Cushith and of the words "of fair appearance" being equally 736. By this substitution the objectionable idea of Moses' marrying an Ethiopian was at the same time removed. Similarly, the Mishnah maintains that those who loved God were to inherit each 310 worlds, the numerical value of the word "substance" ("Yesh") in Proverbs 8:21 being 310. On the other hand, the canons for the deduction of a "Halachah" from the text of Scripture were much more strict and logical. Seven such rules are ascribed to Hillel, which were afterwards enlarged to thirteen. *

* It would be beyond the scope of this volume to explain these "middoth," or "measurements," and to illustrate them by examples. Those who are interested in the matter are referred to the very full discussion on Rabbinical exegesis in my History of the Jewish Nation, pp. 570-580.

Little objection can be taken to them; but unfortunately their practical application was generally almost as fanciful, and certainly as erroneous, as in the case of the "Haggadah."

Probably most readers would wish to know something more of those "traditions" to which our Lord so often referred in His teaching. We have here to distinguish, in the first place, between the Mishnah and the Gemara. The former was, so to speak, the text, the latter its extended commentary. At the same time, the Mishnah contains also a good deal of commentary, and much that is not either legal determination or the discussion thereof; while the Gemara, on the other hand, also contains what we would call "text." The word Mishna (from the verb "shanah") means "repetition"--the term referring to the supposed repetition of the traditional law, which has been above described. The Gemara, as the very word shows, means "discussion," and embodies the discussions, opinions, and saying of the Rabbis upon, or a propos of, the Mishnah. Accordingly, the text of the Mishnah is always given in the pages of the Talmud, which reproduce those discussions thereon of the Jewish Theological parliament or academy, which constitute the Gemara. The authorities introduced in the Mishnah and the Gemara range from about the year 180 BC to 430 AD (in the Babylon Talmud). The Mishnah is, of course, the oldest work, and dates, in its present form and as a written compilation, from the close of the second century of our era. Its contents are chiefly "Halachah," there being only one Tractate (Aboth) in which there is no "Halachah" at all, and another (on the measurements of the Temple) in which it but very rarely occurs. Yet these two Tractates are of the greatest historical value and interest. On the other hand, there are thirteen whole Tractates in the Mishnah which have no "Haggadah" at all, and other twenty-two in which it is but of rare occurrence. Very much of the Mishnah must be looked upon as dating before, and especially from the time of Christ, and its importance for the elucidation of the New Testament is very great, though it requires to be most judiciously used. The Gemara, or book of discussions on the Mishnah, forms the two Talmuds--the Jerusalem and the Babylon Talmud. The former is so called because it is the product of the Palestinian academies; the latter is that of the Babylonian school. The completion of the Jerusalem or Palestinian Talmud ("Talmud" = doctrine, lore) dates from the middle of the fourth, that of the Babylonian from the middle of the sixth century of our era. It need scarcely be said that the former is of much greater historical value than the latter. Neither of these two Gemaras, as we now possess them, is quite complete--that is, there are Tractates in the Mishnah for which we have no Gemara, either in the Jerusalem or in the Babylon Talmud. Lastly, the Babylon Talmud is more than four times the size of that of Jerusalem. Obviously this is not the place for giving even the briefest outline of the contents of the Mishnah.

Suffice it here to state that it consists of six books ("sedarim," "orders"), which are subdivided into Tractates ("Massichthoth"), and these again into chapters ("Perakim"), and single determinations or traditions ("Mishnaioth"). In quoting the Mishnah it is customary to mention not the Book (or "Seder") but the special Tractate, the Perek (or chapter), and the Mishnah. The names of these Tractates (not those of the books) give a sufficient idea of their contents, which cover every conceivable, and well-nigh every inconceivable case, with full discussions thereon. Altogether the Mishnah contains sixty-three Tractates, consisting of 525 chapters, and 4,187 "Mishnaioth."

There is yet another branch of Jewish theology, which in some respects is the most interesting to the Christian student. There can be no doubt, that so early as the time of our Lord a series of doctrines and speculations prevailed which were kept secret from the multitude, and even from ordinary students, probably from fear of leading them into heresy. This class of study bears the general name of the "Kabbalah," and, as even the term (from "kabal," to "receive," or "hand down") implies, represents the spiritual traditions handed down from earliest times, although mixed up, in course of time, with many foreign and spurious elements. The "Kabbalah" grouped itself chiefly around the history of the creation, and the mystery of God’s Presence and Kingdom in the world, as symbolised in the vision of the chariot and of the wheels (Ezekiel 1:1-28). Much that is found in Cabbalistic writings approximates so closely to the higher truths of Christianity, that, despite the errors, superstitions, and follies that mingle with it, we cannot fail to recognise the continuance and the remains of those deeper facts of Divine revelation, which must have formed the substance of prophetic teaching under the Old Testament, and have been understood, or at least hoped for, by those who were under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If now, at the close of these sketches of Jewish life, we ask ourselves, what might have been expected as to the relation between Christ and the men and the religion of His period, the answer will not be difficult. Assuredly, in one respect Christ could not have been a stranger to His period, or else His teaching would have found no response, and, indeed, have been wholly unintelligible to His contemporaries. Nor did He address them as strangers to the covenant, like the heathen. His was in every respect the continuation, the development, and the fulfilment of the Old Testament. Only, He removed the superincumbent load of traditionalism; He discarded the externalism, the formalism, and the work-righteousness, which had well-nigh obliterated the spiritual truths of the Old Testament, and substituted in their place the worship of the letter. The grand spiritual facts, which it embodied, He brought forward in all their brightness and meaning; the typical teaching of that dispensation He came to show forth and to fulfil; and its prophecies He accomplished, alike for Israel and the world. And so in Him all that was in the Old Testament--of truth, way, and life--became "Yea and Amen." Thus we can understand how, on the one hand, the Lord could avail Himself of every spiritual element around, and adopt the sayings, parables, ideas, and customs of that period--indeed, must have done so, in order to be a true man of the period,--and yet be so wholly not of that time as to be despised, rejected, and delivered up unto death by the blind guides of His blinded fellow-countrymen. Had He entirely discarded the period in which He lived, had He not availed Himself of all in it that was true or might be useful, He would not have been of it--not the true man Christ Jesus. Had He followed it, identified Himself with its views and hopes, or headed its movements, He would not have been the Christ, the Son of the living God, the promised Deliverer from sin and guilt. And so we can also perceive the reason of the essential enmity to Christ on the part of the Pharisees and Scribes. It was not that He was a new and a

strange Teacher; it was, that He came as the Christ. Theirs was not an opposition of teaching to His; it was a contrariety of fundamental life-principles. "Light came into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light." Closely related as the two were, the Pharisaical Judaism of that and of the present period is at the opposite pole from the religion of Christ--alike as regards the need of man, the purposes of God’s love, and the privileges of His children. There was one truth which, we are reluctantly obliged to admit, found, alas! scarcely any parallel in the teaching of Rabbinism: it was that of a suffering Messiah. Hints indeed there were, as certain passages in the prophecies of Isaiah could not be wholly ignored or misrepresented, even by Rabbinical ingenuity, just as the doctrine of vicarious suffering and substitution could not be eliminated from the practical teaching of the confession of sins over the sacrifices, when the worshipper day by day laid his hands upon, and transferred to them his guilt. Yet Judaism, except in the case of the few, saw not in all this that to which alone it could point as its real meaning: "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And now, as century after century has passed, and the gladsome Gospel message has been carried from nation to nation, while Israel is still left in the darkness of its unbelief and the misery of its mistaken hope, we seem to realise with ever increasing force that "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Yes: "unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:2, Isaiah 9:6). For assuredly, "God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew." But "all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Romans 11:2, Romans 11:26). "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night" (Isaiah 21:11-12).

Chapter 34

03.01.0. The Bible History, Old Testament

The Bible History, Old Testament by Alfred Edersheim TABLE OF CONTENTS Volume IThe World Before the Flood, and The History of the Patriarchs

PREFACE

DATES OF EVENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1 Creation - Man in the garden of Eden - The Fall

CHAPTER 2 Cain and Abel - The Two Ways and the Two Races

CHAPTER 3 Seth and his Descendants - The Race of Cain

CHAPTER 4 Genealogy of the Believing Race, through Seth

CHAPTER 5 The Universal Corruption of Man - Preparation for the Flood

CHAPTER 6 The Flood - History of the Patriarchs

CHAPTER 7 After the Flood - Noah’s Sacrifice - Noah’s Sin - Noah’s Descendants

CHAPTER 8 Genealogy of Nations - Babel - Confusion of tongues

CHAPTER 9 The Nations and their Religion - Job

CHAPTER 10 The Chronology of the early History of the Bible - Commencement of the History of God’s Dealings with Abraham and his Seed

CHAPTER 11 The Calling of Abram - His Arrival in Canaan, and Temporary Removal to Egypt

CHAPTER 12 The Separation of Abram and Lot - Abram at Hebron - Sodom plundered -Lot rescued - The Meeting with Melchizedek

CHAPTER 13 The Twofold Promise of "a Seed" to Abraham - Ishmael - Jehovah visits Abraham - The Destruction of Sodom - Abraham’s Sojourn at Gerar - His Covenant with Abimelech

CHAPTER 14

Birth Of Isaac - Ishmael Sent Away - Trial Of Abraham’s Faith In The Command To Sacrifice Isaac - Death Of Sarah - Death Of Abraham

CHAPTER 15 The Marriage Of Isaac - Birth Of Esau And Jacob - Esau Sells His Birthright - Isaac At Gerar - Esau’s Marriage

CHAPTER 16

Isaac’s Blessing Obtained By Jacob Deceitfully - Esau’s Sorrow - Evil Consequences Of Their Error To All The Members Of The Patriarchal Family - Jacob Is Sent To Laban - Isaac Renews And Fully Gives Him The Blessing Of Abraham

CHAPTER 17

Jacob’s Vision At Bethel - His Arrival At The House Of Laban - Jacob’s Double Marriage And Servitude - His Flight From Haran - Pursuit Of Laban, And Reconciliation With Jacob

CHAPTER 18

Jacob At Mahanaim - The Night Of Wrestling - Reconciliation Between Jacob And Esau - Jacob Settles At Shechem - Jacob Proceeds To Bethel To Pay His Vow -Death Of Rachel - Jacob Settles At Hebron

CHAPTER 19

Joseph’s Early Life - He Is Sold By His Brethren Into Slavery - Joseph In The House Of Potiphar - Joseph In Prison

CHAPTER 20

Joseph In Prison - The Dream Of Pharaoh’s Two Officers - The Dream Of Pharaoh - Joseph’s Exaltation - His Government Of Egypt

CHAPTER 21 The Sons Of Jacob Arrive In Egypt To Buy Corn - Joseph Recognizes His Brothers - Imprisonment Of Simeon - The Sons Of Jacob Come A Second Time, Bringing Benjamin With Them - Joseph Tries His Brethren - He Makes Himself Known To Them -Jacob And His Family Prepare To Descend Into Egypt

CHAPTER 22

Departure Of Jacob And His Family Into Egypt - Jacob’s Interview With Pharaoh - His Last Illness And Command To Be Buried In Canaan - Adoption Of Ephraim And Manasseh Among The Sons Of Israel

CHAPTER 23 The Last Blessing Of Jacob - Death Of Jacob - Death Of Joseph

Volume II The Exodus and The Wanderings in the Wilderness

PREFACE THE EXODUS

CHAPTER 1 Egypt and its History during the Stay of the Children of Israel, as Illustrated by the Bible and Ancient Monuments.

CHAPTER 2 The Children of Israel in Egypt - Their Residences, Occupations, Social Arrangements, Constitution, and Religion - A new King who knew not Joseph.

CHAPTER 3 The Birth and the Training of Moses, Both in Egypt and in Midian as Preparatory to his Calling.

CHAPTER 4 The Call of Moses - The Vision of the Burning Bush - The Commission to Pharaoh and to Israel - The three "Signs" and their Meaning.

CHAPTER 5

Moses Returns into Egypt - The Dismissal of Zipporah -Moses meets Aaron - Their Reception by the Children of Israel - Remarks on the Hardening of Pharaoh’s Heart.

CHAPTER 6

Moses and Aaron deliver their Message to Pharaoh - Increased Oppression of Israel - Discouragement of Moses - Aaron shows a Sign - General View and Analysis of each of the Ten "Strokes" or Plagues.

CHAPTER 7 The Passover and its Ordinances - The Children of Israel leave EGYPT - Their First Resting-places - The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire - Pursuit of Pharaoh - Passage through the Red Sea -Destruction of Pharaoh and his Host - The Song "on the other side". THE WANDERINGS IN THE WILDERNESS

CHAPTER 8 The Wilderness of Shur - The Sinaitic Peninsula - Its Scenery and Vegetation - Its Capabilities of Supporting a Population -The Wells of Moses - Three Days March to Marah - Elim -Road to the Wilderness of Sin - Israel’s Murmuring - The Miraculous Provision of the Quails - The Manna.

CHAPTER 9 Rephidim - The Defeat of Amalek and its meaning - The Visit of Jethro and its symbolical import.

CHAPTER 10 Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai - The Preparations for the Covenant - The "Ten Words?" and their meaning.

CHAPTER 11

Civil and Social Ordinances of Israel as the People of God - Their Religious Ordinances in their National Aspect - The "Covenant made by Sacrifice" and the Sacrificial Meal of Acceptance.

CHAPTER 12 The Pattern seen on the Mountain - The Tabernacle, the Priesthood, and the Services in their Arrangement and Typical Meaning - The Sin of the Golden Calf - The Divine Judgment - The Plea of Moses - God’s gracious Forgiveness - The Vision of the Glory of the Lord vouchsafed to Moses.

CHAPTER 13

Moses a Second Time on the Mount - On his Return his Face shineth - The Rearing of the Tabernacle - Its Consecration by the seen Presence of Jehovah.

CHAPTER 14 Analysis of the Book of Leviticus - The Sin of Nadab and Abihu - Judgment upon the Blasphemer.

CHAPTER 15

Analysis of the Book of Numbers - The Numbering of Israel - and that of the Levites - Arrangement of the Camp, and its Symbolical Import - The March.

CHAPTER 16 The Offerings of the - Princes - The setting apart of the Levites - Second Observance of the Passover.

CHAPTER 17 Departure from Sinai - March into the Wilderness of Paran - At Taberah and Kibroth-hattaavah.

CHAPTER 18

Murmuring of Miriam and Aaron - The Spies sent to Canaan -Their "Evil Report" - Rebellion of the People, and Judgment pronounced upon them - The defeat of Israel "unto Hormah".

CHAPTER 19 The Thirty-eight Years in the Wilderness - The Sabbath-breaker - The Gainsaying of Korah and of his Associates - Murmuring of the People; The Plague, and how it was stayed - Aakon’s Rod budding, blossoming, and bearing Fruit.

CHAPTER 20 The Second Gathering of Israel in Kadesh - The Sin of Moses and Aaron - Embassy to Edom - Death of Aaron - Retreat of Israel from the borders of Edom - Attack by the Canaanitish King of Arad.

CHAPTER 21

Journey of the Children of Israel in "compassing" the land of Edom - The "Fiery Serpents" and the "Brazen Serpent" - Israel enters the land of the Amorites - Victories over Sihon and over Og, the kings of the Amorites and of Bashan - Israel camps in "the lowlands of Moab" close by the Jordan.

Volume III Israel in Canaan Under Joshua and the Judges

PREFACE

CHAPTER 1

Israel About To Take Possession Of The Land Of Promise -Decisive Contest Showing The Real Character Of Heathenism -Character And History Of Balaam.

CHAPTER 2 The "Prophecies" Of Balaam - The End Of Balaam - Parallel Between Balaam And Judas.

CHAPTER 3 The Second Census Of Israel - The "Daughters Of Zelophehad" -Appointment Of Moses’ Successor - Sacrificial Ordinances - The War Against Midian - Allocation Of Territory East Of The Jordan - Levitical And Cities Of Refuge.

CHAPTER 4 Death And Burial Of Moses.

CHAPTER 5 The Charge To Joshua - Despatch Of The Two Spies To Jericho -Rahab.

CHAPTER 6 The Miraculous Parting Of Jordan, And The Passage Of The Children Of Israel - Gilgal And Its Its Meaning - The First Passover On The Soil Of Palestine.

CHAPTER 7 The "Prince Of The Host Of Jehovah" Appears To Joshua - The Miraculous Fall Of Jericho Before The Ark Of Jehovah.

CHAPTER 8 Unsuccessful Attack Upon Ai - Achan’s Sin, And Judgment - Ai Attacked A Second Time And Taken.

CHAPTER 9 Solemn Dedication Of The Land And Of Israel On Mounts Ebal And Gerizim - The Deceit Of The Gibeonites.

CHAPTER 10 The Battle Of Gibeon - Conquest Of The South Of Canaan - The Battle Of Merom - Conquest Of The North Of Canaan - State Of The Land At The Close Of The Seven Years' War.

CHAPTER 11

Distribution Of The Land - Unconquered Districts - Tribes East Of The Jordan - "The Lot" - Tribes West Of The Jordan - The Inheritance Of Caleb - Dissatisfaction Of The Sons Of Joseph -The Tabernacle At Shiloh - Final Division Of The Land.

CHAPTER 12

Return Of The Two And A Half Tribes To Their Homes - Building Of An Altar By Them - Embassy To Them - Joshua's Farewell Addresses - Death Of Joshua - Review Of His Life And Work.

CHAPTER 13

Summary Of The Book Of Judges - Judah's And Simeon's Campaign -Spiritual And National Decay Of Israel - "From Gilgal To Bochim."

CHAPTER 14 Othniel - Ehud - Shamgar.

CHAPTER 15 The Oppression Of Jabin And Sisera - Deborah And Barak - The Battle Of Taanach - The Song Of Deborah.

CHAPTER 16

Midianitish Oppression - The Calling Of Gideon - Judgment Begins At The House Of God - The Holy War - The Night-Battle Of Moreh.

CHAPTER 17

Farther Course Of Gideon - The Ephod At Ophrah - - Death Of Gideon - Conspiracy Of Abimelech - The Parable Of Jotham - Rule And End Of Abimelech.

CHAPTER 18

Successors Of Abimelech - Chronology Of The Period - Israel's Renewed Apostacy And Their Humiliation Before Jehovah -Oppression By The Ammonites - - Jephthah - His History And Vow -The Successors Of Jephthah.

CHAPTER 19

Meaning Of The History Of Samson - His Annunciation And Early History - The Spirit Of Jehovah "Impels Him" - His Deeds Of Faith.

CHAPTER 20 The Sin And Fall Of Samson - Jehovah Departs From Him -Samson's Repentance, Faith, And Death.

CHAPTER 21 Social And Religious Life In Bethlehem In The Days Of The Judges - The Story Of Ruth - King David's Ancestors.

Volume IV The History of Israel Under Samuel, Saul, and David, to the Birth of Solomon

PREFACE

CHAPTER 1

Purport and Lessons of the Books of Samuel - Eli - Hannah’s Prayer and Vow - Birth of Samuel - Dedication of the Child -Hannah’s Song

CHAPTER 2 The Sin of Eli’s Sons - Eli’s Weakness - A Prophet’s Message -Samuel’s First Vision - His Call to the Prophetic Office

CHAPTER 3

Expedition Against the Philistines - The Two Battles of Ebenezer - Death of Eli’s Sons, and Taking of the Ark - Death of Eli - Judgment on the Philistine Cities - The Return of the Ark

CHAPTER 4

Samuel As Prophet - The Gathering at Mizpeh - Battle of Ebenezer; Its Consequences - Samuel’s Administration-The Demand for a King

CHAPTER 5 The Calling of Saul - Occasion of his Interview with Samuel -Samuel Communes with Saul - Saul is Anointed King - The Three "Signs" - Their Deeper Significance

CHAPTER 6

Saul Chosen King at Mizpeh - His Comparative Privacy -Incursion of Nahash - Relief of Jabesh-gilead - Popular Assembly at Gilgal - Address of Samuel

CHAPTER 7

Saul Marches against the Philistines - Position of the two Camps - Jonathan’s Feat of Arms - Saul Retreats to Gilgal -Terror among the People - Saul’s Disobedience to the Divine Command, and Rejection of his Kingdom

CHAPTER 8

Camps of Israel and of the Philistines - Jonathan and his Armor-bearer - Panic Among the Philistines, and Flight - Saul’s Rash Vow - The "Lot" cast at Ajalon - Cessation of the War

CHAPTER 9 The War Against Amalek - Saul’s Disobedience, and its Motives -Samuel Commissioned to announce Saul’s Rejection - Agag Hewn in Pieces

CHAPTER 10

Samuel Mourns for Saul - He is directed to the house of Jesse -Anointing of David - Preparation of David for the Royal Office -The "Evil Spirit from the Lord" upon Saul - David is sent to Court - War with the Philistines - Combat between David and Goliath - Friendship of David and Jonathan

CHAPTER 11

Saul’s Jealousy, and Attempts upon David’s Life - David marries Michal - Ripening of Saul’s Purpose of Murder - David’s Flight to Samuel - Saul among the Prophets - David Finally leaves the Court of Saul

CHAPTER 12

David at Nob - Observed by Doeg - Flight to Gath - David feigns Madness - The Cave of Adullam - Shelter in Moab - Return to the land of Israel - Jonathan’s Last Visit - Persecutions by Saul

CHAPTER 13 Saul in David’s Power at En-gedi - The Story of Nabal - Saul a second time in David’s power

CHAPTER 14

David’s Second Flight to Gath - Residence at Ziklag -Expedition of the Philistines Against Israel - Saul at Jezreel He resorts to the Witch at Endor - Apparition and Message of Samuel - David has to Leave the Army of the Philistines -Capture of Ziklag by the Amalekites - Pursuit and Victory of David

CHAPTER 15 The Battle on Mount Gilboa - Death of Saul - Rescue of the bodies by the men of Jabesh-gilead - David punishes the false Messenger of Saul’s Death - David king at Hebron -Ish-bosheth king at Mahanaim - Battle between the forces of Abner and Joab -Abner Deserts the cause of Ish-bosheth - Murder of Abner -Murder of Ish-bosheth

CHAPTER 16

David anointed King over all Israel - Taking of Fort Zion -Philistine Defeat - The Ark brought to Jerusalem - Liturgical Arrangements and Institutions

CHAPTER 17

David’s Purpose of Building the Temple, and its Postponement -The "Sure Mercies" of David in the Divine Promise - David’s Thanksgiving

CHAPTER 18

Wars of David Great Ammonite and Syrian Campaign against Israel - Auxiliaries in turn Defeated - The Capital of Moab is taken -Edom subdued - Record of David’s officers - His Kindness to Mephibosheth

CHAPTER 19

Siege of Rabbah - David’s great Sin - Death of Uriah - Taking of Rabbah - David’s seeming Prosperity - God’s Message through Nathan - David’s Repentance - The Child of Bathsheba dies -Birth of Solomon.

Volume V Birth Of Solomon To Reign Of Ahab

PREFACE

CHAPTER 1

Close Of David’s Reign Jewish View Of The History Of David - Amnon’s Crime - Absalom’s Vengeance - Flight Of Absalom - The Wise Woman Of Tekoah - Absalom Returns To Jerusalem - His Conspiracy - David’s Flight.

CHAPTER 2

Ahithophel’s twofold advice - Hushai prevents imminent danger - David is informed, and crosses the Jordan - the battle in the forest - death of Absalom - mourning of David - David’s measures - return to Gilgal - Barzillai and Joab as representative men of their period - federal republican rising under Sheba - murder of Amasa - death of Sheba.

CHAPTER 3

Appendix To The History Of David The Famine - The Pestilence - The Temple Arrangements - David’s Last Hymn And Prophetic Utterance.

CHAPTER 4

Reign Of Solomon Adonijah’s Attempt To Seize The Throne - Anointing Of Solomon - Great Assembly Of The Chiefs Of The People - Dying Charge Of David - Adonijah’s Second Attempt And Punishment - Execution Of Joab And Of Shimei.

CHAPTER 5

Solomon marries the daughter of Pharaoh - his sacrifice at Gibeon - his dream and prayer - Solomon’s wisdom - Solomon’s officers and court - prosperity of the country - understanding and knowledge of the king.

CHAPTER 6 The building of Solomon’s temple - preparations for it - plan and structure of the temple, internal fittings - history of the temple - Jewish traditions.

CHAPTER 7

Dedication of the temple - when it took place - connection with the feast of tabernacles - the consecration services - the king’s part in them - symbolical meaning of the great institutions in Israel - the prayer of consecration - analogy to the Lord’s prayer - the consecration - thanksgiving and offerings.

CHAPTER 8 The surroundings of the temple - description of Jerusalem at the time of solomon - the palace of solomon - Solomon’s fortified cities - external relations of the kingdom - internal state - trade - wealth - luxury - the visit of the queen of Sheba.

CHAPTER 9

Solomon’s court - his polygamy - spread of foreign ideas in the country - imitation of foreign manners - growing luxury - Solomon’s spiritual decline - judgment predicted - Solomon’s enemies: Hadad, Rezon, Jeroboam - causes of popular discontent - Ahijah’s prediction of the disruption - Jeroboam’s rebellion and flight into egypt - death of Solomon.

CHAPTER 10

Rehoboam First King Of Judah Family Of Solomon - Age Of Rehoboam - His Character - Religious History Of Israel And Judah - The Assembly At Shechem - Jeroboam’s Return From Egypt - Rehoboam’s Answer To The Deputies In Shechem - Revolt Of The Ten Tribes - The Reigns Of Rehoboam And Of Jeroboam - Invasion Of Judah By Shishak - Church And State In Israel - Rehoboam’s Attempt To Recover Rule Over The Ten Tribes - His Family History - Religious Decline In Israel, And Its Consequences.

CHAPTER 11

Jeroboam, First King Of Israel Political Measures Of Jeroboam - The Golden Calves - The New Priesthood And The New Festival - The Man Of Elohim From Judah - His Message And Sign - Jeroboam Struck By Jehovah And Miraculously Restored - Invitation To The Man Of Elohim - Heathen View Of Miracles - The Old Prophet - Return Of The Man Of Elohim To Bethel - Judgment On His Disobedience - Character Of The Old Prophet And Of The Man Of Elohim - Sickness Of The Pious Child Of Jeroboam - Mission Of His Mother To Ahijah - Predicted Judgment - Death Of The Child - Remaining Notices Of Jeroboam.

CHAPTER 12

Abijah And Asa, Kings Of Judah Accession Of Abijah - His Idolatry - War Between Judah And Israel - Abijah's Address To Israel And Victory - Deaths Of Jeroboam And Of Abijah - Accession Of Asa - Religious Reformation In Judah - Invasion By Zerah The Ethiopian - Victory Of Zephathah - Azariah's Message To The Army Of Asa - Great Sacrificial Feast At Jerusalem - Renewal Of The Covenant With Jehovah.

CHAPTER 13

Asa, King Of Judah - Hadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Tibni, And Omri, Kings Of Israel Reign Of Nadab - His Murder By Baasha - War Between Judah And Israel - Baasha's Alliance With Syria - Asa Gains Over Ben-Hadad - Prophetic Message To Asa - Resentment Of The King - Asa's Religious Decline - Death Of Asa, Death Of Baasha, Reign Of Elah - His Murder By Zimri - Omri Dethrones Zimri - War Between Omri And Tibni - Rebuilding Of Samaria.

CHAPTER 14

Asa And Jehoshaphat, Kings Of Judah - Ahab, King Of Israel Accession Of Ahab - Further Religious Decline In Israel - Political Relations Between Israel And Judah - Accession Of Jehoshaphat - Ahab's Marriage With Jezebel - The Worship Of Baal And Astarte Established In Israel - Character Of Ahab - Religious Reforms In Judah - Jehoshaphat Joins Affinity With Ahab - Marriage Of Jehoram With Athaliah, And Its Consequences.

CHAPTER 15

Ahab, King Of Israel Rebuilding Of Jericho - The Mission Of Elijah - His Character And Life - Elijah's First Appearance - Parallelism With Noah, Moses, And John The Baptist - Elijah's Message To King Ahab - Sojourn By The Brook Cherith - Elijah With The Widow Of Sarepta - The Barrel Of Meal Wastes Not, Nor Does The Cruse Of Oil Fail - Lessons Of His Sojourn - Sickness And Death Of The Widow's Son - He Is Miraculously Restored To Life.

Volume VI The Reign of Ahab to the Decline of the Two Kingdoms

PREFACE

CHAPTER 1

Ahab, King Of Israel Three Years' Famine In Israel -- Elijah Meets Obadiah And Ahab -- The Gathering On Mount Carmel -- The Priests Of Baal - Description Of Their Rites -- Elijah Prepares

The Sacrifice -- The Answer By Fire -- Israel's Decision -- Slaughter Of The Priests Of Baal -- The Cloud Not Bigger Than A Man's Hand -- Elijah Runs Before Ahab To Jezreel.

CHAPTER 2

Different Standpoint of the Old and the New Testament -- analogy between Elijah and John the Baptist -- Jezebel threatens Elijah's Life -- The Prophet's Flight -- His Miraculous Provision -- Analogy between Moses and Elijah - Elijah at Mount Horeb -- The Divine Message and Assurance to Elijah -- Call of Elisha.

CHAPTER 3

General effect of Elijah's Mission -- The Two Expeditions of Syria and the Twofold Victory of Israel - Ahab releases Ben-hadad -- The Prophet's Denunciation.

CHAPTER 4 The Vineyard of Naboth -- Murder of Naboth -- The Divine Message by Elijah -- Ahab's Repentance.

CHAPTER 5

Ahab And Ahaziah, (Eighth And Ninth) Kings Of Israel. Jehoshaphat, (Fourth) King Of Judah. - The Visit Of Jehoshaphat To Ahab -- The Projected Expedition Against Ramoth-Gilead -- Flattering Predictions -- Micaiah -- The Battle Of Ramoth-Gilead -- Death Of Ahab.

CHAPTER 6

Jehoshaphat, (Fourth) King Of Judah. - The Reproof And Prophecy Of Jehu -- Resumption Of The Reformation In Judah -- Institution Of Judges And Of A Supreme Court In Jerusalem -- Incursion Of The Moabites And Their Confederates -- National Fast And The Prayer Of The King -- Prophecy Of Victory -- The March To Tekoa -- Destruction Of The Enemy -- The Valley Of Berakhah -- Return To Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 7

Jehoshaphat, (Fourth) King Of Judah, Ahaziah And (Jehoram) Joram, (Ninth And Tenth) King Of Israel - The Joint Maritime Expedition To Ophir -- Ahaziah's Reign And Illness -- The Proposed Inquiry Of Baal-Zebub -- The Divine Message By Elijah -- Attempts To Capture The Prophet, And Their Result - Elijah Appears Before The King -- Death Of Ahaziah -- Accession Of Joram -- The Ascent Of Elijah -- Elisha Takes Up His Mantle

CHAPTER 8 Elisha The Prophet - Return To Jericho -- Healing Of The Waters Of Jericho -- Judgment On The Young Men At Bethel -- Settlement In Samaria.

CHAPTER 9

Jehoshaphat, (Fourth) King Of Judah - Joram, (Tenth) King Of Israel - The Allied Expedition Against Moab -- The Moabite Stone -- Lessons Of Its Inscription -- The March Through The Wilderness Of Edom - Want Of Water -- Interview With Elisha -- Divine Deliverance -- Defeat Of Moab -- The Siege Of Kir-Haraseth -- Mesha Offers Up His Son -- Withdrawal Of The Allies.

CHAPTER 10 The Ministry Of Elisha As The Personal Representative Of The Living God In Israel - The Prophet’s Widow And Her Miraculous Deliverance -- The Shunammite And Elisha -- The God-Given Child -- His Death And Restoration To Life -- Elisha At Gilgal -- "Death In The Pot" -- The Man From Baal-Shalisha -- God’s Sufficient And Unfailing Provision For His Own.

CHAPTER 11

Illustration and Confirmation of Biblical History from the Assyrian Monuments -- The Deliverance of Syria through Naaman -- Naaman’s Leprosy and Journey to Samaria -- Elisha’s Message to Joram and to Naaman -- Naaman’s Healing and Twofold Request -- Gehazi’s Deceit and Conviction.

CHAPTER 12

Two Wonderful Manifestations of God’s Presence with His Prophet: The Interposition on behalf of "the Sons of the Prophets" by the banks of Jordan, and that in the deliverance of Elisha at Dothan -- Influence of Elisha’s Ministry -- The Syrians led blinded into Samaria -- The Conduct of the King and of the Prophet.

CHAPTER 13

Siege of Samaria by the Syrians -- Terrible Straits and Tragedy in the City -- The King sends to slay Elisha, but arrests his Messenger -- Announced Deliverance, and Judgment on the Unbelieving "Lord" -- The Discovery by the Four Lepers -- Flight of the Syrians -- Relief of Samaria -- The Unbelieving trodden to Death in the Gate.

CHAPTER 14

Close Of Elisha’s Public Ministry: The Beginning Of Judgment - The Shunammite On Her Return From Philistia Restored To Her Property -- Elisha’s Visit To Damascus -- The Embassy Of Hazael -- Prediction Of Future Judgment -- The Murder Of Ben-Hadad And Accession Of Hazael.

CHAPTER 15

Jehoram And Ahaziah, (Fifth And Sixth) Kings Of Judah Joram, (Tenth) King Of Israel - Accession Of Jehoram -- Murder Of The Royal Princes - Introduction Of The Service Of Baal In Judah -- Revolt Of Edom -- And Of Libnah -- The Writing From Elijah - Incursion Of The Philistines And Arabs -- Death Of Jehoram -- State Of Public Feeling.

CHAPTER 16

Joram And Jehu, (Tenth And Eleventh) Kings Of Israel Ahaziah, (Sixth) King Of Judah - Accession Of Ahaziah -- Character Of His Reign -- Expedition Of Joram And Ahaziah Against Hazael, And Taking Of Ramoth-Gilead -- Joram Returns Wounded To Jezreel -- Visit Of Ahaziah -- Jehu Anointed King -- March On Jezreel -- Joram Killed -- Death Of Ahaziah -- Jezebel Killed -- Fulfillment Of The Divine Sentence By Elijah.

CHAPTER 17

Jehu, (Eleventh) King Of Israel Athaliah, (Seventh) Queen Of Judah - Murder Of The "Sons" Of Ahab And Joram -- Destruction Of The Adherents Of Ahab In Jezreel -- March On Samaria --

Slaughter Of The "Brethren" Of Ahaziah -- Jehonadab The Son Of Rechab -- Meaning Of The Rechabite Movement -- The Feast Of Baal At Samaria -- Destruction Of The Worshippers -- Character Of The Reign Of Jehu -- Decline Of The Northern Kingdom -- Commencing Decline Of The Southern Kingdom.

APPENDIX

Volume VII From The Decline Of The Two Kingdoms To The Assyrian And Babylonian Captivity

PREFACE

CHAPTER 1 Athaliah, (Seventh) Queen, and Jehoash, (Eighth) King of Judah.

CHAPTER 2 Jehoash, or Joash, (Eighth) King of Judah. Jehu, (Eleventh) King of Israel.

CHAPTER 3 Joash, (Eighth) King of Judah. Jehoahaz and Jehoash, (Twelfth and Thirteenth) Kings of Israel.

CHAPTER 4 Amaziah, (Ninth) King of Judah. Jehoash, (Thirteenth) King of Israel.

CHAPTER 5 Azariah or Uzziah, (Tenth) King of Judah. Jeroboam II., (Fourteenth) King of Israel.

CHAPTER 6 Azariah, or Uzziah, (Tenth) King of Judah.

CHAPTER 7

Uzziah (Tenth), Jotham (Eleventh), and Ahaz, (Twelfth) King of Judah. Zachariah (Fifteenth), Shallum (Sixteenth), Menahem (Seventeenth), Pekahiah (Eighteenth), Pekah, (Nineteenth) King of Israel.

CHAPTER 8 Ahaz, (Twelfth) King, of Judah. Pekah (Nineteenth), Hoshea, (Twentieth) King of Israel.

CHAPTER 9 Hoshea, (Twentieth) King of Israel.

CHAPTER 10 Hezekiah, (Thirteenth) King of Judah. (Twentieth) King of Israel.

CHAPTER 11 Hezekiah (Thirteenth) King of Judah.

CHAPTER 12 Hezekiah (Thirteenth) King of Judah.

CHAPTER 13 Hezekiah (Thirteenth) King of Judah.

CHAPTER 14 Manasseh (Fourteenth), Amon (Fifteenth) King of Judah.

CHAPTER 15 Josiah, (Sixteenth) King of Judah.

CHAPTER 16 Josiah (Sixteenth), Jehoahaz (Seventeenth), Jehoiakim (Eighteenth), King of Judah.

CHAPTER 17 Jehoiakim (Eighteenth), Jehoiachin (Nineteenth), Zedekiah, (Twentieth) King of Judah.

03.01.00. Volume 1, Introduction

INTRODUCTION THAT the "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" is also the "God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," and that "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham," - these are among the most precious truths of revelation. They show us not only the faithfulness of our God, and the greatness of our privileges, but also the marvelous wisdom of the plan of salvation, and its consistency throughout. For the Bible should be viewed, not only in its single books, but in their connection, and in the unity of the whole. The Old Testament could not be broken off from the New, and each considered as independent of the other. Nor yet could any part of the Old Testament be disjoined from the rest. The full meaning and beauty of each appears only in the harmony and unity of the whole. Thus they all form links of one unbroken chain, reaching from the beginning to the time when the Lord Jesus Christ came, for whom all previous history had prepared, to whom all the types pointed, and in whom all the promises are "Yea and Amen." Then that which God had spoken to Abraham, more than two thousand years before, became a blessed reality, for "the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." That this one grand purpose should have been steadily kept in view, and carried forward through all the vicissitudes of history, changes of time, and stages of civilization, - and that without requiring any alteration, only further unfolding and at last completion - affords indeed the strongest confirmation to our faith. It is also a precious comfort to our hearts; for we see how God’s purpose of mercy has been always the same; and, walking the same pilgrim-way which "the fathers" had trod, and along which God had safely guided the Covenant, we rejoice to know that neither opposition of man nor yet unfaithfulness on the part of His professing people can make void the gracious counsel of God: - "He loved us from the first of time, He loves us to the last." And this it is which we learn from the unity of Scripture. But yet another and equally important truth may be gathered. There is not merely harmony but also close connection between the various parts of Scripture. Each book illustrates the other, taking up its teaching and carrying it forward. Thus the unity of Scripture is not like that of a stately building, however ingenious its plan or vast its proportions; but rather, to use a Biblical illustration, like that of the light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. We mark throughout growth in its progress, as men were able to bear fuller communications, and prepared for their reception. The law, the types, the history, the prophecies, and the promises of the Old Testament all progressively unfold and develop the same truth, until it appears at last in its New Testament fullness. Though all testify of the same thing, not one of them could safely be left out, nor yet do we properly understand any one part unless we view it in its bearing and connection with the others. And so when at last we come to the close of Scripture, we see how the account of the creation and of the first calling of the children of God, which had been recorded in the book of Genesis, has found its full counterpart - its fulfillment - in the book of Revelation, which tells the glories of the second creation, and the perfecting of the Church of God. As one of the old Church teachers (St. Augustine) writes:

"Novum Testamentum in vetere latet, Vetus in novo patet." That in a work composed of so many books, written under such very different circumstances, by penmen so different, and at periods so widely apart, there should be "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest," can surely not surprise us, more particularly when we remember that it was God's purpose only to send the brighter light as men were able to bear it. Besides, we must expect that with our limited powers and knowledge we shall not be able fully to understand the ways of God. But, on the other hand, this may be safely said, that the more deep, calm, and careful our study, the more ample the evidence it will bring to light to confirm our faith against all attacks of the enemy. Yet the ultimate object of our reading is not knowledge, but experience of grace. For, properly understood, the Scripture is all full of Christ, and all intended to point to Christ as our only Savior. It is not only the law, which is a schoolmaster unto Christ, nor the types, which are shadows of Christ, nor yet the prophecies, which are predictions of Christ; but the whole Old Testament history is full of Christ. Even where persons are not, events may be types. If any one failed to see in Isaac or in Joseph a personal type of Christ, he could not deny that the offering up of Isaac, or the selling of Joseph, and his making provision for the sustenance of his brethren, are typical of events in the history of our Lord. And so indeed every event points to Christ, even as He is alike the beginning, the center, and the end of all history - "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." One thing follows from this: only that reading or study of the Scriptures can be sufficient or profitable through which we learn to know Christ - and that as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" to us. And for this purpose we ought constantly to ask the aid and teaching of the Holy Spirit. A few brief remarks, helpful to the study of patriarchal history, may here find a place. In general, the Old Testament may be arranged into "The Law and the Prophets."

It was possibly with reference to this division that the Law consisted of the five books of Moses -ten being the symbolical number of completeness, and the Law with its commands being only half complete without "the Prophets" and the promises. But assuredly to the fivefold division of the Law answers the arrangement of the Psalms into five books, of which each closes with a benediction, as follows: -

Book 1: Psalms 1:1-6; Psalms 2:1-12; Psalms 3:1-8; Psalms 4:1-8; Psalms 5:1-12; Psalms 6:1-10; Psalms 7:1-17; Psalms 8:1-9; Psalms 9:1-20; Psalms 10:1-18; Psalms 11:1-7; Psalms 12:1-8; Psalms 13:1-6; Psalms 14:1-7; Psalms 15:1-5; Psalms 16:1-11; Psalms 17:1-15; Psalms 18:1-50; Psalms 19:1-14; Psalms 20:1-9; Psalms 21:1-13; Psalms 22:1-31; Psalms 23:1-6; Psalms 24:1-10; Psalms 25:1-22; Psalms 26:1-12; Psalms 27:1-14; Psalms 28:1-9; Psalms 29:1-11; Psalms 30:1-12; Psalms 31:1-24; Psalms 32:1-11; Psalms 33:1-22; Psalms 34:1-22; Psalms 35:1-28; Psalms 36:1-12; Psalms 37:1-40 Psalms 38:1-22; Psalms 39:1-13; Psalms 40:1-17 w:1-17; Psalms 41:1-13

Book 2: Psalms 42:1-11; Psalms 43:1-5; Psalms 44:1-26; Psalms 45:1-17; Psalms 46:1-11; Psalms 47:1-9; Psalms 48:1-14; Psalms 49:1-20; Psalms 50:1-23; Psalms 51:1-19; Psalms 52:1-9; Psalms 53:1-6; Psalms 54:1-7; Psalms 55:1-23; Psalms 56:1-13; Psalms 57:1-11; Psalms 58:1-11; Psalms 59:1-17; Psalms 60:1-12; Psalms 61:1-8; Psalms 62:1-12; Psalms 63:1-11; Psalms 64:1-10; Psalms 65:1-13; Psalms 66:1-20; Psalms 67:1-7; Psalms 68:1-35; Psalms 69:1-36; Psalms 70:1-5; Psalms 71:1-24; Psalms 72:1-20

Book 3: Psalms 73:1-28; Psalms 74:1-23; Psalms 75:1-10; Psalms 76:1-12; Psalms 77:1-20; Psalms 78:1-72; Psalms 79:1-13; Psalms 80:1-19; Psalms 81:1-16; Psalms 82:1-8; Psalms 83:1-18; Psalms 84:1-12; Psalms 85:1-13; Psalms 86:1-17; Psalms 87:1-7; Psalms 88:1-18; Psalms 89:1-52

Book 4: Psalms 90:1-17; Psalms 91:1-16; Psalms 92:1-15; Psalms 93:1-5; Psalms 94:1-23; Psalms 95:1-11; Psalms 96:1-13; Psalms 97:1-12; Psalms 98:1-9; Psalms 99:1-9; Psalms 100:1-5; Psalms 101:1-8; Psalms 102:1-28; Psalms 103:1-22; Psalms 104:1-35; Psalms 105:1-45; Psalms 106:1-48

Book 5: Psalms 107:1-43; Psalms 108:1-13; Psalms 109:1-31; Psalms 110:1-7; Psalms 111:1-10; Psalms 112:1-10; Psalms 113:1-9; Psalms 114:1-8; Psalms 115:1-18; Psalms 116:1-19; Psalms 117:1-2; Psalms 118:1-29; Psalms 119:1-176; Psalms 120:1-7; Psalms 121:1-8; Psalms 122:1-9; Psalms 123:1-4; Psalms 124:1-8; Psalms 125:1-5; Psalms 126:1-6; Psalms 127:1-5; Psalms 128:1-6; Psalms 129:1-8; Psalms 130:1-8; Psalms 131:1-3; Psalms 132:1-18; Psalms 133:1-3; Psalms 134:1-3; Psalms 135:1-21; Psalms 136:1-26; Psalms 137:1-9; Psalms 138:1-8; Psalms 139:1-24; Psalms 140:1-13; Psalms 141:1-10; Psalms 142:1-7; Psalms 143:1-12; Psalms 144:1-15; Psalms 145:1-21; Psalms 146:1-10; Psalms 147:1-20; Psalms 148:1-14; Psalms 149:1-9; Psalms 150:1-6 - the last Psalm standing as a grand final benediction. The Law or the Five Books of Moses are commonly called the Pentateuch, a Greek term meaning the "fivefold," or "five-parted" Book. Each of these five books commonly bears a title given by the Greek translators of the Old Testament (the so-called LXX.), in accordance with the contents of each: Genesis (origin, creation), Exodus (going out from Egypt), Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy (Second Law, or the Law a second time). The Jews designate each book by the first or else the most prominent word with which it begins. The book of Genesis consists of two great parts, each again divided into five sections. Every section is clearly marked by being introduced as "generations," or "originations" - in Hebrew Toledoth - as follows:

PART 1 - THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD TO THE FINAL ARRANGEMENT AND SETTLEMENT OF THE VARIOUS NATIONS General Introduction: Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-3.

Generations of the Heavens and the Earth, Genesis 2:4-25, Genesis 3:1-24, Genesis 4:1-26.

Book of the Generations of Adam Genesis 5:1-32, Genesis 6:1-8.

The Generations of Noah, Genesis 6:9-22, Genesis 7:1-24, Genesis 8:1-22, Genesis 9:1-29.

The Generations of the Sons of Noah Genesis 10:1-32, Genesis 11:1-9.

The Generations of Shem, Genesis 11:10-26.

PART 2--PATRIARCHAL HISTORY

The Generations of Terah (the father of Abraham), Genesis 11:27-32, 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, Genesis 21:1-34, Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67, Genesis 25:1-11.

The Generations of Ishmael Genesis 25:12-18.

The Generations of Isaac, Genesis 25:19-34, Genesis 26:1-35, 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

The Generations of Esau, Genesis 36:1-43.

The Generations of Jacob, Genesis 37:1-36.

These two parts make together ten sections - the number of completeness, - and each section varies in length with the importance of its contents, so far as they bear upon the history of the kingdom of God. For, both these parts, or rather the periods which they describe, have such bearing. In the first we are successively shown man’s original position and relationship towards God; then his fall, and the consequent need of redemption; and next God’s gracious provision of mercy. The acceptance or rejection of this provision implies the separation of all mankind into two classes - the Sethites and the Cainites. Again, the judgment of the flood upon the ungodly, and the preservation of His own people, are typical for all time; while the genealogies and divisions of the various nations, and the separation of Shem, imply the selection of one nation, from whom salvation should spring for all mankind. In this first part the interest of the history groups around events rather than persons. It is otherwise in the second part, where the history of the Covenant and of the Covenant-people begins with the calling of Abraham, and is continued in Isaac, in Jacob, and in his descendants. Here the interest centers in persons rather than events, and we are successively shown God’s rich promises as they unfold, and God’s gracious dealings as they contribute to the training of the patriarchs. The book of Genesis, and with it the first period of the Covenant history, closes when the family had expanded into a nation.

Finally, with reference to the special arrangement of the "generations" recorded throughout the book of Genesis, it will be noticed that, so to speak, the side branches are always cut off before the main branch is carried onwards. Thus the history of Cain and of his race precedes that of Seth and his race; the genealogy of Japheth and of Ham that of Shem; and the history of Ishmael and Esau that of Isaac and of Jacob. For the principle of election and selection, of separation and of grace, underlies from the first the whole history of the Covenant. It appears in the calling of Abraham, and is continued throughout the history of the patriarchs; and although the holy family enlarges into the nation, the promise narrows first to the house of David, and finally to one individual - the Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ, the one Prophet, the one Priest, the one King, that in Him the kingdom of heaven might be opened to all believers, and from Him the blessings of salvation flow unto all men.

03.01.000. Volume 1, Preface

PREFACE

One of the most marked and hopeful signs of our time is the increasing attention given on all sides to the study of Holy Scripture. Those who believe and love the Bible, who have experienced its truth and power, can only rejoice at such an issue. They know that "the Word of God liveth and abideth for ever," that "not one tittle" of it "shall fail;" and that it is "able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Accordingly they have no reason to dread the results either of scientific investigation, or of searching inquiry into "those things which are most surely believed among us." For, the more the Bible is studied, the deeper will be our conviction that "the foundation of God standeth sure."

It is to help, so far as we can, the reader of Holy Scripture - not to supersede his own reading of it -that the series, of which this is the first volume, has been undertaken. In writing it I have primarily had in view those who teach and those who learn, whether in the school or in the family. But my scope has also been wider. I have wished to furnish what may be useful for reading in the family, - what indeed may, in some measure, serve the place of a popular exposition of the sacred history. More than this, I hope it may likewise prove a book to put in the hands of young men, - not only to show them what the Bible really teaches, but to defend them against the insidious attacks arising from misrepresentation and misunderstanding of the sacred text. With this threefold object in view, I have endeavored to write in a form so popular and easily intelligible as to be of use to the Sunday-school teacher, the advanced scholar, and the Bible-class; progressing gradually, in the course of this and the next volume, from the more simple to the more detailed. At the same time, I have taken up the Scripture narrative successively, chapter by chapter, always marking the portions of the Bible explained, that so, in family or in private reading, the sacred text may be compared with the explanations furnished. Finally, without mentioning objections on the part of opponents, I have endeavored to meet those that have been raised, and that not by controversy, but rather by a more full and correct study of the sacred text itself in the Hebrew original. In so doing, I have freely availed myself not only of the results of the best criticism, German and English, but also of the aid of such kindred studies as those of Biblical geography and antiquities, the Egyptian and the Assyrian monuments, etc. But when all has been done, the feeling grows only more strong that there is another and a higher understanding of the Bible, without which all else is vain. Not merely to know the meaning of the narratives of Scripture, but to realize their spiritual application; to feel their eternal import; to experience them in ourselves, so to speak - this is the only profitable study of Scripture, to which all else can only serve as outward preparation. Where the result is "doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness," the Teacher must be He, by whose "inspiration all Scripture is given." "For what man 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." But the end of all is Christ - not only "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," but also He in whom "all the promises of God are Yea and Amen."

A. E. Heniach Bournemouth.

Dates of Events Recorded in the Book of Genesis, According to Hales, Ussher, and Keil.

Column 1 - Ussher, Before Christ; Column 2 - Ussher. Year of the World; Column 3 - Event; Column 4 - Hales, Before Christ; Column 5 - Hales, Year of the World; Column 6 - Keil, Year after the immigration into Canaan.

Ussher B.C.

Ussher Y.W.

Event

Hales B.C.

Hales Y.W.

Keil Y.C.

4004

1

The Creation

5411

1

3874

130

Birth of Seth

5181

230

3769

235

Birth of Enos

4976

435

3679

325

Birth of Cainan

4786

625

3609

395

Birth of Mahaleel

4616

795

3074

930

Death of Adam

4481

930

3544

460

Birth of Jared

4451

960

3382

622

Birth of Enoch

4289

1122

3317

687

Birth of Methuselah

4124

1287

3130

874

Birth of Lamech

3937

1474

3017

987

Translation of Enoch

3914

1487

2948

1056

Birth of Noah

3755

1656

2348

1656

Deluge

3155

2256

2346

1658

Birth of Arphaxad

3153

2258

2311

1693

Birth of Salah

3018

2393

2281

1723

Birth of Heber

2888

2523

1998

2006

Death of Noah

2805

2606

2247

1757

Birth of Pelag

2754

2657

2233

1771

Confusion of Tongues

2554

2857

2217

1787

Birth of Reu

2624

2787

2185

1819

Birth of Serug

2492

2919

2155

1849

Birth of Nahor

2362

3049

2126

1878

Birth of Terah

2283

3128

1998

2006

Death of Noah

1996

2008

Birth of Abram

2153

3258

1921

2083

Abram in Canaan

2078

3333

1

1910

2094

Birth of Ismael

2067

3344

11

Beg. Of Circumcision

24

1896

2108

Birth of Isaac

2053

3358

25

Death of Sarah

62

1856

2148

Marriage of Isaac

2013

3398

65

1836

2168

Birth of Esau & Jacob

1993

3418

85

Death of Abraham

100

Esau’s Marriage

125

Death of Ishmael

1916

3495

148

1760

Jacob to Padan Aram

162

Jacob’s Marriage

169

1745

2259

Birth of Joseph

1902

3509

176

1739

2265

Jacob’s to Canaan

1896

3515

182

1732

2272

Jacob’s at Hebron

1889

3522

192

1728

2276

Joseph sold into Egypt

1885

3526

193

1716

2288

Death of Isaac

1873

3538

205

1715

2289

Joseph Gov. of Egypt

1872

3539

206

1706

2298

Jacob goes to Egypt

1863

3548

215

1689

2315

Death of Jacob

1846

3565

232

1635

2369

Death of Joseph

1792

3619

286

The reader will find in ch. 10, some explanations regarding the systems of Chronology by Ussher and Hales. Hales professes to follow the text of the Greek or LXX translation of the Old Testament, correcting it by the Jewish historian Josephus, whose dates, however, are often manifestly very inaccurate. Ussher professes to follow the Hebrew text. The modern Jewish chronology places the birth of Isaac, when Abraham was one hundred years old, in the year of the world 2048. With this latter very nearly agrees the chronology adopted by a celebrated modern German commentator, Professor Keil, who places it only two years earlier, viz. in 2046. We have given in the last column, according to the chronology of Keil, the succession of events after the migration of Abram into Canaan. Keil places the latter event in the year of the world 2021, and before Christ 2137. From this the reader will easily be able to calculate all the other dates according to the chronology of Keil, which on the whole seems to us the most reliable. He bases it on the following data: according to 1 Kings 6:1, the Temple of Solomon was built 480 years after the Exodus, while the deportation of Israel into Babylon took place 406 years after the building of the Temple, that is, in all, 886 years after the Exodus. But as the commencement of the Exile must have fallen in the year 606 before Christ, we have the year 1492 before Christ (or 2666 after the Creation) as that of the Exodus. The year 606 before Christ is fixed as that of the commencement of the Babylonish exile, because it ended after 70 years, in the first year of the sole reign of Cyrus, which we know to have been the year 536 before Christ.

03.01.01. Volume 1, Chapter 01

CHAPTER 1 Creation - Man in the Garden of Eden - The Fall.

(Genesis 1:1-31; Genesis 2:1-25; Genesis 3:1-24)

"HE that cometh unto God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Hence Holy Scripture, which contains the revealed record of God's dealings and purposes with man, commences with an account of the creation. "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."

Four great truths, which have their bearing on every part of revelation, come to us from the earliest Scripture narrative, like the four rivers which sprung in the garden of Eden. The first of these truths is - the creation of all things by the word of God's power; the second, the descent of all men from our common parents, Adam and Eve; the third, our connection with Adam as the head of the human race, through which all mankind were involved in his sin and fall; and the fourth, that One descended from Adam, yet without his sin, should by suffering free us from the consequences of the fall, and as the second Adam became the Author of eternal salvation to all who trust in Him. To these four vital truths there might be added, as a fifth, the institution of one day in seven to be a day of holy rest unto God. It is scarcely possible to imagine a greater contrast than between the heathen accounts of the origin of all things and the scriptural narrative. The former are so full of the grossly absurd that no one could regard them as other than fables; while the latter is so simple, and yet so full of majesty, as almost to force us to "worship and bow down," and to "kneel before the Lord our Maker." And as this was indeed the object in view, and not scientific instruction, far less the gratification of our curiosity, we must expect to find in the first chapter of Genesis simply the grand outlines of what took place, and not any details connected with creation. On these points there is ample room for such information as science may be able to supply, when once it shall have carefully selected and sifted all that can be learned from the study of earth and of nature. That time, however, has not yet arrived; and we ought, therefore, to be on our guard against the rash and unwarranted statements which have sometimes been brought forward on these subjects. Scripture places before us the successive creation of all things, so to speak, in an ascending scale, till at last we come to that of man, the chief of God's works, and whom his Maker destined to be lord of all. (Psalms 8:3-8) Some have imagined that the six days of creation represent so many periods, rather than literal days, chiefly on the ground of the supposed high antiquity of our globe, and the various great epochs or periods, each terminating in a grand revolution, through which our earth seems to have passed, before coming to its present state, when it became a fit habitation for man. There is, however, no need to resort to any such theory. The first verse in the book of Genesis simply states the general fact, that "In the beginning" - whenever that may have been - "God created the heaven and the earth." Then, in the second verse, we find earth described as it was at the close of the last great revolution, preceding the present state of things: "And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." An almost indefinite

space of time, and many changes, may therefore have intervened between the creation of heaven and earth, as mentioned in Genesis 1:1, and the chaotic state of our earth, as described in Genesis 1:2. As for the exact date of the first creation, it may be safely affirmed that we have not yet the knowledge sufficient to arrive at any really trustworthy conclusion.

It is of far greater importance for us, however, to know that God "created all things by Jesus Christ;" (Ephesians 3:9) and further, that "all things were created by Him, and for Him," (Colossians 1:16) and that "of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things." (Romans 11:36. See also 1 Corinthians 8:6; Hebrews 1:2; John 1:3) This gives not only unity to all creation, but places it in living connection with our Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time we should also always bear in mind, that it is "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Hebrews 11:3)

Everything as it proceeded from the hand of God was "very good," that is, perfect to answer the purpose for which it had been destined. "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." It is upon this original institution of the Sabbath as a day of holy rest that our observance of the Lord’s day is finally based, the change in the precise day - from the seventh to the first of the week - having been occasioned by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which not only the first, but also the new creation was finally completed. (See Isaiah 65:17) Of all His works God only "created man in His own image: in the image of God created He him." This expression refers not merely to the intelligence with which God endowed, and the immortality with which He gifted man, but also to the perfect moral and spiritual nature which man at the first possessed. And all his surroundings were in accordance with his happy state. God "put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it," and gave him a congenial companion in Eve, whom Adam recognized as bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh. Thus as God had, by setting apart the Sabbath day, indicated worship as the proper relationship between man and his Creator, so He also laid in Paradise the foundation of civil society by the institution of marriage and of the family. (Comp. Mark 10:6, Mark 10:9)

It now only remained to test man’s obedience to God, and to prepare him for yet higher and greater privileges than those which he already enjoyed. But evil was already in this world of ours, for Satan and his angels had rebelled against God. The scriptural account of man’s trial is exceedingly brief and simple. We are told: that "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" had been placed "in the midst of the garden," and of the fruit of this tree God forbade Adam to eat, on pain of death. On the other hand, there was also "the tree of life" in the garden, probably as symbol and pledge of a higher life, which we should have inherited if our first parents had continued obedient to God. The issue of this trial came only too soon. The tempter, under the form of a serpent, approached Eve. He denied the threatenings of God, and deceived her as to the real consequences of eating the forbidden fruit. This, followed by the enticement of her own senses, led Eve first to eat, and then to induce her husband to do likewise. Their sin had its immediate consequence. They had aimed to be "as gods," and, instead of absolutely submitting themselves to the command of the Lord, acted independently of Him. And now their eyes were indeed opened, as the tempter had promised, "to know good and evil;" but only in their own guilty knowledge of sin, which immediately prompted the wish to hide themselves from the presence of God. Thus,

their alienation and departure from God, the condemning voice of their conscience, and their sorrow and shame gave evidence that the Divine threatening had already been accomplished: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The sentence of death which God now pronounced on our first parents extended both to their bodily and their spiritual nature - to their mortal and immortal part. In the day he sinned man died in body, soul, and spirit. And because Adam, as the head of his race, represented the whole; and as through him we should all have entered upon a very high and happy state of being, if he had remained obedient, so now the consequences of his disobedience have extended to us all; and as "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," so "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Nay, even "creation itself," which had been placed under his dominion, was made through his fall "subject to vanity," and came under the curse, as God said to Adam: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."

God, in His infinite mercy, did not leave man to perish in his sin. He was indeed driven forth from Paradise, for which he was no longer fit. But, before that, God had pronounced the curse upon his tempter, Satan, and had given man the precious promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent; that is, that our blessed Savior, "born of a woman," should redeem us from the power of sin and of death, through His own obedience, death, and resurrection. And even the labor of his hands, to which man was now doomed, was in the circumstances a boon.

Therefore, when our first parents left the garden of Eden, it was not without hope, nor into outer darkness. They carried with them the promise of a Redeemer, the assurance of the final defeat of the great enemy, as well as the Divine institution of a Sabbath on which to worship, and of the marriage-bond by which to be joined together into families. Thus the foundations of the Christian life in all its bearings were laid in Paradise.

There are still other points of practical interest to be gathered up. The descent of all mankind from our first parents determines our spiritual relationship to Adam. In Adam all have sinned and fallen. But, on the other hand, it also determines our spiritual relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the second Adam, which rests on precisely the same grounds. For "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," and "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The descent of all mankind from one common stock has in times past been questioned by some, although Scripture expressly teaches that "He has made of one blood all nations, for to dwell on the face of the earth." It is remarkable that this denial, which certainly never was shared by the most competent men of science, has quite lately been, we may say, almost universally abandoned, and the original unity of the human race in their common descent is now a generally accepted fact.

Here, moreover, we meet for the first time with that strange resemblance to revealed religion which makes heathenism so like and yet so unlike the religion of the Old Testament. As in the soul of man we see the ruins of what he had been before the fall, so in the legends and traditions of the various religions of antiquity we recognize the echoes of what men had originally heard from the mouth of God. Not only one race, but almost all nations, have in their traditions preserved some dim remembrance alike of an originally happy and holy state, - a so-called golden age - in which the intercourse between heaven and earth was unbroken, and of a subsequent sin and fall of

mankind. And all nations also have cherished a faint belief in some future return of this happy state, that is, in some kind of coming redemption, just as in their inmost hearts all men have at least a faint longing for a Redeemer.

Meanwhile, this grand primeval promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," would stand out as a beacon-light to all mankind on their way, burning brighter and brighter, first in the promise to Shem, next in that to Abraham, then in the prophecy of Jacob, and so on through the types of the Law to the promises of the Prophets, till in the fullness of time "the Sun of Righteousness" arose "with healing under His wings!"

03.01.02. Volume 1, Chapter 02

CHAPTER 2 Cain and Abel - The Two Ways and the Two Races.

(Genesis 4:1-26) THE language in which Scripture tells the second great event in history is once more exceedingly simple. Two of the children of Adam and Eve are alone mentioned: Cain and Abel. Not that there were no others, but that the progress of Scripture history is connected with these two. For the Bible does not profess to give a detailed history of the world, nor even a complete biography of those persons whom it introduces. Its object is to set before us a history of the kingdom of God, and it only describes such persons and events as is necessary for that purpose. Of the two sons of Adam and Eve, Cain was the elder, and indeed, as we gather, the first-born of all their children. Throughout antiquity, and in the East to this day, proper names are regarded as significant of a deeper meaning. When Eve called her first-born son Cain ("gotten," or "acquired"), she said, "I have gotten a man from Jehovah."

Apparently she connected the birth of her son with the immediate fulfillment of the promise concerning the Seed, who was to bruise the head of the serpent. This expectation was, if we may be allowed the comparison, as natural on her part as that of the immediate return of our Lord by some of the early Christians. It also showed how deeply this hope had sunk into her heart, how lively was her faith in the fulfillment of the promise, and how ardent her longing for it. But if such had been her views, they must have been speedily disappointed. Perhaps for this very reason, or else because she had been more fully informed, or on other grounds with which we are not acquainted, the other son of Adam and Eve, mentioned in Scripture, was named Abel, that is "breath," or "fading away."

What in the history of these two youths is of scriptural importance, is summed up in the statement that "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." We next meet them, each bringing an offering unto Jehovah; Cain "of the fruit of the ground," and Abel "of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof." Jehovah "had respect unto Abel and his offering," probably marking His acceptance by some outward and visible manifestation; "but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect." Instead of inquiring into the reason of his rejection, and trying to have it removed, Cain now gave way to feelings of anger and jealousy. In His mercy, God indeed brought before him his sin, warned him of its danger, and pointed out the way of escape. But Cain had chosen his course.

Meeting his brother in the field, angry words led to murderous deed, and earth witnessed the first death, the more terrible that it was violent, and at a brother’s hand. Once more the voice of Jehovah called Cain to account, and again he hardened himself, this time almost disowning the authority of God. But the mighty hand of the Judge was on the unrepenting murderer.

Adam had, so to speak, broken the first great commandment, Cain the first and the second; Adam had committed sin, Cain both sin and crime. As a warning, and yet as a witness to all, Cain, driven from his previous chosen occupation as a tiller of the ground, was sent forth "a fugitive and a

vagabond in the earth." So - if we may again resort to analogy - was Israel driven forth into all lands, when with wicked hands they had crucified and slain Him whose blood "speaketh better things than that of Abel." But even this punishment, though "greater" than Cain "can bear," leads him not to repentance, only to fear of its consequences. And "lest any finding him should kill him," Jehovah set a mark upon Cain, just as He made the Jews, amidst all their persecutions, an indestructible people.

Only in their case the gracious Lord has a purpose of mercy; for they shall return again to the Lord their God - "all Israel shall be saved;" and their bringing in shall be as life from the dead. But as for Cain, he "went out from the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of Nod, that is, of "wandering" or "unrest." The last that we read of him is still in accordance with all his previous life: "he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch."

Now, there are some lessons quite on the surface of this narrative. Thus we mark the difference in the sacrifice of the two brothers - the one "of the fruit of the ground," the other an animal sacrifice. Again, the offering of Cain is described merely in general terms; while Abel's is said to be "of the firstlings of his flock" - the first being in acknowledgment that all was God's, "and of the fat thereof," that is, of the best. So also we note, how faithfully God warns, and how kindly He points Cain to the way of escape from the power of sin. On the other hand, the murderous deed of Cain affords a terrible illustration of the words in which the Lord Jesus has taught us, that angry bitter feelings against a brother are in reality murder (Matthew 5:22), showing us what is, so to speak, the full outcome of self-willedness, of anger, envy, and jealousy. Yet another lesson to be learned from this history is, that our sin will at the last assuredly find us out, and yet that no punishment, however terrible, can ever have the effect of changing the heart of a man, or altering his state and the current of his life. To these might be added the bitter truth, which godless men will perceive all too late, that, as Cain was at the last driven forth from the ground of which he had taken possession, so assuredly all who seek their portion in this world will find their hopes disappointed, even in those things for which they had sacrificed the "better part." In this respect the later teaching of Scripture (Psalms 49:1-20) seems to be contained in germ in the history of Cain and Abel.

If from these obvious lessons we turn to the New Testament for further light on this history, we find in the Epistle of Jude a general warning against going "in the way of Cain;" while St. John makes it an occasion of admonishing to brotherly love:

"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." (1 John 3:12) But the fullest information is derived from the Epistle to the Hebrews, where we read, on the one hand, that "without faith it is impossible to please God," and, on the other, that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh." (Hebrews 11:4)

Scripture here takes us up, as it were, to the highest point in the lives of the two brothers - their sacrifice - and tells us of the presence of faith in the one, and of its absence in the other. This showed itself alike in the manner and in the kind of their sacrifice. But the faith which prompted the sacrifice of Abel, and the want of faith which characterized that of Cain, must, of course, have existed and appeared long before. Hence St. John also says that Cain "was of that wicked one,"

meaning that he had all along yielded himself to the power of that tempter who had ruined our first parents. A little consideration will explain this, and, at the same time, bring the character and conduct of Cain into clearer light.

After the fall the position of man towards God was entirely changed. In the garden of Eden man's hope of being confirmed in his estate and of advancing upwards depended on his perfect obedience. But man disobeyed and fell. Henceforth his hope for the future could no longer be derived from perfect obedience, which, indeed, in his fallen state was impossible. So to speak, the way of "doing" had been set before him, and it had ended, through sin, in death. God in His infinite grace now opened to man another path. He set before him the hope of faith. The promise which God freely gave to man was that of a Deliverer, who would bruise the head of the serpent, and destroy his works. Now, it was possible either to embrace this promise by faith, and in that case to cling to it and set his heart thereon, or else to refuse this hope and turn away from it. Here, then, at the very opening of the history of the kingdom, we have the two different ways which, as the world and the kingdom of God, have ever since divided men. If we further ask ourselves what those would do who rejected the hope of faith, how they would show it in their outward conduct, we answer, that they would naturally choose the world as it then was; and, satisfied therewith, try to establish themselves in the earth, claim it as their own, enjoy its pleasures and lusts, and cultivate its arts. On the other hand, one who embraced the promises would consider himself a pilgrim and a stranger in this earth, and both in heart and outward conduct show that he believed in, and waited for, the fulfillment of the promise. We need scarcely say that the one describes the history of Cain and of his race; the other that of Abel, and afterwards of Seth and of his descendants. For around these two - Cain and Seth -as their representatives, all the children of Adam would group themselves according to their spiritual tendencies.

Viewed in this light the indications of Scripture, however brief, are quite clear. When we read that "Cain was a tiller of the ground," and "Abel was a keeper of sheep," we can understand that the choice of their occupations depended not on accidental circumstances, but quite accorded with their views and character. Abel chose the pilgrim-life, Cain that of settled possession and enjoyment of earth. The nearer their history lay to the terrible event which had led to the loss of Paradise, and to the first giving of the promise, the more significant would this their choice of life appear. Quite in accordance with this, we afterwards find Cain, not only building a city, but calling it after the name of his own son, to indicate settled proprietorship and enjoyment of the world as it was. The same tendency rapidly unfolded in his descendants, till in Lamech, the fifth from Cain, it had already assumed such large proportions that Scripture deems it no longer necessary to mark its growth. Accordingly the separate record of the Cainites ceases with Lamech and his children, and there is no further specific mention made of them in Scripture.

Before following more in detail the course of these two races - for, in a spiritual sense, they were quite distinct - we mark at the very threshold of Scripture history the introduction of sacrifices. From the time of Abel onwards, they are uniformly, and with increasing clearness, set before us as the appointed way of approaching and holding fellowship with God, till, at the close of Scripture history, we have the sacrifice of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to which all sacrifices had pointed. And not only so, but as the dim remembrance of a better state from which man had fallen, and of a hope of deliverance, had been preserved among all heathen nations, so also had that of the necessity of sacrifices. Even the bloody rites of savages, nay, the cruel sacrifices of

best-beloved children, what were they but a cry of despair in the felt need of reconciliation to God through sacrifice - the giving up of what was most dear in room and stead of the offerer? These are the terribly broken pillars of what once had been a temple; the terribly distorted traditions of truths once Divinely revealed. Blessed be God for the light of His Gospel, which has taught us "the way, the truth, and the life," even Him who is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

03.01.03. Volume 1, Chapter 03

CHAPTER 3 Seth and his Descendants - The Race of Cain (Genesis 4:1-26) THE place of Abel could not remain unfilled, if God’s purpose of mercy were to be carried out. Accordingly He gave to Adam and Eve another son, whom his mother significantly called "Seth," that is, "appointed," or rather "compensation;" "for God," said she, "hath appointed me (’compensated me with’) another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." Before, however, detailing the history of Seth and his descendants, Scripture traces that of Cain to the fifth and sixth generations. Cain, as we know, had gone into the land of "Nod" - "wandering," "flight," "unrest," - and there built a city, which has been aptly described as the laying of the first foundations of that kingdom in which "the spirit of the beast" prevails.

We must remember that probably centuries had elapsed since the creation, and that men had already multiplied on the earth. Beyond this settlement of Cain, nothing seems to have occurred which Scripture has deemed necessary to record, except that the names of the "Cainites" are still singularly like those of the "Sethites." Thus we follow the line of Cain’s descendants to Lamech, the fifth from Cain, when all at once the character and tendencies of that whole race appear fully developed. It comes upon us, almost by surprise, that within so few generations, and in the lifetime of the first man, almost every commandment and institution of God should already be openly set aside, and violence, lust, and ungodliness prevail upon the earth. The first direct breach of God’s arrangement of which we here read, is the introduction of polygamy. "Lamech took unto him two wives." Assuredly, "from the beginning it was not so." But this is not all. Scripture preserves to us in the address of Lamech to his two wives the earliest piece of poetry. It has been designated "Lamech’s Sword-song," and breathes a spirit of boastful defiance, of trust in his own strength, of violence, and of murder. Of God there is no further acknowledgment than in a reference to the avenging of Cain, from which Lamech augurs his own safety. Nor is it without special purpose that the names of Lamech’s wives and of his daughter are mentioned in Scripture. For their names point to "the lust of the eye, and the lust of the flesh," just as the occupations of Lamech’s sons point to "the pride of life." The names of his wives were "Adah," that is, "beauty," or "adornment;" and "Zillah," that is, "the shaded," perhaps from her tresses, or else "sounding," perhaps from her song; while "Naamah," as Lamech’s daughter was called, means "pleasant, graceful, lovely." And here we come upon another and most important feature in the history of the "Cainites." The pursuits and inventions of the sons of Lamech point to the culture of the arts, and to a settled and permanent state of society. His eldest son by Adah, "Jabal, was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle," that is, he made even the pastoral life a regular business. His second son, "Jubal, was the father of all such as handle the harp (or cithern), and the flute (or sackbut)," in other words, the inventor alike of stringed and of wind instruments; while Tubal-Cain, Lamech’s son by Zillah, was "an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron."

Taken in connection with Lamech’s sword-song, which immediately follows the scriptural account of his sons’ pursuits, we are warranted in designating the culture and civilization introduced by the family of Lamech as essentially godless. And that, not only because it was that of ungodly men,

but because it was pursued independent of God, and in opposition to the great purposes which He had with man. Moreover, it is very remarkable that we perceive in the Cainite race those very things which afterwards formed the characteristics of heathenism, as we find it among the most advanced nations of antiquity, such as Greece and Rome. Over their family-life might be written, as it were, the names Adah, Zillah, Naamah; over their civil life the "sword-song of Lamech," which indeed strikes the key-note of ancient heathen society; and over their culture and pursuits, the abstract of the biographies which Scripture furnishes us of the descendants of Cain. And as their lives have been buried in the flood, so has a great flood also swept away heathenism - its life, culture, and civilization from the earth, and only left on the mountaintop that ark into which God had shut up them who believed His warnings and His promises. The contrast becomes most marked as we turn from this record of the Cainites to that of Seth and of his descendants. Even the name which Seth gave to his son - Enos, or "frail" - stands out as a testimony against the assumption of the Cainites. But especially does this vital difference between the two races appear in the words which follow upon the notice of Enos' birth: "Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah." Of course, it cannot be supposed that before that time prayer and the praise of God had been wholly unknown in the earth. Even the sacrifices of Cain and of Abel prove the contrary. It must therefore mean, that the vital difference which had all along existed between the two races, became now also outwardly manifest by a distinct and open profession, and by the praise of God on the part of the Sethites. We have thus reached the first great period in the history of the kingdom of God - that of an outward and visible separation between the two parties, when those who are "of faith" "come out from among" the world, and from the kingdom of this world. We remember how many, many centuries afterwards, when He had come, whose blood speaketh better things than that of Abel, His followers were similarly driven to separate themselves from Israel after the flesh, and how in Antioch they were first called Christians. As that marked the commencement of the history of the New Testament Church, so this introduction of an open profession of Jehovah on the part of the Sethites, the beginning of the history of the kingdom of God under the Old Testament. And yet this separation and coming out from the world, this "beginning to call upon the name of Jehovah," is what to this day each one of us must do for himself, if he would take up the cross, follow Christ, and enter into the kingdom of God.

03.01.04. Volume 1, Chapter 04

CHAPTER 4 Genealogy of the Believing Race, through Seth.

(Genesis 5:1-32)

ONE purpose of Scripture has now been fulfilled. The tendencies for evil of the Cainite race have been traced to their full unfolding, and "the kingdom of this world" has appeared in its real character. On the other hand, the race of Seth have gathered around an open profession of their faith in the promises, and of their purpose to serve God, and they have on this ground separated themselves from the Cainites. The two ways are clearly marked out, and the character of those who walk in them determined. There is, therefore, no further need to follow the history of the Cainites, and Scripture turns from them to give us an account of "the elders" who "by faith" "obtained a good report." At first sight it seems as if the narrative here opened with only a "book," or account, "of the generations of Adam," containing here and there a brief notice interspersed; but in truth it is otherwise. At the outset we mark, as a significant contrast, that whereas we read of Adam that "in the likeness of God made He him," it is now added that "he begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." Adam was created pure and sinless in the likeness of God; Seth inherited the fallen nature of his father. Next, we observe how all the genealogies, from Adam downwards, have this in common, that they give first the age of the father at the birth of his eldest son, then the number of years which each of them lived after that event, and finally their total age at the time of death. Altogether, ten "elders" are named from the creation to the time of the flood, and thus grouped:

NAMES ABS #YEAR TOTAL BAC DAC ADAM 130 800 930 1 930 SETH 105 807 912 130 1042 ENOS 90 815 905 235 1140 CAINAN 70 840 910 325 1235 MAHALEEL 65 830 895 395 1290 JARED 162 800 962 460 1422 ENOCH 65 300 365 622 987 METHUSELAH 187 782 969 687 1656 LAMECH 182 595 777 874 1651 NOAH 500 450 950 1056 2006

FLOOD 100

TOTAL 1656

Column 1 - Names; Column 2 - Age at Birth of Son; Column 3 - No. of years after that event; Column 4 - Total Age; Column 5 - Year of Birth from Creation; Column 6 - Year of Death from Creation. On examining them more closely, what strikes us in these genealogical records of the Patriarchs is, that the details they furnish are wanting in the history of the Cainites, where simply the birth of seven generations are mentioned, viz.: Adam, Cain, Enoch, Irad, Mehajael, Methusael, Lamech, and his sons. The reason of this difference is, that whereas the Cainites had really no future, the Sethites, who "called upon the name of Jehovah," were destined to carry out the purpose of God in grace unto the end. Next, in two cases the same names occur in the two races - Enoch and Lamech. But in both, Scripture furnishes characteristic distinctions between them. In opposition to the Enoch after whom Cain called his city, we have the Sethite Enoch, "who walked with God, and was not; for God took him;" and in contradistinction to the Cainite Lamech, with his

boastful ode to his sword, we have the other Lamech, who called his son Noah, "saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed." Thus the similarity of their names only brings out the more clearly the contrast of their character.

Finally, as the wickedness of the one race comes out most fully in Lamech, who stands seventh in the genealogy of the Cainites, so does the godliness of the other in Enoch, who equally stands seventh in that of the Sethites. Passing from this comparison of the two genealogies to the table of the Sethites, we are reminded of the saying, that these primeval genealogies are "monuments alike of the faithfulness of God in the fulfillment of His promise, and of the faith and patience of the fathers." Every generation lived its appointed time; they transmitted the promise to their sons; and then, having finished their course, they all "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." That is absolutely all we know of the majority of them. But the emphatic and seemingly needless repetition in each case of the words, "And he died," with which every genealogy closes, tells us that "death reigned from Adam unto Moses," (Romans 5:14) with all the lessons which it conveyed of its origin in sin, and of its conquest by the second Adam. Only one exception occurs to this general rule - in the case of Enoch; when, instead of the usual brief notice how many years he "lived" after the birth of his son, we read that "he walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years;" and instead of the simple closing statement that "he died," we are not only a second time told that "Enoch walked with God," but also that "he was not; for God took him." Thus both his life and his translation are connected with his "walk with God." This expression is unique in Scripture, and except in reference to Noah (Genesis 6:9) only occurs again in connection with the priest’s intercourse with God in the holy place. (Malachi 2:6) Thus it indicates a peculiarly intimate, close, and personal converse with Jehovah. Alike the life, the work, and the removal of Enoch are thus explained in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Hebrews 11:5) His translation was like that of Elijah (2 Kings 2:10), and like what that of the saints shall be at the second coming of our blessed Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:51-52) In this connection it is very remarkable that Enoch "prophesied" of the very thing which was manifested in his own case, "saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." When Enoch was "translated" only Adam had as yet died: Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, and Jared were still alive. On the other hand, not only Methuselah, the son of Enoch, but also his grandson Lamech, who at the time was one hundred and thirteen years old, must have witnessed his removal. Noah was not yet born. But how deep on the godly men of that period was the impression produced by the prophecy of Enoch, and by what we may call its anticipatory and typical fulfillment in his translation, appears from the circumstance that Lamech gave to his son, who was born sixty-nine years after the translation of Enoch, the name of Noah - "rest" or "comfort" - "saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed."

Evidently Lamech felt the burden of toil upon an earth which God had cursed, and looked forward to a gracious deliverance from the misery and corruption existing in consequence of it, by the fulfillment of the Divine promise concerning the Deliverer. In longing hope of this he called his son Noah. A change, indeed, did come; but it was by the destruction of that sinful generation, and by the commencement of a new period in the covenant-history. We mark that, in the case of Noah, Scripture no longer mentions, as before, only one son; but it gives us the names of the three sons of Noah, to show that henceforth the one line was to divide into three, which were to become the founders of human history.

It is most instructive, also, to notice that Enoch, who seems to have walked nearest to God, only lived on earth altogether three hundred and sixty-five years - less than half the time of those who preceded and who succeeded him. An extraordinary length of life may be a blessing, as affording space for repentance and grace; but in reference to those most dear to God, it may be shortened as a relief from the work and toil which sin has brought upon this world. Indeed, the sequel will show that the extraordinary duration of life, though necessary at the first, yet by no means proved a source of good to a wicked and corrupt generation.

03.01.05. Volume 1, Chapter 05

CHAPTER 5 The Universal Corruption of Man - Preparation for the Flood.

(Genesis 6:1-22)

IT is a remarkable circumstance that all nations should have preserved in their traditions notices of the extraordinary length to which human life was at the first protracted. We can understand that knowledge of such a fact would be most readily handed down. But we should remember, that before the "flood" the conditions of vigor, constitution, climate, soil, and nourishment were quite different from those on which the present duration of life depends. A comparison between the two is therefore impossible, for the best of all reasons, that we have not sufficient knowledge of the primitive state of matters. But this we can clearly see, that such long continuance of life was absolutely necessary, if the earth was to be rapidly peopled, knowledge to advance, and, above all, the worship of God and faith in that promise about a Deliverer which He had revealed, to be continued. As it was, each generation could hand down to remote posterity what it had learned during the centuries of its continuance. Thus Adam was alive to tell the story of Paradise and the fall, and to repeat the word of promise, which he had heard from the very mouth of the Lord, when Lamech was born; and though none of the earlier "fathers" could have lived to see the commencement of building the ark, which took place in the year 1536 from the creation, yet Lamech died only five years before "the flood," and his father Methuselah - the longest-lived man - in the very year of the deluge. If we try to realize how much information even in our own days, when intercourse, civilization, and the means of knowledge have so far advanced, can be gained from personal intercourse with the chief actors in great events, we shall understand the importance of man’s longevity in the early ages of our race.

But, on the other hand, it was possible to pervert this long duration of life to equally evil purposes. The rare occurrence, during so many centuries, of death with its terrors would tend still more to blunt the conscience; the long association of evil men would foster the progress of corruption and evil; and the apparently indefinite delay of either judgment or deliverance would strengthen the bold unbelief of scoffers. That such was the case appears from the substance of Lamech’s prophecy; from the description of the state of the earth in the time of Noah, and the unbelief of his contemporaries; and from the comparison by our Lord (Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26) between "the days of Noe" and those of "the coming of the Son of man," when, according to St. Peter (2 Peter 3:3-4), there shall be "scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." The corruption of mankind reached its highest point when even the difference between the Sethites and the Cainites became obliterated by intermarriages between the two parties, and that from sensual motives. We read that "the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." At that time the earth must have been in a great measure peopled, and its state is thus described, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his

heart was only evil continually." This means more than the total corruption of our nature, as we should now describe it, and refers to the universal prevalence of open, daring sin, and rebellion against God, brought about when the separation between the Sethites and the Cainites ceased. With the exception of Noah there was none in that generation "to call upon the name of Jehovah." "In those days there were 'giants' (in Hebrew: Nephilim) in the earth . . . . the same were the mighty men (or heroes) which were of old, the men of renown."

Properly speaking, these Nephilim were "men of violence," or tyrants, as Luther renders it, the root of the word meaning, "to fall upon." In short, it was a period of violence, of might against right, of rapine, lust, and universal unbelief of the promise. With the virtual extinction of the Sethite faith and worship no further hope remained, and that generation required to be wholly swept away in judgment. And yet, though not only the justice of God, but even His faithfulness to His gracious promise demanded this, the tender loving-kindness of Jehovah appears in such expressions as these: "It repented Jehovah that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him" - literally, "it pained into His heart." The one term, of course, explains the other. When we read that God repented, it is only our human way of speaking, for, as Calvin says, "nothing happens by accident, or that has not been foreseen." It brings before our minds "the sorrow of Divine love over the sins of man," in the words of Calvin, "that when the terrible sins of man offend God, it is not otherwise than as if His heart had been wounded by extreme sorrow." The consequence was, that God declared He would destroy "from the face of the earth both man and beast," - the latter, owing to the peculiar connection in which creation was placed with man, as being its lord, which involved it in the ruin and punishment that befell man. But long before that sentence was actually executed, God had declared, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," - or rather, "dwell with man," "bear rule," or "preside," among them, - "for that he also is flesh," or, as some have rendered it, "since in his erring," or aberration, he has become wholly "carnal, sensual, devilish;" "yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years;" that is, a further space of a hundred and twenty years would in mercy be granted them, before the final judgments should burst. It was during these hundred and twenty years that "the long-suffering of God waited," "while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water."

For, to the universal corruption of that generation, there was one exception - Noah. It needs no more than simply to put together the notices of Noah, in the order in which Scripture places them: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of Jehovah;" and again: "Noah was a just man, and perfect" - as the Hebrew word implies, spiritually upright, genuine, inwardly entire and complete, one whose heart had a single aim - "in his generations," or among his contemporaries; and lastly, "Noah walked with God," - this expression being the same as in the case of Enoch. The mention of his finding grace in the eyes of Jehovah precedes that of his "justice," which describes his moral bearing towards God; while this justice was again the outcome of inward spiritual rectitude, or of what under the fuller light of the New Testament we would designate a heart renewed by the Holy Spirit. The whole was summed up and completed in an Enoch-like walk with God. The statement that Noah found grace is like the forth-bursting of the sun in a sky lowering for the storm. Three times the sacred text repeats it, that the earth was corrupt, adding that it was full of violence, just as if the watchful eye of the Lord, who "looked upon the earth," had been searching and trying the children of men, and was lingering in pity over it, before judgment was allowed to descend. Nor was this all. Even so, "the long-suffering of God waited" for one hundred and twenty years, "while

the ark was a preparing;" and during this time, especially, Noah must have acted as "a preacher of righteousness." The building of the ark commenced when Noah was four hundred and eighty years old; that is, before any of his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, had been born, - in fact, just twenty years before the birth of Shem. Thus the great faith of Noah appeared not only in building an ark in the midst of a scoffing and unbelieving generation, and that against all human probability of its ever being needed, and one hundred and twenty years before it was actually required, but in providing room for "his sons" and his "sons' wives," while as yet he himself was childless! Indeed, the more we try to realize the circumstances, the more grand appears the unshaken confidence of the patriarch. The words in which God announced His purpose were these: "The end of all flesh is come before Me," - that is, as some have explained it, the extreme limit of human depravity; - "for the earth is filled with violence through them," - that is, violence proceeding from them ("from before their faces"), - "and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Noah and his family were alone to be preserved, and that by means of an "ark," - an expression which only occurs once more in reference to the ark of bulrushes in which Moses was saved. (Exodus 2:3-5) Noah was to construct his ark of "gopher," most likely cypress wood, and to "pitch it within and without with pitch." The ark was to be three hundred cubits long, fifty broad, and thirty high; that is, reckoning the cubit at one foot and a half, four hundred and fifty feet long, seventy-five broad, and forty-five high. As the wording of the Hebrew text implies, there was all around the top, one cubit below the roof, an opening for light and for air (rendered in our version "window"), in which, it has been suggested, some translucent substance like our glass may have been inserted. Here there seems also to have been a regular "window," which is afterwards specially referred to (Genesis 1:1). The door was to be in the side of the ark, which was arranged in three stories of rooms (literally "cells"), or the accommodation of all the animals in the ark, and the storage of food. For "of every living thing" Noah was to bring with him into the ark, - seven pairs, in the case of "clean beasts," and one pair of those that were not clean. Then, when the appointed time for it came, God would "bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven." But with Noah God would "establish" His "covenant," that is, carry out through him His purpose in the covenant of grace, which was to issue in the birth of the Redeemer. Accordingly, Noah, his wife - for here there is no trace of polygamy, - his sons, and his sons' wives were to go into the ark, and there to be kept alive during the general destruction of all around.

Thus far the directions of Scripture. Much needless ingenuity has been wasted on a calculation of the exact space in the ark, of its internal arrangements, and of the accommodation it contained for the different species of animals then existing. Such computations are essentially unreliable, as we can neither calculate the exact room in the ark, nor yet the exact number of species which required to be accommodated within its shelter. Scripture, which sets before us the history of God's kingdom, never gratifies such idle and foolish inquiries. But of this we may be quite sure, that the ark which God provided was literally and in every sense quite sufficient for the purposes for which it was intended, and that these purposes were fully secured. It may perhaps help us to realize this marvelous structure if we compare it to the biggest ship known - the Great Eastern, whose dimensions are six hundred and eighty feet in length, eighty-three in breadth, and fifty-eight in depth; or else if we describe it as nearly half the size of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. It should be borne in mind that the ark was designed not for navigation, but chiefly for storage. It had neither masts, rudder, nor sails, and was probably flat at the bottom, resembling a huge floating chest. To

show how suitable its proportions were for storage, we may mention that a Dutchman, Peter Jansen, built in 1604 a ship on precisely the same proportions (not, of course, the same figures), which was found to hold one-third more lading than any other vessel of the same tonnage.

All other questions connected with the building of the ark may safely be dismissed as not deserving serious discussion. But the one great fact would stand out during that period: Noah preaching righteousness, warning of the judgment to come, and still exhibiting his faith in his practice by continuing to provide an ark of refuge. To sum up Noah’s life of faith, Noah’s preaching of faith, and Noah’s work of faith in the words of Scripture: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." (Hebrews 11:7).

03.01.06. Volume 1, Chapter 06

CHAPTER 6 The Flood (Genesis 7:1-24, Genesis 8:1-15)

THERE is a grandeur and majestic simplicity about the scriptural account of "The Flood" which equally challenges and defies comparison. Twice only throughout the Old Testament is the event again referred to - each time in the grave, brief language befitting its solemnity. In Psalms 29:10 we read: "Jehovah sitteth upon the flood; yea, Jehovah sitteth King for ever," - a sort of Old Testament version of "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." Then, if we may carry out the figure, there is an evangelical application of this Old Testament history in Isaiah 54:9-10 : "For this is as the waters of Noah unto Me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith Jehovah that hath mercy on thee." The first point in the narrative of "The Flood" which claims our attention is an emphatic mention, twice repeated, of Noah's absolute obedience, "according unto all that Jehovah commanded him." (Genesis 6:22; Genesis 7:5) Next, we mark a "solemn pause of seven days" before the flood actually commenced, when "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened;" in other words, the floodgates alike of earth and heaven thrown wide open. The event happened "in the sixth hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month;" that is, if we calculate the season according to the beginning of the Hebrew civil year, about the middle or end of our month of November.

Then Noah and his wife, his three sons - Shem, Ham, and Japheth - and their wives, and all the animals, having come into the ark, "Jehovah shut him in," and for forty days and forty nights "the rain was upon the earth," while, at the same time, the fountains of the great deep were broken up. The flood continued for one hundred and fifty days, when it began to subside. The terrible catastrophe is thus described: "And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark." The remarks of a recent writer on this subject are every way so appropriate that we here reproduce them: "The narrative is vivid and forcible, though entirely wanting in that sort of description which in a modern historian or poet would have occupied the largest space. We see nothing of the death-struggle; we hear not the cry of despair; we are not called upon to witness the frantic agony of husband and wife, and parent and child, as they fled in

terror before the rising waters. Nor is a word said of the sadness of the one righteous man who, safe himself, looked upon the destruction which he could not avert. But an impression is left upon the mind with peculiar vividness from the very simplicity of the narrative, and it is that of utter desolation. This is heightened by the repetition and contrast of two ideas. On the one hand, we are reminded no less than six times in the narrative (Genesis 6:1-22; Genesis 7:1-24; Genesis 8:1-22) who the tenants of the ark were, the favored and rescued few; and, on the other hand, the total and absolute blotting out of everything else is not less emphatically dwelt upon" (Genesis 6:13, Genesis 6:17; Genesis 7:4, Genesis 7:21-23).

We will not take from the solemnity of the impressive stillness, amid which Scripture shows us the lonely ark floating on the desolate waters that have buried earth and all that belonged to it, by attempting to describe the scenes that must have ensued. Only the impression is left on our minds that the words "Jehovah shut him in," may be intended to show that Noah, even if he would, could not have given help to his perishing contemporaries. At the end of the one hundred and fifty days it is said, in the peculiarly touching language of Scripture, "God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark." A drying wind was made to pass over the earth, the flood "was restrained," "and the waters returned from the earth continually." On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, that is, exactly five months after Noah had entered it, the ark was found to be resting "upon the mountains of Ararat," - not necessarily upon either the highest peak, which measures seventeen thousand two hundred and fifty feet, nor yet, perhaps, upon the second highest, which rises to about twelve thousand feet, but upon that mountain range. Still the waters decreased; and seventy-three days later, or on the first day of the tenth month, the mountain-tops all around became visible.

Forty days more, and Noah "sent forth a raven," which, finding shelter on the mountain-tops, and food from the floating carcasses, did not return into the ark. At the end of seven days more "he sent forth a dove from him to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground," that is, from the low ground in the valleys. "But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark." Yet another week, and he sent her forth a second time, when she returned again in the evening, bearing in her mouth an olive-leaf. It is a remarkable fact, as bearing indirect testimony to this narrative, that the olive has been ascertained to bear leaves under water. A third time Noah put forth the messenger of peace, at the end of another week, and she "returned not again unto him any more."

"No picture in natural history," says the writer already quoted, "was ever drawn with more exquisite beauty and fidelity than this. It is admirable alike for its poetry and its truth." On the first day of the first month, in the sixth hundredth and first year, "the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, was the earth dried," - just one year and ten days after Noah had entered the ark.

Thus far the scriptural narrative. It has so often been explained that the object of the Bible is to give us the history of the kingdom of God, not to treat of curious or even scientific questions, that we can dismiss a matter too often discussed of late in an entirely unbecoming spirit, in these words of a recent writer: "It is a question among theologians and men of science whether the flood was absolutely universal, or whether it was universal only in the sense of extending over all the

part of the world then inhabited. We do not here enter into this controversy; but we may notice the remarkable fact that the district lying to the east of Ararat, where the ark rested, bears traces of having at one time been under water. It is a peculiarly depressed region, lying lower than the districts around, and thus affording peculiar facilities for such a submersion." But there is another matter connected with the flood so marked and striking as to claim our special attention. It is that the remembrance of the flood has been preserved in the traditions of so many nations, so widely separated and so independent of each other, that it is impossible to doubt that they have all been derived from one and the same original source. As might be expected, they contain many legendary details, and they generally fix the locality of the flood in their own lands; but these very particulars mark them as corruptions of the real history recorded in the Bible, and carried by the different nations into the various countries where they settled. Mr. Perowne has grouped these traditions into those of Western Asia, including the Chaldean, the Phenician, that of the so-called "Sibylline Oracles," the Phrygian, the Syrian, and the Armenian stories; then those of Eastern Asia, including the Persian, Indian, and Chinese; and, thirdly, those of the American nations - the Cherokee, and the various tribes of Mexican Indians, with which - strange though it may seem - he groups those of the Fiji Islands. To these he adds, as a fourth cycle, the similar traditions of the Greek nations. But the most interesting of all these traditions is the Chaldean or Babylonian, which deserves more than merely passing notice.

Though it needs not such indirect confirmations to convince us of the truth of the narratives in the Bible, it is very remarkable how all historical investigations, when really completed and rightly applied, confirm the exactness of what is recorded in the Holy Scriptures. But their chief value to us must always be this, that they tell us of that Ark which alone rides on the waters of the deluge, and preserves for ever safe them who are "shut in" there by the hand of Jehovah.

CHALDEAN NARRATIVE OF THE DELUGE In general we may say that we have two Chaldean accounts of the flood. The one comes to us through Greek sources, from Berosus, a Chaldean priest in the third century before Christ, who translated into Greek the records of Babylon. This, as the less clear, we need not here notice more particularly. But a great interest attaches to the far earlier cuneiform inscriptions, first discovered and deciphered in 1872 by Mr. G. Smith, of the British Museum, and since further investigated by the same scholar.

These inscriptions cover twelve tablets, of which as yet only part has been made available. They may broadly be described as embodying the Babylonian account of the flood, which, as the event took place in that locality, has a special value. The narrative is supposed to date from two thousand to two thousand five hundred years before Christ. The history of the flood is related by a hero, preserved through it, to a monarch whom Mr. Smith calls Izdubar, but whom he supposes to have been the Nimrod of Scripture. There are, as one might have expected, frequent differences between the Babylonian and the Biblical account of the flood. On the other hand, there are striking points of agreement between them, which all the more confirm the scriptural account, as showing that the event had become a distinct part of the history of the district in which it had taken place. There are frequent references to Erech, the city mentioned in Genesis 10:10; allusions to a race of giants, who are described in fabulous terms; a mention of Lamech, the father of Noah, though under a different name, and of the patriarch himself as a sage, reverent and devout, who, when the Deity resolved to destroy by a flood the world for its sin, built the ark. Sometimes the language comes so close to that of the Bible that one almost seems to read disjointed or distorted quotations

from Scripture. We mention, as instances, the scorn which the building of the ark is said to have called forth on the part of contemporaries; the pitching of the ark without and within with pitch; the shutting of the door behind the saved ones, the opening of the window, when the waters had abated; the going and returning of the dove since "a resting-place it did not find," the sending of the raven, which, feeding on corpses in the water, "did not return;" and, finally, the building of an altar by Noah. We sum up the results of this discovery in the words of Mr. Smith:

"Not to pursue this parallel further, it will be perceived that when the Chaldean account is compared with the Biblical narrative, in their main features the two stories fairly agree; as to the wickedness of the antediluvian world, the Divine anger and command to build the ark, its stocking with birds and beasts, the coming of the deluge, the rain and storm, the ark resting on a mountain, trial being made by birds sent out to see if the waters had subsided, and the building of an altar after the flood. All these main facts occur in the same order in both narratives, but when we come to examine the details of these stages in the two accounts, there appear numerous points of difference; as to the number of people who were saved, the duration of the deluge, the place where the ark rested, the order of sending out the birds, and other similar matters."

We conclude with another quotation from the same work, which will show how much of the primitive knowledge of Divine things, though mixed with terrible corruptions, was preserved among men at this early period: "It appears that at that remote age the Babylonians had a tradition of a flood which was a Divine punishment for the wickedness of the world; and of a holy man, who built an ark, and escaped the destruction; who was afterwards translated and dwelt with the gods. They believed in hell, a place of torment under the earth, and heaven, a place of glory in the sky; and their description of the two has, in several points, a striking likeness to those in the Bible. They believed in a spirit or soul distinct from the body, which was not destroyed on the death of the mortal frame; and they represent this ghost as rising from the earth at the bidding of one of the gods, and winging its way to heaven."

03.01.07. Volume 1, Chapter 07

HISTORY OF THE PATRIARCHS

CHAPTER 7 After the Flood - Noah’s Sacrifice - Noah’s Sin - Noah’s Descendants.

(Genesis 8:15-22; Genesis 9:1-28.)

RIGHTLY considered, the destruction of "all flesh" by the deluge was necessary for its real preservation. Death was needful for its new life. The old world was buried in the flood, that a new order of things might rise from its grave. For, manifestly, after the mixing up of the Sethite with the Cainite race, an entirely new commencement required to be made if the purpose of God in grace was to be carried to its goal. Hence, also, God once more pronounced upon Noah the blessing of fruitfulness which he had spoken to Adam, and gave him dominion over creation, yet, as we shall see, with such modifications as the judgment that had just passed, and the new state of things which had commenced, implied.

It deserves our notice that, even after the earth was quite dry, Noah awaited the express command of God before leaving the ark. His first act after that was to build "an altar unto Jehovah," and there to offer "burnt-offerings" "of every clean beast, and of every fowl." Nor was it merely in gratitude and homage to God, but also in spiritual worship that he thus commenced his life anew, and consecrated earth unto Jehovah. In bringing an animal sacrifice Noah followed the example of Abel; in calling upon the name of Jehovah he once again and solemnly adopted the profession of the Sethites. But there was this difference between his and any preceding sacrifice, that now for the first time we read of building an altar. While Paradise was still on earth, men probably turned towards it as the place whence Jehovah held intercourse with man. But when its site was swept away in the flood, God, as it were, took up His throne in heaven, and from thence revealed Himself unto men and held intercourse with them. (See also Genesis 11:5, Genesis 11:7) And the truth, that our hearts and prayers must rise upwards to Him who is in heaven, was symbolized by the altar on which the sacrifice was laid. Scripture significantly adds, that "Jehovah smelled a sweet savor," or rather "a savor of rest," "of satisfaction;" in other words, He accepted the sacrifice. "And Jehovah said in His heart," that is, He resolved, "I will not again curse the ground for man’s sake, for (or because) the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth." Both Luther and Calvin have remarked on the circumstance that men’s universal sinfulness, which formerly had been the cause of the judgment of the flood, should now be put forward as the reason for not again cursing the ground. But in fact this only marks another difference between the state of man before and after the flood. If we may so say, God now admitted the fact of universal sinfulness as existing, and made it an element of His future government. He looked upon man as a miserable and wretched sinner, with whom in His compassion and long-suffering He would bear, delaying His second and final judgment till after He should have accomplished all that He had promised to do for the salvation of men. Putting aside Israel, as God’s special people, the period between Noah and Christ may be described, in the words of St. Paul, as "the times of this ignorance" which "God winked at," (Acts 17:30) or as those when "through the forbearance of

God" sins were passed over. (Romans 3:25, see marginal rendering) Having thus explained the fundamental terms on which the Lord would deal with the nations of the earth during the period between the flood and the coming of the Savior, that is, during the Jewish dispensation, we proceed to notice, in the words which God addressed to Noah, some other points of difference between the former and the new state of things. First of all, the gracious announcement that, while the earth remained, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night were not to cease, implies not only His purpose to spare our earth, but also that man might henceforth reckon upon a regular succession of seasons, and that he was to make this earth for the present his home, to till it, and to possess it. Hence it was quite another matter when Noah became an "husbandman," from what it had been when Cain chose to be "a tiller of the ground." Next, as already stated, God renewed the blessing of fruitfulness in much the same terms in which He had spoken it originally to Adam, and once more conferred dominion over the lower creation. But in this new grant there was this essential difference - that man’s dominion would now be one of force, and not, as formerly, of willing subjection. If God had at the first brought "every beast" and "every fowl" before Adam, as it were, to do homage to him, and to receive from him their names, it was now said to Noah and to his descendants, "The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth; . . . into your hand are they delivered." Perhaps we ought also to notice in this connection that, whatever may have been the common practice before, now for the first time the use of animal food was expressly permitted, with the exception of the blood, and that probably for the reason afterwards mentioned in the case of sacrifices, that the blood was the seat of life. (Leviticus 17:11, Leviticus 17:14) Another and most important change is marked by the solemn prohibition of murder, with this addition, that "whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Such crimes were no longer to be avenged directly by God Himself, but He delegated His authority to man. (Romans 8:1-2) As Luther rightly says, "In these words the civil magistracy is instituted, and the Divine right of bearing the sword." For when it is added, as a reason why murder should be punished with death, that God made man in His own image, it seems to convey that vengeance might not be taken by any one at his own will, but that this belonged to those who on earth represented the authority of God, or were His delegates; whence also they are called in Psalms 82:6, "gods," or rather "Elohim."

And, as Luther rightly argues, "If God concedes to man the power over life and death, assuredly this carries with it authority over that which is less than life, such as goods, family, wife, children, servants, and land." Thus the words spoken by the Lord to Noah contain the warrant and authority of those who are appointed rulers and judges over us. In later times the Jews have been wont to speak of what they called the seven Noachic commandments, which, according to them, were binding upon all Gentile proselytes. These were a prohibition

of idolatry,

of blasphemy,

of murder,

of incest,

of robbery and theft,

of eating blood and strangled animals, and

an injunction of obedience to magistrates. (Comp. also Acts 15:20)

In confirmation of what God had spoken, He "established" His "covenant" with Noah and his sons, and in "token" thereof "set," or "appointed," His "bow in the cloud." It may have been so, that the rainbow was then seen for the first time, although this does not necessarily follow from the words of Scripture. They only tell us that henceforth the rainbow was to be a "token" or visible symbol to man of God’s promise no more to destroy all flesh by a flood, and also that He Himself would "look upon it" as such, so that He might "remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature." The symbol of the rainbow was therefore to be both a sign and a seal of God’s promise. And we can readily understand how impressive, whenever a storm burst upon the earth, this symbol would have appeared to those who had witnessed the flood. In the poetical language of a German writer, "The rainbow, caused by the influence of the sun upon the dark clouds, would show to man, that what was from heaven would penetrate that which rose from earth; and as it spanned the gulf between heaven and earth, it would seem to proclaim peace between God and man; while even the circumstance that it bounded the horizon would symbolize, how the covenant of mercy extended to earth’s utmost bounds." From this scene of intercourse between Noah and God we have to pass to an event in his history, alas, of a very different character. When Noah - with his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth - left the ark to become an husbandman, he planted a vineyard, as Jewish legend has it, from a slip of the vine that had strayed out of Paradise. But it may boldly be asserted that, except the forbidden fruit itself, none has brought more sin, ruin, and desolation upon our earth. Whether Noah was unacquainted with the intoxicating property of the vine, or neglected proper moderation, the sad spectacle is presented of the aged patriarch, so lately rescued from the flood, not only falling a victim to drunkenness, but exposing himself in that state to the impious and vile conduct of his son Ham. As Luther says, "Ham would not have mocked his father, when overcome with wine, if he had not long before cast from his soul that reverence which, according to God’s command, children should cherish towards their parents." It is a relief to find the other sons of Noah, so far from sharing their brother’s sin, reverently defending their father from the unnatural vileness of Ham. As we might have expected, the conduct of the brothers received meet reward, - the curse descended on Ham, while a blessing, suited to each, was given to Shem and Japheth. But, in the words of the patriarch, the curse lights specially upon Canaan, the son of Ham, not to the exclusion of his other sons, but probably because as Noah had suffered from his son, so Ham was to experience his punishment in his son; and Canaan may have been specially singled out, either because he fully entered into the spirit of his father, or more probably because of the later connection between Israel and the Canaanites, in whom they would see alike the spirit and the curse of Ham fully realized. In connection with this we mark, that, twice before (Genesis 9:18, Genesis 9:22), when Ham is mentioned, it is added that he was "the father of Canaan."

Shem, Ham, and Japheth, who were to repeople the earth, seem to have impressed their own characteristics on their descendants. Their very names are symbolical and prophetic. Shem means splendor or glory, Ham burning heat, and Japheth enlargement. Bearing this in mind, we listen to the words of the patriarch: "Cursed be Canaan, A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren;" and we know that this has been the fate of the children of Ham, or the races of Africa; while, strangely, the name of Canaan has been interpreted as meaning "he who is subject." Again, "Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem, And Canaan shall be their slave:" a prophecy most

signally fulfilled when Israel took possession of the land of Canaan; and, lastly, "God (Elohim) shall enlarge Japheth (enlargement); And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, And Canaan shall be their slave." This latter prophecy consists of three parts. It promises from God, as the God of power, that enlargement to Japheth which is the characteristic of his descendants, the European nations. And it adds that Japheth (not, as some have read it, God) shall dwell in the tents of Shem, that is, as St. Augustine has said, "in the churches which the apostles, the sons of the prophets, reared;" thus referring to the blessing which was to flow to all nations through the Hebrew race. Lastly, Canaan was to be the servant of Japheth, as seen in the subjection to Greece and Rome, of Tyre and Carthage, the ancient centers of wealth and merchandise, and of Egypt, the empire of might and of the oldest civilization. But the words spoken to Shem, the ancestor of the Hebrew race, deserve special notice. The blessing here begins quite differently from that of Japheth. It opens with a thanksgiving to God, for, as Luther says, "Noah sees it to be such that he cannot express it in words, therefore he turns to thanksgiving." Then, the blessing of Shem is not outward, but spiritual; for Jehovah is to be the God of Shem. To speak in an anticipatory figure, Shem’s portion, in the widest sense, is that to be hereafter assigned to Levi, amongst the Jews; and Japheth is to dwell in his tents, - in other words, Israel is to be the tribe of Levi to all nations. More than that, whereas Elohim is to give enlargement to Japheth, Jehovah the covenant-God is to be the God of Shem. Thus the primitive promise to Adam is now both further defined and enlarged. The promised Deliverer is to come through Shem, as the ancestor of the chosen race, in the midst of whom Jehovah is to dwell; and through Shem, Japheth is to share in the coming spiritual blessing. Here, then, is clearly defined the separation of the Jews and the Gentiles, and the mission of each: the one from Jehovah, the other from Elohim; the one in the Church, the other in the world.

03.01.08. Volume 1, Chapter 08

CHAPTER 8 Genealogy of Nations - Babel - Confusion of Tongues (Genesis 10:1-32, Genesis 11:1-10)

IT was the Divine will, that after the flood the whole earth should be repeopled by the descendants of Noah. For this purpose they must, of course, have separated and spread, so as to form the different nations and tribes among whom the world should be apportioned. Any attempted unity on their part would not only be contrary to the Divine purpose, but also, considering the universal sinfulness of man, prove dangerous to themselves, and even be untrue, since their inward separation had already appeared in the different characters and tendencies of Ham and his brothers. But before recording the judgment by which the Divine purpose was enforced, Scripture gives us the genealogy of the different nations, and this with a threefold object - to show how the earth was all peopled from the descendants of Noah; to define the relation of Israel towards each nationality; and, best of all, to register, as it were, their birth in the book of God, thereby indicating, that, however "in time past He suffered all nations to walk in their own ways," (Acts 14:6) they also were included in the purposes of mercy, and intended finally to "dwell in the tents of Shem." In accordance with the general plan on which Holy Scripture is written, we read after the prophecy of Noah, which fixed the future of his sons, no more of that patriarch than that he "lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years," and that he died at the age of nine hundred and fifty years. Regarding the division of earth among his three sons, it may be said generally, that Asia was given to Shem, Africa to Ham, and Europe to Japheth. In the same general manner a modern scholar has traced all existing languages to three original sources, themselves, no doubt, derived from a primeval spring, which may have been lost in the "confusion of tongues," though its existence is attested by constant and striking points of connection between the three great families of languages. The more we think of the allotment of Europe, Asia, and Africa among the three sons of Noah, the more clearly do we see the fulfillment of prophecy regarding them. As we run our eye down the catalogue of nations in Genesis 10:1-32, we have little difficulty in recognizing them; and beginning with the youngest, Japheth, we find of those known to the general reader, the Cymry of Wales and Brittany (Gomer), the Scythians (Magog), the Medes (Madai), the Greeks (Ionians, Javan), and the Thracians (Tiras). Among their descendants, the Germans, Celts, and Armenians have been traced to the three sons of Gomer. It is not necessary to follow this table farther, though all will remember Tarshish, or Spain, and the Kittim, or "inhabitants of the isles."

Passing next to Shem (Genesis 10:21), we notice that he is called "the father of all the children of Eber," because in Eber the main line divided into that of Peleg, from whom the race of Abraham sprang, and the descendants of Joktan (Genesis 10:25). The descendants of Shem are exclusively Asiatic nations, among whom we only notice Asshur or Assyria, and Uz, as the land which gave birth to Job.

We have reserved Ham for the last place, because of the connection of his story with the dispersion of all nations. His sons were Cush or Ethiopia, Mizraim or Egypt, Phut or Libya, and

Canaan, which, of course, we know. It will be noticed, that the seats of all these nations were in Africa, except that of Canaan, whose intrusion into the land of Palestine was put an end to by Israel. But yet another of Ham’s descendants had settled in Asia. Nimrod, the founder of the Babylonian empire, the conqueror of Assyria, and the builder of Nineveh (Genesis 10:11), was the son of Cush. Altogether this "mighty one in the earth," who founded the first world-empire, reminds us of Cain and of his descendant Lamech. Leaving out of view the possible meaning of his name, which some have explained as being "we will rebel," boastful violence and rebellion certainly constitute the characteristics of his history. Most strangely have the Assyrian tablets of the royal successors of Nimrod been made to furnish an explanation of his description as "a mighty hunter" - for this is the title given in them to the great conquering warrior-monarchs, as "hunting the people." Thus we gather the full meaning of the expression, "he began to be a mighty one in the earth." From Babylon, which was "the beginning of his kingdom," Nimrod "went out into Assyria" (Genesis 10:11, marginal rendering), "and builded Nineveh" - the remarkable circumstance here being that each time four cities are mentioned in connection with Nimrod: first, the four cities of his Babylonian empire, of which Babel was the capital, and then the four cities of his conquered Assyrian empire, of which Nineveh was the capital. Now all this tallies in the most striking manner with what we read in ancient history, and with those Assyrian monuments which within our own lifetime have by the labors of Layard and Loftus been exhumed from their burial of many centuries, to give witness for the Bible. For, first, we now know that the great Asiatic empire of Babylon was of Cushite origin. Nay, even the name Nimrod occurs in the list of Egyptian kings. Secondly, we are made aware that Babel was the original seat of the empire; and, strangest of all, that the earliest Babylonian kings bore a title which is supposed to mean "four races," in reference to "the quadruple groups of capitals" of Babylonia and Assyria. Lastly, we know that, as stated in the Bible, "the Babylonian empire extended its sway northwards" to Assyria, where Nineveh was founded, which in turn succeeded to the empire once held by Babel. In all these respects, therefore, the latest historical investigations have most strikingly confirmed the narrative of Scripture. Of the magnificence of Babel, the capital of the empire of Nimrod, "the mighty hunter," it is difficult to convey an adequate conception, without entering into details foreign to our purpose. But some idea of it may be formed from its extent, which according to the lowest computation, covered no less than one hundred square miles, or about five times the size of London; while the highest computation would make it cover two hundred square miles, or ten times the extent of London! Such was the world-city, the first "beginning" of which at least Nimrod had founded. No wonder that the worldly pride of that age should have wished to make such a place the world-capital of a world-empire, whose tower "may reach unto heaven!" The events connected with the discomfiture of their plan took place in the days of Peleg, the grandson of Shem. (Genesis 10:25) As Peleg was born one hundred years after the flood, and lived two hundred and thirty-nine years, there must have been already a considerable population upon the earth.

If evidence were required that the flood had indeed destroyed sinners but not sin, it would be found in the bearing and language of men in the days of Nimrod and Peleg. After leaving the ark, they had "journeyed eastward" (Genesis 11:2) till they reached the extensive well-watered plain of Shinar, where they settled. Being still all "of one language and of one speech," they resolved to build themselves there "a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven," for the twofold purpose of making themselves "a name," and lest they "be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Such words read singularly like those which a Nimrod would employ, and they

breathe the spirit of "Babylon" in all ages. Assuredly their meaning is: "Let us rebel!" - for not only would the Divine purpose of peopling the earth have thus been frustrated, but such a world-empire would in the nature of it have been a defiance to God and to the kingdom of God, even as its motive was pride and ambition. A German critic has seen in the words "let us make us a name" - in Hebrew, sheen - a kind of counterfeit of the Shem in whom the promises of God centered, or, if one might so express it, the setting up of an anti-Christ of worldly power. Something of this kind seems certainly indicated in what God says of the attempt (Genesis 11:6): "And this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do." These words seem to imply that the building of Babel was only intended as the commencement of a further course of rebellion. The gathering of all material forces into one common center would have led to universal despotism and to universal idolatry, - in short, to the full development of what as anti-Christ is reserved for the judgment of the last days. We read, that "Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower," that is, using our human modes of expression, to take judicial cognizance of man’s undertaking. In allusion to the boastful language in which the builders of Babel and of its tower had in their self-confidence stated their purpose: "Go to, let us make brick," etc. (Genesis 11:3), Jehovah expressed His purpose of defeating their folly, using the same words: "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language." And by this simple means, without any outward visible interference, did the Lord arrest the grandest attempt of man’s rebellion, and by confounding their language, "scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth." "Therefore is the name of it called Babel, or confusion." What a commentary does this history afford to the majestic declarations of the second Psalm! Of the tower of Babel no certainly ascertained remains have as yet been discovered. It has commonly been identified with the ruins called Birs Nimrud, about six miles to the south-west of the site of ancient Babylon. Birs Nimrud is "a pyramidical mound, crowned apparently by the ruins of a tower, rising to the height of one hundred and fifty-five and a half feet above the level of the plain, and in circumference somewhat more than two thousand feet." Its distance from Babylon, however, seems opposed to the idea that these are the ruins of the tower spoken of in Scripture. But even so, Birs Nimrud can only be a few centuries younger than the tower of Babel; and its construction enables us to judge what the appearance of the original tower must have been. Birs Nimrud faced north-east, and formed a sort of "oblique pyramid, built in seven receding stages. The platform on which these stages rested was of crude brick; the stages themselves of burnt brick, painted in different colors in honor of gods or planets - each stage as it was placed on the other receding, so as to be considerably nearer the back of the building, or the south-west." The first stage, painted black in honor of Saturn, was a square of two hundred and seventy-two feet, and twenty-six feet high; the second stage, orange colored, in honor of Jupiter, was a square of two hundred and thirty feet, and twenty-six high; the third stage, bright red, in honor of Mars, was a square of one hundred and eighty-eight feet, and also twenty-six high; the fourth stage, golden, for the Sun, was one hundred and forty-six feet square, and fifteen high; the fifth stage, pale yellow, for Venus, was one hundred and four feet square, and fifteen high; the sixth stage, dark blue, for Mercury, was sixty-two feet square, and fifteen high; and the seventh stage, silver, for the Moon, was twenty feet square, and fifteen high. The whole was surmounted by a chapel, which must have nearly covered the whole top. The whole height, as already stated, was one hundred and fifty-three feet; or about one-third that of the great pyramid of Egypt, which measures four hundred and eighty feet. It is also interesting to notice, how exactly what we know of early Babylonian architecture tallies with what

we read in Scripture: "Let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime (or rather, bitumen) had they for mortar." The small burnt bricks, laid in bitumen, are still there; not only in the tower, but in the still existing ruins of the ancient palace of Babel, which was coeval with the building of the city itself.

Holy Scripture does not inform us whether "the tower" was allowed to stand after the dispersion of its builders; nor yet does it furnish any details as to the manner in which "Jehovah did there confound the language of all the earth." All this would have been beyond its purpose. But there, at the very outset, when the first attempt was made to found, in man’s strength, a vast kingdom of this world, which God brought to naught by confounding the language of its builders, and by scattering them over the face of the earth, we see a typical judgment, of which the counterpart in blessing was granted on the day of Pentecost; when, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, another universal kingdom was to be founded, the first token of which was that gift of tongues, which pointed forward to a reunion of the nations, when the promise would be fulfilled that they should all be gathered into the tents of Shem!

03.01.09. Volume 1, Chapter 09

CHAPTER 9 The Nations and their Religion

Job A MODERN German writer has well said: "The birth of heathenism may be dated from the moment when the presumptuous statement was uttered, 'Go to, let us build a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name.'" Even Josephus, the ancient Jewish historian, regards Nimrod as the father of heathenism, the characteristic of which is to find strength and happiness in sin, and not in God. Its essential principle is to reject all that is not seen, and to cling to that which is temporal. Thus we also may be heathens in heart, even though we are not such in mind, and do not worship stocks or stone. Indeed, it is very remarkable, that neither nation nor tribe has ever been discovered which did not acknowledge and worship some superior Being; and yet from the most savage barbarians to the most refined philosopher, they have all been destitute of the knowledge of the one living and true God. The only exception in the world has been that of Israel, to whom God specially revealed Himself; and even Israel required constant teaching, guidance, and discipline from on high to keep them from falling back into idolatry. Idolatry is the religion of sight in opposition to that of faith. Instead of the unseen Creator, man regarded that which was visible - the sun, the moon, the stars - as the cause and the ruler of all; or he assigned to everything its deity, and thus had gods many and lords many; or else he converted his heroes, real or imaginary, into gods. The worship of the heavens, the worship of nature, or the worship of man - such is heathenism and idolatry. And yet all the while man felt the insufficiency of his worship, for behind these gods he placed a dark, immovable, unsearchable Fate, which ruled supreme, and controlled alike gods and men. It was indeed a terrible exchange to make - to leave our heavenly Father and His love for such delusions and disappointments. The worst of it was, that man gradually became conformed to his religion. He first imputed his own vices to his gods, and next imitated the vices of his gods. Assuredly, the heathen nations were the younger son in the parable (Luke 15:12), who had left his father's house with the portion of goods that belonged to him - heathen science, art, literature, and power - to find himself at the last driven to eat the husks on which the swine do feed, and yet not able to satisfy the cravings of his hunger! Blessed be God for that revelation of Himself in Christ Jesus, which has brought the prodigal back to the Father's home and heart! But even so, God did not leave Himself without a witness. The inward searching of man after a God, the accusing voice of his conscience, the attempt to offer sacrifices, and the remnants of ancient traditions of the truth among men - all seemed to point upward. And then, as all were not Israel who were of Israel, so God also had at all times His own, even among the Gentile nations. Job, Melchizedek, Rahab, Ruth, Naaman, may be mentioned as instances of this. It will be readily understood that the number of those "born out of season," as it were, from among the Gentiles, must have been largest the higher we ascend the stream of time, and the nearer we approach the period when early traditions were still preserved in their purity in the earth. The fullest example of this is set before us in the book of Job, which also gives a most interesting picture of those early times.

Two things may be regarded as quite settled about the book of Job. Its scene and actors are laid in patriarchal times, and outside the family or immediate ancestry of Abraham. It is a story of Gentile life in the time of the earliest patriarchs. And yet anything more noble, grand, devout, or spiritual than what the book of Job contains is not found, "no, not in Israel." This is not the place to give either the history of Job, or to point out the depth of thought, the vividness of imagery, and the beauty and grandeur of language with which it is written. It must suffice to take the most rapid survey of the religious and social life which it sets before us. Without here referring to the sayings of Elihu, Job had evidently perfect knowledge of the true God; and he was a humble, earnest worshipper of Jehovah. Without any acquaintance with "Moses and the prophets," he knew that of which Moses and the prophets spoke. Reverent, believing acknowledgment of God, submission, and spiritual repentance formed part of his experience, which had the approval of God Himself. Then Job offered sacrifices; he speaks about the great tempter; he looks for the resurrection of the body; and he expects the coming of Messiah.

We have traced the barest outlines of the religion of Job. The friends who come to him, if they share not his piety, at least do not treat his views as something quite strange and previously unheard. This, then, is a blessed picture of at least a certain class in that age. How far culture and civilization must have advanced in those times we gather from various allusions in the book of Job. Job himself is a man of great wealth and high rank. In the language of a recent writer:

"The chieftain lives in considerable splendor and dignity. . . . Job visits the city frequently, and is there received with high respect as a prince, judge, and distinguished warrior. (Job 29:7, Job 29:9) There are allusions to courts of justice, written indictments, and regular forms of procedure. (Job 13:26; Job 31:28) Men had begun to observe and reason upon the phenomena of nature, and astronomical observations were connected with curious speculations upon primeval traditions. We read of mining operations, great buildings, ruined sepulchers. . . . Great revolutions had occurred within the time of the writer; nations, once independent, had been overthrown, and whole races reduced to a state of misery and degradation." Nor ought we to overlook the glimpses of social life given us in this history. While, indeed, there was violence, robbery, and murder in the land, there is happily also another side to the picture. "When I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street, the young men saw me, and hid themselves; and the aged arose and stood up." Along with such becoming tribute of respect paid to worth, we find that the relationship between the pious rich and the poor is thus described: "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy."

Assuredly there is nothing in all this which we could wish to see altered even in New Testament times! But the more terrible in contrast must have been the idolatry and the corruption of the vast majority of mankind; an idolatry which they had probably inherited from before the flood, and which soon attained gigantic proportions, and a corruption which went on ever increasing during the "times of this ignorance."

03.01.10. Volume 1, Chapter 10

CHAPTER 10 The Chronology of the Early History of the Bible - Commencement of the History of God’s Dealings with Abraham and his Seed

BEFORE further proceeding with our history some brief explanation may be desirable of the chronological table given in this volume, and in general of the early chronology of the Bible. It will be noticed, first, that the years are counted from "B.C.," that is, from "before Christ;" the numbers, of course, becoming smaller the farther we come down from the creation of the world, and the nearer we approach the birth of our Savior. Thus, if the year of creation be computed at 4004 before Christ, the deluge, which happened 1656 years later, would fall in the year 2348 B.C. Further, it will be observed that we have given two chronological tables of the same events, which differ by many hundreds of years - the one "according to Hales," the other "according to Ussher," which latter is that of "the dates in the margin of English Bibles," and, we may add, corresponds with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The explanation of the difference between them is that our calculations of Biblical dates may be derived from one of three sources. We have, in fact, the five books of Moses in three different forms before us. First, we have the original Hebrew text of the Old Testament; next, there exists a translation of it in Greek, completed long before the time of our Lord, which was commonly used by the Jews at the time of Christ, for which reason also it is generally quoted in the New Testament. This version is known as that of the "LXX," or "Seventy," from the supposed number of translators. Finally, we have the Samaritan Pentateuch, or that in use among the Samaritans. Now, as the genealogies differ in these three in regard to the ages of the patriarchs, the question arises which of them should be adopted? Each in turn has had its defenders, but the most learned critics are now almost unanimous in concluding, as indeed we might have expected, that the Hebrew text contains the true chronology. Of the other two, the Samaritan is so untrustworthy that for practical purposes we may leave it entirely out of view. The Septuagint chronology differs from that of the Hebrew text in prolonging the ages of the patriarchs, partially before the deluge, but chiefly between the deluge and the calling of Abraham, - the result being that the flood is thrown five hundred and eighty-six years later than in the Hebrew text; and the birth of Abraham yet other eight hundred and seventy-eight years - the total difference amounting to no less than one thousand two hundred and forty-five years! It is not difficult to guess the reason why the Greek translators had thus altered the original numbers. It was evidently their wish to throw the birth of Abraham as late as possible after the flood. Of these two chronologies, that of the Hebrew text may, for convenience sake, be designated as the short, and that of the "LXX" as the long chronology; and, in a general way, it may be said that (with certain modifications which it would take too long to explain) Hales has adopted the long, or Greek, and Ussher the short, or Hebrew chronology. This may suffice on a matter which has engaged only too much discussion. It is far more important to think of the kingdom of God, the history of which is given us in the Holy Scriptures; for now we are at the beginning of its real appearance. If God had at the first dealt with mankind generally, then with one part of the race, and lastly with one division of nations, He now chose and raised up for Himself a peculiar people, through whom His purposes of

mercy towards all men were to be carried out. This people was to be trained from its cradle until it had fulfilled its mission, which was when He came who was the Desire of all nations.

Three points here claim our special attention: -

1. The election and selection of what became the people of God. Step by step we see in the history of the patriarchs this electing and separating process on the part of God. Both are marked by this twofold characteristic: that all is accomplished, not in the ordinary and natural manner, but, as it were, supernaturally; and that all is of grace. Thus Abram was called alone out of his father's house -he was elected and selected. The birth of Isaac, the heir of the promises, was, in a sense, supernatural; while, on the other hand, Ishmael, the elder son of Abram, was rejected. The same election and selection appears in the history of Esau and Jacob, and indeed throughout the whole patriarchal history. For at the outset the chosen race was to learn what is the grand lesson of all Scriptures that everything comes to us from God, and is of grace, - that it is not man's doing, but God's working; not in the ordinary manner, but by His special interposition. Nor should we fail to mark another peculiarity in God's dealings. To use a New Testament illustration, it was the grain of mustard-seed which was destined to grow into the tree in whose branches all the birds of the air were to find lodgment. In Abram the stem was cut down to a single root. This root first sprang up into the patriarchal family, then expanded into the tribes of Israel, and finally blossomed and bore fruit in the chosen people. But even this was only a means to an end. Israel had possessed, so to speak, the three crowns separately. It had the priesthood in Aaron, the royal dignity in David and his line, and the prophetic office. But in the "last days" the triple crown of priest, king, and prophet has been united upon Him Whose it really is, even JESUS, a "Prophet like unto Moses," the eternal priest "after the order of Melchizedek," and the real and ever reigning "Son of David." And in Him all the promises of God, which had been given with increasing clearness from Adam onwards to Shem, then to Abraham, to Jacob, in the law, in the types of the Old Testament, and, finally, in its prophecies have become "Yea and amen," till at the last all nations shall dwell in the tents of Shem.

2. We mark a difference in the mode of Divine revelation in the patriarchal as compared with the previous period. Formerly, God had spoken to man, either on earth or from heaven, while now He actually appeared to them, and that specially as the Angel of Jehovah, or the Angel of the Covenant. The first time Jehovah "appeared" unto Abram was when he entered the land of Canaan, in obedience to that Divine call which singled him out to become the ancestor of the people of God. (Genesis 12:7) After that a fresh appearance of Jehovah, and of the Angel of the Covenant, in whom He manifested Himself, marked each stage of the Covenant history. And this appearance was not only granted to Abraham and to Hagar, to Jacob, to Moses, to Balaam, to Gideon, to Manoah and to his wife, and to David, but even towards the close of Jewish history this same Angel of Jehovah is still found pleading for rebellious, apostate Israel in these words: "O Jehovah of Hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem?"(Zechariah 1:12) The more carefully we follow His steps, the more fully shall we be convinced that He was not an ordinary Angel, but that Jehovah was pleased to reveal Himself in this manner under the Old Testament. We shall have frequent occasion to return to this very solemn subject. Meantime it may be interesting to know that of old the Jews also regarded Him as the Shechinah, or visible presence of God, - the same as appeared in the pillar of the cloud and of fire, and afterwards in the temple, in the most holy place; while the ancient Church almost unanimously adored in Him the Son of

God, the Second Person of the blessed Trinity. We cannot conceive any subject more profitable, or likely to be fraught with greater blessing, than reverently to follow the footsteps of the Angel of Jehovah through the Old Testament.

3. The one grand characteristic of the patriarchs was their faith. The lives of the patriarchs prefigure the whole history of Israel and their Divine selection. In the words of a recent German writer, amidst all varying events, the one constant trait in patriarchal history was "faith which lays hold on the word of promise, and on the strength of this word gives up that which is seen and present for that which is unseen and future." Thus "Abraham was the man of joyous, working faith; Isaac of patient, bearing faith; Jacob of contending and prevailing faith." But all lived and "died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth." And it is still so. Without ignoring the great privilege of those who are descended from Abraham, yet, in the true sense, only "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham;" "and if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise." To adapt the words of a German poet:

"What marks each one within the fold Is faith that does not see; And yet, as if it did behold, Trusts, unseen Lord, to Thee!"

03.01.11. Volume 1, Chapter 11

CHAPTER 11 The Calling of Abram - His Arrival in Canaan, and Temporary Removal to Egypt (Genesis 11:27-32; Genesis 12:1-20; Genesis 13:1-4) WITH Abram an entirely new period may be said to begin. He was to be the ancestor of a new race in whom the Divine promises were to be preserved, and through whom they would finally be realized. It seemed, therefore, necessary that, when Abram was called, he should forsake his old home, his family, his country, and his people. Not to speak of the dangers which otherwise would have beset his vocation, a new beginning required that he should be cut off from all that was "behind." Had he remained in Ur of the Chaldees, he would at best only have been a new link in the old chain. Besides, the special dealings of God, and Abram’s faith and patience, as manifested in his obedience to the Divine command, were intended to qualify him for being the head of the new order of things, "the father of all who believe." Lastly, it was intended that the history of Abram, as that of his seed after him, should prepare the way for the great truths of the Gospel, and exhibit as in a figure the history of all who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Hitherto, God had only interposed, as in the flood, and at the confounding of tongues, to arrest the attempts of man against His purposes of mercy. But when God called Abram, He personally and actively interfered, and this time in mercy, not in judgment. The whole history of Abram may be arranged into four stages, each commencing with a personal revelation of Jehovah. The first, when the patriarch was called to his work and mission;(Genesis 12:1-20; Genesis 13:1-18; Genesis 14:1-24) the second, when he received the promise of an heir, and the covenant was made with him;(Genesis 15:1-21; Genesis 16:1-16) the third, when that covenant was established in the change of his name from Abram to Abraham, and in circumcision as the sign and seal of the covenant;(Genesis 17:1-27; Genesis 18:1-33; Genesis 19:1-38; Genesis 20:1-18; Genesis 21:1-34) the fourth, when his faith was tried, proved, and perfected in the offering up of Isaac.(Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67, Genesis 25:1-11) These are, so to speak, the high points in Abram’s history, which the patriarch successively climbed, and to which all the other events of his life may be regarded as the ascent. Descending the genealogy of Shem, Abram stands tenth among "the fathers" after the flood. He was a son - apparently the third and youngest - of Terah, the others being Haran and Nahor. The family, or perhaps more correctly the tribe or clan of Terah, resided in Chaldea, which is the southern part of Babylonia. "Ur of the Chaldees," as recently again discovered, was one of the oldest, if not the most ancient, among the cities of Chaldea. It lies about six miles away from the river Euphrates, and, curious to relate, is at present somewhere near one hundred and twenty-five miles from the Persian Gulf, though it is supposed, that at one time it was actually washed by its waters, the difference being accounted for by the rapid deposit of what becomes soil, or of alluvium, as it is called.

Thus Abram must in his youth have stood by the seashore, and seen the sand innumerable, to which his posterity in after ages was likened. Another figure, under which his posterity is described, must have been equally familiar to his mind. It is well known that the brilliancy of a starlit sky in the East, and especially where Abram dwelt, far exceeds anything which we witness

in our latitudes. Possibly this may have first led in those regions to the worship of the heavenly bodies. And Abram must have been the more attracted to their contemplation, as the city in which he dwelt was "wholly given" to that idolatry; for the real site of Ur has been ascertained from the circumstance that the bricks still found there bear the very name of Hur on them. Now this word points to Hurki, the ancient moon-god, and Ur of the Chaldees was the great "Moon-city," the very center of the Chaldean moon-worship! The most remarkable ruins of that city are those of the old moon-temple of Ur, which from the name on the bricks are computed to date from the year 2000 before Christ. Thus bricks that are thirty-eight centuries old have now been brought forward to bear witness to the old city of Abraham, and to the tremendous change that must have passed over him when, in faith upon the Divine word, he obeyed its command.

Jewish tradition has one or two varying accounts to show how Abram was converted from the surrounding idolatry, and what persecutions he had to suffer in consequence. Scripture does not indulge our fancy with such matters; but, true to its uniform purpose, only relates what belongs to the history of the kingdom of God. We learn, however, from Joshua 24:2, Joshua 24:14, Joshua 24:15, that the family of Terah had "in old time, on the other side of the flood," or of Euphrates, "served other gods;" and we can readily understand what influence their surroundings must, in the circumstances, have exercised upon them. It was out of this city of Ur that God called Abram. Previously to this, Haran, Abram’s eldest brother, had died. We read, that "Terah took Abram, his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram’s wife, and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there." The words which we have italicized leave no room for doubt, that the first call of God had come to Abram long before the death of Terah, and when the clan were still at Ur.(Comp. Acts 7:2) From the circumstance that Haran is afterwards called "the city of Nahor," (Genesis 24:10; comp. Genesis 27:43) we gather that Nahor, Abraham’s brother, and his family had also settled there, though perhaps at a later period, and without relinquishing their idolatry. It is a remarkable confirmation of the scriptural account, that, though this district belongs to Mesopotamia, and not to Chaldea, its inhabitants are known to have for a long time retained the peculiar Chaldean language and worship. Haran has preserved its original name, and at the time of the Romans was one of the great battle-fields on which that power sustained a defeat from the Parthians. The journey from Ur, in the far south, had been long, wearisome, and dangerous; and the fruitful plains around Haran must have held out special inducements for a pastoral tribe to settle. But when the Divine command came, Abram was "not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Perhaps the arrival and settlement of Nahor and his family, bringing with them their idolatrous associations, may have formed an additional incentive for departing. And so far, God had in His providence made it easier for Abram to leave, since his father Terah had died in Haran, at the age of two hundred and five years. The second call of Jehovah to Abram, as given in Genesis 12:1-3, consisted of a fourfold command, and a fourfold promise. The command was quite definite in its terms: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee;" leaving it, however, as yet undecided which was to be the place of his final settlement. This uncertainty must have been an additional and, in the circumstances, a very serious difficulty in the way of Abram’s obedience. But the word of promise reassured him. It should be distinctly marked, that on this, as on every other occasion in Abram’s life, his faith determined his obedience. Accordingly, we read, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went

out, not knowing whither he went."(Hebrews 11:8) The promise upon which he trusted assured to him these four things: "I will make of thee a great nation;" "I will bless thee," with this addition (in ver. 3), "and thou shalt be a blessing, and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee;" "I will make thy name great ;" and, lastly, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." When we examine these promises more closely, we at once perceive how they must have formed yet another trial of Abram's faith; since he was not only going, a stranger into a strange land, but was at the time wholly childless. The promise that he was to "be a blessing," implied that blessing would, so to speak, be identified with him; so that happiness or evil would flow from the relationship in which men would place themselves towards Abram. On the other hand, from the peculiar terms "them that bless thee," in the plural, and "him that curseth thee," in the singular, we gather that the Divine purpose of mercy embraced many, "of all nations, kindreds, and tongues." Lastly, the great promise, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," went far beyond the personal assurance, "I will make thy name great." It resumed and made more definite the previous promises of final deliverance, by fixing upon Abram as the spring whence the blessing was to flow. Viewed in this light, all mankind appear as only so many families, but of one and the same father; and which were to be again united in a common blessing in and through Abram. Repeated again and again in the history of Abram, this promise contained already at the outset the whole fullness of the Divine purpose of mercy in the salvation of men. Thus was the prediction to be fulfilled: "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem," as is shown by St. Peter in Acts 3:25, and by St. Paul in Galatians 3:8, Galatians 3:14.

Abram was seventy-five years old "when he departed out of Haran," accompanied by Lot and his family. Putting aside the various traditions which describe his prolonged stay at Damascus, and his supposed rule there, we learn from Scripture that Abram entered the land of promise, as many years afterwards his grandson Jacob returned to it, leaving on his right the majestic Lebanon, and on his left the pastures of Gilead and the mountain-forests of Bashan. Straight on he passed over hills and through valleys, till he reached the delicious plain of Moreh, or rather the spreading terebinth-tree of Moreh, in the valley of Sichem. Travelers have spoken in the most enthusiastic terms of this vale. "All at once," writes Professor Robinson, "the ground sinks down to a valley running towards the west, with a soil of rich, black vegetable mold. Here a scene of luxuriant and almost unparalleled verdure burst upon our view. The whole valley was filled with gardens of vegetables, and orchards of all kinds of fruits, watered by several fountains, which burst forth in various parts, and flow westward in refreshing streams. It came upon us suddenly, like a scene of fairy enchantment. We saw nothing to compare with it in all Palestine."

Another traveler says: "Here there are no wild thickets; yet there is always verdure, always shade, - not of the oak, the terebinth, or the garoub-tree, but of the olive-grove, so soft in color, so picturesque in form, that for its sake we can willingly dispense with all other wood."

Such was the first resting-place of Abram in the land of promise, in the plain, or rather in the wood of Moreh, which probably derived its name from the Canaanitish proprietor of the district. For, as shown by the remark of the sacred writer, "and the Canaanite was then in the land," the country was not tenantless, but occupied by a hostile race; and if Abram was to enter on its possession, it must once more be by faith in the promises.

Here it was that Jehovah actually "appeared" unto Abram, under some visible form or other; and now for the first time in sight of the Canaanite was the promise conveyed, "unto thy seed will I give this land." It is added that Abram "there builded an altar unto Jehovah who appeared unto him." Thus, the soil on which Jehovah had been seen, and which He had just promised to Abram, was consecrated unto the Lord; and Abram's faith, publicly professed in the strange land, grasped Jehovah's promise, solemnly given. From Shechem, Abram removed, probably for the sake of pasturage, southwards to a mountain on the east of Bethel, pitching his tent between Bethel and Ai. This district is, in the words of Robinson, "still one of the finest tracts for pasturage in the whole land." In the glowing language of Dean Stanley: "We here stand on the highest of a succession of eminences, . . . its topmost summit resting, as it were, on the rocky slopes below, and distinguished from them by the olive-grove, which clusters over its broad surface above. From this height, thus offering a natural base for the patriarchal altar, and a fitting shade for the patriarchal tent, Abram and Lot must be conceived as taking the wide survey of the country . . such as can be enjoyed from no other point in the neighborhood." What met their astonished gaze from this point will be described in the following chapter. Meantime, we note that here, also, Abram "builded an altar unto Jehovah;" and, though He does not seem to have visibly appeared unto him, yet the patriarch called upon the name of Jehovah. After a residence, probably of some time, Abram continued his journey, "going on still toward the south," - a pilgrim and a stranger "in the land of promise;" his possession of it only marked by the altars which he left on his track. A fresh trial now awaited the faith of Abram. Strong as it always proved in what concerned the kingdom of God, it failed again and again in matters personal to himself. A famine was desolating the land, and, as is still the case with the Bedouin tribes under similar circumstances, Abram and his family "went down into Egypt," which has at all times been the granary of other nations. It does not become us to speculate whether this removal was lawful, without previous special directions from God; but we know that it exposed him to the greatest danger. As we must not underrate the difficulties of the patriarchs, so neither must we overrate their faith and their strength. Abram "was a man of like passions with us," and of like weaknesses. When God spoke to him he believed, and when he believed then he obeyed. But God had said nothing as yet to him, directly, about Sarai; and, in the absence of any special direction, he seems to have taken the matter into his own hands, after the manner of those times and countries. From Genesis 20:13 we learn that when he first set out from his father's house, an agreement had been made between the two, that Sarai was to pass as his sister, because, as he said, "the fear of God" was not among the nations with whom they would be brought in contact; and they might slay Abram for his wife's sake. The deceit - for such it really was - seemed scarcely such in their eyes, since Sarai was so closely related to her husband that she might almost be called his sister. In short, as we all too oftentimes do, it was deception, commencing with self-deception; and though what he said might be true in the letter, it was false in the spirit of it. But we must not imagine that Abram was so heartless as to endanger his wife for the sake of his own safety. On the contrary, it seemed the readiest means of guarding her honor also; since, if she were looked upon as the sister of a mighty chief, her hand would be sought, and certain formalities have to be gone through, which would give Abram time to escape with his wife. This is not said in apology, but in explanation of the matter.

Ancient Egyptian monuments here again remarkably confirm the scriptural narrative. They prove that the immigration of distinguished foreigners, with their families and dependents, was by no means uncommon. One of them, dating from the time of Abram, represents the arrival of such a

"clan," and their presentation and kindly reception by Pharaoh. Their name, appearance, and dress show them to be a pastoral tribe of Semitic origin.

Another ancient tablet records how such foreigner attained the highest dignities in the land. So far, then, Abram would meet with a ready welcome. But his device was in vain, and Sarai "was taken into the house of Pharaoh." As the future brother-in-law of the king, Abram now rapidly acquired possessions and wealth. These presents Abram could, of course, not refuse, though they increased his guilt, as well as his remorse and sense of shame. But he had committed himself too deeply to retrace his steps; and the want of faith, which had at the first given rise to his fears, may have gone on increasing. Abram had given up for a time the promised land, and he was now in danger of losing also the yet greater promise. But Jehovah did not, like Abram, deny her who was to be the mother of the promised seed. He visited "Pharaoh and his house with great plagues," which by-and-by led to their ascertaining the true state of the case - possibly from Sarai herself. Upon this the king summoned Abram, and addressed him in words of reproach, which Abram must have the more keenly felt that they came from an idolater. Their justice the patriarch acknowledged by his silence. Yet the interposition of God on behalf of Abram induced Pharaoh to send him away with all his possessions intact; and, as the wording of the Hebrew text implies, honorably accompanied to the boundary of the land.

It is a true remark, made by a German writer, that while the occurrence of a famine in Canaan was intended to teach Abram that even in the promised land nourishment depended on the blessing of the Lord, - in a manner teaching him beforehand this petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," - his experience in Egypt would also show him that in conflict with the world fleshly wisdom availed nothing, and that help came only from Him who "suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, He reproved kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm," (Psalms 105:14-15) thus, as it were, conveying to Abram’s mind these two other petitions: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." And so Abram once more returned to Bethel, "unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning; unto the place of the altar which he had made at the first: and there Abram called on the name of Jehovah." In one respect this incident is typical of what afterwards befell the children of Israel. Like him, they went into Egypt on account of a famine; and, like him, they left it under the influence of “fear of them which fell” upon the Egyptians - yet laden with the riches of Egypt.

03.01.12. Volume 1, Chapter 12

CHAPTER 12 The Separation of Abram and Lot - Abram at Hebron - Sodom plundered - Lot rescued - The fleeting with Melchizedek (Genesis 13:1-18; Genesis 14:1-24)

HITHERTO Abram had been accompanied by Lot in all his wanderings. But a separation must take place between them also. For Abram and his seed were to be kept quite distinct from all other races, so that the eye of faith might in future ages be fixed upon the father of the faithful, as on him from whom the promised Messiah was to spring. Like so many of God’s most marked interpositions, this also was brought about by what seemed a series of natural circumstances, and probably Abram himself was ignorant of the Divine purpose in what at the time must have been no small trial to him. The increase of their wealth, and especially of their herds and flocks in Egypt, led to disputes between the herdsmen of Abram and of Lot, which were the more painful that, as the Bible notes, "the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land," and must have been witnesses to this "strife" between "brethren." To avoid all occasion of it, Abram now proposed a voluntary separation, allowing Lot, though he was the younger and the inferior, the choice of district - and this not merely from generosity, but in faith, leaving it to the Lord to determine the bounds of his habitation. As the two stood on that highest ridge between Bethel and Ai, the prospect before them was indeed unrivaled. Looking back northwards, the eye would rest on the mountains which divide Samaria from Judaea; westwards and southwards, it would range over the later possession of Benjamin and Judah, till in the far distance it descried the slope on which Hebron lay. But the fairest vision was eastward: in the extreme distance, the dark mountains of Moab; at their foot, the Jordan, winding through a valley of untold fertility; and in the immediate foreground, the range of hills above Jericho. As the patriarchs gazed upon it, the whole cleft of the Jordan valley was rich with the most luxuriant tropical vegetation, the sweetest spot of all being around the Lake of Sodom, at that time probably a sweetwater lake, the "circuit" of the plain resembling in appearance, but far exceeding in fertility and beauty, the district around the Sea of Galilee. In this "round" of Jordan, and by the waters of Sodom, rich cities had sprung up, which, alas! were also the seat of the most terrible corruption. As Lot saw this "round" or district, fair like Paradise, green with perennial verdure, like the part of Egypt watered by the Nile, his heart went out after it, unmindful of, or not caring to inquire into, the character of its inhabitants. The scene might well have won the heart of any one whose affections were set on things beneath. Lot’s heart was so set; and he now vindicated by his choice the propriety of his being separated from Abram. Assuredly their aims went asunder, as the ways which they took. Yet, even thus, God watched over Lot, and left him not to reap the bitter fruit of his own choice. Nor was Abram left in that hour without consolation. As most he needed it when alone, and with apparently nothing but the comparatively barren hills of Judaea before him, Jehovah once more renewed to him, and enlarged the promise of the land, far as his eye could range, bestowing it upon Abram and his "seed for ever." For the terms of this promise were not made void by the seventy years which Judah spent in the captivity of Babylon, nor yet are they annulled by the eighteen centuries of Israel’s present unbelief and dispersion. The promise of the land is to Abram’s "seed for ever." The

land and the people God has joined together; and though now the one lies desolate, like a dead body, and the other wanders unresting, as it were a disembodied spirit, God will again bring them to each other in the days when His promise shall be finally established. So Abram must have understood the word of Jehovah. And when, so to speak, he now took possession by faith of the promised land, he was directed to walk through it. In the course of these wanderings he reached Hebron, one of the most ancient cities of the world, where in the wood of one, Mamre, he pitched his tent under a spreading terebinth, and built an altar unto Jehovah. This place seems through the rest of his life to have continued one of the centers of his movements.

Meanwhile Lot had taken up his abode in a district which, like the rest of Canaan at the time of Joshua's conquest, was subdivided among a number of small kings, each probably ruling over a city and the immediately surrounding neighborhood. For twelve years had this whole district been tributary to Chedorlaomer. In the thirteenth year they rebelled; and, in the fourteenth, the hordes of Chedorlaomer and of his three confederates swept over the intervening district, carrying desolation with them, till they encountered the five allied monarchs of the "round of Jordan," in the vale of Siddim, the district around what afterwards became the Dead Sea. Once more victory attended the invaders - two of the Canaanitish kings were killed, the rest fled in wild confusion; Sodom and Gomorrah were plundered, and their inhabitants - Lot among them - carried away captives by the retreating host. This was the first time -at least in Scripture history - that the world-kingdom, as founded by Nimrod, was brought into contact with the people of God, and that on the soil of Palestine. For Chedorlaomer and his confederates occupied the very land and place where afterwards the Babylonian and Assyrian empires were. It became necessary, therefore, that Abram should interfere. God had given him the land, and here was its hereditary enemy; and God now called and fitted him, though but a stranger and a pilgrim on its soil, to become its deliverer; while alike the mode and the circumstances of this deliverance were to point forward to those realities of which it was the type.

One who had escaped from the rout brought Abram tidings of the disaster. He immediately armed his own trained servants, three hundred and eighteen in number; and being joined by Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, the chieftains to whom the district around Hebron belonged, followed in pursuit of Chedorlaomer and his allies. Probably, as is common in such warfare, victory had made them careless. They may have feasted, or their bands, laden with captives and spoil, may have been straggling, and without order. Certainly they were ignorant of any coming danger, when Abram, having divided his force, fell upon them, in the dead of night, from several sides at the same time, inflicted a great slaughter, and pursued them to close by Damascus. All the spoil and all the captives, among them Lot also, were rescued and brought back. As the returning host of Abram entered the valley of Shaveh, close under the walls of what afterwards became Jerusalem, they were met by two persons bearing very different characters, and coming from opposite directions. From the banks of Jordan the new king of Sodom, whose predecessor had fallen in battle against Chedorlaomer, came up to thank Abram, and to offer him the spoils he had won; while from the heights of Salem - the ancient Jerusalem - the priest-king Melchizedek descended to bless Abram, and to refresh him with "bread and wine." This memorable meeting seems to have given the valley its name, "the king's dale;" and here, in later times, Absalom erected for himself a monumental pillar.(2 Samuel 18:18) But now a far different scene ensued, and one so significant in its typical meaning as to have left its impress alike on the prophecies of the Old and in the

fulfillment of the New Testament. Melchizedek appears like a meteor in the sky - suddenly, unexpectedly, mysteriously, - and then as suddenly disappears. Amid the abundance of genealogical details of that period we know absolutely nothing of his descent; in the roll of kings and their achievements, his name and reign, his birth and death remain unmentioned. Considering the position which he occupies towards Abram, that silence must have been intentional, and its intention typical; that is, designed to point forward to corresponding realities in Christ. Still more clearly than its silence does the information which Scripture furnishes about Melchizedek show the deep significance of his personality. His name is "King of Righteousness," his government that of the "Prince of Peace;" he is a priest," neither in the sense in which Abram was, nor yet "after the order of Aaron," his priesthood being distinct and unique; he blesses Abram, and his blessing sounds like a ratification of the bestowal of the land upon the patriarch; while Abram gives "him tithes of all." There is in this latter tribute an acknowledgment of Melchizedek both as king and priest - as priest in giving him "tithes," and as king in giving him these tithes of all the spoil, as if he had royal claim upon it; while Abram himself refuses to touch any of it, and his allies are only allowed to "take their portion." This is not the place to discuss the typical meaning of this story; yet the event and the person are too important to pass them unnoticed. Twice again we meet Melchizedek in Scripture: once in the prophecy of Psalms 110:4 : "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek;" the other time in the application of it all to our blessed Savior, in Hebrews 7:3. That Melchizedek was not Christ Himself is evident from the statement that he was "made like unto the Son of God" (or "likened unto" Him, Hebrews 7:3); while it equally appears from these words, and from the whole tenor of Scripture, that he was a type of Christ. In fact, we stand here at the threshold of two dispensations. The covenant with Noah had, so to speak, run its course, or rather was merging into that with Abram. As at the commencement of the New Testament, John gave testimony to Jesus, and yet Jesus was baptized by John; so here Melchizedek gave testimony to Abram, and yet received tithes from Abram. If we add, that in our view Melchizedek was probably the last representative of the race of Shem in the land of Canaan, which was now in the hands of the Canaanites, who were children of Ham, as well as that he was the last representative of the faith of Shem, in the midst of idolatry - being a "priest of the most high God," - the relation between them will become more clear. It was the old transferred to the new, and enlarged in it; it was the rule and the promise of Shem, solemnly handed over to Abram by the last representative of Shem in the land, who thus gave up his authority in the name of "the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth," "which hath delivered" Abram’s enemies into his hands. It has been well observed, that "Abram’s greatness consisted in his hopes, that of Melchizedek in his present possession." Melchizedek was both a priest and a king, -Abram only a prophet; Melchizedek was recognized as the rightful possessor of the country, which as yet was only promised to Abram. True, the future will be infinitely greater than the present, - but then it was as yet future. Melchizedek owned its reality by blessing Abram, and transferring his title, as it were, to him; while Abram recognized the present, by giving tithes to Melchizedek, and bending to receive his blessing. Thus Melchizedek, the last representative of the Shemitic order, is the type of Christ, as the last representative of the Abrahamic order. What lay in germ in Melchizedek was to be gradually unfolded - the priesthood in Aaron, the royalty in David - till both were most gloriously united in Christ.

Melchizedek was, however, only a shadow and a type; Christ is the reality and the antitype. It is for this reason that Scripture has shut to us the sources of historical investigation about his descent

and duration of life, that by its silence it might point to the heavenly descent of Jesus. For the same reason also Abram, who so soon afterwards vindicated his dignity and position in the language of superiority with which he declined the king of Sodom’s offer of the spoils, bent lowly before Melchizedek, that in his blessing he might receive the spiritual inheritance which he now bequeathed him. Nor will the attentive reader fail to remark the language in which Melchizedek spake of God as "the most high," and the "possessor of heaven and earth" - terms which Abram adopted, but to which he added the new name of "Jehovah," as that of "the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth" - a name which indicated that covenant of grace of which Abram was to be the representative and the medium. It is quite in accordance with this whole transaction that Abram put aside the offer of the king of Sodom: "Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself." Assuredly, it had not been as an ally of the king of Sodom, but to vindicate his position, and that of all connected with him, that the Lord had summoned Abram to the war, and given him the victory. And so these figures part, never to meet again: the king of Sodom to hasten to the judgment, already lingering around him; the king of Salem to wait for the better possession promised, which indeed was already commencing.

03.01.13. Volume 1, Chapter 13

CHAPTER 13 The Twofold Promise of "a Seed" to Abraham - Ishmael - Jehovah visits Abraham - The Destruction of Sodom - Abraham’s Sojourn at Gerar - His Covenant with Abimelech

(Genesis 15:1-21, Genesis 16:1-16, Genesis 17:1-27, Genesis 18:1-33, Genesis 19:1-38, Genesis 20:1-18, Genesis 21:22-34)

HIGH times of success and prosperity are only too often followed by seasons of depression. Abram had indeed conquered the kings of Assyria, but his very victory might expose him to their vengeance, or draw down the jealousy of those around him. He was but a stranger in a strange land, with no other possession than a promise, - and not even an heir to whom to transmit it. In these circumstances it was that "Jehovah came unto Abram in a vision," saying, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" - that is, Myself am thy defense from all foes, and the source and spring whence thy faith shall be fully satisfied with joy. It was but natural, and, as one may say, childlike, that Abram should in reply have opened up before God all his wants and his sorrow, as he pointed, not in the language of doubt, but rather of question, to his own childless state, which seemed to leave Eliezer, his servant, his only heir. But Jehovah assured him that it was to be otherwise than it seemed; nay, that his seed should be numberless as the stars in the sky. "And he believed in Jehovah: and He counted it to him for righteousness." The remark stands solitary in the narrative, as if to call attention to a great fact; and its terms indicate, on the part of Abram, not merely faith in the word, but trustfulness in the person of Jehovah as his Covenant-God. Most touching and sublime is the childlikeness of that simple believing without seeing, and its absolute confidence. Ever since, through thousands of years, it has stood out as the great example of faith to the church of God. And from this faith in the living God sprang all the obedience of Abram. Like the rod of Aaron, his life budded and blossomed and bore fruit "within the secret place of the Most High." To confirm this faith Jehovah now gave to Abram a sign and a seal, which yet were such once more only to his faith. He entered into a covenant with him. For this purpose the Lord directed Abram to bring an heifer, a she- goat, and a ram, each of three years old, also a turtle-dove and a young pigeon. These sacrifices - for they were all representatives of the kinds afterwards used as sacrifices - were to be divided, and the pieces laid one against the other, as the custom was in making a covenant, the covenanting parties always passing between them, as it were to show that now there was no longer to be division, but that what had been divided was to be considered as one between them. But here, at the first, no covenanting party appeared at all to pass between the divided sacrifices. All day long, as it seemed to Abram, he sat watching lonely, only driving from the carcasses the birds of prey which came down upon them. So it seemed to the eye of sense! Presently even gathered around, and a deep sleep and a horror of great darkness fell upon Abram. The age of each sacrificed animal, the long, lonely day, the birds of prey swooping around, and the horror that had come with the night, all betokened what Jehovah now foretold: how for three generations the seed of Abram should be afflicted in Egypt; but in the fourth, when the measure of the iniquity of the present inhabitants of Canaan would be full, they were to return, and enter on the promised possession of the land. As for Abram himself, he was to

go "to his fathers in peace." Then it was that the covenant was made; not, as usually, by both parties passing between the divided sacrifice, but by Jehovah alone doing so, since the covenant was that of grace, in which one party alone - God - undertook all the obligations, while the other received all the benefits. For the first time did Abram see passing between those pieces the smoking furnace and the burning lamp - the Divine brightness enwrapt in a cloud, just as Moses saw it in the bush, and the children of Israel on their wilderness march, and as it afterwards dwelt in the sanctuary above the mercy-seat, and between the cherubim. This was the first vision vouchsafed to Abram, the first stage of the covenant into which God entered with him, and the first appearance of the glory of the Lord. At the same time, what may be called the personal promise to Abram was also enlarged, and the boundaries of the land clearly defined as stretching from the Nile in the west, to the Euphrates in the east, an extent, it may be here observed, which the Holy Land has never yet attained, not even in the most flourishing days of the Hebrew monarchy.

Precious as the promise of God to Abram had been, it had still left one point undetermined - who the mother of the promised seed was to be. Instead of waiting for the direction of God in this respect also, Sarai seems in her impatience to have anticipated the Lord; and, as we always do when taking things into our own hands, in a manner contrary to the mind of God, as well as to her own sorrow and disappointment. Ten years had elapsed since Abram had entered Canaan, when Sarai, despairing of giving birth to the heir of the promise, followed the common custom of those days and countries, and sought a son by an alliance between her husband and Hagar, her own Egyptian maid. The consequences of her folly were dispeace in her home, then reproaches, and the flight of Hagar. What else might have followed it is difficult to tell, had not the Lord in mercy interposed. None less than the Angel of the Covenant Himself appeared to the fugitive slave, as she rested by a fountain in the wilderness that led down into her native Egypt. He bade her return to her mistress, promised to the son whom she was to bear that liberty and independence of bearing which has ever since characterized his descendants, and gave him the name of Ishmael - the Lord heareth, - as it were thus binding him alike by his descent, and by the Providence that had watched over him, to the God of Abram. Hagar also learned there for the first time to know Him as the God who seeth, the living God, whence the fountain by which she had sat henceforth bore the name of "The Well of the Living, who beholdeth me." So deep are the impressions which a view of the Lord maketh, and so closely should we always connect with them the events of our lives.

Hagar had returned to Abram’s house, and given birth to Ishmael. And now ensued a period which we must regard as of most sore trial to Abram’s faith. Full thirteen years elapsed without apparently any revelation on the part of God. During this time Ishmael had grown up, and Abram may almost insensibly have accustomed himself to look upon him as the heir, even though in all probability he knew that he had not been destined for it. Abram was now ninety-nine years old, and Sarai stricken in years. For every human hope and prospect must be swept away, and the heir be, in the fullest sense, the child of the promise, that so faith might receive directly from God that for which it had waited. It was in these circumstances that Jehovah at last once more appeared in visible form to Abram, - this time to establish and fulfill the covenant which He had formerly made. Hence also now the admonition: "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect," which follows but can never precede the covenant. In token of this established covenant, God enjoined upon Abram and his descendants the rite of circumcision as a sign and a seal; at the same time changing the name

of Abram, "father of elevation" (noble chief?), into Abraham, "the father of a multitude," and that of Sarai, "the princely," into Sarah, or "the princess," to denote that through these two the promise was to be fulfilled, and that from them the chosen race was to spring. These tidings came upon Abraham with such joyous surprise that, as in humble worship, he "fell upon his face," he "laughed," as he considered within himself the circumstances of the case, - as Calvin remarks, not from doubt or disbelief, but in gladness and wonder. To perpetuate the remembrance of the wonder, the promised seed was to bear the name of Isaac, or "laughter." Thus, as afterwards, at the outset of the calling of the Gentiles, the name of Saul was changed into Paul - probably after the first-fruits of his ministry, - so here, at the outset of Israel's calling, we have three new names, indicative of the power of God, which lay at the root of all, and of the simple faith which received the promise. The heir of the promises was indeed to be the child of Sarah; but over Ishmael also would the Lord watch, and "multiply him exceedingly," and "make him a great nation." Ever since those days has the sign of circumcision remained to bear testimony to the covenant with Abraham. On the eighth day, as the first full period of seven has elapsed, a new period is, as it were, to begin; and each Jewish child so circumcised is a living witness to the transaction between God and Abraham more than three thousand years ago. But, better far, it pointed forward to the fulfillment of the covenant-promise in Christ Jesus, in whom there is now no other circumcision needed than that of the heart.

While Abraham's faith was thus exercised and blessed, the "evil men and seducers," among whom Lot had chosen his dwelling, had been waxing worse and worse, and rapidly filling up the measure of their iniquity. That judgment which had long hung over them like a dark cloud was now to burst in a terrible tempest. Abram was sitting "in the tent door in the heat of the day," when Jehovah once more appeared in visible form to him. This time it was, as it seemed, three wayfarers, whom the patriarch hastened to welcome to the rest and refreshment of his abode. But the heavenly Guests were the Lord Himself (See Genesis 18:13) and two angels, who were to be the ministers of His avenging justice. There can be no doubt that Abraham recognized the character of his heavenly Visitors, though, with the delicacy and modesty so peculiarly his, he received and entertained them according to the manner in which they presented themselves to him. The object of their visit was twofold - the one bearing reference to Sarah, the other to Abraham. If Sarah was to become the mother of the promised seed, she also must learn to believe. (Hebrews 11:11) Probably she had not received quite in faith the account which Abraham had given of his last vision of Jehovah. At any rate, the first inquiry of the three was after Sarah. The message of the birth of a son was now addressed directly to her; and as her non-belief appeared in her laughter, it was first reproved and then removed. The first object of their visit accomplished, the Three pursue their way towards Sodom, accompanied by Abraham. Now it was that Jehovah Himself (Genesis 18:17) opened to the patriarch the other purpose of their coming. It was to tell him the impending doom of the cities of the plain, and that for two reasons: because Abraham was the heir to the promises, and because he would "command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah, to do justice and judgment." From the latter words we gather that the doom of Sodom was communicated to Abraham that it might serve as a warning to the children of Israel. It was not to be regarded as an isolated judgment; but the scene of desolation, which was for ever to occupy the site of the cities of the plain, would also for ever exhibit to Israel the consequences of sin, and be to them a type of future judgment. It is in this light that the Scriptures both of the Old and the New Testament present to us the destruction

of Sodom and Gomorrah. On the other hand, as God had in the covenant made gift of the land to Abraham and to his seed, it seemed fitting that he should know of the terrible desolation which was so soon to spread over part of it; and that in his character as the medium of blessing to all, he should be allowed to intercede for their preservation, as formerly he had been called to fight for their deliverance. It was therefore neither on account of the intimate converse between God and Abraham, nor yet because Lot, the nephew of Abraham, was involved in the catastrophe, but strictly in accordance with God's covenant-promise, that God made a communication of the coming judgment to Abraham, and that he was allowed to plead in the case.

Mercy, indeed, was extended to Lot; but he did not escape the consequences of his selfish and sinful choice of a portion in this world. A second time was he to be taught that it is not in the abundance of the things which a man hath that wealth or happiness consists. Jehovah so far listened to the pleading of Abraham, whose believing urgency reminds us of the holy "importunity," (Luke 11:8) characteristic of all true prayer, that He promised to spare the cities of the plain if even ten righteous men were found in them. But the result of the trial by the two angels who went to Sodom was even more terrible than could have been anticipated. The last brief night of horror in Sodom was soon past; and, as the morning glow lay on the hills of Moab, the angels almost constrained Lot and his family to leave the doomed city. Lingering regret for it led Lot's wife to look behind her, when judgment overtook her also, and she was changed into a pillar of salt. Tradition has since pointed out a mountain of salt, at the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, as the spot where the occurrence had taken place. It need scarcely be said that, like most traditions, which only import a disturbing element into our thinking, this also is not founded on fact. The judgment which descended on the doomed cities is described in the sacred text as a "rain of brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven," by which the whole district was overthrown. This account in all its literality has been again confirmed by the late investigations of Canon Tristram, made on the spot. The whole neighborhood of the Dead Sea abounds with sulphur and bitumen, furnishing the materials for the terrible conflagration which ensued when the lightning from heaven struck it, probably accompanied by an earthquake, which would throw up fresh masses of combustible matter. Far and wide the smoke of the burning country was seen to ascend; and as Abraham watched it on the height beyond Hebron, where the evening before he had spoken the last pleading words to Jehovah, it seemed like a vast furnace, from which the cloud of smoke rose to heaven. The basin of the Dead Sea has been specially examined by an American expedition under Lieutenant Lynch. The results of their soundings have brought to light the remarkable fact that it really consists of two lakes, the one, thirteen, the other one thousand three hundred feet deep, - the former being regarded as the site of the doomed cities, and the latter as probably a sweetwater lake, whose waters had washed their shores. In that case, the suggestion is that the catastrophe was brought about by volcanic agency. But whatever changes in the appearance of the country the judgment from heaven may have produced, the most trustworthy authorities have given up the view that the cities of the plain have been submerged by volcanic agency, and are satisfied that the account which Scripture gives of this catastrophe ought to be taken in its utmost literality.

It is equally sad and instructive to notice how little effect mere judgments, however terrible, are capable of producing even upon those most nearly affected by them. Lot and his daughters had been allowed to retire to Zoar, a little town not far from Sodom. But the same weakness of faith

which had made them at the first reluctant to leave their own doomed city, now induced them to forsake Zoar, though safety had been promised them there. Far worse than that, they fell into the most grievous and abominable sin, the issue of which was the birth of the ancestors of Israel's hereditary enemies - Moab and Ammon. (Deuteronomy 23:3-4) But even this is not all. Whether from a dislike to a neighborhood so lately visited by such judgments, or in quest of better pasturage for his flocks, Abraham left the district of Mamre, and traveled in a south-easterly direction, where he settled in the territory of Abimelech, king of Gerar, in the land of the Philistines. Abimelech seems to have been a royal title, like that of Pharaoh. (Comp. Genesis 26:1, Genesis 26:8) But in this instance, as we gather from Scripture, the possessor of this title was far different from the king of Egypt. In fact, he appears to have been not merely true and upright in character, but to have feared the Lord. Accordingly, when Abraham was once more guilty of the same dissimulation as formerly in Egypt, passing off his wife for his sister from fear for his own life, God directly communicated to Abimelech in a dream the real state of matters. Upon this, Abimelech hastened to amend the wrong he had, unwittingly, so nearly committed. In comparison to the Gentile king, Abraham occupies indeed an unfavorable position. He is unable to vindicate his conduct on other grounds than what amounts to a want of faith. But, as God had informed Abimelech, Abraham, despite his weakness, was "a prophet;" and in that capacity, as already quoted, "He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, He reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." The alliance with Abraham which Abimelech had sought by marriage, was shortly afterwards concluded by a formal covenant between the two, accompanied by a sacrifice of the sacred number of seven ewe lambs. (Genesis 21:22) To show that this was intended not as a private but as a public alliance, Abimelech came accompanied by his chief captain, or phichol, (Comp.Genesis 26:26) at the same time expressly stating it as the motive in the public step which he took, that God was with Abraham in all that he did. In similar manner, the sympathy on these points between Abimelech and his people had formerly been shown, when the king had communicated to "all his servants" what God had told him about Abraham, "and the men were sore afraid." In these circumstances we do not wonder that Abraham should have made the land of the Philistines the place of lengthened residence, pitching his tent close by Beersheba, "the well of the oath," with Abimelech, or rather "the well of the seven" ewe lambs, - and there he once more "called on the name of Jehovah, the everlasting God."

03.01.14. Volume 1, Chapter 14

CHAPTER 14

Birth of Isaac - Ishmael sent away - Trail of Abraham’s faith in the Command to sacrifice Isaac -Death of Sarah - Death of Abraham (Genesis 21:1-34, Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67, Genesis 25:1-18) AT last the time had come when the great promise to Abraham should receive its fulfillment. The patriarch was in his hundredth and Sarah in her ninetieth year when Isaac was born to them. Manifestly, it had been the Divine purpose to protract as long as possible the period before that event; partly to exercise and mature Abraham’s faith, and partly that it should appear the more clearly that the gift of the heir to the promises was, in a manner, supernatural. As we have seen, the very name of their child was intended to perpetuate this fact; and now Sarah also, in the joyousness of her heart, said, "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me," - literally, "Laughter has God prepared for me; every one that heareth it will (joyously) laugh with me." Thus, as Abraham’s laughter had been that of faith in its surprise, so the laughter of Sarah was now in contrast to that of her former weakness of trust, one of faith in its gratitude. But there might be yet a third kind of laughter, - neither of faith, nor even of unbelief, but of disbelief: the laughter of mockery, and it also would receive its due recompense. According to God’s direction (Genesis 17:12), Abraham had circumcised Isaac on the eighth day. When the period for weaning him arrived, the patriarch made, after the manner of those times, a great feast. We can scarcely say what the age of the child was, - whether one year, or, as Josephus implies, three years old. In either case, Ishmael must have been a lad, springing into manhood - at least fifteen, and possibly seventeen years of age. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking," - literally, "that he was a mocker." As a German writer observes: "Isaac, the object of holy laughter, serves as the target of his unholy wit and profane banter. He does not laugh; he makes merry. ’What! this small, helpless Isaac, the father of nations!’ Unbelief, envy, and pride in his own carnal pre-eminence, - such were the reasons of his conduct. Because he does not understand, ’Is anything too hard for Jehovah?’ therefore he finds it laughable to connect such great issues with so small a beginning." It was evidently in this light that the apostle viewed it, when describing the conduct of Ishmael in these words.

"As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit." (Galatians 4:29) On this ground, and not from jealousy, Sarah demanded that the bondwoman and her son should be "cast out." But Abraham, who seems to have misunderstood her motives, was reluctant to comply, from feelings of paternal affection quite natural in the case, till God expressly directed him to the same effect. The expulsion of Ishmael was necessary, not only from his unfitness, and in order to keep the heir of the promise unmixed with others, but also for the sake of Abraham himself, whose faith must be trained to renounce, in obedience to the Divine call, everything, - even his natural paternal affection. And in His tender mercy God once more made the trial easier, by bestowing the special promise that Ishmael should become "a nation." Therefore, although Hagar and her son were literally cast forth, with only the barest necessaries for the journey - water and bread, - this was intended chiefly in trial of Abraham’s faith, and their poverty was only

temporary. For, soon afterwards we read in Scripture, that, before his death, Abraham had enriched his sons (by Hagar and Keturah) with "gifts;" (Genesis 25:6) and at his burying Ishmael appears, as an acknowledged son, by the side of Isaac, to perform the last rites of love to their father. (Genesis 25:9)

Thus "cast out," Hagar and her son wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba, probably on their way to Egypt. Here they suffered from what has always been the great danger to travelers in the desert -want of water. The lad's strength failed before that of his mother. At length her courage and endurance also gave way to utter exhaustion and despondency. Hitherto she had supported the steps of her son; now she let him droop "under one of the shrubs," while she went "a good way off," not to witness his dying agony, yet still remaining within reach of him. To use the pictorial language of Scripture, "She lift up her voice and wept." Not her cry, however, but that of Abraham's son went up into the ears of the Lord; and once more was Hagar directed to a well of water, but this time by an "angel of God," not, as before, by the "Angel of Jehovah." And now also, to strengthen her for the future, the same assurance concerning Ishmael was given to Hagar which had previously been made to Abraham. This promise of God has been abundantly fulfilled. The lad dwelt in that wide district between Palestine and Mount Horeb, called "the wilderness of Paran," which to this day is the undisputed dominion of his descendants, the Bedouin Arabs.

Bitter as the trial had been to "cast out" Ishmael, his son, it was only a preparation for a far more severe test of Abraham's faith and obedience. For this - the last, the highest, but also the steepest ascent in Abraham's life of faith - all God's previous leadings and dealings had been gradually preparing and qualifying him. But even so, it seems to stand out in Scripture alone and unapproached, like some grand mountain-peak, which only one climber has ever been called to attain. No, not one; for yet another and far higher mountain peak, so lofty that its summit reacheth into heaven itself, has been trodden by the "Seed of Abraham," Who has done all, and far more than Abraham did, and Who has made that a blessed reality to us which in the sacrifice of the patriarch was only a symbol. And, no doubt, it was when on Mount Moriah - the mount of God's true "provision" - Abraham was about to offer up his son, that, in the language of our blessed Lord (John 8:56), he saw the day of Christ, "and was glad." The test, trial, or "temptation" through which Abraham's faith had now to pass, that it might be wholly purified as "gold in the fire," came in the form of a command from God to bring Isaac as a burnt-offering. Nothing was spared the patriarch of the bitterness of his sorrow. It was said with painful particularity: "Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest;" and not a single promise of deliverance was added to cheer him on his lonely way. The same indefiniteness which had added such difficulty to Abraham's first call to leave his father's house marked this last trial of the obedience of his faith. He was only told to get him "into the land of Moriah," where God would further tell him upon which of the mountains around he was to bring his strange "burnt-offering." Luther has pointed out, in his own terse language, how to human reason it must have seemed as if either God's promise would fail, or else this command be of the devil, and not of God. From this perplexity there was only one issue - to bring "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." And Abraham "staggered not" at the word of God; doubted it not; but was "strong in faith," "accounting" - yet not knowing it - "that God was able to raise up Isaac even from the dead; from whence he also received him in a figure." For we must not detract from the trial by importing into the circumstances our knowledge of the issue. Abraham had absolutely no assurance and no knowledge beyond that of his present duty. All he

had to lay hold upon was the previous promise, and the character and faithfulness of the covenant God, who now bade him offer this sacrifice. Sharp as the contest must have been, it was brief. It lasted just one night; and next morning, without having taken "counsel with flesh and blood," Abraham, with his son Isaac and two servants, were on their way to "the land of Moriah." We have absolutely no data to determine the exact age of Isaac at the time; but the computation of Josephus, that he was twenty-five years old, makes him more advanced than the language of the Scripture narrative seems to convey to our minds. Two days they had traveled from Beersheba, when on the third the "mountains round about Jerusalem" came in sight. From a gap between the hills, which forms the highest point on the ordinary road, which has always led up from the south, just that one mountain would be visible on which afterwards the temple stood. This was "the land of Moriah," and that the hill on which the sacrifice of Isaac was to be offered! Leaving the two servants behind, with the assurance that after they had worshipped they would "come again" -for faith was sure of victory, and anticipated it, - father and son pursued their solitary road, Isaac carrying the wood, and Abraham the sacrificial knife and fire. "And they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together." Nothing further is said between the two till they reach the destined spot. Here Abraham builds the altar, places on it the wood, binds Isaac, and lays him upon the altar. Already he has lifted the sacrificial knife, when the Angel of Jehovah, the Angel of the Covenant, arrests his hand. Abraham’s faith has now been fully proved, and it has been perfected. "A ram caught in the thicket" will serve for "a burnt-offering in the stead of his son;" but to Abraham all the previous promises are not only repeated and enlarged, but "confirmed by an oath," "that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie," he "might have a strong consolation."

"For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself." (Hebrews 6:13) This "oath" stands out alone and solitary in the history of the patriarchs; it is afterwards constantly referred to (Genesis 24:7; Genesis 26:3; Genesis 50:24; Exodus 13:5, Exodus 13:11; Exodus 33:1, etc.), and, as Luther observes, it became really the spring whence all flowed that was promised "by oath" unto David, in Psalms 89:35; Psalms 110:4; Psalms 132:11. No wonder Abraham called the place "Jehovah Jireh," "Jehovah seeth," or "Jehovah provideth," which means that He seeth for us, for, as even the term implieth, His providence, or providing, is just His seeing for us, what, where, and when we do not see for ourselves. As we remember that on this mountain-top the temple of the Lord afterwards stood, and that from it rose the smoke of accepted sacrifices, we can understand all the better what the inspired writer adds by way of explanation: "As it is said to this day, In the mount where Jehovah is seen," - where He seeth and is seen, - whence also the name of Moriah is derived. But before passing from this event, it is necessary to view it in its bearings upon Abraham, upon Isaac, and even upon the Canaanites, as well as in its higher typical or symbolical application. It is very remarkable that a German writer who has most strenuously opposed the truth of this scriptural narrative, has been compelled to some extent to admit the deeper bearing of this history on the faith of Abraham. He writes: "Hitherto even Isaac, that precious gift so long promised, had been only a natural blessing to Abraham. A son like any other, although the offspring of Sarah, he had been born and educated in his house. Since his birth Abraham had not been called to bear for him the pangs of a soul struggling in faith, and yet every blessing becomes only spiritual and truly lasting, if we appropriate

it in the contest of faith." At God’s bidding Abraham had necessarily given up country, kindred, and home, and then his paternal affection towards Ishmael. It yet remained to give up even Isaac after the flesh, so as to receive him again spiritually; to give up not merely "his only son, the goal of his longing, the hope of his life, the joy of his old age" - all that was dearest to him; but the heir of all the promises, and that in simple, absolute faith upon God, and in perfect confidence, that God could raise him even from the dead. Thus was the promise purged, so to speak, from all of the flesh that clung to it; and thus Abraham’s faith was perfected, and his love purified. Upon Isaac, also, the event had a most important bearing. For when he resisted not his father, and allowed himself to be bound and laid on the altar, he entered into the spirit of Abraham, he took upon himself his faith, and thus showed himself truly the heir to the promises. Nor can we forget how this surrender of the first-born was the first of that dedication of all the first-born unto God, which afterwards the law demanded, and which meant that in the first-born we should consecrate all and everything unto the Lord. Perhaps the lesson which the Canaanites might learn from the event will seem to some quite secondary, as compared with these great truths. Yet we must bear in mind, that all around cruel human sacrifices were offered on every hill, when God gave His sanction to a far different offering, by for ever substituting animal sacrifices for that surrender of the best beloved which human despair had prompted for an atonement for sin. And yet God Himself gave up His beloved, His own only begotten Son for us, - and of this the sacrifice of Isaac was intended to be a glorious type; and as Abraham received this typical sacrifice again from the dead "in a figure," so we in reality, when God raised up His own Son, Jesus Christ, from the dead, and has made us sit together with Him in heavenly places.

After the offering up of Isaac, Abraham lived many years; yet scarcely any event worth record in Scripture occurred during their course. The first thing we afterwards read is the death of Sarah, at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven. She is the only woman whose age is recorded in Scripture, the distinction being probably due to her position towards believers, as stated in 1 Peter 3:6. Isaac was at the time thirty-seven years old, and Abraham once more resident in Hebron. The account of Abraham’s purchase of a burying-place from "the children of Heth" is exceedingly pictorial. It also strikingly exhibits alike Abraham’s position in the land as a stranger and a pilgrim, and yet his faith in his future possession thereof. The treaty for the field and cave of. Machpelah (either "the double" cave, or else "the separated place," or "the undulating spot"), which Abraham wished to purchase for "a burying-place," was carried on in public assembly, "at the gate of the city," as the common Eastern fashion is. The patriarch expressly acknowledged himself "a stranger and a sojourner" among "the children of Heth;" and the sacred text emphatically repeats again and again how "Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land." On the other hand, they carry on their negotiations in the true Eastern fashion, first offering any of their own sepulchers, since Abraham was confessedly among them "a prince of God" (rendered in our version "a mighty prince"), then refusing any payment for Machpelah, but finishing up by asking its fullest value, in this true oriental manner: "My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver (about fifty guineas); what is that betwixt me and thee?" In contrast, Abraham truly stands out prince-like in his courtesy and in his dealings. And so the field and cave were secured to him - a "burying-place," Abraham’s only "possession" in a land that was to be his for ever! But even in this purchase of a permanent family burying-place, Abraham showed his faith in the promise; just as, many centuries later, the prophet Jeremiah showed his confidence in the promised return of Judah from Babylon, by purchasing a field in Anathoth. (Jeremiah 32:7-8) In

this cave of Machpelah lie treasured the remains of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebekah, of Leah also, and the embalmed bodies of Jacob and perhaps Joseph. No other spot in the Holy Land holds so much precious dust as this; and it is, among all the so-called "holy places," the only one which to this day can be pointed out with perfect certainty. Since the Moslem rule, it has not been accessible to either Christian or Jew. The site over the cave itself is covered by a Mahomedan sanctuary, which stands enclosed within a quadrangular building, two hundred feet long, one hundred and fifteen wide, and fifty or sixty high, the walls of which are divided by pilasters, about five feet apart, and two and a half feet wide. This building, with its immense stones, one of which is no less than thirty-eight feet long, must date from the time of David or of Solomon. The mosque within it was probably anciently a church; and in the cave below its floor are the patriarchal sepulchers.

Three years after the death of Sarah, Abraham resolved to fill the gap in his own family and in the heart of Isaac, by seeking a wife for his son. To this we shall refer in connection with the life of Isaac. Nothing else remains to be told of the third-eight years which followed the death of Sarah. We read, indeed, that Abraham "took a wife," Keturah, and that she bore him six sons, but we are not sure of the time when this occurred. At any rate, the history of these sons is in no wise mixed up with that of the promised seed. They became the ancestors of Arab tribes, which are sometimes alluded to in Holy Writ. And so, through the impressive silence of so many years as make up more than a generation, Scripture brings us to the death of Abraham, at the "good old age" of one hundred and seventy-five, just seventy-five years after the birth of Isaac. To quote the significant language of the Bible, he" was gathered to his people," an expression far different from dying or being buried, and which implies reunion with those who had gone before, and a firm and assured belief in the life to come. And as his sons Isaac and Ishmael, both aged men, stand by his sepulcher in the cave of Machpelah, we seem to hear the voice of God speaking it unto all times:

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Hebrews 11:13)

03.01.15. Volume 1, Chapter 15

CHAPTER 15 The Marriage of Isaac - Birth of Esau and Jacob - Esau sells his Birthright - Isaac at Gerar - Esau’s Marriage (Genesis 24:1-67; Genesis 25:19-34; Genesis 26:1-35) THE sacred narrative now turns to the history of Isaac, the heir to the promises, still marking in its course the same dealings on the part of God which had characterized the life of Abraham. Viewed in connection with the Divine promises, the marriage of Isaac would necessarily appear a subject of the deepest importance to Abraham. Two things were quite firmly settled in the mind of the patriarch: Isaac must on no account take a wife from among the Canaanites around, - he must not enter into alliance with those who were to be dispossessed of the land; and Jehovah, who had so often proved a faithful God, and in obedience to whose will he now refused what might have seemed highly advantageous connections, would Himself provide a suitable partner for Isaac. These two convictions determined Abraham’s conduct, as they also guided that of "his eldest servant," whom Abraham commissioned to execute his wishes, and who, in general, seems to have been deeply imbued with the spirit of his master.

Some time before (Genesis 22:20) Abraham had been informed that his brother Nahor, whom he left behind in Haran, had been blessed with numerous descendants. To him the patriarch now dispatched "his servant, the elder of his house, who ruled over all that was his" - generally supposed to have been Eliezer of Damascus (Genesis 15:2), though at that time he must, like his master, have been far advanced in years. But before departing, he made him swear by Jehovah - since this matter concerned the very essence of the covenant - to avoid every alliance with the Canaanites, and to apply to his "kindred." And when the servant put before him the possibility, that the execution of this wish might render it necessary for Isaac to return to the land whence Abraham had come, the patriarch emphatically negatived the suggestion, as equally contrary to the Divine will, while his faith anticipated no difficulty, but calmly trusted the result in God’s hands. In all this Abraham had no fresh revelation from heaven; nor needed he any. He only applied to present circumstances what he had formerly received as the will of God, just as in all circumstances of life we need no fresh communication from above - only to understand and to apply the will of God as revealed to us in His holy word. The result proved how true had been Abraham’s expectations. Arrived at Haran, Abraham’s servant made it a matter of prayer that God would "prosper his way," for even when in the way of God’s appointment, we must seek and ask His special blessing. There, as he stood outside the city by the well to which, according to the custom of the East, the maidens would resort at even to draw water for their households, it naturally occurred to him to connect in his prayer a mark of that religious courtesy, hospitality, and kindness to which he had been accustomed in his master’s house, with the kindred of Abraham, and hence with the object of his journey. His prayer was scarcely finished when the answer came. "Before he had done speaking" (Comp. Daniel 9:20-21) Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, came to the well by which the stranger stood with his camels. Her appearance was exceedingly prepossessing ("the damsel was very fair to look upon"), and her bearing modest and becoming. According to the sign on which he had fixed in his own mind, he

asked her for water to drink; and according to the same sign, she exceeded his request by drawing for his camels also. But even so Abraham’s servant did not yield to his first impressions; only at the literality of the answer to his prayer, "the man wondering at her, held his peace, to know whether Jehovah had made his way prosperous or not."

Before asking further who her kindred were, and seeking their hospitality, he rewarded her kindness by splendid presents. But when the answers of Rebekah showed him that Jehovah had actually led him straight "to the house of his master’s brethren," the man, fairly overcome by his feelings, "bowed down his head, and worshipped Jehovah." The description of what now ensued is not only exceedingly graphic, but true to the life. It is said that Rebekah "ran and told her mother’s house," that is, evidently to the female portion of the household. Next, Laban, Rebekah’s brother, seeing the jewels and hearing her tale, hastens to invite the stranger with true Eastern profusion of welcome. But the terms in which Laban, partially at least an idolater, addressed Abraham’s servant: "Thou blessed of Jehovah," remind us how easily the language of Abraham - in other words, religious language, is picked up by those who have really no claim to use it. The servant of Abraham, on the other hand, is quite like his master in his dignified bearing and earnestness of purpose. Before accepting hospitality at the hands of Bethuel and Laban, he will have an answer to the commission on which he has been sent, nor can persuasions or entreaty prevail on him to prolong his stay, even over the following day. With the full consent of Rebekah, the caravan returns to Canaan. Once more it is evening when the end of the journey is reached. It so happens that Isaac has "gone out to meditate in the field" - an expression which implies religious communion with God, probably in connection with this very marriage - when he meets the returning caravan. Rebekah receives her future husband with the becoming modesty of an Eastern bride, and the heart-happiness of the son of promise is secured to him in union with her whom the Lord Himself had "provided" as his wife. Isaac was at the time of his marriage forty years old. In the quiet retirement of his old age Abraham not only witnessed the married happiness of his son, but even lived fifteen years beyond the birth of Esau and Jacob. As for Isaac, he had settled far from the busy haunts of the Canaanites, at the well Lahai-Roi a retreat suited to his quiet, retiring disposition. For twenty years the union of Isaac and Rebekah had remained unblessed with children, to indicate that here also the heir to the promises must be a gift from God granted to expectant faith. At last Jehovah listened to Isaac’s "entreaty," "for his wife," or rather, literally, "over against his wife," for, as Luther strikingly remarks: "When I pray for any one, I place him right in view of my heart, and neither see nor think of anything else, but look at him alone with my soul;" and this is true of all intercessory prayer. Rebekah was now to become the mother of twin sons. But even before their birth a sign occurred which distressed her, and induced her "to inquire of Jehovah" its meaning, though we know not in what precise manner she did this. The answer of God indicated this at least quite clearly, that of her children "the elder shall serve the younger;" that is, that, contrary to all usual expectation, the firstborn should not possess the birthright which the Divine promise had conveyed to the family of Abraham. The substitution of the younger for the elder son was indeed in accordance with God’s previous dealings, but it seemed strange where the two were sons of the same parents. It is not only reasonable, but quite necessary for the understanding of the subsequent history, to believe that Rebekah communicated the result of her inquiry to her husband, and that afterwards both Esau and Jacob were also made acquainted with the fact. This alone fully accounts for the conduct of Jacob and of his mother in seeking to appropriate the birthright, contrary to what would otherwise have been the natural

arrangement. When the two children were born, the red and hairy appearance of the elder procured for him the name of Esau, or "hairy;" while the younger was called Jacob, or he "who takes hold by the heel," because "his hand took hold by Esau's heel" - a name which afterwards was adapted to mean "a supplanter,"(Genesis 27:36) since he who takes hold by the heel "trips up" the other. The appearance of the children did not belie their character when they grew up. The wild disposition of Esau, which found occupation in the roaming life of a hunter, reminds us of Ishmael; while Jacob, gentle and domestic, sought his pleasures at home. As is so often the case, Isaac and Rebekah made favorites of the sons who had the opposite of their own disposition. The quiet, retiring Isaac preferred his bold, daring, strong, roaming elder son; while Rebekah, who was naturally energetic, felt chiefly drawn to her gentle son Jacob. Yet at bottom Esau also was weak and easily depressed, as appeared in his tears and impotent reproaches when he found himself really deprived of the blessing; while Jacob, too, like his mother, impetuous, was ever ready to take matters into his own hands. We repeat it, that all parties must at the time have been aware that, even before the birth of the children, the word of God had designated Jacob as heir of the promises. But Isaac's preference for Esau made him reluctant to fall in with the Divine arrangement; while the impetuosity of Rebekah and of Jacob prompted them to bring about in their own way the fulfillment of God's promise, instead of believingly waiting to see when and how the Lord would do it. Thus it came that Jacob, watching his opportunities, soon found occasion to take advantage of his brother. One day Esau returned from the chase "faint" with hunger. The sight of a mess of lentils, which to this day is a favorite dish in Syria and Egypt, induced him, unaccustomed and unable as he was to control the desires of the moment, to barter away his birthright for this "red" pottage. The circumstances become the more readily intelligible when we remember, besides the unbridled disposition of Esau, that, as Lightfoot has pointed out, it was a time of commencing famine in the land. For, immediately afterwards (Genesis 26:1), we read that "there was a famine in the land," greater even than that at the time of Abraham, and which compelled Isaac for a season to leave Canaan. From this event, so characteristic and decisive in his history, Esau, after the custom of the East, obtained the name of Edom, or "red," from the color of "the mess of pottage" for which he had sold his birthright. In regard to the conduct of the two brothers in this matter, we must note, that Scripture in no way excuses nor apologizes for that of Jacob. According to its wont, it simply states the facts, and makes neither comment nor remark upon them. That it leaves to "the logic of facts;" and the terrible trials which were so soon to drive Jacob from his home, and which kept him so long a bondsman in a strange land, are themselves a sufficient Divine commentary upon the transaction. Moreover, it is very remarkable that Jacob never in his after-life appealed to his purchase of the birthright. But so far as Esau is concerned only one opinion can be entertained of his conduct. We are too apt to imagine that because Jacob wronged or took advantage of Esau, therefore Esau was right. The opposite of this is the case. When we ask ourselves what Jacob intended to purchase, or Esau to sell in the "birthright," we answer that in later times it conveyed a double share of the paternal possessions. (Deuteronomy 21:17) In patriarchal days it included "lordship" over the rest of the family, and especially succession to that spiritual blessing which through Abraham was to flow out into the world (Genesis 27:27-29), together with possession of the land of Canaan and covenant-communion with Jehovah. (Genesis 28:4) What of these things was spiritual, we may readily believe, Esau discredited and despised, and what was temporal, but yet future, as his after conduct shows, he imagined he might still obtain either by his father's favor or by violence. But that for the momentary

gratification of the lowest sensual appetites he should have been ready to barter away such unspeakably precious and holy privileges, proved him, in the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 12:16), to have been "a profane person," and therefore quite unfitted to become the heir of the promises. For profanity consists in this: for the sensual gratification or amusement of the moment to give up that which is spiritual and unseen; to be careless of that which is holy, so as to snatch the present enjoyment, - in short, practically not to deem anything holy at all, if it stands in the way of present pleasure. Scripture puts it down as the bitter self-condemnation which Esau, by his conduct, pronounced upon himself: "and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright."

Before farther following the history of Isaac's trials and joys, it seems desirable to make here a few general remarks, for the purpose of explaining the conduct alike of Isaac and of Jacob, and its bearing on the history of the covenant. It has been common to describe Abraham as the man of faith, Isaac as the model of patient bearing, and Jacob as the man of active working; and in the two latter cases to connect the spiritual fruits, which were the outcome of their faith, with their natural characters also. All this is quite correct; but, in our opinion, it is necessary to take a broader view of the whole matter. Let it be borne in mind, that God had both made and established His covenant with Abraham. The history of Isaac and Jacob, on the other hand, rather represents the hindrances to the covenant. These are just the same as we daily meet in our own walk of faith. They arise from opposite causes, according as in our weakness we either lag behind, or in our haste go before God. Isaac lagged behind, Jacob tried to go before God; and their history exhibits the dangers and difficulties arising from each of these causes, just as, on the other hand, God's dealings with them show how mercifully, how wisely, and yet how holily He knew to remove these hindrances out of the way, and to uproot these sins from their hearts and lives. Accordingly, we shall consider the history of Isaac and Jacob as that of the hindrances of the covenant and of their removal.

Viewed in this light we understand all the better, not only Jacob's attempt to purchase the "birthright" - as if Esau had had the power of selling it! - but what followed that transaction? It seems that a grievous famine induced Isaac to leave his settlement, and it naturally occurred to him in so doing to follow in the wake of his father Abraham, and to go into Egypt. But when he had reached Gerar, the residence of Abimelech, king of the Philistines, where Abraham had previously sojourned, "Jehovah appeared unto him," and specially directed him to remain there, at the same time renewing to him the promises He had made to Abraham. Both in this direction and in the renewal of blessing we recognize the kindness of the Lord, Who would not expose Isaac to the greater trials of Egypt, and would strengthen and encourage his faith. Apparently, he had on reaching Gerar not said that Rebekah was his wife; and when he was, at last, "asked" about it, the want of courage which had prompted the equivocation, ripened into actual falsehood. Imitating in this the example of Abraham, he passed off his wife as his sister. But here also the kindness of the Lord interposed to spare him a trial greater than he might have been able to bear. His deceit was detected before his wife had been taken by any one; and an order given by Abimelech - whether the same who ruled at the time of Abraham, or his successor - secured her future safety. The famine seems now to have become so intense, that Isaac began to till land for himself. And God blessed him with an unusually large return -still further to encourage his faith amidst its trials. Commonly, even in very fruitful parts of Palestine, the yield is from twenty-five to fifty times that

which had been sown; and in one small district, even eighty times that of wheat, and one hundred times that of barley. But Isaac at once "received an hundredfold" - to show him that even in a year of famine God could make the most ample provision for His servant. The increasing wealth of Isaac excited the envy of the Philistines. Disputes arose, and they stopped up the wells which Abraham had digged. At last, even Abimelech, friendly as he was, advised him to leave the place. Isaac removed to the valley of Gerar. But there also similar contentions arose; and Isaac once more returned to Abraham's old settlement at Beersheba. Here Jehovah again appeared unto him, to confirm, on his re-entering the land, the promises previously made. Beersheba had also its name given it a second time. For Abimelech, accompanied by his chief captain and his privy councilor, came to Isaac to renew the covenant which had formerly been there made between the Philistines and Abraham. Isaac was now at peace with all around. Better still, "he builded an altar" in Beersheba, "and called upon the name of Jehovah." But in the high day of his prosperity fresh trials awaited him. His eldest son Esau, now forty years old, took two Canaanitish wives, "which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." Assuredly, if Isaac had not "lagged far behind," he would in this have recognized the final and full unfitness of Esau to have "the birthright." But the same tendency which had hitherto kept him at best undecided, led, ere it was finally broken, to a further and a far deeper sorrow than any he had yet experienced.

03.01.16. Volume 1, Chapter 16

CHAPTER 16

Isaac’s Blessing obtained by Jacob deceitfully - Esau’s Sorrow - Evil Consequences of their error to all the members of their family - Jacob is sent to Laban - Isaac renews and fully gives him the Blessing of Abraham (Genesis 27:1-46, Genesis 28:1-9)

IF there is any point on which we should anxiously be on our guard, it is that of "tempting God." We do so tempt the Lord when, listening to our own inclinations, we put once more to the question that which He has already clearly settled. Where God has decided, never let us doubt, nor lag behind. But if anything might be described as clearly settled by God, it was, surely, the calling of Jacob and the rejection of Esau. It had been expressly foretold in prophecy even before the children were born; and Esau had also afterwards proved himself wholly unfit to be the heir of the promise, first by his light-minded profanity, and next by his alliance with the Canaanites, than which nothing could have more directly run counter to the will of God, and to the purposes of the covenant. Despite these clear indications, Isaac did lag behind, reluctant to follow the direction of God. In truth, he had thrown his natural affections as a makeweight into the scale. As we shall presently show, Isaac hesitated, indeed, to allot unto Esau the spiritual part of the blessing; but what he regarded as the natural rights of the first-born appeared to him inalienable, and these he meant now formally to recognize by bestowing upon him the blessing. A German writer aptly observes: "This is one of the most remarkable complications of life, showing in the clearest manner that a higher hand guides the threads of history, so that neither sin nor error can ultimately entangle them. Each one weaves the threads which are committed to him according to his own views and desires; but at last, when the texture is complete, we behold in it the pattern which the Master had long devised, and towards which each laborer had only contributed one or another feature." At the time of which we write Isaac was one hundred and thirty-seven years old - an age at which his half-brother Ishmael had died, fourteen years before; and though Isaac was destined to live yet forty- three years longer (Genesis 35:28), the decay of his sight, and other infirmities, brought the thought of death very near to him.

Under these circumstances he resolved formally to bestow the privileges naturally belonging to the first-born upon Esau. With this, however, he coupled, as a sort of preliminary condition, that Esau should bring and prepare for him some venison. Possibly he regarded the finding of the game as a sort of providential sign, and the preparation of it as a token of affection. There would be nothing strange in this, for those who believe in God, and yet for some reason refuse implicitly to follow His directions, are always on the outlook for some "sign" to justify them in setting aside the clear intimations of His will. But Rebekah had overheard the conversation between her husband and her son. Probably she had long been apprehensive of some such event, and on the outlook for it. And now the danger seemed most pressing. Another hour, and the blessing might for ever be lost to Jacob. Humanly speaking, safety lay in quick resolution and decided action. It mattered not what were the means employed, if only the end were attained. Had not God distinctly pointed out Jacob

as heir to the promises? Had not Esau proved himself utterly unfit for it, and that even before he married those Canaanitish women? She could only be fulfilling the will of God when she kept her husband from so great a wrong, and secured to her son what God had intended him to possess. Thus Rebekah probably argued in her own mind. To be sure, if she had had the faith of Abraham, who was ready on Mount Moriah to offer up his own son, believing that, if it were to be so, God was able to raise him from the dead, she would not have acted, not even felt, nor feared, as she did. But then her motives were very mixed, even though she kept the promise steadily in view, and her faith was weak and imperfect, even though she imagined herself to be carrying out the will of God. Such hours come to most of us, when it almost seems as if necessity obliged and holy wisdom prompted us to accomplish, in our own strength, that which, nevertheless, we should leave in God's hand. If once we enter on such a course, it will probably not be long before we cast to the winds any scruples about the means to be employed, so that we secure the object desired, and which possibly may seem to us in accordance with the will of God. Here also faith is the only true remedy: faith, which leaves God to carry out His own purposes, content to trust Him absolutely, and to follow Him whithersoever He leadeth. And God's way is never through the thicket of human cunning and devices. "He that believeth shall not make haste;" nor need he, for God will do it all for him. In pursuance of her purpose, Rebekah proposed to Jacob to take advantage of his father's dim sight, and to personate Esau. He was to put on his brother's dress, which bore the smell of the aromatic herbs and bushes among which he was wont to hunt, and to cover his smooth skin with a kind of fur; while Rebekah would prepare a dish which his father would not be able to distinguish from the venison which Esau was to make ready for him. It is remarkable, that although Jacob at first objected, his scruples were caused rather by fear of detection than from a sense of the wrong proposed. But Rebekah quieted his misgivings, - possibly trusting, that since she was doing, as she thought, the will of God, she could not but succeed. In point of fact, Jacob found his part more difficult than he could have expected. Deceit, equivocation, and lying, repeated again and again, were required to allay the growing suspicions of the old man. At last Jacob succeeded - with what shame and remorse we can readily imagine - in diverting his father's doubts; and Isaac bestowed upon him "the blessing," and with it the birthright. But it deserves special notice, that while this blessing assigned to him both the land of Canaan and lordship over his brethren, there is in it but the faintest allusion to the great promise to Abraham. The only words which can be supposed to refer to it are these: "Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." (Genesis 27:29) But this is manifestly very different from the blessing of Abraham, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 22:18)

It is clear that Isaac imagined he had blessed Esau, and that he did not dare confer upon him the spiritual privileges attached to the birthright. So, after all, Jacob and Rebekah did not attain that which they had sought! Jacob had scarcely left the presence of his father, when Esau entered with the venison he had prepared. If Isaac, Rebekah, and Jacob had been each wrong in their share in the transaction, Esau deserves at least equal blame. Not to speak of his previous knowledge of the will of God on this point, he disguised from his brother Jacob that he was about to obtain from his father's favor that which he had actually sold to Jacob! Surely, there was here quite as great dishonesty, cunning, and untruthfulness as on the part of Jacob. When Isaac now discovered the deceit which had been practiced upon him, he "trembled very exceedingly," but he refused to recall the blessing he had pronounced: "I have blessed him - yea, and he shall be blessed." Now,

for the first time, the mist which in this matter had so long hung about Isaac's spiritual vision, seems dispelled. He sees the finger of God, who had averted the danger which his own weakness had caused. Thus, while all parties in the transaction had been in error and sin, God brought about His own purpose, and Isaac recognized this fact. Now, for the first time also, Esau obtained a glimpse of what he had really lost. We read, that "afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears."(Hebrews 12:17) At his earnest entreaty for some kind of blessing, Isaac pronounced what in reality was a prophecy of the future of Edom. Translating it literally, it reads: "Behold, thy dwelling shall be without fatness of the earth, And without the dew of heaven from above." This describes the general aspect of the sterile mountains of Edom; after which the patriarch continues, by sketching the future history of the Edomites: "But by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; Yet it shall come to pass that, as thou shakest it, thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck." The last sentence, it has been well remarked, refers to the varying success of the future struggles between Israel and Edom, and introduces into the blessing of Jacob an element of judgment. And when we compare the words of Isaac with the history of Israel and Edom, down to the time when Herod, the Idumean, possessed himself of the throne of David, we see how correctly the whole has been summed up in the Epistle to the Hebrews 11:20 : "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."

For, that Isaac was now acting in faith, and that he discerned how, without knowing it, he had blessed, not according to his own inclination, but according to the will and purpose of God, appears from the subsequent history. It seems that Esau, full of hatred and envy, resolved to rid himself of his rival by murdering his brother, only deferring the execution of his purpose till after the death of his father, which he also believed to be near at hand. Somehow Rebekah, ever watchful, obtained tidings of this; and knowing her elder son's quick temper, which, however violent, did not long harbor anger, she resolved to send Jacob away to her brother Laban, for "a few days," as she fondly imagined, after which she would "send and fetch" him "from thence." But kindness towards her husband prompted her to keep from him Esau's murderous plan, and to plead as a reason for Jacob's temporary departure that which, no doubt, was also a strong motive in her own mind, that Jacob should marry one of her kindred. For, as she said, "If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life be to me?" Petulant as was her language, her reasoning was just, and Isaac knew it from painful experience of Esau's wives. And now Isaac expressly sent Jacob to Laban, to seek him a wife; and in so doing, this time consciously and wittingly, renewed the blessing which formerly had been fraudulently obtained from him. Now also the patriarch speaks clearly and unmistakably, not only reiterating the very terms of the covenant-blessing in all their fullness, but especially adding these words: "God Almighty . . . . give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee." Thus Isaac's dimness of spiritual sight had at last wholly passed away. But the darkness around Esau seems to only have grown deeper and deeper. Upon learning what charge Isaac had given his son, and apparently for the first time awakening to the fact that "the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father," he took "Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael" as a third wife - as if he had mended matters by forming an alliance with him whom Abraham had, by God's command, "cast out!" Thus the spiritual incapacity and unfitness of Esau appeared at every step, even where he tried to act kindly and dutifully. To conclude, by altering and adapting the language of a German writer: After this event Isaac lived other forty-three years. But he no more appears in this history. Its thread is

now taken up by Jacob, on whom the promise has devolved. Scripture only records that Isaac was gathered to his fathers when one hundred and eighty years old, and full of days, and that he was buried in the cave of Machpelah by Esau and Jacob, whom he had the joy of seeing by his death-bed as reconciled brothers. When Jacob left, his father dwelt at Beersheba. The desire to be nearer to his father's burying-place may have been the ground of his later settlement in Mamre, where he died. (Genesis 35:27-29) Rebekah, who at parting had so confidently promised to let Jacob know whenever Esau's anger was appeased, may have died even before her favorite son returned to Canaan. At any rate the promised message was never delivered, nor is her name mentioned on Jacob's return.

03.01.17. Volume 1, Chapter 17

CHAPTER 17

Jacob’s Vision at Bethel - His Arrival at the House of Laban - Jacob’s double Marriage and Servitude - His Flight from Haran - Pursuit of Laban, and Reconciliation with Jacob (Genesis 28:10-22; Genesis 29:1-35; Genesis 30:1-43; Genesis 31:1-55)

IT had been a long and weary journey that first day when Jacob left his home at Beersheba. More than forty miles had he traveled over the mountains which afterwards were those of Judah, and through what was to become the land of Benjamin. The sun had set, and its last glow faded out from the gray hills of Ephraim, when he reached "an uneven valley, covered, as with gravestones, by large sheets of bare rock, - some few here and there standing up like the cromlechs of Druidical monuments." Here, close by a wild ridge, the broad summit of which was covered by an olive grove, was the place where Abraham had first rested for some time on entering the land, and whence he and Lot had, before their separation, taken a survey of the country. There, just before him, lay the Canaanitish Luz; and beyond it, many days’ journey, stretched his weary course to Haran. It was a lonely, weird place, this valley of stones, in which to make his first night’s quarters. But perhaps it agreed all the better with Jacob’s mood, which had made him go on and on, from early morning, forgetful of time and way, till he could no longer pursue his journey. Yet, accidental as it seemed - for we read that "he lighted upon a certain place," - the selection of the spot was assuredly designed of God.

Presently Jacob prepared for rest. Piling some of the stones, with which the valley was strewed, he made them a pillow, and laid him down to sleep. Then it was, in his dream, that it seemed as if these stones of the valley were being builded together by an unseen hand, step upon step, "a ladder" - or, probably more correctly, "a stair." Now, as he watched it, it rose and rose, till it reached the deep blue star-spangled sky, which seemed to cleave for its reception. All along that wondrous track moved angel-forms, "ascending and descending upon it;" and angel-light was shed upon its course, till quite up on the top stood the glorious Jehovah Himself, Who spake to the lonely sleeper below: "I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac." Silent in their ministry, the angels still passed up and down the heaven-built stairs, from where Jacob lay to where Jehovah spake. The vision and the words which the Lord spoke explain each other, the one being the symbol of the other. On that first night, when an outcast from his home, and a fugitive, heavy thoughts, doubts, and fears would crowd around Jacob; when, in every sense, his head was pillowed on stones in the rocky valley of Luz, Jehovah expressly renewed to him, in the fullest manner, the promise and the blessing first given to Abraham, and added to it this comfort, whatever might be before him: "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." And what Jacob heard, that he also saw in symbolic vision. The promise was the real God-built stair, which reached from the lonely place on which the poor wanderer lay quite up to heaven, right into the very presence of Jehovah; and on which, all silent and unknown by the

world, lay the shining track of angel-ministry. And so still to each one who is truly of Israel is the promise of that mysterious "ladder" which connects earth with heaven. Below lies poor, helpless, forsaken man; above, stands Jehovah Himself, and upon the ladder of promise which joins earth to heaven, the angels of God, in their silent, never-ceasing ministry, descend, bringing help, and ascend, as to fetch new deliverance. Nay, this "ladder" is Christ, for by this "ladder" God Himself has come down to us in the Person of His dear Son, Who is, so to speak, the Promise become Reality, as it is written:

"Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." (John 1:51)

"And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely Jehovah is in this place, and I knew it not." Quite another fear now came upon him from that of loneliness or of doubt. It was awe at the conscious presence of the ever-watchful, ever-mindful covenant-God which made him feel, as many a wanderer since at such discovery: "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And early next morning Jacob converted his stony pillow into a memorial pillar, and consecrated it unto God. Henceforth this rocky valley would be to him no more the Canaanitish Luz, but Beth-el, "the house of God;" just as John the Baptist declared that God could of such stones raise up children to Abraham. At the same time Jacob vowed a vow, that when God had fulfilled His promise, and brought him back again "in peace," he would, on his part also, make the place a Beth-el, by dedicating it to God, and offering unto the Lord a tenth of all that He should give him, which also he did. (Genesis 35:6-7) No further incident worth recording occurred till Jacob reached the end of his journey in "the land of the people of the East." Here he found himself at a "well," where, contrary to the usual custom, three flocks were already in waiting, long before the usual evening time for watering them. Professor Robinson has made this personal observation, helpful to our understanding of the circumstances: "Over most of the cisterns is laid a broad and thick flat stone, with a round hole cut in the middle, forming the mouth of the cistern. This hole we found in many cases covered with a heavy stone, which it would require two or three men to roll away." We know not whether these flocks were kept waiting till sufficient men had come to roll away the stone, or whether it was the custom to delay till all the flocks had arrived. At any rate, when Jacob had ascertained that the flocks were from Haran, and that the shepherds knew Laban, the brother of Rebekah, and when he saw the fair Rachel, his own cousin, coming with her flock, he rolled away the stone himself, watered his uncle’s sheep, and in the warmth of his feelings at finding himself not only at the goal of his journey, but apparently God-directed to her whose very appearance could win his affections, he embraced his cousin. Even in this little trait the attentive observer of Jacob’s natural character will not fail to recognize "the haste" with which he always anticipated God’s leadings. When Laban, Rachel’s father, came to hear of all the circumstances, he received Jacob as his relative. A month’s trial more than confirmed in the mind of that selfish, covetous man the favorable impression of Jacob’s possible use to him as a shepherd, which his first energetic interference at the "well" must have produced. With that apparent frankness and show of liberality under which cunning, selfish people so often disguise their dishonest purposes, Laban urged upon Jacob to name his own "wages." Jacob had learned to love Rachel, Laban’s younger daughter. Without consulting the mind of God in the matter, he now proposed to serve Laban seven years for her hand. This was just the period during which, among the Hebrews, a Jewish slave had to serve; in short, he proposed becoming a

bondsman for Rachel. With the same well-feigned candor as before, Laban agreed: "It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man (to a stranger)." The bargain thus to sell his daughter was not one founded on the customs of the time, and Laban's daughters themselves felt the degradation which they could not resist, as appears from their after statement, when agreeing to flee from their father's home:

"Are we not counted of him strangers? for he has sold us." (Genesis 31:14-15) The period of Jacob's servitude seemed to him rapidly to pass, and at the end of the seven years he claimed his bride. But now Jacob was to experience how his sin had found him out. As he had deceived his father, so Laban now deceived him. Taking advantage of the Eastern custom that a bride was always brought to her husband veiled, he substituted for Rachel her elder sister Leah. But, as formerly, God had, all unknown to them, overruled the error and sin of Isaac and of Jacob, so He did now also in the case of Laban and Jacob. For Leah was, so far as we can judge, the one whom God had intended for Jacob, though, for the sake of her beauty, he had preferred Rachel. From Leah sprang Judah, in whose line the promise to Abraham was to be fulfilled. Leah, as we shall see in the sequel, feared and served Jehovah; while Rachel was attached to the superstitions of her father's house; and even the natural character of the elder sister fitted her better for her new calling than that of the somewhat petulant, peevish, and self-willed, though beautiful younger daughter of Laban. As for the author of this deception, Laban, he shielded himself behind the pretense of a national custom, not to give away a younger before a first born sister. But he readily proposed to give to Jacob Rachel also, in return for other seven years of service. Jacob consented, and the second union was celebrated immediately upon the close of Leah's marriage festivities, which in the East generally last for a week. It were an entire mistake to infer from the silence of Scripture that this double marriage of Jacob received Divine approbation. As always, Scripture states facts, but makes no comment. That sufficiently appears from the lifelong sorrow, disgrace, and trials which, in the retributive providence of God, followed as the consequence of this double union. The sinful weakness of Jacob appeared also in his married life, in an unkind and unjust preference for Rachel, and God's reproving dealings in that He blessed the "hated" wife with children, while he withheld from Rachel a boon so much desired in a family where all that was precious stood connected with an heir to the promises. At the same time, this might also serve to teach again the lesson, given first to Abraham and then to Isaac, how especially in the patriarchal family this blessing was to be a direct gift from the Lord. (See also Psalms 127:3) Leah bore in rapid succession four sons, whom she significantly named Reuben (" behold! a son"), saying, "Surely Jehovah hath looked upon my affliction;" Simeon ("hearing"), "Because Jehovah hath heard that I was hated;" Levi ("cleaving," or "joined"), in the hope "Now this time will my husband cleave to me;" and Judah ("praised," viz., be Jehovah), since she said: "Now will I praise Jehovah." It deserves special notice, that in the birth of at least three of these sons, Leah not only recognized God, but specially acknowledged Him as Jehovah, the covenant-God.

We do not suppose that Rachel, who had no children of her own, waited all this time without seeking to remove what she enviously and jealously regarded as her sister's advantage. Indeed, the sacred text nowhere indicates that the children of Jacob were born in the exact succession of time in which their names are recorded. On the contrary, we have every reason to suppose that such was not the case. It quite agrees with the petulant, querulous language of Rachel, that she waited not so long, but that so soon as she really found herself at this disadvantage compared with

her sister, she persuaded her husband to make her a mother through Bilhah, her own maid, as Sarah had done in the case of Hagar. Thus the sins of the parents too often reappear in the conduct of their successors. Instead of waiting upon God, or giving himself to prayer, Jacob complied with the desire of his Rachel, and her maid successively bore two sons, whom Rachel named "Dan," or "judging," as if God had judged her wrong, and "Naphtali," or "my wrestling," saying: "With great wrestling have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed." In both instances we mark her gratified jealousy of her sister; and that, although she owned God, it was not as Jehovah, but as Elohim, the God of nature, not the covenant-God of the promise.

Once again the evil example of a sister, and its supposed success, proved infectious. When Leah perceived that she no longer became as before, a mother, and probably without waiting till both Rachel's adopted sons had been born, she imitated the example of her sister, and gave to Jacob her own maid Zilpah as wife. Her declension in faith further appears also in the names which she chose for the sons of Zilpah. At the birth of the eldest, she exclaimed, "Good fortune cometh," and hence called him "Gad," or "good fortune;" the same idea being expressed in the name of the second, Asher, or "happy." Neither did Leah in all this remember God, but only thought of the success of her own device. But the number of children now granted to the two sisters neither removed their mutual jealousies, nor restored peace to the house of Jacob. Most painful scenes occurred; and when at length Leah again gave birth to two sons, she recognized, indeed, God in their names, but now, like her sister, only Elohim, not Jehovah; while she seemed to see in the first of them a reward for giving Zilpah to her husband, whence the child's name was called Issachar ("he gives," or "he brings reward"); while she regarded her last-born son, Zebulun, or "dwelling," as a pledge that since she had borne him six sons, her husband would now dwell with her!

It has already been stated that we must not regard the order in which the birth of Jacob's children is mentioned as indicating their actual succession. They are rather so enumerated, partly to show the varying motives of the two sisters, and partly to group together the sons of different mothers. That the scriptural narrative is not intended to represent the actual succession of the children appears also from the circumstance, that the birth of an only daughter, Dinah ("judgment") is mentioned immediately after that of Zebulun. The wording of the Hebrew text here implies that Dinah was born at a later period ("afterwards"), and, indeed, she alone is mentioned on account of her connection with Jacob's later history, though we have reason to believe that Jacob had other daughters (See Genesis 37:35, and Genesis 46:7), whose names and history are not mentioned. And now at last better thoughts seem to have come to Rachel. When we read that in giving her a son of her own, "God hearkened to her," we are warranted in inferring that believing prayer had taken in her heart the former place of envy and jealousy of her sister. The son whom she now bore, in the fourteenth year of Jacob's servitude to Laban, was called Joseph, a name which has a double meaning: "the remover," because, as she said, "God hath taken away my reproach," and "adding," since she regarded her child as a pledge that God - this time "Jehovah" - "shall add to me another son." The object of Jacob's prolonged stay with his father-in-law was now accomplished. Fourteen years' servitude to Laban left him as poor as when first he had come to him. The wants of his increasing family, and the better understanding now established in his family, must have pointed out to him the desirableness of returning to his own country. But when he intimated this wish to his father-in-law, Laban was unwilling to part with one by whom he had so largely profited. With a characteristic confusion of heathen ideas with a dim knowledge of the

being of Jehovah, Laban said to Jacob (we here translate literally): "If I have found grace in thy sight (i.e. tarry), for I have divined (ascertained by magic), and Jehovah hath blessed me for thy sake." The same attempt to place Jehovah as the God of Abraham by the side of the god of Nahor - not denying, indeed, the existence of Jehovah, but that He was the only true and living God - occurs again later when Laban made a covenant with Jacob.(Genesis 31:53) It also frequently recurs in the later history of Israel. Both strange nations and Israel itself, when in a state of apostasy, did not deny that Jehovah was God, but they tried to place Him on a level with other and false deities. Now, Scripture teaches us that to place any other pretended God along with the living and true One argues as great ignorance, and is as great a sin, as to deny Him entirely. In his own peculiar fashion Laban, with pretended candor and liberality, now invited Jacob to name his wages for the future. But this time the deceiver was to be deceived. Basing his proposal on the fact that in the East the goats are mostly black and the sheep white, Jacob made what seemed the very modest request, that all that were spotted and speckled in the flock were to be his share. Laban gladly assented, taking care to make the selection himself, and to hand over Jacob's portion to his own sons, while Jacob was to tend the flocks of Laban. Finally, he placed three days' journey betwixt the flocks of Jacob and his own. But even so, Jacob knew how, by an artifice well understood in the East, to circumvent his father-in- law, and to secure that, though ordinarily "the ringstraked, speckled, and spotted" had been an exception, now they were the most numerous and the strongest of the flocks. And the advantage still remained on the side of Jacob, when Laban again and again reversed the conditions of the agreement.(Genesis 31:7) This clearly proved that Jacob's artifice could not have been the sole nor the real reason of his success. In point of fact, immediately after the first agreement with Laban, the angel of God had spoken to Jacob in a dream, assuring him that, even without any such artifices, God would right him in his cause with Laban.(Genesis 31:12-13) Once more, then, Jacob acted, as when in his father's house. He "made haste;" he would not wait for the Lord to fulfill his promise; he would use his own means - and employ his cunning and devices - to accomplish the purpose of God, instead of committing his cause unto Him. And as formerly he had had the excuse of his father's weakness and his brother's violence, so now it might seem as if he were purely on his defense, and as if his deceit were necessary for his protection - the more so as he resorted to his device only in spring, not in autumn, so that the second produce of the year belonged chiefly to his father-in-law. The consequences proved very similar to those which followed his deceit in his father's house. The rapidly growing wealth of Jacob during the six years of this bargain so raised the enmity and envy of Laban and of his sons, that Jacob must have felt it necessary for his own safety to remove, even if he had not received Divine direction to that effect. But this put an end to all hesitancy; and having communicated his purpose to his wives, and secured their cordial consent, he left secretly, while Laban was away at the sheep-shearing, which would detain him some time. Three days elapsed before Laban was informed of Jacob's flight. He immediately pursued after him, "with his brethren," his anger being further excited by the theft of his household gods, or "teraphim," which Rachel, unknown, of course, to Jacob, had taken with her. On the seventh day Laban and his relatives overtook Jacob and his caravan in Mount Gilead. The consequences might have been terrible, if God had not interposed to warn Laban in a dream, not to injure nor to hurt Jacob. Being further foiled in his search after the missing teraphim, through the cunning of his own daughter, Laban, despite his hypocritical professions of how affectionate their leave-taking might have been if Jacob had not "stolen away," stood convicted of selfishness and unkindness. In fact, if the

conduct of Jacob, even in his going away, had been far from straightforward, that of Laban was of the most unprincipled kind. However, peace was restored between them, and a covenant made, in virtue of which neither party was to cross for hostile purposes the memorial pillar which they erected, and to which Laban gave a Chaldee and Jacob a Hebrew name, meaning "the heap of witness."

Hypocritically as in the mouth of Laban the additional name of Mizpah sounds, which he gave to this pillar, it is a very significant designation to mark great events in our lives, especially our alliances and our undertakings. For Mizpah means "watchtower," and the words which accompanied the giving of this name were:

"Jehovah watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another."

03.01.18. Volume 1, Chapter 18

CHAPTER 18

Jacob at Mahanaim - The Night of Wrestling - Reconciliation between Jacob and Esau - Jacob settles at Shechem - Jacob proceeds to Bethel to pay his Vow - Death of Rachel - Jacob settles at Hebron (Genesis 32:1-32; Genesis 33:1-20; Genesis 34:1-31; Genesis 35:1-29; Genesis 36:1-43)

WE are now nearing what may be described as the high point in the spiritual history of Jacob. Quite different as the previous history of Abraham had been from that of Jacob, yet, in some sense, what Mount Moriah was to Abraham, that the fords of Jabbok became to his grandson: a place of trial and of decision, - only that while the one went to it, the other only left it, with a new name, and all that this implied.

One dreaded meeting was past, and its apprehended dangers averted. Jacob had in his fear "stolen away" from Laban. He had been pursued as by an enemy, but God had brought peace out of it all. Standing by his "Mizpah," he had seen Laban and his confederates disappearing behind the range of Gilead, their spears and lances glistening in the sunlight, as they wound through the pine and oak forests which cover the mountain side. One enemy was now behind him; but another and far more formidable had yet to be encountered. In dealing with Laban, Jacob could justly plead his long service and the heartless selfishness of his employer. But what could he say to Esau in excuse or palliation of the past? How would he meet him? and did his brother still cherish the purpose of revenge from which he had fled twenty years ago? To these questions there was absolutely no answer, except the one which faith alone could understand: that if he now returned to his own country, and faced the danger there awaiting him, it was by the express direction of the Lord Himself. If so, Jacob must be safe. Nor was he long in receiving such general assurance of this as might strengthen his faith. Leaving the mountains of Gilead, Jacob had entered the land of promise, in what afterwards became the possession of Gad. A glorious prospect here opened before him. Such beauty, fruitfulness, freshness of verdure, and richness of pasturage; dark mountain forests above, and rich plains below, as poor Palestine, denuded of its trees, and with them of its moisture - a land of ruins - has not known these many, many centuries! And there, as he entered the land, "the angels of God met him." Twenty years before they had, on leaving it, met him at Bethel, and, so to speak, accompanied him on his journey. And now in similar pledge they welcomed him on his return. Only then, they had been angels ascending and descending on their ministry, while now they were "angel hosts" to defend him in the impending contest, whence also Jacob called the name of that place Mahanaim, "two hosts," or "two camps." And if at Bethel he had seen them in a "dream," they now appeared to him when waking, as if to convey yet stronger assurance.

Such comfort was, indeed, needed by Jacob. From Mahanaim he had sent to his brother Esau a message intended to conciliate him. But the messengers returned without any reply, other than that Esau was himself coming to meet his brother, and that at the head of a band of four hundred men. This certainly was sufficiently alarming, irrespective of the circumstance that since Esau was

(as we shall presently show) just then engaged in a warlike expedition against Seir, the four hundred men with whom he advanced, had probably gathered around his standard for plunder and bloodshed, just like those wild Bedouin tribes which to this day carry terror wherever they appear. Even to receive no reply at all would, in itself, be a great trial to one like Jacob. Hitherto he had by his devices succeeded in removing every obstacle, and evading every danger. But now he was absolutely helpless, in face of an enemy from whom he could neither retreat nor escape. It is said in the sacred text: "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." The measures to which he resorted prove this. He divided his caravan into two bands, in the hope that if Esau attacked the one, the other might escape during the fray. The result thus aimed at was very doubtful, and, at the best, sad enough. Jacob must have deeply felt this, and he betook himself to prayer. Mingling confession of his utter unworthiness with entreaty for deliverance from the danger before him, he successively pleaded before God His express command to return to Canaan, His past mercies, and His gracious promises, at the same time addressing God as Jehovah, the covenant-God of Abraham and of Isaac. Not one of these pleas could fail. That cry of despair was the preparation for what was to follow: Jacob was now learning to obtain, otherwise than by his own efforts, that which Jehovah had promised to give.

We know, with almost perfect certainty, the exact spot where the most important transaction in the life of Jacob took place. It was at the ford of Jabbok, the confluence of the two streams which flow from the East into Jordan, between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, and almost midway between these two points. Indeed, there is only one ford of Jabbok "practicable," "and even here," as a recent traveler records, "the strong current reached the horse’s girths." The beauty and richness of the whole district is most striking - park-like scenery alternating with sweet glades, covered with rich crops; "trees and shrubs grouped in graceful variety;" then peeps into the great Jordan valley, with its almost tropical vegetation, and of the hills of Palestine beyond. Looking down upon the ford, the brook Jabbok is almost invisible from the thicket of oleander which covers its banks; while on the steeper sides, up either way, forests of oak and of evergreen oak merge into the darker pine. It was night in this solitude. Overhead shone the innumerable stars -once the pledge of the promise to Abraham. The impressive silence was only broken by the rushing of Jabbok, and the lowing of the flocks and herds, as they passed over the brook, or the preparations for transporting the women, children, and servants. Quite a large number of the cattle and sheep Jacob now sent forward in separate droves, that each, as it successively came to Esau as a gift from his brother, might tend to appease his feelings of anger, or satisfy the cupidity of his followers. At last they were all gone, each herdsman bearing a message of peace. The women also and children were safely camped on the south side of Jabbok. Only Jacob himself remained on the northern bank. It was a time for solitude - "and Jacob was left alone," quite alone, as when first he left his father’s house. There on the oleander banks of Jabbok occurred what has ever since been of the deepest significance to the church of God. "There wrestled with him a man till the breaking of day." That "Man" was the Angel of Jehovah in Whom was His Presence. "And when He saw that He prevailed not against him, He touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with Him." The contest by wrestling must now have become impossible. But a far other contest ensued. "And He said, Let Me go, for the day breaketh. And he (Jacob) said, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Jacob had now recognized the character of his opponent and of the contest, and he sought quite another victory, and by quite other means than before. He no longer expected to prevail in his own strength.

He asked to be blessed by Him with whom he had hitherto only wrestled, that so he might prevail. That blessing was given. But first the Lord brought before him what had been his old name as expressive of his old history - Jacob, "the cunning, self-helpful supplanter;" then He bestowed on him a new name, characteristic of his new experience and better contest by prayer: Israel, "a prince with God." In that new character would he have "power with God and men," and "prevail" against all enemies. But the mysterious name of the Angel he must not yet know; for "the mystery of godliness" was not to be fully revealed till all the purposes for which Jacob was to become Israel had been fulfilled. And now "He blessed him there." "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel (the face of God): for I have seen God face to face, and my soul has recovered. And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day." And "to this day," literally, is this custom observed among "the children of Israel."

Now what was the meaning of this solemn transaction? Assuredly, it was symbolical - but of what? It was a real transaction, but symbolical of Jacob's past, present, and future. The "man" who wrestled with Jacob "until the breaking of day" was Jehovah. Jacob had, indeed, been the believing heir to the promises, but all his life long he had wrestled with God - sought to attain success in his own strength and by his own devices. Seeming to contend with man, he had really contended with God. And God had also contended with him. At last farther contest was impossible. Jacob had become disabled, for God had touched the hollow of his thigh. In the presence of Esau Jacob was helpless. But before he could encounter his most dreaded earthly enemy, he must encounter God, with Whom he had all along, though unwittingly, contended by his struggles and devices. The contest with Esau was nothing; the contest with Jehovah everything. The Lord could not be on Jacob's side, till he had been disabled, and learned to use other weapons than those of his own wrestling. Then it was that Jacob recognized with whom he had hitherto wrestled. Now he resorted to other weapons, even to prayer; and he sought and found another victory, even in the blessing of Jehovah and by His strength. Then also, truly at "the breaking of day," he obtained a new name, and with it new power, in which he prevailed with God and man. Jacob, indeed, "halted upon his thigh;" but he was now Israel, a prince with God. And still to all ages this contest and this victory, in despair of our own efforts, and in the persevering prayer, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me," have been and are a most precious symbol to the children of God. May we not also add, that as the prophet Hosea pointed to it as symbolical of Israel's history (Hosea 12:4), so it shall be fully realized when "they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn?" (Zechariah 12:10) As Jacob passed over Jabbok in the early morn, the glittering of spears and lances in the sunlight, among the dark pine forests, betokened the approach of Esau with his four hundred men. But Jacob had nothing more to fear: the only real contest was over. It was necessary, when Jacob returned to take possession of the land and of the promises, that all that was past in his history should be past - it was so! Never, after that night, did Jacob again contend with carnal weapons; and though the old name of Jacob reappears again and again by the side of his new designation, it was to remind both him and us that Jacob, though halting, is not dead, and that there is in us always the twofold nature, alike of Jacob and of Israel. What now followed we cannot tell better than in the words of a recent German writer: "Jacob, who in his contest with the Angel of Jehovah had prevailed by prayer and entreaty, now also prevails by humility and modesty against Esau, who comes to meet him with four hundred men." As already hinted, Esau had probably been just engaged in that warlike expedition

to Mount Seir, which resulted in his conquest of the land, where he afterwards settled.(Genesis 36:6-7) This accounts for his appearance at the head of an armed band. Possibly, he may, at the same time, have wished to have the revenge of giving anxiety to his brother, and of showing him the contrast between their respective positions; or he may to the last have been undecided how to act towards his brother. At any rate, under the overruling guidance of God, and "overcome by the humility of Jacob, and by the kindliness of his own heart, Esau fell upon the neck of his brother, embraced and kissed him. With reluctance he accepted the rich presents of Jacob, and he offered to accompany him to the end of his journey with his armed men - a proposition which Jacob declined in a friendly spirit. Thus the two brothers, long separated in affection, were reconciled to each other. Their good understanding remained undisturbed till the day of their death."

There was nothing in Jacob's language to his brother which, when translated from Eastern to our Western modes of conduct and expression, is inconsistent with proper self-respect. If he declined the offer of an armed guard, it was because he felt he needed not an earthly host to protect him. Besides, it was manifestly impossible for cattle and tender children to keep up with a Bedouin warrior band. While Esau, therefore, returned to Mount Seir, there to await a visit from his brother, Jacob turned in a north-westerly direction to Succoth, a place still east of Jordan, and afterwards in the possession of the tribe of Gad. Here he probably made a lengthened stay, for we read that "he built him an house, and made booths for his cattle," whence also the name of Succoth, or "booths." At last Jacob once more crossed the Jordan, "and came in peace to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan." The words seem designedly chosen to indicate that God had amply fulfilled what Jacob had asked at Bethel: to "come again in peace."(Genesis 28:21) But great changes had taken place in the country. When Abram entered the land, and made this his first resting-place, there was no city there, and it was only "the place of Shechem." (Genesis 12:6) But now the district was all cultivated and possessed, and a city had been built, probably by "Hamor the Hivite," the father of Shechem, who called it after his son. (Comp. Genesis 4:17) From "the children of Hamor" Jacob bought the field on which he "spread his tent." This was "the portion" which Jacob afterwards gave to his son Joseph (Genesis 48:22), and here the "bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought out of Egypt," were, at least at one time, buried. (Joshua 24:32) Far more interesting than this, we know that by the well which Jacob there dug, sat, many centuries afterwards, "David's greater Son," to tell the poor sinning woman of Samaria concerning the "well of water springing up unto everlasting life" - the first non-Jewess blessed to taste the water of which "whosoever drinketh" "shall never thirst." (John 4:14) Here Jacob erected an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel, "God, the God of Israel." But his stay at Shechem was to prove a fresh source of trial to Jacob. Dinah, his daughter, at that time (as we gather) about fifteen years of age, in the language of the sacred text, "went out to see the daughters of the land," or, as Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us, to take part in a feast of the Shechemites. A more terrible warning than that afforded by the results of her thoughtless and blameworthy participation in irreligious and even heathen festivities could scarcely be given. It led to the ruin of Dinah herself, then to a proposal of an alliance between the Hivites and Israel, to which Israel could not, of course, have agreed; and finally to vile deceit on the part of Simeon and Levi, for the purpose of exacting bloody revenge, by which the whole male population of Shechem were literally exterminated. How deeply the soul of Jacob recoiled from this piece of Eastern cruelty, appears from the fact, that even on his deathbed, many years afterwards, he reverted to it in these words: -

"Simeon and Levi are brethren; Their swords are weapons of iniquity. O my soul, come not thou into their council; Unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united!" (Genesis 49:5-6) But one, though undesigned, consequence of the crime proved a further blessing to Jacob. It was quite clear that he and his family must remove from the scene of Simeon's and Levi's treachery and cruelty. Then it was that God directed Jacob to return to Beth-el, and fulfill the promise which he had there made on fleeing from the face of Esau his brother. About ten years must have elapsed since the return of Jacob from Mesopotamia, and yet he had not paid his vows unto the Lord! From what follows, we infer that, in all probability, the reason of this delay had been that the family of Jacob had not been purged from idolatry, and that hitherto Jacob had been too weak to remove from his household what must have rendered his appearance at Beth-el morally impossible. But now we read, that "he said unto 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" (this as a symbol of purification): "and let us arise, and go up to Bethel." And all the teraphim and idolatrous "charms" were buried deep down below a terebinth-tree "which was by Shechem." A touching incident is recorded immediately on their arrival at Beth-el. "Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el, under an oak, and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth (the oak of weeping)." Thus Deborah's long and faithful service in the household of Isaac, and the family-mourning over the old, tried family friend, are deemed worthy of perpetual memorial in the Book of God! But from the circumstance that Deborah died in the house of Jacob, we infer not only that her mistress Rebekah was dead, but that there must have been some intercourse between Isaac and Jacob since his return to Canaan. Most probably Jacob had visited his aged parent, though Scripture does not mention it, because it in no way affects the history of the covenant. At Bethel God again appeared to Jacob; and while He once more bestowed on him the name of Israel and the covenant-promises previously given, Jacob also paid his vow unto the Lord, and on his part likewise renewed the designation of the place as Beth-el. From Bethel they continued their journey towards Mamre, the place of Isaac's residence. On the way, some distance from Ephrath, "the fruitful," which in later times was called Bethlehem, "the house of bread," (Micah 5:2) Rachel died in giving birth to Jacob's twelfth son. His mother wished to call her child Ben-oni, "the son of my sorrow;" but his father named him Benjamin, which has been variously interpreted as meaning "son of the right hand," "son of days, i.e. of old age," and "son of happiness," because he completed the number of twelve sons. From Jeremiah 31:15, we gather that Rachel actually died in Ramah. "Jacob set a pillar upon her grave." As the oak, or rather the terebinth, of Deborah was still known at the time of the Judges, when Deborah's greater namesake dwelt under its shadow, "between Ramah and Bethel in Mount Ephraim," (Judges 4:5) so the pillar which marked Rachel's grave was a landmark at the time of Samuel. (1 Samuel 10:2-3) Another crime yet stained the family of Jacob at Migdal Eder, "the watchtower of the flock," in consequence of which Reuben was deprived of the privileges of the firstborn.(Genesis 49:4) At last Jacob came to his journey's end, "unto Isaac his father, unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned." Here Scripture pauses to record, by way of anticipation, the death of Isaac, at the age of one hundred and eighty years, although that event took place twelve years after Jacob's arrival at Hebron; and, indeed, Isaac had lived to share his son's sorrow, when Joseph was sold into Egypt, having only died ten years before Jacob and his sons settled in Egypt. But the course of sacred history has turned from Isaac, and, in fact, Jacob himself is now but a secondary actor in its events. The main interest henceforth centers in Joseph, the elder son of Rachel, with

whose life the progress of sacred history is identified.

03.01.19. Volume 1, Chapter 19

CHAPTER 19 Joseph’s Early Life - He is Sold by his Brethren into Slavery - Joseph in the House of Potiphar -Joseph in Prison (Genesis 37:1-36; Genesis 38:1-30; Genesis 39:1-23) FOR the proper understanding of what follows, it is necessary to bear in mind that what may be called the personal history of the patriarchs ceases with Jacob; or rather that it now merges into that of the children of Israel - of the family, and of the tribes. The purpose of God with the patriarchs as individuals had been fulfilled, when Jacob had become father of the twelve, who were in turn to be the ancestors of the chosen people. Hence the personal manifestations of God to individuals now also ceased. To this there is only a solitary exception, when the Lord appeared unto Jacob as he went into Egypt, to give him the needful assurance that by His will Israel removed from Canaan, and that in His own good time He would bring them back to the land of promise. By way of anticipation, it may be here stated that this temporary removal was in every respect necessary. It formed the fulfillment of God’s prediction to Abram at the first making of the covenant (Genesis 15:12-17); and it was needful in order to separate the sons of Jacob from the people of the land. How readily constant contact with the Canaanites would have involved even the best of them in horrible vices appears from the history of Judah, when, after the selling of Joseph, he had left his father’s house, and, joining himself to the people of the country, both he and his rapidly became conformed to the abominations around. (Genesis 38:1-30) It was necessary also as a preparation for the later history of Israel, when the Lord God would bring them out from their house of bondage by His outstretched arm, and with signs and wonders. As this grand event was to form the foundation and beginning of the history of Israel as a nation, so the servitude and the low estate which preceded it were typical, and that not only of the whole history of Israel, but of the Church itself, and of every individual believer also, whom God delivers from spiritual bondage by His mighty grace. Lastly, all the events connected with the removal into Egypt were needful for the training of the sons of Israel, and chiefly for that of Joseph, if he were to be fitted for the position which God intended him to occupy. Nor can we fail to recognize, that, although Joseph is not personally mentioned in the New Testament as a type of Christ, his history was eminently typical of that of our blessed Savior, alike in his betrayal, his elevation to highest dignity, and his preserving the life of his people, and in their ultimate recognition of him and repentance of their sin. Yet, though "known to God" were all these "His works from the beginning," all parties were allowed, in the free exercise of their own choice, to follow their course, ignorant that all the while they were only contributing their share towards the fulfillment of God’s purposes. And in this lies the mystery of Divine Providence, that it always worketh wonders, yet without seeming to work at all - whence also it so often escapes the observation of men. Silently, and unobserved by those who live and act, it pursues its course, till in the end all things are seen "to work together" for the glory of God, and "for good to them that love God, that are the called according to His purpose." The scriptural history of Joseph opens when he is seventeen years of age. Abundant glimpses into the life of the patriarchal family are afforded us. Joseph is seen engaged in pastoral occupations, as well as his brethren. But he is chiefly with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, the maids of Leah and Rachel. Manifestly also there is ill feeling and jealousy on the part of the sons of Leah towards the

child of Rachel. This must have been fostered by the difference in their natural disposition, as well as by the preference which Jacob showed for the son of his beloved wife. The bearing of the sons of Jacob was rough, wild, and lawless, without any concern for their father's wishes or aims. On the other hand, Joseph seems to have united some of the best characteristics of his ancestors. Like Abraham, he was strong, decided, and prudent; like Isaac, patient and gentle; like Jacob, warmhearted and affectionate. Best of all, his conduct signally differed from that of his brethren. On the other hand, however, it is not difficult to perceive how even the promising qualities of his natural disposition might become sources of moral danger. Of this the history of Joseph's ancestors had afforded only too painful evidence. How much greater would be the peril to a youth exposed to such twofold temptation as rooted dislike on the part of brothers whom he could not respect, and marked favoritism on that of his father! The holy reticence of Scripture - which ever tells so little of man and so much of God - affords us only hints, but these are sufficiently significant. We read that "Joseph brought unto his father" the "evil report" of his brethren. That is one aspect of his domestic relations. Side by side with it is the other: "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children." Even if "the coat of many colors," which he gave to "the son of his old age," had been merely a costly or gaudy dress, it would have been an invidious mark of favoritism, such as too often raises bitter feelings in families. For, as time is made up of moments, so life mostly of small actions whose greatness lies in their combination. But in truth it was not a "coat of many colors," but a tunic reaching down to the arms and feet, such as princes and persons of distinction wore, and it betokened to Joseph's brothers only too clearly, that their father intended to transfer to Joseph the right of the first-born. We know that the three oldest sons of Leah had unfitted themselves for it - Simeon and Levi by their cruelty at Shechem, and Reuben by his crime at the "watch-tower of the flock."

What more natural than to bestow the privilege on the first-born of her whom Jacob had intended to make his only wife? At any rate, the result was that "his brethren hated him," till, in the expressive language of the sacred text, "they could not get themselves to address him unto peace," that is, as we understand it, to address to him the usual Eastern salutation: "Peace be unto thee!"

It needed only an occasion to bring this state of feeling to an outbreak, and that came only too soon. It seems quite natural that, placed in the circumstances we have described, Joseph should have dreamt two dreams implying his future supremacy. We say this, even while we recognize in them a distinct Divine direction. Yet Scripture does not say, either, that these dreams were sent him as a direct communication from God, or that he was directed to tell them to his family. The imagery of the first of these dreams was taken from the rustic, that of the second from the pastoral life of the family. In the first dream Joseph and his brothers were in the harvest-field - which seems to imply that Jacob, like his father Isaac, had tilled the ground - and Joseph's sheaf stood upright, while those of his brothers made obeisance. In the second dream they were all out tending the flock, when the sun and moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to Joseph. The first of these dreams was related only unto his brethren, the second both to his father and to his brothers. There must have been something peculiarly offensive in the manner in which he told his dreams, for we read not only that they hated him yet the more for his dreams," but also "for his words." Even Jacob saw reason to reprove him, although it is significantly added that he observed the saying. As we now know it, they were prophetic dreams; but, at the time, there were no means of judging

whether they were so or not, especially as Joseph had so "worded" them, that they might seem to be merely the effect of vanity in a youth whom favoritism had unduly elated. The future could alone show this; but, meantime, may we not say that it was needful for the sake of Joseph himself that he should be removed from his present circumstances to where that which was holy and divine in him would grow, and all of self be uprooted? But such results are only obtained by one kind of training - that of affliction. The sons of Jacob were pasturing their flocks around Shechem, when the patriarch sent Joseph to inquire of their welfare. All unconscious of danger the lad hastened to execute the commission. Joseph found not his brethren at Shechem itself, but a stranger directed him to "Dothan," the two wells, whither they had gone. "Dothan was beautifully situated, about twelve miles from Samaria. Northwards spread richest pasture-lands; a few swelling hills separated it from the great plain of Esdraelon. From its position it must have been the key to the passes of Esdraelon, and so, as guarding the entrance from the north, not only of Ephraim, but of Palestine itself. On the crest of one of those hills the extensive ruins of Dothan are still pointed out, and at its southern foot still wells up a fine spring of living water. Is this one of the two wells from which Dothan derived its name? From these hills Gideon afterwards descended upon the host of Midian. It was here that Joseph overtook his brethren, and was cast into the dry well. And it was from that height that the sons of Jacob must have seen the Arab caravan slowly winding from Jordan on its way to Egypt, when they sold their brother, in the vain hope of binding the word and arresting the hand of God." But we are anticipating. No sooner did his brothers descry Joseph in the distance, than the murderous plan of getting rid of him, where no stranger should witness their deed, occurred to their minds. This would be the readiest means of disposing alike of "the dreamer" and of his "dreams." Reuben alone shrunk from it, not so much from love to his brother as from consideration for his father. On pretense that it would be better not actually to shed their brother’s blood, he proposed to cast him into one of those cisterns, and leave him there to perish, hoping, however, himself secretly to rescue and to restore him to his father. The others readily acceded to the plan. A Greek writer has left us a graphic account of such wells and cisterns. He describes them as regularly built and plastered, narrow at the mouth, but widening as they descend, till at the bottom they attain a width sometimes of one hundred feet. We know that when dry, or covered with only mud at the bottom, they served as hiding-places, and even as temporary prisons.(Jeremiah 38:6;Isaiah 24:22) Into such an empty well Joseph was now cast, while his brothers, as if they had finished some work, sat down to their meal. We had almost written, that it so happened - but truly it was in the providence of God, that just then an Arab caravan was slowly coming in sight. They were pursuing what we might call the world-old route from the spice district of Gilead into Egypt - across Jordan, below the Sea of Galilee, over the plain of Jezreel, and thence along the sea-shore. Once more the intended kindness of another of his brothers well-nigh proved fatal to Joseph. Reuben had diverted their purpose of bloodshed by proposing to cast Joseph into "the pit," in the hope of being able afterwards to rescue him. Judah now wished to save his life by selling him as a slave to the passing Arab caravan. But neither of them had the courage nor the uprightness frankly to resist the treachery and the crime. Again the other brothers hearkened to what seemed a merciful suggestion. The bargain was quickly struck. Joseph was sold to "the Ishmaelites" for twenty shekels - the price, in later times, of a male slave from five to twenty years old (Leviticus 27:5), the medium price of a slave being thirty shekels of silver, or about four pounds, reckoning the shekel of the sanctuary, which was twice the common shekel (Exodus 21:32), at two shillings and eight-pence. Reuben was not present when the sale was

made. On his return he "rent his clothes" in impotent mourning. But the others dipped Joseph's princely raiment in the blood of a kid, to give their father the impression that Joseph had been "devoured by a wild beast." The device succeeded. Jacob mourned him bitterly and "for many days," refusing all the comfort which his sons and daughters hypocritically offered. But even his bitterest lamentation expressed the hope and faith that he would meet his loved son in another world - for, he said: "I will go down into the grave (or into Sheol) unto my son, mourning."

Except by an incidental reference to it in the later confession of his brothers (Genesis 42:21), we are not told either of the tears or the entreaties with which Joseph vainly sought to move his brethren, nor of his journey into Egypt. We know that when following in the caravan of his new masters, he must have seen at a distance the heights of his own Hebron, where, all unsuspecting, his father awaited the return of his favorite. To that home he was never again to return. We meet him next in the slave-market. Here, as it might seem in the natural course of events, "Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him off the hands of the Ishmaelites." The name Potiphar frequently occurs on the monuments of Egypt (written either Pet-Pa-Ra, or Pet-P-Ra), and means: "Dedicated to Ra," or the sun. According to some writers, "at the time that Joseph was sold into Egypt, the country was not united under the rule of a single native line, but governed by several dynasties, of which the fifteenth dynasty of Shepherd-kings was the predominant one, the rest being tributary to it." At any rate, he would be carried into that part of Egypt which was always most connected with Palestine.

Potiphar's office at the court of Pharaoh was that of "chief of the executioners," most probably (as it is rendered in our Authorized Version) captain of the king's body-guard. In the house of Potiphar it went with Joseph as formerly in his own home. For it is not in the power of circumstances, prosperous or adverse, to alter our characters. He that is faithful in little shall also be faithful in much; and from him who knoweth not how to employ what is committed to his charge, shall be taken even that he hath. Joseph was faithful, honest, upright, and conscientious, because in his earthly, he served a heavenly Master, Whose presence he always realized. Accordingly "Jehovah was with him," and "Jehovah made all that he did to prosper in his hand." His master was not long in observing this. From an ordinary domestic slave he promoted him to be "overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand." The confidence was not misplaced. Jehovah's blessing henceforth rested upon Potiphar's substance, and he "left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought that he had, save the bread which he did eat." The sculptures and paintings of the ancient Egyptian tombs bring vividly before us the daily life and duties of Joseph. "The property of great men is shown to have been managed by scribes, who exercised a most methodical and minute supervision over all the operations of agriculture, gardening, the keeping of live stock, and fishing. Every product was carefully registered, to check the dishonesty of the laborers, who in Egypt have always been famous in this respect. Probably in no country was farming ever more systematic. Joseph's previous knowledge of tending flocks, and perhaps of husbandry, and his truthful character, exactly fitted him for the post of overseer. How long he filled it we are not told."

It is a common mistake to suppose that earnest religion and uprightness must necessarily be attended by success, even in this world. It is, indeed, true that God will not withhold any good thing from those whose Sun and Shield He is; but then success may not always be a good thing for them. Besides, God often tries the faith and patience of His people - and that is the meaning of

many trials. Still oftener are they needed for discipline and training, or that they may learn to glorify God in their sufferings. In the case of Joseph it was both a temptation and a trial by which he was prepared, outwardly and inwardly, for the position he was to occupy. The beauty which Joseph had inherited from his mother exposed him to wicked suggestions on the part of his master's wife, which will surprise those least who are best acquainted with the state of ancient Egyptian society. Joseph stood quite alone in a heathen land and house. He was surrounded only by what would blunt his moral sense, and render the temptation all the more powerful. He had also, as compared with us, a very imperfect knowledge of the law of God in its height and depth. Moreover, what he had seen of his older brothers would not have elevated his views. Still, he firmly resisted evil, alike from a sense of integrity towards his master, and, above all, from dread "of this great wickedness and sin against God." Yet it seemed only to fare the worse with him for his principles. As so often, the violent passion of the woman turned into equally violent hatred, and she maliciously concocted a false charge against him. We have reason to believe that Potiphar could not in every respect have credited the story of his wife. For the punishment awarded in Egypt to the crime of which she accused him, was far more severe than that which Joseph received. Potiphar consigned him to the king's prison, of which, in his capacity as chief of the body-guard, he was the superintendent. How bitterly it fared there with him at the first, we learn from these words of Psalms 105:17-18 -

"He sent before them a man: Sold for a slave was Joseph, They afflicted with fetters his feet, The iron entered into his soul." The contrast could scarcely be greater than between his former prophetic dreams and his present condition. But even so Joseph remained steadfast. And, as if to set before us the other contrast between sight and faith, the sacred text expressly states it: "But" - a word on which our faith should often lay emphasis - "Jehovah was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison." By-and-by, as his integrity more and more appeared, the charge of the prisoners was committed unto him; and as "what he did Jehovah made to prosper," the whole management of the prison ultimately passed into Joseph's hands. Thus, here also Jehovah proved Himself a faithful covenant-God. A silver streak was lining the dark cloud. But still must "patience have her perfect work."

03.01.20. Volume 1, Chapter 20

CHAPTER 20

Joseph in Prison - The Dream of Pharaoh’s Two Officers - The Dream of Pharaoh - Joseph’s Exaltation - His Government of Egypt (Genesis 40:1-23; Genesis 41:1-57; Genesis 47:13-26)

ELEVEN years had passed since Joseph was sold into Egypt, and yet the Divine promise, conveyed in his dreams, seemed farther than ever from fulfillment. The greater part of this weary time had probably been spent in prison, without other prospect than that of such indulgence as his services to "the keeper of the prison" might insure, when an event occurred which, for a brief season, promised a change in Joseph’s condition. Some kind of "offense" - real or imaginary - had, as is so often the case in the East, led to the sudden disgrace and imprisonment of two of Pharaoh’s chief officers. The charge of "the chief of the butlers" - or chief of the cupbearers - and of "the chief of the bakers" naturally devolved upon "the captain of the guard," - a successor, as we imagine, of Potiphar, since he appointed Joseph to the responsible post of their personal attendant. They had not been long in prison when, by the direct leading of Divine Providence, both dreamed in the same night a dream, calculated deeply to impress them. By the same direct guidance of Providence, Joseph was led to notice in the morning their anxiety, and to inquire into its cause. We regard it as directly from God, that he could give them at once and unhesitatingly the true meaning of their dreams.

We are specially struck in this respect with the manner in which Joseph himself viewed it. When he found them in distress for want of such "interpreter" as they might have consulted if free, he pointed them straight to God: "Do not interpretations belong to God?" thus encouraging them to tell, and at the same time preparing himself for reading their dreams, by casting all in faith upon God. In short, whether or not he were eventually enabled to understand their dreams, he would at least not appear like the Egyptian magicians - he would not claim power or wisdom; he would own God, and look up to Him.

We say it the more confidently, that Joseph’s interpretation came to him directly from God, that it seems so easy and so rational. For, it is in the supernatural direction of things natural that we ought most to recognize the direct interposition of the Lord. The dreams were quite natural, and the interpretation was quite natural - yet both were directly of God. What more natural than for the chief butler and the chief baker, three nights before Pharaoh’s birthday, on which, as they knew, he always "made a feast unto all his servants," to dream that they were each again at his post? And what more natural than that on such an occasion Pharaoh should consider, whether for good or for evil, the case of his absent imprisoned officers? Or, lastly, what more natural than that the chief butler’s consciousness of innocence should suggest in his dream that he once more waited upon his royal master; while the guilty conscience of the chief baker saw only birds of prey eating out of the basket from which he had hitherto supplied his master’s table?

Here, then, it may be said, we have all the elements of Joseph's interpretation to hand, just as we shall see they were equally obvious in the dreams which afterwards troubled Pharaoh. Yet as then none of the magicians and wise men of Egypt could read what, when once stated, seems so plainly written, so here all seems involved in perplexity till God gives light. As already stated, the two dreams were substantially the same. In each case the number three, whether of clusters in the vine from which the chief butler pressed the rich juice into Pharaoh's cup, or of baskets in which the chief baker carried the king's bakemeat, pointed to the three days intervening before Pharaoh's birthday. In each case also their dreams transported them back to their original position before any charge had been brought against them, the difference lying in this: that, in the one dream, Pharaoh accepted the functions of his officer; while, in the other, birds which hover about carcasses ate out of the basket. It is also quite natural that, if the chief butler had a good conscience towards his master, he should have been quite ready at the first to tell his dream; while the chief baker, conscious of guilt, only related his when encouraged by the apparently favorable interpretation of his colleague's. Perhaps we ought also to notice, in evidence of the truthfulness of the narrative, how thoroughly Egyptian in all minute details is the imagery of these dreams. From the monuments the growth and use of the vine in Egypt, which had been denied by former opponents of the Bible, have been abundantly proved. From the same source we also learn that bakery and confectionery were carried to great perfection in Egypt, so that we can understand such an office as a royal chief baker. Even the bearing of the baskets furnishes a characteristic trait: as in Egypt men carried loads on their heads, and women on their shoulders. The event proved the correctness of Joseph's interpretation. On Pharaoh's birthday-feast, three days after their dreams, the chief butler was restored to his office, but the chief baker was executed. When interpreting his dream, Joseph had requested that, on the chief butler's restoration, he, who had himself suffered from a wrongful charge, should think on him, who, at first "stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews," had so long been unjustly kept in apparently hopeless confinement. This wording of Joseph's petition seems to indicate that, at most, he only hoped to obtain liberty; and that probably he intended to return to his father's house. So ignorant was he as yet of God's further designs with him! But what was a poor Hebrew slave in prison to a proud Egyptian court official? It is only like human nature that, in the day of his prosperity, "the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him!"

Two other years now passed in prison - probably more dreary and, humanly speaking, more hopeless than those which had preceded. At length deliverance came, suddenly and unexpectedly. This time it was Pharaoh who dreamed successively two dreams. In the first, seven fat kine were feeding among the rich "marsh-grass" on the banks "of the Nile." But presently up came from "the river" seven lean kine, which devoured the well-favored, without, however, fattening by them. The second dream showed one stalk of corn with seven ears, "full and good," when up sprang beside it another stalk, also with seven ears, but "blasted with the east wind;" "and the thin ears devoured the seven good ears." So vivid had been the dream that it seemed to Pharaoh like reality - "and Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream." Only a dream! and yet the impression of its reality still haunted him, so that he sent for "the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof" to interpret his dreams. But these sages were unable to suggest any explanation satisfactory to the mind of Pharaoh; for we can scarcely believe that they did not attempt some interpretation. In this perplexity, his memory quickened by Oriental terror at his master's disappointment, the chief of the cup-bearers suddenly remembered his own and the chief

baker’s dreams just two years before, and Joseph’s interpretation of them. The event becomes all the more striking and also natural if we may take the date literally as "at the end of two full years," or on the third anniversary of that birthday of Pharaoh.

Before proceeding, we notice some of the particulars which give the narrative its vivid coloring, and at the same time wonderfully illustrate its historical truthfulness. And, first of all, we again mark the distinctly Egyptian character of all. The "river" is "the Nile," the sacred stream of Egypt, on which its fertility depended - and Pharaoh stands on its banks. Then the term which we have rendered "marsh-grass," or "reed-grass," is certainly an Egyptian word for which there is no Hebrew equivalent, because that to which it applied was peculiar to the banks of the Nile.

Next, the whole complexion of the dreams is Egyptian, as we shall presently show. Moreover, it is remarkable how closely recent independent inquiries have confirmed the scriptural expressions about "the magicians" and "the wise men" of Egypt. It has been always known that there was a special priestly caste in Egypt, to whom not only the religion but the science of the country was entrusted. But of late we have learned a great deal more than this. We know not only that magic formed part and parcel of the religion of Egypt, but we have actually restored to us their ancient magical Ritual itself! We know their incantations and their amulets, with a special reference to the dead; their belief in lucky and unlucky days and events, and even in the so-called "evil eye." But what is most to our present purpose, we know that the care of the magical books was entrusted to two classes of learned men, whose titles exactly correspond to what, for want of better designation, is rendered as "magicians," or perhaps "scribes," and "wise men!" It was before this assemblage, then, of the wisest and most learned, the most experienced in "magic," and the most venerable in the priesthood, that Pharaoh vainly related his dreams. Most wise truly in this world, yet most foolish; most learned, yet most ignorant! What a contrast between the hoary lore of Egypt and the poor Hebrew slave fetched from prison: they professedly claiming, besides their real knowledge, supernatural powers; he avowedly, and at the outset, disclaiming all power on his part, and appealing to God! A grander scene than this Scripture itself does not sketch; and what an illustration of what was true then, true in the days of our Lord, true in those of St. Paul, and to the end of this dispensation: "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?" And yet when we hear the interpretation through the lips of Joseph, how simple, nay, how obvious does it appear, quite commanding Pharaoh’s implicit conviction. Clearly, the two dreams are one -the first bearing on the pastoral, the other on the agricultural life of Egypt. The dreams are about the flocks and the crops. In both cases there is first sevenfold fatness, and then sevenfold leanness, such as to swallow up the previous fatness, and yet to leave no trace of it. The second dream illustrates the first; and yet the first bears already its own interpretation. For the kine were in Egypt reverenced as symbol of Isis, the goddess of earth as the nourisher; and in the hieroglyphics the cow is taken to mean earth, agriculture, and nourishment. And then these kine were feeding by the banks of that Nile, on whose inundations it solely depended whether the year was to be one of fruitfulness or of famine. Equally Egyptian is the description of the stalk with many ears, which is just one of the kinds of wheat still grown in Egypt. But, we repeat it, obvious as all this now seems to us, the wise men of Egypt stood speechless before their monarch! And what a testimony, we again say, for God, when Joseph is "brought hastily out of the dungeon!" To the challenge of Pharaoh: "I have heard of thee, to wit: Thou hearest a dream to interpret it" - that is, thou only requirest to hear, in

order to interpret a dream, - he answers, simply, emphatically, but believingly: "Ah, not I" ("not to me," "it does not belong to me"), "God will answer the peace of Pharaoh;" i.e., what is for the peace of the king. Nor can we omit to notice one more illustration of the accuracy of the whole narrative, when we read that, in preparation for his appearance before Pharaoh, Joseph "shaved himself." This we know from the monuments was peculiarly Egyptian under such circumstances; whereas among the Hebrews, for example, shaving was regarded as a mark of disgrace. The interpretation, so modestly yet so decidedly given by Joseph, that the dreams pointed to seven years of unprecedented fruitfulness followed by an equal number of famine, so grievous that the previous plenty should not be known, approved itself immediately to the mind of Pharaoh and "of all his servants." With this interpretation Joseph had coupled most sagacious advice, for the source of which, in so trying a moment, we must look far higher than the ingenuity of man.(See Matthew 10:18-19) He counseled the king to exact in the years of plenty a tax of one-fifth of the produce of the land, and to have it stored under royal supervision against the seven years of famine. Viewed as an impost, this was certainly not heavy, considering that they were years of unexampled plenty; viewed as a fiscal measure, it was most beneficial as compared with what we may suppose to have been previously a mere arbitrary system of taxation, which in reality was tyrannical exaction; while at the same time it would preserve the people from absolute destruction. Lastly, regarded in the light of a higher arrangement, it is very remarkable that this proportion of giving, on the part of Pharaoh’s subjects, afterwards became the basis of that demanded from Israel by Jehovah, their heavenly King. We can scarcely wonder that Pharaoh should have at once appointed such a council or to superintend the arrangements he had proposed. In point of fact he naturalized him, made him his grand vizier, and publicly proclaimed him "ruler over all the land." Once more every trait in the description is purely Egyptian. Pharaoh gives him his signet, which "was of so much importance with the ancient Egyptian kings, that their names were always enclosed in an oval which represented an elongated signet." He arrays him "in vestures of byssus," the noble and also the priestly dress; he puts the chain, or "the collar of gold" "about his neck," which was always the mode of investiture of high Egyptian officials; he makes him ride "in the second chariot which he had," and he has it proclaimed before him: "Avrech," that is, "fall down," "bend the knee," or "do obeisance." To complete all, on his naturalization Joseph’s name is changed to Zaphnath-paaneah, which most probably means "the supporter of life," or else "the food of the living," although others have rendered it "the savior of the world," and the Rabbis, but without sufficient reason, "the revealer of secrets." Finally, in order to give him a position among the highest nobles of the land, Pharaoh "gave him to wife Asenath" (probably "she who is of Neith," the Egyptian goddess of wisdom), "the daughter of Poti-pherah ("dedicated to the sun"), priest of On," that is, the chief priest of the ancient ecclesiastical, literary, and probably also political capital of the land, "the City of the Sun." This is the more noteworthy, as the chief of the priesthood was generally chosen from among the nearest relatives of Pharaoh. Yet in all this story there is really nothing extraordinary. As Egypt depends for its produce entirely on the waters of the Nile, the country has at all times been exposed to terrible famines; and one which lasted for exactly seven years is recorded in A.D. 1064-1071, the horrors of which show us the wisdom of Joseph’s precautionary measures. Again, so far as the sudden elevation of Joseph is concerned, Eastern history contains many such instances, and indeed, a Greek historian tells us of an Egyptian king who made the son of a mason his own son-in-law, because he judged him the cleverest man in the land. What is remarkable is the marvelous Divine appointment in all this, and

the equally marvelous Divine choice of means to bring it about.

Joseph was exactly thirty years old on his elevation, the same age, we note, on which our blessed Lord entered on His ministry as "the Savior of the world," "the Supporter of life," and "the Revealer of secrets." The history of Joseph's administration may be traced in a few sentences. During the seven years of plenty, "he gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering," a notice which remarkably agrees with "the representations of the monuments, which show that the contents of the granaries were accurately noted by scribes when they were filled." Then, during the years of famine, he first sold corn to the people for money. When all their money was exhausted, they proposed of their own accord to part with their cattle to Pharaoh, and lastly with their land. In the latter case exception was made in favor of the priestly caste, who derived their support directly from Pharaoh. Thus Pharaoh became absolute possessor of all the money, all the cattle, and all the land of Egypt, and that at the people's own request. This advantage would be the greater, if there had been any tendency to dissatisfaction against the reigning house as an alien race. Nor did Joseph abuse the power thus acquired. On the contrary, by a spontaneous act of royal generosity he restored the land to the people on condition of their henceforth paying one-fifth of the produce in lieu of all other taxation. Besides the considerations already stated in favor of such a measure, it must be borne in mind that in Egypt, where all produce depends on the waters of the Nile, a system of canals and irrigation, necessarily kept up at the expense of the State, would be a public necessity. But the statement of Scripture, which excepts from this measure of public taxation "the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's," remarkably tallies with the account of secular historians.

Two things here stand out in the history of Joseph. The same gracious Hand of the Lord, which, during his humiliation, had kept him from sin, disbelief, and despair, now preserved him in his exaltation from pride, and from lapsing into heathenism, to which his close connection with the chief priest of Egypt might easily have led him. More than that, he considered himself "a stranger and a pilgrim" in Egypt. His heart was in his father's home, with his father's God, and on his father's promises. Of both these facts there is abundant evidence. His Egyptian wife bore him two sons "before the years of famine came." He gave to both of them Hebrew, not Egyptian names. By the first, Manasseh, or "he that maketh forget," he wished to own the goodness of God, who had made him forget his past sorrow and toil. By the second, Ephraim, or "double fruitfulness," he distinctly recognized that, although Egypt was the land in which God had caused him "to be fruitful," it was still, and must ever be, not the land of his joy but that of his "affliction!" If it be asked why, in his prosperity, Joseph had not informed his father of his life and success, we answer, that in such a history safety lay in quiet waiting upon God. If Joseph had learned the great lesson of his life, it was this, that all in the past had been of God. Nor would He now interfere with further guidance on His part. The Lord would show the way, and lead to the end. But as for him, he believed, and therefore made no haste. Thus would God be glorified, and thus also would Joseph be kept in perfect peace, because he trusted in Him.

03.01.21. Volume 1, Chapter 21

CHAPTER 21 The Sons of Jacob arrive in Egypt to Buy Corn - Joseph Recognizes his Brothers - Imprisonment of Simeon - The Sons of Jacob come a second time, bringing Benjamin with them - Joseph tries his Brethren - He makes himself known to them - Jacob and his family prepare to descend into Egypt (Genesis 42:1-38; Genesis 43:1-34; Genesis 44:1-34; Genesis 45:1-28)

WE are now approaching a decisive period in the history of the house of Israel. Yet once again everything seems to happen quite naturally, while in reality everything is supernatural. The same causes which led to a diminution of rain in the Abyssinian mountains, and with it of the waters of the Nile, brought drought and famine to Palestine. It is quite in character that, in such straits, the wild, lawless sons of Jacob should have stood helplessly despondent, while the energies of their father were correspondingly roused. "Why do ye look one upon another? . . . I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence." The ten sons of Jacob now departed on this errand. But Benjamin, who had taken the place of Joseph in his father's heart, was not sent with them, perhaps from real fear of "mischief" by the way, possibly because his father did not quite trust the honest intentions of his sons. The next scene presents to us the Hebrew strangers among a motley crowd of natives and foreigners, who had come for corn; while Joseph, in all the state of the highest Egyptian official, superintends the sale. In true Eastern fashion the sons of Jacob make lowest obeisance before "the governor over the land." Of course they could not have recognized in him, who looked, dressed, and spoke as an Egyptian noble, the lad who, more than twenty years before, had, in "the anguish of his soul," "besought" them not to sell him into slavery. The same transformation had not taken place in them, and Joseph at once knew the well-remembered features of his brethren. But what a change in their relative positions! As he saw them bending lowly before him, his former dreams came vividly back to him. Surely, one even much less devout than Joseph would, in that moment, have felt that a Divine Hand had guided the past for a Divine purpose. Personal resentment or pique could not have entered into his mind at such a time. If, therefore, as some have thought, severity towards his brethren partially determined his conduct, this must have been quite a subordinate motive. At any rate, it is impossible to suppose that he cherished any longer feelings of anger, when shortly afterwards, on their expression of deep penitence, "he turned himself about from them and wept." But we prefer regarding Joseph's conduct as consistent throughout. The appearance of his brothers before him seemed to imply that God had not meant to separate him from his family, nor yet that he should return to them, but that they should come to him, and that he had been sent before to keep them alive. But for such a re-union of the family it was manifestly needful, that their hearts and minds should have undergone an entire change from that unscrupulous envy which had prompted them to sell him into slavery. This must be ascertained before he made himself known to them. Moreover, its reality must be tested by the severest trial to which their altered feelings could be subjected.

Thus viewing it, we can understand the whole conduct of Joseph. Of course, his first object would be to separate the sons of Jacob from the crowd of other purchasers, so as to deal specially with

them, without, however, awakening their suspicions; his next to ascertain the state of matters at home. Then he would make them taste undeserved sorrow by the exercise of an arbitrary power, against which they would be helpless - even as Joseph had been in their hands. Thus they might see their past sin in their present sorrow. All these objects were attained by one and the same means. Joseph charged them with being spies, who, on pretense of buying corn, had come to find out the defenseless portions of the land. The accusation was not unreasonable in the then state of Egypt, nor uncommon in Eastern countries. It was not only that this afforded a pretext for dealing separately with them, but their answer to the charge would inform Joseph about the circumstances of his family. For, naturally, they would not only protest their innocence, but show the inherent improbability of such an imputation. Here no argument could be more telling than that they were "all one man's sons," since no one would risk the lives of all his children in so dangerous a business. But this was not enough for Joseph. By reiterating the charge, he led them to enter into further details, from which he learned that both his father and Benjamin were alive. Still their reference to himself as one "who is not," seemed to imply persistence in their former deceit, and must have strengthened his doubts as to their state of mind. But now experience of violence would show them not only their past guilt, but that, however God might seem to delay, He was the avenger of all wrong. More than that, if Benjamin were placed relatively to them in the same circumstances of favoritism as Joseph had been; and if, instead of envying and hating him, they were prepared, even when exposed through him to shame and danger, not only to stand by him, but to suffer in his stead, then they had repented in the truest sense, and their state of mind was the opposite of what it had been twenty years ago. Proceeding on this plan, Joseph first imprisoned all the ten, proposing to release one of their number to fetch Benjamin, in order to test, as he said, the truthfulness of their statements. This excessive harshness was probably intended to strike terror into their hearts; and, at the end of three days, he so far relented as to retain only one of their number as a hostage; at the same time encouraging them both by the statement that, in so doing, his motive was "fear of God," and by the assurance that, once satisfied of their innocence, he cherished no evil design against them. The reference to "fear of God" on the part of an Egyptian, and this apparent shrinking from needless rigor, must have cut them to the heart, as it brought out in contrast their own implacable conduct towards Joseph. Simeon was chosen to remain behind as hostage, because he was the next oldest to Reuben, who was not detained, since he had endeavored to save the life of Joseph. This also must have contributed to remind them of their former wrong; and, for the first time, they avow to one another their bitter guilt in the past, and how God was now visiting it. So poignant were their feelings that, in the presence of Joseph, they spoke of it, in their own Hebrew, ignorant that Joseph, who had conversed with them through an interpreter, understood their words. Joseph was obliged hastily to withdraw, so as not to betray himself; but he wavered not in his purpose. Simeon was bound before their eyes, and the rest were dismissed; but each with ample provender for the journey, besides the corn they had bought, and with the purchase-money secretly restored to them. The terror with which the unexpected turn of events had inspired them was deepened when, at their first night's quarters, one of them discovered the money in his sack. But, as before, the impression was wholesome. They traced in this also the avenging hand of God: "What is this that God hath done unto us?" The narrative which, on their return, they had to tell their father was sufficiently sad. But the discovery they now made, that the money which they had paid had been secretly put back into each man's sack, seemed to imply some deep design of mischief, and filled Jacob and his sons with fresh

fears. If the condition of their again appearing before the ruler of Egypt was, that they must bring Benjamin with them, then he, who had already lost two sons, would refuse to expose to such a risk his darling, the last remaining pledge of his Rachel. Reuben, indeed, volunteered the strange guarantee of his own two sons: "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee." But this language was little calculated to reassure the heart of Jacob. For a time it seemed as if Jacob's former sorrow was to be increased by the loss of Simeon, and as if Joseph and his family were never again to meet.

If we ask ourselves why Joseph should have risked this, or added to his father's sorrow, we answer, to the first question, that, since Joseph now knew the circumstances of his family, and had Simeon beside him, he could at any time, on need for it appearing, have communicated with his father. As to the second difficulty, we must all feel that this grief and care could not be spared to his father if his brothers were to be tried, proved, and prepared for their mission. And did it not seem as if Joseph had rightly understood the will of God in this matter, since the heart of his brethren had been at once touched to own their past sin and the Hand of God? Could he not then still further commit himself to God in well-doing, and trust Him? Nay, could he not also trust Jacob's faith to bear up under this trial? At most it would be short, and how blessed to all the fruits expected from it! Once more the event proved the correctness of his views. As the stock of provisions, which the sons of Jacob had brought, became nearly exhausted, a fresh application to the royal granaries of Egypt was absolutely necessary. This time it was Judah who offered himself in surety for Benjamin. His language was so calm, affectionate, and yet firm, as to inspire Jacob with what confidence can be derived from the earnest, good purpose of a true man. But he had higher consolation - that of prayer and faith: "God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin." Yet, even if God had otherwise appointed, - if He saw fit to take from him his children, his faith would rise to this also: "And I, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved!" - good is the will of the Lord, and he would bow before it.

It is touching, as it were, to watch the trembling hands of the old man as he makes feeble attempts to ward off the wrath of the dreaded Egyptian. It was a famine-year, and, naturally, there would be scarcity of the luxuries which were usually exported from the East to Egypt. Let them, then, take a present of such dainties to the Egyptian - "a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds." As for the money which had been put back into their sacks, it might have been an oversight. Let them take it again with them, along with the price of what corn they were now to purchase. And so let them go forth in the name of the God of Israel - Benjamin, and all the rest. He would remain behind alone, as at the fords of Jabbok, - no, not alone; but in faith and patience awaiting the issue. Presently the ten brothers, with more anxious hearts than Joseph ever had on his way to Egypt or in the slave-market, are once more in the dreaded presence of the Egyptian. Joseph saw the new-comers, and with them what he judged to be his youngest brother, whom he had left in his home a child only a year old. Manifestly, it was neither the time nor the place to trust himself to converse with them. So he gave his steward orders to take them to his house, and that they should dine with him at noon. Joseph had spoken in Egyptian, which seems to have been unknown to the sons of Jacob. When they saw themselves brought to the house of Joseph, it immediately occurred to them that they were to be charged with theft of the former purchase-money. But the steward with kindly words allayed the fears which made them hesitate before entering "at the door of the house." The sight of Simeon, who was at once restored to them,

must have increased their confidence. Presently preparations were made for the banquet. It was a deeply trying scene for Joseph which ensued when he met his brethren on his return home. Little could they imagine what thoughts passed through his mind, as in true Oriental fashion they laid out the humble presents his father had sent, and lowly "bowed themselves to him to the earth." His language ill concealed his feelings. Again and again he inquired for his father, and as they replied: "Thy servant our father is in good health; he is yet alive," they again "bowed clown their heads, and made obeisance." But when he fastened his eyes on Benjamin, his own mother's son, and had faltered it out, so unlike an Egyptian: "God be gracious unto thee, my son," he was obliged hastily to withdraw, "for his bowels did yearn upon his brother." Twenty-two years had passed since he had been parted from his brother, and Benjamin now stood before him - a youth little older than he when his bitter bondage in prison had commenced. Would they who had once sacrificed him on account of jealousy, be ready again to abandon his brother for the sake of selfishness? At the banquet a fresh surprise awaited the sons of Jacob. Of course, after the Egyptian fashion, Joseph ate by himself, and the Egyptians by themselves; he as a member of the highest caste, and they from religious scruples. We know from secular history that the Egyptians abstained from certain kinds of meat, and would not eat with the knives and forks, nor from the cooking utensils which had been used by those of any other nation. But it must have seemed unaccountable, that at the banquet their places were arranged exactly according to their ages. How could the Egyptian have known them, and what mysterious circumstances surrounded them in his presence? Yet another thing must have struck them. In their father's house the youngest of their number, the son of Rachel, had been uniformly preferred before them all. And now it was the same in the Egyptian palace! If the Egyptian ruler "sent messes unto them from before him," "Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs." Why this mark of unusual distinction, as it was regarded in ancient times?

However, the banquet itself passed pleasantly, and early next morning the eleven, gladsome and thankful, were on their way back to Canaan. But the steward of Joseph's house had received special instructions. As before, each "bundle of money" had been restored in every man's sack. But, besides, he had also placed in that of Benjamin, Joseph's own cup, or rather his large silver bowl. The brothers had not traveled far when the steward hastily overtook them. Fixing upon the eleven the stain of base ingratitude, he charged them with stealing the "bowl" out of which "his lord drank, and whereby, indeed, he divined." Of course this statement of the steward by no means proves that Joseph actually did divine by means of this "cup." On the contrary, such could not have been the case, since it was of course impossible to divine, out of a cup that had been stolen from him, that it was stolen (Genesis 44:15)! But, no doubt, there was in Joseph's house, as in that of all the great sages of Egypt, the silver bowl, commonly employed for divination, in which unknown events were supposed to appear in reflection from the water, sometimes after gems or gold (with or without magical inscriptions and incantations) had been cast into the cup, to increase the sheen of the broken rays of light. Similar practices still prevail in Egypt. The charge of treachery and of theft so took the brothers by surprise, that, in their conscious innocence, they offered to surrender the life of the guilty and the liberty of all the others, if the cup were found with any of them. But the steward had been otherwise instructed. He was to isolate Benjamin from the rest. With feigned generosity he now refused their proposal, and declared his purpose only to retain the guilty as bondsman. The search was made, and the cup found in the sack of Benjamin. Now the first great trial of their feelings ensued. They were all free to go home to their own wives

and children; Benjamin alone was to be a bondsman. The cup had been found in his sack! Granting that, despite appearances, they knew him to be innocent, why should they stand by him? At home he had been set before them as the favorite; nay, for fear of endangering him, their father had well nigh allowed them all, their wives and their children, to perish from hunger. In Egypt, also, he, the youngest, the son of another mother, had been markedly preferred before them. They had formerly got rid of one favorite, why hesitate now, when Providence itself seemed to rid them of another? What need, nay, what business had they to identify themselves with him? Was it not enough that he had been put before them everywhere; must they now destroy their whole family, and suffer their little ones to perish for the sake of one who, to say the best, seemed fated to involve them in misery and ruin? So they might have reasoned. But so they did not reason, nor, indeed, did they reason at all; for in all matters of duty reasoning is ever dangerous, and only absolute, immediate obedience to what is right, is safe. "They rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city." The first trial was past; the second and final one was to commence. In the presence of Joseph, "they fell before him on the ground" in mute grief. Judah is now the spokesman, and right well does his advocacy prefigure the pleading of his great Descendant. Not a word does he utter in extenuation or in plea. This one thought only is uppermost in his heart: "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." Not guilty indeed on this charge, but guilty before God, who hath avenged their iniquity! How, then, can they leave Benjamin in his undeserved bondage, when not he, but they have really been the cause of this sorrow? But Joseph, as formerly his steward, rejects the proposal as unjust, and offers their liberty to all except Benjamin. This gives to Judah an opening for pleading, in language so tender, graphic, and earnest, that few have been able to resist its pathos. He recounts the simple story, how the great Egyptian lord had at the first inquired whether they had father or brother, and how they had told him of their father at home, and of the child of his old age who was with him, the last remaining pledge of his wedded love, to whom the heart of the old man clave. Then the vizier had asked the youth to be brought, and they had pleaded that his going would cost the life of his father. But the famine had compelled them to ask of their father even this sacrifice. And the old man had reminded them of what they knew only too well: how his wife, the only one whom even now he really considered such, had borne him two sons; one of those had gone out from him, just as it was now proposed Benjamin should go, and he had not seen him since, and he had said: "Surely he is torn in pieces." And now, if they took this one also from him, and mischief befell him, his gray hairs would go down with sorrow to the grave. What the old man apprehended had come to pass, no matter how. But could he, Judah, witness the grief and the death of his old father? Was he not specially to blame, since upon his guarantee he had consented to part with him? Nay, he had been his surety; and he now asked neither pardon nor favor, only this he entreated, to be allowed to remain as bondsman instead of the lad, and to let him go back with his brethren. He besought slavery as a boon, for how could he "see the evil" that should "come on his father?"

Truly has Luther said: "What would I not give to be able to pray before the Lord as Judah here interceded for Benjamin, for it is a perfect model of prayer, nay, of the strong feeling which must underlie all prayer." And, blessed be God, One has so interceded for us, Who has given Himself as our surety, and become a bondsman for us. (Psalms 40:6-7; Php 2:6-8) His advocacy has been heard; His substitution accepted; and His intercession for us is ever continued, and ever prevails. The Lord Jesus Christ is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David," and "hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." The last trial was now past. Indeed, it had

been impossible to continue it longer, for Joseph "could not refrain himself." All strangers were hastily removed, and Joseph, with all tenderness of affection and delicacy of feeling, made himself known to them as the brother whom they had sold into Egypt, but whom in reality God had sent before for the purpose not only of saving their lives, but of preserving their posterity, that so His counsel of mercy with the world might be accomplished. Then let them not be grieved, for God had overruled it all. Three times must he speak it, and prove his forgiveness by the most loving marks, before they could credit his words or derive comfort from them. But one object Joseph had now in view: to bring his father and all his family to be near him, that he might nourish them; for as yet only two out of the seven years of famine had passed. And in this purpose he was singularly helped by Divine Providence. Tidings of what had taken place reached Pharaoh, and the generous conduct of his vizier pleased the king. Of his own accord he also proposed what Joseph had intended; accompanying his invitation with a royal promise of ample provision, and sending "wagons" for the transport of the women and children. On his part, Joseph added rich presents for his father. When the eleven returned, first alone, to their father, and told him all, "the heart of Jacob fainted, for he believed them not." Presently, as he saw the Egyptian "wagons" arriving, a great reaction took place. "The spirit of Jacob their father revived." The past, with its sorrows and its sin, seemed blotted out from his memory. Once more it was not, as before, Jacob who spoke, but "Israel" (the prince with God and man) who said, "It is enough, Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."

03.01.22. Volume 1, Chapter 22

CHAPTER 22

Departure of Jacob and his family into Egypt - Jacob’s Interview with Pharaoh - His last Illness and command to be buried in Canaan - Adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh among the Sons of Israel (Genesis 46:1-34; Genesis 47:1-31; Genesis 48:1-22) A DIFFICULT path lay before the patriarch Jacob. As yet he had had no direct intimation from God that he should remove with his family to Egypt. But, on the other hand, God’s dealings with Joseph, the invitation of Pharaoh, and the famine in Canaan served to point it out as the period of which God had spoken to Abram (Genesis 15:13), when his seed should leave Canaan, and become strangers and enslaved in a land that was not theirs. He knew that two things must take place before the return of Israel to, and their final possession of the promised land. "The iniquity of the Amorites" must be "full," and the family of Israel must have grown into a nation. The former was still future, and as for the latter it is easy to see that any further stay in Canaan would have been hindering and not helpful to it. For at the time Canaan was divided among numerous independent tribes, with one or more of whom the sons of Jacob, as they increased in numbers, must either have coalesced or entered into warfare. Still more dangerous to their religion would have been their continuance among and intercourse with the Canaanites. It was quite otherwise in Egypt. Thither they went professedly as sojourners, and for a temporary purpose. The circumstance that they were shepherds, and as such "an abomination to the Egyptians," kept them separate, alike politically, religiously, and socially, from the rest of the people, and, indeed, caused them to be placed in a district by themselves. Yet "the land of Goshen" was the best for the increase of their substance in flocks and herds. These may be designated as the outward reasons for their removal into Egypt at that time; the higher and spiritual bearings of the event have already been stated. The assurance which Jacob needed for his comfort was granted him, as he reached Beersheba, the southern boundary of the promised land. There the patriarch offered "sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac," and there the faithful Lord spake to him "in the visions of the night." His words gave Jacob this fourfold assurance, that God was the covenant-God, and that Jacob need not fear to go down into Egypt; that God would there make of him a great nation, in other words, that the transformation from the family to the nation should take place in Egypt; that God would go down with him; and, lastly, that He would surely bring him up again. And each of these four assurances was introduced by an emphatic I, to indicate the personal and direct source of all these blessings. Thus strengthened, Israel pursued his journey in confidence of spirit. As so often in Scripture, a very important lesson is conveyed to us in this connection, though in a manner to escape superficial observation. It has been repeatedly remarked, that the Bible does not furnish the history of individuals as such, but gives that of the kingdom of God. This appears most clearly in the list, which is introduced at this stage, of "the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt." Manifestly, it is not to be taken as literally the catalogue of those who companied with Jacob on his journey to Egypt. For one thing, some of them, such as Joseph himself, and his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, and their children, if at the time they had any, were already in Egypt. Then, some of the grandsons and great-grandsons of

Jacob, mentioned in this catalogue, must have been born after the sons of Jacob came into Egypt; while, on the other hand, there must have been others who are not mentioned, since it is impossible to imagine that all the families of those whose further descendants are not named became extinct. But if the principle is kept in view, that only what concerns the kingdom of God is recorded, then all becomes plain. We now regard this not as a biographical list, but as a genealogical table, drawn up with a special object in view. That object is, to enumerate first the ancestors of the tribes of Israel, and then such of their descendants as founded the separate and distinct "families" in each tribe. Accordingly this genealogical table contains, besides the names of such descendants of Jacob as literally went with him into Egypt, also those of such as became "heads of houses." This appears quite clearly from a comparison with Numbers 26:1-65, where the "families" of Israel are specially enumerated. Among their founders not one single name appears that had not been previously given in the earlier table. Certain names, however, have dropped out in the second table, viz., that of a son of Simeon, and of one of Asher, and those of three sons of Benjamin - no doubt, either because they became extinct, or else because they were removed from their places through some judgment. Nor does it seem strange to find the names of the future heads of families beforehand enumerated in this catalogue. Do we not similarly read, that in Abraham yet unborn generations of Levi had given tithes to Melchizedek? Indeed, Scripture constantly expresses itself on this wise. Thus we read that God said to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob: "I will give thee the land," when, as yet, they were but strangers and pilgrims in it; and, many centuries before the event took place: "In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed;" while to Jacob himself God spake: "I will bring thee up again," from Egypt. For with God nothing is, in the real sense, future. "He seeth the end from the beginning." But when the sacred text sums up the genealogical table with the statement that "all the souls" were "threescore and ten," we think of the significance of the number, seven times ten, seven being the sacred covenant number, and ten that of perfectness. On his journey Jacob sent Judah in advance, to inform Joseph of his arrival. He hastened to receive his father in the border-land of Goshen. Their meeting, after so long a parting, was most affectionate and touching. The Hebrew expression, rendered in our Authorized Version: "Joseph . . . presented himself unto him," implies extraordinary splendor of appearance. But when in the presence of his Hebrew father, the great Egyptian lord was once more only the lad Joseph. He "fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while." It now became the duty of Joseph to inform Pharaoh of the actual arrival of his family in Egypt, so as to obtain at the same time a fresh welcome, and a temporary concession of the land of Goshen for their settlement. For this purpose Joseph went first alone to the king, and next introduced five of his brothers. Both he and they laid stress on the fact that by occupation the family were shepherds. This would secure their stay in Goshen, as the district was most suitable for pasturage, and at the same time most remote and most isolated from the great bulk of the people. For the Egyptian monuments show that shepherds were considered as the lowest class or caste, probably because their nomadic habits were so opposed to the settled civilization of the country. Another point which the sons of Jacob were specially to bring out before Pharaoh was this, that they had come only "to sojourn," not to settle in the land, so that, as they had arrived at the first upon the express invitation of the king, they might be at liberty freely to depart when the time for it came. It is of importance to notice this in connection with the wrong afterwards done in the forcible detention of their descendants. It happened as Joseph had expected. Pharaoh assigned to them a dwelling-place "in the best of the land," that is, in the portion most suitable, in fact, in almost the

only district suitable for pasturage - in the borderland between Canaan and Egypt, the land of Goshen, or of Rameses, as it is sometimes called from the city of that name. A careful and able scholar has thus expressed himself on the subject: "The land of Goshen lay between the eastern part of the ancient Delta, and the western border of Palestine; it was scarcely a part of Egypt Proper, was inhabited by other foreigners besides the Israelites, and was in its geographical names rather Semitic than Egyptian; it was a pasture-land, especially suited to a shepherd people, and sufficient for the Israelites, who there prospered, and were separate from the main body of the Egyptians."

Before settling him in Goshen, Joseph presented his father to Pharaoh, who received him with the courtesy of an Eastern monarch, and the respect which the sight of age, far exceeding the ordinary term of life in Egypt, would ensure. In acknowledgment of Pharaoh’s kindness, "Jacob blessed" him; and in answer to the question about his age, compared "the days of the years" of his own "pilgrimage" with those of his fathers. Abraham had lived one hundred and seventy-five, Isaac one hundred and eighty years; while Jacob was at the age of only one hundred and thirty, apprehending the approach of death. Compared to theirs, his days had not only been "few" but "evil," full of trial, sorrow, and care, ever since his flight from his father’s house. Yet, however differing in outward events, the essential character of their lives was the same. His and theirs were equally a "pilgrimage." For,

"these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country, ... a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city."(Hebrews 11:13-14, Hebrews 11:16) And in such wise also must each of our lives, whatever its outward history, be to us only a "pilgrimage." But seventeen more years were granted to Israel in his quiet retirement of Goshen. Feeling that now the time of his departure had really come, he sent for Joseph. It was not to express weak regrets, nor even primarily to take such loving farewell as, under such circumstances, might be proper and fitting. Israel, as he is here again characteristically named, was preparing for another great act of faith. On his dying bed, he still held fast by the promises of God concerning the possession of Canaan, and all that was connected with it; and he exacted an oath from his son to bury him with his fathers, in the cave of Machpelah. Having obtained this solemn promise, it is said, "he bowed himself in worship over the head of the bed."

One thing still remained to be done. As yet the sons of Joseph had not been formally adopted into the family of Israel. But the two oldest of them, Manasseh and Ephraim, were to become heads of separate tribes; for Joseph was to have this right of the firstborn - two portions in Israel. Therefore, when, shortly after his interview with his father, Joseph was informed that the last fatal sickness had come upon him, he hastened to bring his two sons that they might be installed as co-heirs with the other sons of Jacob. In this Joseph signally showed his faith. Instead of seeking for his sons the honors which the court of Egypt offered them, he distinctly renounced all, to share the lot of the despised shepherd race. For the first time we here find the blessing accompanied with the laying on of hands. But Jacob’s eyes were dim, and when Joseph had brought his two sons close to his father, placing Manasseh, as the eldest, to his father’s right hand, and Ephraim, as the younger, to his left, he ascribed it to failure of sight when Israel crossed his hands, laying the right on Ephraim

and the left on Manasseh. But Jacob had been "guiding his hands wittingly." In fact, he had done it prophetically. The event proved the truth of this prophecy. At the time of Moses, indeed, Manasseh still counted twenty thousand men more than Ephraim.(Numbers 26:34, Numbers 26:37) But this comparative relationship was reversed in the days of the Judges; and ever afterwards Ephraim continued, next to Judah, the most powerful tribe in Israel. What, however, chiefly impresses us is, to see how intensely all the feelings, remembrances, and views of the dying man are intertwined with his religion. No longer does he cherish any hard thoughts about his "evil" days in the past. His memory of former days is now only of the gentleness and the goodness of God, Who had led him all through his pilgrimage. His feelings come out most fully in the words of blessing which he spake: "The God, before Whose face walked my fathers, Abraham and Isaac; the God Who pastured me from my existence on unto this day; THE ANGEL Who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, be named upon them, and let them increase to a multitude in the midst of the land." In this threefold reference to God as the covenant-God, the Shepherd and the Angel-Redeemer, we have a distinct anticipation of the truth concerning the blessed Trinity. The blessing having been spoken, "Jacob gave to his son Joseph," as a special gift, "that parcel of ground" by Sychar (John 4:5), the ancient Shechem, which he had originally bought of "the children of Heth;" (Genesis 33:19) but which, as he prophesied, he - that is, his descendants - would have to take again with sword and bow out of the hand of the Amorite. In this possession of Joseph, many centuries later, rested the Redeemer-Shepherd, when, even in His weariness, He called and pastured His flock. (John 4:1-54) But as for Jacob, the last assurance which he gave to his son was emphatically to repeat this confession of his faith: "Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers." For men pass away, but the word and purpose of the Lord abide for ever!

03.01.23. Volume 1, Chapter 23

CHAPTER 23 The Last Blessing of Jacob - Death of Jacob - Death of Joseph

(Genesis 49:1) THE last scene had now come, and Jacob gathered around his dying couch his twelve sons. The words which he spake to them were of mingled blessing and prediction. Before him, in prophetic vision, unrolled, as it were, pictures of the tribes of which his sons were to be the ancestors; and what he saw he sketched in grand outlines. It is utterly impossible to regard these prophetic pictures as exact representations of any one definite period or even event in the history of Israel. They are sketches of the tribes in their grand characteristics, rather than predictions, either of special events, or of the history of Israel as a whole. And to them applies especially the description which one has given of prophetic visions generally, that "they are pictures drawn without perspective," - that is, such that you cannot discern the distance from you of the various objects. Two other general remarks may be helpful to the reader. It will be observed that, generally, in the "blessing" spoken, the name of the ancestor seems to unfold the future character and history of the tribe. Secondly, as against all cavilers, it may be said deliberately, that these words of blessing must have been spoken by Jacob himself. When we attempt to imagine them as spoken at any other period in the history of Israel, we find ourselves surrounded by insuperable difficulties. For these words can only apply to the tribes as Jacob viewed them. They could not have been written at any other period, since in that case every later writer would have said something quite inapplicable to one or other of the tribes, so that he could not have used this precise language concerning them all. With these brief prefatory remarks we address ourselves to the words of "blessing:"

Reuben, my firstborn thou, My might and the firstling of my strength, Pre-eminence of dignity and pre-eminence of power -

Such should have been the position of Reuben, as the firstborn, had it not been for the "upboiling" of his passions and his consequent sin. Hence Jacob continues:

Upboiling like water, Thou shalt not have the pre-eminence, Because thou wentest up thy father’s bed, Then defiledst thou it - He went up my couch! The sons next in age to Reuben were Simeon and Levi. Their wanton cruelty at Shechem, from which Jacob recoiled with horror even on his death-bed, had made them "brethren," or companions in evil. As they had united for evil, so God would scatter them in Israel, so that they should not form independent and compact tribes. In point of fact, we know that even at the second numbering of Israel (Numbers 26:14), Simeon had sunk to be the smallest tribe. In the last blessing of Moses (Deuteronomy 33:1-29), no mention at all is made of Simeon. Nor does this tribe seem to have obtained any well-defined portion in the land, but only to have held certain cities within the possession of Judah. (Joshua 19:1-9) Lastly, we know that such of the families of Simeon as largely increased and became powerful, afterwards left the Holy Land, and settled outside its boundaries. (1 Chronicles 4:38-43) The tribe of Levi also received not any possession in Israel; only that their scattering was changed from a curse into a blessing by their election to the priesthood. This scattering of two tribes was the significant answer

which God in His righteous providence made to their ancestors' attempt at vindicating the honor of their race by carnal means and weapons.

Simeon and Levi are brethren;

Instruments of violence are their swords;

Into their council come not thou, oh my soul, Unto their assembly be not thou united, mine honor; For in their anger they slew men, And in their self-will they hamstrung oxen.

Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, And their wrath, for it was cruel.

I will divide them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel. The three older brothers being thus dispossessed, and Joseph receiving the twofold territorial portion, the other privileges of the birthright are solemnly transferred to Judah. He is to be the leader, "the lion." As the lion is king of the forest, so was Judah to have royal sway, through David onwards to the Son of David, the Shiloh, unto Whom, as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," all nations should render homage and obedience. Similarly, fullness of earthly riches was to distinguish the lot of Judah, these earthly blessings being themselves emblems of the spiritual riches dispensed in the portion of Judah. The whole description here is full of Messianic allusions, which were afterwards taken up in the prophecy of Balaam (Numbers 23:24; Numbers 24:9, Numbers 24:17); then applied to David (Psalms 89:20-37); and from him carried forward in prophecy, through Psalms 72:1-20, Isaiah 9:1-21; Isaiah 11:1-16, to Ezekiel 21:27, and Zechariah 9:9, till they were finally realized in Jesus Christ, "sprung out of Juda," (Hebrews 7:14) "our peace, who hath made both one," (Ephesians 2:14) and who "must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet," (1 Corinthians 15:25) "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David," Who "hath prevailed." (Revelation 5:5) In the blessing upon Judah we note, for the first time, how the prophetic significance of the name unfolds and appears:

Judah thou! Thy brethren shall praise thee!

Thy hand in the neck of thine enemies, Thy father's sons shall bow down before thee. A lion's whelp is Judah; From the prey, my son, thou art gone up:

He stoopeth down, he coucheth like a lion, And like a lioness - who shall rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh come, And to Him willing obedience of the nations!

He bindeth unto the vine his foal, And unto the choice vine his ass's colt;

He washeth his garments in wine, And in the blood of grapes his raiment;

Sparkling his eyes from wine, And white his teeth from milk. As local illustrations of this richness of the portion of Judah, the reader will remember that the best wine in Palestine grew near Hebron and Engedi (Numbers 13:23, etc.; Song of Solomon 1:14), and that some of the best pasture-land was south of Hebron, about Tekoa and Carmel. (1 Samuel 25:2; 2 Chronicles 26:10; Amos 1:1) The next blessing also connects itself with the name of Zebulun, or "dwelling," although it requires to be borne in mind, in further illustration of the fact that it was not intended as a literal prediction, that the possessions of the tribe of Zebulun, so far as we can judge from Joshua 19:10-16, never

actually touched the Mediterranean nor the Sea of Galilee, nor yet literally bordered on Zidon:

Zebulun - by the coast of seas shall he dwell, And that, by the coast of ships, And his side towards Zidon. The name of Issachar, "reward," or "hire," is also emblematical of the character of the tribe, as, in its rich portion of Lower Galilee, it preferred labor with quietude, to power and domination:

Issachar is a bony ass, Crouching between the folds.

He saw rest, that it was a boon, And the land, that it was pleasant, And he bent his shoulder to bear, And became a tributary servant. The allusion in the case of Dan, or "judgment," is again to the name. Although Dan was only the son of a bondmaid, he should not be behind his brethren, but "give judgment" to his people, that is, to Israel - the reference being possibly to such men as Samson, though also generally to the character of the tribe. There is another mysterious and most important allusion here, to which we shall immediately advert:

Dan shall give judgment to his people, As one of the tribes of Israel.

Dan shall be a serpent by the way, An adder in the path, Which biteth the heels of the horse So that backwards falleth his rider.

We shall not presume to offer an authoritative explanation of this comparison of Dan to a serpent, and to that kind of adder which, being of the color of the sand, remains unobserved till it has given its deadly bite. We only put it as a suggestion, whether this may not contain an allusion to apostasy or to the Antichrist, at the same time noting that the name of Dan is omitted from the list of the tribes in Revelation 7:5-8.

It is also significant that, immediately after the mention of these contests in connection with Dan, Jacob bursts forth in a prayer, intended, as says Calvin, not only to express his own personal faith and hope, but his confidence for his descendants. Quite the oldest Jewish commentary, or rather paraphrase, puts it this way: "My soul waiteth not for the deliverance of Gideon, the son of Joash, for it was only temporal; nor for that of Samson, for it was but transient; but for the redemption by the Messiah, the Son of David, which in Thy word Thou hast promised to send to Thy people, the children of Israel; for this, Thy salvation, my soul waiteth." For Thy salvation wait I, oh Jehovah! In reference to Gad, we have a threefold allusion to a kindred word, signifying oppression. To the prediction itself we cannot attach any definite historical fulfillment:

Gad - a press presseth upon him, But he presseth on their heel. In the case of Asher, the reference is evidently to the most fertile possession of that tribe, extending from Mount Carmel to the land of Tyre, the district richest in corn and oil (1 Kings 5:11):

Out of Asher fatness: his bread - And he yieldeth royal dainties. The allusion as to Naphtali is to the graceful agility and fleetness of the people, and also to their mental ability and quickness:

Naphtali is a hind let loose - He uttereth words of beauty. At last Jacob comes to the name of his loved son Joseph. Then it seems as if his whole heart were indeed overflowing. First, he sketches his fruitfulness, like that of a fruit-free "planted by rivers of water," (Psalms 1:3) whose boughs run over the wall (Comp. Psalms 80:8-11); then he describes his strength, as derived from God Himself; and, lastly, he pours forth richest blessings, richer far than any his ancestors had bestowed:

Son of a fruit-tree (a fruitful bough) is Joseph, Son of a fruit-tree by a well, Whose daughters (branches) spread over the wall. The archers harass him, They shoot at him, and hate him; But his bow abideth in firmness, And the arms of his hands remain supple From the Hands of the Strong One of Jacob, From thence, from the Shepherd, from the Rock of Israel, From the God of thy father - may He help thee! And from the Almighty -may He bless thee!

Blessings of heaven from above!

Blessings of the deep that lieth beneath!

Blessings of the breasts and of the womb! The blessings of thy father exceed The blessings of my ancestors Unto the bound of the everlasting hills - May they come on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who is separated among his brethren! The allusions to Benjamin will be understood by a reference to Ehud (Judges 3:15), to Judges 5:14; Judges 20:16; 1 Chronicles 8:40 1 Chronicles 12:2; 2 Chronicles 14:8; 2 Chronicles 17:17, and to the history of Saul and of Jonathan:

Benjamin - a wolf who ravins: In the morning he devoureth prey, And at even he divideth spoil! And now, having spoken these his last blessings, Jacob once more charged his sons to bury him in the cave of Machpelah. Then he gathered up his feet into the bed, laid him peacefully down, and without sigh or struggle yielded up the ghost, and was "gathered unto his people."

Such was the end of Jacob - the most pilgrim-like of the pilgrim fathers. His last wishes were obeyed to the letter. The first natural outburst of grief on the part of Joseph past, he "commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father" - either to do the work themselves or to superintend it. Forty days the process lasted, and seventy days, as was their wont, the Egyptians mourned. At the end of that period Joseph, as in duty bound, applied to Pharaoh, though not personally, since he could not appear before the king in the garb of mourning, craving permission for himself and his retinue to go up and bury his father in the land of Canaan. The funeral procession included, besides Joseph and "all his house," "his brethren, and his father’s house," also "all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt," - that is, the principal state and court officials, under a guard of both "chariots and horsemen." So influential and "very great a company" would naturally avoid, for fear of any collisions, the territory of the Philistines, through which the direct road from Egypt lay. They took the circuitous route through the desert and around the Dead Sea - significantly, the same which Israel afterwards followed on their return from Egypt - and halted on the Eastern bank of Jordan, at Goren-ha-Atad, "the buckthorn threshing-floor," or perhaps "the threshing-floor of Atad." The account of the funeral, as that of the embalming, and indeed every other allusion, is strictly in accordance with what we learn from Egyptian monuments and history. The custom of funeral processions existed in every province of Egypt, and representations of such are seen in the oldest tombs. As a German scholar remarks: "When we look at the representations upon the monuments, we can almost imagine that we actually see the funeral train of Jacob." At Goren-ha-Atad other mourning rites were performed during seven days. The attention of the inhabitants of the district was naturally attracted to this "grievous mourning of the Egyptians," and the locality henceforth bore the name of Abel Mizraim, literally "meadow of the Egyptians," but, by slightly altering the pronunciation: "mourning of the Egyptians." Here the Egyptians remained behind, and none but the sons and the household of Jacob stood around his grave at Machpelah. On their return to

Egypt an unworthy suspicion seems to have crossed the minds of Joseph's brethren. What if, now that their father was dead, Joseph were to avenge the wrong he had sustained at their hands? But they little knew his heart, or appreciated his motives. The bare idea of their cherishing such thoughts moved Joseph to tears. Even if bitter feelings had been in his heart, was he "in the place of God" to interfere with His guidance of things? Had it not clearly appeared that, whatever evil they might have thought to do him, "God meant it unto good?" With such declarations, and the assurance that he would lovingly care for them and their little ones, he appeased their fears.

Other fifty-four years did Joseph live in Egypt. He had the joy of seeing his father's blessing commence to be fulfilled. Ephraim's children of the third generation, and Manasseh's grandchildren "were brought up upon his knees." At the good old age of one hundred and ten years, as he felt death approaching, he gathered "his brethren" about him. Joseph was full of honors in Egypt; he had founded a family, than which none was more highly placed. Yet his last act was to disown Egypt, and to choose the lot of Israel - poverty, contempt, and pilgrimage: to renounce the present, in order to cleave unto the future. It was a noble act of faith, true like that of his fathers! His last words were these: "I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." And his last deed was to take a solemn oath of the children of Israel, to carry up his bones with them into the land of promise. In obedience to his wishes they embalmed his body, and laid it in one of those Egyptian coffins, generally made of sycamore wood, which resembled the shape of the human body. And there, through ages of suffering and bondage, stood the figure-like coffin of Joseph, ready to be lifted and carried thence when the sure hour of deliverance had come. Thus Joseph, being dead, yet spake to Israel, telling them that they were only temporary sojourners in Egypt, that their eyes must be turned away from Egypt unto the land of promise, and that in patience of faith they must wait for that hour when God would certainly and graciously fulfill His own promise. When at the close of this first period of the Covenant-history we look around, we feel as if now indeed "the horror of great darkness" were fast falling upon Israel, which Abraham had experienced as he was shown the future of his descendants. (Genesis 15:12) Already personal intercourse between heaven and earth had ceased. From the time that Jacob had paid his vow in Bethel (Genesis 35:15), no personal manifestation of God, such as had often gladdened his fathers and him, was any more vouchsafed, except on his entrance into Egypt (Genesis 46:2-4), and then for a special purpose. Nor do we read of any such during the whole eventful and trying life of Joseph. And now long centuries of utter silence were to follow. During all that weary period, with the misery of their bondage and the temptation of idolatry around constantly increasing, there was neither voice from heaven nor visible manifestation to warn or to cheer the children of Israel in Egypt. One mode of guidance was for a time withdrawn. Israel had now only the past to sustain and direct them. But that past, in its history and with its promises, was sufficient. Besides, the torch of prophecy, which the hands of dying Jacob had held, cast its light into the otherwise dark future. Nay, the fact that Joseph's life, which formed the great turning-point in Israel history, had been allowed to pass without visible Divine manifestations to him and to them was in itself significant. For even as his unburied body seemed to preach and to prophesy, so his whole life would appear like a yet unopened or only partially opened book, - a grand unread prophecy, which the future would unfold. And not merely the immediate future, as it concerned Israel; but the more distant future as it concerns the whole Church of God. For, although not the person of Joseph, yet the leading events of his life are typical of the great facts connected with the life and the work of Him who was

betrayed and sold by His brethren, but whom "God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior."

03.02.00. Volume 2, Preface

PREFACE THE period covered by the central books of the Pentateuch is, in many respects, the most important in Old Testament history, not only so far as regards Israel, but the Church at all times. Opening with centuries of silence and seeking Divine forgetfulness during the bondage of Egypt, the pride and power of Pharaoh are suddenly broken by a series of miracles, culminating in the deliverance of Israel and the destruction of Egypt's host. In that Paschal night and under the blood-sprinkling, Israel as a nation is born of God, and the redeemed people are then led forth to be consecrated at the Mount by ordinances, laws, and judgments. Finally, we are shown the manner in which Jehovah deals with His people, both in judgment and in mercy, till at the last He safely brings them to the promised inheritance. In all this we see not only the history of the ancient people of God, but also a grand type of the redemption and the sanctification of the Church. There is yet another aspect of it, since this narrative exhibits the foundation of the Church in the Covenant of God, and also the principles of Jehovah's government for all time. For, however great the difference in the development, the essence and character of the covenant of grace are ever the same. The Old and New Testaments are essentially one - not two covenants but one, gradually unfolding into full perfectness, "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone" of the foundation which is alike that of the apostles and prophets. (Ephesians 2:20)

There is yet a further consideration besides the intrinsic importance of this history. It has, especially of late, been so boldly misrepresented, and so frequently misunderstood, or else it is so often cursorily read - neither to understanding nor yet to profit - that it seemed desirable to submit it anew to special investigation, following the sacred narrative consecutively from Chapter to Chapter, and almost from Section to Section. In so doing, I have endeavored to make careful study of the original text, with the help of the best critical appliances. So far as I am conscious, I have not passed by any real difficulty, nor yet left unheeded any question that had a reasonable claim to be answered. If this implied a more detailed treatment, I hope it may also, with God's blessing, render the volume more permanently useful. Further, it has been my aim, by the aid of kindred studies, to shed additional light upon the narrative, so as to render it vivid and pictorial, enabling readers to realize for themselves the circumstances under which an event took place. Thus I have in the first two chapters sought to read the history of Israel in Egypt by the light of its monuments, and also to portray the political, social, and religious state of the people prior to the Exodus. Similarly, when following the wanderings of Israel up to the eastern bank of the Jordan, I have availed myself of the best recent geographical investigations, that so the reader might, as it were, see before him the route followed by Israel, the scenery, and all other accessories.

It need scarcely be said, that in studying this narrative the open Bible should always be at hand. But I may remind myself and others, that the only real understanding of any portion of Holy Scripture is that conveyed to the heart by the Spirit of God. And, indeed, throughout, my great object has been, not to supersede the constant and prayerful use of the Bible itself, but rather to lead to those Scriptures, which alone "are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus?"

A.E.

HENIACH, BOURNEMOUTH February - 1876.

03.02.01. Chapter 1 - Palestine Eighteen Centuries Ago

Chapter 1 - Palestine Eighteen Centuries Ago

Eighteen and a half centuries ago, and the land which now lies desolate--its bare, grey hills looking into ill-tilled or neglected valleys, its timber cut down, its olive- and vine-clad terraces crumbled into dust, its villages stricken with poverty and squalor, its thoroughfares insecure and deserted, its native population well-nigh gone, and with them its industry, wealth, and strength--presented a scene of beauty, richness, and busy life almost unsurpassed in the then known world. The Rabbis never weary of its praises, whether their theme be the physical or the moral pre-eminence of Palestine. It happened, so writes one of the oldest Hebrew commentaries, that Rabbi Jonathan was sitting under a fig-tree, surrounded by his students. Of a sudden he noticed how the ripe fruit overhead, bursting for richness, dropped its luscious juice on the ground, while at a little distance the distended udder of a she-goat was no longer able to hold the milk. "Behold," exclaimed the Rabbi, as the two streams mingled, "the literal fulfillment of the promise: 'a land flowing with milk and honey.'" "The land of Israel is not lacking in any product whatever," argued Rabbi Meir, "as it is written (Deuteronomy 8:9): 'Thou shalt not lack anything in it.'" Nor were such statements unwarranted; for Palestine combined every variety of climate, from the snows of Hermon and the cool of Lebanon to the genial warmth of the Lake of Galilee and the tropical heat of the Jordan valley. Accordingly not only the fruit trees, the grain, and garden produce known in our colder latitudes were found in the land, along with those of sunnier climes, but also the rare spices and perfumes of the hottest zones. Similarly, it is said, every kind of fish teemed in its waters, while birds of most gorgeous plumage filled the air with their song. Within such small compass the country must have been unequalled for charm and variety. On the eastern side of Jordan stretched wide plains, upland valleys, park-like forests, and almost boundless corn and pasture lands; on the western side were terraced hills, covered with olives and vines, delicious glens, in which sweet springs murmured, and fairy-like beauty and busy life, as around the Lake of Galilee. In the distance stretched the wide sea, dotted with spreading sails; here was luxurious richness, as in the ancient possessions of Issachar, Manasseh, and Ephraim; and there, beyond these plains and valleys, the highland scenery of Judah, shelving down through the pasture tracts of the Negev, or South country, into the great and terrible wilderness. And over all, so long as God's blessing lasted, were peace and plenty. Far as the eye could reach, browsed "the cattle on a thousand hills"; the pastures were "clothed with flocks, the valleys also covered over with corn"; and the land, "greatly enriched with the river of God," seemed to "shout for joy," and "also to sing." Such a possession, heaven-given at the first and heaven-guarded throughout, might well kindle the deepest enthusiasm.

"We find," writes one of the most learned Rabbinical commentators, supporting each assertion by a reference to Scripture (R. Bechai), "that thirteen things are in the sole ownership of the Holy One, blessed be His Name! and these are they: the silver, the gold, the priesthood, Israel, the first-born, the altar, the first-fruits, the anointing oil, the tabernacle of meeting, the kingship of the house of David, the sacrifices, the land of Israel, and the eldership." In truth, fair as the land was,

its conjunction with higher spiritual blessings gave it its real and highest value. "Only in Palestine does the Shechinah manifest itself," taught the Rabbis. Outside its sacred boundaries no such revelation was possible. It was there that rapt prophets had seen their visions, and psalmists caught strains of heavenly hymns. Palestine was the land that had Jerusalem for its capital, and on its highest hill that temple of snowy marble and glittering gold for a sanctuary, around which clustered such precious memories, hallowed thoughts, and glorious, wide-reaching hopes. There is no religion so strictly local as that of Israel. Heathenism was indeed the worship of national deities, and Judaism that of Jehovah, the God of heaven and earth. But the national deities of the heathen might be transported, and their rites adapted to foreign manners. On the other hand, while Christianity was from the first universal in its character and design, the religious institutions and the worship of the Pentateuch, and even the prospects opened by the prophets were, so far as they concerned Israel, strictly of Palestine and for Palestine. They are wholly incompatible with the permanent loss of the land. An extra-Palestinian Judaism, without priesthood, altar, temple, sacrifices, tithes, first-fruits, Sabbatical and Jubilee years, must first set aside the Pentateuch, unless, as in Christianity, all these be regarded as blossoms designed to ripen into fruit, as types pointing to, and fulfilled in higher realities. * Outside the land even the people are no longer Israel: in view of the Gentiles they are Jews; in their own view, "the dispersed abroad."

* This is not the place to explain what substitution Rabbinism proposed for sacrifices, etc. I am well aware that modern Judaism tries to prove by such passages as 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalms 51:16-17; Isaiah 1:11-13; Hosea 1:1, that, in the view of the prophets, sacrifices, and with them all the ritual institutions of the Pentateuch, were of no permanent importance. To the unprejudiced reader it seems difficult to understand how even party-spirit could draw such sweeping conclusions from such premises, or how t could ever be imagined that the prophets had intended by their teaching, not to explain or apply, but to set aside the law so solemnly given on Sinai. However, the device is not new. A solitary voice ventured even in the second century on the suggestion that the sacrificial worship had been intended only by way of accommodation, to preserve Israel from lapsing into heathen rites!

All this the Rabbis could not fail to perceive. Accordingly when, immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, they set themselves to reconstruct their broken commonwealth, it was on a new basis indeed, but still within Palestine. Palestine was the Mount Sinai of Rabbinism. Here rose the spring of the Halachah, or traditional law, whence it flowed in ever-widening streams; here, for the first centuries, the learning, the influence, and the rule of Judaism centered; and there they would fain have perpetuated it. The first attempts at rivalry by the Babylonian schools of Jewish learning were keenly resented and sharply put down. Only the force of circumstances drove the Rabbis afterwards voluntarily to seek safety and freedom in the ancient seats of their captivity, where, politically unmolested, they could give the final development to their system. It was this desire to preserve the nation and its learning in Palestine which inspired such sentiments as we are about to quote. "The very air of Palestine makes one wise," said the Rabbis. The Scriptural account of the borderland of Paradise, watered by the river Havilah, of which it is said that "the gold of that land is good," was applied to their earthly Eden, and paraphrased to mean, "there is no learning like that of Palestine." It was a saying, that "to live in Palestine was equal to the observance of all the commandments." "He that hath his permanent abode in Palestine," so taught the Talmud, "is sure of the life to come." "Three things," we read in another authority, "are Israel's

through suffering: Palestine, traditional lore, and the world to come." Nor did this feeling abate with the desolation of their country. In the third and fourth centuries of our era they still taught, "He that dwelleth in Palestine is without sin."

Centuries of wandering and of changes have not torn the passionate love of this land from the heart of the people. Even superstition becomes here pathetic. If the Talmud (Cheth. iii. a.) had already expressed the principle, "Whoever is buried in the land of Israel, is as if he were buried under the altar," one of the most ancient Hebrew commentaries (Ber. Rabba) goes much farther. From the injunction of Jacob and Joseph, and the desire of the fathers to be buried within the sacred soil, it is argued that those who lay there were to be the first "to walk before the Lord in the land of the living" (Psalms 116:9), the first to rise from the dead and to enjoy the days of the Messiah. Not to deprive of their reward the pious, who had not the privilege of residing in Palestine, it was added, that God would make subterranean roads and passages into the Holy Land, and that, when their dust reached it, the Spirit of the Lord would raise them to new life, as it is written (Ezekiel 37:12-14): "O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel...and shall put My Spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I shall place you in your own land." Almost every prayer and hymn breathes the same love of Palestine. Indeed, it were impossible, by any extracts, to convey the pathos of some of those elegies in which the Synagogue still bewails the loss of Zion, or expresses the pent-up longing for its restoration. Desolate, they cling to its ruins, and believe, hope, and pray--oh, how ardently! in almost every prayer--for the time that shall come, when the land, like Sarah of old, will, at the bidding of the Lord, have youth, beauty, and fruitfulness restored, and in Messiah the King "a horn of salvation shall be raised up" * to the house of David.

* These are words of prayer taken from one of the most ancient fragments of the Jewish liturgy, and repeated, probably for two thousand years, every day by every Jew.

Yet it is most true, as noticed by a recent writer, that no place could have been more completely swept of relics than is Palestine. Where the most solemn transactions have taken place; where, if we only knew it, every footstep might be consecrated, and rocks, and caves, and mountain-tops be devoted to the holiest remembrances--we are almost in absolute ignorance of exact localities. In Jerusalem itself even the features of the soil, the valleys, depressions, and hills have changed, or at least lie buried deep under the accumulated ruins of centuries. It almost seems as if the Lord meant to do with the land what Hezekiah had done with that relic of Moses--the brazen serpent--when he stamped it to pieces, lest its sacred memories should convert it into an occasion for idolatry. The lie of land and water, of mountain and valley, are the same; Hebron, Bethlehem, the Mount of Olives, Nazareth, the Lake of Gennesaret, the land of Galilee, are still there, but all changed in form and appearance, and with no definite spot to which one could with absolute certainty attach the most sacred events. Events, then, not places; spiritual realities, not their outward surroundings, have been given to mankind by the land of Palestine.

"So long as Israel inhabited Palestine," says the Babylonian Talmud, "the country was wide; but now it has become narrow." There is only too much historical truth underlying this somewhat curiously-worded statement. Each successive change left the boundaries of the Holy Land narrowed. Never as yet has it actually reached the extent indicated in the original promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:18), and afterwards confirmed to the children of Israel (Exodus 23:31). The

nearest approach to it was during the reign of King David, when the power of Judah extended as far as the river Euphrates (2 Samuel 8:3-14). At present the country to which the name Palestine attaches is smaller than at any previous period. As of old, it still stretches north and south "from Dan to Beersheba"; in the east and west from Salcah (the modern Sulkhad) to "the great sea," the Mediterranean. Its superficial area is about 12,000 square miles, its length from 140 to 180, its breadth in the south about 75, and in the north from 100 to 120 miles. To put it more pictorially, the modern Palestine is about twice as large as Wales; it is smaller than Holland, and about equal in size to Belgium. Moreover, from the highest mountain-peaks a glimpse of almost the whole country may be obtained. So small was the land which the Lord chose as the scene of the most marvellous events that ever happened on earth, and whence He appointed light and life to flow forth into all the world! When our blessed Saviour trod the soil of Palestine, the country had already undergone many changes. The ancient division of tribes had given way; the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel existed no longer; and the varied foreign domination, and the brief period of absolute national independence, had alike ceased. Yet, with the characteristic tenacity of the East for the past, the names of the ancient tribes still attached to some of the districts formerly occupied by them (comp. Matthew 4:13, Matthew 4:15). A comparatively small number of the exiles had returned to Palestine with Ezra and Nehemiah, and the Jewish inhabitants of the country consisted either of those who had originally been left in the land, or of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The controversy about the ten tribes, which engages so much attention in our days, raged even at the time of our Lord. "Will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles?" asked the Jews, when unable to fathom the meaning of Christ's prediction of His departure, using that mysterious vagueness of language in which we generally clothe things which we pretend to, but really do not, know. "The ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers," writes Josephus, with his usual grandiloquent self-complacency. But where--he informs us as little as any of his other contemporaries. We read in the earliest Jewish authority, the Mishnah (Sanh. x. 3): "The ten tries shall never return again, as it is written (Deuteronomy 29:28), 'And He cast them into another land, as this day.' As 'this day' goeth and does not return again, so they also go and do not return. This is the view of Rabbi Akiba. Rabbi Elieser says, 'As the day becomes dark and has light again, so the ten tribes, to whom darkness has come; but light shall also be restored to them.'" At the time of Christ's birth Palestine was governed by Herod the Great; that is, it was nominally an independent kingdom, but under the suzerainty of Rome. On the death of Herod--that is, very close upon the opening of the gospel story--a fresh, though only temporary, division of his dominions took place. The events connected with it fully illustrate the parable of our Lord, recorded in Luke 19:12-15, Luke 19:27. If they do not form its historical groundwork, they were at least so fresh in the memory of Christ's hearers, that their minds must have involuntarily reverted to them. Herod died, as he had lived, cruel and treacherous. A few days before his end, he had once more altered his will, and nominated Archelaus his successor in the kingdom; Herod Antipas (the Herod of the gospels), tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea; and Philip, tetrarch of Gaulonitis, Trachonitis, Batanaea, and Panias--districts to which, in the sequel, we may have further to refer. As soon after the death of Herod as circumstances would permit, and when he had quelled a rising in Jerusalem, Archelaus hastened to Rome to obtain the emperor's confirmation of his father's will. He was immediately followed by his brother Herod Antipas, who in a previous testament of Herod had been left what Archelaus now claimed. Nor were the two alone in Rome, They found there already a number of members of

Herod’s family, each clamorous for something, but all agreed that they would rather have none of their own kindred as king, and that the country should be put under Roman sway; if otherwise, they anyhow preferred Herod Antipas to Archelaus. Each of the brothers had, of course, his own party, intriguing, manoeuvring, and trying to influence the emperor. Augustus inclined from the first to Archelaus. The formal decision, however, was for a time postponed by a fresh insurrection in Judaea, which was quelled only with difficulty. Meanwhile, a Jewish deputation appeared in Rome, entreating that none of the Herodians might ever be appointed king, on the ground of their infamous deeds, which they related, and that they (the Jews) might be allowed to live according to their own laws, under the suzerainty of Rome. Augustus ultimately decided to carry out the will of Herod the Great, but gave Archelaus the title of ethnarch instead of king, promising him the higher grade if he proved deserving of it (Matthew 2:22). On his return to Judaea, Archelaus (according to the story in the parable) took bloody vengeance on "his citizens that hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." The reign of Archelaus did not last long. Fresh and stronger complaints came from Judaea. Archealus was deposed, and Judaea joined to the Roman province of Syria, but with a procurator of its own. The revenues of Archelaus, so long as he reigned, amounted to very considerably over 240,000 pounds a year; those of his brothers respectively to a third and sixth of that sum. But his was as nothing compared to the income of Herod the Great, which stood at the enormous sum of about 680,000 pounds; and that afterwards of Agrippa II, which is computed as high as half a million. In thinking of these figures, it is necessary to bear in mind the general cheapness of living in Palestine at the time, which may be gathered from the smallness of the coins in circulation, and from the lowness of the labour market. The smallest coin, a (Jewish) perutah, amounted to only the sixteenth of a penny. Again, readers of the New Testament will remember that a labourer was wont to receive for a day’s work in field or vineyard a denarius (Matthew 20:2), or about 8d., while the Good Samaritan paid for the charge of the sick person whom he left in the inn only two denars, or about 1s. 4d (Luke 10:35). But we are anticipating. Our main object was to explain the division of Palestine in the time of our Lord. Politically speaking, it consisted of Judaea and Samaria, under Roman procurators; Galilee and Peraea (on the other side Jordan), subject to Herod Antipas, the murderer of John the Baptist--"that fox" full of cunning and cruelty, to whom the Lord, when sent by Pilate, would give no answer; and Batanaea, Trachonitis, and Auranitis, under the rule of the tetrarch Philip. It would require too many details to describe accurately those latter provinces. Suffice, that they lay quite to the north-east, and that one of their principal cities was Caesarea Philippi (called after the Roman emperor, and after Philip himself), where Peter made that noble confession, which constituted the rock on which the Church was to be built (Matthew 16:16; Mark 8:29). It was the wife of this Philip, the best of all Herod’s sons, whom her brother-in-law, Herod Antipas, induced to leave her husband,and for whose sake he beheaded John (Matthew 14:3, etc.; Mark 6:17; Luke 3:19). It is well to know that this adulterous and incestuous union brought Herod immediate trouble and misery, and that it ultimately cost him his kingdom, and sent him into life-long banishment.

Such was the political division of Palestine. Commonly it was arranged into Galilee, Samaria, Judaea, and Peraea. It is scarcely necessary to say that the Jews did not regard Samaria as belonging to the Holy Land, but as a strip of foreign country--as the Talmud designates it (Chag. 25 a.), "a Cuthite strip," or "tongue," intervening between Galilee and Judaea. From the gospels we know that the Samaritans were not only ranked with Gentiles and strangers (Matthew 10:5;

John 4:9, John 4:20), but that the very term Samaritan was one of reproach (John 8:48). "There be two manner of nations," says the son of Sirach (Sir 1:25-26), "which my heart abhorreth, and the third is no nation; they that sit upon the mountain of Samaria, and they that dwell among the Philistines, and that foolish people that dwell in Sichem." And Josephus has a story to account for the exclusion of the Samaritans from the Temple, to the effect that in the night of the Passover, when it was the custom to open the Temple gates at midnight, a Samaritan had come and strewn bones in the porches and throughout the Temple to defile the Holy House. Most unlikely as this appears, at least in its details, it shows the feeling of the people. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the Samaritans fully retaliated by bitter hatred and contempt. For, at every period of sore national trial, the Jews had no more determined or relentless enemies than those who claimed to be the only true representatives of Israel’s worship and hopes.

03.02.01. Volume 2, Chapter 01

THE EXODUS

CHAPTER 1 Egypt And Its History During The Stay Of The Children Of Israel, As Illustrated By The Bible & Ancient Monuments

Exodus 1:1-7 THE devout student of history cannot fail to recognize it as a wonderful arrangement of Providence, that the beginning and the close of Divine revelation to mankind were both connected with the highest intellectual culture of the world. When the apostles went forth into the Roman world, they could avail themselves of the Greek language, then universally spoken, of Grecian culture and modes of thinking. And what Greece was to the world at the time of Christ, that and much more had Egypt been when the children of Israel became a God-chosen nation. Not that in either case the truth of God needed help from the wisdom of this world. On the contrary, in one sense, it stood opposed to it. And yet while history pursued seemingly its independent course, and philosophy, science, and the arts advanced apparently without any reference to revelation, all were in the end made subservient to the furtherance of the kingdom of God. And so it always is. God marvelously uses natural means for supernatural ends, and maketh all things work together to His glory as well as for the good of His people.

It was, indeed, as we now see it, most important that the children of Israel should have been brought into Egypt, and settled there for centuries before becoming an independent nation. The early history of the sons of Jacob must have shown the need alike of their removal from contact with the people of Canaan, and of their being fused in the furnace of affliction, to prepare them for inheriting the land promised unto their fathers. This, however, might have taken place in any other country than Egypt. Not so their training for a nation. For that, Egypt offered the best, or rather, at the time, the only suitable opportunities. True, the stay there involved also peculiar dangers, as their after history proved. But these would have been equally encountered under any other circumstances, while the benefits they derived through intercourse with the Egyptians were peculiar and unique. There is yet another aspect of the matter. When standing before King Agrippa, St. Paul could confidently appeal to the publicity of the history of Christ, as enacted not in some obscure corner of a barbarous land, but in full view of the Roman world "For this thing was not done in a corner." (Acts 26:26) And so Israel’s bondage also and God’s marvelous deliverance took place on no less conspicuous a scene than that of the ancient world-empire of Egypt.

Indeed, so close was the connection between Israel and Egypt, that it is impossible properly to understand the history of the former without knowing something of the latter. We shall therefore devote this preliminary chapter to a brief description of Egypt. In general, however historians may differ as to the periods when particular events had taken place, the land itself is full of reminiscences of Israel’s story. These have been brought to light by recent researches, which almost year by year add to our stock of knowledge. And here it is specially remarkable, that every fresh historical discovery tends to shed light upon, and to confirm the Biblical narratives.

Yet some of the principal arguments against the Bible were at one time derived from the supposed history of Egypt! Thus while men continually raise fresh objections against Holy Scripture, those formerly so confidently relied upon have been removed by further researches, made quite independently of the Bible, just as an enlarged knowledge will sweep away those urged in our days. Already the Assyrian monuments, the stone which records the story of Moab, (2 Kings 3:1-27) the temples, the graves, and the ancient papyri of Egypt have been made successively to tell each its own tale, and each marvelously bears out the truth of the Scripture narrative. Let us see what we can learn from such sources of the ancient state of Egypt, so far as it may serve to illustrate the history of Israel. The connection between Israel and Egypt may be said to have begun with the visit of Abram to that country. On his arrival there he must have found the people already in a high state of civilization. The history of the patriarch gains fresh light from monuments and old papyri. Thus a papyrus (now in the British Museum), known as The Two Brothers. and which is probably the oldest work of fiction in existence, proves that Abram had occasion for fear on account of Sarai. It tells of a Pharaoh, who sent two armies to take a fair woman from her husband and then to murder him. Another papyrus (at present in Berlin) records how the wife and children of a foreigner were taken from him by a Pharaoh. Curiously enough, this papyrus dates from nearly the time when the patriarch was in Egypt. From this period also we have a picture in one of the tombs, representing the arrival of a nomad chief, like Abram, with his family and dependents, who seek the protection of the prince. The newcomer is received as a person of distinction. To make the coincidence the more striking - though this chief is not thought to have been Abram, he is evidently of Semitic descent, wears a "coat of many colors," is designated Hyk, or prince, the equivalent of the modem Sheich, or chief of a tribe, and even bears the name of, Ab-shah, "father of sand," a term resembling that of, Ab-raham, the "father of a multitude."

Another Egyptian story - that of Sancha, "the son of the sycamore," - reminds us so far of that of Joseph, that its hero is a foreign nomad, who rises to the highest rank at Pharaoh’s court and becomes his chief counselor. These are instances how Egyptian history illustrates and confirms that of the Bible. Of the forced employment of the children of Israel in building and repairing certain cities, we have, as will presently be shown, sufficient confirmation in an Egyptian inscription lately discovered. We have also a pictorial representation of Semitic captives, probably Israelites, making bricks in the manner described in the Bible; and yet another, dating from a later reign, in which Israelites - either captives of war, or, as has been recently suggested, mercenaries who had stayed behind after the Exodus - are employed for Pharaoh in drawing stones, or cutting them in the quarries, and in completing or enlarging the fortified city of Rameses, which their fathers had formerly built. The builders delineated in the second of these representations are expressly called Aperu, the close correspondence of the name with the designation Hebrew, even in its English form, being apparent. Though these two sets of representations date, in all probability, from a period later than the Exodus, they remarkably illustrate what we read of the state and the occupations of the children of Israel during the period of their oppression. Nor does this exhaust the bearing of the Egyptian monuments on the early history of Israel. In fact, we can trace the two histories almost contemporaneously - and see how remarkably the one sheds light upon the other. In general, our knowledge of Egyptian history is derived from the monuments, of which we have already spoken, from certain references in Greek historians, which are not of much value, and especially from the historical work of Manetho, an Egyptian priest who wrote about the year 250 B.C. At that time the monuments of Egypt were still almost intact. Manetho had access to them all;

he was thoroughly conversant with the ancient literature of his country, and he wrote under the direction and patronage of the then monarch of the land. Unfortunately, however, his work has been lost, and the fragments of it preserved exist only in the distorted form which Josephus has given them for his own purposes, and in a chronicle, written by a learned Christian convert of the third century (Julius Africanus). But this latter also has been lost, and we know it only from a similar work written a century later (by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea), in which the researches of Africanus are embodied. Such are the difficulties before the student! On the other hand, both Africanus and Eusebius gathered their materials in Egypt itself, and were competent for their task; Africanus, at least, had the work of Manetho before him; and, lastly, by universal consent, the monuments of Egypt remarkably confirm what were the undoubted statements of Manetho. Like most heathen chronologies, Manetho's catalogue of kings begins with gods, after which he enumerates thirty dynasties, bringing the history down to the year 343 B.C.

Now some of these dynasties were evidently not successive, but contemporary, that is, they present various lines of kings who at one and the same time ruled over different portions of Egypt. This especially applies to the so-called 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th dynasties. It is wholly impossible to conjecture what period of time these may have occupied. After that we have more solid ground. We know that under the 12th dynasty the whole of Egypt was united under one sway. As we gather from the monuments, the country was in a very high state of prosperity and civilization. At the beginning of this dynasty we suppose the visit of Abram to have taken place. The reign of this 12th dynasty lasted more than two centuries, and either at its close or at the beginning of the 13th dynasty we place the accession and rule of Joseph. From the fourth king of the 13th to the accession of the 18th dynasty Egyptian history is almost a blank. That period was occupied by the rule of the so-called Hyksos, or Shepherd kings, a foreign and barbarous race of invaders, hated and opposed by the people, and hostile to their ancient civilization and religion. Although Josephus represents Manetho as assigning a very long period to the reign of "the Shepherds," he gives only six names. These and these only are corroborated by Egyptian monuments, and we are warranted in inferring that these alone had really ruled over Egypt. The period occupied by their reign might thus amount to between two and three centuries, which agrees with the Scripture chronology. "The Shepherds" were evidently an eastern race, and probably of Phoenician origin. Thus the names of the two first kings in their list are decidedly Semitic (Salatis, "mighty," "ruler," and Beon, or Benon, "the son of the eye," or, the "beloved one"), and there is evidence that the race brought with it the worship of Baal and the practice of human sacrifices -both of Phoenician origin. It is important to keep this in mind, as we shall see that there had been almost continual warfare between the Phoenicians along the west coast of Palestine and the Hittites, and the native Egyptian kings, who, while they ruled, held them in subjection. This constant animosity also explains why, not without good reason, "every shepherd was an abomination" unto the real native Egyptians. (Genesis 46:34) - It also explains why the Shepherd kings left the Israelitish shepherds unmolested in the land of Goshen, where they found them. Thus a comparison of Scripture chronology with the history of Egypt, and the evidently peaceful, prosperous state of the country, united under the rule of one king, as described in the Bible, lead us to the conclusion that Joseph's stay there must have taken place at the close of the 12th, or, at latest, at the commencement of the 13th dynasty. He could not have come during the rule of the Hyksos, for then Egypt was in a distracted, divided, and chaotic state; and it could not have been later, for after the Shepherd kings had been expelled and native rulers restored, no "new king," no

new dynasty, "arose up over Egypt." On the other hand, the latter description exactly applies to a king who, on his restoration, expelled the Hyksos. And here the monuments of Egypt again afford remarkable confirmation of the history of Joseph. For one thing, the names of three of the Pharaohs of the 13th dynasty bear a striking resemblance to that given by the Pharaoh of the Bible to Joseph (Zaphnath-paaneah). Then we know that the Pharaohs of the 12th dynasty stood in a very special relationship to the priest city of On, (Genesis 41:45) and that its high-priest was most probably always a near relative of Pharaoh. Thus the monuments of that period enable us to understand the history of Joseph's marriage. But they also throw light on a question of far greater importance - how so devout and pious a servant of the Lord as Joseph could have entered into such close relationship with the priesthood of Egypt. Here our knowledge of the most ancient religion of Egypt enables us to furnish a complete answer.

Undoubtedly, all mankind had at first some knowledge of the one true God, and a pure religion inherited from Paradise. This primeval religion seems to have been longest preserved in Egypt. Every age indeed witnessed fresh corruptions, until at last that of Egypt became the most abject superstition. But the earliest Egyptian religious records, as preserved in that remarkable work, The Ritual for the Dead, disclose a different state of things. There can be no doubt that, divested of all later glosses, they embodied belief in "the unity, eternity, and self-existence of the unknown Deity," in the immortality of the soul, and in future rewards and punishments, and that they inculcated the highest duties of morality. The more closely we study these ancient records of Egypt, the more deeply are we impressed with the high and pure character of its primeval religion and legislation. And when the children of Israel went into the wilderness, they took, in this respect also, with them from Egypt many lessons which had not to be learned anew, though this one grand fundamental truth had to be acquired, that the Deity unknown to the Egyptians was, Jehovah, the living and the true God. We can therefore understand how such close connection between Joseph and the Egyptian priesthood was both possible and likely. But this is not all. Only under a powerful native ruler could the redivision of the land and the rearrangement of taxation, which Joseph proposed, have taken place. Moreover, we know that under the rule of the last great king of this native dynasty (the 13th) a completely new system of Nile-irrigation was introduced, such as we may well believe would have been devised to avoid another period of famine, and, strangest of all, a place by the artificial lake made at that time bears the name Pi-aneh, "the house of life," which is singularly like that given by Pharaoh to Joseph. If we now pass over the brief 14th dynasty and the Hyksos period, when we may readily believe Israel remained undisturbed in Goshen, we come to the restoration of a new native dynasty (the so-called 18th). After the "Shepherds" (Exodus 1:9-10) had been expelled, the Israelitish population, remaining behind in the borderland of Goshen, would naturally seem dangerously large to the "new king," the more so as the Israelites were kindred in descent and occupation to the "Shepherds," and had been befriended by them. Under these circumstances a wise monarch might seek to weaken such a population by forced labor. For this purpose he employed them in building fortress-cities, such as Pithom and Raamses, (Exodus 1:11) Raamses bears the name of the district in which it is situated, but Pithom means "the fortress of foreigners," thus indicating its origin. Moreover, we learn from the monuments that this "new king" (Aahmes I.) employed in building his fortresses what are called the Fenchu - a word meaning "bearers of the shepherd's staff," and which therefore would exactly describe the Israelites. The period between the "new king" of the Bible (Aahmes I.) and Thothmes II. (the second in succession to him), when we suppose the Exodus to have taken place, quite agrees with the

reckoning of Scripture. Now this Thothmes II. began his reign very brilliantly. But after a while there is a perfect blank in the monumental records about him. But we read of a general revolt after his death among the nations whom his father had conquered. Of course, one could not expect to find on

Egyptian monuments an account of the disasters which the nation sustained at the Exodus, nor how Pharaoh and his host had perished in the Red Sea. But we do find in his reign the conditions which we should have expected under such circumstances, viz., a brief, prosperous reign, then a sudden collapse; the king dead; no son to succeed him; the throne occupied by the widow of the Pharaoh, and for twenty years no attempt to recover the supremacy of Egypt over the revolted nations in Canaan and east of the Jordan. Lastly, the character of his queen, as it appears on the monuments, is that of a proud and bitterly superstitious woman, just such as we would have expected to encourage Pharaoh in "hardening his heart" against Jehovah. But the chain of coincidences does not break even here. From the Egyptian documents we learn that in the preceding reign - that is, just before the children of Israel entered the desert of Sinai - the Egyptians ceased to occupy the mines which they had until then worked in that peninsula. Further, we learn that, during the latter part of Israel's stay in the wilderness, the Egyptian king, Thothmes III., carried on and completed his wars in Canaan, and that just immediately before the entry of Israel into Palestine the great confederacy of Canaanitish kings against him was quite broken up. This explains the state in which Joshua found the country, so different from that compact power which forty years before had inspired the spies with such terror; and also helps us to understand how, at the time of Joshua, each petty king just held his own city and district, and how easily the fear of a nation, by which even the dreaded Pharaoh and his host had perished, would fall upon the inhabitants of the land (compare also Balaam's words in Numbers 23:22; Numbers 24:8). We may not here follow this connection between the two histories any farther. But all through the troubled period of the early Judges down to Barak and Deborah, Egyptian history, as deciphered from the monuments, affords constant illustration and confirmation of the state of Canaan and the history of Israel, as described in the Bible. Thus did Providence work for the carrying out of God's purposes, and so remarkably does He in our days raise up witnesses for His Word, where their testimony might least have been expected.

We remember that Abram was at the first driven by famine into Egypt. The same cause also led the brothers of Joseph to seek there corn for their sustenance. For, from the earliest times, Egypt was the great granary of the old world. The extraordinary fertility of the country depends, as is well known, on the annual overflow of the Nile, caused in its turn by rains in the highlands of Abyssinia and Central Africa. So far as the waters of the Nile cover the soil, the land is like a fruitful garden; beyond it all is desolate wilderness. Even in that "land of wonders," as Egypt has been termed, the Nile is one of the grand outstanding peculiarities. Another, as we have seen, consists in its monuments. These two landmarks may conveniently serve to group together what our space will still allow us to say of the country and its people. The name of the country, Egypt (in Greek Ai-gyptos), exactly corresponds to the Egyptian designation Kah-Ptah, "the land of Ptah" - one of their gods - and from it the name of Copts seems also derived. In the Hebrew Scriptures its name is Mizraim, that is, "the two Mazors," which again corresponds with another Egyptian name for the country, Chem (the same as "the land of Ham" Psalms 105:23, Psalms 105:27), both Mazor and Chem meaning in their respective languages the red mud or dark soil of which the cultivated part

of the country consisted. It was called "the two Mazors," probably because of its ancient division into Upper and Lower Egypt. The king of Upper Egypt was designated by a title whose initial sign was a bent reed, which illustrates such passages as 2 Kings 18:21; Isaiah 36:6; Ezekiel 29:6; while the rulers of Lower Egypt bore the title of "bee," which may be referred to in Isaiah 7:18. The country occupies less than 10,000 square geographical miles, of which about 5,600 are at present, and about 8,000 were anciently, fit for cultivation. Scripture history has chiefly to do with Lower Egypt, which is the northern part of the country, while the most magnificent of the monuments are in Upper, or Southern, Egypt. As already stated, the fertility of the land depends on the overflowing of the Nile, which commences to rise about the middle of June, and reaches its greatest height about the end of September, when it again begins to decrease. As measured at Cairo, if the Nile does not rise twenty-four feet, the harvest will not be very good; anything under eighteen threatens famine. About the middle of August the red, turbid waters of the rising river are distributed by canals over the country, and carry fruitfulness with them. On receding, the Nile leaves behind it a thick red soil, which its waters had carried from Central Africa, and over this rich deposit the seed is sown. Rain there is none, nor is there need for it to fertilize the land. The Nile also furnishes the most pleasant and even nourishing water for drinking, and some physicians have ascribed to it healing virtues. It is scarcely necessary to add that the river teems with fish. Luxuriously rich and green, amidst surrounding desolation, the banks of the Nile and of its numerous canals are like a well-watered garden under a tropical sky. Where climate and soil are the best conceivable, the fertility must be unparalleled. The ancient Egyptians seem to have also bestowed great attention on their fruit and flower gardens, which, like ours, were attached to their villas. On the monuments we see gardeners presenting handsome bouquets; gardens traversed by alleys, and adorned with pavilions and colonnades; orchards stocked with palms, figs, pomegranates, citrons, oranges, plums, mulberries, apricots, etc.; while in the vineyards, as in Italy, the vines were trained to meet across wooden rods, and hang down in rich festoons. Such was the land on which, in the desolate dreariness and famine of the wilderness, Israel was tempted to look back with sinful longing! When Abram entered Egypt, his attention, like that of the modern traveler, must have been riveted by the Great Pyramids. Of these about sixty have been counted, but the largest are those near the ancient Memphis, which lay about ten miles above Cairo. Memphis - in Scripture Noph (Isaiah 19:13; Jeremiah 2:16; Jeremiah 46:14, Jeremiah 46:19; Ezekiel 30:13, Ezekiel 30:16) was the capital of Lower, as Thebes that of Upper, Egypt, the latter being the Pathros of Scripture. (Isaiah 11:11; Jeremiah 44:1, Jeremiah 44:15) It is scarcely possible to convey an adequate idea of the pyramids. Imagine a structure covering at the base an area of some 65,000 feet, and slanting upwards for 600 feet; or, to give a better idea than these figures convey "more than half as long on every side as Westminster Abbey, eighty feet higher than the top of St. Paul’s, covering thirteen acres of ground, and computed to have contained nearly seven million tons of solid masonry?

We cannot here enter on the various purposes intended by these wonderful structures, some of which, at any rate, were scientific. Not far from the great pyramids was the ancient On, connected with the history of Joseph, and where Moses probably got his early training, But all hereabout is full of deepest interest - sepulchers, monuments, historical records, and sites of ancient cities. We are in a land of dreams, and all the surroundings bear dreamy outlines; gigantic in their proportions, and rendered even more gigantic by the manner in which they are disposed. Probably the most magnificent of these monuments in Upper Egypt, the Pathros of Scripture - are those of its capital, Thebes, the No, or No Amon of the Bible. (Jeremiah 46:25; Ezekiel 30:14-16; Nahum

3:8) It were impossible in brief space to describe its temple. The sanctuary itself was small, but opposite to it a court opened upon a hall into which the great cathedral of Paris might be placed, without touching the walls on either side! One hundred and forty columns support this hall, the central pillars being sixty-six feet high, and so wide that it would take six men with extended arms to embrace one of them. The mind gets almost bewildered by such proportions. All around, the walls bear representations, inscriptions, and records - among others, those of Shishak, who captured Jerusalem during the reign of Rehoboam. But the temple itself is almost insignificant when compared with the approach to it, which was through a double row of sixty or seventy ram-headed sphinxes, placed about eleven feet apart from each other. Another avenue led to a temple which enclosed a lake for funeral rites; and yet a third avenue of sphinxes extended a distance of 6,000 feet to a palace. These notices are selected to give some faint idea of the magnificence of Egypt.

It would be difficult to form too high an estimate of the old-world culture and civilization, here laid open before us. The laws of Egypt seem to have been moderate and wise; its manners simple and domestic; its people contented, prosperous, and cultured. Woman occupied a very high place, and polygamy was almost the exception. Science, literature, and the arts were cultivated; commerce and navigation carried on, while a brave army and an efficient fleet maintained the power of the Pharaohs. Altogether the country seems old in its civilization, when alike the earliest sages of Greece and the lawgivers of Israel learned of its wisdom. But how different the use which Israel was to make of it from that to which the philosophers put their lore! What was true, good, and serviceable was to enter as an element into the life of Israel. But this life was formed and molded quite differently from that of Egypt. Israel as a nation was born of God; redeemed by God; brought forth by God victorious on the other side the flood; taught of God; trained by God; and separated for the service of God. And this God was to be known to them as Jehovah, the living and the true God. The ideas they had gained, the knowledge they had acquired, the life they had learned, even the truths they had heard in Egypt, might be taken with them, but, as it were, to be baptized in the Red Sea, and consecrated at the foot of Sinai.

Quite behind them in the far distance lay the Egypt they had quitted, with its dreamy, gigantic outlines. As the sand carried from the desert would cover the land, so did the dust of superstition gradually bury the old truths. We are ready to admit that Israel profited by what they had seen and learned. But all the more striking is the final contrast between Egyptian superstition, which ultimately degraded itself to make gods of almost everything in nature, and the glorious, spiritual worship of the Israel of God. That contrast meets us side by side with the resemblance to what was in Egypt, and becomes all the more evident by the juxtaposition. Never is the religion of Israel more strikingly the opposite to that of Egypt than where we discover resemblances between the two; and never are their laws and institutions more really dissimilar than when we trace an analogy between them. Israel may have adopted and adapted much from Egypt, but it learned only from the Lord God, who, in every sense of the expression, brought out His people with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm!

NOTE ON THE BOOK OF EXODUS For a clearer understanding, a general outline of the Book of Exodus may here be given. Like Genesis (see Hist. of the Patriarchs, Introd. p. 15.), it consists of two great parts, the first describing the redemption of Israel, and the second the consecration of Israel as the People of God. The first part (Exodus 1:1-22, Exodus 2:1-25, Exodus 3:1-22, Exodus

4:1-31, Exodus 5:1-23, Exodus 6:1-30, Exodus 7:1-25, Exodus 8:1-32, Exodus 9:1-35, Exodus 10:1-29, Exodus 11:1-10, Exodus 12:1-51, Exodus 13:1-22, Exodus 14:1-31, Exodus 15:1-21) appropriately ends with "the Song of Moses;" while, similarly, the second part closes with the erection and consecration of the Tabernacle, in which Jehovah was to dwell in the midst of His people, and to hold fellowship with them. Again, each of these two parts may be arranged into seven sections (seven being the covenant number), as follows:

PART I:

Preparatory: Israel increases, and is oppressed in Egypt (Exodus 1:1-22); birth and preservation of a deliverer (Exodus 2:1-25); The calling and training of Moses (Exodus 3:1-22, Exodus 4:1-31); His mission to Pharaoh (Exodus 5:1-23, Exodus 6:1-30, Exodus 7:1-7); The signs and wonders (Exodus 7:8-25, Exodus 8:1-32, Exodus 9:1-35, Exodus 10:1-29, Exodus 11:1-10);

Israel is set apart by the Passover, and led forth (Exodus 12:1-51, Exodus 13:1-16);

Passage of the Red Sea and destruction of Pharaoh (Exodus 13:17-22, Exodus 14:1-31);

Song of triumph on the other side (Exodus 15:1-21). THE SEVEN SECTIONS OF PART II ARE AS FOLLOWS:

March of the children of Israel to the Mount of God (Exodus 15:22-27, Exodus 16:1-36, Exodus 17:1-7);

Twofold attitude of the Gentile nations towards Israel: the enmity of Amalek, and the friendship of Jethro (Exodus 17:8-16, Exodus 18:1-27); The covenant at Sinai (Exodus 19:1-25, Exodus 20:1-26, Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-33, Exodus 24:1-11);

Divine directions about making the Tabernacle (Exodus 24:12-18, Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38, Exodus 31:1-18);

Apostasy of Israel, and their restoration to be the people of God (Exodus 32:1-35, Exodus 33:1-23, Exodus 34:1-35);

Actual construction of the Tabernacle and of its vessels (Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-32); The setting up and consecration of the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:1-38), the latter corresponding, as closing section of Part II., to the Song of Moses (Chap. 45), with which the first part had ended (see Keil, Bible Com., vol. i., pp. 302-311). The reader will note these parts and sections in his Bible, and mark what grandeur and unity there is in the plan of the Book of Exodus, and how fully it realizes the idea of telling the story of the kingdom of God.

03.02.02. Volume 2, Chapter 02

CHAPTER 2 The Children Of Israel In Egypt - Their Residences, Occupations, Social Arrangements, Constitution, And Religion - "A New King Who Knew Not Joseph." Exodus 1:1-22. To End.

THREE centuries and a half intervened between the close of the Book of Genesis and the events with which that of Exodus opens. But during that long period the history of the children of Israel is almost an entire blank. The names of their families have come down to us, but without any chronicle of their history; their final condition at the time of the Exodus is marked, but without any notice of their social or national development. Except for a few brief allusions scattered through the Old Testament, we should know absolutely nothing of their state, their life, or their religion, during all that interval. This silence of three and a half centuries is almost awful in its grandeur, like the loneliness of Sinai, the mount of God. Two things had been foretold as marking this period, and these two alone appear as outstanding facts in the Biblical narrative. On the boundary of the Holy Land the Lord had encouraged Israel:

"Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation." (Genesis 46:3) And the Book of Exodus opens with the record that this promise had been fulfilled, for "the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them." (Exodus 1:7)

Yet another prediction, made centuries before to Abram, was to be fulfilled. His seed was to be "a stranger in a land not theirs," to be enslaved and afflicted. (Genesis 15:13-16) And as the appointed centuries were drawing to a close, there "arose up a new king over Egypt," who "evil entreated our fathers." (Acts 7:19) Thus, in the darkest period of their bondage, Israel might have understood that, as surely as these two predictions had been literally fulfilled, so would the twofold promise also prove true, "I will bring thee up again," and that "with great substance." And here we see a close analogy to the present condition of the Jews. In both cases the promised future stands in marked contrast to the actual state of things. But, like Israel of old, we also have the "more sure word of prophecy," as a "light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn." The closing years of the three and a half centuries since their entrance into Egypt found Israel peaceful, prosperous, and probably, in many respects, assimilated to the Egyptians around. "The fathers" had fallen asleep, but their children still held undisturbed possession of the district originally granted them. The land of Goshen, in which they were located, is to this day considered the richest province of Egypt, and could, even now, easily support a million more inhabitants than it numbers.

Goshen extended between the most eastern of the ancient seven mouths of the Nile and Palestine. The borderland was probably occupied by the more nomadic branches of the family of Israel, to whose flocks its wide tracts would afford excellent pasturage; while the rich banks along the Nile and its canals were the chosen residence of those who pursued agriculture. Most likely such would also soon swarm across to the western banks of the Nile, where we find traces of them in various cities (Exodus 12:1-51) of the land. There they would acquire a knowledge of the arts

and industries of the Egyptians. It seems quite natural that, in a country which held out such inducements for it, the majority of the Israelites should have forsaken their original pursuits of shepherds, and become agriculturists. To this day a similar change has been noticed in the nomads who settle in Egypt. Nor was their new life entirely foreign to their history. Their ancestor, Isaac, had, during his stay among the Philistines, sowed and reaped. (Genesis 26:12) Besides, at their settlement in Egypt, the grant of land - and that the best in the country - had been made to them "for a possession," a term implying fixed and hereditary proprietorship. (Genesis 47:11, Genesis 47:27) Their later reminiscences of Egypt accord with this view. In the wilderness they looked back with sinful longing to the time when they had cast their nets into the Nile, and drawn them in weighted with fish; and when their gardens and fields by the waterside had yielded rich crops -"the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic." (Numbers 11:5) And afterwards, when Moses described to them the land which they were to inherit, he contrasted its cultivation with their past experience of Egypt, "where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs." (Deuteronomy 11:10) As further evidence of this change from pastoral to agricultural pursuits, it has also been remarked that, whereas the patriarchs had possessed camels, no allusion is made to them in the narrative of their descendants. No doubt this change of occupation served a higher purpose. For settlement and agriculture imply civilization, such as was needed to prepare Israel for becoming a nation. In point of fact, we have evidence that they had acquired most of the arts and industries of ancient Egypt. The preparation of the various materials for the Tabernacle, as well as its construction, imply this. Again, we have such direct statements, as, for example, that some of the families of Judah were "carpenters" (1 Chronicles 4:14), "weavers of fine Egyptian linen" (1 Chronicles 4:21), and "potters" (1 Chronicles 4:23). These must, of course, be regarded as only instances of the various trades learned in Egypt. Nor was the separation between Israel and the Egyptians such as to amount to isolation. Goshen would, of course, be chiefly, but not exclusively, inhabited by Israelites. These would mingle even in the agricultural districts, but, naturally, much more in the towns, with their Egyptian neighbors. Accordingly, it needed the Paschal provision of the blood to distinguish the houses of the Israelites from those of the Egyptians; (Exodus 12:13) while Exodus 3:22 seems to imply that they were not only neighbors, but perhaps, occasionally, residents in the same houses. This also accounts for the "mixed multitude" that accompanied Israel at the Exodus, and, later on, in the wilderness, for the presence in the congregation of offspring from marriages between Jewish women and Egyptian husbands. (Leviticus 24:10)

While the greater part of Israel had thus acquired the settled habits of a nation, the inhabitants of the border-district between Goshen and Canaan continued their nomadic life. This explains how the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh possessed so much larger flocks than their brethren, as afterwards to claim the wide pasture-lands to the east of Jordan. (Numbers 32:1-4) We have, also, among the records of "ancient stories," (1 Chronicles 4:22) a notice of some of the descendants of

Judah exercising lordship in Moab, and we read of a predatory incursion into Gath on the part of some of the descendants of Ephraim, which terminated fatally. It is but fair to assume that these are only instances, mentioned, the one on account of its signal success, the other on that of its failure, and that both imply nomadic habits and incursions into Canaan on the part of those who inhabited the border-land. But whether nomadic or settled, Israel preserved its ancient constitution and religion, though here also we notice modifications and adaptations, arising from their long

settlement in Egypt. The original division of Israel was into twelve tribes, after the twelve sons of Jacob, an arrangement which continued, although the sons of Joseph became two tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh), since the priestly tribe of Levi had no independent political standing. These twelve tribes were again subdivided into families (or rather clans), mostly founded by the grandsons of Jacob, of which we find a record in Numbers 26:1-65., and which amounted in all to sixty. From Joshua 7:14 we learn that those "families" had at that time, if not earlier, branched into "households," and these again into what is described by the expression "man by man" (in the Hebrew, Gevarim). The latter term, however, is really equivalent to our "family," as appears from a comparison of Joshua 7:14 with Joshua 7:17-18. Thus we have in the oldest times tribes and clans, and in those of Joshua, if not earlier, the clans again branching into households (kin) and families. The "heads" of those clans and families were their chiefs; those of the tribes, "the princes." (Numbers 1:4, Numbers 1:16, Numbers 1:44; Numbers 2:3; etc.; Numbers 7:10) These twelve princes were "the rulers of the congregation." (Exodus 34:31; Numbers 7:2; Numbers 30:1; Numbers 31:13; Numbers 32:2; Numbers 34:18) By the side of these rulers, who formed a hereditary aristocracy, we find two classes of elective officials, (Deuteronomy 1:9-14) as "representatives" of "the congregation." (Numbers 27:2) These are designated in Deuteronomy 29:10 as the "elders" and the "officers," or, rather, "scribes." Thus the rule of the people was jointly committed to the "princes," the "elders," and the "officers." The institution of "elders" and of "scribes" had already existed among the children of Israel in Egypt before the time of Moses. For Moses" gathered the elders of Israel together," to announce to them his Divine commission, (Exodus 3:16; Exodus 4:29) and through them he afterwards communicated to the people the ordinance of the Passover. (Exodus 12:21) The mention of "scribes" as "officers" occurs even earlier than that of elders, and to them, as the lettered class, the Egyptian taskmasters seem to have entrusted the superintendence of the appointed labors of the people. (Exodus 5:6, Exodus 5:14-15, Exodus 5:19) From the monuments of Egypt we know what an important part "the scribes" played in that country, and how constantly their mention recurs. Possibly, the order of scribes may have been thus introduced among Israel. As the lettered class, the scribes would naturally be the intermediaries between their brethren and the Egyptians. We may, therefore, regard them also as the representatives of learning, alike Israelitish and Egyptian. That the art of writing was known to the Israelites at the time of Moses is now generally admitted. Indeed, Egyptian learning had penetrated into Canaan itself, and Joshua found its inhabitants mostly in a very advanced state of civilization, one of the towns bearing even the name of Kirjath-sepher, the city of books, or Kirjath-sannah, which might almost be rendered "university town." (Joshua 15:15, Joshua 15:49) In reference to the religion of Israel, it is important to be in mind that, during the three and a half centuries since the death of Jacob, all direct communication from Heaven, whether by prophecy or in vision, had so far as we know, wholly ceased. Even the birth of Moses was not Divinely intimated. In these circumstances the children of Israel were cast upon that knowledge which they had acquired from "the fathers," and which, undoubtedly, was preserved among them. It need scarcely be explained, although it shows the wisdom of God’s providential arrangements, that the simple patriarchal forms of worship would suit the circumstances in Egypt much better than those which the religion of Israel afterwards received. Three great observances here stand out prominently. Around them the faith and the worship alike of the ancient atriarchs, and afterwards of Israel, may be said to have clustered. They are: circumcision, sacrifices, and the Sabbath. We have direct testimony that the rite of circumcision was observed by Israel in Egypt.

(Exodus 4:24-26; Joshua 5:5) As to sacrifices, even the proposal to celebrate a great sacrificial feast in the wilderness, (Exodus 8:25-28) implies that sacrificial worship had maintained its hold upon the people. Lastly, the direction to gather on the Friday two days provision of manna, (Exodus 16:22) and the introduction of the Sabbath command by the word "Remember," (Exodus 20:8) convey the impression of previous Sabbath observance on the part of Israel. Indeed, the manner in which many things, as, for example, the practice of vows, are spoken of in the law, seems to point back to previous religious rites among Israel.

Thus far for those outward observances, which indicate how, even during those centuries of silence and loneliness in Egypt, Israel still cherished the fundamental truths of their ancestral religion. But there is yet another matter, bearing reference not to their articles of belief or their observances, but to the religious life of the family and of individuals in Israel. This appears in the names given by parents to their children during the long and hard bondage of Egypt. It is well known what significance attaches in the Old Testament to names. Every spiritually important event gave it a new and characteristic name to a person or locality. Sometimes - as in the case of Abram, Sarai, and Jacob - it was God Himself Who gave such new name; at others, it was the expression of hearts that recognized the special and decisive interposition of God, or else breathed out their hopes and experiences, as in the case of Moses' sons. But any one who considers such frequently recurring names among "the princes" of Israel, as Eliasaph (my God that gathers), Elizur (my God a rock), and others of kindred import, will gather how deep the hope of Israel had struck its roots in the hearts and convictions of the people. This point will be further referred to in the sequel. Meantime, we only call attention to the names of the chiefs of the three families of the Levites: Eliasaph (my God that gathers), Elizaphan (my God that watcheth all, around), and Zuriel (my rock is God) - the Divine Name (El) being the same by which God had revealed Himself to the fathers.

Besides their own inherited rites, the children of Israel may have learned many things from the Egyptians, or been strengthened in them. And here, by the side of resemblance, we also observe marked contrast between them. We have already seen that, originally, the religion of the Egyptians had contained much of truth, which, however, was gradually perverted to superstition. The Egyptians and Israel might hold the same truths, but with the difference of understanding and application between dim tradition and clear Divine revelation. Thus, both Israel and the Egyptians believed in the great doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and of future rewards and punishments. But, in connection with this, Israel was taught another lesson, far more difficult to our faith, and which the ancient Egyptians had never learned, that God is the God of the present as well as of the future, and that even here on earth He reigneth, dispensing good and evil. And perhaps it was owing to this that the temporal consequences of sin were so much insisted upon in the Mosaic law. There was no special need to refer to the consequences in another life. The Egyptians, as well as Israel, acknowledged the latter, but the Egyptians knew not the former. Yet this new truth would teach Israel constantly to realize Jehovah as the living and the true God. On the other hand, the resemblances between certain institutions of Israel and of Egypt clearly prove that the Law was not given at a later period, but to those who came out from Egypt, and immediately upon their leaving it. At the same time, much evil was also acquired by intercourse with the Egyptians. In certain provisions of the Pentateuch we discover allusions, not only to the moral corruptions witnessed, and perhaps learned, in Egypt, but also to the idolatrous practices

common there. Possibly, it was not the gorgeous ritual of Egypt which made such deep impression, but the services constantly there witnessed may have gradually accustomed the mind to the worship of nature. As instances of this tendency among Israel, we remember the worship of the golden calf, (Exodus 32:1-35) the warning against sacrificing unto the "he-goat," (Leviticus 17:7) and the express admonition, even of Joshua (Joshua 24:14), to "put away the strange gods" which their "fathers served on the other side of the flood." To the same effect is the retrospect in Ezekiel 20:5-8, in Amos 5:26, and in the address of Stephen before the Jewish council. (Acts 7:43) Yet it is remarkable that, although the forms of idolatry here referred to were all practiced in Egypt, there is good reason for believing that they were not, so to speak, strictly Egyptian in their origin, but rather foreign rites imported, probably from the Phoenicians. Such then was the political, social, and religious state of Israel, when, their long peace was suddenly interrupted by tidings that Aahmes I. was successfully making war against the foreign dynasty of the Hyksos. Advancing victoriously, he at last took Avaris, the great stronghold and capital of the Shepherd kings, and expelled them and their adherents from the country. He then continued his progress to the borders of Canaan, taking many cities by storm. The memorials of the disastrous rule of the Shepherds were speedily removed; the worship which they had introduced was abolished, and the old Egyptian forms were restored. A reign of great prosperity now ensued.

Although there is difference of opinion on the subject, yet every likelihood (as shown in the previous chapter) seems to attach to the belief that the accession of this new dynasty was the period when the "king arose who knew not Joseph."7 For reasons already explained, one of the first and most important measures of his internal administration would necessarily be to weaken the power of the foreign settlers, who were in such vast majority in the border province of Goshen. He dreaded lest, in case of foreign war, they might join the enemy, "and get them up out of the land." The latter apprehension also shows that the king must have known the circumstances under which they had at first settled in the land. Again, from the monuments of Egypt, it appears to have been at all times the policy of the Pharaohs to bring an immense number of captives into Egypt, and to retain them there in servitude for forced labors. A somewhat similar policy was now pursued towards Israel. Although allowed to retain their flocks and fields, they were set to hard labor for the king. Egyptian "taskmasters" were appointed over them, who "made the children of Israel serve with rigor," and did "afflict them with their burdens." A remarkable illustration of this is seen in one of the Egyptian monuments. Laborers, who are evidently foreigners, and supposed to represent Israelites, are engaged in the various stages of brickmaking, under the superintendence of four Egyptians, two of whom are apparently superior officers, while the other two are overseers armed with heavy lashes, who cry out, "Work without fainting!" The work in which the Israelites were employed consisted of brickmaking, artificial irrigation of the land, including, probably, also the digging or restoring of canals, and the building, or restoring and enlarging of the two "magazine-cities"8 of Pithom and Raamses, whose localities have been traced in Goshen, and which served as depots both for commerce and for the army. According to Greek historians it was the boast of the Egyptians that, in their great works, they only employed captives and slaves, never their own people. But Aahmes I had special need of Israelitish labor, since we learn from an inscription, dating from his twenty-second year, that he was largely engaged in restoring the temples and buildings destroyed by the "Shepherds." But this first measure of the Pharaohs against Israel produced the opposite result from what had been expected. So far from diminishing, their previous vast growth went on in increased ratio, so that the Egyptians "were sorely afraid 9

(alarmed) because of the children of Israel." (Exodus 1:12) Accordingly Pharaoh resorted to a second measure, by which all male children, as they were born, were to be destroyed, probably unknown to their parents. But the two Hebrew women, who, as we suppose, were at the head of "the guild" of midwives, do not seem to have communicated the king’s order to their subordinates. At any rate, the command was not executed. Scripture has preserved the names of these courageous women, and told us that their motive was "fear of God" (in the Hebrew with the article, "the God," as denoting the living and true God). And as they were the means of "making" or upbuilding the houses of Israel, so God "made them houses." It is true that, when challenged by the king. they failed to speak out their true motive; but, as St. Augustine remarks, "God forgave the evil on account of the good, and rewarded their piety, though not. their deceit."

How little indeed any merely human device could have averted the ruin of Israel, appears from the third measure which Pharaoh now adopted. Putting aside every restraint, and forgetting, in his determination, even his interests, the king issued a general order to cast every Jewish male child, as it was born, into the Nile. Whether this command, perhaps given in anger, was not enforced for any length of time, or the Egyptians were unwilling permanently to lend themselves to such cruelty, or the Israelites found means of preserving their children from this danger, certain it is, that, while many must have suffered, and all needed to use the greatest precautions, this last ruthless attempt to exterminate Israel also proved vain. Thus the two prophecies had been fulfilled. Even under the most adverse circumstances Israel had so increased as to fill the Egyptians with alarm; and the "affliction" of Israel had reached its highest point. And now the promised deliverance was also to appear. As in so many instances, it came in what men would call the most unlikely manner.

03.02.03. Volume 2, Chapter 03

CHAPTER 3 The Birth, And The Training Of Moses, Both In Egypt And In Midian, As Preparatory To His Calling

Exodus 2:1-25 TO the attentive reader of Scripture it will not seem strange - only remarkable - that the very measure which Pharaoh had taken for the destruction of Israel eventually led to their deliverance. Had it not been for the command to cast the Hebrew children into the river, Moses would not have been rescued by Pharaoh's daughter, nor trained in all the wisdom of Egypt to fit him for his calling. Yet all throughout, this marvelous story pursues a natural course; that is, natural in its progress, but supernatural in its purposes and results. A member of the tribe of Levi, and descendant of Kohath,(Exodus 6:20; Numbers 26:59) Amram by name, had married Jochebed, who belonged to the same tribe. Their union had already been blessed with two children, Miriam and Aaron, when the murderous edict of Pharaoh was issued. The birth of their next child brought them the more sorrow and care, that the "exceeding fairness" of the child not only won their hearts, but seemed to point him out as destined of God for some special purpose. In this struggle of affection and hope against the fear of man, they obtained the victory, as victory is always obtained, "by faith." There was no special revelation made to them, nor was there need for it. It was a simple question of faith, weighing the command of Pharaoh against the command of God and their own hopes. They resolved to trust the living God of their fathers, and to brave all seeming danger. It was in this sense that "by faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." Longer concealment at home being impossible, the same confidence of faith now led the mother to lay the child in an ark made, as at that time the light Nile-boats used to be, of "bulrushes," or papyrus - a strong three-cornered rush, that grew to a height of about ten or fifteen feet. The "ark" - a term used in Scripture only here and in connection with the deliverance of Noah by an "ark" - was made tight within by "slime" - either Nile-mud or asphalt - and impenetrable to water by a coating of "pitch." Thus protected, the "ark," with its precious burden, was deposited among "the flags" in the brink, or lip of the river, just where Pharaoh's daughter was wont to bathe, though the sacred text does not expressly inform us whether or not this spot was purposely chosen. The allusion in Psalms 78:12 to the "marvelous things" done "in the field of Zoan," may perhaps guide us to the very scene of this deliverance. Zoan, as we know, was the ancient Avaris, the capital of the Shepherd kings, which the new dynasty had taken from them. The probability that it would continue the residence of the Pharaohs, the more so as it lay on the eastern boundary of Goshen, is confirmed by the circumstance that in those days, of all the ancient Egyptian residences, Avaris or Zoan alone lay on an arm of the Nile which was not infested by crocodiles, and where the princess therefore could bathe. There is a curious illustration on one of the Egyptian monuments of the scene described in the rescue of Moses. A noble lady is represented bathing in the river with four of her maidens attending upon her, just like the daughter of Pharaoh in the story of Moses. But to return - the discovery of the ark, and the weeping of the babe, as the stranger lifted him, are all true to nature. The princess is touched by the appeal of the child to her woman's

feelings. She compassionates him none the less that he is one of the doomed race. To have thrown the weeping child into the river would have been inhuman. Pharaoh's daughter acted as every woman would have done in the circumstances. To save one Hebrew child could be no very great crime in the king's daughter. Moreover, curiously enough, we learn from the monuments, that just at that very time the royal princesses exercised special influence - in fact, that two of them were co-regents. So when, just at the opportune moment, Miriam, who all along had watched at a little distance, came forward and proposed to call some Hebrew woman to nurse the weeping child - this strange gift, bestowed as it were by the Nile, god himself on the princess, - she readily consented. The nurse called was, of course, the child's own mother, who received her babe now as a precious charge, entrusted to her care by the daughter of him who would have compassed his destruction. So marvelous are the ways of God. One of the old church-writers has noted that "the daughter of Pharaoh is the community of the Gentiles," thereby meaning to illustrate this great truth, which we trace throughout history, that somehow the salvation of Israel was always connected with the instrumentality of the Gentiles. It was so in the history of Joseph, and even before that; and it will continue so until at the last, through their mercy, Israel shall obtain mercy. But meanwhile a precious opportunity was afforded to those believing Hebrew parents to mold the mind of the adopted son of the princess of Egypt. The three first years of life, the common eastern time for nursing, are often, even in our northern climes, where development is so much slower, a period decisive for after life. It requires no stretch of imagination to conceive what the child Moses would learn at his mother's knee, and hear among his persecuted people. When a child so preserved and so trained found himself destined to step from his Hebrew home to the court of Pharaoh - his mind full of the promises made to the fathers, and his heart heavy with the sorrows of his brethren, - it seems almost natural that thoughts of future deliverance of his people through him should gradually rise in his soul. Many of our deepest purposes have their root in earliest childhood, and the lessons then learnt, and the thoughts then conceived, have been steadily carried out to the end of our lives.

Yet, as in all deepest life-purpose, there was no rashness about carrying it into execution. When Jochebed brought the child back to the princess, the latter gave her adopted son the Egyptian name "Moses," which, curiously enough, appears also in several of the old Egyptian papyri, among others, as that of one of the royal princes. The word means "brought forth" or "drawn out," "because," as she said in giving the name, "I drew him out of the water." But for the present Moses would probably not reside in the royal palace at Avails. St. Stephen tells us (Acts 7:22) that he "was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." In no country was such value attached to education, nor was it begun so early as in Egypt. No sooner was a child weaned than it was sent to school, and instructed by regularly appointed scribes. As writing was not by letters, but by hieroglyphics, which might be either pictorial representations, or symbols (a scepter for a king, etc.), or a kind of phonetic signs, and as there seem to have been hieroglyphics for single letters, for syllables, and for words, that art alone must, from its complication, have taken almost a lifetime to master it perfectly. But beyond this, education was carried to a very great length, and, in the case of those destined for the higher professions, embraced not only the various sciences, as mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, etc., but theology, philosophy, and a knowledge of the laws. There can be no doubt that, as the adopted son of the princess, Moses would receive the highest training. Scripture tells us that, in consequence, he was "mighty in his words and deeds," and we may take the statement in its simplicity, without entering upon the many Jewish and

Egyptian legends which extol his wisdom, and his military and other achievements.

Thus the first forty years of Moses' life passed. Undoubtedly, had he been so minded, a career higher even than that of Joseph might have been open to him. But, before entering it, he had to decide that one great preliminary question, with whom he would cast in his lot - with Egypt or with Israel, with the world or the promises. As so often happens, the providence of God here helped him to a clear, as the grace of God to a right, decision. In the actual circumstances of Hebrew persecution it was impossible at the same time "to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter" and to have part, as one of them, "with the people of God." The one meant "the pleasures of sin" and "the treasures of Egypt" - enjoyment and honors, the other implied "affliction" and "the reproach of Christ" -or suffering and that obloquy which has always attached to Christ and to His people, and at that time especially, to those who clung to the covenant of which Christ was the substance. But "faith," which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," enabled Moses not only to "refuse" what Egypt held out, but to "choose rather the affliction," and, more than that, to "esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt," because "he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." (Hebrews 11:24-26) In this spirit "he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens." (Exodus 2:11) But his faith, though deep and genuine, was as yet far from pure and spiritual. The ancient Egyptians were noted for the severity of their discipline, and their monuments represent the "taskmasters" armed with heavy scourges, made of tough bending wood, which they unmercifully used. The sight of such sufferings, inflicted by menials upon his brethren, would naturally rouse the utmost resentment of the son of the Princess Royal. This, together with the long-cherished resolve to espouse the cause of his brethren, and the nascent thought of becoming their deliverer, led him to slay an Egyptian, whom he saw thus maltreating "an Hebrew, one of his brethren." Still it was not an access of sudden frenzy, for "he looked this way and that way," to see "that there was no man" to observe his deed; rather was it an attempt to carry out spiritual ends by carnal means, such as in the history of Moses' ancestors had so often led to sin and suffering. He would become a deliverer before he was called to it of God; and he would accomplish it by other means than those which God would appoint. One of the fathers has rightly compared this deed to that of Peter in cutting off the ear of the high-priest's servant; at the same time also calling attention to the fact, that the heart both of Moses and Peter resembled a field richly covered with weeds, but which by their very luxuriance gave promise of much good fruit, when the field should have been broken up and sown with good seed. In the gracious dispensation of God, that time had now come. Before being transplanted, so to speak, Moses had to be cut down. He had to strike root downwards, before he could spring upwards. As St. Stephen puts it, "his brethren understood not how that God, by his hand, would give them deliverance" - what his appearance and conduct among them really meant; and when next he attempted to interfere in a quarrel between two Hebrews, the wrong-doer in harsh terms disowned his authority, and reproached him with his crime. It was now evident that the matter was generally known. Presently it reached the ears of Pharaoh. From what we know of Egyptian society, such an offense could not have remained unpunished, even in the son of a princess, and on the supposition that she who had originally saved Moses was still alive, after the lapse of forty years, and that the then reigning Pharaoh was her father. But, besides, Moses had not only killed an official in the discharge of his duty, he had virtually taken the part of the Hebrews, and encouraged them to rebellion. That Moses commanded such position of influence that Pharaoh could not at once order his execution, but "sought to slay him," only aggravated the matter, and

made Moses the more dangerous. Open resistance to Pharaoh was of course impossible. The sole hope of safety now seemed to lie in renouncing all further connection with his people. That or flight were the only alternatives. On the other hand, flight might further provoke the wrath of the king, and it was more than doubtful whether any of the neighboring countries could, under such circumstances, afford him safe shelter. It was therefore, indeed, once more an act of "faith" when Moses "forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured" (or remained steadfast, viz., to his choice and people), "as seeing the Invisible One," that is, as one who, instead of considering the king of Egypt, looked by faith to the King invisible. (1 Timothy 1:17)

Like Jacob of old, and Joseph under similar circumstances, Moses must now go into a strange land. All that Egypt could teach him, he had acquired. What he still needed could only be learned in loneliness, humiliation, and suffering. Two things would become manifest in the course of his history. That which, in his own view, was to have freed his people from their misery, had only brought misery to himself. On the other hand, that which seemed to remove him from his special calling, would prepare the way for its final attainment. And so it often happens to us in the most important events of our lives, that thus we may learn the lessons of faith and implicit self-surrender and that God alone may have the glory.

Disowned by his people, and pursued by the king, the gracious Providence of God prepared a shelter and home for the fugitive. Along the eastern shore of the Red Sea the Midianites, descended from Abraham through Keturah, (Genesis 25:2-4) had their settlements, whence, as nomads, they wandered, on one side to the southern point of the peninsula of Sinai, and on the other, northward, as far as the territory of Moab. Among the Midianites it happened to Moses, as of old to Jacob on his flight. At the "well" he was able to protect the daughters of Reuel, "the priest of Midian," against the violence of the shepherds, who drove away their flocks. Invited in consequence to the house of Reuel, he continued there, and eventually married Zipporah, the daughter of the priest. This, and the birth of his two sons, to which we shall presently refer, is absolutely all that Moses himself records of his forty years' stay in Midian. But we are in circumstances to infer some other and important details. The father-in-law of Moses seems to have worshipped the God of Abraham, as even his name implies: Reuel, the "friend of El" the latter the designation which the patriarchs gave to God, as El Shaddai, "God Almighty." (Exodus 6:3) This is further borne out by his after-conduct. (Exodus 18:1-27) Reuel is also called Jethro and Jether, (Exodus 3:1; Exodus 4:18) which means "excellency," and was probably his official title as chief priest of the tribe, the same as the Imam of the modern Arabs, the term having a kindred meaning. But the life of Moses in the house of Reuel must have been one of humiliation and loneliness. From her after-conduct (Exodus 4:25) we infer that Zipporah was a woman of violent, imperious temper, who had but little sympathy with the religious convictions of her husband. When she first met him as "an Egyptian," his bravery may have won her heart. But further knowledge of the deepest aims of his life might lead her to regard him as a gloomy fanatic, who busied his mind with visionary schemes. So little indeed does she seem to have had in common with her husband that, at the most trying and noble period of his life, when on his mission to Pharaoh, he had actually to send her away. (Exodus 18:2-3) Nor could there have been much confidence between Moses and his father-in-law. His very subordinate position in the family of Jethro (Exodus 3:1); the fact of his reticence in regard to the exact vision vouchsafed him of God (Exodus 4:18); and the humble manner in which Moses was sent back into Egypt (Exodus 4:20),

all give a saddening view of the mutual relations. What, however, all this time were the deepest feelings and experiences of his heart, found expression in the names which he gave to his two sons. The elder he named Gershom (expulsion, banishment), "for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land" (Exodus 2:22) the second he called Eliezer, "my God is help" (Exodus 18:4). Banished to a strange land, far from his brethren and the land of promise, Moses longs for his real home. Yet this feeling issues not in despondency, far less in disbelief or distrust. On the contrary, "the peaceable fruits of righteousness," springing from the "chastening" of the Lord, appear in the name of his second son; "for the God of my fathers," said he, "is mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh." The self-confidence and carnal zeal manifest in his early attempt to deliver his brethren in Egypt have been quenched in the land of his banishment, and in the school of sorrow. And the result of all he has suffered and learned has been absolute trustfulness in the God of his fathers, the God of the promises, Who would surely fulfill His word.

03.02.04. Volume 2, Chapter 04

CHAPTER 4 The Call Of Moses - The Vision Of The Burning Bush -The Commission To Pharaoh And To Israel -And The Three "Signs," And Their Meaning Exodus 2:23; Exodus 4:17

WHEN God is about to do any of His great works, He first silently prepares all for it. Not only the good seed to be scattered, but the breaking up of the soil for its reception is His. Instrumentalities, unrecognized at the time, are silently at work; and, together with the good gift to be bestowed on His own, He grants them the felt need and the earnest seeking of it. Thus prayers and answers are, as it were, the scales of grace in equipoise.

It was not otherwise when God would work the great deliverance of His people from Egypt. Once more it seemed as if the clouds overhead were just then darkest and heaviest. One king had died and another succeeded; but the change of government brought not to Israel that relief which they had probably expected. Their bondage seemed now part of the settled policy of the Pharaohs. Not one ray of hope lit up their sufferings other than what might have been derived from faith. But centuries had passed without any communication or revelation from the God of their fathers!

It must therefore be considered a revival of religion when, under such circumstances, the people, instead of either despairing or plotting rebellion against Pharaoh, turned in earnest prayer unto the Lord, or, as the sacred text puts it, significantly adding the definite article before God, (Exodus 2:23) "cried" "unto the God," that is, not as unto one out of many, but unto the only true and living God. This spirit of prayer, now for the first time appearing among them, was the first pledge and harbinger, indeed, the commencement of their deliverance. (Exodus 3:7; Deuteronomy 26:7) For though only "a cry," so to speak, spiritually inarticulate, no intervening period of time divided their prayer from its answer. "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them" - literally, He "knew them," that is, recognized them as the chosen seed of Abraham, and, recognizing, manifested His love towards them. The southern end of the peninsula of Sinai, to which the sacred narrative now takes us, consists of a confused mass of peaks (the highest above 9,000 feet), some of dark green porphyry, but mostly red granite of different hues, which is broken by strips of sand or gravel, intersected by wadies or glens, which are the beds of winter torrents, and dotted here and there with green spots, chiefly due to perennial fountains. The great central group among these mountains is that of Horeb, and one special height in it Sinai, the "mount of God." Strangely enough it is just here amidst this awful desolateness that the most fertile places in "the wilderness" are also found. Even in our days part of this plateau is quite green. Hither the Bedouin drive their flocks when summer has parched all the lower districts. Fruit-trees grow in rich luxuriance in its valleys, and "the neighborhood is the best watered in the whole peninsula, running streams being found in no less than four of the adjacent valleys." It was thither that Moses, probably in the early summer, drove Reuel’s flock for pasturage and water. Behind him, to the east, lay the desert; before him rose in awful grandeur the mountain of God. The stillness of this place is unbroken; its desolateness only relieved by the variety of coloring in

the dark green or the red mountain peaks, some of which "shine in the sunlight like burnished copper." The atmosphere is such that the most distant outlines stand out clearly defined, and the faintest sound falls distinctly on the ear. All at once truly a "strange sight" presented itself. On a solitary crag, or in some sequestered valley, one of those spiked, gnarled, thorny acacia trees, which form so conspicuous a feature in the wadies of" the desert," of which indeed they are. The only timber tree of any size," stood enwrapped in fire, and yet "the bush was not consumed." At view of this, Moses turned aside "to see this great sight." And yet greater wonder than this awaited him. A vision which for centuries had not been seen now appeared; a voice which had been silent these many ages again spoke. "The Angel of Jehovah" (Exodus 3:2), who is immediately afterwards Himself called "Jehovah" and "God" (Exodus 3:4-5), spake to him "out of the midst of the bush." His first words warned Moses to put his shoes from off his feet, as standing on holy ground; the next revealed Him as the same Angel of the Covenant, who had appeared unto the fathers as "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." The reason of the first injunction was not merely reverence, but it was prompted by the character of Him who spoke. For in the East shoes are worn chiefly as protection from defilement and dust, and hence put off when entering a sanctuary, in order, as it were, not to bring within the pure place defilement from without. But the place where Jehovah manifests Himself - whatever it be - is "holy ground," and he who would have communication with Him must put aside the defilement that clings to him. In announcing Himself as the God of the fathers, Jehovah now declared the continuity of His former purpose of mercy, His remembrance of Israel, and His speedy fulfillment of the promises given of old. During these centuries of silence He had still been the same, ever mindful of His covenant, and now, just as it might seem that His purpose had wholly failed, the set time had come, when He would publicly manifest Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The same truth was symbolically expressed by the vision of the burning bush. Israel, in its present low and despised state, was like the thorn bush in the wilderness (comp. Judges 9:15), burning in the fiery "furnace of Egypt," (Deuteronomy 4:20) but "not given over unto death," because Jehovah, the Angel of the Covenant, was "in the midst of the bush" - a God who chastened, but did "not consume." And this vision was intended not only for Moses, but for all times. It symbolizes the relationship between God and Israel at all times, and similarly that between Him and His Church. For the circumstances in which the Church is placed, and the purpose of God towards it, continue always the same. But this God, in the midst of the flames of the bush, is also a consuming fire, alike in case of forgetfulness of the covenant on the part of His people, (Deuteronomy 4:24) and as "a fire" that "burneth up His enemies round about." (Psalms 97:3) This manifestation of God under the symbol of fire, which on comparison will be seen to recur through all Scripture, shall find its fullest accomplishment when the Lord Jesus shall come to judge -"His eyes as a flame of fire, and on His head many crowns." (Revelation 19:12) But as for Moses, he "hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." The vision vouchsafed, and the words which accompanied it, prepare us for the further communication which the Lord was pleased to make to His servant. He had heard the cry of His people; He knew their sorrows, and He had come to deliver and bring them into the Land of Promise, "a good land," it is added, "and a large," a land "flowing with milk and honey" -large and fruitful enough to have been at the time the territory of not fewer than six Canaanitish races (Exodus 3:8). Finally, the Lord directed Moses to go to Pharaoh in order to bring His people out of Egypt.

Greater contrast could scarcely be conceived than between the Moses of forty years ago and him who now pleaded to be relieved from this work. If formerly his self-confidence had been such as to take the whole matter into his own hands, his self-diffidence now went the length of utmost reluctance to act, even. as only the Lord’s messenger and minister. His first and deepest feelings speak themselves in the question, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11). But the remembrance of former inward and outward failure was no longer applicable, for God Himself would now be with him. In token of this he was told, "When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." Evidently this "token" appealed to his faith, as indeed every "sign" does, whence their misunderstanding by those "who are not of the household of faith" (comp. Matthew 12:38-39; Luke 16:31). Similarly, long afterwards, a distantly future event - the birth of the Virgin’s Son - was to be a sign to the house of Ahaz of the preservation of the royal line of David. (Isaiah 7:10-14) Was it then that underneath all else God saw in the heart of Moses a want of realizing faith, and that He would now call it forth? This first difficulty, on the part of Moses, had been set aside. His next was: What should he say in reply to this inquiry of Israel about God? "What is His Name?" (Exodus 3:13). This means, What was he to tell them in answer to their doubts and fears about God’s purposes towards them? For, in Scripture, the name is regarded as the manifestation of character or of deepest purpose, whence also a new name was generally given after some decisive event, which for ever after stamped its character upon a person or place. In answer to this question, the Lord explained to Moses, and bade him tell Israel, the import of the name Jehovah, by which He had at the first manifested Himself, when entering into covenant with Abraham. (Genesis 15:7) It was, "I am that I am" - words betokening His unchangeable nature and faithfulness. The "I am" had sent Moses, and, as if to remove all doubt, he was to add’ "the God of your fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." "This," the Lord declares, "is my Name for ever, and this is my memorial to all generations;" in other words, as such He would always prove Himself, and as such He willeth to be known and remembered, not only by Israel, but "to all generations." Here, then, at the very outset, when the covenant with Abraham was transferred to his seed, the promise also, which included all nations in its blessing, was repeated. In further preparation for his mission, God directed Moses on his arrival in Egypt to "gather" the elders of Israel together, and, taking up the very words of Joseph’s prophecy when he died, (Genesis 1:24) to announce that the promised time had come, and that God had "surely visited" His people. Israel, he was told, would hearken to his voice; not so Pharaoh, although the original demand upon him was to be only to dismiss the people for a distance of three days’ journey into the wilderness. Yet Pharaoh would not yield, "not even by a strong hand" (Exodus 3:19) - that is, even when the strong hand of God would be upon him. But, at the last, the wonder-working power of Jehovah would break the stubborn will of Pharaoh; and when Israel left Egypt it would not be as fugitives, but, as it were, like conquerors laden with the spoil of their enemies.

Thus the prediction clearly intimated that only after a long and severe contest Pharaoh would yield. But would the faith of Israel endure under such a trial? This is probably the meaning of Moses’ next question, seemingly strange as put at this stage:

"But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, Jehovah hath not appeared unto thee." (Exodus 4:1) To such doubts, whether on the part of Israel, of Pharaoh, or of the Egyptians, a threefold symbolical reply was now furnished, and that not only to silence

those who might so object, but also for the encouragement of Moses himself. This reply involved the bestowal of power upon Moses to work miracles. We note that here, for the first time in Old Testament history, this power was bestowed upon man, and that the occasion was the first great conflict between the world and the

Church. These miracles were intended to be like "a voice" from heaven, bearing direct testimony to the truth of Moses' commission. So we read in Exodus 4:8 of Israel "hearkening unto" and "believing" "the voice" of the signs, and in Psalms 105:27 (marginal reading) that Moses and Aaron "shewed the words of His signs among them." But while this was the general purpose of the three signs now displayed - first to Moses himself - each had also its special reference. The first to Pharaoh, the second to Israel, and the third to the might of Egypt. In the first sign Moses was bidden to look at the rod in his hand. It was but an ordinary shepherd's staff, At God's command he was to cast it on the ground, when presently it was changed into a serpent, from which Moses fled in terror. Again God commands, and as Moses seized the serpent by the tail, it once more "became a rod in his hand." The meaning of this was plain. Hitherto Moses had wielded the shepherd's crook. At God's command he was to cast it away; his calling was to be changed, and he would have to meet "the serpent" - not only the old enemy, but the might of Pharaoh, of which the serpent was the public and well-known Egyptian emblem. "The serpent was the symbol of royal and divine power on the diadem of every Pharaoh" - the emblem of the land, of its religion, and government. At God's command, Moses next seized this serpent, when it became once more in his hand the staff with which he led his flock - only that now the flock was Israel, and the shepherd's staff the wonder-working "rod of God." (Exodus 4:20) In short, the humble shepherd, who would have fled from Pharaoh, should, through Divine strength, overcome all the might of Egypt. The second sign shown to Moses bore direct reference to Israel. The hand which Moses was directed to put in his bosom became covered with leprosy; but the same hand, when a second time he thrust it in, was restored whole. This miraculous power of inflicting and removing a plague, universally admitted to come from God, showed that Moses could inflict and remove the severest judgments of God. But it spoke yet other "words" to the people. Israel, of whom the Lord had said unto Moses, "Carry them in thy bosom," (Numbers 11:12) was the leprous hand. But as surely and as readily as it was restored when thrust again into Moses' bosom, so would God bring them forth from the misery and desolateness of their state in Egypt, and restore them to their own land. The third sign given to Moses, in which the water from the Nile when poured upon the ground was to become blood, would not only carry conviction to Israel, but bore special reference to the land of Egypt. The Nile, on which its whole fruitfulness depended, and which the Egyptians worshipped as divine, was to be changed into blood. Egypt and its gods were to be brought low before the absolute power which God would manifest.

These "signs," which could not be gainsaid, were surely sufficient. And yet Moses hesitated. Was he indeed the proper agent for such a work? He possessed not the eloquence whose fire kindles a nation's enthusiasm and whose force sweeps before it all obstacles. And when this objection also was answered by pointing him to the need of direct dependence on Him who could unloose the tongue and open eyes and ears, the secret reluctance of Moses broke forth in the direct request to employ some one else on such a mission. Then it was that "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses." Yet in His tender mercy He pitied and helped the weakness of His servant's faith. For this twofold purpose God announced that even then Aaron was on his way to join him, and

that he would undertake the part of the work for which Moses felt himself unfit. Aaron would be alike the companion and, so to speak, "the prophet" of Moses. (Exodus 7:1) As the prophet delivers the word which he receives, so would Aaron declare the Divine message committed to Moses. "AND MOSES WENT." (Exodus 4:18)

Two points yet require brief explanation at this stage of our narrative. For, first, it would appear that the request which Moses was in the first place charged to address to Pharaoh was only for leave "to go three days journey into the wilderness," whereas it was intended that Israel should for ever leave the land of Egypt. Secondly, a Divine promise was given that Israel should "not go empty," but that God would give the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, and that every woman should "borrow of her neighbor," so that they would "spoil the Egyptians." At the outset, we observe the more than dutiful manner in which Israel was directed to act towards Pharaoh. Absolutely the king, Pharaoh had no right to detain the people in Egypt. Their fathers had avowedly come not to settle, but temporarily "to sojourn," (Genesis 47:4) and on that understanding they had been received. And now they were not only wrongfully oppressed, but unrighteously detained. But still they were not to steal away secretly, nor yet to attempt to raise the standard of rebellion. Nor was the Divine power with which Moses was armed to be at the first employed either in avenging their past wrongs or in securing their liberty. On the contrary, they were to apply to Pharaoh for permission to undertake even so harmless an expedition as a three days pilgrimage into the wilderness to sacrifice unto God - a request all the more reasonable, that Israel’s sacrifices would, from a religious point of view, have been "an abomination" to the Egyptians, (Exodus 8:26) and might have led to disturbances. The same almost excess of regard for Pharaoh prompted that at the first only so moderate a demand should be made upon him. It was infinite condescension to Pharaoh’s weakness, on the part of God, not to insist from the first upon the immediate and entire dismissal of Israel. Less could not have been asked than was demanded of Pharaoh, nor could obedience have been made more easy. Only the most tyrannical determination to crush the rights and convictions of the people, and the most daring defiance of Jehovah, could have prompted him to refuse such a request, and that in face of all the signs and wonders by which the mission of Moses was accredited. Thus at the first his submission was to be tried where it was easiest to render it, and where disobedience would be "without excuse."

There might have been some plea for such a man as Pharaoh to refuse at once and wholly to let those go who had so long been his bondsmen; there could be absolutely none for resisting a demand so moderate and supported by such authority. Assuredly such a man was ripe for the judgment of hardening; just as, on the other hand, if he had at the first yielded obedience to the Divine will, he would surely have been prepared to receive a further revelation of His will, and grace to submit to it. And so God in His mercy always deals with man. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." The demands of God are intended to try what is in us. It was so in the case of Adam’s obedience, of Abraham’s sacrifice, and now of Pharaoh; only that in the latter case. as in the promise to spare Sodom if even ten righteous men were found among its wicked inhabitants, the Divine forbearance went to the utmost verge of condescension. The same principle of government also appears in the New Testament, and explains how the Lord often first told of "earthly things," that unbelief in regard to them might convince men of their unfitness to hear of "heavenly things." Thus the young ruler (Matthew 19:16) who believed himself desirous of inheriting eternal life, and the scribe who

professed readiness to follow Christ, (Matthew 8:19) had each only a test of "earthly things" proposed, and yet each failed in it. The lesson is one which may find its application in our own ease - for only "then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." The second difficulty about the supposed direction to Israel to "borrow jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment," and so to "spoil the Egyptians," (Exodus 3:22) rests upon a simple misunderstanding of the text. Common sense even would indicate that, under the circumstances in which the children of Israel, at the last, left the land, no Egyptian could have contemplated a temporary loan of jewels, soon to be repaid. But, in truth, the word rendered in our Authorized

Version by "borrowing," does not mean a loan and is not used in that sense in a single passage in which it occurs throughout the Old Testament. It always and only means "to ask" or to request." This "request," or "demand" - as, considering the justice of the case, we should call it - was readily granted by the Egyptians. The terror of Israel had fallen on them, and instead of leaving Egypt as fugitives, they marched out like a triumphant host, carrying with them "the spoil" of their Divinely conquered enemies.

It is of more importance to notice another point. Moses was the first to bear a Divine commission to others. He was also the first to work miracles. Miracles present to us the union of the Divine and the human. All miracles pointed forward to the greatest of all miracles, "the mystery of godliness, into which angels desire to look; "the union of the Divine with the human" in its fullest appearance in the Person of the God-Man. Thus in these two aspects of his office, as well as in his mission to redeem Israel from bondage and to sanctify them unto the Lord, Moses was an eminent type of Christ.

"Wherefore" let us "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house - as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Hebrews 3:1-2, Hebrews 3:5-6)

03.02.05. Volume 2, Chapter 05

CHAPTER 5

Moses Returns Into Egypt - The Dismissal Of Zipporah -Moses Meets Aaron - Their Reception By The Children Of Israel - Remarks On The Hardening Of Pharaoh’s Heart

Exodus 15:17-27

SCRIPTURE-HISTORY is full of seemingly strange contrasts. Unintelligible to the superficial observer, the believing heart rejoices to trace in them, side by side, the difference between what appears to the eye of man and what really is before God; and then between the power of God, and the humbleness of the means and circumstances through which He chooses to manifest it. The object of the one is to draw out our faith, and to encourage it in circumstances which least promise success; that of the other, to give all the glory to God, and ever to direct our eye from earth to heaven. So it was, when, in the days of His flesh, neither Israel nor the Gentiles recognized the royal dignity of Christ in Him who entered Jerusalem, "meek, and riding upon an ass and the colt of an ass." And so it also appeared, when, in the simple language of Scripture, "Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an, ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand." (Exodus 4:20)

What a contrast! He who bears in his hand the rod of God is dismissed in this mean manner - his wife and sons, and all their goods laden on one ass, and himself humbly walking by their side! Who would have recognized in this humble guise him who carried that by which he would smite down the pride of Pharaoh and the might of Egypt? On his return from "the mount of God," Moses had simply announced to his father-in-law his purpose of revisiting Egypt Probably Jethro had not sufficient enlightenment for Moses to communicate to him the Divine vision. Besides, the relations between them at the time (as we gather even from the manner in which Jethro allowed him to depart) seem not to have been such as to invite special confidence; possibly, it might have only raised hindrances on the part of Jethro or of Zipporah. But it was an indication that God furthered his way, when alike his father-in-law and his wife so readily agreed to an expedition which, in the circumstances, might have been fraught with great danger. And this was not all. After he had resolved to go, but before he actually set out, God encouraged him by the information that all the men were dead who had sought his life. Again, while on his journey, He gave him threefold strengthening for the work before him. First, He pointed him to the Divine rod in his hand, with which he was to attest by miracles his mission to Pharaoh. (Exodus 4:21) Secondly, lest he should be discouraged by the failure of these signs to secure Pharaoh’s submission, God not only foretold the hardening of the king’s heart, but by saying, "I will harden his heart" (Exodus 4:21), proved that that event also was under His own immediate control and direction. Lastly, in the message which he was to bear to Pharaoh a double assurance was conveyed (Exodus 22:1-23). Jehovah demanded freedom for the people, because "Israel is my son, even my firstborn," and He threatened, in case of Pharaoh’s refusal, "to slay" his "son," even the king’s "firstborn." So terrible a threat was to prove the earnestness of the Divine demand and purpose. On the other hand, the

tide given to Israel implied that God would not leave "His firstborn" in the bondage of Egypt. In the contest with Pharaoh Jehovah would surely prevail. That precious relationship between God and His people, which was fully established in the covenant at Mount Sinai, (Exodus 19:5) might be said to have commenced with the call of Abraham. Israel was "the son of God" by election, by grace, and by adoption (Deuteronomy 32:18; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 3:4; Malachi 1:6; Malachi 2:10) As such, the Lord would never withdraw His love from him, (Hosea 11:1; Jeremiah 31:9-20) but pity him even as a father his children; (Psalms 103:13) and, although He would chasten the people for their sins, yet would He not withdraw His mercy from them. Such a relationship is nowhere else in the Old Testament indicated as subsisting between God and any other nation. But it is exceedingly significant that Israel is only called "the firstborn." For this conveys that Israel was not to be alone in the family of God, but that, in accordance with the promise to Abraham, other sons should be born into the Father’s house. Thus even the highest promise spoken to Israel included in it the assurance of future blessing to the Gentiles. And yet he who was to declare Israel the heir to this precious legacy was himself at the time living in neglect of the sign of that very covenant! His own second son had not been circumcised according to the Divine commandment (Genesis 17:14) - whether from neglect, owing to faith discouraged, or, more probably, as we gather from the subsequent conduct of Zipporah, on account of his wife’s opposition, which in his depressed circumstances he could not overcome. But judgment must begin at the house of God; and no one is fit to be employed as an instrument for God who in any way lives in neglect of His commandments. God met even His chosen servant Moses as an enemy. His life was in imminent danger, and Zipporah had to submit, however reluctantly, to the ordinance of God. But her mood and manner showed that as yet she was not prepared to be Moses’ helpmate in the work before him. He seems to have understood this, and to have sent her and the children back to his father-in-law. Only at a later period, when he had "heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people," did Jethro himself bring them again to Moses. (Exodus 18:1-7)

Thus purged from the leaven of sin, Moses continued his journey. Once more God had anticipated His servant’s difficulties; we might almost say, the fulfillment of His own promises. Already He had directed Aaron "to go into the wilderness to meet Moses." At the mount of God the two brothers met, and Aaron willingly joined the Divine mission of Moses. Arrived in Egypt, they soon "gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel." At hearing of the gracious tidings which Aaron announced, and at sight of "the signs" with which he attested them, it is said, "they bowed their heads and worshipped." Then God had not forsaken His people whom He foreknew! So then, not Moses’ unbelieving fears (Exodus 4:1), but God’s gracious promise (Exodus 3:18), had in this respect also been amply realized. Neither their long stay in Egypt nor their bondage had extinguished their faith in the God of their fathers, or their hope of deliverance. However grievously they might afterwards err and sin, the tidings that "Jehovah had visited" His people came not upon them as strange or incredible. More than that, their faith was mingled with humiliation and worship.

Before we pass to an account of the wonders by which Moses was so soon to prove before Pharaoh the reality of his mission, it may be convenient here briefly to consider a very solemn element in the history of these transactions - we mean, the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart. Not that we can ever hope fully to understand what touches the counsels of God, the administration of His government, the mysterious connection between the creature and the Creator, and the solemn judgments by which He vindicates His power over the rebellious. But a reverent consideration of

some points, taken directly from the text itself, may help us at least, like Israel of old, to "bow our heads and worship." We have already noticed, that before Moses had returned into Egypt, (Exodus 4:21) God had declared of Pharaoh, "I will harden his heart," placing this phase in the foreground, that Moses might be assured of God's overruling will in the matter. For a similar purpose, only much more fully expressed, God now again announced to Moses, before the commencement of the ten plagues, (Exodus 7:3) "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt."

These are the two first statements about the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. In both cases the agency is ascribed to God; but in both cases the event is yet future, and the announcement is only made in order to explain to Moses what his faith almost needed to know.

Twice ten times in the course of this history does the expression hardening occur in connection with Pharaoh. Although in our English version only the word "harden" is used, in the Hebrew original three different terms are employed, of which one (as in Exodus 7:3) literally means to make hard or insensible, the other (as in Exodus 10:1) to make heavy, that is, unimpressionable, and the third (as in Exodus 14:4), to make firm or stiff, so as to be immovable. Now it is remarkable, that of the twenty passages which speak of Pharaoh's hardening, exactly ten ascribe it to Pharaoh himself, and ten to God, and that in both cases precisely the same three terms are used. Thus the making "hard," "heavy," and "firm" of the heart is exactly as often and in precisely the same terms traced to the agency of Pharaoh himself as to that of God. As a German writer aptly remarks, "The effect of the one is the hardening of man to his own destruction; that of the other, the hardening of man to the glory of God."

Proceeding further, we find that, with the exception of the two passages (Exodus 4:21; Exodus 7:3) in which the Divine agency in hardening is beforehand announced to Moses for his instruction, the hardening process is during the course of the actual history, in the first place, traced only to Pharaoh himself. Thus, before the ten plagues, and when Aaron first proved his Divine mission by converting the rod into a serpent, (Exodus 7:10) "the heart of Pharaoh was hardened," that is, by himself (Exodus 7:13-14).

Similarly, after each of the first five plagues (Exodus 7:22; Exodus 8:15; Exodus 8:19; Exodus 8:32; Exodus 9:7) the hardening is also expressly attributed to Pharaoh himself. Only when still resisting after the sixth plague do we read for the first time, that "the Lord made firm the heart of Pharaoh" (Exodus 9:12). But even so, space for repentance must have been left, for after the seventh plague we read again (Exodus 9:34) that "Pharaoh made heavy his heart;" and it is only after the eighth plague that the agency is exclusively ascribed to God. Moreover, we have to consider the progress of this hardening on the part of Pharaoh, by which at last his sin became ripe for judgment. It was not only that he resisted the demand of Moses, even in view of the miraculous signs by which his mission was attested; but that, step by step, the hand of God became more clearly manifest, till at last he was, by his own confession, "inexcusable." If the first sign of converting the rod into a serpent could in a certain manner be counterfeited by the Egyptian magicians, yet Aaron's rod swallowed up theirs (Exodus 7:12). But after the third plague, the magicians themselves confessed their inability to carry on the contest, declaring, "This is the finger of God" (Exodus 8:9). If any doubt had still been left upon his mind, it must have been removed by the evidence presented after the fifth plague (Exodus 9:7), when "Pharaoh sent, and,

behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead." Some of the Egyptians. at least, had profited by this lesson, and on the announcement of the seventh plague housed their cattle from the predicted hail and fire (Exodus 9:20-21). Lastly, after that seventh plague, Pharaoh himself acknowledged his sin and wrong (Exodus 9:27), and promised to let Israel go (Exodus 9:28). Yet after all, on its removal, he once more hardened his heart (Exodus 9:35)! Can we wonder that such high-handed and inexcusable rebellion should have been ripe for the judgment which appeared in the Divine hardening of his heart? Assuredly in such a contest between the pride and daring of the creature and the might of the Lord God, the truth of this Divine declaration had to be publicly manifested:

"Even for this purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth." (Romans 9:17) For the long-suffering and patience of God will not always wait. It is indeed most true, that "God hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he be converted and live;" (Ezekiel 33:11) and that He "will have all men come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved." (1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9) But "he that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and than without remedy." (Proverbs 29:1) The same manifestation of God which to the believing is "a savor of life unto life," is to those who resist it "a savor of death unto death." As one has written, "the sunlight shining upon our earth produces opposite results according to the nature of the soil." In Scripture language: (Hebrews 6:7-8) "the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." Or, as a German writer puts it, "It is the curse of sin that it makes the hard heart ever harder against the gracious drawing of the Divine love, patience, and long-suffering."

Thus they who harden themselves fall at last under the Divine judgment of hardening, with all the terrible consequences which it involves.

Hitherto we have only traced this as it appears in the course of Pharaoh’s history. There are, however, deeper bearings of the question, connected with the Divine dealings, the sovereignty, and the power of God. For such inquiries this is obviously not the place. Suffice it to draw some practical lessons. First and foremost, we learn the insufficiency of even the most astounding miracles to subdue the rebellious will, to change the heart, or to subject a man unto God. Our blessed Lord Himself has said of a somewhat analogous case, that men would not believe even though one rose from the dead. (Luke 16:31) And His statement has been only too amply verified in the history of the world since His own resurrection. Religion is matter of the heart, and no intellectual conviction, without the agency Of the Holy Spirit, affects the inmost springs of our lives. Secondly, a more terrible exhibition of the daring of human pride, the confidence of worldly power, and the deceitfulness of sin than that presented by the history of this Pharaoh can scarcely be conceived. And yet the lesson seems to have been overlooked by too many! Not only sacred history but possibly our own experience may furnish instances of similar tendencies; and in the depths of his own soul each believer must have felt his danger in this respect, for "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Lastly, resistance to God must assuredly end in fearful judgment. Each conviction suppressed, each admonition stifled, each loving offer rejected, tends towards increasing spiritual insensibility, and that in which it ends. It is wisdom and safety to watch for the blessed influences of God’s Spirit, and to throw open our hearts to the

sunlight of His grace.

03.02.06. Volume 2, Chapter 06

CHAPTER 6

Moses And Aaron Deliver Their Message To Pharaoh - Increased Oppression Of Israel - Discouragement Of Moses - Aaron Shows A Sign - General View And Analysis Of Each Of The Ten "Strokes," Or Plagues

Exodus 5:1-23, Exodus 6:1-30, Exodus 7:1-25, Exodus 8:1-32, Exodus 9:1-35, Exodus 10:1-29, Exodus 11:1-10, Exodus 12:1-30 THE predicted trial was soon to come. Provoked through the daring of man, who would measure his strength against that of the living God, it was to establish two facts for all ages and to all mankind. In sight of Egypt (Exodus 7:5) and of Israel (Exodus 10:2) it was to evidence that God was Jehovah, the only true and the living God, far above all power of men and of gods. (Exodus 9:14) This was one aspect of the judgments which were to burst upon Egypt. (Romans 9:17) The other was, that He was the faithful Covenant-God, who remembered His promises, and would bring out His people "with a stretched-out arm and with great judgments," to take them to Himself for a people, and to be to them a God (Exodus 4:1-8). These are the eternal truths which underlie the history of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. How Israel had understood and taught them to their children, appears from many passages of Scripture, especially from Psalms 78:1-72; Psalms 105:1-45. Nor is their application less suited to our wants. It exhibits alike the Law and the Gospel - the severity and the goodness of God - and may be summed up in that grand proclamation unto all the world: "Jehovah reigneth." (Psalms 99:1) The sacred narrative here consists of two parts, the one preparatory, so far as all parties in this history are concerned - Pharaoh, Israel, and Moses; the other describing the successive "signs" in which Jehovah manifested Himself and His power, and by which He achieved both the deliverance of Israel and His judgments upon Pharaoh and Egypt. And here we shall notice successive progress, externally in the character of the Plagues sent by God, and internally in their effect upon Pharaoh and his people. Twice, before the plagues laid low the pride of Egypt, Moses and Aaron had to appear before Pharaoh, once with a simple message (Exodus 5:1-5), the second time both with a message and a sign to attest their mission (Exodus 6:10-13; Exodus 7:8-13). In this also we mark the Divine condescension and goodness. If at the first interview the king could say,

"Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go" (Exodus 5:2), it became impossible to urge this plea, when, at the king's challenge, "Shew a miracle for you" (Exodus 7:9), Aaron's rod was changed into a serpent. This proved beyond doubt that Jehovah was God, and that he had commissioned His servants, since they wielded His power. The only question still possible was, whether the gods whom Pharaoh served were equal to the Lord. For this purpose the king summoned his magicians, who imitated, in a certain way, the miracle of Aaron. But even so, the inferiority of their power was proven when" Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." This assuredly - even taking their own profession of miracle-working - should have been sufficient to indicate to Pharaoh that "Jehovah, He is God" - had his hardness of heart admitted of such conviction. But as between Moses' and Aaron's first

and second interview with Pharaoh important events occurred, it may be well briefly to record them again in their order.

After the first interview, in which Moses and Aaron had simply delivered the Divine command, Pharaoh, who had pleaded ignorance of Jehovah (that is, of His Deity and claims), professed to regard the demand of Moses as a mere pretense to procure a series of holidays for the people. They were "vain words" (Exodus 5:9) "to let the people from their works" (Exodus 5:4). As "the people of the land" - that is, the Israelites, the laboring class - were "many," to "make them rest from their burdens" (Exodus 5:5) would inflict great damage upon the king. To prevent their having either time or inclination to listen to such suggestions, the king ordered that, while the old amount of work should continue to be exacted, the straw needful for making the sun-dried bricks (such as we find on the monuments of Egypt) should no longer be supplied. The time requisite for gathering "stubble instead of straw" prevented, of course, their fulfilling their "daily tasks." The punishment then fell upon the Israelitish "officers," or rather "scribes," whom the Egyptian "taskmasters" had set over the work and held responsible for it. An appeal to Pharaoh only explained the cause of his increased severity, and the "officers" of a people which but lately had acknowledged that God had visited them, not seeing that visitation, but rather seemingly the opposite, ventured in their unbelief to appeal to Jehovah against Moses and Aaron! So rapidly do the results of a faith which cometh only by the hearing of the ear give way before discouragements. As for Moses, the hour of his severest trial had now come. With the words of Israel’s complaint he went straight to the Lord, yet, as St. Augustine remarks, not in the language of contumacy or of anger, but of inquiry and prayer. To his question, "Lord, wherefore hast Thou so evil entreated this people?" (Exodus 5:22) - as so often to our inquiries into God’s "Wherefore" -no reply of any kind was made. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." To us, indeed, the "need be" of making the yoke of Egypt as galling as possible seems now evident, as we remember how the heart of the people clung to the flesh-pots of Egypt, even after they had tasted the heavenly manna; (Numbers 11:1-35) and the yet higher "need be for it," since the lower Israel’s condition and the more tyrannical Pharaoh’s oppression, the more glorious the triumph of Jehovah, and the more complete the manifestation of His enemy’s impotence. But in Moses it only raised once more, at this season of depression, the question of his fitness for the work which he had undertaken. For when Satan cannot otherwise oppose, he calls forth in us unbelieving doubts as to our aptitude or call for a work. The direction which Moses now received from God applies, in principle, to all similar cases. It conveyed a fresh assurance that God would certainly accomplish His purpose; it gave a fuller revelation of His character as Jehovah, with the special promises which this implied (Exodus 6:2-8); and it renewed the commission to Moses to undertake the work, accompanied by encouragements and assurances suitable in the circumstances.

One point here claims special attention, not only on account of the difficulties which it presents to the general reader, but also because its lessons are so precious. When, on the occasion just referred to, God said to Moses (Exodus 6:2-3),

"I am Jehovah and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob in El Shaddai (God Almighty), but as to My name Jehovah was I not known to them," it cannot, of course, mean, that the patriarchs were ignorant of the special designation Jehovah, since it frequently occurs in their history. To understand this passage aright, we must bear in mind the meaning of the expression "name" as applied to God, and that of the term "Jehovah." By the "name of God" we are of course

to understand not a mere appellation of God, but that by which He makes Himself known to man. Now Scripture teaches us that we only know God in so far as He manifests, or reveals Himself. Hence the peculiar name of God indicates the peculiar manner in which He had manifested Himself, or, in other words, the character, of His dealings at the time. Now the character of God's dealings - and therefore His name - was in patriarchal times unquestionably El Shaddai (Genesis 17:1; Genesis 35:11; Genesis 48:3). But His manifestation as Jehovah -the dealings by which, in the sight of all men, He made Himself known as such - belonged not to that, but to a later period. For the term "Jehovah" literally means, "He who is," which agrees with the explanation given by God Himself. "He who is that He is." (Exodus 3:14) As here used, the word "to be" refers not to the essential nature of God, but to His relationship towards man. In that relationship God manifested Himself, and He was known as Jehovah - as "He who is that He is," in other words, as unchangeable - when, after centuries of silence, and after the condition of Israel in Egypt had become almost hopeless, He showed that He had not forgotten His promise given to the fathers, that He had all along been preparing its fulfillment; and that neither the resistance of Pharaoh nor the might of Egypt could stay His hand. Viewed in this light, the distinction between the original El Shaddai manifestation to the patriarchs and the Jehovah knowledge vouchsafed to the children of Israel becomes both clear and emphatic. But to return. The first interview of Moses with Pharaoh had served to determine the relationship of all parties in reference to the Divine command. It had brought out the enmity of Pharaoh, ripening for judgment; the unbelief of Israel, needing much discipline; and even the weakness of Moses. There, at the outset of his work, even as the Lord Jesus at the commencement of His ministry, he was tempted of the adversary, and overcame by the word of God. Yet how great in this also, is the difference between the type and the Antitype!

Still, though hardly fought, the contest was gained, and Moses and Aaron confronted a second time the king of Egypt. On this occasion Aaron, when challenged by Pharaoh, proved his fight to speak in the name of God. He cast down his rod, and it became a serpent, and although "the magicians of Egypt" "did in like manner with their enchantments," the superiority of Aaron appeared when his "rod swallowed up their rods." Without here entering into the general question of magic before the coming of our Lord, or of the power which the devil and his agents may have wielded on earth before our Savior subdued his might, and led captivity captive, there was really nothing in what the Egyptian magicians did that Eastern jugglers do not profess to this day. To make a serpent stiff and to look like a rod, and then again suddenly to restore it to life, are among the commonest tricks witnessed by travelers. St. Paul mentions the names of Jannes and Jambres as those who "withstood Moses," (2 Timothy 3:8) and his statement is not only confirmed by Jewish tradition, but even referred to by the Roman writer Pliny. Both their names are Egyptian, and one of them occurs in an ancient Egyptian document. In this connection it is also important to notice, that the Hebrew term for "the serpent," into which Aaron's rod was changed, is not that commonly used, but bears a more specific meaning. It is not the same term as that for the serpent (nachash) by which Moses was to accredit his mission before his own people, (Exodus 4:3-4) but it indicated the kind of serpent (tannin) specially used by Egyptian conjurers, and bore pointed reference to the serpent as the great symbol of Egypt. Hence also the expression "dragon," which is the proper rendering of the word, is frequently in Scripture used to denote Egypt. (Psalms 74:13; Isaiah 27:1; Isaiah 51:9; Ezekiel 29:3; Ezekiel 32:2) Accordingly Pharaoh should have understood that, when Aaron's rod swallowed up the others, it pointed to the vanquishment of Egypt, and the executing of judgment "against all the gods of Egypt." (Exodus 12:12) Willfully to shut his eyes to

this, and to regard Aaron and Moses as magicians whom his own equaled in power, was to harden his heart, and to call down those terrible plagues which ushered in the final judgment upon Pharaoh and his people.

Before describing in detail the plagues of Egypt, a few general remarks will be helpful to our understanding of the subject.

1. The plagues were miraculous - yet not so much in themselves as in the time, the manner, and the measure in which they came upon Egypt. None of them was wholly unknown in Egypt, but had visited the land at some time or other, and in some measure. As so often, the Lord here employed ordinary natural events. The supernaturalness of the plagues consisted in their severity, their successive occurrence, their coming and going at the word of Moses, their partial extent, and the unusual seasons and manner in which they appeared.

2. We mark in them a regular arrangement and steady progress. Properly speaking, there were only nine plagues (3 X 3), the tenth "stroke" being in reality the commencement of judgment by Jehovah Himself, when He went out "into the midst of Egypt" to slay its firstborn. Of these nine, the first three were in connection with that river and soil which formed the boast of Egypt, and the object of its worship. They extended over the whole country, and at the third the magicians confessed, "This is the finger of God." By them the land was laid low in its pride and in its religion. The other six came exclusively upon the Egyptians, as the Lord had said: "I will put a division between My people and thy people," "to the end that thou mayest know that I am Jehovah in the midst of the land." If the first three plagues had shown the impotence of Egypt, the others proved that Jehovah reigned even in the midst of Egypt. Finally, the three last "strokes" were not only far more terrible than any of the others, but intended to make Pharaoh know "that there is none like Me in all the earth." (Exodus 9:14) To show that Jehovah, He is God, that He was such in the midst of Egypt, and finally, that there was none like Him in the midst of all the earth - or, that Jehovah was the living and the true God - such was the threefold object of these "strokes."

3. In reference to the duration of these strokes, the interval between them, and the length of time occupied by all, we know that the first plague lasted seven days, (Exodus 7:25) and that the killing of the firstborn and the Passover occurred in the night of the fourteenth, Abib (or Nisan), corresponding to about the beginning of April. In reference to the seventh plague (that of the hail), we have this statement to guide us as to its time: (Exodus 9:31-32) the flax and the barley was smitten, for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was boiled (or in blossom). But the wheat and the rice (or rather the spelt) were not smitten: for they were not grown." This would fix the time as about the end of January or the beginning of February, giving an interval of at least eight weeks between the seventh and the tenth stroke, or, if we might take this as an average, of more than two weeks between each plague. Computed at this rate, the first "stroke" would have fallen in September or October, that is, after the cessation of the annual overflow of the Nile. But this seems unlikely, not only because the red coloring ordinarily appears in the river at the commencement of its increase, but because the expressions (Exodus 7:19-21) seem to imply that the river was then at its rise (and not on the decrease), and especially because just before this the Israelites are represented as gathering "stubble" for their bricks, which must have been immediately after the harvest, or about the end of April. Hence it seems more likely (as most interpreters suppose) that the first "stroke" fell upon Egypt about the middle of June, in which case

from the first "plague" an interval of about ten months would have elapsed prior to the slaying of the firstborn. All this time did the Lord deal with Egypt, and Pharaoh was on his trial! There is, as we have already indicated, a terrible irony about "the plagues" of Egypt, since in the things in which Egypt exalted itself it was laid low.

We seem to hear it throughout, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision." (Psalms 2:4) This will appear more clearly as we briefly consider each of the "strokes." The first "stroke," or "Plague." Early in the morning, during the rise of the Nile, Pharaoh went down to the river to offer unto its waters the customary Divine worship. Probably, he was accompanied by his wise men and magicians. Here he was confronted by Moses with the message of God. On his refusal to listen, Moses smote, as he had threatened the waters with the rod of God, and the Nile, in all its branches, canals, cisterns, and reservoirs, becomes red, like blood. Such a change of color in the Nile was by no means uncommon, or Pharaoh would scarcely have quite hardened his heart against the miracle. In ordinary times this appearance of the river arises partly from the red earth, which the swollen waters carry with them, and partly from the presence of small cryptogamic plants and animalcules (infusoria). The supernaturalness of the event lay in its suddenness, in its appearance at the command of Moses, and in the now altered qualities of the water. "The fish that was in the river died" - thus depriving the people of one of the main staples of their food; - "and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river," thus cutting off the main supply of their drink. Somehow the magicians, however, contrived to imitate this miracle, probably on some of the water that had been drawn before "the rod" had smitten the river. And so for seven days, throughout the whole land of Egypt, the blood-like, un-drinkable water in every household "vessel of wood" or of earthenware, and in the large stone troughs which stood for general use in the corners of streets and on village-roads, bore testimony for Jehovah. And the Egyptians had to dig round about the river, that their drinking-water might be filtered for use. But "Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he set his heart to this also." The second "stroke" or "plague" - that of the frogs - was also in connection with the river Nile. At the same time it must be remembered that the frog was also connected with the most ancient forms of idolatry in Egypt, so that what was the object of their worship once more became their curse. Here also a natural occurrence, not uncommon in Egypt, rendered Pharaoh’s unbelief not impossible. After the annual inundation of the Nile the mud not uncommonly produces thousands of frogs - called by the Arabs to this day by the name corresponding to the term used in the Bible. These frogs "are small, do not leap much, are much like toads, and fill the whole country with their croaking. They are rapidly consumed by the, ibis, which thus preserves the land from the stench described in Exodus 8:14. The supernaturalness of the visitation lay in their extraordinary number and troublsomeness (Exodus 8:3), and in their appearance at the bidding of Moses. The magicians here also succeeded in imitating Moses upon a small scale. But apparently they were wholly unable to remove the plague, and Pharaoh had to ask the intercession of Moses, at the same time promising to let the people go. To give the king yet further proof that "the stroke" was not natural but of God, Moses left Pharaoh the option of himself fixing what time he pleased for their removal: "Glory over me: when shall I entreat for thee?" (Exodus 8:9) - that is, let me not fix a time, but let me yield to thee the glory of fixing the exact time for the cessation of the plague. "But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite (literally, enlargement, breathing-space), he made heavy his heart." The third stroke, as always the third in each of the three series of plagues, came unannounced to Pharaoh, and consisted, not exactly of what we call "lice," but rather of a kind of

small insects, scarcely visible, but which penetrate everywhere and cause the most intense inconvenience. Sir S. Baker describes this visitation of vermin, which is not uncommon after the rice-harvest, in almost the words of Scripture: "It is as though the very dust were turned into lice." The "plague" came when Aaron, as directed by God, had smitten the dust of the earth with his rod. As twice before the river, so now the fertile soil, which the Egyptians also worshipped, became their curse. In vain the magicians tried to imitate this miracle. Their power was foiled. But, to neutralize the impression, they "said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of Elohim" (Exodus 8:19) - the result of the power of a God. He has done this. Therefore, being in no way due to Moses and Aaron, it cannot confirm their demand. We are vanquished, yet not by Moses and Aaron, but by a Divine power equally superior to them and to us. Therefore "Pharaoh's heart was hardened" ("made firm" and insensible). And now in the second series of plagues commenced the distinction between the Egyptians and Israel, the latter being exempted from "the strokes," to show that it was not "the finger of Elohim merely," but that He was "Jehovah in the midst of the land" of Egypt (Exodus 8:22). For the same reason, Moses and Aaron were not used as instruments in the fourth and fifth plagues. They were simply announced to Pharaoh by the messengers of Jehovah, but inflicted by God Himself, to show that they came directly from His hand. The fourth stroke consisted of swarms of so-called dog-flies, which not only infested the houses, but "corrupted the land" by depositing everywhere their eggs. This "plague" (Psalms 78:45) is to this day most troublesome, painful, and even dangerous, as these animals fasten upon every uncovered surface, especially the eyelids and comers of the eyes, and their bites cause severe inflammation. it was announced to Pharaoh, as he went to the river early in the morning (Exodus 8:20), as has been suggested, probably "with a procession, in order to open the solemn festival which was held one hundred and twenty days after the first rise" of the Nile (i.e. about the end of October or early in November). Although it wrung from Pharaoh consent for the people to go, yet on its removal, "he hardened his heart at this time also" - perhaps because in this and the next plague he did not see the instrumentality of Moses, and therefore fell back upon the theory of the magicians about "the finger of Elohim." The fifth stroke was a very grievous murrain (not uncommon in Egypt, which has been supposed to have been of the same kind as the "cattle-plague" in our own country, only far more extensive. But although Pharaoh ascertained, by special inquiry, that Israel had been exempted from this plague, his heart was hardened. The sixth stroke was again made to descend by the instrumentality of Moses and Aaron. As the third in the second series, it came without any warning to the king. Moses and Aaron were directed to take "ashes of the furnace" - probably in reference to the great buildings and pyramids in which Egypt took such pride - and to "sprinkle it up towards heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast" (Exodus 9:10). Such "burning turnouts breaking into pustulous ulcers," but exclusively confined to man, are not uncommon in the valley of the Nile. Even the magicians seem now to have yielded (Exodus 9:11), but the judgment of hardening had already come upon Pharaoh. The sixth plague had struck not only the pride and the possessions of the Egyptians, but their persons. But the three which now followed in rapid succession, stroke upon stroke, were far more terrible than any that had preceded, and indeed represented "all" God's "plagues" (Exodus 9:14). They were ushered in by a most solemn warning, unheeded by him who was nigh unto destruction (Exodus 9:15-18). The reason why God did not at once destroy Pharaoh and his people is thus stated by the Lord Himself:

(Exodus 9:15-16) "For now if I had stretched forth My hand and smitten thee and thy people with the pestilence, then hadst thou been cut off from the earth. But now, in very deed for this cause have I let thee stand (made thee stand, raised thee up), (Romans 9:17) for to show in thee My power (perhaps, to let thee see or experience it - this is the first reason; the second) and that My Name may be declared throughout all the earth." That this actually was the result we gather from Exodus 15:14. Nay, the tidings spread not only among the Arabs, but long afterwards among the Greeks and Romans, and finally, through the Gospel, among all nations of the earth.

Only one day for thought and repentance was granted to Pharaoh (Exodus 9:18) before the seventh stroke descended. It consisted of such hail as had never been seen in Egypt, mingled with thunder and fiery lightning. The cattle in Egypt are left out to graze from January to April, and such of the Egyptians as gave heed to the warning of Moses withdrew their cattle, and servants into shelter, and so escaped the consequences; the rest suffered loss of men and beasts. That some "among the servants of Pharaoh" "feared the word of Jehovah" (Exodus 9:20) affords evidence of the spiritual effect of these "strokes." Indeed Pharaoh himself now owned, "I have sinned this time" (Exodus 9:27). But this very limitation, and the hardening of his heart when the calamity ceased, show that his was only the fear of consequences, and, as Moses had said, "that ye will not yet fear Jehovah Elohim" (Exodus 9:30). A very decided advance is to be marked in connection with the eighth stroke. For Moses and Aaron, on the ground of Pharaoh’s former confession of sin, brought this message from God to him: "How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before Me?" (Exodus 10:3)

Similarly, "Pharaoh’s servants," warned by previous judgments, now expostulated with the king (Exodus 10:7), and he himself seemed willing to let the male Israelites go for a short season, provided they left their families and flocks behind. On the other hand, the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart had also so far advanced, that, on Moses’ refusal to submit to conditions, the king burst into such daring taunts as (Exodus 10:10-11): "So be it! Jehovah be with you as I will let go you and your little ones. Look! for evil is before your faces" (i.e. your intentions are evil; or, perhaps, it may be rendered. See to it! for beware, danger is before you). "Not so! Go then, ye men, for that ye are seeking" (the language evidently ironical). And they were driven out from Pharaoh’s presence. And thus it came, that when "Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, Jehovah brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning the east wind brought the locusts." Once more they were natural means which the Lord used. For the plague of locusts was common in Egypt; yet even the heathen used to regard this as a special visitation of God. In Scripture it serves as the emblem of the last judgments coming upon our earth. (Revelation 9:3-10) This "plague," so much dreaded at all times, came now slowly, from far-off Arabia, upon the doomed land, more grievous than such visitation had ever been known, and to the utter destruction of every green thing still left in Egypt - Goshen alone being again excepted. Pharaoh felt it, and for the first time not only confessed his sin, but asked forgiveness, and entreated that "this death" might be taken away (Exodus 10:16-17). Not for want of knowledge, then, did Pharaoh harden himself after that. Yet now also it was not repentance, but desire for removal of "this death," that had influenced Pharaoh. No sooner had his request been granted, than his rebellion returned.

Once more unannounced came the ninth stroke, more terrible than any that had preceded. A thick darkness covered the whole land, except Goshen. There was this peculiar phenomenon about it,

that, not only were the people unable to see each other, but "neither rose any from his place for three days." It was literally, as Scripture has it, a "darkness which might be felt" - the darkness of a great sand-storm, such as the Chamsin or south-west wind sometimes brings in early spring, only far more severe, intense, and long. Let us try to realize the scene. Suddenly and without warning would the Chamsin rise, The air, charged with electricity, draws up the fine dust and the coarser particles of sand till the light of the sun is hid, the heavens are covered as with a thick veil, and darkness deepens into such night that even artificial light is of no avail. And the floating dust and sand enter every apartment, pervade every pore, find their way even through closed windows and doors. Men and beasts make for any kind of shelter, seek refuge in cellars and out-of-the-way places from the terrible plague. And so, in utter darkness and suffering, three weary nights and long days pass, no one venturing to stir from his hiding. Once more, Pharaoh now summoned Moses. This time he would let all the people go, if only they would leave their flocks behind as pledge of their return. And when Moses refused the condition, the king "said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself; see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die" (Exodus 10:28).

It was a challenge which sounded not strange in Moses' ears, for before this interview God had informed him what would happen, and directed that Israel should prepare to leave. And Moses now took up the kings challenge, and foretold how after those terrible three days darkness "at midnight," Jehovah Himself would "go out into the midst of Egypt," and smite every firstborn of man and beast. Then would rise through the night a great lamentation over the land, from the chamber of the palace, where Pharaoh's only son lay a-dying, to that of the hut where the lowliest maidservant watched the ebbing tide of her child's life. But in Goshen all these three days was light and festive joy. For while thick darkness lay upon Egypt, the children of Israel, as directed by God, had already on the tenth of the month - four days before the great night of woe - selected their Paschal lambs, and were in waiting for their deliverance. And alike the darkness and the light were of Jehovah - the one symbolical of His judgments, the other of His favor.

03.02.07. Volume 2, Chapter 07

CHAPTER 7 The Passover And Its Ordinances - The Children Of Israel Leave Egypt - Their First Resting-Place The Pillar Of Cloud And Of Fire - Pursuit Of Pharaoh Passage Through The Red Sea - Destruction Of Pharaoh And His Host - The Song "On The Other Side."

Exodus 12:1-51, Exodus 13:1-22, Exodus 14:1-31, Exodus 15:1-21

EVERY ordinance had been given to Israel about the Paschal feast, and observed by them. On the tenth day of the month, Abib (the month of ears, so called, because in it the ears of wheat first appear), or, as it was afterwards called, Nisan, (Esther 3:7; Nehemiah 2:1) the "Passover" sacrifice was chosen by each household. This was four days before the "Passover" actually took place - most probably in remembrance of the prediction to Abraham, (Genesis 15:16) that "in the fourth generation" the children of Israel should come again to the land of Canaan. The sacrifice might be a lamb or a kid of goats, but it must be "without blemish, a male of the first year." Each lamb or kid should be just sufficient for the sacrificial meal of a company, so that if a family were too small, it should join with another. The sacrifice was offered "between the evenings" by each head of the company, the blood caught in a basin, and some of it "struck" "on the two side-posts and the upper door-post of the houses" by means of "a branch of hyssop." The latter is not the hyssop with which we are familiar, but most probably the caper, which grows abundantly in Egypt, in the desert of Sinai, and in Palestine. In ancient times this plant was regarded as possessing cleansing properties. The direction, to sprinkle the entrance, meant that the blood was to be applied to the house itself, that is, to make atonement for it, and in a sense to convert it into an altar. Seeing this blood, Jehovah, when He passed through to smite the Egyptians, would "pass over the door," so that it would "not be granted the destroyer to come in" unto their dwellings. (Exodus 12:23) Thus the term "Passover," or Pascha, literally expresses the meaning and object of the ordinance.

While all around the destroyer laid waste every Egyptian household, each company within the blood-sprinkled houses of Israel was engaged in the sacrificial meal. This consisted of the Paschal lamb, and "unleavened bread with," or rather "upon, bitter herbs," as if in that solemn hour of judgment and deliverance they were to have set before them as their proper meal the symbol of all the bitterness of Egypt, and upon it the sacrificial lamb and unleavened bread to sweeten and to make of it a festive supper. For everything here was full of deepest meaning. The sacrificial lamb, whose sprinkled blood protected Israel, pointed to Him whose precious blood is the only safety of God’s people; the hyssop (as in the cleansing of the leper, and of those polluted by death, and in Psalms 51:7) was the symbol of purification; and the unleavened bread that "of sincerity and truth," in the removal of the "old leaven" which, as the symbol of corruption, pointed to "the leaven of malice and wickedness." (1 Corinthians 5:7-8) More than that, the spiritual teaching extended even to details. The lamb was to be "roast," neither eaten "raw," or rather not properly cooked (as in the haste of leaving), nor yet "sodden with water" - the latter because nothing of it was to pass into the water, nor the water to mingle with it, the lamb and the lamb alone being the food of the sacrificial company. For a similar reason it was to be roasted and served up whole - complete, without break

or division, not a bone of it being broken, (Exodus 12:46) just as not even a bone was broken of Him who died for us on the cross. (John 19:33-36) And this undividedness of the Lamb pointed not only to the entire surrender of the Lord Jesus, but also to our undivided union and communion in and with Him. (1 Corinthians 10:17) So also none of this lamb was to be kept for another meal, but that which had not been used must be burnt. Lastly, those who gathered around this meal were not only all Israelites, but must all profess their faith in the coming deliverance; since they were to sit down to it with loins girded, with shoes on their feet and a staff in their hand, as it were, awaiting the signal of their redemption, and in readiness for departing from Egypt. A nobler spectacle of a people's faith can scarcely be conceived than when, on receiving these ordinances, "the people bowed the head and worshipped" (Exodus 12:27). Any attempt at description either of Israel's attitude or of the scenes witnessed when the Lord, passing through the land "about midnight," smote each firstborn from the only son of Pharaoh to the child of the maidservant and the captive, and even the firstborn of beasts, would only weaken the impression of the majestic silence of Scripture. Such things cannot be described - at least otherwise than by comparison with what is yet to follow. Suffice then, that it was a fit emblem of another "midnight," when the cry shall be heard: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." (Matthew 25:6) In that midnight hour did Jehovah execute "judgment against all the gods of Egypt," (Exodus 12:12) showing, as Calvin rightly remarks, how vain and false had been the worship of those who were now so powerless to help. That was also the night of Israel's birth as a nation "of their creation and adoption as the people of God." (Isaiah 43:15) Hence the very order of the year was now changed. The month of the Passover(Abib) became henceforth the first of the year. The Paschal supper was made a perpetual institution, with such new rules as to its future observance as would suit the people when settled in the land; and its observance was to be followed by a "feast of unleavened bread," lasting for seven days, when all leaven should be purged out of their households.

Finally, the fact that God had so set Israel apart in the Paschal night and redeemed them to Himself, was perpetuated in the injunction to "sanctify" unto the Lord "all the firstborn both of man and of beast." (Exodus 13:1-7) When at last this "stroke" descended upon Egypt, Pharaoh hastily called for Moses and Aaron. In that night of terror he dismissed the people unconditionally, only asking that, instead of the curse, a "blessing" might be left behind (Exodus 12:32).

"And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people that they might send them out of the land in haste, for they said, We be all dead men." Ere the morning had broken, the children of Israel were on their march from Rameses, around which most of them had probably been congregated. Their "army" consisted in round numbers of "600,000 on foot - men, beside children" (Exodus 12:37), or, as we may compute it, with women and children, about two millions. This represents a by no means incredible increase during the four hundred and thirty years that had elapsed since their settlement in Egypt, even irrespective of the fact that, as Abraham had had three hundred and eighteen "trained servants born in his own 73 house," (Genesis 14:14) and therefore afterwards circumcised (Genesis 17:13), whom he could arm against the invaders of Sodom, so the sons of Jacob must have brought many with them who were afterwards incorporated in the nation. With these two millions of Israelites also went up a mixed multitude of varied descent, drawn in the wake of God's people by the signs and wonders so lately witnessed - just as a mixed crowd still follows after every great spiritual movement, a source of hindrance rather than of help to it, (Numbers 11:4) ever continuing strangers, and at most only fit to act as "hewers of wood and

drawers of water." (Deuteronomy 29:11) But a precious legacy of faith did Israel bear, when they took with them out of Egypt the bones of Joseph, (Exodus 13:19) which all those centuries had waited for the fulfillment of God’s promise. As Calvin aptly writes: "In all those times of adversity the people could never have forgotten the promised redemption. For if, in their communings, the oath which Joseph had made their fathers swear had not been remembered, Moses could in no wise have been aware of it." Such a sight had never been witnessed in the land of Egypt as when the nation, so delivered, halted for their first night-quarters at Succoth, or, "booths." The locality of this and the following station, Etham, cannot be exactly ascertained; nor is this the place to discuss such questions. Succoth may have been fixed upon as the general rendezvous of the people, while at Etham they had reached "the edge of the wilderness," which divides Egypt from Palestine. The straight road would have brought them shortly into the land of the Philistines, face to face with a warlike race, against which even Egypt could often scarcely stand. Of course they would have contested the advance of Israel. To such test God in His mercy would not expose a people so unprepared for it, as was Israel at that time. Accordingly, they were directed to "turn" southward, and march to "Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea," where they were to encamp.

Two events, as we understand it, marked Etham, the second stage of their journey. It was apparently here, at the edge of the wilderness, (Exodus 13:21) that Jehovah first "went before" His people "by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and night," that is, to enable them at all times to march onward. In Exodus 13:17-18, we read that "God (Elohim) led the people," but now Jehovah, as it were, took command (Exodus 13:21), and, by a sensible sign of His Presence, ensured their safety. This pillar was at the same time one "of fire and of the cloud" (Exodus 14:24), "of light" and "of cloud and darkness" (Exodus 14:20). Ordinarily, by day only the cloud was visible, but by night the fire, which the cloud had enwrapped, shone out. (Numbers 9:15-16) In this cloud Jehovah was visibly present in the "Angel" of the covenant; (Exodus 14:19) there the glory of Jehovah appeared (Exodus 16:10; Exodus 40:34 hew:34 hew:34; Numbers 16:42); thence He spoke to Moses and to Israel; and this was the Shechinah, or visible Presence, which afterwards rested upon the Most Holy Place. And this pledge and symbol of His visible Presence appears once more in the description of the last days, only then "upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion." (Isaiah 4:5)

Secondly, it was probably from Etham, as they turned southwards, that tidings were carried to Pharaoh, which made him hope that Israel had, by this sudden backward movement, "entangled" themselves as in a net, and would fall a ready prey to his trained army. (Exodus 14:2-4) Perhaps now also, for the first time, he realized that the people had "fled" (Exodus 14:5) -not merely gone for a few days to offer sacrifice, as they might have done, close by Etham, but left entirely and forever. The sacred text does not necessarily imply that from Etham to Pi-hahiroth there was only one day’s march. Indeed, opinions as to the exact locality of each of the stages to the Red Sea are still divided, though the general route is sufficiently ascertained. While Israel thus pursued their journey, Pharaoh quickly gathered his army, the principal strength of which lay in its "six hundred chosen chariots." Each of these was drawn by two fiery, trained horses, and contained two warriors, one bearing the shield and driving, the other fully armed. A most formidable array it would have been under any circumstances; much more so to an untrained multitude, encumbered with women and children, and dispirited by centuries of slavery to those very Egyptians, the flower of whose army they now saw before them.

It must have been as the rays of the setting sun were glinting upon the war chariots, that the Israelites first descried the approach of Pharaoh's army. It followed in their track, and came approaching them from the north. There was no escape in that direction. Eastward was the sea; to the west and south rose mountains. Flight was impossible; defense seemed madness. Once more the faith of Israel signally failed, and they broke into murmuring against Moses. But the Lord was faithful. What now took place was not only to be the final act of sovereign deliverance by God's arm alone, nor yet merely to serve ever afterwards as a memorial by which Israel's faith might be upheld, but also to teach, by the judgments upon Egypt, that Jehovah was a righteous and holy Judge.

There are times when even prayer seems unbelief, and only to go forward in calm assurance is duty. "Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." Yet this forward movement was to be made only after Moses had stretched the rod of God over the sea, and the Angel of the Lord gone behind the host, casting the light of the pillar upon Israel's path, while, with the darkness of the cloud, he kept Egypt apart from them. Then blew the "strong east wind all that night," as never it had swept across those water before. They divided, and formed on each side a wall, between which Israel passed dry-shod. When the host of Egypt reached the seashore, night had probably fallen, and the Israelites were far advanced on the dry bed of the sea. Their position would be seen by the fire from the cloud which threw its light upon the advancing multitude. To follow where they had dared to go, seemed dictated by military honor, and victory within easy reach. Yet, read in the light of what was to follow, it sounds like Divine irony that "the Egyptians pursued and went in after them in the midst of the sea." And so the long night passed. The gray morning light was breaking on the other side of the waters, when a fiercer sun than that about to rise on the horizon east its glare upon the Egyptians. "Jehovah looked unto" them "through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians." It was the fire of His Divine Presence, bursting suddenly through the pillar of the cloud, which threw them into confusion and panic. The wheels of their chariots became clogged, the sand beneath them seemed to soften under the fiery glow, and they drave heavily. With that light from the fiery cloud, the conviction flashed upon them that it was Jehovah who fought for Israel and against them. They essayed immediate flight. But already Moses had, at God's command, once more stretched his hand over the sea. In that morning watch, the wind veered round; the waters returned, and Pharaoh, with the flower of his host, sank, buried beneath the waves. Thus, in the language of Scripture, "Jehovah shook off the Egyptians in the midst of the sea." (Exodus 14:27)

Incidental confirmations of this grand event are not wanting. Throughout the Old Testament, it is constantly appealed to, and forms, so to speak, the foundation on which God rests His claim upon His people. Local tradition also has preserved its memory. Nor has anything yet been urged to shake our faith in the narrative. Although the exact spot of the passage through the Red Sea is matter of discussion, yet all are agreed that it must have taken place near Suez, and that the conditions are such as to make it quite possible for the host of Israel to have safely crossed during that night. Moreover, it is a curious fact, illustrating the history of Pharaoh's overthrow, that, according to Egyptian documents, seventeen years elapsed after the death of Thothmes II (whom we regard as the Pharaoh of this narrative) before any Egyptian expedition was undertaken into the Peninsula of Sinai, and twenty-two years before any attempt was made to recover the power over Syria which Egypt seems to have lost. And thus, also, it was that Israel could safely pursue

their march through the wilderness, which had hitherto been subject to the Egyptians. But Moses and the children of Israel sang on the other side of the sea a song of thanksgiving and triumph, which, repeated every Sabbath in the Temple, when the drink-offering of the festive sacrifice was poured out, reminded Israel that to all time the kingdom was surrounded by the hostile powers of this world; that there must always be a contest between them; and that Jehovah would always Himself interpose to destroy His enemies and to deliver His people. Thus that great event is really not solitary, nor yet its hymn without an echo. For all times it has been a prophecy, a comfort, and a song of anticipated sure victory to the Church. And so at the last, they who stand on the "sea of glass mingled with fire," who have "gotten the victory," and have "the harps of God," "sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb."

03.02.08. Volume 2, Chapter 08

THE WANDERINGS IN THE WILDERNESS

CHAPTER 8 The Wilderness Of Shur - The Sinaitic Peninsula - Its Scenery And Vegetation - Its Capabilities Of Supporting A Population - The Wells Of Moses -Three Days March To Marah - Elim Road To The Wilderness Of Sin - Israel's Murmuring - The Miraculous Provision Of The Quails - The Manna Exodus 15:22; Exodus 16:1-36 WITH the song of triumph on the other side the sea, the first part of the Book of Exodus ends. Israel has now become a nation. God has made it such by a twofold deliverance. He has, so to speak, "created" it for Himself. It only remains that this new-born people of God shall be consecrated to Him at the mount. And the second part of Exodus describes their wilderness-journey to Sinai, and their consecration there unto God. In this also it may serve to us as the pattern of heavenly things on our passage through the wilderness to the mount. As Israel looked in the morning light across the now quiet sea, into which Jehovah had so lately shaken the pursuers of His people, their past danger must have seemed to them greater than ever. Along that defile, the only practicable road, their enemies had followed them. Assuredly the sea was the only pathway of safety to them, and in that sea they had been baptized unto Moses, and unto Moses' God. And now, as they turned towards the wilderness, there seemed to stand before them, and to extend all along their line of vision, east and north, a low range of bare limestone hills, that bounded the prospect, rising like a wall. Accordingly they called this the wilderness of Shur, or of "the wall." (Exodus 15:22) This then was the wilderness, fresh, free, and undisputed! But this also was that "great and terrible wilderness," so full of terror, danger, and difficulty, (Deuteronomy 8:15; Deuteronomy 32:10) through which they must now pass. Under the shadow of that mass of rocky peaks, along the dry torrent-beds which intersect them, through the unbroken stillness of that scenery, of which grandeur and desolateness are the characteristics, led their way. A befitting road to such a sanctuary as Sinai! But what contrast in all around to the Egypt they had left behind only a few hours! When we think of the desert through which Israel journeyed, we must not picture to ourselves a large, flat, sandy tract, wholly incapable of cultivation. In fact it is in almost every particular quite the contrary. That tract of land which bears the name of the Peninsula of Sinai, extends between the Gulf of Suez on the west, and that of Akaba (or the Persian Gulf) on the east. Its configuration is heart-shaped, the broader part lying towards Palestine, the narrower, or apex, stretching southwards into the sea. It really consists of three distinct portions. The northern, called the Wilderness of Tih, or, "of the Wandering," is pebbly, high table-land, the prevailing color being that of the gray limestone. Next comes a broad belt of sandstone and yellow sand, the only one in the desert of the Exodus. To the south of it, in the apex of the peninsula, lies the true Sinaitic range. This portion bears the name of the Tor, and consists in the north chiefly of red sandstone, and in the center of red granite and green porphyry. The prevailing character of the scenery is that of an irregular mass of mountains, thrown together in wild confusion. The highest peak rises to about 9,000 feet. Between these wind what seem, and really are, torrent-beds, filled, perhaps, for a very short time in winter, but generally quite dry. These are called Wadies, and they form the highway through the wilderness. Here and there,

where either a living spring rises, or the torrent has left its marks, or where the hand of man is at work, cultivated patches, fair and fruitful, are found; palm-trees spring up, even gardens and fields, and rich pasture ground. But, generally, the rocky mountain-sides are bare of all vegetation, and their bright coloring gives the scenery its peculiar character. The prevailing tints are red and green; but this is varied by what seems a purple, rose, or crimson-colored stream poured down the mountain side, while, occasionally, the green of the porphyry deepens into black. Over all this, unbroken silence prevails, so that the voice is heard in the pure air at extraordinary distances. Besides the cultivated or fruitful spots already mentioned, and tiny rock-flowers, and aromatic herbs, the vegetation of the wilderness consists chiefly of the caper-plant, the hyssop of the Bible, which springs from the clefts of the rocks and hangs down in gay festoons; the "thorn," a species of acacia; another species of the same tree, the Shittim-wood of Scripture, of which the framework of the Tabernacle was made; the white broom, or juniper of Scripture; and the tamarisk, which, at certain seasons of the year, produces the natural manna. This leads us to say, that it were a mistake to suppose that the wilderness offered no means of support to those who inhabited it. Even now it sustains a not inconsiderable population, and there is abundant evidence that, before neglect and ravages had brought it to its present state, it could, and did, support a very much larger number of people. There were always Egyptian colonies engaged in working its large copper, iron, and turquoise mines, and these settlers would have looked well to its springs and cultivated spots. Nor could the Israelites, any more than the modern Bedouin, have had difficulty in supporting, in the desert, their numerous herds and flocks. These would again supply them with milk and cheese, and occasionally with meat. We know from Scripture that, at a later period, the Israelites were ready to buy food and water from the Edomites, (Deuteronomy 2:6) and they may have done so from passing caravans as well. Similarly, we gather from such passages as Leviticus 8:2, Leviticus 8:26, Leviticus 8:31; Leviticus 9:4; Leviticus 10:12; Leviticus 24:5; Numbers 7:13, and others, that they must have had a supply of flour, either purchased, or of their own sowing and reaping, during their prolonged stay in certain localities, just as the modern Bedouin still cultivate what soil is fit for it.

Such was the wilderness on which Israel now entered. During the forty years that Moses had tended the flocks of Jethro, its wadies and peaks, its pastures and rocks must have become well known to him. Nor could the Israelites themselves have been quite ignorant of its character, considering the constant connection between Egypt and the desert. We are therefore the more disposed to attach credit to those explorers who have tried to ascertain what may have been the most likely route taken by the children of Israel. This has of late years been made the subject of investigation by scholars thoroughly qualified for the task. Indeed, a special professional survey has been made of the Desert of Sinai. The result is, that most of the stations on the journey of Israel have been ascertained, while, in reference to the rest, great probability attaches to the opinion of the explorers. The first camping-place was, no doubt, the modern Ayun Musa (Wells of Moses), about half an hour from the sea-shore. Even now the care of the foreign consuls has made this a most pleasant green and fresh summer retreat. One of the latest travelers has counted nineteen wells there, and the clumps of palm-trees afford a delightful shade. There is evidence that, at the time of Moses, the district was even more carefully cultivated than now, and its water-supply better attended to. Nor is there any doubt as to the next stage in Israel’s wilderness-journey. The accounts of travelers quite agree with the narrative of the Bible. Three days’ journey over pebbly ground through desert wadies, and at last among bare white and black

limestone hills, with nothing to relieve the eye except, in the distance, the "shur," or wall of rocky mountain which gives its name to the desert, would bring the weary, dispirited multitude to the modern Hawwarah, the "Marah" of the Bible. Worse than fatigue and depression now oppressed them, for they began to suffer from want of water. For three days they had not come upon any spring, and their own supplies must have been well-nigh exhausted. When arrived at Hawwarah they found indeed a pool, but, as the whole soil is impregnated with nitre, the water was bitter (Marah) and unfit for use. Luther aptly remarks that, when our provision ceases, our faith is wont to come to an end. It was so here. The circumstances seemed indeed hopeless. The spring of Hawwarah is still considered the worst on the whole road to Sinai, and no means have ever been suggested to make its waters drinkable. But God stilled the murmuring of the people, and met their wants by a miraculous interposition. Moses was shown a tree which he was to cast into the water, and it became sweet. Whether or not it was the thorny shrub which grows so profusely at Hawwarah, is of little importance. The help came directly from heaven, and the lesson was twofold.

"There He made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He proved them." (Exodus 15:25) The "statute," or principle, and "the ordinance," or fight, was this, that in all seasons of need and seeming impossibility the Lord would send deliverance straight from above, and that Israel might expect this during their wilderness-journey. This "statute" is, for all times, the principle of God’s guidance, and this "ordinance" the right or privilege of our heavenly citizenship. But He also ever "proves" us by this, that the enjoyment of our right and privilege is made to depend upon a constant exercise of faith. From Hawwarah, or Marah, a short march would bring Israel to a sweet and fertile spot, now known as Waddy Gharandel, the Elim of Scripture, "where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees; and they encamped there by the waters." This spot was suitable for a more lengthened encampment. In point of fact, we find that quite a month passed before their next stage in the wilderness of Sin. (Exodus 16:1) Even now this valley, watered by a perennial stream, has rich pasturage for cattle, and many shrubs and trees. Here, and in the neighborhood, the flocks and herds would find good sustenance, and the people rest. Leaving Elim, the character of the scenery changes. Instead of dreary level plains of sand, as hitherto, we are now entering among the mountains, and the bright green of the caper-plant forms a striking contrast to the red sandstone of the rocks. Hitherto the route of Israel had been directly southward, and in pursuing it, they had successively skirted the Tih, and near Elim a belt of sand. But now the host was to enter on the Sinaitic range itself. From Numbers 33:10, we know that from Elim their journey first brought them again to the shore of the "Sea of Weeds." The road which they would follow would be from Wady Gharandel through the Wady Taiyebeh, in a south westerly direction. Here the sandstone again gives place to chalk hills and rocks. Where the road descends to the sea (at Ras Abu Zenimeh) it would touch, probably, the most dreary, flat, and desolate place in the whole wilderness. This spot was the next camping-ground of the children of Israel after Elim. From the shore of the Red Sea the next halting-place brought them into the Wilderness of Sin itself. (Numbers 33:11) That name applies to the whole extensive sandy plain, which runs along the shore of the Red Sea, from the camping-place of Israel to the southern end of the Sinaitic Peninsula. On leaving the Wilderness of Sin, (Numbers 33:12-14) we read of two stations, Dophkah and, Alush, before the Israelites reached Rephidim. The Wilderness of Sin, the modern El Markha, is a dreary, desolate tract, which obtains its name from a long ridge of white chalk hills. In this inhospitable desert, the provisions which Israel had brought from Egypt, and which had now

lasted a month, began to fail. Behind them, just above the range of chalk cliffs, they would see, in the distance, the purple streaks of those granite mountains which form the proper Sinaitic group. To the west lay the sea, and across it, in the dim mist, they could just descry the rich and fertile Egypt, which they had for ever left behind. Once more their unbelief broke forth. True, it was only against Moses that their murmurs rose. But in reality their rebellion was against God. To show this, and thereby "to prove them, whether they would walk in the law of God or no," (Exodus 16:4) that is, follow Him implicitly, depending upon, and taking such provision as He sent, and under the conditions that He dispensed it, God would now miraculously supply their wants. Bread and meat would be given them, both directly sent from God, yet both so given that, while unbelief was inexcusable, it should still be possible. To show the more clearly that these dealings were from the Lord, they were bidden "come near before Jehovah," and "behold the glory of Jehovah," as it "appeared in the cloud." (Exodus 16:9-10) That Presence ought to have prevented their murmuring, or rather changed it into prayer and praise. And so it always is, that, before God supplies our wants, He shows us that His presence had been near, and He reveals His glory. That Presence is in itself sufficient; for no good thing shall be wanting to them that trust in Him. As evening gathered around the camp, the air became darkened. An extraordinary flight of quails, such as at that season of the year passes northward from the warmer regions of the interior, was over the camp. It is a not uncommon occurrence that, when wearied, these birds droop and settle down for rest, so as to be easily clubbed with sticks, and even caught by the hand. The miraculousness chiefly consisted in the extraordinary number, the seasonable arrival, and the peculiar circumstances under which these quails came. But greater wonder yet awaited them on the morrow. While passing through the Wady Gharandel they might have observed that the tamarisk, when pricked by a small insect, exuded drops of white, sweet, honey-like substance, which melted in the sun. This was the natural manna (a name perhaps derived from the Egyptian), which, in certain districts, is found from the middle of May to about the end of July. But "can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" Can He command the clouds from above, and open the doors of heaven? Can He rain down manna upon them to eat? That would indeed be to give them of the corn of heaven! Truly, this were angels' food, the provision, direct from God, "the bread of heaven!" (Psalms 78:19-27; Psalms 105:40) The Lord did this, and far more. As in the evening, He had "caused an east wind to blow in the heavens; and by His power He brought in the south wind; He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea, so, in the morning, as the dew that had lain rose in white vapor, and was carried towards the blue sky, there lay on the face of the ground "a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost." "It was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." (Exodus 16:21) The children of Israel said, Manna! What is that? It was manna, and yet it was not manna; not the manna which the wilderness produced, and yet in some respects like it; it was the manna from heaven, the bread which God gave them to eat. Thus it recalls our present condition. We are in the wilderness, yet not of the wilderness; our provision is like the wilderness food, yet not the wilderness manna; but, above all, it is sent us directly from God.

Such assuredly must have been the lessons which Israel was, and which we to this day are, called to learn. The very resemblance in some points of the natural to the heaven-sent manna would suggest a truth. But the difference between them was even greater and more patent than their likeness. On this point let there be no mistake. Israel could never have confounded the heaven-sent with the natural manna. The latter is seen in but a few districts of the desert, and only

at certain seasons at most during three months; it is produced by the prick of an insect from the tamarisks; it is not the least like coriander-seed; nor yet capable of being baked or seethed (Exodus 16:23); and the largest produce for a whole year throughout the Peninsula amounts to about 700 lbs., and would therefore not have sufficed to feed the host of Israel even for one day, far less at all seasons and during all the years of their wanderings! And so, in measure, it is still with the provision of the believer. Even the "daily bread" by which our bodies are sustained, and for which we are taught to pray, is, as it were, manna sent us directly from heaven. Yet our provision looks to superficial observers as in so many respects like the ordinary manna, that they are apt to mistake it, and that even we ourselves in our unbelief too often forget the daily dispensation of our bread from heaven.

There is yet another point in which the miraculous provision of the manna, continued to Israel during all the forty years of their wilderness-journey, resembles what God’s provision to us is intended to be. The manna was so dispensed that "he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating." (Exodus 16:18) For this marks the true purpose of God’s giving to us, whichever interpretation of the verse just quoted we adopt’ whether we regard it as describing the final result of each man’s work, that, however much or little he had gathered, it was found, when measured, just sufficient for his want; or understand it to mean that all threw into a common store what they had gathered, and that each took from it what he needed. By two other provisions did God sanctify His daily gift. First, the manna came not on the Sabbath. The labor of the previous day provided sufficient to supply the wants of God’s day of holy rest. But on ordinary days the labor of gathering the bread which God sent could not be dispensed with. What was kept from one day to the other only "bred worms and stank" (Exodus 16:20). Not so on the Lord’s day. This also was to be to them "a statute" and an "ordinance" of faith, that is, a principle of God’s giving and a rule of their receiving. Secondly, "an omer full of manna" was to be "laid up before Jehovah" in a "golden pot." Together with "Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant," it was afterwards placed in the Holiest of all, within the ark of the covenant, overshadowed by "the cherubim of glory." (Hebrews 9:4)

Thus, alike in the "rain of bread from heaven," in the ordinance of its ingathering, and in the Sabbath law of its sanctified use, did God prove Israel - even as He now proves us, whether we will "walk in His law or no." (Exodus 16:4)

03.02.09. Volume 2, Chapter 09

CHAPTER 9 Rephidim - The Defeat Of Amalek And Its Meaning - The Visit Of Jethro And Its Symbolical Import Exodus 17:1-16; Exodus 18:1-27 A SWEET spot or grander scenery can scarcely be imagined than Wady Feiran. Here we are at last among those Sinaitic mountains which rise in such fantastic shapes and exhibit every variety of coloring. Following the windings of Wady Feiran we come upon a wide fertile plain, seemingly all shut in by mountains. This is Rephidim, the battle-field where Israel, fighting under the banner of Jehovah, defeated Amalek. The place is too full of interest to be cursorily passed by.

Just before reaching the plain of Rephidim, the children of Israel would, on their way from the Wilderness of Sin, pass a large, bare, outstanding rock. This, according to an Arab tradition, to which considerable probability attaches, is the rock which Moses smote, and whence the living water gushed. Now we know that, when Israel reached that spot, they must have been suffering from thirst, since, all the way from the Red Sea, these three days, they would not have passed a single spring, while their march in early May through that wilderness must have been peculiarly hot and weary. Again, it is quite certain that they must have passed by that rock, and under its shadow they would in all likelihood halt. For at that moment the valley of Rephidim before them with its living springs was held by Amalek, who, as the modern Bedouin would do in similar circumstances, had gathered around their wells and palms, waiting to attack the enemy as he came up thirsty, weary, and way-worn. Here then probably was the scene of the miracle of the smitten rock. Beyond it lay the battle-field of Rephidim.

Before following the Biblical narrative, let us try to realize the scene. Advancing from the rock just described upon that broad plain, we seem to be in a sort of dreamy paradise, shut in by strange walls of mountains. As the traveler now sees Rephidim, many a winter’s storm has carried desolation into it. For this is the region of sudden and terrific storms, when the waters pour in torrents down the granite mountains, and rush with wild roar into the wadies and valleys, carrying with them every living thing and all vegetation, uprooting palms, centuries old, and piling rocks and stones upon each other in desolate grandeur. At present the stillness of the camp at night is often broken by the dismal howl of wolves, which in winter prowl about in search of food, while in the morning the mark of the leopard’s foot shows how near danger had been. But in the days of the Exodus Rephidim and its neighborhood were comparatively inhabited districts. Nothing, however, can have permanently changed the character of the scenery. Quite at the north of the valley are groves of palms, tamarisks and other trees, offering delicious shade. Here the voice of the bulbul is heard, and, sweeter still to the ear of the traveler, the murmur of living water. This beautiful tract, one of the most fertile in the peninsula, extends for miles along the valley. To the north, some 700 feet above the valley, rises a mountain (Jebel Tahuneh), which, not without much probability, is regarded as that on which Moses stood when lifting up to heaven his hand that held the rod, while in the valley itself Israel fought against Amalek. As a sort of background to it we have a huge basin of red rock, gneiss and porphyry, above which a tall mountain-peak towers in the far distance. Turning the other way and looking south, across the battle-field of Rephidim, the majestic Mount

Serbal, one of the highest in the Peninsula (6,690 feet), bounds the horizon. On either side of it two valleys run down to Rephidim. Between them is a tumbled and chaotic mass of mountains of all colors and shapes. Lastly, far away to the south-east from where Moses stood, he must have descried through an opening among the hills, the blue range of Sinai. But before us lies the highland valley of Rephidim itself, nearly 1,500 feet above the level of the sea. Here in close proximity, but in striking contrast to sweet groves and a running river, are all around fantastic rocks of gorgeous diversity of color, white boulders, walls of most lovely pink porphyry, from the clefts of which herbs and flowers spring and wind, and gray and red rocks, over which it literally seems as if a roseate stream had been poured. In this spot was the fate of those who opposed the kingdom of God once and, viewing the event prophetically, for ever decided. Wonderful things had Israel already experienced. The enemies of Jehovah had been overthrown in the Red Sea; the bitter waters of Marah been healed; and the wants of God’s people supplied in the wilderness. But a greater miracle than any of these - at least one more palpable - was now to be witnessed, for the purpose of showing Israel that no situation could be so desperate but Jehovah would prove "a very present help in trouble." That this was intended to be for all time its meaning to Israel, appears from the name Massah and Meribah, temptation and chiding, given to the place, and from the after references to the event in Deuteronomy 6:16; Psalms 68:15; Psalms 105:41, and especially in Psalms 114:8. The admonition (Psalms 115:8) "Harden not your heart, as in Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My work," refers, however, primarily, to a later event, recorded in Numbers 20:2, and only secondarily to the occurrence at Rephidim. At the same time it is true, that when the children of Israel chode with Moses on account of the want of water in Rephidim, it was virtually a tempting of Jehovah. Judgment did not, however, at that time follow. Once more would God prove Himself, and prove the people. Moses was directed to take with him of the elders of Israel, and in their view to smite the rock in Horeb (that is, "dry," "parched"). God would stand there before him - to help and to vindicate His servant. And from the riven side of the parched rock living waters flowed - an emblem this of the "spiritual rock which followed them;" an emblem also to us - for "that Rock was Christ." (1 Corinthians 10:4)

It was probably while the advanced part of the host were witnessing the miracle of the Smitten Rock that Amalek fell upon the worn stragglers, "and smote the hindmost, - even all that were feeble," - when Israel was "faint and weary." (Deuteronomy 25:18) It was a wicked deed, for Israel had in no way provoked the onset, and the Amalekites were, as descendants of Esau, closely related to them. But there is yet deeper meaning attaching both to this contest and to its issue. For, first, we mark the record of God’s solemn determination "utterly to put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven," (Exodus 17:14) and His proclamation of "war of Jehovah with Amalek from generation to generation" (Exodus 17:16). Secondly, we have in connection with this the prophetic utterance of Balaam to this effect: (Numbers 24:20) "Amalek the first-fruits of the heathen" (the beginning of the Gentile power and hostility), "but his latter end even to destruction;" while, lastly, we notice the brief but deeply significant terms in which Scripture accounts for the cowardly attack of Amalek: (Deuteronomy 25:18) "he feared not God." The contest of Amalek therefore must have been intended, not so much against Israel simply as a nation, as against Israel in their character as the people of God. It was the first attack of the kingdoms of this world upon the kingdom of God, and as such it is typical of all that have followed. Strange as it may sound, in such a contest God will not fight for Israel as at the Red Sea. Israel itself must also fight,

though success will be granted only so long as their fight is carried on under the banner of God. That banner was the rod which Moses had received, and with which he was to perform miracles. This rod represented the wonder-working Presence of Jehovah with His people as their Shepherd, their Ruler and their Leader. Yet in the fight which Israel waged, it was not enough simply to stretch forth the rod as over the Red Sea. The hand that holds the rod must also be lifted up to heaven - the faith that holds the symbol of God's wonder-working presence must rise up to heaven and draw down in prayer the pledged blessing, to give success to Israel's efforts, and ensure victory to their arms. Thus we understand this history. Moses chose a band to fight against Amalek, placing it under the command of Hoshea, a prince of the tribe of Ephraim, (Numbers 13:8, Numbers 13:16; Deuteronomy 32:44) whose name, perhaps, from that very event, was changed to Joshua (Jehovah is help). In the mean time Moses himself took his position on the top of a hill, with the rod of God in his hand. So long as this rod was held up Israel prevailed, but when Moses' hands drooped from weariness, Amalek prevailed. Then Aaron and Hur - the latter a descendant of Judah, and the grandfather of Bezaleel, who seems to have held among the laity a position akin to that of Aaron (Exodus 24:14) - stayed the hands of Moses until the going down of the sun, and the defeat of Amalek was complete. This holding up of Moses' hands has been generally regarded as symbolical of prayer. But if that were all, it would be difficult to understand why it was absolutely needful to success that his hands should be always upheld, so that when they drooped, merely from bodily weariness, Amalek should have immediately prevailed. Moreover, it leaves unexplained the holding up of the rod towards heaven. In view of this difficulty it has been suggested by a recent commentator, that the object of holding up the hands was not prayer, but the uplifting of the God-given, wonder-working rod, as the banner of God, to which, while it waved above them, and only so long, Israel owed their victory. With this agrees the name of the memorial-altar, which Moses reared to perpetuate the event -Jehovah-nissi, "the Lord my banner." But neither does this explanation quite meet the statements of Scripture. Rather would we combine both the views mentioned. The rod which Moses held up was the banner of God -the symbol and the pledge of His presence and working; and he held it up, not over Israel, nor yet over their enemies, but towards heaven in prayer, to bring down that promised help in their actual contest. And so it ever is.

Amalek opposes the advance of Israel; Israel must fight, but the victory is God's; Israel holds the rod of almighty power in the hand of faith; but that rod must ever be uplifted toward heaven in present application for the blessing secured by covenant-promise.

If the attack of Amalek represented the hostility of the world to the kingdom of God, the visit of Jethro, which followed Israel's victory, equally symbolized the opposite tendency. For Jethro came not only as Moses' father-in-law to bring back his wife and children - although even this would have expressed his faith in Jehovah and the covenant-people, - but he "rejoiced for all the goodness which Jehovah had done to Israel." More than that, he professed,

"Now I know that Jehovah is greater than all gods; for He has shown Himself great in the thing wherein they (the Egyptians) had dealt proudly against them (the Israelites)" (Exodus 18:11). As this acknowledgment of God led Jethro to praise Him, so his praise found expression in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, after which Jethro sat down with Moses and Aaron, and the elders of Israel, to the sacrificial meal of fellowship with God and with each other. Thus Jethro may be regarded as a kind of first fruits unto God from among the Gentiles, and his homage as an

anticipating fulfillment of the promise; (Isaiah 2:3) "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." A very marked advantage was immediately derived from the presence of Jethro. Just as after the conversion of the Gentiles to Christianity, the accumulated learning and research of heathenism were to be employed in the service of the Gospel, so here the experience of Jethro served in the outward arrangements of the people of God. Hitherto every case in dispute between the people had been brought to Moses himself for decision. The consequence was, that Moses was not only in danger of "wearing away," from the heaviness of the work, but the people also (Exodus 18:18), since the delay which necessarily ensued was most tedious, and might easily have induced them to take justice into their own hands. Now the advice which Jethro offered was to teach the people "ordinances and laws," and to "shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work they must do." Whatever questions arose to which the ordinances, laws, and directions, so taught them, would find a ready application, were to be considered "small matters," which might be left for decision to subordinate judges, whom Moses should "provide out of all the people - able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness" (Exodus 18:21). Whatever came not within range of a mere application of these known laws were "great matters," which Moses should reserve for his own decision, or rather, "bring the causes unto God." And this wise advice was given so modestly and with such express acknowledgment that it only applied "if God command" him so, that Moses heard in it the gracious direction of God Himself. Nor would it be possible to imagine a more beautiful instance of the help which religion may derive from knowledge and experience, nor yet a more religious submission of this world’s wisdom to the service and the will of God, than in the advice which Jethro gave, and the manner in which he expressed it. From Deuteronomy 1:12-18 we learn that Moses carried out the plan in the same spirit in which it was proposed. The election of the judges was made by the people themselves, and their appointment was guided, as well as their work directed, by the fear and the love of the Lord.

03.02.10. Volume 2, Chapter 10

CHAPTER 10 Israel At The Foot Of Mount Sinai - The Preparations For The Covenant - The "Ten Words?" And Their Meaning Exodus 19:1-25, Exodus 20:1-17

IT was the third month after leaving Egypt when the children of Israel reached that innermost mountain-group from which the Peninsula of Sinai derives its name. Roughly speaking, the whole district occupies about twice the area of Yorkshire.

Running through it, like roads, pass very many wadies, all seemingly leading up to the grand central sanctuary, where God was about to give His law to His people. This mountain district bears in Scripture two distinct names - Horeb and Sinai - the former applying probably to the whole group, the latter to one special mountain in it. The meaning of the name Horeb is probably "mountain of the dried-up ground," that of Sinai "mountain of the thorn." At present the whole Sinaitic group is known by the designation of Jebel Musa. It forms "a huge mountain-block, about two miles in length and one mile in breadth, with a narrow valley on either side,... and a spacious plain at the north-eastern end." That plain, at present known as Er Rahah, is computed to be capable of accommodating a host of two millions. Right before it rises Jebel Musa, from which protrudes a lower bluff, visible from all parts of the plain. This is the modern Ras Sufsafeh (Willow-head), and was in all probability the Sinai upon which the Lord came down, and whence He spake" the ten words." In that case the plain of Er Rahah must have been that on which Israel stood, and the mound in front, on the ascent to Ras Sufsafeh, the spot where Moses "separated from the elders who had accompanied him so far on his ascent." On leaving Rephidim the main body of the Israelites would pass through what is known as Wady es Sheikh, a broad open valley, containing tamarisk trees, and "cut right through the granitic wall." As a turn in the road is reached, "the journey lies entirely through granite rocks, the sharp, rugged outlines of which, as well as the increasing height and somber gray coloring of the mountains, impart much more solemn grandeur to the scenery." A late eloquent traveler thus describes the approach to Sinai: "At each successive advance these cliffs disengaged themselves from the intervening and surrounding hills, and at last they stood out - I should rather say, the columnar mass, which they form, stood out - alone against the sky. On each side the infinite complications of twisted and jagged mountains fell away from it. On each side the sky compassed it round, as though it were alone in the wilderness. And to this great mass we approached through a wide valley, a long-continued plain, which, enclosed as it was between two precipitous mountain ranges of black and yellow granite, and having always at its end this prodigious mountain-block, I could compare to nothing else than the immense avenue through which the approach was made to the great Egyptian temples." As we try to realize the scene presented at the giving of the Law, we can well understand how "all the people that was in the camp trembled." (Exodus 19:16) The vast plain of Er Rahah, and all the neighboring valleys and glens, were dotted with the tents of Israel. No more suitable camping-ground could have been found than this, the best-watered neighborhood in the whole peninsula, where "running streams are found in no less than four of the adjacent valleys." The plain itself is nearly 5,000 feet above the level of the sea. Right in front, cut off by intervening valleys from all around, rises the Horeb

group (its highest point 7,363 feet), and from it projects into the valley, like some gigantic altar or pulpit, the lower bluff of Ras Sufsafeh (6,830 feet) - "the nether part of the mount" - that Sinai from which the voice of the living God was heard. In front is the mound on which Moses parted from the elders. So abruptly does Sufsafeh rise, "that you may literally stand under it and touch its base," and so thoroughly is the mountain range separated from all around, that there could be no difficulty whatever in "setting bounds unto the people round about," to prevent their going up into the mount, or even touching the border of it. (Exodus 19:12) Behind Sufsafeh, on some peak or cleft, Moses was forty days with the Lord, and descending into the adjacent valley, he would - as the members of the Ordnance Survey record they had frequently experienced - hear the sound from the camp without being able to see what passed in it. But now as the people gazed on it, "Mount Sinai was altogether on smoke." (Exodus 19:18) That vast isolated mountain-block - two miles in length and one in breadth - seemed all on fire! As "the smoke of a furnace" it rose to heaven, "and the whole mount quaked greatly," and "there were thunders and lightnings" and "the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud." But, more awful than any physical signs, "Jehovah came down upon Mount Sinai," "and Jehovah called Moses to the top of the mount," and God Himself "spake all these words" of the commandments. For three days had the people been preparing by continued sanctification, and now they stood in readiness at the foot of, although shut off from, the mountain. But even so, "when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exodus 20:18-19) This outward sanctification of Israel had been preceded by inward and spiritual preparation. As always, the demand and the command of God had been preceded by His promise. For He ever gives what He asks. It is, as St. Augustine beautifully expresses it, "Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt." Arrived at the foot of Mount Sinai, Moses had gone up to a lower peak, as if to ask the commands of his Lord, and Jehovah had spoken to him from the top of the mountain. He was directed, before the people prepared to receive the Law, to remind them of their gracious deliverance from Egypt, of the judgments of God’s hand, and of the mercy and kindness which they had received. For as "on eagle wings had Jehovah borne them, God’s dealings being compared to the eagle, who spreads his strong pinions under the young birds when they take their first flight, lest, weary or faint, they be dashed on the rocks (comp. Deuteronomy 32:11). Yet all this mercy - Moses was to tell Israel -was but the pledge of far richer grace. For now would the Lord enter into covenant with them. And if Israel obeyed His voice, and kept the covenant, then, in His own words, "Ye shall be to Me a precious possession from among all nations for Mine is all the earth. And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Exodus 19:5-6) The promise thus conveyed was both special and universal; and it described alike the character of God’s people and their destination. All the earth was God’s, not only by right of creation and possession, but as destined yet to own Him its Lord. Herein lay a promise of universal blessing to all mankind, and with this the mission of Israel was closely bound up. But while all the earth was the Lord’s, Israel was to be His "precious possession from among all nations," His choice treasure - for this the Hebrew expression implies - or, as St. Paul (Titus 2:14) and St. Peter (1 Peter 2:9) explain it, "a peculiar people." The manner in which this dignity would appear, is explained by the terms in which Israel is described as "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." The expression "kingdom of priests" means a kingdom whose citizens are priests, and as such possess royal dignity and power, or, in the language of St. Peter, "a royal priesthood." So far as Israel was concerned, the outward and visible theocracy, which God established among

them, was only the means by which this end was to be obtained, just as their observing the covenant was the condition of it. But the promise itself reached far beyond the Old Covenant, and will only be fulfilled in its completeness when "the Israel of God" - whom already the Lord Jesus, "the First-begotten of the dead and the Prince of the kings of the earth," "hath made kings and priests unto God and His Father" (Revelation 1:5-6; Revelation 5:10) - shall share with Him His glory and sit with Him on His throne. Thus the final object of the royal priesthood of Israel were those nations, from among whom God had chosen His people for a precious possession. Towards them Israel was to act as priests. For, just as the priest is the intermediary between God and man, so Israel was to be the intermediary of the knowledge and salvation of God to all nations. And this their priesthood was to be the foundation of their royalty, A still more solemn description of Israel, and of us who are called "the Israel of God," is that of "holy nation." As Calvin rightly observes, "This designation was not due to the piety or holiness of the people, but because God distinguished them by peculiar privileges from all others. But this sanctification implies another, viz., that they who are so distinguished by God’s grace should cultivate holiness, so that in turn they sanctify God." The Hebrew term for "holy" is generally supposed to mean "separated, set apart." But this is only its secondary signification, derived from the purpose of that which is holy. Its primary meaning is to be splendid, beautiful, pure, and uncontaminated. God is holy - as the Absolutely Pure, Resplendent, and Glorious One. Hence this is symbolized by the light. God dwelleth in light that is unapproachable; (1 Timothy 6:16) He is "the Father of light, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" - light which never can grow dimmer, nor give place to darkness. (James 1:17) Christ is the light that shineth in the darkness of our world, "the true light which lighteth every man." (John 1:5-9) And Israel was to be a holy people as dwelling in the light, through its covenant-relationship to God. It was not the selection of Israel from all other nations that made them holy, but the relationship to God into which it brought the people. The call of Israel, their election and selection, were only the means. Holiness itself was to be attained through the covenant, which provided forgiveness and sanctification, and in which, by the discipline of His law and the guidance of His Holy Arm, Israel was to be led onward and upward. Thus, if God showed the excellence of His name or His glory in creation, (Psalms 8:1-9) the way of His holiness was among Israel. (Psalms 77:13; Psalms 104:1-35; Psalms 103:1-22) This detailed consideration of what Moses was charged to say, will help us to understand both the preparations for the covenant, and the solemn manner in which it was inaugurated. When Moses intimated to the people the gracious purpose of God, they declared their readiness to obey what God had spoken. But as the Lord could only enter into covenant with the people through the mediation of Moses, on account of their weakness and sinfulness, He spoke in a thick cloud with His servant before them all, so that they might see and hear, and for ever afterwards believe. As previously indicated, the outward preparations of the people were twofold. First, they underwent certain purifications, symbolical of inward cleansing. Secondly, bounds were set round Sinai, so that none might break through nor touch the mountain. Then, on the third day, Moses led forth the men, and placed them "at the nether part of the mount," "that burned with fire." There God proclaimed His holy and eternal law amidst portentous signs, which indicated that He was great and terrible in His holiness, and a jealous God, though the fire of His wrath and zeal was enwrapt in a dense cloud. The revelation of God’s will, which Israel heard from Mount Sinai, is contained in the ten commandments, or, as they are called in the Hebrew original, "the ten words." These were prefaced by this declaration of what Jehovah was and what He had done:

"I am Jehovah thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." (Exodus 20:2) This (as Calvin says) "to prepare the souls of the people for obedience." The "ten words" were afterwards written on two tables of stone, which were to be kept within the ark of the covenant, "the mercy-seat" being significantly placed over them. (Exodus 25:16; Exodus 40:20 hew:20 hew:20) It is not easy to say how they were arranged on these two tables, but not improbably the first four "words" with "the Preface" (in Exodus 20:1) may have occupied the first, and the other six commandments the second Table of the Law. But we only know for certain, that "the tables were written on both their sides, on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables."

Considering more closely these "ten words", of the covenant," we notice, first, their number, ten, as that of completeness. Next, we see that the fifth commandment (to honor our parents) forms a transition from the first to the second table - the first table detailing our duties towards God; the second those towards man. But our duty to our parents is higher than that towards men generally; indeed, in a certain sense is Divine, just as the relationship to an earthly father symbolizes that to our Father in heaven. Hence the command is to honor, whereas our duty to men only requires us to love them. Again, almost all the commands are put in a negative form ("thou shalt not"), implying that transgression, not obedience, is natural to us. But "the commandment is exceeding broad," and requires a corresponding right state of mind. Accordingly we find that the law of the ten commandments is summed up in this. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself." Lastly, the first five "words" have always some reason or motive attached to them. Not so those of the second table, which are mostly put quite generally, to show that such commands as, not to kill, not to commit adultery, not to steal, not to bear false witness, are intended to apply to all possible cases, and not only to friends or fellow-citizens.

Passing from general considerations to particulars, we find that the "first word" not only forbids all idolatry in thought, word, and deed, but enjoins to love, fear, serve, and cleave to the Lord. (Deuteronomy 6:5, Deuteronomy 6:13; Deuteronomy 10:12, Deuteronomy 10:20) The second word shows the manner in which the Lord will be served - more particularly, not under any image or by any outward representation. As Calvin remarks, it condemns "all fictitious worship which men have invented according to their own minds," and not according to the word of God. The third word forbids the profaning of the name of Jehovah, in which He has manifested His glory, by using it either for untruth or in vain words, that is, either in false or idle swearing, in cursing, in magic, or such like. The fourth word, which implies a previous knowledge of the Sabbath on the part of Israel, enjoins personal, domestic, and public rest from all manner of labor on God’s holy day, which is to be spent in His service and for His glory. The fifth word directs honor to parents as (in the language of Luther) "the vicars of God," and hence implies similar reverence towards all God’s representatives, especially magistrates and rulers. The Second Table progresses from outward deed (in the sixth, seventh, and eighth "words") to speech (ninth commandment), and finally to thought and desire. The sixth, seventh, and eighth words apply equally to what may injure our own life, chastity, or property, and those of others. The ninth word should be literally translated: "Thou shalt not answer against thy neighbor as a false witness" (or "as a witness of falsehood"). Comparing this with the statement in Deuteronomy 5:20, where the expression is "a witness of

vanity," we gather that not only all untrue, but all unfounded statements against our neighbor are included in this commandment. Lastly, the tenth word sounds the inmost depths of our hearts, and forbids all wrong and inordinate desires in reference to anything that is our neighbor’s.

Such law was never given by man; never dreamed of in his highest conceptions. Had man only been able to observe it, assuredly not only life hereafter but happiness and joy here would have come with it. As it was, it brought only knowledge of sin. Yet, for ever blessed be God: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17)

03.02.11. Volume 2, Chapter 11

CHAPTER 11

Civil & Social Ordinances Of Israel As The People Of God - Their Religious Ordinances In Their National Aspect - The "Covenant Made By Sacrifice" And The Sacrificial Meal Of Acceptance Exodus 20:18-26; Exodus 21:1-36; Exodus 22:1-31; Exodus 23:1-33; Exodus 24:1-12 THE impression produced upon the people by the phenomena accompanying God’s revelation of His law was so deep, that they entreated that any further Divine communication might be made through the mediatorship of Moses. As Peter, when the Divine power of the Lord Jesus suddenly burst upon him, (Luke 5:8) felt that he, a sinful man, could not stand in the presence of his Lord, so were the children of Israel afraid of death, if they continued before God. But such feelings of fear have nothing spiritual in themselves. While Moses acceded to their request, he was careful to explain that the object of all they had witnessed had not been the excitement of fear (Exodus 20:20), but such searching of heart as might issue, not in slavish apprehension of outward consequences, but in that true fear of God, which would lead to the avoidance of sin. And now Moses stood once more alone in the "thick darkness, where God was." The ordinances then given him must be regarded as the final preparation for that covenant which was so soon to be ratified. (Exodus 24:1-18) For, as the people of God, Israel must not be like the other nations. Alike in substance and in form, the conditions of their national life, the fundamental principles of their state, and the so-called civil rights and ordinances which were to form the groundwork of society, must be Divine. To use a figure: Israel was God’s own possession. Before hallowing and formally setting it apart, God marked it out, and drew the boundary lines around His property. Such was the object and the meaning of the ordinances, (Exodus 20:22-23) which preceded the formal conclusion of the covenant, recorded in Exodus 24:1-18 : Accordingly the principles and "judgments" (Exodus 21:1), or rather the "rights" and juridical arrangements, on which national life and civil society in Israel were based, were not only infinitely superior to anything known or thought of at the time, but such as to embody the solid and abiding principles of national life for all times. And in truth they underlie all modern legislation, so that the Mosaic ordinances are, and will remain, the grand model on which civil society is constructed.

Without entering into details, we note the general arrangement of these ordinances. They were preceded by a general indication of the manner in which Israel was to worship God. (Exodus 20:22-26) As God had spoken to Israel "from heaven," so they were not to make any earthly representation of what was heavenly. On the other hand, as God would "come unto" them - from heaven to earth, and there hold intercourse with them, the altar which was to rise from earth towards heaven was to be simply "an altar of earth" (Exodus 20:24), or if of stones, of such as were in the condition in which they had been found in the earth. Moreover, as the altar indicated that place on earth where God would appear for the purpose of blessing Israel, it was only to be reared where God recorded His name, that is, where He appointed it. In other words, their worship was to be regulated by His manifestation in grace, and not by their own choice or preferences. For grace lies at the foundation of all praise and prayer. The sacrifices and worship of Israel were not

to procure grace; grace had been the originating cause of their worship. And so it ever is. "We love Him, because He first loved us," and the gift of His dear Son to us sinners is free and unconditional on the part of the Father, and makes our return unto Him possible. And because this grace is free, it becomes man all the more to serve God with holy reverence, which should show itself even in outward demeanor (Exodus 20:26).

"The judgments" next communicated to Moses determined, first, the civil and social position of all in Israel relatively to each other (Exodus 21:1; Exodus 23:12), and then their religious position relatively to the Lord (Exodus 23:13-19)." The Divine legislation begins, as assuredly none other ever did, not at the topmost but at the lowest rung of society. It declares in the first place the personal rights of such individuals as are in a state of dependence - male (Exodus 21:2-6) and female slaves (Exodus 21:7-11). This is done not only with a sacred regard for the rights of the person, but with a delicacy, kindness, and strictness beyond any code ever framed on this subject. If slavery was still tolerated, as a thing existent, its real principle, that of making men chattels and property, was struck at the root, and the institution became, by its safeguards and provisions, quite other from what it has been among any nation, whether ancient or modern.

Then follow "judgments" guarding life (Exodus 21:12-14), with crimes against which, the maltreatment and the cursing of parents (Exodus 21:15-17), and man-stealing (Exodus 21:16), are put on a level. It is the sanctity of life, in itself, in its origin, and in its free possession, which is here in question, and the punishment awarded to such crimes is neither intended as warning nor as correction, but strictly as punishment, that is, as retribution. From the protection of life, the law passes to that of the body against all injuries, whether by man (Exodus 21:18-27)or by beast (Exodus 21:28-32). The principle here is, so far as possible, compensation, coupled with punishment in grave offenses.

Next, the safety of property is secured. But before entering upon it, the Divine law, Divine also in this, protects also the life of a beast. (Exodus 21:33-36) Property is dealt with under various aspects. First, we have the theft of cattle - most important to guard against among an agricultural people - a different kind of protection being wisely allowed to owners by day and by night (Exodus 22:1-4). Then, damage to fields or their produce is considered (Exodus 22:5-6). After that, loss or damage of what had been entrusted for safe keeping (Exodus 22:7-15), and along with it loss of honor (Exodus 22:16-17) are dealt with. The statutes which follow (Exodus 22:18-30) are quite different in character from those which had preceded. This appears even from the omission of the "if," by which all the previous ordinances had been introduced. In truth, they do not contemplate, as the others, any possible case, but they state and ordain what must never be allowed to take place. They are beyond the province of ordinary civil legislation, and concern Israel as being specially the people of Gad. As such they express what Jehovah expects from His own people, bound to Him by covenant. And this, perhaps, is the most wonderful part of the legislation, regulating and ordering what no civil rule has ever sought to influence. As before, the series of statutes begins by interdicting what is contrary to the God-consecrated character of the nation. Thus, at the outset all magic is exterminated (Exodus 22:18), and with it all unnatural crimes (Exodus 22:19), and idolatrous practices (Exodus 22:20). In short, as before in worship, so now in life, heathenism, its powers, its vileness, and its corruptions are swept aside. On the other hand, in opposition to all national exclusiveness, the stranger (though not the strange god) is to be kindly welcomed (Exodus 22:21); widows and the fatherless are not to be "humiliated" (Exodus

22:22-24); those in temporary need not to be vexed by usury (Exodus 1:1-22); God as the supreme Lawgiver is not to be reviled, nor yet are those appointed to rule under Him to be cursed (Exodus 1:1); the tribute due to the Lord as King is to be cheerfully given (Exodus 1:1-22); and the holy dignity of His people not to be profaned even in their daily habits (Exodus 1:1).

Again, nothing that is untrue, unloving, or unjust is to be said, done, or attempted (Exodus 23:1-3), and that not merely in public dealings, but personal dislike is not to influence conduct. On the contrary, all loving help is to be given even to an enemy in time of need (Exodus 23:4-5); the poor and persecuted are not to be unjustly dealt with; no bribe is to be taken, "for the gift maketh open eyes blind, and perverteth the causes of the righteous," and the same rule is to apply to the stranger as to Israel (Exodus 23:6-9). Finally in this connection, the seventh year's and the seventh day's rest are referred to, not so much in their religious character as in their bearing upon the poor and the workers (Exodus 23:10-12).

Passing from the statutes fixing the civil and social position of all in Israel to their religious position relatively to Jehovah, (Exodus 23:13-19) we have first of all an injunction of the three great annual feasts. Although strictly religious festivals, they are here viewed, primarily, not in their symbolical and typical meaning (which is universal and eternal), but in their national bearing: the paschal feast as that of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, the feast of weeks as that "of harvest, the first fruit of thy labors," and the feast of tabernacles as that of final "ingathering" (Exodus 23:14-17). Of the three ordinances which now follow (Exodus 23:18-19), the first refers to the Paschal sacrifice (comp. Exodus 12:15, Exodus 12:20; Exodus 13:7; Exodus 34:25), and the second to the feast of first fruits or of weeks. From this it would follow, that the prohibition to "seethe a kid in its mother's milk" (Exodus 23:19)must, at least primarily, have borne some reference to the festivities of the week of tabernacles; perhaps, as the learned Rabbinical commentator Abarbanel suggests, because some such practices were connected with heathen, idolatrous rites at the time of the ingathering of fruits. The "judgments" which the Lord enjoins upon His people are appropriately followed by promises (Exodus 23:20-33), in which, as their King and Lord, He undertakes their guidance and protection, and their possession of the land He had assigned to them. First and foremost, assurance is given them of the personal presence of Jehovah in that ANGEL, in Whom is the Name of the Lord (Exodus 23:20). This was no common angel, however exalted, but a manifestation of Jehovah Himself, prefigurative of, and preparatory to His manifestation in the flesh in the Person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For all that is here said of Him is attributed to the Lord Himself in Exodus 13:21; while in Exodus 33:14-15, He is expressly designated as "the Face" of Jehovah ("My Face" - in the Authorized Version "My presence"). Accordingly, all obedience is to be shown to His guidance, and every contact with idolatry and idolaters avoided. In that case the Lord would fulfill every good and gracious promise to His people, and cause them to possess the land in all its extent.

Such were the terms of the covenant which Jehovah made with Israel in their national capacity. when the people had ratified them by acceptance, (Exodus 24:3) Moses wrote all down in what was called "the book of the covenant" (Exodus 24:7). And now the covenant itself was to be inaugurated by sacrifice, the sprinkling of blood, and the sacrificial meal. This transaction was the most important in the whole history of Israel. By this one sacrifice, never renewed, Israel was formally set apart as the people of God; and it lay at the foundation of all the sacrificial worship which followed. Only after it did God institute the Tabernacle, the priesthood, and all its services.

Thus this one sacrifice prefigured the one sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ for His Church, which is the ground of our access to God and the foundation of all our worship and service. Most significantly, an altar was now built at the foot of Mount Sinai, and surrounded by twelve pillars, "according to the twelve tribes of Israel" Ministering youths - for as yet there was no priesthood - offered the burnt, and sacrificed the peace offerings unto Jehovah. Half of the blood of the sacrifices was put into basins, with the other half the altar was sprinkled, thus making reconciliation with God. Then the terms of the covenant were once more read in the hearing of all, and the other half of the blood, by which reconciliation had been made, sprinkled on the people with these words: "Behold the blood of the covenant which Jehovah hath made with you upon all these words (or terms)." As a nation Israel was now reconciled and set apart unto God - both having been accomplished by the "blood of sprinkling." Thereby they became prepared for that fellowship with Him which was symbolized in the sacrificial meal that followed. (Exodus 24:9-11) There God, in pledge of His favor, fed His people upon the sacrifices which He had accepted. The sacrificial meal meant the fellowship of acceptance; its joy was that of the consciousness of this blessed fact. And now Moses and Aaron, and his two sons (the future priests), along with seventy of the elders of Israel, went up into the mount, "and did eat and drink" at that sacrificial meal, in the seen presence of the God of Israel, not indeed under any outward form, (Deuteronomy 4:12-15) but with heaven’s own brightness underneath the Shechinah. Thus "to see God, and to eat and drink," was a foretaste and a pledge of the perfect blessedness in beholding Him hereafter. It was also a symbol and a type of what shall be realized when, as the Alleluia of the "great multitude" proclaims the reign of the "Lord God omnipotent," the gladsome, joyous bride of the Lamb now made ready for the marriage, and adorned with bridal garments, hears the welcome sound summoning her to "the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Revelation 19:6-9)

03.02.12. Volume 2, Chapter 12

CHAPTER 12 The Pattern Seen On The Mountain - The Tabernacle, The Priesthood, And The Services In Their Arrangement And Typical Meaning - The Sin Of The Golden Calf - The Divine Judgment - The Plea Of Moses - God’s Gracious Forgiveness - The Vision Of The Glory Of The Lord Vouchsafed To Moses

Exodus 24:12; Exodus 25:1-40 Exodus 26:1-37; Exodus 27:1-21; Exodus 28:1-43; Exodus 29:1-46; Exodus 30:1-38; Exodus 31:1-18; Exodus 32:1-35; Exodus 33:1-23

NEVER assuredly have we stronger proof of the Divine origin of what we call grace, and of the weakness and unprofitableness of human nature, than in the reaction which so often follows seasons of religious privilege. Readers of the New Testament will recall many instances of this in the Gospel-history, and will remember how our Lord, ever and again, at such times took His disciples aside into some desert place for quietness and prayer. But perhaps the saddest instance of how near the great enemy lingers to our seasons of spiritual enjoyment, and how great our danger of giddiness, when standing on such heights, is furnished by the history of Israel, immediately after the solemn covenant had been ratified.

Now that God had set apart His reconciled people unto Himself, it was necessary to have some definite place where He would meet with, and dwell among them, as also to appoint the means by which they should approach Him, and the manner in which he would manifest Himself to them. To reveal all this, as well as to give those "tables of stone," on which the commandments were graven, God now called Moses once more "up into the mount." Accompanied by "Joshua, his minister," he obeyed the Divine behest, leaving the rule of the people to Aaron and Hur. For six days he had to wait, while "the glory of Jehovah abode upon the mount" On the seventh, Moses was summoned within the bright cloud, which, to the children of Israel beneath, seemed "like a devouring fire", Joshua probably remaining near, but not actually with him. "Forty days and forty nights" "Moses was in the mount," without either eating bread or drinking water. (Deuteronomy 9:9) The new revelation which he now received concerned the Tabernacle which was to be erected, the priesthood which was to serve in it, and the services which were to be celebrated. Nay, it extended to every detail of furniture, dress, and observance. And for what was needful for this service, the free-will offerings of Israel were to be invited. (Exodus 25:1-8)

We have it upon the highest authority, that, not only in its grand outlines, but in all minutest details, everything was to be made "after the pattern" which God showed to Moses on the mount. (Exodus 25:9) And so we also read in Acts 7:44, and Hebrews 8:5; Hebrews 9:23, teaching us, that Moses was shown by God an actual pattern or model of all that he was to make in and for the sanctuary. This can convey only one meaning. It taught far more than the general truth, that only that approach to

God is lawful or acceptable which He has indicated. For, God showed Moses every detail to indicate that every detail had its special meaning, and hence could not be altered in any, even the

minutest, particular, without destroying that meaning, and losing that significance which alone made it of importance. Nothing here was intended as a mere ornament or ceremony, all was symbol and type. As symbol, it indicated a present truth; as type, it pointed forward (a prophecy by deed) to future spiritual realities, while, at the same time, it already conveyed to the worshipper the firstfruits, and the earnest of their final accomplishment in "the fullness of time." We repeat, everything here had a spiritual meaning - the material of which the ark, the dresses of the priesthood, and all else was made; colors, measurements, numbers, vessels, dresses, services, and the priesthood itself - and all proclaimed the same spiritual truth, and pointed forward to the same spiritual reality, viz., God in Christ in the midst of His Church. The Tabernacle was "the tent of meeting" (Ohel Moed) where God held intercourse with His people, and whence He dispensed blessing unto them. The priesthood, culminating in the high-priest, was the God-appointed mediatorial agency through which God was approached and by which He bestowed His gifts; the sacrifices were the means of such approach to God, and either intended to restore fellowship with God when it had been dimmed or interrupted, or else to express and manifest that fellowship. But alike the priesthood, the sacrifices, and the altar pointed to the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. So far as the Tabernacle itself was concerned, the court with the altar of burnt-offering was the place by which Israel approached God; the Holy Place that in which they held communion with God; and the Most Holy Place that in which the Lord Himself visibly dwelt among them in the Shechinah, as the covenant-God, His Presence resting on the mercy-seat which covered the Ark.

It is most instructive to mark the order in which the various ordinances about the Tabernacle and its furniture were given to Moses. First, we have the directions about the Ark, as the most holy thing in the Most Holy Place; (Exodus 25:10-22) then, similarly, those about the table of shewbread and the golden candlestick (Exodus 25:23-40), not only as belonging to the furniture of the Holy Place, but because spiritually the truths which they symbolized - life and light in the Lord - were the outcome of God’s Presence between the cherubim. After that, the dwelling itself is described, and the position in it of Ark, table, and candlestick. (Exodus 26:1-37)

Then only comes the altar of burnt-offering, with the court that was to surround the sanctuary (Exodus 27:1-19). We now enter, as it were, upon a different section, that of ministry. here directions are first given about the burning of the lamps on the seven-branched candlestick (Exodus 27:20-21); after which we have the institution of, and all connected with, the priesthood. (Exodus 28:1-43; Exodus 29:1-46) The last, because the highest, point in the ministry is that about the altar of incense and its service (Exodus 30:1-10). This symbolized prayer, and hence could only come in after the institution of the mediatorial priesthood. Thus far it will be noticed, that the arrangement is always from within outwards - from the Most Holy

Place to the court of the worshippers, symbolizing once more that all proceeds from Him Who is the God of grace, Who, as already quoted in the language of St. Augustine, "gives what He commands," and that the highest of all service, to which everything else is subservient, or rather to which it stands related as the means towards the end, is that of fellowship in prayer - the worshipful beholding of God.

These directions are followed by some others strictly connected with the character of Israel as the people of God. Israel is His firstborn among the nations, (Exodus 4:22-23) and, as such, must be

redeemed, like the firstborn son of a family, (Exodus 22:29; Exodus 34:20; Numbers 3:12-16) to indicate, on the one hand, that the people are really His own property, and that the life entrusted to them belongeth to Him and, on the other hand, to express that, in the firstborn, all the family is hallowed to God. (Romans 11:16) This was the import of the "atonement money." (Exodus 30:11-6) But even so, each approach to Him needed special washing - hence the laver (Exodus 30:17-21). Again, within Israel, the priests were to be the sacred representatives of the people. As such, they, and all connected with their service, must be anointed with a peculiar oil, symbolical of the Holy Spirit, all counterfeit of which was to be visited with such punishment as reminds us of that following upon the sin against the Holy Ghost (Exodus 30:22-33). Lastly, the material for the highest symbolical service, that of incensing, is described (Exodus 30:34-38). The whole section closes by designating the persons whom the Lord had raised up for doing all the work connected with the preparation of His Sanctuary. (Exodus 31:1-11) The institutions thus made were, in reality, the outcome and the consequences of the covenant which the Lord had made with Israel. As "a sign" of this covenant between Jehovah and the children of Israel, (Exodus 31:17) God now ordered anew the observance of the Sabbath (Exodus 31:12-17) - its twofold provision of rest and of sanctification (Exodus 31:15) being expressive of the civil and the religious aspects of that covenant, and of their marvelous combination. Thus furnished with all needful directions, Moses finally received, at the Hand of the Lord, the "two tables of testimony," "written with the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18).

While these sacred transactions were taking place on the mount, a far different scene was enacted below in the camp of Israel. Without attempting the foolish and wrongful task of palliating the sin of making the Golden Calf, (Exodus 32:1-6) it is fight that the matter should be placed in its true light. The prolonged absence of Moses had awakened peculiar fears in the people. They had seen him pass more than a month ago into the luminous cloud that covered the mount.

"And the sight of the glory of Jehovah was like a devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." (Exodus 24:17)

What more natural than for those who waited, week after week, in unexplained solitude, within sight of this fire, to imagine that Moses had been devoured by it. Their leader was gone, and the visible symbol of Jehovah was high up on the mountain top, like "a devouring fire." They must have another leader; that would be Aaron. But they must also have another symbol of the Divine Presence. One only occurred to their carnal minds, besides that which had hitherto preceded them. It was the Egyptian Apis, who, under the form of a calf, represented the powers of nature. To his worship they had always been accustomed; indeed, its principal seat was the immediate neighborhood of the district in Egypt where, for centuries, they and their fathers had been settled. Probably, this also was the form under which many of them had, in former days, tried, in a perverted manner, to serve their ancestral God, combining the traditions of the patriarchs with the corruptions around them (compare Joshua 24:14; Ezekiel 20:8; Ezekiel 23:3-8). It is quite evident that Israel did not mean to forsake Jehovah, but only to serve Him under the symbol of Apis. This appears from the statement of the people themselves on seeing the Golden Calf: (Exodus 32:4) "This is thy God," and from the proclamation of Aaron (Exodus 32:5): "To-morrow is a feast to Jehovah." Their great sin consisted in not realizing the Presence of an unseen God, while the fears of their unbelief led them back to their former idolatrous practices, unmindful that this involved a breach of the second of those commandments so lately proclaimed in their hearing, and

of the whole covenant which had so solemnly been ratified. Some expositors have sought to extenuate the guilt of Aaron by supposing that, in asking for their golden ornaments to make "the calf," he had hoped to enlist their vanity and covetousness, and so to turn them from their sinful purpose. The text, however, affords no warrant for this hypothesis, It is true that Aaron was, at the time, not yet in the priesthood, and also that his proclamation of "a feast to Jehovah" may have been intended to bring it out distinctly, that the name of Jehovah was still, as before, acknowledged by Israel. But his culpable weakness - to say the least of it - only adds to his share in the people's sin. Indeed, this appears from Aaron's later confession to Moses, (Exodus 32:21-24) than which nothing more humiliating is recorded, even throughout this sad story. Perhaps, however, it was well that, before his appointment to the priesthood, Aaron, and all after him, should have had this evidence of natural unfitness and unworthiness, that so it might appear more clearly that the character of all was typical, and in no way connected with the worthiness of Aaron or of his house.

While Israel indulged in the camp in the usual licentious dances and orgies which accompanied such heathen festivals yet another trial awaited Moses. It had been God Himself Who informed Moses of the "quick" apostasy of His people (Exodus 32:7-8), accompanying the announcement by these words: "Now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them. and I will make of thee a great nation" (Exodus 32:10). One of the fathers has already noticed, that the Divine words, "Now therefore let Me alone," seemed to imply a call to Moses to exercise his office as intercessor for his people. Moreover, it has also been remarked, that the offer to make of Moses a nation even greater than Israel, (Deuteronomy 9:14) was, in a sense, a real temptation, or rather a trial of Moses' singleness of purpose and faithfulness to his mission. We know how entirely Moses stood this trial, and how earnestly, perseveringly, and successfully he pleaded for Israel with the Lord (Exodus 32:11-14). But one point has not been sufficiently noticed by commentators. When, in announcing the apostasy of Israel, God spake of them not as His own but as Moses' people - "thy people, whom thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 32:7) - He at the same time furnished Moses with the right plea in his intercession, and also indicated the need of that severe punishment which was afterwards executed, lest Moses might, by weak indulgence, be involved in complicity with Israel's sin. The latter point is easily understood. As for the other, we see how Moses, in his intercession, pleaded the argument with which God had furnished him.

Most earnestly did he insist that Israel was God's people, since their deliverance from Egypt had been wholly God-wrought. Three special arguments did he use with God, and these three may to all time serve as models in our pleading for forgiveness and restoration after weaknesses and falls. These arguments were: first, that Israel was God's property, and that His past dealings had proved this (Exodus 32:11); secondly, that God's own glory was involved in the deliverance of Israel in the face of the enemy (Exodus 32:12); and, thirdly, that God's gracious promises were pledged for their salvation (Exodus 32:13). And such pleas God never refuses to accept (Exodus 32:14). But, although informed of the state of matters in the camp of Israel, Moses could have been scarcely prepared for the sight which presented itself, when, on suddenly turning an eminence, the riotous multitude, in its licentious merriment, appeared full in view. The contrast was too great, and as 'Moses' wrath waxed hot, he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount" (Exodus 32:19). It is not necessary to suppose that what follows in the sacred

text is related in the strict order of time.

Suffice it, that, after a short but stern reproof to Aaron, Moses took his station "in the gate of the camp," summoning to him those who were "on the side of Jehovah." All the sons of Levi obeyed, and were directed to go through the camp and "slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor" (Exodus 32:27). On that terrible day no less than 3,000 men fell under the sword of Levi. As for the Golden Calf, its wooden framework was burnt in the fire and its gold covering ground to powder, and strewed upon the brook which descended from Sinai. Of this Israel had to drink, in symbol that each one must receive and bear the fruits of his sin, just as, later on, the woman suspected of adultery was ordered to drink the water into which the writing of the curses upon her sin had been washed. (Numbers 5:24)

There is one point here which requires more particular inquiry than it has yet received. As commonly understood, the slaughter of these 3,000 stands out as an unexplained fact. Why just these 3,000? Did they fall simply because they happened to stand by nearest, on the principle, as has been suggested, of decimating an offending host; and why did no one come to their aid? Such indiscriminate punishment seems scarcely in accordance with the Divine dealings. But the text, as it appears to us, furnishes hints for the right explanation. When Moses stood in the camp of Israel and made proclamation for those who were on Jehovah’s side, we read that "he saw that the people were naked" (Exodus 32:25), or unreined, licentious (Exodus 32:6; 1 Corinthians 10:7-8). In short, there stood before him a number of men, fresh from their orgies, in a state of licentious attire, whom even his appearance and words had not yet sobered into quietness, shame, and repentance. These, as we understand it, still thronged the open roadway of the camp, which so lately had resounded with their voices; these were met by the avenging Levites, as, sword in hand, they passed from gate to gate, like the destroying angel through Egypt on the Paschal night; and these were the 3,000 which fell on that day, while the vast multitude had retired to the quietness of their tents in tardy repentance and fear, in view of him whose presence among them betokened the nearness of that holy and jealous God, Whose terrible judgments they had so much cause to dread.

Thus ended the day of Moses’ return among his people. On the morrow he gathered them to speak, not in anger but in sorrow, of their great sin. Then returning from them to the Lord, he entreated forgiveness for his brethren, with an intensity and self-denial of love (Exodus 32:31-32), unequaled by that of any man except St. Paul.

Thus far he prevailed, that the people were not to be destroyed, nor the covenant to cease; but God would not personally go in the midst of a people so incapable of bearing His holy Presence; He would send a created angel to be henceforth their leader. And still would this sin weight the scale in the day of visitation, which the further rebellion of this people would only too surely bring. The first words of the final sentence, that their carcasses were to fall in the wilderness, (Numbers 14:29) were, so to speak, already uttered in this warning of the Lord on the morrow of the slaughter of the 3,000: "Nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them." "Thus," in the language of Scripture (Exodus 32:35), "Jehovah smote the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made." That the Lord would not go personally with Israel because of their stiffneckedness, was, indeed, felt to be "evil tidings." (Exodus 33:4) The account of the people’s repentance and of God’s gracious forgiveness (Exodus 33:1-23) forms one of the most precious

portions of this history. The first manifestation of their godly sorrow was the putting away of their "ornaments," not only temporarily but permanently. Thus we read:" The children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from the mount Horeb onward" (Exodus 33:6). Israel was, so to speak, in permanent mourning, ever after its great national sin. Next, as the Lord would not personally be in the midst of Israel, Moses removed the tent - probably his own -outside the camp, that there he might receive the Divine communications, when "the cloudy pillar descended," "and Jehovah talked with Moses." Moses called this "the tent of meeting" (rendered in the Authorized Version "the tabernacle of the congregation:" Exodus 33:7). It is scarcely necessary to say, that this was not "the Tabernacle" (as the Authorized Version might lead one to infer), since the latter was not yet constructed. To this "tent of meeting" all who were of the true Israel, and who regarded Jehovah not merely as their national God, but owned Him personally and felt the need of Him, were wont to go out. This must not be looked upon as either a protest or an act of separation on their part, but as evidence of true repentance and of their desire to meet with God, who no longer was in the camp of Israel. Moreover, all the people, when they saw the cloudy pillar descend to Moses, "rose up and worshipped." Altogether, this was perhaps the period of greatest heart-softening during Israel's wanderings in the wilderness. And God graciously had respect to it. He had already assured Moses that he stood in special relationship to Him ("I know thee by name"), and that his prayer for Israel had been heard ("thou hast also found grace in My sight"). But as yet the former sentence stood, to the effect that an angel, not Jehovah Himself, was to be Israel's future guide. Under these circumstances Moses now entreated Jehovah to show him His way, that is, His present purpose in regard to Israel, adding, that if God would bring them into the Land of Promise, He would "consider that this is Thy people," and hence He their God and King. This plea also prevailed, and the Lord once more promised that His own presence would go with them, and that He Himself would give them the rest of Canaan (Exodus 33:14; comp. Deuteronomy 3:20; Hebrews 4:8). And Moses gave thanks by further prayer, even more earnest than before, for the blessing now again vouchsafed (Exodus 33:15-16). But one thing had become painfully evident to Moses by what had happened. However faithful in his Master's house, (Hebrews 3:5) he was but a servant; and a servant knoweth not the will of his master. The threat of destruction if Jehovah remained among Israel, and the alternative of sending with them an angel, must have cast a gloom over his future mediatorship. It was, indeed, only that of a servant, however highly favored, not of a son. (Hebrews 3:5-6) Oh, that he could quite understand the Being and character of the God of Israel - see, not His likeness, but His glory! (Exodus 33:18) Then would all become clear, and, with fuller light, joyous assurance fill his heart. That such was the real meaning of Moses' prayer, "Show me Thy glory" (Exodus 33:18), appears from the mode in which the Lord answered it. "And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of Jehovah before thee." Then was Moses taught, that the deepest mystery of Divine grace lay not in God's national, but in His individual dealings, in sovereign mercy, "And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (Exodus 33:19). Yet no man could see the face, the full outshining of Jehovah. Neither flesh nor spirit, so long as it dwelt in the flesh, could bear such glory. While that glory passed by, God would hold Moses in a clift of the rock, perhaps in the same in which a similar vision was afterwards granted to Elijah, (1 Kings 19:9) and there He would support, or "cover" him with His hand. Only "the back parts" - the after-glory, the luminous reflection of what Jehovah really was - could Moses bear to see. But what Moses witnessed, hid in the clift of the rock, and Elijah, the representative of

the prophets, saw more clearly, hiding his face in his mantle, while he worshipped, appears fully revealed to us in the Face of Jesus Christ, in Whom "the whole fullness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily."

03.02.13. Volume 2, Chapter 13

CHAPTER 13

Moses A Second Time On The Mount - On His Return His Face Shineth - The Rearing Of The Tabernacle - Its Consecration By The Seen Presence Of Jehovah Exodus 34:1-35, Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-43, Exodus 40:1-38 THE covenant relationship between God and Israel having been happily restored, Moses was directed to bring into the mount other two tables -this time of his own preparing - instead of those which he had broken, that God might once more write down the "ten words." (Exodus 34:1-4) Again he passed forty days and forty nights on Sinai without either eating or drinking (Exodus 34:28). The communications which he received were preceded by that glorious vision of Jehovah’s brightness, which had been promised to him. What he saw is nowhere told us; only what he, heard, when Jehovah" proclaimed" before him what Luther aptly designates as "the sermon about the name of God." It unfolded His inmost being, as that of love unspeakable - the cumulation of terms being intended to present that love in all its aspects. And, in the words of a recent German writer "Such as Jehovah here proclaimed, He also manifested it among Israel at all times, from Mount Sinai until He brought them into the land of Canaan; and thence till He cast them out among the heathen. Nay, even now in their banishment, He is ’keeping mercy for thousands, who turn to the Redeemer that has come out of Zion.’" When Moses thus fully understood the character of Jehovah, he could once more plead for Israel, now converting into a plea for forgiveness even the reason which had seemed to make the presence of Jehovah among Israel dangerous - that they were a stiff-necked people (Exodus 34:9). In the same manner had the Lord, in speaking to Noah, made the sin of man, which had erst provoked judgment, the ground for future forbearance. (Genesis 6:5-6; Genesis 8:21) And the Lord now graciously confirmed once more His covenant with Israel. In so doing He reminded them of its two conditions, the one negative, the other positive, but both strictly connected, and both applying to the time when Moses should be no more, and Israel had entered on possession of the Promised Land. These two conditions were always to be observed, if the covenant was to be maintained. The one was avoidance of all contact with the Canaanites and their idolatry (Exodus 34:11-16); the other, observance of the service of Jehovah in the manner prescribed by Him (Exodus 34:17-26).

Another confirmation of the Divine message which Moses bore from the mount, appeared on his return among Israel. All unknown to himself, the reflection of the Divine glory had been left upon him, and "the skin of his face shone (shot out rays) because of His (God’s) talking with him." As Aaron and the children of Israel were afraid of this reflection of the Divine glory, Moses had to use a coveting for his face while speaking to them, which he only removed when conversing with the Lord. It is to this that the apostle refers (2 Corinthians 3:7) when he contrasts the Old Testament glory on the face of Moses, which "was to be done away" at any rate at the death of Moses - and which was connected with what, after all, was "the ministration of death," with "the ministration of the Spirit" and its exceeding and enduring glory. Moreover, the veil with which Moses had to cover his face was symbolical of the veil covering the Old Testament, which is only "done away in Christ"

(2 Corinthians 3:13-14).

Everything was now ready for the construction of the Tabernacle and of all requisite for its services. We can understand how, especially in view of the work before them, the Sabbath rest should now be once more enjoined. (Exodus 35:2-3) Then a proclamation was made for voluntary contributions of all that was needful, to which the people responded with such "willing offerings" (Exodus 35:29), that soon not only "sufficient" but "too much" "for all the work" was gathered. (Exodus 36:5-7) The amount of gold and silver actually used is expressly mentioned in Exodus 38:24-26. The sum total of the gold amounts in present value to at least 131,595l., and that of the silver to about 75,444l., or both together to 207,039l., And it must be borne in mind, that this sum does not indicate the whole amount offered by Israel - only that actually employed. In regard to the silver, either less of it was offered or none at all may have been required, since the 75,444l. in silver represent the exact amount of the "ransom money" (Exodus 30:12) which every Israelite had to pay on their being first numbered (Exodus 38:26). Nor was it only gold, silver, and other material which the people brought. All "wise-hearted" men and women "whose heart the Lord stirred up" - that is, all who understood such work, and whose zeal was kindled by love for God’s sanctuary - busied themselves, according to their ability, under the direction of Bezaleel, the grandson of Hur, and Aholiab, of the tribe of Daniel But what chiefly impresses us in the sacred narrative is the evidence of spiritual devotion, which appeared alike in the gifts and in the labor of the people.

"And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as Jehovah had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them." (Exodus 39:43)

Under such willing hands, the whole work was completed within an almost incredibly short period. On comparing Exodus 19:1, which fixes the arrival of Israel at Mount Sinai as in the third month (of the first year), with Exodus 40:2, which informs us that the Tabernacle was ready for setting up "on the first day of the first month" (of the second year), we find that an interval of nine months had elapsed. From this, however, must be deducted twice forty days, during which Moses was on the mount, as well as the days when Israel prepared for the covenant, and those when it was ratified and the law given, and also the interval between Moses’ first and second stay on the mountain. Thus the whole of the elaborate work connected with the Tabernacle and its services must have been done within six months. And now that "the Tabernacle was reared up, Moses first placed within the Most Holy Place the Ark holding "the testimony," and covered it with the mercy-seat; next, he ranged in the Holy Place, to the north, the table of shewbread, setting "the bread in order upon it before the Lord;" then, to the south, "the candlestick," lighting its lamps before the Lord; and finally "the golden altar" "before the veil" of the Most Holy Place, "and he burnt sweet incense thereon." All this being done, and the curtain at the entrance to the Tabernacle hung up, (Exodus 40:28) the altar of burnt-offering was placed "by the door of the Tabernacle," and "the laver" between it and that altar, although probably not in a straight line, but somewhat to the side of the altar of burnt-offering. And on the altar smoked the burnt and the meat-offering, and the laver was filled with water, in which Moses, and Aaron, and his sons washed their hands and their feet.

All was now quite in readiness means, ordinances, and appointed channels of blessing, and all was in waiting. One thing only was needed; but upon that the meaning and the efficacy of everything else depended. But God was faithful to His promise. As in believing expectancy Israel looked up, "the cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of Jehovah filled the

Tabernacle." Outside, visible to all, rested "upon the tent" that Cloud and Pillar, in which Jehovah had hitherto guided them, and would continue so to do. For, as the cloud by day and the appearance of fire by night tarried over the Tabernacle, the children of Israel "abode in their tents," "and journeyed not." But "when it was taken up," then Israel's camp was speedily broken up, and, journeying, they followed their Divine Leader (comp. Numbers 9:15-23). A constant, visible, and guiding Presence of Jehovah this among His professing people, resting above the outer tent that covered the Tabernacle. But within that Tabernacle itself there was yet another and unapproachable Presence. For "the glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle." (Exodus 40:34-35) Presently it withdrew within the Most Holy Place, into which none could enter but the high-priest once a year, and that on the day and for the purpose of atonement, and where it rested between the cherubim of glory, above the mercy-seat, that covered the ark with the testimony. For "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." "But Christ being come an high-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Hebrews 9:8-12)

03.02.14. Volume 2, Chapter 14

CHAPTER 14 Analysis Of The Book Of Leviticus - The Sin Of Nadab & Abihu - Judgment Upon The Blasphemer.

Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38, Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20, Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34, Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46, Leviticus 27:1-34 THE Book of Exodus was intended to tell how the Lord God redeemed and set apart for Himself "a peculiar people." Accordingly, it appropriately closes with the erection of the Tabernacle and the hallowing of it by the visible Presence of Jehovah in the Holy Place. It yet remained to show the other aspect of the covenant. For the provisions and the means of grace must be accepted and used by those for whom they are designed, and the "setting apart" of the people by Jehovah implied, as it’s converse, consecration on the part of Israel. And this forms the subject matter of the Book of Leviticus, which a recent German writer has aptly described as "the code regulating the spiritual life of Israel, viewed as the people of God." To sum up its general contents - it tells us in its first Part (Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38, Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20, Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34) how Israel was to approach God, together with what, symbolically speaking, was inconsistent with such approaches; and in its second Part (Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46, Leviticus 27:1-34) how, having been brought near to God, the people were to maintain, to enjoy, and to exhibit the state of grace of which they had become partakers. Of course, all is here symbolical, and we must regard the directions and ordinances as conveying in an outward form so many spiritual truths. Perhaps we might go so far as to say, that Part 1 of Leviticus exhibits, in a symbolical form, the doctrine of justification, and Part that of sanctification; or, more accurately, the manner of access to God, and the holiness which is the result of that access.

It has already been pointed out, that the Book of Leviticus consists of two Parts; Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38, Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20, Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34; the other, properly speaking, with Leviticus 25:1-55; Leviticus 26:1-46 being a general conclusion, indicating the blessings of faithful adherence to the covenant, while Leviticus 27:1-34, which treats of vowing unto the Lord, forms a most appropriate appendix. At the close of the book itself, (Leviticus 26:46) and of the chapter which, for want of a better name, we have termed its appendix (Leviticus 27:34), we find expressions indicating the purpose of the whole, and that the book of Leviticus forms in itself a special and independent part of the Pentateuch. We repeat it, the Book of

Leviticus is intended for Israel as the people of God; it is the statute-book of Israel's spiritual life; and, on both these grounds, it is neither simply legal, in the sense of ordinary law, nor yet merely ceremonial, but throughout symbolical and typical. Accordingly, its deeper truths apply to all times and to all men.

Part 1 (Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38, Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20, Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34), which tells Israel how to approach God so as to have communion with Him, appropriately opens with a description of the various kinds of sacrifices. (Leviticus 1:1-17; Leviticus 2:1-16; Leviticus 3:1-17; Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-19; Leviticus 6:1-30; Leviticus 7:1-38) It next treats of the priesthood.

(Leviticus 8:1-36; Leviticus 9:1-24; Leviticus 10:1-20) The thoroughly symbolical character of all, and hence the necessity of closest adherence to the directions given, are next illustrated by the judgment which befell those who offered incense upon "strange fire." (Leviticus 10:1-6) From the priesthood the sacred text passes to the worshippers. (Leviticus 11:1-47; Leviticus 12:1-8; Leviticus 13:1-59; Leviticus 14:1-57; Leviticus 15:1-33) These must be clean - personally (Leviticus 11:1-47), in their family-life, (Leviticus 12:1-8) and as a congregation. (Leviticus 13:1-59; Leviticus 14:1-57; Leviticus 15:1-33) Above and beyond all is the great cleansing of the Day of Atonement, (Leviticus 16:1-34) with which the first part of the book, concerning access to God, closes. The Second Part of the Book of Leviticus, which describes, in symbolical manner, the holiness that becometh the people of God, treats, first, of personal holiness, (Leviticus 17:1-16) then of holiness in the family, (Leviticus 18:1-30) of holiness in social relations, (Leviticus 19:1-37; Leviticus 20:1-27) and of holiness in the priesthood. (Leviticus 21:1-24; Leviticus 22:1-33) Thence the sacred text proceeds to holy seasons. (Leviticus 23:1-44; Leviticus 24:1-23) As the duty of close adherence to the Divine directions in connection with the priesthood had been illustrated by the judgment upon Nadab and Abihu, (Leviticus 10:1-6) so now the solemn duty, incumbent on all Israel, to treat the Name of Jehovah as holy, is exhibited in the punishment of one who had blasphemed it. (Leviticus 24:10 -end) Finally, Leviticus 25:1-55 describes the holiness of the land. Thus Part II. treats more especially of consecration. As Part I., describing access to God, had culminated in the ordinance of the Day of Atonement, so Part II. in that of the Jubilee Year. Lastly, Leviticus 26:1-46 dwells on the blessing attaching to faithful observance of the covenant; while Leviticus 27:1-34, reaching, as it were, beyond ordinary demands and consecrations, speaks of the free-will offerings of the heart, as represented by vows.

It now only remains to describe the two illustrative instances already referred to - the one connected with the priesthood, the other with the people. Aaron and his sons had just been solemnly consecrated to their holy office, and the offering, which they had brought, consumed in view of the whole people by fire from before Jehovah, to betoken His acceptance thereof. (Leviticus 9:1-24) All the more did any transgression of the Lord's ordinance, especially if committed by His priests, call for signal and public punishment. But, Nadab and Abihu, the two eldest sons of Aaron, attempted to offer "strange fire before Jehovah, which He commanded them not." (Leviticus 10:1)

Some writers have inferred from the prohibition of wine or of any strong drink to the priests during the time of their ministry, which immediately follows upon the record of this event (Leviticus 10:8-11), that these two had been under some such influence at the time of their daring attempt. The point is of small importance, comparatively speaking. It is not easy to say what the expression "strange fire" exactly implies. Clearly, the two were going to offer incense on the golden altar (Leviticus 10:1), and as clearly this service was about to be done at a time not prescribed by the Lord. For a comparison of Leviticus 10:12-16 shows that it took place between the sacrifice offered by Aaron (Leviticus 9:1-24) and the festive meal following that sacrifice; whereas incense was only to be burnt at the morning and evening sacrifices. Besides, it may be, that they also took "strange fire" in the sense of taking the burning coals otherwise than from the altar of burnt-offering. In the ceremonial for the Day of Atonement the latter is expressly prescribed, (Leviticus 16:12) and it is a fair inference that the same direction applied to every time of incensing. At any rate, we know that such was the invariable rule in the Temple at the time of Christ. But Nadab and Abihu were not allowed to accomplish their purpose. The same fire, which a little ago had consumed the accepted sacrifice, (Leviticus 9:24) now struck them, "and they died before Jehovah," that is, in front of His dwelling-place, most probably in the court (comp. Leviticus 1:5), just as they were about to enter the Holy Place. Thus, on the very day of their consecration to the priesthood, did the oldest sons of Aaron perish, because they had not sanctified the Lord in their hearts, but had offered Him a worship of their own devising, instead of that holy incense consumed by fire from off the altar, which symbolized prayer, offered up on the ground of accepted sacrifice. And this twofold lesson did the Lord Himself teach in explanation of this judgment (Leviticus 10:3). So far as the priesthood was concerned - "I will sanctify Myself in those who stand near to Me,2 and" (so far as all the people were concerned) "before all the people I will glorify Myself." In other words, if those who had been consecrated to Him would not sanctify Him in heart and life, He would sanctify Himself in them by judgments (comp. also Ezekiel 38:16), and thus glorify His Name before all, as the Holy One, Who cannot with impunity be provoked to anger. So deeply was Aaron solemnized, that, in the language of Scripture, he "held his peace." Not a word of complaint escaped his lips; nor yet was a token of mourning on his part, or on that of his sons, allowed to cast the shadow of personal feelings, or of latent regret, upon this signal vindication of Divine holiness (Leviticus 10:6). Only their "brethren, the whole house of Israel" were permitted to "bewail this burning (of His anger) which Jehovah hath kindled." The history of the judgment upon the blasphemer (Leviticus 24:10-14) was inserted in the portion of Leviticus where it stands, either because it happened at the time when the laws there recorded were given, or else because it forms a suitable introduction to, and illustration of, the duty of owning Jehovah, which finds its fullest outward expression in the rest of the Sabbatical and in the arrangements of the Jubilee Year, enjoined in Leviticus 25:1-55. It also affords another instance of the dangers accruing to Israel from the presence among them of that "mixed multitude" which had followed them from Egypt. (Exodus 12:38) There seems no reason to doubt the Jewish view, that the latter occupied a separate place in the camp; the children of Israel being ranged according to their tribes, "every man by his own standard, with the ensign of their father’s house." (Numbers 2:2) But as the blasphemer was only the son of a Danite mother - Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri - his father having been an Egyptian, he would not have been entitled to pitch his tent among the tribe of Daniel.

Hebrew tradition further states, that this had been the cause of the quarrel, when the blasphemer" went out among the children of Israel; and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel

strove together in the camp." Finally, it adds, that the claim to dwell among the Danites having been decided by Moses against him, the man "blasphemed the Name (of Jehovah), and cursed." Whatever truth, if any, there be in this tradition, the crime itself was most serious. If even cursing one’s parents was visited with death, what punishment could be too severe upon one who had "reviled" Jehovah, and "cursed!" But just because the case was so solemn, Moses did not rashly adjudicate in it (comp. the corresponding delay in Numbers 15:34)

"They put him inward to determine about them (i.e. about blasphemers), according to the mouth (or command) of Jehovah." Then by Divine direction the blasphemer was taken without the camp; those who had heard his blasphemy laid "their hands upon his head," as it were to put away the blasphemy from themselves, and lay it on the head of the guilty (comp. Deuteronomy 21:6); and the whole congregation shared in the judgment by stoning him. But the general law which decreed the punishment of death upon blasphemy (Leviticus 24:16) was to apply to native Israelites as well as to the stranger, as indeed all crimes that carried retributive punishment -specially those against the life or the person - were to be equally visited, whether the offender were a Jew or a foreigner. This is the object of the repetition of these laws in that connection. (Leviticus 24:17-22) For Jehovah was not a national deity, like the gods of the heathen; nor were Israel’s privileges those of exceptional favor in case of offenses; but Jehovah was the Holy One of Israel, and holiness became His house for ever.

03.02.15. Volume 2, Chapter 15

CHAPTER 15

Analysis Of The Book Of Numbers - The Numbering Of Israel - And That Of The Levites - Arrangement Of The Camp, And Its Symbolical Import - The March Numbers 1:1-54; Numbers 2:1-34; Numbers 3:1-51; Numbers 4:1-49; Numbers 10:1-11 THE Book of Numbers reads almost like a chronicle of the principal events during the thirty-eight years which elapsed between Israel's stay in the wilderness of Sinai, and their arrival on the borders of Canaan.

What took place during the journey to Mount Sinai had been intended to prepare the people for the solemn events there enacted. Similarly, the thirty-eight years wanderings which followed were designed to fit Israel for entering on possession of the Land of Promise. The outward history of the people during that period exhibited, on the one hand, the constant care and mercy of Jehovah, and on the other, His holiness and His judgments; while the laws and ordinances given them were needful for the organization of the commonwealth of Israel in its future relations. A brief analysis of the whole book will show the connection of all. In general, the Book of Numbers seems to consist of three parts, the first, (Numbers 1:1-54, Numbers 2:1-34, Numbers 3:1-51, Numbers 4:1-49, Numbers 5:1-31, Numbers 6:1-27, Numbers 7:1-89, Numbers 8:1-26, Numbers 9:1-23, Numbers 10:1-10) detailing the preparations for the march from Sinai; the second, (Numbers 10:11-21) The history of the journeyings of Israel through the wilderness; and the third, (Numbers 22:1-41; Numbers 23:1-30; Numbers 24:1-25; Numbers 25:1-18; Numbers 26:1-65) the various occurrences on the east of the Jordan. If we examine each of these parts separately, we find that Part 1 consists of four sections, detailing - 1. The numbers and the outward arrangement of each of the tribes, (Numbers 1:1-54; Numbers 2:1-34) and the appointment of the Levites to their service (Numbers 3:1-51, Numbers 4:1-49); 2. Laws concerning the higher and spiritual order of the people, culminating in the priestly blessing (Numbers 5:1-31, Numbers 6:1-27); 3. The three last occurrences before leaving Mount Sinai (Numbers 7:1-89, Numbers 8:1-26, Numbers 9:1-14); 4. The signals for the march in the wilderness (Numbers 9:15-23, Numbers 1:1-10).

Part II tells the history of the wanderings of Israel, in their three stages 1. From Sinai to Paran, near Kadesh, detailing all that happened there (Numbers 10:10-14); 2. From the announcement of the death of the generation which had 125 come out from Egypt to the re-assembling of the people at Kadesh in the fortieth year after the Exodus (Numbers 15:1-41, Numbers 16:1-50, Numbers 17:1-13, Numbers 18:1-32, Numbers 19:1-22); 3. The march from Kadesh to Mount Hor, with the events during its course (Numbers 20:1-29, Numbers 21:1-35). Lastly, Part III. consists of five sections detailing - 1.The attempts of Moab and Midian against Israel (Numbers 22:1-41, Numbers 23:1-30, Numbers 24:1-25, Numbers 25:1-18);

2.A fresh census and the ordinances connected with it (Numbers 25:1-18, Numbers 26:1-65, Numbers 27:1-23);

3.Certain sacred laws given in view of settling in Palestine (Numbers 28:1-31, Numbers 29:1-40, Numbers 30:1-16);

4.The victory over Midian, the division of the territory gained, along with a review of the past (Numbers 31:1-54, Numbers 32:1-42, Numbers 33:1-49);

5.Some prospective directions on taking possession of the Land of Promise (Numbers 33:50-56, Numbers 34:1-29, Numbers 35:1-34, Numbers 36:1-13).

Before leaving the encampment at Mount Sinai, God directed Moses and Aaron to take a census of all who constituted the host of Israel in the language of Scripture. "All that are able to go forth to war," "their armies," (Numbers 1:3) that is, "every male from twenty years old and upwards." In this they were to be assisted by one delegate from each tribe, "every one head of the house of his fathers" (Numbers 1:4); or, as they are designated in Numbers 1:16, "the called (representatives) of the congregation, princes of their paternal tribes, heads of thousands in Israel." The latter expression indicates that the census was taken on the plan proposed by Jethro, (Exodus 18:21-25) by which Israel was arranged into thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. This also accounts for the even numbers assigned to each tribe as the final result of the numbering, Manifestly, the census was made on the basis of the poll taken, nine months before, for the purpose of the "atonement money." (Exodus 30:11-16) This poll had yielded a total of 603,550, (Exodus 38:26) which is precisely the same number as that in Numbers 1:46. Probably, therefore, the census was substantially only a re-arrangement and registration of the people according to their tribes, in thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, made with the co-operation of the hereditary rulers of the tribes. The above number of men capable of bearing arms would, if we may apply modern statistical results, imply a total population of upwards of two millions. Thirty-eight years later, just before entering upon possession of the land, a second census was taken, (Numbers 26:1-65) which yielded a total number of 601,730 capable of bearing arms (Numbers 26:51), thus showing a decrease of 1820 during the years of wandering in the wilderness. Arranging these two census according to the tribes, and placing them side by side, we gather some interesting information:

First Census (Exodus 30:1-38; Numbers 1:1-54) REUBEN.....46,500 (Elizur, "My God the Rock.") Simeon.....59,300 (Shelumiel, "God my Salvation.") Gad.....45,650 (Eliasaph, "My God that gathers.") JUDAH .....74,600 (Nahshon, "The Diviner.") Issachar .....54,400 (Nethaneel, "God the Giver.") Zebulon .....57,400 (Eliab, "My God the Father.") EPHRAIM.....Matthew,500 (Elishama, "My God the Hearer.") Manasseh.....32,200 (Gamaliel, "My God the Rewarder.") Benjamin .....35,400 (Abidan, "My Father is Judge.") DAN.....62,700 (Ahiezer, "My Brother is Help.") Asher .....41,500 (Pagiel, either "My Fate is God," or "My prayer-God.") Naphtali .....53,400 (Ahira, "My Brother is Friend.")

TOTAL 603,550 Second Census (Numbers 26:1-65) REUBEN.....43,730 Simeon.....22,200 Gad.....Matthew,500 JUDAH 2 .....76,500 Issachar .....64,300 Zebulon .....60,500 EPHRAIM.....32,500 Manasseh.....52,700 Benjamin .....45,600 DAN.....64,400 Asher .....53,400 Naphtali 45,400

TOTAL 601,730 A comparison of the foregoing figures will show, that, while some of the tribes remarkably increased, others equally remarkably decreased, during the thirty-eight years' wanderings. Thus, for example, Issachar increased nineteen per cent., Benjamin and Asher twenty-nine per cent., and Manasseh about sixty-three per cent.; while Reuben decreased six per cent., Gad twelve per cent., Naphtali fifteen per cent., and Simeon almost sixty-three per cent. Some interpreters have connected the large decrease in the latter tribe with the judgment following upon the service of Baal Peor; the fact that Zimri, a prince of the tribe of Simeon, had been such a notable offender (Numbers 25:6-14) leading to the inference that the tribe itself had been largely implicated in the sin.

It has already been noted, that the Levites were taken for the ministry of the sanctuary in place of the firstborn of Israel. (Numbers 3:11-12) The number of the latter amounted to 22,273. (Numbers 3:43) But this statement is not intended to imply that, among all the Jewish males, amounting to upwards of a million of all ages - from the grandfather to the infant lately born - there were only 22,273 "firstborns." The latter figure evidently indicates only the number of the firstborn since the departure from Egypt. With reference to those born previously to the Exodus we are expressly told: (Numbers 3:13; Numbers 8:17) "all the firstborn are Mine; on the day that I smote all the firstborn of Egypt I hallowed unto Me all the firstborn in Israel."

Hence the fresh hallowing of the firstborn of Israel, and their subsequent numbering with a view to the substitution of the Levites for them, must have dated from after the Paschal night. Thus the 22,273 firstborn sons, for whom the Levites were substituted, represent those born after the departure from Egypt. If this number seems proportionally large, it should be remembered that the oppressive measures of Pharaoh would tend to diminish the number of marriages during the latter part of Israel's stay in Egypt, while the prospect of near freedom would, in a corresponding manner, immensely increase them. Besides, it is a well-known fact that even now the proportion of boys to girls is very much greater among Jews than among Gentiles. Viewed in this light, the account of Scripture on this subject presents no difficulties to the careful reader. As already explained, the Levites were not numbered with the other tribes, but separately, (Numbers 3:15) and appointed ministers to Aaron the priest "for the service of the Tabernacle," in room of the firstborn of Israel (Numbers 3:5-13). Not being regarded as part of the host, they were counted "from a month old and upward," the number of their males amounting to 22,000, which at the second census (after the thirty-eight years' wanderings) had increased to 23,000. (Numbers 3:39; Numbers 26:62) This has been computed to imply about 13,000 men, from twenty years and upwards - a number less than half that of the smallest of the other tribes (Benjamin, 35,400). With this computation agrees the statement (Numbers 4:48) that the number of Levites "from thirty years old and upwards, even unto fifty years old, every one that came to do the service of the ministry," amounted in all to 8,580. The same proportion between Levi and the rest of the people seems to have continued in after times, as we gather from the results of the census taken by King David, (1 Chronicles 23:3) when Levi had only increased from 23,000 to 38,000, while the rest of the tribes had more than doubled. The Levites were arranged into families after their ancestors, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the three sons of Levi. (Numbers 3:14-43) The Gershonites (again subdivided into two families, and amounting to 7,500), under their leader Eliasaph - "My God that gathers" - had charge of "the Tabernacle," or rather of "the dwelling-place;" of "the tent," of "the covering thereof;" and of "the hanging (or curtain) for the door of the tent of meeting;" as also of

"the hangings of the court" (in which the Tabernacle stood); of the curtain for its door; and of all the cordage necessary for these "hangings."

We have been particular in translating this passage, because it proves that the common view, which places the curtains "of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet," (Exodus 26:1) outside the boards that constituted the framework of the Tabernacle, is entirely erroneous. Evidently these hangings, and not the boards, constituted "the Tabernacle," or rather "the dwelling" - "the tent," outside the framework, consisting of the eleven curtains of goats' hair, (Exodus 26:7) and "the covering" of the whole being twofold - one "of rams' skins dyed red," and another "of badgers' skins." (Exodus 26:14)

Whilst the Gershonites had charge of "the dwelling," "the tent," and the hangings of the outer court, the care of the "boards of the dwelling," with all that belonged thereto, and of "the pillars of the court round about" - in short, of all the outer solid framework of the Tabernacle and of the court - devolved upon the Merarites, under their chief, Zuriel ("My Rock is God"). Finally, the most important charge - that of the contents and vessels of the sanctuary - was committed to the Kohathites, under their chief Elizaphan ("My God watcheth round about").

Viewed as a whole, the camp of Israel thus formed a threefold square - a symbolical design, further developed in the Temple of Solomon, still more fully in that of Ezekiel, and finally shown in all its completeness in "the city that lieth foursquare." The innermost square - as yet elongated and therefore not perfect in its width (or comprehension), nor yet having the perfect form of a cube, except so far as the Most Holy Place itself was concerned (which was a cube) - was occupied by "the dwelling," covered by "the tent," and surrounded by its "court." Around this inner was another square, occupied by the ministers of the Tabernacle in the East, or at the entrance to the court, by Moses, Aaron, and his sons; in the South by the Kohathites, who had the most important Levitical charge; in the West by the Gershonites; and in the North by the Merarites. Finally, there was a third and outermost square, which formed the camp of Israel. The eastern or most important place here was occupied by Judah, bearing the standard of the division. With Judah were Issachar and Zebulon (the sons of Leah), the three tribes together a host of 186,400 men. The southern place was held by Reuben, with the standard of that division, camped probably nearest to Zebulon, or at the south-eastern corner. With Reuben were Simeon and Gad (the sons of Leah and of Zilpah, Leah's maid), forming altogether a host of 151,450 men. The western post was occupied by Ephraim, with the standard of his division, being probably camped nearest to Gad, or at the south-western corner. With Ephraim were Manasseh and Benjamin (in short, the three descendants of Rachel), forming altogether a host of 108,100 men. Lastly, the northern side was occupied by Dan, with his standard, camping probably nearest to Benjamin, or at the north-western corner. With Dan were Asher and Naphtali (the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah), forming altogether a host of 157,600 men. This was also the order of march, Judah with his division leading, after which came Reuben, with his division, then the sanctuary with the Levites in the order of their camping, the rear consisting of the divisions of Ephraim and of Daniel. The sacred text does not specially describe the banners carried by the four leading tribes. According to Jewish tradition they bore as emblems "the likeness of the four living creatures," seen by Ezekiel in his vision of the Chariot, (Ezekiel 1:10) the color of the standard being the same as that of the precious stones on the high-priest's breastplate, on which the names of the standard-bearing tribes were graven. (Exodus 28:15-21) In that case Judah would have had on its standard a lion on

a blood-red ground (the sardian stone or sard); Reuben the head of a man on a ground of dark red color (the ruby or carbuncle); Ephraim the head of a bullock on a ground of hyacinth (the ligury, according to some, Ligurian amber); and Dan an eagle on a ground of bright yellow, like gold (the ancient chrysolith, perhaps our topaz). This, supposing the names to have been graven in the order in which the tribes camped. But Josephus and some of the Rabbis range the names on the breastplate in the same order as on the ephod of the high-priest, (Exodus 28:10) that is, "according to their birth." In that case Reuben would have been on the sardian stone or sard, Judah on the ruby or carbuncle, Dan on a sapphire, or perhaps lapis-lazuli (blue), and Ephraim on an onyx, or else a beryl, the color of the banners, of course, in each case corresponding. Altogether the camp is supposed to have occupied about three square miles. The direction either for marching or for resting was, as explained in a former chapter, given by the Cloud in which the Divine Presence was. But for actual signal to move, two silver trumpets were to be used by the sons of Aaron. A prolonged alarm indicated the commencement of the march. At the first alarm the eastern, at the second the southern part of the camp was to move forward, then came the Tabernacle and its custodians, the western, and finally the northern part of the camp, Naphtali closing the rear. On the other hand, when an assembly of the people was summoned, the signal was only one blast of the trumpets in short, sharp tones. In general, and for all times, the blast of these silver trumpets, whether in war, on festive, or on joyous occasions, had this spiritual meaning: "ye shall be remembered before Jehovah your God." (Numbers 10:1-10) In other words, Israel was a host, and as such summoned by blast of trumpet. But Israel was a host of which Jehovah was Leader and King, and the trumpets that summoned this host were silver trumpets of the sanctuary, blown by the priests of Jehovah. Hence these their blasts brought Israel as the Lord’s host in remembrance before their God and King.

03.02.16. Volume 2, Chapter 16

CHAPTER 16 The Offerings Of The Princes - The Setting Apart Of The Levites - Second Observance Of The Passover Numbers 7:1-89; Numbers 8:1-26; Numbers 9:1-23

THREE other occurrences are recorded, before the camp of Israel broke up from Mount Sinai, although they may not have taken place in the exact order in which, for special reasons, they are told in the sacred text. These events were: the offering of certain gifts on the part of "the princes" of Israel: (Numbers 7:1-89) the actual setting apart of the Levites to the service for which they had been already previously designated; (Numbers 7:1-89) and a second observance of The Passover." (Numbers 9:1-14) The offerings of the princes of Israel commenced immediately after the consecration of the tabernacle. (Leviticus 8:10-36; Leviticus 9:1; Numbers 7:1) But their record is inserted in Numbers 7:1-89, partly in order not to interrupt the consecutive series of Levitical ordinances, which naturally followed upon the narrative of the consecration of the tabernacle, (Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34, Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33, Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23, Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46, Leviticus 27:1-34) and partly because one of the offerings of the princes bore special reference to the wilderness-journey, which was then about to be immediately resumed. Probably these offerings may have been brought on some of the days on which part of the Levitical ordinances was also proclaimed. We know that the presentation of gifts by the princes occupied, altogether, the mornings of twelve, or rather of thirteen days. On the first day (Numbers 7:1-9) they brought in common "six covered wagons and twelve oxen," for the transport of the Tabernacle during the journeyings of the children of Israel. Four of these wagons with eight oxen were given to the Merarites, who had charge of the heavy framework and of the pillars; the other two wagons and four oxen to the Gershonites, who had the custody of the hangings and curtains. As for the vessels of the sanctuary, they were to be carried by the Kohathites on their shoulders. Then, during the following twelve days "the princes" offered successively each the same gift, that so "there might be equality," anticipating in this also the New Testament principle. (2 Corinthians 8:14) Each offering consisted of a "silver charger," weighing about four and a half pounds, a "silver bowl," weighing about two and a quarter pounds, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat-offering, and a "golden spoon," about a third of a pound in weight, "full of incense." These gifts were accompanied by burnt, sin, and peace-offerings, which no doubt were sacrificed each day, as the vessels were presented in the sanctuary. And as they brought their precious offerings, with humble confession of sin over their sacrifices, with thanksgiving and with prayer, the Lord graciously signified His acceptance by speaking unto Moses "from off the mercy-seat," "from between the cherubim." (Numbers 7:89) The second event was the formal setting apart of the Levites, (Numbers 8:5, etc.) which was preceded by a significant direction to Aaron in reference to the lighting of the seven-branched candlestick in the sanctuary. To make the meaning of this symbol more clear, it was added, "the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick" - that is, each of the seven lamps (the number being also significant) shall be so placed as to throw

its light into the darkness over against it. Each separately - and yet each as part of the one candlestick in the Holy Place, and burning the same sacred oil, was to shed light into the darkness over against the candlestick. For the light on the candlestick was symbolical of the mission of Israel as the people of God, and the Levites were really only the representatives of all Israel, having been substituted instead of their firstborn. (Numbers 3:11-13) On this account, also, the Levites were not specially "hallowed," as the priests had been, but only "cleansed" for their ministry, and after that presented to the Lord. The first part of this symbolical service consisted in sprinkling on them "water of sin" (rendered in our Authorized Version "water of purifying"), alike to confess the defilement of sin and to point to its removal. After that they were to shave off all their hair and to wash their clothes. The Levites were now "unsinned" (Numbers 8:21), so far as their persons were concerned. Then followed their dedication to the work. For this purpose the Levites were led "before the Tabernacle" (Numbers 8:9), that is, probably into the outer court, bringing with them two young bullocks - the one for a burnt, the other for a sin-offering, and each with its meat-offering. The people, through their representatives - the princes - now laid their hands upon them, as it were to constitute them their substitutes and representatives. Then Aaron took them "before Jehovah" (Numbers 8:10), that is, into the Holy Place, and "waved them for a wave-offering of the children of Israel" - probably by leading them to the altar and back again - after which, the Levites would lay their hands upon the sacrifices which were now offered by Aaron, who so "made an atonement for them" (Numbers 8:21). The significance of all these symbols will be sufficiently apparent. "And after that, the Levites went in to do service in the Tabernacle of the congregation" (Numbers 8:22). The third event recorded was a second celebration of the Passover on the anniversary of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt - "in his appointed season, according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof." (Numbers 9:3) We specially mark how the Lord now again directed all - the injunction to "keep the Passover" being expressly repeated here, perhaps to obviate the possibility of such a misunderstanding as that the Passover was not to be observed from year to year. Again, when certain men, "defiled by a dead body," complained that they had thereby been excluded from the feast, Moses would not decide the matter himself, but brought their case before God. The direction given was, that, under such or similar circumstances, the Passover should be observed exactly a month later, it being at the same time added, to guard against any willful, not necessary, neglect, that whoever omitted the ordinance without such reason should "be cut off from among His people." (Numbers 9:13) For, as the significance of symbolical rites depended upon their entirety, so that if any part of them, however small, had been omitted, the whole would have been nullified, so, on the other hand, Israel’s compliance with the prescribed rites required to be complete in every detail to secure the benefits promised to the obedience of faith. But not to receive these benefits was to leave an Israelite outside the covenant, or exposed to the Divine judgment. More than that, being caused by unbelief or disobedience, it involved the punishment due to open rebellion against God and His Word.

03.02.17. Volume 2, Chapter 17

CHAPTER 17 Departure From Sinai - March Into The Wilderness Of Paran - At Taberah And Kibroth-Hattaavah Numbers 10:29-11 AT length, on the twentieth day of the second month, the signal for departure from Sinai was given. The cloud which had rested upon the Tabernacle moved; the silver trumpets of the priests summoned "the camps" of Israel to their march, and as the Ark itself set forward, Moses, in joyous confidence of faith, spake those words of mingled prayer and praise which, as they marked the progress of Israel towards the Land of Promise, have ever been the signal in every forward movement of the Church:

Arise, O Jehovah, let Thine enemies be scattered: Let them also that hate Thee flee before Thee. The general destination of Israel was, in the first place, "the wilderness of Paran," a name known long before. (Genesis 14:6; Genesis 21:21) This tract may be described as occupying the whole northern part of the Sinaitic peninsula, between the so-called Arabah on the east, and the wilderness of Shur in the west, (Genesis 16:7; Exodus 15:22) which separates Philistia from Egypt.

Here Israel was, so to speak, hedged in by the descendants of Esau - on the one side by the Edomites, whose country lay east of the Arabah, and on the other by the Amalekites, while right before them were the Amorites. The whole district still bears the name Badiet et Tih, "the desert of the wanderings." Its southern portion seems, as it were, driven in wedgeways into the Sinaitic peninsula proper, from which it is separated by a belt of sand. Ascending from the so-called Tot, which had been the scene of the first year of Israel’s pilgrimage and of the Sinaitic legislation, the Tih might be entered by one of several passes through the mountains which form its southern boundary. The Et Tih itself "is a limestone plateau of irregular surface." It may generally be described as "open plains of sand and gravel... broken by a few valleys," and is at present "nearly waterless, with the exception of a few springs, situated in the larger wadies," which, however, yield rather an admixture of sand and water than water… "The ground is for the most part hard and unyielding, and is covered in many places with a carpet of small flints, which are so worn and polished... as to resemble pieces of black glass." In spring, however, there is a scanty herbage even here, while in the larger wadies there is always sufficient for camels, and even "a few patches of ground available for cultivation." Such was "that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water," (Deuteronomy 8:15) through which Jehovah their God safely led Israel! A still earlier retrospect on the part of Moses brings the events about to be described most vividly before us. Addressing Israel, he reminds them: (Deuteronomy 1:19) "when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as Jehovah our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea." This "mountain of the Amorites" is the most interesting spot in the whole Et Tih, or "wilderness of the wanderings." Arrived there, it seemed as if Israel were just about to take possession of the Promised Land. Thence the spies went forth to view the land. But here also the sentence was spoken which doomed all that unbelieving, faint-hearted generation to fall in the wilderness, and thither Israel had to return at the end of their

forty years wanderings to start, as it were, anew on their journey of possession. "The mountain of the Amorites" is a mountain plateau in the north-east of the Et Tih, about seventy miles long, and from forty to fifty broad, which extends northward to near Beersheba. It contains many spots known to us from patriarchal history, and also celebrated afterwards. According to the description of travelers, we are here, literally, in a land of ruins, many of them dating far back, perhaps from the time of the Exodus, if not earlier.

Even the old name of the Amorites is still everywhere preserved as ’Amir and ’Amori. It leaves a peculiar impression on the mind to find not only the old Scripture names of towns continued these thousands of years, but actually to hear the wells which Abraham and Isaac had dug still called by their ancient names! About half way towards Beersheba the whole character of the scenery changes. Instead of the wilderness we have now broad valleys, with many and increasing evidences of former habitation all around. Indeed, we are now in the Negeb, or "south country" (erroneously rendered "the south" in our Authorized Version), which extends from about Kadesh to Beersheba. If "certain primeval stone remains" found throughout the Sinaitic peninsula have been regarded by the latest travelers as marking the journeyings, or rather the more prolonged settlements of Israel in "the wilderness," there is one class of them which deserves special attention. These are the so-called "Hazeroth," or "fenced enclosures," consisting of "a low wall of stones in which thick bundles of thorny acacia are inserted, the tangled branches and long needle-like spikes forming a perfectly impenetrable hedge around the encampment" of tents and cattle which they sheltered. These "Hazeroth," so frequently referred to in Scripture, abound in this district.

Such then was the goal and such the line of march before Israel, when, on that day in early summer, the Ark and the host of the Lord moved forward from the foot of Sinai. At the reiterated request of Moses, Hobab, the brother-in-law of Moses, had consented to accompany Israel, and to act as their guide in the wilderness, in the faith of afterwards sharing "what goodness Jehovah" would do unto His people. (Numbers 10:32) This we learn from such passages as Judges 1:16; 1 Samuel 15:6; 1 Samuel 27:10; 1 Samuel 30:9. Although the pillar of cloud was the real guide of Israel in all their journeying, yet the local knowledge of Hobab would manifestly prove of the greatest use in indicating springs and places of pasturage. And so it always is. The moving of the cloud or its resting must be our sole guide; but under its direction the best means which human skill or knowledge can suggest should be earnestly sought and thankfully used. For three days Israel now journeyed without finding "a resting-place." By that time they must have fairly entered upon the "great and terrible wilderness." The scorching heat of a May sun reflected by such a soil, the fatigues of such a march, with probably scarcity of water and want of pasturage for their flocks - all combined to depress those whose hearts were not strong in faith and filled with longing for the better country. Behind and around was the great wilderness, and, so far as could be seen, no "resting-place" before them! In truth, before inheriting the promises, Israel had now to pass through a trial of faith analogous to that which Abraham had undergone. Only as in his case each victory had been marked by increasing encouragements, in theirs each failure was attended by louder warnings, until at last the judgment came which deprived that unbelieving generation of their share in the enjoyment of the promise. Three days journey under such difficulties, and "the people were as they who complain of evil in the ears of Jehovah." (Numbers 11:1) But as this really reflected upon His guidance, it displeased the Lord, and a fire, sent by Jehovah, "consumed

in the ends of the camp." At the intercession of Moses "the fire was quenched." But the lesson which might have been learned, and the warning conveyed in the judgment which had begun in the uttermost parts of the camp, remained unnoticed. Even the name Taberah (burning), with which Moses had intended to perpetuate the memory of this event, was unheeded. Possibly, the quenching of the fire may have deadened their spiritual sensibility, as formerly the removal of the plagues had hardened the heart of Pharaoh and of his people. And so Taberah soon became Kibroth-hattaavah, and the fire of wrath that had burned in the uttermost parts raged fiercely within the camp itself. The sin of Israel at Kibroth-hattaavah was due to lust, and manifested itself in contempt for God's provision and in a desire after that of Egypt. The "mixed multitude" which had come up with Israel were the first to lust. From them it spread to Israel. The past misery of Egypt - even its cruel bondage - seemed for the moment quite forgotten, and only the lowest thoughts of the abundant provision which it had supplied for their carnal wants were present to their minds. This impatient question of disappointed lustfulness, "Who shall give us flesh to eat?" repeated even to weeping, can only be accounted for by such a state of feeling. But if it existed, it was natural that God's gracious provision of manna should also be despised. As if to mark their sin in this the more clearly, scripture here repeats its description of the manna, and of its miraculous provision. (Numbers 11:7-9) When Moses found "the weeping" not confined to any particular class, but general among the people (Numbers 11:10), and that "the anger of Jehovah was kindled greatly," his heart sank within him. Yet, as has been well observed, he carried his complaint to the Lord in prayer, and therefore his was not the language of unbelief, only that of utter depression. Rightly understood, these words of his, "Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them?" implied that not he but God was their father and their provider, (Exodus 4:22; Isaiah 63:16) and that therefore he must cast their care upon the Lord. But even so the trial of Moses had in this instance become a temptation, although God gave him "with the temptation a way of escape."

Two things would the Lord do in answer to the appeal of Moses. First, He would, in His tender mercy, support and encourage His servant, and then manifest His power and holiness. With this twofold purpose in view, Moses was directed to place seventy of the elders of Israel - probably in a semi-circle - around the entrance to the Tabernacle. These "elders" were henceforth to help Moses in bearing the burden of the people. He had wished help, and he was now to receive it, although he would soon experience that the help of man was vain, and God alone the true helper. And then, to show in sight of all men that He had appointed such help, yet only as a help to Moses, God" came down in a cloud," spake unto Moses, and then put of his spirit upon these "elders." In manifestation of this new gift "they prophesied," by which, however, we are to understand not the prediction of future events, but probably that "speaking in the spirit" which in the New Testament also is designated as "prophesying." (1 Corinthians 12:1-31; 1 Corinthians 14:1-40) Further, lest in the mind of the people this should be connected with any miraculous power inherent in Moses, the same spirit descended, and with the same effect, upon two (Eldad and Medad) who had been "written," that is, designated for the office, but who for some reason had been prevented from appearing at the door of the Tabernacle. The lesson, it was evident, was required, for even Joshua had misunderstood the matter. When he found that Eldad and Medad prophesied "in the camp," he deemed the authority of his master compromised, and wished to "forbid them," since these men had not received the gift through Moses. We are here reminded of the similar conduct of John, who would have forbidden one "casting out devils" in the name of Christ, because he followed not with the other disciples, and of the Lord's rebuke of such mistaken zeal, (Mark 9:38; Luke 9:49) - a

mistake too often repeated, and a rebuke too much forgotten in the Christian Church at all times. Far different were the feelings of Moses. As a faithful servant, he emphatically disclaimed all honor for himself, and only expressed the fervent wish that the same spiritual gifts might be shared by all the Lord’s people.

One thing was still required. God would manifest His power in providing for the wants of the people, and His holiness in taking vengeance on their lust. The lesson was specially needed, for even Moses had, when first told, questioned the full promise of providing for the whole people flesh sufficient to last for a month. (Numbers 11:18-23) And now the Lord again showed how easily He can bring about supernatural results by what we call natural means. As explained in a former chapter, in spring the quails migrate in immense numbers from the interior of Africa northwards. An east wind, blowing from the Arabian Gulf, now drove them, in vast quantities, just over the camp of Israel. Here they fell down exhausted by the flight, and lay, to the distance of a day’s journey "on this side and on that," in some places two cubits high. It is the same lesson which we have so often learned in this history. The "wind" which brought the quails" went forth from the Lord," and the number brought was far beyond what is ordinarily witnessed, although such a flight and drooping of birds are by no means uncommon. And so God can, by means unthought of, send sudden deliverances unexpectedly, even to one like Moses. But as for Israel, they had now their wishes more than gratified. The supply of flesh thus provided sufficed not only for the present, but was such that the greater part of it was preserved for after use (Numbers 11:32). Thus had God shown the folly of those who murmured against His provision or questioned His ability. It still remained to punish the presumption and sin of their conduct. "While the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of Jehovah was kindled against the people, and Jehovah smote the people with a very great plague. And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah (the graves of lust): because there they buried the people that lusted." But how deeply the impression of this judgment sunk into the hearts of the godly in Israel appears from such passages as Psalms 78:26-31, while its permanent lesson to all times is summed up in these words:

"He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul." (Psalms 106:15)

03.02.18. Volume 2, Chapter 18

CHAPTER 18

Murmuring Of Miriam And Aaron - The Spies Sent To Canaan - Their "Evil Report" - Rebellion Of The People, And Judgment Pronounced Upon Them - The Defeat Of Israel - "Unto Hormah"

Numbers 12:1-16; Numbers 13:1-33; Numbers 14:1-45

HITHERTO the spirit of rebellion on the part of the people had been directed against Jehovah Himself. If Moses had lately complained of continual trials in connection with those to whom he stood in no way closely related, (Numbers 11:12) he was now to experience the full bitterness of this, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matthew 10:36) From Kibroth-hattaavah Israel had journeyed to Hazeroth, a station the more difficult to identify from the commonness of such "fenced enclosures" in that neighborhood. Here Miriam and - apparently at her instigation, - Aaron also "spake against Moses," as it is added, "because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married," referring most likely to a second marriage which Moses had contracted after the death of Zipporah. For the first time we here encounter that pride of Israel after the flesh and contempt for all other nations, which has appeared through-out their after history, and in proportion as they have misunderstood the spiritual meaning of their calling. Thus, as Calvin remarks, Miriam and Aaron now actually boasted in that prophetic gift, which should have only wrought in them a sense of deep humility. (Numbers 12:2) But Moses was not like any ordinary prophet, although in his extreme meekness he would not vindicate his own position (Numbers 12:3). He "was faithful," or approved, "to Him that appointed him," (Hebrews 3:2, Hebrews 3:5) not merely in any one special matter, but "in all the house" of Jehovah, that is, in all pertaining to the kingdom of God. And the Lord now vindicated His servant both by public declaration, and by punishing Miriam with leprosy. At the entreaty of Aaron, who owned his sister's and his own guilt, and at the intercession of Moses, this punishment was indeed removed. But the isolation of Miriam from the camp of Israel would teach all, how one who had boasted in privileges greater than those of others might be deprived even of the ordinary fellowship of Israel's camp. The seven days of Miriam's separation were past, and Israel again resumed the march towards the Land of Promise. They had almost reached its boundary, when the event happened which not only formed the turning-point in the history of that generation, but which, more than any other, was typical of the future of Israel. For as that generation in their unbelief refused to enter the Land of Promise when its possession lay open before them, and as they rebelled against God and cast off the authority of Moses, so did their children reject the fulfillment of the promises in Christ Jesus, disown Him whom God had exalted a Prince and a Savior, and cry out: "Away with Him! away with Him!" And as the carcasses of those who had rebelled fell in the wilderness, so has similar spiritual judgment followed upon the terrible cry: "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" But, blessed be God, as mercy was ultimately in store for the descendants of that rebellious generation, so also, in God's own time, will Israel turn again unto the Lord and enjoy the promises made unto the fathers. The scene of this ever-memorable event was "the wilderness of Paran," or, to define the locality more exactly,

Kadesh-barnea. (Numbers 13:26; Deuteronomy 1:19) The spot has first been identified by Dr. Rowlands and Canon Williams, and since so fully described by Professor Palmer, that we can follow the progress of events, step by step. Kadesh is the modern ’Ain Gadis, or spring of Kadesh, and lies in that north-eastern plateau of the wilderness of Paran, which formed the stronghold of the Amorites. A little north of it begins the Negeb or "south country" of Palestine, which, as already explained, reaches to about Beersheba, and where the Promised Land really begins. The district is suited for pasturage, and contains abundant traces of former habitation, and, in the north, also evidence of the former cultivation of vines. Here, and not, as is usually supposed, in the neighborhood of Hebron, we must look for that valley of Eshcol, whence the spies afterwards on their return brought the clusters of grapes, as specimens of the productiveness of the country, Kadesh itself is the plain at the foot of the cliff whence the ’Ain Gadis springs. To the east is a ridge of mountains, to the west stretches a wide plain, where the Canaanites had gathered to await the advance of Israel. Hence, if the spies were to "get up this Negeb" ("south country "), they had "to go up by the mountain," (Numbers 13:17, Numbers 13:22) in order to avoid the host of Canaan. In so doing they made a detour, passing south of ’Ain Gadis, through what is called in Scripture the wilderness of Zin (Numbers 13:21), from which they ascended into the mountains. Thus much seems necessary to understand the localization of the narrative. But to return. From Deuteronomy 1:22, we gather that the proposal of sending spies "to search out the land" had originally come from the people. By permission of the Lord, Moses had agreed to it, (Numbers 13:1) adding, however, a warning to "be of good courage" (Numbers 13:20), lest this should be associated with fear of the people of the land. Twelve persons, seemingly the most suitable for the work, - spiritually and otherwise - were chosen from "the rulers "of the tribes. Of these we only know Caleb and Joshua, the "minister of Moses," whose name Moses had formerly changed from Hoshea, which means "help," to Joshua, or "Jehovah is help." Detailed and accurate directions having been given them, the spies left the camp of Israel "at the time of the first-ripe grapes," that is, about the end of July. Thus far they were successful. Eluding the Canaanites, they entered Palestine, and searched the land to its northernmost boundary., "unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath," that is, as far as the plain of Coele-Syria. On their way back, coming from the north, they would of course not be suspected. Accordingly they now descended by Hebron, and explored the route which led into the Negeb by the western edge of the mountains. "In one of these extensive valleys -perhaps in Wady Hanein, where miles of grape-mounds even now meet the eye - they cut the gigantic cluster of grapes, and gathered the pomegranates and figs, to show how goodly was the land which the Lord had promised for their inheritance."

After forty days absence the spies returned to camp. The report and the evidence of the fruitfulness of the land which they brought, fully confirmed the original promise of God to Israel. (Exodus 3:8) But they added: (Numbers 13:28) "Only that the people is strong which occupieth the land, and the cities fortified, very great, and also descendants of the Anak have we seen there," whom, in their fear, they seem to have identified (Numbers 13:33) with the Nephilim of the antediluvian world. This account produced immediate terror, which Caleb sought in vain to allay. His opposition only elicited stronger language on the part of the other "spies," culminating in their assertion, that, even if Israel were to possess the land, it was one "that eateth up its inhabitants," that is, a country surrounded and peopled by fierce races in a state of constant warfare for its possession. Thus the most trustworthy and the bravest from among their tribes, with only the exception of Caleb and of Joshua (whose testimony might be set aside on the ground of his

intimate relationship to Moses), now declared their inability either to conquer or to hold the land, for the sake of which they had left the comforts of Egypt and endured the hardships and dangers of "the great and terrible wilderness. A night of complete demoralization followed - the result being open revolt against Moses and Aaron, direct rebellion against Jehovah, and a proposal to elect a fresh leader and return to Egypt! In vain Moses and Aaron "fell on their faces" before God in sight of all the congregation; in vain Joshua and Caleb "rent their clothes" in token of mourning, and besought the people to remember that the Presence of Jehovah with them implied certain success. The excited people only "spake" of stoning them, when of a sudden "the glory of Jehovah visibly appeared in the tent of meeting to all the children of Israel." (Numbers 14:10) Almost had the Lord destroyed the whole people on the spot, when Moses again interposed - a type of the great Leader and Mediator of His people. With pleadings more urgent than ever before, he wrestled with God - his language in its intensity consisting of short, abrupt sentences, piled, as it were, petition on petition, but all founded on the glory of God, on His past dealings, and especially on the greatness of His mercy, repeating in reference to this the very words in which the Lord had formerly condescended to reveal His inmost Being, when proclaiming His "Name" before Moses. (Exodus 33:17; Exodus 33:19) Such plea could not remain unheeded; it was typical of the great plea and the great Pleader. But as, when long afterwards Israel called down upon themselves and their children the blood of Jesus, long and sore judgments were to befall the stiffnecked and rebellious, even although ultimately all Israel should be saved, so was it at Kadesh. According to the number of days that the spies had searched the land, were to be the years of their wanderings in the wilderness, and of all that generation which had come out from Egypt, at the age of twenty and upwards, not one was to enter the Land of Promise, but their carcasses were to fall in that wilderness, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua. But as for the other ten searchers of the land, quick destruction overtook them, and they "died by the plague before Jehovah." This commencement of Divine judgment, coupled as it was with abundant evidence of its reality - especially in the immediate destruction of the ten spies, while Caleb and Joshua were preserved alive - produced an effect so strange and unlooked for, that we could scarcely understand it, but for kindred experience in all ages of the Church. It was now quite plain to Israel what they might, and certainly would have obtained, had they only gone forward. Yesterday that Land of Promise - in all its beauty and with all its riches - so close at hand as to be almost within sight of those mountain ranges, was literally theirs. Today it was lost to them. Not one of their number was even to see it. More than that, their carcasses were to fall in that wilderness! All this simply because they would not go forward yesterday! Let them do so today. If they had then done wrong, let them do the opposite today, and they would do right. Moreover, it was to Israel that God had pledged His word, and as Israel, He would have brought them into the land. They were Israel still let them now go forward and claim Israel’s portion. But it was not so; and never is so in kindred circumstances. The wrong of our rebellion and unbelief is not turned into right by attempting the exact opposite. His still the same spirit, which prompted the one, that influences the other. The obedience which is not of simple faith is of self-confidence, and only another kind of unbelief and self-righteousness. It is not the doing of this or that, nor the circumstance of outwardly belonging to Israel, which secures victory over the enemy, safety, or possession of the land. It is that "Jehovah is among us." (Numbers 14:42) And the victory is ever that of faith. Not a dead promise to the descendants of Jacob after the flesh, but the presence of the living God among His believing Israel secured to them the benefits of the covenant. And Israel’s determination to go up on the morrow,

and so to retrieve the past, argued as great spiritual ignorance and unfitness, and involved as much rebellion and sin, as their former faint-heartedness and rebellion at the report of the spies. In vain Moses urged these considerations on the people. The people "presumed to go up to the head of the mountain," although Moses and the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah remained behind in the camp. From Kadesh it is only about twenty miles to Hormah, to which place their enemies afterwards "smote and discomfited them." As we know from the descriptions of travelers, increasing fertility, cultivation, and civilization must have met the host as it advanced into the Negeb. The Israelites were in fact nearing what they must have felt home-ground - sacred to them by association with Abraham and Isaac. For a little to the north of Hormah are the wells of Rehoboth, Sitnah, and Beersheba, which Abraham and Isaac had dug, the memory of which is to this day preserved in the modern names of Ruheibeh, Shutneh, and Bir Seba. Abraham himself had "journeyed toward the Negeb, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur," (Genesis 20:1) and Isaac had followed closely in his footsteps. (Genesis 26:17 -end) And of the next occupants of the land, the Amorites, we find almost constantly recurring mementoes, and nowhere more distinctly than in the immediate neighborhood of Hormah. From Judges 1:17, we know that that city, or probably rather the fort commanding it, had originally borne the name of Zephath, which simply means "watch-tower." The name Hormah, or "banning," was probably given it on a later occasion, when, after the attack of the king of Arad, Israel had "vowed the vow" utterly to destroy the cities of the Canaanites (Numbers 21:1-3). But, as Dr. Rowlands and Canon Williams have shown, the name Zephath has been preserved in the ruins of Sebaita, while Professor Palmer has discovered, close by, the ancient "watch-tower," which was a strong fort on the top of a hill commanding Sebaita. It is intensely interesting, amid the ruins of later fortifications, to come upon these primeval remains, which mark not only the ancient site of Zephath, but may represent the very fort behind which the Amorites and Canaanites defended themselves against Israel, and whence they issued to this war. As if to make it impossible to mistake this "mountain of the Amorites," the valley north of Sebaita bears to this day the name Dheigat el ’Amerin, or Ravine of the Amorites, and the chain of mountains to the south-west of the fort that of Ras Amir, "head" or top "of the Amorites."

Israel had presumed to go up into this mountain-top without the presence of Jehovah, without the Ark of the Covenant, and without Moses. Yesterday they had been taught the lesson that their seeming weakness would be real strength, if Jehovah were among them. To-day they had in bitter experience to find out this other and equally painful truth - that their seeming strength was real weakness. Smitten and discomfited by their enemies, they fled "even unto Hormah."

03.02.19. Volume 2, Chapter 19

CHAPTER 19 The Thirty-Eight Years In The Wilderness - The Sabbath-Breaker - The Gainsaying Of Korah And Of His Associates - Murmuring Of The People; The Plague, & How It Was Stayed - Aakon’s Rod Budding, Blossoming, And Bearing Fruit

Numbers 33:19-37; Numbers 16:1-50; Numbers 17:1-13; Deuteronomy 1:46; Deuteronomy 2:1-37; Deuteronomy 3:1-29; Deuteronomy 4:1-49; Deuteronomy 5:1-33; Deuteronomy 6:1-25; Deuteronomy 7:1-26; Deuteronomy 8:1-20; Deuteronomy 9:1-29; Deuteronomy 10:1-22; Deuteronomy 11:1-15

MORE than thirty-seven years of "wanderings" were now to be passed in "the wilderness of Paran," until a new generation had risen to enter on possession of the Land of Promise. Of that long period scarcely more than one single record is left us in Scripture. As a German writer observes, The host of Israel, being doomed to judgment, ceased to be the subject of sacred history, while the rising generation, in whom the life and hope of Israel vow centered, had, as yet, no history of its own. And so we mark all this period rather by the death of the old than by the life of the new, and the wanderings of Israel by the graves which they left behind, as their carcasses fell in the wilderness.

Still, we may profitably gather together the various notices scattered in Scripture. First, then, we learn that Israel "abode in Kadesh many days," (Deuteronomy 1:46) and that thence their direction was "towards the Red Sea." (Deuteronomy 2:1) Their farthest halting-place from Kadesh seems to have been Ezion-gaber, which, as we know, lay on the so-called Elanitic Gulf of the Red Sea. Thence they returned, at the end of the forty years wanderings, once more to "the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh." (Numbers 33:36) The "stations" on their wanderings from Kadesh to Ezion-geber are marked in Numbers 33:18-35. There are just seventeen of them, after leaving Rithmah - a name derived from retem, a broom-bush, and which may therefore signify the valley of the broom-bushes. If we rightly understand it, this was the original place of the encampment of Israel near Kadesh. In point of fact, there is a plain close to ’Ain Gadis or Kadesh which to this day bears the name of Abu Retemet. As for Kadesh itself - or the Holy Place, the place of "sanctifying" - which originally bore the name En-Mishpat, "well of judgment," (Genesis 14:7) we imagine that it derived its peculiar name from the events that there took place, the additional designation of Barnea - Kadesh Barnea - either marking a former name of the place, or more probably meaning "the land of moving to and fro."

We presume that the encampment in "the broom-valley" was in all probability determined by the existence and promise of vegetation there, which, no doubt, was due to the presence of watercourses. Indeed, an examination of the names of the seventeen stations occupied by Israel during their wanderings shows, that all the encampments were similarly selected in the neighborhood of water and vegetation. Thus we have Rimmon-parez, "the pomegranate breach" - perhaps the place where Korah’s rebellion brought such terrible punishment; Libnah, "whiteness," probably from the white poplar trees growing there; Rissah, "dew;" Mount Shapher, "the mount of

beauty," or "of goodliness;" Mithcah, "sweetness," in reference to the water; Hashmonah, "fatness," "fruitfulness," where to this day there is a pool full of sweet living water, with abundant vegetation around; Bene-jaakan, or, as in Deuteronomy 10:6, Beeroth Bene-jaakan, "the wells of the children of Jaakan," probably the wells which the Jaakanites had dug on their expulsion by the Edomites from their original homes; (Genesis 36:27; 1 Chronicles 1:42) Jotbathah, "goodness;" and Ebronah, probably "fords." The other names are either derived from peculiarities of scenery, or else from special events, as Kehelathah, "assembling;" Makheloth, "assemblies;" Haradah, "place of terror," etc. The first impression which we derive, alike from the fewness of these stations, and from their situation, is, that the encampments were successively occupied for lengthened periods. More than that, we infer from the peculiar wording of some expressions in the original, that, during these thirty-eight years, the people were scattered up and down, the Tabernacle with the Levites forming, as it were, a kind of central camp and rallying-place. It is also quite certain that, at that period, the district in which the wanderings of Israel lay was capable of supporting such a nomadic population with their flocks and herds. Indeed, the presence of water, if turned to account, would always transform any part of that wilderness into a fruitful garden. In this respect the knowledge of irrigation, which the Israelites had acquired in Egypt, must have been of special use. Lastly, the people were not quite isolated. Not only were they near what we might call the direct highway between the East and Egypt, but they were in contact with other tribes, such as the Bene-jaakan. Deuteronomy 2:26-29 seems to imply that at times it was possible to purchase provisions and water, while Deuteronomy 2:7 shows that Israel had not only "lacked nothing" during "these forty years," but that they had greatly increased in substance and wealth. Such passages as Deuteronomy 8:14, etc.; Deuteronomy 29:5; and Nehemiah 9:21 prove in what remarkable manner God had cared for all the wants of His people during that period; and there can be no doubt that in the prophetic imagery of the future, especially by Isaiah, there is frequent retrospect to God’s gracious dealings with Israel in the wilderness.

Brief as is the record of these thirty-eight years, it contains a notice of two events, both in rebellion against the Lord. The first gives an account of a man who had openly violated the Divine law by gathering "sticks upon the Sabbath day." (Numbers 15:32-36) Although the punishment of death had been awarded to such a "presumptuous sin," (Exodus 31:14; Exodus 35:2) the offender was, in the first place, "put in ward," partly to own the Lord by specially asking His direction, since only the punishment itself but not its mode had been previously indicated, and partly perhaps to impress all Israel with the solemnity of the matter. Due observance of the Lord’s day was, indeed, from every point of view, a question of deepest importance to Israel, and the offender was, by Divine direction, "brought without the camp, and stoned with stones, and he died." We are not told at what particular period of the wanderings of Israel this event had occurred. It is apparently inserted as an instance and illustration, immediately after the warning against" presumptuous sins" (literally, "sins with a hand uplifted," viz., against Jehovah). These sins in open contempt of God’s word involved the punishment of being "cut off" from the people of the Lord. Nor have we any precise date by which to fix the other and far more serious instance of rebellion on the part of Korah and of his associates, (Numbers 16:1-50) in which afterwards the people, as a whole, were implicated. (Numbers 16:41-50) There is, however, reason to suppose that it occurred at an early period of "the wanderings" - perhaps, as already suggested, at Rimmon-parez. The leaders of this rebellion were Korah, a Levite -descendant of Izhar, the brother of Amram, (Exodus 6:18) and therefore a near relative of Aaron - and three Reubenites, Dathan, Abiram, and On. But as the

latter is not further mentioned, we may suppose that he early withdrew from the conspiracy. These men gained over to their side no fewer than two hundred and fifty princes from among the other tribes, all of them members of the national representative council, and "men of renown," or, as we should express ilk well-known leading men. Thus the movement assumed very large proportions, and evidenced wide-spread disaffection and dissatisfaction. The motives of this conspiracy seem plain enough. They were simply jealous and disappointed ambition, though the rebels assumed the language of a higher spirituality. As descended from a brother of Aaron, Korah disliked, and perhaps coveted, what seemed to him the supremacy of Aaron, for which he could see no valid reason. He had also a special grievance of his own. True, he was one of that family of the Kohathites to whom the chief Levitical charge in the sanctuary had been committed; but then the Kohathites numbered four families, (Numbers 3:27) and the leadership of the whole was entrusted not to any of the older branches, but to the youngest, the Uzzielites (Numbers 3:30). Was there not manifest wrong and injustice in this, probably affecting Korah personally? It speaks well for the Levites as a whole, that, notwithstanding all this, Korah was unable to inveigle any of them in his conspiracy. But close to the tents of the Kohathites and of Korah was the encampment of the tribe of Reuben, who held command of the division on the south side of the camp. Possibly - and indeed the narrative of their punishment seems to imply this - the tent of Korah and those of the Reubenitic princes, Dathan, Abiram, and On, were contiguous. And Reuben also had a grievance; for was not Reuben Jacob’s first-born, who should therefore have held the leadership among the tribes? It was not difficult to kindle the flame of jealousy in an Eastern breast. What claim or right had Moses, or rather the tribe of Levi whom he represented, to supremacy in Israel? Assuredly this was a grievous wrong and an intolerable usurpation, primarily as it affected Reuben, and secondarily all the other tribes. This explains the ready participation of so many of the princes in the conspiracy, the expostulation of Moses with Korah (Numbers 16:8-11), and his indignant appeal to God against the implied charges of the Reubenites (Numbers 16:15). Indeed, the conspirators expressly stated these views as follows (Numbers 16:3), "Sufficient for you!" - that is, You, Moses and Aaron, have long enough held the priesthood and the government; "for the whole congregation, all are holy, and in the midst of them Jehovah. And why exalt ye yourselves over the convocation of Jehovah?" It will be observed that the pretense which they put forward to cover their selfish, ambitious motives was that of a higher spirituality, which recognized none other than the spiritual priesthood of all Israel. But, as we shall presently show, their claim to it was not founded on the typical mediatorship of the high-priest, but on their standing as Israel after the flesh. The whole of this history is so sad, the judgment which followed it so terrible - finding no other parallel than that which in the New Testament Church overtook Ananias and Sapphira - and the rebellion itself is so frequently referred to in scripture, that it requires more special consideration. The rebellion of Korah, as it is generally called, from its prime mover, was, of course, an act of direct opposition to the appointment of God. But this was not all. The principle expressed in their gainsaying (Numbers 16:3) ran directly counter to the whole design of the old covenant, and would, if carried out, have entirely subverted its typical character. It was, indeed, quite true that all Israel were holy and priests, yet not in virtue of their birth or national standing, but through the typical priesthood of Aaron, who "brought them nigh" and was their intermediary with God. Again, this priesthood of Aaron, as indeed all similar selections - such as those of the place where, and the seasons when God would be worshipped, of the composition of the incense, or of the sacrifices -although there may have been secondary and subordinate reasons for them,

depended in the first place and mainly upon God’s appointment.

"Him whom the Lord hath chosen will He cause to come near unto Him" (Numbers 16:5); "whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy" (Numbers 16:7).

Every other service, fire, or place than that which God had chosen, would, however well and earnestly intended, be "strange" service, "strange" fire, and a "strange" place. This was essential for the typical bearing of all these arrangements. It was God’s appointment, and not the natural fitness of a person or thing which here came into consideration. If otherwise, they would have been natural sequences, not types - constituting a rational rather than a Divine service. It was of the nature of a type that God should appoint the earthly emblem with which He would connect the spiritual reality. The moment Israel deviated in any detail, however small, they not only rebelled against God’s appointment, but destroyed the meaning of the whole by substituting the human and natural for the Divine. The types were, so to speak, mirrors of God’s own fitting, which exhibited, as already present, future spiritual realities with all their blessings. In Christ all such types have ceased, because the reality to which they pointed has come. This digression seemed necessary, alike for the proper understanding of the history of Korah and for that of the typical arrangements of the Old Testament. But to return. On the morning following the outbreak of the rebellion, Korah and his two hundred and fifty associates presented themselves, as Moses had proposed, at the door of the Tabernacle. Here "they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon." Indeed, Korah had gained such influence, that he was now able to gather there "all the congregation" as against Moses and Aaron. Almost had the wrath of God, whose glory visibly appeared before all, consumed "this congregation" in a moment, when the intercession of Moses and Aaron once more prevailed. In these words: "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation?" (as Calvin remarks) Moses made his appeal "to the general grace of creation," praying that, "as God was the Creator and Maker of the world, He would not destroy man whom He had created, but rather have pity on the work of His hands." And so there is a plea for mercy, and an unspeakable privilege even in the fact of being the creatures of such a God!

Leaving the rebels with their censers at the door of the Tabernacle -perhaps panic-struck - Moses next repaired to the tents of Dathan and Abiram, accompanied by the elders, and followed by the congregation. On the previous day the two Reubenites had refused to meet Moses, and sent him a taunting reply, suggesting that he only intended to blind the people. And now when Dathan and Abiram, with their wives and children, came out and stood at the door of their tents, as it were, to challenge what Moses could do, the people were first solemnly warned away from them. Then a judgment, new and unheard of, was announced, and immediately executed. The earth opened her mouth and swallowed up these rebels and their families, with all that appertained to them, that is, with such as had taken part in their crime. As for Korah, the same fate seems to have overtaken him. But it is an emphatic testimony alike to the truth of God’s declaration, that He punisheth not men for the sins of their fathers, (Jeremiah 31:30; Ezekiel 18:19-20) and to the piety of the Levites, that the sons of Korah did not share in the rebellion of their father, and consequently died not with him. (Numbers 26:11) More than this, not only were Samuel and afterwards Heman descendants of Korah, (1 Samuel 1:1; 1 Chronicles 6:33-38) but among them were some of those "sweet singers of Israel," whose hymns, Divinely inspired, were intended for the Church at all times. And all the Psalms "of the sons of Korah" have this common characteristic, which sounds like an echo

of the lesson learned from the solemn judgment upon their house, that their burden is praise of the King Who is enthroned at Jerusalem, and longing after the services of God’s sanctuary. But as for "the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense," "there came out a fire from the Lord and consumed" them, as, on a former occasion, it had destroyed Nadab and Abihu. (Leviticus 10:2) Their censers, which had been "hallowed," by being presented before the Lord, (Numbers 16:37) were converted into plates for covering the altar of burnt offering, that so they might be a continual "memorial unto the children of Israel" of the event and its teaching. This signal judgment of God upon the rebels had indeed struck the people who witnessed it with sudden awe, but it led not to that repentance (Psalms 4:4) which results from a change of heart. The impression passed away, and "on the morrow" nothing remained but the thought that so many princes of tribes, who had sought to vindicate tribal independence, had been cut off for the sake of Moses! It was in their cause, the people would argue, that these men had died; and the mourning in the tents of the princes, the desolateness which marked what had but yesterday been the habitations of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, would only give poignancy to the feeling that with this event a yoke of bondage had been for ever riveted upon the nation. For they recognized not the purpose and meaning of God; this would have implied spiritual discernment; only that, if judgment had proceeded from Jehovah, it had come, if not at the instigation of, yet in order to vindicate Moses and Aaron. In their ingratitude they even forgot that, but for the intercession of these two, the whole congregation would have perished in the gainsaying of Korah. So truly did that generation prove the justice of the Divine sentence that none of their number should enter into the land of Canaan, and so entirely unfit did their conduct (as of old that of Esau) show them for inheriting the promises! But as for Moses and Aaron, when the congregation was once more gathered against them with this cruel and unjust charge on their lips, "Ye have killed the people of Jehovah," they almost instinctively "faced towards the tent of meeting," as the place whence their help came and to which their appeal was now made. Nor did they look in vain.

Denser and more closely than before did the cloud cover the tabernacle, and from out of it burst visibly the luminous glory of Jehovah. And as Moses and Aaron entered the court of the tabernacle, "Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, and I will consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces." But what was Moses to plead? He knew that "already" was "wrath gone forth from Jehovah," and "the plague" had "begun." What could he now say? In the rebellion at Mount Horeb, (Exodus 32:31) again at Kadesh, (Numbers 14:13, etc.) and but the day before at the gainsaying of Korah, he had exhausted every argument. No similar plea, nor indeed any plea, remained. Then it was, in the hour of deepest need, when every argument that even faith could suggest had been taken away, and Israel was, so to speak, lost, that the all-sufficiency of the Divine provision in its vicarious and mediatorial character appeared. Although as yet only typical, it proved all sufficient. The incense kindled on the coals taken from the altar of burnt-offering, where the sacrifices had been brought, typified the accepted mediatorial intercession of our great High Priest. And now, when there was absolutely no plea upon earth, this typical pleading of His perfect righteousness and intercession prevailed. Never before or after was the Gospel so preached under the Old Testament as when Aaron, at Moses’ direction, took the censer, and, having filled it from the altar, "ran into the midst of the congregation," "and put on incense, and made an atonement for the people" (Numbers 16:47). And as he stood with that censer "between the dead and the living," "the plague," which had already swept away not less than 14,700 men, "was stayed." Thus if Korah’s assumption of the

priestly functions had caused, the exercise of the typical priesthood now removed, the plague. But the truth which God now taught the people was not to be exhibited only in judgment. After the storm and the earthquake came the "still, small voice," and the typical import of the Aaronic priesthood was presented under a beautiful symbol. By direction of God, "a rod" for each of the twelve tribes, bearing the respective names of their princes, was laid up in the Most Holy Place, before the Ark of the Covenant. And on the morrow, when Moses entered the sanctuary, "behold the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds." The symbolical teaching of this was plain. Each of these "rods" was a ruler’s staff, the emblem of a tribe and its government. This was the natural position of all these princes of Israel. But theirs as well as Aaron’s were rods cut off from the parent-stem, and therefore incapable of putting forth verdure, bearing blossom, or yielding fruit in the sanctuary of God. By nature, then, there was absolutely no difference between Aaron and the other princes; all were equally incapable of the new life of fruitfulness. What distinguished Aaron’s rod was the selection of God and the miraculous gift bestowed upon it. And then, typically in the old, but really in the new dispensation, that rod burst at the same time into branches, into blossom, and even into fruit - all these three combined, and all appearing at the same time. And so these princes "took every man his rod," but Aaron’s rod was again brought before the Ark of the Covenant, and kept there "for a token." Nor was even the choice of the almond, which blossoms first of trees, without its deep meaning. For the almond, which bursts earliest into flower and fruit, is called in Hebrew "the waker" (shaked, comp. Jeremiah 1:11-12). Thus, as the "early waker," the Aaronic priesthood, with its buds, blossoms, and fruit, was typical of the better priesthood, when the Sun of Righteousness would rise "with healing in His wings."

03.02.20. Volume 2, Chapter 20

CHAPTER 20 The Second Gathering Of Israel In Kadesh - The Sin Of Moses And Aaron - Embassy To Edom - Death Of Aaron -Retreat Of Israel From The Borders Of Edom -Attack By The Canaanitish King Of Arad Numbers 20:1-29; Numbers 21:1-3

IT was indeed most fitting that, at the end of the thirty-seven years wanderings, Israel should once more gather at Kadesh. There they had been scattered, when the evil report which the spies had brought led to their unbelief and rebellion; and thence had the old generation carried, as it were, its sentence of death back into the wilderness, till during these long and weary years its full terms had been exhausted. And now a new generation was once more at Kadesh. From the very spot where the old was broken off was the fresh start to be made. God is faithful to His purpose; He never breaks off. If the old was interrupted, it had been by man’s unbelief and rebellion, not by failure on the part of God; and when He resumed His work, it was exactly where it had been so broken off. And man also must return to where he has departed from God, and to where sentence has been pronounced against him, before he enters on his new journey to the Land of Promise. But what solemn thoughts might not have been expected in this new generation, as they once more stood ready to resume their journeying on the spot where that of their fathers had been arrested. As He had sanctified His Name in Kadesh by judgment, would they now sanctify it by their faith and willing obedience?

Besides Joshua and Caleb, to whom entrance into the land had been specially promised, only three of the old generation still remained. These were Miriam, Moses, and Aaron. And now, just at the commencement of this fresh start, as if the more solemnly to remind them of the past, Miriam, who had led the hymn of thanksgiving and triumph on their first entering the desert, (Exodus 15:31) was taken away. Only Moses and Aaron were now left - weary, wayworn pilgrims, to begin a new journey with new pilgrims, who had to learn afresh the dealings of Jehovah. And this may help us to understand what happened at the very outset of their pilgrimage. Israel was in Kadesh, or rather in the desert of Zin, the name Kadesh applying probably to the whole district as well as to a special locality. So large a number of people gathered in one place would naturally soon suffer from want of water. Let it also be remembered, that that generation knew of the wonders of the Lord chiefly by the hearing of the ear, but of His judgments by what they had seen of death sweeping away all who had come out of Egypt. In the hardness of their hearts it now seemed to them as if the prospect before them were hopeless, and they destined to suffer the same fate as their fathers. Something of this unbelieving despair appears in their cry, "Would God that we had died when our brethren died before Jehovah" (Numbers 20:3) - that is, by Divine judgment, during these years of wandering. The remembrance of the past with its disappointments seems to find expression in their complaints (Numbers 20:5). It is as if they contrasted the stay of their nation in Egypt, and the hopes awakened on leaving it, with the disappointment of seeing the good land almost within their grasp, and then being turned back to die in the wilderness! And so the people broke forth in rebellion against Moses and against Aaron.

Feelings similar to theirs seem to have taken hold even on Moses and Aaron - only in a different direction. The people despaired of success, and rebelled against Moses and Aaron. With them as leaders they would never get possession of the Land of Promise. On the other hand, Moses and Aaron also despaired of success, and rebelled, as it were, against the people. Such an unbelieving people, rebelling at the very outset, would never be allowed to enter the land. The people felt as if the prospect before them were hopeless, and so did Moses and Aaron, although on opposite grounds. As we have said, the people rebelled against Moses and Aaron, and Moses and Aaron against the people. But at bottom, the ground of despair and of rebellion, both on the part of the people and of Moses, was precisely the same. In both cases it was really unbelief of God. The people had looked upon Moses and not upon God as their leader into the land, and they had despaired. Moses looked at the people as they were in themselves, instead of thinking of God who now sent them forward, secure in His promise, which He would assuredly fulfill. This soon appeared in the conduct and language of Moses. By Divine direction he was to stand in sight of the people at "the rock before their eyes" with "the rod from before Jehovah" - no doubt the same with which the miracles had been wrought in Egypt, and under whose stroke water had once before sprung from the rock at Rephidim. (Exodus 17:6)

It is generally thought that the sin of Moses, in which Aaron shared, consisted in his striking the rock - and doing so twice - instead of merely speaking to it, "and it shall give forth its water;" and also, in the hasty and improper language which he used on the occasion, "Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock?" But it seems difficult to accept this view. On the one hand, we can scarcely imagine that unbelief should have led Moses to strike, rather than to speak to the rock, as if the former would have been more efficacious than the latter. On the other hand, it seems strange that Moses should have been directed to "take the rod," if he were not to have used it, the more so as this had been the Divinely sanctioned mode of proceeding at Rephidim. (Exodus 17:6)

Lastly, how, in that case, could Aaron have been implicated in the sin of Moses? Of course, the striking the rock twice was, as we read in Psalms 106:32-33, evidence that they had "angered" Moses, and that "his spirit was provoked." This also showed itself in his language, which Scripture thus characterizes, "he spake unadvisedly with his lips" - or, as the word literally means, "he babbled." Be it observed, that Moses is not anywhere in Scripture blamed for striking instead of speaking to the rock, while it is expressly stated that the people "angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes." The other aspect of the sin of Moses was afterwards expressly stated by the Lord Himself, when He pronounced on Moses and Aaron the sentence that they should not "bring this congregation into the land," which He had given them, on this ground:

"Because ye believed Me not, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel" (Numbers 20:12).

Thus in their rebellion against Moses and Aaron, the people had not believed that Jehovah would bring them into the land which He had given them; while, in their anger at the people, Moses and Aaron had not believed God, to sanctify Him in His power and grace in the eyes of the children of Israel. Israel failed as the people of God; Moses as their mediator. Hitherto Moses had, under every provocation, been faithful as a steward over his charge, and pleaded with God and prevailed, because he believed. Now for the first time Moses failed, as we all fail, through unbelief,

looking at the sin of the people, and thence inferring the impossibility of their inheriting the promises, instead of looking at the grace and power of God which made all things possible, and at the certainty of the promise. Unlike Abraham in similar circumstances, "he staggered at the promises." And having through unbelief failed as mediator of the people, his office was to cease, and the conduct of Israel into the land to devolve upon another.

It is only in this sense that we can accept the common statement, that the sin of Moses was official rather than personal. For these two - office or work, and person - cannot be separated either as regards responsibility or duty. Rather would we think of Moses and Aaron as aged pilgrims, worn with the long way through the wilderness, and footsore with its roughnesses and stones, whose strength momentarily failed when the weary journey was once more resumed, and who in their weariness stumbled at the rock of offense. Yet few events possess deeper pathos than this "babbling" at the waters of Meribah. Its true parallel is found not in the Old but in the New Testament. It is true that, in similar circumstances, Elijah also despaired of Israel, and was directed to "the mount of God," there to learn the same lesson as Moses - before, like him, he was unclothed of his office. But the full counterpart to the temptation of Moses is presented in the history of John the Baptist, when doubting, not the Person but the mode of working of the Messiah, and despairing, from what he saw and heard, of the fulfillment of the promise at that time and among that generation, he sent his disciples on that memorable embassy, just before he also was unclothed of his office. This is not the place to follow the subject further. Suffice it to point out, on the one hand, Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, and, on the other, Joshua, Elisha, and our blessed Lord, as the types and antitypes presented to us in Scripture.

Before leaving Kadesh, Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom, and also, as we learn from Judges 11:17, to the king of Moab, whose dominions lay on the north of Edom, asking permission for Israel to pass through their countries. A glance at the map will show that this would have been the most direct route, if Palestine was to be entered from the other side Jordan at Jericho. Certainly it was the easiest route, as it avoided contact with those who held the Negeb, or south country, who thirty-seven years before had met Israel in hostile conflict and signally defeated them. (Numbers 14:44-45) But in vain Moses urged upon Edom the claims of national kinship, Israel’s past sufferings in Egypt, and their marvelous deliverance and guidance by The Angel of Jehovah. In vain also did he limit his request to permission to use the ordinary caravan road -"the king’s highway" - without straying either to the right or the left, adding the promise of payment for the use of the wells. (Numbers 20:14-17) The children of Esau not only absolutely refused, but hastily gathered an army of observation on their borders. Meantime, while the messengers of Moses had gone on their embassy, the camp of Israel had moved forward to what may be described as "the uttermost of the border" of Edom. A day’s journey eastward from Kadesh, through the wide and broad Wady Murreh, suddenly rises a remarkable mountain, quite isolated and prominent, which Canon Williams describes as "singularly formed," and the late Professor Robinson likens to "a lofty citadel." Its present name Moderah preserves the ancient Biblical Moserah, which, from a comparison of Numbers 20:22-29 with Deuteronomy 10:6, we know to have been only another designation for Mount Hor. In fact, "Mount Hor" or Hor-ha-Hor ("mountain, the mountain") just means" the remarkable mountain." This was the natural route for Israel to take, if they hoped to pass through Edom by the king’s highway - the present Wady Ghuweir, - which would have led them by way of Moab, easily and straight, to the other side of Jordan. It was

natural for them here to halt and await the reply of the king of Edom. For while Moderah lies at the very boundary, but still outside Edom, it is also at the entrance to the various wadies or roads, which thence open east, south, and south-west so that the children of Israel might thence take any route which circumstances would indicate. Moreover, from the height of Moderah they would be able to observe any hostile movement that might be directed against them, whether from the east by Edom, or from the north and west by the Amalekites and Canaanites. From what has been said, it will be gathered that we regard this as the Mount Hor where Aaron died.

Thus speedily, within a day's journey of the place of his sin, was the Divine sentence upon Aaron executed. There is a solemn grandeur about this narrative, befitting the occasion and in accordance with the locality. In the sight of all the congregation these three, Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar, went up the mount. In his full priestly dress walked Aaron to his burial. He knew it, and so did all in that camp, who now, for the last time, reverently and silently looked upon the venerable figure of him who, these forty years, had ministered unto them in holy things.

There was no farewell. In that typical priesthood all depended on the unbroken continuance of the office, not of the person. And hence on that mountain-top Aaron was first unclothed of his priestly robes, and Eleazar, his son, formally invested with them. Thus the priesthood had not for a moment ceased when Aaron died. Then, not as a priest but simply as one of God's Israel, was he "gathered unto his people." But over that which passed between the three on the mount has the hand of God drawn the veil of silence. And so the new priest, Eleazar, came down from the solemn scene on Mount Hor to minister amidst a hushed and awe-stricken congregation. "And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel."

Serious tidings were now in store for Israel. The messengers returned from Edom bringing absolute refusal to the request of passage through that country. Not only so, but the large army of Edom was assembling on the frontier, close to the camping-ground of Israel. If, according to the Divine command, Edom was not to be attacked, then Israel must rapidly retreat. The ordinary route from Mount Hor "to compass the land of Edom," so as to advance northwards, by the east of Edom, would have led Israel straight down by the Wady El-Jeib, and so through the northern part of the Arabah. But this route touched the western boundary of Edom, just where, as we gather from the Scriptural narrative, the army of Edom was echeloned. To avoid them, it became therefore necessary, in the first place, to retrace their steps again through part of the Wady Murreh, in order thence to strike in a south-easterly direction through what are now known as "the mountains of the

'Azazimeh," the ancient dukedom of Teman, or Mount Paran. By this detour Israel would strike the Arabah far south of where the army of Edom awaited them, passing through the modern Wadies Ghudhaghidh and 'Adbeh. In point of fact, we learn from Deuteronomy 10:7 that Gudgodah and Jotbath were the two stations reached next after the retreat from Mount Hor. But just at the point where the host of Israel would turn southwards from Wady Murreh, they were also in almost a straight line for the territory of the king of Arad. Of course, he would be informed that Israel had been refused a passage through Edom, and, finding them on the flank of his territory, would naturally imagine that they intended to invade it. "And the Canaanitish king of Arad, which dwelt in the Negeb" (or south country), "heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies" (or, more

probably, "the way of the merchants," the caravan road); "then he fought against Israel, and took of them prisoners" having probably fallen on their rearguard. The event is mentioned for this twofold reason: to show the unprovoked enmity of Canaan against Israel, and the faithfulness of God. For Israel at that time "vowed a vow" utterly to destroy the cities of the Canaanites. And God hearkened and heard. Many years afterwards He gave the prayed-for victory, (Jude 1:17) when the name of Hormah or ban - utter destruction - given in prophetic anticipation of God’s faithfulness, became a reality.

03.02.21. Volume 2, Chapter 21

CHAPTER 21

Journey Of Children Of Israel In "Compassing" Land Of Edom - The "Fiery Serpents" And The "Brazen Serpent" - Israel Enters The Land Of The Amorites - Victories Over Sihon And & Og, - The Kings Of The Amorites And Of Bashan - Israel Camps In "Lowlands Of Moab" Close By The Jordan Numbers 21:3-35; Numbers 33:35-49; Deuteronomy 2:1-37; Deuteronomy 3:1-29 THE opposition of Edom and the unprovoked attack of the Canaanite king of Arad must have convinced Israel that the most serious difficulties of their march had now commenced. It was quite natural that, during the thirty-eight years when they were scattered up and down in the Sinaitic peninsula, their powerful neighbors should have left them unmolested, as the wandering Bedouin are at this day. But when Israel again gathered together and moved forward as a host, then the tidings of the marvelous things which God had done for them, communicated with all the circumstantiality common in the east, would excite mingled terror and a determination to resist them. The latter probably first; the former as resistance was seen to be vain, and the God of Israel realized as stronger than all other national deities. Eastern idolaters would naturally thus reason; and the knowledge of this will help our understanding of the Scriptural narrative. The general direction of Israel’s march, in order to "compass" the land of Edom, was first to the head of the Elanitic Gulf of the Red Sea, or the Gulf of ’Akabah. Thence they would, a few hours north of Ezion-geber (the giant’s backbone), enter the mountains, and then pass northwards, marching to Moab "by the road which runs between Edom and the limestone plateau of the great eastern desert" (comp. Deuteronomy 2:8).

Probably they were prepared to contend for every fresh advance which they made northwards. But the first part of their journey was otherwise trying. That deep depression of the Arabah through which they marched - intensely hot, bare of vegetation, desolate, rough, and visited by terrible sandstorms - was pre-eminently "that great and terrible wilderness," of which Moses afterwards reminded the people. (Deuteronomy 1:19) What with the weariness of the way, the want of water, and of all food other than the manna, "the soul of the people was much discouraged," "and the people spake against God and against Moses." The judgment of "fiery serpents" which the Lord, "in punishment, sent among the people," and of which so many died bore a marked resemblance to all His former dealings. Once more He did not create a new thing for the execution of His purpose, but only disposed sovereignly of what already existed. Travelers give remarkable confirmation and illustrations of the number and poisonous character of the serpents in that district. Thus one writes of the neighborhood of the gulf: "The sand on the shore showed traces of snakes on every hand. They had crawled there in various directions. Some of the marks appeared to have been made by animals which could not have been less than two inches in diameter. My guide told me that snakes were very common in these regions." Another traveler on exactly the route of the children of Israel states: "In the afternoon a large and very mottled snake was brought to us, marked with fiery spots and spiral lines, which evidently belonged, from the formation of its teeth, to one of the most poisonous species… The Bedouins say that these snakes, of which they

have great dread, are very numerous in this locality." From the fact that the brazen serpent is also called "fiery" (a Saraph), we infer that the expression describes rather the appearance of these "fire-snakes" than the effect of their bite.

Two things are most marked in this history, the speedy repentance of Israel, couched in unwonted language of humility, (Numbers 21:7) and the marvelous teaching of the symbol, through which those who had been mortally bitten were granted restoration to life and health. Moses was directed to make a fiery serpent of brass, and to set it upon a pole, and whosoever looked upon it was immediately healed. From the teaching of our Lord (John 3:14-15) we know that this was a direct type of the lifting up of the Son of Man, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." The simplicity of the remedy - only to look up in faith, its immediateness and its completeness as well as the fact that this was the only but also the all-sufficient remedy for the deadly wound of the serpent - all find their counterpart in the Gospel. But for the proper understanding both of the type and of the words of our Lord, we must inquire in what manner Israel would view and understand the lifting up of the brazen serpent and the healing that flowed from it. Undoubtedly, Israel would at once connect this death through the fiery serpents with the introduction of death into Paradise through the serpent. And now a brazen serpent was lifted up, made in the likeness of the fiery serpent, yet without its poisonous bite. And this was for the healing of Israel. Clearly then, the deadly poison of the fiery serpent was removed in the uplifted brazen serpent! All this would carry back the mind to the promise given when first the poisonous sting of the serpent was felt, that the Seed of the Woman should bruise the head of the serpent, and that in so doing His own heel should be bruised. In this sense even the apocryphal Book of Wisdom (Wis 16:6) designates the brazen serpent "a symbol of salvation." And so we are clearly taught that "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;" (Romans 8:3) that "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; (2 Corinthians 5:21) and that "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." (1 Peter 2:24) The precious meaning of the type is thus deduced by Luther from the three grand peculiarities of this "symbol of salvation:" "First, the serpent which Moses made at the command of God had to be of brass or copper, that is, red, and like those fiery serpents, which were red, and burning in their bite - yet without poison. Secondly, the brazen serpent had to be set up on a pole for a sign" (comp. Colossians 2:14, etc.). "Thirdly, those who would be healed of the fiery serpents bite must look up to the brazen serpent, lifted up on the pole" (perceive, and believe), "else they could not recover nor live." Similarly a modern German critic thus annotates John 3:14 :

"Christ is the antitype of this serpent, inasmuch as He took upon Himself and vicariously bore sin, the most noxious of all noxious powers."

It is of the deepest interest to follow the march of the children of Israel, when every day’s journey brought them nearer to the Land of Promise as their goal. To them it was not, as to us, a land of ruins and of memories, but of beauty and of hope. To a people who had all their lives seen and known nothing but "the wilderness," the richness, fertility, and varied beauty of Palestine, as it then was, must have possessed charms such as we can scarcely imagine. Then every step in advance was, so to speak, under the direct leading of God, and, in a sense, a miracle, while every such leading and miracle was itself a pledge of others yet to follow. The researches of modern travelers enable us almost to company with Israel on this their march. As already stated, the wonderful tenacity with which old names keep their hold in the far East helps us to discover the exact spots

of

Biblical scenes; while, on the other hand, descriptions of the localities throw most vivid light on the Scriptural narratives, and afford evidence of their trustworthiness. The reader ought to remember that the route which lay before Israel was in part the same as that still traversed by the great caravans from Damascus to Mecca. The territories which they successively passed or entered were occupied as follows. First, Israel skirted along the eastern boundary of Edom, leaving it on their left. The western boundary of Edom, through which Israel had sought a passage when starting from Kadesh, (Numbers 20:18) would from its mountainous character and few passes have been easily defended against the Israelites. But it was otherwise with the eastern line of frontier, which lay open to Israel, had they not been Divinely directed not to fight against Edom. (Deuteronomy 2:4-6) This, however, explains the friendly attitude which the Edomites found it prudent to adopt along their eastern frontier, (Deuteronomy 2:29) although their army had shortly before been prepared to fight on the western. At Ije Abarim, "the ruins," or "the hills of the passages," or "of the sides" -perhaps "the lateral hills" the Israelites were approaching the wilderness which lay to the east of Moab. The brook or Wady Zared (Numbers 21:12) here forms the boundary between Edom and Moab. But as Israel had been also commanded not to fight against Moab, (Deuteronomy 2:9) they left their territory equally untouched, and, continuing straight northwards, passed through the wilderness of Moab, until they reached the river Arnon, the modern Wady Moab, which formed the boundary between the Moabites and the Amorites. The territory of the Amorites stretched from the Arnon to the Jabbok. It had originally belonged to the Moabites; (Numbers 21:26) but they had been driven southwards by the Amorites. No command of God prevented Israel from warring against the Amorites, and when Sihon, their king, refused to give them a free passage through his territory, they were Divinely directed to that attack which issued in the destruction of Sihon, and the possession of his land by Israel. At the brook Zared - on the southern boundary of Moab - the Israelites had already been in a line with the Dead Sea, leaving it, of course, far on their left. The river Arnon also, which formed the boundary between Moab and the Amorites, flows into the Dead Sea almost opposite to Hazazon-tamar, or En-gedi. This tract, which now bears the name of el-Belkah, is known to the reader of the Old Testament as the land Gilead, while in New Testament times it formed the province of Perea. Lastly, the district north of the Jabbok and east of the Jordan was the ancient

Bashan, or the modern Hauran. The fact that the country north of the Arnon had, before its possession by the Amorites, been so long held by Moab explains the name "Fields of Moab" (rendered in the Authorized Version "country of Moab," Numbers 21:20)as applied to the upland hills of Gilead, just as the western side of Jordan similarly bore the name of "the plains of Moab," or rather "the lowlands of Moab." (Numbers 22:1) The children of Israel were still camped on the south side of the Arnon when they sent the embassy to Sihon, demanding a passage through his territory. Canon Tristram has given a most vivid description of the rift through which the Arnon flows. Its width is calculated at about three miles from crest to crest, and its depth at 2,150 feet from the top of the southern, and at 1,950 from that of the northern bank. Of course, the army of Israel could not have passed the river here, but higher up, to the east, "in the wilderness." (Numbers 21:13) They probably waited until the messengers returned from Sihon. How high their courage and confidence in God had risen, when tidings arrived that Sihon with all his army was coming to meet them, appears even from those extracts of poetic pieces which form so marked a

peculiarity of the Book of Numbers, and which read like stanzas of war-songs by the camp-fires. From the banks of the Arnon the route of Israel was no doubt northward till they reached Bamoth or Bamolh Baal, "the heights of Baal," (Numbers 21:19) one of the stations afterwards taken up by Balak and Balaam. (Numbers 22:41) "And from Bamoth (they marched) to the valley, which is in the fields of Moab (on the plateau of Moab), on the height of Pisgah, and looks over to the face of the wilderness," that is, over the tract of land which extends to the north-eastern shore of the Dead Sea. (Numbers 21:20) From this plateau on the mountains of the Abarim, of which Pisgah and Nebo were peaks, Israel had its first view of the Land of Promise, and especially of that mysterious Sea of Salt whose glittering surface and deathlike surroundings would recall such solemn memories and warnings. At last then the goal was in view! The decisive battle between Sihon and Israel was fought almost within sight of the

Dead Sea. The victory at Jahaz, in which Sihon was smitten "with the edge of the sword" - that is, without quarter or sparing, - gave Israel possession of the whole country, including Heshbon and "all the daughters thereof" - or daughter-towns, - from the Arnon to the upper Jabbok (the modern Nahr Amman). The latter river formed the boundary between the Arnorites and the Ammonites. Beyond this the Arnorites had not penetrated, because "the border of the children of Ammon was strong." (Numbers 21:24) And Israel also forbore to penetrate farther, not on the same ground as the Amorites, but because of an express command of God. (Deuteronomy 2:19) Leaving untouched therefore the country of Ammon, the Israelites next moved northward, defeated Og, king of Bashan, and took possession of his territory also, and of the mountains of Gilead. The whole country east of the Jordan was now Israel’s, and the passage of that river could not be disputed.

Before actually entering upon their long-promised inheritance, some great lessons had, indeed, yet to be learned. An event would take place which would for ever mark the relation between the kingdom of God and that of this world. The mission of Moses, the servant of the Lord, must also come to an end, and the needful arrangements be made for possessing and holding the land of Palestine. But all these belong, strictly speaking, to another period of Israel’s history. When the camp was pitched in Shittim, "on this side Jordan by Jericho," waiting for the signal to cross the boundary line, the wanderings of the children of Israel were really at an end.

03.03.00. Volume 3, Preface

PREFACE THE history of Israel as a nation may be said to commence with their entrance into their own land. All previous to this - from the Paschal night on which Israel was born as a people to the overthrow of Sihon and of Og, the last who would have barred Israel's way to their home - had been only preparatory. During the forty years' wanderings the people had, so to speak, been welded together by the strong hand of Jehovah. But now, when the Lion of Judah couched by the banks of Jordan, Israel was face to face with its grand mission, and the grand task of its national life commenced: to dispossess heathenism, and to plant in its stead the kingdom of God (Psalms 80:8-11), which was destined to strike root and to grow, till, in the fullness of time, it would extend to all nations of the world.

Accordingly, when the camp of Israel was pitched at Shittim, a new period commenced. Its history records, first, certain events which had to take place immediately before entering the Land of Promise; next, the conquest, and then the apportionment of the land among the tribes of Israel; and, lastly, in the time of the Judges, side by side, the unfolding of Israel's religious and national condition, and the assertion of those fundamental principles which underlay its very existence as a God-called people. These principles are: - The special relationship of Israel as the people of God towards Jehovah, and Jehovah's special dealings towards them as their King. The history of the wilderness period had, indeed, been shaped by this two-fold relationship, but its consequences appeared more clearly under Joshua, and most fully in the time of the Judges. When not only Moses, but Joshua, and even the elders who had been his contemporaries had passed away, the people, now settled in the land, were left free to develop those tendencies which had all along existed. Then ensued that alternation of national apostasy and judgment, and of penitent return to God and deliverance, which constitutes, so to speak, the framework on which the Book of Judges is constructed. This part of Israel's history attained alike its highest and its lowest point in Samson, with whom the period of the Judges appropriately closes. For, the administration of Samuel forms only the transition to, and preparation for the establishment of royalty in Israel. But the spiritual import of the whole history of that period is summed up in these words of Holy Scripture (Psalms 44:2-4):

"Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy hand, and plantedst them: Thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them, but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favor unto them. Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob." The Books of Joshua and of the Judges form the two first portions of what in the Hebrew Canon are designated as the "Former Prophets." This, not because their narratives are largely connected with the rise and activity of the prophets, nor yet because their authors were prophets, but rather because the character and contents of these books are prophetic.

They give the history of Israel from the prophet's point of view - not a succinct and successive chronicle of the nation, but a history of the Kingdom of God in Israel. This also explains its

peculiarities of form and style. For, neither are the Judges, for example, mentioned in the order of their succession, nor must it be supposed that they ruled over all the tribes of Israel. Similarly, there are evidently large blanks left in the history of the times, and while some events or reigns of considerable duration are only cursorily mentioned, very detailed and circumstantial narratives are given of persons and occurrences, which only occupied the scene for a comparatively short period. But as, from the frequent references to authorities, and from their evident knowledge of details, the writers of these books must have had at command ample material for a full history, we conclude that the selection, Divinely guided, was made in accordance with the "Spirit of Prophecy," to mark the progress of the Kingdom of God in connection with Israel. From what has been said it will be readily understood, that the history traced in this volume offers peculiar difficulties -from its briefness, its abruptness, its rapid transitions, the unusual character of its incidents, and its sudden and marked Divine interpositions. These difficulties are not so much exegetical or critical - although such are certainly not wanting - but rather concern the substance of the narratives themselves, and touch the very essence of Holy Scripture. For myself, I am free to confess that I entered on my present undertaking, I shall not say with apprehension but with great personal diffidence. I knew, indeed, that what appears a difficulty might find its full and satisfactory solution, even though I were not able to indicate it, and that a narrative might have its Divine meaning and spiritual purpose, even though I should fail to point it out. Yet I imagine that most readers of the Books of Joshua and Judges will in some measure understand and sympathize with my feelings. All the more is it now alike duty and privilege, at the close of these investigations, to express it joyously and thankfully, that the more fully these narratives are studied, the more luminous will they become; the more will their Divine meaning appear; and the more will they carry to the mind conviction of their truthfulness, and to the heart lessons of their spiritual import. Perhaps I may be allowed in illustration of these statements to point to my study of the characters of Balaam and Joshua, and of the histories of Gideon, of Jephthah, and especially of Samson. From this circumstance, and faithful to the plan, which I proposed to myself in this series, of gradually leading a reader onwards, the sacred narrative has received in this volume more full treatment - the discussion of such textual questions as fell within its scope, being, however, chiefly thrown into the footnotes. Many questions, indeed, on which I could have earnestly wished to enter, lay quite outside the purport of the present series, and had therefore reluctantly to be left aside. These concern chiefly the antiquity and the authenticity of these books of Holy Scripture. I venture to think, that a great deal yet remains to be said on these points - the chief defect of former treatises lying, in my opinion, in this, that they rather busy themselves with refuting the arguments of opponents, than bring forward what I would call the positive evidence. That such positive evidence abundantly exists, a somewhat careful study has increasingly convinced me. I am not ashamed to own my belief that, notwithstanding confident assertions of writers on the opposite side, we may trustfully and contentedly walk in "the old paths;" and the present volume is intended as a reverent contribution, however inadequate, towards the better understanding of what, I verily believe, "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Spirit," and that, "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Alfred Edersheim

Loders Vicarage, Bridport

February 23, 1877

03.03.01. Volume 3, Chapter 01

CHAPTER 1

Israel About To Take Possession Of The Land Of Promise -Decisive Contest Showing The Real Character Of Heathenism -Character And History Of Balaam.

(Numbers 22:1-41) THE wilderness-life and the early contests of Israel were over. Israel stood on the threshold of the promised possession, separated from it only by the waters of Jordan. But, before crossing that boundary-line, it was absolutely necessary that the people should, once and for all, gain full knowledge of the real character of heathenism in its relation to the kingdom of God. Israel must learn that the heathen nations were not only hostile political powers, opposing their progress, but that heathenism itself was in its nature antagonistic to the kingdom of God. The two were incompatible, and therefore no alliance could ever be formed with heathenism, no intercourse cultivated, nor even its presence tolerated. This was the lesson which, on the eve of entering Palestine, Israel was to learn by painful experience in connection with the history of Balaam. Its importance at that particular period will readily be understood. Again and again was the same lesson taught throughout the history of Israel, as each alliance or even contact with the kingdoms of this world brought fresh sorrow and trouble. Nor is its application to the Church of God, so far as concerns the danger of commixture with, and conformity to the world, less obvious. And so the history of Balak and of Balaam has, besides its direct lessons, a deep meaning for all times. With the decisive victories over Sihon and over Og, all who could have barred access to the Land of Promise had been either left behind, or else scattered and defeated. And now the camp of Israel had moved forward, in the language of Scripture, to "the other side Jordan from Jericho." Their tents were pitched in rich meadow-land, watered by many streams, which rush down from the neighboring mountains - Arboth, or lowlands of Moab, as the country on this and that side the river was still called, after its more ancient inhabitants. As the vast camp lay scattered over a width of several miles, from Abel Shittim, "the meadow of the acacias," in the north, to Beth Jeshimoth, "the house of desolations," on the edge of the desert, close to the Dead Sea, in the south (Numbers 33:49), it might have seemed as if the lion of Judah were couching ready for his spring on the prey. But was he the lion of Judah, and were the promises of God to him indeed "yea and amen?" A fiercer assault, and one in which heathenism would wield other arms than those which had so lately been broken in their hands, would soon decide that question.

We can perceive many reasons why Moab, though apparently not immediately threatened, should, at that special moment, have come forward as the champion and representative of heathenism (Numbers 22:1-3). True, Israel had left their land untouched, restrained by express Divine command from invading it (Deuteronomy 2:9). But their close neighborhood was dangerous. Besides, had not all that land north of the Arnon, which Israel had just wrested from the Amorites, been till lately Moabitish -the very name of Moab still lingering on mountain-plateau and lowland plains; and might not Moab again have what once it held? But there was far more involved than either fear or cupidity suggested. The existence alike of heathen nations and of heathenism itself

depended on the issue. There can be no doubt that the prophetic anticipation of the song of Moses (Exodus 15:14-16) had already in great part been fulfilled. "The nations" had "heard" of God's marvelous doings for Israel, and were afraid; "the mighty men of Moab, trembling" had taken "hold upon them." Among the wandering tribes of the east, tidings, especially of this kind, travel fast. Jethro had heard them long before (Exodus 18:1), and the testimony of Rahab (Joshua 2:9) shows how fear and dread had fallen upon the inhabitants of the land. Force of arms had been tried against them. The Amorites, who had been able to wrest from Moab all the land north of the Arnon, had boldly marched against Israel under the leadership of Sihon their king, and been not only defeated but almost exterminated. A similar fate had befallen the brave king of Bashan and his people. There could be no question that so far Jehovah, the God of Israel, had proved true to His word, and stronger than the gods of the nations who had been subdued. Farther progress, then, in the same direction might prove fatal alike to their national existence, their national deities, and their national religion. In trying to realize the views and feelings of heathenism under such circumstances, we must beware of transporting into them our modern ideas. In our days the question is as to the acknowledgment or else the denial of Jehovah God. In those days it turned upon the acknowledgment or the opposite of Jehovah as the only true and living God, as this is expressed in the first commandment. Heathenism would never have thought of denying the existence or power of Jehovah as the national God of the Hebrews (see, for example, 1 Kings 20:23; 2 Kings 18:25, 2 Kings 18:33-35). What it controverted was, that Jehovah was the only God - all others being merely idols, the work of men's hands. Prepared as they were to acknowledge Jehovah as the national Deity of the Hebrews, the question before them would be, whether He or their gods were the more powerful. It was a point of the deepest interest to them, since, if anything were known of Jehovah, it would be this, that He was "a jealous God," and that the rites by which He was worshipped were so different from theirs, as to involve an entire change, not only of religion, but of popular habits and manners. From what has been stated, it will be understood why, in attempting to break the power of Israel, whose God had hitherto - whether from accident, fate, or inherent power - proved Himself superior to those of the nations, the king of Moab had, in the first place, recourse to "divination," and why he was so specially anxious to secure the services of Balaam.

Balaam, or rather Bileam, the son of Beor, belonged apparently to a family of magicians who resided at Pethor, possibly, as has been suggested, a city of professional soothsayers or students of that craft, but certainly situated in "Aram" or Mesopotamia, and on the banks of the Euphrates (Numbers 22:5; Numbers 23:7; Deuteronomy 23:4). His name, which means "devourer," or "swallower up," and that of his father, which means "burner up," or "destroyer" - whether given them at birth, or, as is so common in the East, from their supposed characteristics -indicate alike the claims which they put forth and the estimate in which they were popularly held. If, as has been conjectured, Balak, the king of Moab, was of Midianitish origin (his father having been a Midianitish usurper), it becomes all the more intelligible that in his peculiar circumstances he would apply for advice and help to the Midianites; that he would ally himself with them; and that through them he would come to know of, and along with them send for, Balaam (Numbers 22:4, Numbers 22:7, etc.). At any rate, those Midianite wanderers of the desert which stretched between Mesopotamia and the dominions of Moab would, like modern Bedawin under similar circumstances, not only know of the existence of a celebrated magician like Balaam, but probably greatly exaggerate his power. Moreover, being themselves unable to attack Israel, they would nevertheless gladly make

common cause with Moab, and that, although for the present their territory was not directly threatened, any more than that of the Moabites. This explains the alliance of Moab and Midian and their common embassy to Balaam. The object in view was twofold. As already explained, the success of Israel as against the nations, or rather that of Israel's God against their deities, might, in their opinion, arise from one of two causes. Either their own national deities - Chemosh and Baal - had not been sufficiently propitiated -sufficient influence or power had not been brought to bear upon them; or else Jehovah was really stronger than they. In either case Balaam would bring invaluable, and, if he only chose to exert it, sure help. For, according to heathen views, a magician had absolute and irresistible power with the gods; power was inherent in him or in the incantations which he used. And herein lay one of the fundamental differences between heathenism and the Old Testament, between magic and miracles. In the former it was all of man, in the latter it was shown to be all of God. No prophet of the Lord ever had or claimed power, like the magicians; but in every case the gracious influence was specially, and for that time, transmitted directly from God. Only the God-Man had power in Himself, so that His every contact brought health and life. And in the Christian dispensation also, however much of the supernatural there maybe experienced and witnessed, nothing is magical; there is no mere exercise of power or of authority; but all is conveyed to us through the free promises of God, and in the dispensation of His grace. But to return. Supposing that Jehovah were really superior to Chemosh and Baal, the king of Moab and his associates would none the less desire the aid of Balaam. For it was a further principle of heathenism, that national deities might be induced to transfer their blessing and protection from one nation to another. Thus the ancient Romans were wont, when laying siege to a foreign city, solemnly to invite its special gods to come out to them and join their side, promising them in return not only equal but higher honors than they had hitherto enjoyed. And if something of this kind were now needful - if influence was to be exerted on the God of the Israelites, who was so capable of it as Balaam, both from his profession as a dealer with the gods, and from his special qualifications? And this leads up to the principal personage in this history, to his character, and to the question of his religion.

What has been said of the knowledge which the king of Moab must have possessed of Jehovah's dealings in reference to Israel (Exodus 15:14-16) applies, of course, with much greater force to Balaam himself. As a professional magician, belonging to a family of magicians, and residing at one of their chief seats, it was alike his duty and his interest to acquaint himself with such matters. Moreover, we ought not to forget that, in the place of his residence, traditions of Abraham would linger with that Eastern local tenacity which we have already had so frequent occasion to notice. Indeed, we have positive evidence that Balaam's inquiries had gone back far beyond the recent dealings of Jehovah to His original covenant-relationship towards His people. A comparison of the promise of God to Abraham in Genesis 13:16 with the mode of expression used by Balaam in Numbers 23:10; still more - the correspondence between Genesis 49:9 and Numbers 23:24; Numbers 24:9 in his description of Judah; but most of all, the virtual repetition of the prophecy Genesis 49:10 in Numbers 24:17, prove beyond doubt that Balaam had made himself fully acquainted with the promises of Jehovah to Israel. That a professional soothsayer like Balaam should have been quite ready, upon a review of their whole history, to acknowledge Jehovah as the national God of Israel, and to enter - if the expression may be allowed - into professional relationship with such a powerful Deity, seems only natural in the circumstances. This explains his conduct in speaking to and of Jehovah, and apparently owning Him. But in all this Balaam did not

advance a step beyond the mere heathen point of view, any more than Simon Magus when, "beholding the miracles and signs which were done," "he was baptized;" (Acts 8:13) nor did his conduct bring him nearer to the true service of Jehovah than were those seven sons of Sceva to that of Christ, when they endeavored to cast out evil spirits in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:13-14). In fact, Scripture designates him uniformly by the word Kosem, which is the distinctive term for heathen soothsayers in opposition to prophets of the Lord. And with this his whole conduct agrees. Had he possessed even the most elementary knowledge of Jehovah as the only true and living God, or the most rudimentary understanding of His covenant-purposes, he could not, considering his acquaintance with previous prophecy, have for a moment entertained the idea of allying himself with Balak against Israel. On the other hand, if, according to his view of the matter, he could have succeeded in making the God of Israel, so to speak, one of his patron-deities, and if, upon his own terms, he could have become one of His prophets; still more, if he could have gained such influence with Him as to turn Him from His purpose regarding Israel, then would he have reached the goal of his ambition, and become by far the most powerful magician in the world. Thus, in our opinion, from the time when we first meet him, standing where the two roads part, to the bitter end of his treachery, when, receiving the reward of Judas, he was swept away in the destruction of Midian, his conduct was throughout consistently heathen, and his progress rapid in the downward course. Where the two roads part! In every great crisis of history, and, we feel persuaded, in the great crisis of every individual life, there is such a meeting and parting of the two ways - to life or to destruction. It was so in the case of Pharaoh, when Moses first brought him the summons of the Lord to let His people go free, proving his authority by indubitable signs. And Balaam stood at the meeting and parting of the two ways that night when the ambassadors of Balak and the elders of Midian were for the first time under his roof. That embassy was the crisis in his history. He had advanced to the knowledge that Jehovah, the God of Israel, was God. The question now came: Would he recognize Him as the only true and living God, with Whom no such relationship could exist as those which heathenism supposed; towards Whom every relationship must be moral and spiritual, not magical - one of heart and of life service, not of influence and power? To use New Testament language, in his general acknowledgment of Jehovah, Balaam had advanced to the position described in the words: "he that is not against us is for us" (Luke 9:50). But this is only, as it were, the meeting and parting of the two roads. The next question which comes is far deeper, and decisive, so far as each individual is concerned. It refers to our relationship to the Person of Christ. And in regard to this we read: "He that is not with Me is against Me" (Matthew 12:30). As always in such circumstances, God’s great mercy and infinite patience and condescension were not wanting to help Balaam in the crisis of his life. There could, at least, be no doubt on two points. Balak’s avowed wish had been, by the help of Balaam, to "smite" Israel and "drive them out of the land" (Numbers 22:6); and his expressed conviction, "he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed." Now, not to speak of the implied magical power thus attributed to him, Balaam must have known that Balak’s intention ran directly counter to Jehovah’s purpose, while the words, in which the power of blessing and cursing was ascribed to Balaam, were not only a transference to man of what belonged to God alone, but must have been known to Balaam as the very words in which Jehovah had originally bestowed the blessing on Abraham:

"I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Genesis 12:3). That Balaam so knew these words appears from his own quotation of them in Numbers 24:9. The proposal of

Balak therefore ran directly counter to the fundamental purpose of God, as Balaam knew it - and yet he could hesitate even for a single moment! But this is not all. In His infinite long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, God even now condescended to Balaam. He had proposed to the ambassadors of Balak that they should "lodge" with him that night, and that on the morrow he would make his reply, as Jehovah would speak unto him. And Jehovah did condescend to meet Balaam in his own way, and that night fully communicated to him His will. The garbled and misrepresenting account of it, which Balaam in the morning gave to his guests, finally marked his choice and decided his fate. But why did Jehovah God appear to, or deal with such an one as Balaam? Questions like these ought, with our limited knowledge of God's purposes, not always to be entertained. In the present instance, however, we can suggest at least some answer. Of God's purpose, so far as Balaam's personal condition was concerned, we have already spoken. But a wider issue was here to be tried. Balak had sent for Balaam in order through his magic to destroy Israel, or rather to arrest and turn aside the wonder-working power of Jehovah. It was, therefore, really a contest between heathenism and Israel as the people of God, which would exhibit and decide the real relationship between Israel and the heathen world, or in other words, between the Church of God and the kingdoms of this world. And as formerly God had raised up Pharaoh to be the instrument of bringing down the gods of Egypt, so would He now decide this contest through the very man whom Balak had chosen as its champion - using him as a willing instrument, if he yielded, or as an unwilling, if he rebelled, but in any case as an efficient instrument for carrying out His own purposes. It is in this manner that we regard God's meeting Balaam, and His speaking both to him and through him.

Three brief but emphatic utterances had God in that first night made to Balaam:

"Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed" (Numbers 22:12). Of these Balaam, in his reply to the ambassadors next morning, had deliberately suppressed the last two (Numbers 22:13). Yet they were the most important, as showing the utter hopelessness of the undertaking, and the utter powerlessness of any man to control or influence the purpose of God. He thus withheld knowledge of the utmost importance for understanding alike the character of the true God and that of His true servants, who simply obey, but do not seek to control, His will. But even in what he did repeat of God's message there was grievous misrepresentation. For this statement, "Jehovah refuses to give me leave to go with you" (Numbers 22:13), implied an ungrounded arbitrariness on the part of God; confirmed Balak in his heathen views; and perhaps encouraged him to hope for better results under more favorable circumstances. As for Balaam himself, we may be allowed to infer, that he misunderstood God's appearance to, and conversation with him, as implying a sort of league with, or acknowledgment of him, while all the time he had irrevocably departed from God, and entered the way of sin and of judgment. Accordingly, we find Balaam thenceforth speaking of Jehovah as "my God," and confidently assuming the character of His servant. At the same time, he secured for himself the presents of Balak, while, in his reply, he took care not to lose the favor of the king, but rather to make him all the more anxious to gain his aid, since he was owned of Jehovah, Who had only refused a leave which on another occasion He might grant.

It was under these circumstances that a second embassy from Balak and Midian, more honorable than the first, and with almost unlimited promises, came again to ask Balaam "to curse this people" (Numbers 22:17). The king had well judged. With no spiritual, only a heathen acknowledgment of

Jehovah, covetousness and ambition were the main actuating motives of Balaam. In the pithy language of the New Testament (2 Peter 2:15), he "loved the wages of unrighteousness." But already his course was sealed. Refusing to yield himself a willing, he would now be made the unwilling instrument of exalting Jehovah. And thus God gave him leave to do that on which he had set his heart, with this important reservation, however: "But yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do." Balaam, whose blinded self-satisfaction had already appeared in his profession to the ambassadors, that he could "not go beyond the word of Jehovah his God," understood not the terrible judgment upon himself implied in this "let him alone," which gave up the false prophet to his own lusts. He had no doubt been so far honest, although he was grossly and willfully ignorant of all that concerned Jehovah, when he proposed to consult God a second time, whether he might curse Israel. And now it seemed as if God had indeed inclined to him. Balaam was as near reaching the ideal of a magician, and having "power," as was Simon Magus when he offered the apostles money to bestow on him the power of imparting the Holy Ghost.

It was no doubt on account of this spirit of deluded self satisfaction, in which next morning he accompanied the ambassadors of Balak, that "God’s anger was kindled because he went," and that "the angel of Jehovah stood in the way for an adversary against him" - significantly, the angel of the covenant with a drawn sword, threatening destruction. The main object of what happened to him on the journey was, if possible, to arouse Balaam to a sense of his utter ignorance of, and alienation from Jehovah. And so even "the dumb ass, speaking with man’s voice, forbad the madness of the prophet" (2 Peter 2:16).

We know, indeed, that animals are often more sensitive to the presence or nearness of danger than man - as it were, perceive what escapes our senses. But in this case the humiliating lesson was, that while the self-satisfied prophet had absolutely seen nothing, his ass had perceived the presence of the angel, and, by going out of the way, or falling down, saved the life of his master; and that, even so, Balaam still continued blinded, perverse, and misunderstanding, till God opened the mouth of the dumb animal, so that with man’s voice it might forbid the madness of the prophet. To show Balaam himself as he really was, and the consequences of his conduct; and to do so in the strongest, that is, in this case, in the most humiliating manner, such was the object of the apparition of the angel, and of the human language in which Balaam heard the ass reproving him. But even this produced no real effect - only an offer on the part of Balaam to get him back again, if it displeased the angel of Jehovah (Numbers 22:34). The proposal was as blundering, and argued as deep ignorance, as his former readiness to go with the ambassadors. For the question was not simply one of going or not going, but of glorifying God, and acknowledging the supremacy of His covenant-purpose. Balaam might have gone and returned without doing this; but Jehovah would now do it Himself through Balaam. And already the elders of Moab and Midian had hurried on along with Balaam’s own servants, to announce the arrival of the prophet. Presently from the lonely, terrible interview with the angel was he to pass into the presence of the representative of that heathenism against which the drawn sword in the angel’s hand was really stretched out.

03.03.02. Volume 3, Chapter 02

CHAPTER 2 The "Prophecies" Of Balaam - The End Of Balaam - Parallel Between Balaam And Judas

(Numbers 22:36-41, Numbers 23:1-30, Numbers 24:1-25, Numbers 25:1-18, Numbers 26:1-65, Numbers 27:1-23, Numbers 28:1-31, Numbers 29:1-40, Numbers 30:1-16, Numbers 31:1-20) THE meeting between the king of Moab and the soothsayer took place at Ir Moab, the "city" or capital of Moab, close by its northern boundary. It commenced with gentle reproaches on the part of the monarch, which, Eastern-like, covered large promises, to which the soothsayer replied by repeating his old profession of being only able to speak the word that God would put in his mouth. There is no need of assuming hypocrisy on his part; both monarch and soothsayer acted quite in character and quite consistently. From Ir Moab they proceeded to Kirjath Huzoth, "the city of streets," the later Kiriathaim.

Here, or in the immediate neighborhood, the first sacrifices were offered, Balaam as well as "the princes" taking part in the sacrificial meal. Next morning, Balak took the soothsayer to the lofty heights of Mount Attarus, to Bamoth Baal "the heights of Baal," so-called because that plateau was dedicated to the service of Baal. The spot, which also bears the names of Baal-meon, Beth Baal-meon, and Beth-meon, commands a magnificent view. Although "too far recessed to show the depression of the Dead Sea," the view northwards stretches as far as Jerusalem, Gerizim, Tabor, Hermon, and Mount Gilead. But, although the eye could sweep so far over the Land of Promise, he would, from the conformation of the mountains, only see "the utmost part of the people," (Numbers 22:41) that is, the outskirts of the camp of Israel. In accordance with the sacred significance which, as Balaam knew, attached to the number seven in the worship of Jehovah, seven altars were now built on the heights of Baal, and seven bullocks and seven rams offered upon them - a bullock and a ram on each altar. Leaving Balak and the princes of Moab by the altars, Balaam went forth in the regular heathen manner, in the hope of meeting Jehovah (Numbers 23:3), which is explained by Numbers 24:1 as meaning "to seek auguries," such as heathen soothsayers saw in certain natural appearances or portents. And there, on the top of "a bare height," God did meet Balaam, not in auguries, but by putting "a word in Balaam’s mouth." As the man shared not in it otherwise than by being the outward instrument of its communication, this "word" was to him only "a parable," and is designated as such in Scripture. Never before so clearly as in presence of the powers of heathenism, assembled to contend against Israel, did Jehovah show forth His almighty power, alike in making use of an instrument almost passive in His hand, and in disclosing His eternal purpose.

FIRST "PARABLE" OF BALAAM From Aram brought me Balak, The king of Moab from the mountain of the east -Come, curse me Jacob, And come, threaten Israel! How shall I curse whom God doth not curse, And how shall I threaten whom Jehovah threatens not For, from the top of the rocks I see him, And from the hills I behold him: Lo, a people dwelling alone, And not reckoning itself among the nations (the Gentiles)! Who can count the dust of Jacob, And the number of the

fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous. And let my latter end be like his!

Two things will be noted, without entering into special criticism. First, as to the form of this parable: each thought is embodied in two sentences, with rapid, almost abrupt, transitions from one thought to the other. Secondly, the outward and inward separation of Israel (the former as symbol of the latter) is singled out as the grand characteristic of God's people - a primary truth this of the Old Testament, and, in its spiritual application, of the New Testament also. But even in its literality it has proved true in the history of Israel of old, and still applies to them, showing us that Israel's history is not yet finished; that God has not forgotten His people; and that a purpose of mercy yet awaits them, in accordance with His former dealings. Such a people Balaam could not curse. On the contrary, he could only wish that his death should be like theirs whom God's ordinances and institutions kept separate outwardly, and made righteous inwardly, referring in this, of course, to Israel not as individuals, but in their totality as the people of God. In the language of a German critic, "The pious Israelite could look back with calm satisfaction, in the hour of his death, upon a life rich in proofs of the blessing, forgiving, protecting, delivering, saving mercy of God. With the same calm satisfaction would he look upon his children, and children's children, in whom he lived again, and in whom also he would still take part in the high calling of his nation, and in the ultimate fulfillment of the glorious promise which it had received from God.... And for himself, the man who died in the consciousness of possessing the mercy and love of God, knew also that he would carry them with him as an inalienable possession, a light in the darkness of Sheol. He knew that he would be 'gathered to his fathers' - a thought which must have been a very plenteous source of consolation, of hope, and of joy." THE SECOND "PARABLE" OF BALAAM

It was but natural that Balak should have been equally surprised and incensed at the words of the soothsayer. The only solution he could suggest was, that a fuller view of the camp of Israel might change the disposition of the magician. "Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them (viz., in their totality); only the end (utmost part) of them seest thou, but the whole of them thou seest not - and from thence curse me them." The station now selected was on the field of the watchers," on the top of Pisgah, affording not only a full view of the camp, but of the Land of Promise itself. Here Moses, not long afterwards, took his farewell prospect of the goodly heritage which the Lord had assigned to His people. The same formalities as before having been gone through, in regard to altars and sacrifices, Balaam once more returned to Balak with the following message:

Rise up, Balak, and hear, Hearken to me, son of Zippor! Not man is God that He should lie, Nor a son of man that He should repent! Hath He said, and shall He not do it, Hath He spoken, and shall He not fulfill it? Behold, to bless, I have received -And He hath blessed, and I cannot turn it back! He beholdeth not iniquity in Jacob, And He looketh not upon distress in Israel: Jehovah his God is with him, And the king's jubilee in the midst of him.

God bringeth them out of Egypt -As the unwearied strength of the buffalo is his. For, no augury in Jacob, no soothsaying in Israel, According to the time it is said to Jacob and to Israel what God doeth.

Behold, the people, like a lioness it riseth, And like a lion it raiseth itself up -He shall not lie down, till he has eaten the prey, And drink the blood of the slain. The meaning of this second "parable" needs no special explanation. Only it will be noticed, that the progress of thought is successively

marked by four lines - the last two always expressing the ground, or showing the foundation of the two first. The center couplet is the most important. It marks for ever, that the Covenant-Presence of God in Israel, or, as we should now express it, that the grace of God, is the ultimate cause of the forgiveness of sins, and that the happy realization of Jehovah as the King is the ground of joy. Whenever and wherever that Presence is wanting only unforgiven sin is beheld; wherever that shout is not heard only misery is felt. THE THIRD "PARABLE" OF BALAAM In his despair Balak now proposed to try the issue from yet a third locality. This time a ridge somewhat farther north was selected - "the top of Peor that looketh toward Jeshimon." A third time seven altars were built and sevenfold sacrifices offered. But there was a marked difference in the present instance. Balaam went no more "as at other times to seek for auguries" (Numbers 24:1). Nor did Jehovah now, as formerly (Numbers 23:5-16), "put a word in his mouth." But "the Spirit of God came upon him" (Numbers 24:2), in the same manner as afterwards upon Saul (1 Samuel 19:23) - he was in the ecstatic state, powerless and almost unconscious, or, as Balaam himself describes it, with his outward eyes shut (Numbers 24:3), and "falling," as if struck down, while seeing "the vision of the Almighty," and "having his (inner) eyes opened" (Numbers 24:4).

Saith Balaam, the son of Beor, And saith the man with closed eye,

Saith he, hearing the words of God, Beholding the vision of the Almighty: he beholdeth -falling down - and with open eyes! How good are thy tabernacles, Jacob, Thy dwellings, O Israel -Like (watered) valleys they stretch, like gardens by a river, Like aloes Jehovah planted, like cedars by the waters.

Flow waters from his twin buckets - and his seed by many waters, Higher than Agag shall be his king - and his kingdom be exalted. God brings him from Egypt - his the unwearied strength of the buffalo -He shall eat the nations (Gentiles) his enemies - and their bones shall he gnaw - and his arrows shall he split. He coucheth, lieth down like a lion and like a lioness - who shall rouse him? Blessed he that blesseth thee, and cursed he that curseth thee!

We can scarcely wonder that the bitter disappointment of Balak should now have broken forth in angry reproaches. But Balaam had not yet finished his task. Before leaving the king he must deliver another part of the message, which he had already received from Jehovah, but not yet spoken.

"Come, I will advise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days" (Numbers 24:14).

PROPHETIC MESSAGE THROUGH BALAAM IN FOUR "PARABLES"

First "parable," descriptive first of the "latter days," and then referring to Moab, as the representative of heathenism:

Saith Balaam, the son of Beor, and saith the man with closed eye, Saith he, hearing the words of God, and knowing the knowledge of the Most High, Beholding the vision of the Almighty: he beholdeth - falling down - and with open eyes: I behold Him, but not now - I descry Him, but not nigh! Cometh a Star from Jacob, and rises a Sceptre from Israel, And dasheth the two sides of Moab, and overthroweth the sons of tumult. And Edom shall be a possession, and a possession shall be Seir - his enemies -And Israel is doing mighty things! And shall come from Jacob (a ruler)

And shall destroy what remaineth out of the cities.

Second "parable" against Amalek - as the representative of heathenism in its first contest against Israel: And he beheld Amalek, and he took up his parable, and said: First of the Gentiles Amalek - and his latter end even unto destruction.

Third "parable" in favor of the Kenites as the friends and allies of Israel: And he beheld the Kenites, and he took up his parable, and said: Durable thy dwelling-place, and placed on the rock thy nest. For shall Kajin be for destruction, Until Assbur shall lead thee away?

Fourth "parable" concerning the Assyrian empire, and the kingdoms of this world, or prophecy of "the end," appropriately beginning with a "woe:" And he took up his parable, and said: Woe! who shall live when God putteth this? And ships from the side of Chittim - and afflict Asshur, and afflict Eber -And he also unto destruction! This latter may, indeed, be characterized as the most wonderful of prophecies. More than a thousand years before the event, not only the rising of the great world-empire of the West is here predicted, with its conquest of Asshur and Eber (i.e, of the descendants of Eber) (Genesis 10:21), but far beyond this the final destruction of that world-empire is foretold! In fact, we have here a series of prophecies, commencing with the appearance of the Messiah and closing with the destruction of Anti-Christ. To this there is no parallel in Scripture, except in the visions of Daniel. No ingenuity of hostile criticism can take from, or explain away the import of this marvelous prediction. And now the two parted - the king to go to his people, the soothsayer, as we gather from the sequel, to the tents of Midian. But we meet Balaam only too soon again. One who had entered on such a course could not stop short of the terrible end. He had sought to turn away Jehovah from His people, and failed. He would now endeavor to turn the people from Jehovah. If he succeeded in this, the consequences to Israel would be such as Balak had desired to obtain. By his advice (Numbers 31:16; Revelation 2:14) the children of Israel were seduced into idolatry and all the vile abominations connected with it. In the judgment which ensued, not fewer than 4,000 Israelites perished, till the zeal of Phinehas stayed the plague, when in his representative capacity he showed that Israel, as a nation, abhorred idolatry and the sins connected with it, as the greatest crime against Jehovah. But on "the evil men and seducers" speedy judgment came. By God’s command the children of Israel were avenged of the Midianites. In the universal slaughter of Midian, Balaam also perished. The figure of Balaam stands out alone in the history of the Old Testament. The only counterpart to it is that of Judas, the traitor. Balaam represented the opposition of heathenism; Judas that of Judaism. Both went some length in following the truth; Balaam honestly acknowledged the God of Israel, and followed His directions: Judas owned the Messianic appearance in Jesus, and joined His disciples. But in the crisis of their inner history, when that came which, in one form or another, must be to every one the decisive question - each failed. Both had stood at the meeting and parting of the two ways, and both chose that course which rapidly ended in their destruction. Balaam had expected the service of Jehovah to be quite other from what he found it; and, trying to make it such as he imagined and wished, he not only failed, but stumbled, fell, and was broken. Judas, also, if we may be allowed the suggestion, had expected the Messiah to be quite other than he found Him; disappointment, perhaps failure in the attempt to induce Him to alter His course, and an increasingly widening gulf of distance between them, drove him, step by step, to ruin. Even the besetting sins of Balaam and of Judas - covetousness and ambition - are the same. And as, when Balaam failed in turning Jehovah from Israel, he sought - only too successfully - to turn Israel from the Lord; so when

Judas could not turn the Christ from His purpose towards His people, he also succeeded in turning Israel, as a nation, from their King. In both instances, also, for a moment a light more bright than before was cast upon the scene. In the case of Balaam we have the remarkable prophetic utterances, reaching far beyond the ordinary range of prophetic vision; at the betrayal of Judas, we hear the prophetic saying of the High-priest going far beyond the knowledge of the time, that Jesus should die, not only for His own people, but for a ruined world. And, lastly, in their terrible end, they each present to us most solemn warning of the danger of missing the right answer to the great question - that of absolute and implicit submission of mind, heart, and life to the revealed Covenant-Will of God.

03.03.03. Volume 3, Chapter 03

CHAPTER 3 The Second Census Of Israel - The "Daughters Of Zelophehad" -Appointment Of Moses' Successor - Sacrificial Ordinances - The War Against Midian - Allocation Of Territory East Of The Jordan - Levitical And Cities Of Refuge.

(Numbers 26:1-65; Numbers 27:1-23; Numbers 28:1-31; Numbers 29:1-40 Numbers 30:1-16; Numbers 31:1-54; Numbers 32:1-42; Numbers 33:1-56; Numbers 34:1-29; Numbers 35:1-34; Numbers 36:1-13)

BEFORE describing the closing scene of Moses' life, we may here conveniently group together brief notices of the events intervening between the judgment of "the plague" on account of Israel's sin (Numbers 25:1-18) and the last discourses of Moses recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy 1:1-46. A second census of Israel was taken by Divine direction (Numbers 26:1-65). The arrangements for it were in all probability the same as those at the first census, thirty-eight years before (Numbers 1:1-54). The "plague" had swept away any who might yet have remained of the old doomed generation, which had come out of Egypt. At any rate, none such were now left (Numbers 26:64). This may have been the reason for taking a new census. But its main object was in view of the approaching apportionment of the land which Israel was so soon to possess. Accordingly, the census was not taken as before (Numbers 1:1-54), according to the number of individuals in each tribe, but according to "families." This corresponded in the main with the names of the grandsons and great-grandsons of Jacob, enumerated in Genesis 46:1-34. In reference to the future division of the land, it was arranged that the extent of the "inheritance" allotted to each tribe should correspond to its numbers (Numbers 26:52-54). But the exact locality assigned to each was to be determined "by lot" (Numbers 26:55-56), so that each tribe might feel that it had received its "possession" directly from the Lord Himself. The proposed division of the land brought up a special question of considerable importance to Israel. It appears that one Zelophehad, of the tribe of Manasseh, and of the family of Gilead, had died - not in any special judgment, but along with the generation that perished in the wilderness. Having left no sons, his daughters were anxious to obtain a "possession," lest their father's name should be "done away from among his family" (Numbers 27:1-23). By Divine direction, which Moses had sought, their request was granted, and it became "a statute of judgment" in Israel - a juridical statute - that daughters, or in their default - the nearest kinsman, should enter upon the inheritance of those who died without leaving sons. In all such cases, of course the children of those who obtained the possession would have to be incorporated, not with the tribe to which they originally belonged, but with that in which their "inheritance" lay. Thus the "name" of a man would not "be done away from among his family." Nor was this "statute" recorded merely on account of its national bearing, but for higher reasons. For this desire to preserve a name in a family in Israel sprang not merely from feelings natural in such circumstances, but was connected with the hope of the coming Messiah. Till He appeared, each family would fain have preserved its identity. Several instances of such changes from one tribe to another, through maternal inheritance, are recorded in Scripture (comp. 1 Chronicles 2:34-35; Numbers 32:41, and Deuteronomy 3:14-15, and 1 Chronicles 2:21-23; and notably, even

in the case of priests, Ezra 2:61-62, and Nehemiah 7:63-64).

2. God intimated once more to Moses his impending death, before actual entrance into the Land of Promise (Numbers 27:12-14). In so doing, mention of the sin which had caused this judgment was repeated, to show God’s holiness and justice, even in the case of His most approved servants. On the other hand, this second reminder also manifested the faithfulness of the Lord, Who would have his servant, as it were, set his house in order, that he might meet death, not at unawares, but with full consciousness of what was before him. It is touching to see how meekly Moses received the sentence. Faithful to the end in his stewardship over God’s house, his chief concern was, that God would appoint a suitable successor, so "that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd" (Numbers 27:15-17). To this office Joshua, who had the needful spiritual qualifications, was now set apart by the laying on of Moses’ hands, in presence of Eleazar the priest and of the congregation. Yet only part of Moses'" honor" - so much as was needful to ensure the obedience of Israel - was put upon Joshua, while his public movements were to be directed by "the judgment of the Urim" and Thummim. Thus did God not only vindicate the honor of His servant Moses, but also show that the office which Moses had filled was, in its nature, unique, being typical of that committed in all its fullness to the Great Head of the Church.

3. Now that the people were about to take possession of the land, the sacrificial ordinances were once more enjoined, and with full details. The daily morning and evening sacrifice had already been previously instituted in connection with the altar of burnt-offering (Exodus 29:38-42). To this daily consecration of Israel were now added the special sacrifices of the Sabbath -symbolical of a deeper and more special dedication on God’s own day. The Sabbatic and the other festive sacrifices were always brought in addition to the daily offering. Again, the commencement of every month was marked by a special sacrifice, with the addition of a sin-offering, while the blast of the priests’ trumpets was intended, as it were, to bring Israel’s prayers and services in remembrance before the Lord. If the beginning of each month was thus significantly consecrated, the feast of unleavened bread (from the 15th to the 21st of Abib), which made that month the beginning of the year, was marked by the repetition on each of its seven days of the sacrifices which were prescribed for every "new moon." The Paschal feast (on the 14th of Abib) had no general congregational sacrifice, but only that of the lamb for the Paschal supper in each household. Lastly, the sacrifices for the feast of weeks were the same as those for the feast of unleavened bread, with the addition of the two "wave loaves" and their accompanying sacrifices prescribed in Leviticus 23:7-21. This concluded the first festive cycle in the year. The second cycle of feasts took place in the seventh or sacred month - seven being the sacred number, and that of the covenant. It began with new moon’s day when, besides the daily, and the ordinary new moon’s offerings, special festive sacrifices were brought (Numbers 29:1-6). Then on the 10th of that month was the "Day of Atonement," while on the 15th commenced the feast of tabernacles, which lasted seven days, and was followed by an octave. All these feasts had their appropriate sacrifices. The laws as to sacrifices appropriately close with directions about "vows" (Numbers 30:1-16). In all the ordinances connected with the sacred seasons, the attentive reader will mark the symbolical significance attaching to the number seven - alike in the feasts themselves, in their number, their sacrifices, and in that of the days appointed for holy convocation. Indeed, the whole arrangement of time was ordered on the same principle, ascending from the Sabbath of days, to the Sabbath of weeks, of months, of years, and finally to the Sabbath of Sabbatic years, which was the year of

Jubilee. And thus all time pointed forward and upward to the "Sabbatism," or sacred rest, that remaineth for "the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9).

4. All that has hitherto been described occurred before the expedition against Midian, by which Israel was "avenged" for the great sin into which they had by treachery been seduced. That expedition which was accompanied by Phinehas, whose zeal had formerly stayed the plague (Numbers 25:7-8), was not only completely successful, but executed all the Divine directions given. The Midianites seem to have been taken by surprise, and made no resistance. The five kings of Midian, or rather the five chieftains of their various tribes (comp. Numbers 25:15), all of whom seem to have been tributaries of Sihon (comp. Joshua 13:21), were killed, as well as the great bulk of the population, and "their cities," and "tent-villages" (erroneously rendered in the Authorised Version "goodly castles") "burnt with fire." Besides a large number of prisoners, immense booty was taken. To show their gratitude for the marvelous preservation of the people, who had probably surprised their enemies in one of their wild licentious orgies, the princes offered as an "oblation" to the sanctuary all the golden ornaments taken from the Midianites. The value of these amounted, according to the present standard of money, to considerably upwards of 25,000l. The destruction of the power of Midian, who might have harassed them from the east, secured to Israel the quiet possession of the district east of Jordan, which their arms had already conquered. All along, from the river Arnon in the south, which divided Israel from Moab, to the river Jabbok and far beyond it, the land of Gilead and of Bashan, their borders were safe from hostile attacks. The accounts of travelers are unanimous in describing that district as specially suited for pastoral purposes. We read of magnificent park like scenery, of wide upland pastures, and rich forests, which everywhere gladden the eye. No wonder that those of the tribes which had all along preserved their nomadic habits, and whose flocks and herds constituted their main possessions and their wealth, should wish to settle in those plains and mountains. To them they were in very truth the land of promise, suited to their special wants, and offering the very riches which they desired. The other side Jordan had little attraction for them; and its possession would have been the opposite of advantageous to a strictly pastoral people. Accordingly, "the children of Gad," and "the children of Reuben" requested of Moses:

"Let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan" (Numbers 32:5).

If this proposal did not actually imply that those tribes intended henceforth quietly to settle down, leaving their brethren to fight alone for the conquest of Palestine proper, it was at least open to such interpretation. Moses seems to have understood it in that sense. But, if such had been their purpose, they would not only have separated themselves from the Lord’s work and leading, but, by discouraging their brethren, have re-enacted, only on a much larger scale, the sin of those unbelieving spies who, thirty-eight years before, had brought such heavy judgment upon Israel. And the words of Moses prevailed. Whether from the first their real intentions had been right, or the warning of Moses had influenced them for good, they now solemnly undertook to accompany their brethren across Jordan, and to stand by them till they also had entered on their possession. Until then they would only restore the "folds" for their sheep, and rebuild the destroyed cities, to afford safe dwelling-places for their wives and children, and, of course, for such of their number as were either left behind for defense, or incapable of going forth to war. On this express promise, their request was granted, and the ancient kingdoms of Sihon and of Og were provisionally

assigned to Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, which latter had made special conquests in Gilead (Numbers 32:39). But the actual division of the district among these tribes was left over for the period when the whole country should be allocated among the children of Israel (Joshua 13:1-33).

5. The arrangements preparatory to possession of the land appropriately concluded with two series of ordinances. The first of these (Numbers 33:50-56; Numbers 34:1-29) directed the extermination of the Canaanites and of all traces of their idolatry, re-enjoining, at the same time, the partition of the now purified land, by lot, among the tribes of Israel (Numbers 33:50-56).

Next, the boundary lines of Palestine were indicated, and the persons named who were to superintend the partition of the country (Numbers 34:1-29). This duty was intrusted to Eleazar the high-priest, and to Joshua, along with ten representative "priests", one from each of the ten tribes, Reuben and Gad having already received their portion on the other side Jordan. The second series of ordinances now enacted (Numbers 35:1-34; Numbers 36:1-13) was, if not of greater importance, yet of even deeper symbolical meaning. According to the curse that had been pronounced upon Levi, that tribe was destined to be "divided in Jacob" (Genesis 49:7). But, in the goodness of God, this was now converted into a blessing alike to Levi and to all Israel. The Levites, the special property and election of the Lord, were to be scattered among all the other tribes, to recall by their presence everywhere the great truths which they symbolized, and to keep alive among the people the knowledge and service of the Lord. On the other hand, they were not to be quite isolated, but gathered together into cities, so that by fellowship and intercourse they might support and strengthen one another. For this purpose forty-eight cities were now assigned to the Levites - of course not exclusive of any other inhabitants, but "to dwell in," that is, they were to have as many houses in them as were required for their accommodation. Along with these houses certain "suburbs," also, or "commons" for their herds and flocks, were to be assigned them - covering in extent on each side a distance of 1000 cubits (1500 feet) round about their cities (Numbers 35:4). Besides, around this inner, another outer circle of 2000 cubits was to be drawn in every direction. These were to be the fields and vineyards of the Levites (Numbers 35:5). The number of these cities in each tribe varied according to the size of its territory. Thus Judah and Simeon had to furnish nine cities, Naphtali only three, and each of the other tribes four (Joshua 21:1-45). Lastly, the thirteen Levitical cities in the territories of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin were specially assigned to the priests, the descendants of the house of Aaron, while six of the Levitical cities - three east and three west of the Jordan - were set apart as "cities of refuge," for the unintentional manslayer. It is interesting to notice, that even the number of the Levitical cities was significant. They amounted in all to forty-eight, which is a multiple of four, the symbolical number of the kingdom of God in the world, and of twelve, the number of the tribes of Israel. In regard to the "cities of refuge," for the protection of the unintending manslayer, it must not be imagined that the simple plea of unintentional homicide afforded safety. The law, indeed, provided that the country both east and west of the Jordan should be divided in three parts - each with its "city of refuge," the roads to which were always to be kept in good repair. But, according to the sacred text (Numbers 35:25, comp. Joshua 20:4), a homicide would, on arriving at the gates of a city of refuge, first have to plead his cause before the elders of that city, when, if it approved itself to their minds, they would afford, him provisional protection. If, however, afterwards, the "avenger of blood" claimed his extradition, the accused person would be sent back under proper protection to

his own city, where the whole case would be thoroughly investigated. If the homicide was then proved to have been unintentional, the accused would be restored to the "city of refuge," and enjoy its protection, till the death of the high priest set him free to return to his own city. As for the duty of "avenging blood," its principle is deeply rooted in the Old Testament, and traced up to the relation in which God stands to our world. For, the blood of man, who is God’s image, when shed upon earth, which is God’s property, "crieth" unto God (Genesis 4:10) - claims payment like an unredeemed debt. Hence the expression "avenger of blood," which should be literally rendered "redeemer of blood." On the other hand, the symbolical meaning of the cities of refuge will readily be understood. There - in the place of God’s merciful provision - the manslayer was to find a refuge, sheltered, as it were, under the wings of the grace of God, till the complete remission of the punishment at the death of the high priest -the latter symbolically pointing forward to the death of Him Whom God has anointed our great High Priest, and Who "by His one oblation of Himself once offered," hath made "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction" for the sins of the world.

03.03.04. Volume 3, Chapter 04

CHAPTER 4 Death And Burial Of Moses.

Deuteronomy 3:23-29; Numbers 27:15-23; Deuteronomy 34:1-12

ALL was now ready, and Israel about to cross the Jordan and take possession of the Promised Land! It was only natural - one of those traits in the history of the great heroes of the Bible, so peculiarly precious, as showing in their weakness their kinship to our feelings - that Moses should have longed to share in what was before Israel. Looking back the long vista of these one hundred and twenty years - first of life and trial in Egypt, then of loneliness and patient faith while feeding the flocks of Jethro, and, lastly, of labor and weariness in the wilderness, it would indeed have been strange, had he not wished now to have part in the conquest and rest of the goodly land. He had believed in it; he had preached it; he had prayed for it; he had labored, borne, fought for it. And now within reach and view of it must he lay himself down to die?

Scripture records (Deuteronomy 3:23-26), with touching simplicity, what passed between Moses and his Heavenly Father. "And I entreated grace from the Lord at that time, saying: Lord Jehovah, Thou hast begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy strong hand. For what God is there in heaven or in the earth which doeth like Thy doings and like Thy might? Oh, that I might now go over and see the good land which is on the other side Jordan, this goodly mountain and the Lebanon! And Jehovah was wroth with me on account of you, and hearkened not unto me. And God said to me: Let it now suffice thee - continue not to speak to Me any more on this matter." The deep feelings of Moses had scarcely bodied themselves in the language of prayer. Rather had it been the pouring forth of his inmost desires before his Father in heaven - a precious privilege which His children possess at all times. But even so Moses had in this also, though but "as a steward" and "afar off," to follow Him whose great type he was, and to learn the peaceful rest of this experience, after a contest of thought and wish: "Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done." And it was the good will of God that Moses should lay himself down to rest without entering the land. Although it came in punishment of Israel’s and of Moses’ sin at the waters of Meribah, yet it was also better that it should be so - better for Moses himself. For on the top of Pisgah God prepared something better for Moses than even entrance into the land of earthly promise. And now calmly, as a father setteth his house in order, did Moses prepare for his departure. During his life all his thoughts had been for Israel; and he was faithful even unto the death. His last care also had been for the people whom he had loved, and for the work to which he had been devoted - that Jehovah would provide for His congregation "a shepherd" "who may lead them out and bring them in" (Numbers 27:16-17). Little else was left to be done. In a series of discourses, Moses repeated, and more fully re-stated, to Israel the laws and ordinances of God their King. His last record was "a song" of the mercy and truth of God (Deuteronomy 32:1-52); his last words a blessing upon Israel (Deuteronomy 33:1-29). Then, amid the respectful silence of a mourning people, he set out alone upon his last pilgrim-journey. All the way up to the highest top of Pisgah the eyes of the people must have followed him. They could watch him as he stood there in the sunset, taking his full view

of the land - there to see for himself how true and faithful Jehovah had been. Still could they descry his figure, as, in the shadows of even, it moved towards a valley apart. After that no mortal eye ever beheld him, till, with Elijah, he stood on the mount of transfiguration. Then indeed was the longing wish of Moses, uttered many, many centuries before, fulfilled far beyond his thinking or hoping at the time. He did stand on "the goodly mountain" within the Land of Promise, worshipping, and giving testimony to Him in "Whom all the promises are yea and amen." It was a worthy crowning this of such a life. Not the faithful steward of Abraham, Eliezer of Damascus, when he brought to his master's son the God-given bride, could with such joy see the end of his faithful stewardship when the heir entered on his possession, as this "steward over God's house," when on that mountain he did homage to "the Son in His own house." But to Israel down in the valley had Moses never so preached of the truth and faithfulness of Jehovah, and of His goodness and support to His people, as from the top of Pisgah. There was a strange symbolical aptness even in the ascent of the mount, 4,500 feet up, which is "rapid" but "not rugged."

Standing on the highest crest, the prospect would, indeed, seem almost unbounded. Eastwards, stretching into Arabia, rolls a boundless plain - one waving ocean of corn and grass. As the eye turns southwards, it ranges over the land of Moab, till it rests on the sharp outlines of Mounts Hor and Seir, and the rosy granite peaks of Arabia. To the west the land descends, terrace by terrace, to the Dead Sea, the western outline of which can be traced in its full extent. Deep below lies that sea, "like a long strip of molten metal, with the sun mirrored on its surface, waving and undulating in its further edge, unseen in its eastern limits, as though poured from some deep cavern beneath." Beyond it would appear the ridge of Hebron, and then as the eye traveled northwards, successively the sites of Bethlehem and of Jerusalem. The holy city itself would be within range of view - Mount Moriah, the Mount of Olives; on the one side of it the gap in the hills leading to Jericho, while on the other side, the rounded heights of Benjamin would be clearly visible. Turning northwards, the eye follows the winding course of Jordan from Jericho, the city of palm-trees, up the stream. Looking across it, it rests on the rounded top of Mount Gerizim, beyond which the plain of Esdraelon opens, and the shoulder of Carmel appears. That blue haze in the distance is the line of "the utmost sea." Still farther northwards rise the outlines of Tabor, Gilboa, the top of snow-clad Hermort, and the highest range of Lebanon. In front are the dark forests of Ajalon, Mount Gilead, then the land of Bashan and Bozrah.

"And Jehovah shewed Moses all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the Negeb, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar" (Deuteronomy 34:1-3).

Such was the prospect which, from that mountain-top, spread before Moses. And when he had satiated his eyes upon it, he descended into that valley apart to lay him down to rest. Into the mysterious silence of that death and burial at the hands of Jehovah we dare not penetrate. Jewish tradition, rendering the expression (Deuteronomy 34:5) literally, has it that "Moses the servant of Jehovah died there... at the mouth of Jehovah," or, as they put it, by the kiss of the Lord. But from the brief saying of Scripture (Jude 1:9) may we not infer that although Moses also received in death the wages of sin, yet his body passed not through corruption, however much "the devil," contending as for his lawful prey, "disputed" for its possession, but was raised up to be with Elijah the first to welcome the Lord in His glory? For "men bury a body that it may pass into corruption. If Jehovah, therefore, would not suffer the body of Moses to be buried by men, it is but natural to

seek for the reason in the fact that He did not intend to leave him to corruption." But "there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders, which Jehovah sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel" (Deuteronomy 34:10-12).

"and Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Hebrews 3:5-6).

03.03.05. Volume 3, Chapter 05

CHAPTER 5 The Charge To Joshua - Despatch Of The Two Spies To Jericho -Rahab.

(Joshua 1:1-18; Joshua 2:1-24) A WIDE, rich plain at the foot of the mountains of Moab, carpeted with wild flowers springing in luxuriant beauty, watered by many rivulets and rills, here and there covered by acacia trees, where birds of brightest plumage carol, and beyond, to the south, by the banks of streams, where scented oleanders rise to a height of twenty-five feet, their flower-laden boughs bending like those of the willow - such is Abel-Shittim, "the meadow of acacias." Beyond it are the fords of Jordan, and the western heights; in the distance southwards, the hills of Judaea, on which the purple light rests. Climate and vegetation are tropical, on the eastern even more than on the western banks of the Jordan. Many memories hallow the place Somewhere here must Elijah have smitten the waters of Jordan, that they parted, ere the fiery chariot wrapt him from the companionship of Elisha. In this district also was the scene of John’s baptism, where the Savior humbled Himself to fulfill all righteousness. And on this "meadow of acacias" did an early summer shed its softness when, about the month of March, forty years after the Exodus, the camp of Israel kept thirty days’ solemn mourning for Moses (Deuteronomy 34:8). Behind them rose that mountain-top, from which "that saint of God" had seen his last of Israel and of the goodly land, which they were so soon to possess; before them lay the Land of Promise which they were presently to enter.

Such a leader as Moses had been would Israel never more see; nor yet one with whom God had so spoken, "mouth to mouth," as a man with his friend. A feeling of loneliness and awe must have crept over the people and over their new leader, Joshua, like that which Elisha felt, when, alone, he turned him back with the mantle of Elijah that came to him from heaven, to test whether now also the waters would divide at the bidding of the Lord God of Elijah. And the faithful Covenant-God was with Joshua, as he waited, not unbelievingly, but expectantly, in that mourning camp of Abel-Shittim, for a fresh message from God. Though he had been previously designated by God, and set apart to the leadership, it was well he should so wait, not only for his own sake, but also "that the people might afterwards not hesitate gladly to follow his leadership, who had not moved a foot without the leading of God." And in due time the longed-for direction came: not in doubtful language, but renewing alike the commission of Joshua and the promises to Israel. Far as the eye could reach, to the heights of Anti-Lebanon in the extreme distance, to the shores of the Great Sea, to the Euphrates in the East - all was theirs, and not a foeman should withstand them, for God would "not fail nor forsake" their leader. Only two things were requisite: that, in his loving obedience, the word and commands of God should be precious to Joshua; and that in strong faith he should be "very courageous." This latter command was twice repeated, as it were to indicate alike the inward courage of faith and the outward courage of deed. That this call had found a response in the hearts not only of Joshua, but also of the people, appears from the answer of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, when reminded of their obligation to share in the impending warfare of their brethren. While professing their readiness to acknowledge in all things the authority of Joshua, they also expressly made the latter conditional on the continued direction

of Jehovah, and re-echoed the Divine admonition to be "strong and of a good courage." So much does success in all we undertake depend on the assurance of faith!

"For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord" (James 1:6-7).

Thus directed and encouraged, Joshua gave orders that the people should provide themselves with the necessary victuals to begin, if occasion should offer, their forward march on the third day. In point of fact, however, it was at least five days before that movement could be made. For Joshua had deemed it prudent to adopt proper preparatory measures, although, or rather just because he was assured of Divine help, and trusted in it. Accordingly he had sent, unknown to the people, two spies "to view the land and Jericho." The reason of this secrecy lay probably both in the nature of their errand, and in the sad remembrance of the discouragement which evil report by the spies had formerly wrought among the people (Numbers 14:1). As the two spies stealthily crept up the eight miles of country from the western bank of the Jordan to "the city of palm trees," they must have been struck with the extraordinary "beauty and luxuriance of the district. Even now there is a bright green oasis of several miles square which marks the more rich and populous groves of Jericho." Its vegetation is most rich and rare; almost every tree is tenanted by the bulbul or Palestinian nightingale, with the "hopping thrush," "the gorgeous Indian blue kingfisher, the Egyptian turtle-dove, and other singing birds of Indian or Abyssinian affinity." "On the plain above are the desert larks and chats, while half an hour’s walk takes us to the Mount of Temptation, the home of the griffon, where beautifully plumed partridges, rock-swallows, rock-doves, and other birds abound. But, beyond all others, Jericho is the home of the lovely sun-bird,.... resplendent with all the colors of the humming-bird" - its back brilliant green, its throat blue, and its breast purple, "with a tuft of rich red, orange, and yellow feathers at each shoulder." The little streams - which Elisha healed from its after curse - swarms with fish, while climate and prospect are equally delicious in that early summer-like spring, when the spies visited it. And what the wealth and beauty of this plain must have been when it was crowded with feathery palms, and scented balsam gardens, we learn from the descriptions of Josephus (Ant. xv. 4, 2). This paradise of Canaan was guarded by the fortress of Jericho - one of the strongest in the whole land. Behind its walls and battlements immense wealth was stored, partly natural and partly the result of civilization and luxury. This appears even from the character and value of the spoil which one individual - Achan - could secrete from it (Joshua 7:21). As the spies neared the city, the setting sun was casting his rays in richest variegated coloring on the limestone mountains which surrounded the ancient Jericho like an amphitheater, rising closest, and to the height of from 1200 to 1500 feet, in the north, where they bear the name of Quarantania, marking the traditional site of the forty days of our Lord’s temptation; and thence stretching with widening sweep towards the south. Friend or ally there was none in that city, whose hospitality the two Israelites might have sought. To have resorted to a khan or inn would have been to court the publicity which most of all they wished to avoid. Under these circumstances, the choice of the house of Rahab, the harlot, was certainly the wisest for their purpose. But even so, in the excited state of the public mind, when, as we know (Joshua 2:11), the terror of Israel had fallen upon all, the arrival of two suspicious-looking strangers could not remain a secret. So soon as the gates were shut, and escape seemed impossible, the king sent to make captives of what he rightly judged to be Israelitish spies. But Rahab had anticipated him. Arriving at the same conclusion as the king, and expecting what would

happen, she had "hid them" - perhaps hastily - "with the stalks of flax which she had laid in order upon the roof," after the common Eastern fashion of drying flax on the flat roofs of houses. By the adroit admission of the fact that two men, previously unknown to her, had indeed come, to which she added the false statement that they had with equal abruptness left just before the closing of the gates, she succeeded in misleading the messengers of the king. The story of Rahab sounded likely enough; she had seemingly been frank, nor was there any apparent motive for untruthfulness on her part, but quite the opposite, as the same danger threatened all the inhabitants of Jericho. As Rahab had suggested, the messengers "pursued quickly" in the supposed wake of the Jewish emissaries, which would have been "the way to Jordan, unto the fords," by which they must return to the camp of Israel, and the gates were again shut, to make escape from Jericho impossible, if, after all, they had not quitted the city.

Thus far the device of Rahab had succeeded. So soon as night settled upon the city, she repaired to the roof, and acquainted the spies, who were ignorant of any danger, with what had taken place. At the same time she explained the motives of her conduct. They must indeed have listened with wonder, not unmingled with adoring gratitude, as she told them how they, in Canaan, had heard what Jehovah had done for Israel at the Red Sea, and that, by His help, the two powerful kings of the Amorites had been "utterly destroyed." The very language, in which Rahab described the terror that had fallen upon her countrymen, was the same as that uttered prophetically forty years before, when Moses and the children of Israel sang the new song on the other side of the Red Sea, Exodus 15:14-16 (comp. Exodus 23:27; Deuteronomy 2:25; Deuteronomy 11:25). But the effect of this knowledge of Jehovah’s great doings differed according to the state of mind of those who heard of them. In the Canaanites it called forth the energy of despair in resisting Israel, or rather Israel’s God. But in Rahab’s heart it awakened far other feelings. She knew that Jehovah had given to Israel the land -and far better than even this, that "Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and in earth beneath." Knowing God’s purpose, she would shelter the spies, and so further their errand; knowing that He alone was God, she and all near and dear to her must not take part in the daring resistance of her countrymen, but seek safety by separating themselves from them and joining the people of God. And so she implored mercy for herself and her kindred in the day when Jehovah would surely give Israel the victory. Such a request could not be refused, evidenced as its genuineness had been by her "works." The two spies solemnly acceded to it, but on condition that she would prove true to the end, helping on their work by still keeping their mission secret, and evidencing her faith by gathering on the day of trial all her kindred within her house. That house should be distinguished from all other dwellings in Jericho by exhibiting the same "scarlet cord," with which she let down the spies over the city wall upon which her house was built. All throughout, this story is full of deepest symbolical meaning. And in truth, one, prepared so to act, was in heart "an Israelite indeed," and her household already belonged to the "household of faith."

We are now in circumstances to appreciate the faith by which the harlot Rahab perished not with them that were disobedient, when she had "received the spies with peace," a faith which, as St. James argues, evidenced itself "by works" (James 2:25). In so doing, it is not necessary either to represent her in her former life as other than she really was, or even to extenuate her sin in returning a false answer to the king of Jericho. Nor, on the other hand, do we wish to exaggerate the spiritual condition to which she had attained.

Remembering who, and what, and among whom she had been all her life-time, her emphatic confession, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, "He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath;" her unwavering faith in the truth of His promises, which moved her to self-denying action at such danger and sacrifice, and supported her in it; her separation from her countrymen; her conduct towards the spies at the risk of her life - all show her to have had that faith which "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen;" not a "dead faith," "without works," but one which "wrought with her works, and by works was made perfect." And He Who "giveth more grace" to them who wisely use what they have, marvelously owned and blessed this "first-fruits" from among the Gentiles. Her history, which, in all its circumstances, bears a remarkable analogy to that of the woman of Samaria (John 4:1-54), is recorded for the instruction of the Church. And, as in the case of the Hebrew midwives who had preserved Israel (Exodus 1:21), God also "made her a house." She became the wife of Salmon, a prince of the tribe of Judah, and from her sprang in direct line both David (Ruth 4:21) and David’s Lord (Matthew 1:4). But as for the two Israelitish spies, they hid themselves, according to Rahab’s advice, for three days among the limestone caves and grottoes which abound in Mount Quarantania, while their pursuers vainly searched for them in the opposite direction of the fords of Jordan. When the fruitless pursuit had ceased, they made their way back to Joshua, expressing to him their conviction, as the result of their mission: "Truly Jehovah hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us."

03.03.06. Volume 3, Chapter 06

CHAPTER 6

Miraculous Parting of the Jordan, and the Passage of the Children of Israel - Gilgal and its meaning - The First Passover on the soil of Palestine.

(Joshua 3:1-17, Joshua 4:1-24, Joshua 5:1-12) THE morrow after the return of the spies, the camp at Shittim was broken up, and the host of Israel moved forward. It consisted of all those tribes who were to have their possessions west of the Jordan, along with forty thousand chosen warriors from Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. A short march brought them to the brink of Jordan. Strictly speaking, the Jordan has a threefold bank; the largest at the water's edge, which, in spring, is frequently inundated, owing to the melting of snow on Hermon; a middle bank, which is covered with rich vegetation, and an upper bank, which overhangs the river. The people now halted for three days, first to await the Divine direction as to the passage of the river, and then to prepare for receiving in a proper spirit the manifestation of Divine power about to be manifested in the miraculous parting of Jordan. For, as one has remarked, the expression used by Joshua, "the living God is among you" (Joshua 3:10), does not merely imply the presence of God among Israel, but, as the event proved, the operations by which He shows Himself both living and true.

All that was to be done by Israel was Divinely indicated to Joshua, and all was done exactly as it had been directed. First, proclamation was made throughout Israel to "sanctify" themselves, and that not only outwardly by symbolic rites, but also inwardly by turning unto the Lord, in expectant faith of "the wonders" about to be enacted. These were intimated to them beforehand (Joshua 3:5, Joshua 3:13).

Thus passed three days. It was "the tenth day of the first month" (Joshua 4:19), the anniversary of the day on which forty years before Israel had set apart their Paschal lambs (Exodus 12:3), that the miraculous passage of the Jordan was accomplished, and Israel stood on the very soil of the promised land. Before the evening of that anniversary had closed in, the memorial stones were set up in Gilgal. All between those two anniversaries seemed only as a grand historical parenthesis. But the kingdom of God has no blanks or interruptions in its history; there is a grand unity in its course, for Jehovah reigneth. With feelings stirred by such remembrances, and the expectancy of the great miracle to come, did Israel now move forward. First went the Ark, borne by the priests, and, at a reverent distance of 2000 cubits, followed the host. For, it was the Ark of the Covenant which was to make a way for Israel through the waters of Jordan, and they were to keep it in sight, so as to mark the miraculous road, as it was gradually opened to them. It is to this that the Divine words refer (Joshua 3:4): "that ye may know," or rather come to know, recognize, understand, "the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore." With the exception of Caleb and Joshua, none, at least of the laity, had been grown up at the time, and seen it, when the Lord parted the waters of the Red Sea at the Exodus. Then it had been the uplifted wonder-working rod of Moses by which the waters were parted. But now it was the Ark at whose advance they were stayed. And the difference of the means was quite in accordance with that of the circumstances.

For now the Ark of the Covenant was the ordinary symbol of the Divine Presence among Israel; and God commonly employs the ordinary means of grace for the accomplishment of His marvelous purposes of mercy.

It was early spring, in that tropical district the time of early harvest (Joshua 3:15), and the Jordan had overflown its lowest banks. As at a distance of about half a mile the Israelites looked down, they saw that, when the feet of those who bore the Ark touched the waters, they were arrested." Far up "beyond where they stood, at the city of Adam that is beside Zarethan," did the Divine Hand draw up the waters of Jordan, while the waters below that point were speedily drained into the Dead Sea. In the middle of the river-bed the priests with the Ark halted till the whole people had passed over dryshod. Then twelve men, who had previously been detailed for the purpose, took up twelve large stones from where the priests had stood in the river-bed, to erect them a solemn memorial to all times of that wondrous event.

Only after that did the priests come up from Jordan. And when "the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land" (literally, were detached, viz., from the clogging mud, "upon the dry"), "the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as before." It must have been towards evening when the rest of the march was accomplished - a distance of about five miles - and Israel's camp was pitched at what afterwards became Gilgal, "in the east border of Jericho," about two miles from the latter city. The object and meaning of this "notable miracle" are clearly indicated in the sacred text. We know that it was as absolutely necessary in the circumstances as formerly the cleaving of the Red Sea had been. For, at that season of the year, and with the means at their disposal, it would have been absolutely impossible for a large host with women and children to cross the Jordan. But, besides, it was fitting that a miracle similar to that of the Exodus from Egypt should mark the entrance into the Land of Promise; fitting also, that the commencement of Joshua's ministry should be thus Divinely attested like that of Moses (Joshua 3:7). Finally, it would be to Israel a glorious pledge of future victory in the might of their God (Joshua 3:10), while to their enemies it was a sure token of the judgment about to overtake them (Joshua 5:1).

Two things yet remained to be done, before Israel could enter upon the war with Canaan. Although the people of God, Israel had been under judgment for nearly forty years, and those born in the wilderness bore not the covenant mark of circumcision. To renew that rite in their case was the first necessity, so as to restore Israel to its full position as the covenant-people of God.

After that, a privilege awaited Israel which for thirty-eight years they had not enjoyed. Probably the Passover at the foot of Sinai (Numbers 9:1) had been the last, as that feast would not have been observed by the people in their uncircumcision. But at Gilgal their reproach was "rolled away," and the people of God renewed the festive remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt. Truly, that first Passover on the soil of Palestine had a twofold meaning. Even the circumstances recalled its first celebration. As the night of the first Passover was one of terror and judgment to Egypt, so now, within view of the festive camp of Gilgal,

"Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in" (Joshua 6:1). And now also the Divine wilderness-provision of the "manna which had clung to them with the tenacity of all God's mercies," ceased on, "the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land: neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the

fruits of the land of Canaan that year." And so also have miraculous gifts ceased in the Church, because their continuance has become unnecessary. Similarly will our manna-provision for daily life-need cease, when we at the last enter upon the land of promise, and for ever enjoy its fruits!

03.03.07. Volume 3, Chapter 07

CHAPTER 7 The "Prince of the Host of Jehovah" appears to Joshua - The miraculous fall of Jericho before the Ark of Jehovah.

(Joshua 5:13; Joshua 6:27) AT first sight it may seem strange, that, when such fear had fallen upon the people of the land, any attempt should have been made to defend Jericho. But a fuller consideration will help us not only to understand this, but also by-and-by to see special reasons, why this one fortress should have been miraculously given to Israel. Not to mention motives of honor, which would at least have some influence with the men of Jericho, it was one of the main principles of heathenism, that each of their "gods many" was limited in his activity to one special object. But what the Canaanites had heard of Jehovah showed Him to be the God of nature, who clave the Red Sea and arrested the waters of Jordon, and that He was so far also the God of battles, as to give Israel the victory over the Amorite kings. But was His strength also the same as against their gods in reducing strong fortresses? Of that at any rate they had no experience. Trivial as such a question may sound in our ears, we have evidence that it was seriously entertained by heathendom. To mention only one instance, we know that a similar suggestion was made at a much later period, not by obscure men, but by the servants and trusted advisers of Ben-hadad, and that it was acted upon by that monarch in the belief that "Jehovah is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys" (1 Kings 20:28). At any rate, it was worth the trial, and Jericho, as already stated, was the strongest fortress in Canaan, and the key to the whole country. This latter consideration could not but have weighed on the mind of Joshua, as from the camp of Gilgal he "viewed the city." As yet no special direction had been given him how to attack Jericho, and, assuredly, the people whom he commanded were untrained for such work. While such thoughts were busy within him, of a sudden, "as he lifted up his eyes and looked, there stood over against him," not the beleaguered city, but "a man with his sword drawn in his hand." Challenged by Joshua: "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" the strange warrior replied: "No! But I am the Captain (or Prince) of the host of Jehovah, now I am come." Here His speech was interrupted - for Joshua fell on his face before Him, and reverently inquired His commands. The reply: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy," must have convinced Joshua that this Prince of the host of Jehovah was none other than the Angel of the Covenant, Who had spoken to Moses out of the burning bush (Exodus 3:4), and Who was co-equal with Jehovah. Indeed, shortly afterwards, we find Him expressly spoken of as Jehovah (Joshua 6:2). So then the mission of Joshua was substantially the continuation and completion of that of Moses. As at the commencement of the latter, the Angel of the Covenant had appeared and spoken out of the burning bush, so He now also appeared to Joshua, while the symbolical act of "loosing the shoe off his foot," in reverent acknowledgment of the Holy One of Israel, recalled the vision of Moses, and at the same time connected it with that of his successor. Having assured Joshua of complete victory, the Angel of Jehovah gave him detailed directions how Israel was to compass Jericho, under the leadership of the Ark of the Lord, and how, when the wall of the city had fallen, the people were to act. Implicit obedience of what in its nature was symbolical, was absolutely

requisite, and Joshua communicated the command of the Lord both to priests and people. And now a marvelous sight would be witnessed from the walls of Jericho. Day by day, a solemn procession left the camp of Israel. First came lightly armed men, then followed seven priests blowing continually, not the customary silver trumpets, but large horns, the loud sound of which penetrated to the far distance, such as had been heard at Sinai (Exodus 19:16-19; Exodus 20:18). The same kind of horns were to be used on the first day of the seventh month (Leviticus 23:24), and to announce the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:9).

Thus heralded, came the Ark of Jehovah, borne by the priests, and after it "the rereward" of Israel. So they did for six days, each day once encompassing the walls of Jericho, but in solemn silence, save for the short sharp tones, or the long-drawn blasts of the priests' horns. The impression made by this long, solemn procession, which appeared and disappeared, and did its work, in solemn silence, only broken by the loud shrill notes of the horns, must have been peculiar. At length came the seventh day. Its work began earlier than on the others - "about the dawning of the day." In the same order as before, they encompassed the city, only now seven times. "And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for Jehovah hath given you the city." "And it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city." As for Jericho itself, Joshua had by Divine command declared it "cherem," or "devoted" to Jehovah (Joshua 6:17). In such cases, according to Leviticus 27:28-29, no redemption was possible, but, as indicated in Deuteronomy 13:16, alike the inhabitants and all the spoil of the city was to be destroyed, "only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron" being reserved and "put into the treasury of the house of Jehovah" (Joshua 6:24; comp. Numbers 31:22-23, Numbers 31:50-54). This was not the ordinary sentence against all the cities of Canaan. In all other cases the inhabitants alone were "smitten with the edge of the sword" (Joshua 8:26; Joshua 10:28; comp. Deuteronomy 2:34; Deuteronomy 3:6; Deuteronomy 8:2; Deuteronomy 20:16), while the cattle and the spoil were preserved. But in the case of Jericho, for reasons to be afterwards stated, the whole city, with all that it contained, was cherem. Only Rahab, "and her father's household, and all that she had," were saved from the general wreck.

It lies on the surface of the Scriptural narrative that "a notable miracle," unparalleled in history, had in this case been "wrought" by Jehovah for Israel. As a German writer puts it: It would have been impossible to show it more clearly, that Jehovah had given the city to Israel. First, the river was made to recede, to allow them entrance into the land; and now the walls of the city were made to fall, to give them admission to its first and strongest city. Now such proofs of the presence and help of Jehovah, so soon after Moses' death, must have convinced the most carnal among Israel, that the same God who had cleft the Red Sea before their fathers was still on their side. And in this light must the event also have been viewed by the people of Canaan. But, besides, a deeper symbolical meaning attached to all that had happened. The first and strongest fortress in the land Jehovah God bestowed upon His people, so to speak, as a free gift, without their having to make any effort, or to run any risk in taking it. A precious pledge this of the ease with which all His gracious promises were to be fulfilled. Similarly, the manner in which Israel obtained possession of Jericho was deeply significant. Evidently, the walls of Jericho fell, not before Israel, but before the Ark of Jehovah, or rather, as it is expressly said in Joshua 6:8, before Jehovah Himself, whose

presence among His people was connected with the Ark of the Covenant. And the blast of those jubilee-horns all around the doomed city made proclamation of Jehovah, and was, so to speak, the summons of His kingdom, proclaiming that the labor and sorrow of His people were at an end, and they about to enter upon their inheritance. This was the symbolical and typical import of the blasts of the jubilee-horns, whenever they were blown. Hence also alike in the visions of the prophets and in the New Testament the final advent of the kingdom of God is heralded by the trumpet-sound of His angelic messengers (comp. 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 20:1-15; Revelation 21:1-27). But, on the other hand, the advent of the kingdom of God always implies destruction to His enemies. Accordingly, the walls of Jericho must fall, and all the city be destroyed. Nor will the reader of this history fail here also to notice the significance of the number seven - seven horns, seven priests, seven days of compassing the walls, repeated seven times on the seventh day! The suddenness of the ruin of Jericho, which typified the kingdom of this world in its opposition to that of God, has also its counterpart at the end of the present dispensation. For "the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night; and when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."

Lastly, it was fitting that Jericho should have been entirely devoted unto the Lord; not only that Israel might gain no immediate spoil by what the Lord had done, but also because the city, as the firstfruits of the conquest of the land, belonged unto Jehovah, just as all the first, both in His people and in all that was theirs, was His - in token that the whole was really God’s property, Who gave everything to His people, and at Whose hands they held their possessions. But, to indicate the state of heart and mind with which Israel compassed the city, following the Ark in solemn silence, we recall this emphatic testimony of Scripture (Hebrews 11:30):

"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days." In this instance also, as just before the Lord cleft the Red Sea, and again afterwards, when in answer to Jehoshaphat’s prayer God destroyed the heathen combination against His people, the Divine call to them was, "Stand ye still" (in expectant faith) "and see the salvation of Jehovah" (Exodus 14:13, 2 Chronicles 20:17). And so it ever is to His believing people in similar circumstances.

03.03.08. Volume 3, Chapter 08

CHAPTER 8

Unsuccessful Attack upon Ai - Achan’s Sin, and Judgement - Ai attacked a second time and taken.

(Joshua 7:1-26, Joshua 8:1-29) THE conquest of Jericho without fight on the part of Israel had given them full pledge of future success. But, on the other hand, also, might it become a source of greatest danger, if the gracious promises of God were regarded as national rights, and the presence of Jehovah as secured, irrespective of the bearing of Israel towards Him. It was therefore of the utmost importance, that from the first it should appear that victory over the enemy was Israel’s only so long as the people were faithful to the covenant of their God. In their progress towards the interior of the land, the fortress next to be taken was Ai. Broken up as the country seems to have been into small territories, each under an independent chieftain or "king," who reigned in his fortified city and held sway over the district around, a series of sieges rather than of pitched battles was to be expected. Ai, situated on a conical hill about ten miles to the west of Jericho, was a comparatively smaller city, numbering only 12,000 inhabitants (Joshua 8:25). Yet its position was exceedingly important. Southwards it opened the road to Jerusalem, which is only a few hours distant; northwards it commanded access to the heart of the country, so that, as we find in the sequel, a victorious army could march thence unopposed into the fertile district of Samaria.

Moreover, the fate of Ai virtually decided also that of Bethel. The latter city, ruled by another independent "king," lay to the west of Ai, being separated from it by a high intervening hill. This hill, about midway between Bethel and Ai, possessed special interest. It was the site of Abram’s altar, when he first entered the land (Genesis 12:8). Here also had the patriarch stood with Lot, overlooking in the near distance the rich luxuriance of the Jordan valley, when Lot made his fatal choice of residence (Genesis 13:4; Genesis 13:10). Standing on this hill, a valley is seen to stretch westward to Bethel, while eastward, around Ai, "the wadys which at first break down steeply... descend gradually for about three quarters of a mile, before taking their final plunge to the Jordan valley. The gently sloping ground is well studded with olive trees." This rapid sketch of the locality will help us to realize the events about to be recorded. The advance now to be made by Israel was so important, that Joshua deemed it a proper precaution to send "men to view Ai." Their report satisfied him that only an army-corps of about 3000 men was requisite to take that city. But the expedition proved far from successful. The men of Ai issued from the city, and routed Israel, killing thirty-six men, pursuing the fugitives as far as "Shebarim" ("mines," or perhaps "quarries" where stones are broken), and smiting them "in the going down," that is, to about a mile’s distance, where the wadys, descending from Ai, take "their final plunge" eastwards. Viewed in any light, the event was terribly ominous. It had been Israel’s first fight west of the Jordan - and their first defeat. The immediate danger likely to accrue was a combination of all their enemies round about, and the utter destruction of a host which had become dispirited. But there was even a more serious aspect than this. Had God’s pledged promises now failed? or, if this could not even for a moment be

entertained, had the Lord given up His gracious purpose, His covenant with Israel, and the manifestation of His "Name" among all nations, connected therewith?

Feelings like these found expression in Joshua's appeal to God, when, with rent clothes and ashes upon their heads, he and the elders of Israel lay the livelong day, in humiliation and prayer, before the Lord, while in the camp "the hearts of the people" had "melted and became as water." We require to keep in view this contrast between the impotent terror of the people and the praying attitude of their leaders, to realize the circumstances of the case; the perplexity, the anxiety, and the difficulties of Joshua, before we judge of the language which he used. It fell indeed far short of the calm confidence of a Moses; yet, in its inquiry into the reason of God's dealings, which were acknowledged, faith, so to speak, wrestled with doubt (Joshua 7:7), while rising fear was confronted by trust in God's promises (Joshua 7:9). Best of all, the inward contest found expression in prayer. It was therefore, after all, a contest of faith, and faith is "the victory over the world."

Strange, that amidst this universal agitation, one should have remained unmoved, who, all the time, knew that he was the cause of Israel's disaster and of the mourning around. Yet his conscience must have told him that, so long as it remained, the curse of his sin would follow his brethren, and smite them with impotence. It is this hardness of impenitence - itself the consequence of sin - which, when properly considered, vindicates, or rather demonstrates, the rightness of the Divine sentence afterwards executed upon Achan. His sin was of no ordinary character. It had not only been a violation of God's express command, but daring sacrilege and profanation. And this under circumstances of the most aggravated character. Besides, Joshua had, just before the fall of Jericho, warned the people of the danger to themselves and to all Israel of taking "of the accursed thing" (Joshua 6:18). So emphatic had been the ban pronounced upon the doomed city, that it was extended to all time, and even over the whole family of any who should presume to restore Jericho as a fortress (Joshua 6:26).

And, in face of all this, Achan had allowed himself to be tempted! He had yielded to the lowest passion. One of those Babylonish garments, curiously woven with figures and pictures (such as classical writers describe), a massive golden ornament, in the shape of a tongue, and a sum of silver, amounting to about 25l in a city the walls of which had just miraculously fallen before the Lord, had induced him to commit this daring sin! More than that, when it had come true, as Joshua predicted (Joshua 6:18), that such theft would "make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it," Achan had still persisted in his sin.

It will be remembered that, forty years before, at the brink of the Red Sea, "the Lord said unto Moses: Wherefore criest thou unto Me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward!" (Exodus 14:15). As then, so now, when Joshua and the elders of Israel lay on their faces before the Lord, not prayer, but action was required. In the one case it was not exercise of faith to pray where obedience was called for; nor yet, in the other, had prayer any meaning, nor could it expect an answer, while sin remained unremoved. And so it ever is. The cause of Israel's disaster lay, not in want of faithfulness on the part of the Lord, but on that of Israel. Their sin must now be searched out, and "the accursed" be "destroyed from among them." For, although the sin of Achan was that of an individual, it involved all Israel in its guilt. The sinner was of Israel, and his sin was in Israel's camp. It is needless here to discuss the question, how one guilty of sin should involve in its

consequences those connected with him, whether by family or social ties. It is simply a fact, admitting no discussion, and is equally witnessed when God’s law in nature, and when His moral law is set at defiance. The deepest reason of it lies, indeed, in this, that the God of nature and of grace is also the founder of society; for, the family and society are not of man’s devising, but of God’s institution, and form part of His general plan. Accordingly, God deals with us not merely as individuals, but also as families and as nations. To question the rightness of this would be to question alike the administration, the fundamental principles, and the plan of God’s universe. But there is reason for devout thankfulness, that we can, and do recognize the presence of God in both nature and in history. The highest instance of the application of this law, is that which has rendered our salvation possible. For just as we had sinned and destroyed ourselves through our connection with the first Adam, so are we saved through the second Adam - the Lord from heaven, Who has become our Substitute, that in Him we might receive the adoption of children. The tidings, that the sin of one of their number had involved Israel in judgment, must have rapidly spread through the camp of Israel. But even this knowledge and the summons to sanctify themselves, that on the morrow the transgressor might be designated by the Lord, did not move Achan to repentance and confession. And now all Israel were gathered before the Lord. First approached the princes of the twelve tribes. Each name of a tribe had been written separately, when "the lot" that "came up," or was drawn, bore the name of Judah.

Thus singled out, the heads of the various clans of Judah next presented themselves, when the lot designated that of Zarhi. And still the solemn trial went on, with increasing solemnity, as the circle narrowed, when successively the families of Zabdi, and finally, among them, the household of Achan was singled out by the hand of God. All this time had Achan kept silence. And now he stood alone before God and Israel, that guilty one who had "troubled" all. Would he at the last confess, and "give glory to Jehovah" by owning Him as the God who seeth and knoweth all sin, however deeply hidden? It was in the language of sorrow, not of anger, that Joshua adjured him. It wrung from Achan a full admission of his crime. How miserable the whole thing must have sounded in his own ears, when he had put the facts of his sin into naked words; how paltry the price at which he had sold himself, when it was brought into the broad sunlight and "laid out before the Lord," in the sight of Joshua and of all Israel. One thing more only remained to be done. They led forth the wretched man, with all his household, and all that belonged to them, and all Israel stoned him. And then they burned the dead body, and buried all beneath a heap of stones, alike as a memorial and a warning. But the valley they called that of "Achor," or trouble - while the echoes of that story sounded through Israel’s history to latest times, in woe and in weal, for judgment and for hope (Isaiah 65:10; Hosea 2:15). The sin of Israel having been removed, God once more assured Joshua of His presence to give success to the undertaking against Ai. In pledge thereof He was even pleased to indicate the exact means which were to be used in reducing the city. A corps of 30,000 men was accordingly detailed, of whom 5000 were placed in ambush on the west side of Ai, where, under shelter of the wood, their presence was concealed from Ai, and, by the intervening hill, from Bethel. While the main body of the Israelites under Joshua were to draw away the defenders of Ai by feigned flight, this corps was at a given signal to take the city, and after having set it on fire, to turn against the retreating men. Such was the plan of attack, and it was closely adhered to. "The ambush" lay on the west of Ai, while the main body of the host pitched north of the city, a valley intervening between them and Ai. Next, Joshua moved into the middle of that valley. Early the following morning the king of Ai discovered this advance of the

Israelitish camp, and moved with his army to the "appointed place," right in front of "the plain," which, as we know from the description of travelers, was covered by olive trees. The battlefield was well chosen, since Ai occupied the vantage-ground on the slope, while an advance by Israel would be checked and broken by the olive plantation which they would have to traverse. Joshua and all Israel now feigned a retreat, and fled in an easterly direction towards the wilderness. Upon this, all the people that were in Ai, in their eager haste to make the victory decisive, "allowed themselves to be called away" to pursue after Israel, till they were drawn a considerable distance from the city. The olive plantation now afforded those who had lain in ambush shelter for their advance. The preconcerted signal was given. Joshua, who probably occupied a height apart, watching the fight, lifted his spear. As the outposts of the ambush saw it, and reported that the signal for their advance had been given, a rush would be made up the steep sides of the hill towards the city. But the signal would also be perceived and understood by the main army of Israel, and they now anxiously watched the result of movements which they could not follow. They had not long to wait. Above the dark green olive trees, above the rising slopes, above the white walls, curled slowly in the clear morning air the smoke of the burning city. Something in the attitude and movements of Israel must have betrayed it, for "the men of Ai looked behind them," only to see that all was lost, and no means of escape left them. And now the host of Israel "turned again," while those who had set Ai on fire advanced in an opposite direction. Between these two forces the men of Ai were literally crushed. Not one of them escaped from that bloody plain and slope. The slaughter extended to the district around. Finally, the king of Ai was put to death, and his dead body "hanged upon a tree till eventide." But of what had been Ai "they made a Tel (or heap) for ever." Never was Scripture saying more literally fulfilled than this. For a long time did modern explorers in vain seek for the site of Ai, where they knew it must have stood. "The inhabitants of the neighboring villages," writes Canon Williams, to whom the merit of the identification really belongs, "declared repeatedly and emphatically that this was Tel, and nothing else. I was satisfied that it should be so when, on subsequent reference to the original text of Joshua 8:28, I found it written, that 'Joshua burnt Ai, and made it a Tel for ever, even a desolation unto this day!' There are many Tels in modern Palestine, that land of Tels, each Tel with some other name attached to it to mark the former site. But the site of Ai has no other name 'unto this day.' It is simply et-Tel - the heap 'par excellence.'"

03.03.09. Volume 3, Chapter 09

CHAPTER 9

Solemn Dedication of the Land and of Israel on Mounts Ebal and Gerizim - The Deceit of the Gibeonites

(Joshua 8:30, Joshua 9:1-27) BY the miraculous fall of Jericho God had, so to speak, given to His people the key to the whole land; with the conquest of Ai they had themselves entered, in His strength, upon possession of it. The first and most obvious duty now was, to declare, by a grand national act, in what character Israel meant to hold what it had received of God. For, as previously explained, it could never have been the Divine object in all that had been, or would be done, merely to substitute one nation for another in the possession of Palestine; but rather to destroy the heathen, and to place in their room His own redeemed and sanctified people, so that on the ruins of the hostile kingdom of this world, His own might be established. To mark the significance of the act by which Israel was to declare this, it had before been prescribed by Moses as a first duty (Deuteronomy 27:2), and detailed directions given for it (Deuteronomy 27:1-26). The act itself was to consist of three parts. The law - that is, the commands, "statutes," and "rights," contained in the Pentateuch - was to be written on "great stones," previously covered with "plaster," in the manner in which inscriptions were made on the monuments of Egypt. Then sacrifices were to be offered on an altar of "whole stones." The memorial stones were to be set up, and the sacrifices offered on Mount Ebal. But the third was to be the most solemn part of the service. The priests with the Ark were to occupy the intermediate valley, and six of the tribes (Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin) - those which had sprung from the lawful wives of Israel - were to stand on Mount Gerizim, while the other six (of whom five had sprung from Leah’s and Rachel’s maids, Reuben being added to them on account of his great sin, Genesis 49:4) were placed on Mount Ebal.

Then, as the priests in the valley beneath read the words of blessing, the tribes on Mount Gerizim were to respond by an Amen; and as they read the words of the curses, those on Mount Ebal were similarly to give their solemn assent - thus expressly taking upon themselves each obligation, with its blessing in the observance, and its curse in the breach thereof. An historical parallel here immediately recurs to our minds. As, on his first entrance into Canaan, Abraham had formally owned Jehovah by rearing an altar unto Him (Genesis 12:7), and as Jacob had, on his return, paid the vow which he had recorded at Bethel (Genesis 35:7), so Israel now consecrated its possession of the land by receiving it as from the Lord, by recording His name, and by taking upon itself all the obligations of the covenant. A glance at the map will enable us to realize the scene. From Ai and Bethel the direct route northwards leads by Shiloh to Shechem (Judges 21:19). The journey would occupy altogether about eleven hours. Of course, Israel could not have realized at the time that they were just then traveling along what would become the great highway from Galilee to Jerusalem, so memorable in after-history. Leaving the sanctuary of Shiloh a little aside, they would climb a rocky ridge. Before them a noble prospect spread. This was the future rich portion of

Ephraim: valleys covered with corn, hills terraced to their tops, the slopes covered with vines and olive-yards. On wards the host moved, till it reached a valley, bounded south and north by mountains, which run from west to east. This was the exact spot on which Abram had built his first altar (Genesis 12:7); here, also, had Jacob’s first settlement been (Genesis 33:19). Not a foe molested Israel on their march right up the middle of the land, partly, as previously explained, from the division of the land under so many petty chieftains, but chiefly because God had a favor unto them and to the work to which they had set their hands. Travelers speak in rapturous terms of the beauty of the valley of Shechem, even in the present desolateness of the country. It is a pass which intersects the mountain-chain, that runs through Palestine from south to north. To the south it is bounded by the range of Gerizim, to the north by that of Ebal. From where the priests with the Ark took up their position on the gentle rise of the valley, both Gerizim and Ebal appear hollowed out, forming, as it were, an amphitheater, while the "limestone strata, running up in a succession of ledges to the top of the hills, have all the appearance of benches."

Here, occupying every available inch of ground, were crowded the tribes of Israel: men, women, and children, "as well the strangers, and he that was born among them." As they stood close together, the humblest in Israel by the side of the "officers," "elders," and "judges," all eagerly watching what passed in the valley, or solemnly responding to blessing or curse, a scene was enacted, the like of which had not before been witnessed upon earth, and which could never fade from the memory. It is noteworthy that, on Mount Ebal, whence came the responses to the curses, the great stones were set up on which "the law" was written, and that there also the sacrifices were offered. This is in itself characteristic. Perhaps even the circumstance is not without significance, that they who stood on Mount Ebal must have had their view bounded by the mountains of Benjamin. Not so they who occupied Gerizim, the mount whence came the responses to the blessings. For the view which greeted those who at early morn crowded the top of the Mount of Blessings, was only second to that vouchsafed to Moses from the summit of Pisgah. If less in extent than the latter, it was more distinct and detailed.

All Central Palestine lay spread like a map before the wondering gaze of Israel. Tabor, Gilboa, the hills of Galilee rose in succession; in the far-distance snow-capped Hermon bounded the horizon, with sweet valleys and rich fields intervening. Turning to the right, they would descry the Lake of Galilee, and follow the cleft of the Jordan valley, marking beyond it Bashan, Ajalon, Gilead, and even Moab; to their left, the Mediterranean from Carmel to Gaza was full in view, the blue outline far away dimly suggesting thoughts of the "isles of the Gentiles," and the blessings in store for them. as far as the eye could reach -and beyond it, to the uttermost bounds of the earth - would the scene which they witnessed in that valley below be repeated; the echo of the blessings to which they responded on that mount would resound, till, having wakened every valley, it would finally be sent back in songs of praise and thanksgiving from a redeemed earth. And so did Israel on that spring morning consecrate Palestine unto the LORD, taking sea and lake, mountain and valley - the most hallowed spots in their history -as witnesses of their covenant. From this solemn transaction the Israelites moved, as we gather from Joshua 9:6, to Gilgal, where they seem to have formed a permanent camp. The mention of this place in Deuteronomy 11:30, where it is described as "beside the oaks of Moreh," that is, near the spot of Abram’s first altar (Genesis 12:7), implies a locality well-known at the time, and, as we might almost conjecture from its after history, a sort of traditional sanctuary. This alone would suffice to distinguish this Gilgal from the

first encampment of Israel east of Jericho, which only obtained its name from the event which there occurred. Besides, it is impossible to suppose that Joshua marched back from Shechem to the banks of Jordan (Joshua 9:6; Joshua 10:6-7, Joshua 10:9, Joshua 10:15, Joshua 10:43), and, again, that he did so a second time, after the battles in Galilee, to make apportionment of the land among the people by the banks of Jordan (Joshua 14:6). Further, the localization of Gilgal near the banks of Jordan would be entirely incompatible with what we know of the after-history of that place. Gilgal was one of the three cities where Samuel judged the people (1 Samuel 7:16); here, also, he offered sacrifices, when the Ark was no longer in the tabernacle at Shiloh (1 Samuel 10:8; 1 Samuel 13:7-9; 1 Samuel 15:21); and there, as in a central sanctuary, did all Israel gather to renew their allegiance to Saul (1 Samuel 11:14). Later on, Gilgal was the great scene of Elisha's ministry (2 Kings 2:1), and still later it became a center of idolatrous worship (Hosea 4:15; Hosea 9:15; Hosea 12:11; Amos 4:4; Amos 5:5). All these considerations lead to the conclusion, that the Gilgal, which formed the site of Joshua's encampment is the modern Jiljilieh, a few miles from Shiloh, and about the same distance from Bethel - nearly equi-distant from Shechem and from Jerusalem. In this camp at Gilgal a strange deputation soon arrived. Professedly, and apparently, the travelers had come a long distance. For their garments were worn, their sandals clouted, their provisions dry and moldy, and the skins in which their wine had been were rent and "bound up" (like purses), as in the East wine-bottles of goat's skin are temporarily repaired on a long journey.

According to their own account, they lived far beyond the boundaries of Palestine, where their fellow-townsmen had heard what the Lord had done in Egypt, and again to Sihon and to Og, wisely omitting from the catalogue the miraculous passage of Jordan and the fall of Jericho, as of too recent date for their theory. Attracted by the name of Jehovah, Israel's God, who had done such wonders, they had been sent to make "a league" with Israel. It must have been felt that the story did not sound probable - at least, to any who had learned to realize the essential enmity of heathenism against the kingdom of God, and who understood that so great a change as the report of these men implied could not be brought about by "the hearing of the ear." Besides, what they proposed was not to make submission to, but a league with, Israel: by which not merely life, but their land and liberty, would be secured to them. But against any league with the inhabitants of Canaan, Israel had been specially warned (Exodus 23:32; Exodus 34:12; Numbers 33:55; Deuteronomy 7:2). What if, after all, they were neighbors? The suspicion seems to have crossed the minds of Joshua and of the elders, and even to have been expressed by them, only to be set aside by the protestations of the pretended ambassadors. It was certainly a mark of religious superficiality and self-confidence on the part of the elders of Israel to have consented on such grounds to "a league." The sacred text significantly puts it: "And the men (the elders of Israel) took of their victuals (according to the common Eastern fashion of eating bread and salt with a guest who is received as a friend), but they asked not counsel at the mouth of Jehovah." Their mistake soon became apparent. Three days later, and Israel found that the pretended foreigners were in reality neighbors! Meanwhile, the kings or chieftains who ruled in Western Palestine had been concerting against Israel a combined movement of their forces from "the hills," or highlands of Central Palestine, from "the valleys," or the Shephelah (low country), between the mountain-chain and the sea, and "from the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon," that is, from Joppa northwards by the sea-shore. The existence of the small confederate republic of Gibeon with its three associate cities in the midst of small monarchies throws a curious light upon the state of Palestine at the time; and the jealousy which would naturally exist between them helps to explain

alike the policy of the Gibeonites, and the revenge which the Canaanitish kings were shortly afterwards preparing to take. The history of the republic of Gibeon is interesting.

"Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities.... greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty" (Joshua 10:2). Its inhabitants were "Hivites" (Joshua 11:19). Afterwards Gibeon fell to the lot of Benjamin, and became a priest-city (Joshua 18:25; Joshua 21:17). When Nob was destroyed by Saul, the tabernacle was transported to Gibeon, where it remained till the temple was built by Solomon (1 Chronicles 16:39; 1 Chronicles 21:29; 1 Kings 3:4; 2 Chronicles 1:3). It lay about two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem, and is represented by the modern village of el-Jib. Its three associate towns were Chephirah, about three hours' west from Gibeon, the modern Kefir; Beeroth, about ten miles north of Jerusalem, the modern el-Bireh - both cities afterwards within the possession of Benjamin; and Kirjath-Jearim, "the city of groves," probably so called from its olive, fig, and other plantations, as its modern representative, Kuriet-el-Enab, is from its vineyards. The latter city, which was afterwards allotted to Judah, is about three hours from Jerusalem; and there the Ark remained from the time of its return from the Philistines to that of David (1 Samuel 7:2; 2 Samuel 6:2; 1 Chronicles 13:5-6). When the people learned the deceit practiced upon them, they "murmured against the princes;" but the latter refused to break their solemn oath, so far as it insured the lives and safety of the Gibeonites. If they had sworn rashly and presumptuously "by Jehovah, God of Israel," it would have only added another and a far more grievous sin to have broken their oath; not to speak of the effect upon the heathen around. The principle applying to this, as to similar rash undertakings, is, that a solemn obligation, however incurred, must be considered binding, unless its observance involve fresh sin. But in this instance it manifestly did not involve fresh sin. For the main reason of the destruction of the Canaanites was their essential hostility to the kingdom of God. The danger to Israel, accruing from this, could be avoided in a solitary instance. With a view to this, the Gibeonites were indeed spared, but attached as "bond-men" to the sanctuary, where they and their descendants performed all menial services (Joshua 9:23). Nor, as the event proved, did they ever betray their trust, or lead Israel into idolatry. Still, as a German writer observes, the rashness of Israel's princes, and the conduct of the Gibeonites, conveys to the church at all times solemn warning against the devices and the deceit of the world, which, when outward advantage offers, seeks a friendly alliance with, or even reception into, the visible kingdom of God.

03.03.10. Volume 3, Chapter 10

CHAPTER 10 The Battle of Gibeon - Conquest of the South of Canaan - The Battle of Merom - Conquest of the North of Canaan - State of the land at the close of the seven-years' war.

(Joshua 10:1-43; Joshua 11:1-23; Joshua 12:1-24) THE surrender of Gibeon would fill the kings of Southern Canaan with dismay. It was, so to speak, treason within their own camp; it gave Israel a strong position in the heart of the country and within easy reach of Jerusalem; while the possession of the passes leading from Gibeon would throw the whole south of Canaan open to their incursion. In the circumstances it natural that the chieftains of the south would combine, in the first place, for the retaking of Gibeon. The confederacy, which was under the leadership of Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, embraced Hoham, King of Hebron (about seven hours' south of Jerusalem); Piram, king of Jarmuth, the present Jarmuk, about three hours' to the south-west of Jerusalem; Japhia, king of Lachish, and Debir, king of Eglon, both cities close to each other, and not far from Gaza, to the south-west of Hebron. The march of the combined kings was evidently rapid, and the danger pressing, for it seems to have found the Gibeonites wholly unprepared, and their entreaty to Joshua for immediate succor was of the most urgent kind. That very night Joshua marched to their relief with "all the people of war, that is, the mighty men of valor." The relieving army came upon the enemy as "suddenly" as they had appeared in sight of Gibeon. It was probably very early in the morning when Joshua and his warriors surprised the allied camp. Gibeon lay in the east, surrounded, as in a semicircle, north, west, and south, by its three confederate cities. The five kings had pushed forward within that semicircle, and camped in the "open ground at the foot of the heights of Gibeon." Animated by the assurance which God had expressly given Joshua: "Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee," the host of Israel fell upon them with an irresistible rush. The Canaanites made but a short stand before their unexpected assailants; then fled in wild confusion towards the pass of Upper Beth-horon, "the house of caves." They gained the height before their pursuers, and were hurrying down the pass of the Nether Beth-horon, when a fearful hailstorm, such as not unfrequently sweeps over the hills of Palestine, burst upon them. It was in reality "the Lord" who, once more miraculously employing natural agency, "cast down great stones from heaven upon them;" "and they were more which died from the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword."

It was but noon; far behind Israel in the heaven stood the sun over Gibeon, and before them over Ajalon in the west hung the crescent moon. The tempest was extinguishing day and light, and the work was but half done. In the pass to Nether Beth-horon Israel might be readily divided; at any rate, the enemy might escape before their crushing defeat had assured safety to Gibeon, and given the south of Palestine to Israel. Now, or never, was the time to pursue the advantage. Oh, that the sun would once more burst forth in his brightness; oh, that the all too short day were protracted "until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies!" Then it was that Joshua burst into that impassioned prayer of faith, which is quoted in the sacred text from the "Book of Jasher," - or "Book of the Pious," - apparently, as we infer from 2 Samuel 1:18, a collection of

poetical pieces, connected with the sublimest scenes in the history of the heroes of the kingdom of God. In this instance the quotation begins, as we take it, Joshua 10:12-15. This is proved by the insertion in Joshua 10:15 of a notice, which in the historical narrative occurs only in Joshua 10:43. For it is evident that Joshua did not return to Gilgal immediately after the battle of Gibeon (Joshua 10:21), but pursued the war as described in the rest of Joshua 10:1-43, till the whole south of Palestine was reduced. Thus Joshua 10:12-15 are a quotation from "the Book of the Pious," inserted within the Book of Joshua, the narrative of which is resumed in Joshua 10:16. The quotation reads as follows:

"Then spake Joshua to Jehovah, In the day Jehovah gave the Amorite before the sons of Israel, And he spake in the sight of Israel. Sun, on Gibeon rest still, And moon, on the valley of Ajalon! And still rested the sun, And the moon stood, Till the people were avenged on their foes. (Is not this written in the 'Book of the Pious?') And the sun stood in mid-heaven, And hasted not to go - like (as on) a complete day. And there was not like that day, before or after, That Jehovah hearkened to the voice of man - For Jehovah warred for Israel! And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him to the camp, to Gilgal." And God hearkened to the voice of Joshua. Once more the sun burst forth, and the daylight was miraculously protracted till Israel was avenged of its enemies. Onwards rolled the tide of fugitives, hotly pursued by Israel, through the pass of Nether Beth-horon to Azekah, and thence to Makkedah. Here tidings were brought to Joshua, that the five kings had hid themselves in one of the caves with which that district abounds. But Joshua would not be diverted from his object. He ordered large stones to be rolled to the mouth of the cave, and its entrance to be guarded by armed men, while the rest of the army followed the enemy and smote their "rearguard." Only broken remnants of the fugitives found shelter in the "fenced cities." Joshua himself had camped before the city of Makkedah. Thither the pursuing corps returned, and thence the war was afterwards carried on (Joshua 10:21, Joshua 10:29). On the morning after the victory, the five confederate kings were brought from their hiding-place. In a manner not uncommon in ancient times, Joshua made his captains put their feet upon the necks of the prostrate kings, who had so lately gone forth boastfully in all the pride and. pomp of war. But the lesson which Israel was to learn from their victory was not one of self-confidence in their supposed superiority, but of acknowledgment of God and confidence in Him: "Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall Jehovah do to all your enemies against whom ye fight." The death of these five kings proved only the beginning of a campaign which may have lasted weeks, or even months, for we find that successors of these five kings afterwards shared their fate. In the end, the whole south of Canaan was in the hands of Israel, though some of the cities taken appear to have been afterwards again wrested from them, and occupied by the Canaanites. The extent of the conquest is indicated (Joshua 10:41) by a line drawn south and north, westwards - "from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza" - and eastwards, "from the district of Goshen unto Gibeon." The campaign thus finished in the south had soon to be renewed in the north of Canaan. The means, the help, and the result were the same as before. Only, as the danger was much greater, from the multitude of Israel's opponents - "even as the sand that is upon the sea-shore," - and from their formidable mode of warfare ("horses and chariots very many"), hitherto unknown to Israel, the Lord once more gave express assurance of victory: "I will deliver them up all slain before Israel." At the same time He enjoined "to hough (or hamstring) their horses, and burn their chariots with fire," lest Israel should be tempted to place in future their trust in such weapons. The allied forces of the northern enemy were under the leadership of Jabin, king of Hazor, which "beforetimes was

the head of all those kingdoms." They consisted not only of the three neighboring "kings" (or chieftains) of Madon, Shimron, and Achshaph, but of all the kings "in the north and (on the mountain" (of Naphtali, Joshua 20:7), of those in the Arabah, south of the Lake of Gennesaret, of those "in the plains," or valleys that stretched to the Mediterranean, and in "the heights of Dor," at the foot of Mount Carmel - in short, of all the Canaanite tribes from the Mediterranean in the south-west up to Mizpeh "the view") under Mount Hermon in the far north-east. With the rapidity and suddenness which characterized all his movements, Joshua fell upon the allied camp by the Lake Merom (the modern el-Huleh), and utterly routed the ill-welded mass of the enemy. The fugitive Canaanites seem to have divided into three parts, one taking the road north-west to "Zidon the Great," another that west and south-west to the "smelting-pits by the waters" (Misrephoth-Maim), and the third that to the east leading to the valley of Mizpeh. In each direction they were hotly pursued by the Israelites. One by one all their cities were taken. Those in the valleys were burnt, but those on the heights, with the exception of Hazor, left standing, as requiring only small garrisons for their occupation. Altogether the war in the south and north must have occupied at least seven years, at the end of which the whole country was in the possession of Israel, from the "smooth mountain (Mount Halak) that goeth up to Seir," - that is, the white chalk mountains in the chain of the Azazimeh, in the Negeb - as far north as "Baal-gad," the town dedicated to "Baal" as god of "fortune," the Caesarea Philippi of the Gospels (Joshua 11:16-18). More than that, Joshua also drove the Anakim, who had inspired the spies with such dread, from their original seats in the mountains, and in and around Hebron, Debir, and Anab into the Philistine cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. From Joshua 15:14 we infer that they shortly afterwards returned, but were conquered by that veteran hero, Caleb. To sum up all, we find that the wars under Joshua put Israel into possession of Canaan and broke the power of its inhabitants, but that the latter were not exterminated, nor yet all their cities taken by Israel (Joshua 13:1-6; Joshua 17:14, etc.; Joshua 18:3, Joshua 23:5 Joshua 23:12). Indeed, such a result could scarcely have been desirable, either in reference to the country or to Israel, while, from Exodus 23:28-30 and Deuteronomy 7:22, we know that from the beginning it had not been the Divine purpose. But there was also a higher object in this. It would teach that a conquest, begun in the power of God and in believing dependence on Him, must be completed and consolidated in the same spirit. Only thus could Israel prosper as a nation. Canaan had been given to Israel by God, and given to their faith. But much was left to be done which only the same faith could achieve. Any conformity to the heathen around, or tolerance of heathenism, any decay of the spirit in which they had entered the land, would result not only in weakness, but in the triumph of the enemy. And so it was intended of the Lord. The lesson of all this is obvious and important. To us also has our Joshua given entrance into Canaan, and victory over our enemies - the world, the flesh, and the devil. We have present possession of the land. But we do not yet hold all its cities, nor are our enemies exterminated. It needs on our part constant faith; there must be no compromise with the enemy, no tolerance of his spirit, no cessation of our warfare. Only that which at first gave us the land can complete and consolidate our possession of it.

03.03.11. Volume 3, Chapter 11

CHAPTER 11

Distribution of the land - Unconquered districts - Tribes east of the Jordan - "The lot" - Tribes west of the Jordan - The inheritance of Caleb - Dissatisfaction of the sons of Joseph -The Tabernacle at Shiloh - Final division of the land.

(Joshua 13:1-33; Joshua 14:1-15; Joshua 15:1-63; Joshua 16:1-10; Joshua 17:1-18; Joshua 18:1-28; Joshua 19:1-51; Joshua 20:1-9; Joshua 21:1-45) THE continuance of unsubdued races and districts soon became a source of danger, although in a direction different from what might have been anticipated. Sufficient had been gained by a series of brilliant victories to render the general tenure of the land safe to Israel. The Canaanites and other races were driven to their fastnesses, where for the time they remained on the defensive. On the other hand, a nation like Israel, accustomed to the nomadic habits of the wilderness, would scarcely feel the need of a fixed tenure of land, and readily grow weary of a desultory warfare in which each tribe had separately to make good its boundaries. Thus it came that Joshua had grown old, probably ninety or a hundred years, while the work intrusted to him was far from completed. In the far south and along the sea-shore the whole district from the brook of Egypt to Ekron was still held, in the south-west and south-east, by the Geshurites and the Avites, while the territory farther north from Ekron to Gaza was occupied by the five lords of the Philistines (Joshua 13:2-3).

According to the Divine direction, all these, though not descended from Canaan (Genesis 10:14), were to be "counted to the Canaanites," that is, treated as such. Traveling still farther northwards along the sea-shore, the whole "land of the Canaanites" or of the Phoenicians far up to the celebrated "cave" near Sidon, and beyond it to Aphek and even "to the borders of the Amorites" was still unconquered. Thence eastward across Lebanon as far as Baal-gad and "the entering into Hamath," and again back from Mount Lebanon, across country, to the "smelting-pits on the waters," was subject to the Sidonians or Phoenicians. Yet all this belonged by Divine gift to Israel. That it was still unoccupied by them, and that Joshua was now old, constituted the ground for the Divine command to make immediate distribution of the land among the tribes. It was as if, looking to His promise, God would have bidden Israel consider the whole land as theirs, and simply go forward, in faith of that promise and in obedience to His command.

It will be remembered that only nine and a half tribes remained to be provided for, since "unto the tribe of Levi He gave none inheritance," other than what came from the sanctuary, while Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh had had their portions assigned by Moses east of the Jordan. That territory was bounded by Moab along the south-eastern shores of the Dead Sea, while the eastern border of Reuben and Gad was held by Ammon. Both these nations were by Divine command not to be molested by Israel (Deuteronomy 2:9-19). The southernmost and smallest portion of the district east of the Jordan belonged to Reuben. His territory extended from the river Arnon, in the south, to where Jordan flowed into the Dead Sea, and embraced the original kingdom of Sihon. Northward of it, the Ammonites had once held possession, but had been driven out by Sihon. That

new portion of Sihon’s kingdom was given not to Reuben but to Gad. The territory of that tribe ran along the Jordan as far as the Lake of Gennesaret - the upper portion (from Mahanaim) narrowing almost into a point. North of this was the possession of the half tribe of Manasseh, which embraced the whole of Bashan. It occupied by far the largest extent of area. But from its position it also lay most open to constant nomadic incursions, and possessed comparatively few settled cities. The division of the land among the nine and a half tribes was, in strict accordance with Divine direction (Numbers 26:52-56; Numbers 33:54; Numbers 34:2-29), made by Eleazar, Joshua, and one representative from each of the ten tribes. It was decided by the "lot," which probably, however, only determined the situation of each inheritance, whether north or south, in. land or by the sea-shore, not its extent and precise boundaries. These would depend upon the size of each tribe. In point of fact, the original arrangements had in some cases to be afterwards modified, not as to tribal localization, which was unalterably fixed by the Divine lot, but as to extent of territory. Thus Judah had to give up part of its possession to Simeon (Joshua 19:9), while Dan, whose portion proved too small, obtained certain cities both from Judah and from Ephraim. As regards the lot, we may probably accept the Rabbinical tradition, that two urns were set out, one containing the names of the ten (or rather nine and a half) tribes, the other the designation of the various districts into which the country had been arranged, and that from each a lot was successively drawn, to designate first the tribe, and then the locality of its inheritance. This is not the place, however interesting the task, to describe the exact boundaries and cities of each tribe. We can only attempt the most general outline, which the reader must fill up for himself. Beginning in the far south, at Kadesh in the wilderness, and along the borders of Edom, we are within the territory of Simeon; north of it, bounded on the west by the land of the Philistines, and on the east by the Dead Sea, is the possession of Judah; beyond it, to the east, that of Benjamin, and to the west, that of Dan; north of Dan we reach Ephraim, and then Manasseh, the possession of Issachar running along the east of these two territories, and ending at the southern extremity of the Lake of Gennesaret; by the shore of that lake and far beyond it is the territory of Naphtali, first a narrow slip, then widening, and finally merging into a point. Asher occupied the seaboard, north of Manasseh; while, lastly, Zebulon is as it were wedged in between Issachar, Manasseh, Asher, and Naphtali.

It only remains briefly to notice the incidents recorded in connection with the territorial division of the land.

1. It seems that before the first lot was drawn in the camp at Gilgal, Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, came forward with a special claim. It will be remembered, that of the twelve princes sent from Kadesh only he and Joshua had brought "a good report of the land," in the spiritual sense of the expression, as encouraging the people to go forward. And when the Divine sentence doomed that rebellious generation to death in the wilderness, Caleb and Joshua alone were excepted. Strictly speaking, no more than this might have been implied in the promise by Moses, now claimed by Caleb: "Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance" (Joshua 14:9), since to have survived was to obtain the inheritance. But there seems to have been more than merely a promise of survival, although it alone is mentioned in Numbers 14:24-30. For we infer from the words and the attitude of Caleb, and from the similar privileges afterwards accorded to Joshua (Joshua 19:49-50), that Moses had, by direction of the Lord, given these two a right of special and personal choice. This on account of their exceptional faithfulness, and as the sole

survivors of the generation to whom the land had been given. It was as if the surviving proprietors might choose their portion, before those who, so to speak, were only next of kin had theirs allotted to them. Of this Caleb now reminds Joshua, and in words of such vigorous faith, as make us love still better the tried old warrior of Jehovah. Appearing at the head of "the house of fathers," in Judah, of which he was the head, he first refers to the past, then owns God’s faithfulness in having preserved him to the age of eighty-five, with strength and courage undiminished for the holy war. From Joshua 14:9 we infer that, when the twelve spies distributed themselves singly over the land, for the purposes of their mission, Caleb specially "searched" that "mountain," which was the favorite haunt of the dreaded Anakim. If this be so, we discover a special meaning and special faith on the part of Caleb, when he, rather than Joshua, attempted to "still the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once" (Numbers 13:30). In that case there was also special suitableness in the Divine bestowal made then and there:

"Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance" (Joshua 14:9-12). But even if otherwise, the courage and faith of the old warrior shine only the more brightly, as, recalling the terror formerly inspired by the Anakim and the strength of their cities, he claims that very portion for his own. Yet his courage bears no trace of self-sufficiency, only of believing dependence upon the Lord. "If so be Jehovah will be with me, and I shall drive them out" (Joshua 14:12). The claim thus made was immediately acknowledged, Joshua adding his blessing on Caleb’s proposed undertaking. But it was some time later that the expedition was actually made, when Caleb offered the hand of his daughter, Achsah, as the prize of taking the great stronghold of Debir, the ancient Kirjath-sepher, or "book-city," - probably the fortified depository of the sacred books of the Anakim. The prize was won by a near kinsman, Othniel, who, after the death of Joshua, was the first "judge" of Israel (Judges 3:9). The history of the campaign, with its accompanying incidents, is inserted in Joshua 15:13-19, because, both geographically and historically, it fits into that part of the description of the inheritance of Judah.

2. The first signs of future weakness and disagreement appeared so early as when the lot designated the possession of the children of Joseph (Ephraim and half the tribe of Manasseh). Theirs was the richest and most fertile in the land, including the plain of Sharon, capable of producing almost boundless store, and of becoming the granary of the whole land. On that ground then no complaint could be made. Nor could any reasonable objection be taken to the size of their lot, provided they were prepared to go forward in faith and occupy it as against the Canaanites, who still held the principal towns in the valley, all the way from Bethshean by the Jordan to the plain of Jezreel and farther. But the children of Joseph were apparently afraid of such encounter because of the iron chariots of their enemies. Equally unwilling were they to clear the wooded heights of Ephraim, which connect the range north of Samaria with Mount Carmel, and where the Perizzites and the Rephaim had their haunts. Rather did they clamor for an additional "portion" (Joshua 17:14). Their demands were, of course, refused; Joshua turning the boastful pride in which they had been made into an argument for action on their part against the common enemy (Joshua 17:18). But this murmuring of the children of Joseph, and the spirit from which it proceeded, gave sad indications of dangers in the near future. National disintegration, tribal jealousies, coupled with boast-fullness and unwillingness to execute the work given them of God, were only too surely foreboded in the conduct of the children of Joseph.

3. If such troubles were to be averted, it was high time to seek a revival of religion. With that object in view, "the whole congregation of the children of Israel" were now gathered at Shiloh, and the tabernacle set up there (Joshua 18:1). The choice of Shiloh was, no doubt, Divinely directed (Deuteronomy 12:11). It was specially suitable for the purpose, not only from its central situation - about eight hours' north of Jerusalem, and five south of Shechem - but from its name, which recalled rest and the promised rest-giver (Genesis 49:10). Then Joshua solemnly admonished the assembled people as to their "slackness" in taking possession of the land which Jehovah had given them. To terminate further jealousies, he asked the people to choose three representatives from each of the seven tribes whose inheritance had not yet been allotted. These were to "go through the land and describe it," that is, to make a general estimate and valuation, rather than an accurate survey, "with reference to their inheritance," that is, in view of their inheriting the land. After their return to Shiloh these twenty-one delegates were to divide the land into seven portions, when the lot would assign to each tribe the place of its inheritance.

4. The arrangement thus made was fully carried out. After its completion Joshua, who, like Caleb, had received a special promise, was allowed to choose his own city within his tribal inheritance of Ephraim. Finally, the cities of refuge, six in number; the Levitical cities, thirty-five in number; and the thirteen cities of the priests, the sons of Aaron, were formally set aside.

Thus, so far as the Lord was concerned, He "gave unto Israel all the land which He sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And Jehovah gave them rest round about, according to all that He sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; Jehovah delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (Joshua 21:43-45).

03.03.12. Volume 3, Chapter 12

CHAPTER 12

Return of the two and a half Tribes to their Homes - Building of an Altar by them - Embassy to them - Joshua’s Farewell Addresses - Death of Joshua - Review of his Life and Work.

(Joshua 22:1-34; Joshua 23:1-16; Joshua 24:1-33)

YET another trial awaited Joshua, ere he put off the armor and laid him down to rest. Happily, it was one which he rather dreaded than actually experienced. The work given him to do was ended, and each of the tribes had entered on its God-given inheritance. And now the time had come for those faithful men who so truly had discharged their undertaking to recross Jordan, and "get unto to the land of their possession." These many years had the men of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh fought and waited by the side of their brethren. And now that God had given them rest, Joshua dismissed the tried warriors with a blessing, only bidding them fight in their own homes that other warfare, in which victory meant loving the Lord, walking in His ways, keeping His commandments, and cleaving unto and serving Him.

It must have been with a heavy heart that Joshua saw them depart from Shiloh. It was not merely that to himself it would seem like the beginning of the end, but that misgivings and fears could not but crowd upon his mind.

They parted from Shiloh to comparatively far distances, to be separated from their brethren by Jordan, and scattered amid the wide tracts, in which their nomadic pastoral life would bring them into frequent and dangerous contact with heathen neighbors. They were now united to their brethren; they had fought by their side; would this union continue? The very riches with which they departed to their distant homes (Joshua 22:8) might become a source of danger. They had parted with Jehovah’s blessing and monition from the central sanctuary at Shiloh. Would it remain such to them, and they preserve the purity of their faith at a distance from the tabernacle and its services? Joshua remembered only too well the past history of Israel; he knew that even now idolatry, although publicly non-existent, had still its roots and fibers in many a household as a sort of traditional superstition (Joshua 24:23). Under such circumstances it was that strange tidings reached Israel and Joshua. Just before crossing Jordan the two and a half tribes had built an altar that could be seen far and wide, and then departed without leaving any explanation of their conduct. At first sight this would have seemed in direct contravention of one of the first principles of Israel’s worship. Place, time, and manner of it were all God-ordained and full of meaning, and any departure therefrom, even in the slightest particular, destroyed the meaning, and with it the value of all. More especially would this appear an infringement of the express commands against another altar and other worship (Leviticus 17:8-9; Deuteronomy 12:5-7), to which the terrible punishment of extermination attached (Deuteronomy 13:12-18). And yet there was something so strange in rearing this altar on the western side of the Jordan, and not on the eastern, and in their own possession, that their conduct, however blameworthy, might possibly bear another

explanation than that of the great crime of apostasy.

It was an anxious time when the whole congregation gathered, by their representatives, at Shiloh, not to worship, but to consider the question of going to war with their own brethren and companions in arms, and on such grounds. Happily, before taking decided action, a deputation was sent to expostulate with the two and a half tribes. It consisted of ten princes, representatives, each of a tribe, and all "heads of houses of their fathers," though, of course, not the actual chiefs of their tribes. At their head was Phinehas, the presumptive successor to the high priesthood, to whose zeal, which had once stayed the plague of Peor, the direction might safely be left. We are not told how they gathered the representatives of the offending tribes, but the language in which, as recorded, the latter were addressed, is quite characteristic of Phinehas. The conduct of the two and a half tribes had been self-willed and regardless of one of the first duties - that of not giving offense to the brethren, nor allowing their liberty to become a stumbling-block to others. For a doubtful good they had committed an undoubted offense, the more unwarranted, that they had neither asked advice nor offered explanation. Phinehas could scarcely help assuming that they had "committed unfaithfulness towards the God of Israel." He now urged upon them the remembrance, yet fresh in their minds, of the consequences of the sin of Peor, and which had, alas! still left its bitter roots among the people. If, on account of their uncleanness, they felt as if they needed nearer proximity to the altar, he invited them back to the western side of the Jordan where the other tribes would make room for them. But if they persisted in their sin, he reminded them how the sin of the one individual, Achan, had brought wrath on all the congregation. If so, then the rest of Israel must take action, so as to clear themselves of complicity in their "rebellion." In reply, the accused tribes protested, in language of the most earnest expostulation, that their conduct had been wholly misunderstood. So far from wishing to separate from the tabernacle and worship of Jehovah, this great altar had been reared as a witness to all ages that they formed an integral part of Israel, lest in the future they might be debarred from the service of Jehovah. That, and that alone, had been their meaning, however ill expressed. The explanation thus offered was cause of deep thankfulness to the deputies and to all Israel. Thus, in the good providence of God, this cloud also passed away. A twofold work had been intrusted to Joshua: to conquer the land (Joshua 1:8), and to divide it by inheritance among the people (Joshua 1:6). Both had been done, and in the spirit of strength, of courage, and of believing obedience enjoined at the outset (Joshua 1:7). Unlike his great predecessor and master, Moses, he had been allowed to finish his task, and even to rest after its completion. And now he had reached one hundred and ten years, the age at which his ancestor Joseph had died (Genesis 50:26). Like a father who thinks of and seeks to provide for the future of his children after his death; like Moses when he gathered up all his life, his mission, and his teaching in his last discourses; as the Apostle Peter, when he endeavored that Christians might "be able after his Exodus to have these things always in remembrance," so did Joshua care for the people of his charge. On two successive occasions he gathered all Israel, through their representative "elders," to address to them last words. They are in spirit and even in tenor singularly like those of Moses, as indeed he had no new truth to communicate. The first assembly must have taken place either in his own city of Timnath-serah, or else at Shiloh. The address there given had precisely the same object as that afterwards delivered by him, and indeed may be described as preparatory to the latter.

Probably the difference between the two lies in this, that the first discourse treated of the future of Israel rather in its political aspect, while the second, as befitted the circumstances, chiefly dwelt on the past mercies of Jehovah, and urged upon the people decision in their spiritual choice. Both discourses are marked by absence of all self-exaltation or reference to his own achievements. It is the language of one who, after long and trying experience, could sum up all he knew and felt in these words: "As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." The first discourse of Joshua consisted of two parts (Joshua 23:2-13, and Joshua 23:14-16), each beginning with an allusion to his approaching end, as the motive of his admonitions. Having first reminded Israel of all God's benefits and of His promises, in case of their faithfulness, he beseecheth them: "Take heed very much to your souls to love Jehovah your God" (Joshua 23:11), the danger of an opposite course being described with an accumulation of imagery that shows how deeply Joshua felt the impending danger. Proceeding in the same direction, the second part of Joshua's address dwells upon the absolute certainty with which judgment would follow, as surely as formerly blessing had come. The second address of Joshua, delivered to the same audience as the first, was even more solemn. For, this time, the assembly took place at Shechem, where, on first entering the land, Israel had made solemn covenant by responding from Mounts Ebal and Gerizim to the blessings and the curses enunciated in the law. And the present gathering also was to end in renewal of that covenant. Moreover, it was in Shechem that Abraham had, on entering Canaan, received the first Divine promise, and here he had built an altar unto Jehovah (Genesis 12:6-7). Here also had Jacob settled after his return from Mesopotamia, and purged his household from lingering idolatry, by burying their Teraphim under an oak (Genesis 33:20; Genesis 35:2-4). It was truly a "sanctuary of Jehovah" (Joshua 24:26), and they who came to it, "gathered before God" (Joshua 24:1). In language the most tender and impressive, reminding us of Stephen's last speech before the Sanhedrim (Acts 7:1-60), Joshua recalled to them the mercies of God (Joshua 24:2-13), specially in those five great events: the calling of Abraham, the deliverance from Egypt, the defeat of the Amorites and of the purpose of Balaam, the miraculous crossing of Jordan and taking of Jericho, and finally, the Divine victory given them over all the nations of Canaan. On these grounds he now earnestly entreated them to make decisive choice of Jehovah as their God. And they replied by solemnly protesting their determination to cleave unto the Lord, in language which not only re-echoed that of the preface to the ten commandments (Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6), but also showed that they fully responded to Joshua's appeals. To bring the matter to a clear issue, Joshua next represented to them that they could not serve Jehovah (Joshua 24:19) -that is, in their then state of heart and mind - "in their own strength, without the aid of grace; without real and serious conversion from all idols; and without true repentance and faith." To attempt this were only to bring down judgment instead of the former blessing. And when the people still persevered in their profession, Joshua, having made it a condition that they were to put away the strange gods from among them and "direct" their hearts "unto Jehovah, God of Israel," made again solemn covenant with them. Its terms were recorded in a document which was placed within the book of the Law, and in memory there of a great stone was set up under the memorable tree at Shechem which had been the silent witness of so many solemn transactions in the history of Israel. With this event the history of Joshua closes. Looking back upon it, we gather the lessons of his life and work, and of their bearing upon the future of Israel. Born a slave in Egypt, he must have been about forty years old at the time of the Exodus. Attached to the person of Moses, he led Israel in the first decisive battle against Amalek (Exodus 17:9-13), while Moses, in the prayer of faith, held up to heaven the

God-given "rod."

It was no doubt on that occasion that his name was changed from Oshea, "help," to Jehoshua, "Jehovah is help" (Numbers 13:16). And this name is the key to his life and work. Alike in bringing the people into Canaan, in his wars, and in the distribution of the land among the tribes - from the miraculous crossing of Jordan and taking of Jericho to his last address - he was the embodiment of his new name: "Jehovah is help!" To this outward calling his character also corresponded. It is marked by singleness of purpose, directness, and decision. There is not indeed about him that elevation of faith, or comprehensiveness of spiritual view which we observed in Moses. Witness Joshua's despondency after the first failure at Ai. Even his plans and conceptions lack breadth and depth. Witness his treaty with the Gibeonites, and the commencing disorganization among the tribes at Shiloh. His strength always lies in his singleness of purpose. He sets an object before him, and unswervingly follows it. So in his campaigns: he marches rapidly, falls suddenly upon the enemy, and follows up the victory with unflagging energy. But there he stops - till another object is again set before him, which he similarly pursues. The same singleness, directness, and decision, rather than breadth and elevation, seem also to characterize his personal religion.

There is another remarkable circumstance about Joshua. The conquest and division of the land seem to have been his sole work. He does not appear to have even ruled as a judge over Israel. But so far also as the conquest and division of the land were concerned, his work was not complete, nor, indeed, intended to be complete. And this is characteristic of the whole Old Testament dispensation, that no period in its history sees its work completed, but only begun and pointing forward to another yet future, till at last all becomes complete in the "fullness of time" in Christ Jesus. Thus viewed, a fresh light is cast upon the name and history of Joshua. Assuredly Joshua did not give "rest" even to his own generation, far less to Israel as a nation. It was rest begun, but not completed - a rest which even in its temporal aspect left so much unrest; and as such it pointed to Christ. What the one Joshua could only begin, not really achieve, even in its outward typical aspect, pointed to, and called for the other Joshua, the Lord Jesus Christ, in Whom and by Whom all is reality, and all is perfect, and all is rest for ever. And so also it was only after many years that Oshea became Joshua, while the name Joshua was given to our Lord by the angel before His birth (Matthew 1:21). The first became, the second was Joshua. And so the name and the work of Joshua pointed forward to the fullness in Christ, alike by what it was and by what it was not, and this in entire accordance with the whole character and object of the Old Testament.

03.03.13. Volume 3, Chapter 13

CHAPTER 13

Summary of the Book of Judges - Judah’s and Simeon’s Campaign -Spiritual and national Decay of Israel - "From Gilgal to Bochin."

(Judges 1:1-36, Judges 2:1-23, Judges 3:1-4)

IF evidence were required that each period of Old Testament history points for its completion to one still future, it would be found in the Book of Judges. The history of the three and a half centuries which it records brings not anything new to light, either in the life or history of Israel; it only continues what is already found in the Book of Joshua, carrying it forward to the Books of Samuel, and thence through Kings, till it points in the dim distance to the King, of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who gives perfect rest in the perfect kingdom. In the Book of Joshua we see two grand outstanding facts, one explaining the outer, the other the inner history of Israel. As for the latter, we learn that ever since the sin of Peor, if not before, idolatry had its hold upon the people. Not that the service of the Lord was discarded, but that it was combined with the heathen rites of the nations around. But as true religion was really the principle of Israel’s national life and unity, "unfaithfulness" towards Jehovah was also closely connected with tribal disintegration, which, as we have seen, threatened even in the time of Joshua. Then, as for the outer history of Israel, we learn that the completion of their possession of Canaan was made dependent on their faithfulness to Jehovah. Just as the Christian can only continue to stand by the same faith in which, in his conversion to God, he first had access to Him (Romans 5:2), so Israel could only retain the land and complete its conquest by the same faith in which they had at first entered it. For faith is never a thing of the past. And for this reason God allowed a remnant of those nations to continue in the land "to prove Israel by them" (Judges 3:1), so that, as Joshua had forewarned them (Joshua 23:10-16, comp. Judges 2:3), "faithfulness" on their part would lead to sure and easy victory, while the opposite would end in terrible national disaster.

Side by side with these two facts, there is yet a third, and that the most important: the unchanging faithfulness of the Lord, His unfailing pity and lovingkindness, according to which, when Israel was brought low and again turned to Him, He "raised them up judges,... and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge" (Judges 2:18). The exhibition of these three facts forms the subject-matter of Israel’s history under the Judges, as clearly indicated in Judges 2:21, Judges 3:4. Accordingly, we must not expect in the Book of Judges a complete or successive history of Israel during these three and half centuries, but rather the exhibition and development of those three grand facts. For Holy Scripture furnishes not - like ordinary biography or history - a chronicle of the lives of individuals, or even of the successive history of a period, save in so far as these are connected with the progress of the kingdom of God. Sacred history is primarily that of the kingdom of God, and only secondarily that of individuals or periods. More particularly is this the reason why we have no record at all of five of the Judges - not even that Jehovah had raised them up. For this cause also some events are specially selected in the sacred narrative, which, to the

superficial reader, may seem trivial; sometimes even difficult or objectionable. But a more careful study will show that the real object of these narratives is, to bring into full view one or other of the great principles of the Old Testament dispensation. For the same reason also we must not look for strict chronological arrangement in the narratives. In point of fact, the Judges ruled only over one or several of the tribes, to whom they brought special deliverance. Accordingly, the history of some of the Judges overlaps each other, their reign having been contemporaneous in different parts of the land. Thus while in the far east across Jordan the sway of the children of Ammon lasted for eighteen years, till Jephthah brought deliverance (Judges 10:6-18; Judges 11:1-40 Judges 12:1-7), the Philistines at the same time oppressed Israel in the far southwest. This circumstance renders the chronology of the Book of Judges more complicated. The Book of Judges divides itself into three parts: a general introduction (Judges 1:1-36, Judges 2:1-23, Judges 3:1-6), a sketch of the period of the Judges (Judges 3:7-31, Judges 4:1-24, Judges 5:1-31, Judges 6:1-40, Judges 7:1-25, Judges 8:1-35, Judges 9:1-57, Judges 10:1-18, Judges 11:1-40, Judges 12:1-15, Judges 13:1-25, Judges 14:1-20, Judges 15:1-20, Judges 16:1-31), arranged in six groups of events (Judges 3:7-11; Judges 3:12-31; Judges 4:1-24, Judges 5:1-31, Judges 6:1-40, Judges 7:1-25, Judges 8:1-35, Judges 9:1-57, Judges 10:1-5; Judges 10:6-18, Judges 11:1-40, Judges 12:1-15; Judges 13:1-25, Judges 14:1-20, Judges 15:1-20, Judges 16:1-31), and a double Appendix (Judges 17:1-13, Judges 18:1-31, Judges 19:1-30, Judges 20:1-48, Judges 21:1-25). The two series of events, recorded in the latter, evidently took place at the commencement of the period of the Judges. This appears from a comparison of Judges 18:1 with Judges 1:34, and again of Judges 20:28 with Joshua 22:13; Joshua 24:33. The first of the two narratives is mainly intended to describe the religious, the second the moral decadence among the tribes of Israel. In these respects they throw light upon the whole period. We see how soon, after the death of Joshua and of his contemporaries, Israel declined - spiritually, in combining with the heathen around, and mingling their idolatrous rites with the service of Jehovah; and nationally, the war with the Canaanites being neglected, and the tribes heeding on every great occasion only their private interests and jealousies, irrespective of the common weal (Judges 5:15-17, Judges 5:23; Judges 8:1-9), until "the men of Ephraim" actually levy war against Jephthah (Judges 12:1-6), and Israel sinks so low as to deliver its Samson into the hands of the Philistines (Judges 15:9-13)!

Side by side with this decay of Israel we notice a similar decline in the spiritual character of the Judges from an Othniel and a Deborah down to Samson. The mission of these Judges was, as we have seen, chiefly local and always temporary, God raising up a special deliverer in a time of special need. It is quite evident that such special instruments were not necessarily always under the influence of spiritual motives. God has at all periods of history used what instruments He pleased for the deliverance of His people - a Darius, a Cyrus, a Gamaliel, and in more modern times often what appeared the most unlikely, to effect His own purposes. Yet in the history of the Judges it seems always the best and most religious whom the locality or period affords who is chosen, so that the character of the Judges affords also an index of the state of a district or period. And in each of them we mark the presence of real faith (Hebrews 11:1-40), acting as the lever-power in their achievements, although their faith is too often mingled with the corruptions of the period. The Judges were Israel’s representative men -representatives of its faith and its hope, but also of its sin and decay. Whatever they achieved was "by faith." Even in the case of Samson, all his great deeds were achieved in the faith of God’s gift to him as a Nazarite, and when "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him." Hence the Judges deserved to be enrolled in the catalogue of

Old Testament "worthies." Besides, we must not forget the necessary influence upon them of the spirit of their age. For we mark in the Bible a progressive development, as the light grew brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. In truth, if this were not the case, one of two inferences would follow. Either we would be tempted to regard its narratives as partial, or else be driven to the conclusion that these men could not have been of the period in which they are placed, since they had nothing in common with it, and hence could neither have been leaders of public opinion, nor even been understood by it. From these brief preliminary observations we turn to notice, that there were altogether twelve, or rather, including Deborah (Judges 4:4), thirteen Judges over Israel. Of only eight of these are any special deeds recorded. The term Judge must not, however, be regarded as primarily referring to the ordinary judicial functions, which were discharged by the elders and officers of every tribe and city. Rather do we regard it as equivalent to leader or ruler. The period of the Judges closes with Samson. Eli was mainly high priest, and only in a secondary sense "Judge," while Samuel formed the transition from the Judges to royalty. With Samson the period of the Judges reached at the same time its highest and its lowest point. It is as a Nazarite, devoted to God before his birth, that he is "Judge," and achieves his great feats - and it is as a Nazarite that he falls and fails through selfishness and sin. In both respects he is the representative of Israel - God-devoted, a Nazarite people, and as such able to do all things, yet falling and failing through spiritual adultery. And thus the period of the Judges ends as every other period. It contains the germ of, and points to something better; but it is imperfect, incomplete, and fails, though even in its failure it points forward. Judges must be succeeded by kings, and kings by the King - the true Nazarite, the Lord Jesus Christ. The period between the death of Joshua and the first "Judge" is summarized in Judges 1:1-36, Judges 2:1-23, Judges 3:1-6. It appears, that under the influence of Joshua’s last address, deepened no doubt by his death, which followed soon afterwards, the "holy war" was resumed. In this instance it was purely aggressive on the part of Israel, whereas formerly, as a matter of fact, the attack always came from the Canaanites (except in the case of Jericho and of Ai). But the measure of the sin of the nations who occupied Palestine was now full (Genesis 15:13-16), and the storm of judgment was to sweep them away. For this purpose Israel, to whom God in His mercy had given the land, was to be employed - but only in so far as the people realized its calling to dedicate the land unto the Lord. On the ruins of what not only symbolized, but at the time really was the kingdom of Satan, the theocracy was to be upbuilt. Instead of that focus whence the vilest heathenism overspread the world, the kingdom of God was to be established, with its opposite mission of sending the light of truth to the remotest parts of the earth. Nor can it be difficult to understand how, in such circumstances, at such a time, and at that period of religious life, any compromise was impossible - and every war must be one of extermination.

Before entering on this new "war," the children of Israel asked Jehovah, no doubt through the Urim and Thummim, which tribe was to take the lead. In reply, Judah was designated, in accordance with ancient prophecy (Genesis 49:8). Judah, in turn, invited the co-operation of Simeon, whose territory had been parceled out of its own. In fact, theirs were common enemies. The two tribes encountered and defeated the Canaanites and Perizzites in Bezek, a name probably attaching to a district rather than a place, and, as the word seems to imply, near the shore of the Dead Sea. In the same locality Adoni-bezek appears to have made a fresh stand, but with the same disastrous result. On that occasion a remarkable, though most cruel retaliation overtook him. As chieftain of that district he must have been equally renowned for his bravery and cruelty. After a custom not

uncommon in antiquity, the many chieftains whom he had subdued were kept, like dogs, "for lengthened sport," under the banqueting table of the proud conqueror in a mutilated condition, their thumbs and great toes cut off, in token that they could never again handle sword and bow, nor march to war.

It need scarcely be said, that the Mosaic law never contemplated such horrors. Nevertheless the allied tribes now inflicted mutilation upon Adoni-bezek. The victors carried him to Jerusalem, where he died. On that occasion the city itself, so far as it lay within the territory of Judah, was taken and burnt. But the boundary line between Judah and Benjamin ran through Jerusalem, the Upper City and the strong castle, which were held by the Jebusites, being within the lot of Benjamin. In the war under Joshua, the Jebusites had foiled Judah (Joshua 15:63). Now also they retired to their stronghold, whence the Benjamites did not even attempt to dislodge them (Judges 1:21). From Jerusalem the tribes continued their victorious march successively to "the mountain," or highlands of Judah, then to the Negeb, or south country, and finally to the Shephelah, or lowlands, along the sea-shore. Full success attended the expedition, the tribes pursuing their victories as far south as the utmost borders of the ancient kingdom of Arad, where, as their fathers had vowed (Numbers 21:2), they executed the ban upon Zephath or Hormah. The descendants of Hobab (Judges 4:11) the Kenite the brother-in-law of Moses, who had followed Israel to Canaan (Numbers 10:29), and had since pitched their tents near Jericho, now settled in this border land, as best suited to their nomadic habits and previous associations (Judges 1:8-11-16). The campaign ended with the incursion into the Shephelah, where Judah wrested from the Philistines three out of their five great cities. This conquest, however, was not permanent (Judges 14:19; Judges 16:1), nor were the inhabitants of the valley driven out, "because they had chariots of iron." But the zeal of Israel did not long continue. In fact, all that follows after the campaign of Judah and Simeon is a record of failure and neglect, with the single exception of the taking of Bethel by the house of Joseph. Thus the tribes were everywhere surrounded by a fringe of heathenism. In many parts, Israelites and heathens dwelt together, the varying proportions among them being indicated by such expressions as that the "Canaanites dwelt among" the Israelites, or else the reverse. Sometimes the Canaanites became tributary. On the other hand, the Amorites succeeded in almost wholly driving the tribe of Dan out of their possessions, which induced a considerable proportion of the Danites to seek fresh homes in the far north (Judges 18:1-31).

Israel was settling down in this state, when their false rest was suddenly broken by the appearance among them of "the Angel of Jehovah." No Divine manifestation had been vouch-safed them since the Captain of Jehovah’s host had stood before Joshua in the camp at Gilgal (Joshua 5:13-15). And now, at the commencement of a new period, and that one of spiritual decay, He "came" from Gilgal to Bochim, not to announce the miraculous fall of a Jericho before the ark of Jehovah, but the continuance of the heathen power near them in judgment upon their unfaithfulness and disobedience. "From Gilgal to Bochim!" There is much in what these names suggest - and that even although Gilgal may have been the permanent camp, where leading representatives of the nation were always assembled, to whom "the Angel of Jehovah" in the first place addressed Himself, and Bochim, or "weepers," the designation given afterwards to the meeting-place by the ancient sanctuary (either Shechem or more probably Shiloh), where the elders of the people gathered to hear the Divine message. And truly what had passed between the entrance into Canaan and that period might be thus summed up: "From Gilgal to Bochim!" The

immediate impression of the words of the Angel of Jehovah was great. Not only did the place become Bochim, but a sacrifice was offered unto Jehovah, for wherever His presence was manifested, there might sacrifice be brought (comp. Deuteronomy 12:5; Judges 6:20-28; Judges 13:16; 2 Samuel 24:25).

But, alas! the impression was of but short continuance. Mingling with the heathen around, "they forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and Ashtaroth." Such a people could only learn in the school of sorrow. National unfaithfulness was followed by national judgments.

Yet even so, Jehovah, in His mercy, ever turned to them when they cried, and raised up "deliverers." In the truest sense these generations "had not known all the wars of Canaan" (Judges 3:1). For the knowledge of them is thus explained in the Book of Psalms (Psalms 44:2-3):

"Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy hand, and plantedst them; Thou didst afflict the nations, and east them out. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favor unto them." This lesson was now to be learned in bitter experience by the presence and power of the heathen around:

"to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah, which He commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses" (Judges 3:4).

03.03.14. Volume 3, Chapter 14

CHAPTER 14 Othniel - Ehud - Shamgar

(Judges 3:5-31) THE first scene presented in the history of the Judges is that of Israel's intermarriage with the heathen around, and their doing "evil in the sight of Jehovah," forgetting Him, and serving "Baalim and the groves." And the first "judgment" on their apostasy is, that they are "sold" by the Lord into the hand of "Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia," or rather of "Aram-naharaim," "the highland by the two streams" (Euphrates and Tigris). Curiously enough, there is an ancient Persian tradition, according to which the monarchs of Iran, who held dominion "by the streams," waged war against Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor. Of their heroes, who are described as Cushan, or from the land of Chusistan (= Scythians, Parthians?), the most notable is Rustan or Rastam, a name evidently akin to Rishathaim. And so ancient heathen records once more throw unexpected light upon the historical narratives of the Old Testament. The oppression had lasted full eight years when Israel "cried unto Jehovah." The deliverer raised up for them was Othniel, the younger brother of Caleb, whose bravery had formerly gained him the hand of his wife (Judges 1:12-15). But his success now was not due to personal prowess.

"The Spirit of Jehovah was upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war." For the first time in the Book of Judges we meet here the statement, that "the Spirit of Jehovah" "was upon," or "clothed," or else "came upon" a person.

We naturally connect the expression with what we read of "the manifold gifts of the Spirit" as these are detailed in Isaiah 11:2, which were distributed to each as God pleased, and according to the necessity of the time (1 Corinthians 12:11). But, in thinking of these influences, we ought to bear two things in mind. First: although, in each case, the influence came straight from above - from the Spirit of God - for the accomplishment of a special purpose, it was not necessarily, as under the New Testament dispensation, a sanctifying influence. Secondly: this influence must not be regarded as the same with the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart. This also belongs to the New Testament dispensation. In short, these gifts of the Holy Spirit were miraculous, rather than gracious - like the gifts in the early Church, rather than as "the promise of the Father." In the case of Othniel, however, we note that the Spirit of God "was upon" him, and that, under His influence, "he judged" Israel, even "before he went out to war." And so, while ancient Jewish tradition in all other instances paraphrases the expression, "the Spirit of the Lord," by "the spirit of strength," in the case of Othniel - "the lion of God" - it renders it: "the spirit of prophecy." A war so undertaken must have been successful, and "the land had rest forty years." The next judgment to rebellious Israel came likewise from the east. Quite on the eastern boundary of Reuben and of Gad lay the land of Moab. One of the chieftains of its tribes, Eglon, now allied himself with the old enemies of Israel, Ammon and Amalek, the former occupying the territory south of Reuben, the latter the districts in the far south-west, below Philistia. Eglon swept over the possessions of the trans-Jordanic tribes, crossed the river, and made Jericho, which was probably rebuilt as a town, though not as a fortress, his capital. Having thus cut the land, as it were, into two, and occupied its

center and garden, Eglon reduced Israel for eighteen years to servitude. At the end of that period the people once more "cried unto the Lord," and "the Lord raised them up a deliverer," although Holy Scripture does not say that in his mode of deliverance he acted under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord. In the peculiar circumstances of the case this silence is most significant. The "deliverer" was "Ehud (probably, the praised one), the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man left-handed," or, as the original has it, "shut up" or "weak" "as to his right hand." The conspiracy against Eglon was well planned. Ehud placed himself at the head of a deputation charged to bring Eglon "a present," or, more probably, the regular tribute, as we gather from the similar use of the word in 2 Samuel 8:2-6; 2 Samuel 17:3-4. But Ehud carried under his raiment a two-edged dagger, a cubit long; according to the LXX translation, about three-quarters of a foot. The tribute was delivered, no doubt with many protestations of humility and allegiance on the part of Ehud, and the deputation graciously dismissed.

It was needful for his plan, and probably in accordance with his wish to involve no one else in the risk, that the rest should be done by Ehud alone. Having seen his fellow- countrymen safely beyond "the quarries that were by Gilgal," or, rather, as the term implies, beyond "the terminal columns" (always objects of idolatrous worship), that divided the territory of Eglon from that of Israel, he returned to the king, whose confidence his former appearance had no doubt secured. The narrative here is exceedingly graphic. The king is no longer in the palace where the deputation had been received, but in his "upper chamber of cooling," a delicious summer-retreat built out upon the end of the flat roof. Ehud professes to have "a secret errand," which had brought him back when his companions were gone.

All the more that he does not ask for the withdrawal of the king’s attendants does Eglon bid him be "Silent!" in their presence, which, of course, is the signal for their retirement. Alone with the king, Ehud saith, in a manner not uncommon in the East: "I have a message from God unto thee," on which Eglon, in token of reverence, rises from his seat. This is the favorable moment, and, in an instant, Ehud has plunged his dagger up to the hilt into the lower part of his body, with such force that the blade came out behind. Not pausing for a moment, Ehud retires, closes and locks the doors upon the murdered king, and escapes beyond the boundary.

Meanwhile the king’s attendants, finding the room locked, have waited, till, at last, they deem it necessary to break open the doors. The horror and confusion consequent upon the discovery of the murder have given Ehud still further time. And now the preconcerted signal is heard. The shrill blast of the trumpet in Seirath (perhaps the "hairy" or "wooded") wakes the echoes of Mount Ephraim. All around from their hiding troop the men of Israel. The first object is to haste back towards Jericho and take the fords of Jordan, so as to allow neither help to come, nor fugitives to escape; the next to destroy the garrison of Moab. In both, Israel are successful, and, "at that time" - of course, not on that precise day - 10,000 of Moab are slain, all of them, as we should say, fine men and brave soldiers. "And the land had rest fourscore years."

Ancient history, both Greek and Roman, records similar stories, and, where the murderer has been a patriot, elevates him to the highest pinnacle of heroism. Nay, even Christian history records like instances, as in the murder of Henry III and Henry IV of France, the former, even in its details, so like the deed of Ehud. But strikingly different from the toleration, and even commendation, of such deeds by the Papacy is the judgment of the Old Testament. Its silence is here severest

condemnation. It needed not cunning and murder to effect deliverance. Not one word of palliation or excuse is said for this deed. It was not under the influence of "the Spirit of Jehovah" that such deliverance was wrought, nor is it said of Ehud, as of Othniel, that he "judged Israel." Even Jewish tradition compares Ehud to the "ravening wolf" which had been the early emblem of his tribe, Benjamin (Genesis 49:27).

It must have been during this period of eighty years' rest, that another danger at least threatened Benjamin. This time it came from an opposite direction - from the west, where the Philistines held possession. "After" Ehud (3:31), that is, after his example, a notable exploit was performed by Shamgar ("the name of a stranger"?). Under the impulse of sudden sacred enthusiasm, he seized, as the first weapon to hand, an ox-goad, commonly used to urge on the oxen in ploughing. The weapon is formidable enough, being generally about eight feet long, and six inches round at the handle, which is furnished with an iron horn to loosen the earth off the plough, while the other end is armed with a long iron spike. With this weapon he slew no fewer than 600 Philistines, whom, probably, panic seized on his appearance. The exploit seems to have been solitary, and we read neither of further war, nor yet of Shamgar's rule, only that for the time the danger of a Philistine incursion was averted.

03.03.15. Volume 3, Chapter 15

CHAPTER 15 The Oppression of Jabin and Sisera - Deborah and Barak - The Battle of Taanach - The Song of Deborah

(Judges 4:1-24; Judges 5:1-31)

DARKER and darker are the clouds which gather around Israel, and stranger and more unexpected is the deliverance wrought for them. It had begun with Othniel, truly a "lion of God." But after the "lion of God" came one left-handed, then a woman, then the son of an idolater, and then an outlaw of low birth, as if it were ever to descend lower and lower, till the last stage is reached in the Nazarite, Samson, who, as Nazarite, is the typical representative of Israel's calling and strength, and, as Samson, of Israel's weakness and spiritual adultery. Yet each period and each deliverance has its characteristic features and high points. The narrative opens as if to resume the thread of Israel's continuous history, only temporarily broken by Ehud's life: "And the children of Israel continued to do evil in the eyes of Jehovah - and Ehud was dead." This furnished a long wished-for opportunity.

It had been about a century before when a Jabin ("the prudent" or "understanding," - no doubt the monarch's title, like Pharaoh or Abimelech) had marshaled the chieftains of Northern Palestine against Joshua, and been signally defeated (Joshua 11:1-10). Since then his capital had been restored and his power grown, till now it seemed the fitting moment to recover his ancient empire. As we understand the narrative, the hosts of Jabin had swept down from Hazor in the far north, and occupied the possessions of Naphtali, Zebulun, and Issachar. While Jabin himself continued in his capital, his general, Sisera ("mediation," "lieutenant"?) held the southern boundary of the annexed provinces, making his head-quarters at Harosheth ha Gojim - "the smithy of the nations" - perhaps so called from being the arsenal where his iron war-chariots, armed with scythes, were made. The site of this place is probably somewhere in the neighborhood of Bethshean, which afterwards formed the southernmost point of Galilee. Evidently it must have been south of Mount Tabor, to which Barak afterwards marched from Kedron, in the north of Naphtali. For, irrespective of the utterly helpless state of the country, as described in Judges 5:6, Sisera would not have allowed Barak to turn his flank or to march on his rear. The occupation of the north of Palestine by Sisera had lasted twenty years. Relief must have seemed well-nigh hopeless. On the one hand, the population was wholly disarmed (Judges 5:8); on the other, Sisera had no less than nine hundred war-chariots - means of attack which Israel most dreaded. But as often before, so now, suffering led Israel to cry unto the Lord - and help was soon at hand.

One of the most painful circumstances in the history of the Judges is the utter silence which all this time seems to envelop Shiloh and its sanctuary. No help comes from the priesthood till quite the close of this period. Far away in Mount Ephraim God raised up a woman, on whom He had poured the spirit of prophecy. It is the first time in this history that we read of the prophetic gift. The sacred text conveys, that she exercised it in strict accordance with the Divine law, for it is significantly added in connection with it, that "she judged Israel at that time." Deborah, "the bee," is described

as a "burning woman." The meeting-place for all in Israel who sought judgment at her hands was between Ramah and Bethel, under a palm-tree, which afterwards bore her name. Thence she sent for Barak ("lightning,") the son of Abinoam ("my father" - God -"is favor"), from the far north, from Kadesh in Naphtali. His ready obedience proved his preparedness. But when Deborah laid on him the Divine command "gradually to draw" an army of 10,000 men to Mount Tabor, Barak shrank from it, unless Deborah would accompany him. This evidently proved distrust in the result of the undertaking, which in turn showed that he looked for success to the presence of man, rather than entirely to the power of God. Accordingly, he must learn the folly of attaching value to man; and Deborah predicted, that not Israel's leader, but a woman, wholly unconnected with the battle, would have the real triumph.

Accompanied by Deborah, Barak now returned to Kadesh, whither he summoned the chiefs of Naphtali and Zebulon. All plans being concerted, the combatants converged in small companies, from all roads and directions, "on foot," towards the trysting-place. About six or eight miles east of Nazareth rises abruptly a beautifully-shaped conical mountain, about 1,000 feet high. This is Mount Tabor ("the height"), its sloping sides covered with trees, and affording from its summit one of the most extensive and beautiful prospects in Palestine. Here the army under Barak and Deborah gathered. Tidings soon reached the head-quarters of Sisera. His chariots could of course only fight to advantage in the valleys, and he naturally marched north-west to the plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon. This has ever been, and will prove in the final contest (Revelation 16:16), the great battle-field of Israel. It was now the first of many times that its fertile soil was to be watered with the blood of men.

Sisera had chosen his position with consummate skill. Marching in almost straight line upon the plain of Megiddo, his army was now posted at its entrance, resting upon the ancient Canaanitish town of Taanach (Judges 5:19, comp. Joshua 12:21). Behind, and at his left flank, were the mountains of Manasseh, before him opened the basin of the valley, merging into the plain of Esdraelon, watered by the Kishon. Into this plain must Barak's army descend "on foot," badly armed, without experienced officers, without cavalry or chariots - and here his own 900 war-chariots would operate to best advantage. It was not even like one of those battles in which mountaineers hold their own fastnesses, or swoop down on their enemies in narrow defiles. On the contrary, all seemed to tell against Israel - but this, that God had previously promised to draw Sisera and his army to the river Kishon, and to deliver them into Barak's hand. Then once more did the Lord appear as "a man of war," and fight on the side of His people. It is said: "And Jehovah discomfited," or rather, "threw into confusion, Sisera and all his chariots, and all his host." The expression is the same as when Jehovah fought against Egypt (Exodus 14:25), and again when before Gibeon Joshua bade sun and moon stand still (Joshua 10:10). It indicates the direct interference of the Lord through terrible natural phenomena; (comp. also its use in 2 Samuel 22:15; Psalms 18:14; Psalms 144:6). As we gather from Judges 5:20-22, a fearful storm swept down from heaven in face of the advancing army. The battle must have drawn towards Endor, where its fate was finally decided (Psalms 83:9-10). Presently the war-chariots were thrown into confusion, and instead of being a help became a source of danger. The aftrighted horses carried destruction into the ranks of the host. Soon all were involved in a common panic. A scene of wild confusion ensued. It was impossible to retreat, and only in one direction could flight be attempted. And now the waters of Kishon had swollen into a wild torrent which swept away the fugitives! To

escape capture, Sisera leaped from his chariot, and fled on foot northwards towards Hazor. Already he had passed beyond Kadesh, and almost reached safety. There the boundary of Naphtali was marked by what was known as "the oakwood at the twin tents of wandering" (Elon be-Zaanannim; comp. Joshua 19:33). Here Heber the Kenite had pitched his tent, having separated from his brethren, who had settled in the extreme south at Arad (Judges 1:16). Living quite on the boundary of Jabin's dominion, and not being really Israelites, the clan of Heber had been left unmolested and "there was peace between Jabin, king of Hazor, and the house of Heber the Kenite."

Only outward, not real peace! There is something wild and weird about the appearance of these Kenites on the stage of Jewish history. Originally an Arab tribe they retain to the last the fierceness of their race. Though among Israel, they never seem to amalgamate with Israel, and yet they are more keenly Israelitish than any of the chosen race. In short, these stranger-converts are the most intense in their allegiance to the nation which they have joined, while at the same time they never lose the characteristics of their own race. We mark all this, for example, in the appearance of Jehonadab, the son of Rechab (2 Kings 10:15), and again much later during the troubles that befell Judah in the time of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 35:1-19). Jael, "the chamois," the wife of Heber, was among the Kenites what Deborah, the "torch-woman," was in Israel, only with all the characteristics of her race developed to the utmost. At her tent-door she meets the fugitive Sisera. She disarms his suspicions; she invites him to rest and security; she even sacrifices the sacred rights of hospitality to her dark purpose. There is something terrible and yet grand about that fierce woman, to whom every other consideration is as nothing, so that she may avenge Israel and destroy its great enemy. All seems lawful to her in such an undertaking; every means sanctified by the end in view. She has laid the worn warrior to rest; she has given him for refreshment of the best her tent affords. And now, as he lies in heavy sleep, she stealthily withdraws one of the long iron spikes to which the tent-cords are fastened, and with a heavy hammer once, again, and yet a third time, strikes it into his temples. It is not long before Barak - a "lightning" in pursuit as in battle - has reached the spot. Jael lifts aside the tent-curtain and shows him the gory corpse. In silence Barak turns from the terrible spectacle. But the power of Jabin and his dominion are henceforth for ever destroyed.

There is, as it seems to us, not a word in Scripture to express its approbation of so horrible a deed of deceit and violence -no, not even in the praise which Deborah in her song bestows upon Jael. It was not like Deborah's war, nor like Barak's battle, but strictly Kenite. Her allegiance to the cause of the people of God, her courage, her zeal, were Israelitish; their fanatical, wild, unscrupulous manifestation belonged to the race from which she had sprung, to the traditions amidst which she had been nurtured, and to the fiery blood which coursed in her veins - they were not of God nor of His word, but of her time and race. Heathen history tells of similar deeds, and records them with highest praise; Scripture with solemn silence. Yet even so Jehovah reigneth, and the fierce Arab was the sword in His hand!

"Then sang Deborah and Barak on that day, saying:

For the loose flowing of the long hair, For the free dedication of the people, Praise ye Jehovah!

Hear O kings, hearken O rulers, I - to Jehovah will I sing, Will psalmody to Jehovah, the God of Israel!

Jehovah, when Thou didst come forth from Seir, When Thou marchedst from out the fields of Edom, The earth trembled, also the heavens dropped, Even the clouds dropped water.

The mountains quaked before Jehovah - This Sinai before Jehovah, the God of Israel.

In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, In the days of Jael, the highways ceased, And they who went on paths, went by roundabout ways.

Deserted was the open country in Israel - deserted - Till I arose, Deborah, I arose a mother in Israel!

Chose they new gods - Then war at the gates - If shield was seen or spear Among forty thousand in Israel!

My heart towards the rulers of Israel, Those who freely vowed (dedicated) themselves among the people. Praise ye Jehovah!

Ye that ride on white she-asses, Ye that sit on coverings Ye that walk by the way - consider!

From the noise (sound, voice) of the archers between the draw-wells - There they rehearse the righteous deedsof Jehovah, The mighty deeds of His open country in Israel -Then went down to the city gates the people of Jehovah!

PART II

Awake, awake, Deborah, Awake, awake - utter the song; Arise, Barak, and lead captive thy captives, son of Abinoam!

Then went down a remnant of the mighty, of the people, Jehovah went down for me among the heroes!

From out of Ephraim - his root in Amalek; After thee: Benjamin among thy nations - From Machir come down they who bear rule, From Zebulon who draw out with the staff of the writer.

But the princes of Issachar were with Deborah - And Issachar the foundation of Barak, Pouring on foot into the valley! By the brooks of Reuben great resolves of heart

Why abodest thou among the folds To hear the flutes of the flocks? By the brooks of Reuben great ponderings of heart!

Gilead dwells on the other side Jordan! And Dan, who pass upon ships? Asher sitteth by the sea-shore, And by its bays resteth!

Zebulon a people that jeoparded its life unto death, And Naphtali on the heights of the field!

Came kings - warred - Then warred the kings of Canaan, In Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo - Spoil of silver took they none!

From heaven warred, The stars out of their paths warred against Sisera!

The river Kishon swept them away, River of encounters, River Kishon! March forth my soul in strength!

Then clattered the hoofs of the horse From the racing and chasing of his mighty.

Curse ye Meroz, saith the Angel of Jehovah, Curse ye -cursed its inhabitants, For they came not to the help of Jehovah, The help of Jehovah against the mighty!

PART III.

Blessed among women, Jael, The wife of Heber, the Kenite, Among women in the tent blessed!

Water asked he - milk she gave, In the cup of the noble brought she thickened milk

Her hand to the tent-nail sendeth forth, And her right hand to the ponderous hammer of workmen - Hammers she Sisera, shivers (see endnote 242) his head, Cleaves (see endnote 242) and pierces his temple!

Between her feet he winds - he falls - he lies - Between her feet he winds - he falls - Where he winds there he falls desolated!

High up through the window spies - anxiously she calls, The mother of Sisera - cut through the lattice: 'Why tarrieth his chariot to come, Why linger the steps of his war-chariots?'

The wise of her princesses answer - Nay, she herself answers her words to herself: 'Are they not finding - dividing spoil -

A maiden-twain maidens to the head of the warriors - Spoil of dyed garments to Sisera, Spoil of dyed garments -many-colored kerchief - A dyed garment, twain many-colored kerchiefs for the necks of the prey!'

So perish all Thine enemies, Jehovah - And let those who love Him be like the going forth of the sun in his strength! And the land had rest forty years.

03.03.16. Volume 3, Chapter 16

CHAPTER 16

Midianitish Oppression - The Calling of Gideon - Judgment begins at the House of God - The Holy War - The Night-battle of Moreh

(Judges 6:1-40, Judges 7:1-22) WITH the calling of Gideon commences the second period in the history of the Judges. It lasted altogether less than a century. During its course events were rapidly hastening towards the final crisis. Each narrative is given with full details, so as to exhibit the peculiarity of God's dealings in every instance, the growing apostasy of Israel, and the inherent unfitness even of its best representatives to work real deliverance. The narrative opens, as those before, with a record of the renewed idolatry of Israel. Judgment came in this instance through the Midianites, with whom the Amalekites and other "children of the east" seem to have combined. It was two hundred years since Israel had avenged itself on Midian (Numbers 31:3-11). And now once more, from the far east, these wild nomads swept, like the modern Bedawin, across Jordan, settled in the plain of Jezreel, and swooped down as far as Gaza in the distant south-west. Theirs was not a permanent occupation of the land, but a continued desolation. No sooner did the golden harvest stand in the field, or was stored into garners, than they unexpectedly arrived. Like the plague of locusts, they left nothing behind. What they could not carry away as spoil, they destroyed. Such was the feeling of insecurity to life and property, that the people made them "mountain-dens, and caves, and strongholds," where to seek safety for themselves and their possession. Seven years had this terrible scourge impoverished the land, when the people once more bethought themselves of Jehovah, the God of their fathers, and cried unto Him. This time, however, before granting deliverance, the Lord sent a prophet to bring Israel to a knowledge of their guilt as the source of their misery. The call to repentance was speedily followed by help.

1. The calling of Gideon. - Far away on the south-western border of Manasseh, close by the boundary of Ephraim, was the little township of Ophrah, belonging to the family of Abiezer (Joshua 17:2; 1 Chronicles 7:18), apparently one of the smallest clans in Manasseh (Judges 6:15). Its head or chief was Joash -"Jehovah strength," or "firmness." As such he was lord of Ophrah. In such names the ancient spiritual faith of Israel seems still to linger amidst the decay around. And now, under the great oak by Ophrah, suddenly appeared a heavenly stranger. It was the Angel of Jehovah, the Angel of the Covenant, Who in similar garb had visited Abraham at Mamre (Genesis 18:1-33). Only there He had come, in view of the judgment about to burst, to confirm Abraham's faith - to enter into fellowship with him, while here the object was to call forth faith, and to prove that the Lord was ready to receive the vows and prayers of His people, if they but turned to Him in the appointed way. This may also explain, why in the one case the heavenly visitor joined in the meal, while in the other fire from heaven consumed the offering (comp. Judges 13:16; 1 Kings 18:38; 2 Chronicles 7:1).

Close by the oak was the winepress of Joash, and there his son Gideon was beating out the wheat with a stick. Alike the place and the manner of threshing were quite unusual, and only accounted

for by the felt need for secrecy, and the constant apprehension that at an unexpected moment some wild band of Midianites might swoop down upon him. If, as we gather from the Angel's salutation, Gideon was a strong hero, and if; as we infer from his reply, remembrances and thoughts of the former deeds of Jehovah for Israel had burned deep into his heart, we can understand how the humiliating circumstances under which he was working in his father's God-given possession, in one of the remotest corners of the land, must have filled his soul with sadness and longing.

It is when "the strong warrior" is at the lowest, that the Messenger of the Covenant suddenly appears before him. Not only the brightness of His face and form, but the tone in which He spake, and still more His words, at once struck the deepest chords in Gideon's heart. "Jehovah with thee, mighty hero!" Then the speaker was one of the few who looked unto Jehovah as the help-giver; and he expressed alike belief and trust! And was there not in that appellation "mighty warrior" a sound like the echo of national expectations - like a call to arms? One thing at least the Angel immediately gained. It was - what the Angel of His Presence always first gains - the confidence of Gideon's heart. To the unknown stranger he pours forth his inmost doubts, sorrows, and fears. It is not that he is ignorant of Jehovah's past dealings, nor that he questions His present power, but that he believes that, if Jehovah had not withdrawn from Israel, their present calamities could not have rested upon them. The conclusion was right and true, so far as it went; for Israel's prosperity or sufferings depended on the presence or the absence of Jehovah. Thus Gideon's was in truth a confession of Israel's sin, and of Jehovah's justice. It was the beginning of repentance. But Gideon had yet to learn another truth - that Jehovah would turn from His anger, if Israel only turned to Him; and yet another lesson for himself: to put personal trust in the promise of God, based as it was on His covenant of love, and that whether the outward means to be employed seemed adequate or not. But Gideon was prepared to learn all this; and, as always, gradually did the Lord teach His servant, both by word, and by the sight with which He confirmed it. The reply of the Angel could leave no doubt on the mind of Gideon that a heavenly messenger was before him, Who promised that through him Israel should be saved, and that simply because He sent him. It is not necessary to suppose that Gideon understood that this messenger from heaven was the Angel of the Covenant. On the contrary, the revelation was very gradual. Nor do the questions of Gideon seem strange - for such they are rather than doubts. Looking around at his tribe, at his clan, and at his own position in it, help through him seemed most unlikely, and, if we realize all the circumstances, was so. Only one conclusive answer could be returned to all this: "I shall be with thee." The sole doubt now left was: Who was this great I AM? - and this Gideon proposed to solve by "asking for a sign," yet not a sign to his unbelief, but one connected with worship and with sacrifice. Jehovah granted it. As when Moses sought to know God, He revealed not His being but His character and His ways (Exodus 33:18; Exodus 34:6), so now He revealed to Gideon not only Who had spoken to him, but also that His "Name" was "Jehovah, Jehovah God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin."

It would be almost fatal to the proper spiritual understanding of this, as of other Biblical narratives, if we were to transport into it our present knowledge, ideas, and views. Remembering the circumstances of the nation, of Gideon, and of Israel; remembering also the stage of spiritual knowledge attainable at that period, and the difficulty of feeling really sure Who the speaker was,

we can understand Gideon's request (Judges 6:1-17): "Work for me a sign that THOU (art He) Who art speaking with me." It is difficult to imagine what special sign Gideon was expecting. Probably he had formed no definite idea. Suffice it, he would bring a sacrificial gift; the rest he would leave to Him. And he brought of the best. It was a kid of the goats, while for the "cakes," to be offered with it, he took a whole ephah of flour, that is, far more than was ordinarily used. But he does all the ministry himself; for no one must know of it. To dispense with assistance, he puts the meat and the cakes in the "bread-basket," "and the broth in a pot." Directed by the Angel, he spreads his offering on a rock.

Then the Angel touches it with the end of His staff; fire leaps out of the rock and consumes the sacrifices; and the Angel has vanished out of his sight. There was in this both a complete answer to all Gideon's questions, and also deep symbolic teaching. But a fresh fear now fills Gideon's heart. Can one like him, who has seen God, live? To this also Jehovah gives an answer, and that for all times: "Peace to thee - fear not - thou shalt not die!" And in perpetual remembrance thereof - not for future worship - Gideon built an altar there, and attached to it the name, "Jehovah-Peace!"

2. One part was finished, but another had to begin. Jehovah had called - would Gideon be ready to obey? For judgment must now begin at the house of God. No one is fit for His work in the world till he has begun it in himself and in his own house, and put away all sin and rebellion, however hard the task. It was night when the command of Jehovah came. This time there was neither hesitation nor secrecy about Gideon's procedure. He obeyed God's directions literally and immediately. Taking ten of his servants, he first threw down the altar of Baal, and cut down the Asherah - the vile symbol of the vile service of Astarte - that was upon it.

One altar was destroyed, but another had to be raised. For, the altar of Jehovah could not be reared till that of Baal had been cast down. It was now built, and that not in some secret hiding-place, but on "the top of this defense" - either on the top of the hill on which the fort stood, or perhaps above the place where the people were wont to seek shelter from the Midianites. Upon this altar Gideon offered his father's "second bullock of seven years old" - the age being symbolical of the time of Midian's oppression - at the same time using the wood of the Asherah in the burnt-sacrifice. Such a reformation could not, and was not intended to be hidden. The Baal's altar and its Asherah were indeed Joash's, but only as chief of the clan. And when on the following morning the Abiezrites clamored for the death of the supposed blasphemer, Joash, whose courage and faith seem to have been re-awakened by the bold deed of his son, convinced his clan of the folly of their idolatry by an unanswerable argument, drawn from their own conduct. "What!" he exclaimed, in seeming condemnation, "will ye strive for Baal? Or will ye save him? He that will strive for him let him die until the morrow! If he be a god, let him strive for himself, because he has thrown down his altar. And they called him on that day Jerubbaal ('let Baal strive'), that is to say, Let the Baal strive with him, because he has thrown down his altar."

3. The Holy War. - Gideon had now purified himself and his house, and become ready for the work of the Lord. And yet another important result had been secured. The test to which Baal had been put had proved his impotence. Idolatry had received a heavy blow throughout the land. In Ophrah at least the worship of Jehovah was now alone professed. Moreover, the whole clan Abiezer, and, beyond it, all who had heard of Gideon's deed, perpetuated even in his name, were prepared to look to him as their leader. The occasion for it soon came. Once more the Midianitish Bedawin had

swarmed across Jordan; once more their tents covered the plain of Jezreel. Now or never -now, before their destructive raids once more began, or else never under Gideon - must Israel arise! Yet not of his own purpose did he move. In the deeply expressive language of Scripture: "The Spirit of Jehovah clothed Gideon," like a garment round about, or rather like an armor. Only after that he blew the trumpet of alarm. First, his own clan Abiezer "was called after him." Next, swift messengers bore the tidings all through Manasseh, and that tribe gathered. Other messengers hastened along the coast (to avoid the Midianites) through Asher northwards to Zebulun and Naphtali, and they as well as Asher, which formerly had not fought with Barak, obeyed the summons.

All was ready - yet one thing more did Gideon seek. It was not from unbelief, nor yet in weakness of faith, that Gideon asked a sign from the Lord, or rather a token, a pledge of His presence. Those hours in the history of God’s heroes, when, on the eve of a grand deed of the sublimest faith, the spirit wrestles with the flesh, are holy seasons, to which the superficial criticism of a glib profession, that has never borne the strain of utmost trial, cannot be applied without gross presumption. When in such hours the soul in its agony is seen to cast its burden upon the Lord, we feel that we stand on holy ground. It is like a stately ship in a terrific gale, every beam and timber strained to the utmost, but righting itself at last, and safely reaching port. Or rather it is like a close following of Jesus into the Garden of Gethsemane - with its agony, its prayer, and its victory. In substance, though not in its circumstances, it was the same struggle as that which was waged in the night when Jacob prayed: "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me;" the same as when, many centuries afterwards, the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Jesus: "Art Thou He, or do we wait for another?" The "sign" was of Gideon’s own choosing, but graciously accorded him by God. It was twofold. On the first night the fleece of wool spread on the ground it was to be full of dew, but the ground all around dry. This, however, might still admit of doubt, since a fleece would naturally attract the dew. Accordingly, the next night the sign was reversed, and the fleece alone remained dry, while the ground all around was wet with dew. The symbolical meaning of the sign is plain. Israel was like that fleece of wool, spread on the wide extent of the nations. But, whereas all the ground around was dry, Israel was filled with the dew, as symbol of the Divine blessing (Genesis 27:28; Deuteronomy 33:13; Proverbs 19:12; Isaiah 26:19; Hosea 14:5; Micah 5:7.). And the second sign meant, that it was equally of God, when, during Israel’s apostasy, the ground all around was wet, and the fleece of Jehovah’s flock alone left dry.

4. The battle: "For Jehovah and for Gideon!" - The faith which had made such trial of God was to be put to the severest trial. Israel’s camp was pitched on the height; probably on a crest of Mount Gilboa, which seems to have borne the name of Gilead. At its foot rose "the spring Harod" - probably the same which now bears the name Jalood. Beyond it was the hill Moreh (from the verb "to indicate," "to direct"), and north of it, in the valley, lay the camp of Midian, 135,000 strong (Judges 8:10), whereas the number of Israel amounted to only 22,000. But even so they were too many - at least for Jehovah "to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against Me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." In accordance with a previous Divine direction (Deuteronomy 20:8), proclamation was made for all who were afraid, to "turn and wind about from Mount Gilead."

Still, Gideon must have been surprised, when, in consequence, he found himself left with only 10,000 men. But even these were too many. To "purify them" (as by refining - for such is the

meaning of the word), Gideon was now to bring them down to the spring Harod, where those who were to go to battle would be separated from the rest. All who lapped the water with the tongue out of their hands (out of the hollow hand), as a dog lappeth water, were to go with Gideon, the rest to return, each to his own place. Only three hundred were now left, and with these God declared He would save, and deliver the Midianites into Gideon's hand. If we ask about the rationale of this means of distinction, we conclude, of course, that it indicated the bravest and most ardent warriors, who would not stoop to kneel, but hastily quenched their thirst out of the hollow of their hands, in order to hasten to battle. But Jewish tradition assigns another and deeper meaning to it. It declares that the practice of kneeling was characteristic of the service of Baal, and hence that kneeling down to drink when exhausted betrayed the habit of idolaters. Thus the three hundred would represent those in the host of Israel - "all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal" (1 Kings 19:18). They who had been selected now "took victuals from the people in their hands, and the trumpets" - the rest were sent away. That night the small company of Israel occupied an advanced position on the brow of the steep mountain, that overhangs the valley of Jezreel. Effectually concealed, probably by the shelter of wood or vineyards, the vast straggling camp of Midian spread right beneath them. That night came the Divine command to Gideon to go down to the camp, for God had given it into his hand. And yet, alike in condescension to Gideon's weakness, and to show how thoroughly the Lord had prepared the victory, He first allowed him to ascertain for himself the state of matters in the camp of Midian. Quietly Gideon and his page Phurah ("the branch") crept from rock to rock, over where the last patrol of the advance-guard kept watch around the camp-fire.

Here they overheard the tale of a strange dream. Alike the dream and its interpretation are peculiarly Eastern and in character. Both would make the deepest impression on those sons of the desert, and, communicated to the next patrol, as the first watch was relieved by the second, must have prepared for that panic which, commencing with the advance-guard, was so soon to spread through the whole camp of Midian. The dream was simply this: "Behold, a loaf of barley-bread rolled itself into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent (the principal one, that of the general), and struck it, and it fell, and it turned from above and it was fallen!" To which his neighbor (comrade) replied: "This is nothing else but the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel; given hath the God into his hand Midian and all his camp." So wondrous seemed the dream and its interpretation, that, when Gideon and his armor-bearer heard it, they bent in silent worship, assuredly knowing that God had given them the victory. In truth, with the tale of this dream the miracle of the victory had already begun.

There is such pictorialness and such truthfulness of detail about all this narrative, that we almost seem to see the events enacted before us. That camp of Bedouins, like locusts in numbers - with their wives, children, and camels, like the sand by the seashore; then the watchfire by which alone they keep guard; the talk over the camp-fire; the dream so peculiarly Bedouin, and its rapid interpretation, no less characteristically Eastern - and yet the while all ordered and arranged of God - while that small band of three hundred Israelites lies concealed on the neighboring height, and Gideon and his "young man," are close by, behind the great shadows which the watch-fire casts, hidden perhaps in the long grass! Then the dream itself! It was all quite natural, and yet most unnatural. The Midianites - especially the advanced-guard, that lay nearest to Israel, could not be ignorant that Gideon and his host occupied yonder height. Fame would spread, probably

exaggerate, the "mighty valor" of Gideon, and the valor of his followers - while the diminished numbers of Gideon would, of course, not be known, as they had retired by circuitous routes. Moreover, the Midianites must also have been aware that this was to Israel a religious war; nor can they have been ignorant of the might of Jehovah. The fears which all this inspired appear in the interpretation of the dream. But the dream itself was the result of the same feelings. Barley-bread was deemed the poorest food; yet a loaf of this despised provision of slaves rolls itself into Midian's camp, strikes the tent of the leader, turns it upside down, and it falls! Here is a dream-picture of Israel and its victory - all quite natural, yet marvelously dreamed and told just at that particular time. And still, often do dreams, excited by natural causes, link themselves, in God's appointment, to thoughts that come supernaturally.. We have throughout this history marked how often what seemed to happen quite naturally, was used by God miraculously, and how the supernatural linked itself to what, more or less, had its counterpart in the ordinary course of nature. It had been so in the history of Moses and of Israel; it was so when Joshua defeated the allied kings before Gibeon, and when Barak encountered the invincible chariots of Sisera. In each case it was the Lord, Who gave miraculous victory through terrific tempest. So also it had been in an hour, when thoughts of Israel's past and present must have burned deepest into the heart of Gideon, that the Angel stood before him, even as it was by means most natural that God separated from the rest the three hundred who had not bent the knee to Baal, and who alone were to go to the holy war. Thoughts like these do not detract from, they only make the supernatural the more marvelous. Yet they seem also to bring it nearer to us, till we feel ourselves likewise within its circle, and can realize that even our "daily bread" comes to us straight from heaven! Gideon and Phurah have returned to the waiting host. In whispered words he has told what they had witnessed. And now the three hundred are divided into three companies. It is not the naked sword they grasp, for in that night not Israel, but Jehovah is to fight. In one hand each man holds a trumpet, in the other, concealed in a pitcher, a burning torch. Each is to do exactly as the leader. Silently they creep round to three different parts of Midian's camp. The guard has just been relieved, and the new watchers have settled quietly by the watch-fire. Suddenly a single trumpet is heard, then three hundred - here, there, everywhere the sound of war is raised. The night is peopled with terrors. Now with loud crash three hundred pitchers are broken; three hundred torches flash through the darkness; three hundred voices shout: "The sword for Jehovah and for Gideon!" Then is the enemy all around the camp! No one can say in what numbers. Again and again rings the trumpet-sound; wave the torches. The camp is roused. Men, women, children, camels rush terror-stricken through the dark night. No one knows but that the enemy is in the very midst of them, and that the neighbor whom he meets is an Israelite, for all around still sounds the war-trumpet, flash the torches, and rises the war-cry. Each man's sword is turned against his neighbor. Multitudes are killed or trampled down, and their cries and groans increase the terror of that wild night. A hopeless panic ensues, and ere morning-light, the site of the camp and the road of the fugitives towards Jordan are strewed with the slain.

sermon index

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net