Papers on the Pentateuch

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Abel's Sacrifice

Genesis 4; Hebrews 11 (B.T. Vol. 17, p. 321-323.)

If we take the history of the garden of Eden as a whole, we shall see in it a real whole, and in brief a complete picture of the ways of God. Man placed under responsibility and even under law was sinful, and an actual sinner; and he was driven out from the place of sojourn, where God visited him for fellowship. But God did not send him out to begin anew world away from Himself without giving the fullest testimony to the sovereign grace that has met the evil. Man’s nakedness was the expression of innocence being gone. Shame and guilt, and a guilty fear of God’s presence, were now man’s state: God in sovereign grace met this. He clothed Adam with that which came from death, and His eye had His own work before Him. This did not say man was not naked in himself, but that God Himself, having taken knowledge of it in grace, had covered his nakedness. The present state was perfectly provided for in full, and the power of evil judged in the future. Hereafter the power of the serpent’s seed would be destroyed.

But man, thus driven out from God, with innocence gone, began a new world; and the question necessarily arose, Can man have to say to God, and how? Now it is clear, that if God wrought in men, He could not for a moment he indifferent to what had happened; and still clearer, that God could not he indifferent to the state of evil which had brought man where he now was, and was expressed by what he was in sin and away from God. That which was the sad effect for man God saw as the evil state in him.

The driving him out of paradise had placed man in a judicial way in this place though not irrecoverably. He was in it morally, and the question arose: Could he approach God? Now he could not really, while insensible to the state he had got into; he would still be as far from God as ever; and in God's public government and testimony, God could not give witness to His so receiving him. And this is the new platform of Cain and Abel — approach to God when in a state which was the result of being driven out from His presence. Do we approach God as if nothing had happened, in connection with the everyday circumstances and duties of the place we have got into, or in the sense of the sinfulness of this state, the sense of our fall, and looking up to God in our consciences as those who have got these by sin? Every christian knows. And here note, it is not committed sin, but the consciousness of our true standing before God. Cain goes with the fruit of his toil (man had been sent forth to be a tiller of the ground) — the actual practical state of man driven out. In Abel faith had its perceptions. Sin had come in, and death by sin: faith recognised it. "Now once Christ appeared in the consummation of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." This was not the clearing of the individual's sins actually committed. These are spoken of immediately after as a distinct subject, adding judgment, but a judgment passed for those that look for Him, seeing He has borne our sins Himself, Who becomes Himself the Judge (Heb. 9:26-28).

We have four worlds, so to speak, in this aspect: the garden of Eden; a world no longer innocent, but man departed from God and driven out where sin reigns and Satan; a world in which Christ reigns in righteousness;

and the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. We have an innocent world (now gone) tested without evil in it by simple obedience. The final world as based on righteousness, which in its nature never changes, cannot change in its moral stability.

But the moment sin had come in and characterised the world and the state of man, the terms on which man could be with God must be changed, because God could not change. That a holy God and a sinful creation should be on the same terms as an innocent one could not be. Free and happy communion would be impossible. Cry for mercy there might be — challenge on what ground he was there, but. no free intercourse. That God is love does not alter this. His love is a holy love, for He is light; but “men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil” (John 3:19).

Now I admit and believe that the free sovereign self-originated love of God is the source of all our joy and hopes and blessings, eternal and infinite as they are. But God exercises that love by bringing in a Mediator in death: not here by bloodshedding to meet guilt, but in perfect self-surrender to God in that which was death, as such, and the fruit of sin. Fat was offered (Gen. 4:4) as much as blood, yet not offered as such for forgiveness but for acceptance in Another, Who gave Himself wholly to God in death which had come in. And mark this was that souls might approach to God: each came with his offering.

Cain came, as if nothing had happened, so much so that he brought to God, as offering, what was the sign of the ruined state into which he had got, but which he did not

reckon as rain. There was no faith in it. In Abel's there was. He offered by faith, which recognised that death had come in by sin, but that Another had given Himself for him, an offering made by fire of a sweet savour. For there are two things: "unto Him That loveth us and washed us from our sins;" and "Christ also loved us and gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." One was to clear foregone sins; the other, the value and preciousness of Him in Whom we are accepted — "accepted in the Beloved." Now this was a question of acceptance in coming; and God did not accept Cain. He did accept Abel; but the witness was borne to his gifts. He was accepted, but God's testimony was to that which he brought, the life of another in all its energies and perfectness given up to God in death.

Another thing we have to remark here; it was not God setting forth anything to the sinner. That was "a mercy-seat (ἱλαστήριον) through faith in His blood." Here it is Abel presenting himself to God, but coming by the acceptance and perfectness of another who had given himself for him. And this is propitiation. Now to say that God could receive a sinner as He received an innocent person is to say that God is indifferent to good and evil. And note here, it was not, by the eye of God resting on an inward change that a difference was made (there was such a change, for faith was working in Abel's heart), but a judicial estimate on God's part of the gifts he brought, Christ in figure, Christ offered in sacrifice; and for this we have the express authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It was a propitiatory sacrifice as ground of acceptance; or the whole basis of the standing of a fallen

world is gone — the whole moral basis of the preference of Abel to Cain.

That love, electing love, may have been there is admitted; but the ground of acceptance, as stated in scripture (see Heb. 11), is gone, if propitiatory sacrifice be not accepted. To win secure righteousness before God, and for the believer's acceptance, according to the value that is in Christ, He offered Himself absolutely without spot for God's glory. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him." Faith believed in it then and found its fruit. Abel was accepted, and distinctively on the ground of what he brought — his gifts. Cain brought no such offerings; he had to be accepted in himself only, and he was not. Faith looks to this sacrifice, and finds acceptance and blessing according to the value of Christ in the eyes of God.

I only add now that God gave Christ to us for this end. He "sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The self-originating work of love is in it, but the effectual work of suffering is to make good in righteousness that love. God forbid that I should weaken confidence in the Father's love. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us."

It is certain then, that, man being fallen, Abel sought God's face and acceptance by a sacrifice, to the value of which God bore testimony, "by which he obtained testimony that he was righteous." It was a sacrifice which recognised death as come in, but which, as so presented, bore the character of perfect self-offering to

God’s glory. Not actual sins were in question, but the state of man and his acceptance on the ground of mediatorial death, in which God’s own glory alone was sought on man’s part in obedience, and in which the highest gift of grace shone out on God’s part in love.

But here, immediately connecting itself with our subject, is another point, less abstract, narrower possibly in effect, but dealing more immediately with conscience, and hence of present necessity. If a man believes in heart (that is, as convinced of guilt) in the Lord Jesus Christ, he will not come into judgment; he knows he is forgiven and justified, he has peace with God, rejoices in hope of His glory, and trusts God for the road auto the end. “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity” — not that he has not done any, but that it has been borne by Another. Another has been substituted in his place by grace, Who has taken the charge of it on Himself, “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” It is not here the basis on which the race is before God, as in Abel’s case, and which as a general principle recognises the whole truth; but actual sins committed, which are dealt with and put away out of God’s sight by One “Who was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:5).

Now this, call it by any word you please, was One person put in the place of another, and then in such sort taking the sins and their consequences on Himself that they should not come at all upon the person, who was himself guilty, in judgment or penal consequences. Upon all who are not under this substitutionary benefit they do come, and with such God enters into judgment concerning them. For God’s people it is said, “according to this

time," not what, men wrought, but "what hath God wrought!" (Num. 23:21- 23.)

Thus substitution is as certain a truth as scripture can afford; that is, one person standing in another's place, Christ bearing his sins in His own body on the tree, bruised for them instead of the guilty one, who is healed by Christ's taking the stripes. For "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

The Early Chapters of Genesis

(Bible Treasury Volumes N1 & 2, 1896-1898, [36 sections].)

Genesis 10:1.

This comprehensive, instructive, and interesting chapter, followed by Gen. 11:1-9 which has its own special importance, is devoted to a description of a new element among mankind, its various nations divided in their lands, every one after his tongue. Before the deluge no such distinctions subsisted. Immense as the population might be, they were not thus associated any more than marked off one from another. Jehovah took care that the line of Seth should be guarded for His ways then, and for His purposes in the future. There were moral differences between Cain and his descendants from early days; and an awful form of creature lawlessness arose before God executed judgment on all flesh in an earth corrupt before Him, and filled with violence. But there was no government on the one hand yet established by God, nor was there any division into nations, nor yet diversity of language.

After the flood God had introduced the principle of government, committing the charge into the hands of men. As the next fact of the widest moment for the earth, the origin of the nations which were about to play their part is made known to us; and this with a special view to His choice of a people for Himself, and separated to Himself. Even it is seen first tried and failing through sin, as Adam had been in the world before the flood. Of this the O.T. is the ample witness

and the awful proof, before His grace intervenes in the Second man and the Messiah of Israel to deliver both man and Israel, as He will the church and the universe, on the ground of divine righteousness and ever enduring mercy to the praise of Himself and the Lamb.

The fact is before all eyes. Nothing exists more notorious in ordinary and universal knowledge (save perhaps for the most isolated of savages) than the many races and tongues and peoples of mankind, each having its own separate bond of union. Yet how this fact began, so pregnant in history, not one of these nations can tell; nor do the most ancient — one does not ask of formal records, but — of incidental monuments go far enough back to explain. Yet here it is written with simple and calm dignity by the instrument God chose for the purpose. It was easy for Him, Who knew all from before the beginning, to make known distinctly and accurately what it seemed good in His eyes to reveal to His people. This He has done in the short compass of a single chapter, Gen. 10, with His moral ground for so separating mankind in the first paragraph of the following chapter. We shall find there an adequate, not to say absolutely necessary reason for His intervention at once for His own glory and on behalf of guilty man; unless we assume that He Who but recently instituted responsible government in man’s hand was indifferent to a rebellion as slighting to Himself as ruinous to man. This drew out from Him a dealing equally simple and effectual, which issued in the scattering of man over the earth according to God’s will, but in separate nationalities to the frustration of man’s will against God.

As Israel then was to be His earthly people, God made known in a brief survey the sources of all the nations

here below, having provided, laid down, and committed to man government in its root principle. None of these facts applies to the antediluvian earth, where all consisted of a vast indiscriminate population of one tongue and under no restraint of government, as it ended in all but universal lawlessness and a judgment that spared a family of only eight persons, including its head. He Who alone could reveal the primeval state when the first man and woman were made, and ushered then into an unstained earth, now deigned to tell the story of how nationalities began with their miraculously started distinct languages, spreading over different lands according to their families. His pleasure was both to bring to nought man's union for a name of pride and to set Israel in the most central spot, not more for righteous government than for shedding on all the earth the knowledge of Jehovah and His glory. So says Deut. 32:8: "When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the children of Adam, He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel." The people were redeemed first, then the land: all in view of Messiah and His redemption and reign in manifest glory, when they shall bow in faith who are still unbelieving, and living water issuing from the house eastward shall heal the Dead sea and gird the globe with blessing. See Ezek. 47, and Joel 3:18; and Zech. 14:8, 9 adds that half goes westward: the sign doubtless of universal blessing from the divine centre in that day.

The first chapter of Genesis presents the origin of the world, especially of the earth, sea and land, and its inhabitants, above all of man himself its head and God's representative; then in Gen. 2 the special relations of

man with God, with the lower creaturehood, and with woman his counterpart, which necessitates for completeness and accuracy the special divine name of “Jehovah” Elohim. The slighting of these revelations exposes to Atheism or a powerless Theism. Science cannot penetrate the secrets of the beginnings by the confession even of one so self-confident and sceptical as J. S. Mill (in his Logic). The domain of science is either purely abstract or applied to what is already created; but how it came to be is outside its ken. Here in Gen. 10 we are given to survey a fact of immense importance to the government of the earth. The first rise of families into separate nations and tongues, history has utterly failed to indicate, as science fails, in the material realm.

Revelation, as it kept intact two chronological lines in Gen. 5, here too supplies the manifest and invaluable light of God with a special view to His earthly people, followed by the moral cause laid before us in Gen. 11 which brings in (as it ought) the name of Jehovah throughout its earlier paragraph; whereas it only appears exceptionally, though for good reason, in Gen. 10:9. All the lessons and monumental records of all the earth combined are not to be compared for certainty or comprehensiveness with this sacred ethnography, grounded on genealogy, and linked with geography. God gave it by Moses as He alone could. Facts of great weight as to the antediluvians are related in Gen. 4, and, what to some may seem strange, in the family of Cain with religion but without faith. Therein arose city life, arts, and sciences, literary verse, among men who forgot the fall, ignored sin and the Saviour, and strove to embellish the earth into a worldly paradise. As the unity of the race was absolute at the beginning, so it was

virtually in Noah after the deluge. The outward progress of mankind must have been all the greater because of their longevity. Whatever it was, the sons of Noah possessed all on their new start. No theory is more fallacious than the pretended ages of stone, bronze, and iron. Men, in their wanderings into rude forest life or other forms of savagery, fell into the circumstances of such facts, which still exist under similar conditions: to generalise them, as successive periods through which all passed, is mere myth, not history.

"And these [are the] generations of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and sons were born to them after the flood" (Gen. 10:1). This is the true place for such a statement given after Noah's fall and its remarkable consequences; just as the genealogy of Adam's sons followed in Gen. 5 after his sin and that of Cain led to the revealed state of the world before the flood. Noah lived on for centuries after, but is mentioned no more in the history, as Adam disappears after his sin, with Cain's crime leading to Seth given instead of Abel. One Spirit forms the narrative beyond the wisdom of Moses, and in total disproof of incoherent fragments pieced together, least of all at an epoch when all was crumbling to ruin among the chosen people. It was well ordered that none of Noah's sons had children till they emerged from the ark. So Adam became a father only after the fall and expulsion from paradise.

Genesis 10:2.

It will be noticed that the order of Noah's sons is now changed. Japheth has the first place, when we come to genealogic survey; and this is even explained when we arrive at the line of Shem (ver. 21), who for spiritual

reasons had been uniformly set in that place of honour hitherto, even Ham being other wise put before Japheth. That many Jews, followed by others, should overlook the spirit of scripture, in their zeal for the progenitor of the chosen people, is easily understood; but some weighed the word with more care and less prejudice. So Nachmanides remarks that the enumeration begins with Yapheth, because he is the firstborn. It proceeds with Cham, although the youngest, and reserves Shem to the last, because the narrator wishes to enlarge on the history of his descendants. Rashi also, though admitting the doubtfulness of the phrase, decides similarly from comparing other scriptures:- “From the words of the text I do not clearly know whether the elder applies to Shem or Japheth. But as subsequently we are informed that Shem was one hundred years old and begat Arpachshad two years after the deluge (Gen. 11:10), it follows that Yapheth was the elder. For Noach was five hundred years old when he began to have children, and the deluge took place in the six hundredth year of his age. His eldest son must consequently have been one hundred years old at the time of the deluge; whereas we are expressly informed that Shem did not arrive at that age till two years after the deluge.”

We next come to the family of the firstborn. “Sons of Japheth: Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras” (ver. 2).

Here is presented the distinct statement of what scholars have regarded as the greatest triumph of modern research in comparative philology. The Asiatic Society instituted in 1784 at Calcutta gave the great impulse, Sir W. Jones declaring that “no philologer could examine the Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, without

believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps no longer exists. There is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothic and Celtic had the same origin with the Sanskrit. The old Persian may be added to the same family." Long after this scholars were still incredulous, clinging to the heathen notion of aboriginal races with their respective tongues, modified by the thought of a Hebrew primaeval source. Hence, in his prejudice for the honour of Greek and Latin, so cultivated and able a person as the late Professor Dugald Stewart (Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, iii. 100-137) denied the reality of Sanskrit as a tongue of the past! and imputed its forgery! to unprincipled Brahmans whom he supposed to have founded it on the model of the old classic languages to deceive the world. F. Schlegel however, though more a genius than a scholar, had scanned the secret early in the century when he gave the name Indo-Germanic to the Aryan tongues of ancient Persia (the Zend), Greece, Italy, and Germany. He might have included quite as surely Celtic, Scandinavian, and Sclavonian under the wider generalisation of Indo-European. They were the tongues of the Japhetic or, as moderns speak, the Aryan families. It was the task of Franz Bopp to set the matter on a sound basis of proof, not only in his essay of 1816 and others, but in his Comparative Grammar of 1833-1852. Others, as Eugène Burnouf in France and Max. Müller in this country, have contributed not a little since.

Now if the Mosaic account had been given its just place, the fact would have been known all through, which is far more simple and to the believer more authoritative than

inferences ever so plain and sure drawn from the comparison of these many languages. For it became evident that Sanskrit, old as it may be, is no more the parent of these tongues than Greek, but that they were all sisters, derived from a language earlier than any of them. Thus the tongues were seen to have a family relationship no less than the races of mankind; and phonetic changes follow according to observed principle instead of the more obvious derivatory resemblance. That they had (as Sanskrit proved) in the east a common source was for the learned a recent discovery. But in our verse we are told authoritatively that Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras were sons of Japheth. Thus were they all linked together, dialectically distinct, but of common origin. Nor is it difficult to distinguish those races in general.

Thus Gomer embraces the Cimbri, or the more modern Kelts, who appear to have come first of the Aryan family to Europe from their early seat in the north of India. At one time they had a considerable hold on northern Italy, as well as Spain, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and south of the Danube; but Belgium, Britain, Gaul, were long their own; and even now the Welsh and the Breton dialects (and till recently the Cornish) attest the fact, as also the closely related Erse, Gaelic, and Manx. It was a body of marauders from Gaul, chiefly the three tribes of Tectosages, Tolistobogii, and Trocmi, who overran Asia Minor and gave their name to Galatia where they settled: a consideration not without considerable interest to those who weigh the Epistle addressed to them by the apostle Paul. They seem to have migrated to

Asia Minor on their route to Europe, before this final return and settlement for some in that quarter.

Next, Magog (cf. Ezek. 38:2) quite as certainly is identified with the land we call Russia (a name derived from the river Volga, called Greek Ῥᾶ, as Ῥῶς is their Greek title). To these must add Meshech and Tubal, races long known as Moschi and Tibareni: these are the Muskai and the Tuplai of the Assyrian inscriptions, who find their representatives in Moscow and Tobolsk. This is the Sclavonian branch.

Madai again is the unchanged name for the Medes and their country, with whom was the Persian race or Parsec, though Elam was Shemitic. Even to this day, the Persian tongue, though debased by Arabic importations, is essentially Aryan, as the older language, the Zend, was exclusively, and of course closely akin to Sanskrit.

Javan also is the proper Hebrew for Greece, as in Daniel 8 where we hear of the Medes and Persians. The less may be said as here no question can be. Details will follow in due course which confirm the general fact.

There remains but Tiras, which from the likeness of the name has been generally believed to mean the representative of the Thracians. Though they lacked cohesion and persevering purpose and so made little mark politically, it is well to remember that Herodotus set them next to the Indians as the most considerable nation in his day. The absence of the vowel “i” may be accounted for by its subscription in the Greek term. Still the question cannot be said to be settled, like all the others which precede.

The learning of the Greek was at fault at least as much as the tradition of the Jew. Scripture had not been

weighed or trusted by either. And when the discovery of Sanskrit came, the issue was so startling that the erudite at first recoiled from that which not only brought in larger views, but shook to its foundations much they had been building up. The method of derivation alone had been trusted; whereas the newly ascertained facts pointed to parallel descents from a common parent in at least six great lines with their modern offspring. But this so revolutionised the entire groundwork as to show that erudition had been on a false scent, especially as to the inflexions and the conjugations of tongues ever so distant locally, which indicate affinity far more surely and thoroughly than isolated words. K. O. Müller was one of the first seriously to own the old position embarrassing; and G. Hermann before him had written sarcastically of those who sought light from “a sort of aurora borealis, reflecting the gleams of eastern illumination, and who, betaking themselves to the Brahmans and Ulphilas, endeavoured to explain Greek and Latin by the help of languages which they only half understood.” K. A. Lobeck carried on the war in his celebrated works, Aglaophamus (1829), Paralipomena (1837) and Pathologia (1843), as Ellendt did in the Preface to his Lex. Sophocl. (1835). Yet the truth remains that God marks certain families of language in the great dispersion, and that with their specified differences they give sure evidence of a common kindred. The same grammatical framework belongs to them; and it differs totally too from that of the Shemitic tongues; as the varied Turanian group differs in this from them both.

The Jews, as is known, assign to Cush (translated Ethiopia ordinarily) not only his African seat but the

opposite coast of Arabia and the southern shore of Asia generally into India. And this is well founded. But Arabia received also a large Shemitic population which gave character to their language; and this as we shall see not only from Joktan, Eber's son, but from Jokshan, Abraham's son by Keturah, and from Ishmael's twelve sons, with some of Esau's descendants. Even Homer (Od. ii. 23, 24) speaks of Ethiopians as divided into two parts, the most distant of men, some at the setting sun, and some at the rising. It was a Turanian race, which included the Turks, but not the Armenians who were rightly given to Japheth. But the Jews seem never to have realised the fact that the ancient Persian tongue (Zend) and that of northern and central India (Sanskrit) yield the fullest indication of Japhetic origin.

Genesis 10:3.

Of Japheth's sons two only have their descendants specified, Gomer the head of the Kelts, and Javan, from whom came the Hellenic-Italian races.

"And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah" (ver. 3).

Jeremiah (Jer. 51:27) introduces Ashkenaz as one of three kingdoms set apart and called together with Ararat and Minni against Babylon, when the kings of the Medes also played their decisive part. There seems no sound reason to doubt that as Ararat and Minni were parts of Armenia, here as elsewhere falling under Togarmah, so Ashkenaz and Riphath occupied the peninsula of Asia Minor at that time and took their place with Cyrus the leader of these races during that notable struggle. But this in no way weakens the general fact that Gomer pushed westward and into Europe, allowing

that at least Togarmah settled in Armenia.1 For this is as sure as any fact of history; and scripture is decisive as to it, not only in the past, but for the future.

For instance, Ezek. 38 beyond doubt unveils the judgment of Russia at the end of this age, and lets us see its supporters compelled to follow and share the general ruin. Among those of the north are Gomer and all his hordes, and the house of Togarmah from the uttermost north and all his, as well as the southern races of Persia, Cush, and Phut under the same influence.

It is quite unfounded to pretend that this vast confederacy of the nations (or its overwhelming destruction) applies to any action under the Seleucidae, any more than the then state of the Jews in the land agrees. For it is clear that Israel previously has been brought back from the sword, gathered out of many peoples, and that they are dwelling in safety, though in a land of unwalled villages, having neither bars nor gates. Again, the position is made all the plainer by taking into account the two preceding chapters, Jer. 36 and Jer. 37. The prophet in the first declares that Jehovah will call them from among the nations, and gather them out of all the countries, and bring them into their own land. This restoration is to have a national completeness and a holy character beyond all precedent. “And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your uncleannesses and from all your idols will I cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and keep mine, ordinances, and ye shall do them. So ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your

fathers, and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

This new and mighty work of divine grace for Israel is clearly seen to be confirmed symbolically in the next: Jer. 37, where we see the valley of dry bones caused to live and stand up, an exceeding great army; then, under the two sticks made one in Jehovah's hand, the old rent of the divided tribes completely healed, and one nation made on the mountains of Israel with one king to them, as has never been since the days of Rehoboam. "And they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. And they shall not any more defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; and I will save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd; and they shall walk in my ordinances, and keep my statutes and do them." It is a bright and blessed prediction awaiting its fulfilment. In these circumstances will Gog lead his vassal hordes to perish signally on the mountains of Israel, and a fire shall also be sent on Magog and those that dwell at ease in the isles; and they shall know Who it is that thus judges them in the day that all Israel shall be gathered out of the nations into their own land, none to be left any more there.

The Rabbins have it that Ashkenaz subsequently migrated into that part of Europe which was afterward called Germany. And a learned German who has devoted much research to the details of this chapter comes to the same conclusion. But the evidence is far from being

clear, though all agree that the Teutons are Japhetic and of Gomer. Herodotus indeed (i. 125) tells us of the Germanioi. as with other tribes an agricultural class, not pastoral like several, and distinct from the princely and noble, into which the ancient Persians were divided. It is probable that they were at any rate connected with Carmania, the modern Kirman, as Mr. W. S. Vaux suggests; so Agatharcides (Mar. Erythr. 27, Hudson) and Strabo (xiv. 723) use the name of Germania, for what Diodorus (xviii. 6) calls Carmania. But it seems only a curious coincidence. Besides, of old, “Germans” was not the name the Teutonic family gave themselves, but from without. Far less is the ground for applying Riphath to Great Britain as some have done, or to the Rhipaean mountains (in all probability a geographical dream of the ancient Greeks), though here again the rationalist coalesces with the Jewish doctors and labours to find in the Carpathian range a temporary seat for the Kelts or Gaels. But there is no good reason for doubting that those we call Germans were of Gomer, no less than the Kelts,

Genesis 10:4.

We have now to offer such explanation as we can on another branch of the Japhetic race. It may be premised that they come next after Madai. Of this last we have no details; only indeed of Gomer’s sons, as now of Javan’s, the. Keltic and the Italo-Hellenic, families respectively.

It has been already shown briefly on ver. 2 that Javan represents Greece. Ionia however, or Ionis, answers most nearly to the Hebrew name, a narrow district in Asia Minor, of which Greek colonies are said to have possessed themselves more than a thousand years B.C.,

some time after the Dorian conquest of Peloponnesus, and even after their advance toward Attica (Müller's Dorians, ii. 511, Tufnell and Lewis' Tr. 1830). Not only was Ionia remarkable for its commercial prosperity, but for excellence in art and poetry, in history and philosophy, before the mother-country attained any eminence in these pursuits (Smith's Dict. of Gr. and R. Geography, ii. 61, col. 1). Ezekiel 27:13 speaks of Javan among the traffickers with Tyre: only we must distinguish from it Javan of Uzal in ver. 19, which seems to mean the capital town of Yemen or Arabia Felix. But those who migrated here and elsewhere were the race who long before were in Attica and in part of the Peloponnesus. Of course none can wonder at varied forms of mythical genealogy; but the fact is certain of the early predominance of the Ionian name, as Moses here gives it, for a general description of Greece (Thirlwall's Hist. i. 134). In fact Greece is so designated from Gen. 10 to Zech. 9. Homer in Il. xiii. 685, Aeschylus, in Pers. 176, 568, 948 and Suppl. 72, employ a word that approximates to the Hebrew term.

"And the sons of Javan, Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim" (ver. 4)2 As Javan unquestionably answers to the Greeks in general and is represented in the Ionian race particularly, it is acknowledged that Elishah also belongs to that people. Ezekiel 27:7 helps us to the conclusion that the isles or maritime parts pertained to his lot. Josephus applied the name to the Aeolians, as others to Hellas (which was adopted by J. D. Michaelis, Spicil. i. 79). But Bochart preferred the Peloponnesus as an extension of Elis. The commerce with Tyre points to the islands as well as to the Morea.3 Tarshish follows; and here it appears that we need not

doubt an original settlement on the south shore of Spain, where also the Phoenicians later had factories, and whence by their ships they brought to Tyre silver, iron, tin, and lead, as Ezek. 27:12 informs us. The ships of Tarshish were the most famous for merchandise in ancient times. Ps. 72:10 is of itself sufficient to indicate a considerable stretch of country, not merely the well-known city of Tartessus at the mouth of the Baetis (or Guadalquiver). There is no valid ground to doubt that this was the region to which Javan's second son gave the name. There may have been another place so called in the south east or Indian ocean, to which Solomon's ships sailed from Ezion-Geber (cf. 1 Kings 9:26, 2 Chron. 9:21). For we have no ground to suppose the route round Africa by the Cape of Good Hope was then known; nor, if it were, could the south of Spain supply ivory, and asses, and peacocks, which point rather to India or Ceylon. Tarsus in Cilicia, which Josephus conjectured, in no way meets what is said in the references of scripture.

There is no difficulty as to Kittim, which is a term beyond controversy applied to two of the peninsulas of Europe, first Greece [or Macedon], then Rome or Italy. So the writer of Maccabees speaks of Greece (chaps. i. 1, viii. 5); as Dan. 11:30 is decisive as to Rome. So in the prophecy of Balaam (Num. 24:24) we learn of a fleet from the west afflicting Asshur, when all man's power comes to destruction. In Jer. 3:10 and Ezek. 28:6 we hear of the "isles" or sea-coasts of Kittim; which can hardly mean Cyprus, as understood Josephus and many since his day, though Gesenius approved. He allows however that a wider signification is called for as in not a few Scriptures here cited.

Dodanim remains, which some, from the similarity of sound it seems, would connect with the famous Dodona in Epirus; but the celebrity of an ancient oracle would scarcely give warrant for a place in this chapter. There is another reading which appears in 1 Chron. 1:7, and Rhodians have been thought to correspond with it. The Sept. has the same people for Dedan in Ezek. 27:15, which is assuredly an error. The learned Bochart suggests the Rhone, at whose mouth was an ancient Greek colony and emporium. More than one Targum understood the common reading of the Dardans; and Gesenius inclines to this view in his Monumenta Phoen. 432 and Thes. LL. Heb. and Ch. 1266. It was a branch of the widely spread Pelasgic stock. Curiously enough Strabo (vii.) preserves a fragment of Hesiod, of Dodona as a seat of the Pelasgians. See also Hes. Goettl, ed, alt. 295,

Genesis 10:5.

The general summary of the Japhetic distribution is given in the closing verse 5: “From these were separated the isles (or, maritime districts) of the nations in their lands, each (man) after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.”

Of the seven sons of Japheth, we have the descendants of but two, Gomer and Javan; from Gomer, three, and from Javan, four; seven only specified of the second generation, as of the first. That Magog and Madai had sons cannot be doubted, for we hear of their posterity to the latest times as well as of Tubal and Meshech; and as little can we doubt of Tiras. But it did not here fall within the design to give details of more. The prophets speak of others who sprung from these early forefathers

to figure in the latter day. It is clear also that the order of time is not in question here; for in the following chapter difference of tongues is shown to have been imposed suddenly by a divine act of judgment, only after the project of building a city and tower, and thus making themselves a name. Our chapter therefore anticipates what is historically set out in what follows, and so speaks of the sons of Japhet distributing their seats of settlement, as it does of the Hamite race and the Shemitic in their respective places. On the other hand the "dividing" of the earth in the days of Peleg (chap. 10:25) should be distinguished. Dispersion preceded: a different term is employed in the Hebrew, as there ought to be in the translation. The isles are said here to be "separated," as the earth there is "divided." The orderly partition followed the confused dispersion.

Hence in Deut. 32:8 we read,

When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the peoples According to the number of the sons of Israel.

Israel is thus declared to be His earthly centre, though as yet we see not His glorious plan, which the prophets fully disclose. Hitherto no more appears than a passing but instructive shadow under David and Solomon, even these bringing in seeds of ruin, with occasional glimpses of better things in such as Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, but as a whole gradual yet sure downfall till "there was no remedy," and the chosen people were by reason of their apostasy branded as Lo-ammi, Not-My-people. And so they are from the Babylonish captivity to this day. A remnant of Judah was according to prophecy

restored to the land by Cyrus; and a further test of the first man followed, no longer under the failing sons of David, but in the presentation to them of Messiah Himself, the Righteous Servant. But those who had wholly broken down in violating God's law and even in persistent departure after false gods to their shame by the renunciation of one Jehovah, their only true God, proved themselves yet more inexcusably His enemies and the slaves of Satan by rejecting His anointed, though according to flesh of Israel — of Judah — He was, Who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen. But Him they crucified in blind hostile unbelief by the hand of lawless men, and therefore are they dispersed to the ends of the earth. Beauty and Bands are severally both cut asunder.

But the cross of Christ in the wondrous wisdom of God is made His basis for the counsels of His grace, and the display of His righteousness, and the bringing out of His heavenly purpose, the hidden mystery or secret concerning Christ and concerning the church. For He is now in glory made Head, not merely over Israel or even all nations too, but over the universe, expressly over all things that are in the heavens and that are on the earth; and the church is united to Him as the Head of that one body which is soon to share His heavenly and universal glory. Yet shall the Jews, purged by disciplinary judgments, be brought to His feet, and see Him as their Deliverer Whom once they pierced, and all Israel be saved in God's mercy, to make good His plans, laid down from the first, accomplished at the last, to bless all the families of the earth, and fill it with the glory of Jehovah, and with the knowledge of it and of Him, as the waters cover the sea. So little is this chapter to be counted dry

or unedifying; for barren as it may seem now, what fruit of righteousness shall be in that day through Jesus Christ unto God’s glory and praise!

At present God is working in the gospel, and in the church, but it is for His heavenly purpose in Christ, Whose members suffer with Him and wait for Him. The sole dispensation now as to the kingdom is of the heavens in its mysterious form, While the earth-rejected King sits at God’s right hand on high. He must come and appear. in glory to bring in the manifested kingdom, which alone the prophets predicted, when the daughter of Jerusalem shall have the first dominion here below, as Micah declared. Then, when the heavenly counsels have been completed, shall Jehovah make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the former Levitical one which they broke; but He will put His law in their inwards and write it in their heart, and He be their God, and they His people. Then, and not till then, shall Jerusalem be the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem; and they shall no more walk after the stubbornness of their evil heart. Instead of taking out of the nations a people for His name, as God is doing now by the gospel and in the church, the day will have come to destroy in the mountain of His holiness the face of the veil which veileth all the peoples, and the covering that is spread over all the nations. For Jehovah of hosts shall reign on mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His ancients in glory: a state in strong and manifest contrast with all that goes on now, whether we think of God or man, of heaven or earth.

The word usually rendered “isles” not only admits of an application to coast-lands also (as to the Greek, Italian, Spanish, and Scandinavian peninsulas), but to settlements or habitations wider still, as Gesenius contends with ample consent of the more learned modern Jews; and such is the version of de Sola, Lindenthal, and Raphall in this verse. Again, the division is marked by four particulars: their lands, the tongue spoken, their family descents, and the resulting nation.

We shall see from Gen. 11 how little man’s will had to do with the distribution. Here we have simply but clearly the fact. It was quite a new thing on earth, not only unprecedented before the deluge, but the very opposite was man’s purpose after it; so that the replenishing of the earth could not but seem distant indeed, however fruitful Noah’s sons might be. But the God of creation is the God of providence, and He knows how to give effect to His word; and here we have Europe, though not Europe only, the destined scene for the Japhetic line, of all the earth the most varied in contour, the fullest of coast-line as being the most deeply indented, and so the most accessible through its inland seas, and as well the most open to foreign connection. It was exactly suitable for him who was to be enlarged in his activity beyond his brethren. What a contrast with Africa or even Asia, and their more elevated highlands and extensive plateaus!

Yet contrary to this common purpose each country was allotted to its respective race, and in all this startlingly new fact of lands partitioned by families constituting nations, and distinguished by its tongue appears, as we have seen, the line of Japhet, which mainly and in due time settled in Europe. The remembrance of the deluge would not dispose men to separate. But God meant it to

be, and so it was: one race of Adam, but with all the variety into which the several stocks were to divide and replenish the earth. And the immediate occasion was the opposing determination of man, and the practical end for which they united, as the history relates afterward, along with the simple and effectual way in which God confounded their vain and selfish purpose and accomplished His own.

Nor was the earth itself externally out of harmony with God's mind about man, but adjusted in general to his use who was to eat bread in the sweat of his face, and especially to the new condition, fitted to their separate life as nations with mountain barriers and river boundaries, till man's enterprise made even the seas the ready means of intercourse, commerce, and conquest.

Thus also the principle of government, which God laid on Noah and his sons, was to prove its great practical value, as its control could now be brought to bear far more readily when men were distinguished in their nations. If it was a fresh start for the race, it was not under one man, Adam. The post-diluvian earth began with three sons of Noah, and their three wives, besides Noah and his wife, all of them inheriting whatever was known and learnt in the long era before the deluge. Agriculture and live stocking were long familiar, city as well as tent life had begun, forging of copper and iron for instruments of every sort, with musical instruments for wind and hand, and metrical composition, from very early days. Since the flood God had entrusted to man's hand the responsibility of the civil sword (Gen. 9:6), the root of government in restraint of human violence which includes the lesser rights in the greatest; and this well suited to the national bond of each independent nation

which was now commencing. Families of course had been before in the midst of an undivided race. Henceforth in the new state of things they take their place in their lands by the lesser relation of their nations, each welded together by that tongue which severed him from others of different descent and locality, with their own associations and their independent interests and aims.

The importance, as well as the permanence, of this new condition of humanity will be felt all the more by comparing the prophecies of the O.T. and the Revelation of the New. In the former may be identified the descendants of the Japhetic line as well as those to follow of Ham and Shem. In the others, when the heavenly saints are transferred to their proper home on high, the question of the earth is raised and we hear of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, out of which the Lamb purchased saints to God by His blood, and the ensuing conflict for the inheritance here below. For Christ, the Son, is alone Heir of all things, and the day hastens when His rights shall be asserted with indisputable power.

Genesis 10:6.

The Holy Spirit now brings before us in a general way the descendants of Ham or Chain. As there seems prophetic significance in the name of Japheth (“may he spread”), and it was expressly claimed for Noah in Gen. 5:29, there appears to be also in that of his younger son, which means “warm” or hot, and so “dark” or black.

“And the sons of Ham, Cush and Mizraim and Phut and Canaan” (ver. 6).

The prominent fact that strikes one here is that this is the branch of mankind which after the deluge distinguished itself by the earliest and most vigorous civilization; and this not in an isolated instance, but alike in Asia and in Africa. Scripture attests the truth; and even rationalism, though ever hostile, cannot dispute it. But along with material progress another characteristic is no less marked: the degradation of the race, their fall into ways and habits of savagery. Phut illustrates this as distinctly as Cush and Mizraim and Canaan showed themselves in different respects pioneers of earthly progress.

However opposite, both are effects of departure from God. In an unfallen earth and the innocence of man, there was room for neither the savage nor the civilised state. No dream of unbelieving poets is more remote from the truth than the pictures they have drawn of early human beings unable as yet to converse, and subsisting on acorns, wild fruits, edible roots scooped with difficulty out of the reluctant earth; at length imitating the birds, or rising from ejaculations, to express wants and feelings. Then in the course of time, instead of wandering after precarious food, some conceive the idea of collecting seeds, and cultivating their growth in patches cleared from the forest or brushwood; others, again, betake themselves to the chace, and so provide food and clothing for themselves, and begin also to barter with those that tilled the earth, who bethought them too of rearing the animals capable of domestication in order to their supply or exchange. Later in time rude huts and ruder rafts or canoes were made for land and water and with the long awaited social life villages and towns would arise and give birth

to the useful arts in their variety, and to the unlimited refinements of life.

We have already seen how the inspired history contradicts this fanciful scheme. In God's account of man sinless in the paradise of Eden we see our first parents surrounded by every good thing, endowed with mind and moral feelings as well as speech, with a given sphere for activity, and placed under a defined responsibility to the only true God Whose presence and intercourse they enjoyed, and Who thus blessed them whom He tried as bound to obedience under penalty of death. It was a state of natural blessings enjoyed with thanksgiving to Him Who gave them. Alas! they disobeyed Jehovah Elohim, and were expelled from their earthly paradise, but not without a fresh revelation suited in God's mercy to their fallen condition, and directing their hearts to a Deliverer. He from the nature of the case could not but be divine, yet One Who in some wondrous way must be human also, to suffer indeed but to triumph over the mighty and subtle foe — the bruised Seed of woman to bruise the Serpent's head. Alone, with this hope did Jehovah Elohim clothe them with coats of skin — with that which had its origin in death: a thing suggestive, especially in connection with the revelation then given, of grave but comforting assurance to guilty man, in lieu of a merely natural device in vain adopted to cover their nakedness.

But it is equally sure, according to scripture, that the arts of civilisation began and were developed in that family which rejected God's revelation for nature; which resented His disapproval and vented hatred on the believing brother, as righteous as Cain was not; and which in despair and defiance betook themselves out of

a bad conscience and its fears to civic life in its cradle, and sought to make, if not a paradise, a substitute for it in the elegant arts and letters that embellish society. This is surely civilisation in the germ; and we see it in Cain's line from the earliest age ever expanding, and recounted for our serious thought in Genesis 4. To impute its rise or progress to revelation is what none could do who reads believingly.

It is no less plain that Ham and his sons are as marked after the deluge by their progress in civilisation, as by the degeneracy into barbarism. To this, war would naturally expose the sufferers from superior power, fleeing into distant lands and forgetting at length what had once been familiar in the new sphere where they sought liberty.

Of Ham's sons Cush has the first place. According to scripture that stock settled in lands the most remote. There is without doubt an Asiatic as well as an African Cush. Gen. 2:13 presents its difficulty, but it would seem to be anticipative like Havilah and Assyria; for it is certain that till the flood there was no actual settlement of lands in their nations. But we know from our chapter that a notable departure was first taken by one of the Cushite descent to possess himself of power by usurpation, and this not in Africa but in the plain of Shinar, of which there are details to follow. It was certainly not after their arrival in Africa that this ambitious movement took place, but early in that day of change; and in fact not a few traces exist, philological and historical, of early connection between Ethiopia, Southern Arabia, and the cities on the lower Euphrates, as may be seen in Rawlinson's Herod. i. 442, 443. No one doubts that in general Cush as a country lies beyond

higher Egypt; but as a race they settled far more widely, as already pointed out. And this explains more than one passage, which is commonly and altogether misunderstood from not taking the facts into account no less than from holding fast the strict wording of scripture. Thus, Isaiah (Isa. 18:1) says, “Ho! land shadowing with wings, which art beyond the rivers of Cush.” It is absurd to infer that this means either Egypt or Ethiopia, any more than Babylonia. The object of the phrase is on the contrary to distinguish the land in question from either those lands or from any within those limits, which had in the past interfered with Israel. It is the prediction, not yet accomplished, of a land beyond the Nile in the south and the Euphrates in the north, which are the rivers of Cush. That unnamed land, described in striking terms as distinctly outside the Gentile powers which had hitherto acted on the chosen people, is to espouse their cause at a future day; but to no good effect, for the nations will oppose, jealous and hostile as of old, just before Jehovah takes up the matter and restores Israel to the place of His name, to Mount Zion. So in Zeph. 3:10 we read, “From beyond the river of Cush my suppliants, the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring my oblation.” Egypt or Ethiopia might be described as on one side of Cush, and Babylonia on the other; but Jehovah shall bring His dispersed from lands expressly beyond both.

There is no question as to the identification of Mizraim, and the great magnificence of its civilisation as of the Asiatic Cush in the remotest antiquity. The form of the word in Hebrew is the dual, which some would refer to higher and lower Egypt. However this may be, the context decides that both Cush and Mizraim mean men,

and sons of Ham. Ephraim, born in Egypt, has also the dual form, but is none the less surely the name of a man.

Phut or Put exemplifies the more degraded stock of Ham's descendants in Africa, contiguous to Egypt and Ethiopia, and named with one or other at times. But Phut can hardly be the Libyan as A.V. makes out of Jer. 46:9, or Libya as from Ezek. 30:5, and Ezek. 38:5 where it should be Phut as in Ezek. 27:10. The Lubim as in Nahum 3:9 point rather to the Lybians. The very obscurity which covers this African branch of Ham's sons serves to show how low they had fallen.

But Canaan, last named, has the most unenviable place of all, as the early object of curse, and the direst adversary of Israel in the land assigned according to promise: a highly civilised race, but steeped in shameless idolatry and every moral abomination, and therefore given up according to earthly righteousness to extermination, both because they deserved it, and as a safeguard lest Israel should be drawn into like iniquities; as indeed, failing to execute His sentence, they proved to their own sin, shame, and cost. More details we hope to have in due course.

Genesis 10:7.

The posterity of Cush we have next, as being Ham's eldest son. "And the sons of Cush, Seba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabtecha. And the sons of Raamah, Sheba and Dedan" (ver. 7; see also 1 Chron. 1:9).

The man Seba gave his name to the country and people afterwards known as Meroë between Ethiopia and Egypt. The ruins of the metropolis also so called are not

far from the Nubian tower of Dschendi or Shendy, as Gesenius tells us (Thes. Ll. H. and Ch. ii. 993). Bruce in his travels (See. Ed. v. 317) says, “If we are not to reject entirely the authority of ancient history, the island of Meroe, so famous in the first ages, must be found somewhere between the source of the Nile and this point where the two rivers unite; for of the Nile we are certain, and it seems very clear that the Atbara is the Asaboras of the ancients.” In his vol. vi. 445, 446, he confirms the former statement, and gives its latitude as 16 deg. 26 min. for the city, adding that there are four remarkable rivers that contribute to form the island Meroe, the Astusaspes (or Mareb), the Astaboras (or Tacazzé), the Astapus (or White river), and the Nile (or Blue River). It is rather of course a Mesopotamian tract than an island proper; but no one need wonder that it was so called. Strabo (xviii. 823) corrects Diodorus Sic. (i. 23) in that 375 miles would be not the length but the circumference, and 125 miles the diameter. It was rich in mines of gold, copper, iron, and salt; possessed woods of ebony, date-palm, almond-trees, etc., and abounded in pasture-lands and millet fields of double harvest, to say nothing of forests where game and wild beasts were caught.

But its fame was long after the first ages of the Pharaohs; and the derivation (Diodorus Sic., Josephus, etc.), of Meroë from a sister of Cambyses who died during his expedition, is very doubtful. It is rather an adoption from the native designation Meru, which in ancient Egyptian means island, as shown in Smith’s Dict. B. iii. 1189. Our Auth. and Rev. Vv. have “Sabeans,” in Isa. 45:14, where it should surely be Sebeans (Sebaim), as the country is named with Cush or Ethiopia

in Isa. 43:3. In Job 1:15 the error occurs of calling the men of Sheba “Sabeans.” Both Sheba and Seba are brought together in Ps. 72:10; and we shall find a Cushite Sheba presently, as well as a Joktanite and a Jokshanite of the Shemitic line later on, both of whom found their settlements in Arabia, not in Africa.

There is far from the same clear evidence as to Havilah, the second son of Cush, and also another of similar name, the twelfth son of Joktan (ver 22). As we know there is a country so called in the account of the rivers of Eden (Gen. 2:11), some have sought it in Colchis or in modern Georgia; or again to the north of Suez (cf. Gen. 25:18; 1 Sam. 15:7). From the scanty references to the Cushite Havilah in scripture, it is not possible to speak with decision; but there is no doubt that they found their way into southern Arabia; and it would seem that the difficulty is increased by their intermingling with the Shemites of the same name, where the district of Khäwlán is supposed to have been theirs. It is well known that Niebuhr the elder says there are two districts of that name (Descr. 270, 280); whence some have inferred one for each of the two races. But the second seems a town rather than another large district. There is more ground to look for the Cushite Havilah in the Avalitae on the African coast S.W. of the straits of Bab-el-Man-deb.

The next son of Cush, Sabtah, is generally thought traceable among the Adramitae on the Red Sea coast of Aden, where we have the modern name of Hadramaut. Cl. Ptolemy and Arrian speak of them, and Pliny the elder (N. H. vi. 32) notices a city, Sabatha, which seems to recall their forefather. It is mentioned by Knobel (in his book on these peoples) that there is a dark race in

that quarter though not confined to it, quite different from the ordinary Arab, and pointing to a Hamitic stock.

More distinct is the identification of Raamah, not only through his own name, but in his sons' too. Indeed Ezekiel names father and son as represented long after by the merchants from the eastern coast of Arabia. "The trafficking of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy traffickers; they traded for thy wares with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones and gold" (Ezek. 27:22). These were pre-eminently products of Arabia Felix on the Persian Gulf. It is interesting to observe, as Mr. E. S. Poole points out in Smith's Dict. B. ii. 983, that the LXX. version of our text helps to trace Raamah's name, Ῥεγμά in connection with the same in Ptol. (vi. 7) and with Ῥῆγμα in Steph. Byzant. (de Urb. ed. Berk. 653). Mr. Forster (Arabia, i, 62, 64, 75) thinks that the tribe's name, whether in Ptol. or in Pliny, is drawn from "Rhamanitae," and hence from their progenitor; and he says that Ramah is still the name of a town as well as of a tribe and a district in that region.

Sabtecha is the last-named of Cush's sons, of which scripture makes no mention beyond the genealogical list here and in 1 Chron. 1. Hence we cannot say anything sure, and need not repeat more than Bochart's conjecture that they found their way to Carmania on the Persian shore of the Gulf, and that the name seems changed to the Samydace of Steph. Byzant. In his Thes. Gesenius suggests a yet less probable idea.

Of Sheba and Dedan, sons of Raamah, we may say more when we come to compare them with the same names in the Shemitic line. This only may be noticed that in Ezek. 27 Sheba occurs twice; first, with Raamah in ver. 22,

which fixes him as the Cushite in the same part of Arabia; secondly, with Asshur, etc., in ver, 23, which points to the Shemitic line, confirmed by the distinct merchandise of each. In like manner the men of Dedan in Ezek. 27:15 appear to be Cushites on the Persian gulf (where the isle of Dadan perpetuates the name) and with imports and exports accordingly; whereas we have Dedan distinguished in ver. 20, who seem to be Shemitic through Keturah. Compare Ezek. 25:13.

The Jews therefore did not err in assigning to Cush, not only Ethiopia and the contiguous parts in Africa, but the opposite coast of Arabia and the southern shore of Asia generally unto India. But Arabia received also a large Shemitic population, as we shall see, which gave character to their language; and this not only from Joktan, Eber's son early, but from Ishmael's twelve sons, and from Jokshan, Abraham's son still later, with some of Esau's descendants. Even Homer (Od. i. 23, 24) speaks of Ethiopians divided into two parts, the most distant of men, some at the setting sun, and some at the rising. We shall find a Cushite element active early in Babylonia and Africa. It was a Turanian race which included the Turks, but not the Armenians whom they rightly gave to Japhet. But they seem never to have realised that the ancient Persian (Zend) language, and that of northern and central India (Sanskrit), disclose the same Japhetic source.

Genesis 10:8-10.

From the manner in which Nimrod is introduced, it would appear that he was a descendant of Cush rather than son in the strict sense. Why else should he be

named after not only the five sons of Cush, but his two grandsons through Raamah?

“And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before Jehovah: wherefore it is said, like Nimrod a mighty hunter before Jehovah. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar” (vers. 8-10).

Nimrod then was assuredly a Cushite. This only it was of moment to communicate, because of a new departure which originated in him. And as we do not hear particulars of his immediate connection beyond that fact, so neither are we told of his descendants. Personal ascendancy is ascribed to him first, which made the brief notice of himself of sufficient interest to turn aside from the hitherto simple tracing of the genealogical lines, the origin of the various races. “He began to be a mighty one in the earth.” It was no question of divine appointment or providential succession. His own right hand wrought on his own behalf. The Jews have as usual much to say where scripture is silent, and strive to fill up the outline of truth into a fabulous picture. So do others follow them in this natural propensity, which they represent as hoary tradition; so in Arab astronomy Nimrod is transformed into the constellation Orion, “Giant,” in Hebrew “Chesil” (Job 9:9, Job 38:31, Amos 5:8). We need not occupy our readers with the various hypotheses which have been reared on this latter word; but those curious in such speculations can find them in Michaelis’ Suppl. ad Lex. Hebr. No. 1192.

But there is nothing mythical in the little that scripture says. Nimrod “began to be a mighty one in the earth.”

Not so had it been with Abel or Seth, with Enoch or Noah. What they enjoyed was God's gift. They looked for Him Who is coming; Nimrod sought great things for himself like Cain who was the first builder of a city in primeval days, as Nimrod was the first after the deluge, and on a large and repeated scale. Present power was his aim; and God allowed it apparent success.

We are further told that "he was a mighty hunter before Jehovah." There seems no sufficient reason to question that this is meant literally. It made a great impression on his contemporaries, so that his prowess as a hunter became proverbial. "Wherefore it is said, like Nimrod a mighty hunter before Jehovah." It evidently gave him the exercised skill and strength which passed at length into another field of far deeper interest and gravity.

Yet more important is it to note that Nimrod was the first to set at nought the patriarchal headship which hitherto prevailed, as it subsisted elsewhere for ages afterward. His ambition could not be bounded by the chase, and led him from wild beasts to mankind. "And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel." We have to wait for the chapter which follows to see the significance of this fact; and we learn from it and other remarks how little our chapter has to do with chronology. For though it does give the origin of races in their lands and tongues, it intersperses notices by the way which occurred not a little while after; and this episode of Nimrod is one of them.

It was among the Hamitic sons then that a kingdom was first set up among men. God was not in any of Nimrod's thoughts; He was not sought, nor did He give the least direction, in the case. Nimrod conceived the design

through his own ambition, and executed it through the force of his will, and the address and skill he had acquired in his hunting. How different the way of Jehovah at a later day! For, when Israel would have a king in imitation of the nations and chose one who served himself, and brought no deliverance even from Philistines within their border who slew him and his sons, He took His servant David from the pasture, from following the sheep, and made him prince over His people, over Israel, to feed them, and assured him that his house and his kingdom should be made firm for ever before him — his throne established for ever.

But the present use made of this is not the perpetuity of that kingdom, secured as it did become in Christ risen, the sure mercies of David; but the beautiful preparation which pleased Jehovah Who chose him lay, as we have seen, in his lowly and tender care of the sheep, in marked contrast with the first king among men who made his mark in the snaring and slaying of wild beasts. The race of man had already proved how little it regarded aged Noah who was not only chief of all the saved from the deluge but set up by God with the sword of magistracy then first committed. And if he had through heedless self-indulgence fallen into an act whose effects put him to grievous shame, what wickedness in any near him to expose him to mockery who had covered all his own through the dangers of the flood! Of this line it was, though not of Canaan’s descent, that Nimrod arrogantly set up first a kingdom. Terrible and dreadful we may say, as the prophet said of the Chaldeans, his judgment and his dignity proceeded from himself.

His kingdom Nimrod began with Babel. This is most characteristic. What recked he, if it had begun in impious self-will to centralise mankind in direct opposition to the divine design and command of replenishing the earth? or if it had been abandoned by the builders under a divine judgment which compelled them to scatter abroad upon the face of all the earth? The abandoned city and tower exactly suited his project of a kingdom for himself, not a universal commonwealth. So “the beginning of his kingdom was Babel.” And success in his project encouraged him to go forward; “and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar” followed. As there is no doubt about Babylon, there need be as little that Warka (Irka, or Irak), some forty-three miles east of Babylon, answers to Erech, certainly not Gesenius’ identification with Aracca on the Tigris, any more than Jerome’s notion of Edessa (or Urfah). More weight is due to Jerome’s report of Jewish judgment, that Accad was represented by Nisibis, the ancient name of which was Acar (Rosenmüller ii. 29). The Talmud identifies Calneh with Niffer, about sixty miles south-east of Babylon. Here Arab tradition revels abundantly; but their flights of fancy are not worth recounting.

Genesis 10:11, 12.

The important fact imparted to us, in the verses immediately preceding, we have seen to be the first establishment of royal power in the Cushite Nimrod; and this by force and fraud, transferred from hunting wild beasts to acquiring dominion over mankind for personal aggrandizement. His city building in Babylonia we have also seen, the earliest development of the kind since the

deluge. Nor is any architecture more characteristic of race, as Mr. Ferguson has shown, than the massive monumental style of the sons of Ham.

This is confirmed by the true sense of Micah 5:6, where “the land of Assyria” is expressly distinguished from “the land of Nimrod,” which last was really the plain of Shinar. They were quite distinct and separated by the Hiddekel or Tigris. In “that land” i.e. Babylonia there were Shemitic and Japhetic elements no less than the Hamitic, which at first was predominant.

It is such an episodical notice as seems to account for the mention in this place of a counter movement on the part of the Shemite Asshur, of whom we read in his due place afterward. A step forward among men naturally finds imitation ere long. And the record of the new policy in the south is followed by that of a similar course in the north as far as the building of cities is concerned, though this may not have been at all contemporary but later than that. Their kindred nature sufficiently explains the mention of both at this point.

“From that land went forth Asshur, and built Nineveh, and Rehoboth-Ir, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: this is the great city” (vers. 11, 12). It is not intimated that Asshur was driven out by the Hamitic race, but rather is it inferred from the language that the success of Nimrod set the example, and gave the impulse to a like ambition. How completely Noah’s authority (for he still lived) was forgotten by all, is evident by all that is revealed. Patriarchal place yielded to men’s thoughts and will.

Of these four cities, the first is beyond any just question. Yet it is late in the history of the world when we hear of

Nineveh. Then in the days of Jonah it was a “very great city,” according to some of still greater extent than Babylon when the “golden city” rose to its zenith. But human accounts of cities long passed away need to be read with caution, as the chroniclers long after were apt to stray through exaggeration. Still the Biblical intimation of its later existence is of immense extent, vast population, and exceeding splendour. The remains exhumed in our day attest that the words of scripture are here as reliable as everywhere else. Yet we need not conceive anything more when Asshur wrought his work than a little beginning of that which was at length to attain such power and magnificence. This it retained to triumph over the ten tribes of Israel and to menace Judah and David’s house, when it received a blow so manifestly divine that it never troubled the holy land again. Ere long it fell never to rise, when God was pleased to bring forward Babylon from a provincial position, though with a king and sometimes independent, to become the mistress of the world, and the captor of the guilty capital and king and people of the Jews.

Rehoboth-Ir appears to be so specified to distinguish it from Rehoboth the Nahar — “of the river.” This latter (Gen. 36:37; 1 Chron. 1:48) was unmistakably on the river Euphrates; and in fact the name is still found given to two places on the river, one on the western bank, eight miles below the junction of the Khabûr (Rahabeth, Chesney’s Euphr. i. 119, ii. 610), the other with an added name (Rahabeth-Malik), which Gen. Chesney does not notice, but it is given in Mr. Layard’s Nineveh, a few miles lower on the eastern bank. Rehoboth-Ir was in Assyria proper. Kaplan, the Jewish geographer, identifies

Rehoboth of the river with Rahabeth-Malik, but distinguishes it from Rehoboth-Ir, which he believes to have disappeared (see Smith's Dict. of the Bible, iii. 1026, col. 1). As no trace of this city has as yet commended itself to any explorer, it may be worth naming, that Jerome, not only in the Vulgate but in his works (Quaest. ad Genesim), gives it as his opinion that it was part of what became Nineveh, meaning "the streets of the city" (i.e. plateas civitatis), This is a mere conjecture, which may be cleared up by better knowledge.

But Calah was too important a city to be so easily hidden. This the Septuagint renders Χαλάχ, and distinguishes from Halah in 2 Kings 17:6, 18:2, and 1 Chron. 5:26, rendered Ἀλαέ Chesney (i. 22, 119) appears to accept Sir H. Rawlinson's identification of Calah with the ruins of Holwáa, situated near the river Diyálah, and about 130 miles east of Baghdad. If so, it is now Sar. púli Zohab on the slopes of the Zagros, and in the high road leading from Baghdad to Kirmán Sháh, vol. ix. 36 of Royal Geogr. Journal (Chesney ii. 25). It seems once to have been the capital of the empire, the residence of Sardanapalus and others, till Sargon built a new capital on the site of what is now called Khorsabad. But it still retained importance till the empire fell.

Resen has been by some identified with the Ῥέσινα of Steph. Byz and Ptol. (Geog. v. 18); this, however, was not in Assyria, but far west. Bochart (Geog. Sac. iv. 28) suggested the Larissa of Xenophon (Anab. iii. 4, §7) which call hardly be doubted to correspond with the remarkable ruins now called Nimrud. Mr. Rawlinson leans to the view that these ruins answer to Calah, and that Resen, therefore, lay between that city and

Nineveh, and that its ruins are near the Selaimyeh of modern times, and cuneiform inscriptions at Nimrud give Culach as the Assyrian name of the place. This tends to support the claim of Calah rather than of Resen.

Genesis 10:13, 14.

Let us now look a little into the family of Mitzraim. “And Mitzraim begot the Ludim and the Anamim and the Lehabim and the Naphtuhim and the Pathrusim and the Casluhim (out of whom came the Philistines) and the Caphtorim” (vers. 13, 14). So it is also in 1 Chron. 1:11, 12.

As there was a Shemite Lud (ver. 22), it is important to distinguish from him, the ancestor of the well-known Lydian race in the west of Asia Minor, those descended from Mitzraim, who spread themselves west of the Nile. They were archers as we learn from Isa. 66:19, and Jer. 46:9, where the African people seem enumerated and so described. It would appear to be the same in Ezek. 27:10, and in Ezek. 30:4, 5 also. In the Auth. V. of Jer. 46 is given the word “Lydians,” as in Ezek. 30 “Lydia.” This conveys the impression that our translators probably understood the Asiatic people. But there ought not to be a doubt that they were African.

We next hear of the Anamim, of whom nothing more is said in the Bible than in the two genealogical lists. It may perhaps be gathered, from comparison with the names which follow, that they were a race that settled in the Delta of Egypt. But it must be allowed that no reliable trace is known either in the ancient Geographers, or in the monuments hitherto deciphered. Here we have the unfailing record of God, Who alone saw the end from the beginning and has been pleased to

communicate to us the truth otherwise unnoticed. The judgment of the habitable earth in a day which approaches will prove that the races are not extinct.

The Lehabim, called also Lubim in 2 Chron. 12:3, 2 Chron. 16:8, with the people called Phut, or Put, (if not Pul, as in Isa. 66:19), answer to the ancient Lybians; save indeed that the ordinary usage of Lybia in olden time is vague, and extends far and wide to almost all Africa west of the Nile. The Phut of scripture apparently corresponds with the hieroglyphic bow, or Pet. This is also applied to a people, or rather confederacy of peoples, conquered by Egypt, and called “the Bows,” or “Nine Bows,” Na-Petu, though Brugsch understands simply “the Nine Peoples.” This would seem to connect itself with the Naphtuhim immediately following the Lehabim, who are the same as the Lebu or Rebu of the Egyptian inscriptions, as Mr. R. S. Poole has shown, the Libyans proper. The A.V. renders Phut the Libyans” in Jer. 49:2 (“handling the shield”) distinguished from the Lydians, or Ludim (“handling and bending the bow”); and in Ezek. 38:5 “Libya,” again marked with other powers by the “shield.” In Nahum 3:9 we see Phut and the Lubim helpers of No-Amon (the god Amon of No, or Thebes of Upper Egypt), the ruins of which, in spite of Cush and Mitzraim, is set by the prophet as a warning to Nineveh. Again, and bearing on what is still future, we are told that when the last king of the north subdues and spoils Egypt, the Lubim and Cush shall be at his steps, though Edom and Moab and the chief of the children of Ammon shall be delivered out of his hands.

What plainer proof can there be to the believer that these races are yet abiding and to take their part in the great catastrophe of the latter day? The reign of

Antiochus Epiphanes, directly or indirectly, did not extend beyond Dan. 11:31, 32. That which we have pointed out is after the great break of ver. 35, and expressly supposes the renewal of the two powers of the north and the south, when “the king,” the lawless one, is in “the land” between them “at the time of the end.” Thus that time is as clearly future as sure. Compare Isa. 11:14, which not only confirms the fact of tie old cognate but hostile races on the borders of the land, but declares their final subjection to Israel under Messiah “in that day.”

Of the Naphtuhim a little has been already said when speaking of the Lubim. More is given in scripture respecting the next name of Pathrusim. From Isa. 11:11 Pathros as distinguished from Egypt would seem to be the upper part of the land. Ezek. 29:14, 30:13-18 are supposed to point at the Thebais the desolation which the prophet declared should overtake all the land. The chief difficulty is, that Jeremiah speaks of Pathros (44:1) in connection with cities in Lower Egypt, and in a yet more. general way later on (ver. 15). But there does not appear in the group anything so decided as to set aside our referring Pathros to the land farther south.

There remain the “Casluhim (out of whom or whence came the Philistines) and the Caphtorim.” These races can hardly be doubted to have occupied the Delta before the Philistine migration to the Shephelah. Some suggest here a transposition; as Deut. 2:23, Jer. 47:4, Amos 9:7, expressly connect the Philistine immigrants with the Caphtorim. Pusey, commenting on the last of these scriptures, inclines to the conclusion, that there were different immigrations of the same tribe into Palestine (as of Danes and Saxons into England, where they all

merged into one common name). The first day have been from the Casluhim; the second in time but chief in importance from the Caphtorim; and a third of Kerethim (probably from Crete) in the era of the Judges added but a little to their strength (1 Sam. 30:14-16). Of these last, Cherethites and Pelethites figure as lifeguards of King David, foreigners like the Gittites.

It is plain and certain that the architecture, whether of temples or of palaces, the sculpture and painting, and the various other monuments of Egypt for living or dead bear, like its original language, the marks of extreme antiquity and of, high civilisation. Idolatry flaunts us everywhere, but as Heeren remarks (African Nations, ii. 271, Oxford Talboys, 1832), “The first idea which presents itself from a view of these monuments must be that Thebes [the No, or No-Amon, of Scripture] was once the capital of a mighty empire, whose boundaries extended far beyond Egypt, which at some distant period comprised a great part of Africa, and an equally large portion of Asia. Her kings are represented as victors and conquerors; and the scene of their glory is not confined to Egypt, but often carried to remote regions. Prisoners of distant nations bow the knee before the conquerors, and count themselves happy if they can obtain their pardon.... This is further confirmed by the many examples which evince the refinement of domestic life, and the degree of luxury to which the people had arrived. The narrow valley of the Nile could not supply all the articles, such as costly garments, perfumes, etc., which we find here represented. An extensive commerce was requisite, not only to obtain all this, but also to produce that opulence, and that interchange of ideas, which constitute its foundation.”

Denon (Voy. dans la basse et haute Egypte, 1802), the great French Government work (Description de l'Egypte, 1811, 1815), Hamilton (Remarks etc. 1809), Belzoni (Narrative etc. 1822), Minutoli (Travels, 1824), and both series of Sir G. Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians are the chief modern authorities.

Genesis 10:15-18.

The youngest branch of the Hamitic race now comes before us, already branded with curse (Gen. 9:25), and a bondman of bondmen to his brethren. Yet no doom long seemed more unlikely. They were enterprising beyond any, and no more disposed to tarry at home than the sons of Cush. Who spread themselves abroad as they? Canaan, who naturally gave the general designation, had a more special application to the "lowlanders" of the country. They are carefully pointed out as races. which possessed themselves of the land destined for Israel. As the song of Moses so forcibly expresses it (Deut. 32:8), "When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel. For Jehovah's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

This is a revelation of the highest importance for God's government of the world. Men willingly forget that the times of the Gentiles are in this quite abnormal. For He has no direct government of the earth, only providential, during their course. The only time when He governed immediately was when Israel afforded its theatre. To this end He chose the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as His people, and gave them the land of promise from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates. To

Israel He made Himself known as Jehovah, the one living and true God, as He had to their pilgrim fathers as the Almighty God. But through the self-confidence of unbelief they forgot their redemption from Egypt and their preservation in the wilderness up to Sinai, all of grace; and then accepted law as their condition at Sinai, instead of pleading the promise. Hence their history became a history of sin and ruin, chequered by wondrous interventions of mercy, as well as solemn chastisements of their rebellious iniquity, till at length even the house of David led the last remaining tribe of Judah into abominable idolatry, and God delivered them as captives to Babylon, the first of the four “beasts,” or Gentile imperial powers. Finally under the last of these bestial empires (the Roman), the Jewish remnant, which was permitted to return to the land for a fresh trial, rejected their own Messiah and even the gospel founded on His death, which was first sent to them, and wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

It is in the Jewish people only that we have a kingdom of the earth set up by Jehovah Himself under the direction of His law. But even under its earliest and brightest phase, when David reigned, what failure and presage of downfall! yet not without shadows of abiding righteousness, power, and glory, as often seen in the psalms! And the man of peace, his son, outwardly more magnificent, brought in but plain evidence of ruin, even then come and far more approaching and sure till there was no remedy. Yet was the history full of instruction both of what man was as responsible under God’s law, and of God’s ways in blessing and punishing according to the principles of His earthly government.

All this was, however, only a witness in the hands of a people prone to evil and departure from Him. But God has in no way abandoned His purpose for the earth. He is using the interval, since His rejection of the Jews because of their rejection of Christ, to call a people out of both Jews and Gentiles, who put on Christ in Whom there is neither, to form a heavenly family in union with Christ, the body of the ascended Head, God's habitation in the Spirit. When this is complete, the Lord Jesus will come and receive us unto Himself and present us in the Father's house. He will also in due time appear executing judgment, not only on the fourth Beast revived and the Antichrist in the land, but on all hostile powers and peoples, delivering a remnant of Jews then righteous, the nucleus of the nation, believing and expectant, blessed and established for ever as a blessing to all the families of the earth. Such will Israel be under Messiah and the new covenant, and mercy endure for ever, as they will then sing in truth of heart. And the Gentiles will in that day cast away their idols of silver and gold, and everything high and lifted up, and lofty looks and haughtiness of heart, cordially bowing to the kingdom with Zion as its centre, and the mountain of Jehovah's house established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills. For Messiah will reign, the only perfect judge between the nations, who shall not lift sword nor learn war any more.

Now the races of Canaan occupied that land which Jehovah intended for Israel. Nor was this all. They were conspicuously vile, most of all the cities of the plain, whose wickedness was not to be named. They were therefore cut off by a sudden and manifestly divine infliction. But when the cup of the Amorites was full, and

the land became so unclean that Jehovah must visit its iniquity, He was pleased to make Israel the executioner of His vengeance. What could be more righteous in itself? What wiser for His people, its destined heirs? All unnatural evils as well as idolatries (their very religion ever binding on them these abominations) had become their “customs,” from which Israel must be kept. It was no question of cruelty; and it was Israel’s fault not to exterminate as completely as Jehovah enjoined; so that the spared did not fail to ensnare and corrupt the chosen people into like infamy.

Of these races we need dwell on no more than the first two. These can be more easily severed, as they only are personal names, the rest Gentilic. “And Canaan begat Zidon [or Sidon] the firstborn, and Heth” (ver. 15). The name of the first means, like Saida its modern appellation, “fishing.” The city was built on the northern slope of a spur projecting into the sea with its citadel behind on the south. The plain was narrower between Lebanon and the sea. But the daughter city of Tyre in time outshines it, as the later prophets indicate. In earlier days we hear of “great Zidon” (Joshua 11:8, Joshua 19:28). So even Homer, who repeatedly speaks of it and its people, never named Tyre. They were then skilled in manufactures, later celebrated for their marine and as merchants. But they corrupted even Solomon’s house by their abominations.

The Hittites were of Heth or Cheth. Their daughters troubled Isaac and Rebecca, though we hear of Abraham friendly with them and others. They like the Jebusites and the Amorites betook themselves to the mountains from the south, and afterwards were outside in the valley of the Orontes. So in 1 Kings 10:29 their kings are

spoken of with “the Kings of Aram” or Syria; they seem without doubt to be the Khatti of the Egyptian inscriptions, on the western side of the Euphrates. They had however shared in the efforts against Joshua (9, 11) and suffered accordingly. In Ezek. 16:3, 45, “thy mother was a Hittite” is no more meant literally than “thy father was an Amorite.” They are the prophet’s figures of moral reproach.

As for the races mentioned after these, little more is to be said than what lies on the surface of scripture: “And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite” (vers. 16-18). The Jebusites held Jerusalem, though defeated by Joshua, but not dispossessed till David. The Amorite was in the mountain land of Judah, but pushed east where on their full or expulsion the two and a half tribes settled east of the Jordan. The Girgashites disappeared from view. Of the Hivites we have the remarkable tale the Book of Joshua tells, and of its consequences, at least of those in Gibeon; for there were others further north and outside, near whom settled the latter five families, or on the coast, and also in the isle of Aradus.

Genesis 10:18-20.

The notices of the Canaanite families are more minute, as God considered His people whose duty it was to execute judgment and dispossess them of the promised land. However they might be “spread abroad” or dispersed, and seen to flourish for a while, the curse was on them, from the first on moral grounds, aggravated at last by enormities against God and man which to His eyes called for extermination.

It may be remarked that we do not hear of Perizzites in this genealogical account, though the name occurs in Gen. 13:7, Gen. 15:20, Gen. 34:30; Ex. 3:8, 17, Ex. 23:23, Ex. 33:2, Ex. 34:11; Deut. 7:1, Deut. 20:17; Joshua 3:10, Joshua 9:1, Joshua 11:3, Joshua 12:8, Joshua 17:15, Joshua 24:11; Judges 1:4, 5, Judges 3:5; 1 Kings 9:20; Ezra 9:1; 2 Chron. 8:7; and Neh. 9:8. This appears to imply that they were not a distinct race, but rather such as separated from the town-life, to which the Canaanites generally were addicted, and remained villagers; as in the later history of Israel those who were religious separatists were called Pharisees.

“And afterwards the families of the Canaanites spread themselves abroad. And the border of the Canaanites was from Zidon, as thou goest toward Gerar, unto Gazah; as thou goest toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, unto Lasha. These [are] sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, in their nations” (vers. 18-20).

The border is thus traced from Zidon on the N.W. of Gerar and Gazah on the S.W., and from the four doomed cities of the plain in the S.E. to Lasha (probably Laish or Leshem in the N.E.), though Jerome identifies it with Callirrhoe on the east of the Dead Sea, and Bochart with a city called by the Arabs Lusa in the south of Judah. Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim are specified on which fell fire from heaven in early patriarchal days, as recorded in this book, to their utter destruction: a dealing of Jehovah in His wrath, which was recalled to the warning of Israel from Moses (Deut. 29:23) to Hosea (Hosea 11:8) and Jeremiah (Jer. 20:16).

In reviewing the posterity of Ham, this we cannot but see, that none sprang so early into prominence of earthly power and dominion, that none carried forward civilisation so rapidly and extensively in primeval times, that no other peoples were so distinguished at first with material grandeur, both in the plain of Shinar and in that remarkable country which lies along the Nile, that is, in both Asia and Africa; and that they were long the sole pioneers of commerce in west and east, north and south. But the true God was absent from their souls; nor this only: they out-ran all other races in their vain thoughts, ungratefully abandoning Him when they knew Him, and their foolish heart was soonest darkened. Professing to be wise they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and quadrupeds and reptiles. Wherefore God gave them up to the lowest defilement and vile affections contrary to nature, and worse than brutish, reprobate. Their very mind had pleasure in evil. Such man became without God, none so audaciously, and shamefully as the Canaanites, whose judgment therefore was most righteous save to such as are more or less reprobate.

What an illustration is their history of the words of the apostle on the first man as contrasted with the last Adam! “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.” The book of nature man never did read aright, though he ought; and conscience, the monitor of fallen man, shows him his sins, but of itself never leads to repentance: only God’s goodness does, above all revealed in Christ. But the Hamite races were the

leaders of the departure from God, and none so flagitiously as the Canaanite.

Genesis 10:21.

The races which sprang from Shem come before us in the last place. This is quite independent of the respective ages of Noah's three sons. Ham, we know, is declared to be "the little" one (Gen. 9:24), — generally translated "youngest"; and chronology shows that not Shem but Japheth was the eldest. Accordingly Leeser joins Mendelssohn in the rendering of the A.V. and the margin (not the text) of the R.V. The first place assigned to Shem, in the usual formula of "Shem, Ham, and Japheth," is due not to the order of birth, but to the spiritual purpose which gave Shem that position (Gen. 5:32, Gen. 6:10, Gen. 7:13, Gen. 9:18, Gen. 10:1). When, however, "the generations" are given in detail, Japheth's sons are enumerated first; and a similar order prevails in 1 Chron. 1. If primogeniture here in Japheth had its honour, if precocity in his rising to political place and natural power is recognised in Ham, for Shem was reserved, though named last, the honour Godward. "And to Shem also were [sons] born: he [was] father of all the sons of Eber, brother of Japheth the elder" (ver. 21).

Undoubtedly the manner of Shem's introduction is so peculiar as to arrest attention. He had descendants like the other chiefs derived from Noah. But he is specified, on the one hand as the father of all the sons of Eber, and on the other as the brother of Japheth the elder (or, great one). Of the latter enough has been said; but we may compare Gen. 14:13, "Abram the Hebrew," in order to understand better what seems meant. And here the LXX give περάτης, "the passer," as Aquila has ὁ

περαίτης. This at least gives a distinctive stamp, where as only tradition does it to Eber personally.

The head of that people, above all distinguished among those who sprang from Shem, passed the Euphrates on his memorable way. As Joshua said to all the people at the close of his service, and a little before his death (Joshua 24:2, 3, 12, 13), “Your fathers dwelt of old on the other side of the river, Terah the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the river, and led him throughout the land of Canaan,” etc. “And now fear Jehovah and serve him in perfectness and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt, and serve Jehovah. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods whom your fathers that were on the other side of the river served, or the gods of the Amorite in whose land ye dwell.” Scripture thus lays a stress on that fact far beyond what it does to an ancestor who does not stand out from others in the genealogical line, save as the father of Peleg and Joktan. An important event marked Peleg’s days; yet it did not concern the chosen people particularly but “the earth” at large.

That Gen. 14:13 connects Abram in the passage of the eastern river, rather than his remote ancestor Eber, seems clear; for this was the regular Gentile name given to God’s people by those without, not Israel but Hebrews, as we find from the earliest to later times. And it is intelligible that a tangible fact like that event would be patent and abidingly known.

It is another question whether “all the sons of Eber” can be legitimately connected with any other person than him of whom we read in vers. 24, 25, and Gen. 11:14-17, with the corresponding list in 1 Chron. 1. In Num. 24:24 we have the only other reference, I think, which can be connected with it: an early prophecy which looks on to the latter day. For there comes a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, not merely to cut in pieces the corners of Moab but to destroy all the sons of tumult. The great conflict of the future is contemplated, as nothing in the past quite meets all. “And ships shall come from the coasts of Chittim, and afflict Asshur, and afflict Eber; and he also shall come to destruction.” West and East and Israel shall be in collision and suffer; but as the previous word runs, “Israel doeth valiantly, and one out of Jacob shall have dominion.” That Eber is used figuratively for the Jews seems unquestionable; and that they arise to earthly supremacy, when the destroyers of the earth are destroyed and Messiah reigns, is what the prophets declare.

Herein lies the real and superior dignity of Shem. Messiah is to come of his stock; as Canaan was accursed, not Ham wholly, but Canaan; so the living oracle said, “Blessed be Jehovah the God of Shem.” This was not predicted of the elder, but “God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem.” And so it has been. How vast in His providence the spread of that energetic race! Have they not dwelt, too, in the tents of Shem, not as mere conquerors, but, among other ways perhaps, as sharers in that blessing which was shadowed so finely in Israel’s “own olive-tree.” Here in due time would be the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law-giving, and the service, and

the promises, and not the fathers merely but the Son, the Messiah with a personal dignity far beyond what Israel has owned — to their own deep loss as yet.

Genesis. 10:22.

The immediate descendants of Shem are next enumerated, it would seem in the order of birth, as Arpachshad, the progenitor of the chosen line, stands in the third place, neither first nor last, either of which might be done as elsewhere for special reasons.

“The sons of Shem, Elam, and Asshur, and Arpachshad, and Lud, and Aram” (ver. 22).

Elam, the first apparently in natural order, gave his name to that part of Khusistan, which the Greeks and Romans called Elymais, which had of old Shushan for its capital, of which we hear so much in the book of Esther (Esther 1:2, 5; Esther 2:3, 5, 8; Esther 3:15; Esther 4:16; Esther 8:14, 15; Esther 9:11, 15, 18; as also in Neh. 1:1). There has been no little debate among men of learning on the precise locality, some contending (as Dean Vincent, Anc. Comm. i. 439) for Shuster on the Pasitigris or Kuran, others for Susan a good deal to the east of Shuster. But Mr. Loftus, following Sir W. F. Williams, appears to have set the question at rest in favour of Shush (to the north-west of Shuster), where only an immense mound of ruins remains of the once magnificent fortress and palace of the Persian monarchs, possessed before that by the king of Babylon, as Dan. 8:2 attests. There it was that the prophet saw the vision of the Persian ram, and the Greek or Macedonian he-goat, though some will have it that the prophet was only there in vision. It is known that Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, seized the land

of Elam or Susiana, which succumbed afterwards to Cyrus; and Susa or Shushan became the regular residence of the Persian monarch for a part of the year. There is no reason to doubt that the excavations made in our day lay bare the plan, with certain remains of the palaces," indicating a structure, with its dependent buildings, which occupied a square of 1,000 feet each way, in a massive style of architecture with fluted columns, and those in the outer groups with bases like an inverted lily (which Shushan means).

In the days of Abraham we bear of Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, with his three allies coming 2,000 miles to punish his vassal kings in the vale of Siddim: a plain proof of early power, though signally chastised by the father of the faithful. It seems that subsequently the Hamites, who earlier still rose to power in the east as well as south-west, gave the name of Cissim to this district, as Herodotus (v. 49) and Strabo let us know. They were Cossaei, and Cushites.

But it is of importance to mention that Elam joined the Medes to overthrow Babylon, as we see predicted in Isa. 21:2, the latter a Japhetic race, as the former was of Shem. In Jerusalem's day yet to come Elam will figure with its confederates against Jerusalem. For the mysterious succession here, as in Isa. 14, not applying to the past, looks on to the future, when the last Shebna shall give way to the anti-typical Eliakim, (Whom God hath appointed). Yet we know also from the assured word of prophecy, that however ravaged in the past (Ezek. 32:24, 25, and Jer. 49:34-38), Elam will have its captivity brought again in the latter days according to Jer. 49:39.

On Asshur there is the less motive for dilating, as every reader of scriptural history knows how splendid a part their race played in the comparatively early history of the world, when the struggle for predominance seemed to lie between Assyria and Egypt. Of this we find authentic accounts in the O.T. especially when both came into collision, the Assyrian especially, with the chosen people in its decay through idolatry, sweeping away the kingdom of Israel, and menacing that of Judah. But the awful check given to Sennacherib in the height of his scornful pride soon proved no real opportunity to Egypt; for Babylon that joined in destroying Nineveh was destined of God to be the head of power, as all know according to God's word. Here again shall mercy triumph over judgment; and Isa. 19 is express that in the day of Messianic power and glory Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth. We need not speak of Israel, but may say that this was never the case with Egypt and with Assyria in the past. Both wrought innumerable evils for man; both sinned shamelessly against God. But what cannot, will not, mercy work on God's part, even for the enemies of His guilty and chastised people? What a monument will not the trio be "in that day"!

Of Arpachshad we may say still less; for he leads directly down to the time of promise, about which the O.T. is almost wholly occupied.

Lud is the next son of Shem; and there is the more need of care, as there was another race of similar name which had its seat in Africa, the first named of the Mizraim or Egyptian peoples, of whom we have spoken (Gen. 10:13). There was thus Ludim of Ham, as well as of Shem. Josephus (Ant. i. § 4) was justified in stating that

the latter race settled in Asia Minor, the Lydians. Herodotus (i. 7) says indeed that the Maeones or early dwellers in the far from definite land called Lydia, for its extent changed greatly from time to time, afterward adopted the name of Lydians, being in fact as he thought the same people. But this was a mistake. Even Strabo (xii. xiv.) recognises on ancient testimony, that they were distinct races, as Niebuhr (Hist. of Rome, i. 32) and others in modern times are convinced. The Maeones were the early Japhetic settlers whom the Shemitic Lydians conquered. Indeed that careful historian, Dionysius (i. 30), notices that the Lydians had nothing in common with their Pelasgian predecessors. It can hardly be doubted that Jer. 46:9 and Ezekiel 27:10, Ezekiel 30:5, refer to the African race, perhaps Isa. 66:19, though this be not so certain. But they join in the great catastrophe of “that day.” Of Aram we shall speak in considering ver. 23.

Genesis 10:23.

Aram is the last of the sons of Shem. His name was generally given to the high table-land north-east of Palestine, though applied also more widely in combination with other terms, as will presently be pointed out. In the A.V., following the Septuagint and the Vulgate, “Syria” represents that general use. In the largest sense it comprehended not only the watershed of the Jordan and the country north, west, and east, but that which stretched to the Tigris, with Armenia on the north down to Arabia on the south. In the S.E. quarter it is designated Aram-Naharaim, that is, Syria of the two rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris, translated “Mesopotamia” in Gen. 24:10, Deut. 23:4, Judges 3:8,

10. After 1 Chron. 19:6, we have no longer that name, as the country so named passed under the dominion first. of Assyria, and last of Babylon where it attained its supreme place. In early days it was the country where Nahor and his family had a city after leaving Ur (the modern Musheir) of the Chaldees or Kasdim, a Cushite race.

The classic name of Syria was probably a mere abbreviation of Assyria, or Asshur, another name really, though akin, being alike Shemitic. But even Homer (Il. ii. 783) and Hesiod (Theog. 304) know only the name Ἄριμοι, unless Ἔρεμβοὶ also refers to the same (Od. iv. 84); so does Pindar in the fragment cited by Bockh (iii. 618) who corrects ἐν to εἰν as in Homer. As Virgil (Aen. ix. 7 6) speaks of Inarime Jovis imperiis imposita Typhöeo, the scholars are anxious to relieve the learned Latin, to say nothing of Ovid, Lucan, Sil. Ital., etc., from the imputation of a blunder in the words and transferring the scene from Asia to the volcanic regions of Italy and Sicily. But it is sure enough that Ovid does err in distinguishing Inarime from Pithacusae which were the same island, of late called Ischia. Heyne has written a learned note on the matter in his second Exc. on Aen. ix. (iii. 374-6, Lond. 1793).

At least five districts of Aram are referred to in scripture. (1) Aram-Dammesek or the Syria of Damascus appears in 2 Sam. 8:5, 6; 1 Chron, 18:5, 6. (2) Aram-Zobah, or Zobah only, to the N.E. of Damascus we find in 1 Sam. 14:47; 2 Sam. 8:3; 10:6, 8; 1 Chron. 18, 19. (3) Arambeth-Rehob, or Rehob only, occurs in 2 Sam. 10:6, 8. (4) Aram-Maachah, or Maachah only is mentioned in 2 Sam. 10:6; 1 Chron. 19:6. And Geshur in Syria or Aram we hear of in 2 Sam. 15:8, bordering with Maachah on

Argob (Deut. 3:14, Joshua 13:11, etc.). These small kingdoms of Aram seem. gradually to have merged in that which is first named; as Damascus grew itself in importance. But (5) Aram-Naharaim, or Padan-more correctly Paddan-Aram (called also Padan in Gen. 28:7), the ploughed land of Aram became the most celebrated by far, familiar to us from the days of Jacob. To this Hosea alludes as the field or open country of Syria (Hosea 12:12) almost wholly an immense plain, nearly 700 miles long and from 20 to 250 miles broad.

The north district is mountainous, where a chain (called Mons Masius of old) connects the ancient Amanus on the west with the Niphates in the east. Then about the middle the Sinjar hills cross, running nearly east and west from Mosul or thereabout to Rakkeh or near it. “This district,” says Prof. Rawlinson, “is always charming; but the remainder of the region varies greatly according to circumstances. In early spring a tender and luxuriant herbage covers the whole plain, while flowers of the most brilliant hues spring up in rapid succession, imparting their colour to the landscape, which changes from day to day. As the summer draws on, the verdure recedes towards the streams and mountains. Vast tracts of and plain, yellow, parched, and sapless, fill the intermediate space, which ultimately becomes a bare and uninhabitable desert. In the Sinjar, and in the mountain-tract to the north, springs of water are tolerably abundant, and corn, vines, and figs, are cultivated by a stationary population; but the greater part of the region is only suited to the nomadic hordes, which in spring spread themselves far and wide over the vast flats, so utilising the early verdure, and in summer and autumn gather along the banks of the two main

streams and their affluents, where a delicious shade and a rich pasture may be found during the greatest heats. Such is the present character of the region. It is thought, however, that by a careful water system, by deriving channels from the great streams or their affluents, by storing the superfluous spring-rains in tanks, by digging wells and establishing kanáts, or subterraneous aqueducts, the whole territory might be brought under cultivation, and rendered capable of sustaining a permanent population. That some such system was established in early times by the Assyrian monarchs seems to be certain from the fact that the whole level country on both sides of the Sinjar is covered with mounds marking the sites of cities, which wherever opened have presented appearances similar to those found on the site of Nineveh, If even the more northern portion of the Mesopotamian region is thus capable of being redeemed from its present character of a desert, still more easily might the southern division be reclaimed and converted into a garden. Between the 35th and 34th parallels, the character of the Mesopotamian plain suddenly alters. Above, it is a plain of a certain elevation above the courses of the Tigris and Euphrates, which are separated from it by low limestone ranges; below, it is a mere alluvium almost level with the rivers, which frequently overflow large portions of it. Consequently from the point indicated, canalisation becomes easy. A skilful management of the two rivers would readily convey abundance of the life-giving fluid to every portion of the Mesopotamian tract below the 34th parallel. And the innumerable lines of embankment, marking the course of ancient canals, sufficiently indicate that in the flourishing period of

Babylonia a network of artificial channels covered the country."

It was in that region that the tower of Babel was reared (Gen. 10). It was there Nimrod made "the beginning of his kingdom" (Ibid.). Thence came the four kings to put down the rebellion of the five kings of the south Jordan (Gen. 14). Thence Chushan-Rishathaim reduced Israel to his over-lordship for eight years, soon after Joshua's death till Caleb's nephew, Othniel, broke it down; and David conquered the Syrians everywhere. Assyria then by decrees reached its highest ascendancy to the ruin of Israel, till Babylon rose in God's way on the overthrow of Nineveh, to world-power and swept away Judah, itself succumbing to Cyrus, and Medo-Persian supremacy followed.

"And the sons of Aram, Uz and Hul and Gether and Mash" (ver. 23). The first of them gave his name to the sandy soil south-east of Palestine, in the north of Arabia Deserta, and west of the Euphrates. We hear in Job 1 who lived there, of the raids of the Sabeans and the Chaldeans.

Hul seems to have gone farther north. His name we may trace in Ard-el-Huleh, and Bahr-el-Huleh, south of this district, the waters of Merom, or the lake Semechonitis as Josephus calls it, though he connects Hul with Armenia.

Gether may have lent his name to Gadara, rather than Geshur, as Kalisch thinks.

Mash would seem, as Bochart supposes (Phaleg ii, 11) to be represented geographically by the classical Mons Masius, the mountainous range which runs north of Mesopotamia between the great rivers, Euphrates and

Hiddekel or Tigris. In 1 Chron. 1:17 Mesech is the name, but not the one joined with Kedar, which was Japhetic. In the same genealogy these four sons of Aram are classed directly with the sons of Shem, including Aram, a compendious style not uncommon in such lists, for which verse 4 prepares the reader. The discrepancy is merely apparent.

Genesis 10:24.

The most important line of all Shem's stock, in its remote and even in its approaching consequences, through moral and divine associations, is the briefest in this genealogy; and this must now be noticed.

"And Arphaxad (Arpachshad) begot Shelah (Shelach) and Shelah begot Eber" (ver 24). Arphaxad was Shem's eldest son, born two years after the deluge.

It is to be observed that the inspiring Spirit led Moses to change his manner at this point, introducing Arphaxad and his family as a sort of fresh start. The same style is adopted also in 1 Chron. 1: It is no longer as before, "And the sons of -." As in evil a new departure was made for Cush and his descendants, so here for good where Arphaxad comes before us. Yet for the present little is said of the latter, unlike Nimrod who shot into immediate prominence, not content to be a mighty hunter before Jehovah, but thereon and after began to be mighty on the earth. Good is of rare occurrence here below and of slow growth, always excepting the One Who manifested its perfection, and all the more because He would not be designated by that which He claimed for God alone, unless indeed there was faith to see and own God in Him.

Josephus states in his Antiq. i. 6, 4 (ed. Hudson i. 19, 20) that Arphaxad gave his name to the Chaldeans. But this is erroneous. For the Chaldim, as they are called in scripture, or Kaldi as they called themselves, were a Cushite race, not Shemitic, and their tongue is said to have closely resembled the Galla or ancient language of the Aethiopians. This appears to have been retained as a learned tongue for erudite and religious purposes, at least; and we may see reference to it in Dan. 1:4, even when the Shemitic type of language had superseded it for ordinary or evil usage as shown in the inscriptions of that region both Assyrian and Babylonian. The predominance of Nabopolassar and of Nebuchadnezzar his son gave the Chaldeans their established supremacy over the various races in Babylon; so that what was an old and special tribe at first got to be the more extensive designation of that conquering people, as well as to mark a peculiar class of learned and scientific religionists, etc., astrologers as we see in Dan. 2 of whom the prophet was constituted chief or master" (Dan. 4:9; 5:11).

Nevertheless it is very possible that Arphaxad may be traced in the name of the region called Ἀῤῥαπαχῖτις mentioned twice by Cl. Ptolemy (Geog. ed. Wilberg, 387) in his account of Assyria, and in the City Ἄῤῥαπα in the list with which that first chapter of book vi. closes. So Bochart concludes in his Geog. Sacr. ii. 4. This region, south of Armenia, was the early home of the Shemites, as afterwards Asshur prevailed there. But there also the Cushites were strong in early days, and a Japhetic element was not wanting in self-assertion. But the Shemites unlike the others were ever disposed to stay at home, which made the subsequent crossing the more

remarkable in the progenitor of the Hebrews at the call of God.

Of Salah or Salach little can be said with certainty, because the Bible is silent. He was the father of Eber in the direct line of the chosen patriarch Abram, the depositary of promise. The name signifies shoot or extension, but to regard it therefore as fictitious ought to be too absurd for the credulity of rationalism. It is known that a place with a similar name in the north of Mesopotamia occurs in Syrian writings; to which Knobel refers in his well-known book.

Of Eber a little more may be said when verse 25 is examined. It is the more necessary to distinguish the true form, because in Luke 3:35 it is confounded with the different name of "Heber," which is shared by no less than half-a-dozen persons wholly distinct. The latter reappears in the name of Hebron, the well-known city of Judah, as ancient as Damascus and rather older than Zoan, or Tanis as the Greeks called it, in Egypt. Scripture expressly intimates this (Num. 13:22).

Genesis 10:25.

The verse which here claims our attention brings before us incidentally another of the great facts in those early days of man's renewed history, as we have had the characteristic account of monarchy begun in the Cushite Nimrod.

"And to Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan" (ver. 25).

In verse 21 a notable mark was set upon Eber, when his forefather was introduced in the unusual terms of

“father of all the children, or sons, of Eber,” though several generations after, not Arphaxad’s, nor Salah’s, but Eber’s. So contrariwise, though not so strikingly perhaps, Ham had to bear the shame of being designated “father of Canaan” (Gen. 9:18). Thus does God call us on the one hand to heed him who inherited the curse and was the instrument of the enemy in striving to hinder Israel in due time taking possession of the promised land; and on the other to learn the interest He took in giving us to look onward to those who stood in the first line of the heirs of Shem’s blessing; for “blessed be Jehovah the God of Shem.” One cannot safely run on so fast as the excellent Matthew Henry, in saying “Eber himself, we may suppose, was a man eminent for religion in a time of general apostasy, and a great example of piety to his family; and the holy tongue being commonly called from him the Hebrew, it is probable that he retained it in his family, in the confusion of Babel, as a special token of God’s favour to him; and from him the professors of religion were called the children of Eber. Now, when the inspired penman would give them an honourable title, he calls him (Shem) the father of the Hebrews; though, when Moses wrote this, they were a poor despised people, bond-slaves in Egypt, yet being God’s people it was an honour to a man to be akin to them.” It is wise to say less, and surer to believe what is written than to suppose with ancients or moderns. Goodness, he adds, is true greatness; but in the case before us we may be content with ascribing both in the highest degree to the Blesser without being too confident sponsors for the blessed. The Lord teaches us to be jealous on that head for God, rather than for man as weak and poor as he is aspiring.

Of Eber we have two sons: Peleg, which means division, the first named, and Joktan his brother. In connection with the former a new and important fact is noted as to the earth and its future history. In the days of Peleg the earth was divided. Such is the meaning of Peleg's name; for as the rule the names then given to men were significant. The scattering of which we have the divine account, its moral reason and its chastening, in the next chapter (11) was historically previous; but our chapter 10 pursues its aim and gives the origin of the nations, everyone after his tongue, apart from time. But as we had (vers. 8-11) in Nimrod the assumption of power and the spread of dominion from Babel the beginning of his kingdom, so here we have in Peleg's days the earth divided. Here we are not told of human pride and power, nor yet of Jehovah's scattering men abroad through confounding their language, and their consequent inability to understand one another's speech. The division of the earth after that in the days of Peleg appears to have been done peaceably. But it is a fact which has subsisted ever, whatever the emigration of peoples through stress of circumstances or desire of bettering their lot Of Joktan we leave the details till we consider the verses that follow.

Genesis 10:26.

The name of Eber's second son was, as we have seen, Joktan, "small," as distinguished from Peleg whose name, "division," marked as an epoch the more peaceful dividing of the earth, after the judgment of God necessitated the dispersion of mankind. There is no substantial reason to limit the "division" to the family of Eber himself, when the younger branch migrated into

southern Arabia, the elder remaining in Mesopotamia. Had this mere family split been referred to, the younger son would more naturally have borne its name, not the elder who abode where he was. Besides, how can an event so ordinary meet the large terms employed — “in his days was the earth divided?” The Chaldee paraphrase on 1 Chron. 1:19 suggests that Joktan derived his name from the diminution of human life at that time. Certain it is that then longevity sunk one half, judging by the recorded years of Peleg (Gen. 11:18, 19) and of those that succeeded, diminishing by degrees to its ordinary range.

Joktan appears on abundant evidence of varied kinds to answer to the Arabic Kachtán. “Of them [the Beni Sad], and of the Kahtan Arabs,...., Masoudy says in his work entitled ‘The Golden Meadows,’ that they are the only remnants of the primitive tribes of Arabia. Most of the other tribes, etc. But the two tribes above mentioned, the Beni Sad and Kahtan, are famed in the most remote antiquity, when Arabian history, for the greater part, is covered with complete darkness” (Burckhardt’s Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys,. ii. 47, 48, London, 1831). We shall see that the traces of his thirteen sons are almost all plain enough also. This had been doubted by some who conceived it to be a Jewish tradition adopted later by Mohammedan writers. Why should any one doubt that the Κατανῖται of Cl. Ptolemy (Geog. vi. 7) are the Beni Kachtán, or Kahtanys? In Pliny (vi. 28) and Strabo (xvi.) they seem spoken of as Catabani, and Καταβανεῖς, by an inversion not uncommon among Greeks and Latins. Dionysius Perieg. speaks of the same tribe under a name very slightly changed, of which no account appears in Smith’s Dict. of G. and R. Geography.

Modern research however has not only vindicated the fact, but explained probably why the change of the name was effected. Of his numerous sons we glance at the four named in the verse before us.

“And Joktan begat Almodad and Sheleph and Hazarmaveth and Jerah” (ver. 26).

The first enumerated corresponds with Mudad, or, as the word admits the article, El-Mudad. Bochart in his Phaleg (ii. 16) long ago connected the name with the Ἀλλουμαιῶται of Cl. Ptolemy (vi. 7, § 24) who held a central position in Yemen or Arabia Felix. There seems no sufficient ground to heed Gesenius’ idea that the name is a variant from Almoram, so as to trace it in the tribe called Morad living in a mountainous region of the same country near Zabid.

Next comes Sheleph or Shaleph. This name has been without reasonable doubt identified with the district of Sulaf or Salif in southern Arabia. The elder Niebuhr gives it as Salfie (in his map Selfia) (Descr. 215). More recently Dr. Osiander gives an account of the tribe Shelif or Shulaf, as Yakoot in the Moajam and other Arabic authorities which complete the geographical traces. Indeed Ptolemy (vi. 7) had of old told us of the Σαλαπηνοὶ or Ἀλαπηνοί as the Greeks called the people. Here is therefore proof in this case still clearer than in some. Mr. G. Forster (Geog. of Arabia) in both his vols. labours to identify the modern Meteyr tribe with the Salapeni or sons of Σαλέθ as their chief is called by the LXX. They were close allies of the Beni Kachtan against the Kedarite Beni-Charb or Carbani Hazarmaveth plainly answers to the district east of the modern Yemen, called by the Arabs Hádramäwt (court of death), also in the

south of Arabia, situated on the Indian Sea, and, if unhealthy, no less famous for its rich spices. One of its ports was Zafári, the Sephar of which we read later in this chapter. Here again there is satisfactory evidence that the third in the list of Joktan's sons furnished the name, rendered Σαρμώθ by the LXX. and Asarmoeh in the Vulgate.

Jerah or Yerach "the moon" is the fourth, which Michaelis in his Spicileg. ii. 60 in the "low land of the moon," or in the "mount of the moon," both of which were near Hádramäwt. It is needless and against all probability to follow Bochart's notion of the Alilaei dwelling near the Red Sea. Mr. E. S. Poole (Smith's Dict. of the Bible, i, 264) traces the name in a fortress (and probably an old town) mentioned as belonging to the district of the Nijjad, which is in Mareb at the extremity of the Yemen. Indeed Arab tradition, as we may see in Golius (sub voce) is in nothing ancient more unanimous than in styling this son of Joktan "Father of Yemen" (Abu Yemen). His name appears in the LXX. as Ἰαράχ, and as Jare in the Vulgate. The Arab name may be represented by Jeshä or Serhä, giving the "h" its guttural pronunciation of "ch." G. Ptol. speaks of the Νῆσος Ἰεράχων on the Arabian gulf, and of the Ἰεράχων κώμη on a river near the Persian gulf, which appear to point to the same family, wide as they might be apart. Mr. Forster brings many other names under the same reference modified by slight changes of name and sound; just as Ptolemy's river Lar on the east coast seems no other than the Zar of present day, which the Latin geographers confirm who translate it Flumen Canis — Dog, which the Arabic means. The great region of Karjé, he argues, derives its name from Jerah

according to an anagram quite common in their proper names.

Genesis 10:27.

After the four sons of Joktan already noticed, we have now before us three: “and Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah” (ver. 27).

The fifth son appears to have settled farther east in that part of the peninsula which has long been designated ‘Omán, and gives its name to the lower waters of the Persian gulf, opening into the Indian ocean. The south-eastern headland of that deep bay is called Ras-el-Had, which must be carefully distinguished from Ras-Fartask or Fartaques, “the wild boar’s snout,” answering to its Greek designation of Σύαγρος ἄκρα (Ptol. vi. 7, §11). It is the more necessary to be on one’s guard, as of old we learn from the Alexandrian geographer that the position of the latter was misconceived by his predecessor, Marinus; and in this Marcianus (Hudson’s Geog. Gr. Min. i. 24) agrees with the correction. In modern times D’Anville, followed by many (as e.g. Long’s Classical Atlas) confounded Syagros with Ras-el-Had. Dean Vincent in his earlier writings had been thus misled; but he corrected himself in his elaborate work on the so called Periplus of Arrian (ii. 331-351). The classical title of the headland we are occupied with is really Κορόδαμον ἄκρον, as the learned Bochart long ago conjectured from the name of the forefather therein disguised, i.e. from Hadoramum. So convinced is Mr. Forster of its soundness that he does not hesitate to say, the fact, unnoticed by Bochart, “is simply this, that the promontory now actually bears the name of Hadoram,

under an ordinary abbreviation of the Arabic, in its modern appellation of Ras-el-HAD" (i. 140, 141).

It is indeed a confirmation not to be despised also that Commodore Owen's Survey "first gave the correct form of this bay, accompanied by what is more important for our present object, its Arabic name, Bundes Djuram or Doram, the Bay of Doram." Abbreviations of this kind are notorious in that tongue as in others, as Dûra or Dora for Adoraim, and Jok for Joktan. It appears too from the M.S. Journal of Captain Sadleir that there is still existing in the desert of Ul Ahsu on the northern confines of 'Omán the tribe Dreeman, which corresponds with the Drimati of whom Pliny speaks as being in this quarter. So he does of the Fons Dora and of the Darrae which last word has its analogue in a town and tribe at this day. Hadoram (in the LXX. Ὀδοῤῥᾶ) seems not obscurely traceable in a race singularly unyielding.

It, may also be observed that, if we heed the statement of Dionysius, there was a district on the east of Arabia called Chatramis south of Chaldamis (Bahrein) opposite to Persia, which agrees with the north of 'Omán. This race must be distinguished from the Adamitae, or Chatametitae, that sprang from Hazarmaveth and lived in Hadramaut on the south. The town of Hadrama corresponds apparently.

Uzal (in the Vat. text of the LXX. Αἰβήλ, prob. err. for Αἰζήλ in others) is named in the sixth place, and gave his name in ancient times to the capital city of Yemen, afterwards and still Sanà. Mr. E. S. Poole cites the printed edition of the Marásid, which says "that its name was Oozál, and when the Abyssinians arrived at it, and

saw it to be beautiful, they said, Sanà, which means beautiful, and therefore it was called Sanà." Arabic authors have compared this with Damascus for its waters and its fruits; as Niebuhr says its houses and palaces are finer than those of any other town in Arabia. The Jews, it seems, who are immemorially settled there, only know it by the name of Uzal. That there should be other traces of the name is natural; but we need not dwell on what is disputable, having a record so direct and clear. The Auth. V. of Ezek. 27:19 has darkened an important reference, which stands no better in the Revised. Dr. Henderson and Mr. Darby present it thus: "Vedan and Javan of Uzal traded in thy [Tyre's] markets: wrought iron, cassia, and calamus were in thy truffle [or barter]." The LXX. render it "from Asel," the Syriac and Aquila "from Uzal." As ver. 17 gave Judah and Israel, it is possible that Dan or Vedan and Javan were of the Arab race, and Uzal their emporium. So Dathe renders the clause; and de Wette adds to them Mehusal (as the Vulgate Mosel) for a third trafficker. Diodati in his French as well as Italian Version preferred "Dan also, and the vagabond Javan" in its Greek application. Dr. Benisch has for Uzal "spun yarn," and Dr. Leeser "silken goods" according to other points.

Of Diklah, the eighth name, there is little to say. From signifying "palm-trees" some have looked to the city Φοινίκων in the north-west of Arabia Felix; but Gesenius after Bochart for a similar reason inclined to find his descendants in the widely spread people classically called Minaei. But Mr. Forster strenuously contends that they were of the stock of Jerah, and that the great region of Kerjé or Karjé is none other than an anagrammatic inversion (so common in Arab names) of

the patriarch Jerah himself. Into this discussion we do not enter; but any one can discern in the Dulkelaitae, of whom Golius speaks in his Lexicon, a name that answers to the son of Joktan we are now tracing, from whom descended a people of Yemen between Sanà and Mareb. Pococke also refers to them as Dhu l'Chalaah. Yet Mr. Poole is unaware of any trace of Diklah in Arabic works, except the mention of a place called Dakalah in El-Yemameh, mentioned by Kamoos, where grew many palm-trees. Enough then appears to this day, even as to the least conspicuous of these early tribes of Arabia, not only to testify to the Mosaic account, but to demonstrate the gracious interest of God in the otherwise obscure and undistinguished races of mankind. We shall have occasion to speak of some not of the Shemitic stock who seem to have been the first that entered the peninsula as they also penetrated elsewhere the earliest after the dispersion. Also we have to take note of the repeated influx of the Abrahamic seed, outside those chosen and called, who settled in its wide domain and gave special form to a characteristic portion of its denizens. But this must suffice for the earlier names of Joktan's sons.

Genesis 10:28,

We have now to trace, as far as evidence reaches, the seats of Joktan's sons brought together in the verse before us, the eighth, ninth, and tenth names: "and Obal and Abimael and Sheba" (ver. 28). As before, some have left marks much more distinct than others; so it is in the present three.

Obal ("bare, or stript of leaves") is represented as "Ebal" (in the LXX. Εὐὰλ, in 1 Chron. 1:22 Γεμιάν). Arabic pronunciation still more closely approximates the

name to the Abalites of Pliny, who are evidently the same as C. Ptolemy's Avalites with a bay and emporium of the same name. Indeed Bochart pronounces them to be no other than the name of the eighth son of Joktan. It is true that the settlement which thus recalls the founder was on the African side of the Red sea, not in Arabia; but this is no insuperable difficulty. We way not be able to trace such as abode with the great mass in Arabia; while it is of interest to identify such as crossed the strait to Africa. Nothing binds us to confine all the progeny of Joktan, save as a general rule, to Arabia. And the coast which affords the apparent traces of Obal was severed only by the narrow strait, called by the Greeks Παλίνδρομος, as was the promontory adjacent, and by the Arabs Bab-el-Mandeb. It is a strait made still easier, if not for commerce or passengers, for immigrants into Africa by intervening islands, Cytis, etc. In fact, though on the western side of the Strait, they were but a few miles distant from the coast of Yemen where their kindred abounded pre-eminently. The Gebanites with whom Knobel would identify them were no doubt in a general way their kinsmen; but where is any real evidence to show that they were the offspring of Obal? What has been above given suffices to prove that their mark was left south of Berenice Epidires, a town built by the Ptolemies at a much later day, north of the indentation which was called Avalites Sinus, on the south of which bay dwelt the Avalitae.

Abimael ("father of Mael," taken as an appellative, "fatness ") is to be found, it would seem, on the east of Yembo (Jambia) and even of the town Ausura (C. Ptolemy) or El-Szafra of Burckhardt. Their town is called both Malai and Kheyf, and appears in Theophrastus

(Hist. Plant. ix. 4), along with three others celebrated of old for its spices, under the form Μάλι. The Alexandrian geographer speaks of Malichae in the neighbourhood of Yathreb or Iathrippph, in after history famous as El-Medineh, “the city” in the eyes of Mussulmans, about ten days’ journey north of Mekka. The people of Mali or Malai seem no other than the Malichae. To this day the district has a high reputation for its balsam; the sale of which is even now an active trade, and highly remunerative. But of old it was very much more so, when Egypt and the West, Rome especially, used aromatics largely and luxuriously; whereas at present Persia appears to be the chief consumer. But Bochart’s identification of Abimael with this people on the edge of the great Arabian desert appears to be well founded.

Sheba needs the greater care because in the inspired history we hear of no less than three heads of tribes who bore the name, the tenth of Joktan’s sons now in question, preceded by the Cushite Raamah’s son (ver. 7), and followed by the Abrahamic son of Keturah, Jokshan, who begat another Sheba (Gen. 25:2, 3).

But we may also distinguish Seba’s posterity, Cush’s eldest son, the Sebaim of eastern Arabia, to which they seem to have migrated from Chuzestan on the eastern side of the Persian gulf. They were dark-coloured, and very tall (Isa. 45:14), the Dowaser or Danasir Arabs of modern times. C. Ptolemy draws the line between these, the oldest, or amongst the oldest, settlers, and Sabeans in the province of Sabié (who appear to be descended of Sheba, Raamah’s son), and calls them Sabai as distinct from those in the east coast of Oman, whom he names Sabi (or Asobi, the common Arabic prefix). Of the

Jokshanite Sheba the less need be said, as they had their seat far north and were more obviously distinct.

The race from Joktan's son Sheba had their kingdom in the S.W. of Yemen; and these were the Sabeans, familiar to the Greeks and Romans, who had high notions of their wealth attributed to their own products without adequate account of their Indian trade. Their capital was called by Eratosthenes Mariaba, and by C. Ptolemy Sabatha Metropolis. The Arabs used both Mâreb and Saba. It is Abulfeda, as Mr. Forster shows (i. 155, 156), who in his geography expressly states that Mâreb was the central seat of the Beni Kahtan, i.e. the sons of Joktan. This can only be Sheba's posterity when we come to specify to which of Joktan's numerous sons in particular it belonged.

Nor is there any reasonable doubt that the Queen of Sheba, or as our Lord said "of the south," whose visit to King Solomon holds so interesting a place in scripture, ruled the, Sabean kingdom of which we have last spoken. Indeed "Yemen" means the south generally, and that quarter of Arabia, Felix in particular. But scripture carefully distinguishes the Shemitic lines of Sheba, Joktanite or Jokshanite (distinct as they are in themselves), from the Rahmanite Sheba in Yemen and the kindred Seba on or near the Persian gulf. It was the last race which gave its name to the kingdom of Meroe, far as its seats might be apart. Pliny confounded these races, as if one and the same ruled the entire south of the peninsula from west. to east; but C. Ptolemy as usual shows more exactness and discrimination. The "Sheba and Raamah" of Ezekiel 27:27 would seem to be the Cushite race in the west, as being spice merchants; whereas Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad in ver. 23 point to

the Keturah family as dealers in choice clothes or wares and bales of broidered work. This too was the Sheba that first plundered Job's possessions.

Genesis 10:29.

In addition to the sons already passed in review there remain three; "and Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these were sons of Joktan" (ver. 29).

The local habitation of "Ophir" has been contested most notably; but no sufficient ground appears to look for it outside the peninsula. Josephus (Ant. viii. 6-4) referred it to India, as did Vitringa (Geog. Sac. 114), and Reland in his dissertation on the question, and of late Lassen, Ritter, Bertheau; again, Sir W. Raleigh to the Molucca Islands; and Pererius, Sir J. E. Tennent, Thenius, Ewald and Gen. Chesney (Euphrates ii. 126) to Malacca and the adjoining tracts. On the other hand, Huet, Bruce, Robertson the historian, Heeren, and Quatremère placed Ophir in Africa; and Plessis and A. Montanus contended for Peru, arguing from the word "Parvaim!" But Michaelis (Spicil. ii, 184), Karsten Niebuhr (Descr. de l'Arabie), Gosselin (Rech. sur la Geog. des Anciens, ii. 99), Vincent (Comm. and Nav. ii. 265-270), Crawford (Desc. Dict.), Forster (Geog. of Arabia i. 161-175), Fürst, Kalisch, Knobel (Völk. 190), and Winer (Realw.), assign it to Arabia. The learned Bochart (Phaleg ii. 27) was inclined to two Ophirs, one in Arabia, the other in Ceylon; as D'Anville admitted two, one in Arabia, the other in Africa. Gesenius, both in his Thes. and elsewhere, thought that the balance of evidence between Arabia and India was so even that he declined giving a decisive judgment.

The fact is, however, that ever since the maps of Sale and of D'Anville, as Mr. Forster observes (i. 167), Ofor or Ofir appears as the name of a city and district in the mountains of Omàn, seated on their eastern side, near the source of the Omàn river, and within about a degree, or a little more, of the coast; and the adjoining coast, lying due east under Ofir, was still celebrated in the elder Pliny's time (Nat. H. vi. 32) for its traffic in gold, "littus Hammaeum ubi auri metalla." This answers to the town and coast of Maham, as laid down in modern maps for that precise locality.

One of the chief arguments against Arabia by those who looked elsewhere is the absence of gold as a known product of the country for many years. But Dean Vincent had anticipated the objection by his remark that silver is not now found at Carthagena in Spain, where the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and Romans, obtained it in great abundance. Niebuhr (iii. 256) says of this very province Omàn, "there is no want there of lead and copper mines"; and Mr. Wellsted (Travels in Arabia, i. 315) states that the notion is untrue that Arabia is wholly destitute of the precious metals. "In this province we meet with silver, associated as usual with lead. Copper is also found: at a small hamlet, on the road from Semed to Neswah, there is a mine which the Arabs at present work; but the others are wholly neglected. Even in the vicinity of Maskat the hills are very metalliferous," In ancient times the testimony is distinct that Arabia was a gold-producing land. Thus Agatharchides the geographer who lived in the second century before Christ testifies to it (Hudson's Geog. Min. i. 60); a little later wrote Artemidorus, whose account Strabo reproduces (xiv. 18); Diodorus Sic. is no less plain in his

Bibliotheca (ii. 50, iii. 44); and Pliny the elder as we have seen; to whom from Eusebius' Praep. Evang. ix. 30 we may add the testimony of Eupolemus before the Christian era: only that he affirms Ophir to be an island with old mines in the Erythrean sea, i.e., the sea that compassed Arabia, west, south, and east. At the least Ophir was the emporium whence not gold only but algum trees, red sandalwood or whatever else is meant, and precious stones, were brought.

No one denies that peacocks, apes, and ivory point further east than Arabia; but Ophir was their meeting place and mart. It is to be noticed that Uphaz, as equivalent to Ophir, means "isle of fine gold," if there was another such place besides the inland one still bearing the name.

The family of "Havilah" have left their mark in the country in a distinct manner, though the name is as usual somewhat disguised by the difference of pronunciation which prevailed when there was little of known pervading literature to fix it. Only we have to take into account that there was a Cushite Havilah which extended itself in its branches over the peninsula from the N.E. to the S.W. These we have to discriminate from the Joktanite tribe which found their place, it would seem, chiefly among their kindred. But as the names of their respective patriarchs were identical, so the same changes of form prevailed over tie descendants of each, and the places which derived their designation from them. Thus Khaulan or Haulan evidently sprang from Havilah, harder or softer, as also Hévila and Hali, and Strabo's Chaalla, as we may see in Niebuhr, So Dr. Wells long ago from Bochart noticed the Chaulothaei of Eratosthenes, the Chaulosii of Festus Avienus, the

Chablasii of Dionysius Periegetes, and the Chavilei of Pliny. Mr. Forster puts the case yet more strongly that, when in Ptolemy we read Huaela or Huaila, and in Niebuhr Huala, or more correctly Hauilah, we have before us literally the Havilah of the Hebrew Scripture, Aval or Aual being a dialectic softening which prevails on the Persian Gulf. In Yemen, and north of it, it eau hardly be doubted that the Joktanite section of Havilah prevailed.

Nor is there any serious question as to the descendants of "Jobab" in the clan of Jobaritae. They are mentioned by G. Ptolemy as dwelling in the south and near the Sachalitae, who gave their name to the well known bay. Besides, we hear of the Beni Jobub or Jubbar of Niebuhr, as the existing name of a tribe S.E. of Beishe or Baisath Joktan, halfway between Uzal (Sanà) and Sabata (the modern Zebid). Thus there seems no sufficient reason to doubt the identification. The variations of form at most found in this casein no way hinder the recognition of the ancient designation; while the measure of change is no more than time brings about in the immovable east, even in a land so shut out from intercourse with mankind in general. It is truly remarkable that, for every member of Joktan's numerous sons, living representatives should be traceable, attesting in a simple but striking way the inestimable value of God's word, long before human records, even then few and failing till long after.

Genesis 10:30.

The verse we are now to consider demands close investigation, as it is not without importance and difficulty also. "And their dwelling was from Mesha, as

thou goest to Sephar, a mountain of the east" (ver. 30). It is beyond question a general description of the limits within which dwelt the many sons of Joktan. We have already identified in detail their local habitation throughout Arabia, with the slight exception of those who crossed to the western shore of the narrow strait that severs their father's land from Africa. There is therefore, the best reason to reject the idea that they left, their original seats for dwellings between "Mount Masius in the south part of Mesopotamia and an imaginary" mount adjoining Siphare, a city in Asia, as Dr. E. Wells conjectured in his Help to the Holy Scriptures i. 77 (Oxford, 1728). In fact Mount Masius forms the northern boundary of Mesopotamia; but, this is a slight misapprehension to which the Μασσῆ of the LXX. may have led, in comparison with the chief error, as the Persian Siphare (city or mount) is still more untenable. And so must one think of Dr. C. Wordsworth's idea of Mesha as an island of the Tigris and of a Sephar on the Persian Gulf. Such limits do not include the dwellings of Joktan's sons.

Very different is the hypothesis of Bochart (Phaleg iii. 29) who identifies Mesha with Meza, which seems to be the same as Ptolemy's Μασσῆ (or Μοῦζα in the Periplûs), a little north of the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. But as he considers Sephar to be the mountain near Saphar in the hill-country between Yemen and Hadrámaut, it seems clear that such limits (little above 200 miles) are incompatible with the widespread dispersion of the sons of Joktan throughout the southern half of the peninsula. For "the east" seems no difficulty when we bear in mind its usage as in Gen. 25:6.

Gesenius (Thes. i. 823) inclined therefore to the suggestion of J. D. Michaelis (Spicil. ii. 214, Suppl. 1561) of a Mesene (or Middle-land) between the mouths of the Pastigris. Hence he understood the last part of our verse to mean “from Mesha unto Sephar and (or as far as) the mountain land of Arabia.” He lays it down as certain that “mountain in the east” is not to be joined in apposition with Sephar, but is some other third place to which the boundary extended. It is difficult to understand on what ground this consummate Hebraist so decidedly maintained a construction which seems extremely harsh; for his rationalism did not here intrude to bias him. Like many, he and of late M. Frèsnel (Lettres sur l’Hist. des Arabes) regarded Sephar as the metropolis of the region of Shehr, between Hadrámaut and Omàn; as the highland of the east he held to be the chain of mountains near the middle of Arabia from the Hedjaz on the Persian Gulf. It is called today Dhafàri or Dhafàr. But as of the ancient name, so of the modern, there are various places so called.

It becomes therefore a nice point to decide which is here intended. For there are, as C. Niebuhr and E. S. Poole say, no less than four places bearing the same name, besides several others bearing names that are merely variations from the same root. Now Niebuhr (Descr. iii. 206, 207) speaks both of the ruins of Dhafàr near Yemen, and of Sumara or Nak’l Sumara as the greatest and the highest mountain he had ascended in Yemen, and very probably the same that the Greek geographers called Climax (Κλίμαξ ὄρος of C. Ptol. vi. 7). This is near the Dhafàr which Bochart identifies with the Σαπφάρα μητρόπολις of Ptolemy, capital of the Σαπφαρῖται (vi. 6, § 25), and with the Sephar in our text. Dhafàr seems the

same city a little disguised, which the author of the Periplus and Diodorus Sic. called Aphar, as others call it Tafar?

If then Sephar be traced to the Dhafàr on the border of Yemen and Hadrámaut in the S.W. of Arabia, this goes far to determine the site of Mesha as in the N. E. of the peninsula. This satisfies best the compendious summary of the Joktanite settlements, answering to the similar allusion to the Canaanite border, N. and S. in ver. 19, which follows the details of their several families. Now there is a mountain chain in the Nedjd, which was the boundary of the sons of Joktan in that very region, on the north of which wandered their adversaries, the sure indication of a distinct race.4 The Beni Shaman or Samman, the sons of Mishma or Masma, son of Ishmael, being no other than the Μαισαιμανεῖς of Ptol. (vi. 7, § 21), jealously guarded mount Zames or Zametas (as the Alexandrian Geographer calls the mountain) against intrusion from the south, where lay the Καταν῏ται or Joktanite races. Equally hostile were the Aenezes, or gang of Kenaz. Hence Chesney's suggestion of Mekkah for Mesha is untenable; for the tribe of Harb, the Cerbae, Darrae, etc., descendants of Kedar and enemies of the Joktanites, was paramount in the Hedjaz. The Kenezites, or sons of Kenaz, were of Edomite extraction and dwelt north of the Salapeni, or sons of Sheleph, a Joktanite, It may be added that it was to Yemen the Greek and Latin geographers applied the epithet Εὐδαίμων, or Felix (Happy), which was at a later time extended more widely, as when one of our own poets speaks of "Araby the Blest." There was no little exaggeration in allowing the justice of such a claim, even allowing for the mystery in which the Arabian

traders indulged with their western and even eastern customers, in attributing to their own country some precious imports from lands more distant still. For mendacity has long infected the Arab people like others of the east. Yet it is not improbable, as Oriental scholars suggest, that the designation may have been an accidental misnomer. Thus Felix was a mistranslation of El-Yemen, or the right hand, the fortunate side in usage of the Greeks, whom the Roman poets mostly followed, Notoriously, as the face was directed to the east, so the peninsula lay as compared with Syria, Esh-Sham, the left hand. Hence was Arabia said to be “fortunate” or “blessed” through a word of good omen, which was afterwards by a mistake construed of extraordinary wealth and fertility.

If Mohammedan fanaticism has for long centuries shut out Arabia and its numerous races from the free or friendly intercourse of the rest of mankind, it is interesting to note the striking help given by the Greek and Latin geographers before and since the Christian era to identify places and races with those which then existed. Of comparatively late years the travels of G. Niebuhr, Burckhardt, and Wellsted have contributed to prove that they still exist, though it also appears that the religious imposture has not failed to cover the land and the people with malignant and withering influence. For there are but traces and ruins where considerable tribes and cities once flourished. Happily for the object here in view in no part of the world do names abide more signally resisting change or surviving it, than among the sons of the east.

Genesis 10:31.

Subsequent statements in the Book of Genesis give particulars of other families of the Shemitic stock who entered the Arabian Peninsula. All that is intended here is to fill up the general view of its denizens, in order to complete the picture, in this measure anticipating what follows our chapter. As sons of Cush were the first to settle within it, chiefly on the Persian Gulf and the S.W. coast skirted by the Red Sea, before Joktan and his sons possessed themselves so largely of its borders and interior, we may notice first Ishmael and his sons as a most characteristic class of the dwellers in Arabia. No prediction of the kind has been more signally fulfilled than Gen. 16:12: “He will be a wild ass of a man, his hand against every man, and every man’s hand against him; and he shall dwell before the face of all his brethren.”

In vain has the sceptical Gibbon (Decline and Fall, chaps. 46 and 50) strained his ingenuity to get rid of their standing independence, felt alike by strangers and by natives. There it is to this day, as it has been through all history. Of whom else can it be pretended similarly? The overruling power of God, as always, has guarded His word. Ishmael, though in no way the line of covenant any more than Esau, has lived before Him. Other peoples, and conspicuously in their neighbourhood, have dwindled and disappeared, I do not say they are extinguished. Ishmael He made fruitful and a great nation. In this world as it is, no sane person denies checks or exceptions during the course of ages, when God was ignored or misrepresented. But even the infidel historian had to acknowledge that these exceptions were “temporary or local.” “The body of the nation has

escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies: the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia. The present sovereign of the Turks may exercise a shadow of jurisdiction, but his pride is reduced to solicit the friendship of a people, whom it is dangerous to provoke and fruitless to attack."

The wilderness of Paran was the earliest seat of Ishmael; but his posterity extended completely across the northern parts of Arabia, including the district of Sinai on the west to the Euphrates. In this district the sons of Keturah also dwelt, and thus Ishmaelites or Hagarites got mixed up with Midianites, as we may see in Gen. 37:25-28, 36, Judges 8:22-26, 1 Chron. 5:20. Nebaioth, Ishmael's firstborn, gave his name to the large region of Arabia Petraea; where Josephus places all the other sons. But this is too limited; for they settled also south of what the ancients called Nabathea or Nabateus. They bred camels, and kept sheep, as they were also merchants in aromatics and other commodities. Like other rationalists, Gibbon imputes their love of independence to their accidental locality. It was rather their wild character which availed itself of rocks and deserts; and God so acted as to suit both to His word and will. Here too the Edomites, or sons of Esau, found their place in mount Seir.

The second of Ishmael's sons was Kedar (from whom Mohammed proclaimed his descent through the tribe of Koreish), the Cedrei of Pliny, Cadraitae or Kadranitae from time immemorial living in the Hedjaz; as the B'nei Kenaz dwelt and still dwell in the interior N.E. who are called in modern times the Aenezes, descendants of Esau, the largest (as Burckhardt says) of all the Bedouin

tribes of Arabia, at constant feud with the Joktanites south of them, as their progeny are to this day. Some of the other sons of Ishmael may be more or less obscure; but this cannot be said of Dumah (who had also the characteristic title of B'nei Kalb, as the Kedarites were correspondingly styled B'nei Karb), and Tema, written large and deep in the northern part of the Negd, as the interior highlands of Arabia are called among themselves.

There is no intention at this point to give more than a general notion of the relation of the Ishmaelites and other Abrahamidae to the previous settlers in Arabia. But it is well to bear all in mind, as each race had its influence on the circumstances and history of a land remarkably divided.

"These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations" (ver. 31).

Blessing in the prophecy of Noah was assigned to Shem, or more strictly the word was "Blessed [be] Jehovah, the God of Shem." So it has been; so faith knows now; so it will be completely fulfilled, when Christ makes the truth indisputable in glorious results to every eye. This is not the design of God either by the gospel or in the church; it is reserved for the age to come.

The notion of such as Renan (Hist. Générale des Langues Sémit.), that the Shemitic races were to be in purpose or in fact monotheistic is a delusion. As the Adamic condition of innocence yielded to sin, so did the post-diluvian government of the world break down, and God's judgment of the earth with which it was preceded was soon darkened and perverted to serving other gods.

Ham may lead the way, as beyond doubt the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel; but Asshur soon followed in the same path, not of ambition only but of idolatry; and the very family of him that was chosen to be the father of the faithful were thus corrupted when the call of God called him out to bless him and make him a blessing to all families of the earth (Joshua 24:2). Thus no flesh can glory in itself or its ways. Let him that glorieth glory in Jehovah.

Even Max Müller, though far from believing reverence, is compelled by overwhelming facts to abandon the Rationalistic dream and to pay in a measure at least to the truth, as another has culled out of his "Chips out of a German Workshop," i. 345. "Can it be said that a monotheistic instinct could have been implanted in all those nations which adored Elohim, Jehovah, Sabaoth, Moloch, Nisroch, Rimmon, Nebo, Dagon, Ashtaroth, Baal or Bel, Baal-peor, Baalzebub, Chemosh, Milcom, Adrammelech, Anammelech, Nibhaz and Tartak, Ashima, Nergal, Succoth-benoth, the sun, the moon, the planets, and all the host of heaven." Shemitic races worshipped these and more.

In the same work M. M. goes farther still in his disproof. "Nor is it possible to explain on merely historical grounds how the Hebrews first obtained and so persistently clung to this grand first truth. Their chronicles show continual lapses into idolatry, and yet they always recovered themselves; till at last, after a bitter discipline of national calamities, they finally turned with enthusiastic devotion to the worship of Jehovah.

“Reference to a primitive religious instinct in mankind is as little satisfactory; for though there must have been such an intuitive sentiment in the earliest men as the basis of their future idolatries, it could only have impressed on them the existence of some Divine Being, but in no degree involved the conception of that Being, as one and one only, but as all history proves, tended to the very opposite. Nor can it be said that the Hebrew worked out the great truth by a profound philosophy; for no contrast could be greater between the Jewish mind and that of other nations of antiquity sprung from a different stock, than the utter absence from it of the metaphysical speculations in which other races delighted.

“Yet, while all nations over the earth have developed a religious tendency which acknowledged a higher than human power in the universe, Israel is the only one which has risen to the grandeur of conceiving this power as the One, Only, Living God.” Better still is his closing confession: “If we are asked how it was that Abraham possessed not only the primitive conception of the divinity as He has revealed Himself to all mankind [a very questionable proposition, corrected anticipatively in Rom. 1:19, 20], but passed, through the denial of other gods, to the knowledge of the one God, we are content to answer that it was by a special divine revelation” (ib. i. 372).

When the Anointed came, He tested this “enthusiastic devotion to the worship of Jehovah,” and proved as Isaiah had testified long before, that in vain the people worshipped Him, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men. For had they learned of the Father they would have come to Christ, but they knew neither the Son nor the

Father Who sent Him. “Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son hath not the Father either, he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also” (1 John 2:22, 23).

The day is at hand when the worthlessness of Jewish devotion even to monotheism or rather to their Elohim, or Jehovah, will be manifest. For, as the rejected Messiah warned, the unclean spirit of idolatry which they then thought and still think exorcised for ever, will return to his house empty, swept, and garnished; and just because it is empty, instead of filled with His presence Who is Jehovah as well as Messiah. Yea more, he will take to himself in that day (for it is not yet fulfilled) seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first. Even thus shall it be also to this wicked generation (Matt. 12). To banish idols and judge idolatry for ever is reserved for the Lord in the day of His appearing.

Genesis 10:32.

In the concluding verse we have the still larger summary of the post-diluvian earth, which furnishes occasion for a general survey.

“These [are the] families of Noah’s sons, after their generations, in their nations; and by these were separated the nations in the earth after the flood” (verse 32).

It is not only that mankind sprang from a single pair created innocent as Adam and Eve were. A fresh start for the race began after the deluge which judged the

guilty mass. From Noah and his three sons preserved from destruction, conditions began which subsist today and will for their descendants till, with the clouds of heaven, the Son of man come to Whom shall be given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. So recent comparatively is the history of man, and his tripartite separation of land and tongue, family and nation. For instead of beginning with a single line, we have three heads with their wives, three great families to renew the history of man on earth with the experience derived from the antediluvian earth.

What can be vainer than the dreams of men? From the only evidence we have, happily the highest, surest, and most authoritative of testimony we know that primeval man was as far as possible from savagery. He was set in a garden or park of delights, where grew every tree pleasant to the sight, and good for food. Even when transgression entailed man’s expulsion from Paradise, and sons were in due time born, the elder was a husbandman, the younger a shepherd. Town life began for some, nomad habits for others, the forging of tools, bronze and iron, and the making instruments of music, wind and stringed all this before our first parents died.

It would seem in fact that it was after not only the deluge but the dispersion of the various families, that the more distant and isolated tribes degenerated into a savage condition. To this deserts and forests, marshes and mountains, would expose men, when they found themselves severed from others by distinct tongues, and the national barriers drew in their train opposing

interests, and the difficulties of subsistence increasing with population. Hunting soon led to encroachment on human liberty, as our chapter has shown. There was corruption and violence before the flood, a great reason for it though by no means the only one; but there is no evidence of idolatry till after. We know it had set in even through Abraham's progenitors before his call. But idolatry, once introduced, spread like fire, and added enormously to the debasement of its victims.

The Japhetic race is first traced in the early verses (2-5), and with marked brevity. Japheth's sons present the great outline of those that possessed themselves of the north from east to west in Asia and Europe. From two only do we hear of descendants, though doubtless all had; but here we have only the sons of Gomer and of Javan. These were respectively the families which peopled Asia Minor, and Armenia on the east, and the sons of Javan whom we cannot fail to identify with the Greek or Hellenic families, extending to Spain, France, Italy and Sicily, the isles or maritime coasts of the nations.

Much more detail is assigned to Ham, who occupies verses 6 to 20. And with that holy boldness and candour which characterises the truth, this chapter hides not but sets before us plainly the early rise of kingly power in that race. The beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar; Nimrod was of Cush, Ham's eldest son. He and he alone is here described in terms so strong, even if we conceive that Asshur went out from that land, though of Shem's stock, and emulated Nimrod's ambitious example by building Nineveh and three cities more in Assyria. The sons of Cush include much beyond

Ethiopia, but are distinct from Mizraim and Phut as well as Canaan, minutely enumerated, though none so much as that race accursed of God which Israel was responsible to blot out.

Last of all we come to Shem's descendants in vers. 21-31, singularly described as father of all the sons of Eber, brother of Japheth the elder. Eber led the way through Peleg in due time to the father of the faithful. If Shem had not the natural priority over Japheth, he pre-eminently had the blessing, as Canaan the curse. Elam is the first named son, progenitor of those east of Persia proper, occupying the province of which Shushan or Susa was capital. It early rose to power, but faded before the energy of Assyria and Babylon, till with Persia and Media it shared the power of the second world-kingdom. Arphaxad will find his developed place in Gen. 11. The Lydians answer to Lud, and Syrians to Aram. Attention is drawn under Peleg to the significant fact of the earth divided in his day. And the list closes with Joktan and his sons who fill Arabia from S.W. to N.E. as the Ishmaelites, Keturahites, and Edomites distinguish the north and west. But of these we have no particulars till later in the book of Genesis, so that we speak here only of the fact in general.

Genesis 11:1.

The last chapter gave us with minute detail the new fact on the earth of the sons of Noah after their generations, in their nations, after their tongues, and in their lands. Here were traits and arrangements, unknown to the world before the deluge, and in no degree seen for some time after. Gen. 10 casts invaluable light, found nowhere else, on the rise of those families distributed on the

earth, every one after his tongue. It is only in Gen. 11 that we find the originating cause and occasion. The previous chapter comes in, not flowing according to historic time, but as a descriptive parenthesis between Gen. 9 and 11. It was of very great importance to give us inspired certainty where men had no adequate record, and no reliable tradition; where pride hastened to disguise or forget a divine judgment which effectually rebuked it. East or west, men set up claims to be indigenous from the first, sprung from their own soil; and if they believed that man was an outcast from Paradise, though in forms disguised by pride, setting up to speak the original language of our primeval parents.

The A.V. fails to express the two thoughts. The speech and the words were alike one. “And the whole earth was of one language (lip) and the words one” (or the same) (11:1). The Latin Vulgate gives the literal reflection of the Hebrew text. Moses beyond doubt here goes back to the universal state of mankind for a certain period after the great catastrophe of the flood. Till then and after it, man had but one “lip” and the same words.

There had been ample space before the deluge for the development of many languages. Soon after the murder of Abel had furious Cain gone forth, an unrepentant despairing man, who failed to profit by Jehovah’s patience, and dwelt in the land of Nod, away from the scene which even he could not face at ease or unabashed. There is no real ground to accept either von Bohlen’s identification with India, or Knobel’s with China. Enough for us to know that the land of his “Wandering,” as it means, was toward or in front of the east of Eden. Still less can we identify the city Cain built and called “Enoch” after the name of his son. But the

Holy Spirit plainly intimates the rise in his line (not of a rudiment of a different tongue nor of a distinct nationality which we in our ignorance might have thought only natural, but) of science and art, and even the fine arts. The holy wisdom of God took care to apprise His people of the true origin of civic life as well as of nomad, the latter not previous but posterior, of music and its practice in stringed and wind instruments, of the working in copper and iron, of polygamy, and self-occupied verse, the first recorded song of man. It is a picture of man's skill and energy, civilisation, letters, and luxury. The Pagans long after attributed these to their spurious gods but real demons. Here we have them shown to be the inventions of men far from God, vainly striving to make the earth of their exile a paradise of their own.

But here first do we learn how, when, where, and why it was that diversity of tongues superseded the "one lip" which had characterised the whole earth hitherto. The original unity of language prevailed for some time after the deluge, as uninterruptedly before it. This is an immense difficulty to such as reason from the existing multiplicity of tongues; for there are confessedly at least 900 in possession of the earth. Of late the researches of the learned have reduced them to families or groups, and have named these Aryan, Shemitic, and Turanian. But a deeper affinity has disclosed itself to patient, comprehensive, and minute study. For these family groups, whatever their strongly marked distinctions from each other, have been proved to yield decided proofs of common relationship, which cannot be thought accidental but indicative of one source. Thus were scholars forced to the conclusion, neither expected nor

desired by most, but opposed strongly to the scepticism of many, that these languages point to a time when was spoken but one and the same tongue, whence all drew those common evidences of flowing from the same fountain-head.

Such was the judgment of A, von Humboldt. in treating of the prolific varieties of aboriginal American speech in his contribution to the “Asia Polyglotta,” p. vi. (Paris, 1823). Such too was the conviction of Julius Klaproth in that erudite survey itself of the Asiatic tongues. It is the more striking because the latter’s incredulity is daring and undisguised. Nor was any wish more from his heart than testifying in result to the truth of inspired history. Yet he declared that, in his comparative tables etc., “the universal affinity of languages is placed in so strong a light that it must be considered by all as completely demonstrated. This does not appear explicable on any other hypothesis than that of admitting fragments of a primary language yet to exist through all the languages of the old and new worlds” (Vorr. § ix.).

But the believer stands on an impregnable and unchanging vantage ground. He receives the fact on the word of God, and therefore in simple faith common to all who are led of the Holy Spirit, apart from all linguistic lore, apart from all historic investigation where so much is difficult and obscure, apart from philosophical discussion where vanity revels in opposing old hypotheses and inventing new ones of the day and the man. He knows the only true God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, His sent One; living of that life eternal he delights to honour that word which is open to Jew or Greek, bond or free. But he is not displeased to note how the adversaries of revelation are compelled to bow

to the force of proofs which divine mercy leaves to convince inquirers, even though pursuing their own paths without a care for His truth or glory, perhaps not afraid to gainsay Him now and then, as they are estranged from the life of God by reason of the hardness of their hearts.

Is it objected that these were investigators early in the century? Though one distrusts the childish assumption that recent men have better knowledge or judgment, for such experts are rare, let them learn that in this field no living man has greater claim to be heard than Max Müller; that he is morbidly afraid of mixing up theological arguments with his “Science of Language;” and that his real object was not at all to assert revealed truth, but to show how rash it was to speak of different independent beginnings in the history of human speech, before a single argument had been brought forward to establish the necessity of such an admission. On the contrary he endeavoured to show how even the most distant members of the Turanian family (the one spoken in the north, the other in the south of Asia) have preserved in their grammatical organisation traces of a former unity. So later he says, in the enthusiasm of his theme, though in terms which a, believer could not endorse, “the Science of Language thus leads us up to that summit from whence we see into the very dawn of man’s life on earth; and where the words which we have heard so often since the days of our childhood — ‘and the whole earth was of one language and of one speech’ — assume a meaning more natural, more intelligible, more convincing than they had before.” This is so doubtless to himself and others like him on natural ground; but to him who sets to his seal that God is true,

no evidences or reasonings of man can compare with the certainty, simplicity, or sweetness of God's testimony. If the child accepts it without question, the mature Christian finds in it truth which lifts him far above the summits of philology, and jarring or jealous disputes of philosophers, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth: possibility, probability, necessity are their respective idols, one as vain and unreliable as another.

Genesis 11:2-4.

How many dialects, how many languages, have on the one hand perished practically, or have on the other sprung really into being and the most extensive use, long since the Christian era! Yet here, on the shortest reckoning for nearly as many centuries since our first parents were created, we have the fact calmly and clearly revealed, which was nowhere else made known and wholly inconsistent with human experience as well as all scientific theory of languages, that there was but one "lip" or (as we and others say) one tongue, the "words" also one and the same. This we believe, without reasoning which is here out of court, from one qualified divinely to give us certainty. For Moses was distinguished above even all other prophets, who had a vision or a dream adequate in the power of the Spirit. But to him mouth to mouth did Jehovah speak openly.

So too did the Son of God, both in the days of His flesh and after He rose from the dead, attest Moses, not only as the channel but as the writer of the Law or Five Books (John 5, Luke 20 and 24). But if in presence of supernatural power sons of Israel "were not afraid to speak against" him living, we need not wonder that, in

fallen yet haughty and unbelieving Christendom, professing Christians take their place with infidel Jews, in denying that he wrote aught but the merest shreds. These shreds some of these men do rather pretend (for there is no ground, but their self-sufficiency) to identify among the legends of an Elohist, and a Jehovist, with as many more imaginary hands in the patch-work as the pseudocriticism may invent to hide its empty and naked impotence. Not that any prophet failed to give the word of God; but Moses, besides the divine authority which attached to what he wrote as well as spoke from Jehovah, had a divine intimacy peculiar to himself, the fruit of which is in no part of the Law more conspicuous or of richer consequence than in the book of Genesis.

“And it came to pass as they journeyed [lit. pulled up their tent-stakes] east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Come, let us make bricks and burn (them) thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and asphalt had they for mortar. And they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower, whose top [head] (may be) to the heavens; and let us make ourselves a name, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth.” (vers. 2-4)

Things were no longer as before God’s judgment in the deluge, when men were left, outside paradise, to their own ways without covenant or government. The law which tested innocent Adam in the garden did not apply to himself when an outcast or to his sons who were never there. As fallen men, however, they had conscience, that invaluable monitor universally possessed, which does not fail inwardly. to pronounce on right and wrong, or, as scripture says, “to know good

and evil." Nor were they without revelation to and through their first father, brief indeed but of unspeakable moment to fallen man. Other divine intimations also followed, even to Cain, as well as Enoch, Lamech, and Noah: each of deep importance; all together not beyond what the fear of God in every one was bound to weigh, and fairly remember, and might fully profit by.

Only after the flood came in the great principle of divine government laid on man responsibly, never to be revoked to the eternal day. It was not creation left to itself in departure from God, but creation set under government in human hands. Noah walked with God. But Noah, preserved with his family from the destruction which befell the world of ungodly men, failed in an unwatchful hour to govern himself; as his sin and shame gave occasion to the heartless rebellious wickedness of a son, who brought on a curse narrowed to one line instead of overspreading all his seed. But the government, which from God through man abode unreversed, spite of personal flaws does still to this day. For there is no authority except what is from God; and those authorities that exist are established by God.

We have now a new development, in which not one or a few but the race displayed its state. God originally had in blessing men said, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it. After the deluge, His word to Noah and his sons still was, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. But mankind, though awed by that judgment, had no care to do His will. Their mind was to keep together. And assuredly they pitched on a region, by its great rivers on either side and its exceeding fertility, eminently suited for their purpose; which was to

constitute themselves a universal republic without God. Was it then for man to live by bread alone? So at least they spoke and acted: God was in none of their thoughts. It was the first joint, and public, step of the post-diluvian race, They were without excuse, not only because of the witness to God's eternal power and divinity manifested to them, but from such knowledge of God as Noah, "preacher of righteousness," professed and testified, backed by such an intervention as the deluge itself fresh in their memory. They glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. Into what folly in their inward reasonings this led them ere long need not be stated here. For we do not as yet hear of that new plague of Satan, idolatry; but it soon followed, as we way assuredly gather from Joshua 24:2, Romans 1:20-23.

But we do learn their united purpose, independent of God, yea, in defiance of His will that they should fill the earth. As stone and lime were not furnished by the plain of Shinar, they none the less resolved to build a city and a tower; and they had brick thoroughly burnt for stone, and asphalt, of which abundance was there, for mortar. But their aim (for this it is that mainly determines man's acts and life) — what was their object? "Come (said they) let us build ourselves a city and a tower, whose top (may reach) to the heavens; and let us make ourselves a name, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth." There is no need to conceive that more was meant in their aspiration, than in the depressing tone of the spies in Deut. 1:28: "the cities are great and walled up to heaven."

Nothing was farther from their thoughts or from common sense than to rear a pile to save them from another deluge, as some have fancied for them. God had

solemnly assured Noah that this was never to be again. If they had nevertheless dreaded it, the highest of lands might have been chosen with that foolish design; certainly not the low-lying plain they settled on. It was a deep-laid human scheme, ignoring God altogether, and in rebellious self-will; it was for “ourselves” throughout. It was not merely a city to live in (which had been from early days), but to “build ourselves a city and a tower,” and with high-flown pretensions. But worse still, “let us make ourselves a name.” What! poor sinners, saved by divine mercy, from the flood that swept all else away! Noah, they well knew, built an altar and offered Burnt offerings. The earth as a whole now changes all that. They sought to themselves a conspicuous centre for every eye; they would make themselves a name, though this belongs only to God, or to a head with all authority delegated of Him. What is man to be accounted, whose breath is in his nostrils?

Yet clearly had they, notwithstanding their self-sufficiency, the fear that accompanies a bad conscience; for what they sought was “lest they should be scattered upon the face of the whole earth.” But therefore it was that Jehovah scattered them. Their forebodings were more than realised in a scattering, by Him Whom they willingly forgot, which immediately and completely dispersed them and their descendants till this day.

Genesis 11:5-7.

These verses are a striking example of the childlike simplicity which, as it characterised the ways of God with man in these early days, is reflected in the divine record, and nowhere more so than in the book of Genesis. There it was in the account of creation in itself

(Gen. 1), and in its varied relations (Gen. 2). Nor was it only with Adam and Eve, innocent or fallen (Gen. 3), but with wicked Cain (Gen. 4) and with righteous Noah (Gen. 6-9). A similar feature prevails throughout the book, as the expression on the one hand of tender interest and on the other hand of His heart grieved by perverseness and rebellion in those that were the object of His great and countless favours. We see it even with such as Pharaoh (Gen. 12) and Abimelech (Gen. 21), not only with Abraham (Gen. 12-22), Isaac (Gen. 26) and Jacob (Gen. 28), but with Sarah. (Gen. 18:15) and Laban too (Gen. 31), Hagar also (Gen. 16:7-13), and Rebekah (Gen. 25:23). The same simplicity characterises the ways as the words of God, and produced like effects on the faithful.

“And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of Man builded. And Jehovah said, Behold, the people [are] one, and have all one language (lip); and this have they begun to do; and now they will not be hindered in all that they meditate to do. Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech (lip)” (vers 5-7).

He Who is not the Creator only but the moral governor, Jehovah, came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of Man builded. No designation suited the occasion but this. For He it is Who concerned Himself with all who stood in moral relation with Him, as He had breathed into the nostrils of their first father the breath of life In the style of the account He would also impress His people with, His calm and full judicial survey of men’s ways, though all was known to Him from the beginning (ver. 5). God was in none of their thoughts.

They never thought of a temple to His honour being a centre for themselves. They built no altar to Jehovah, as Noah did on emerging from the ark. They called not on His name, neither sought they His will. On the contrary, “let us make us a name” was their purpose; “let us build us a city and a tower, whose top [is] unto heaven,” their plan, “lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.”

It was Jehovah thrown off in open independency; and as He saw and said and wrought before the deluge, so did He now deliberately and righteously deal with this new and daring impiety. We may be assured that those who walked with God had no fellowship with a project of practical atheism. If they forgot Him, it is no wonder that Noah or Shem did not enter their minds. To the exclusion of God, the root of all infidelity, they would make themselves a public centre and a striking rallying-place. What did it matter to them that God called man to replenish the earth? Here on this fertile plain, watered by two noble rivers, would they dwell, and construct such a visible symbol of that union which is strength as would keep them together and guard against all danger of scattering. But Jehovah had His plan wholly differing; and at they abandoned both Him and His expressed will, so He made manifest their folly, and perforce scattered them by a simple, peaceful, and effectual means which subsists to this day. How vain is human wisdom in collision with God! How ineffectual is the prudence that trusts self and does without Him! What sin too!

“And Jehovah said, Behold, the people are one, and have all one language, and this have they begun to do; and now they will not be hindered in all that they meditate to do. Come, let us go down, and there confound their

language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

The race had dared to set themselves in direct opposition to Jehovah, Who, in answer to Noah's offering of sweet savour, had guaranteed the continuance of the earth with its seasons, the ground to be cursed no more for man's sake, nor any more every living thing to be smitten as by the deluge. It was not the day for the powers of heaven to be shaken, nor for the kingdom of God to come in power and glory for the earth. But as the principle of government had been set up in Noah, so Jehovah was content to confound man's scheme of union without God, themselves the makers of a centre the work of their own device and of their own hands! It was a universal socialism they sought, which Jehovah brought to nought by the confusion of tongues. This compelled them, not only to give up their godless project, but to disperse according to His will and replenish the earth.

What a contrast with God's work in the church! Therein grace gathered from every nation under heaven. There in honour of Him, the righteous Servant of Jehovah (Who suffered for our sins to the uttermost, died, rose, and ascended). His name was the God-given centre; and in virtue of one Spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all given to drink of one Spirit. Thus was He Whom all in heaven adore made the object of worship and service for all that believe on earth: a worthy and divine centre; else it would have been an idolatrous rival and a derogation from the true God. But on the contrary it is His revealed word that we honour Christ as we honour the Father, Who is' only known and possessed by such as

thus confess the Son. And in witness of the gracious power of God in Christ, while the government of men was left as it had been, and the effect of divine judgment in divers tongues still subsists, His love wrought in unlettered Jews, become Christians, to proclaim the wonderful works of God in all the tongues of Gentiles.

Still greater or at least wider and more conspicuous will the contrast be when the Son of man appears in the clouds of heaven, dominion and glory given Him, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages shall serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Even then manifestly all the peoples, languages, and nations remain, but in blessed harmony around the true centre to the glory of God the Father. Only in the eternal state will such distinctions vanish, when God shall be all in all, and His tabernacle be with men.

Genesis 11:5-7.

As the case of the Babel-builders is quite misconceived latterly by some of influence, it seems well to review the observations made by the late Abp. Whately in the third Preliminary Dissertation of the Encyclopaedia Britannica (ed. eighth). Here they are in extenso.

“There is reason to believe that the confusion which is recorded as having occurred at Babel5 afterwards called Babylon,6 and which caused the dispersion of mankind into various countries, was in reality a dispute among them as to their worship of some god or gods. This at least is certain, that the scheme mentioned in Gen. 11 was something displeasing to God, and therefore could not have been merely the building of a tower. And it is

plain also from the Bible history, that some ages after the flood mankind had very generally fallen into gross idolatry, though we are not told expressly when and how it was introduced. As for the Tower of Babel, it is said indeed in our version that a number of persons joined together to build ‘a tower whose top should reach to heaven’ (our translators meant an exceeding high tower), in order that they might ‘not be scattered over the face of the whole earth’; and that God sent on them a confusion of language, which ‘caused them to cease building the tower, and scattered them.’ But it is to be observed that the word ‘reach’ is supplied by our translators, there being nothing answering to it in the original, which merely says, ‘whose top to the heavens.’ And the meaning doubtless is, that the top of the tower should be dedicated to the heavens — that is, that a temple should be built on it to Bel, Belus, Zeus, or Jupiter; under which title the ancient Pagans worshipped the heavens, For we find the historian Herodotus (I. cxxxi.) who many ages later visited Babylon, expressly declaring that there was there in his time a very high tower, on the top of which was a temple to Belus; who, he says, was the same with the Zeus of the Greeks. The ancient Pagans, it is well known, were accustomed to erect altars to the Heavens, or to the Sun, on ‘high places’ (Numbers 33:52), on the loftiest mountains. And as the land of Shinar is a very fertile plain of vast extent and quite level, it seems to have been designed to make a sort of artificial mountain on it — that is, a very high tower — and to build a temple on the top of this, to their god Belus, and so establish a great empire of people worshipping at this temple. The ‘confusion’ which God sent among them, and which caused the tower to be less lofty than originally

designed, and dispersed many of the people into other lands, was most likely not a confusion of languages, but a dissension about religious worship. The word in the original literally signifies lip. And it is more likely that it was used to signify worship than language. A dissension as to that which was the very object of the building would much more effectually defeat the scheme than a confusion of languages. For labourers engaged in any work, and speaking different languages, would in a few days learn by the help of signs to understand one another sufficiently to enable them to go on with their work. But if they disagreed as to the very object proposed, this would effectually break up the community. As for the different languages now spoken in the world, there is no need of explaining that by any miraculous interference. For tribes who have not the use of letters, and have but little mutual intercourse, vary so much from each other in the language after even a few generations, as not to be able at all to understand each other" (465, 466).

Those who accept what has been said already on these verses will have no hesitation in pronouncing the whole statement a string of strange fancies, which supplant the truth, concluding with undisguised disbelief of scripture. Not a trace does the inspired narrative give of a dispute about worship. Not a word breathes a question about the true God, still less does it "about some god or gods." We hear of a city and a tower. A temple was as wholly absent from their minds as God Himself. This could not but be displeasing to God.

But there was far more here. They sought only their own glory. They wilfully hid from themselves His judgment of the antediluvian world, and His merciful preservation of

a few, their own progenitors still living. They set their heart unitedly on a city, and a lofty tower which built on the plain should call attention all the more as a centralising object in the land of their settlement. The name of God was nothing in their eyes. “Let us make ourselves a name.” Was this a peccadillo in the eyes of the archbishop? Their aim was the unity of man without God, and this avowedly in self-exaltation. What a tale it tells that a prelate should fail to understand how displeasing this must be to God! It was setting up a unity of man independently of God; it was claiming for themselves what alone can in truth belong to God, alone is due to His power and glory, to His righteousness and mercy. It was rebellion and usurpation. He alone is the rightful centre.

They did not yet set up “some god or gods.” They left the true God out. They would make a name for themselves. It was not merely the building of a tower, but man’s first collective effort after unity without God; to make himself a name round a self-made centre, instead of multiplying and replenishing the earth. The time would soon come when they would set up other gods beside and before God. The time will at last come when a man, energised by Satan, shall sit down in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. But to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; and neither of these had yet come.

It was however sad and evil enough, that, while the witnesses of a divine and universal judgment still lived to glorify God for his saving themselves through the deluge, the progeny could forsake the fountain of living water, and set themselves up, cisterns, broken cisterns, that could hold no water. The language of Jehovah

confirms all this as the truth; not a word here points to strange gods or idols. “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing Will be restrained from them — all which they purpose doing.” It was irreligious combination, not false worship. “Once hath God spoken, twice have I heard this, that strength [belongeth] unto God.” They had heeded not but forgotten Him. Their own union would be their strength, and a name of renown on earth. At the end punitive judgment must fall on the full results. But meanwhile Jehovah would bring their pride to nought, and would disperse them by a means as simple as effectual. He would there confound their language, that they should not understand one another’s speech; and they would be compelled to scatter as they feared. But what mercy in their dispersion! Not a hair of their heads was lost.

It is utterly unfounded that ver. 4 can mean “a top dedicated to the heavens.” This is perversion, and one so gross that no version however faulty known to me follows it, no scholar as far as I know has ever attempted to justify it. Nor can the testimony so late in the day prove any thing of the original tower, even if the site were the same. Not till afterwards was the worship of the heavens, as of the sun, or of Bel. Nor had dissension about worship the least to do with the bold builders of Babel, any more than the word translated “language” and “speech” (lit. “lip”) means worship. Indeed it is a notion destructive of the plain sense of the history. If we assume it, what folly! Does Jehovah create ever so many forms of false worship? He certainly made the “one lip” to be many even if the wonder seemed too great for Dr. W. to believe, The tower then was not

designed for religion, but as a rallying centre for man in that great plain; which was thoroughly frustrated by the confusion of tongues. The Abp. talks of labourers learning signs of communication; but the sudden completeness of the divine measure overawed men too much, lest a worse thing might befall them. They had not yet learnt the rationalists' lesson. The fact that all as yet spoke one language, though men had lived some seventeen or eighteen centuries, not crowded together, nor boasting the use of letters any more than much mutual intercourse, makes only the more impressive Jehovah's dealing in the immediate introduction of different tongues. Yet was it a dealing tempered with wisdom and mercy; for each tongue was spoken by the same clan. They did not part (as might easily have been if God had so willed) from their families, but spread abroad after their generations; and national history thus began in their various lands. How paltry is the misreading, how worthy is the truth!

Genesis 11:8, 9.

Thus was the scheme of human self-will brought to nought. They had left out God and at best forgotten His word. They had dared to oppose His will Who commanded that they should fill the earth. They sought on the contrary to hold together in a region well suited for union, being alike fertile in itself and peculiarly adapted to receive supplies from all sides. There they proposed not only to build a city and a tower of imposing pretension, but to make themselves a name, that they should not be scattered over the face of the whole earth. Therefore Jehovah interfered, not yet in punishment of their rebellious audacity, but by a dealing which left no

doubt of His hand and compelled their dispersion according to His declared mind.

“And Jehovah scattered them thence over the face of the whole earth. And they left off building the city. Therefore was its name called Babel (confusion); because Jehovah there confounded the language of the whole earth. And Jehovah scattered them thence over the face of the whole earth” (vers. 8, 9).

Thus it was that mankind spread everywhere after the flood. It came to pass after a certain lapse of time, not willingly but under the constraint of divine power. This so thoroughly and at once confounded them, that they might well dread the issue of any further effort to disobey. Thus nationalities began, each with its peculiar tongue, in their lands, but as mercy ruled according to their families. There was no confusion in Jehovah’s ordering. Gen. 11:1-9 is the key to the previous Gen. 10, the moral account thus graphically of what was there given as a fact.

It is sorrowful to find the lack of simple faith even in minds not at all unfriendly to revelation. But men suffer, partly through undue heed to tradition, partly through indulging in dreams of their own. Thus Jacob Bryant, in his New System, or Analysis of Ancient Mythology (vol. iv. 31-15, 3rd edition, 1807), strives to give a very different turn to the confusion of tongues. As his learned work may weigh with some, it seems well to notice briefly what he alleges for denying the general bearing of the event, which he would limit to the Cushite, and pare down in itself to a labial failure, so that the people affected could not articulate and thus failed to understand each other.

“This I take to be the true purport of the history: from whence we may infer that the confusion of language was a partial event; and that the whole of mankind is by no means to be included in the dispersion from Babel. It related chiefly to the sons of Cush, whose intention was to have founded a great, if not an universal, empire; but by this judgment their purpose was defeated” (37). Hence he distinguishes the scattering here as partial, from the earth divided to the nations in the days of Peleg as a general event in which all were concerned. “We must therefore, instead of the language of all the earth, substitute the language of the whole country”; also “a failure and incapacity in labial utterance. By this their speech was confounded, but not altered; for as soon as they separated, they recovered their true tenor of pronunciation; and the language of the earth continued for some ages nearly the same.” For evidence Mr. Bryant sends us to M. A. Court de Gebelin’s Monde Primitif Analysé et comparé avec le Monde Moderne, in nine vols. 4to (1774-1784): an ambitious effort of no solid value, any more than this speculation of our own countryman before us.

Now not a word in scripture belittles the fact or God’s dealing as is here done. In Gen. 10:8-10 we have the pride of power which a son of Cush betrayed early; but a wholly different phase is here, not individual usurpation, nor a kingdom or empire, but a sort of universal republic, as we have already remarked. In that chapter which is not chronological but descriptive we have simply the families of Noah’s sons after their families and tongues, in their lands and nations. Here in Gen. 11 we have the moral cause, why Jehovah scattered them contrary to their perverse resolve to hold together in the

land of Shinar. We have not a word about Nimrod or any other individual here. The force lies in its universality. Attention is expressly called to the whole earth being of one lip and of words alike also. Not a hint is dropped of one land in particular. There would be nothing to surprise in one country pervaded by one tongue; but we are reminded of the state that thus characterised all the earth, in order the better to appreciate the judgment which compelled men suddenly to speak diversely, and so not to understand one another's speech.

It is then an unsubstantial dream to fancy that it was only the Cushites, however numerously followed by others. — Not only is there no evidence of any specific family, but the inspired record excludes any such construction. Nimrod was subsequent to the scattering; for "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel," other cities following. He was not afraid to start his ambitious enterprise from a city branded by divine displeasure. The scattering had already taken place. It was a new form of man's will; for there was no thought or pretence of its being ordained of God. Nor was there any such mark of God's intervention as that which dealt with their purpose to unite unholily and to make themselves a name.

But it was no mere temporary fit of labial failure as Bryant imagined, again without a scrap of divine evidence. It was Jehovah confounding their language, so that men should be no longer one, but be divided into nations henceforth, though mercy took care that the tongues should not dislocate their families. It was Jehovah's doing, not nature nor circumstances, nor development, but a manifestly judicial and a lasting dealing of divine power. And the account is exactly

suited to the inspired and only reliable Book of Origins; where man's history fails, and tradition is as puerile and misleading as pretentious philosophy, spinning cobwebs from within.

Genesis 11:10-26.

We are now presented with a genealogy which ends with Abram, and is followed in the next chapter with the mighty principle of grace, God's call. That prepares the way outwardly. But Jehovah shines through this dealing and revelation. Here we have the special line. It is no more an "endless genealogy" than that of Adam to Noah in Gen. 5. We may notice ten links in the chain of both chapters.

But there are notable differences to be noticed also. The sorrowful chime is heard throughout the earlier one, "and he died." — Not once does this sound in the later one, though as a fact all spoken of in chap. 11 did die; whereas there was in chap. 5 the conspicuous exception of Enoch, "who walked with God and was not, for God took him." Human life was so prolonged in those days, that it was all the more affecting to say of each with that exception, "and he died." In the latter half of chap. 11 we read of the line of blessing, and we are told of each succession down to Abram, the time when the promise was made, and the years were lived; but nothing is said of death. Let who will count either accidental, the believer can hardly avoid seeing a distinct purpose in each, which may well awaken serious but happy reflections.

Again, neither is drawn in the style of formal, legal, or historical documents. Each is suited to its own place where it is placed by inspiration, and either would be

strange in any book but God's. Yet are they invested with such precise information over the earliest ages, before the Deluge and after it, without a gap, that no genealogical line for that period outside of scripture can be compared with it. But over and above reliable information as to every link in the chain, a special design on God's part governs in each case. This even now earthly learning fails to see, and it has no interest for those intent on literary questions. Yet how great a thing for those whose ears are opened to the voice and teaching of God! But a divine purpose is as far as possible from casual documents or floating traditions from ancient sources, nobody knows whence, pieced together at a later date. The fact of a deep and distinct moral design pervading these lists respectively refutes the notion of any such trivial accident.

"These are the generations of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood; and Shem lived after he had begotten Arphaxad five hundred years, and begot soils and daughters. And Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Shelah; and Arphaxad lived after he had begotten Shelah four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. And Shelah lived thirty years, and begot Eber; and Shelah lived after he had begotten Eber four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. And Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg; and Eber lived after he had begotten Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters. And Peleg lived thirty years and begot Reu; and Peleg lived after he had begotten Reu two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters. And Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug; and Reu lived after he had

begotten Serug two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters. And Serug lived thirty years and begot Nahor; and Serug lived after he had begotten Nahor two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. And Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah; and Nahor lived after he had begotten Terah a hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters. And Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran" (vers. 10-26).

We may readily discern the speciality of this account by comparing it with what is said of the same progenitor in Gen. 10:21. "And to Shem, to him also were [sons] born; he is the father of all the sons of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder. The sons of Shem: Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud and Aram." Here the aim is quite of another kind in a genealogy of Noah's sons parting into their several lands, every one after his tongue, family, and nation. Even so, it wears little or no resemblance to a document such as any human object might demand. For Elam and Asshur, though of celebrity among mankind (prominent also in the Bible and connected with Jewish story), are but named, though before Arphaxad, like Lud after him; and the apparently youngest, Aram, is introduced before Arphaxad. "And the sons of Aram: Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash."

Certainly the divine wisdom of the record is not at all questioned; but it is not man's fashion. Divine design is stamped on this case, as in the other lists, There is neither repetition nor oversight, still less the clashing of differing documents or writers. Not the slightest evidence of solid worth has ever been alleged to shake the fact that Moses wrote every one of them; but the truth still more precious to the believer, and most

solemn for every other, is that God is the author of all, And we can perceive that the design in chap. 10 was not to pursue Arphaxad's line there beyond his grandson, Eber's son Peleg, to state the deeply interesting fact of his name's reference to the division of the earth in his days. Thence it branches off to his brother Joktan, and his sons who settled in the south of Arabia west and east.

Compared with his father Noah and those before him, Shem's years mark the growing diminution of human age after the flood. Yet it was given to him before he came near the end of his six hundred years to live into the days not of Abram only but of Isaac. Peleg, the fifth in this series, did not reach half the limit of Shem's term; and Nahor, the father of Terah, dwindled to a hundred and forty-five years. So that in God's providential arrangements man was coming by rapid steps to the span of years ordinary since the prayer of Moses (Ps. 90), himself an exception as there have been a few even in modern times.

Genesis 11:26.

At this point it seems well to look a little more closely into "the generations" which so frequently come before us in this book. Some remarks on them were made in looking at the verses preceding; but the matter well deserves further consideration.

No believer in God's plenary inspiration of the scriptures is under the least necessity of denying the incorporation of human documents, any more than of speeches or conversations of men who may have been godless or hostile. Thus in Acts 23 we have the letter from the chiliarch Claudius Lysias to Felix the governor; and in

Acts 24 follows the speech of the rhetorician Tertullus accusing Paul. The speech was public, the letter private; but there this is, evidently just as it was written, as the Holy Spirit designed that we should know it. Yet there is no reason to imagine that the contents transpired through officers at Jerusalem or at Caesarea friendly to Paul. He who inspired Luke to give the private document as unerringly as the open speech is in no way limited to any such means; and it is unwarrantable, when we read of such things in scripture, to cast about for some conceivable way of a natural kind to account for them. The great fact is that in a world of evil, falsehood, and vanity, scripture gives us the truth, and this in relation to God as well as to man. Thus only can we have the certainty of His mind revealed to us, though we still need the guidance of His Spirit in its apprehension and application.

If then God led Moses, in writing the book of Genesis, to make use of documents written (say) by Noah, Shem, the Patriarchs, Joseph and any others, there could be no valid objection on that score. But the unity of style and plan, which pervades each part in the face of all that petty criticism has ever alleged to the contrary, does stand adverse to any such theory. The essential condition is that God should inspire His chosen vehicle to convey to us the truth as He intended it for His own. It cannot be denied on solid ground that the alphabet even of Greece and Rome points to a Shemitic source, though it may have reached them according to the common tradition through a Phoenician or an Egyptian channel. In the days of Moses, at least in the wilderness, the Bible bears testimony that reading and writing prevailed among the Israelites, not merely in a sacred or

learned class, but even largely among the rest (Deut. 6:9; Deut. 11:20; Deut. 24:1, 3). Thus from the earliest date of inspiration there was no difficulty of finding writers or readers.

Is it true then that the book of “Genesis is a compilation, and is stated so to be?” Is it the fact that these “generations” prove it to consist of so many separate documents, each beginning with this title? Let us see.

The first occurs in Gen. 2:4: “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah Elohim made earth and heavens.” Now it is plain that this opening verse of a new section of the book, characterised by a very special employment of the divine names7 in the rest of Gen. 2 and in Gen. 3, also sums up the salient facts of Gen. 1. What went before gave creation completely. The new section does not speak of the creation of the heavens and earth. It is not a second, still less a different or discordant account, but the added revelation of man set in moral responsibility, tried by Jehovah Elohim; as he, and he only, is said here to become a living soul by His immediate communication of the breath of life. Hence here we have the park or garden planted by Jehovah Elohim; here the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; here a simple test of obedience suited to innocence. Here too the relation of the man and the woman is given, and Adam’s exercised authority over the lower creation, in contrast with his associate taken out of himself, his one meet companion, whose name he gave to mark the difference. Then in Gen. 3 under the same name of the Creator in moral relationship, the Temptation and the Fall, the present result in death and ruin, but with the revelation of the

Deliverer in the woman's Seed: a wholly new presentation of the truth on the moral side, and grace too rising above sin, not the platform of creation as in what preceded (Gen. 1- 2:3).

Who but the Supreme could have made known the majestic course of creation, and in terms as simple for the hearer as dignified for the Speaker? Was Adam, or any of his sons, the man to announce the solemn yet profound message of his trial and fall, and of the yet future triumph of the bruised Seed of the woman? These assuredly are not casual fragments or "separate documents," but the words of the One Infinite conveying His mind on the immense foundations of divine truth, creation every whit good, and creation with its head ruined through sin and Satan till the Second man by redemption and in power vanquish the enemy, deliver those that believe, and reconcile all things to God's glory. The title is in the precisely right place. Had it been put as a heading to Gen. 1, it would have utterly marred the calm sublimity of the description. Where it stands, it is a suited introduction to the moral government that follows, while it seals the already accomplished grand material work, of the one true God; it shows us all coming to ruin that hung on the first man, and points to the Second and Last as the object of faith and destroyer of Satan.

Next in Gen. 5 we have and here only, and most appropriately, "the book"8 of Adam's generations. It says Elohim throughout, save in Lamech's prophecy where His government comes in, and therefore we hear of Jehovah. It is a summary of the antediluvian world. Who could have drawn it up but Himself?

Then in Gen. 6:9 we read, “These are the generations of Noah:” where the fitting ground is given for his exemption from the flood, with his “three sons and their wives; and “the book” of chap 5 would be out of place.

In Gen. 10 we have the generations of the sons of Noah,” but there collaterally rather than successively unless in measure and for special reason, in order to set out an entirely new thing, the separation of the nations, after their families and tongues, and in their lands. The moral cause is explained in Gen. 11:1-9; after which we find “the generations of Shem” in vers. 10-26, and those “of Terah” to complete the picture, and make way for Abram, the man of God’s choice, call, and promise. Here we have, unlike any of those before, at least two genealogies side by side: the nations separate one from another, and the man separated to God with blessing and promise in him, and his seed natural or spiritual.

After Abraham’s death in Gen. 25, we have also two genealogies — vers. 12-18 Ishmael’s, and vers. 19-26 Isaac’s — of the flesh, and of promise.

In Gen. 36 we have the generations “of Esau” still more pretentiously, ending in kings before there was such a ruler over the sons of Israel. Only it is untrue that the times of the Jewish monarchy, long after Moses’ day, are spoken of. The kings of Israel are not alluded to historically; but not one had reigned in Israel when Edom had been thus ruled. To say the least, the eight named may all have reigned when Moses wrote. Did he not know from God (Deut. 17) that Israel would set up a king? if so, he had to charge Israel that he should not be a foreigner but a brother.

Genesis 37:2 gives “the generations of Jacob,” with Joseph the special object of interest and a plain figure of Him Who was rejected by His brethren and separated thence, but exalted of God and wielding the power of the throne over the Gentiles. In due time His brethren are brought to repentance and humiliation before His glory, and Himself made known to them. Even a mere man, to say nothing of a believer, must be a thoughtless reader of the O.T. in the light of the New, who fails to perceive the type of Christ rejected by His natural brethren, and condemned unjustly by the Gentile, yet the Interpreter of God’s mind in humiliation, then raised to be the Saviour of both Jews and Gentiles outside the land, and at last owned by His own people. So in earlier days was Isaac, the beloved son, after the figure of Christ’s death and resurrection (Gen. 22), shown us in Canaan only, and the bride brought across the wilderness for union with the heir of promise, to whom the father gave all that he had. Yet the others had gifts; none was forgotten. Ishmael lived before God, and had his twelve sons princes, as Esau had his kings, while the chosen family passed through the furnace and were oppressed in bondage for hundreds of years, Jacob himself typifying their wanderings and sorrows before their restoration and glory.

It is freely granted then that these genealogies are wholly different from those of human pride, and their style in harmony with God’s book of beginnings, which adumbrate His ways even to the end of the age and of that to come. The misconception is that God deigns to write history any more than to teach science. But He has written the scriptures to make known Himself and His ways, as well as to let man learn himself as can be

nowhere else save in His Son, the centre, substance, and display of all truth. To Him all scripture testifies from Genesis to Revelation. Even these genealogies, which seem strange to literary men and furnish materials for all sorts of speculation to such as lack the key of Christ for all the word, in the midst of much variety of form, testify to one and the same writer, even Moses, and bear the stamp of future purpose as on God's part. Surely it is most important, that we should not fail to recognise His wise and holy mind, but grow in grace and faith and the knowledge of Him Who is our all, but the Judge of all that believe not to their utter and everlasting condemnation. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me" (John 5:46).

Genesis 11:26.

From the detailed comparison of the genealogies in this book, let us turn to the humbling crisis at this stage of man's sad story. Very interesting it is to note that we are indebted for it to the book of Joshua. In its last chapter we have him making a covenant with the people after his farewell charge at Shechem to the assembled tribes. Thus carefully but in our eyes peculiarly does God order His word. Is it not that we may search and cherish every part of it? Who beforehand could have looked for such important information about the father of Abraham in the book of the conquest of Canaan? Who yet more surprisingly could have anticipated in the Epistle of Jude the account of Michael's contention with Satan? The effort to reduce scripture to the merely human or historical method is vain, Its divinely inspired character is wholly inconsistent with such an aim. Man may not

believe God; but he gives Him the lie at his own peril, and must justly suffer if he does not repent.

It is then in Joshua 24 we read that Joshua said to all the people, “Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt of old on the other side of the river [the Euphrates], Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods.” It is the first notice the Bible affords of idolatry; and this not when it began, but when it corrupted the immediate progenitor of Abraham. There was abundant and flagrant evil in the antediluvian world; but of serving other gods we never hear. Nor is there any hint of its existence after the deluge till scripture thus speaks of the fathers in Terah’s day, though self-will wrought strangely in the race generally and in Nimrod particularly. God was in none of their thoughts. Human association only drew out dispersion; and individual energy subjugated mankind, as it had the beasts previously.

The judgment of God abides in the confusion of tongues; and man’s age dwindles with comparative rapidity down to the common standard that subsists. The obedience or gathering of the peoples is reserved for Shiloh. In Him indeed it is God’s purpose to head up all thinks, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth. The entire universe shall find in Him the true centre; and we who are His shall share His exaltation Who is the Heir, as He was the Creator, of all things.

But the enemy at this point is shown to have taken a new step of daring moment. He establishes himself as God in the worship of mankind; and so successful were his wiles that, when first told of the fact, we hear of its prevalence in the fathers of Israel. Blessed, said Noah,

be Jehovah the God of Shem; but now we find the sons of Shem, and in the most favoured stem, serving other gods. Had Ham been thus apostate, or Canaan, Shem's bondman, it were not so astounding. But no; it was not even haughty Japheth enlarging his border and in his earthly energy forgetting the only true God. It was Shem's descendant Torah, father of Abraham and father of Nahor; it was they that "served other gods." This too was the fitting moment to show how grace had shone on Abraham, when he and his brother and his father were walking thus evilly, separating him to be a witness of the true God. So the sons of Israel knew that they themselves were called to be His people and witnesses since Moses led them out of Egypt. But it is precisely therein lay their danger of returning to what they were called out of. This Satan ever seeks as the enemy of God and man: how successfully when God is forgotten! And Joshua appreciated the danger.

Genesis simply states the fact on God's part and on Abram's, and even in this delays stating it till Terah was dead, when Abraham acted on it freely and faithfully, for he had been hindered as long as Terah lived. It is only when Joshua was near his departure that we learn the deplorable evil, to which Jehovah applied in sovereign grace the separative principle of His call, choosing Abraham to enjoy His promise, blessed and a blessing to all the families of the earth, as will yet be proved in the fullest way when Christ comes.

Let us consider the unclean thing as scripture treats it. The deluge left mankind with the strongest impression of the living God's hand. But they soon ceased to glorify Him as God and were unthankful. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and, changing the truth of God into

falsehood, they worshipped the creature more than the Creator Who is blessed for ever. Amen. When idolatry began, or by whom is not said, but that Terah and his sons were involved in it. Now in 1 Cor. 10:20 the apostle, citing Deut. 32:17, pronounces on what it really is, though the form may differ. The worship of the heavens and all its host, of the earth and the sea and their denizens, the serpent especially, or again of heroes and departed ancestors, or of fabulous beings and their images, soon laid hold of men's imagination, not only to shut out God but to debase their votaries to the uttermost. And no wonder. For both O.T. and New, as we have seen, declare that what they sacrificed they sacrificed to demons, not to God. Demons ware in effect behind the idols. If the idols were nothing in themselves, the demons were an awful reality of subtle and malignant evil to the ruin of such as paid the idols reverence.

Man was corrupt and violent, as before the deluge. But it was an awful advance in rebellion against God, when men not only did without Him absolutely, but chose as their gods many and lords many those who were only mightier rebels than themselves. What a deadly insult to the true God!

How humbling that the lesson is lost on philosophising linguists like Max Müller! In the second series of Lectures on the Science of Language (419-425) he mildly deprecates the strong language of the Bible just cited, and misconstrues God's word in Acts 14:16 and especially in Acts 17:22-31. He admits a great amount of incontestable truth in "hard words such as idolatry and devil worship," yet he "cannot help thinking that full justice has never been done to the ancient religions of

the world (!) not even to those of the Greeks and Romans(!!) who in so many other respects are acknowledged by us as our teachers and models." It is to be feared that a classical taste has not been acquired without the moral degradation which accompanies idolatry, and not least that of Greeks and Romans. Alas! it has ever been apt to dispose the youth of Christendom toward the not less real but more guilty idolatries of Popery and her Greek and Oriental rivals. Augustine was right in believing the inspired warning that demons exercise real mischief in connection with idol worship; he was deplorably wrong in thinking that it was better for professing Christians, as they would get drunk on feast days, thus to indulge in honour of martyrs rather than at the altars of Jove or Bacchus.

So Prof. M. contrasts the language in Acts with that in 1 Cor. 10:20, saying that the former "are truly Christian words" and that "this is the truly Christian spirit in which we ought to study the ancient religions of the world: not as independent of God, not as the work of an evil spirit, as mere idolatry and devil-worship, not even as mere human fancy, but as a preparation, as a necessary part in the education of the human race — as a race 'seeking the Lord if haply they might feel after him.'" Can infatuation or perversion be more complete? Fallen man has a conscience, which refers even in a pagan to God, and vainly sought satisfaction by sacrifices to the gods of its own imagining. Of this the apostle at Athens availed himself, by an altar 'to God unknown," to proclaim the true and only God. It is too plain that this learned man failed to see the perfect consistency of seeking to win the heathen by preaching the grace and truth of Him Whom they knew not, while

sternly reproving the profane levity of the Corinthians in partaking of the table and of the cup at a Gentile temple, on the plea that the idol was nothing. The same apostle declares that to do so is communion with demons, and that he did not wish them to be in communion with demons. Think of Paul wishing them or any other Christians “to study the ancient religions of the world!” and to study them “as a preparation, as a necessary part of the education of the human race!” Such is the wisdom of this age, totally insensible to what God revealed to us through the Spirit, as it is to what the cross of Christ means.

Genesis 11:26.

The verse before us is a remarkable example of the manner of scripture which men are apt to mistake. Terah, it is written, lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. So it was said, Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Bare, and Japheth, The father’s age was stated before naming any that were begotten. In neither case also was the elder named first but last, as the examination of other scriptures proves beyond just doubt. The first place in both cases was given to mark the special and spiritual honour God put on each respectively. We have already spoken of the relative seniority of Noah’s sons. Here it remains to determine from scriptural facts that of Terah’s family.

Now we are told in ver. 32 that Terah lived two hundred and five years. As the birth of his eldest occurred when he was seventy, it could not have been Abram; for he was but seventy five years of age as we are told in Gen. 12:4, when he left Charan, after Terah’s death. He was

not begotten therefore till sixty years after the firstborn. It would seem from the history that Haran was the eldest son, born when his father was seventy. Thereby we can understand how Nahor married Haran's daughter Milcah, his niece, and (if the Jewish tradition were reliable that Iscah and Sarah are the same) Abram did also. We also apprehend more clearly how the granddaughter of Nahor became the wife of Isaac, Abraham's son. Nor is it hard to explain why Sarah should be spoken of as his sister, seeing that Lot is spoken of as his brother, though strictly his brother's son.

Nevertheless I cannot but believe that the words of Abram to Abimelech (Gen. 20:12) point more naturally to Terah as Sarah's father by a second and later wife, as she was ten years younger than her husband. Scripture does not hide the facts which were at issue with the law given at a later day; but it is easy to see that the Jews might endeavour to soften or get rid of what was discreditable by a so called tradition, and might seek to confirm their wish by any phrase of scripture which could lend it colour.

Abram then, though the youngest son, took precedence in God's mind and word through the grace that was shown him. "The last was made first": a principle applied frequently in Scripture, and in the N.T. even more distinctly than in the Old, though there we see it every now and then from the earliest book to the latest. Nor need any wonder that Abram should be thus honoured. We have seen ample grounds for it already, and may observe more, In him God began a new headship, not like fallen Adam of mankind universally as they are, but of the faithful. He is the one of whom it is

written, that “he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness” (Gen. 15). It is not insinuated that Abel, Enoch, Noah, or others did not believe God before; but in him the privilege of faith was first publicly established, being brought out in a striking manner, as exercised on a. definite promise.

Abram had already been called out into separation by the appearing of the God of glory to him in Ur of the Chaldees; and it was to a very thorough separation from country and kindred and father’s house. These associations might be and were the. providential arrangements subsisting still, as the general rule for all mankind since the confusion of tongues, families, countries, and nations; yet Jehovah called Abram to come out of them all. And more was added, not only in Gen. 15 but in Gen. 17, which gave him, to say this only, a unique place, as the starting-point of that line of promise and testimony, which the apostle compares to the olive tree in Rom. 11, reasoning on it at great length not in this Epistle only but in that to the churches of Galatia. For it came to light first in his seed after the flesh, who, accepting law as their tenure, and consequently their own righteousness, lost everything in the face of the patient and persevering dealings of Jehovah and all possible healing measures till there was no remedy. Even the advent of the Messiah served but to aggravate and seal their ruin on the ground of their responsibility; for they utterly rejected Him, as they do still, till in the latter day they repent and say, Blessed He that cometh in the name of Jehovah. Self will be renounced and judged; divine mercy in Messiah, all their confidence, rest, and boast. Meanwhile during the gap made by their rejection there is secondly not only the

remnant according to the election of grace, but the call of Gentiles who believe and (being Christ's) become the seed of Abraham and heirs according to promise. He who was raised up to bring out that which rises far above all such hopes, the mystery concerning Christ and concerning the church, the apostle of the Gentiles, is also the most careful to clear the promise assured to all the seed, not only to that which is of the law, but also to that which is of the faith of Abraham who is father of us all.

Who can be surprised then that God's word should place Terah's youngest son before his older brothers? The reader is left to search out the facts there revealed for his soul's profit, where those we find honoured, who honour God, their haste confounded who doubt, and their faith confirmed who believe. How many and great are the errors of such as try to persuade themselves and others, that the Bible is to be treated like any other book! How could this if it be, as it claims to be, the word of God?

Genesis 11:27, 28.

We have seen then the immense importance of what God was pleased to accomplish in the call of Abram. But that which accompanies it is not without its interesting instruction, as a brief notice may help to show.

"And these [are] the generations of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begot Lot. And Haran died before the face of Terah his father in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldeans" (vers. 27, 28).

The order of the three sons of Terah reverses that of nature. Abram was in no sense the head of the family after the flesh, not even when his brother Haran died. The comparison of dates and facts makes it evident that Abram was the youngest of all, and as Haran was born when his father was seventy, so Abram only when he was one hundred and thirty years of age. His foremost place therefore was due to the choice of God.

We may dismiss the traditional dream (Ant. i. 7 § 2) which Josephus was too prone to interweave with inspiration, in order to aggrandise the head of the Jewish people and to commend him in the eyes of Greeks and Romans for wisdom and knowledge, as the teacher of monotheism to the Chaldeans, as well as of astronomy and mathematics to the Egyptians. He even quotes Nicolaus of Damascus, a contemporary of Augustus and therefore not long before his own day, for Abram's reign over Damascus, whither "he came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of the Chaldeans. But after a long time he got him up and removed from that country with his people also, and came into the land then called the land of Canaan, and this when his posterity were become a multitude." Yet all this is not only without but opposed to scripture, which, brief as it may be, gives us to gather with certainty that the delay was in Charran or Harran, not in Damascus, and that Abram had no "posterity" till a much later day. The fact that he had a confidential and chief servant, Eliezer of Damascus, is a slender guarantee of any conquest there, whatever trophy of victory Dean Stanley may have fancied with others (Jewish Church i. 9).

Nor can we entertain for a moment the Jewish tradition which tells of Abram faithful to the true God from his boyhood. That Terah and his family served other gods, we know on divine authority. That Abram, when at fifty years and trusted to sell the idols which his father manufactured, took in hand the practical measure of demonstrating to Terah the sinful folly of idolatry, is a story suited for the credulity of the Jew Apella, even without the legend of Nimrod's punishing Abram in the flames, and the fountain springing up to extinguish them, with a delightful garden, wherein were Been angels sitting and Abram in their midst. Truth needs neither fables nor more miracles to exalt man. It humbles even those whom it blesses to God's glory. "The God of glory (says Stephen, Acts 7:2) appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Charran." Here is the truth of God in its simple and sure and satisfactory light. It was he that believed and acted accordingly. Of Terah we are told nothing which gives happy confidence. Of Haran, father of Lot and of Milcah, we only learn that he "died before the face of his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldeans"; he did not reach Charran, the halfway sojourn in the migration; he died before any left their common Chaldean abode. Nahor, it is evident, did not relinquish Ur for Charran till a later day; but there he stayed, so that he made it "his city" in Aram-naharaim or Paddan-Aram.

Wholly distinct was Abram, but it was the sovereign call of God that made him so. "Look unto Abraham your father (says the prophet), and unto Sarah that bare you; God called him alone, and blessed him and increased him." Terah was of no account in this, nor even Lot

though designated a “righteous man” in his day. But Abram was called “alone,” whoever might accompany him, or share less or more the blessing which was his rich portion.

Still we do not well to confound his singularly honoured place, chosen and called out by promise to be father of the faithful, with that which is now distinctively given to the Christian as in Eph. 1 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, according as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love.” The difference in character is immense. It is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Who blessed, not the God of any earthly father. Next, it is universal blessing and above all things of a natural sort on earth. Further, it has no connection with a land to be shown, or Canaan; it is a choice of us in Him Who is above every name. Then again it was not to meet the frightful departure of man when they gave up the true God for other gods who were nothing but puppets with demons behind them. There it was before the world’s foundation, a choice not due to creature apostacy or any other evil in time, but flowing from God’s own heart when no creature existed to affect it in any way. Nor was it simply to receive blessing or to be the channel for it to all families of the earth, but that we should be holy and blameless in His sight in love. He would surround Himself with partakers of His own nature and character, and this in love. Such was His choice in our case; and this “through Jesus Christ to Himself.” What a pattern before Him “according to the good pleasure of his will

unto the praise of the glory of his grace!" Could the true God rise higher than this ground and purpose?

Genesis 11:29, 30.

Not only is Haran's death "before the face of his father Terah" recorded, but the relationships the other sons contracted. We need not speculate on Haran's death. Enough for us to learn from this note of scripture how unusual it was for a son to die before his father's face in the land of his nativity. Had there been any divine lesson in the undisclosed details and facts, the goodness of our God would have given this also. It is as truly unbelief to imagine or to accept the imaginations of others, as it is to hesitate about the communications of the inspired word. Where scripture ceases to speak, let us learn to be silent. The attempt to conjecture is presumption, the refusal of it honours God and His word.

"And Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife [was] Sarah; and the name of Nahor's wife Milcah, a daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. And Sarah was barren; she [had] no child" (vers. 29, 30).

God takes a beneficent interest not only in the persons who have to do with Him but in their relations, especially in that which, of all natural ties, is the most important for a human being. It may have been that those here in question on either side did not yet know Him; but He at least knew the end from the beginning and guided in His providence those who were to play an influential part in the future dealings of His grace. He registers it in that word of His which endures for ever. He would thus impress its gravity on all that fear Him for their own steps here below. He would have them

above all to seek His guidance, now in particular since the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For there His word assures a character of deeper intimacy than with a people chosen to be the theatre of His direct government, or even with the fathers resting on His promises. Nor is it only that His word is thus adapted to our calling; for He has now also given us the Holy Spirit in the power of personal indwelling, to speak of nothing else, which could not be till sin was judged in the cross, and the Saviour took His new place in heaven before God. Therefore if any one be in Christ, it is a new creation: the old things are past; behold, all things are made new. And all things are of God Who reconciled us to Himself by Christ.

Nor is this all. For the true and sound knowledge which grace gives us of God enables the Christian to vindicate Him as to the things of the old creation, instead of yielding to the teachings of demons which would put a slight on marriage or meats, as we read in 1 Tim. 4. Thus Satan way, to dishonour the Creator, affect a spurious holiness. But the truth delivers us from such reveries and insists that every creature of God is good, and that nothing is to be refused if received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. Now we know every barrier gone in Christ's death: not divine compassion only come down where and as we were, but ourselves free to draw near to God in His victorious love, proved to the full, efficacious and everlasting. Unbelief may mock Christ and His work; it must another day take the bitter consequence in the face of the amplest possible evidence to convince and satisfy. But faith is entitled even now to enjoy divine goodness, both in the heavenly sphere where Christ sits,

and in the scene where He was rejected, and we still are in our weakness, waiting for the appearing of His glory.

The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, of whom in due time we are told so much comparatively; and this not only in the O.T. history, but in the profoundly instructive comment of the great apostle in N.T. doctrine. Of Milcah we hear but little. She was Haran's daughter and Nahor's wife, and as Gen. 22 and 24 inform us, mother of Bethuel and seven other sons. Bethuel was father of Laban and Rebekah, of whom so much is said there or afterwards. No more of Iscah is known than that she too was Haran's daughter. But it is said here that Sarai was barren; she had no child. And this remained a painful fact for many years. Yet was she destined, after long patience of faith, chequered by some impatience of unbelief to bear Abram's heir, the child of promise. In Isaac should his seed be called, type of the "Child born" and — of the "Son given" in Whose name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, yea, a type of Him even received from the dead in figure. Another woman in after years was to be His immediate mother (Luke 1) and she not barren, though a virgin of David's house when David's tabernacle was fallen down. Of her it was promised centuries before that Emmanuel should be born as He was, Who will assuredly raise up that ruin with every other that is for Jehovah's glory. Highly favoured was that maiden, blessed among women in good sooth. But, as He said (and His words are spirit and life) to a woman who lifted up her voice in blessing the mother, "yea rather, blessed [are] they that hear the word of God and keep it" (Luke 11:27, 28),

Genesis 11:31, 32.

The chapter concludes with the interesting though brief notice here given of Terah and his household. It would be an unbelieving error to overlook the spiritual instruction that every Christian ought to derive from these words of the Holy Spirit. How indeed can men be blessed from above by that which they doom not only human, but even and often unreliable, haphazard and inconsistent, nothing more than tesselated and ill-assorted fragments of men's traditions? If we receive them is God's word, according to the Lord's teaching and example, we are entitled to look for divine light and certain truth as from no other book.

"And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot son of Haran, son of his son, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, wife of Abram his son; and they set out together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came as far as Charan, and dwelt there, And the days of Terah were two hundred [and] five years; and Terah died in Charan" (vers, 31, 32).

In order to the sure understanding of the case, we do well to avail ourselves of the light afforded in Acts 7:2-4, where Stephen interprets that which otherwise might easily be misunderstood. "The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Charan, and said to him, Go out of thy land and kindred, and come into the land which I will show thee. Then he came out of the Chaldeans' land, and dwelt in Charan. And thence, after his father died, he removed him into this land in which ye now dwell." The verses with which Gen. 11 close give simply the historical fact. Gen. 12:1-4 give the clue to the failure in

carrying out Jehovah's mind. So we saw in Gen. 11:1-9 the hidden reason why the nations were formed and distributed after their families and tongues over the earth, of which we find only the fact in Gen. 10.

The call of Jehovah was not to Terah but to Abraham, who was called to go out from his kindred as well as his country. Here we learn that he failed. For "Terah took Abraham his son," etc. This was no right answer to the call of God. The consequence was that for the time it came to nothing. "They set out together," kindred and all, "from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan." But into the land of Canaan they came not. "And they came as far as Charan, and dwelt there." But Charan was no more Canaan than Ur of the Chaldeans. It was an intermediate spot, and in no way the land which Jehovah was to show, and did in due time show Abram when faithful to His word.

But as yet a serious obstacle stood in the way. Abram obeyed only in part. Far from going from his father's house, his father who was not within the terms of the call took the lead, as indeed was but natural if he came with Abram. So we read not even that Abram took Terah, but that "Terah took Abram," thus making the word of God of none effect. Faith is no compromise; it receives and obeys the divine word. Abram was called to break from all that seemed naturally, yea from all that was naturally, dear to him. His first duty was subjection to Jehovah's call, Who would assuredly show him the land according to His promise. And so it ever must be for faith. The call of grace is paramount; and faith confides in God. It is no calculation of interest or ambition, but as Heb. 11 puts it, at length "he went out,

not knowing whither he went," assured of God's love, wisdom, and power.

Whether Terah took up the call to Abram in his own strength, or Abram yielded to natural feeling and reason, we know not. But we do know that the attempt to unite the father's house with following the call was fatal to its effect. They might leave Ur, and reach Charan; but they got no farther. Terah died in Charan, aged two hundred and five years, Abram being now seventy-five years old. In the same year that Terah died, Abram departed out of Charan, 'as Jehovah had spoken to him,' though Lot went with him.

Faith was now cleared of its drawback. "And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all the substance they had gathered and the souls they had gotten in Charan; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came" (Gen. 12:5). The word of Jehovah was thus fully honoured, and the result was simple, pure, and bright accordingly. For it was no longer man essaying only to hinder: God was obeyed. It is not now "Terah took Abram," etc. but "Abram took Sarai," etc. "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." It was the walk of faith, separate to Jehovah, Abram blessed and a blessing. Providence does not fail to watch over the country and the father's house left behind. But this is God's matter, not Abram's. The believer is to go out to Him that called him.

1 It is generally accepted that Armenia is Har-minni," the mountains of Minni," though Ararat and Minni were distinct localities. Togarmah, being the name of the race, included all the land.

2 Dathe renders the verse, “Graecorum coloniae sunt Elis, Tartessus, Italia et Dodanaei,” seen since this paper was written.

3 We may compare with this what the late Bp. of St. David’s gives as a note to his Hist. of Greece, i. 40. “Welcker, Ueber eine Kretische Kolonie in Theben, p. 30, observes that Πελασγοὶ or Πελάγονες (for Πέλαγοι), signifying the illustrious, is most probably only another form of Ἕλλοπες and Πέλοψ; and, having illustrated his proposition by a number of examples, concludes with the remark: ‘Hence it appears that the forms, Ἕλος, Ἕλλος, Ἕλλην, Ἕλαξ, Ἕλακος or Ἕλαγος (in Πελάγων, as well as in Σέλαγος, in Crete Σάλαγος, Paus. viii. 4, 8.) and have all one origin.’“ The Hebrew name corresponding is more certainly Elishah, the eldest of Javan’s sons, as we may add. Indeed Αἰολις, Αἰολεύς, κ. τ. λ. would seem to be but another class or form of the same fruitful stock; which, like the foregoing, Greek imagination personified, and developed into a variety of poetic myths. In scripture we have nothing but the simple and solid truth, as far as it fell in with the divine design to give it, in carrying out His plans for the earth, of which Israel will ever be found to be the centre, save in the abnormal state when through their apostasy they became Lo-Ammi as they are still.

4 “These [the Metyr Arabs] strengthened their party by an alliance with the Kahtan Arabs; while the Aenezes were assisted by the Beni Shaman. Between these tribes an inveterate hatred subsisted; which every spring was the cause of much bloodshed and checked the commercial intercourse with the Hedjaz.” (Burckhardt’s Travels in Arabia, ii. 401).

5 This is a mistake, the first being the Hebrew word, the second its Greek form. Hence the LXX give Βαβυλὼν in Gen. 10:10 and translate Σύγχυσις. Confusion, in Gen. 11:9.

6 Ibid.

7 Gen. 4 drops the combined form of the divine name, marking perhaps the henceforth ordinary ways of man under his moral government; save that Eve, having found out her haste and error in connecting Cain's birth with Jehovah, speaks only of Elohim on that of Seth (ver. 25).

8 The remark that "book" was unknown in those, days, if true, is nothing to the purpose. Books abounded in the days of Moses, as is, now certain to unbelievers from evidence no longer contested. The believer needs no other proof than Ex. 17:14, which assumes the fact.

The Pentateuch and its Critics

Modern criticism has ventured to undermine and assail almost all the books of holy scripture, but none with such boldness as the Pentateuch, unless it be the prophecy of Daniel. The incredulity of not a few theologians in our own day, abroad and at home, outstrips while it follows that of Celsus and Porphyry, of Spinosa and Hobbes, of Bolingbroke and Hume. The remote antiquity of Moses especially seemed to invite their unhappy efforts in the dark; for as the prowling birds of night shun the day, so the sceptics of all ages love darkness rather than light for a reason which is plain to every eye but their own — a reason on which the Judge of quick and dead has already pronounced, if not on themselves because of it.

We need not cite the heathen critics, nor the famous Rabbis outside Christianity who rise up to rebuke such unconscionable doubts. We would not summon the whole nation of Israel, whose testimony is in this all the stronger, because from a date far earlier than the father of Grecian history it is given with double force to the law if not to the prophet. We would not glean from the widespread field of tradition, east, west, north, south; nor appeal even to the unwritten but emphatic records of Egypt itself, that once renowned mistress, but now, according to one of Jehovah’s prophets, the basest of kingdoms; which hides no doubt the shame of its rulers, but confirms in the most minute way the nicest details of the Mosaic report of Israel’s hard bondage before their triumph. Let us take our stand on the fact, broad, deep, and conclusive, that the authority of Christ has decided

the question for all who own Him to be God as well as man. It is well that we should know with what sort of men we have to deal; for all have not faith. He who spoke of charity, and lived it as perhaps none other ever did since, saw no inconsistency (even if for a moment we leave his inspiration out of sight) in binding up with his salutation in the same epistle the solemn warning — “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha.”

Our Lord then has spoken with particular care of Daniel as “the prophet” toward the close of the Old Testament canon, but of Moses at the beginning as the writer of the law. (Mark 10:5, Mark 12:26; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:46, 47, John 7:19.) It is not merely that He does not contest the position of the Jews as to Moses; He affirms it and insists on it repeatedly Himself in the plainest terms. Think of the coolness of a man, professedly not an infidel but a Christian and a Christian minister, who, after quoting Christ’s words, “Have ye not read in the book of Moses how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham,” etc., can say, “Here the allusion is to Exodus 3:6, which was not written by Moses, as we suppose!”1 Fully admitting the value of reasoning to convict gain-sayers, and expose the futility of their captious arguments, I lay it down as an axiom that in revealed truth it is and must be simply a question of a divine testimony, which is given to be believed, and which binds the conscience even of him who rejects it through unbelief. If physics require patient induction and comprehensive grouping under general principles or laws, if mathematics demand a strict and necessary demonstration, if the mixed sciences admit of both, the written word of God claims faith in His testimony which

tests the moral state of him who hears. The faith which receives it traditionally and with indifference is of no value, and will under pressure give it up with the same otiose facility in which it assented. Certainly to doubt is not to believe; yet one could almost allow the saying to pass, that there is more faith in some doubts than in such traditional faith as characterises Christendom, save those in it who are born of God. For the soul which begins to be really in earnest is apt to hesitate till it has adequate motive to believe; while the flesh which so promptly offered to obey at Sinai is just as ready to say its Amen to the Athanasian creed.

Again, God does give sufficient evidence to render the unbelief of the objector inexcusable; but the faith which rests on such human motives is merely of nature, not of the Holy Spirit as its source. One may be arrested or attracted by such evidence; but God's testimony must be received because and as He gives it, with no other motive whatever: else we set up to judge Him and His word, instead of submitting, as divinely formed faith always does, to be judged by Him. If the testimony be of God, it is the truth; and if so, he who cavils and opposes is ipso facto proved to be in such a state morally that he has no congeniality with the truth of God, and, if pressed closely, his indisposition to receive it ripens into active hatred and scoffing unbelief. Whatever be the circumstances, he has so yielded to his own thoughts or those of other men, that he overlooks the motives adequate to win his confidence which God has given, and becomes at length settled down in such hardness of heart against His word, that it is enough to resist all testimony, and he can only be left to the judgment which he despises.

From this it will be plain to the reflecting mind why in the things of God it is a question of believing a divine testimony, while in pure science we have to do with necessary inference, and in applied science with observed fact also. Hence in these latter it is of course a question of knowledge or ignorance; they are not the subject of doubt or belief as is testimony. But it is a horrible and fatal error thence to infer that any conclusion of science is more certain than every word of God is in itself and so to the believer. There are measures of faith as of knowledge; but, though no Pyrrhonist in the domain either of the senses or of science, or even of honest and competent history, I maintain that (pure science apart, where the premises necessitate the conclusion) the word of God alone gives absolute certainty, and faith receives accordingly. Revelation is the word of a God who cannot lie; and if man can with comparative ease convey his mind correctly, how much more can God His, infinite though it be? The human element is fully admitted; but the essence of inspiration is, that the power of the Holy Spirit excludes error in the writer. It is too much forgotten that there is ignorance in every reader; and that this ignorance as to divine truth is really and always, spite of appearances, in the ratio of our self-sufficiency.

Further, that there are difficulties, not only great but possibly insoluble by you, me, or any other man, is not only allowed but affirmed. It may well, not to say it must, be so in a system so immense as that of which revelation treats from the creation of all, and before it, till the new heavens and earth of eternity. But he is unwise who would surrender the positive proofs of revelation, or of

the truths it contains, because of difficulties which perplex the human mind. There is no divinely formed province even in nature, and this in its least or lowest forms, where there are not enigmas beyond the wit of man; and these the wisest are the most ready to confess. If writings which professed to be a revelation had no depths beyond man's plummet, it would be a juster conclusion to infer that it could scarcely be a revelation of God.

Scripture claims to be the communication of the mind of God to man, not setting aside the character or circumstances of the writers, but giving the full and absolute truth of God in and through all. Such is the doctrine asserted in 1 Cor. 2, 2 Tim. 3; and with this agrees the uniform use of the passages cited for special purposes throughout both the Old and the New Testaments. So above all said He Who spoke as never man spoke; and no wonder; for He was God as well as man, and man as truly as God. But it is to be feared that unbelief as to the written word bodes ill for the faith which is professed in the Word, the personal Word of life. In both cases it is the Infinite brought into the finite by grace; of which the ruinous speculations of unbelief would deprive us, as their authors have been themselves deprived of it by an enemy subtler than they are. Thus, if incarnation be the Word made flesh (a divine person yet a real man, "that Holy Thing," born of His mother, and this by the power of the Spirit), revelation is the mind of God in the language of man, but perfectly guided and guarded by the Spirit. It were to lose the truth in both respects, if we accepted the foolish cheat of Satan that the finite drags down the Infinite. Not so; both were given in God's love to meet the finite in its actual state

of sin, degradation, and distance from God; and in both the finite is so governed by the Infinite, which has joined it to itself in holy and perfect union, that grace and truth alone exist and appear without the smallest admixture of human evil or error.2 Take the following decisive utterance of the Saviour: “How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” (John 5:44-47.) The Lord had been declaring Himself the object of faith, who as Son of God becomes the source of life to him that believes, but is the judge of him that believes not to his utter destruction. This leads Him to open out the various testimonies to Himself: first, John the Baptist; secondly, the works which the Father gave the Son to do; thirdly, the Father’s own witness to the Son; and lastly, the scriptures. Even the Jews owned their all-importance for their souls; yet did they testify concerning Christ. Self and the world were and are the true hindrances to the love and the glory of God, and hence also render faith impossible. Their accuser would be not Jesus [who will judge all] but the very Moses in whom they had their hope. If they had believed Moses, they would have believed Jesus; “for he wrote of me. For if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” Thus the Lord puts the highest honour conceivable on the written word, if it were only the law, and not the latest and fullest communications of God. For scripture as a testimony has a permanence in this respect which can belong to no spoken words. Christ did

not therefore expect them to receive His own words if they did not believe the writings of Moses.

It will be observed, however, how many modern questions are here by anticipation answered. The scriptures as a whole testify about Christ. He is the object continually before the inspiring Spirit, directly or indirectly. Good or evil is noticed relatively to Him, the brighter and only complete exemplar of the one, the absolute contradiction and finally the judge of the other. The Old Testament therefore is in the fullest sense prophetic. Christ is the end of the law: is He not of the Psalms also, as well as of the Prophets? So indeed He risen from the dead tells His disciples. (Luke 24:27, and 44, 45.) I know that these unhappy rationalists dare to think that in the days of His flesh He, the Lord God, was not above the prejudices of that time and place from which they, dupes of Satan, flatter themselves somewhat freed. Thus they conceive either that He did not know the truth, or that, knowing it, He deigned to —. No; I refuse to stain even this paper of mine with their infamy of the Lord of all.

Yet, earnestly desiring not their destruction but their edification, I entreat them to weigh the last citation, and the fact, to them surely as reasonable men most momentous, that Jesus is declared so to speak as risen from the dead. If they have failed so lamentably in faith and reverence for His personal glory during His earthly service, at least they must believe, if they believe anything divine, that no human prejudices survive the grave, that in the risen state even we shall know as we are known. If then they are pleased to accord also to Jesus risen that perfection, which it is to be supposed they hope for themselves, I call on them with me to

denounce the shameful, nay shameless, notion that He stooped to “a wise accommodation to popular views.”

Again, no one alleges that “Christ and His apostles came into the world to instruct the Jews in criticism.”3 But does not faith in Christ bind us to accept His authority as superior to any criticism? He declares both during His ministry and in the risen state that Moses wrote of Him, that the books commonly called the law, the Pentateuch, are Moses’ writings. Was He in this fostering an error of the day, and supporting it by His authority? Certainly it was no part of Christ’s mission to prove that the Pentateuch did not proceed from Moses! But it is impossible to believe Christ’s words and to deny that He declares those books to be written by Moses, which the rationalist declares are not, and distributes between Moses and perhaps earlier hands the primitive Elohist after the expulsion of the Canaanites, the junior Elohist in the days of Elisha, the Jehovist in the reign of Uzziah, the still later redactor who was not Ezra,4 and the unfortunate Deuteronomist in the reign of Manasseh who employed the “innocent fiction,” “which an uncritical age rendered easy,” of attributing to the legislator the utterance of the contents of Deuteronomy as well as the authorship of the first four books, in both of which Dr. Davidson (i. 118) deliberately imputes to him what is a fraud.

I trust the pious reader will pardon my copying such views, which I may fairly call the Christian or unchristian mythology of the nineteenth century. They have found entrance and even taken root in certain quarters beyond their native soil; and I am sure that they will work to yet greater ungodliness, and contribute to the growing denial and rejection of divine authority in

the world as well as in holy things, the counterpart of the haughty and effete superstition which has just pretended to claim the infallibility of God, which no apostle5 had nor all together, for its chief priest: two main streams of evil which will pour their impure waters into the stagnant pool of “the apostasy” that is at hand for ungrateful and self-vaunting Christendom.

But the Christian will turn with increasing confidence and singleness of purpose to the living oracles; and loving Christ he will keep His word, even as he who loves Him not keeps not His words, little thinking that the word he thus despises is the Father’s who sent the Son, and will judge him at the last day.

Even the Jews who to their ruin refused Christ, because they did not hear Moses and the prophets, and who resisting them were not persuaded when He Himself rose from the dead — even they never went so far in presumptuous yet petty criticism as to shut their eyes to the most abundant evidence, external and internal, to the writings of Moses, never dared to deny (as rationalists do) the only light we have for more than half this world’s obscure history, besides its highest function of bearing witness to Christ. Never did they presume to say that there is little external evidence for the Mosaic authorship; that what little there is does not stand the test of criticism; or that the succeeding writers of the Old Testament do not confirm it! — all this in the face of such evidence as neither Greek nor Latin classics possess; whose authorship none would dispute but vain or crazy dreamers. Again, no intelligent man questions the claims of Mahomet to writing the Koran, probably not alone, but by the help of an unprincipled Jew. The reason of the difference is plain: not that there is nearly

such an amount or excellence of proofs for the authorship of the Koran as for Moses' writings, but that these, not that, appeal so loudly to conscience. The Koran flatters human nature, bribing its own party and bullying others; but the law brings in God, the true God, and testifies of Christ, which flesh fears and dislikes and therefore instinctively seeks to defame, unconscious too often of its sin and shame.

But if it is monstrous to deny the immense and unbroken chain of external evidence to the Pentateuch, were it only in the fact that the entire political and religious life of the Jewish nation turned on it in prosperity and adversity, captive and restored, for fifteen hundred years before Christ, not to speak of what goes on before our eyes till this day; if it is equally so to deny that from Joshua through the Psalms to Malachi the strongest links and the most express statements are given wherever they could be found naturally, what can we think of one who does not shrink from saying with the scripture before his eyes that "the venerable authority" of Christ has no proper bearing on the question? I should have thought that the effort to represent Moses as not the writer of the law as a whole, as a lawgiver, not a historian, was manifestly and hopelessly at variance with His authority who condemned the unbelief of the Jews on the ground that Moses not only wrote the law, but wrote it concerning Himself. If there are various irreconcilable contradictions;6 if there are convincing traces of a later date (beyond such as an inspired editor put for the help of the reader after an immense change in the condition of the people as all admit, Jews and Christians); if the narratives are partly mythical and legendary and only usually trustworthy; if the miracles

are the exaggerations of a later age; if the voice of God cannot without profanity be said to have externally uttered all the precepts attributed to Him; if Moses' hand laid the foundation but he was not even the first of those who penned parts,* where is Christ's authority? Did He not mean, did not the Jew understand Him to mean, the five books of the law by the writings of Moses? Was He deceived? Does the evangelist John deceive us (unwittingly it could not be, if the Holy Spirit inspired him) through Christ's words? Certainly, if Dr. D. be true, He who is the truth is not true; and the Gospels are as untrustworthy and misleading as it is possible to be. To state the blasphemy is to refute it; yet such is the inevitable issue if there be one word of reality in what is thus alleged against the Pentateuch.

But if the Lord is and spoke the truth, no real believer can fail, though with grief and amazement, to see that the rationalist stands in the most deplorable and fatal hostility to Christ's authority and to God's word. For if Moses testified the truth of Christ some fifteen centuries before He lived and died, he was a prophet, and inspired of God in what he wrote; and if God gave him, according to the Lord Jesus, to prophesy truly of Him, is it credible that he has written falsely of that of which even an ordinary man might have written truly? If the rationalist speaks aright, the Pentateuch is not Moses' writings, but a bundle of tales true and false, and in not one word written really of Christ: else it would be bona fide prophetic, which the system denies in principle; because true prophecy implies God's supernatural communication, and this would be necessarily a deathblow to the criticism of the rationalist.

It is needless to say that the objections derived from internal structure are only conclusive proofs of the rash ignorance of those who make them, and lead us, when cleared away by the light of Christ, into (not mere evidence of the Mosaic authorship, which is ruled definitely to all who respect the word and authority of Christ, but) an increasing sense and enjoyment of the testimony which the honoured servant bears to his Master, the Lord of all descried from far but most distinctly by the power of the inspiring Spirit.

If scripture itself gave the slightest intimation to that effect, there would be no difficulty in supposing ever so many writers contributing to the Pentateuch. The Psalms also consist of five books for an incomparably better reason than, as the Rabbis say, in order to correspond with the five books of the law. I have no doubt that their order is as divine as are the contents and character of each; and that they can be shown to have internal grounds for it of very great interest, instead of being a mere collocation of David's first, and of others afterwards, which in no way accounts for some of David's in the last book, and for one of Moses himself the introduction of the fourth book. But we have the sons of Korah, Ethan, Asaph, perhaps Solomon, and others unnamed in addition to the writers already named. But then we know the authors as far as they are mentioned from the inspired account in each case; and the grouping will be found to carry along with it the self-evidencing light of God; for none but He, I am persuaded, could have distributed to each as He has done, or have so tempered them as a body together, securing a moral and prophetic progress in the greater divisions as well as in the unity of the entire collection.

No believer would refuse to the Pentateuch what he owns unhesitatingly in the Psalter, if there were similar grounds of faith. But the declarations of God are clearly and expressly opposed to any such conclusion, and the internal structure of the law too has nothing in common with that of the Psalms, but to my mind falls in so simply and naturally with the single authorship of Moses, that the real difficulty would have been to have supposed more than one if the question otherwise had been absolutely open. If the Lord and the apostles had not corroborated irrefragably the Mosaic authorship, both the style and the line of inspired Jewish witnesses, not to speak of the evident claim of Moses to all implied in Deuteronomy, would point to this conclusion.

If Moses had been led of God to use a quantity of earlier documents for the writing of Genesis, of contemporary records for Exodus or Numbers, I do not see how this could impair the inspiration of the Pentateuch. For we know little of the mode in which God wrought inspiration, though we are authoritatively taught the result; and we cannot but be sensible of its essential difference from all other writings in the working out of the divine purpose, and in the exclusion of human imperfections stamped on it. But even the more sober, who contend for the tessellated composition of the Pentateuch, have as yet presented no evidence but what can be better accounted for otherwise: especially as they confess “a unity of plan, a coherence of parts, a shapeliness, and an order “ which satisfy them that, as e.g. Genesis stands, it is the creation of a single mind. Is it not forgotten that the opening chapters for instance, largely at least, could not have been narrated by Adam himself any more than by Moses from personal

knowledge? God necessarily must have communicated the account of creation, as also of the flood, two of the parts most attacked, and one might add with least reason, by infidel temerity.

On the peculiar use of the divine names, and a certain accompanying difference of style, we need not enter much, as this is noticed frequently in its place. I need only say that the Jehovah-Elohim section (Gen. 2:4 — Gen. 3) presupposes the so-called Elohistic one that precedes, as both are assumed in what follows; and the difference of motive truly and fully accounts for all; and that it is the very reverse of the fact that the name of Elohim almost ceases to be characteristic of whole sections after Ex. 6:2; Ex. 7:7. On the contrary, it holds good wherever similarly required throughout not the Pentateuch only but the Psalms (compare books first and second) and the Prophets (see Jonah especially). It is impossible to account for all the facts (not to say for any of them) by the documentary or fragmentary hypothesis.

But it is worthy of note that the Lord distinctly attributes to Moses not merely the substance but the writing of Deuteronomy. (Mark 10:5.) There can be no doubt that the Pharisees refer to the injunction in Deuteronomy 24; on which the Lord declares that not “a later writer” but “Moses wrote you this precept.” How grievous the unbelief then which does not tremble to say after such an utterance, “it is certain that Moses himself could not have written the book of Deuteronomy, nor made such changes in the old legislation as are contained in the discourses of the book!” To say that the work was impossible to one whose eye was not dimmed nor his natural force fled till he died is unwise. Besides, had it been otherwise, or had he seen fit as it was, an

amanuensis (one or more) would not detract any more from Moses' writings than Tertius did from Paul's.

As to the fact of changes, such as Numbers 18:18 compared with Deuteronomy 12:17, 18; Deuteronomy 15:19, 20, they are due to the difference in the character and object of the books: the one having the wilderness in view; the other the settlement in the land, where we see not only the importance given to the central place of worship which Jehovah their God would choose, but also the joining of all, including the priests, the Levites, in the exulting joy of blessings already possessed. To infer, from the circumstance of Moses addressing the people in the affecting form of a homiletic recapitulation, that he of his own motion rescinded what Jehovah had ordained, is as wanton as to deny Jehovah's title to modify according to moral design in a changed state of things. Yet this puerility is made much of more than once.7 It may be also observed that the Lord Jesus (Matt. 19:4, 5) attributes to God the words cited from Gen. 2:24: "He which made them.... said, For this cause shall a man leave father,'' etc. It was Moses that wrote; but it was God speaking none the less. Rationalism denies both through confiding in an ignis fatuus of criticism.

But the inspired apostles also are explicit. Thus Peter (Acts 3:22, 23) cites the famous passage as to the prophet from Deut. 18, and affirms that Moses said so. Rationalism shrinks neither from refusing the book to Moses nor from declaring that the correct interpretation rejects all but the one sense — the succession of prophets or prophetic order in general, while it allows the adaptation to Jesus to be reasonable, or an argumentum ad hominem! To minds of this bias it adds

no more weight that Stephen too quotes it as the language of Moses, and with evident reference to the Messiah. (Acts 7:37)

Paul again cites freely from the law, and in the same chapter of Romans (10:5, 19) cites twice from portions in a sense diametrically opposed to neological criticism: in the former, Lev. 18:5; in the latter, Deut. 32:21, which it relegates to two different and much later writers. It is not a question of Paul as a man, but of Paul writing in the Spirit. Did not He know the truth? Has He told it? We cannot speak of the Holy Spirit thinking this or that: He knew all. To suppose that He did not know is as false as that He kept up a fiction is impious. No, it is only man who has deceived himself again through trusting his own thoughts against the plain word of God.

1 Cor. 10:1-11 is a passage of much moment for the consideration and correction of those influenced against the theopneustic or inspired character of the history of Exodus and Numbers. The passage of the Red Sea is denied to be literal history. The cloud; the manna; the water from the smitten rock; the punishment of the murmurers, etc., are viewed as more or less legendary. The apostle affirms that all these things happened to them as types, and that they are written for our admonition. Thus he attaches a divinely prophetic character to the accounts which rationalism slights. Ought it to be a question whether the apostle or a neologian has the mind of God?

Heb. 11 is quite as weighty a test, and yet more comprehensive in its survey of the Pentateuch and the historical books of the Old Testament. The apostle (verse 3) accepts creation as a literal fact; the rationalist

endeavours to show “its mythical character.” But both Prof. Powell and Dr. Davidson misstate the case in order to place Gen. 1 in opposition to facts. It is not correct that “the chapter can only convey the idea of one grand creative act, of a common and simultaneous origin of the whole material world, terrestrial and celestial, together with all its parts and appendages, as it now stands, accomplished in obedience to the divine fiat, in a certain order and by certain stages, in six equal successive periods,” etc. So the late Mr. P., in whose wake follows Dr. D., who says that “the first verse of Genesis is a summary account of the six days’ work which follows in detail. On the first creative day God produced the matter of the world, and caused light to arise out of it. Hence it is implied that the world was created only about six thousand years ago. But geology teaches most incontrovertibly that the world must have existed during a long period prior to the races of organized beings now occupying its surface. Thus geology and scripture come into collision as to the age of the earth.”8 I affirm, on the contrary, that Moses was inspired so to write Gen. 1:1-3 as to avoid with the greatest precision and certainty the very error which these writers attribute to him. It is easy to see their desire to array geology against the Bible. But the incontrovertible fact is, that the usus loquendi proves that the first verse is not a summary of what follows in the six days’ work, but an initiatory act sui generis, the groundwork of all that follows no doubt, and as distinct from verse 2 as both clearly are from verse 3, where the first day’s work begins. The copulative vau connects each verse, but of itself in no way forbids an immense space, which depends on the nature of the case where no specification of time enters. In the first two verses there is no limitation whatever; and hence in

these instances all is open indefinitely. Had the conjunction (which I translate “and” in all these cases, not “but”) been wanting, the idea of a summary heading would have naturally followed in accordance with the phraseology elsewhere, as at the beginning of Gen. 5; Gen. 6:9, etc.; Gen. 10:1, etc., passim; Gen. 11:10, etc., 27, etc.; Gen. 25:12-17, 19, etc.; Gen. 35:22-26; Gen. 36:1, etc., passim; Gen. 46:8, etc., passim; Exodus 1, 6, etc. It is needless to pursue the proof. It is the necessary phraseology not of Hebrew only but of every conceivable language. In no tongue could one rightly prefix such a clause as Gen. 1:1 as “a summary account of the six days’ work.”

The truth is that the first verse of the chapter states with noble simplicity the creation of the universe — not of matter on the first day, but of the heavens and the earth — without the smallest note of days. There is another and wholly different notation of time, “in the beginning,” reaching back to the farthest point when God caused (not crude matter, nor chaos, but) the heavens and the earth to be. The second verse coupled with it describes, as even Dr. D. admits, a state of chaos or destruction, but not universal; for the earth only, not the heavens, was the scene of the utter confusion. I am surprised that a sensible man did not see the incongruity of this with his previous position, and still more with the admirably perfect statement of verse 1. Contrary to the style of Moses, and to the genius of Hebrew and indeed of universal grammar, he asserts the first verse to be a summary of the entire six days’ work. But if so, such a summary cannot be the bare creation of matter. For matter is not said to be produced on any one of these days, but contrariwise its previous existence is

assumed throughout their course from first to last. On the other hand, if he says that verse 1 means the production of matter, he abandons his own thesis that it is a synoptical view of the six days' work. Does he then take verse 2 as God producing the matter of the world? How, if so, can it also mean universal chaos or destruction? Perhaps he thinks that the first clause of verse 2 means this, and that the last points to the production of matter; but here again he is entangled in the strange conclusion that the universal chaos or destruction — destruction of what? — precedes the production of matter. If he concede, as I think he must on reconsideration, that God producing the matter of the world is not the meaning either of the first or of the last clause of verse 2, it follows that his exposition is fundamentally erroneous, and that matter must have been produced before, unless he fall back on the Aristotelian absurdity of eternal matter, which is a virtual denial of creation in the proper sense, and indeed betrays an atheistic root. From this he saves himself by the statement that "on the first creative day God produced the matter of the world, and caused light to arise out of it." The reader, however, has only to read the record in order to see that Dr. D. interpolates here the production of matter without the least warrant from the inspired account of the first day, and contrary to the clear intimation of the verses that precede it. The production of matter is supposed before the chaos of verse 2, and is involved in the creation of verse 1.

Thus scripture is more exact than the natural philosophy of Mr. Baden Powell, or the system of Aristotle, or the exegesis of Dr. S. Davidson. It asserts the grave truth of the creation of the heavens and the earth, but expressly

not “as it now stands,” nor with the “parts and appendages” which were found in the days which preceded Adam. We have no connection of day or night in this earliest phase, any more than the state of disruption and ruin that is described so graphically in verse 2. Vast tracts of time may have passed ere verse 3 — not “innumerable periods of past duration in one unbroken chain of regular changes.”9 But Dr. D. is ill-informed in the facts which geology is slowly building up into a consistent science, if he ignores the proofs of repeated and extraordinary breaks and upheavals, when anarchy was again followed by fresh creative energy, and then by order. So it was, if Mr. D’Orbigny and other men of the highest reputation may be trusted, for some thirty successive and stupendous revolutions of this earth before the week when man stands at the head of a suited realm subjected to him by the Creator.

But the reader, who desires to find a calm and full and exact exposition of the facts can find it in D’Orbigny’s “Cours de Paléontologie et de Géologie Stratigraphiques,’’ especially chapter 9 vol. 2. pp. 251-258. There is hardly a finer instance of patient induction, nor a more distinct contradiction of the alleged law of continuity, and this without an allusion to Genesis or a thought beyond the largest collection of the facts of geological science known to me. Even the tertiary period alone he shows must be divided into five distinct successions, and in them, of 6042 species 91 only common to two or more, but all distinct from the existing species of the Adamic earth. “Une première création s’est montrée avec l’étage silurien. Aprés l’anéantissement de celle-ci, par une cause géologique quelconque, aprés un laps de temps considérable, une

seconde création a en lieu dans l'étage devonien; et successivement vingt-sept fois des créations distinctes sont venues repeupler toute la terre de ses plantes et de ses animaux, à la suite de chaque perturbation géologique qui avait tout détruit dans la nature vivante. Tel est le fait nous bornons à constater, sans chercher à percer le mystère surhumain qui l'environne." This witness is true; but the Bible conducts the simplest believer with sure foot and opened eyes where the mere man of science finds himself arrested by an impenetrable veil. Scripture asserts original creation, and then destruction: how often renewals and destructions may have followed it does not say; but, having given us the key to both facts, it does tell us, what it most concerned us morally to learn, the details of the construction of the world where the human race was to be tried and fall, where the Creator was to become in sovereign grace the woman's Seed, and by His suffering and death win more than was lost for the creature's blessing to the glory of God.

It is granted that the Bible does not reveal these sequences of order and convulsion. But it shows us the principle of both in verses 1 and 2 anterior to the Adamic earth. This was enough for us to know; and this we know more clearly and certainly from these few words of scripture than science ever taught till very lately. In fact some geologists seem recently in danger of overlooking the best established facts of their own and all other science, and of drifting into that strange delusion — the Darwinian form of Lamarckian development which necessari1y destroys faith in creation altogether.

But Genesis leaves room for all the changes, calm or violent, which passed over this earth before the race. Creation, and creation of the universe, verse 1 does state; how long it went on, and with what changes, till the state of chaos described in verse 2, we are not informed. Let science tell if she can. There is ample space here without danger of collision: God has effectually guarded against the mistakes of hasty expositors, friends or enemies. Verse 3 begins the account of the days; and here, after a chaos (we know not how long or often), we hear of light caused to be on the first day. The state of things is so contrasted in each of the verses that the conjunction which simply introduces each new statement can produce no difficulty whatever.

Far from contradicting the large bearing of verse 1, texts such as Gen. 14:19-29, 20:11, Exodus 31:17, 2 Peter 3:13, can in no way be restrained to “the earth itself.” It is careless to confound the making of heaven and earth in six days (which I grant is always for Adam) with the original creation of verse 1. Gen. 2:4 speak of both. As to the objection founded on animals of previous states seeing, and plants too requiring light, before the work of the first day or of the fourth, it suffices to say that not a word implies that light was created, or the heavenly bodies either, on these days. Light was caused to act, as the luminaries later still. But of the geologic periods, after creation but antecedent to the earth made for man in six days, we have nothing either affirmed or denied, though in my opinion the strikingly guarded language leaves room for all. The statements of Dr. D. are as unfounded in science as they are careless in taking account of the exactitude of scripture.

That the sense just given to the inspired account of creation is unforced and exact, it would require hardihood to question; so it would to deny the looseness of the rationalistic interpretation, inconsistent as it also is with itself and with facts, and thus exhibiting the usual faults of what is wholly misunderstood. I advocate no stooping to a barely admissible meaning, nor call in the wisdom of the world to ascertain the force of scripture. The believer need neither court nor fear human science. Nowhere however has a single fact of geology been proved to be at variance with the words of Moses: those who affirm it have only exposed themselves, whether they attack or apologise for Gen. 1:1-3.

Further, from Gen. 2:4 we have the necessary complement of chapter 1. The terms of the fourth verse though a most natural commencement of another aspect which follows with fresh particulars of the greatest moral weight, refer unmistakably to what had been already written. It is certainly not a summary of what is to come, for this does not describe the production of the heavens and the earth, but introduces us to the transitional state of things before rain fell or man was there to till the ground; it then gives us the specific difference which is the ground of human responsibility, and therefore forthwith describes the garden of Eden with its two trees, where the first Adam was about to be tried. It is plain accordingly that Gen. 2:4, while it gives a retrospective glance at chapter 1 with its orderly chart of the creation, leads us into the scene of relationships. Even according to the earlier outline, far from being lost in the graduated series of creative acts, the pre-eminent place of man in the scale of the creature is carefully

guarded for male and female — of man made in the image of God,10 after His likeness, with dominion over the fish and birds and cattle and earth and reptiles, not worshipping them all like the sages of Egypt. But the detailed formation of man, in his body from the dust of the ground, in his soul from Jehovah-Elohim's breathing into his nostrils (alone of living creatures) the source of an immortal immaterial nature proper to him, is found in the later account only. Here too we have his various relations not only to the subordinate creatures to which he gave names as their lord, but to his wife (who was built up peculiarly out of Adam's body as he slept), and above all to Him Who set the man in a position of such singular honour, though necessarily of commensurate responsibility.

In Gen. 3 accordingly the issue of the trial soon appears. Abruptly and mysteriously an enemy of God and man enters, and by his subtle insinuations deceives the woman, who in turn becomes the instrument of the man's disobedience. It is a simple but profound, and the only satisfactory solution of the problem on which human philosophy and religion have laboured in vain, on which all have made shipwreck who have not submitted to the word of God. It can surprise none that it is the same serpent playing his old deceits and destroying souls by the hope of knowing good and evil as God, yea better if they refuse His account for their own thoughts, even though they yield no more than that coldest and most irreverent of results, negative criticism. Satan, availing himself of "the serpent," thus dragged down our first parents into sin and ruin not for themselves only but for the lower creation dependent on Adam's

maintenance of his relation to God, as also for the race yet to be born.

Does not this approve itself as worthy of God? Is it not in harmony not only with all the Old Testament, but only more conspicuously with the New? The earliest inspired account reveals God creating and fashioning the universe in wisdom and goodness no less than omnipotent power, the earth in detail as man's abode to whom the world is given. But man is tried and fails irretrievably as far as original innocence and Eden are concerned, but not without righteous conviction, not without a judgment which accounts for the great present facts of humanity even to the difference of woman's lot from man's, yet with their common sentence of death and the sorrowful change which has passed over the creation now subjected to vanity and groans; but not without the gracious revelation of a Deliverer, who should be in some special sense Seed of the woman, yet (after suffering) conqueror of the enemy the serpent, who had done this foul and otherwise fatal dishonour to God as well as man.

Without this key what have the greatest wits of this world made of it all? I do not speak only of monstrous cosmogony, or the (if possible) still falser and less rational assertion of the world's eternity. But take the mental workings of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle; nay take the latest philosophic enemies, who have stolen all their best from the Bible but who have not learnt its first lesson, without which all is vain — that fear of Jehovah which is the beginning of wisdom. But what have any ancients or moderns said up to this day to be named in comparison of the Mosaic account, which ungrateful rationalism would fain behead, draw, and quarter? Sin

and ruin, suffering and death, are facts in God's earth as it is: inspiration did not make them; rationalism cannot unmake them. To suppose that a Being of infinite power and goodness made the race and the earth as they are is to imply an absurdity, which philosophy (where it admits God at all) accepts. But scripture is in no way responsible for a conclusion which is opposed not only to His word but to all right reason and sound morality, for mind and conscience cannot but own the truth when revealed, though superstition and philosophy essay to explain it away again. Such a Demi-urge as every system supposes but scripture (or what follows scripture) would be a malicious demon, not the true God.

Bow to Gen. 1 - 3 and the difficulty is explained, yet even then just as it ought to be, in the measure of our faith. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body is full of light:" the want of this is the real source of confusion, error, contradiction and every other fault which rationalists love to heap on the Bible. These exist in their own minds and system, not in God's word. It is impossible to understand scripture without seeing the divine design which accounts for distinct aspects, repetitions, and all the other peculiarities over which they ignorantly stumble. God, being love, is considerate of the poor, the lowly, the young, the old, while He puts down the haughty who count themselves learned and deep, wise and prudent. He has revealed Himself in writings whose unity of thought and moral purpose, is only and infinitely more striking because they consist of books in more than one language, and spread over the greatest variety of writers through fifteen centuries. Hence, whether dealing by law through Moses, or by grace in His Son one-half in both Old Testament and New consists of facts

profoundly instructive for the most reflective, but withal coming down to the level of a child. Only God could have done or thought of this beforehand: now that it is before us in the Bible, we can see that there is nothing like it (save in poor measure what is borrowed from it) for simplicity or for depth, for rising up to God or for coming down to the secrets of man's heart.

What reader can fail, for example, to see that God made all around and above Adam and pronounced it all very good; that man the chief and most favoured of all in a paradise (not such as blind Mahometanism holds out but of purity and innocence) disobeyed Him who gave him all and tried him by the least conceivable test, and thus brought in the vanity and death of all this lower creation? Who can be deaf to the solemn voice that searches out the truth from lips which, spite of deceit and insolence, cannot but condemn themselves? Who can forget the accents of grace implied even in the hopeless condemnation of the arch-foe, and assuring the guilty of a Saviour who must suffer first but at last crush the serpent's head? None but the rationalist; none but the man who prefers his own reasonings to scripture, — himself the first man to Christ the Second and last Adam.

The unreasonableness and utter poverty of the separate document-hypothesis is also plain by joining Gen. 5 to the end of Gen. 2:3. What can be more meagre? The entrance of death is unaccounted for, the moral trial in Eden is lost, sin is left out, and God's ways as to it: the prophetic revelation of the Saviour and of the destruction of Satan's power is gone; the solemn history of Cain and Abel disappears; also faith in a sacrifice, and this the index and accompaniment of righteousness, God

testifying of the gifts; the suffering of the godly; the worldliness and progress in material things of those who are far from God. And Seth is introduced in a way which derives an immense accession of weight from the intervening chapters, if even it be really intelligible without them.

On the other hand, if the entire narrative be taken as a whole, consisting of distinct parts, each having its own definite character, yet only seen in their proper value as conspiring from different points to the one result, how immense the gain in beauty, force, and harmony! Creation properly falls under Elohim; the relationship of man and his trial and fall, as well as the ruin and creation, under Jehovah-Elohim; the discrimination of the just from the unjust, both morally and above all in worship, with the issues here below, under Jehovah, the distinctive name of God in the government of man on the earth. Genesis 5 returns naturally to Elohim since the perpetuation of the line from Adam is in question, but with Jehovah in verse 29 where we see special relationship.

Dr. Perowne 11 thinks that the alleged design in the use of the divine names will not bear a close examination. Not so; it only seems to fail, I venture to say, for want of a searching analysis. He allows that it does suit the earlier chapters, but not Noah's history, on comparing Genesis 6:7 with 8: why say, argues he, that "Noah found grace in the eyes of Jehovah," yet that he "walked with Elohim"? Now he might have seen in Genesis 5:23, 24, that the expression "walked with God" is not casual but designed. Not only is it appropriate to simple historical mention, but to moral contrast with those characterised by the violence and corruption of all flesh

in the earth (Gen. 11, 12). Jehovah is required where not nature but relative feelings and position are meant to be conveyed. The principle is true in the New Testament equally as in the Old. Thus our Lord Himself always says "Father" in His life or ministry; He says "God" on the cross when bearing the judgment of sin, against which all that God is in holy antagonism was arrayed; He says both when He arose from the dead and placed His disciples in His own place and relationship as far as this could be, now that sin was put away by the sacrifice of Himself, and He could take the place formally of a quickening Spirit in resurrection. So John's epistles employ "God" and "Father " concerning the Christian with invariable distinctiveness and propriety. It is evident to me then that to "walk with God" is just the right phrase for moral character; while we may also see, by comparing verses 5 and 12, that the introduction of His special relationship applies a more severe and intimate test.

Again, the other cases Dr. P. has named (Gen. 6:21, 22; Gen. 7:5, 9) are plain examples used from internal motives, while Gen. 7:16 exposes the futility of referring the matter to distinct documents. In the former Elohim speaks with authority of destroying creation, preserving as Creator only enough to perpetuate species. In the latter He reveals what became Him in special connection with Noah; but even there, where care of the creature only is in question, we read of "the male and the female as Elohim commanded Noah," "male and female of all flesh as Elohim had commanded; and Jehovah shut him in." The change in the last is plain and necessary, as in verse 6 also, closing the directions which provide for the exigencies of sacrifice in the

“clean” beasts and birds preserved not by a pair but by sevens. The existence of both titles in the same verse is most unnatural on the document-hypothesis, but as explicable as elsewhere when we see that a divine design guides from internal reasons in every case.12 Such then is the true explanation of the duplicate accounts, as they have been styled. If difference of authors or of documents had any real evidence, it in no way covers the facts; it really introduces mere imagination to set aside the positive declarations of the Lord and the apostles, who attribute to Moses expressly what a groundless fancy distributes among 2, 3, 5, 10, or even more imaginary writers of the disjecta membra of the Pentateuch severed from each other by considerable intervals of time.

It would not be edifying to discuss too minutely the neology of Dr. Davidson’s book, chiefly culled from German sources: a few specimens must suffice. To him the Fall, for instance, is a national mythus. The apostle repeatedly treats it as a fact of the gravest import, which none can slight with impunity. (2 Cor. 11; 1 Tim. 2) But what of that? Paul knew nothing of the higher criticism, and must be condoned for his ignorance. The nature of the serpent, the manner in which he is said to have proceeded, the dialogue between him and Eve, the sentence pronounced, militate against that mode, the apostolic mode, of interpretation! Thus, however plain the scriptures, these men are not ashamed to count it a vulgar error if one insist on their authority and sacredness. It has nothing, say they, to do with personal religion; it conduces in their judgment to a right view of inspiration if one accepts their word that the Bible abounds in almost every sort of error on the one hand,

and on the other that all religious men were counted inspired. Talk no more of Paul in the first century: did not “the immortal De Wette” come to opposite conclusions so long ago as the year 1805? Paul, no doubt, treats the history as the origin of man’s universal sinfulness (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22); but why heed so antiquated an idea? The Anglo-German scribe had not yet appeared to expound aright the philosophical myth in which a reflecting Israelite sets forth his views on the origin of evil! Such, my reader, is the spirit of modern rationalism.

Of course the apostle’s use of Genesis 4 in Hebrews 11:4 is of no account. It is an accommodation. We are told by our new oracle that the “mythic view of the first three chapters is corroborated by the succeeding narrative.” Genesis 4 “presupposes a different theory of the origination of mankind” — this because of verse 14, and the supposed inconsistency of verses 2 and 20! The infatuation of this pseudo-criticism culminates in the judgment that the Sethite line in Gen. 5 and the Cainite one in Genesis 4:17, 18 “are parallel accounts resolvable into one and the same genealogy!”

The solemn account of antediluvian apostasy and corruption in Gen. 6 is naturally treated with levity; and the flood (Gen. 7, 8) affords the usual material for free handling. “What gave rise to the mythus was the yearly inundations which happen in most countries..... If the account of the deluge be a poetical myth, it is of no importance to inquire whether the catastrophe was partial or universal..... Authentic (!) Egyptian history [for with these men Egyptian history (?) is authentic, scripture is not] ignores the existence of a general flood, to which there is no allusion in the annals from the

epoch of Menes the founder of the kingdom of Egypt, B.C. 3463 (!), till its conquest under Darius Ochus, B.C. 340; whereas the period of the Noachian deluge is said to be about 2348 B.C." I presume that the writer is not much acquainted with these matters, and that he means Baron Bunsen's date for the accession of Menes, B.C. 3643. But the reader should know that in the same work the world's history before Christ is set down at twenty thousand years, and that Egypt is supposed to have been ruled provincially for more than five thousand years before Menes. On such a scale, in contempt of all that is known in or out of the Bible, one must consider that it is a moderate flight in this imaginative system to claim for Menes no more than a few centuries before the flood. It may be added that the basis of it is a passage of Syncellus, and a manifest error, as has been shown by others. But there is no need of learning or logic here; for the divine testimony of Christ has sealed the truth of the flood as an authentic fact, and a most solemn warning to unbelief. (See Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26, 27.) The apostles Paul (Heb. 11:7) and Peter (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5) have confirmed the witness to it, if this were wanted.

The freest thinker will not complain that, when I cite the testimony of Baron Bunsen, he is likely to give an opinion unfairly to the prejudice of Egyptian records as compared with the Old Testament. "The written character is prolix; the repetition of fixed phrases makes it still more so. Little is lost by occasional lacunae; but comparatively little advance is made by what is preserved. There are few words in a line, and, what is still worse, little is said in a great many lines. Inscriptions on public buildings were not intended to

convey historical information. They consist of panegyrics on the king and praises of the gods, to each of whom all imaginable titles of honour are given. Historical facts are thrown into the shade as something paltry, casual, incidental, by the side of such pompous phraseology as Lords of the World, Conquerors of the North, Tamers of the South, Destroyers of all the Unclean, and all their enemies. The case of the papyri is certainly different. But written history, such as the historical books of the Old Testament, so far as our knowledge of their writings goes, was certainly unknown to the old Egyptians."

Let us briefly review a quantity of smaller points. The unbelieving criticism on the earlier chapters of Genesis has been noticed the more, as being in fact the most confidently urged, and, if refuted, involving the rejection of much the greater part of the rest. Subsequent insertions, brief and rare as they are, are rather a confirmation than a weakening of the Mosaic authorship, and in no way an infringement of inspiration, which is a far more important thing; for all were equally inspired of God, whether Moses or Samuel, Ezra, Jeremiah, or any other prophet. The Book of Proverbs is a clear instance, where a large and important addition at a later epoch than that of its earlier portion is avowed. But it is not certain that some of the notices supposed to be of this kind were not original, as, for instance, Gen. 13:18, etc. One can easily understand the original name, for a time overlaid by the name of Arba, finally restored; and we can conceive a curious coincidence in the name of Dan, as it seems to have been an element in Jor-dan and Dan-jaan, apart from the tribe.

The passage in Gen. 36 (verse 31) on which most stress has been laid seems to be undoubtedly of Moses. To call the notice of kings that reigned in Edom “before there reigned any king over the land of Israel” a trifling proposition13 is not only irreverence, but evinces that fatal defect of all rationalists — the absence of moral perception. Israel had the promise of kings, which Esau had not; yet Esau had many successive kings long before a sign of royalty was seen in the object of that promise. Had the passage been written after Saul or David’s line began to reign, the phraseology would have been different not “any” or “a” king, but “the king” or “the kings.”

Again, Ex. 16:35, 36; Ex. 22:29; Lev. 26:34, 35, 43; Deut. 19:14, are only difficult to one who denies the essential claim of scripture. Lev. 18:28 is cleared in its true sense by simply reading verses 24, 25. Num. 15:32 is quite plain if written, as it probably was, in the plains of Moab. Gen. 40:15 is most natural on the lips of Joseph looking back on the land where his father and himself were once together, aud designating it by “the Hebrews” — a name familiar among the Gentiles.

Nor do notices of ancient inhabitants or actual rulers and their history, as in Deut. 2, 3, present the smallest difficulty. They are of the highest interest in themselves, and Moses might well speak and write of them.

Exodus 6:26 has nothing to do with the lapse of a considerable time after Moses, but is due to the sense of God’s condescension in using such men by the writer who was one of the two. This may seem trifling to a modern critic: what does the pettifoggery (and, as far as I have had leisure to sift, very incorrect minims) seem to

those who rejoice in the divine truth of God's dealings with man for this world and for eternity? So, if the Bible were a human book, such texts as Exodus 11:3, Numbers 12:7, might seem strange. Nevertheless the history proves their strict truth; and the language of Paul in 2 Cor. 11 may cause one to hesitate in counting them later additions by Ezra or some other authorised hand, as no one doubts of the formula "unto this day." But none of these in the smallest degree touches the claim of Moses to have written the Pentateuch by inspiration.

It is not only that the "higher criticism " fails to explain justly the divine names, and does not pretend to any remark on their employment beyond the superficial and, as we have seen, unfounded notion of different dates, but another notable trait is its extreme carelessness, and, I must say, its misstatements as to alleged matter of fact. Thus even opponents of neology are too apt to repeat the assumption that the supposed Elohist always says "pad-an" or "pad-an a'-ram", not "a'-ram gaharam[?]" like the supposed Jehovist. Now the fact is that Padan occurs but once (Gen. 48:7) in an address opened and therefore governed by the name El-Shaddai, the distinctive title of relationship to the patriarchs. Next the very first occurrence of Padan-aram is in Genesis 25:20, where it is severed from Elohim by seven verses (12-18), which set forth the generations of Ishmael and his sons, and where it has in its own immediate sequence and connection (ver. 21) the name of Jehovah. In Genesis 28:2 it is followed in the next verse not by Elohim but by El-Shaddai, though after that no doubt comes Elohim. But Jehovah appears repeatedly in the middle of the same short chapter, as does Elohim

at the close. The only criticism therefore to which the new school can resort is the very mechanical device of the scissors, by which they divide these few verses, though bound up intimately, among at least three different writers: — verses 1-9, the Elohist (which does not at all account for the quite distinct title of El-Shaddai); 10-12, 17-22, the junior Elohist (which overlooks the most emphatic use of Jehovah in the chapter, ver. 21); and 13-16, the redactor. Why the Jehovist should be discarded and the compiler or editor substituted where the Jehovah title is so prominent is not explained or apparent. But such is the artificial hypothesis which Dr. D. borrows from his German leaders. Genesis 31:18 is the next occurrence of Padan-aram, which here follows Jehovah's word to Jacob. Jacob calls him repeatedly God; but it is impossible to deny that the passage turns on what Jehovah said (ver. 3). The ground taken therefore is wholly false; an the attempt to cut out verse 18 for the Elohist, and to assign the rest of the chapter to the younger Elohist, the Jehovist and the redactor, as Dr. D. does,14 only proves the desperation as well as the poverty of thought to which such criticism reduces its partisans. In Genesis 33:18 Padan-aram occurs again, but the title with which it stands most nearly connected is the remarkable compound El-elohe-Israel, which is certainly not purely Elohistic on their system. But singularly enough Dr. D. seems here to have forgotten his lesson himself (i. 59), for he distributes this verse 18 between the Jehovist and the redactor, giving the latter the clause containing the name, which in p. 27 he confines to the Elohist. And this is criticism! Genesis 35:9, 26 Dr. D. has mangled to the utmost limits of the hypothesis, for he cuts it up among all the four imaginary writers of this book. It is impossible, however,

to deny the distinctive force in the chapter of El and El-Shaddai which are not Elohistic: so exactly of Genesis 46:15, the last occurrence, save that El-Shaddai is not here.

On the other hand, the basis for pronouncing Aramnaharaim Jehovistic is of the weakest, as the reader will feel when assured that it occurs but twice in all the five books of Moses, Genesis 24:10, Deut. 23:4. Even in this word the same fatality of error haunts the neologian; for one of the only three occurrences of the word outside the Pentateuch is in the title to Psalm 60, one of the most intensely Elohistic compositions in the Bible. Besides, it is not at all proved that Padan-aram is identical with Aramnaharaim. The high land of the two rivers may well include the ploughed highland or plateau of Syria, though both might with sufficient accuracy for ordinary use be translated Mesopotamia. Aram, simply, is the most comprehensive term of all, and occurs but once in the Pentateuch (Num. 23:7) distinctly in the sense of a country, and this in Balaam's speech, who uses Elohim, Jehovah, Elion, and Shaddai in such a way as puts to the rout the idea of a Jehovistic document.

I grant that, in general, terms expressive of natural species, distinctions of sex, generations (save in an exceptional case such as Gen. 2:4), historic specifications of time, etc. occur in scriptures where Elohim is used rather than Jehovah. But this flows from the nature of things, and must therefore be on the supposition that Moses wrote the five books. It is a question of propriety and exactness of speech, not of different documents. For in describing for instance natural production, or the perpetuation of the creature,

or facts as such, Elohim is required, and the name of special relationship would be out of place.

Again, we are told that “establish a covenant,” is the Elohistic expression, the Jehovistic “to make (literally ‘cut’) a covenant.” Now, not to say more of Genesis 17:7, 19, the strongest evidence possible against the exclusive Elohism of the first formula is, that it is employed in immediate sequence after the formal revelation of the name of Jehovah. (Exodus 6:2-4.) I am aware that our scissors-critics never fail for want of boldness, and that Dr. D. ventures to bracket this very passage to the redactor in verse 1, and to the Elohist in verses 2-7, leaving verse 8 to the Jehovist. But to treat scripture thus, to represent the passage as such an ill-assorted farrago, is mere wilfulness, and contrary to their own principle which professes to draw its proofs wholly from internal evidence. For, if so, nothing can be more certain than the Jehovistic character of this chapter, though care is taken, as we have seen elsewhere, to show that Elohim is Jehovah, as well as El-Shaddai, henceforward to be looked to nationally according to all that the name of Jehovah implies as their God. Ezekiel 16:6, 62 cannot be pretended to be Elohistic. So as to the alternative form, [establish a covenant], it occurs twice only in the Pentateuch, Genesis 9:12, Num. 25:12. Of this last chapter I am aware that Dr. D. calls verses 1-5 Jehovistic, 6-18 Elohistic. The best answer is to read verses 10-12, which open thus: “And Jehovah spake.” As to the exclusively Jehovistic phrase, the disproof is equally sure. (See Gen. 21:27, 32.) Junior or senior, it is Elohistic, contrary to the alleged distinction. It occurs again in Genesis 31:44, which is certainly not Jehovistic; though I am not able to make out how Dr. D. (58, 59)

tabulates verses 43-47. He assigns parts of 41 and 48 to his redactor. At any rate the use here contradicts the system. So the connection is Elohistic, not Jehovistic, in Ezra 10:3; Psalm 83:5. In short the reader has only to sift in order to prove how unfounded is the hypothesis and its conclusions.

I do not judge it to be called for just now to examine all the other phrases supposed to characterize the Elohistic or the Jehovistic passages15 respectively. But of this the reader may be assured, that it is wise in no case, were it the most immaterial statement, to trust the assertions of rationalism. Even where there may be a true element, it is invariably misapplied and in general exaggerated to the last degree. Thus much is made of “possession;” and “land of sojournings,” as “peculiarly Elohistic.” Unfortunately for the theory, their first occurrence in the same chapter and in the same verse (Gen. 17:8) disproves the assertion, unless indeed one is weak enough to allow a chapter to be counted Elohistic which begins thus: “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am El-Shaddai,” etc. How can this be Elohistic, either elder or younger? It begins with Jehovah revealing Himself to Abram by that special name in which he and the other fathers had to walk, and then showed Himself to be none other than Elohim (ver. 12, 15, 18, 19), which was of the utmost importance. One could hardly conceive of a more satisfactory disproof of distinct documents as well as of confining the phrases cited to Elohistic passages. Any good Hebrew concordance will multiply cases of it.

Another remark may be here made, and not without cause. The uncertainty of these speculations is such that

hardly two rationalists agree tolerably, nay, hardly one agrees with himself for any length of time even, as to broad outlines and points of very great importance. Thus Dr. Davidson, in his contribution to the tenth edition of Horne's Introduction, contended for two documents, the Elohistic of Joshua's day, and the Jehovistic during the Judges, which he supposed to have been combined in one work under Saul's or David's reign. What is of still greater moment, he then ascribed the authorship of Deuteronomy to Moses. Traditional orthodoxy may have yet exercised a check on his mind; for one can hardly speak of faith, when in six years all was changed for the worse in his own Introduction to which reference has so often been made. I am far from insinuating that the author did not believe what he wrote in his second volume for the late Mr. Horne's work. But one can only save his honesty by blaming both the extreme want of judgment in questions of very great consequence (for the denial of this, i. 129, will satisfy none but the light-minded), and the instability which could make such a revolution in so short a space. Were it a stripling, allowance might be made for inexperience or the influence of stronger minds: As it is, even a heathen could say, facilis descensus Averni.

The pretentiousness which accompanies the worst insinuations against God's word, when these rest on the flimsiest of reasons, is deeply painful. Every one in the least familiar with the manner in which the Holy Spirit has deigned to instruct us in scripture knows that it is frequently by taking up the same subject and presenting another line of association, so as to give us the truth fully through viewing it on all sides. Not otherwise do the wisest men, as far as their small measure is capable

of a method so exhaustive. Instances of this we may see frequently, not only in the five books of Moses, but in every part of the scriptures, and nowhere more conspicuously than in the inspired accounts of our Lord; for it is true of whole books, as well as of retracings of particular themes within them. One can easily understand the lack of spiritual perception which overlooks such a mode of instruction. But what can one think of those who fear not to sit in judgment on what, just because it is divine, must be beyond the natural mind; and who, instead of looking to God that the entrance of His words might give the needed light, venture to speak of an author, in such a case, stultifying himself by announcing an important distinction which he had uniforlmy observed in certain sections and as uniformly violated in others?

It is a joy on the other hand to learn on, I suppose good authority that De Wette, speculative as he once was, I will not say led captive every thought to the obedience of Christ, but certainly turned to Him and His blood, with much simplicity some time before his decease; and that the late Baron Bunsen, after a career of theorising on scripture almost wilder than Origen's, found rest at last in that Saviour who alone can and does give it to the weary and heavy-laden.

On the whole, then, no support is given by any or all such passages to the scheme of Astruc, who deserves no credit for a critical eye, but rather reprobation for yielding to an unbridled imagination, which has already wrought no small mischief among his followers; and so much the more because, untaught and ill-established in divine truth, they sometimes expend great industry and ample erudition on the mere surface of the scriptures

which they wrest to their own destruction, as ignorant of their object as of their scope and depth.

Another opportunity may offer to prove how far the minute philology applied to Deuteronomy really weakens Moses' title to have written it. I am satisfied myself that the phenomena supposed to be adverse are but a cover for the main object underneath all the muster of difficulties and objections — the desire to get rid of divine authoritative truth, which probes the conscience as nothing else can; and the more so, as not the prophets only but the Lord of glory also have affixed a seal, which profanity alone would think of breaking, to the Pentateuch as God's word written by Moses.

We have seen that the positive objections, when sifted, either fall to the ground, or become rather witnesses in favour of the Mosaic authorship and inspired character of the first five books of the Old Testament. The alleged omissions, rightly viewed, bear testimony to the same. An inspired writer can and does habitually leave such blanks as we find in the history of the sojourn in the wilderness, the journeys and stations, the desired particulars of Hur and Jethro, etc. This is never so, save by defect of information, in human annals; but it flows immediately from the moral design of scripture. Man loves to stimulate and indulge curiosity; God inspires for the communication of His mind, the link of connection being in the divine purpose and objects, not in the facts which may often be partial and disjointed as a history.

Let me cite the competent opinion given entirely apart from controversy by Mr. H. F. Clinton, which may serve to illustrate more than one point. "The history contained in the Hebrew scriptures presents a remarkable and

pleasing contrast to the early accounts of the Greeks. In the latter we trace with difficulty a few obscure facts preserved to us by the poets, who transmitted with all the embellishments of poetry and fable what they had received from oral tradition. In the annals of the Hebrew nation we have authentic narratives written by contemporaries, and these writing under the guidance of inspiration. What they have delivered to us comes accordingly under a double sanction. They were aided by divine inspiration in recording facts, upon which, as mere human witnesses,16 their evidence would be valid. But as the narrative comes with an authority which no other writing can possess, so in the matters related it has a character of its own. The history of the Israelites is the history of miraculous interpositions. Their passage out of Egypt was miraculous. Their entrance into the promised land was miraculous. Their prosperous and their adverse fortunes in that land, their servitudes and their deliverances, their conquests and their captivities, were all miraculous. The entire history, from the call of Abraham to the building of the sacred temple, was a series of miracles. It is so much the object of the sacred historians to describe these that little else is recorded. The ordinary events and transactions, what constitutes the civil history of other states, are either very briefly told, or omitted altogether; the incidental mention of these facts being always subordinate to the main design of registering the extraordinary manifestations of divine power. For these reasons the history of the Hebrews cannot be treated like the history of any other nation [exactly what rationalism essays to do, to the dishonour of scripture, and to its own utter and ruinous confusion]; and he who should attempt to write their history, divesting it of its miraculous character, would find

himself without materials. Conformably with this spirit there are no historians in the sacred volume of the period in which miraculous intervention was withdrawn. After the declaration by the mouth of Malachi (Mal. 3:1) that a messenger shou1d be sent to prepare the way, the next event recorded by any inspired writer is the birth of that messenger.17 But of the interval of 400 years between the promise and the completion no account is given. And this period of more than 400 years between Malachi and the Baptist is properly the only portion, in the whole long series of ages from the birth of Abraham to the Christian era, which is capable of being treated like the history of any other nation."18 "The character of the Jews in their captivity had undergone a remarkable change. During the period of their judges they had been easily seduced into the idolatries of their neighbours; but, after their return from Babylon, they exhibited a spirit of attachment to their law and to their sacred books which they maintained under all circumstances with incredible firmness. A people of such habits as they had now acquired was eminently fitted for the office, for which they were designed, of guardians of the oracles of God, ἐπιστεύθησαν τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ. (Rom. 3:2.) Josephus, Apion, i. 8, remarks of his countrymen, πᾶσι σύμφυτόν ἐστιν εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς πρώτης γενέσεως Ἰουδαίοις τὸ νουμίζειν αὐτὰ Θεοῦ δόγματα, καὶ τούτοις ἐμμένειν, καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν, εἰ δέοι θνήσκειν ἡδέως. Miraculous aid was now therefore no longer necessary to fit them for their office, and was accordingly withheld. As in the material world Providence had everywhere proportioned the means to the end, the forces being not greater than the occasion requires, so it would seem that in his spiritual communications extraordinary aids are only granted when ordinary influence is insufficient.

At the birth of the Messiah the greatness of the occasion demanded that divine communication, after a suspension of four centuries, should again be made; and the evangelists and apostles were armed with supernatural gifts and powers adequate to the duties which they were to perform."

"From this spirit of the scripture history, the writer not designing to give a full account of all transactions, but only to dwell on that portion in which the divine character was marked, many things which we might desire to know are omitted, and on many occasions a mere outline of the history is preserved." (Fasti Hellen i. pp. 283-285.)

These are in the main, without vouching for every thought or expression, words of truth and soberness. Not only were God's ways with Israel above mere nature, but His word as to the patriarchs and them has throughout a prophetic character. Even so ordinary a transaction as the domestic trouble of Sarah and Hagar as to Isaac and Ishmael we know on inspired authority to be an allegory of the two covenants, and the opposition of the flesh to promise and the Spirit. So we are taught that Melchisedec in Gen. 14 represents a higher priesthood than that of Aaron, verified now in Christ and to be displayed in His kingdom. In short everywhere God selected by the inspired writers such facts as were adequate to bring out fully what man is as morally judged of Himself, and what God is in grace or in government, of which Christ is the only complete expression. All scripture is the expansion of this as its central idea: not that the several writers knew the bearing of all they wrote, especially those before Christ, but that He did who inspired them all to write.

Hence there is a vast system of which the several books form part, filling up each the place assigned in the purpose of God. While every book has an unity of its own, and certain books may supplement each other in a way evidently beyond the writers' thought, they all compose a divine whole.

Thus in Genesis, couched under the simplest forms of word or deed, are seen the great principles of divine action and relationship with man from the earliest days, which look on typically to the last: creation, human responsibility, sin, revelation of a Deliverer in grace, sacrifice in faith, the world in its worship and in its outward progress, translation to heaven, corruption and violence on earth, providential judgment and deliverance through it, covenant with the earth, human government ordained but of God, combination of men in pride, dispersion into nations, tribes, and tongues by divine judgment; calling by grace as a separate witness for the God of promise; the risen son and heir with the calling of the bride; the election for the earth cast out for a time, but after humbling experiences restored and blessed and a blessing; and this in connection with a holy sufferer rejected by his brethren, sold to the Gentiles, but by this very path of sorrow exalted over the world while unknown to Israel, and receiving a Gentile bride, but finally making himself known to his brethren preserved through their secret trouble, and now owning in him the grace and glory they had so long despised and hated.

In Exodus we see, not individuals or a family, but a people, God's people, redeemed from the house of bondage and brought to God from the world which falls under His mighty hand, and inflictions in an ever-rising

character till chastening slighted ends in exterminating judgment; but the people of God themselves failing to appreciate His grace which led them all the instructive way from Egypt to Sinai, and voluntarily accepting conditions of obeying the law as the means and tenure of divine privilege, yet even in the shadows of the tabernacle, etc., having His grace in Christ typified with striking variety and fulness.

Leviticus next presents God from the tabernacle laying down the means and character and consequences of access to Himself by sacrifice and priesthood and ordinances for food, birth, disease, infirmity, etc., and feasts for the people in the midst of whom He dwells, with the prophecy of their ruin and exile for rebellious and idolatrous unbelief, but of their restoration when they should repent by His grace, and so enjoy the promises made to their fathers.

The book of Numbers gives us the sojourn and march of the people through the desert, with the provisions of grace, the full account of their unbelief as to both the way and the end, the judgment of presumption and rebellion, and the effort of the enemy to hinder turned of God into the grandest vindication of His people and assurance of future glory when He judges the world, with facts and ordinances which look onward to their possession of the promised land.

Deuteronomy is not only a farewell moral rehearsal of the law, but also of God’s ways with Israel, enforcing obedience as the way of blessing; as the last words of him who was the chief type of Messiah as Prophet, it urges on the people, just about to enter the land, a more direct relationship with Jehovah their God, and, while

predicting their ruin through disobedience, points darkly to “secret things,” the resources of divine mercy in which He will more than retrieve all to their blessedness and His own glory in the latter day.

There is thus a deep inward connection as well as progress in the five books of Moses, and the reader who looks below the surface will find proofs of this multiplying on his prayerful study; but the same principle is true of the entire Bible from Genesis to the Revelation, the links between which are as strong as they are numerous, and those comparatively indirect or latent so much the more undeniable a testimony to the One Divine Author of them all.

W.K.

1 “An Introduction to the Old Testament, Critical, Historical, and Theological; containing a Discussion of the most important Questions belonging to the several Books.” By Samuel Davidson, D.D., of the university of Halle, and LL.D., vol. i. p. 124.

2 I do not refer to questions of readings, translations or expositions, which are quite distinct from divine revelation, and belong solely to man’s responsible use of revelation.

3 Introd. O.T. i. 126,127.

4 Ibid. i. 47-61.

5 Authority in rule or appointment, and inspiration which they might share with the prophets, are very different things, neither of which is denied. None but God however is infallible.

6 Introd. O.T. i. 131.

7 Introd. O.T. i, 75, 76; 356, 357; 364; 377, 378; 395, 396.

8 Introd. O. T. i. 152.

9 It is not true that “law, order, uniformity, slowness, partiality characterize those changes; not suddenness or universality. Universal destruction and reconstruction — anarchy followed by order — are things unknown to science, and opposed to all its fundamental conclusions.” A little learning is a dangerous thing. Had it been said that, once established, such is the way of the Creator as long as a given state of things is permitted to endure, Dr D. would have been right; but to put matters thus absolutely is only the science of infidel progressionists or unwary souls, like the late Hugh Miller, beguiled in a measure by them. Laws of phenomena are quite distinct from causes; and the reason why moderns merge the last in the first is the instinctive desire to escape from the thought of creation, and hence of the true God. Positivism is the lowest form of all, and hence is essentially atheistic.

10 It is the grossest ignorance to confound the knowledge of good and evil (i.e. conscience), which was acquired by the fall, with the image and likeness of God in which Adam was made.

11 Smith’s Dict. of the Bible, ii. 775.

12 Neither the name of El-Elion (the most High God) nor any other trait in Gen. 14 is a sufficient reason to warrant the notion that it is a “monogram” from another pen. It is bound up in the closest moral connection with chapter 13. Lot chose for himself, and, soon tasting the sorrows of the world, is only delivered through the prompt love of him who walked in faith while he himself

had yielded to covetousness. Further I cannot doubt that Jehovah's declaration in Gen. 15:1, "I am thy shield, thy exceeding great reward," is an allusive answer on His part to the noble and generous disinterestedness of Abraham recorded at the close of Gen. 14. Thus the account appears to be so bound up with the chapters before and after as to refute the idea of its being an ancient monument transferred to this book of Moses.

13 Introd. O.T. i. 3, 4.

14 Introd. O.T. i, 58, 59.

15 The supposed confirmation of the Elohistic and Jehovistic hypothesis drawn from the few proper names compounded with Jehovah before Samuel and David (Introd. O.T. i. 19) is null. It was natural they should use the name more when revealed to them in national relationship, though it did not become general till Samuel in measure, and David, faithful and obedient fully, set up what Moses had enjoined, but what had been grossly neglected for centuries before.

16 "It may be said that Moses was not a witness of the facts which he relates between the birth or the call of Abraham (when the history of the Hebrews may be properly said to commence) and his own time. But there were so few steps between Abraham and Moses that, though not a witness, he was an authentic reporter of evidence. In the following history, from the exodus to the rebuilding of the temple, all the writers were, strictly speaking, witnesses."

17 "Or at least the circumstances which preceded it: Luke 1:1-56. Augustine, Civ. Dei., xvii 24, has remarked this cessation of prophecy: Toto," etc.

18 “Because during this period divine interpositions were withheld, and the Jews were left to the ordinary course of things. And we may remark that in all ages of their history divine inspiration was vouchsafed in exact proportion to the necessity of the case. Inspiration was afforded to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses; and from Moses to Malachi there was an uninterrupted communication of the divine will through inspired ministry to the chosen people. By this chosen people the knowledge of the Deity was preserved through so many ages in the midst of the darkness and idolatry and polytheism of the other nations of the world. And the measure of inspiration was always in proportion to the exigency. The greatest prophets arose in the most difficult times. The reign of Ahab was distinguished by Elijah and Elisha. Isaiah continued to prophesy through the time of Ahaz. And during the captivity many eminent prophets consoled and instructed the Jews in their calamity. But with Malachi inspiration ceased, and the Jews were left to the exertions of their own faculties. Inspiration appears to have been withdrawn because it was no longer necessary for the purposes of Providence.

The Closing Types of Leviticus

(Weston 1905 [CBA9592]. Currently published by BTP.)

Chapter 1. The Duties Of The Sanctuary.

Lev. 24:1-9.

After the Feasts comes a new section of this third book of Moses, which we now propose to consider. It consists of a rather miscellaneous group of particulars not yet laid down in the book.

The first words treat of the provision for the candlestick and the table before Jehovah continually.

“ 1 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, 2 Command the children of Israel that they take unto thee pure beaten olive oil for the light to light the lamp continually. 3 Outside the veil of the testimony, in the tent of meeting, shall Aaron dress it from evening to morning before Jehovah continually: an everlasting statute throughout your generations. 4 Upon the pure candlestick shall he arrange the lamps before Jehovah continually “

“ 5 And thou shalt take fine wheaten flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof; each cake shall be of two tenths. 6 And thou shalt set them in two rows, six in a row, upon the pure table before Jehovah. 7 And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon [each] row; and it shall be a bread of remembrance, an offering to Jehovah. 8 Every sabbath day he shall arrange it before Jehovah continually on the part of the children of Israel: an everlasting covenant. 9 And it shall be Aaron’s, and his sons’; and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it [is] most holy unto him of

Jehovah's fire-offerings: an everlasting statute" (vers. 1-9).

It is important for us to feel the part which God devolves on His children and expects from them, unless He be indifferent to His honour or their blessing. So it is here with His people. What a privilege and responsibility for the sons of Israel! They could not enter the holy place: the covering or curtain forbade it save for the priests. But on all the children of Israel lay the charge of providing pure olive oil beaten for the light of the sanctuary outside the veil of the testimony to cause the lamps to burn continually.

The meaning of the type is plain. That light was the exhibition of God in Christ who is the True Light. Light He was on coming into the world which lay in darkness; He was the light of men; He sheds His light on every man. There the Fathers are as dark as the Friends; for nothing can be more preposterous than that every man is lighted. On the contrary, every one, as man, is still darkness: so the apostle declares even of the elect in their natural state. And so terrible is this spiritual darkness that even the presence of the divine light did not dispel it, as darkness yields to light naturally: the darkness in that case did not apprehend the light. Nor is it without moment to see that it is on His coming into the world that the light so manifests every man. The common rendering, as in the A.V., is both grammatically and dogmatically false. It would require the article to mean "that" cometh. As anarthrous, it must mean "on coming." Yet "on coming" has no distinctive force here, save as said of the true Light; but as predicated of Him, it is full of interest and instruction. Said of man, it not only adds nothing beyond that he is a man, who must

therefore have already come into the world; but it might impart the strange notion that man is thus enlightened on his coming into the world, which yields no good sense.

Here however it is the same Light, yet not as when on earth He was “the light of the world.” He is the light shining in the sanctuary, the light of God for those who have priestly title to enter there during the darkness which rests on the Christ-rejecting people. For as we are told in the detail of ver. 3, “in the tent of meeting Aaron shall order it from evening to morning before Jehovah continually.” It is the function of the high priest (and we know Who He is that thus acts in heaven itself), not in the hand-made holies or the figures, but in the true. We know also what the oil denotes which caused the light to burn. It was the Holy Spirit given without measure. It was in that Spirit that the Lord met the tempter; in that Spirit that He was anointed for His service of every kind; in that Spirit that He offered Himself spotless to God. So was He raised from among the dead; so when risen did He charge the apostles whom He had chosen; so the Revelation speaks of Him as having the seven Spirits of God, not only in dealing with the churches, but in view of the crisis of judgment that follows to bring in and rule the world-kingdom. It was His perfection as Incarnate never to speak or act otherwise where we who have the same Spirit so often and sadly fail. Here we have Him under the figure of the candlestick displaying the light on high.

Again, the pure table with its twelve loaves of fine flour represents Him as the heavenly food of the priests, Him Who was also the manna that came down for the people on earth. And as the spiritual fulness was aptly couched

under the seven lamps of the candlesticks, so the twelve loaves pointed to the human or administrative fulness of Christ. We readily see the same principle in Israel, in the twelve apostles, in the complement of Israel and of Judah in the Revelation, in the gates etc. of the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. Jesus was also the bread of life as man; and if Israel see this not yet, any more than the light of heaven, we whom by grace He made priests delight in both. For what nourishment is there not in that glorified Man whom we henceforth know and feed on (2 Cor. 5:16, 17)?

Nor must we omit to take into account the pure frankincense upon earth now, for a memorial, our acceptance in all the grace of Christ, the fragrance before God. We see the sabbath too here, as it followed the manna, as historically shown in Ex. 16. It is on Christ that rest for us depends, not on the Spirit in us, which is our help and power; but He, Christ, is our peace before God. Only the priests eat of Him thus, and they only in a holy place. “For it is most holy unto him of the fire-offerings of Jehovah:” a statute for ever, as was the ordering of the candlestick, both figures of Christ in God’s presence.

We cannot but see, if we believe the testimony of God, how rich as well as suited to need and condition is the provision of His grace in Christ. We are met, when outside in the folly and wretchedness of sin, by mercy that adapts itself to wants so extreme; and in truth we want every thing that is good, evil ourselves and delighting in it, yet not without shame and compunction and remorse. The goodness of God leads us to repentance. The grace of Christ, while manifesting to us

our ruined and guilty estate, attracts and wins us to God, by His suffering for our sins.

But thus brought into the peace of heavenly light, we learn at first to our wonder that we are made priests to God, more wonderful, considering what He is and what we are, than that we should also be made kings. And there we, made free of the true Sanctuary, have the joy and blessing of Christ as its light in all fulness. There too we have the gracious provision for the sustenance and refreshment of the new man, in that plentiful store of heavenly food which He as the golden table thus spread is meant to furnish those whom grace has called into this place of nearness before Him. This is not what is called “the mystery concerning Christ and concerning the church;” but a precious part of Christian privilege that accompanies it, as made known in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in the First Epistle of Peter.

Chapter 2. Blasphemy Judged With Other Evil

Lev. 24:10-23.

In marked contrast with the provision for the full light of Christ to shine uninterruptedly in the sanctuary, till the morning without clouds, during the night, and in connection with the pledge of blessing for all Israel, stands the public insult to Jehovah, which is here recounted with His judgment on it.

“ 10 And the son of an Israelitish woman, but who [was] son of an Egyptian man, went forth among the children of Israel; and this son of the Israelitish [woman] quarrelled with an Israelitish man together in the camp. 11 And the Israelitish woman’s son blasphemed the Name, and cursed; and they brought him to Moses (and

his mother's name [was] Shelomith, daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan). 12 And they placed him in ward, that they might decide at the mouth of Jehovah. 13 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, 14 Lead the blasphemer outside the camp; and all that heard shall lay their hands upon his head, and the whole assembly shall stone him. 15 And thou shalt speak to the children of Israel, saying, Every one when he curseth his God shall bear his sin. 16 And he that blasphemeth the name of Jehovah shall certainly be put to death: all the assembly shall certainly stone him; as well the stranger as the homeborn, when he blasphemeth the Name, shall be put to death. 17 And he that smiteth any man mortally shall certainly be put to death. 18 And he that smiteth any beast mortally shall make it good, life for life. 19 And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour as he hath done, so shall it be done to him, 20 breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him. 21 And he that smiteth a beast [mortally] shall make it good; and he that smiteth a man [mortally] shall be put to death. 22 Ye shall have one law; as the stranger, so the homeborn; for I [am] Jehovah your God. 23 And Moses spoke to the children of Israel; and they led the blasphemer outside the camp, and stoned him with stones. And the children of Israel did as Jehovah commanded Moses" (vers. 10-23).

The first portion of the chapter is the clear type of Christ, not only as the light of the heavenlies during the dark night for Israel on earth, but as the pledge by-and-by of their twelve-tribed fulness through the grace of Christ. Here we have not the shadows of good things to come, but the sad fact of Jehovah's name blasphemed

meanwhile on the earth, where the responsibility lies to be His witness in reverence and righteousness and truth. Here is the sample, alas! in this one man of Israel after the flesh, the son of an Israelitess and an Egyptian father: an unhallowed union, the fruit of which reviles the holy Name. No doubt all flesh is as grass; but Israel was to be holy to Jehovah. And surely this is the most weighty step a woman (symbol of a state) takes in this life naturally. But Shelomith married an Egyptian, one of that oppressing world out of which Israel was brought with a high hand by Jehovah.

It is not that sin of idolatry for which they were to be swept off the land into Assyria; and especially even the royal tribe, when it apostatised, into Babylon. Here it is defiance, cursing the true God, or blaspheming Jehovah. This became emphatically true, when, weaned meanwhile from idols, they disdained and blasphemed the Name in the Messiah, Himself also Jehovah their God. Therefore are they given up nationally to a worse than Babylonish captivity. They are under the curse of Him they reviled, and the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost (1 Thess. 2:16).

Therefore also, as they despised Him who suffered for sins, all their other sins, as in the verses that follow, come up against them. They have not even the temporary relief in the blood of calves and goats offered for their transgressions. They have in God’s righteous judgment neither king nor prince, sacrifice nor statue, ephod nor seraphim. But the heavenly reality, the dead but now risen Christ, in the tabernacle not made with hands, is the sure token that more than all they lost they will find provided by Jehovah in the mercy that endures for ever, when they shall say, Blessed He that cometh in

the Name of Jehovah. For repent they surely will, as it is the promise of divine grace, and turn again, that their sins may be blotted out; so that there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of Jehovah, and that He may send the Messiah that has been fore-appointed to them. He is now in the Sanctuary above, where the heavens received Him, after His atoning work was done, till times of restoring all things, of which God spoke by His prophets since the world began. The security is on high where only faith's eye can reach; but it is unfailing before God, and awaits the moment when the gathering out of every nation as well as out of Israel is complete to join the Lord in the air. Then renewed dealings follow on to form a godly remnant of Jews, His missionaries to preach the gospel of the kingdom to all the nations before the end come, when the day of Jehovah ensues for the judgment of the quick throughout all the habitable earth, and He shall reign over Israel in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever, that is as long as earth endures.

Chapter 3. The Land And Jehovah's Earthly Purpose.

1. The Sabbath Year.

Lev. 25:1-7.

The Feasts had given the entire circle of divine purpose and ways leading up to its effectuation, etc. (Lev. 23). Leviticus 24 presents, in a remarkable and concise twofold, the unfailing priestly light in the Sanctuary, whatever the darkness of Israel might be temporarily to their shame because of their rebellion and blasphemy of His Name. This is vividly set forth in the fruit of a mixed

marriage in the same chapter and its unsparing doom. Now follows, in a seventh sabbatic year, and the jubilee when seven sevens of years pass, Jehovah's pledge that His mercy endures for ever, and this for His land, for His people; as it is written in Deuteronomy 32:43, "For He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful to His land, to His people."

Jehovah means to bless all families of the earth in Abraham, and in his seed, the true (not the figurative) Son dead and risen; and so the apostle could justify, by its first clause, the gospel to every creature, and those that believe of the Gentiles, rejoicing with the Israel of God, all such fleshly distinction gone in the church. But the fulfilment for Israel, and the nations as a whole awaits the day of Jehovah; when after overwhelming judgments on both, and on apostate Christendom most of all, the Crucified, Jah the Saviour, shall reign over all the earth. In that day shall there be one Jehovah, and His name one, all idols consigned to the moles and to the bats. Yet though mercy will surely bless the nations, even Egypt the old oppressor and Assyria that punished them for their idolatry, Israel shall still be expressly Jehovah's inheritance. No other is holy and pleasant here below. By the Christians, during Israel's night, as for the faithful elders, is seen a better land, that is, a heavenly, and not as by them afar off, but themselves brought nigh and lit up with the light of Christ, their life, known far more fully by sovereign grace. How can any, with the N. T. and the Holy Spirit as now given, doubt it for a moment? No wonder that such children are gloomy, under notions so defective (to say the least), and occupied overmuch with creature evil, to the loss of the

spiritual good to be enjoyed; for whatever the reproach and the suffering, we more than conquer through Him that loved us.

The Jews are exiles again, and far longer the time required for their blind hatred of their, of Jehovah's, Messiah. But they shall yet sing, "His foundation is in the mountains of holiness. Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion more than all the tabernacles of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." At that very time God will have visited the judgments of saints and apostles and prophets on the corrupt city of confusion, which has so long dazzled the eyes of the superstitious as the false eternal, doomed to God's burning, the smoke of which is to go up to the ages of ages, when the earth as well as the heavens rejoice. Neither London nor Paris, neither Berlin nor Vienna nor yet Moscow, has the smallest claim to a sacred title. It is quite easy to understand that successful merchants, soldiers, and scientists think otherwise; but what is the worth of any opinion of man? The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God abides for ever. And the Christian can say so with an emphasis and joy unknown as yet to the Jew, if he but know his calling upwards, waiting for the Lord to receive him to Himself for heavenly glory as well as reigning over the earth in that day.

" 1 And Jehovah spoke to Moses in mount Sinai, saying, 2 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, When ye come into the land that I will give you, the land shall keep a sabbath to Jehovah. 3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years shalt thou prune thy vineyard, and gather in the produce thereof; 4 but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest for the land, a sabbath to Jehovah. Thy field thou shalt not sow, nor prone thy

vineyard. 5 That which groweth of itself of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, and the grapes of thine undressed vines thou shalt not gather: a year of rest shall it be for the land. 6 And the sabbath of the land shall be for food for you; for thee, and for thy bondman, and for thy handmaid, and for thy hired servant, and for him that dwelleth as a sojourner with thee, 7 and for thy cattle, and for the beasts that [are] in thy land: all the produce thereof, it shall be for your food."

Now here was to worldly ears the strangest edict ever imposed on a people. Nebuchadnezzar, despotic as he was, could not dare to issue it; nor Cyrus the Persian, nor Alexander. Julius Caesar or his imperial nephew would have counted it stark madness. Jehovah laid it down as a matter of course for a people separated to Himself; and this early in their wilderness history. For it is intimated that He spoke it to Moses in mount Sinai, whence they moved early in the second year; as then He told them of their coming to the promised land, though many years through their sinful folly must pass till the rebellious generation was followed by another one. He knew the end from the beginning, and has communicated to His own what was good for them to know, let the miscalled higher critics revile as they may. Nor did Jehovah ever fail to make good the extraordinary means He adopted, as explained in vers. 21, 22. He gave them, while Israel obeyed, the produce of three years on every sixth year, to carry over not that year only but the sabbatic and the eighth, when they sowed and waited for its harvest. It was therefore a constant exertion of divine power and goodness to a people whom He thus encouraged to trust and honour Him. But Israel soon became restive under His control

and authority, and contrived to be “like all the nations,” growing mad on strange gods beyond any. Retrograding they violated the Covenant, and made it impossible for Jehovah to perform His wondrous part, unless He consented to His own dishonour.

The Sabbath had a great and holy interest from the beginning. It was God’s rest from creating to make; but man sinned and failed to enter. It reappeared in His dealings of grace before Israel reached Sinai, when it was marked out after the manna was given, type of rest after the living bread from heaven. But Israel liked not that bread of God, and lusted after flesh, confiding in human ability to keep the law which embodied the Sabbath as a divine command. It became a sign to Israel, a sign of God: rest to faith, when God introduced any new principle in the great book of redemption, Exodus. But Israel despised and ignored His sabbaths, though every week closed with one, and the first month had an added one to which Messiah’s death lent a most solemn import, with the sevens till Pentecost; and the seventh month more openly still, with its Day of Atonement, and its Feast of Booths, with its first day and eighth extraordinarily. But the sabbath year was the same writ large to be read and seen by all men. It brought into prominence the land: “a year of rest for the land,” of which Jehovah was landlord, and Israel His tenants at will.

O that His people had hearkened, and Israel had walked in His ways! But they would none of Him to their own ruin, to this day even worse than of old, but not for ever. No: the land is His, and He will give it again to them, no longer on the condition of their faithfulness to Him but of His to them in mercy; when they are brought down

truly to feel that mercy alone suits either their sin and ruin, or His grace and truth as their Saviour God. God's rights remain to faith when man, yea the chosen nation, sinned away all pretension to right on their part. It is true that an unparalleled tribulation must be the last chapter of the Jew without the true God and His Anointed, alas! under the antichrist, the man of sin, "the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. 30:7). Yes, Jehovah will be merciful to His land, to His people.

The sabbath year was also marked by the liberation of a brother who had become a bondman to an Israelite; for what anomalies might not be till Messiah come and reign over them? But even during the day of evil through one man's weakness or fault, and another man's availing himself of it for his selfishness, in that land only was the sign of the good time coming, and of Him who is competent to put down all enemies. But even now Jehovah insisted on all that heeded this law, that after six years of bondage the Hebrew slave could claim liberty. "In the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee" (Ex. 21, Deut. 15:12); and when sent free, he was not to "go away empty." The law made nothing perfect; but it was righteous, good, and holy check on man. It was not Christ and redemption, or the Spirit and the new man; so that neo-critics, who complain of things then as not on the Christian level, only betray their illwill and ignorance.

Again, the seventh or sabbath year was Jehovah's release for the insolvent Hebrew (Deut. 15:1-15). It is beautiful and affecting, how the lawgiver was inspired to appeal to the hearts of those who had, on behalf of the poor brother that had not. But the divine mind was clear

and express in this beneficent obliteration of debts in the year when His own bounty was so conspicuous to His people, spite of sad and frequent faults.

There was the further care of His wisdom, that “at the end of [every] seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing” (Deut. 31:10, 11). Thus admirably was it provided, unless rebellious wickedness hindered, that every Israelite, men, women, and children, ay, “and thy stranger that is within thy gates,” should hear and observe to do all the words of this law.

But as unbelief led to idolatry, so even before this, to profane the sabbaths of every kind, of days and years, as we find predicted in Lev. 26:14, 15, and also punished in the carrying away to Babylon for seventy years (2 Chr. 36:20, 21). Alas! it is the old, old story of man’s failure in every duty, and from the earliest; for what meant the setting up the calf of gold which Aaron made at the people’s mandate, before the tables on which Jehovah deigned to write His law were brought down by Moses? These however are only the wretched ways of man. But days come, when all will be recovered by a poor and afflicted and repentant people under Messiah and the new covenant. Then will be fulfilled all the pledges of the sabbath year, and incomparably more, every promise and every prediction to God’s glory, and to the blessing of Israel and all the nations; as the heavenly saints will enjoy still higher and richer blessings with Christ above.

Here again note the testimony to Jehovah’s beneficence to the humble and the needy and the stranger that

sojourned with the Israelite, to their cattle, and to the very beasts in their land: none forgotten, all provided for; though in the sabbath year not a field was sown nor a vineyard pruned, not a field reaped nor the grapes gathered. What a witness for God, if Israel had obeyed! But they disobeyed here as elsewhere; and were it not that Jehovah changes not, the sons of Jacob had been destroyed hopelessly. But He looked on to Messiah and His sacrificial work, awaiting in the latter day their repentance in His grace. Then will He blot out their transgressions for His own sake, and will not remember their sins. Then the deaf shall hear, and the blind see. Then shall the lame leap as a hart, and the tongue sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break forth, and torrents in the desert. And the mirage shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitations of wild dogs where they lay, grass with reeds and rushes. In short, sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

On the other hand it ought to be plain to every reflecting Christian that the type of the recurring sabbatical year of release cannot without violence be applied to the church or to any individual member of it. We have redemption in Christ through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. It is a constant privilege of the gospel. One may have to confess any and every sin into which he falls by the way through unwatchfulness and failure in dependence on God. But the redemption which we received at the start remains unrevoked and unimpaired throughout the entire course of each believer; and the grace which gave it sovereignly then abides in His faithful goodness to the last, providing the advocacy of Christ with the Father and securing our humiliation and self-judgment to the restoration of the soul.

Our relation to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is therefore very different from that of Israel as here traced. And it is of the more importance to seize it, as the tendency ever is to slip from the heavenly and eternal character of our privileges into the earthly and temporal nature of theirs. To confound them has been the bane of Christendom; and the issue is the loss of the "better thing" God provided for us, and the denial of the hopes of Israel in their due place and season.

Chapter 4. The Year Of Jubilee

Lev. 25:8-13

Deeply impressive as the sabbath year is in ushering in this chapter, more outward and imposing and thorough-going is the jubilee when seven sabbaths of years were fulfilled, or forty-nine years. This therefore is next introduced in a general way with details to the end of the chapter.

" 8 And thou shalt count to thee seven sabbaths of years, seven years seven times; and the days of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to thee forty and nine years. 9 And thou shalt cause a sound of the trumpet to go forth in the seventh month on the tenth [day] of the month; on the day of atonement shall ye sound the trumpet throughout all your land. 10 And ye shall hallow the year of the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty in the land to all the inhabitants thereof: a jubilee shall it be to you, and ye shall return [every] man to his possession, and ye shall return [every] man to his family. 11 A jubilee this fiftieth year [shall] be to you: ye shall not sow, nor reap its after-growth, nor gather one of its separations. 12 For it [is] the jubilee; it shall be holy to you; out of the

field ye shall eat its produce. 13 In this year of jubilee shall ye return [every] man to his possession" (8-13).

As there was a sabbath day and month, so also a sabbatical year and one after seven times that year; this last being the jubilee, when the cycle of seven sabbatical years was completed. The first two referred to the people with Jehovah; the last two to the land. So it is with us now that the Spirit of God carefully brings out the individual's true and full relation to God, before our corporate privilege is unfolded, as we may read in the Epistle to the Ephesian saints. So here, after days of sin, sorrow, and ruin, it is the day anticipated in these pledges by the way whereon Jehovah who chose Israel will remember His people, even to the joy of the nations long envious and scornful; when He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful to His land, to His people. The land is prominent in the sabbatical year, still more completely in the jubilee.

Hence the explicit care to base the jubilee on the offering and acceptance of the atonement-day, the most solemn sacrifice of the year. The cornet which was to sound so loud, and bring in the proclamation of liberty throughout the land to all the inhabitants thereof, was not on the first of the seventh month but on the tenth. The first was a sabbath too, and distinguished by a memorial of blowing the cornet. It too was a holy convocation: no servile work was to be done, and a fire-offering made to Jehovah. But the tenth was the fast, when no work was to be done, with the most peremptory warning that every soul not afflicted on that same day should be cut off from among his peoples, and that every soul doing any manner of work on that same day

Jehovah would destroy from among His people. Christ's atonement alone accounts for this. Therefore the repentance in dust and ashes; therefore too the exclusion of any manner of work. His work, His suffering for sin, explains it all.

The "liberty" which immediately follows is the answer to that work of atonement completed and accepted. It is quite a different liberty from that deliverance from the law of sin and death which we know as Christians as traced in Rom. 8, 2 Cor. 3, and Gal. 5. The jubilee is in no way the type of what pertains to the Christian or the church, but of Israel for the land when Jehovah's people shall be brought into their full promised blessing. Pentecost typifies what we now enjoy by the gift of the Spirit, consequent on Christ our passover sacrificed for us, and His resurrection shown in its wave-sheaf and the wave-loaves, till at an untold moment the heavenly saints are changed and caught up to meet Him for the Father's house. Only this was a mystery not yet revealed in scripture but hid in God. After that, when time begins again to be counted, in the seventh month comes a new series of divine dealings to apply the already accomplished work of atonement to Israel, awaked from their long slumber of death on the first of the month, then brought by self-judgment and humiliation under the atoning sacrifice in power of truth, at length the feast of glory for time and even eternity.

It is here too that the jubilee finds its just place and true application; for it has its peculiar place for Israel so marked that it is treated here distinctly from the greater cycle of the Feasts of Leviticus. It has nothing whatever to say to any joy for us in the resurrection when the last trumpet sounds for our joining Christ on high to be with

Him above. It concerns characteristically the people and the land; for Christ is to have glory everywhere, and a suited people for the earth as well as the heavens. Here the theologians are sadly astray and short of the truth. And the N. T. is as clear about it, as the O. T. is full of it. The fiftieth year the Israelites were to hallow, and proclaim in the land for all the inhabitants thereof. It is the era when all Israel shall be saved too, when all Zion's children shall be taught of Jehovah, and great shall be their peace. They shall be all righteous, and possess the land for ever as the branch of Jehovah's planting, the work of His hands, that He may be glorified. The type was but the shadow of a greater antitype. But it is of Israel's blessedness here below when Messiah reigns.

"A jubilee shall it be to you, and ye shall return every man to his possession, and ye shall return every man to his family." We can readily perceive how appropriate such consolation is to poor distressed Israel. They had a vested interest there, and from Jehovah, but by their own self-confidence held on the tenure of law, that is, of their own righteousness. Alas! they violated their law in every way. They were as mad as Babylon on their idols, and the Jews were exiled to Babylon, as the rest had been to Assyria. And when a remnant of Jews returned in God's goodness for the coming of Messiah in due time, it was but to reject and have Him crucified by lawless hands; as they also refused the Spirit's call in the gospel, and especially rose up against it for the Gentiles. For all that Jehovah waits to be gracious; and when the Gentiles, instead of standing by faith and continuing in goodness, claim all for themselves in pride and denial of Israel, they too shall become objects of

judgment. Then God's mercy shall Dow like a river on Israel repentant and believing; and the jubilee shall sound for the long distant and deaf, the atoning sacrifice being received in faith and true affliction of heart to the denial of self and all manner of work. Liberty shall be proclaimed, and a return shall be for every man, and for every man to his family. As the land shall mourn, every family apart and their wives apart in self-judgment, so all will be united in joy when the restitution of all things arrives. "A jubilee this fiftieth year shall be to you."

Such language has a force to Israel as it has to no other people, because Jehovah gave them the land of His choice for them, as for none else. Still less can the words have fitness for the Christian or the church, chosen out of every family, and brought into union with Christ, so that henceforth as Christians we know no man according to flesh. We belong even now to a dead and risen Christ, and are a new and heavenly family, not man's but God's for glory on high. And what is the possession to which every Christian returns? The notion becomes an absurdity. We had nothing in our natural estate as children of wrath; we had only sins and sin. There was no earthly paradise for fallen man to return to, nor yet possession in the land of Israel for a Gentile. To us all our portion as Christians is above nature and heavenly; and it is what sovereign grace gives us in and with Christ. Only thus could heavenly glory be ours, and all we enjoy as members of His body and shall inherit in that day.

So also the provision that follows, like that of the sabbatical year in vers. 11, 12. "Ye shall not sow, nor reap its aftergrowth, nor gather in its separations (i. e. the fruit of its undressed vines). For it is the jubilee; it

shall be holy to you: out of the field ye shall eat its produce." It is a little testimony to the great change when the land shall be no more barren or reluctant, but yield its increase with all fulness, to honour the great King, and greet His people no longer small but mighty and exalted and blest. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress, and instead of the nettle shall come up the myrtle, and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." How apply such words to the Christian and the church, save to drag us down from heaven to earth, and to deny Israel's hopes under Messiah and the new covenant! No, it is for them, not about us, that we read, "In this year of jubilee ye shall return every man to his possession."

"Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

They shall fear thee while the sun endureth, and so long as the moon, throughout all generations, he shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.

In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace, till the moon be no more.

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth.

They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; and the poor, that hath no helper.

He shall have pity on the poor and needy, and the souls of the needy he shall save.

He shall redeem their soul from oppression and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight: and they shall live; and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: and men shall pray for him continually; they shall bless him all the day long.

There shall be abundance of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass on the earth.

His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him happy.

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things: and blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen.

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

Chapter 5. The Jubilee The Standard Of Value

Lev. 25:14-17

The position of Israel on earth was unique. They were the only people over whom Jehovah's name was called. "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen: in order that ye may know and believe that I am He; before Me was no god formed, and none will be after Me." So the apostle, instead of depreciating their privileges, says in Rom. 9:4, "Whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law-giving, and the service, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever." It was they who in their blind unbelief stumbled at the stumbling-stone, the infinite grace of His humiliation, and His obedience unto death — the death of the cross, which shut out from the eyes of their heart the height of His glory far beyond that of the Messiah.

But even in the matter of the land allotted to each Israelite, we see a standard of valuation which was meant to keep before them their peculiar relation to Jehovah, as well as their bright prospect, whatever the failure or the chastening, whatever the change even to exile. For a restitution of all things awaits them on earth under the Messiah, the ground of all their blessings.

" 14 And if thou sell aught to thy neighbour, or buy of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not over-reach one another. 15 According to the number of years since the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour; according to the number of years of the crops he shall sell to thee. 16 according to the greater number of the years thou shalt increase the price thereof; and according to the fewness

of years thou shalt diminish the price thereof; for it is the number of the crops that he selleth to thee. 17 And ye shall not over-reach one another; but thou shalt fear thy God; for I [am] Jehovah your God" (vers. 14-17).

But like every thing else here below committed to man's responsibility, the polity of the theocracy broke down through the rebellion of Israel. Those who were nationally set apart to Jehovah sought to be like the nations, that they might have not only a king but other and false gods. Thus the warnings given in His ordinances were trampled under foot. Has therefore the word of Jehovah failed? Far from it. Israel, having gone astray, has borne the chastisement and has yet more and worse to bear before the blessing. But the word of God shall stand for ever: even while the ruin is complete, and before the manifested blessing comes for Israel and the land, we have it for our profit by faith.

To the Jew it ought to have been a precious resource that underneath such regulations as these the principle stood that the land belonged to Jehovah. This secures inalienable title for Israel in the long run. The Gentiles have trodden down the land and its capital for many centuries; but their times shall be fulfilled. The last empire is doubtless to revive in a portentous way, and shall be destroyed, not by conquest or decay, but by divine judgment. So shall be destroyed the Antichrist, the lawless king in the land; the Assyrian, or King of the North; and later his gigantic patron, Gog, Prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: these, with their allies and followers too, constitute all the nations of the earth. Their downfall in the day of Jehovah will make way for Jacob to take root. Israel shall blossom and bud; and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit. In that day

shall be a root of Jesse, standing as a banner of the peoples: the nations shall seek to it; and His resting-place shall be glory.

How obvious the comfort thus rendered to the believing Israelite, who would enjoy the blessed assurance of Jehovah's loving interest in His people! Thus He secures the restoration of the property assigned, in spite of all their errors and imprudence, or the over-reaching of others meanwhile. We know that, among Gentiles who know not God, reigns a general anxiety as to both persons and property. To Israel only was there the divine guarantee at every half-century. But what when this beneficent pledge is incomparably exceeded in the great Jubilee! Then "Behold, these shall come from afar; and, behold, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim. Shout, ye heavens; and be joyful, thou earth; and break forth, ye mountains, into singing; for Jehovah comforteth his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted ones" (Isa. 49:12, 13). No loss of liberty or land more; "for as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, saith Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain" (Isa. 66:22).

But before that day, and as long or far as there was fidelity to Jehovah and His word, they were bound in selling or buying the land, or rather the lease of it, by the jubilee as instituted by divine command. Personal equity was not all, but Jehovah's valuation of the worth of its produce till the jubilee. A regularly recurring miracle accompanied subjection to His law. It was not, as for the Christian and the church, a constant hope of Christ's coming suited to the heavenly people; but the earthly people had their times and seasons, and the

value of their sales according to the distance or the nearness of the jubilee. We are not of the world, and should always wait expectantly.

The Israelites were not to over-reach one another; and, if obedient, had a free insurance of life, liberty, and land from Jehovah. “Thou shalt fear thy God; for I [am] Jehovah your God.” What could be more simple and sure for an earthly people? If rebellious, how could they expect it? God is not mocked.

Chapter 6. Incentives To Obedience In The Land

Lev. 25:18-24

Jehovah did not fail to encourage His people in subjection to Himself as their God, and in a way suited to their position in the land He was about to give them. By their own act their tenure depended on their fidelity; but He exhausted all means to explain, and stimulate, to strengthen and cheer them. Yea, He would act on their behalf in mercy and judgment; and they shall celebrate it soon in everlasting song when they own their rejected king.

“ 18 Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. 19 And the land shall yield its fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety. 20 And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: 21 then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for the three years. 22 And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat of the fruits, the old, until the ninth year; until its fruits come in, ye shall

eat [of] the old. 23 And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land [is] mine; for ye [are] strangers and sojourners with me. 24 And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land" (vers. 18-24).

Obedience is indeed the essential claim of God on the creature, and the creature's inalienable duty. But even innocent, sinless, man never stood in it, but failed; and this very soon, when tested, as the opening facts of inspired history prove to every soul that fears God and trembles at His word. How much less did or could fallen man recover his balance? One perfect exception at length appeared, the hope of Whom acted powerfully on all who waited for Him in faith; but all others departed more and more sadly from God, and hardened themselves in disobedience and self-will with ever growing boldness of unbelief.

That exception however was the Creator become man; who demonstrated the incurable evil of fallen man, only made worse by corrupting or defying all God's remedial means. Worst of all, He proved favoured man's hatred of God come in nothing but goodness, for God was as far as possible from judging and publishing man's iniquity, but revealing Himself in sovereign grace. Man's answer was enmity to God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing to them their offences. Thereon God would and does now act in Him for His own glory, bringing in the gospel of His grace, and the church Christ's body. Then obedience assumes its fullest. character in; those that are His elect according to, God the Father's foreknowledge by (or, in) the Spirit's sanctification unto obedience and blood-sprinkling of Jesus Christ. The Christian by grace obeys God as a son after Christ's

pattern, though he receives His blood-sprinkling to do it. It is in full contrast with Israel under the most solemn sanction of death if they violated the law (Ex. 24:7, 8); as they shortly did thoroughly. But what can we say of our obedience either individually or collectively? Its very nature is ignored. The total ruin of Christianity proper is attested by the boast of Christendom in its twofold shame of Jewish ordinance and of Gentile philosophy.

But the land itself equally attests the no less ruin of the Jew. Does Israel therein dwell in safety? Does the land yet yield its fruit? Do the people of God eat their fill, and dwell therein in peace, honour, blessing and glory? When under the Messiah and the new covenant, it will assuredly be so. No longer will they say, what shall we eat the seventh year? Jehovah will bless them every year, not when, by the political help of friendly Gentiles, the Jews, before the harvest and after the blossom, think to become a ripe grape. Not so: the sprigs shall be cut off, and the spreading branches cut down. They are not yet a people prepared for Jehovah. The veil still lies upon their heart, which has not yet truly turned to Him. They do not yet repent at the feet of the crucified Messiah:; and they shall be left together to the ravenous birds of the mountains and to the beasts of the earth, who shall respectively summer and winter upon them. Yet the same inspired: prophet declares, following up their bitter disappointment, “In that time shall a present be brought unto Jehovah of hosts” of that very afflicted people, not with worldly aid without faith, nor to provisional region half-way, but to the place of His name, the Mount Zion. There shall they be ranged in the land, yet in a wholly different order from that under Joshua, but carefully from north to south laid down in Ezek. 48

and with parallel lines from east to west, then only to be for all the twelve-tribed nationality of Israel.

The Jews are still under the retribution, not only of the law broken in all ways but of the Messiah rejected. So the prophet Isaiah forewarned in his second and still more mature and profound portion, which depraved wits will have to be of his nameless double. Jerusalem is trodden down of Gentiles till their seasons are fulfilled. And the Jews must face a darker page of sin and woe, when the mass of them in the land shall receive the Antichrist for King, as their fathers rejected the true Anointed. Then shall be seen the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory; and when these things begin to come to pass, a godly Jewish remnant look up and lift up their heads, because their redemption draws nigh.

Jehovah will vindicate His rights in that day. “The land shall not be sold in perpetuity,” whatsoever the pretensions pride of Gentile may say. “For the land is Mine.” Strangers and sojourners with Him had been the men of Israel. But thenceforward He will hide His face no more from them; “for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah.” The right of redemption which they were responsible to grant in all the land of their possession He keeps for the fit moment, and will triumphantly proclaim to their everlasting joy. And what unselfish joy will be the glorified church’s in that day looking down from the heavenly places, and praising Him who is the giver of every good giving and every perfect gift, and of His Son through whom it all comes righteously, and of His Spirit in virtue of whom it can alone be divinely known and enjoyed.

But Christendom is as faithless to His grace as she is indifferent to His glory on high, and hence has sought that supremacy on earth, which is the proper portion in reserve for Israel, when the Son of man shall reign over all nations and tongues under the heavens. They repentant and restored to their land in that day shall have the place of earthly power in righteousness as His own people. Meanwhile we believe and confess Him as the rejected Messiah exalted to the throne of His Father, and not yet sitting on His own throne, and share His sufferings here below, unknown to the world and refusing its alliance or its honours, but waiting for Him to receive us to Himself for the Father's house, and to be manifested along with Him when He is manifested in glory.

Ignorance of the gospel and of the church's heavenly relationship coveted earthly case and worldly honour soon after the apostles passed away. That departure left room for the rivalry of the West and the East; as later still it gave birth to the Crusaders which are the plainest evidence that the grace and truth which came through our Lord Jesus was practically not only depraved but effaced. It was what struck the Christian Seer with wondering horror, when he beheld, not the chaste virgin espoused to Christ and suffering with Him here below, but the great harlot gorgeously arrayed, pandering to the lust of kings, intoxicating the peoples, and riding the Beast or Roman Empire, but destined to be the object of God's sternest judgments for her corruption, cruelty to the saints, and abominable idolatry. But the end is not yet though at hand, and pride rises high before the irretrievable downfall.

Chapter 7. The Right Of Redemption

Lev. 25:25-28

Here as elsewhere is no hiding of the people's failure in responsibility. Each would surely have his portion in Jehovah's land. Each was to enjoy the sabbath yea. of the land to Jehovah. For each throughout all the land the joyful sound of the jubilee should sound after: forty-nine years, proclaiming liberty and return, each to his possession. Not because they were more numerous or able, nor yet that they were more righteous than others, had they been chosen; but because Jehovah loved Israel, and because He would keep the oath He had sworn to their fathers, He brought them out with a powerful hand from the then greatest kingdom on earth that oppressed them, redeeming them out of the house of bondage, and giving them these pledges of unfailing rest and deliverance for the day when judgment falls on the inhabited earth. But Israel shall have the kingdom under the whole heavens under the Son of man: an everlasting dominion, which. shall not pass: away, and His kingdom which shall not be destroyed.

Yet it is a great mistake to confound this coming day of blessing for His earthly people with the secret hid in God, and thus from ages and generations, for Christ's glory in the heavens and the joint-heirs with Him, His heavenly bride. Restitution of all things now ruined here below is quite different from that glory which is above the world, wherein all distinction between Jew and Gentile disappears; because Christ is "the all" for all on high, in the faith of which the Christian and the church are called now to walk. In the world to come, whatever the blessing to every family on earth, the daughter of

Zion shall have the first dominion; for great will be the Holy One of Israel in the midst of her. The glorified above as one with Christ shall with Him share the universe. He is given head over all things to the church, His body.

Meanwhile on the side of man failure is anticipated and provided for; and here is contemplated the first case of loss through poverty, the form which failure must take in this type; and which we know in a still deeper way.

“ 25 If thy brother grow poor and sell of his possession, then shall his nearest of kin come and redeem what his brother sold. 26 And if the man have no one having right of redemption, and his hand hath attained and found sufficiency for its redemption, 27 then shall he reckon the years since his sale, and restore the overplus to the man to whom he sold it; and so return to his possession. 28 And if his hand have not found what sufficeth to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of the buyer until the year of jubilee; and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.”

“If” is a serious word for man. No doubt it is righteous; but the fact is that the first man breaks down and fails in his responsibility. He is fallen and a sinner; and of this Israel in the past is the constant witness. Every help that mercy could furnish, while law governed, Israel enjoyed, priesthood, offering, sacrifice. But the failure was ever more and more; and the rejection of their own Messiah, added to their previous idolatry, made their tenure of Jehovah’s land impossible, and their scattering over the earth complete, till the repentance of a godly remnant and return to their Messiah in heart. This will be of

Jehovah’s mercy enduring for ever, and through the atonement which grace applies to Israel in that great day. For Jesus will then be owned as the Kinsman Redeemer. And He will indeed come to redeem. The right is His, and He will not fail to recognise and apply it, in everlasting mercy.

But Israel must be made willing. And so it shall be in the day of His power. They refused Him to their own sin and shame and loss in the day of His humiliation, proud as man is so often of his poverty, and blind to his need of grace. Kin otherwise will have failed, and their own hand will have attained to no sufficiency. But grace will count that the time of suffering is accomplished, and that iniquity is pardoned through Him that loved His people and suffered for their sins. It is quite a mistake that mankind is here in question, however wide the gospel call. But redemption, whether for forgiveness of sins, or deliverance of the body, is of believers only. The theologians forget relationship, or vaguely misapply it. We hear of a brother who had his possession lost through unfaithfulness, and restored through grace triumphant over all difficulties. And Israel will be the standing and public witness, both of the loss through evil, and of the gain through grace. Yet the merit is not theirs in any way but only of Jesus, as the grace here and in every case is of God delighting in good of His own nature and of His own will, which rises above creature weakness and worthlessness, whatever the fruits of His Spirit in any.

Chapter 8. The Dwelling-House

Lev. 25:29-34

It is the people and the land with which Jehovah connects redemption. Both were objects of His gracious choice. Both have fallen under the greatest change through contempt of His goodness on man's part, and opposition to His will, even to rebellion and apostasy. But Jehovah will triumph on behalf of both, but by His own mercy in Christ the Redeemer, when Israel shall sing, Not unto us, O Jehovah, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy loving-kindness and for Thy truth's sake. The redeemed of Jehovah whom He had redeemed from the hand of the oppressor, and gathered out of the countries from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, shall give thanks to Jehovah, and say that He is good, for His loving-kindness endures for ever. What a contrast with man's way who starts with confidence, and whose hopes tell a flattering tale; but, looking no more truly to God than the beasts that perish, he has this of His, hand to lie down in sorrow. And none will have this more bitterly and manifestly than such of Israel as presume on their name and privileges as His people while their heart is far from Him and under the enemy's power. But blessed are all who have their confidence in the Son — in Jehovah Himself. And Zion shall put on her strength, Jerusalem her beautiful garments; and her waste places shall break forth, for Jehovah comforts His people, and redeems her as well as them.

The truth is made more emphatic in the type by making an exception of what man builds, a dwelling-house in a walled city." 29 And if any one sell a dwelling-house in a

walled city, then he shall have the right of redemption up to the end of the year of the sale; for a full year he shall have the right of redemption. 30 But if it be not redeemed until a whole year is complete, then the house that [is] in the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it throughout his generations; it shall not go out in the jubilee. 31 But the houses in villages that have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields of the country; they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubilee. 32 But [as to] the cities of the Levites, the houses in the cities of their possession, the Levites shall have a perpetual right of redemption. 33 And if a man redeem from one of the Levites (or, one of the Levites redeem something), then the house that was sold in the city of his possession shall go out in the jubilee; for the houses of the cities of the Levites [are] their possession among the children of Israel. 34 And the field of the suburbs of their cities shall not be sold; for it [is] their perpetual possession (vers. 29-34).

It was the dwelling-house in a walled city which thus lost its claim to redemption at the jubilee. The seller had the right to gain it back during a full year from its sale; after that, if not bought back, it passed for ever to the possession of the purchaser. Though it was built on the land which God gave the Israelites, its privilege of divine gift was vitiated by the prevalence of man’s failure, as a twofold witness may show us. “For every house is builded by some one.” It is only man that builds it. But the God that built all things claimed the land as His and gave it to His people as their landlord, to make it all the surer as He will prove it to be in the great jubilee, when every intruder vanishes, and He reinstates His people,

who had lost it meanwhile over and over again by their departure from Himself. The land will go out free for the Israelite in that day by Jehovah's vengeance on their wicked enemies, and His mercy toward themselves, at last repentant in dust and ashes and resting on the atoning blood of Him whom they now refuse and despise. But the dwelling-place which each built or took from the Canaanite was no such gift of God as the land of promise.

And this was made still more precise by the added feature of being "in a walled city." For here is not merely man's hand everywhere apparent in his dwelling-house, but yet more the "walled city" marks the presence if not the prevalence of the enemy's power. There is therefore recourse to such a human measure of protection, which tells the tale how little as yet the Israelite enjoys His full privilege when they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it. No doubt it will be because a King shall reign in righteousness, far beyond David or Solomon, His feeble types. And the man who is God, and Jehovah's fellow, shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And then shall the Spirit be pouted from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest; and His people shall dwell in a peaceful habitation, and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting-places.

So, when the work of dealing with Israel's enemies is in process but not yet complete, we hear in Ezek. 38 Israel shall then be gathered out of many peoples into the land bought back from the sword. But the chief of Rosh,

Meshech, and Tubal, unmoved by the downfall of the head of the western powers in league with the Antichrist, and even by the destruction of the eastern hordes who opposed the west, persists in his mischievous purpose of self-aggrandisement, and hopes by coming down on Israel's unprotected appearance to become overlord of the earth. ''Thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go up to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to seize the spoil and to take the prey; to turn thy hand against the waste places that are inhabited, and against a people gathered out of the nations which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land." But Jehovah will prove Himself the true and glorious bulwark of His people, and pour upon this last enemy and all his hosts, before the proper reign of peace over the earth begins, overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire and brimstone. So it shall be upon the mountains of Israel; nor will that exemplary punishment suffice. For Jehovah will send a fire on Magog, and among them. that dwell at ease in the isles. Their walled cities, their fortifications, their formidable navies, will be a vain defence, for it is the day when the risen Lord will judge the inhabited earth; and they shall know that He is Jehovah (Ezek. 39:6).

Hence the house in the country parts, not thus protected, fell under the principle of the land, retained the right of redemption, and should go out in the jubilee. The strength and shield of man must fall in that day, and the defenceless that confide in Him shall triumph, when the fastness of the high defences of men's walls will He bring down, lay low, bring to the ground, into the dust.

On a similar principle too the house of the Levites fell under His care who calls them to be His servants, and had perpetual right of redemption. Even if sold in the city of his possession, it must go out at the jubilee. On the other hand, their fields in the suburbs of their cities could not be sold. They must abide their perpetual possession, as God’s sacred gift to them; and this He will see to when He comes whose right it is to repair all wrongs and failures for His own that wait or Him.

The Christian now is in a different position and His glory heavenly; and he shall reign with Christ over the earth. He has already redemption in Him through His blood, but awaits His coming again for the redemption of the body and also of the inheritance. He is united to Christ by the Spirit who strengthens him to suffer with Him joyfully, not of the world as He was not.

Chapter 9. The Poor Brother In Decay

Lev. 25:35-38

Here we read a new statute respecting the poor brother fallen into decay. It does not touch on what might be done by his nearest relation, or by his own recovery, as in vers. 25-28, but on loving succour where there was no such resource from without or from within. For Jehovah encouraged compassion in His people, of which they had been so richly the objects from Himself. Nothing more alien from His mind, among His own and even to strangers, than the spirit of independence of which the Gentiles are proud in their self-sufficient ignorance of God.

“ 35 And if thy brother grow poor and be fallen into decay beside thee, then thou shalt relieve him, stranger

or sojourner, that he may live beside thee. 36 Thou shalt take no usury nor increase of him; and thou shalt fear thy God, that thy brother may live beside thee. 37 Thy money shalt thou not give him on usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. 38 I [am] Jehovah your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God" (vers. 35-38).

Three divine principles are here applied to the duty of the Israelite, standing in a relationship to Jehovah peculiar to that people of His choice, whatever the mercy it may involve as it does to the stranger; for God abides good in Himself and to all, and will not suffer His people to forget it, though prone to do so as scripture proves, to say nothing of experience.

(1) It is His grace which gives prosperity to any. Only unbelief is blind to His over-ruling who counts the hairs of our head, and without whom not a sparrow falls unheeded. Man, sinner alas! as he is, is no object of indifference to Him. The Israelite was then precious to Him for the fathers' sake, as he will be by-and-by not for them also but incomparably more for Him whom in repentance and faith they will own as their Messiah, so long despised, their all-gracious and Almighty deliverer when ready to perish under the Antichrist and to be swallowed up by the nations. But even from early days He would have them pitiful to their brother, or even a stranger and sojourner by their side, that he might live and not die. It was grace that called out Abram from beyond the Euphrates, where their fathers in old time dwelt and even served other gods. It was grace that sent Moses to plague Egypt which oppressed the sons of Israel, and brought them out of the iron furnace across the Red Sea which covered their enslavers. When the

same power should destroy the Amorite, the Canaanite, and the rest who dwelt in the promised land, they were bound to remember that all was of His grace, and that He enjoined it in due measure on those who prospered on behalf of their decayed brothers. It was no small grace which inaugurated the emerging, if not birth, of His people, when brought forth out of the land of Egypt to receive the land of Canaan, and have Jehovah their saviour and guide and governor to be their God.

Just so we, Christians, are privileged and bound ever to look back and cherish our beginning, the foundation of all our blessing in Him who died, rose, and ascended to the highest heaven for us. This rises far above what was given or possible to Israel; for we can say, and ought to know by divine teaching, we are quickened and raised together with Christ and made to sit together in Him in the heavenlies. And as we are such a workmanship as this, His body who is Head over all, so were we created in Christ Jesus (for it is a wholly new thing) for good works which God before prepared that we should walk in them, a new walk in many respects because of and suited to such a unique relationship.

(2) Israel had to represent Jehovah and do His will as given to dwell in His land. If the strange gods gave a licence to every passion of sinful man through the working of the great enemy of God and man, the Jew was called to practise mercy, as belonging to and confessing Him who delights in mercy. How could He maintain a people in His land, the good land flowing with milk and honey, where His eyes rested continually, if they set His will at nought and abandoned Him? They had deliberately taken their stand on their obedience of His law, and must abide the consequence. Mercy

obtained is a valid ground for expecting mercy to be shown; and the law bound this on the Jew as we see here.

(3) But there was also the powerful influence of hope, which governs the regulations of all this chapter. The Jew was called to act in view of the jubilee, and was inexcusable if he put it from his eyes in his conduct. When a brother was decayed, he was to bear in mind the deliverance that ere long would surely come, and thereby be strengthened to assist the need, and not to make it an occasion for selfish greed by interest for a loan, or return of food to increase his own store. For Israel in the land was not to be a merchant like the Canaanite; but it is the striking contrast of the Jews now among the nations, enriching themselves in this way beyond all others, the banking masters of the world. They have for the time lost their true place, because they became apostate from God, first by idolatry, then by rejecting Jesus the Christ; as they will descend lower still by receiving the Antichrist. Even on their return from Babylon, which was to see the Messiah in humiliation, they made the divine command of no effect by their tradition; and selfish interest prevailed over goodness and mercy, till unbelief wrought to the utmost.

But what has Christendom to say as to this? Has it the face to reproach the Jew? Christendom that has oppressed, plundered, and cruelly persecuted the Jew, instead of being a city of refuge to the man-slayer, till the death of the anointed priest (that is, in antitype, till Christ closes His priesthood on high)! Thence He will come for judgment, and the believing homicide will be cleared and enter on his inheritance; but the blood of

guilt shall lie on the unrepentant murderer who persists in his unbelief to helpless ruin.

It is not Romanism only, but the Greek church yet more which hates the Jew and disbelieves his hopes in a future day, blessed in a new way and in Jehovah's special mercy, and not at all as merged in the church of God. For the church has a heavenly place of union with her glorified Head; whereas Israel has the promise of the first dominion on the earth when the Lord reigns over all the nations also. This earthly dominion Christendom in all its forms began to covet, when it shirked to share Christ's sufferings here below, and the heavenly hope of Christ's glory above and reigning with Him over the world in that day.

Satan will find means to amalgamate with the Jew the Western powers in the worship of idols, and the false prophet-king of the Jews in the land (Dan. 11:36-39). And the Lord will destroy them both at His appearing (2 Thess. 2:3, Rev. 17, Rev. 19), as He will afterwards and similarly destroy him whom Isaiah and Micah call "the Assyrian," as Daniel styles him "the king of the north," their then external enemy (Isa. 28, Isa. 29, Isa. 30; Dan. 8:23-25, Dan. 11:40-45), of whom Sennacherib was the type.

Chapter 10 The Poor Brother Sold

Lev. 25:39-46

There is a condition still more lamentable than the decay of poverty. The Israelite might be so reduced as to sell himself to bondage; and this condition comes under divine regulation to the end of the chapter. Here we may notice its first part.

“ 39 And if thy brother grow poor beside thee, and be sold to thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant: 40 as a hired servant, as a sojourner, he shall be with thee; until the year of jubilee he shall serve with thee. 41 And he shall go out from thee, he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers he shall return. 42 For they [are] my servants, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as they sell bondmen. 43 Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour, and thou shalt fear thy God. 44 And thy bondmen and thy bondmaids whom thou shalt have — of the nations that are round about you — of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. 45 Moreover of the children of those that dwell as sojourners with you, of them shall ye buy and of their families that [are] with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall be your possession. 46 And ye shall make them as an inheritance to your children after you, to inherit as a possession: these ye shall make your bondmen for ever; but your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour” (vers. 39-46).

Whatever the disorder created by sin and its resulting miseries, Jehovah provided merciful checks, especially for the people of His choice till the day of restitution, of which the jubilee was the recurring foreshadow. The Israelite might through sheer distress be sold to one of his brethren, but never in perpetuity. Ordinarily it was but for the term of six years of servitude, and on the seventh he went out free for nothing, as we know from the deeply interesting “judgment” with its details in Ex. 21:2-6. But, if as here with no such limit, the year of jubilee reinstated him. Meanwhile Jehovah imposed the

duty on his Israelitish master that he should not be treated as a bondservant, but as a hired servant, as a sojourner and not a slave. Then should he go out from his employer, and his children with him unconditionally. The sale of bondmen did not apply. On the contrary he lifted up his head as free, and all his, returning to his own family and to the possession of his fathers.

With such considerate care did Jehovah provide for His people, whatever their improvidence. How affecting and securing the ground on which He laid it down! “For they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt.” There superstition took care of the priests who kept them in unceasing bondage to false gods who were but demons without truth or pity. The Eternal, who rescued Israel out of that house of bondage and iron furnace, did not hinder as yet such an Israelite as broke down in his responsibility from tasting the bitter effect of his or others’ wrongs. But He restricted the chastening to measured times, and gave the sure hope of merciful return: the pledge of a glorious one for ever, when the Divine Deliverer shall rescue them from sins and sufferings no less than enemies, and Himself be the ground of a holy freedom and an unfailing inheritance, as due to One who is David’s Son and David’s Lord. What a joyful sound will be the trumpet voice of the true and full jubilee, which needs not but precludes repetition!

When it was only a nation favoured of Jehovah, the law did not interfere with an Israelite buying slaves, as we see in vers. 44-46. They were free to have such slaves of the nations round about them, or even of the sojourners with them. Neither could claim the relation of their own brotherhood holy to Jehovah: of troth they might buy,

and make them their possession. and leave them as an inheritance to their own children after them, their bondmen for ever. And even in the day, when the creation shall be delivered from its present groans and thraldom, when the church shall share Christ's glory above and over all things, when Israel shall own the crucified but all the more exalted Messiah, the Son of man and Heir of all things, kings here below shall be nursing fathers of the Jew never more to be despised or persecuted, and queens their nursing mothers. Strangers shall build up Zion's walls, and their king" shall minister in that day. Aliens shall be their plowmen and their vine-dressers For that nation and kingdom that will not serve Zion shall perish. "But ye shall be named priests of Jehovah: men shall call you the ministers of our God. Ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and to their glory shall ye succeed." Need one refer to more decisive proofs of the change that awaits Israel under Messiah and the new covenant? And the time hastens: the zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.

It is infatuation for Gentile theology to take any of this away from the hopes of Israel. True Christian faith maintains it all for the Jew when his heart shall turn to the Lord whom they despised to their own sin, shame, and loss. But God's gifts and calling stand without a change on His part, who awaits and will bring out their salvation in sovereign grace. Our calling is above: we can well afford to set our mind on heavenly things. Their portion will be all blessing and glory on the earth, and in their own land, then the joy and boast and crown of all lands. The word of our God, Israel's God, shall stand for ever. God has provided some better thing concerning us [who believe while the Jews are impenitent] that apart

from us even those who of old believed but received not the promises should not be made perfect. We shall each enjoy our proper portion practically at the same time to God’s glory in Christ..

Chapter 11. The Poor Brother Selling Himself To The Stranger Waxing Rich

Lev. 25:47-55

This last case is the saddest of all to a true Israelite. It was not without a fault that a person under the government of Jehovah grew poor in His land (vers. 25, etc.), and had to sell his possessions, whether land, or a dwelling house in a walled city (vers. 29, etc.). It was worse to fall into such decay as to become an object of help to Jew, stranger, or sojourner, for money and victuals (35-38). Still worse was it to be sold to a brother Israelite, even if Jehovah in each interposed His shield of mercy (39-46). But here it is the poor brother selling himself to a stranger or sojourner becoming rich. Yet Jehovah speaks here also.

“ 47 And if a stranger or a sojourner with thee become rich beside thee, and thy brother beside him grow poor, and sell himself to the stranger [or] sojourner with thee, or to a descendant of the stranger’s family: 48 after he is sold, there shall be right of redemption for him; one of his brethren may redeem him; 49 or his uncle, or his uncle’s son, may redeem him, or any of his next of kin of his family may redeem him; or if he may obtain the means, he may redeem himself. 50 And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he sold himself to him unto the year of jubilee; and the price of his sale shall be according to the number of the years;

according to the days of a hired servant shall he be with him. 51 If [there be] yet many years, according to them shall he return the price of his redemption out of the money he was bought for. 52 And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubilee, then he shall reckon with him; according to his years shall he return the price of his redemption. 53 As a hired servant shall he be with him year by year: he shall not rule with rigour over him before thine eyes. 54 And if he be not redeemed by these [means], then he shall go out in the year of jubilee, he and his children with him. 55 For to me the children of Israel [are] servants; they [are] my servants, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I [am] Jehovah your God" (vers. 47-55).

As this chapter is devoted to redemption by grace and in power, it is in perfect keeping with its aim to let Israel know the reserves which awaited their failure in responsibility to the law, which they had accepted as the ground of their standing before Jehovah. Their fall to such an extreme of want as for an Israelite to sell himself into voluntary bondage to a rich stranger or sojourner with them, or to a scion of such a house, is here provided for in God's considerate goodness. Jehovah would not hinder their tasting their evil or folly; but He was careful to lay down, that after he had sold himself, there should be right of redemption for him. One of his brethren might redeem him, or his uncle, or his uncle's son, or any of the near relations of his family: there was room for that affectionate and special interest, which He ever cherished in, and commended to, His people.

Or again, the man, once so desperately impoverished, might somehow obtain adequate means to redeem

himself, so that he could not be kept an hour longer in slavery. As being in that land, no strangers any more than a brother could plead a just title against the statutes of Jehovah. But justice must stand too. “And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he sold himself to him unto the year of jubilee; and the price of his sale shall be according to the number of the years; according to the days of a hired servant shall he be with him.” Absolute slavery Jehovah would not tolerate for a child of Abraham. If the price of redemption was equitably offered, the stranger must accept it and set him free. If many years had yet to run, redemption price had to be returned out of the money that he was bought for (51); and if there remained but few years, the reckoning must be accordingly (52).

But Jehovah’s pitifulness went farther still; for in ver. 53 it was prescribed, even where he had no means or prospect of redemption till the jubilee, that the Israelite bondman was to have a place like no other slave. “As a hired servant shall he be with him year by year: he [the stranger master] shall not rule with rigour over him before thine [Israel’s] eyes.” Thus was the strain meanwhile to be alleviated, if Israel had the heart and power to see Jehovah’s will enforced on behalf of His poor.

Then came the great resource when the trumpet of jubilee sounded over the land (54). If every other means failed, here was sure hope for Israel. “And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was bitter of soul” in abnormal bondage, was entitled to leap for joy at Jehovah’s glad tidings of grace; as it is said here, ‘‘he shall go out in the year of jubilee, he and his children with him.” And Thou,

blessed Jesus, true but rejected and only the more glorious Messiah, shalt have the joy of redeeming Israel from all his iniquities and all distresses and all indignities, Thyself the more loved then for Thy sufferings and shame at the Jews' hand, joining hand in hand thus with the lawless Gentiles as presently with the Antichrist against Jehovah and His Anointed. Thou shalt return in glory to destroy the destroyers, to deliver Israel in its godly remnant, and to crush the nations, with the old serpent that deceived them all, and that deceives Christendom now as blind as it is haughty.

The very learned prelate of Chester, Dr. John Pearson, had low views of Christ's personal glory, and accordingly of His work and offices. His was such "dry light" on divine things as might satisfy the most scientific of theologians. Yet even he saw in this chapter not the prototype of Christian privilege, but rather a strong contrast with the "better thing" God provided concerning us. So even his cold spirit warmed a little when he compared our privileges with those pledges of goodness to Israel. "We were all at first enslaved by sin, and brought into captivity by Satan, neither was there any way of escape but by way of Redemption. Now it was the law of Moses that if any were able he might redeem himself: but this to us was impossible, because absolute obedience in all our actions is due unto God; and therefore no act of ours can make any satisfaction for the least offence. Another law gave yet more liberty, that he which was sold might he redeemed again; one of his brethren might redeem him. But this in respect of all the mere sons of men was equally impossible, because they were all under the same captivity. Nor could they satisfy for others, who were wholly unable to redeem

themselves. Wherefore there was no other brother but that Son of Man which is the Son of God; who was like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, which could work this redemption for us. And what he only could, that he freely did for us." (An Exposition of the Creed, vol. i. 119, Oxford, 1797.)

Yes, we were all lost far beyond the worst picture of any Israelite; and we are saved as none could be till the Son of God had wrought soul-salvation for such as believe beyond what Dr. P. ever taught or knew; for God's salvation is come, and His righteousness is revealed. Such is His gospel to Jew and Greek through and upon faith in Christ. But the favoured nation, according to Rom. 11 and the facts which every one sees day by day, are enemies, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Blindness in part is their state while the gospel goes out to the Gentile, till a new-born remnant of the Jews say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of Jehovah. Then will Jesus come to the deliverance of the remnant and the destruction of their foes. "And so all Israel [except the apostates] shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion [a later epoch than out of heaven] the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins [never so great as then]: as concerning the gospel, enemies for your sake [the Gentiles now called], but as touching the election, beloved for the fathers' sake" (Rom. 11:26-28). Can anything be plainer that the present age then closes, and the new age begins for the generation to come

Chapter 12. The Jubilee Concluded

Lev. 25:55

This last verse concludes the subject with a renewed statement of Jehovah's immediate interest in His people. They were His servants; He had brought them forth out of the land of Egypt; and He in His eternal covenanted Name was their God.

" 55 For unto me [are] the children of Israel servants; they [are] my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I [am] Jehovah your God."

Throughout, the great aim of these statutes of the jubilee is that the Israelite should remember that his best and unfailing Friend and mighty Deliverer is Jehovah. It is the same assured truth which the last of their prophets uttered, "I Jehovah change not; and ye, sons of Jacob, are not consumed" (Mal. 3:6). We learn that the jubilee is the pledge that the land as well as the people is to share the same deliverance at His hand. The scattering of Israel is the visible sign that the accomplishment has not yet taken place, as this cannot be till they own their rejected Messiah. It is Emmanuel's land, as they are His people; and His eyes are continually on both. Babylon was the instrument of punishing their idolatry; as Rome longer and more heavily, because of Him whom they despised with averted face and alienated heart. But the day hastens when they shall say in their heart, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of Jehovah. He will come when the godly remnant is rejected like Himself, and the mass fall victims both to idolatry and to the Antichrist.

How gracious and grand for Israel, when it shall be no more the shadow but the very image! when the Lord shall come to Zion a Redeemer indeed, and to those that turn from transgressions in Jacob, saith Jehovah! “And as for me, this is my covenant with them, saith Jehovah: My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith Jehovah, from henceforward and for ever.”

Truly “the gifts and the calling of God admit of no change of mind,” as he wrote who loved them as much as Moses did. Both loved Israel because they are the objects of God’s grace, and Messiah’s people for the earth’s glory in divine purpose. This makes their unbelief and its chastisement the more bitter, but gives certainty that the Deliverer is at hand. They belong to Him as His servants; and when they own it, He will appear for their rescue and redemption. He does not forget their old deliverance out of the iron furnace; but then the new covenant shall eclipse the old, and glory shall dwell in their land, as the fruit of His grace and of blood that speaks a better thing than Abel. How will they exult when they learn that Messiah suffered that they might be saved, and own Him, as unbelieving Thomas did, their Lord and their God. In the fulness of His person Jesus is not Messiah only but also Jehovah their God.

Grace like this when brought home by the Spirit will at length subdue the self-righteous heart of Israel, and produce the generation to come which will then be fitted to bear witness to the besotted heathen world with a power beyond the feeble testimony of the nations which

have long compromised the name of the Lord Jesus by the vanity of knowledge falsely so-called, and by worldly lusts as unjudged as among the heathen themselves. It will be another thing when the long unbelieving Jew is brought into childlike faith; and yet more when the Lord Jesus reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords, after an unparalleled judgment of the quick in West, East, South and North, with a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit suited to that wondrous display of His government and blessing of all the families of the earth in righteousness, power, and glory.

On Israel's repentance for the blotting of their sins depends the coming of times of refreshing from the presence of Jehovah, when He will send the Messiah-Jesus who was fore-ordained for them, times of restoring all things, of which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets since time began.

Chapter 13. The Covenant With Moses, And That With The Fathers

Lev. 26:1-13

Chapters 26 and 27 wind up the book as an appendix: the first on the obligations which bound all the people of Israel; the second on the vows of the individual.

Chap. 26 opens with the prohibition of image worship, and with the reverence due to the sabbath and the sanctuary of Jehovah, the pillars of the law; the very evils to which man was most prone (vers. 1, 2). This is followed by His blessings on their obedience (vers. 3-13).

“ 1 Ye shall make yourselves no idols, nor rear yourselves carved image or statue, nor shall ye set up a figured stone in your land, to bow down unto it; for I [am] Jehovah your God. 2 Ye shall observe my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I [am] Jehovah. 3 If ye walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them, 4 then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit; 5 and your treading out (or, threshing) shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing-time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land securely. 6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make [you] afraid: and 1 will put away the evil beasts out of the land; and the sword shall not go through your land. 7 And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword; 8 and five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. 9 And I will turn my face toward you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. 10 And ye shall eat old store and clear off the old because of the new. 11 And I will set my habitation among you; and my soul shall not abhor you; 12 and I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. 13 I [am] Jehovah your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you walk upright” (vers. 1-13).

The sons of Israel of all men had the least excuse for idolatry. Those who heard His voice out of the midst of fire, and besought a mediator lest they should perish,

saw no similitude, and heard Him denounce the heathen device of representing Him by any likeness of the creature in heaven above, or on earth beneath, or in the waters that sink below it. He could not be true God if He tolerated bowing down to another god. Real service must be His exclusively; yet Aaron's deplorable weakness here betrayed itself at the beginning of their history, and Solomon's even worse in its zenith. There too lay the continual warfare of His true prophets with the false who misled kings and priests and people, till there was no remedy; and He who loved them had to say, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it. And it shall be no [more], until he come whose right it is; and I will give it [him]" (Ezek. 21:27).

But there was another thing hateful in His eyes, where they set up no strange god. Nor is anyone more explicit in denouncing their profane irreverence and shameless hypocrisy than Malachi, the last of the post-captivity prophets. We know from his contemporary Nehemiah how His sabbaths were then profaned, and His sanctuary set at nought The sabbath had a special place in the decalogue as flowing simply from divine authority, prescriptive and not in the same sense moral as the other nine commandments. It was instituted as a sign of creation and a pledge of God's rest; and God imposed it in His law for Israel, the measure of man's responsibility, as a sign to them as His people. A new day, the first day of the week, is the day of Christ's resurrection, the Lord's day for the Christian, as the day of the new creation in Him, and of sovereign grace to us who now believe for heavenly glory as His body and bride. The sabbath is in no way abrogated or changed or spiritualised, but must be fulfilled in all its own

blessedness for man on earth, and for Israel God's firstborn among all nations, when idols vanish for ever, and the sanctuary of Jehovah shall never be profaned more.

The conditional blessings are for Israel obedient to their God, Jehovah, and earthly, however rich; they are not those characteristic of the Christian, whatever special pleaders argue. If Israel walk in His statutes submissively, rain is assured in due season, the earth will yield its produce, and trees their fruit; the threshing reaches to the vintage, and it to the sowing time. Bread to the full should be theirs, instead of selling it for their other wants, and safety within their dwellings. Nay more, neither evil beasts, nor hostile sword should alarm. it I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall terrify." "And ye shall chase your foes, and they shall fall before you by the sword," five chasing a hundred, and a hundred putting ten thousand to flight. ''And I will turn my face toward you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you." The old store will abound beyond their eating and need clearing away because of the new. And, better still, "I will set my habitation among you, and my soul shall not abhor you; and I will walk among you and be your God, and ye shall be my people." As He began, so would He continue: "I [am] Jehovah your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen, and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you walk upright."

Chapter 14 The Penalties Of The Violated Covenant

Lev. 26:14-26

Then Jehovah pronounces the inevitable consequences of Israel’s disobedience.

“ 14 But if ye hearken not unto me, and do not all these commandments, 15 and if ye shall despise my statutes, and if your soul shall abhor mine ordinances, so that ye do not all my commandments, that ye break my covenant, I also will do this unto you: 16 I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and fever, which shall cause the eyes to fail, and the soul to waste away; and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. 17 And I will set my face against you, that ye may be routed before your enemies: they that hate you shall have dominion over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

“ 18 And if for this ye hearken not unto me, I will punish you sevenfold more for your sins, and I will break the arrogance of your power, 19 and I will make your heaven as iron and your earth as bronze; 20 and your strength shall be spent in vain; and your land shall not yield its produce, and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.

“ 21 And if ye walk contrary to me, and will not hearken unto me, I will bring sevenfold more plagues upon you, according to your sins. 22 And I will send the beasts of the field among you, that they may rob you of your children, and cut off your cattle, and make you few in number; and your streets shall be desolate.

“ 23 And if ye will not be disciplined by me through these, but walk contrary to me, 24 then will I also walk contrary to you, and will smite you, even I, sevenfold for your sins. 25 And I will bring a sword upon you that avengeth with the vengeance of the covenant, and ye shall be gathered into your cities, and I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. 26 When I break the staff of your breed, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and shall deliver you the bread again by weight; and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied” (vers. 14-26).

Israel’s promises end in misery; and Jehovah judges his disobedience as it deserves, and with increasing severity at his ever growing rebelliousness. He appoints over the people, when their soul abhorred His righteous ordinances, “terror, consumption and fever,” not only the dread of a guilty conscience, but disease in its wasting chronic form and in its raging acuteness; and sends their enemies to devour their harvests and rout their armies, yea to domineer over them even to their fleeing when unpursued. If this suffice not to humble them before Him, He will punish sevenfold more, to break their arrogance. He will make their heaven as iron and their earth as bronze, refusing all heat and moisture, and vegetation, so that their toil should be vain. And if this be not enough to recall them, sevenfold more plagues should fall on them, and the very beasts of the field should rob them of their children and cut off their cattle, to reduce them indefinitely and desolate their very streets. And if this failed to discipline their refractory spirit, He would walk as contrary to them in displeasure as they to Him in self-will. He must smite them Himself personally sevenfold for their sins, and

bring a sword on them to execute the vengeance of the covenant. And as they gathered into their cities out of the goodly land, Me would send the pestilence on them, and they should be delivered into the hand of the enemy. Their efforts at union for strength should only and surely bring on them death and degradation as a people. Scarcity of bread should do its withering work in their prostrate condition. How could it be otherwise under the condition of law between the righteous Jehovah, and His people more guilty than the nations which knew not God?

The law as such knows no grace; its function must be to condemn every breach. Grace and truth came through our Lord Jesus; undoubtedly God's grace, but through Him, the one Mediator of God and men, Who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony in its own time. This we Gentiles know now as the consequence of Israel's unbelief to the uttermost after the fullest and most patient waiting on them; and no remedy when their Messiah came in gracious humiliation and divine power, any more than under the law and the prophets. The apostles too testified in the Holy Spirit and like power in men of like passions. But all has been vain, that mercy might flow to the Gentiles who have sinned worse than Israel under far superior privileges, till they too are cut off; and sovereign mercy shall once more shine on Israel, and for ever.

Chapter 15. Sterner Woes On The People And The Land

Lev. 26:27-39

It might have been thought hard to find strokes heavier than those Jehovah inflicted on His people according to the earlier half of our chapter. But as Israel hardened their necks and persevered in their iniquities, here we have His yet more awful dealings with their stubborn rebelliousness. He is gracious beyond measure; but we know Him that said, To me [belongs] vengeance: I will recompense, saith the Lord [Jehovah]; and again, The Lord [Jehovah] will judge His people. Fearful [is it] to fall into a living God's hands (Heb. 10:30, 31). If He punished the vile abominations of the doomed nations who had intruded into His land, much more strictly does Be chasten His people. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2).

" 27 And if for all this ye hearken not to me, but walk contrary to me, 28 then I will walk contrary to you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you sevenfold for your sins. 29 And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. 30 And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your sun-pillars, and cast your carcases upon the carcases of your idols; and my soul shall abhor you. 31 And I will lay waste your cities, and desolate your sanctuaries, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. 32 And I will bring the land into desolation, that your enemies who dwell therein may be astonished at it. 33 And I will scatter you among the nations, and will draw out the sword after you; and your land shall be desolation, and your cities

waste. 34 Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths all the days of her desolation, when ye [are] in your enemies' land; then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths. 35 All the days of the desolation it shall rest; in which it rested not in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. 36 And as to those that remain of you, I will send faintness into their heart in the lands of their enemies, and the sound of a driven leaf shall chase them, and they shall flee as one fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth; 37 and they shall stumble one over another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth; and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. 38 And ye shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. 39 And they that remain of you shall waste away through their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also through the iniquities of their fathers shall they waste away with them" (vers. 27-39).

The furnace of wrath waxes hotter against guilty Israel, and as Jehovah says, "I, even I, will chastise you sevenfold for your sins." The flesh of their own sons and daughters should be their food, and the high places and sun-pillars which they had honoured should be cut down, their own carcases heaped upon those of their idols, and His soul abhorring them. He would proceed to devastate their cities and sanctuaries to the astonishment of their enemies dwelling therein (27-32)

Their land too should not escape; and as they had despised His sabbaths in days and years and jubilees, there should be a judicial sabbath: for it should be desolate while Israel should be in the enemies' land. The land that flows with milk and honey should lie desolate and have rest, against the rest which it had not when

the tribes dwelt there (32-35). Instead of the courage He once gave them against all odds, they would fall into abject terror. “I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a driven leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee as one fleeth from the sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. And they shall stumble one upon another, as it were before the sword, when none pursueth” (36, 37). There too should they perish among the nations and the enemies’ land eat them up. Those left of them in their enemies’ lands shall pine away in their own iniquities, and in the iniquities of their fathers with them (38, 39).

Thus brought down to the lowest misery and degradation, the goodness of God leads them to repentance. What a lesson to all the nations! Yet this they never learn, till Israel shows the way, forgiven of grace, when they cannot forgive themselves before Jehovah and His anointed! But we must not anticipate what is to follow. How awful when a people boasting of Jehovah’s name sell themselves really to His enemy, and become slaves of demons which supplant His will and worship; and their religion so-called becomes their worst sin and their most destructive snare. Thus it was in Israel, as it now is in Christendom. The end for both (as far at least as “this generation” goes for the Jew) will be at the consummation of the age in judgment, which the Lord Jesus will surely execute. But the greatest reviler of revelation cannot charge the God of Israel with partiality to His people when inconsistent or unworthy. Demons, instead of chastising, humoured their devotees for their own bad and mischievously vile ends. So it is in all religions, save the faith in God through Christ.

Chapter 16. Israel, Repent, And Jehovah Remembers His Covenant With Their Fathers

Lev. 26:40-46

Here however we have the turning-point of grace. There is no restoration for Babylon, and especially none for the Babylon of the N.T. which among her many lies dares to call herself “the eternal city,” but is really doomed to the everlasting judgment of God, as we read in Rev. 14, 16, 17 and 18 to the joy of all in heaven who in view of her smoke going up unto the ages of ages say, Hallelujah (Rev. 19:1-5)! Reunion of Christendom or not, this is God’s destiny for her of the seven hills. “Come out of her, My people,” says the voice from above, “that ye have not fellowship with her sins, and that ye do not receive of her plagues.” But there is sure restoration for Israel, and a history in the future of their land more glorious than David’s or Solomon’s, or than any nation’s that ever existed on the earth. The time hastens and is at hand. Israel will repent, and believe in Jehovah’s Messiah, their crucified King of glory.

“ 40 And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, through their unfaithfulness wherein they were unfaithful to me, and also that they have walked contrary to me, 41 so [that] I also walked contrary to them, and brought them into the land of their enemies. If then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept the punishment of their iniquity, 42 I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. 43 For the land shall be left by them, and shall enjoy its sabbaths, when it is in desolation without them; and

they shall accept the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because, they despised my judgments, and their soul despised my statutes. 44 And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not despise them, and will not abhor them, to make an end of them utterly, and to break my covenant with them, for I [am] Jehovah their God. 45 But I will remember toward them the covenant with their ancestors whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt before the eyes of the nations, that I might be their God: I [am] Jehovah.

46 These [are] the statutes and ordinances and laws which Jehovah made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses" (vers. 40-46).

Does anyone object that this blessed change is sometimes made conditional on Israel's repentance? The answer is that there is no real force in the objection, because Jehovah has promised unconditionally that He will so work in their hearts when the due moment comes as only known to Him. And this is remarkably confirmed even in this chapter of arraignment and denunciation and furious wrath against them for their wickedness. Yet here there is no condition but an express prediction, "And they shall confess their iniquity" etc. God may exceed in goodness and mercy; never does He come short; and He here declares that so it is to be. Undoubtedly He makes good the condition in their souls where such a condition is laid down in His word.

In fact such a prediction as this unconditional one entirely agrees with the covenant with their fathers; for such was its character in distinct contrast with the

covenant of law whereof Moses was mediator. And observe the deliberate iteration of His assurance to Israel, beginning with the “worm” Jacob yet redeemed and called by name, His servant and chosen, next with Isaac, and then with Abraham His friend. Why all this care but to give the most stable confidence to those just awakened to feel and own their ages of rebellious and even apostate iniquity? The covenant with the fathers as here joins in one common boon the entire people of spared Israel and the land. In this future kingdom of power it will not be what characterises Christianity and the church, the extinction of Jewish and Gentile differences in Christ as now. The blessing to come in that day will be of Israel as the head, and of the nations in willing subordination, because Israel is the special people of Jehovah Messiah for the earth. We are of heavenly grace, wherein fleshly difference is of no account.

It is well for Christians to learn that Christianity, precious as it is, is not all; and that, when God’s present work is accomplished, God has other ways in which He is to be glorified in Christ. There will be another and a good age to succeed this present evil age, before the eternal state, the complete form of the new heavens and new earth, wherein righteousness is to dwell.

It is the millennium which begins when this age closes and continues till the dissolution of all things, preparatory to the absolutely perfect state of heaven and earth, when there is no change, but all is fixed for the righteous, as well as for the unrighteous. In the millennial age there will be perfect blessedness for those in the heavens who reign with Christ; but the earth, though governed righteously, and delivered from

the power of evil, and full of divine fruits, will be tried by Satan's temptation at the end, and bring the final judgment. of God on the wicked from first to last.

Chapter 17 Personal Vows

Lev. 27:1-8

These were special acts of devotedness to Jehovah through the priest, but according to his valuation who was king in Jeshurun and thus type of Messiah.

The chapter is a remarkable example of that divine inspiration, which underlies Scripture for the profit of faith, but above the ken of the wise and prudent who dare to judge God's word under the plea of historical and literary investigation, totally blind to their guilty unbelief and profanity. But the single-eyed believer delights to observe that Lev. 25 looks on to the true and full day of Jubilee when Jehovah will make good His rights over the land on behalf of His people its failing tenants. Then Lev. 26 sets out the sad ruin of His guilty people under the first covenant because of their disobedience and apostasy; but also restoring mercy under the second when they accept the punishment of their iniquity, and He remembers His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the land. Lastly comes this appendix of special or voluntary vows which turns on His absolute title when all on man's part had failed, and He acts through Him who shall there build the temple of Jehovah, bear the glory, and sit and rule upon His throne; when He shall be a priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between Them both (Zech. 6:13).

The vows here brought together consist, first of persons, male or female; secondly of beasts so devoted; thirdly of house or field, and this brings in the Jubilee, and proves the chapter to be in its precisely right and necessary place. The rest of the chapter states the distinction between persons or things thus devoted from those that were simply sanctified, with certain exceptions already established by His law. These verses 1-8 deal only with the persons.

“ 1 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, 2 Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, When a man devoteth by a vow, the persons [shall be] for Jehovah by thy valuation. 3 And thy valuation shall be of the male from twenty years old even to sixty years old: even thy valuation shall be sixty shekels of silver after the shekel of the sanctuary. 4 And if for a female, then thy valuation shall be thirty shekels. 5 And if from five years old even to twenty years old, then thy valuation of the male shall be twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels. 6 And if from a month old even to five years old, then thy valuation of the male shall be five shekels of silver, and for the female thy valuation [shall be] three shekels of silver. 7 And if from sixty years old and above, if a male, then thy valuation shall be fifteen shekels; and for the female ten shekels. 8 And if he be poorer than thy valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his means that vowed shall the priest value him” (vers. 1-8).

Jehovah would have seriousness in His people in making a vow. There was no demand on His part in this case, as in the firstlings of man and beast, etc. There was a whole tribe, the sons of Levi, already consecrated to the religious service of Jehovah; but He accepted the desire

of any individual for devotedness to Himself, and laid down directions for Moses to value them on a certain scale of valuation, which varied according to their age and sex (vers. 1, 2).

The first estimate took account of the time when service was most prized from twenty years to sixty years old, the male at fifty shekels of silver, the female at thirty. This would mean of our money (say) six pounds five shillings, and three pounds fifteen shillings respectively (vers. 3, 4).

The next estimation for each is from five years of age to twenty, and is rated at twenty shekels for the male, and ten far the female, or two pounds ten shillings, and one pound five shillings (ver. 5).

Then the extreme point for males and females from a month to five years has the valuation of five shekels for the one, and three for the other, or twelve shillings and sixpence, and seven shillings and sixpence (ver. 6).

Next for the oldest class, from sixty years and above, for the male fifteen shekels or one pound seventeen shillings, and the female ten shekels or one pound five shillings (ver. 7). There the scale for the aged female rose nearest to the male, where man might be disposed to despise.

As Jehovah did not require these vows, He did not make them irrevocable. The persons thus devoted might be redeemed; and the foregoing scale of valuation was therefore provided. The use to be made of the redemption price is referred to in 2 Kings 12 as “the money of the persons for whom each man is rated.” This, with other contributions fixed or voluntary there stated, the priests were to take in the days of the temple

for repairing the breaches of the house wheresoever any breach was found.

But in its considerate equity there was another provision given in ver. 8, “And if he be poorer than thy valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his means that vowed shall the priest value him.” It was due to Jehovah that something should be paid, that the exemption from his obligation might not be a light thing, or God mocked by heedlessness. Yet there must be no harshness; only gracious care that the debt to God might not oppress the poorest of His people.

Chapter 18. Beasts Or House Devoted

Lev. 27:9-15

But things also animate or inanimate might be set apart to Jehovah, as here we have animals and a house.

“ 9 And if [it be] a beast of which men offer an offering to Jehovah, all that they give of such to Jehovah shall be holy. 10 They shall not alter it nor change it, a good for a bad nor a bad for a good; and if he at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy. 11 And if any unclean beast, of which they do not offer an offering to Jehovah, then he shall present the beast before the priest; 12 and the priest shall value it, between good and bad: according to thy valuation, O priest, so shall it be. 13 And if they will in any wise redeem it, then they shall add a fifth thereof according to thy valuation.

“ 14 And when anyone halloweth his house, that it may be holy to Jehovah, the priest shall value it, between

good and bad: as the priest shall value it, so shall it stand. 15 And if he that halloweth it will redeem his house, he shall add the fifth of the money of thy valuation to it, and it shall be his" (vers. 9-15).

A necessary difference at once appears between beasts clean or unclean, as there was no question of the firstborn of man and of cattle already claimed from the sons of Israel as Jehovah's (Ex. 13:2), at least the males (12, 13). The firstling of an ass if not ransomed with a lamb must have its neck broken; as the firstborn of man among their sons with a price. For the firstborn of Israel the tribe of Levi was substituted as we know from Num. 3; but as its number did not suffice to represent all the firstborn, the rest who were over and above those ransomed by the Levites were redeemed by the ransom-money of five shekels apiece according to the shekel of the sanctuary. Thus in every way Jehovah associated with Himself His people so liable to forget their high relations, grounded on different figures of redemption.

The first principle laid down impressed on the Israelite that if he gave to Jehovah a clean beast, one presentable for sacrifice, it was to be thenceforward "holy" (9). It could not be bought back. Even if defective or bad in any way, he could not alter, nor change it for an unblemished beast, neither good for bad nor bad for good. All this should have been weighed before offering it; and if the offerer altered his mind, he must learn that God did not. If it was real concern for Jehovah's honour, he might bring another good beast; but the original animal and the exchange must remain holy to Jehovah (10).

There was more allowance where there was no such close link with Jehovah as with animals fit for sacrifice to

Him. If an unclean beast were presented, he should present it to the priest, and the priest should value it whether it be good or bad; and as he valued it, so should it be. If one wished to recall the unclean beast, it was open to him with a fifth added to the estimation, as a trespass or forfeit, because of his lack of due gravity in what was thus connected with Jehovah (11-13).

It is substantially the same with the latter case, where one hallowed his house to Jehovah. The priest valued it good or bad; and at his valuation, so it was to stand. But if the Israelite did not stand to his purpose and wished to redeem, Jehovah made no difficulty, but impressed a reproof on his fickleness by requiring a fifth over its estimated value; and thus he might have his house back.

We see the same guard against second thoughts in the book of Psalms, though in a more general form and the converse too, where there was no such devotion to Jehovah. It is part of what is shown to please Jehovah and suits the hill of His holiness, that if a man have sworn to his own hurt, he does not change. He who is by grace steadfast in word and deed, abhorring evil end cleaving to good, shall never be moved even in a world of vain show. But we soon find out how fickle we are, when we are seriously given up to do the will of God. As long as it is only a theory of duty, we are to spare and let ourselves off easily. And we prove that it is sure to be no better with others till they have Christ as their life, and self is thoroughly judged before God. The Holy Spirit then helps us in power to glorify God, whatever it may cost us, and it is our delight thus to please Christ.

Chapter 19. The Devoted Field Sanctified To Jehovah

Lev. 27:16-25

There were two cases in the hallowing of the field, which are here distinguished, a field of the Israelite's possession, and a field which he bought. Descent or purchase involved a marked difference.

" 16 And if a man hallow to Jehovah out of a field of his possession, thy valuation shall be according to the seed thereof: the homer of barley seed at fifty shekels of silver. 17 If he hallow his field from the year of jubilee, according to thy valuation it shall stand; 18 but if he hallow his field after the jubilee, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain until the year of the jubilee, and there shall be a reduction from thy valuation. 19 And if he that hallowed the field will in any wise redeem it, he shall add the fifth of the money of thy valuation unto it, and it shall be assured to him. 20 But if he do not redeem the field, or if he sell the field to another man, it cannot be redeemed any more; 21 and the field when it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy to Jehovah as a field devoted: the possession thereof shall be the priest's. 22 And if he hallow to Jehovah a field that he hath bought, which [is] not the field of his possession, 23 the priest shall reckon to him the amount of thy valuation unto the year of the jubilee; and he shall give thy valuation on that day, holy unto Jehovah. 24 In the year of the jubilee the field shall return to him of whom it was bought, to him to whom the possession of the land [belonged] 25 And all thy valuations shall be according to the shekel of the

sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel" (vers. 16-25).

God will not allow His people to forget that the land of Canaan is His peculiarly, as they were to whom He gave it in possession. This was of their special favours. Israel were His people as no other nation could be then, and their land too was His that He might secure it to them for ever, unless they apostatised, for which He drove them out and made them the slave and butt of their enemies' malice and contempt. So it was for their idolatry when the mother of idols led the Jew captive, as Assyria led away Ephraim long before; and so it was to be again as Isaiah foretold both (Isa. 40-48 and Isa. 49-57.) when the Roman should take away both their place and nation because they rejected the Messiah.

But here it is an Israelite while acknowledged of Jehovah sanctifiying to Jehovah a part of a field of his possession. The valuation was to be according to the seed required, a homer of barley being rated at fifty shekels of silver. Here the jubilee rules, the standard for rectifying man's weakness or fault and for restoring divine order. If he sanctified his field from the year of jubilee, it must stand according to the valuation. The jubilee proclaimed Jehovah's rights unmistakeably; and if the field were devoted to Him, there could be no change The estimation allowed no abatement, nor meddling.

But if after the jubilee the Israelite sanctified it, "then the priest shall reckon to him the money according to the years that remain to the year of the jubilee," and thus equitable abatement ensues Yet the case does not end there. "If he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it," he must submit to the usual forfeit required

in thus departing from his original purpose of devotedness to Jehovah. The fifth part has to be added of the valuation money to that valuation price, in order to gain back the portion devoted.

It is also laid down that, if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it “shall not be redeemed any more.” Further still, the rights of Jehovah are repeated by the provision that “the field, when it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy to Jehovah as a field devoted.” The terms of re-acquiring it had not been complied with. Jehovah was the real Landlord; and His title is not to be any longer subject to human caprice. “The possession thereof shall be the priest’s.” Thus Jehovah would exercise His people in a due regard for His majesty and word, who sought thereby the best blessing for His people, and the restitution of the land as well as of the people.

On the other hand, if one sanctified to Jehovah a field which he had bought, outside the field of his possession, the priest must reckon unto him the worth of the valuation unto the year of jubilee; and this valuation was then and there to be given, a holy thing to Jehovah. There was no forfeit of the fifth part to be added to the price Nor did it abide holy to Jehovah beyond the year of jubilee; for then it must return to the original possessor of the land who had sold it. Jehovah’s gift held good: if man changes, He does not.

Another law was applied inflexibly throughout these transactions. “And all thy valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel” (ver. 25). Israel might desire to purchase by what coin was most convenient in their dealings with the

nations. But as in relation to the temple service and their redemption price, so here they must make their payments “according to the shekel of the sanctuary.”

We are under grace, not law; but what a profound error that we se Christians are left to our own will or wisdom! We are bought with an infinite price, and are in no wise our own. Undoubtedly all things are ours, life or death, things present or things to come. But we are Christ’s by the same title which manes all to be ours; so that the bondman if called in the Lord is His freedman; and the free man if called is Christ’s bondman. Such is Christian liberty. Humbled at our sins, we rejoice in His grace which has set us free to be all the more His servants, as He was the lowliest of all and the only efficacious One in love without measure to God’s glory.

Chapter 20. Concluding Regulations

Lev. 27:26-34

It remains to notice briefly the verses that follow. “ 26 Only the firstling among beasts, which is made a firstling to Jehovah, no man shall sanctify it: whether [it be] ox or sheep, it [is] Jehovah’s. 27 And if [it be] of an unclean beast, then he shall ransom [it] according to thine estimation, and shall add to it the fifth thereof; or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thine estimation. 28 Notwithstanding, no devoted thing that a man shall devote to Jehovah of all that he hath, of man or beast, or of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing [is] most holy to Jehovah. 29 None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death. 30 And all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land,

[or] of the fruit of the tree, [is] Jehovah's, holy to Jehovah. 31 And if a man will redeem [aught] of his tithe, he shall add to it the fifth thereof. 32 And all the tithe of the herd or the flock, whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy to Jehovah. 33 He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it; and if he change it at all, then both it and that for which it is changed shall be holy: it shall not be redeemed. 34 These [are] the commandments which Jehovah commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai" (vers. 26-34).

It was not unneeded to remind the thoughtless, that the firstlings of clean animals being already due to Jehovah were not objects of the devotedness contemplated in this chapter. Such firstlings were already His as every Israelite ought to know. But it was here interdicted, lest any should make a vow as to such, and deceive his soul to Jehovah's dishonour.

The same principle applies as we have seen already, if a man sought to redeem the firstling of an unclean beast. He must submit to the appointed estimation, and was not to make one of his own; and he must add a fifth to it as the penalty of changing his mind about a vow to Jehovah. If not redeemed, it was to be sold accordingly, as being incapable of any holy purpose.

The great general rule was that what was devoted to Jehovah of all a man had, man, beast, field, should be sold or redeemed, every devoted thing being most holy to Jehovah. None devoted which shall be devoted of men should be ransomed, but surely put to death. As to the tithe of land, whether seed of the land, or fruit of the tree, all was Jehovah's, holy to Him. And if a man would

redeem of it, he must add the fifth as forfeit. Again, in tithe of herd or flock, the tenth was holy to Jehovah. And it was carefully insisted that he was not to search for good or bad, nor to change: Jehovah accepted it simply as it was. If however he did change it all, he must offer alike the original and the change: both should be holy, and neither to be ransomed.

Thus did Jehovah teach His people to be obedient, and hate self-will. How much more is this incumbent on us whom the Spirit sanctified unto Christ's obedience and the sprinkling of His blood, the Christian's place as distinct from Israel's! Practical righteousness is looked for in all; but righteousness is consistency with relationship, and Israel are an earthly people, the church a heavenly one.

In the Beginning, And the Adamic Earth

An Exposition of Genesis 1 - 2:3

New Edition, Revised

Preface To The First Edition.

The volume consists of papers which have already appeared in the Bible Treasury and thus secured a considerable circulation. But it has been strongly urged that even those who read these successive articles desire to have them as a consecutive whole, not only for their own reconsideration, but as much or more for the help of thousands unacquainted with that periodical, and more willing to examine the exposition of Gen. 1 - 2:8 in a convenient collective form.

The writer has only to express his growing sense of the perfectness and inestimable value of this scripture as of all others. He prays that the work, notwithstanding all shortcomings may be by grace helpful to all who (in a day of effort to resuscitate lifeless forms and of reactionary free-thinking, both of which schools of unbelief struggle for the mastery) would keep Christ's word and not deny His name. In faith and love they would also seek earnestly the winning of souls from the imminent and increasing peril of going back, from the true light of Christ in all its fulness, to the darkness of a world now rapidly becoming apostate; which, by wisdom even more dangerously than by folly, knew not God, and rejects as foolishness the wisdom of God in Christ and Him crucified.

London, March, 1894.

Genesis 1:1

The Old Testament is a revelation from God in view of His earthly people Israel. It was of the highest moment that they should have the truth authoritatively announced that the one true God is the Creator of all. Darkness covered the earth, gross darkness the peoples. Israel, in Egypt, as later in the land of Canaan, was ever prone to forget this truth and lapse into the delusions of men. Fallen like others, they wished to be like all nations in their polity and their religion. Hence the importance of their knowing and acknowledging creation in any real sense; it points to and is bound up with the unity of the living God.

A difficulty has been raised, why, if God created, it was not always. The answer is as simple as complete. Eternal creation, eternal matter, is untrue and impossible, a contradiction for thought, even if we had not the word of God to enlighten us. God of all power, if He pleases, creates: there only is the truth of it. To say that the self-existing One cannot create is to deny that He is the Absolute, that He is God. But that God, omnipotent, omniscient, sovereign and good, can crease when He chooses, flows necessarily from what He is. If He could not display Himself in this way, or even more gloriously, He is not God. If the display of creation or of anything else were always, He would not be free and absolute. His sovereignty is part of Himself (Eph. 1:11). Suppose any display necessary, and you destroy in thought His divine essence and will. Necessity is at bottom an atheistic device to get rid of the true God. Creation, therefore, was perfectly free to God, but not necessary;

it was when and as He pleased. And He was pleased to create. Creation exists.

Nor can there be conceived a more simple, sublime, and comprehensive opening of divine revelation than these few words: — “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” It is the absolute commencement of creation, and in the most pointed contradistinction from the seven days. The question is solely about the true unforced meaning of the written word of God, not about Rabbis any more than the chosen people. What does the inspired record contain and convey? It may be of interest to examine what Philo or Josephus understood, as well as how the Seventy translated it into Greek long before Christ. One may weigh either the Massorah or the Jerusalem Targum, and the comments of Jarchi, Aben Ezra, both Kimchis, Levi Ben Gerson, Saadias Haggaon, Abarbanel, or any other learned Jew, to say nothing of others.

But without them there is God’s word given to be read and understood, though not without the faith of Christ, not without His guidance Who communicated it originally. It was not given to teach science, and it is wholly independent of philosophy for its intelligence. Geologists, Botanists, Zoologists, Astronomers, Historians, etc., have His brief and clear account before them. Man’s comprehension of what is communicated may be affected by the amount of his knowledge, and far more by his faith. This, however, is a question of our understanding and expounding it; but we must never forget that God is the Author, and the writers only the instruments. The Bible is a moral book, only the more striking in its unity because it consists of so many compositions of so many writers, stretching over a

thousand years of the most varied circumstances if we limit ourselves to the O.T. The reader may be right or wrong at any given time in the idea he attaches to what we call “firmament,” “plant,” or the like; but the truth remains unadulterated and unchanging in scripture, for us to read again and again, and to learn more perfectly.

This indeed constitutes its characteristic and permanent value. It is not only a full and sure source of instruction in consonance with its moral and yet higher designs to God’s glory; it is the sole standard of the truth, by which we are bound to test all else which professes to be divine. Let us ever search afresh in faith, and ever grow into a deepening knowledge of the revealed mind of God.

The philosophies, as well as the religions, of antiquity were wholly ignorant of creation. Of God, of the “beginning,” they knew nothing. Dreams of evolution were the earliest folly, and, among the Ionic school, Anaximander and Anaximenes followed Thales, each differing, all blind. Anaxagoras let in with mere matter the idea of mind, but no creator. It is useless to name others; even Plato and Aristotle, rivals too, had no real light. They, more or less openly, all held eternal matter at bottom; and though the philosophers boasted, as they still do, of their knowledge and logic, they failed to see that they could not prove it, or even that it is to mere mind unthinkable. To the believer it is the simple yet deep truth, that a beginning was given to everything that exists; if God says it, he perceives that nothing else can be true. For it is impossible to admit an effect without a cause; but reasoning can never rise at best beyond, There must be a First Cause; it can never say, There is. This God alone can and does affirm: “In the

beginning God created the heavens and the earth." God brought the whole ordered system into being. The form, nature, and aim, are not here explained: such a detail had no proper place here. That He created all is a primary and momentous truth.

But there is not a word in scripture to warrant the strange and hasty assumption that the universe was brought into being in the six days of Gen. 1:3-31, so often referred to throughout the Bible. Construe the six days as men will, it is out of the power of any on just principles of interpretation to deny that the first day begins with light, and that the first two verses are marked off in their nature, as well as by their expression, from the work of the six days. Nothing indeed but prepossession can account for the mistake, which the record itself corrects. "In the beginning" has its own proper significance, and is in no way connected with "the days," save as the revealed start of divine creation, and in due time (however probably immense the interval) leading to that measure of time only when the constitution of things was made for Adam, for the race.

The antiquity of the earth may be as great as the shifting schemes of the most enthusiastic geologist ever conceived: there is absolutely neither here nor in any other part of scripture the least intimation that opposes vast ages before man was created, or that affirms man to be nearly contemporary with the original creation. It is ignorance of scripture to say that Moses assigns an epoch to the earth's first formation, such as fathers or commentators (not without worthier remarks) have imagined and made current in Christendom. The philosophers who have spent their time in the study of

geology and kindred sciences will act wisely in reading with unwonted care the beginning of Gen. 1. They will thence learn that they have been precipitate in the conclusion that the inspired writing is at all committed to the blunders of its interpreters, theological or scientific. However vast the periods they claim, even for the strata nearest the surface, scripture is the sole record which, while revealing God as the Creator of all things, leaves room for all that has been wrought before the Adamic earth. “The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary: there is no searching of his understanding” (Isa. 40:28). While geology waits for its Newton, subjection to scripture meanwhile would be untold gain to its devotees as to all other men.

There was an epoch then in the infinite course of eternity when God created the universe. This is here stated with the utmost accuracy — “ in the beginning.” It is in view of man, primarily indeed of Israel, that the Pentateuch was written, the Second man and Last Adam being the, as yet, hidden object (and the church one with Him) of God’s counsels. Angels are not spoken of, though we know from another ancient book of inspiration that they expressed their joy when earth’s foundations were made to sink (Job 38:6, 7). “In the beginning,” accordingly, is severed from all the measures of time with which a man’s existence is conversant. How admirably previous duration, unlimited by ordinary notation, suits the immense changes of which geology takes cognizance, needs no further remark here.

“God” in our version answers to the Hebrew Elohim, which, however, has the peculiarity of a plural

substantive with a singular verb. Christianity alone in its own time cleared up the enigma, which still remains impenetrably dark to the Jews, as well to other men, who know not in Christ “the true Light.”

Again, there ought to be no doubt among scholars that the word “created” in our tongue corresponds better than any other with the original. With us, as with Israel, the word admits of application to signal callings into existence out of actual material, as in Gen. 1:21, 27, but only with a special ground and emphasis. And never is it used of any other maker than God. But if the aim were to speak of creation in the ultimate, highest, and strictest sense, the Hebrews, like ourselves, had no other word so appropriated. Here the context is decisive. “God created the heavens and the earth,” where nothing of the kind existed previously. They were created out of nothing as men speak, perhaps loosely, but not unintelligibly. The heathen might worship, as all did, the heavens, or even the earth; the Jew sinned against the written word if he was ensnared of Satan after their dark example. The first words of God’s law told him that those were but creatures; Israel was to hear if others were deaf, and bound to own, serve, and worship the one God, the Creator. The chosen people was quite as ready as any other to worship the creature, as all their history to the Babylonish captivity proves; but there can be no doubt what the Bible supposed, declared, and claimed from its very first verse — God created the universe.

Further, it is not matter created, crude matter to be afterwards fashioned into the shapely and beautiful universe of the heavens and the earth. It is not chaos first, as Greek and Latin poets feigned, in accordance

with heathen tradition never wholly right, though often mixing up what was not wrong. It is not a nebula, as La Place conceived, a mere modification of the same rationalism, however refined it be. Lord Rosse, by his observations with his great reflector, has fairly disposed of this unbelieving hypothesis. For he has proved that many nebulae, considered even by the Herschels irresolvable objects, actually consist of agglomerations of stars. Surely, therefore, the only just presumption is that all nebulae are nothing more, and only need more powerful means to make manifest their true nature. God only has given the truth plainly, briefly, and after a way transparently divine in its simple and unparalleled majesty. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” How is it, ye savants, that this great truth is found here only in its pristine splendour, towering above your Hesiods and Homers, your Ovids and Virgils, your Egyptian and Mexican remains, your Hindu and Chinese fables? How is it that to our day the Lyell and Darwin, to say nothing of profaner men, are stumbling in the dark over a morass of hypotheses (to say the least), unproved and dubious? It is because God’s word is not believed as He wrote it; and this, because men like not the true God Who judges sin and saves only through His Son the Lord Jesus. So of old when men knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither gave thanks, but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. It is the more guilty now, because, the Son of God being come and having accomplished redemption, the darkness quite passes away and the true light already shines. Alas! anything is welcome but a living God, and least of all the whole universe created by and through and for His Son Who is before all things and by Whom all things consist. “By faith we understand (or

apprehend) that the worlds have been framed by God's word, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear" (Heb. 11:3).

Genesis 1:2

Creation then in ver. 1 is the great primary fact of revelation. It is all the stronger, because the Hebrew text ("In [the] beginning") has no article, any more than the Greek in John 1:1. It is therefore undefined. Compare Prov. 8:23. From the context, however, it is plain that the fourth Gospel rises beyond the first book of Moses; for it goes back to divine and eternal being (not ἐγένετο, but ἦν), and not merely divine origination, which in fact appears later (in John 1:3), and this in a form all-embracing and exclusive. "All things were made (came into being) through him, and without him was not anything made which hath been made."

"In the beginning" is not a known fixed point of time, but indefinite according to the subject-matter; it here intimates that "Of old," or "In former duration" (expressly undefined), God created the universe. Undoubtedly there is no disclosure of the immense aeons of which geologists speak so freely; but the language of ver. 1 leaves the door open for all that can be proved by research, or even for the longest demand of the most extravagant Uniformitarian.

But the words do affirm a "beginning" of the universe, and by God's word, as in both O. and N.T. (see Ps. 33:6-9, and Heb. 11:3). This was everything to accomplish His design, and His design was to create the heavens and the earth, where there had been nothing. Whatever Atheists or Pantheists feign, science at length confesses there was a "beginning;" so that "created"

stands here in its proper and fullest sense, as the context requires.

“There was a beginning, says geology, to man; and farther back, to mammals, to birds, and to reptiles, to fishes, and all the lower animals, and to plants; a beginning to life: a beginning, it says also, to mountain ranges and valleys, to lands and seas, to rocks. Hence science takes another step back, and admits or claims a beginning to the earth, a beginning to all planets and suns, and a beginning to the universe. Science and the record in Genesis are thus one. This is not reconciliation; it is accordance.” So writes Dr. J. D. Dana, the eminent American Professor, in the “O. and N. Test. Student” of July, 1890.

The record declares that God created not a “formless earth,” but “the heavens” (where at no time do we hear of disorder) “and the earth.” But even as to “the earth,” which was to be a scene of change, we are expressly told by an authority no leas inspired, and therefore of equal authority with Moses, that such disorder was not the original state. “For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens; he is God; that formed the earth and made it; he established it, he created it not a waste, he formed it to be inhabited” (Isa 45:18). The Revised V. is purposely cited, as confessedly the more correct reflection of the prophet. Here is therefore the surest warrant to separate ver. 2 from ver. 1 (save, of course, that it is a subsequent fact), severed, it may be, by a succession of geologic ages, and characterised by a catastrophe, at least as far as regards the earth. Indeed it would be strange to hear of an ordered heavens along with a “formless earth” as the firstfruits of God’s creative activity.

But we are not told of any such anomaly. The universe, fresh from God's will and power, consisted of "the heavens and the earth." Silence is kept as to its condition then, and up to the cataclysm of ver. 2; and most suitably, unless God's purpose in the Bible were altogether different from that moral end which pervades it from first to last. What had the history of those preliminary physical changes to do with His people and their relations to Himself? But it ought not to be doubted that each state which God made was a system perfect for its aim. Yet it was not formless materials only, but heaven and earth.

"And the earth was (or became) waste1 and empty, and darkness [was] upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God [was] brooding upon the face of the waters" (ver. 2).

The well-known and flexible particle of connection in the Hebrew text introduces the verse. Its meaning, usually and simply copulative, is often modified, as almost all words in every language must be, by contextual considerations. Hence the learned Dathe, in 1781, renders it here "posthaec vero," expressly to distinguish the state of things in ver. 2 from that referred to in ver. 1, and sends us to such instances as Num. 5:23, Deut. 1:19. Now there is no doubt that the Hebrew conjunction admits of an interval as often as facts demand it; but there is no need of departing from its primary force, "and" (though our conjunction is not so pliant); or it may readily have a somewhat adversative force as we see in the LXX. The true determination lies in what follows. For the usage of the past verb when thus employed is to express a state subsequent to, and not connected with, what goes before, but previous to

what follows. Hebrew idiom does not use that verb simply as a copula, as may be seen twice in this verse, and almost everywhere; or it puts the verb before the noun. The right conclusion therefore is that Moses was led to indicate the desolation into which the earth was thrown at some epoch not made known, after creation, but prior to the “days” in which it was made the habitation for Adam and the race.

With this agrees the occurrence of the remarkable phraseology “waste and empty” elsewhere. There are but two other occasions: — Isa. 34:11, “the line of confusion [or waste] and the stones of emptiness;” and Jer. 4:23, “I beheld the earth; and lo! it was waste and emptiness.” In both it is a desolation indicted, not the primary condition. So it is in Genesis 1:2. It is the more to be noted, as in Jeremiah it is said of the heavens at this time, that “they had no light.” Thus is confirmed, by each of the other occurrences, the conviction that our text describes a state which befell the earth, possibly long after its original creation as in the verse before. It is to this interval that the successive ages of geology apply. Here are undeniable facts, full of interest, and implying creation made existent and extinguished. One’s confidence in the hypotheses reared on all this may be otiose or enthusiastic; but the exact meaning of Moses’ words in this verse leaves all the room that could be desired for those vast processes which may be gathered from the observed phenomena of the earth’s crust. There is nothing in scripture to exclude a succession of creatures rising to higher organization from lower as the rule, with a striking exception here and there, from the Eozoon in the Laurentian rocks of Canada to the Mammalia, which most nearly resemble those of the

earth as it is. But all the brilliant ingenuity of Sir C. Lyell, with others of kindred view, fails to explain or evade the proofs of change at this very period, immense as it may have been, incomparably vaster and more rapid than since man appeared. No doubt the deluge had the deepest moral significance, and is thus unique, because the human race, save those in the ark, was then swept away. But physically its traces were superficial compared with those far more ancient convulsions so apparent except to those who worship Time and Uniformitarianism.

“We simply assert” (says the cautious Sir R. I. Murchison), “on the countless evidences of fracture, dislocation, metamorphism, and inversion of the strata, and also on that of vast and clean-swept denudations, that these agencies were from time to time infinitely more energetic than in existing nature - in other words, that the metamorphisms and oscillations of the terrestrial crust, including the uprise of sea-bottoms, and the sweeping out of debris, were paroxysmal in comparison with the movements of our own era We further maintain that no amount of time (of which no true geologist was ever parsimonious when recording the history of bygone accumulations of sediment, or of the different races of animals they contain) will enable us to account for the signs of many great breaks and convulsions which are visible in every mountain chain, and which the miner encounters in all underground workings.... The case therefore stands thus. The shelly and pebbly terraces which exist are signs of sudden elevations at different periods; whilst the theory of modern gradual elevation and depression is still wanting in any valid proof that such operations have taken place

except within very limited areas. Much longer and more persistent observations must indeed be made before any definite conclusion can be reached respecting the rate of gradual elevation or depression which has been going on in the last thousand years, though we may confidently assert that such changes in the relations of land to water in the historical period have been infinitesimally small when compared with the many antecedent geological operations" (Siluria, 490-1, fifth ed., 1872).

On the one hand the facts point to changes in earth and sea, and these repeatedly varied too with fresh water; to rocks igneous and stratified and metamorphosed, and (during the periods thus implied, and with a corresponding environment of temperature and constitution) to organised natures, vegetable and animal, from lower orders to high, short of man and those animals which accompany his appearance on the earth; to whole groups of these organisms in vast abundance coming to an end, and others quite distinct succeeding and extinguished in their turn. Would it not be a harsh supposition that God, in the fossils of the rocks, made a mere appearance of what once lived? that these petrified creatures never had animate existence here below? On the other hand, the principle and the fact of creation we see not more plainly revealed in ver. 1 than of disruption in ver. 2; and both before the actual preparation of the earth for Adam as described in the six days.

As the creation, announced in a few words of noble simplicity, is the first and most momentous of God's productive interventions, so the catastrophe here briefly described seems to be the last and greatest disturbance

of the globe, the twenty-seventh or sub-Apennine stage, if we accept the elaborate conclusions of M. Alcide D'Orbigny (Paleontologie Stratigr., Tome ii. 800 - 824), a most competent naturalist. Then the Alps and Chilian Andes received their actual elevation, of itself (though with many other changes of enormous consequence) quite sufficient to account for universal confusion, with destruction of life on the earth, the deep supervening everywhere, and utter darkness pervading all. However vast, this state may have been for but a little while. The animals embedded ages before in the rocks had eyes; presumably therefore light then prevailed. Indeed some of the earliest organic remains had vision with the most striking adaptation to their circumstances, as the Trilobites of the Silurian and other beds, with their compound structure, each eye in one computed to have 6,000 facets (Owen's Pal. 48, 49, 2nd ed.). The language of ver. 2 is perfectly consistent with this, when compared with ver. 1, and in fact naturally supposes the darkness to be the effect of the disorder.

To confound the two verses is as contrary to the only sound interpretation of the record, as it is to the facts which science undertakes to arrange and expound. Nor can anything be more certain than the manner in which scripture steers clear of all error and consistently with all that is irrefragably ascertained, whilst never quitting its own spiritual ground to occupy the reader with physics. To reduce these gigantic operations of the geologic ages, in destruction and reconstruction with new living genera and species, to the slow course of nature and providence in the Adamic earth, the fashionable craze of the modern school, is "making a world after a pattern of our own," quite as really as

uninformed prejudice used to do. It was absurd to deny that the petrifactions of the strata were once real animals and plants, and to attribute them to a plastic force in the earth, or to the influence of the heavens: but so it is to overlook the evidence of extremely violent and rapid convulsions before man was made, closing one geological period and inaugurating another with its flora and fauna successively suited to each in the wisdom and power and goodness of God.

Neither ver. 1 nor ver. 2 is a summary of the Adamic earth, which only begins to be got ready from ver. 3. There are, accordingly, three states with the most marked distinction: original creation of the universe; the earth passed into a state of waste and emptiness; and the renovation of the earth, etc., for man its new inhabitant and ruler. Science is dumb, because wholly ignorant, how each of these three events, stupendous even the least of them, came to pass; it can only speak, often hesitatingly, about the effects of each, and, with least boldness, about creation in the genuine sense, though some, I cheerfully acknowledge, with outspoken and ungrudging cordiality. How different and surpassing is the language of scripture, which has revealed all these things to babes, if they are hid from or dubious to the wise and the prudent! From the Bible they are, or ought to be, known on infallible authority, and this in the first written words God gave to man, when Rome and Athens had not emerged from barbarism if they existed as such at all.

Our ver. 2 then brings to view a confused state of the earth, as different from the order of primary creation as from the earth of Adam and his sons, in regard to which state the Spirit of God is said to have been “brooding

upon the face of the waters." By His Spirit the heavens are beautified; and as to creatures generally it is written, "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the ground." Here it was to be for man's earth. This is the link of transition. All was to be made by God's word. Wisdom rejoices in the "habitable" earth, and has delights with the sons of men. A mighty wind might rage over the abyss. The Spirit of God, not the wind, could be said with propriety to "brood." What new wonders were at hand!

Genesis 1:3-5

Now comes the first point of direct contact with the habitable earth and its surrounding. We have had (ver. 1) the creation of the heavens and the earth, apart from date or definite time; we have had also (ver. 2) a superinduced condition of confusion, but the Spirit of God brooding upon the face of the waters. Neither one nor other has to do with man's earth, though earth there had been under both those differing and successive conditions. Nor can it be doubtful to him who knows God, that even the latter had its worthy and wise aim as well as more obviously the former. But neither phase is connected immediately with man, though all was done to God's glory with man in prospect, and above all the Second man, as we can add unhesitatingly from the N.T. It is to the facts stated in these preliminary verses that geological observations and inferences would mainly refer. As the words are few and general, there is ample space for research.

The believer knows beforehand that theoretic conclusions wherever sound must fall in with the sentence of inspiration. The work of the six days has

little if anything to do with geology. There may be a measure of analogy between the work of the third, fifth, and sixth days, and certain of the alleged antecedent geologic periods which the Bible passes over silently as being outside its range and object, while room is left for them all in vers. 1 and 2. But the effort to force the days, whether those three or al] six, into a scriptural authority for the successive ages of geology is mere illusion. If it be a harmless use of geology, it is anything but reverence for God's word or intelligence in it. That there are discrepancies between the record and any facts certainly ascertained, neither geology proves, nor any of the sciences still more sure and mature. But he who is assured of revealed truth can afford to hear all that experts assert, even when based on a partial induction of facts, as is not seldom the case. If, outside scripture, there is nothing a believer has to contend for; if scripture speaks, he believes, no matter what science declares to the contrary; if science confirms it, so much the better for science. Assuredly God's word needs no imprimatur from men.

If one appealed to any branch of physical science as to the first day, he could get no clear answer. Geology has confessedly, nothing to say. What can astronomy or optics do more? Science, as such, leaves out God — science, not scientific men, many of the greatest of whom have been true-hearted believers. Science, in itself, knows nothing of the power that originated, ignores the First Cause, and shirks ordinarily even the final causes which might summon heed to a first cause. It occupies itself with an established order in the world and with secondary causes, especially those at work before men's eyes or probably deducible from

experience. The peril for the unwary is obvious, and real, and notorious. It would be much less if science were honest enough to acknowledge its ignorance of what is beyond its sphere. But often its interpreter says "There is not," where logically and morally he is entitled only to say, "I know not." This is not merely audacity without warrant, but sin of the worst kind. The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God." It is exactly where science finds itself confessedly stopped by a blind wall that scripture proclaims the truth from God. As He knows, so He revealed as far as in His wisdom and goodness He saw fit. "And God said, Light be: and light was. lend God saw the light that [it was] good; and God divided between the light and the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening, and there was morning, one (or, first) day" (vers. 3-5).

Now who but an inspired man would have so written? The more you depreciate Israel as an unlettered, if not rude and barbarous, people, the greater the wonder. Did Egypt so teach, or Babylon? did Greece or Rome? How came Moses to declare that the fact was as he writes? I do not speak of the sublime which Longinus so justly extolled, but of that which human experience never could have suggested; for living man, had he judged from universally known phenomena, had ever regarded the sun as the great source of light; so that if the writing had been his, he must naturally have spoken first of that bright orb. In other words, the work of the fourth day would more reasonably have taken the place of the first. That the philosophers taught for ages afterwards. But not so the truth; and, whatever the seeming and striking difficulty, especially then, Moses was given to write the

truth. As the apostle says some fifteen centuries after, God spoke light to shine out of darkness (2 Cor. 4:6). The darkness is not said to have been everywhere, but "on the face of the deep," and now that an earth for the human race was in question, there it was that God commanded light to shine. That it was "created" now is not said; that it had existed before during the geologic ages for varying phases of the earth and for a very long while for the vegetable and animal kingdoms, there is abundant reason to conclude. But this is science, not faith, though the scriptural account is the sole cosmogony that leaves room for it.

But what is affirmed is that (after utter confusion reigned over the earth and darkness on the face of the deep, yet the Spirit of God brooding on the face of the waters) God interposed and said, Light be; and light was. As far as the Adamic earth was concerned, the light-bearers were not yet set in their functions as now: this was the fourth-day work. The word was, "Light be;" and light was: language evidently consistent with that view of light which prevails in comparatively modern times against Sir I. Newton's theory of emanation from the sun. If the phenomena of light are allowed in general to be a result of molecular action, and dependent on fundamental qualities of matter as it is now constituted, so that it was not the creation of an element admitting of independent existence, as science now owns, is it not remarkable that the words of Moses avoid all error, without forestalling scientific discovery, and express nothing but truth in the clearest terms? At the word of God appeared instant activity of light, just before that time inert.

But science easily over-shoots itself in hasty generalisation. For it contradicts the inspired record when it ventures to say that the fiat as to light on the first day must have preceded the existence of water and of earth, of solid or liquid or gaseous compounds of every kind. Granted that light is manifested in the making of such compounds. But vers. 1 and 2 give the surest testimony that “earth” and “water” did exist, not indeed before light, but before that particular fiat of God which called it into action for the earth that now is, after the confusion and darkness which had just before prevailed.

It is all a mistake then, and distinctly at issue with the context, to assume that there was no “light” in the state of things intimated by ver. 1. And it is allowed that even the “earth” and “water” of ver. 2, whatever the then state of ruin and darkness, could not have been without “light” previously, if but to form them. Verse 3 was not therefore really the signal of creation begun, but of God acting afresh and in detail, ages after the universe was created, with its systems, and within them its suns, planets, and satellites. On the plain face of the record, after the mighty work of the universe, and after a disruption that befell the earth with most marked consequences, God puts forth His word to form the Adamic earth with its due accompaniments.

Hence we may notice anticipatively that on the fourth day not a hint is given of creating the physical masses of the sun, moon, and stars. It is there and then no more than setting them in their declared and existing relations to the earth. Their creation belongs in time to Gen. 1:1; but of the rest more fully in its place. That on the first day light dissipated the then prevailing

darkness is true, and of deep interest as God's first word and act for the earth of man. But this says nothing about the original creation of the heavens and earth. Nor is it quite comprehensible why "the waters" of ver. 2 should not be literal waters, because utter darkness veiled the deep or abyss. These are the inconsistencies that necessarily flow from the false start which confounds "in the beginning" of ver. 1 with the "first day" of vers. 3-5 and those that follow; as this again involves the extraordinary error of taking ver. 2 to be the original state of the earth in ver. 1, when it immediately came into being from God.

The hypothesis that the earth when creation began was a frigid chaos or frozen globe, strange as it seems, is hard to escape for such as deny successive states since creation according to God's will, or, which goes along with it, for such as affirm the "creation" of the sun, etc., only on the fourth day. The argument is that, if so, it must have been almost cloudless, well lighted, and well warmed — in short, an impossibility. But reasoning from things as they are to a condition so contrasted in the record itself with what God formed for man subsequently is fallacious. It is simply a question of what God tells us of the abnormal state supposed in ver. 2. Not a word implies frigidity, save that darkness was on the face of the deep, which may rather have been the effect of heat acting on the earth and the waters, a transient state after previous order, and before it was made for Adam.2 The record in no way identifies the disorder with the earth when its creation was effected in ver. 1; but it assuredly distinguishes the dark dislocation of ver. 2 from the work of the fourth day when the earth and sun and stars became one in system as in their

present constitution. In short, the dilemma appears to be quite baseless. The true scope of ver. 2 is not at all that the original creation was a scene of darkness, even for the earth, but that when the earth, not the heavens, was thrown into confusion ever so long after, darkness was on the face of the deep. Light is not an element calling for annihilation (which would indeed be absurd), but a state flowing from molecular activity which God could and did here arrest, as far as “the deep” was concerned. It acted all the same elsewhere; as it had over the earth till then during the formation of what some geologists call the Tertiary, Secondary, and Primary beds, to say nothing of what preceded: details for men to discover and interpret as they can scientifically, but as foreign to scripture as the detailed wonders and movements of the starry heavens.

Hence “creation” of light, first or second, in the universe is only the slip of philosophers. Scripture is more accurate than its most modern expounder, even when striving to show the accordance of science with the Bible. In the gloom that overhung the earth thrown into desolation God caused light to act, as the characteristic act of the “first day” of the week, the brief cycle that was to close with man its new master and representative of God here below. “And God saw the light that [it was] good; and God divided the light from the darkness; and God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.” It presents to us God pondering and speaking in gracious consideration of the race He was about to create thereon, with a mind dwelling on realities about to open out for man far more solemn than the light or the darkness, day or night, literally. Yet the light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart, says the Preacher (Prov. 15:30),

and truly is sweet (Eccles. 11:7), as God pronounced it "good." "And it was evening, and it was morning, first (or, one) day." Only we must guard against taking the previous darkness as the evening. It would appear rather that light shone; and then its waning into night, and brightening into day, constituted the first day. That the earth would revolve on its axis, before the light-bearing of the sun afterwards, and so have the phenomena of evening and morning, is easy to apprehend. The fact is certain; the "how" was no difficulty to Him Who spoke and it was done. Our place is to honour Him in believing His word, without which faith nothing is as it should be. Another first day was to behold a better light; there, too, still more conspicuously, if that True Light shone when all was profounder darkness, He too had been before the darkness.

If the preceding exposition be just, the day of the first week is plainly one of twenty-four hours. No one can fairly deny that scripture, like other speech, uses "day" where required in a general or figurative sense, which may cover a period of considerable length. But this need never produce embarrassment to a careful reader: as ever, the context gives the clue. In this chapter and the next we have the word variously applied according to the exigency of the case; in none ought it to be doubtful. Here "the evening" and "the morning" should exclude just question. It can only mean, thus defined, a day of twenty-four hours. Before (not "there was a sun," but before) the sun was set to rule the day (of twelve hours) as now makes no difference as to the length meant. The same phrase is carefully used before and after. Nor would any prolonged sense have been tolerated for this

carefully specified week but for the error which muddles “the beginning” with the first and following days, makes the heavens and the earth at first to be a chaos, and in so doing effaces in fact the creation of both the one and the other. For where is either really “created” on such a scheme?

This will appear still more convincingly when we come to close quarters with the six days viewed as embracing the immense ages of geology. It might not be so glaring when taken in a dreamy poetic way as a vision in the hands of the late Hugh Miller. But when the simple dignity of the true father of history is vindicated for the matchless prose of Moses, the effort to make the days, or some of them, answer to the ages of geologic formation in building up the crust of the globe proves itself in so much more glaring and violent failure. Take the first day as our first test: are we told to imagine such a notion as that the outshining of the light in dispelling the immediately antecedent darkness occupied an age? And if not for the first day, or the second, or the fourth, how harshly inconsistent to claim it for the third, fifth, and sixth? Especially as the seventh day, or sabbath, should honestly put to the rout any such application. In every case the figurative sense is here irrelevant and unsuitable. We shall see in due time from scripture that the stretching out of the sabbath into an aeon is altogether unfounded.

An ingenious attempt is made in “Sermons in Stones” to show that the brooding of the spirit in ver. 2 means the creation of submarine animals (Zoophytes and Bivalve Molluscs without visual organs) before light; then of a higher class furnished with organs of sight after light on the second day; and lastly of Vertebrate Fishes on the

third. All this is error opposed by the record, which admits of animated nature for man's world only after the fourth day. For this confusion we are indebted to the misinterpreting "days" here into ages. The truth is, according to the record, that the Spirit's brooding upon the face of the waters is quite general and admits of no such precision, as it was also before the first day. And if the days were simply days of the week in which Adam was created, geology can neither affirm nor contradict. Its main office is to investigate the evidence of the successive ages of the earth's crust before the human race. It is freely granted that the language employed by inspiration is that of phenomena; but this does not warrant the hypothesis of the medium of a vision. It was a divine communication to and by Moses; but how given we know not and should not speculate, lest we err. A vision in fact might have shown him the submarine animals, being beyond natural conditions; but the hypothesis is invented to foist in the creation of animals, not seen or specified in the record.

Further, we must banish the notion that the black pall of an unbroken night was the original condition - a heathen, not a biblical, idea. It was not so before ver. 2, which describes a subsequent and transient state. The first verse supposes an order of the universe; the second, an interruption of no small moment for man; then in ver. 3 the week begins in which the earth was prepared for his abode who was made before that week ended. The geologic ages had passed before the human measures of time commenced. If the record had been duly read, the Inquisition might have avoided its unwise and suicidal judgment of Gal. Galiléi; for the first day, compared with the fourth, favours the Copernican

theory as decidedly as it condemns the old philosophy of Ptolemy. It exactly agrees with the revolution of the earth round its axis for evening and morning, independently of the function of the sun soon after formed. Only we must take note that the profound darkness dispelled was neither primeval nor universal, as many men of science have hastily assumed. It had nothing to do with the heavens, any more than had the disorder which befell the earth, after ever so long lapse of time.

Genesis 1:6-8

Happily the second day's work admits of a notice so much the more brief because of the rather full remarks on the preceding verses. In these were discussed the original creation "in the beginning"; then the superinduced state of confusion; lastly the work of the "first day" that commences the week of the earth's preparation for the human race.

The evident immediateness of the first day's work applies throughout the other days. Whatever grounds there may be for scientific men to infer processes occupying vast tracts of time before the "days," there is no real reason to doubt, but plain and positive scripture to believe, that the work done on the several six days was not of long ages, but really within the compass of the literal evening and morning. How unnatural to suppose an age for light to act on the first day! And why suppose otherwise on the second day or any other? A long succession of ages may be true after "the beginning" and before "the days," which taken in their natural import have a striking moral harmony with man, the last work of God's creation-week.

In this way there is no contest between long periods of progressive character and successive acts of marked brevity. On the one hand, the record is so written as to leave ample space for the researches of scientific discovery over the evidence of successive states of the earth before man existed; on the other, details under the shape of divine fiats in the six days appear only when man is about to be created. There is thus truth in both views. The mistake is in setting them in opposition. One can understand, if God so willed it, immense times of physical action, with secondary causes in operation before man, not without the evidence of convulsion far beyond volcanoes or the deluge within the human period, which great geologists at home and abroad admit, contrary to the recent speculations of others. But there are those that feel the gracious (not belittling) condescension of God in deigning to work for six days and rest on the seventh, only when getting ready that earth where was, not only the first man to come under His moral government, but the Second man later to glorify God to the uttermost, give to such as believe eternal life, and prove the worthlessness of all who reject His grace and repent not of their sins; the true and intelligible and blessed reason why this earth, so insignificant in bulk when compared with the vast universe of God, has a position in His favour so transcending all other planets, suns, or systems, put together. If man was much to differentiate the earth, Christ is infinitely more: and He has yet to show what the earth and man on it are to be under His glorious kingdom, to say nothing of the heavens according to His grace and the counsels of God.

But a little must be said of the second day. These are the terms: — “And God said, Let an expanse be in the midst of the waters, and dividing be between waters and waters. And God made the expanse, and divided between the waters that [are] under the expanse and the waters that [are] above the expanse: and it was so. And God called the expanse Heavens. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day” (vers. 6-8).

There is no more ground for conceiving this to be the first creation of atmospheric heavens than we saw in the case of light on the first day. The absolute language of creating is avoided in both cases. As there had been light in the long ages of geology when not only plants but animals marine and terrestrial abounded, suited to the systems that contained them, so an atmosphere was requisite and, no doubt, was furnished of God with every provision for their sustenance till a new condition succeeded by God’s power. That which now girdles the earth may not have been altogether alike for the varying states of vegetable and animated being long before man existed, to say nothing of the azoic periods before either. They had each an environment adapted by the Creator of all. The remains in successive strata indicate an admirable suitability for the then flora and fauna, quite different from the Adamic earth and its inhabitants, in some of which it may be doubted if man could have lived, as he did not in fact.

The great difficulty for geologists, especially of late from the growth of infidel thought, is to allow such a revolution as ver. 2 intimates. Even Christians among them are afraid to be governed by its express declarations, and shrink from the ignorant mockery of

those who boldly deny there ever was a breach of continuity between the original creation and the days of man on the earth. But on the one hand it is certain that the record maintains such a breach to have occurred (and this not on a circumscribed part of the earth, which some like Dr. Pye Smith have imagined in a spirit of compromise,3 but for the earth wholly) as to require an entire re-ordering of it as well as man's creation, God's vicegerent then first made to have dominion over all here below. On the other hand, it is intolerable to assume that no convulsions could have effected such changes as the non-action of light, or the destruction of atmospheric conditions, etc. This is mere and narrow unbelief. "Ye do err, knowing not the scriptures nor the power of God." How little science can explain even of existing life and of its surroundings! How unbecoming of geology to dogmatise! Is it not one of the youngest of sciences, with much to explore and adequately weigh, and very far from the precision of chemistry for instance, though there too how much is unknown?

At a fit moment the question of the mammoth, etc., co-existing with the musk-ox and other surviving quadrupeds may be briefly examined. But on the face of the argument it is plain that there is no more difficulty in conceiving God might renew some previously existing plants and animals for Adam's earth, than in causing light again to act on the first day and the atmosphere on the second. The work of the first day, perfectly if not exclusively consistent with an instantaneous exertion of the divine will, illustrates and confirms that of the second day. Scripture places the description of ver. 2 at some time before these days commence. Light acted first after that disorder, and according to the earth's

revolution on its axis. Next day the atmospheric heavens, so essential to light, sound, and electricity, to vegetation and animal life, were called (or rather recalled) to their functions after that confusion which destroyed them in ways beyond our ken.

Assuredly this renewal was no matter of a long age of gradual process, but a work to which God assigned a separate day, though to Him abstractedly a moment had sufficed. As it is, man's attention was impressively drawn to His considerate and almighty goodness Who then separated "waters from waters," which otherwise had filled space above the earth with continual vapour and without that due mixture of gases which constitutes the air essential to all life on the globe. To its machinery with other causes by divine constitution we owe the formation of clouds and the fall of rain as well as evaporation; to its refractive and reflective powers, that modification of light which adds incalculably to beauty no less than to the utility of the creation: a black sky had otherwise cast its constant pall over the earth. Even had dry land by another fiat been disengaged from the waters, without this encompassing elastic fluid, vapours would not have been absorbed nor have fallen as now; dew had ceased; fountains and rivers if formed had wasted away; water had enormously prevailed; and if dry land had survived anywhere, it must have been a dry arid waste with neither animal life nor a blade of grass. But enough; these are not the pages in which to seek the physical methods of creative beneficence.

It is now generally known, as it had long been laid down by the most competent Hebraists before modern science existed, that "expanse" is the real force of the original word, instead of "firmament" which came to us through

the Latin Vulgate, as it seems due to the Greek Septuagint. Possibly these Jewish translators in the days of Ptolemy Philadelphus may have succumbed here as elsewhere to Gentile ideas or at least phrases. And a great Rabbinical scholar, a Christian teacher, has given his opinion that the Greek version employs the word (στερέωμα) in the sense of an ethereal or fine subtle orb, and in no way of a solid permanent vault as rationalists love to assume, basing it on etymology and figurative usage. The aim is obvious, the wish father to the thought. Excluding God from the written word as from creation, deifying nature and exalting fallen man (more especially of the nineteenth century), they gladly depreciate the text by citing “windows” and “doors,” “pillars” and “foundations” as if meant literally. Now the usage of the word even in the chapter itself (vers. 15, 17, 20, 28) sufficiently proves that the word conveys the idea of the open transparent sky, whatever may have been the misunderstanding of the reader at any given time.

Hence it may be noted that the Authorised and Revised English Versions give “the air” as the equivalent of “the heavens” in ver. 28 as elsewhere. It is really the expanse, including the atmospheric heavens in the lower part of which birds fly. A solid vault is out of the question. The true derivation seems rather from a word expressing elevation, like the source of our own “heaven”; but even if drawn from the idea of beating or hammering out, who knows not that words may and do acquire a force etherealised according to the object designated, wholly above their material origin? The scriptures really present the heavens as spread out, and the earth hung upon nothing, nowhere giving

countenance to the grossness of the stars fastened like brass nails on a metallic vault. Sceptical ill-will likes that it should seem so; but it is unworthy slander. Even Dathe who was free enough gives “spatium extensum,” as did learned Jews generally long before and since.

“The waters above” consist of that enormous supply of vapour which fills the clouds and falls as rain, hail, or snow. “The waters below” covered the earth as yet, but were shortly to form seas, when the dry land appeared next day. It is ignorance therefore to say, in the face of a crowd of scriptures, that the waters above imply a permanent solid vault like a shower bath. The Hebrews could see the movements of many heavenly bodies instead of regarding all as fixtures. But even had they been as dull as rationalism is invidious, our concern is with the divine record, the accuracy of which irritates hostile minds who would hail the least flaw with satisfaction. Scripture abides; science changes and corrects itself from age to age. As to figures, “bottles” are used no less than “pillars,” and a “tent” or “curtain” as well as “windows” and “doors.” They are all strikingly expressive. Only the stupid or malicious could take any of them in the letter, to dishonour the scriptures.

Genesis 1:9-13

This publication is scarcely the suited place, nor does the writer pretend, to draw out adequately the wondrous and beneficent functions of the separated waters or seas and of the dry land, any more than of the light and of the atmospheric heavens, on which a little has been said. But a few words here may confirm, what was remarked as to the first and the second days, that the record speaks with immediate propriety of God’s

constituting the earth for the human race. By no means does it intimate particulars of the long periods before man when those successive changes are observable, which laid down vast stores for his future use and fitted the earth's progressively built-up crust, the rich field of geological research. One can admire the wisdom which did not encumber the Bible with the details of natural science. Rocks crystalline and stratified are before men's eyes, who can reason on the fossils they embalm. Scripture alone avoids the universal heathen idea of a primitive chaos, and the philosophic error of an eternal universe or even eternal matter. Scripture, on the contrary, has carefully enunciated God's creation at an undefined moment, "in the beginning," not merely of crude materials, but of the heavens and the earth, without a word about their denizens. It also makes known the fact that the earth was subjected to revolution so complete that before the Adamic state of things divine power was needed to cause light to act in a diurnal way, as well as to order the atmosphere, and from a previous and universal overspread of waters the appearance of dry land, on which God began the plants or vegetable kingdom for man.

Thus the work of these days wholly leaves out, because chronologically it follows, the vast operations both of slow construction and of destruction which give special interest to the geologist. Original creation and subsequent dislocation (which swept away in due time whole species and genera of organised beings, followed by fresh and different ones, and this repeatedly) it asserts distinctly; and both, before the days which prepared all for his life and probation under divine government who was created ere the week closed. The

document itself furnishes the warrant to the believer for taking the first verse indefinitely before the six days, and also for affirming the state, possibly final state, of confusion into which the earth passed before it became the world as it now is.

There may indeed be some analogy between the days that concern the earth of the human race and those immense ages of ripening advance which preceded, so as to furnish a slight ground of resemblance on which not a few men of ingenuity and the best intentions have reared their various schemes for accommodating the days to the geological ages. Yet this hypothesis, even when guarded by the most cautious and competent aid of science, does not square with scripture. It is unjustifiable in every point of view to confound the disturbed state of ver. 2 with the creation of the earth described in ver. 1, which it really follows, disorder after order; is it not even absurd to identify ver. 3 with either? Each follows consecutively; and the long tracts of time, if filled up in a way that scripture does not essay, would come in after ver. 1, and before ver. 3, which wholly differing from what precedes, introduces a new condition where alone details are given to mark God's direct dealings with man.

Hence the days, from ver. 3 and onward, are wholly misapplied to the geologic ages. Where for this scheme have we the formation of the plutonic, volcanic, and metamorphic rocks? Where the upheaval of the mountain ranges and the tracing of the river systems? Where the succession of organic remains, marine and terrestrial, vegetable and animal, new ones following those extinguished, and mutually distinct, from the Laurentian beds to the Post-Pleiocene or Quaternary?

The six days set forth the peculiar constitution God was pleased to establish for the existing or human world. What the geologic periods embrace is successive remodellings of the earth where sea and land have changed place, mountains were raised and valleys scooped, perhaps again and again, not only a sweeping away of old organic creation, but an introduction of new plants and animals, each assemblage confessed even by Lyell to admirably fit the new states of the globe; with singular varieties all pointing by harmony of parts and beauty of contrivance to One Divine Maker. These days only begin, when God, having closed the long undefined periods of progressive character, with repeated extermination of their correspondingly changed flora and fauna, forms, within the brief span of human labour, that system, inorganic and organic of which man is the appointed head, but enriched by all He had slowly deposited and rendered available to man's industry and profit by that dislocation which laid bare treasures so remote and manifold, so interesting and important.

The divine operations of the third day call for more detail than that which was last before us. They form a double class, as does the work of the sixth day.

"And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together to one place, and let the dry [land] appear. And it was so. And God called the dry [land] Earth, and the gathering together of the waters he called Seas. And God saw that [it was] good. And God said, Let the earth sprout grass, herb producing seed, fruit-trees yielding fruit after their kind, the seed of which [is] in them, on the earth. And it was so. And the earth sprouted grass, herb producing seed after its kind, and trees yielding fruit, the seed of which [is] in them

after their kind. And God saw that [it was] good. And there was evening, and there was morning, a third day" (vers. 9-13).

We have seen light (involving heat) caused to act for the Adamic earth, and that atmosphere which sustains an enormous body of waters above those that lie below: both of them results of essential importance for what was coming, and of course adapted by divine power and wisdom to the system in which the human race were to exist. It was needless and foreign for a divine revelation to explain how these and other works of God were effected. The important truth for His people, and for every soul of man, to know, is that He is both the Originator and the Maker of all. No student of geology doubts mechanical any more than chemical agency on the largest scale in forming the crust of the earth. Heat, water, and air have played their part under His hand in change, and waste, and progressive formation. But it is only the petty and pedantic unbelief of some who cry up such gradual secondary causes as are now seen, shutting out the evidence (which geology itself affords to candid minds) of repeated and enormous transformations, and all but entire revolution of organic life, in both extinction and new creation, with the corresponding change of the globe and its temperature which this implies, and each of these not for a brief space but for ages before the earth of man. Facts plainly enough point to these conclusions for those who occupy themselves with the natural antiquities of the earth. Nor can it be doubted that each successive tale inscribed on the fossiliferous rocky tablets of the earth shows on the whole distinct progress, in no way as mere development of the antecedent condition, but the fresh fruit of

creative acts, even if some species seem renewed for the subsequent phase, and all with evident relation to the earth as it was to be for Adam, and as it will be when the Second man takes it with the universe itself for His inheritance. Unity of plan marks all from first to last.

But all this bygone succession of physical change is only left room for in the revealed word which dwells on man and Immanuel. Geological detail in scripture would have been as much out of place as any other science; but how can the room left for all, in what is said, be accounted for save as implying the knowledge of all by Him Who revealed His word? An original creation of the heavens and the earth without details, and unlimited even by myriads of years, “in the beginning,” perfectly falls in with every ascertained fact; and a violent dislocation of the earth, of the highest importance for the race in its disarrangements, altogether different from and more thorough than any diluvial or merely superficial action, is also made known; followed by that “making” of heaven and earth which is historically described in Gen. 1:3-31 and referred to solemnly in Ex. 20:11.

It is pertinent to observe that the effort to interpret the days of the immense ages before man, separates Adam from his historic time as well as the creation placed under him as its head. For according to the long periods of geology what would the fossil-plants of the third day have to do with those that grew on the Adamic earth? And so with the animals on the fifth day, if not the sixth. On the contrary “the six days” were plainly meant to convey a realm of creation immediately connected with Adam, the various forms of organic nature being subjected and given to him. The sixth day is thus made geologic as well as historical. Surely this does not hang

together; any more than our having a detailed account of fossil creation, and none at all of that which seems the express object of the several days — the creation in view of the incoming race. Now in a divine revelation it is easy to understand passing over all particulars of the fossilised stages of the earth; but inconceivable that there should be no account of heaven and earth and sea and all that in them is, in connected relation to Adam and his sons: especially as out of the thousands of organised species in the Secondary rocks, not a single species, says Professor Hitchcock, corresponds with any now living; and even out of the thousands in the Tertiary, but few seem identical with living species The natural and only reasonable conclusion is that, whatever the analogy with the divine action in past geologic time, the "days" speak solely of what God made in immediate view of Adam; not of fossils, animal or vegetable, but of the organic beings placed under Adam and his race, with their surroundings and suited system. To suppose both is nothing but confusion.

Returning to the day before us we see a fresh operation of God for man's world, the waters under the heavens collected to one place, and dry land consequently appearing. Not that such a separation had not existed before; but that the disruption, wise and benevolent for the earth of man, made it a necessary act now, as indeed in a general way everything had to be made afresh for Adam: a disruption wholly distinct from the vague and useless chaos which the heathen imagined.

Now God formed the earth and seas in the condition which substantially abides to our days. How momentous an act for the race needs few words to explain. That both earth and seas had existed previously no geologist

disputes, any more than the various phases of both according to the plants and animals that prevailed from one geologic age to another. Doubtless also, save for dead-level Uniformitarians if there be such, the epochs of change that destroyed the older creatures and beheld new races modified greatly both the earth and the seas; for each period had its own proper system, with changes in inorganic matter, water, atmosphere, temperature, and the like, corresponding to each new set of organised beings.

The earth then was to have that form for the most part which God saw best fitted for His new purpose: vast continents and vaster oceans, islands large and small, lakes salt and fresh, swamps and torrents, mountains and rivers, plains greater or less, and valleys not merely effected by gradual erosion but often by deep and sudden dislocation. It is common knowledge what a part is played in the physical economy of the world by the "seas," (which in Hebrew idiom embrace all large collections of waters, oceans, seas, lakes, and even rivers,) as well as by the varied disposition of the land, high or low. To this the disarrangement of Gen. 1:2 had directly contributed; as now in the separation of earth and seas after having been commingled for a time. Rapid extraordinary operations wrought, and of course slow and existing causes, in bringing about what was then done for man; but here we learn that God laid down the great landmarks which abide to this day. Gen. 2:11-14 is enough to indicate that men attribute to the deluge or other changes more than can be proved.

God gave names too, as to the objects of His work on the previous days.

But there is a second part of His work to notice: vegetable nature for the earth that now is, that kingdom which mediates between minerals and animals. God commanded the earth to bring forth grass (or, sprout sprouts4), herb seeding seed, fruit trees yielding fruit after its kind, which has its seed in itself after its kind, as is said here most emphatically. This is the true origin of vegetable species for the Adamic earth. And as God pronounced good the dry land and the seas, so now the beautiful clothing of the dry land, and the abundant supplies for man and beast — at first indeed the exclusive food even for man.

How does the protracted scheme of the days as geologic periods agree with the vegetable kingdom on the third day, and the animal even in its lowest forms on the fifth? Is it really so with the evidence of fossils? The coal measures indicate vast brackens, ferns, etc.; but what of fruit-trees bearing fruit according to each several kind? Certainly it would seem that Zoophytes are as early as any vegetable remains, long before the Carboniferous era so paraded as the fulfilment of the third day, after a great abundance of marine animals far beyond plants, of which direct evidence appears in the rocks. If the days are taken simply in reference to Adam, there is no difficulty on any such score, as the provision for the world that now is appeared with no interval such as geology can appreciate.

How absurd, taking the third day before us as our example, for us to identify it with the Carboniferous age, or that which laid the basis for the coal measures! What real analogy between coal-plants, chiefly Acrogens, and the grass, herb, tree, so manifestly for the food of animals, above all of man? What with herb in general

producing seed, and what with fruit-trees yielding fruit after their kind, the seed of which is in them? This is evidently not provision for coal, but for the food and refreshment of man and cattle, of bird and beast. The analogy vanishes when looked into. For geologic eras it is a failure; for man's world it is the simple and suited truth. It was plant-life for Adam's earth. The Carboniferous era, when people have been content with facts, was the age, botanically of Cryptogams and Gymnosperms, in the animal realm of the earlier reptiles, Batrachian or Amphibian. Now does this truly correspond with the third day? With the formation of seas and the emergence of dry land? And this clothed with verdure, herbs, and fruit-trees, each propagating after its kind? Beyond just doubt Moses means herbs, not of the Carboniferous age, but solely of the earth for man, animal life for it not existing till the fifth day. Compare ver. 29.

But the geologic evidence points to plants and animals even in Archaean time; for as the simplest animal forms (Rhizopods) have been detected in the Laurentian rocks, so the enormous quantity of graphite, being carbon, implies abundant vegetation, sea-weeds, and lichens. The metamorphism of the rocks may account for the rare indications of organic life even in the Huronian beds which were subsequent; but according to what is generally averred, Paleozoic time goes farther back than even the Silurian age, Upper and Lower, the era of fucoids on the one hand and of marine invertebrate animals on the other (Protozoans, Radiates, Molluscs, and Articulates). Then comes the Devonian, or age of fishes (chiefly Selachian and Ganoid), and some insects, in addition to previous invertebrates; and, besides sea-

weeds, Calamites, Conifers, Ferns, and Lycopods. Surely long ages with organic life, not only vegetable but animal, before the Carboniferous period, as all geologists accept, disprove beyond controversy the effort to make out the third day therein fulfilled. Hence Principal Dawson (Arch. 168) is obliged to own that the coal flora (consisting mainly of Cryptogams allied to ferns and clubmosses, and of Gymnosperms allied to the pines and cycads) cannot coalesce with the higher orders of plants called into being in our verses 11, 12. "For these reasons," says he, "we are shut up to the conclusion that this flora of the third day must have its place before the Paleozoic period of geology," i.e., when vegetation was incomparably lower than that of the coal measures! The true conclusion on the contrary is that the third day's work implies a flora for man and the creatures under him, long after the coal measures.

By the way, Dawson remarks that "the sacred writer specifies three descriptions of plants as included in it": the first he will have to be not "grass," but the Cryptogamia, as fungi, mosses, lichens, ferns, etc.; then seed-bearing herbs, and fruit-bearing trees. The Cryptogams may well be doubted: if tenable, it might be pleaded even more fairly that the Phaenogams, endogenous and exogenous, follow. However, it would seem that no scientific classification is intended, but a general division which all could observe into grass, herbs, and fruit-trees, each species none the less expressly and permanently reproductive. In point of fact it is not till the Cretaceous period of Mesezoic time that we find the first traces of Angiosperms (Oak, Plane, Fig, etc.); so that the reference to an age before the

Paleozoic time is still less reasonable than the hypothesis of the Carboniferous era.

Doubtless geologists would, if they could, make verses 11, 12 subsequent to the great operations of the fourth day; for who can question the all-importance not of light only but of the sunbeam for herbage of all kinds, for fruit-bearing, and for timber? This is no difficulty for one who takes the days as “the evening and the morning”; but is it not insuperable for all who regard them as representing ages of untold duration? The Archaean rocks, we must bear in mind, are believed to be near five miles thick; the Silurian system considerably thicker, especially if we add the Devonian. Then come the Carboniferous and Permian formations of not far from four miles; and after the Triassic and Jurassic the Cretaceous, when it would seem that Angiosperms or Dicotyledons began to appear (Rose, Apple, Elm, etc.). In fact it was only just before the Tertiary or Cainozoic, if we include in it, as most do, the Nummulitic beds. Who can reckon the times of these formations?

There is another observation of importance to make. What scripture reveals of the third day’s work points in no way to Archaean or Paleozoic times, but simply and naturally to the formation of the Adamic earth. Geology tells us that the continents while still beneath the waters began to take shape; then, as the seas deepened, that the first dry land appeared, low, barren, and lifeless; next that, under intestine and external action, the dry land expanded, strata formed, and mountains rose, each in its appointed place, till finally heights and continents reached their fullest development. Now the flora described by the inspired writer does not fit the geologic first appearance of dry land, when of the character

above described, till the mountains rose ages afterwards and river-systems followed. To say the least, marked advance of state is involved in the flora described by Moses. How then identify it with the earliest geologic time when sea-weeds alone existed in the waters, along with lichens on the land, and even then the Eozoon Rhizopod?

Moses describes just such a vegetable kingdom in its main features as Adam had, and we have now. It was vegetation as he knew it; and God led him so to describe it, being the truth. Is there then contradiction between the more or less satisfactory conclusions of geology and unerring scripture? In no way. Distinguish the times, and clashing disappears. The third day speaks solely of the earth's last emergence from the waters by which it was submerged long ages after the original "outlining of the land and water determining the earth's general configuration." Dr. Dana on reconsideration should acknowledge that the idea of life expressed in the lowest plants and afterward, if not contemporaneously, in the lowest or systemless animals, the Protozoans, is doubly and hopelessly incongruous with the Mosaic record. Take it as of the Adamic week, and all is plain to the believer, if a few difficulties remain for the geologist. Why should any wonder, since it is confessed by the same competent authority that "a broken record the geological undoubtedly is, especially for terrestrial life" (Dana's "Manual of Geology," 601, third edition, 1875)? Not so with the Bible, which, being divine, is and most be true: plain for the wayfaring man, profound for the most informed and best cultured.

Genesis 1:14-19

The evidence which the record furnishes of the third day is express. It is dry lands and seas in view of man: in no way the varying phases of either in the geologic ages, but solely the result, after the last disturbance when the waters prevailed everywhere. Indeed a good deal of unfounded hypothesis is now exploded (especially since the recent deep-sea soundings) as to the alternation of the ocean beds and the vast mountain ranges east or west. For though the strata and fossils, marine, lacustrine or fluviatile, and terrestrial, point to repeated submergence and emergence of considerable regions, the continents have abode from Archaean time, the Atlantic flowing on one side, the Pacific on another. During the ages that followed, allow all that can be proved of change by upheaval, oscillation, dislocation, and rock formation, fragmental, or crystalline, eruptive or stratified, by means organic, mechanical, or chemical, by atmosphere, water, fire or aught else, there were elements of life vegetable and animal brought into being in the waters and on the land, but successively extinguished, and new ones created with the changed state of the globe, each period having its appropriate species in the new environment.

But none of these alternations, vast and important as they were physically, enters the scope of the six days. No geologist denies that the mountains, to take this one sample, were elevated substantially as they are, long before the human race; and on mountains depend the springs and rivers and even the due fall of rains, and striking equalisation of temperature between the extremes" climes, so necessary to man and beast and herb. Very much more indeed had been done by God in

that immense preparation, not only in the partially hidden supplies (coal, marble, lime, precious stones, metals, etc.) for man's use, but in enriching the soil and beautifying the surface of the earth in countless ways, working, as He still does, now for instance by sudden volcanic action, and again for example by the slow process of innumerable polyps, yea, and mysteriously by their combined action (though the one be organic and the other not) in the accomplishment of His creative designs, from a time when there was no life here below, till every organised form was there short of man. Now it is exclusively of the human era and its belongings that the six days speak; and none more clearly than the third day, when the vegetable kingdom began, but solely in reference to Adam and those subject to him. The application to geologic time is impossible as proved by the record itself, and the mutual contradictions of all who essay it.

The evidence is no less plain and conclusive as to the fourth day, of which the more prudent advocates for the long-period days say little. But even here, though it be a question of the heavenly orbs, the record looks at them simply in view of man and this earth. "And God said, Let there be light-bearers in [the] expanse of the heavens to divide between the day and between the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for light-bearers in [the] expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth. And it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light for ruling the day, and the lesser light for ruling the night (the stars also). And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide between the

light and the darkness. And God saw that [it was] good. And there was evening, and there was morning, a fourth day" (verses 14-19).

It is a mistake to suppose that during the long ages of vegetable and animal life up to the highest forms, one excepted, there had not been the shining of sun, moon and stars, as well as sea and land and atmosphere, though not always quite the same as ours. If geology can trace the proofs of life, and its progress in a typical system, which reveals unity of plan as distinctly as deep and comprehensive wisdom, be it so; yet they enjoyed sunlight, heat, air, and water throughout. But here we have everything successively ordered for man, after those immense eras of change were closed, when the last disturbance needed God's interference for a new system. Light was caused to act. The atmosphere as it is followed, Next, the seas were gathered to their own place, and dry land appeared, and the vegetable realm; the work of mountain-making and valley- scooping, shaping as well as storing, having been already, and it may be in long successive ages, effected. In each case of these "days" the result seems instantaneous. "He spoke, and it was done." The work stated here is quite distinct. "The evening and the morning" are the expression of God's considerate goodness to man, responsible to learn of Him and to do His will on the earth, as Christ did perfectly.

It is assuredly not the creation of the sun, etc. This the inspired historian does not say, but only that God now constituted the heavenly luminaries, after the plants and before the animals for the Adamic earth. Light had shone otherwise since the first day of the great week. Now He set the light-bearers of the heavens to do their

assigned work, but it is for the earth, and indeed for man. Their creation was implied in ver. 1; for God did not create either empty; and what would heaven be without its host? And we saw that ver. 2 implies that the earth even had not been so, though so it became with other marks of disorder. What then hindered the functions of sun and moon was now rectified. Light independently had been proved to be under God's control. On the fourth day He gave the luminaries of heaven their unhindered relation to divide the day from the night. Now we can readily understand the plants (and these were for the use of man and his congeners) caused to spring forth on the day before without the sunbeam; but assuredly not so of a geological age of grass, corn, and fruit. Yet we see the fitness of the due ordering of light and heat, as we have it, the next day, if the plants were to flourish, as well as for the animal life that begins after that according to His word.

This is entirely confirmed if we inspect the context more closely. For where would be the sense of the light-bearers "for signs and for seasons, and for days and years," if it had been an age (thousands, myriads, millions of years) before Adam? If, on the contrary, God was not creating them, but, after that which had intercepted, only "setting" them to their ordained task in immediate view of man, all is clear and consistent. And to whom could this be of such interest as to Israel, the people of His choice, in whose history we have them acting as "signs" on critical occasions for His sovereign will? Without dwelling on His wonders in Egypt where light was in Israel's dwellings, darkness thick in all the rest of the land, or later at Sinai, we see what a sign it was to Israel when Joshua said in their sight, "Sun,

stand still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon"; or in far other days when Jehovah spoke to sick Hezekiah, and gave him a sign in the shadow that went back ten steps on the dial of Ahaz. And what a sign again where all was lost, as far as man is concerned, in the Cross of Messiah when darkness for three hours covered all the land! A mere eclipse was then impossible. Nor will whole clusters of signs be wanting when He comes in power and glory on the clouds of heaven. For "seasons" is needed no comment: man alone on earth understands and appreciates these fit and recurring times. As the same Hebrew word means "the congregation" and "the solemn feast," as well as the season or appointed time at which they kept it, "seasons" may have a sacred aspect; but the more ordinary sense seems confirmed by what follows. Very little astronomy is requisite to know how "days and years" are defined by them, but only for man. In the ages before him this were all irrelevant. In view of man, and Israel especially, it is as affecting as full of interest. The constant design is reiterated in "Let them be for light- bearers in the expanse of the heavens." It was their effect, not their structure, that is intimated. "And it was so."

Then we are told that "God made," not created, "the two great lights." The language is never varied without purpose. Rosenmüller the younger was an admirable Hebraist, and certainly free enough in his handling of scripture: yet he has no hesitation in his discussion of this question formally, but insists that the genuine force of the construction is not "fiant luminaria" (i.e., let lights be made), but "inserviant in expanso coelorum" (i.e., serve in the expanse of the heavens). He compares the

singular with the plural of the Hebrew verb for being, and deduces the inference that the language can only express the determination of the luminaries to some fixed uses for the world, and not to their production. Further, it is solely relation to man on earth that demonstrates the strict phraseological propriety of “the two great lights.” He Who created all and inspired Moses knew better than Newton or La Place the sizes of every orb in heaven; but for man’s and for Israel’s help on earth, to say nothing of every subject creature, what were all the rest, for light-giving by day and night, compared to the sun and moon?

This, again, as definitely excludes scientific preoccupation as it confirms the reference throughout. The stars only come in parenthetically. God made them too, if blind man deified them. But God gave sun and moon to rule over the day and over the night. They were His creatures and gifts for man’s use dividing between the light and the darkness. “And God saw that [it was] good,” not as if they were just created, but in the assigned work He gave to be done by them. “And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.” Here it cannot be fairly denied by any, that from the necessary effect of that day’s work we have the ordinary vicissitude of night and day; and that a similar diurnal revolution followed for the fifth and sixth days, as for every day since, including the seventh. But this being so, surely consistency requires it for the three previous days. That light was supplied otherwise before the fourth day is no impediment. The daily course of the earth on its axis depends on gravitation, not on illumination, and would have gone on equally, had the

sun been only and always opaque, or had its previous and its present action in light-bearing never existed.

And here it may be noticed that those who contend for nothing but the same agencies at worn from the first as act now before our eyes, and who go so far as to swell the time into incalculable ages by embracing the fond hypothesis of evolution, so that 300,000,000 years span an inconsiderable period of geological imagination, have now to confront an unexpected and veritable coup de grace from Lord Kelvin. For he has proved that if the earth existed at all only 100,000,000 years ago, it must have been on scientific grounds a red-hot molten globe altogether incompatible with life, animal or vegetable. The geologists in their loose and one-sided way reasoned from the deposition of the enormously deep strata at the present rate of formation. But Lord Kelvin founded his far more rigorous calculations on the acknowledged facts of the earth's tidal retardation, as well as of its gradually cooling state. Hence the recent disposition among the less prejudiced men to re-arrange the order and time of formations by the probable contemporaneity of unlike strata. They essay thus to reduce their egregious demands by the supposition that the Cambrian, for instance, may coalesce chronologically with the Silurian, the former lacustrine, the latter marine; and similarly the Permian with the Jurassic, etc. The groups thus associated would each owe their different phenomena to their respective conditions of deposit.

But those who accept the plain and simple interpretation of the record here offered will observe that, if all these shifting and precarious hypotheses are due to the dim twilight of the science, scripture is responsible for no

error. What it asserts remains not only unshaken but indisputably true.

Genesis 1:20-23

We are now come to a fresh activity of divine power, when the Holy Spirit employs again the term "created" (ver. 21): not merely organisms, for these we have seen for the new vegetable kingdom on day third, but the first animal life for the Adamic world, to people the waters below and the heavens above. They are familiarly known to be the opposed but mutually dependent realms of life, far above inorganic nature, not only in growth and structural development, but in germs for the continuance of the species, both of which materialism vainly strives to explain or evade. For plants take in nourishment without an interior cavity or sac, and without digestive fluid, which animals have; and as plants imbibe carbon and give out oxygen, animals exhale carbon and use up oxygen: a provision worthy of divine wisdom for the well-being of the earth. Nor is this hard to appreciate; for plants are nourished by inorganic food which they convert into organic for animals, as they store up for their use condensed force from the sun's influence, starch, gluten, etc., for animal development with increasing power, and locomotive faculty, as well as a will. That their germs are chemically like, not only in elements but in their proportions, only brings out the total difference which results from their respective character of life. To originate animal life especially, even in its least form, justly calls for the term "created."

Thus God is not content with employing chemical powers to disintegrate and to reconstruct, as well us mechanical means chiefly by water, frost, and

gravitation not only to enlarge the surface but to increase its fertility. The provision and satisfying of life is a part of His admirable plan even for a fallen world, the very volcano playing no small part, whatever its temporary terrors, in His beneficent hand. But all else would have been ineffectual without that great reality, of which science is as ignorant as those whom it most despises in its unbecoming scorn — that reality which would bring God face to face with every rational being, were men not hard in conscience and blinded by sin — that reality which meets every soul as the surest fact, yet the most inscrutable for any man; life, not vegetable only but animal, even if we regard it in its simplest range. It is life that directs the chemistry of plants or animals; it is life which produces the organisation appropriate according to its kind. Men may speak of protoplasm, and analyse into carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen; but these are the mere materials which God employs according to the limits He has imposed on species under the agency of life. When life is given, the activity of change goes on in the creature and its reproduction; when life is withdrawn there is a dissolution into the common stock for the fresh replenishment of the earth and its organized beings. Men may shrink from the Causa causans, and take refuge in “the laws of nature “; but after all they only succeed, if they do succeed, in retreating a step back from the Giver of]life, and the Sovereign sustainer of nature. But this retreat is to lose God altogether.

Genesis 1 knows nothing of a primordial gas, or the nebula hypothesis, of an original spore, or of a monad. That God created the universe is its proclamation, with details of Adam’s world. A nisus formativus is here

unheard, and left only to the unbelieving fanatics of science. Men would have had ere this wings better than those of Daedalus if desires and efforts availed; nor would the peacock be left alone to expand his feathered glories in the golden light of the sun. The power and wisdom of God has made these countless creatures, plants or animals, out of a few elements; and these, as geology is compelled to own, repeatedly exterminated on the earth, and as often renewed, in systems ever perfectly suited to each, and as uniformly rising on the whole, when He was pleased to form a higher one, till He created man. Yea, at last He deigned to send His Son, the Eternal Word, to be made flesh, accomplish redemption, and unite to Himself those that are His for heavenly glory; as God will send Him again to bless Israel and all nations, to reign from heaven over a reconciled creation (for He is Heir of all things), but none the less to judge those who reject Him the Lord and Saviour to their own everlasting ruin, and manifestly so in “that day.”

Further, as God created, so He perpetuates life within variations brought about by circumstances and especially by man’s will, which, ceasing to act, leave plant or animal to revert to primitive type; when hybrids are forced, sterility also ensues. His will gave birth to the creatures that people the waters and the sky; and He abides to give constant effect to His will. We can see therefore the wisdom of His revelation of the day before us; for how many sages have dreamt and thought that the sun was the prolific source of life! The vegetable kingdom was formed when the sun was not yet set to do its all-important office for the earth of man. The humbler departments of the animal kingdom were called into

being by God the day after. And how manifestly is contingency excluded no less than necessity? It is all the result of the Creator's will, Who upholds all that He has called into being. "For thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were and they were created" (Rev. 4:11). Dualism, pantheism, eternal matter, and evolution are mere but wicked delusions.

"And God said, Let the waters swarm a swarm of living creatures (lit. souls), and let birds fly above the earth on the face of the expanse of the heavens. And God created the great whales (or, sea monsters) and every living creature that moveth with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind. And God saw that [it was] good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day" (vers. 20-23).

Here it is to be observed that "sea-monsters"5 is given by many modern translators, the Revisers among them; so as to include the huge creatures of large rivers, crocodiles, etc., as well as marine. Indeed "whales" may be here in view specifically by the accompanying epithet "great"; seeing that they exceed in size all other animals, not only of the Adamic period, but even of previous ages when characterised by creatures of enormous magnitude as compared with analogous ones in man's day. If the whale be here singled out, the description is justified beyond dispute; and all the more because the fossils, as the rule, disclose specimens larger of their kind than any now living, whether Protozoans, Crustaceans, or the Vertebrates in general. Even the birds then must have been gigantic, if we

accept their supposed footmarks on the new red sandstone of Connecticut. Their fossils were much later.

In ver. 20 then God spoke into being the creatures that people the waters and those that people the air in terms the most general. In ver. 21 the result is stated with more precision, the great whales or sea-monsters being distinguished from every living creature that moveth (whether Protozoans, Radiates, Molluscs, Articulates, or Vertebrates), with which the waters swarmed, after their kind. Again we hear of “every bird of wing” after its kind. A correct version here, as the reader may see, explodes the error which commentators, Jewish and Christian, have tried to explain; for the sense is not that the waters produced the birds, but that God made them fly in the open expanse of the heavens. Compare Gen. 2:19, which distinctly teaches that they were formed out of the ground no less than was the beast of the field.

But the important fact announced is that for Adam’s world the waters were now peopled and the air likewise. It is in no true sense the Reptilian age, though no doubt such reptiles as belonged to the waters then were included; for land reptiles are distinctively of the sixth day, as is certain from vers. 24, 25, 26, 28. Hence the effort to make the fifth day’s work correspond with the Mesozoic time of geology is an utter fallacy. During it, especially in the Cretaceous period, reptiles abounded, and many were enormous, Dinosaurs, Enaliosaurs, Ichthyosaurs, Mosasaurs, Plesiosaurs, or Pterosaurs; for in contrast with the fifth day the earth had then its species, as well as the sea and the air. Jurassic Britain had its vast and numerous varieties, as their absence is the more conspicuous since Adam’s day. But all that the cautious Dr. Dana says as to birds is, that they probably

began in the Triassic, especially as the inferior tribe of Marsupials were then found; that in the Jurassic some if not all birds exhibited the long vertebrated tail which with other peculiarities allied them to reptiles; but that in the Cretaceous they were numerous, and most of modern type, though some were of the older form. To suppose all that now people the waters and air existed then is as baseless as that these verses really describe the Reptilian age. For “the great” sea-monsters and many birds had yet to be.

Now it is on the face of the record that the entire population of the waters and of the air, as Adam knew both, is meant; not that extraordinary era of the Secondary formation, with its prodigious denizens of earth and sea and air. Indeed it is notorious geologically that Protozoans, Radiates, Molluscs, and Articulates had been even in the Lower Silurian; and in the Upper S. fishes appear if only Sharks and Ganoids. Again, who does not know that the Devonian is habitually designated the age of Fishes? How then can it be fairly alleged that the day-period interpretation holds good? If the third day means the Carboniferous age, though this has been proved erroneous, how comes the age of Fishes to be before it? The record declares that the fish and the fowl of Adam’s world were only and alike on the fifth day.

Is it not then extreme prejudice that has beguiled able and excellent persons into the thought that the record here speaks of the Reptilian age of geology? Hence one zealous advocate limits the swarm of the waters in ver. 23 to “the reptile,” and for the same reason changes “that moveth” into “that creepeth” in ver. 21. The fact is that, though the former word often means “reptile,” the

context here proves it to be of far larger bearing, and in fact of cognate signification with the verb; so that to “swarm swarms” seems the literal force, and to “bring forth abundantly the moving” thing is a fair representation as in the A. and R. Versions. Again, in ver. 21 the right way is to interpret the Hebrew as “moving” in water and “creeping” on land; so any one may see who can intelligently use a Hebrew Concordance. In both respects Sir J. W. Dawson is more correct than the late Mr. D. M’Causland: but he errs in making ver. 21 say “great reptiles.” It is either all the large creatures of the deep, or not improbably “the whales,” for the reason already and appropriately implied in “the great.” Perhaps we may fairly add that the Cetacea call for a special place as being the representative of Mammals, and hence are made to stand apart from the general population of the deep. Certainly they were of the waters.

The effect too of the periodic construction of the days is here quite plainly as unfounded as elsewhere. The fishes with which Adam and his race were familiar are thereby almost wholly left out of God’s account of His creation. All we are told, on that hypothesis, is of fossil Saurians, the most anomalous in appearance of all the creatures whose remains have come to view, of which Moses knew as little as the children of Israel, however interesting to geologists in our day. Is it credible that the Holy Spirit inspired the law-giver to speak of wonders only intelligible in the nineteenth century, and to pass by without a word what they needed to know of the teeming creatures in the watery world?

As usual the hypothesis when considered seriously betrays its inherent unreality. The huge Saurians of the

Mesozoic were not marine only, as they ought to be if the record spoke of them; many of them were Pterosaurs of the land, some species even winged, though we cannot count Pterodactyls as birds. The inspired text therefore conclusively puts them all out of consideration. Here we read solely of the creatures with which the waters swarmed, of every living creature that moved there, each according to its species, as well as of those justly designated “the great” among the multitudes of smaller sea-creatures; as also of “every winged bird” after its kind. The natural force and true aim of the revelation was to make known God’s work in that lower part of the animal kingdom, which is none the less the object of His care; and if one portion be of vast bulk, none the less was it His creature. The Adam family were called to own His hand and goodness in the whole.

The evident intention was to impress, on all that heed the written word, that the fifth day’s work embraced the entire circle of aquatic animals as well as all bird life known to mankind; not at all to acquaint them with a bygone system of animated nature, which sustained at the close of the Cretaceous period one of the most complete exterminations of species confessed by geologists. In fact too it is only in the Quaternary that Teliost Fishes as well as Birds find their culmination; of all allusion to which, though nearly affecting man, the mis-interpretation entirely deprives us. If on the contrary the inspired writer speak of what concerns man practically, with this agrees the expressed blessing of God, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” It also derives impressive confirmation from vers. 26, 28, where dominion over the fish of the sea is given to man, no less

than over birds of the air, and beast and cattle and all that creep on the earth. The only detail in fact is in setting forth the origin of what was actually put under man's rule; which certainly does not apply to Paleozoic, or Mesozoic, or Tertiary times.

Genesis 1:24, 25

It needs few words to prove that in the fifth day's work we vainly look for an exact correspondence with the Secondary or Mesozoic period. Fishes, even vertebrated fishes, had been created in abundance in Paleozoic time, and so before the Carboniferous age; also the earlier reptiles, chiefly Amphibian, preceded the age when they arrived at gigantic proportions and in every sphere, earth having its species no less than sea and air: Does this agree with the record which distinguishes its denizens, as of sea and air, from those that were only called into being on the following day, — which declares that every reptile of the earth belongs to the sixth, and not the fifth? Dinosaurs (including Megalosaurs, Iguanodons, Hylaeosaurs) being land reptiles stand opposed. Nor is this all. The absurdity of the periodic interpretation is that we are compelled to leave out the fishes proper, such as Adam knew and we, in order to make it fulfilled in Labyrinthodonts, Ichthyosaurs, Pterodactyls, &c. Birds had in no way their culmination, any more than Teliost Fishes, or even the higher insects, and Mammals, till the Quaternary of man. The Cetacea ("the great whales") again resist this expository violence. Expressly specified in the text as created on the fifth day, being water-creatures, they according to geology ought to belong to a far later epoch, as being of a high mammalian rank, and in no way to be classed

with even the small marsupials, &c., of an earlier day, though this again is not according to the record. The truth we have seen, in accordance with that of the four previous days, is that the fifth day's work contemplates the entire population of sea and air for man's world, and nothing else. Here as in every other case the ages of geology prove untenable when fairly examined. Apply the six days to Adam's time, and the balance is restored.

Exactly analogous for the land's inhabitants is the work of the sixth day. Does it really correspond with Cainozoic time before man, or the Tertiary age? The scripture gives manifestly and solely the land- creatures made for man and on the same day as man; geology is obliged to confess that "all the Fishes, Reptiles, Birds, and Mammals of the Tertiary are extinct species" (Dana, 518). Take the equine tribe alone: there was the Orohippus of the Eocene, the Anchitherium of the Meiocene, and the Hipparion of the Pleiocene. All passed away before the Quaternary, when the Equus Caballus exists for man's service. Even those who contend most keenly for nothing but secondary causes operating all through cannot deny the general extermination of species that closed Mesozoic time any more than the great disturbances that wrought repeatedly and similarly in the Tertiary age. Indeed geologists of eminence, who had nothing to do with theology and alleged prejudice, are constrained to allow that the elevation of the great mountain chains of Europe and Asia, as well as of America, only attained its full height about the close of that period, as well as the larger part of igneous eruption, with the usual destruction of systems of life in being previous to God's introducing a new one adapted to the fresh conditions.

“Chaos” is not a word any Christian need favour; but there was assuredly a fearful state of disorder that intervened, however brief the interval might have been. Do not geologists seem rash to deny that of which they are and must be ignorant? But all this was antecedent to the six days. The believer absolutely subject to God’s word can calmly accept every ascertained fact, assured that every work of God agrees with His word. But hypotheses are another thing and open to criticism, especially where we see plain symptoms of infidelity open or underlying.

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creature (lit. soul) after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the field after its kind. And it was so. And God made beast of the earth after its kind, and the cattle after its kind, and every creeping thing of the ground after its kind. And God saw that [it was] good” (vers. 24, 25).

Where is the analogy even here with the age of Mammals, as the Tertiary has been well designated? If we add according to scripture the creation of man on that same day, the system is not only different but even in contrast. The simple truth intended is that we have in these verses the land population of all kinds for the period of the human race; as before we had that of the waters and of the air, after the vegetable provision, with the due establishment not of light only but of the heavenly phenomena.

To introduce the herbivores, the reptiles, and the carnivores into the text is to strain after a scientific gloss, besides failing to represent the sense in some respects if not in all. Compare Deut.. 28:26 for the very

first class. Reptiles again are too narrow, and so are the "carnivore," where "ferae" would express the truth more exactly. Nor is there real anachronism in giving "cattle" as the first named in verse 24, the domesticable if not yet domesticated animals, appropriate to the use of man. "Creeping thing" follows in its more literal application, whereas "moving" expressed more fully the action of the creatures that peopled the waters, so as to embrace not only serpents, etc., but insect life. "Animal of earth" designates the wild beast.

All of them are terms in constant usage where man lives and reigns; they do not distinctively define the age of Mammals where he was not, such as Anoplotheres, Chaeropotami, Dinotheres, Palaeotheres, Lophiodons, Xiphodons, etc. Pachyderms are no doubt included, but by no means so determined as to warrant a reference to the age in which they abounded. Indeed, at that time confessedly there was the almost total absence of the tribe of ruminants, which rose to prominence when man was made.

The language of the text does not really call up the period "when the brute species existed in their greatest magnificence, and brutal ferocity had full play," but the day crowned by the creation of man where material force fell into the shade before higher powers. In man's presence the greater birds and beasts that co-existed even become extinct; as notably the Moa of New Zealand, the Dodo of the Mauritius, and the Aepyornis of Madagascar; and again the Urus (or Bos primigenius) described in Caesar's Comm. de Bello Gall. 6:26, the great Irish Elk (or Megaceros), the Megatherium, the Mastodon, and the Mammoth. For the evidence points to their co-existence with man, some for but a little while,

others till recent time. The tendency has been to push man's age back on the assumption that only so could he have been coeval with them. But the facts are plain and sure enough, not only as to the first but even the last named also, that they existed with man for no inconsiderable time, and this if we accept the lowest reckoning of Biblical chronology. It seems the fashion just now to exaggerate as to time, placing the glacial season or seasons at an incredibly remote distance, and thus the gigantic creatures that perished then, and man also, judging from remains which indicate his hand. There is on the contrary strong and varied evidence, in the estimate of sober geologists, not committed to hypothesis, to show the recent date of the glacial period both in Europe and in America, and the sudden close of what is called "the drift," and the extinction of mammoths, etc.

The second part of the sixth day's work is too momentous to be touched here. This only may be remarked, how fitting it is that for Adam's time all animal and vegetable creation should arrive at the highest organisation, that the heavenly luminaries should do their regulative work in view of the race, that the seas and the land should be as a whole adequately settled, that the atmospheric conditions in supplies of water, vapour, dew, etc., should stand most favourably, with the bountiful and regular vicissitudes of night and day, for life more varied than ever before here below. Thus, if the geologic ages brought by divine power and wisdom a constantly rising state of the earth and of creatures suited to each new state, so, the six days connected with Adam and his world express rapidly succeeding divine fiats culminating in him, and in their

combination of respective goodness characterising that period in which the human race was called not only into being, but into responsibility before God. Other ages might be distinctively azoic; or the system of life might be ushered in with sea-plants, then with marine life of low type, then with fishes when the Vertebrates were made. Next, when dry land was fitted, such plants grew as would flourish and adapt it for higher ones, and, again, for living creatures that live on herbage, as well as prey one on another. So in geologic ages we can talk of the age of Acrogens, of Invertebrates, of Fishes, of Reptiles, and of Mammals. But the human period is characteristically that of all, not in their utmost profusion or in their greatest physical magnitude, but as the rule in their highest forms and also together in their respective places under their appointed ruler, God's vicegerent here below. For example, the Cereals attach to the human period, and depend pre-eminently on cultivation. Compare Isa. 28:28-29.

In each case we have God's word, the immediate and manifest result, and its excellence in His sight declared. Thus if the six days gave an immediate relation to Adam, the immense ages antecedent were on a vast scale preparatory; and geology, as one of its ablest exponents owns, "leaves wholly unexplained the creation of matter, life, and spirit, and that spiritual element which pervades the whole history like a prophecy, becoming more and more clearly pronounced with the progressing ages, and having its culmination and fulfilment in man."

Genesis 1:26, 27.

In day third we saw the distinct two-fold energy of the Creator; not only the waters gathered into seas, and the

dry land appearing, and this seen to be good; but the earth caused by His word to put forth grass, herb seeding seed after its kind, and tree yielding fruit, with its seed in itself after its kind, upon the earth, and this seen to be good. On the sixth day there is also a double action, and the second still more strikingly distinguished, as human life is brought into being, the highest of earthly natures (not as before vegetable life, the lowest of organised creatures) here below. The spheres had been fitted in divine wisdom and in the unfolding ways of God for the living beings that were to clothe and fill them with beauty, food, and fruit, to be followed duly by higher beings to profit by all that His provident goodness had prepared, all endowed with powers of constant reproduction, whether vegetable or animal. In a general way God had in the vast ages of which geology takes cognisance so wrought in creative energy, but without man as the centre of systems which successively appeared and fell. The days we have seen have special reference to man, who, on the sixth, follows and crowns the highest animals set under his rule.

“And God said, Let us make men in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over fish of the sea, and over bird of the heavens, and over cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created Man6 in his image, in God’s image created he him; male and female created he them” (vers. 26, 27).

Not only is man introduced with marked separateness from the previous creation of animals, even from those of the earth made on the same day, each “after its kind,” and all seen as “good,” but for the first time God enters into counsel with Himself for this great and absolutely

new work. It is no longer “Let there be,” or “Let the earth (or “the waters”) bring forth,” though man’s body is in its due place expressly said to have been formed of the dust of the ground. Here the language rises into appropriate grandeur and solemnity, “Let us make men.” Not a word about kinds of men, for there was but one; whatever people may have subsequently dreamt in their pride or in the selfish advantage they desired to take of their degraded fellows. Not a little was suffered afterwards in view of their hard-heartedness; but from the beginning it had not been so.

We shall hear yet more when we come to a fresh revelation, not of man’s creation as its head simply, but of the moral relations in which he is shown to have been set; but here there is ample evidence of the dignity conferred on the race. “Let us make men in our image, after our likeness.” Nothing is more opposed to the Bible than the anthropomorphism of Greek and Roman mythology, which degraded their deities to fallen males and females with like passions and lusts, and gave the sanction of religion to the basest immorality. And what philosophers of Greece or Rome ever ventured to claim so noble a prototype? Here Moses was inspired to give it as the holy declaration of the Creator. How far from the brute at length evolving man, a theory suggested by Satan to brutalise the race! It is the simple yet wondrous truth: not God brought down to the human level, but men alone created after a divine pattern.

A frequent question is raised as to the force of the terms and their precise shade of difference; for those are not to be heard who hide their ignorance under the assumption that both mean the same thing. The usage throughout the O. and N. Testaments seems to indicate

that “image” represents, and “likeness” resembles. Thus the “image” of the world-power in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream represented the succession of Gentile empires from first to last: likeness could not be the point. So it is “image” in the plain of Dura (Dan. 3), the proportions of which exclude a human figure, or the resemblance of any living creature. Whatever it might not be like, it definitely represented what the monarch commanded to be an object of worship. Again, in the N. T. the denarius our Lord asked for had on its face the image and superscription of Caesar. It might have been a faulty likeness, but was an indisputable image of the Roman imperator. It expressed his authority and represented his claim over the Jews because of their departure from God, ill as they liked to own either.

So men (ver. 26) are said to have been made in God’s image, after His likeness, as the former is emphatically repeated in ver. 27: not in His likeness, after His image. In God’s image is the truth insisted on, though here also man is declared to be made after or according to His likeness. To man only was it given to represent God here below. Angels are never called to such a place. They excel in might. They fulfil God’s word, they hearken unto the voice of His word. Yet no angel rules in His name, nor does he represent Him, as a centre of a system subjected to Him, and looking up to Him. But man was made to represent God in the midst of a lower creation dependent on him; though in order to be created in God’s image, he was also made “after His likeness,” without evil and upright. But even when through sin the likeness existed no more, he abode His image; however inadequate to represent God aright, he was still responsible to represent Him. Hence in Gen. 5:1, 2, we

read that God made man in His likeness; male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day of their creation But it is significantly added in ver. 3 that Adam begat in his likeness. Seth resembled his father, now fallen, as well as represented him. Again, when after the deluge animals were given for the food of man, blood was interdicted, and the most jealous care of human life insisted on; for in the image of God made He man. To kill him was rebellion against God's image, though a man was now anything but like God.

The N.T. fully sustains the same distinction far beyond Caesar's case already referred to. Thus the man in 1 Cor. 11 is distinctively called God's image and glory, as publicly representing Him; and Christ, the incarnate Son, is styled "image of the invisible God." His not being called "likeness" only confirms the truth. If so entitled, it would deny His deity. For He is God, instead of being only like God. Compare for the Christian now, Col. 3:10, as well as 2 Cor. 3:18; and for the glorious result, Rom. 8:29, and 1 Cor. 15:49.

On the other hand we must not confound the state of Adam unfallen with the new man which "after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." This is descriptive of the new creation, not of the first Adam state where all was mere innocence, but the knowledge of good and evil along with the power by grace which abhors evil and clings to good that is implied in righteousness and holiness of the truth. This is not nature, but supernatural in believers, who become partakers of a divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

Nevertheless, though Adam's state was far from that of which Christ is the risen Head, be evidently was made to have a portion, though a creature, above all the creation that surrounded him, "in God's image, after His likeness." How utterly false in presence of the Bible are the speculations of evolution, an hypothesis logically at issue with those fixed laws of nature which the same philosophers cry up to the exclusion of God! For how reconcile invariable law with change of species? The truth is that real science depends upon the uniformity of results, and consists in discovering and classifying them. This does not hinder variation through circumstances, failing which the original type returns.

Again, as natural science is essentially based on the reality and continuance of species, so it can give no account of origins. If honest, it admits there must be a cause, and an adequate one; but here, as science, it is and must be wholly ignorant. God's word alone reveals the truth; and of all reveries, none viler than the ignorance which refuses to learn and dares to defy divine revelation, by conceiving man a developed ape, fish, seaweed, or aught else. The truth is that primordial causes are beyond science; which, instead of honestly owning its ignorance, pretends to deny the creation which scripture clearly reveals. God alone could create; and He declares that He has done so, and in what order. Science would gladly learn if not sceptical; for its province lies in investigating effects, and cannot reach up to primordial causes, which it is of all moment to know if revealed. But we can only know them from God's testimony, which is simple if we were.

How worthy of God and cheering to man, turning from these freaks of spurious science, to weigh once more His

words! “Let us make men in our image after our likeness; and let them have dominion over fish of the sea and over bird of the heavens [the work of the day fifth] and over cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth [sixth day’s work]. And God created Man in his image, in God’s image created he him; male and female created he them.” How emphatically, it will be noticed, Moses says that God created the race. It was enough to say so once of the vast universe in ver. 1, when it was brought originally into being. Again, it was said to mark the introduction of animated nature, or at least of the aquatic Mammals, into the Adamic world in ver. 21. But here of Man it is repeated again and again to enforce the attention of all who tremble at God’s word. Not only was Man an unprecedented creature, but he had a place in God’s mind altogether peculiar, not merely in time on earth, but for all eternity. For the unfolding of this we must await other declarations of God’s mind. What is said here points to his creature place as originally set on earth by God. Even for the details of this we need chap. ii with its all-important supplement on the relations of Adam, where we have the key to the fact that Man was created “male and female,” as we are told here: a single pair, and even so, formed as none other ever was, that Man might be differentiated from every creature in earth or heaven. For immense consequences turn on that fact, which God took care to make good, and only He in the nature of things could reveal.

What can science as such say on a matter so profoundly interesting, and morally so important? Is it logical to deny whatever it does not know? For science to confess ignorance is no doubt humiliating. But is it reverent to

despise what God does know and has revealed? Alas! science knows nothing of faith any more than of piety or reverence. Were it content to assert only what it knows, and confess its ignorance of all beyond its own limits, it would do less mischief and speak more becomingly. Hewers of wood and drawers of water have a place useful if not dignified. Boasting is not seemly, save only in the Lord for all who trust Him.

Genesis 1:28

Thus we have seen Man, the race, created in God's image. No doubt, that this should be true, it was and must be after God's likeness in the absence of all moral evil. But it was emphatically a creation in God's image. Man was the last and chief creature here below, the only one in the heavens or the earth, whom scripture designates as made in God's image: a wondrously high distinction, with the grave responsibility of representing Him aright before others, as His delegated ruler. Not even the highest angel possesses such a place before the universe. Angels serve on account of those that shall inherit salvation.

But here, as we may easily stray, we need simple and entire subjection to the written word; and this we are most unlikely to have or court unless we have unwavering faith in it, as we certainly ought if we believe it inspired of God. This the apostle predicates, not merely of scripture generally as a known body of holy writings, but of everything coming under that designation, some of which had yet to be written. What can be conceived more precious and withal comprehensive, than πᾶσα γραφὴ, "every scripture," in 2 Tim. 3:16? He declares it to be, not only useful for the

various purposes of divine blessing to man, but before all God-inspired. All admit the human instruments; but if scripture be God-inspired in every part, it is certain that God is not a man that He should lie. And He has magnified His word above all His name.

Now there is a two-fold danger of misapprehending Adam's state and place while unfallen. We may exalt it beyond the truth by confounding it with what grace gives in Christ; or we may lower it by making it a question of such reasoning and conscience as man acquired by the fall. In his original state Adam stood in relationship with God in thankful use of all He gave, but liable to death on disobedience. It was in no way heaven held out if he obeyed, as will appear more fully by-and-by. The danger was of losing his first estate by transgression. But God imposed no such moral government as the law; nor had Adam the knowledge of good and evil till the fall. Man was not holy but innocent, and tested solely by prohibition as the simple test of obedience on God's part. It was a blessed creature's responsibility to obey with the threat of death on transgression.

By the fall man got the knowledge of good and evil, that is, the intrinsic perception of right and wrong apart from prescription; or as Jehovah Elohim said (Gen. 3:22), "Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil!" In Adam fresh from God's hand the knowledge of good and evil would have been a defect, a moral inconsistency, and therefore an impossibility. Before the fall he had conscience solely in the sense of responsibility to obey, not at all in the way of accusing or else excusing self. Only when he sinned, and thus lost his innocence, did he gain the moral power of knowing

good and evil of himself, hence forth his sad, painful, but most useful monitor. Before that, he was naturally enjoying divine goodness in its creative effects, under the test, not of resisting things intrinsically evil, but of a single restriction from God which made eating the forbidden fruit wrong: a state wholly different from ours. The fall changed for evil the whole ground of standing. Propitiation with life in Christ is a still deeper and higher change for good, even though in fact the old man yet abides and is altogether evil in itself. Christianity is no mere restoration of man, but eternal life in Christ and eternal redemption.

But unfallen Adam was in no way free in the sense of independence of God. He had indisputable title to act in what God subjected to him, but in nothing else. Obedience and dependence were due to God. All was good around him to enjoy: one thing was forbidden, and wrong because God forbade it, as a test of subjection to Himself. To act independently was to set self up as God, and thus in effect to set aside the true God. But this is sin, yea, apostasy from God, instead of walking as created in His image, after His likeness, the total opposite of Him, Who being God, became man, the image of the invisible God, come to do His will on earth where all else had failed.

And here it is that science, however interesting in its sphere and useful also, comes in so mischievously. At best it ignores man as God created him, because it only knows man as he is, fallen from his original relationship with God in nature; as it equally ignores man born anew, born of water and of the Spirit, because the new birth is supernatural. This ignorance falsifies scientific ideas and reasonings. For instance, that knowledge of good and

evil of which scripture speaks as a consequence of the fall, or a moral sense as men call it, is assumed to be the highest ethical constitution that has survived the fall! But there was this immense difference that, while of course God knew good and evil, it was as One unassailable by evil and supremely above it in His own nature: man only acquired it by sin and in subjection to the power of evil, and thus having it now in himself. The Lord Jesus on the contrary was the Word made flesh, born not innocent only but holy, rejecting evil always even when tempted as Adam and his sons never were, and at the end as a sacrifice dying for sins and to sin, that we who believe might live in Him risen, the life-giving Spirit, the Second man and Last Adam.

Now faith only, not science, recognises either the fall of the first man as affecting all mankind and the entire scene put under him, or the victory which God gives all who believe in Christ risen from the dead. Science accepts fallen man's estate as the only one, because it alone is the subject-matter of ordinary experience. It is therefore involved in difficulties necessarily insoluble, because it knows neither the sinless and happy state in which God originally set man, nor the righteous deliverance which the Lord Jesus gives to faith in God's love; still less the glory, power, and incorruption to be made good even for the dead, and for the mortal body, when He comes. Philosophy is either openly infidel or vainly essays to conciliate, with a God of power and goodness, a world of sin, suffering, misery, and death. Were creation truly believed and the fall honestly confessed, the main difficulty vanishes; absolutely so, when God's love is read in the gift of His Son incarnate and suffering for the sinful world which crucified Him in

its unbelief of His glory and rejection of His grace and truth. But science as such starts with the world and man as they are, ignoring his moral disorder and the effect of this on what was subjected to him; and cannot rise above the facts it discovers in the perceived course of nature, but may deduce its laws so called. God only could reveal creation. His word alone tells how man fell from innocence in first estate into sin and death, and dragged down with him all the inferior creation.

Science in its very nature is incapable of rising to this knowledge infinitely more important as it is than all it can make known or even discover, however ample the field in nature may be. For revelation speaks of three broadly distinct conditions: creation unfallen; creation as it is in guilt, and misery, whatever the resources of sovereign grace held out to faith; creation as it will be when all things are made new. Science occupying itself solely with the intermediate is in great danger of denying in dishonest pride what it cannot know scientifically, to the destruction of all who trust it, instead of the God Who gave His Son in love to save sinners who repent and believe the gospel.

But to return, we read, “And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over fish of the sea and bird of the heavens, and over every living thing that creepeth on the earth” (ver. 28). Man, as Prof. Owen said, is the sole species of his genus, and the sole representative of his species.

This is the second benediction of creation. The first was when God made the creatures that peopled the waters and the air of Adam’s world, the earliest to enjoy animal

life in that state of things. God has pleasure in blessing His creatures that have a life even of a lowly kind to appreciate the fruits of His goodness, and especially in view of their reproduction and multiplying within their sphere. Here, a second time, He blessed mankind, male and female, of whom alone it is said, though the detailed difference is reserved for a subsequent and more fitting occasion. In verse 22 we have only “saying,” but here “God said to them, Be fruitful,” etc. Man was the depository of God’s revelation, as he ought to be His priest, and, as we have seen, His viceroy. This is more than the interpreter of nature, as one of our sages styled him. He had intercourse with God at once.

Language thus was in no way the slow invention of man’s wit, but an immediate endowment of our first parents by God from creation. Here His word assures us of its reality from the first day of man’s creation; and everything confirms in the chapters that follow. To imagine otherwise is to disbelieve the Bible and prefer one’s own thoughts or the dreams of other men, as if we or they could know anything about the matter. He Who alone knows all has been pleased to tell us the truth through Moses. His word was valid for the unintelligent creation: how comforting for the human pair to hear Him say, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it! Even though man comes in as a creature with the rest, still he is introduced exceptionally as the crown of creation; and the higher creatures are pronounced good separately from man, who is blessed, male and female, in an address to them as at the head of all the rest.

Then comes the proclamation of the rule assigned them by God. Not only were they, like others, to multiply and

fill the earth, they were to subdue, or bring it into subjection. Next He adds as before, “and have dominion over fish of the sea and over bird of the heavens, and over every living thing that creepeth on the earth.” Thus from the outset was man, even when enumerated as a being fresh from God, set apart essentially. None other was to subdue the earth. He alone had the God-given capacity. He alone was called to have dominion. Development in the Darwinian sense is not only an illusion, but at plain issue with the word of God. A striking and practical proof of the reality of this dominion as far as every beast and every bird was given to Adam (Gen. 2:19) when Jehovah Elohim brought them to see what their lord would call them; and whatever he called each living soul (or, creature), that was its name: a fact full of interest otherwise on which some remark will fall in its season. Be was owned by God in that place of authority which entitled him to give each subject creature its name.

For the present, however, we do not notice more than the singular evidence here afforded of real intelligible language communicated from the very first to the head of the race. Adam had it in perfection, like the other properties of full growth, the day he was created. Doubtless in this he differed from all that sprang from him in due time and to this day who have to learn. But here God created worthily of Himself; and even infidels own that there must have been primeval causes for all that exists, of which science can give no account. It can at most only say “must be,” not “is.” For its fixed laws are only gathered from the constant course of things; and such a course supposes the “things that appear” to have gone on long enough for men to observe the order

of nature which they thus designate. An originating first cause is no less certain; also the phenomena need time for that regular course which they describe by “laws of nature.”‘ Eternal self-existence belongs only to God, not to the creature; and none so negligent or perhaps rebellious as geologists, if they forget how often God intervened to create as well as to destroy in a way irreconcilable either with chance or with fate. But these are the characteristic mainsprings of Epicureanism on the one hand and of Stoicism on the other, the two chief opposing systems of ancient philosophy (Acts 17:18) as of modern under new names. Without creation and the fall, man can account for nothing aright; but for knowing either we need faith, as well as their revelation, which some in their infatuation pronounce impossible. These men confessedly can make known their evil ideas to their fellows; but God, they argue, cannot communicate His good word! What is possible with men seems to their unbelief impossible with God! Could folly sink lower? Creation must be a miracle; but miracles must not be. Has not the nineteenth century settled it for ever.

Here also natural religion betrays its inherent insufficiency and falseness. For it never truly feels or acknowledges the fall, even if it borrow creation as a tradition from the Bible. If it estimated the ruin aright, it would own the necessity of divine revelation and of salvation by grace, yea of a Saviour able to meet God in righteousness, no less than man in grace. But it takes the ground of making out a righteousness of its own, supplemented by God’s mercy to cover all faults and deficiencies. Impossible for any soul to find satisfaction thus. For on one side he acknowledges a Creator God of power and goodness infinite: on the other he faces a

world and race of sin, evil, wretchedness, and death, to say nothing of a judgment he could not but dread. The strongest and clearest mind is lost in this labyrinth; and human efforts on the religious side of superstition are as vain to clear it up and present the truth and purge the conscience as the profane speculations and self-contradictory antinomies of philosophy. Human religion only hardens men in their naturally false thoughts of God as either austere or easy-going. Philosophy (in its struggles to escape the inconsistencies inevitable to a fallen estate, which is not confessed to God with a broken heart) only darkens more deeply what is already dark, and ends too often by the mental endeavour to deny the God Whom sin and unbelief have made unknown, save in the qualms of conscience.

No! man was made to look up, not physically alone but morally, in dependence on God the source and giver of all goodness. He sought independence by sin, and gained a conscience already bad, which made him look down, while his pride still pretended to everything. He had lost God and departed from Him, and (being wholly insufficient to abide self- sustained) set his mind on the creature below himself so as at length even to deify it. The Son of God emptied Himself by taking the form of a bondman, being made in the likeness of men, and humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto the death of the cross; where God was glorified as to sin by propitiation for it, and the ground laid for the righteous salvation of all who believe. A man-god was Satan’s bait and man’s ruin. The God-man dying in obedience and for redemption is the triumph of truth and grace.

Genesis 1:29-31.

The closing notice remains, the economy of the primeval creation, and the divine estimate of it all.

“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb producing seed that [is] upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which [is] the fruit of a tree producing seed: to you it shall be for food; and to every animal of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, in which [is] a living soul, every green herb for food. And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold [it was] very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day” (vers. 29-31). Man has still his distinctive place in God’s commission and plan; but it is in the state of innocence. After the fall came in corruption and violence. Animal life was not permitted to man till after the deluge. Herbs and fruit were given at first to man, and to the subject creation every green herb. Death was not in the Adamic earth till sin. Granted that Rom. 5:12-21 does not go beyond the human race as fallen under death through sin; but Rom. 8:19- 22 looks at “all the creation” as ruined through the fall of its head. Neither scripture raises any question about states of the earth anterior to Adam. We have seen in Gen. 1:1, 2, the general principle of a previous condition called into being and destroyed; which, as far as it goes, leaves room for death by one means or another among the then animals. In no previous conditions was there man existing, still less the great moral trial of Adam the first head, and the varied dispensations of God, till through the last, the risen Adam, God gives those who believe the victory. Whatever gradual approach may have been made before, the six days describe the

formation of that platform where man would be tested in every way according to divine wisdom, and God was in due time to bring in Christ, His Son, become man to glorify Him, not only in obedience but in redemption, and a wholly new and everlasting creation only as yet come in the person of its glorious Head on high. The words of God here spoken are in view of man and earth yet unfallen.

Here experience is necessarily at fault. For only the Bible could give us the truth as to the primitive phase of man and the creatures around him. But it at once approves itself, when revealed, as being the sole conceivable state in which the Creator could have placed creation and its head suitably to His own goodness. Hence the force and moral beauty of His final survey in the last verse. “And God saw everything that he had made (i.e., in the Adamic earth), and behold, it was very good.” So with the one exception of day second had He called each thing “good”; now as a whole it was superlatively so in His eyes.

Yet the unbeliever, scientific or not, is misled by his abuse of experience about a time where he cannot have a tittle of evidence to contradict scripture, and imputes to God, if he allow there is One, such a world as would be the production of a fiend, not of the Only True God. Even on his own ground it is the grossest assumption to assume that at the beginning (and science is now compelled to own there must have been a beginning) things were as they now are. It is illogical, as well as infidel, to take for granted that the present state is a normal one, or that God made men sinful, vain, proud, selfish, to say nothing of more abominable outbreaks; that He left men indifferent, so as to become heathen or

Jews, Mahometans or Christians, of any religion or of none, without guidance or proof. It is evident that the state of the world is offensive to God; and that it has been so since man left records more or less credible. This is a fact, Bible or no Bible.

But the Bible alone, unlike every other testimony, gives us the simplest, clearest, and fullest explanation, in a few words, how all came to pass. God made man upright, surrounded by every thing “very good” yet under trial of obedience, as we shall soon hear definitely, but he departed from God through the wiles of the enemy in the face of solemn warning, He sinned and thus introduced death for himself and his posterity, and “subjected to vanity” the creation put under him. But God, when tracing the evil to its source, has proved His goodness by holding out the assurance of a Conqueror over the enemy, even while suffering Himself, to be born of woman too. And to this word all believers from the fall clung till He came Who made it good in His death on the cross and in His resurrection.

Thus does God from the first proclaim mercy rejoicing over judgment, though sin bore its sorrowful fruits in an outcast race and a blighted world, where no creature is as God made it. It is science, not scripture, which here as elsewhere, brings in difficulties even for believers.

But Sir J. W. Dawson in his Archaia, 217-222, raises questions which are certainly not solved, though brought by himself, a very competent geologist, “into the light of our modern knowledge of nature.” He pictures Eden either cleared of its previous inhabitants or not yet invaded by animals from other centres! He supposes man created then with a group adapted to his

happiness (Gen. 2:19, etc., treating of them only), and these latest species of animals and plants extending themselves within the spheres of older districts, so as to replace the ferocious beasts of older epochs and other regions! He fancies that on the fall the curse that befell the earth would thus consist in the predaceous animals with thorns and briars invading his Eden. Most of my readers will have heard more than they wish of notions as irreconcilable with scripture as derogatory to it. How can the excellent Principal of M'Gill College have indulged in such speculations? Evidently because being sure, too sure, of his geological scheme, he accommodates scripture to it: a position not very wise scientifically where so much is continually shifting and so little is absolutely ascertained — a position most antagonistic to a Christian's faith in God's word. He is not entitled geologically to assume a mixture of the conditions of the Tertiary with those of the human period in the Quaternary. His theory of day-ages exposes him to these consequences, along with the recently adopted fashion of opposition to A D'Orbigny's careful and exhaustive proof in his "Prodrome de Stratigraphique Palaeontologie,"7 that not a species of plants or animals survived the Tertiary, and that a distinct break preceded man's time as often before.

And what is the alleged ground in scripture? "Man was to rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the b'hemah or herbivorous animals. The carnivorous creatures are not mentioned, and possibly were not included in man's dominion"! But this is distinctly refuted by ver. 30, which expressly assigns every green herb to "every beast " or animal of the earth. The same text proves that at this time "every animal in the earth

was herbivorous," though it is boldly laid down that this cannot be meant. Nor should any believer question the past fact, if assured by inspired prophecy that the day is coming, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard lie down with the kid, when the cow and the bear shall feed, their young lying down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. Here undoubtedly science will decry and scoff; but he who believes (as Dawson does) the unfallen state of Adam and his Eden, if not his earth, is inconsistent in curtailing his rule to a petty domain. The apostle, we have seen, interprets his headship of creation in general, whatever modern geology may pronounce to the contrary.

Philologically too, it is quite an error that b'hemah, though expressing "cattle," is limited as is here imagined. Any good Hebrew Concordance will show the most unlearned that it is frequently employed in the largest sense and rightly rendered "beast" in both the Auth. and the Rev. Versions. Compare Gen. 6:7, Gen. 7:2 twice, 8, Gen. 8:20, Gen. 34:23, Gen. 36:6: Ex. 8:17, 18, Ex. 9:9, 10, 19, 22, 25, Ex. 11:5, 7, Ex. 13:2, 12, 15, Ex. 19:13, Ex. 20:10, Ex. 22:10, 19. It occurs at least 25 times in this sense in Leviticus, 8 times in Numbers, and 7 times in Deuteronomy; so often in the historical books, in the Psalms and in the Prophets, where the sense of "cattle" is in fact rare.

This then is God's account of His creation, and in detail of the Adamic earth. No wise man will wonder that we are conducted silently over the vast and successive platforms of dead plants and animals, to say nothing of the debris of rocks, under water and heat. Here we have a system of life rising up, not by any necessity, but by divine power, wisdom, and goodness, to beings

constituted chief of creation and made in His image after His likeness, before sin brought in death and every woe on the guilty and all subject to them: a system where our feeble eyes cannot fail, save blinded by wilful evil, to see it everywhere, above, around, below, filled with contrivances that disclose the omniscient designs and the inexhaustible benevolence of the omnipotent Designer, yet in no case absolutely, but with a view to moral government, the effects of which afford a handle of objection to those who refuse that divine word which reveals good then and still higher purposes of grace in Christ for all who believe. Even in the lowest point of view, well may we at this place exclaim with the psalmist, “These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give [them] their meat in due season: [that] thou givest them, they gather. Thou openest thine hand; they are filled with good” (104:27, 28).

Genesis 2:1-3.

These verses are really the necessary supplement and close of chap. 1, if we divide into chapters on a sound principle. It is well known that such a division, save in the Psalms, etc., has no authority and is not seldom erroneous. The new title given to God, Jehovah Elohim, indicates consistently a new subject, as will be shown in its place. Hitherto it is simply Elohim, the abstract name of the Creator. Here as everywhere the name has nothing whatever to do with the question of authorship, as ignorant unbelief has suggested with misplaced confidence, but springs exclusively from internal reasons, as may be seen throughout scripture to much interest and instruction.

“And the heavens and the earth and all their host were finished. And God had finished on the seventh day 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 on it he had rested from all his work which God had created in making” (or, and made, lit. to make) (vers. 1-3).

The last is without doubt a remarkable phrase, falling in naturally with what we have seen in the opening verses, an original creation where man was not, succeeded by catastrophe, and by fresh creative energy, the details of which refer to the scene where and when man was to be brought into being. Here the work and the rest of God are in clear view of the race; and the seventh day or sabbath has immense importance. On its first mention it was unmistakably the witness of God’s rest: His rest, not from weariness of course, but from the work of creation and making. This work was now ended for the life that now is. And as the six preceding days were literal, so is the seventh the closing day of the week.

This is amply and strictly confirmed by Ex. 20:1-11. The sabbath is not a but the seventh day, the memorial of creation finished — of the Adamic world. “For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; therefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it.” The language is precise. It is not said “created” but “made.” This was the right phrase as a whole for the work of the six days, however well creating is said of parts within that work. It was not the original production but a special construction of divine will and power with man in view. That the seventh day is the sabbath is with

equal care impressed in Deut. 5:12-15, though the connection of heart here is with the deliverance from bondage in the land of Egypt rather than with creation.

Nor is there a commandment on which scripture laid greater stress, when the law was bound on the sons of Israel, than that of the sabbath. All the others were moral in a sense which this was not; for of their own selves they could not but feel and own the duty. But the hallowing of the sabbath was of God's initiation exclusively, and singularly marked out for His people that they should not even look to gather the manna on that day. His honour was pre-eminently identified with its observance; and so was His blessing.

For us, Christians, the first day of the week, and not the sabbath, is characteristic. That only is to us the Lord's day, as the day of His resurrection, and the witness of our accomplished redemption and of the power of His life as risen from the dead, and our life. It is accordingly as much marked by the new creation and grace as the sabbath day was by the six-days creation and the law. Yet, though we have to do with the Lord on the first day, as the N.T. makes plain in manifold ways, the sabbath is not done with but will assuredly re-appear, when Zion arises from her long slumber in the dust, and the light of Jehovah shines in Israel for the universal blessing of the earth and the nations, as it never did even in the days of David and Solomon; so the prophets proclaim, and scripture cannot be broken.

Ours meanwhile is a higher call and a brighter hope; for we are by the Holy Spirit united to Him Whom Jew and Gentile crucified, Whom God not only raised but set at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all

principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; we are the body of the glorified Head. Those who had the sabbath, as a sign between them and Jehovah, rejected their own Messiah, Who, slain by the bands of lawless men, lay in the grave that sabbath, “high” or great day as it emphatically was It was the sin and the death of Israel, the ground of a still more terrible scattering than that of Assyria or of Babylon; yet in God’s grace the divine and only efficacious means to faith of blotting out that sin and every other; as we prove who believe the gospel, while hardening in part has befallen Israel. But all Israel shall be saved by-and-by; and when they are, from one moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Jehovah. We now by the Spirit sent down from heaven draw near by faith within the holiest, and this with boldness by the blood of Jesus. Of our peculiar blessing the first day, not the seventh, is the witness. Nor can lack of Christian intelligence be more decided than confounding the Lord’s day with the sabbath.

But the seventh day is also decisively against the day periods. For what can be conceived more unnatural, save when we let a system of private interpretation carry us away alike from simplicity and from spiritual understanding? Till the days introduced Adam and his world, it could not be said that the heavens and the earth, still less “all their host,” were finished. Previous states of the creation had their importance; but till man and his congeners, animal and vegetable, there was a great lack. Neither on earth nor even in the heavens was there a creature made in God’s image or after His

likeness. This was not a little in itself as bringing in moral ways of and with man, and room for God's manifestation in promise and government, till the infinite fact of Immanuel, the Word made flesh, the Son of God a man, and His work no less infinite of redemption, yet to be the basis not only of the church's blessedness, as also of all saints and of Israel to come, but of the new heavens and new earth through all eternity.

What possible evidence from scripture that "the seventh day is the modern or human era in geology" (Archaia, 235)? or as the author of "Footprints of the Creator" puts it, "God's sabbath of rest may still exist; the work of redemption may be the work of His sabbath day!" Does it need the words of any one to refute such a reverie of self-destroying fancy? The scripture before us points out His rest as cessation from work, not merely from creation, but from "creating to make." No doubt, if six immensely protracted periods of several thousand years each were certainly meant by the six days, analogy would claim a proportionately lengthened term for the seventh. But the doctrine of God's word even then would be thrown into confusion. For sin violated the rest of creation; and as God could not rest in sin, so He would not in misery, its effect. This is not our rest: it is polluted.

The argument of Heb. 3, 4 is that, even though Messiah is come and the work of propitiation wrought, and we that believe do enter into the rest of God, we are only as yet in the day of temptation in the wilderness. Hence we are exhorted to fear lest any might seem to have failed, and to use diligence to enter in. A sabbatism, then, remains to the people of God. It is not yet come. It is the

day of glory and not before, when God has no more work to do, all being done so perfectly that He can rest for ever. So our Lord pleaded to those who indulged in somewhat similar imagination in His day, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” But work and rest are in contrast. Hence our Lord did on the sabbath what roused the enmity of the Jews implacably. God’s rest was in no true sense come. He must work in grace, yea, the Father and the Son; and this has been done beyond all thought of the creature, and God is glorified thereby; yet the rest remains for another day.

But that work, infinitely acceptable and efficacious, is the very opposite of His rest, though the foundation of it. Meanwhile the heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ are being called; the delay, the long-suffering of God, is salvation; and the people of God must be by faith fitted to enjoy His rest. In due time they will enter in, in heaven and on earth. But it still remains; it is not yet come. The idea of a sabbath from Adam till now is a dream wholly antagonistic to all revealed truth. It will be at the end when God makes all things new, and the first things have passed away. This is in the fullest sense the rest of God, not the morning cloud that enveloped the entrance into Canaan, nor the dew that passed so early away in Eden. They were but shadows. The reality is to come, the true rest of God. There cannot be rest and work at the same time in the same sense. To view the sabbath or rest of God as contemporaneous with His work is to be in a mist and to lose completely the truth of both in strange fancifulness.

The absurdity which thus inevitably attaches to the age-day theory is proved by no consideration more clearly than by the seventh day or sabbath. That the natural day

is meant is only the more evident from the fact that scripture leaves no room for a symbolic or age-lasting sabbath, after the Adamic world was made, but casts us only on its sure but still future dawn. It is “a promise left us” which the day of glory alone fulfils. Of this the sabbath, the natural day at the beginning, was the pledge, the blessed antitype, when God and the creature shall (by redemption and resurrection power) enjoy the communion of His own rest, sin, sorrow, and death completely effaced, and love, righteousness, and glory, triumphant for ever through our Lord Jesus. This the scriptures hold out abundantly and unambiguously; but an allegoric sabbath stretching over the fall and the deluge, the kingdom of Israel and the Gentile world-powers (to say nothing of the law, the gospel, and the church), is a mere fiction of some few geologists speculative beyond the rest, for which not a word of revelation has ever been truly advanced.

Reviewing these papers attentively for reproduction in a small volume, I do not feel the need of adding many words. Scripture is to the believer absolutely reliable; and, in my judgment, it refuses to bend to philosophic speculation which is not true science, but the guesswork of some scientists assuming to theorise on what is unknown to science and therefore illegitimate. In such schemes generally proper creation is denied, and evolution of matter (perhaps eternal matter) takes the place of God calling the universe into being as in Gen. 1:1. Next, the state of disorder, so necessary in its results for man when brought into existence, is shown in ver. 2 and connected with the statement of original creation, because both preceded man’s world, and cover

the enormous periods of geologic time, not only when fossil remains make their records recognisable in themselves and distinguishable one from another, but the more vague Azoic age which preceded.

Hence the least offensive of these schemes, as Prof. Dana's, is not only without, but opposed to, scripture in assuming an original nebula. For this disagrees with both the first verse and the second of Gen. 1, and conceives the third to mean the earth as a globe of molten rock, like the sun in brightness and nature, enveloped in an atmosphere containing the dissociated elements of the future waters and whatever else the heat at the surface could evaporate. Such is the first era of philosophic conjecture. A second went forward until first the earth became centrally solid. Long after, a crust was formed outside; and the vapours of the atmosphere were condensed, and a watery envelope made. A third age, or continuation, followed, so as to admit of the simplest forms of vegetable life, and of the crust increasing by contraction, aided by disintegration of the rock, by exposure, to the ocean; and so began the earth's supercrust — the only part of the earth's structure within the reach of direct investigation. As the first introduction of vegetable life is the fourth age, the display of the systems followed in the four grand types of the animal kingdom in the fifth; and in the sixth, Mammals, and Man.

Analogy, with the chief periods of geological time, is admitted. But it is only a measure of analogy as a whole. We have seen on conclusive evidence that the inspired record will not bend to the assumption, either that the first verse of Gen. 1 is a summary of the chapter, or that ver. 2 contains the original order of creation, instead of

being a state of confusion into which, for the wisest purposes to come, the earth was thrown. He created it not a waste (compare Isa. 14:18). Both verses are incompatible with the hypothesis, fashionable for the moment, that man's world like himself goes forward with a progress steady in the main and slowly advancing to comparative perfection. Nor is the periodistic reading of the days due to the text itself or any light of the Holy Spirit afforded by other scriptures, but to the overbearing influence of unbelieving geologists who take almost equal pleasure in parading the prevalent scheme of their science as absolutely settled among all the intelligent, and in perplexing Christians too easily allured or alarmed, who forthwith set about to adjust the language of Holy Writ to the alleged exigence of modern scientific results. Yet the enormous changes, not merely through the better ascertainment of important facts, but in the abandonment of fundamental principles by one so influential as the late Sir C. Lyell, ought assuredly to impress the need and the value of creation; especially as the change was a yielding to the sceptical spirit of the day, betraying animus against scripture, not to say contempt for all it teaches of man's comparatively recent origin, as well as the utmost self-confidence in that uniformitarianism which logically shuts out God and denies creation in any real sense.

Now, speculate as people may on Gen. 1 - 2:8, it will scarcely be contested that God in the words of Ex. 20 did not adopt the language of poetry or philosophy but laid down moral principles in the most liberal and unambiguous terms. What then means His fourth commandment to Israel? "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy

work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God. For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day," etc. (vers. 8-11). The accuracy of the inspired word is so much the more to be noticed, as so many commentators wrongly refer to it as "created" instead of "made:" exactly agreeing with the remarkable phrase that closes the account in Gen. 2:3, which combines, yet distinguishes, "all his work which Elohim created to make." Whatever particulars might properly be called creating within the six days, the comprehensive term which embraced the whole is expressly "made" in contradistinction to the equally proper term "created" in Gen. 1:1. Can any nicety of speech more manifestly confirm the interpretation of the days in Genesis as meant exclusively in their ordinary and historical sense? The six days are God's work in view of man; on the seventh is His rest, the pledge of a better and enduring one, based on the redemption of the Second man, and issuing in glory for heavens and earth, and above all for those who by grace believe. Need one say more?

1 "Without form" is hardly exact, for all matter must have form, but desolate or disordered it may be made subsequently. "To become" (not "be") is the force of the verb in some twenty places in this chapter.

2 Without any pretension to dogmatise on science, it is curious to find how these oracles disagree. For the nebular theory in La Place's "Exposition du Système du Monde," the boast of modern science so vaunted against Genesis 1, supposes all the planets existing before the sun reached its actual condition. And Arago, Humboldt, etc., contend that the sun not only was but is a dark

globe, with a luminous atmosphere simply. Dr. A M'Caul also refers to the discoveries of Kirchhoff in proof that the earth was before the sun and had a light of its own. Why attach weight to any speculation about the solar system before the preparation of the earth for the race? The proper domain of science lies not in what has long passed away, but in the accurate classification of facts grouped under general laws that stand the test.

3 Sir J. W. Dawson, in his "Archaia," rejects the views represented by both Chalmers and Smith, but seems himself obscure as to the bearing of ver. 2. He is a believer; where, and when, does he then assign the occurrence of that unparalleled disorder? That scripture places it before the Adamic earth, and after the original creation, is an undeniable fact. It is easy to object if influenced by some loud-voiced materialists; but what is the truth? What saith the scripture? Geology has much to learn. Our call is to believe God, not to humour the lispings of an infant science. That immense and violent upturning was itself absolutely requisite for man about to be created subsequently.

4 There may be a question whether the peculiar phrase here does not mean the general term "sprouts" expanded into herbs and fruit-trees, as some learned men have inferred. The substantive has a wider meaning than "grass" which it frequently signifies; but I am not aware of any other application so extensive as to justify that generic forge. If meant here it is peculiar.

5 This must not be confounded with a shorter word, which would seem to mean jackals. When a land monster is expressed by the word in the text, it means a dragon or serpent.

6 The race, Man, which as it has the article in Hebrew, is thus distinguished from the anarthrous noun, has a name derived from the ground out of which man was taken. The context confirms the plural sense also.

7 Trois Volumes, Victor Masson, Paris; also his “Cours élém. de pal. et de Géol. strat.” 2 vols. Perhaps no recent author has combined to the same degree mastery over both zoology and geology with the fullest scope of practical observation. Such a man’s positive testimony is entitled to unusual respect.

Exodus 1-3:22

Introduction

There can hardly be a greater contrast than between the first book of Moses called Genesis, and the second called Exodus. For the former is the book of beginnings, and hence exhibits the most striking variety, so as to present the germs of almost all the truths or topics expounded in other books of scripture-creation, relationship with God and one with another, temptation and fall of man, revelation of grace and the enemy's defeat, sacrifice, and sonship in faith and without it, the world, etc. It is needless to pursue here what is manifest, and fully explained in its own place.

But in the abundance of Genesis one vast truth is not included, redemption. It is the characteristic subject which fills the book of Exodus: first, the evil and wretched state of God's people which called for it from God; second, the accomplishment of it, as far as the type went; and, third, the blessed consequence of it in God's dwelling in the midst of the redeemed.

In the earlier chapters we are told of the oppression which befell Israel at the hand of Egypt, ever harder as they grew and multiplied (Ex. 1). God meets the faith of the parents of Moses, and preserves the life of the destined deliverer, when exposed, by the daughter of the king who was bent on their destruction. But even Moses must learn to wait on God for His time and way when his own energy proved abortive (Ex. 2); yet, even then faith is proved superior to providence which gave what looking to God gave up. And Moses learned in the desert

what the wisdom of Egypt could not teach. There appeared to him Jehovah's angel in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bramble bush, and announced His coming down through him to deliver His people out of Egypt (Ex. 3). As distrustful now as before bold, Moses receives the signs of the serpent-rod, the leprous hand, and the river's water become blood, as his signs of divine commission, with Aaron as mouthpiece, and gets Jethro's consent for his return to Egypt with his wife and sons (Ex. 4). But Pharaoh vents his pride and unbelief in the rudest rejection of Jehovah's demand through His envoys; and the oppression is made cruelly heavier: no straw now, yet the tale of bricks undiminished, so that they were worse off than ever (Ex. 5). On the remonstrance of Moses, the God-Almighty of the fathers reveals Himself by His covenant name of Jehovah to their sons, though they listened not through anguish; and Moses confesses his despair (Ex. 6).

Pharaoh's obdurate heart was made harder still, and the plagues begin. Their boasted river and waters everywhere are turned into blood (Ex. 7). The frogs emerge from the smitten waters and cover the land and their dwellings everywhere (Ex. 8). But the respite given only hardens the king more. And Jehovah turns the dust under the staff of Moses into gnats on man and beast, so that the scribes own the finger of God; but Pharaoh still rebels. Then dog-flies sent everywhere save in Goshen become a yet plainer judgment, and Pharaoh yields for the moment, but hardened his heart when the pressure was withdrawn. Next was sent (Ex. 9) the grievous murrain on Egypt's cattle, not on Goshen's; but Pharaoh's heart was stubborn, and he did not let the people go. Then the dread boil with blains fell on man as

well as cattle throughout Egypt, yet in vain. Next came such a violent hail and lightning and thunder as Egypt had never known, yet none befell Goshen. Pharaoh owned his wrong, but only for the moment. After this were sent locusts beyond precedent, so that Pharaoh's bondmen entreated, and himself called Moses and Aaron in haste to ask forgiveness. But darkness to be felt for three days in Egypt, while Israel had light in their dwellings followed his impenitence (Ex. 10), and one more plague must come, the death of every firstborn of man and cattle (Ex. 11) from Pharaoh to his meanest slave.

But this night of passover had quite another character for Israel. It was the foundation of their redemption through the blood of the lamb sprinkled on their two doorposts and the upper lintel. Within these they feasted on its body roast with fire and unleavened bread, eaten in haste with loins girt, sandals on feet, and staff in hand, on the month of Abib, once the seventh of the year, now the first of the sacred reckoning for Israel. It was an ordinance for ever on the fourteenth day at evening, with a feast till the one and twentieth, which forbade leaven on peril of cutting off. At midnight Jehovah executed judgment on man and beast and the gods of Egypt; and a great cry arose, for there was not a house in which there was not one dead (Ex. 12). And Pharaoh and the Egyptians rose to bid Israel depart, long since, as now, laden by the favour of their neighbours with raiment, and silver and gold utensils abundantly. Then most impressively did Jehovah lay it on Israel to remember that day of death for Egypt's firstborn, and therefore sacrificing to Him every firstling

of males, breaking the ass's neck, unless ransomed with a lamb, and ransoming their own firstborn (Ex. 13).

Yet God led His people about lest they should be discouraged; and Jehovah went before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, so that they could go day and night. Not even then did Pharaoh bend to God. Redemption would have its type of power in the final destruction of the foe, as well as by atoning blood which is the deepest for the soul before God. This was not for the Egyptians but for Israel. It was a question for sin before Him; and the lamb's blood alone secured him that was within the blood-sprinkled door. If they partook of a lamb's body, it was eaten with bitter herbs and with unleavened bread. Self was judged. Repentance accompanied faith. Jehovah saw the blood, and passed over according to His estimate of its worth which is perfect for each, as ours could not be: we rest therefore on His value for it, which is the essence of faith.

Exodus 14 typifies not Christ's blood sprinkled for Jehovah's eye on the night of judgment, but His death and resurrection for the deliverance of the redeemed, who now sing of His salvation and the destruction of His foes. Thenceforward is the proper journey of His own across the desert for the mountain of His inheritance, the place that Jehovah has made His dwelling, who shall reign for ever and ever, but guided already to the abode of His holiness, the fruit of redemption. Yet they prove the trials and the mercies of the way, three days without water, and the water, even when found, too bitter to drink; but the wood cast in by Jehovah's direction makes it sweet; and is followed by the ample refreshment of twelve wells and seventy palm trees (Ex. 15). In Ex. 16 the bread from above is shown to precede and mark the

sabbath; as in Ex. 17 the living waters from the smitten rock strengthen for conflict with Amalek, wherein the victory depends on the uplifted hand of the mediator. Grace meets every fault, which at other times called for judgments. This closes in Ex. 18 with the picture of divine government which is only realised when Messiah reigns.

All changes in Ex. 19. where the people, heedless of such grace and confiding in their fidelity, accept the condition of law to their ruin, whilst its terrors begin with darkness, and lightning, thunder, trumpet, and the voice more terrible than all to the sinner. And God spoke His ten words (Ex. 20), and set out His judgments (Ex. 21-23) not without better things in type. Yet in Ex. 24 the legal covenant with death as the penalty was sealed with the sprinkled blood; and the elders ate and drank before Him. But Moses draws into higher access to see the pattern of the sanctuary, pledges too of the good things to come. After the heave-offering of the material, we have the ark with the mercy-seat prescribed, the table, and the lampstand, and their appurtenances in Ex. 25; the tabernacle itself with its curtains, loops and clasps, its coverings of goat's hair and of ram's skins, the boards too and the bars, with the veil of the innermost and the entrance curtain (Ex. 26). But we may remark for our profit that Ex. 27 closes this portion with the great altar of burnt-offering and the court around it, and the command to bring oil for the lamps continually.

Then follows in Ex. 28, 29 the order of consecration of the priesthood, Aaron and his sons; and only then in Ex. 30 the golden altar of incense figuring Christ in His sweet savour in the light of the Spirit manifested perpetually, and the people identified by redemption

with it, though unable to enter the holiest as we can; and next the laver for purification if there was failure, the washing of water by the word; the holy anointing oil, and the fragrant drugs for the sanctuary. These were all associated with the priesthood for maintaining feeble man in accordance with His relationship to God; whereas the types preceding the order for consecrating the priesthood were to manifest God in Christ for man's blessing in the knowledge of Him.

In Ex. 31 we have Jehovah calling and qualifying men for the work; and the sabbath anew associated with it; and the tables of stone given to Moses. But who can adequately tell the horror of Israel's departure from God in Ex. 32! who the guilty weakness of Aaron, saint of Jehovah, or the anguish of Moses! The broken tables declare it, and the avenging sword of Levi's sons, and the intercession of Moses, willing to be blotted out for Israel. Nor will he let Him go (Ex. 33) without His presence; as he had already pitched the tent outside the camp and called it the Tent of meeting whither every one that sought Jehovah went outside the camp. And Jehovah asked for fresh tables (Ex. 34), and came down before Moses' face, revealing Himself as Jehovah governmentally in mercy and long-suffering but by no means clearing the guilty, under this mediation of Moses, and not under law simply as such. How much goodness was here added! Yet this is what 2 Cor. 3 treats as the ministry of death and condemnation! Privileges of divine goodness aggravate our guilt if we are under law but cannot deliver us from its curse.

In Ex. 35 the sabbath is again enjoined; and the work goes forward in Ex. 36-39, till on the first day of the first month (in Ex. 40) all is set up in order, and in every part

of it, and Moses did all “As Jehovah had commanded Moses.” The oil anointed it wholly. It was thus not only the fruit of redemption but in the power of the Holy Spirit, and in figure God’s habitation.

“And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went forward in all their journeys. But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day when it was taken up. For the cloud of Jehovah was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.”

It is a redeemed people’s privilege and responsibility to look up for, and act under, the guidance of God in their walk through the wilderness.

Chapter 1 - Israel In Egypt

Ex. 1:1-7

It was a wondrous act of grace when the God of glory called Abram in Ur of the Chaldees to Himself. The fathers of the chosen race no less than the accursed of Canaan then “served other gods:” a then new and destructive evil, striking directly at God’s truth and honour, of which we never hear in scripture till after the deluge. In the early days of Seth, particularly from the birth of his son whom he called Enosh with a due sense of what man is now, frail and mortal, we know that people began to call on the name of Jehovah. Eminent among those who believed later were Enoch and Noah; but all these walked with God where they were. Their spirit was separate to Him whom they knew by His word and Spirit, and they looked onward in confiding hope for Him, the mysterious Seed of the woman who should

crush the enemy of God and man. They, or some, called on Jehovah's name with a reality which a new nature alone gives.

But idolatry as an open affront to God could be met by nothing less than His call to open separation unto Himself, not only from the nearest ties of kin and nature but also from the providential order He had Himself lately set up in tongues, countries, and nations. His call was sovereign grace but imperative and paramount, with promises to an earthly seed and to a spiritual, only to be fully accomplished in Christ's day above and below. Oh how feebly realised meanwhile by faith!

As Abram went down into Egypt under natural pressure, so he was given to know in prophetic vision with a smoking furnace and a flaming fire, that his seed should be a sojourner in a land not theirs, and be in bondage and affliction four centuries, to emerge with great property and divine judgment on their oppressive masters, when the time approached to deal with Amorite iniquity (Gen. 15). Having come down under the prestige of Egypt's greatest governor and the warmest royal favour, Israel might have looked for nothing but ease and honour, settled as they were in the best of the land, in Goshen, the extreme province of Egypt toward the south frontier of Palestine. But spite of appearances Egypt in Jehovah's eyes betokened servitude and affliction; and so it came to pass when Joseph's bulwark no longer subsisted. The word of God abides, and cannot fail, whatever the weakness of man, or the pride of unbelief. For the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, and His word is the proof of His goodness toward man, and of counsels of grace and glory unfailing when man

comes to the end of his folly and sin, and the divine judgment is proved as sure as is His grace.

“And these are the names of the sons of Israel who came into Egypt: with Jacob came they, the man and his household, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; Dan and Naphthali; Gad and Asher. And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls; and Joseph was in Egypt [already]. And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed and multiplied and became exceeding strong; and the land was filled with them” (vers. 1-7).

Egypt was the providential nursery provided for the chosen race whilst growing up from a great patriarchal family, the sons and sons’ sons of one father, into a people for their destined inheritance. They were sheltered mercifully for a season, that they might grow all the more under adversity when it came, as it must, under man’s antipathy to any who claimed relationship with the true God, not without dread as we shall soon find.

Let none deem it carping or unkind criticism, if I cite the words of so excellent a Christian as M. Henry in order to save souls from following him where he shows his utter ignorance of God’s church, which he confounds, one while with the saints before or during or since Israel, and as here with Israel as such. This is to ignore all the N.T. light on what is found exclusively there, and impossible to exist alongside of Israel, which supposes the middle wall of partition to have God’s sanction; whereas He took it down as an essential act for the being of the church, wherein is neither Jew nor Greek,

but Christ is all and in all. The family of faith again was a fact throughout the world's history, and independent of it with increasing degrees of light from God. But the church of God was a wholly new thing, which only began with the Jew's rejection of the Christ, whom God raised and exalted to His right hand, and then and there gave Him to be Head over all things to the church which is His body.

Judge then the profound lack of intelligence in these words which open his Exposition of Exodus, "Moses…, having in the first book of his history preserved and transmitted the records of the church (!), while it existed in private families, comes in this second book to give us an account of its growth into a great nation (!!); and as the former furnishes us with the best Economics, so this with the best Politics." It is not that other divines of any school are more reliable: they all agree in the display of the same misconception. Nor is it a question of an idea or a theory. The truth of the church is bound up with Christ's glory in heavenly places, and immediately acts on our judgment and our affections; because this is what God is now occupied with, along with the gospel sent to all the creation. Now we, without right understanding of our church relation and of God's revealed will as to it, cannot but drift helplessly from what is of the deepest importance to His glory and the blessing of all concerned. The misunderstanding is through the like Judaising that was the earliest and widest spread of all the forms of unbelief with which the apostle Paul had his life-conflict. It is no less persistent and ensnaring today, blinding not a few of the excellent of the earth against our highest privileges.

Here we have exclusively the sons of Israel brought before us under circumstances favouring an extremely rapid increase to which ver. 7 directs our special attention. There is not the most distant allusion to the church throughout.

Chapter 2 - Israel Made To Serve With Rigour

Ex. 1:8-14.

So rapid an increase in the population of Israel did not fail to arouse the attention and the fears of the Egyptians, when the memory of Joseph and of his services had passed away.

“And there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. And he said to his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel [are] more numerous and stronger than we. Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass that, if war occur, they take side also with our enemies and fight against us, and go up out of the land. And they set over them task-masters to oppress them with their burdens. And they built store-cities for Pharaoh, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and spread; and they were distressed because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigour; and they embittered their life with hard labour in clay and bricks, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service with which they made them serve [was] with rigour” (vers. 8-14).

The wisdom of the world over-reaches and defeats itself. It was bad policy for the Egyptians to live in idleness and luxury, and to leave their works of hard toil and skill as an oppressive burden on their servants. It was a good

apprenticeship for those who were to be mighty as well as populous, and to possess the gate of their enemies. In any case the righteous Lord loves righteousness, and is indifferent to injustice nowhere, least of all when done to the family of “the friend of God.” None shall prosper who are unfair or cruel to his seed. “I will bless them that bless thee,” said Jehovah to Abram, “and curse him that curseth thee.”

In the present case it was a breach of the friendly understanding which set Israel and his sons in Goshen. There had never been hostility. The sons of Israel were in no way prisoners of war or captives in any way. They had given no reason for suspicion of seeking dominion over Egypt. They had never abandoned the hope of returning to Canaan as their land of promise. The burial of Jacob proclaimed this loudly; the unburied coffin of Joseph, still more loudly. Yet did the king who knew not Joseph dread the increasing number and strength of a people which served now as if due for a long while. Nor this only. Come, said he, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass that, if war occur, they take side also with our enemies, and fight against us, and get them up out of the land. Was this in any degree just? And is an unjust policy “wise” in the long run, or in itself justifiable?

No doubt it is so that the kingdoms of the world have ever acted. God is not in their thoughts, even if He be on the lips of any. Selfishness reigns publicly as it governs individually. So it was increasingly when kings ruled over Israel and Judah with a slight exception. So it was when Babylon followed and the other world-kingdoms of Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. So it will not be when He comes whose right it is beyond every other ruler. But

before that King reigns in righteousness and princes rule in judgment, a dark page of prophecy must be fulfilled not in blood only but in burning fuel for fire, and such overturning of things above and below as the world has never known. Out of that hurly-burly Israel shall emerge as Jehovah's people, His Son reigning in Zion, and they shall dwell in the land that He gave to His servant Jacob, when He shall have executed judgments on all those that despised or spoiled them near and far off, and they all shall know that He is Jehovah their God.

Meanwhile man's will had its way; as Israel built store-cities for Pharaoh, Pithom, and Raamses (or Rameses). But God's providence acted also; for the more the Egyptians afflicted the Israelites, the more these multiplied and spread. Therefore were their masters vexed with fear and horror, and hardship was added to their bondage. The Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigour; or as is so graphically described in the text, "they embittered their life with hard labour in clay and bricks, and in all their manner of labour in the field: all their labour with which they made them serve was with rigour." It was quite different from the conditions of slavery once in the West Indies, and later still in the Southern States of America, where such malice was the exception, yet with a race never in honour but degraded grievously. But the face of Jehovah is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth, even in a day when the moral foundations are out of course. His eyes are upon the righteous, and His ears unto their cry. But the furnace became hotter still, and the divine intervention took a more definite and impressive shape.

Chapter 3 - Pharaoh’s Malice And God’s Blessing

Ex. 1:15-22.

We have seen from ver. 13 that it was not only a new king who regarded the rising strength of Israel with fear and jealousy: “the Egyptians made the sons of Israel serve with rigour, and embittered their lives with hard labour,” in town and country. It was not merely service but harsh bondage, as complete a contradiction to their original tenure of Goshen as could be.

The oppression became more cruel still, and stopped not short of plans of the most cowardly kind and in a crafty and perfidious way.

“And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of the one [was] Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah; and he said, When ye do the office of a midwife [or, help in bearing] to the Hebrew women, and see [them] upon the birth-stool, if a son, then ye shall kill him; but if a daughter, then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. And the king of Egypt called the midwives, and said to them, Why have ye done this, and saved the male-children alive? And the midwives said to Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women [are] not as the Egyptian women; for they are strong, and they have borne before the midwife cometh to them. And God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And it came to pass because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses. And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is

born ye shall cast into the river, but every daughter ye shall save alive" (vers. 15- 22).

Such an instance as this, and as Herod's in dread of Messiah's birth, could so exceed the ordinary evil ways of man as to remind one of the hidden wicked one, the old Serpent and the Devil, and his enmity to the woman's Seed from first to last of man's day; whose blindness becomes the deeper because he ignores the secret power that works behind the scenes of the world's sad history. How little its rulers, any more than its classes and masses, believe that he is the spring that actuates the sons of disobedience, slaves of a mightier rebel than themselves! For here is a conflict unceasing between the arch-enemy instigating to destruction the first man against the Second and those dear to Him, till the last war whether above to clear the heavenly places (Rev. 12), or the earth enters for the displayed kingdom (Rev. 19), or the final judgment and eternity (Rev. 20, Rev. 21:1-8). All other wars generally are petty in comparison, springing from ambition, revenge, or other depraved lusts. We may except such as may have typified on a small scale those immensely momentous events for the deliverance of man and the creation from Satan's thraldom, for God's glory in His purpose of exalting the Christ and all that are His in the heavens and on the earth in the highest, largest, and richest way, and alas! too in the destructive punishment of all His enemies.

Here it is but a dastardly and diabolical effort to thwart what God was doing with the sons of Israel, even through the midwives for the male-children. But it was frustrated by the fear of God in the midwives, whom God

established in their houses, as they refused the perfidy and the murder the wicked king commanded.

Chapter 4 - Moses Born Under Interdict

Ex. 2:1-10.

Man proposes, God disposes. It appears from the facts stated, that, just after Pharaoh's edict for exterminating the sons of Israel, God ordered the birth of their deliverer. For Aaron was born three years before Moses, and was untouched, Miriam being several years his senior, as the history even here implies.

"And a man of the house of Levi went and took a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived and bore a son. And she saw him that he was fair, and hid him three months. And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of paper reeds, and cemented it with bitumen and pitch, and put the child in it, and laid [it] in the sedge, on the bank of the river. And his sister stood afar off to see what would happen to him. And the daughter of Pharaoh went down to bathe in the river; and her maids walked along by the river side. And she saw the ark in the midst of the sedge, and sent her hand-maid to fetch it. And she opened [it] and saw the child, and, behold, the boy wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is [one] of the Hebrews' children. And his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call thee a wet-nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the damsel went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Take this child away and nurse it for me, and I will give [thee] thy wages. And the woman took the child and nursed it. And when the child was

grown, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses1 and said, Because I drew him out of the water " (vers. 1-10).

The mother's heart regarded the beauty of the babe as a sign from God to preserve him from the murderous fate intended by the king. But there was more than natural feeling. "By faith" Moses when born was hid three months by his parents, because they saw the child fair; and they did not fear the injunction of the king (Heb. 11:23). A deliverer was ever before those who believed, not only the woman's Seed, but Abraham's Seed also. To have taken absolutely that life was a Satanic attack on God's counsels. At the risk of life perhaps they preserved their child three months. We are not told more of the circumstances, why it was impossible to hide the child longer. But obviously he who devised the death of every male child would use means too for due inquisition to ascertain from time to time that his decree was carried out. It is legitimate to infer that the moment was at hand when their concealment could last no longer, the child must be committed to the Nile, and themselves punished also for their contumacy.

Hence the mother was led by a wisdom above her own to commit the baby to an ark of papyrus reeds, well plastered with bitumen and pitch, and to await divine interference. The sister, who was afterwards known as not Miriam only but the "prophetess," watched at a distance, but near enough to see how her little brother would fare on the bank of the river. And who should be the first to come down to bathe near the ark but Pharaoh's daughter, she and her maids? She in God's providence saw the ark, and sent her handmaid to fetch it, and opened it and saw the child. Here again God

wrought; for, “behold, the babe wept.” His tears, to say nothing of his beauty, touched the heart of the princess. “She had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”

Miriam had now joined herself at the critical moment to the group; and with wit quickened by affection availed herself of the evident compassion to say to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrews, that she may suckle the child for thee?” What could the princess say to so sensible and timely a suggestion, but “Go”? “And the damsel went and fetched the child’s mother [her own too]; and Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give [thee] thy wages.”

This was no miracle, any more than the preservation of the child. But it was the living God’s working in the various persons concerned, to rescue from a watery grave the one who was to rescue His people from a bondage to many more bitter than death in the Nile: the type of the Deliverer from sin and wrath, not for Israel but for every believer; the prophet too and mediator of God’s law, like but beyond other men, though immeasurably inferior to Him through Whom grace and truth came, the manifestation of God’s light and love as none but Himself.

“And the woman took the child and nursed it.” Say not, believe not, that God gives the believer divine life only, to feel his sins, or pardon through His mercy in forgiving them. Here it was not yet the divine Saviour. But what a joy to the parents to have the doom so simply and surely set aside! and the child brought up where it ought to be rather than anywhere else in the world. Even then it was

capable of forming impressions which grace would strengthen and deepen another day, to fortify against the unholy influence of a heathen court, whatever the kindness personally of the princess. “And the child grew, and she (the mother) brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and said, “Because I drew him out of the water.” How vain to faith what cavillers say in this day or any other! This was the childhood of him whom God inspired in due time, among other great things, to write the Pentateuch, greater than all his great deeds for God and for man. And it abides as a divine monument in face of all the vain efforts of unbelieving detractors, who really possess no more weight than noisy boys blowing against a mountain; but they cannot shake off the guilt of unbelief.

Chapter 5 - Moses Quits Egypt And Flees To Midian

Ex. 2:11-25.

We have seen faith blessed in the saving of Moses, and providence at work in the king’s daughter, who made his own mother his nurse, and adopted him as her son and had him instructed, as Stephen said, in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, mighty as he was too in his deeds and words.

Now we are about to hear of his own faith, rising above the elevation which providence gave him at the court of Pharaoh, and enabling him to sacrifice all to God’s glory and His promises to Israel in their most despised and distressful circumstances.

“And it came to pass in those days when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he turned this way and that way, and when he saw that [there was] no man, he smote the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. And he went out the second day, and, behold, two Hebrew men were quarrelling; and he said to him that was in the wrong, Why art thou smiting thy neighbour? And he said, Who made thee ruler and judge over us? Dost thou intend [say] to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared and said, Surely, the matter is known. And Pharaoh heard of this matter and sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from before Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian. And he sat by the well. And the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came and drew [water], and filled the troughs to water their father’s flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses rose and helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, Why are ye come so soon today? And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew abundantly for us, and watered the flock. And he said to his daughters, And where [is] he? Why then have ye left the man behind? Call him that he may eat bread. And Moses consented to stay with the man; and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter. And she bore a son, and he called his name Gershom [a sojourner there]; for he said, I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.

“And it came to pass during these many days, that the king of Egypt died. And the children of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and cried; and their cry came

up to God because of the bondage. 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 took notice" (vers. 11-25.).

It was characteristic of Moses' faith, that he believed God's love to His people because they were His, however deplorable their state through their unbelief and the world's oppression and contempt. The providential circumstances which had lifted him above the low estate of his parents and set him, distinguished by his abilities, his acquirements, and his character in the nearest position to the royal family, gave him the stronger reason to treat all as nought compared with identifying himself with down-trodden Israel. Natural gratitude might plead her claim who had under God's hand delivered him from death. Reason would not fail to argue the prudence of using his nearness at court to gain and seize opportunities for its favour toward his suffering kinsfolk. In the face of all adverse appearances the faith of Moses rested on two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, His promise and His oath to the father of the faithful, that of Abraham's seed He would make a great nation, and that in his Seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Moses was no enthusiastic stripling, but then, as Stephen lets us know, a man about forty years of age. His words, his deeds, his mind, his affection, all point him out as one of the leading spirits for all time. But by faith he deliberately turned his back on Egypt's ease, power, and honour, to take his place among the chosen people of Jehovah, slaves though they then were and strangers in a land not their own. He knew from what

we read in Gen. 15 that the end of their affliction must come ere long; for had not Jehovah said hundreds of years before, that He would judge the nation after it had reduced them to servitude? and was not the fourth generation arrived, when they should quit their oppression for the land of promise? “By faith Moses, when become great, refused to be called son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to have temporary pleasure of sin, esteeming the reproach of the Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked off to the recompence” (Heb. 11:24-26.).

The history gives the facts as they occurred. His brethren under their burdens lay on the heart of Moses; and as he looked, he saw an Egyptian smite one of them. Roused to indignation, “he looked this way and that way,” and seeing no witness, he took the law into his hand and slew the offender, hiding the body in the sand. The love to his brethren was a right and holy feeling; but his inflicting death on the Egyptian was unjustifiable, and led to his long exile to escape the king’s resentment. He acted on the impulse of his heart, and in no way as consulting God or obeying Him. Had he looked to Him, he would not have “looked this way or that way.” He tarnished his testimony for God by his efforts to escape any witness of the deed or of his concealing of the corpse, and the consequences.

The very day after, he had to bear the keen wound indicted not by an Egyptian nor the king but by an unworthy brother. For when he reproved the sad quarrelling of Hebrew with Hebrew, he that did the wrong was the one to raise the insulting cry, “Who made thee a ruler and a judge”? and to clench it with the stab,

Intendest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian yesterday?" The conscience of Moses was bad: "surely the matter is known." The king too was roused by his act; and Moses fled from his vengeance into the land of Midian. Moses was not brought to nothingness in his own eyes. He was playing the hero rather than the saint who waits on God, not only for the revealed end, but for each step of the way. Hence we walk by faith, not by sight. It is a path of constant dependence on God, guided by His word. And Moses had as it were to unlearn for as many years in Midian as he had been learning the wisdom of the Egyptians. What a change from the court of Pharaoh to lead Reuel or Jethro's sheep "in the back end of the desert," not far from "the mount of God." To this discipline the solitude of the wilderness and the lowly life of a shepherd gave the needed sphere, that his impetuous spirit might be broken down, and himself become "very meek, above all men that were upon the face of the earth."

As he sat by the well, came the seven daughters of Reuel with their father's flock. But the shepherds drove them away from the troughs they sought to fill for watering the sheep. Moses interposed, and so helped the maidens that they returned soon enough to excite their father's inquiry how it came to pass, and a message sent that the stranger should partake of his hospitality. The gift of his daughter as wife followed, and the birth in due time of a son, whose name expressed the father's sense of strangership in a foreign land, in striking contrast with Joseph's forgetfulness of all his toil and all his father's house, under similar circumstances.

During those "many days" died the king of Egypt. But no relaxation of the cruel strain as yet appeared for the

sons of Israel. Their bondage drew out sighs and cries. But their cry, as we are told with touching simplicity "came up to God because of the bondage; 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 took notice." O ye that boast of Herodotus and Thucydides, of Livy and Tacitus, produce any sentence from those classic historians, or from any since down to our day, for words approaching these for tenderness, soon to be rendered into undying facts, now for everlasting principles of truth and righteousness in earthly things which test the soul whether we care for the living God or are in heart His enemies!

Chapter 6 - The Burning But Unconsumed Bramble

Ex. 3:1-5.

The moment so long desired by Moses came. The term, however considerable, of learning the wisdom of the Egyptians did not accomplish it; and an equal length in the desert for unlearning must as it were run out before God gave him the effectual call.

"And Moses tended the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock behind the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bramble; and he looked and behold, the bramble burned with fire, and the bramble was not consumed. And Moses said, Let me now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bramble is not burnt. And Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, and God called to him out of the midst of the bramble, and

said, Moses, Moses! And he said, Here [am] I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; loose thy sandals from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (vers. 1- 5).

There had been significant tokens of the divine ways at great crises vouchsafed by God from the beginning. What more solemn than that which closed paradise to the disobedient pair, from whom the fallen race was to spring? A bad conscience led them to hide themselves from Him who had surrounded them with nothing but good, before He "drove out the man"; and the race thenceforward is by nature in exile from the garden of delights. Cherubim proclaimed God's rights and made re-entrance into Adam's paradise impossible. Innocence once gone is irreparable. Yet God's grace cannot fail in the Second man, the bruised Bruiser of the old serpent, held out to all that believe even before the guilty were expelled.

Again, when the post-diluvian earth began, and Noah offered to Jehovah his burnt-offerings of every clean beast and every clean fowl, so that all should stand on sacrifice, God (Elohim), for this was the right word in each case, set His bow in the cloud, as the token that a deluge of such destruction should never again destroy all flesh.

Further, when Jehovah pledged Himself to childless Abram in Gen. 15 to make his seed numberless as the stars, not only were special sacrifices prescribed, but a deep sleep and horror of darkness fell on the patriarch, and at sunset a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed, to his vision, between the divided animals as

they lay slain: the sign of affliction and service to befall his seed before they should enter the promised land.

It was fitting that there should be given now to Moses with his commission a suited sign. And can any be conceived so meet for the deliverer to see as this great sight when he led the flock of Jethro behind an intervening wilderness, and came to what is significantly called “the mountain of God.” It was the precisely significant mark of Israel under the covenant of law, utterly failing yet not destroyed. “For I am Jehovah, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Mal. 3:6). The law given through Moses they presumed to obey, forgetting God’s promises to the fathers, which Jehovah never forgot. Spite of their self-confidence, the bramble-bush went on burning, but unconsumed, because He, the Eternal, had promised. And they remain still insensible to their real state and its cause. For they in every way broke the first covenant and added to that sin, for which they were led captive to Babylon, the still worse sin of the returned remnant in rejecting the Messiah, even to the death of the cross, and were scattered by the Romans as they remain to this day, as indicated by Isaiah the prophet.

Even when there shall be a future righteous remnant repenting of all their sins and unbelief, the mass or “the many” as Daniel calls the apostate Jews, by compact with the Roman Beast will strive to set up the nation as Jehovah’s people and their lawless king in the land (Dan. 11:36, etc). But Jehovah will come, as Isaiah says (Isa. 66:15, 16), “with fire and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will Jehovah plead with all flesh, and the slain of Jehovah

shall be many." Such will be the return of the Lord Jesus when He takes up again His ancient people, and deals with the enemies, Jewish or Gentile. Hence it essentially differs from what Moses saw to encourage him then, though there is the common principle that God's judgment of evil is ever unsparing; and privilege is vainly pleaded, either by Judaism or by Christendom, on behalf of their iniquities.

Here Jehovah manifests Himself as judge of evil in Israel who shall be sustained because of what He is to them, and in no way for their deserts: a greater fact than its wondrous sign. "And God," the Supreme, "called to Moses out of the midst of the bramble, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here [am] I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; loose thy sandals from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest [is] holy ground." His presence is the true power of sanctification. Forms He could and did use under the law, in tabernacle and temple. But He Himself is more than any or all. What a support for Moses in going in to Pharaoh, and in leading His people out, and bearing their frowardness in the wilderness where all perished save the two witnesses, Joshua and Caleb; yet Israel remained unconsumed to enter the land in the generation to come.

Chapter 7 - The Divine Commission To Moses

Ex. 3:6-22.

But definite words were added to the sight.

"And he said, I [am] the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. And Jehovah said, Seeing (or, Surely) I have seen the

affliction of my people that [are] in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good and large land, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me, and I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who [am] I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this [shall be] the token to thee that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. And Moses said to God, Behold [when] I come to the children of Israel, and shall say to them, The God of your fathers hath sent me to you; and they shall say to me, What [is] his name? what shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, I AM WHAT I AM; and he said, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me to you. And God said moreover to Moses, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me to you; this [is] my name for ever, and this my memorial to all generations. Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath appeared to me, saying, Visiting (or, Surely) I have visited you and [seen] that which is done to you in Egypt; and I have said, I will

bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, to a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice; and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and ye shall say to him, Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, hath met with us; and now let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God. And I know that the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will put forth my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof; and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty; but every woman shall ask her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment; and ye shall put [them] upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians" (vers. 6-22).

It was a blessed intervention of Jehovah on behalf of His enslaved and cruelly oppressed people. The name He gave Himself was not new in the sense of never having been heard before. But now He was about to act on its reality and present value. There was to be accomplishment up to a certain and evident point, and not promise only. Hence stress is laid on "the God of thy fathers," and this expounded as "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses realised the fact and hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. Most reassuring were the words, " And Jehovah said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their

taskmasters; for I know their sorrows: and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land into a good land and large, into a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. And now behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me; and I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt" (vers. 7-10).

Yet would it be partial and temporary; for what could be more that depended on the first man, a people in the flesh? The fulfilment for everlasting can only be when man truly renounces self, owns his ruin before God, and has Christ, the Second man, as the present and abiding ground of blessing. There was to be shortly a typical redemption; and a typical entrance into the land of abundance, not of corn and fruit only, but flowing with milk and honey. Nothing abides for ever but God, and God now has wrought for sinful man in the gift of life eternal and everlasting redemption. So it will be really for Israel when they have their own Messiah present and reigning over them. Till then it could be no more than provisional for Israel, who must learn what it is, after sowing to the flesh, to reap corruption.

Moses is as distrustful now, as he was confident in Egypt; he asks "Who am I" to go unto Pharaoh and bring out Israel? But Jehovah vouchsafes His presence and gives the token of serving God "on this mountain." Then, to Moses asking a specific name of His presence, He says, "I AM WHAT I AM," His essential and abiding

being; and bids Moses say to Israel, “I AM hath sent me to you.” All else was but creature. He was the only and ever existing One. But he was also to say, The Jehovah God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, had sent him to them. “This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial to all generations.” A wondrous declaration to be infallibly verified, when the Lord Jesus vindicates His every word.

God therefore calls on Moses (ver. 16) to “Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath appeared unto me saying, I have surely visited you and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: and I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanite and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, to a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice; and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say to him, Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, hath met with us: and now let us go, we pray thee, three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God. And I know that the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will put forth my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: but every woman shall ask her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put [them]

upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians" (vers. 16- 22).

He was to ask at first leave to go ''three days' journey into the wilderness," but would ask more as the obduracy of the king appeared; and God lets Moses know the king's sure defiance, tells of His wonders to be done in reproof, and directs His people not to go empty after their long unrequited labour, and that every woman should (not, 'borrow,' but) ask for jewels of silver and of gold, and thus spoil them, as it was righteous retribution. The word "borrow" is only a secondary sense, and here misappropriate. "Ask" is the direct and primary sense, and therefore right to be preserved.

[Thus far only had the Author written when he passed away.]

1 Josephus (Ant. ii. 9. b), accounts thus for the Greek analogue in the Sept., Μωυ> σης "for the Egyptians call the water 'Mo' and those who are rescued from the water 'uses'."

The Feasts in Deuteronomy 16

1. The Passover, In Verses 1-8.

The three great feasts of Jehovah here specified were instituted by Him for the express purpose of filling the hearts of His people with the enjoyment of Himself revealed in distinct blessings. If it was so in the letter for Israel, what is taught and conveyed to us, who have the substance of these earthly shadows! For all that God wrought or gave in the times that are past is but a little thing, compared with what the incarnate Son of God presented to Him in His person, and accomplished in His death, resurrection, and ascension, that the Holy Spirit might testify to the believer a blessedness worthy of the Father and the Son. Yet who could deny that these feasts were full of rich remembrance and rich promise of mercy? What a magnificent putting forth of divine power it was to bring Israel, a then nation of slaves, from under the greatest power at the time ruling on the earth! Nor in that deliverance was it merely power. There was a far deeper question before God. Israel, no less than the Egyptians, were a sinful race. How could God make light of their sins? Against all the gods of Egypt Jehovah was about to execute judgment. Pharaoh, who denied His title to claim Israel, must be publicly humbled and punished. But withal what about the sins of Israel? Therefore, while closing His preliminary blows upon guilty Egypt, God directed the last of them to fall on the firstborn sons of the Egyptians, from the king’s down to the maid’s behind the mill. How then was it with His people? Were they not as real sinners as the Egyptians? And would God make light of sin because they were His

own? Is not Jehovah sanctified in those that are near Him? Does it not add immensely to the horribleness of sins in His sight when they break out in one that He chooses to Himself? He had favoured and blessed their fathers, marking them out clearly for hundreds of years while growing up to be such a people as they then became.

Accordingly, He instituted the Passover, and made it the more striking, for a new reckoning commenced from that fact as a foundation for Israel. Abib was the seventh month of the civil year; “for in the month of Abib, Jehovah thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night” (ver. 1). It now began the holy year. Jehovah was dealing judicially beyond all that had gone before; and the lamb’s blood alone could shelter guilty Israel. It was a whole people confessing their sins and His righteousness in the same solemn sacrifice applied to every household and every soul who entered that night the blood-sprinkled doors. So we read in Exodus 12. Only observe that in Deuteronomy 16 it is simply the passover sacrificed. Nothing is said here of the blood put upon the door- posts. “And thou shalt sacrifice the passover unto Jehovah thy God, of the flock and the herd” (ver. 2).

The reason is plain. The use of the blood as on that first celebration was made but once. This intimates a great deal for the effectual reality, as well as in its typical significance, — as we may read, over and over again, in the Epistle to the Hebrews. How much on the other hand among men depends on repetition! Only thus is it that ordinarily, they attain an approach to what they consider worthy. With God Who cannot fail, any more than lie, it is quite another thing. Repetition in His

institutions imposed on man means that the end is not reached. But there was only one paschal sprinkling of blood on the door-posts; nor was there failure in the then result. It was not repeated at any subsequent observance of the feast. Attention was thereby drawn to the unity of the blood-sprinkling when judgment was proceeding as never again in Israel's history. But "sacrifice" must always be, as it is, the ground of righteousness for man as he is. And whose righteousness was it? Not man's certainly but God's righteousness. So in the cross of Christ God would lay such a foundation that He might not only judge the evil, but justify the ungodly who had wrought nothing to deserve protection. It was grace therefore, but God's righteousness according to His word. It is His appreciation of Christ's work on behalf of those whose works were only evil.

All are aware that the Passover was before the law. The attempt therefore to bring in the law is plainly and absolutely excluded. Had that feast only come in after the law, there might have seemed some little ground for such an inference. Men are ready enough to catch at this or that appearance in order to lay down what pleases them. And the reason why the law pleases is because it necessarily is addressed to man himself and his works. He therefore likes it; man is somebody, and can do something. Yet the law was God's claim on man; but what He taught by it was the impossibility of pleasing God on any such ground. Here too He was showing by the passover, before the law was, His way of sheltering from judgment a guilty people by the blood He directed them to put on their door-posts. Be it that they were Israel; but their sins He could not ignore, as if

they were nothing; nor must they be borne with, because they were the sins of His people. No, He found a way of righteousness, His own righteousness in the lamb that was slain; and only once was the lamb's blood put (yet in a way that brought the ground of their exemption from judgment home to each Israelite,) on the entrance to every house. No one that was there could enter save under the lamb's blood which was put, not within but, outside the house.

And what could show so clearly that it was for Jehovah's eye, not for man as a matter of sense, or mind? It was put on the two side-posts, and on the lintel for his faith simply, but all the more for the profoundest feelings of his heart. Had it been inside, it would have naturally awakened the suggestion that they were to gaze at the lamb's blood, to which they owed their security. But there was nothing of the kind, the lamb's blood was put outside; within they eat the flesh roast with fire. What makes the force of that which has been said the more evident is the fact that it was "night." There was no natural light to enable the blood to be seen of men. Only the divine eye could see the blood on the door-posts. And He was the One concerned; sins refer to His judgment. He might work by a destroyer; but it was Jehovah Who smote Egypt, man, beast, and gods; it was Jehovah Who saw the blood, and passed over Israel sheltered by it. There was the blood for the eye of Jehovah Himself to discern. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Thus and thus only could the people be screened from the destroyer.

This was the foundation of all. Man had lived upon the earth long before; he had tried his own way in every possible form. Jehovah's people too had shown what

they were; as His own fidelity and goodness had failed in no way. But never before had anything for His people been wrought as a righteous groundwork till the Passover.

Here however we see in this chapter, as the people were about to enter the land of promise, the same blessed truth is recalled to mind when Jehovah gathered Israel round Himself. If the application of the blood to the door-posts, so striking and instructive on the original occasion, is left out here, even this is quite appropriate to Israel then and to the believer now. No doubt when a man is first awakened and receives the glad tidings of redemption in Christ Jesus through the shedding of His blood, imminent danger from the wrath to come clearly appeals to the soul. But after he has bowed to the truth, he is no longer filled with alarm, still less in the same degree or way. Is it that Christ's work is valued less? A great deal more. When souls wake up at Christ's word from moral death, when they justly feel their sins in the sight of God, there are deep and vehement heart searchings and painful pressure of guilt on the conscience; and the grace of Christ administers truly divine relief. Afterwards, as the soul submits to the righteousness of God, does the value of Christ and His work diminish? It acquires a far deepening character, as faith is exercised by the word.

May I observe that there are not a few hymns tending to make people think that the first joy of looking to the Lord Jesus as the Saviour is so bright and full, that all afterwards here below becomes comparatively pale. But is this really consistent with the truth? Does scripture justify our looking back on that early and indelible hour of contrition, when the Saviour's welcome was tasted, as

the fulness of blessing for ourselves? I believe that for such as do so, the heart has feebly entered into “the riches of His grace,” little, if at all into what the apostle calls “the glory of His grace.” Great as that mercy was, we are all entitled to “receive of His fulness,” and to know experimentally depths of His grace in Himself and His work far beyond.

It is the abiding blessing of Christ in His work of redemption that is here presented. Many circumstances of the first burst of the truth on the people of God are left out, the wondrous sacrifice in itself is recalled in its simple majesty, without any particular reference to the form in which it applied in the first instance The Spirit of God is here anticipating the way in which the passover should be kept in the land of God. Now it is precisely because the grace is anticipated of Jehovah bringing in Israel there, that no lack of care is tolerable, that the deepest call is made on their spiritual affections. It is no more leaving Egypt, nor yet the wilderness through which they passed, but Jehovah putting forth His power in new and, if possible, richer ways in bringing His people into the full accomplishment of the blessing. Does not this mark Israel entering into and dwelling in the “good” land where His eyes rest continually? So when we are first awakened, the pressure of our sense of danger is great, the urgent necessity of being screened by Christ’s work from judgment because of our iniquities; but surely He and that work lead us on to appreciate far deeper things. So now we have the calm and peaceful enjoyment of a work in itself intrinsically the same, and infinite in its value. This seems to be what Jehovah would have His people enjoy in the passover kept in the land. “Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the

passover unto Jehovah thy God, of the flock and the herd,1 in the place which Jehovah shall choose to cause His name to dwell there" (ver. 2) But while the peculiar circumstances of its first celebration disappear, there is no difference as to the unleavened bread. It may be presumed that all know that the purity which must follow "the sacrifice," means the total denial of all ungodliness and corruption, however palatable to fallen nature. In the glorious land as Daniel calls it, could there be any relaxation of purity? Here we have the unleavened bread particularly enjoined; "thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, [even] the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste; that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life." So it was then, but there is no haste now. So there was and must have been on the first occasion; they are merely reminded of this in looking back: "that thou mayest remember the day... all the days of thy life." It personally concerned each one. When Israel come to know Who He is that was sacrificed for them, on Whose blood hung their entire shelter, what incomparably deeper thoughts and affections will arise God-ward! No wonder will it appear then that "there shall be no leaven seen with thee in all thy borders seven days." Our entrance into its force is revealed in 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. The veil done away in Christ, lies upon their heart, because they reject Him; but whensoever it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. We, not Israel, are here below keeping the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. They will keep it when Messiah appears to their joy. They too are to eat the flesh of the lamb of which we have partaken in faith, while they are

unbelieving. Mark the deepest reverence here for the sacrifice with full liberty to eat of it. “Neither shall any of the flesh which thou sacrificest the first day at even remain all night until the morning.” The lamb’s flesh must never be treated as common food. What was not then eaten must be burnt, not kept for ordinary use; it was a sacrifice to God, as well as a holy communion.

The grand secret of Christianity, I do not say of christendom, the everlasting and peculiar blessing that we boast before our God, is Christ Himself. Oh, what a joy to have one word that contains all that we delight in, and, what is far more important, all that God delights in, the same object, God’s delight and our delight, in Him who unites Godhead and manhood in His own person! But more than that: — there was a particular time that, even for God, drew out what Christ expressed in that fact, as before prophetically, which never was before and never can be again. With reverence be it spoken, I believe that as on the one hand God never felt before as He did at the cross of Christ; so on the other hand the Lord Jesus never felt as He did save at the cross. As His Spirit predicted it through David; so did He in the garden anticipate it; and oh, what a grief and weight of conflict for His Spirit! But anticipation is not accomplishment. It was on the cross there came from Christ that expression of it, so familiar, yet so solemn, to all our souls, “My God, my God, why didst thou forsake me?” There is the wondrous basis of all blessing. It is Christ forsaken of God after all the perfection of a life of obedience incomparable here below; Christ rejected and atoning for sin. What an unfathomable truth! What creature on earth or in heaven would ever have looked for it? For who was Christ? Was He not the eternal life

with the Father before ever there was a creature? Was He not the Creator? Yet here He lay in death: and what a death! How did such a consummation come to pass? It was for sin; for our sins borne in His own body on the tree. This we know too well, yet alas! far too little. He, the Son, became man; man as truly as He was and is God. And God made sin for us Him Who knew no sin. Here therefore we rest on that foundation which can have no equal. God never saw anything but perfection in the Son of His love throughout eternity. When the Word became flesh and tabernacled among men, in a world of sin, that perfection was unfolded in such forms of moral beauty and grace, as were never before seen, and only in measure predicted. Truly He was the Second man and last Adam. Never did love and obedience, meekness, zeal and suffering, reach their acme till the cross. Never was God or God's Son, the Son of man, so glorified as therein. And every child of God in this hall knows it, and has, in his measure responded to it in faith. But the more we weigh it, the greatness of that work rises before our souls. The ground of righteousness is only found in that word so terrible to man's conscience — death; and wondrous to say, in His death, which was our sin (for He was rejected of men), yet on God's part a sacrifice to God. Here then dawns on us this first feast — the Passover; and more truly ours, by faith, than Israel's. They had, no doubt, their lamb; and they were entitled to enjoy the remembrance of God's deliverance of their nation from the land of Egypt. But what is that compared to God judging sin, in Christ? This is what we read in the cross of our Lord Jesus. What infinite things for our souls have we not in "the Lord's death!" What words could be put together speaking with the same

power revealing a divine ground of righteousness for sin comparably with “the Lord’s death?”

Consequently, there we have it before us, we have it through the infinite mercy of our God habitually and particularly on the resurrection day. There is something remarkably sweet in that, that we have His death on the day of resurrection, for it is never meant that we should be so absorbed in death as to forget the joy of resurrection.

I would only now notice the words of ver. 5, “Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates.” There was to be but one place henceforth, many were allowed before. It had been taken in Egypt, house by house, and in the wilderness only at first. But now in the land where it might have seemed any place would do, because it was the holy land, Jehovah chose one sole place. He would take the matter of His blessing and of Israel’s enjoyment of it entirely out of their hands, to bless them all the more because of binding it up with His presence. Jehovah chose one place and one only for the celebration of the passover; it was where He Himself dwelt. There He commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. This, He said, is my resting-place for ever. Here will I dwell; for I have desired it. Such was the place that Jehovah chose for His people’s eating of the passover. Thus may be seen from those early days God manifesting, particularly in the way in which it is presented in the last book of Moses, the celebration of the passover in the land, which typifies our connection with heaven. Jehovah chose, for the purpose of our enjoying His interest in us as to that which is deepest for our souls. And what goes down into such depths as the passover, especially in the light and association of

heaven where He is to whom we are united by the Holy Spirit, one spirit with the Lord.

But remark, although they took it “at the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose to cause His name to dwell in, thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. Thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose; and thou shalt turn in the morning and go unto thy tents” (vers. 5-7), for Israel at least there was a return to their own things. It was not such peaceful communion with Jehovah as to detach them from all things in principle to Himself. They turn and go into their tents in the morning after eating the passover. They eat unleavened bread with the bread of affliction. It was far from being all that Jehovah designed and gave in the feasts to follow in due time. More was needed to impart full enjoyment of Jehovah’s blessing in His chosen place. Only to the passover are these words appended; they are dropped, not only for the Feast of Tabernacles, but also for the Feast of Weeks.

Ver. 8 repeats the obligation to eat unleavened bread six days. On the seventh was a solemn assembly to Jehovah the God of Israel, and no work to be done. His work they celebrated and rested in. Only in this Feast is work here forbidden to be done.

2. — The Feast Of Weeks, In Verses 9-12.

Then comes quite a different feast — the Feast of Weeks. What does this rest on, or spring from ? Christ not in death but risen again. Not the life before He died but the life of Christ triumphing over death. This is intimated by the wave-sheaf in due time followed by the

two wave loaves brought before us in the Feast of Weeks. Not only are we told (ver. 9) that Christ was the first-fruits, but that the loaves at the Feast of Weeks were also first-fruits (Lev. 23:17). They alike receive the same name. There was nothing like this in the Passover nor is there anything like it in the Feast of Tabernacles. There is a union with Christ when we come to the Feast of Weeks, found nowhere else. The reason is plain. We are united to Christ risen and ascended. The living Christ stood alone, was heard end followed by faith; but union there could not be before His death. “Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” Yet are we not united to Christ dead. We have all the virtue of the death of Christ and can thus more than ever enjoy all the benefits of the life and the example of the Living One; and they are both of the richest value for the believer. Indeed we must begin with our sins, which were in His cross met once for all. It would have been a dangerous thing to have spoken of the example of Christ before our sins are dealt with. What do we find in the disciples who followed Him every day? Did they manifest Christ? They manifested tolerably decent Jews, sometimes pious, not infrequently prejudiced, and pre-occupied with themselves. Now and then appeared a good deal of self-righteousness, besides too, ambition and jealousy; but at what time did not self work? There never was a truth that Christ brought out to which their souls fully answered. He was always misunderstood, and even when it was a very grave misunderstanding, the Lord says, “what thou knowest not now thou shalt know hereafter.” But that was what was so blessed in our Lord — His love to them always the same, His patience whatever their incapacity — spiritual incapacity. And

why was this? And why spiritual incapacity? Because there never can be spiritual power till in the death of Christ I have faced my sins. No life of Christ will ever do alone, no example of Christ, except to show how unlike to Him we are. And so it is that there is far too light dealing with our state, and a total incapacity of estimating the immense distance between the Son of God and every saint that loves Him.

But now it is another thing. The state of believers in the time of our Lord was not christian. They were saints; but a Christian is a great deal more than a saint. A Christian is a saint since redemption; a Christian is a saint that is united to Christ. A Christian is a saint that rests upon the death and precious blood of Christ in all its virtue before God, which has changed everything from that moment. Now starts a new reckoning of time altogether. There is a manifest progress from what was, to what God has now given us in our Lord Jesus. What a comfort it is that every question that could arise between our souls and God is now settled! There are many saints at the present time who lose incalculably; they stop short at getting Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, if, indeed, they know this as a truth always abiding. In general, they think that the forgiveness of sins is a great privilege that is being dribbled out day by day; and that one is forgiven to-day, wanting more to-morrow, and more and more all the time one is here below. But this is not the way in which scripture puts the mighty work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here we have a death that meets sins completely; nor is it merely our sins, but sin. I admit that this is beyond what we have any type for, for the types were the types of the law, and the Passover was taken up when the law

was given, although it was instituted before. So also the Sabbath in the same way; the Sabbath was long before the law but nevertheless it was embodied in the law.

But “that which the law could not do” God did. And how? “Sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” It could not have been in the reality of sinful flesh. In that case He could not have been a sacrifice for sin at all. If there had been an atom of the reality of sinful flesh, if there had been a single taint, it would have destroyed the sin offering. Of the “meal-offering” which represents the life of Christ, and of the “sin” (and “trespass”) offering which brings before us His death — of both these offerings are we alike told that “it is most holy.” No, the Lord Jesus looked like another, therefore is it said, “in the likeness.” There was nothing outwardly to distinguish the Lord, as far as His body was concerned, from another man. Mind, I am not speculating upon the Lord’s appearance — I abhor all such speculations, but, at the same time, I am bound to believe from what Scripture says, that He was like any other man. Truly a man, as truly as we are, there was nothing in our Lord’s outer man to indicate the essential difference, nothing to indicate that infinite difference that there is between Him and every other.

Therefore is it said, “in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin,” or as the meaning is, “a sacrifice for sin.”

Well, this is what God did, He sent His Son “in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin.” He “condemned sin in the flesh.” This is what God did. He executed sentence on the Lord Jesus at the cross. He had shown Him in the likeness of sinful flesh during His life, and there wasn’t a sin nor the appearance of one. “In Him is

no sin." And now there is another work, His death as "a sacrifice for sin." He condemned — not only the sins — He forgave the sins — but He condemned "sin"; He executed sentence of death on the sin — not upon the sinner, which would have been his everlasting ruin — but on Christ. Assuredly, as "a sacrifice for sin" that we might be, not only forgiven, but that we might know the old nature completely and for ever dealt with for every believer. That is the reason why we are no longer "tied and bound with the chain of our sins," as many excellent people say that they are: some of the best in christendom. Really true saints believe that they are tied and bound by the chain of their sins. Many very earnest indeed in their way among our own nation. Others speaking our own tongue elsewhere, I must say, have shown more care for the truth of God as a general thing. But still there is that terrible lack, they don't know how God has met sin in the flesh. But this is exactly what God has said: "What the law could not do," the impossibility of the law God has done perfectly. He has executed sentence of condemnation, and the consequence is there is no condemnation for us. Not only that there is no condemnation for what we did, or have done, but there is no condemnation for the sin in our nature. That is the point of the apostle Paul in the beginning of the eighth of Romans. Then comes another thing; that is, the positive place into which we are brought. We have not to go looking for it elsewhere. And what do people substitute for that? They either fall back on the example of Christ, or they take up the law. They say, we know we could not keep the law or follow its example before we were converted, but now we are converted that is what we can do, and the Spirit will help us. But the Spirit of God will do nothing of the kind. What! the Spirit of God

help people to keep the law as their rule of life! No. That the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in the Christian, I admit; and I understand the righteousness of the law consists of the two great parts — the love of God, and love to our neighbour. If a Christian does not love God and his neighbour, nobody does. There is not a single Christian in the main that is not really true. No Christian but what his heart goes out to God when he knows His love. I am supposing now a man who believes the gospel. “We love Him, because He first loved us.” And what about our neighbour? I think the poorest Christian in the world is deeply anxious about the salvation of others. No doubt we are not like Christ. There is no need to say that; there is no need of crying up what a Christian is. But the new nature shows itself in every child of God by the desire for the blessing of people, with cost to itself, and further also I affirm that there is still more unqualifiedly the love of the God that has so blessed him.

But that all is not all that we find here. We have a great deal more. We have God’s way of presenting it, and that is, that the believer now according to the Feast of Weeks has Christ risen from the dead, not only Christ down here as the manna, but Christ risen from the dead as his food. We see elsewhere in scripture that the heavenly food is Christ risen; Christ in heaven is the food of the believer now, and he requires it. The manna is not all, but there is Christ thus in the presence of God to feed on. There is another thing here, and that is, that “as He (Christ) is, so are we in this world.” That is a wonderful thing to say. I ask this of you. If you hadn’t these words in the First Epistle of John would you have believed them? If they were not written out in the Bible I should

like any man in this room to say that he could have thought them? I don't believe a word of it. You are only cheating yourself if you think you could have dared to say these words. I say it again, As Christ is — not as He was, but now, in the presence of God, in all His glory there, the glorified man — "As He is, so are we in this world." So are we — not, so we shall be in the next world, but — in this world. Why, if these words were not the words of Scripture, it would be the most fearful presumption that ever passed through the heart of man to say them. But they are God's words; and they are God's words because they are His truth. They are the rich blessing He has given you and me at this very time, and, thank God, not to us only. There is no Christian here, in England, in the world but what has these words said of him, and they are meant of him and for him to take them home to his heart and live on them — at any rate upon the One into whose nearness of relationship we are now brought, into that wonderful place of union with Christ. If it were not the life of Christ that is given to us it could not be true. It is in virtue of that, that we are one with Christ — that it can be said, "as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17).

If I look at myself or you, would that warrant such language? How is it then? Why, because our oneness with Christ is, not with Christ come down to take part of our nature, but, with Him risen from the dead and gone to heaven. On what does this depend? On the Holy Spirit sent down in consequence of Christ's exaltation. And you see how perfectly the word read tonight suits it. The Feast of Weeks was the day of Pentecost — the day when the Holy Ghost was given. It could not have been true a day before. It is always true after.

We may observe that this feast differs from others in that in it we have not only our individual responsibility brought before us, as in the passover for instance, but also our privilege. In the passover we have the solemn responsibility of practical holiness being maintained, also of our life being holy — all grounded upon Christ, the Lamb slain.

But here we have another thing, not our responsibility but our privilege. Now we have this new privilege that could not be in the least degree entered into by a Jew at that time. Now we can read, and are bound to read, these Jewish forms in a light that they did not possess or enjoy. The heavenly light shines upon us because Christ is in heaven. He is that light. That is the meaning of the day dawning and day star arising in the heart, of which Peter speaks in his Second Epistle (chap. 1). “And we have the prophetic word confirmed, to which we do well to take heed (as to a lamp shining in a dark place);” it is more than dark, it is squalid as well as dark. Look at all the prophecies, the terrible state of man which they show; for prophecy came in when things were in a state of ruin. That however is not Christianity. The blessedness of Christianity came when Christ came, when Christ died, when Christ arose and went up to heaven still more. This is the day dawn.

Now then here we have the rising to a height that cannot be exceeded, and it is all in Christ. How precious! Not only that we have all the blessedness of judgment stayed, of sins gone, and sin itself judged in that same death of Christ — all His mighty work in our favour to draw out the sense of God’s love and to produce love to God as well, as nothing else could, — but now it is the enjoyment of this wondrous place of

Christ, a new place even for Him. Great is the mystery of godliness, “God has been” or “He who has been manifested in flesh… received up in glory.” What is the mystery of godliness? People might have thought that it is something we can do, something the Holy Spirit would work in us, but no, the mystery of godliness is Christ Himself, it is bound up with Christ.

This is what we find in these three Feasts, Christ in the Passover — Christ in the Feast of Weeks — the Spirit of God come down; but He was not the new corn of the land — the corn of wheat, that had fallen into the ground and died, but is now risen. No, Christ is that, and we are part of the same stock. We have the same nature — made “partakers of a divine nature.” Christ is risen and He is our life, we have not only the life but we have also the Holy Ghost to give divine power of enjoyment of the life, which can never be unless the heart surrenders itself to the death of Christ. People stop short of that; they don’t know the power of His resurrection till the power of His death is known. And that is what makes a full gospel of such grand importance for the saint. There is a great difference between a free and a full gospel. A free gospel is the finest thing possible for the sinner. A full gospel is not for the sinner but rather for the saint. I might say Peter preached a free gospel, and three thousand were converted on the first occasion. Paul preached a full gospel. There is this difference that the preaching of Paul was most rich and profound and of the greatest possible blessing where it was entered into. It is all there for us and we ought not to come short of it, and if it is for us to know, it is for us to preach. But the grand point for us is to take it into our souls. When that is done there is full blessing now. It is the life for

evermore, where death can never enter, where sin never did enter. Now there is delivering power and that is the power that works in us. That is our portion by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, for that blessed Person is always at any rate faithful to Christ, and to Christ not merely dead, but risen from the dead. He never stops short at the death of Christ — He would have that death entered into in all its sweetness — and in many respects there is nothing like it, but still there is this power in resurrection that we do well not to lose, and the Holy Ghost would have us follow Christ in faith where He is, and to know that our portion is in Himself there.

His death! It was for us, but now in His resurrection and His present place in heaven we are there in Him. As Christ is, so are we in this world. Connected with this I would just add one word. It is remarkable that the day of Pentecost was the day when the law was given. The law was given on the first Pentecost — not yet called Pentecost in the same way as now, but still it was fifty days after the wave sheaf and there was the law, and oh! what weakness, what death, and what misery, just because the law was good and we bad, because Christ was not there. But now that Christ has come, everything is turned into blessing. The judgment of God! Yes, because it fell on Him, it was due to us but it fell on Him, and surely it is an immense thing to know that; and can anything show more clearly where these dear evangelical people are than the fact that this great truth of the gospel is not believed. The wonderful thing is that they are so good practically with so little truth to be their foundation. It is a vital truth of the gospel that the believer shall not come into judgment.

I lost a most valued friend years ago by insisting upon that great truth — a lady of remarkable spiritual power, more so than most women I have ever met. She never came into communion. There were great difficulties. Her family dependent upon her being faithful to what they called their own mother the church, and there she was — much to be felt for. She had been a Roman Catholic and had married a High Churchman who died and whose children were bound very strictly indeed. She however could not get over that difficulty in her mind. I have found few persons that more appreciated the truth as far as she knew. But when she heard this wondrous truth of the gospel, she thought it peculiar and something out of the common rut — this rich wondrous truth which has been so fully brought out of late years. But no, my dear friends, this truth is bound up with the gospel. It is a full gospel.

There is nothing more wonderful than a full gospel — the gospel as Paul preached it. As the Lord said in John 5, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word,” not the word of Moses or the prophets now, “and believes him,” not believes on Him, that is, about it, but “believes him that sent me.” The essence of faith is that I believe God, that I believe what God says. He that, through hearing Christ’s word, believes God that sent Him “hath life eternal, and cometh not into judgment,” not merely “condemnation.” Our translators of 1611 changed it to that, and I have never met with one of these evangelical, pious, people — even the most intelligent, that believed that he should not come into judgment. They think that the believer will come into it, but be kept and brought through it. But, let me tell you, if the believer goes into the judgment he would not,

could not, get through it, because he is not guiltless. Even David felt this when he said “Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified” (Ps. 143:2). And the judgment is a real thing. It is a foolish thing to go into a judgment that is unreal, and the idea of God’s sparing anyone is an impossibility. This idea of the believer going into judgment undoes the effect of Christ’s redemption. It is true that they think that the blood of Christ will speak in the day of judgment. But no, no one will speak in the day of judgment but the Judge. There are the books, and they are opened, and the books speak of the guilt of the man and the guilt is undeniable, and so there can be no issue from judgment but to be cast into the lake of fire. There is no soul but a sinful soul that passes through the judgment. The believer’s judgment is past, that has been borne by Christ for all who believe. We shall not stand before the great white throne. We shall tell all out, or, “be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ;” we shall confess everything there, but that is a totally different thing to being “judged.” Being judged means that I suffer for what I have done, and if that is so what could it be but everlasting ruin! But it is not so. It would be a total denial of, a total inconsistency with, life eternal. Impossible that a person who has life eternal could be judged! A man who has life eternal, judged! such a judgment would be a mockery. The whole thing is a jumble of mistake. However, this dear friend presented my letter setting out the truth on the subject to the then Bishop of Carlisle, and he was horrified.

I mention this to show that nothing startles these people more than a full gospel. A free gospel presents rather what we are delivered from. It is a mercy to have got

thus far, but I do believe that those I am addressing to-night are peculiarly responsible to God, that if they have got the truth fully for themselves, and I don't deny that they have, they are responsible to make it known to those who may not have had such opportunities. I don't deny that they ought to break it up into the smallest pieces to suit palates and the weakest stomachs. It is right to think of the state of souls, but we should seek to lead them on, little by little, and not to leave them where they are.

That is the danger of too great quickness in receiving into fellowship. Souls should be led on to know the gospel — a full gospel, otherwise they remain where they are in their souls. We are all to blame. Instead of teaching them about the antichrist and Babylon and the woman of the seven hills (all very interesting and profitable, in its proper place), let us seek that souls should hear and believe the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation. For what are all these things compared with a sound and full gospel as a foundation for the soul — to know that all the evil is cleared away in the death of Christ now, that we are in the unclouded favour of God, and that Christ's place is ours? No doubt, it is entirely through Him and His death. It is not merely that we look back but we look up to where He is now, we know that we are one with Him who is there. That is the grand truth of this Feast of Weeks.

"Thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a free will offering of thine hand." Well, undoubtedly, this free will offering of the hand is a bright testimony in its own way. The free will offering of the hand is supposed to represent the heart, and so it does. It is one who is delighting in Christ, for we are

delivered from all unreality, from all appearances, and it is the saddest disgrace for a Christian if the heart is not behind all that the hand does. “Which thou shalt give unto Jehovah according as Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee.” The essence of Christianity is our personal blessedness now. We are not only a forgiven people, but a people blessed; and how far? “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ.” Well, that is just the Feast of Weeks, and as there is this blessing — the richest possible for God even for us now on the earth — mark the effect (ver. 11), “thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter,” but it does not end there, “and thy manservant, and thy maidservant.” The blessing is to be felt by those that serve in the humblest position. Is it for those in the houses only? No, “and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you” — the specimens of the various classes of sorrow and need that are in this poor world. There we have the opening of the heart to all. Truly this is divine love, that if we are thus blessed the heart opens in love both Godward and manward too, and wherever there is most distress, there it goes out the most actively.

“And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt” (ver. 12). This is not a man tied and bound with the chain of his sins. No, he remembers that he was a bondman. It is the denial of that. It is not that you get the denial of it simply in the eighth of Romans, but here you have it in the type of Deut. 16. The apostle presents it thus — “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of

sin and death" (Rom. 8:12). So, manifestly, I am no longer in bondage, but delivered. It is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Had it been the law of Moses, I would be under bondage, and that is the reason really why these pious people are tied and bound with the chain of their sins. The law is continually before their eyes. When we are looking at Christ, we do fulfil what is according to the law; Christ in that case fills the heart. "Thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt; and thou shall observe, and do these statutes." That is, the spirit of obedience is strengthened in the soul in the highest degree by the sense of this complete deliverance and this blessed union with Christ.

Can there then be more blessing than this? There is a third Feast. How truly is it written that "all things are ours"! If one were a Jew and not a Christian, he could only keep one at a time. One he was bound to observe, the Passover, first and alone then as the others came, each could only be kept separately. Indeed the Feast of Tabernacles points to a new and future state of blessedness. But "all things are ours"; and we are meant to have all these joys, once tasted, together in our hearts and to have them always, if we are given to know them from God.

Here we read in verse 13, "Thou shalt observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days." The day of Pentecost, if only one day, brings us pre-eminently into the anticipated joy of what is heavenly, eternal. It is based on the wave-sheaf exhibited in the wave loaves. A course of time here below is not marked in it as in the Passover on the one hand, nor on the other in the Feast of Tabernacles. Seven days, are an earthly period. There is no such thing in the Feast of Weeks. In a certain sense

Pentecost, although a day marked off from all others, is the emblem of that which has no end. As one with Christ we enter into the things above and unseen which are eternal. There will never be a time when we shall lose the Spirit of God, not even in heaven. So our Lord gave commandments to the apostles through the Holy Spirit after He rose from the dead (Acts 1:2). He received the Spirit at His baptism (Luke 3), and again in heaven, as the Father's promise, to shed forth on us (Acts 2:33). For in virtue of redemption we have the Spirit too. We shall not lose the Spirit when we rise. It would be an irreparable blank if we had the Spirit no more when in heaven. But there it will no longer be His gracious condescension in working in us that we may judge ourselves and correct our faults. Alas! that a great part of His work now is not only ministering to us the blessedness of Christ but dealing with our short comings; in heaven it will be so no more: every affection will rise in worship, or go forth in service. He will have nothing to correct. All will go out in power and sweet savour to God. But here we have this Feast of Tabernacles seven days. How comes it to pass and when do the seven days of glory — seven days of grace crowned by that which does not end at all — Pentecost — come on?

We enter into the power of the resurrection at the same time that we rest upon the foundation of His death. But now here we have another thing. We have Christ in heaven and we have Christ coming again, so that all our blessing is bound up with Christ, and so we read "after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." Now I think that none can have any doubt as to the meaning of the gathering in of the corn and the wine. You are all

familiar with the gathering in of the corn — the harvest. The harvest is typical not only of the Lord's coming, but coming to judge; and farther, you know that there is another type — the vintage — still more tremendous. In the harvest, there is the gathering out of the good as well as the execution on the bad; but in the vintage there is nothing but the trampling down of that which is most hateful to God; and what is that? It is the religion of the world. When God is dealing simply with the world some will be gathered in, for of some, although just like the rest, grace will make a difference. But God has no measure of His abhorrence of the religion of the world. The vine of the earth, that which is of the earth, earthy — taking the place of the true Vine, after the true Vine had been here; but how horrible in the sight of God! how hateful to God! and accordingly there is nothing but trampling down in His fury. The Lord Himself will do it. After that, the Feast of Tabernacles will come. And what is after the Lord's accomplishment of His judgment on the earth? Well, it is the day of glory. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; therefore, as I have said, there will be a stated and full time of glory — seven days. Just as there was a stated and full time of grace, so here there is a stated and full time of glory. But we are not waiting for that time in order to enter into the joy of glory. We see the glory, in its best case and highest power, in our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently it is said not only that the Spirit of God rests upon you, that is Pentecost; but the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. So we are entitled to keep the Feast of Tabernacles too.

And what belongs to the Feast of Tabernacles? ‘‘Thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son and thy

daughter," — practically the same thing as before. "Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto Jehovah thy God in the place which Jehovah shall choose: because Jehovah thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands." There is not a word of this said before. That will mark the day of glory, not only personal blessing, that is really now for all that are Christ's; but what will be then, "bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands." That is not the case now. There is many a saint now with whom all things go wrong, people are tried in every way, the apostles were the very off-scouring of all things, set forth the last, set forth as a spectacle to the world; that is not a blessing on the increase of the works of the hands! And where, on the contrary, people flourish in the things of this world the Lord intimates that it is hard, not impossible but hard, for such to enter into the kingdom of God. It is a difficulty but not an impossibility; but then there will be no difficulty. The time is coming to bless everything, not only persons, separated from all the rest of the world; that is now where the blessing comes on souls high or low; they are called out from the world, they are called not to go with the world in the slightest degree, as the Lord said, "They are not of the world, as I am not of the world" (John 17:16).

Whereas in that day the world is to be blessed. Then will be the time when the Lord will ask for the world. He does not pray for it now. "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me: for they are thine." That is what came in at Pentecost; but in the future He will ask for the world, and He will have it, and more than that, Jehovah will have it full of blessing every where. That is the Feast of Tabernacles. The universal

blessing — all but universal blessing. There will be exceptions even in that time, just to show it is not the eternal state although the spirit of that day will have come.

“Because Jehovah thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice. Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose” (vers. 15, 16).

Here we have a blessed setting out of our portion. May the Lord grant that our unfeigned confidence may be in Himself, that our joy and delight may be, above all, in that Christ that covers everything.

If I look at the dark side, there is death that covers it now; the blood is before God; not our folly not our death. His death! That has changed all for us. If I look up, there, He is in all the glory and perfection of His person and according to the counsels of God, I am placed there in Him. And so you are, so are you; and this is the portion of all that are His. As Christ is, so are we in this world. And if we look forward — there is nothing to fear in looking forward, there is all the fulness of blessing in all the increase of the works of the hands in that day. For the time will then have come for the day of blessing — the Melchisedec priesthood — not merely the principle of it, but the exercise of it, and not only according to the order of Melchisedec as now. Then will be the true Melchisedec bringing forth the bread and the wine, that it may not be simply meeting the necessary wants of the body, but everything that can cheer the heart of God’s people here below.

W.K.

1 It may be well to observe that the strictly paschal sacrifice was a lamb of the flock only. But it will be seen in Num. 28 that daily during the Feast, burnt-offerings of bullocks were also sacrificed, with a ram and lambs, a meal-offering, and a goat for a sin offering and a drink-offering. This explains the “herd” here.

The Creation - Genesis 1

There are truths which concern external nature, for which we are indebted to the revelation of God. Creation is one of these. That we are warranted in treating this truth as one which man could only guess after, without a divine revelation, we cannot but infer from the fact that mankind in general doubted about it — nay, even those who had the reputation of being the wisest and greatest of men denying it. There was no country where philosophy had such brilliant names and such extensive cultivation as in Greece; yet perhaps nowhere else was unbelief of creation more prevalent, especially among the philosophers. Aristotle denied it; Plato never understood it. To say who did comprehend, or even so much as conceive it, would be difficult. I deny not that there were those who spoke of it, but with singular darkness, and with evident confusion of mind. And yet it is a truth which, when once it is revealed, man’s mind feels that so it must have been, if he really weighs the facts, and submits to their force.

The reason why man, without a revelation, cannot reach up to creation as a certainty, I suppose to be this, — that man, as such — apart from a higher being — cannot rise above that which he is himself. He is but a creature. He may reason as to the effects of creation around him; he may arrive at inferences and convictions — and so he has, as the Apostle Paul shows us — of God’s eternal power and Godhead. At the same time, as creation is clearly out of the sphere of sense and demonstration, so there can be no certainty of it unless God reveal it.

When revealed, it at once accounts for and explains that which is before the eyes of all.

Men have raised many difficulties about creation. There is nothing so easy, even for a child, as to put questions hard to solve; but, after all, the difficulties and objections of speculation are generally trifling, when looked into with candour, and fairly confronted with the light of divine truth.

Thus men have asked why creation should be at a certain point of time, why not always. I answer that to say always is to deny creation. You assume by your doubt the denial of that which God's word asserts, and which even your reason can find the only key that really unlocks the universe. More than this, creation necessarily implies an exertion of the power of God; for it means that God was pleased to put forth His energy, and to give being to that which had no previous existence. And clearly it belongs to a personal being, as God is, to have a will — consequently, to create when He pleases, how He pleases, and as much or as little as He pleases.

Creation, therefore, is the action of sovereign will to call into being whatever seemed fit to His wisdom. If one used "time" of this, it must be in a large sense; for, strictly speaking, what we call time ordinarily is duration measured by created objects, after they have been caused to exist by God's power. In ancient times the philosophizing Jews found considerable difficulty in bringing in measures of time into their thoughts of creation. Their difficulty was precisely the opposite of that which the Gentile philosophers feel now. The modern schools of science demand enormous tracts of

time; but they themselves must admit they have made profound mistakes — their own books prove it. They differ not only from their predecessors, but from one another; not only from one another, but from themselves. Give them only a few years, and we find the most confident statements made — by geologists more particularly — refuted, not merely by other writers, but by their own subsequent investigations.

Again, in general it is not a question of disputing their observations, or well-attested facts. These may be interesting and important, as well as solid; the use made of them is another thing. We are entitled to judge their conclusions: they assuredly have done so themselves, with no little freedom; we are entitled on incomparably better grounds, if we have confidence in the word of God, which they have not. Only let us take care, lest we bring, by our own haste or unskilfulness, unmerited blame on that word which we seek to expound. If they have let it slip, if they have dared to despise it, so much the worse for them both now and evermore.

The truth is that Scripture is infinitely larger than the systems of men. I shall hope to prove, this afternoon, two things: — that after the beginning there is room for the longest successive lapses of duration; next, that the ordinary divisions of time are expressly introduced, and this precisely when it suits the character of God’s revelation, and His dealings with men. Consequently the word of God leaves ample space for all that is true in the systems both of the ancients and of the moderns. Here, then, as ordinarily, and I dare to say always, it is only ignorance of Scripture, and inattention to it, which have created the difficulty, as they are apt to do.

In short, the portion that has been read gives two great facts: creation at first, apart from those measures of time which belong to the present condition of the heavens and earth; secondly, the introduction of the common course of time, when God is undertaking to prepare an immediate abode for man on the earth. Thus, then, is met the Alexandrian theory, as of Philo, who thought it derogatory to God to suppose literal time in creation.1 His conception of the divine energy was an instantaneous result. The moderns have reduced God to a being rather more like themselves. For man undoubtedly would be a long time making such a world as this, and so is ready to imagine that God must have been a long time too. I do not say that there is much to boast of, either in ancients or in moderns; but the fact is that there seems to be a true element in both these suppositions. The mischief is that neither has been rightly understood, and that one has been set against another; whereas both, duly applied, have a solid existence in fact, and in the revelation of God's word. But we must distinguish and not confound them.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." If God had been bound to create at any moment before that in which He was pleased to call into being the heavens and the earth, His character must have been denied; He would not thus be the Absolute after all. For absolute means that He is not tied to conditions. That He was pleased, therefore, to exert His own divine energy at the particular time when He chose flows from the very fact that He is God. Even a man has a will. Is God to be deprived of His will? What sort of a God would that be?

“In the beginning,” then, “God created the heaven and the earth.” Observe the careful abstinence here from measures of time that belong to man. It is now well known, that not the heavens only but the earth had an existence and suited condition when man was not upon it — when it might be utterly impossible, according to the facts that we know about its circumstances, for man to be there, or for any animated nature to subsist — followed by vast and gradual changes, as well as sudden convulsions destructive of such living things as did afterwards exist. For such crises and changes there were, if there be anything ascertained in the “uncertain science,” as one called it who was himself one of the chief contributors to the riches of physical knowledge. And an uncertain science it truly is. Humboldt, we may be sure, did not mean to slight any real fruit of man’s mind. If there be, then, anything certain in the uncertain science of geology, it is this, that there were immense tracts of duration when man did not exist upon the earth. God’s word leaves ample space for them. “In the beginning “ fixes the commencement of the universe indeed, but admits of eras of indefinite extent, and this before the confusion described in the following verse, still more of course before the six days, whose course begins with verse 3.

To what use He applied them — what were the particular constitution, phase, and denizens of the earth during one space or another, God has not seen fit to lay before us in His word. This is no defect in Scripture: that it lies open to such a charge flows from one of its excellences. The word of God was never meant to be a book of human science. Nevertheless, when science ceases to be uncertain, when it is no longer a heap of

hypotheses, one displacing and destroying another, in the measure in which it becomes really entitled to the rank of science, and attains any degree of consistency as a branch of knowledge, it never fails to pay homage to the word of God. I do not speak of every individual who cultivates it. Far from that. But it seems to me true of science itself. And unquestionably men who have largely advanced its domains in all directions have not been the least loud in their acknowledgment of God's word, when it speaks of that which they are generally considered to know best. There are none in this room who would dispute the place of a Newton or a Cuvier. They were not backward in owning the value of Scriptural truths. Remember, I do not bring in the names of these great men as if it could be any triumph for the cause of God. It was their gain to bow to His word, which really cast lustre on them, not they on it.

So always it is. There is no man but what derives all his blessing, if he be wise, through God's word from God Himself. Sir Isaac Newton, for instance, did not degrade the science of which he was one of the most illustrious ornaments by denying God or dishonouring His word. Not that the prince of natural philosophers understood the word of God well — I do not think he did. It was not given to him to sound the depths of Scripture to any remarkable extent. He can scarcely be deemed correct as to his views of creation; for his idea was that God in the first place created crude masses of matter.2 Very likely such is the notion among many to this day; if so, it is a serious error, which derives no countenance from the word of God. What Scripture says is that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Do these latter terms mean masses of matter? Heaven is

not masses of matter, nor earth either. When Scripture says God created the heaven and the earth, it means what it says. God did not create a mass of undigested materials. We may presume Sir Isaac got this from Ovid, certainly not from the Bible. Most school-boys have imbibed the same idea; for even the greatest of men may sometimes be affected by that which influences the child at school. Few of us sift our sources of thought enough to discern how much we are tinctured, especially by heathen poets and philosophers. There is no man necessarily above such an influence. It would be only flattering ourselves to fancy that any man here could pretend to such an immunity. I should be sorry, indeed, to give the slightest ground to suppose it to be a question of man against man. My present task is to vindicate God's word, no matter who the person is that ventures to oppose it. Let his reputation be what it may, God is above him, and His word is infinitely wiser than that which any man has written without inspiration. Scripture never knows what it is to correct itself; it corrects all others and their words, let them be the greatest philosophers or who they may.

"By the help of this principle all material things seem to have been composed of the hard and solid particles above mentioned, variously associated in the first creation by the counsel of an intelligent Agent; for it became Him who created them to set them in order. And if He did so, it is unphilosophical to seek for any other origin of the world, or to pretend that it might have arisen out of chaos by the mere laws of nature; though being once formed it may continue by these laws for many ages.

“Space being infinitely divisible, and matter not being necessary in all places, it may be also allowed that God is able to create particles of matter of several sizes and figures, and in several proportions to space, and perhaps of different densities and forces, and thereby to vary the laws of nature, and make worlds of several sorts in several parts of the universe. At least I see nothing of contradiction in all this.” — Horsley’s Newton, vol. iv., p. 260, etc.

God’s word then asserts, that in the beginning He created the heaven and the earth. I admit that it was not the heavens in the sense in which we afterwards read of them, in the course of the second day (verses 6-8). It was not the earth in the state in which, when the waters were finally gathered into seas, man was to live on the dry land. Nor is there any reference to man or even to any other animal in this primary mention of the earth (verse 1). All is left strikingly open. If science has made discoveries here, let her humbly seek to prove them. Let her remember the cosmogonies of olden time and not be too hasty. Above all, let her not be in a hurry to contradict the Bible. She will be wiser if she curbs her spirit and seeks a docile mind; otherwise she will find out her humiliating mistake before long. When things get settled down into their places, and the various discoveries acquire shape, and are generalized into laws that carry conviction everywhere, like the principle of gravitation; when geology arrives (if ever it should) at such a place as its far more exact sister, astronomy, I do not doubt that her obeisance to the Bible will be more complete than it is now. Not that I expect such progress; yet it is not for any one to predict what may be in reserve. But this is certain, that Scripture asserts the

grand truth that God gave being to the heaven and the earth, without connecting this with time as measured by man, still less of course by history.

Consequently the common idea of putting the creation of the world some six thousand years ago is a mere blunder. The Bible is in no way responsible for it. Where does Scripture say so, or anything approaching to it? It is only the annotator at the beginning of the Authorised Version who joins B.C. 4004 with Genesis 1:1. I do not doubt that the margin was thus supplied by men, excellent, learned, and with pious intentions. But it is only man, not God, who dates creation from Tisri or September 1st. And this is the blessedness of the Bible, that we have in itself that which corrects the best of men who laboured on it with the best means and desires.3 Is this a loss? To my mind an immense boon, especially to those who boast of no wisdom except that which the Bible gives them. The Bible — and this is its boast and ours — is the book for all, be they the simplest or the most ignorant. The Bible — and where is there the appearance of such another book — can correct the best wisdom that man has ever laid up, not merely outside, but from the Bible itself. The Bible, then, nowhere puts creation in connection with Adam — expressly not; nor is it in connection with animated being, with beasts, or birds, or fishes, or reptiles, nor even with the grass and fruits of the earth. It simply affirms what man never knew as a certainty without the Bible, that “in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

Then the second verse puts us in presence of another great fact, which has been, no doubt, illustrated by geologists, but in no way are we indebted to them for

ascertaining it. Here it is in the Bible without them and before geology was heard of: “And the earth was without form, and void.” It is clearly a condition totally different from the first verse. Not a word about the heaven being without form, and void; the earth alone was so. Some, no doubt, have found a difficulty because of the word “and” (!) being introduced, as if it linked the second verse with the first in point of time; but this is all a mistake. If the word “and” had not been here, the first verse might have been taken for a sort of summary of all the rest of the chapter; and thus hasty readers, and preachers, and commentators have been too disposed to treat it in expounding the chapter. They imagined that God’s creating in the beginning was set out in detail under the various days that afterwards follow; but that little conjunction precludes such an interpretation. Compare such statements elsewhere, as for instance, in Genesis 5: “This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made be him.’’ There we have the absence of the conjunction. The reason is that the first words are an abstract of that which the rest of the chapter brings before us. Had there been no “and” at the beginning of the second verse of the first chapter, the common (or at least what used to be the common) construction might plead some show of reason for itself, as far as the language of Moses is concerned. There might have then been an impeachment of the accuracy of the divine record. As it stands, there is thorough and manifest correctness. The only persons that have made mistakes are either Christians with upright wishes, who have merely attached their own erroneous notion to the scripture, or men of science who similarly mis-reading it have forthwith sought to malign it. There was no just

ground for either; the fault was in both, not in God's word.4 "And the earth was without form, and void." This is a second fact. There is no limitation of the space that intervened between the original creation of heaven and earth in verse 1, and the dreary ruin depicted in the earlier clause of verse 2. We are not told what were the grounds on which God dissolved the fabric of the earth He had created, and brought it into the chaotic condition so strikingly set forth. But I repeat my assertion that the creation of a chaos, or the existence of a chaos as a primeval state, is a heathen and not a biblical thought. What the Bible says is quite inconsistent with such an idea. "Heaven and earth," we have seen, does not mean chaos, but a state of things with an order necessarily distinguishing them. What use God may have made of the earth as it originally came from His fiat is another question, and our curiosity is not indulged by the Bible. The fact, however, is certain; and it is a fact of the utmost moment, and of very great interest in its place. All the facts that have been discovered of the earliest conditions of the earth fall in with it; that is to say, they point to a time when the animal, or even vegetable kingdom, when life in its lowest forms as yet had no existence on the globe. Is there no difficulty then? I grant you that man has the utmost possible difficulty in arriving at anything more than a First Cause. What the nature of that First Cause is, how can he tell? The very same principle that leads him to feel there must be a First Cause forbids his understanding it. The reason of this too it is not hard to see. Man himself infers a first cause, but he, a caused being, never can per se understand a first cause that is not caused. It is outside and above the sphere and nature of his own being. There man feels, and, alas!

would hide, his own ignorance. But here in Scripture all is plain. We are told that all things above and below had a First Cause, and that He who caused them to be was God, who by the absolute act of His own will was pleased so to create (verse 1). Then (verse 2) follows another fact — all the earthly part of the creation completely dissolved, and in hopeless confusion. I shall prove that Scripture refers to the same words elsewhere; never as the original state, but a state to which God was pleased to reduce the object in question. The importance of this cannot be over-estimated in such a theme as the present.

Thus in Isaiah 34:11 we have these same expressions once more. In describing the judgment upon the land of Edom, we read, “The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion (tohu), and the stones of emptiness” (bohu). No man can say that this is a description of the original state of the land of Edom; it is a condition to which God’s judgment brought it down. This, then, confirms the interpretation already given of Genesis 1:2. The second verse is brought in as an additional statement to the first (not an exhibition of the state which was before us in the first verse). But, further, the use made of the terms elsewhere (as Isaiah 34) shows that they suit there a condition to which God consigned what He had made, and certainly do not describe that in which He made or created it.

Again Jeremiah 4:23 refers to these same terms, and clearly in allusion to Genesis. There the prophet writes in view of the land of Israel and the judgments impending — “I beheld the earth” (it was a prophetic

vision), “and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled.” That is, it is not at all a vision looking back to a primeval condition, but one that looks onward to the utter desolation with which God would visit a particular land, the terms being pointedly chosen from the second verse of Genesis 1. What I gather is very simple; that there is an analogy in the use to which the Spirit of God applies His own words; that Genesis 1:2 is a description of the state, not in which God made the earth, but to which He was pleased subsequently to reduce it.

I may be met by the objection that this represents God as capricious. Far be the thought! Was not, is not, He that made the heavens and the earth all-wise? Ah! it would have been a poor thing for man, as he is now, if God had not broken up the earth; an imperfect provision, if He had not convulsed it, and many a time too. I am not prepared to endorse, still less to oppose, what men of science, who had, as far as I am aware, no thought of illustrating the Bible, have affirmed as to the number and character of the pre-Adamite convulsions. There is one that I could name among the most exact and comprehensive of modern writers on palaeontology, and he, if I recollect aright, affirms that some nine and twenty times the crust of this earth was broken up, before man was made to dwell here below; that nine and twenty times there have been successive acts of God’s power, in bringing in what was new on the basis of the breach of the old. And suppose you that all this was arbitrary? Certainly I am not going in anywise to bind

my faith or yours to that which M. D'Orbigny says, however competent he may have been to give a grave and ripe judgment. Convulsions may have happened nineteen times, or nine and twenty, or thirty-nine.

To my mind it is rather a precarious affirmation, the exact number on a point so delicate and difficult to ascertain with precision. Nevertheless, the general outline I cannot but hold to be as sure a series of facts as any other in geological science, that God was pleased to form successive deposits, and after each, or at any rate at intervals, violently to break up the surface that He formed. And so far from this being without a worthy purpose, it was the evidently wise course of things, if He destined the earth, after these vast geological eras, to become the home of man, or at least the sphere for man's activity and responsibility in such a world as this. How else would man have reached what lay in the bowels of the earth? How else could he have availed himself, for instance, of the buried coal measures? How else could he have turned to account the minerals deposited in its depths? How else could he have quarried the lime, the marbles, and other stones concealed there? On the one hand, all this chain of successive convulsions was requisite for man, when formed on the earth; but, on the other hand, it was entirely incompatible with man, or indeed any other being, when living on the face of the earth; because these violent disruptions, of course, would have been fatal, as they were when various genera and species of living creatures did exist at each epoch when the crash took place; and consequently the tale is told by the vast beds of fossilized objects, as we all know — when God laid down not merely unstratified formations, but strata

with an ascending scale of organic being, before the Adamic earth.

But all this was not without a beneficent design marked with the utmost wisdom and goodness too, as all that God does and says must be. So that although He was pleased here to pass over these geologic eras silently, leaving it to man who was about to avail himself of means to discover such facts by his observation, and by that mind with which God had endowed him, yet He has left ample verge for all in verse 2. It was natural that man should survey that world on which he was made, and of which he was constituted the lord. One can understand that man goes forth and enters with interest into the conditions of the world that was put under him; for things here below were his proper domain. Naturally, therefore, man seeks to understand the world which has been set in his heart (Eccles. 3:11), where he finds himself now an inhabitant. It is perfectly certain that all the previous states differed more or less from each other, as they were totally different from the conditions in which man was made and tested in Eden.

Let me here state another patent fact. It is after all this that the days come in. It is quite a mistake to count them long periods. They are nothing of the sort. I see no reason to doubt that they are simple cycles of twenty-four hours. If long periods had been meant, do you think that God would have spoken about “the evening and the morning”? Such a phrase would be an extraordinary formula for introducing any other than a natural day. That there were long periods may be quite true; but then they are left room for, and not described. They would come in before if not after the state described in verse 2 — once certainly, and perhaps twice. There

might be suites of long periods for aught we know. It does not appear, as far as my reading goes, that there is anything of real trustworthiness as to these periods except the general fact, which is a matter of fair inference from what has been turned up here below. But here it is, and here only, in my opinion, that you must insert these long eras. Grant that there may have been forty thousand years for one period, what is there to alarm in that? Be it so: I care not how many millions of years you claim. Supposing that scheme true, there is room for the geologic ages; Scripture says nothing to the contrary, but leaves abundant space for all, and so much the more remarkably because at first sight such interstices might be easily passed over.

It is not the part of wisdom for a Christian to deny facts. Why reject the phenomena which indicate states not only of the earth, but of living creatures there before Adam was made, that is, before the six days? Otherwise, how can we escape the supposition, that God was pleased to make vast quantities of fossilized objects, giving the appearance of having lived on the earth, which never did? Are you prepared to accept the notion that God studiously gave a semblance of that which was not true? There are remains of animals, and animals too that were evidently made with distinct objects and with characteristics altogether different from those of any animals to be found now, and supposing a correspondent state of things (as for instance, when the world was a vast marsh and enormous heat prevailed). There is no ground whatever to doubt these facts. I do not see that a Christian shows his wisdom, or his faith either, by denying anything of the sort. Granted that being unrevealed it is not a point for faith; it is a thing that

man must ascertain and prove if he can, and thus it is a question of knowledge or ignorance. One cannot talk correctly about faith in science. Faith has nothing to do with science, nor again has science with faith. What the scientific men have to do is to collect and marshal their facts; then let them and others judge their conclusions. This does not appear to me at all arrogant — but what every soul who can ought to do — every one who takes the trouble of making himself master of the facts they present. It does not follow that the most diligent and successful collectors of facts are the best deducers from them. This may or may not be. A wise man has not a word to say against science itself or known facts. I do complain of the precipitancy and evident animus with which many men have chosen to use what they could in an unformed and crude state of science to contradict the word of God. Neither wisdom nor reverence appears in such ways.

Thus, we have now had the two grand facts with which the chapter opens — the original creation, and secondly, another separate fact, but the next that is stated, — the chaotic condition into which the earth was reduced, and, as far as the analogy of Scripture shows by God's act — by His judgment — for wise reasons.

But there is more evidence still. There is a passage in Isaiah which seems to me formally to contradict the notion that God created the earth in a state of chaos. As to heaven it is not pretended; it is only a question of the earth. We shall best see the importance of this by-and-by. Now, in a well-known passage of Isaiah (45:18), the Spirit of God is explicit that God did not make the earth in the chaotic condition which is familiar to all the readers of ancient mythology. It is a statement which

made a considerable impression on my own mind, because in it the Spirit of God seems distinctly to contradict the idea that the earth was created in emptiness or confusion. “For thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it; he created it not in vain: he formed it to be inhabited.” Our translators in using the expression “in vain “ evidently turned tohu aside from the literal import. The fact is, it is very much more forcible when taken in connection with the passage in Genesis 1, 2. One of the terms Moses employed in verse 2 is used by Isaiah, who declares that Jehovah did not create the earth so. What conclusion can one draw but that Moses described an after state, and not the primary result of God’s creation! The traditional interpretation sets the legislator at variance with the prophet, and must be abandoned for the view already given, which maintains their perfect harmony. When created, God did not create the earth a waste; when it became such, it was a subsequent state.

There is another fact also on which I would just desire to say a word — the remarkable precision of the terms that the Spirit of God has used on this subject. Hebrew is not by any means a copious language, but is comparatively poor. It is not at all equal to our own in possessing shades of synonym; but for all that it is worthy of note that, as to the matter now in hand, which was to be conveyed by revelation to man, the language that the Holy Ghost first employed has materials which, for precision, as far as I know, are found in none other. Consider how the terms which we translate “creating” “making” “forming” or “fashioning,” here and

elsewhere, are used — with what force and appropriateness — in the word of God.

It may help to put this in a clear light before those ignorant of it if we turn to Exodus 20, which, perhaps, may be in the minds of some as bearing out the common notion that the earth was created in six days. In the eleventh verse of that chapter it is written, “In six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day.” No doubt a great many people, in the habit of hearing this, have confounded it with the opening words of Genesis 1. But there is a marked difference, instead of any such confusion. If Scripture said that Jehovah created heaven and earth in six days, there would be reasonable ground for the thought. Nowhere is such an assertion to be found in the word of God. What we do find is the creation of heaven and earth in the beginning; but when you come to the six days, it is the making of heaven and earth. So manifest is the difference at once. “Create” (bara), if we are to distinguish the words, refers to the efficient cause; “make” (asah) points to the formal cause; and they have another word (yatsar), which brings in the material.

It is very evident, therefore, that Hebrew — poor a language as it may be in some respects — is exquisitely precise in these very particulars. No doubt the reason is obvious. It was God’s pleasure to reveal His mind as to the outward creation in the Hebrew tongue. And what makes it the more striking is, that Greek — which is such a finely expressive language in most other respects — seems to fail not a little in this. They had no words at all competent to express these shades of meaning. They were driven to other ways of putting the idea. There is

always a possibility in every tongue of expressing thought; but this may, in some cases, require a circuitous method. In John 1:3 we have creation alluded to. In the first verse we read: “In the beginning was the Word” — clearly this ascends, as often noticed, before Genesis 1:1. In the one beginning God acted; in the other the Word was, the uncreated expresser of God, before His power was put forth to call anything or one into being — the Word that was with God, and that was God. “The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him.” There is a beautiful exactness in the Greek expression, that is not found in the English. Egeneto is not adequately answered either by the Hebrew or the English “made.” Properly speaking, it does not mean anything of the sort, but “caused to be.” The Word gave to all things existence. This seems to be the best Greek method of expressing creation, if it can be expressed in that tongue by one word. “All things were brought into being by him; they began” — or, rather, “were caused to be” — “by him.” Such is the force of the term. But this does not at all match the admirable excellence of the Hebrew tongue, where we have God’s own absolute act referred to. Such is the essence of the word “create” and consequently it is invariably attributed to God. We never read of any created being of whom it is predicated, unless in a figure or evident accommodation. It could not be applied to the act of a creature. Not that it always means created out of nothing. It is the word for this, but not for this only. Hence it is applied to the fifth day’s work — the first production of animal life for the Adamic world (verse 21), and still more emphatically to the latest task of the sixth day, when God gave being to the chief of this lower creation (verse 27). We ought always to gather the

value of a word from its usage; to the use that Scripture makes of it we may wisely, and must implicitly, bow.

Thus, without going farther, this very chapter of Genesis shows that, while the word here translated “create” is proper to describe God’s origination of being where there was none before, at the same time it may express a particular act of God’s will where there existed materials of which God made use. For instance, where He created the sea-animals, and where He created man in the image of God, it is evident that in neither case does it mean without pre-existent materials. Here we know from the account that such there were. The statements of Scripture are inconsistent, therefore, with the notion that the word create invariably means creating out of nothing. At the same time, while this modification of the word’s meaning is allowed, it remains true that, if God would express creation in its full import where there was nothing before, this is the word and none other. Where is the word beside so admirably suited to convey it?

If some suppose it a defect that the same word is used with such shades of difference, let me tell them that their objection makes a demand on Hebrew which is not met by any other language — which, if it could be met, would involve mere barbarism even if practicable to be remembered and used; in fact, there is no language where words do not express varieties of meaning. If the most precise of tongues did not admit of some modification in the use of its terms, such a catalogue would be an intolerable burden. If one were bound to use a new word for every new thought, how cumbrous would human speech become! Man would sink under the weight of that which he had to carry in his mind, and

utter in its proper time and place. But enough of this, which I merely notice to guard the unreflecting from a common misapprehension.

When God, then, expresses not the first origination of the universe, but the constituting of the earth an abode for man, we find the plain fact, that in the six days Jehovah, the God of Israel, is said to have made all things (according to the fourth commandment, which views the whole scene as we have it now, not as primarily created). Accordingly, after the Spirit of God has been brought in as moving upon the face of the waters, we are shown in the six days' work the making of the earth for man as formed by the hand of God here below.

Let us briefly trace their course. "And God said, Let there be light." Here, again, it is well to direct your attention to the words. A well known critic of antiquity singled out the sentence as a fine instance of the sublime. But there is far more in it. Probably many of my hearers are aware that there have been conflicting theories about light, and that the men of science have not quite settled the question yet among themselves (that is to say, whether it depend on emission from a certain point which you may call the fountain, or whether light be caused to act by vibrations). There is thus a wide discordance between the corpuscular theory and the idea of an undulating ether. Further, it is known that most scientific moderns have been disposed to give up the Newtonian theory of corpuscles in favour of the vibration theory of a later date. It may be remarked here that the manner in which God's word introduces the action of light suits the more refined view. For certainly there is a careful abstinence from making an entity of

light. It is not put forward as some material thing created, but in such a way as to express a power, whatever its seat might be. Thus the peculiarity of its mention makes it perfectly consistent with the supposition that it is merely produced by undulations of ether.

This is the more remarkable, because no one can pretend that the theory was known. I am aware how scholars have permitted themselves to look down on the sons of Israel. I am aware that to your Tacituses and Gibbons they were the most contemptible of mankind. I am aware that poets cannot conceal their bitter scorn. Nevertheless, how comes to pass the startling fact, that there have been heaps of philosophers before and since these scornful poets and historians, ancient or modern, but the only account of creation which survives is found in the simple yet sublime words of the Hebrew Moses? Many of them, if not all, wrote of the universe since Moses; but where will you put Cl. Ptolemy — one of the greatest names — now? Here shines day by day the same majestic statement in the word of God. The more you seek to degrade the Hebrews, the more you really, though unwittingly, exalt the God who employed them to be the vehicles of communicating what none else knew. Where is any other document of the kind that stands its ground like Genesis 1? If there be, show me it or the man that wrote it. Where is the theory of the earth, up to this year of grace, which has yet given such a graphic, comprehensive, or exact statement? And this is the more admirable, because it is given in a book meant for men, women, and children; in a book expressly designed to cast the light of God on a world involved in moral darkness; in a book capable of being understood from

the first day it was written, yet at the same time so written that nothing shall ever be found to contradict it up to the last day.

This is what I claim for the Bible. That anything has ever really contradicted it, on grounds that will bear investigation, I have yet to learn. It has not been for want of will or effort; it has not been for want of learning or science. I do not pretend to be so ignorant as not to have looked into what men have written against the Bible. I have examined what has been said in ancient as well as modern times. But I have not seen — and I challenge any other person to show me — an account of creation that carries on its own face such an admirable combination. There is a statement of facts that does not go beyond what men in olden time could profit by and understand; and yet not only does it survive all the changing thought of mankind, but it gathers fresh illustration of its truth from the advance of science, wherever the later becomes so mature and fixed as to carry general conviction along with itself.

That a man living at so very early a day (as Moses unquestionably did) has written in the same brief sentence that which one of the greatest wits of antiquity, and finest critics of style, cites as challenging universal admiration for its simple sublimity; and that he has at the same time given his account with an exactness that surpasses what the illustrious Newton displayed, only within a comparatively short remove from our own time — to me is the more gratifying, because it came from the remote history of a very little people in an obscure corner of the earth. It is no use to tell me that Moses was learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians. The wisdom of the Egyptians in these matters would have only

misled him. Produce me such a testimony of their wisdom, show me from their hieroglyphics, or from any other source you like, that they understood the course of creation as Moses did. There may have been some points common; but they were points common to many others besides Egyptians. They were relics of current tradition, in some way or other generally received. But were the special salient points of Moses ever endorsed by the philosophers of Greece, Rome, or Egypt? The Egyptians held eternal matter, primeval night, and the origin of their gods from earth and heaven, not the God who in the beginning created them and all things.

It seems to me, then, that the scorn of incredulity is, as usual, exceedingly misplaced; and that Moses must not be viewed as a genius who had by depth of intellect penetrated into nature's secrets. They are not to be rifled thus. Genius may develop itself in poetry; it may happily blossom and bear fruit in a waste of seemingly barren facts. But the facts of creation are an impossibility for mind to conceive and calmly state without exposing itself to successful attacks from all sorts of shafts of a hostile world. Not so! There is One above all the geniuses, scholars, and men of science, who gave them life and breath and all things; He it was who wrote by His servant Moses.

We must take note of another fact also. Why is it that light is introduced here? It is no use to say that it is all according to phenomena. It is not natural to have spoken of it here, unless the allegation were the simple truth. Moses surely had done otherwise had he been writing according to observation. And you know that this is the boasted but really base philosophy of the hour; you are aware that men are now making experience

everything, and that what Hume put forth in his scepticism of a former day is now the fashionable empiricism of this day. They call it positivism. No more degrading system ever dragged down men's minds since the world began; nothing will more thoroughly corrupt the hearts. Such was the fate of the early positivists in heathen times. It will be more deadly now.

But however this may be judged, here we have a fact not discernible by experience at all. And if it be a truth, how was it learnt? Who, that merely gathered his thoughts from the world around and above, would have brought in light before the sun, moon, and stars? Why then did Moses burden his account of creation by that which was not at all a fact derivable from observation, but rather a difficulty? It is a strange statement at first sight. If it really set forth the truth, it is easily accounted for. Nor am I in the least denying that light may have been caused to act at previous states of the world. It is vain, therefore, to object to Scripture, that there were animals before man which had eyes, and consequently saw; that even those little animals (I need hardly say I mean the Trilobites) that have been discovered soon after the first traces of animal life, noticed in the formations of the Silurian epoch, are remarkable for their singular and powerful structure of vision. There is no doubt of the facts, and I would not weaken their force in the least. Their ocular provision indicates fulness and power. Some of these must have been able to look round about in a way beyond most beings now on the earth. At the same time, all this is not at all inconsistent with the statement of Moses. It is evident that a state of chaos might cause totally different conditions from what had existed before, and might forbid that vibration that was

necessary to call out light. But here we find that, after this utter confusion, light is caused to be. If animals existed before those described for the Adamic earth, there may have been light before also. What is said under the six days is about the earth as it was to be placed under man.

Another thing may be observed. A certain analogy may well have been in part, if not wholly, between the great geological periods, and these six days. You are aware, of course, that Hugh Miller is the popular advocate of this idea, carried out so far as to identify them by making the days mean these vast successive eras. Now it is not for me to speak slightingly of such a man; at the same time, I believe he was mistaken. Do I deny the long periods? Not at all. Do I reject the analogy between them and these days? In no wise. Can we not understand vast periods characterized by God's building up this globe gradually and in successive exertions of His power, and that the six days should go over the work again after the last great catastrophe, before man, only on a circumscribed and very brief scale, for our race to dwell on the earth — yet similar, in certain grand outlines, to that which had occupied God in the immense tracts of duration which preceded Adam? There appears to me not the slightest ground for setting the one thought against the other. Both may be perfectly true, and in point of fact I believe that so it was.

Doubtless you are aware of a comparatively new set of philosophers, more daring in their speculations than the old heathen.5 They assert that everything has grown up from a nebula; but what the nebula grew out of no man can tell — not even these experts. Of this only they are sure, that they owe their origin not to God but to a

nebula, unless this be their God. I hope to show, before I have done with this chapter, that the scheme is as false as the facts of science are true; that God's word makes all plain, and, in point of fact, falls in with the most thorough and comprehensive observation, as well as with conscience; for conscience has a good deal to do with these matters, though it may not appear so at first sight. There is a will in all this restless speculation. There is a willing ignorance of that which does not suit. There is a desire to get rid of God, and consequently of creation.

As to the notion of development, let me tell you that God has taken pains, both above and below, to expose the falsity. As a general fact, it is quite clear that from the lower classes of being there is an ascending scale. But the moment you make it absolute and exclusive, you contradict facts. I deny the assumption first from this, that God made angels before He made man. I suppose you will not dispute the fact that angels are a superior class of beings. Now we know for certain, that when the foundations of the earth were laid, "the morning stars sang together," as Job says, "and all the sons of God shouted for joy." God has taken pains, therefore, to guard against such a system.

This, by-the-bye, illustrates the remarkable ways of God in the Bible. It is not arranged as a mere book of geometry, where one proposition depends on a preceding one, and all form, so to speak, a regularly connected chain. The Bible must be read, and read again and again as a whole; and one grand reason why many make so poor a use of it is, that they cherish favouritism so much as to neglect the greater part of Holy Writ. And those who teach are apt to have their

favourite texts, so that it fares ill with the Bible among both teachers and taught. I do not say that God does not bless the most partial use of His book; but I am sure that it will most amply repay every Christian who reads it as a whole. And let me assure you that the best recipe against infidelity is thus to read the Bible. How many of those who disbelieve it have so read it? That they have read parts of it I can suppose, as well as those who have feebly endeavoured to upset their statements. But it is a rare thing to meet with souls that read all the Bible with a spirit of faith. Many read it as a duty or religious task. Can such a study thus expect to enter in and enjoy? There is a numerous class of persons who get through the Bible in a year, or something of that kind; but this is far short of what I am now urging. Seek to understand the Bible: it is only possible by faith. There is no other way. Not by understanding do we believe, but by faith we understand as well as set to our seal that God is true.

Again, for the dissipation of the dismal idea of development, take the fact of the superiority of the early remains of the Saurian order above existing objects of the same kind. Can they gainsay this? They know it is true. They are perfectly aware that the idea of development in the Saurian order is a fiction, that the superior objects of that family are not those that in point of time followed as the theory would require. A single, positive, and well-defined fact of the kind suffices. No doubt there are others. Without pretending to any minute acquaintance with the subject, I know this much at least, and on their own authority, or rather on facts which cannot be disputed. Will they say that we should not bow to facts? I do not dispute them, whether it be facts of criticism as to the text of Scripture, or

ascertained facts in the outward world of science. I do not question that facts have a meaning; but the hypothesis some seek to build upon those facts ought not to be too readily accepted.

We may now pass on to look briefly at the following days. “And God said, Let there he a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven.”

How comes this? It is another difficulty at first sight. Did we not hear of heaven in the first verse? To be sure we did; and here we are told of heaven again. What then — contradiction? Not in the least degree; only another heaven — that is all. And is this, then, not true? Why this other heaven? Because man was about to be made. The circumambient atmosphere, extending upwards too, was essential not only to man’s existence here below, but to vegetable life, to the due activity of light and heat, as well as to all forms of animated existence.

We find under the second day, then, the lower heaven. And that this is not a merely Jewish idea, but of God, is perfectly certain from the New Testament; for there we read how Paul was caught up (at any rate “a man in Christ,” who, I have no doubt, was Paul) into the third heaven. We can easily understand, therefore, that at the beginning God made two heavens, and that in this case He made the lowest one. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Here we find He made another, man being about to be made. And this is called heaven too. They are all called the heavens. There is the

heaven of His presence; the heaven of the stars, planets, and other astronomical objects; and the atmospheric heaven necessary for man and living things here below.

Again we find, as that which occupies the third day, that the waters under the heaven are gathered together to one place, and the dry land appears. “And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas.” And then the earth is made to bring forth grass — that lovely array, as it were, for the earth — full of beauty as well as beneficence. “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind.”

I grant you that modern science denies genera and species everywhere. Development is in effect a denial of this. The Lamarckian notion, of which we have a representative in a rather celebrated living Englishman, sets it all aside. Do they realty gain much by it? I do not see that the blotting out of kinds in fruit-trees or herbs is a great acquisition of science. To me it seems to be a blotting out of the landmarks, not of science only, but of distinctions that date from the workmanship of God. It seems to be thoroughly spurious — merely one of those dark clouds that for a season flit across the horizon of science as over other worlds. It may be fashionable, but this does not make it the better. Here we are told, for God has written, that the different herbs had their kinds. And this is one of the great facts of the vegetable kingdom. The simplest gardener, that thinks as well as labours, knows this. Since man observed facts on the earth, when was it seen or heard that an apple-tree brought forth pears, or that a pear-tree bore apples? They can prove nothing but the liveliness of their own imagination. These dreamers contradict not only

Scripture and science, but the facts gathered by observation in every land.

Again, on the fourth day we hear of the luminaries. And here mark the consistency and propriety of the language. It is not said that God then created them, but simply, “Let there be lights in the firmament.” It is not light now, but “lights,” or light-bearers, “in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night (the stars also).” These last are just referred to, and it was the more important because, as is generally known, many of those that had the greatest weight in the ancient world adored the stars. Even Plato, although a western, was sufficiently tinctured by orientalism to yield to the monstrous figment that the earth is a sort of living creature. As the philosophy of Aristotle directly tended to atheism (for it was low-minded empiricism), so the philosophy of Plato led into, if it was not downright, pantheism. Such was the difference between them. Pantheism, though in sound opposed, is really near akin to atheism.

God here cuts off the ground of all these delusions, as well as the objection of moderns, who too hastily assumed that the stars are said to be created at this time. It is not so. No matter how long the space required for the light from more distant stars to reach the earth, it is evident that room is left for all by what is said, and not said, in verses 1, 14, 16. Had Moses written that they were created on the fourth day, it would have

contradicted the facts; but as it is expressed, not only is there no contradiction, but obviously the Bible is wiser than either the friends or the foes of revelation. Compare what Moses wrote with any philosopher you please in the ancient world. Whose writings have failed to contradict the facts of modern science? How comes it that Moses did not? Whose care was it that preserved him from here implying — as many divines have been too hasty to say for him — the creation of the lights?6 A Scotch university professor not long since insisted to me that Moses affirmed it. He was so ready to believe that Scripture contradicts science, that he had not even weighed these few words with care. Had Plato or Aristotle written as Moses did, how loud the boasting, and how close the scrutiny, not to "hint a fault," but to set forth the excellence of their philosophy! Scripture needs no apology. All I ask is a more exact attention to the word of God on the part of those who venture to assail it. It would be wiser at least to read it first.

You see where those are that speak about the enormous length of time necessary for light to be transmitted — though this again is more than they ought to assume — at any rate for the action of light by means of the heavenly orbs. But there is no difficulty whatever. When God created the heavens, did He make them empty? Did He not create also the host of heaven? What about the sun, and moon, and stars? He created them some time. That they were made we find elsewhere in this chapter; not, I presume, the absolute moment of their creation, but of their being made to serve for the use of man on the earth. What other uses they served we are not there informed. That they were God's handiwork, and for man's use, as creatures of God here below — not objects

of worship, as in heathenism, He does explain. Surely there was wisdom in saying this and no more. There was considerate goodness in what He said, and in what He withheld.

On the fifth day the waters were to “bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.” Here, too, a contradiction, I must tell you has been discovered by certain critics. Chapter 2 shows that fowl were made out of the earth; but Genesis 1:20, they say, intimates that fowl were made out of the waters. Superficial cavillers! Genesis 1 says nothing of the sort, but is perfectly consistent with Genesis 2:19. Look at the margin, not the text, of 1:20 in your common English Bible. The objection is exceedingly illustrative of the danger of reasoning not from Scripture, but from a mistake that has crept into a translation of it. The first thing we have always to do is to ascertain the word of God and its meaning as accurately as possible. What this verse teaches is not that the waters were to bring forth fowl, as it appears to do in our English version; but “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature, and let fowl fly about the earth in the open firmament of heaven.” The flying of the fowl in that sphere is the point, and not the statement that the waters gave birth to them. There is no such intimation in Scripture. What men have reasoned on, therefore, is merely their own misconception, and nothing more.

On the next and sixth day we have the land animals produced, and finally, man made in the image of God, after His likeness, with dominion over the lower creation assigned to them, and God blessing them. But mark the difference. It is only when man is thus about to be made

that God says, “Let us.” Oh, can you not appreciate the spirit of such a word as this? Can you not admire the way in which God, as it were, sits in counsel on the creation of man? Can you not judge between the physiologist that would make an ape his progenitor, and the Bible that reveals God thus creating man in His own image? Which is the more noble? Which is the more degrading? Of no other creature is it said, “Let us make,” when it was a question of the earth, the sea, nay, of light itself — nothing of the sort. “Light be,” said Elohim, “and light was.” But as to the others, He wrought, but with no such preface as “Let us make.” Here it is for the first and only time, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion.” What can be farther from development? Such an idea is altogether foreign; and, indeed, the existence of different races and kinds has been engraved by God most legibly on the world of nature; for although man by his wicked ingenuity may cross the breed, as for example, of the animals that were put under his dominion, the result is always to induce sterility — the standing witness, on the one hand, against man’s meddling, and, on the other, for the order in which God meant His creation to proceed. Thus is set before us succinctly, but plainly, the general course of creation.

A few remarks I would make on chapter 2 before I close.

The Sabbath-day is introduced at the beginning, though in truth the first three verses of chapter 2 belong properly to chapter 1; that is, they form a part of the great week of God’s work and its rest. And there is a very beautiful connection with this which meets an objection of modern times on which a word may be well bestowed. You are aware that German authors have

insisted loudly (whether the idea was originated by them is more than I would say) that we are indebted to different writers for the first book of Moses (just as it used to be the fashion of the Wolffians to divide Homer among I know not how many rhapsodists, though, in point of fact, this created far greater difficulties than it was supposed to remove; for it is far harder to imagine half a dozen Homers than one). One thing is very certain, that Moses, according to these sages, must have been a weak, foolish man, who adopted at least two different accounts, without a suspicion of what to them is obvious, that the one writer contradicted the other. Such is the discovery of modern criticism. Let me say what I am sure is the truth on this: I dare not venture to put it forward as an opinion. It seems to me a sin to state anything that rests on the clear testimony of God's word as open to a doubt. If it is a mere question of your judgment of this fact or that, or your individual estimate of the person putting it forward, or your comparative view of the circumstances passing around, it is an opinion; and of what value can it be? You are yourself the measure of it — your ability, with your special opportunities, or general experience, and nothing more. But when we come to the word of God we should pass from the region of human opinions. What distinguishes it is that therein God speaks, and His people, yea, every soul, is bound to hear. For my own part I am convinced, and I trust you are no less than myself, that God has written His word intelligibly. By this I do not mean that any part of it is according to the measure of man; but that it is all written for man to God's glory, and in His wisdom. Thus, what God has been pleased to put in the plainest possible language may be beyond our fathoming; but at the same time it is not beyond our

understanding and enjoying, according to our measure of faith, though we may also find out that it is unfathomable. But ever so deep as it is, and infinitely exceeding man's plummet to reach the bottom, it is as clear as it is profound, and not the mud or shallows of the creature.

I am persuaded, then, that these erudite writers have never gone below the surface of the wonderful introduction of Genesis, and that their speculations are not only idle, but ignorant. They tell us that the author of chapter 1 was a man that knew, and only knew, Elohim; and consequently they call this the Elohistic document. Then, from chapter 2:3, because Jehovah-Elohim occurs, they will have this to be the Jehovistic portion, or a sort of mingling of the two — the Elohistic-Jehovistic. The fact is, that up to Genesis 2:3 we have God (Elohim), and from verse 4 we have the LORD God (Jehovah-Elohim). But that there were two different and inconsistent writers is gratuitous and false. It was one and the same writer throughout; and, so far from inconsistency, each feature is perfection for its own object. Why, then, the difference? The reason is plain, sure, and instructive. When God presents Himself in contrast with man, or the creature, as the originator of all, the invariable term is God (Elohim). It is the proper word, and always so used throughout the Scripture. Consequently, if the term "Elohim" had not been used by Moses in the first chapter of Genesis, it would have gone to prove that Moses could not be inspired. Exactness of thought requires that the Creator should be presented thus in the broadest form of contrast with the creature. On the other hand, besides being the self-existing originator, the Mighty One that caused to be what was

not, God is pleased to enter into relationship with man, and indeed with creation. Now the special term in the Old Testament for relationship is Jehovah.

Besides, there was something peculiar in the manner in which God was pleased to enter into relationship then with man and creation, because all was unfallen. The consequence is that it is neither Elohim alone nor Jehovah alone in Genesis 2 and 3, but Jehovah-Elohim. Proofs will appear presently (and they might be increased) that this is precisely what it ought to be, and that any other form of presentation would not so exactly have suited the context. If we suppose (what the chapters themselves assert) that the God of creation was pleased to enter into relationship with man, and this at first in an exceptional way before sin entered the world, the writer ought to have adopted one title in chapter 1 (and none other than Elohim), and another in chapter 2 (and none other than Jehovah-Elohim). No doubt a revolution is stated to have come soon afterwards, when God accordingly changes His name in order to suit that altered state. After the Fall He simply calls Himself Jehovah. Thus the writer, being inspired (and probably far beyond his own measure of understanding the force of all he wrote), does not present the combined form in the way that is found in chapters 2 and 3 where we have first the relationship and then the test and Fall.

Consequently it is evident that the true key to the use of these terms is not the supposition of two or three different writers or documents, followed by a stupid compiler who did not perceive their mutual inconsistency. The very reverse is the truth; Moses — wise as he was — had an infinitely higher than human or Egyptian wisdom to guide him in all he wrote. None but

God could have so furnished and so guided him. With all the advantages of observed facts on every side, with the incomparably greater privilege of the fullest subsequent revelation, we are but learning better in our own age the unspeakable value of what Moses wrote in that early day. I do not believe that this is because Moses rose in stature so highly above all men, from his day to ours, but because the only true God inspired Moses and all the other writers of the Bible.

The truth then is, that in this chapter 2 you will find everything savours of, or chimes in with, the establishment of relationships. “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.” Observe that there is creation, and also making. This is precisely right, creation having the first rank, and making the subsequent place. “And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Why is this introduced in chapter 2 rather than in chapter 1? For I affirm that you could not transplant this into the first chapter, and that the true cause depends, not upon a different writer, but upon quite another object and line of truth. The design here is not to show man made a creature, though at the head of creation. This is the subject-matter of the first chapter; and there his dominion is fixed by God, and pointed out by the sacred

historian. But in the second chapter the aim is not merely to bring out that God made man, as He made every other creature, out of the dust of the ground (reminding him of the humility of his origin), but that he had that which came direct from God in a way no other animal had.

Into whose nostrils did Jehovah-Elohim breathe the breath of life? Into man's, and man's alone. We have no reason to think it was so with angels even. The man who was made out of the dust of the ground was not in full proper relationship with God until God breathed the breath of life into him. On this depends the immortality of the soul; and all who dispute or doubt this truth7 fritter away its singular weight. Nor is it confined to such errorists. Those who have read Bp. Jos. Butler's works know that the great moralist failed to solve the difficulty of man's partaking in the resurrection, while other animals do not. There lies the secret. God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and thus it was he became a living soul. Every other animal became a living soul materially and without this. Man alone of all that live on the earth stands in immediate relationship to God. He may sin against Him, and he, consequently alone of all on earth, will be lost for ever. Thus the very fact that he has the breath of the Lord God in his nostrils will be the ground of his misery consequent on eternal exclusion from God. That God breathed into man, and he thus became a living soul, constitutes man's capacity for blessedness through belief of the truth, and for being so brought into the presence of God; as it is his misery when banished from Him for the rejection of Christ into the blackness of darkness for ever.

Thus when we are informed simply about creation, we hear of Elohim; when it is not Elohim, but Jehovah-Elohim, we have moral relationship; for Jehovah, I repeat, is the characteristic name of relationship in the Old Testament, as Father is in the New. In the New Testament, indeed, it is not only a God who has a people, but a Father who has a family. That His Son became a man to die and rise again has made it possible for God, by redeeming grace, to bring us into the place of children and sons; and consequently our proper term of relationship to God is children, as His relationship to us is that of Father. But in the Old Testament Jehovah was the term revealed in due time.

Mark how all the chapter carries out the leading idea. First, we have his relationship to God in the matter of the garden, which was to be kept; but, besides, there was a moral test — he must not eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and. evil. Why (let me ask) was not this given in the first chapter? Because that chapter does not enter into moral relations; the second has it, because it does. Here we are in the presence of the solemn truth that God is Jehovah-God; that He is not merely a Creator, but establishes the creature, man, in relationship with Himself. Thus it is not only the Absolute, but He who is absolute chooses to form relationships between the creature and Himself. Not in the first chapter, but in the second, is this spread out before us livingly. The whole chapter proceeds on this ground.

Next we have here, and here alone, the animals brought for Adam to name. Thus is shown his relationship to those inferior to himself. He was the one to whom they belonged. There is nothing like this in the first chapter

— no bringing of animals to receive their names from Adam; yet we see how consistent it is with the grant of dominion from Elohim recounted in that chapter.

To my mind this, as far as it goes, is just perfection as the word of God must be, instead of the hotch-potch of blunderers who strung together the inconsistent traditions of their own dark days. Such is what self-complacent unbelief has made of it. It appears to me that these critics are alike objects of horror and of compassion, and that what the Christian would desire for them is forgiveness from Him whose word they defame, because their incredulity has rendered them incapable of comprehending it. There is another, and only another, relationship that I will speak of, and this is the one that is last brought before us in this chapter. Relationship to God we have seen tested by the tree. Adam was to till the garden, and keep it, using all freely, but with his obedience tested by a single restriction. Then relationship to the creature is seen, where the various animals were brought before him to be named. But there was a help-meet wanted. How did God meet this need? In a way admirably wise, not by an absolutely fresh creation, but by forming a portion of the man into a woman, thus reminding him what the woman was and should be towards him — that she was part of himself.

Who, beforehand, could ever have thought of such a way? Who does not feel the beauty and appropriateness of the work and the word of God? How vain and unworthy the notions of the heathen as to all this! Alas! I know that some have sunk so low as to mock at this very fact, and the record of it. Perhaps they may never have known their duty toward the woman dependent on them (and if so, sure to be degraded by them). But the word of

God puts everything in its place, and reminds the man, and the woman too, of that special relationship; for there was but the man and the woman — not one man and two women, but only one man and one woman. From the beginning it was so; to the end it ought not to have been otherwise. Thus it was God made them; and this the Son of God cited to vindicate His Father, putting guilty selfish man to shame. But He also made the woman out of man, and man discerned the fact at once. Though he had been in a sleep, he had an instinctive sense how matters stood.

Thus everything was in chapter 2 put in its proper place — the relationship of man with woman, as before with the inferior creation, and with God Himself.

May the Lord bless all His word, and give us unfeigned confidence in all that He has written, without losing the sense of being learners! If God has given us power to teach in our little measure, may this never take us out of the place of discipleship! It is only “in part” that any of us know; and I am sure that we ought to abound in forbearance — forbearance in everything short of dishonour to Christ, yea, even this where it may be done ignorantly, provided it be not deliberate persistent rejection of the testimony of God. May that which has been just brought before you contribute, however little, to the help of the children of God; and may it win the confidence of those that are not children of God, exposing foolish speculation under the garb of wisdom, but a wisdom that is as hollow as man himself is without God!

Appendix.

I ought perhaps to except the Phoenician theology of Sanchoniatho. Is it not striking that he who is considered to be the earliest writer of the heathen world should be approached so closely by the most recent form of the apostate philosophy of Christendom? that at least modern geology shows such strong tendency to relapse into ancient cosmogony — philosophy in general into naturalism? It need hardly be said that the original we have not, but only some fragments of the Greek translation executed by Philo Byblius, for which we are indebted to the citation of Eusebius. (Praep. Evang. i. 10.) "He supposes the beginning of the universe was a dark and windy air, or a breeze of dark air, and a turbid Erebus-like chaos; and that these things were infinite, and for a time had no bound. But when it fell in love with its own principles, and a mixture took place, that embrace was called longing. And this was the beginning of the creation of all things. But it knew not its own creation. And from its embrace with this wind came Mot. This some call mud; others the rotting of a watery mixture; and from this came all the seed of creation, and the generation of the universe." Wagenfeld gives us just the same in his edition of Sanchun. Hist. Phoen. 1. i. p. 9. It is unnecessary to quote the still wilder details that follow on the animals without sense, out of which come intelligent ones called Zophasemin (i.e., spectators of heaven), moulded in the shape of an egg, when Mot shone out, and sun and moon, and stars small or great.

If the Hermetic creed, transcribed by Jamblichus, and popularly known in I. P. Cory's Ancient Fragments, could be depended on as the theology of Egypt in days as early as those of Moses, the contrast between Genesis and

what we can gather of Egyptian lore would be less striking than it is. But there is strong reason to infer that this, like other productions attributed to Hermes, is due to the Neo-Platonists, who garnished the reveries of the heathens with ideas borrowed from the apostolic writings, in order the more effectually to oppose Christianity. The writings which reflect the real opinions of the ethnic world have but a negative and melancholy interest for the believer. They illustrate and confirm the truth of St. Paul's account in Romans 1. But they have as little solid value as the assaults of our own day on the word of God.

1 * Philo, in his treatise on the Mosaic account of the creation, does not go farther than saying that the six days were said for the sake of arrangement, to which number is allied, of which he curiously thinks " six " is perfection. But in his first book of Allegories, he will have it that Moses wrote Gen. 2:4 to leave the time undefined, and so to exclude the idea that the universe came into being in six days.

2 * "It seems probable to me that God, in the beginning, formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles, of such sizes and figures, and with such other properties, and in such proportions to space, as most conduced to the end for which He formed them.

3 * Thus even Bishop Horsley writes, in his Biblical Criticism, i. III: "The creation of the world, as it is described in the first chapter of Genesis, was not a single instantaneous act, but a work performed by gradual stages in the time of six successive days or entire revolutions of the globe of the earth upon its axis."

4 * If the LXX. meant “and” in an adversative sense, as many have done since, I believe them mistaken, and that the conjunction is simply a particle of connection. The true interpretation is confirmed by the substantive verb which in Hebrew is never, as often in English and other tongues, a mere copula. The facts, therefore, of verses I and 2 are connected; the times are kept expressly separate. In the beginning (let it be ever so far back) was the creation; subsequently — but how long after is not said — was the chaotic confusion of the earth. Here Dr. Kennedy (Donnellan Lectures, ii. 12, etc.) seems to be in evident error.

5 *See Appendix.

6 *Thus Horsley (Biblical Crit. i. 4) says, “Neither the sun nor any of the celestial luminaries were in being when light was produced. For light was the work of the first day; the luminaries of the fourth.” Also (p. 5), “The celestial bodies were set in the firmament in their respective places, when they were first created; and they were at the same time appointed to be for lights, to give light upon the earth; and to be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years.”

7 * Their arguments are for the most part the unintelligent misapplication of Old Testament texts that treat of the present life, or death, to that which is outside the world and everlasting. Thus, “Thou shalt surely die,” and “The soul that sinneth, it shall die,” are applied by them to deny the soul’s unceasing existence; whereas they speak solely of God’s government in this life. The New Testament has brought to light not only life and incorruptibility, but the second death and

eternal judgment. The wages of sin is death, but not death only; for after death comes the judgment.

The Call of the Bride - Genesis 24

We live in a time when everything is questioned; at least everything that is of God; and in reading this chapter to you this evening, I am glad to present the truth of God from that part of His word which, if it has been the object of especial attack, furnishes the simplest and plainest witness to the prescient wisdom and goodness of Him who wrote it for our instruction.

It would not be intelligent for anyone to look for the revelation of the church of God here. There is no intimation of the union of Jew and Gentile in one body. But, when the mystery was revealed, those who bow to Scripture can see how God had prepared its place and type, although its character was not yet revealed. Nor is this so merely in an isolated point, but there is a well-defined connection of truth clearly foreshown in what precedes and follows. What a testimony, then, if this be so, have we here to the absoluteness of inspiration! Some have looked at Scripture as containing God's word, but not as itself His word. An actual sample from the middle of a book like the present will be found to bespeak God in every word.

The portion to which I direct your attention now commences with Genesis 22. This is not an arbitrary beginning. The chapter is introduced thus: "And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham." It is a new set of divine pictures of the truth. The father is asked to give up his son, "thine only son Isaac whom thou lovest" — an unheard-of trial; to offer him as a burnt-offering on a mountain of Moriah. Under sentence of death the son rests till the third day; then, when the

surrender was proved complete, and the hand stretched forth, and the knife to slay the son, the hand of the father is arrested, and a rain, caught by his horns in the thicket, is substituted. Thus did God provide for Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering; for no type can reach up to the height or go down into the depth of the truth: God's Son is God's Lamb.

Perhaps there is no child of God who has not learned that we have here a shadow of the offering of His Son. This every soul that values Scripture and bows to the corresponding light of the New Testament, must acknowledge. But this is not all. The Holy Ghost confirms it by signatures which show His hand and mind. The very order is instructive. Most, we know, are apt to be content with less. They see the love of God set forth in the sacrifice provided; they see the substitution of the ram answering to Him who died for our sins. And there they stop; but the New Testament does not. In Hebrews 11 the apostle Paul gives us most distinctly another step, telling us that "Abraham offered up his only-begotten, of whom it was said, 'that in Isaac shall thy seed be called': accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure." That is, it is intimated that in Genesis 22 we have a shadow, not merely of the death, but also of the resurrection of Christ.

But there is another allusion to this scene in the New Testament, to which we must turn for a little in the third place. It is found in the use the apostle makes of it in Galatians 3. He there lays the greatest stress on the one Seed as contrasted with many: a use of Genesis which is often a great difficulty even to believers. They cannot doubt the statement made, yet feel that they do not

understand it. They know that “seed” in all languages may mean many, just as much as one; and so they are conscious that the force of the passage escapes them. Paul must be right, they are assured; why, or what he means, they know not. When men raise difficulties, they are apt to go farther and judge the word which is beyond them. They would do far better if they would look to God as well as into the word of His grace.

The point here I believe to be this: the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham out of heaven, and, after Isaac was taken from under the knife (the figure of death), Abraham is shown the ram, and offers it: and then the angel of Jehovah called a second time, and said, “By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing, I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.” This sorely perplexes the hasty reader. How strange the apostle should lay the greatest stress upon “one seed,” whereas the text seems to speak of very many! But read more, “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Now we come to the point in Galatians.

There are two kinds of blessing before us; not only two measures but two orders of blessing. The blessing of a numerous seed comes first; and here, where number is attached to the seed, the blessing is distinctly Jewish in character, down to possessing the gate of their enemies. By and by God will assuredly make this good; He means to bless as well as to deliver His earthly people; He will maintain the divine government of the world in Israel. He intends to make all good when Satan has made the

worst of it. His purpose is to wrest out of the hand of the destroyer his seeming victory. And when His people are brought down to the lowest, then will be God's opportunity. He will lift them up, and set them at the head of all earth's blessing and glory. The prophets are full of this, but the earliest book pledges it, and this in connection with the sacrifice of Isaac in the figure.

But there is more to be noticed, and more closely. The same apostle lays stress on the one Seed; and with the one Seed presents another character of blessing; and this is the emphasis in writing to the Galatians. The enemy was trying to make the believers in Galatia become Jews (of course, in principle only, not in fact), in order to ensure the blessing, insisting on circumcision for the purpose. Thus they were in danger of surrendering all that was most precious in Christianity. The apostle seeks to recall them, and that in this way; where the one Seed is spoken of (without reference to number, not the numerous seed), there is blessing to the Gentiles promised, and to the Jew distinctively. This he applies to Christ risen, "and in thy seed (where there is nothing about the sand or the stars) — shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." It is not the gate of their enemies possessed by the Jews, but the Gentiles to be blessed; the former in relation to the numerous seed, the latter in relation to the one Seed. I repeat, this is the point of Galatians 3:16. Our blessing is not even with Christ Himself as Messiah here below, but with Him who was crucified and is risen from the dead. In short, it is a character of blessing altogether new on the other side of death, with the risen Lord Jesus, the one Seed. "So we become Abraham's seed, not by being circumcised, which is on this side of death, but by faith in Him who

died and is raised again. It is before God the complete blotting out of man in the flesh, and the introduction of a new man in the risen Christ, in whom there is neither Jew nor Gentile. And faith acts on what is before God.

There is also another thing which is an immense difficulty to many in this connection. Sarah dies in Genesis 23. According to doctrine too common in Christendom, Sarah ought to be henceforth alive and vigorous. Such, I am persuaded, would have been the ordering of the type if man had arranged it, for such is the thought current in theology. But according to Scripture Sarah dies; it is not Hagar, the old covenant after the flesh, but the mother of the Seed of promise, who then passes away. What is the meaning of this? If Genesis 22 have its clear illustration in the Lord's death and resurrection, and His purpose forthwith to bless the Gentiles in Christ with a totally different kind of blessing from that of Israel, however true it also is to be in its season, what is the meaning of the death of Sarah at this point?

The Acts of the Apostles may make all quite plain. After the gift of the Holy Ghost the apostles presented the Lord Jesus to Israel as such, addressing them as "men of Israel," and pledging the truth of God to the assurance that, if they only repented and received Him they had put to death on the cross who was now risen by the mighty power of God, all His promises would be made good to them. This is very particularly marked in Acts 3. "The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our father hath glorified His Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be

granted unto you, and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses." And again, "Those things which God before hath shown by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye, therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Is it not evident that here is the distinct proffer of God through His servant to make good all that was promised to Israel? But they refused. The consequence was, that His offer for the time entirely lapsed. Sarah dies. There is no more presentation of the covenant of promise. Thus it had been made in the close of Acts 3. "Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed; unto you, first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Such was the offer; but the offer was rejected, the consequence of which we see in no further presenting the word of the Lord after that sort, in no subsequent overture to Israel on any such ground. Sarah dies. It is not that Sarah is not to rise again, and, as surely as she is literally to rise again, so shall the covenant of grace reappear, under the returning Son of man, for both houses of Israel.

What follows according to the Acts? An extraordinary apostle is called out, and fresh ground is taken; nay, it is

too little to speak of the change so. The secret that was kept hid from ages and generations is told out by a new and suited instrument. Saul of Tarsus becomes the characteristic witness not to the mother of the Seed of promise, not to the accomplishment of what God has pledged Himself from the first to make good to the line of Abraham; but a bride is to be called out from the world, formed and fashioned and got ready for the risen Bridegroom. The apostle Paul becomes the special and typical “minister of the church.” Thus do the Old and the New Testaments perfectly tally together.

Just so in our next chapter, Genesis 24, follows a wholly new scene, in the most significant way corroborating what has been said; and this I shall endeavour to pursue as God has given it. “And Abraham was old and well stricken in age, and Jehovah had blessed Abraham in all things, and Abraham said unto his eldest servant in his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and I will make thee swear by Jehovah, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell, but thou shalt go into my country and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.”

The Canaanites, as everyone moderately taught knows, were the future enemies of the chosen people, already in the land, Satan’s instrument to exclude, if this were possible, or at least to expose and corrupt, those who were called of God. They typify, according to Ephesians 6, our foes, the world-rulers of this darkness, spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, with whom our conflict has to be maintained. Accordingly, it is, as all will admit, not from demons or fallen angels that God calls to the

fellowship of His Son. It is from the world that sovereign grace is forming a bride for Christ.

This then is the charge of the father to his steward, servant over all that he had, “Thou shalt go unto my country and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.” The servant has his fears, at least he presents his difficulties. “Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?” And Abraham said unto him, “Beware thou, that thou bring not my son thither again. The Jehovah God of heaven, which took me from my father’s house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.” There is no one point more insisted upon in the chapter than this: Isaac, the risen son, is to remain exclusively in Canaan; on no account is he to leave it.

Let us compare him with others. Abraham had been called out from Mesopotamia himself, and thence had he brought his wife. Afterwards Jacob goes back from Canaan, and far away he marries Leah and Rachel, and thence returns. But, while the call of the new bride goes on to Mesopotamia., Isaac must remain in the place which is the well-known type of heaven; at least, during that transaction, the bridegroom abides only in Canaan. The Son of the Father, while the bride is being called, has no relation with the world, and is seen exclusively in heaven at the right hand of God. And this is just as distinct as to Christ in the New Testament doctrine, as

the injunction respecting Isaac is imperative throughout its type in Genesis. It is an infinite privilege to be blessed with Christ; to be blessed not only by Him but with Him, and not only with Him but with Him in heaven in the presence of God. But such is our blessing, who are in the place whence He has been ignominiously cast out; and our blessing is in Him now, while He is on the right hand of God.

Is not this the heavenly place of Christ which the Spirit of God shows Himself pressing with manifest care in the chapter just read? “Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me into this land; must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou, that thou bring not my son thither again.” During the call of the church, Christ sustains no direct relationship with the earth; He is simply the glorified Head on high. Before this He had come to the earth; and it was here, and here only, although in Him lifted up from the earth on the cross, that God’s mighty work of redemption could be accomplished by His son, whom the Father spared not but gave for us all. Here man had sinned, and here sin must be judged; but it is in heaven, and only in heaven, that Christ is viewed in relation to the bride. It is from heaven that the Holy Ghost comes down; it is for the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven that the bride is destined, and it is while the risen Bridegroom is in heaven that she is in process of being formed here below, before He comes to receive the saints to Himself and present them above.

This settles many a grave question. And it is Christians particularly who trouble themselves about the matter; for others count it fanaticism, and are not interested in

it. Your association with Christ as the heavenly Head is, therefore, what Satan wants to frustrate; for if your strength and blessing depend on your seizing your true relationship to Christ and the reality of Christ's relationship to you, the effort of the foe is to sever all he can between Christ and the church; while the active working of God's Spirit is to put and keep the believer, and not only the individual but the church, in the living present consciousness of His and our relationship, for God is looking for conduct founded upon it. How, then, can the suited conduct be, unless you know the standing and relation on which it depends and from which it flows? The affection, and the intimate union, and the obedience which belong to the wife, are inseparable from her relationship. In another they would be most improper and the grossest sin. If the wife does not so walk, she utterly fails. But the known relationship is the ground of the duties that we owe.

In the midst of the then revealed scene which a Jew, perhaps some Christians, might regard merely as a domestic story, the Spirit of God has traced out the typical lineaments of our call and relationship to Christ, all-important to our souls now, the sweeter because one sees from Genesis how it was from early days before God; as indeed, we know from the New Testament, it was purposed in Christ before the world was. Here we see its shadow, and what seems to me of high value, in relation to the system of promise on the one hand and, above all, to the sacrifice of the Son of God on the other.

But we have to notice also other notable features that fill in the sketch, and befit such a scene. Let me again impress on you the great truth that even here we see the church is founded on the finished work of Christ, as an

accomplished fact; yea not only on death but also on resurrection. Here the Son is risen and stands in a new place altogether. In this place Christ is found under the representation of Isaac, received from the dead in a figure, who, keeping himself entirely to Canaan, is in the acknowledged and undeniable type of heaven. When we think of the previous history of Abraham, or of that which follows in the case of Jacob, Joseph, or any other, the solemn restriction of Isaac alone is the more remarkable. We see what a tendency there was for the family likeness to repeat itself throughout, from father to son. This makes it all the more striking as a fact; how much more when we see its full meaning in Christ as our heavenly Head and Bridegroom now! Isaac had that typical place all to himself. There was no one of the patriarchs so remarkably seen in Canaan from first to last, so emphatically there alone in relation to the call of Rebecca. If God would set forth a Bridegroom exclusively heavenly, how else could He do it so effectually? Isaac is on no pretext and for no end to quit Canaan, whatever the difficulties of bringing home the bride.

The Spirit of God, we already remarked, brings out the same truth openly to us in the Epistles of the New Testament, and in substance too in the latter part of John’s Gospel, where Christ is shown putting us in His own place above. Yet in the Old Testament Christ is often presented as the one who should reign over Israel, restored and blessed in their land; who should judge and rule all nations. And so without fail, He will, for Scripture cannot be broken; and if the Word of God could waver for the earth, who could trust it for heaven? The Psalms and Prophets are full of glowing visions of

the day when the once humbled Messiah shall reign from sea to sea and bring the days of heaven on the earth; and hence the saints of old, though not without heavenly outlooks, as we know from Hebrews, regarded justly the earth as the future sphere of manifested blessing, though not of course the earth exclusively. Without doubt, then, Christ will ask, and Jehovah will give the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. But that day of asking and having them, and consequently of judgment on the quick (Ps. 2:8, 6) is in contrast with what is true now (John 17), when He asks not for the world as then but for ourselves while He is on high. It is the true Isaac thus imprinting a heavenly character on souls on the earth; giving them not merely that their destination should be heavenly by and by, but withal, even now, a heavenly stamp from and with Himself while they are here as consciously belonging to Him there.

The time, too, was come for this wondrous display of faith. The Lord Jesus had gone down to the depths of atonement. He had also been utterly rejected by the Jews, and God had now rejected them and the earth's direct blessing as such for the time; for this depends on their reception, which will be to the world as life from the dead. Hence it is not on the earth which cast out the Righteous One, but in heaven that righteousness is seen now, where God has glorified the Holy One whom man despised and refused; and those who receive Him meanwhile are made God's righteousness in Him. Thus the actual grace of God is richer than any promises, for God never limited Himself to a promise. Could He indeed allow such a thought as that He, or His giving in grace, was exhaustible?

The grand fact for us, in the face of the devil who led the world to put Jesus to death, is that God has raised Him up from the dead after suffering for our sins, and set Him in heavenly glory, while He calls out from the world, not only individuals to be blessed with Christ, but forms them by His Spirit into His assembly, one body, the body of Christ, whilst He is there and we are here. And, if you really have the spirit of Christ now, that is your relationship. You are a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, spite of your thoughts or of that which men have told you. And, as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. If you believe in Him, be not afraid of confessing Him, nor doubt your blessedness, nor be ashamed of Him or it in any way. What a sorrow to have to press this truth when the church should be living in the full joy of it! How sad that we have now to recall God's children to that which His grace gave them, to what is their own, but alas forgotten! God decides (it is not ours to choose) our relationship in Christ. I have heard one say, thinking it lowly, too, "I dare not ask to be a son of God; I am content to be His servant." Alas, it is real unbelief, not humility. For this does not mean measuring ourselves by ourselves or others, but seeing that Christ has suffered all, that God might bless accordingly, and bring us into relationships according to the work of redemption and the glory of Him who wrought it, in the fulfilment of the divine counsels for magnifying Him.

Is Christ, then, the "Heavenly" One now? "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." If there are heavenly ones, who are they? Not the angels. The good angels are not taken out of their position, and the bad angels are yet to be dealt with judicially. Grace acts

to the full; and the last whom nature could suppose chosen are those to whom God vouchsafes the richest blessing. Such is the position of the Christian and the church, however little we may have done for His name. Our deliverance and our relationship are questions of Him and His work; not of those who reap the blessing through the grace of God. I do not say that you may not know your heavenly place individually, or with all saints, or your responsibility in both respects as God's temple. I do say you must seek to lay hold of your relationship before you can manifest the affection and the ways suitable to it. Who could expect the conduct of a son save from a child that knew his father?

It is precisely the same principle in the sphere of Christ and the church. The man, not the woman, determines her position and dignity according to his own. He was, He will be, on earth; but now He is in heaven, and so alone we know Him: yea had we known Him otherwise, so only now. The relationship is established, and for us, too, in this blessed way, through the Christ who has baptized us into one body by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The cross made it possible, having cleared away sin by the judgment of it once for all; not by forbearance, though there was a time when God did forbear as to it, but now in righteousness, for grace reigns through righteousness, sin having been judged, so judged as it never will be in hell, and as it never can be again. Faith bows to God, and receives through and with Christ this heavenly portion; believing on the Lord Jesus, we are united to Him. On high the suffering Man was given to the church, Head over all things. He must go through death first; for, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it

bringeth forth much fruit.” The word of God makes it perfectly certain that the Lord Jesus, only after redemption, became at the right hand of God the Head of His body, now in process of forming by the Spirit on earth. There was no such state of things when He was on earth. In no respect was He our Head until He took His place on high; nor could the body be so much as begun till Christ was there as Head, to whom the Holy Ghost could unite us. For it is neither an awakened conscience nor even faith which unites, but the Spirit given to us over and above as believers. I repeat, that I believe as an individual; and this is of all moment, and of the greatest value for the soul of each. If conscience be unsettled, there cannot be the right flow of divine affection; and it was part of God’s way and wisdom to leave no questions before we are united to Christ by the Spirit.

We must distinguish between the new birth and the baptism of the Spirit. As sinners we are quickened; as saints we have the Spirit given to us, whether as individuals or for union. Suppose a woman, the most obscure you could find, whose only name was of ill repute; but one of the noblest of the land, of the most exalted character and position, was pleased to make her the object of his love, and, more than that, to give her his own name as his bride, what then? In an instant all is changed; no matter what she may have been before, all now depends on the new relationship, both for others and especially for herself. No unbelief of believers puts that blessing off until we get to heaven; but, according to God’s word (and this alone is binding), it is true of us here, though the practical power, enjoyment, and testimony are lost now if we believe it not. We are of

Christ's body now. There is no such doctrine as becoming members of His body in heaven. Because it is a question of Christ and His work made known by the Spirit sent down, there is nothing too good for the church in the mind of God, who is glorifying Him and blessing us in Him. It is here, too, that we are called to suffer with Him. All saints had to suffer, and Christians especially, not only for righteousness but for Christ; and this people do not like.

Unbelief likes the safe middle way of good common sense; it is afraid of extremes because it slights Christ. It courts ease and honour now, and hopes to have forgiveness and acceptance above. This is not Christianity, but the revival of a semi-Judaism, which destroys the true relationship and testimony of the church. The truth may sometimes be presented crudely and with looseness, and Satan would thus make it ridiculous to the natural man and its form repulsive to a spiritual mind. This is to be deplored, and should be owned, not justified by him who feels for God's glory. But we cannot pare down the truth, or make it palatable to the world or to the Christians who seek to walk with the world. Everything that is according to God must flow from faith; the faith of the saint (I say not of the soul in coming to God) is formed by its object, even Christ, now in glory, to whom the person is united and by whom he is more and more changed into His image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, from glory to glory. Doubtless, till a man's soul has bowed to God in the sense of his own sinfulness, and has found redemption by the blood of Jesus, it is folly and wrong to talk of other and heavenly privileges. But, when all need of conscience before God

is settled by faith, the Spirit seals the believer, who is made one with Christ in heaven.

It will be seen from Scripture, in fact, that without faith there is no union; but faith in itself never unites. There is no such idea as a person united to Christ in believing; but, when he believes, he is made one with Christ by the Holy Ghost, who has now condescended to take the place of serving the counsels of the Father for the glory of His beloved Son. As the Son became servant in doing God's will here below, so now the Spirit glorifies Christ in communion with the Father's mind and love. And this could only be when Christ went on high, after His finished work, and sent the Comforter to be in and with us forever.

One result we see beautifully depicted here is the spirit of faith in which the servant acts, and this showing itself in prayer according to the mind of God. "And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. And he said, O Jehovah God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water; And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness

unto my master. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder." Does not the case illustrate vividly "praying in the Holy Ghost"? It is prayer, not merely for this or that, but in the current of what is for the Son's glory and in the Father's purpose to bestow. It seems to be the liveliest anticipation in the Old Testament of asking the Father in Christ's name, by having whatever we thus ask. I speak of the spirit of the thing.

Is it then a casual circumstance that such passages should be found here? What a contrast with Jacob's vow in Genesis 28, or his cry of distress in Genesis 32! Indeed, it is not too much to say that there is not another chapter in Genesis where there is so much about prayer as here; and why? Is it not because now, during the call of the bride, the walking by faith is exemplified by Him who dwells and works in the Christian? Assuredly God looks for no less habits of dependence in those who bear the name of Christ. Of course, at every time from the beginning of God's ways with man, all prayed who had faith; and we see it admirably in Abraham and others. But I appeal to every discerning mind whether we do not find such a type in this respect here, as we find nowhere else in the book.

There is another feature, too; the Holy Ghost has come down in a way that never was made good before. As surely as the Son descended personally to the earth to take flesh, so the Holy Ghost came to abide in and with us now. He had come down to abide in the Son, He sealed, and without blood, Him who was the Holy One of God. But how could we, sinners as we were, have His

Spirit in us? How could we be the vessels of the Holy Spirit of God? Only in the power, the perfect and perfecting sacrifice of Christ. After that, not before, the Holy Ghost came down to dwell in those who had been most wretched sinners; and He can dwell in us forever now by virtue of the blood that cleanses us from all sin. Has this no voice to us, beloved brethren? A most solemn thing it is for all Christians. We need, and should cultivate that spirit of faith and prayer which keeps us practically in the presence of God where flesh is judged, knowing that He hears us, and that we have the petitions that we desire of Him.

But this is not the only thing here. The same servant who represents the power of the Spirit acting in man now, shows also the wonderful faithfulness in which God not only guides him, but controls for him all circumstances: just as at the beginning of the chapter, it was not merely as Jehovah-God Abraham acknowledged Him, but as, “the God of heaven and the God of the earth.” And so, yet more should the Christian feel now, according to the infinite largeness of the revelations of His glory as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, in Ephesians 4. He shows Himself to be above all and through all, as well as in us all. It is not only that we are brought into the utmost nearness by grace; but, despised as we may be and cast out for Christ’s sake, we are, and should know that we are, as children in that intimacy which enables us to speak to Him who moves all things. Just as the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels’ weight of gold (vers. 22, 30), so to every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Compare Eph. 4:7-16).

Again, the heart of the servant instantly turns to worship. “And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord. And he said, Blessed be the Jehovah God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth; I being in the way, Jehovah led me to the house of my master’s brethren.” It was, no doubt, homage rather than worship in the proper Christian sense; that is, it was individual, not the praise of God’s children or assembly. Still it is the figure of worship. Did it ever strike you that there is more about such homage or worship in this chapter than in all the other chapters of Genesis put together? Why should it be so? Can one doubt that it is because now God has made the way for true worshippers? According to truth, and according to love, God has now revealed Himself in Christ the Son. He is no longer groped after, if haply He may be found; but the God and Father of Christ has brought us to Himself, His Father and ours, His God and ours, having not only come down to us in Him here below, but brought us in Him, dead and risen and ascended, to be before Himself without a spot. How could we then but worship Him?

And so, as surely as souls enter into the place of the Christian and the church, worship in spirit and in truth flows forth. God is revealed in His grace, redemption is wrought, the veil is rent, and we are brought now as sons, and have God dwelling in us. The Spirit of God could not but lead the children of God to worship. The first Epistle to the Corinthians accordingly speaks to them of singing with the spirit, though we know what their state was; and in Ephesians and Colossians we hear of “speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,” “singing and making melody in

your heart to the Lord." This supposes a relationship which cannot but thus breathe itself out to God in praise and thanksgiving. How different from occupation with self, important as this alas! may be in its place and season. There is a right time for all things, and for general humiliation, too; and a dangerous thing it is for a Christian not to judge himself and take a humbling review of his ways sometimes. But, whatever in us may call for self-judgment, let us never defraud our God and Father of His worship. Let us neither mar nor stint the praises of God and the Lamb. Therefore we find, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup."

In our narrative, in full unison as far as the type could reach, we have the sense of God and His blessing filling the heart of Eliezer; and so the man bows his head and worships continually as God displays His grace. (Compare verses 48, 52.)

Notice again the way in which the calling of the bride links itself with the coming of the Lord. The question is put to Rebekah, "Wilt thou go with this man?" Nature might plead to keep her a few days, at least ten. But she who had only heard and believed the report has her heart made up, like the Christian toward Christ; "whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not," etc. Brother, mother, house, family, country, speak in vain. And the servant was true to his errand of love, to bring home the bride. It is the very pattern of the Spirit working in the new man and making Christ the all-absorbing object. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not

myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The servant is undistracted — has but "one thing" to do. "Hinder me not," he says, "seeing Jehovah hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master." Do any speak of "resignation" to depart? Is it only in His heart to bring us home? His love truly known makes a true love; as here, the simple answer of Rebekah is, "I will go." The Spirit and the bride say but one thing: Come, come, Lord Jesus. Can you say this, beloved brethren? He is coming; wilt thou go? Isaac comes to meet her, and she who had left all behind is "gone out" to meet the bridegroom, veiling herself as not for others, but only for him. As the moment draws near, she realizes it increasingly in spirit.

May God Himself, by His own Spirit, fix upon us the truth of what Christ is to us! Unbelief is always trying to be what it is not; as believers, we never can exaggerate what grace has given us in Him; so blessed with Christ is every saint of God now, though as yet we have but the word and the Spirit of God, and the flesh despises and resists both.

Search God's word and see how far your position consorts with the truth we have before us. A main object in the Epistles of the New Testament is to reveal that which this type shadows in the call of the bride who crosses the desert under the conduct of Eliezer for the bridegroom in Canaan, the church espoused to Christ.

All that people boast of value and esteem among men, all you may have thought in your system good and

helpful, you will find in the light of God's word to be but a hindrance to manifesting Christ — Christ our life. If an object on earth occupies you, it is clearly foreign to the Holy Ghost who is glorifying Christ. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." May you prove that your true business is now to bear testimony to Him as an earth-rejected, heavenly, and returning Christ! I leave this, which is God's truth, not the word of man, to work in your souls. Prove all you have heard about it; hold fast what is good.

On no occasion is the Christian free to forget his proper relationship, and it is as true of the assembly as of the individual. Is it so with you in both respects? If you know what it is to be heavenly in your affections and ways, you will not tolerate an earthly-minded denomination, and indeed a denomination as such, denies the body and bride of Christ as a present reality here below, which demands entire devotedness to Christ and continual waiting for His coming, not of the world, as He is not. A denomination is a voluntary society, or a system framed by worldly authority; neither of which can, in the nature of things, express or even contemplate, the one body of Christ. If we are His, we are so by the Holy Ghost who made us one, as the objects of His love and for His glory, at the same time separating us from the world which crucified Him. "Believest thou this?" May our God bless His own truth for Christ's sake!

W. K.

The Feast of Jehovah --Leviticus

(Taken from a ‘new’ edition which included, ‘The Feasts in Deuteronomy 16’, published by Weston in 1901 [CBA9607]; currently in print, by photolithography from a slightly different type-set (without Deut. 16) through BTP. Another old edition, which is slightly different, exists in JRULM [CBA12575])

The Sabbath. - Lev. 23:1-3.

The scripture we are entering on at this time brings before us the whole outline of the dealings of God with His people on earth. It is not of course in detail, but first is the original purpose as before God; next, the foundation which He laid in order to accomplish this purpose; then, again, the ways of God in the application which He made of the mighty work thus accomplished; and, finally, the direct and full result at Christ’s appearing in glory, the heavenly things as well as the earthly.

It will be proved in the course of these remarks that God did really look forward far beyond the existing state of His ancient people. The Feasts had a simple and primary application, as no Christian doubts, to the Jews as they then were. The Feasts, at any rate the chief of them, served the purpose of gathering Israel around Himself where He had placed His name. But it is impossible to limit scripture to such an application. We hope to gather what the Holy Ghost contemplates in the shadows; for He was looking on to other things far greater than men are apt to allow. All was future in this point of view; and we may clearly see what has been accomplished, and

what will be, as well as that which is now being verified. He has anticipated therein what was to have an entirely different and superior character, indeed what we commonly call Christianity. He also removes the veil from the age to come when He will establish the kingdom in glory. Whether for heaven or for earth, we see the stress laid on “holy convocations”: for God in Christ will gather His own around Himself. When we think what man was and is become, what grace! Thus we shall be able to trace the dealings of God, first, not merely in letter but in spirit, and then, when it will be no longer grace but glory, and this not only for heaven but mainly for the earth. It is quite a mistake to suppose that His glory is connected only with heaven. Undoubtedly He has allowed Satan to do his worst; but He has already won the victory morally in Christ, and efficaciously in His death and resurrection: and He will prove it before every eye in a day fast approaching. But now we walk by faith, not by sight. May the scripture thus brought before us continue to strengthen the faith of those who believe, as well as to rebuke those who dare to disbelieve, the word of God.

The first thing to which attention should be drawn is the sabbath, introduced in an altogether peculiar manner. This is no mere notion of mine, nor of any one else. It is marked very clearly in the opening of the chapter before us.

“ 1 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, 2 Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, The set feasts of Jehovah, which ye shall proclaim [as] holy convocations, these [are] my set feasts. 8 Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day [is] a sabbath of rest, a holy convocation; no manner of work shall ye do. It [is] a

sabbath to Jehovah in all your dwellings" (vers. 1-3). Thus the feasts open; but let us notice that the fourth verse begins again, "These are the feasts of Jehovah." Hence we see that in the beginning of the chapter, where the feasts are introduced generally, the sabbath is named in particular; next, in ver. 4, there is a fresh beginning which excludes the sabbath.

Now there is nothing in vain in scripture; not a word from Genesis to Revelation which God wrote could be changed but for the worst. We know certain minds find this difficult to believe; and the reason is because they judge of God by themselves. If you, they, or I had written it, there would have been many a word to change for the better; and we are apt to attribute our infirmities to God's word. No man can rightly reason on God's word from himself; nor is it sound to reason from nature up to nature's God. We must begin with God, and reason from Him (or His word) down to His works. If we start with what we find in reason or things here below, it is a start with what is frail, feeble, inconstant. How can we reason soundly when we commence with that which breaks at a touch? When we begin with God and His word, we are bound by that which judges all men and things. But the tendency of man is to take on him to judge the word of God; did he believe that the word of God judges all, it would be safer and more becoming If God has given a revelation of His mind, the revelation must be worthy of Himself; and He has taken particular care to call it His word. Undoubtedly He wrought by various means; but He never calls it the word of Moses, of David, of John, or Paul's, or the word of man, but the word of God. Let us never forget this.

It may be said that here is a difficulty, and what appears even an irregularity. The sabbath is introduced, first as the beginning of the feasts; and then, secondly, we begin with the sabbath left out. Why? Because the sabbath has a character altogether peculiar to itself. Evidently as a matter of fact, and merely looking at it from a literal point of view, all the other feasts were celebrated but once a year, the sabbath every week. There is therefore a distinct line of demarcation; and so the second beginning is justified. But still the sabbath has the character of a feast, and with a most important aim, if in a way that marks no other; for this feast, and this alone, was to be continually repeated, as the end of the week came round. It was of all importance, that its twofold witness should be habitually before God's people, the testimony to the creation as His work that sanctified it from the first, and the testimony of the great rest of God which His people are to enter and enjoy at the end.

Here let us not fail to notice the difference between this and what scripture calls "the Lord's day." Those who would and do confound the two understand neither. The sabbath day was originally and historically at the end of the week, when man had accomplished his ordinary round of toil. The end he gave to God. He had laboured himself for six days, on the seventh he rested. According to God's law, it was not merely a seventh but "the" seventh day. No other day of the week would have done so well, or at all, if one looked at it with truly fear of God. From a utilitarian point of view, one day was as good as another; and this is man's way of dealing with things. But God knows that man is prone to forget Him even in creation, above all to forget the gracious and final purpose of God pledged in the sabbath.

What is it that God means to bring in? A rest for Himself, a rest worthy of Himself, and a rest which He will share with His people. When will this be? Not till the end of all things. It is a wicked and fatal delusion that every man will enjoy that rest. No one can think or say so who believes what sin is, or that God will judge it, and the world by the Man risen from the dead and ordained for it. But while acknowledging that God must show His deep resentment against evil, we know also by faith that He has brought in a Deliverer and a deliverance for all who believe, in due time a manifest and glorious deliverance for creation. This is precisely what God will display in the day of Christ's appearing; and His rest it will be.

Let me refer here to the striking New Testament scripture on the rest of God. In Heb. 3 and 4 we find the Spirit of God (after pointing to Christ on high, Son of God, and Son of man, Who had died atoningly) to introduce this rest. What gave occasion to it was the evident danger for the Hebrew believers of taking their ease now, and thus forgetting they were pilgrims passing through the wilderness. They were so accustomed to connect with the coming of Messiah a present rest, that they could hardly understand why they were ushered into a scene of trial answering to His Who suffered without the gate, and were called to count it their privilege. They were in danger of seeking to make themselves at ease and comfortable here. The First Epistle to the Corinthians shows that they were not alone in this. It is a very natural snare to the heart of man, even for those who have found the Saviour. After a trying time of doubt and anxiety, the soul knowing what the judgment of God on sin is, and its own utter guilt

and condemnation, there is often danger of reaction when deliverance in the Lord Jesus is once found.

The saints are apt to settle down, thinking that the campaign is over, because the great battle has been fought, and the victory is given through the Lord Jesus Christ. They flatter themselves that no great trouble can be more, because the deep soul-distress is closed. It is sufficiently plain that these Hebrews were in some such state. Hence the apostle not only reminds them later how joyfully they took their early spoliation and sufferings, but here instructs them that theirs is not yet the pattern of the settlement in the land, but like Israel to march through the desert. Accordingly we find that the whole argument of the Epistle supposes not the temple but the tabernacle, from first to last; and thus it hails from the camp, not from the kingdom to be set up in due time after the conquest of Canaan.

Hence it is said, “Let us therefore fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it” (Heb. 4:1). The apostle does not speak of believing in the Lord Jesus for present rest of conscience. Had this been the point before him, he would have boldly assured them that faith has no need to fear. To speak of the blood of Christ, and then exhort to fear, would be the denial of the glad tidings. For the gospel is the declaration of full remission, yea, of more than this, of reconciliation, of salvation of souls (1 Peter 1:9), through the Lord Jesus. If forgiveness through Christ’s blood were in question, he would rather call on them to dismiss every fear; for, as the apostle John says in discussing the point, “perfect love casteth out fear.” It is not “perfect love” on our part (the law asked for this, and never could get it), but the perfect love of God,

which is only revealed in and through our Lord and Saviour. What are we to fear then? Not the blood of Christ failing, not losing the remission of sins through change of mind at any moment from grace in God. Be afraid of settling down in this world; fear the coming short of the true outlook of pilgrims and strangers on the way to a better land. To have rested in the wilderness would have been fatal to Israel; and so we have to remember that this is not our rest, and that to settle down is virtually to deny and lose the rest to come.

In this Epistle the Spirit of God urges the necessity of going forward to the rest of God; and I press this as the only genuine meaning, because it is often applied to soul-rest, which it rather tends to enfeeble or destroy. That it is not within the scope of the passage of the text, we may see from verse 11, where we read, ‘‘Let us labour (or, use diligence) therefore to enter into that rest.” What sort of a gospel would it be to tell people they must do so for rest of conscience? Evidently it would upset the grace of God, for that means no other than salvation by works. On the face of it, all can see that the apostle is addressing such Jews as professed Christ, who were in danger of slipping into present ease, instead of pressing through the wilderness world on their way to “that rest,” the rest of God’s glory.

Do not suppose that one overlooks Matt. 11:28, that in Christ is a present rest for faith. “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” This is the rest of grace now, not of glory. Then follows something further too: ‘‘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.” First, in pure

sovereign favour, He gives rest unconditionally to all the weary that come; and then, when walking in the path of obedience and submission to Him, the faithful find rest. For if one be disobedient, one must have (as 1 John 3 teaches) the heart ill at ease. Our heart condemns us; how then can be any rest of soul? But there remains a third sense: not only rest given by Christ as a present relief to the conscience; and, again, true rest of heart found in the path of obedience and learning of Him; but the rest of God, when it is no longer a question of man and sin and self-will and misery, but all the chequered scene of toil and suffering will be over; when God will rest in the satisfaction of His own love and glory, having brought His sons and His people into His everlasting rest, rest above and rest below.

Doubtless, as the apostle argues, God gave the sabbath at the beginning; but this was not His rest, for sin spoiled creation. Hence He says afterwards, “If they shall enter into my rest.” “If” implies that they had not entered it, and might fail also. So again, after Joshua (the “Jesus” of Heb. 4:8) had put down the Canaanites (though never completing the conquest), after Israel had settled themselves in the land, was it then the rest of God? By no means; for the Psalm which speaks of that rest as not yet was written long after Adam and even Joshua. The conclusion is that “there remaineth therefore a rest (σαββατισμὸς, a sabbath keeping) for the people of God.” Consequently it is not yet come.

Further, the apostle strengthens this from another principle, namely, that one cannot be both working and resting in the same sense, at the same time. If one has entered into rest, he has done with works, even as is said of God Himself (ver. 10). But the bright day when

we shall rest is not yet arrived. He therefore exhorts the saints to diligence meanwhile. Now is the time for work; and every one that has the love of Christ in such a world as this must feel it, for the simple reason that sin and wretchedness overspread the world. Divine love, whether in God or in His people, refuses to rest in evil or in misery. After Christ comes, it will not he so. “There remaineth therefore a sabbath-keeping for the people of God.”

Further, it is a mistake to suppose the sabbath is done with, for it is to be in force throughout the millennium. I am not speaking of the Lord’s day, when we very properly meet together as Christians; and let me say, so far from its being a mere question of man or the church appointing the Lord’s day, that it has the very highest divine sanction. So true is this, that a Christian in losing sight of the import, object, and character of the Lord’s day, would be more guilty than a Jew who dishonoured the sabbath day. But as the Lord’s day came in by the resurrection of Christ for the Christian and the church meanwhile, it will be the sabbath, and not the Lord’s day, when Jehovah God establishes the kingdom, and our Lord Jesus Christ reigns manifestly; when idolatry shall be abolished, superstition swept away, and every kind of iniquity which now raises its head will have met its end; when the groaning creation of this world will sing for joy. For one pities the man who thinks the world was only made to be spoiled. Certainly he who does not believe it is spoiled must be most lamentably wrong; but it is a gloomy and false thought that God made creation only to be ruined. As sure as the first Adam was the means of universal ruin for the creature, so the Second Man will be the great Deliverer not only of us but of it.

He will reconcile to God all that He made, that is, all "things:" not all persons, for this is fatal error. In scripture you never read of all persons being reconciled.

One little word makes all the difference between blessed truth and hateful error. What can be more false than the infidel dream of universal restoration? God will judge all whose sins have not been borne away to faith in Christ and His cross.

There is a day coming when all creation shall rejoice, when the heavens and earth and all in them unite together. God has taken particular pains to express the earth's joy also, and it is a singular proof of the infatuation of man that he cannot see it though clearly revealed. This will be the rest of God; and, when it comes, the sabbath (and not the Lord's day) will again be the distinctive sign of God, which He will have observed and honoured through the whole earth. You will judge then from this that one is anything but an anti-sabbatarian. Yet it is an indisputable fact now that all is changed. We do not keep the last but the first day of the week. And what principle lies at the bottom of the change? That the Lord is risen indeed, and not only so, but is gone to heaven; and the first day of the week shines from the person of the risen Lord Jesus in the heavens, now opened, on a heavenly people who are as yet here, but going to be with Him there at His coming. Hence it must always follow that, when men confound the sabbath and the Lord's day, they are earthly-minded. As the sabbath is bound up exclusively with the earth and an earthly people, so is the Lord's day with those who are "heavenly."

It is not the same principle which we find in the Lord's day; for this is the intervention of divine power in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, after He had gone down into death to make propitiation for our sins, yea, to reconcile us and all things to God. Consequently the Lord's day is an excellent day for spiritual toil, for the work of faith and the labour of love; and no one acquainted with Christ would think it wrong, if able, to preach a dozen sermons on that day, or to take many sabbath-day's journeys to preach them. Were it the sabbath-day, he could not do so lightly. Thus they have a wholly different character. The source, nature, and end of the Lord's day is marked out by grace in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, as the sabbath is by creation and the law of God.

It seemed good to the Lord then, and it is necessary for man, that there should be first the "rest truth of the sabbath set forth before we enter on the basis of all, and the ways of God. Before He gave the type of His redemption work, He hung out clearly and distinctly this initiatory pledge of rest at the end. "I am coming to have My rest (it means) but not to have it alone; you shall share it in glory with Me." The sabbath is to be fulfilled in a day yet to come; and both for heaven and earth. But the rest is after all work is done, whether in type or anti-type.

The Passover. - Lev. 23:4, 5.

Here we come to a very distinct thing: God laying the foundation for all blessing. Mark first, He does not effect it hastily. There are many who think it would have been better if God had at the beginning given His Son to die for sinners. Instead of this He waited for 4,000 years

and more. In His word we get the key to the difficulty. “In due season Christ died for the ungodly” (Rom. 5:6). When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, come of woman, come under law that He might redeem, etc. (Gal. 4:4-6). It was not on the first day of the first month that the passover was instituted, the great standing type of Christ slain for sinners, but on the fourteenth day. Was not God in this delay of importance in many ways testifying the fulness of time?

First, He leaves man to his own way; and then, lest man should complain that he had gone astray because abandoned to himself, God took him in hand and tested him under law. So Israel, as the centre of mankind, was placed under His government. What was the result? After all possible pains the tree bore more bad fruit. Israel at the close was worse than at the beginning. The end of man morally was the cross of Christ. They hated the Son and the Father. Therefore do we hear of Christ’s death at the consummation of the ages (Heb. 9:26). It is not a mere chronological expression. God had tried man in various ways, as judgment, promise, law, rejection of His people, etc. which ended in nothing but wickedness and ruin. What does God then? He displaces alike man’s sin and his religion, which blinded him to sin as well as to God’s grace, by the infinite work of redemption; and this is what we have in the Feast of passover.

“ 4 These [are] the set feasts of Jehovah, holy convocations which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. 5 In the first month, on the fourteenth of the month at even, [is the] passover to Jehovah” (vers. 4, 5). What was the great truth set forth in this Feast? God had intervened to deliver His people from the house of bondage. It was not because of any good in them; for the

children of Israel were at that time worshipping false gods, and were utterly indifferent to the glory of the True. Next, if God delivers them, He must deliver them righteously. Pay particular attention to this. It is not simply a question of mercy in forgiving wicked people, but He will have them before Him on a foundation of right. He is a just God and a Saviour. Hence on that night He sent through the land a destroying angel to avenge sin. It was His judgment of evil, as the first thing impressed. He came down by that angel to deal with whatever was offensive to His nature and character. But one thing stayed the hand of the destroying angel, namely, the blood of the slain lamb. Wherever this was not on the doorposts and upper lintel, death reigned. Not that God was yet judging all men or all false gods. It was a sample, which testified practically what sin deserved, and what alone could screen from divine judgment. Jehovah declared by that blood on the sprinkled doorposts of the children of Israel, that only the death of a suited substitute could stay judgment.

If it was in the last degree solemn — the lamb judged for sin, what wondrous grace also! Judgment falling on the lamb; not on the guilty, but on the substitute! The judgment of God because of our sins Christ was given to endure, the spotless Lamb of God. What made the Lord Jesus sweat anticipatively as it were great drops of blood? Was simple dying before Him? This would lower the Lord below yourself, if you are a believer. A Christian rejoices in the thought of departing to be with Christ, Who alone suffered and died for our sins. But what meant that cry, “My God, my God, why didst thou forsake me?” It was the judgment of sin which then fell

on Christ. It was not what the Jews did, nor Pontius Pilate, nor Herod, nor what man in general laid on Him.

We know the popular hymn says, “I lay my sins on Jesus.” But the truth is far better: God laid them there. If you or I had to bring our sins for expiation, we might have forgotten many; Jehovah laid the whole burden on Him. Hence the Lord suffered on the cross as never did before either any other or Himself. For if He had been bearing sins all His life, as some say, either He must have been forsaken of God all His life, or God must have acted as if sin was tolerable till then. Is either thought true? Neither; indeed without even an appearance of truth. Christ suffered once (ἅπαξ) for sins.

The judgment of God falling on the Lamb alone explains what sin is and calls for. The sprinkling of the blood on the doors answers to the believer’s application of Christ’s blood by faith to his own case. In this and this alone was seen that which made it a righteous thing to pass over sin. God’s judgment fell on His Son, because He is His Lamb Who was able to bear it. The blood of the Lamb is the witness of God’s judgment, but in the richest grace, because on His Son it fell. This was God’s basis; and let it be remembered that in these types we have not what Moses or others understood, but what God said and faith receives in and through our Lord Jesus.

Do you ask the authority for all this? 1 Cor. 5:7 declares “Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us.” Is not this ample warrant? The Holy Spirit says it to those who had been Gentiles and now were His church. In Egypt and before then He looked far beyond the Jew to another day; and in this day we find ourselves. But beyond us

Christ's death is the groundwork of all blessing, the blood of the slain Lamb, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. We may see too, that it was not a question of continuous or repeated offering; as is argued in Heb. 9:26, "For now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Further, "He bore," as Peter says, "our sins in His own body on1 the tree." The consequence of His work is perfect peace to the believer. If it were continually going on, one could not, one ought never here to, have settled peace. The perfect efficacy goes with the singleness of Christ's offering, through righteousness as the apostle teaches in Rom. 5.

The Feast Of Unleavened Bread.

Here is another feature to be noticed. The passover was followed immediately by the feast of unleavened bread. Not a single day was allowed to intervene. For as an ordinary rule, there was a space between these different feasts; but here is a plain exception to the rule. Let me ask who could, save by God's power, have appreciated the force of this beforehand? Now that it is revealed, we may follow. Like Moses from the cleft of the rock, one can see Him as He passes before us; but who can go before Him? The passover was followed immediately by the feast of unleavened bread. There was not the lapse of a day between them — one being on the fourteenth, the other on the fifteenth, of the same month. As the feast of unleavened bread in the New Testament is treated as beginning with the killing of the paschal lamb, the immediate response of the Christian to Christ's blood is to walk in holiness. Henceforth God will not have him to claim a single day to himself. At once he

is called by the grace of God to own his responsibility to put away all leaven. We know from 1 Cor. 5:7 that leaven is symbolic of corruption. “For also Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us; wherefore let us keep the feast.” What feast? That of unleavened bread.

This differs in a weighty particular from the passover; for one day was kept in the latter case, seven days in the former. It may be assumed that all those who read their Bibles know the force of “seven days.” It was a complete cycle of time in connection with God’s people on the earth. “Day” might be used of heavenly or earthly things, but “seven days” intimated a full period for men on earth.

We may derive important instruction in God’s ways from all this. There are in scripture several applications of leaven. The Lord speaks of the leaven of the Pharisees, of the Sadducees, and of Herod. The Holy Ghost uses the expression “a little leaven” twice in the Epistles of Paul. From this we do not well to allow the thought that they are merely parallels. Each has its own force, though there is of course a common character. But as to all such passages, apt to be loosely huddled together, it is well that we should seek to discriminate. True wisdom is not manifested, as one of our sages says, by seeing resemblances in things which differ, but by discerning the real difference among those which resemble one another. We need to cultivate a sound judgment; but it is never got by hunting up so-called parallel passages.

It is written then that “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” Hence to many, as the same words appear in two different passages, the too rapid inference is that they point to the same thing. So far is this from being

true that the application is wholly different. What then is the bearing of each? Pay attention to the principle, that, if we wish to understand any verse of scripture we must always interpret it by its context. In 1 Cor. 5 leaven represents what is unclean, corrupting, and manifestly immoral. They were not to allow “the wicked person” in their midst, for evil spreads; and ever so little leaven, if allowed, defiles the whole lump. In Galatia evil was taking what we may call a religious or legal form (Gal. 5:9). The Christians there were observing days, months, times, and years. They were crying up circumcision as a desirable supplement to faith. This was the Pharisaic leaven, as in Corinth was the Sadducean. The leaven of the Sadducees was the evil of free thought and licentious action. The leaven of the Pharisees was that of rigorous legalism and human tradition, as that of Herod was worldly time-serving.

“ 6 And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast of unleavened bread to Jehovah; seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread. 7 On the first day ye shall have a holy convocation: no manner of servile work shall ye do. 8 And ye shall present to Jehovah a fire-offering seven days; on the seventh day [is] a holy convocation: no manner of servile work shall ye do” (vers. 6-8).

Keeping the feast of “unleavened bread” typifies the feeding on Christ, on Him in His unsullied purity. The bitter herbs were eaten with the lamb’s body on the paschal night; self-judgment accompanied faith in God’s mercy through the Lamb. But the unleavened bread was their food through all the seven days. This involved and required the maintenance of personal holiness. No leaven must be found in their houses. So scripture insists: Rom. 6, 7, 8; 1 Cor. 5, 6; Gal. 5, 6; Eph. 4, 5; 1

Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 12:14, etc. If we do lift up our hands to the Lord, let it be piously, without wrath or doubting; let the walk and ways be under the sense of responsibility, as separate to the Lord; let love be without dissimulation and with incorruptness.

But is this all? Not so. Leaven was to be banished from the house as well as from the individual. You may often find people rightly jealous as to personal walk, yet to the last degree lax as to ecclesiastical impurity. The Lord calls us to beware of allowing leaven anywhere. But corporate purity is a worthless pretension without due regard to personal holiness. Bring not horror of clericalism or of sects into shame by lack of a lowly spirit and a holy walk. We are bound to eschew all evil, whether collective or individual. In short, what God has here at heart is that we should please Him in every relation, in what is collective as well as our individual walk. It is far from all; but it covers the present time here below. The feast of “unleavened bread” takes in the entire pilgrimage, our whole course public as well as private. Thus we may see that, if the feast was to begin the first day after the Passover, the greatest care is taken to show that it was to be continued throughout our actual sojourn on earth. To keep this feast is ever our calling while here.

The Wave Sheaf And The Wave Loaves.

The foundation of all the ways of God for a fallen people is laid not in grace only but righteousness; it is the death and the efficacy of the blood of the Lamb. Theology would have ordered otherwise, and made it the law or Christ’s obedience of it. But mark it well; the paschal feast is not even a witness of the incarnation, nor of the

Lord's path on earth; but His blood staying divine judgment. God begins with Christ's death; and no wonder. He could not overlook our sins; and there they were for the first time righteously met, and one may add, as far as the type goes, for the last time as well as the first. They were perfectly met for us by Him. It made no difference to the revealing Spirit whether the facts were present or future, so; far as the communication of God's mind was concerned. All was before His eyes, though in Christ and after redemption the truth comes out with deeper and infinite fulness.

For every scripture is divinely inspired, and it was just as impossible that God could lie before His atoning work was accomplished as when it was; and that is in part my reason for taking this chapter for consideration. It is high time for every Christian to stand for the word of God, and for every written word of His. The difficult times of the last days are come, Those that hesitate their dislike, or openly declare it, against what they call "verbal" inspiration, are apt to lose all right sense of God's word. It may be profitable, for such as shrink from the inspiration of the Bible, to say what remains for themselves to depend on. If you give up to the infidel the words of scripture, he will not leave you the thoughts of God. You may try to separate the truth from the words of God; but truth is communicated by words; and the apostle claims to speak "in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Cor. 2:13) The Bible is the only book which possesses such a character: and the Christian who is led by the Spirit in searching the word of God will learn how worthy of confidence is the only and absolutely perfect communication of His mind.

On the paschal night God acted as Judge. This was necessary and righteous. How dangerous it is when people talk about His love, where they ought to think of their guilt and bow before His solemn judgment of all sin!

Love is not to be denied for an instant; but even the boundless love of God cannot treat with sin, except by His own judgment of it. If sin were to be judged in our persons, we must be lost for ever. Therefore grace provided an offering, the only adequate one, in Christ on the cross; and accordingly all the holy unsparing force of God's judgment fell on the head of the Lord Jesus there and then. It is not merely that He died in love in order to meet our need — this He did most surely; but there was far more and of deeper import, for He met the judgment of God. He suffered what sin deserved at the hand of God. And this is so essential to truth; that one could not call a true believer in the atonement him who only sees Christ dying in love to man, and so only takes in the outward fact and human side of the cross.

It is patent to all that those who that day only saw Christ crucified were none the better, but rather worse. They were hardened at the sight, and afterwards more careless than ever. Those whom grace gave to believe what God wrought therein were saved from wrath. Shelter from judgment was shadowed in the blood of the slain Lamb.

Thereon immediately (and there is nothing morally more remarkable in these feasts) follows the feast of Unleavened Bread. Indeed as may be seen elsewhere, the two are so bound up together that they are both sometimes called the Passover. Not one day is allowed to

separate them; and this because God will not allow that the remission of our sins brought in by the blood of the Lamb shall be for ever so little separated from our responsibility to holiness. The moment the Israelite was under the shelter of the blood of the Lamb, he was forbidden to eat leavened bread, or to have leaven in any shape within his house.

The Wave Sheaf.

“ 9 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and say unto them, 10 When ye come into the land that I give to you, and ye reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf (omer) of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 And he shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah to be accepted for you; on the next day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. 12 And ye shall offer that day, when ye wave the sheaf, a he-lamb without blemish, a yearling, for a burnt offering to Jehovah; 13 and the oblation (meal offering) thereof, two-tenths of fine dour mingled with oil, a fire-offering to Jehovah for a sweet odour, and a drink-offering thereof of wine, a fourth of a hint 14 And ye shall not eat bread, or roast corn, or green ears, until the same day that ye shall have brought the offering of your God; an everlasting statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings” (vers. 9-14).

Now we come to another principle, which is made definite by a new speech of Jehovah to Moses. Yet in fact the Wave-sheaf was during the feast of Unleavened Bread on the morrow after its great sabbath. It was not merely that God was at the cross as the Judge of sin. What was shown at Christ’s resurrection? Without doubt, as it is written, that God, the very One Who

smote Jesus, raised Him from the dead.. Sin was condemned, not for every one, but for those who believed. For those who do not believe there will only be the greater condemnation; for their sins are aggravated by the fact that, in the face of God, they have despised and rejected the Son of God; and, more than that, the Son of man dying as a propitiation for sins. Thus the divine judgment of sin on the cross makes the case of the unbeliever incomparably graver; for he is not only a sinner, but refuses the grace of God that would save him at all cost to Himself.

It is of express design, in fact a new utterance of Jehovah to Moses; not precisely a new feast, but at any rate introductory to a new feast and indeed the whole pivot on which it turns. What is the bearing of this? The reader, it may be taken for granted, believes that every word of God has a meaning, and a most important meaning. You do not require to be reminded that God's word before Christ is just as truly inspired as the New Testament since.

The Wave-sheaf then is introduced as quite separate from the Passover and accompanying Feast of Unleavened Bread. But in point of fact the Wavesheaf was waved on the first day of the week that followed the passover. So the Lord was crucified on Friday, lay in the grave on the sabbath or last day of the week, and rose on the first day or Sunday as the Gentiles called it. He was raised from the dead on the very day the Wave-sheaf was waved before Jehovah. Little did the priest who waved it conceive the power and character of the truth set forth in the first-fruits he was thus presenting before the God of Israel. But the Risen one and Raiser of the dead had left the grave and broken its power for

believers, whether they knew it or not; but if the Jews refused to listen, the Gentiles by grace would hear. Thus the type of the Wave-sheaf begins a new order of things, distinguished from all before, as befits Him Who is the Beginning, the First-born from the dead, as the type of the Christian gathering (or the church) is seen immediately after. The church is dependent on Christ's resurrection.

Indeed there is no apter figure of resurrection in the Bible than that of the grain falling into the ground and dying, and then springing up. It is the Lord's own illustration in John 12:24: "Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Of whom was this spoken? Of His own death and resurrection, with the mighty consequences. If He is not raised, vain is apostolic preaching, and vain the Christian's faith. But Christ is raised from among the dead, first-fruits of those fallen asleep. So here it is said, "And ye shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah, to be accepted for you" (ver. 11). Nor is "salvation" ever known without it, though souls may be born again. For it is the light of His resurrection which chases away all gloom and dries every tear of sorrow. It is the resurrection of the Lord which brings out the acceptance of the believer without question before God. In His death our evil was dealt with atoningly, the sole righteous basis for the forgiveness of sinful man; but Christ's resurrection declares that the sins are for ever gone for those who believe. "He was delivered for our offences, and raised for our justification." "On the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." The type is fully confirmed by the striking coincidence of the plain and wondrous facts.

This then is what we have prefigured in the Wave-sheaf: Christ raised by God's power and the Father's glory. For His power entered the grave of the Lord Jesus, after all that God felt and could do against sin was exhausted in the cross. Therein was He so glorified that it was His right to raise up Jesus from the dead, never ceasing till He set Him at His own right hand in heaven, and gave Him a name which is above every name. As man He died; as man He is raised up end exalted. As a divine person, the Son has everything; but He became man, and humbled Himself, yea, to death of the cross; and now, in resurrection, He is taken up as man by the power of God, Who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God.

With the Wave-sheaf there was to be no offering for sin. This is a remarkable exception. If Israel or the Christian had been meant, there must have been a Sin and Trespass offering. Here it is Christ, and as fittingly there was no such offering. When it was a question of bringing Israel out of Egypt, blood was put on every door-post. The Passover was thus a striking type of holiness following. Here is a fresh truth in the Wave-sheaf. For there are two great principles: one displayed in the death of Christ; the other in His resurrection; and these are so distinct that God employs two different types to show them forth in our chapter.

It is certain that this typifies Christ's resurrection, and none but His; for we see there was no offering for sin connected with it. He was the only man since the world began who could be presented to God without blood. An offering for sin was needed, even for the high priest, "as for the people, so also for himself;" but not so for Christ, Who died for our sins. It is clearly then a question of

Christ only. For here we have the two great offerings of sweet savour: the Burnt-offering and the Meal-offering, both speaking of acceptance personally in His perfection; and of a double perfection — perfection of life lived, in the meal-offering, and perfection of life given up, or of death, in the Burnt-offering. There was of course the accompanying Drink-offering, but not a trace of anything inconsistent with the savour of rest that God found in Christ; for it is of Him, and of Him alone, that the Spirit here speaks prophetically.

The next verse helps to explain an expression in Luke 6:1, about which very likely some here present have found difficulty, as certainly most people elsewhere. "And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the cornfields: and his disciples plucked the ears of corn and did eat, rubbing them in their hands." What is the force of '`the second sabbath after the first"? To explain this it is of little use to send you to the commentators: for they are all at sea about it, as too often about difficulties for which help would be welcome. Some have had recourse to a harsh way of getting out of the difficulty by cutting out the word (for in Greek it is only a single word, δευτεροπρώτῳ): a very dangerous principle where the Bible is concerned. One celebrated critic thus guilty repented, virtually confessing the fault by replacing it. But it is no bad moral lesson for us when we can say, "I do not know." This at least is true and lowly: and if one looks up for light, it is well; for thus God can give what is lacking.

Let us look then at verse 14, for it is important, and helps to clear up a phrase otherwise dark. It is a vital claim of piety all through scripture that God must have

His portion first, before the believer can becomingly take and enjoy his. One feels how right it is that God should be considered in the first place: it is due to Him, and true in everything; and if we do not render it, we must suffer the bitter consequence. So distinctly was this impressed on the statutes and ways of Israel, that no godly person then would have attempted to touch his corn before the first sheaf had been waved before Jehovah. How blessedly this applies to Christ, we all feel! Once Christ is the waved first-fruits, what of blessing may not follow?

For remember that Christ is a man, not only the eternal Son of God, but One Who having become man has accomplished redemption. To His resurrection the Wave-sheaf pointed in type, and this for our acceptance. As man risen from the dead He goes up to heaven. He was not taken up in a merely exceptional way as an individual, like Enoch or Elijah. He was head of the new family whose sins He had borne, going up into the glory of God, accepted for man, that is, for those who believe. By man, when He came here below, we know how He was rejected and crucified; but God raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God.

Here then the disciples were going with their Master through the cornfields; and, being hungry, according to the gracious permission of Jehovah they on the sabbath plucked and ate the ears of corn. Now it is said here that this particular sabbath was “the second after the first,” or second-first. How striking that this should be the first sabbath on which it was allowable! It was of no use to show this to unbelieving Pharisees. For what did they care for the truth? Their only wish was through the

disciples to damage the Lord, being blind instruments in the hand of Satan. But the Lord vindicates amply His guiltless followers. On this we need not enter, save just to sift out the force of the term in question. The first sabbath on the paschal feast was emphatically said to be a high or great day (John 19:31); and no wonder when we take in what God foresaw. But so it was in Jewish estimate. Alas for man! It was the very day in which Christ lay in the grave, the only day, sabbath as it was, marked by that awful crime throughout its entire evening and morning. There was only a part of the other two days, out of the three, but each reckoned a day and night. On that first sabbath, immediately before the Wave-sheaf as it was, no Jew would have partaken of the corn. The day after it was the first day of the week, when the Wave-sheaf was offered. The following sabbath was “the second-first” immediately after the Wave-sheaf. The one was the first, the next the second-first because associated with it.

But why dwell on this? To show how precious is scripture to explain scripture. What else can? Yet we need the Holy Spirit to apprehend it aright. The word “second-first” occurs nowhere but in this verse of Luke. We see the value of the Old Testament to understand the New, not only of the New to understand the Old. Holy scripture is inspired and profitable: yet it is a fact, as singular as it is sure, that we only appreciate intelligently the Old when we are at home in the New. They both go together for faith and blessing, as they ought; and the key to both is found in Jesus the Saviour alone, the Christ of Israel, and to reign over all nations too, as well as Head of the church as He is now. For we must not limit or confound but confess His glories.

The Wave Loaves, Or Feast Of Weeks.

Next let us turn to the feast of verses 15 et seqq. “ 15 and ye shall count to you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering, seven sabbaths shall be complete; 16 even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days, and ye shall offer a new oblation (meal-offering) to Jehovah. 17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves of two tenths: they shall be baked with leaven, the first-fruits to Jehovah. 18 And ye shall present with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be a burnt-offering to Jehovah with their meal-offering and their drink-offerings, even a fire-offering of a sweet odour to Jehovah 19 And ye shall offer one he-goat for a sin-offering, and two he-lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace-offerings. 20 And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits, a wave-offering before Jehovah with the two lambs: they shall be holy to Jehovah for the priest. 21 And ye shall make proclamation on the self-same day: a holy convocation shall it be to you; no manner of servile work shall ye do: an ever-lasting statute in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

“ 22 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, and the gleaning of the harvest thou shalt not gather; thou shalt leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am Jehovah your God” (vers 15-22)

There is the peculiar expression of fulness here, such as we hear of nowhere else. This feast only is marked out by seven sabbaths intervening It is the feast of weeks,

but among the Hellenists or Greek-speaking Jews, the number fifty, as is well known, has given the name to this feast, which is therefore called “Pentecost.” What then was fulfilled when the day of Pentecost was fully come? The Father made good His promise, that incomparable promise of which the Lord Himself had said, ‘‘It is expedient for you that I go away.” What could outweigh the blessedness of His presence with His disciples on earth? The gift of another Advocate, not merely gifts but Himself baptizing them, no longer in hope but accomplished in fact.

Therefore they were told on that day to offer a new Meal-offering. I daresay you are all familiar with the repugnance that many, believers even, have to looking at the church as a new thing. They like to think of it as that which has always been and which shall always go on till eternity. Yet it is remarkable that not only does Paul give it the name of the “one new man,” but here Moses calls it a “new meal-offering.” There was a Meal-offering before, unambiguously shadowing Christ. What did the “new meal-offering” on the day of Pentecost mean? I leave it to yourselves, to your own conscience and intelligence: the answer is so certain that one need not say more about it. At that day began here below a thing so new that it was entirely without precedent. Compare 1 Cor. 12:12.

Again, in verse 17, we hear of “two waveloaves.” Mark the association with Christ. He was the Wave-sheaf, and He alone: these were Wave-loaves, and there were to be two. Do you ask if it be not said that the church was a mystery hid for ages and generations? How then can it be thus typified here? My answer is, God took care, though giving this type, not to reveal the mystery. He did

show some important truths that meet in the mystery, but never disclosed itself. For instance, if He had meant to reveal it in this type, would it not, if one may reverently so speak, have been spoken of as “one loaf?” When the mystery was revealed, it was certainly marked as “one new man,” “one body,” etc.; and in the sign of the Lord’s Supper we have, not two loaves, but one bread or one loaf symbolising one body. The time then had not come to reveal the mystery; for Christ had not been rejected, nor was redemption yet wrought. Consequently the Spirit of God has only given us here the witness of our association with Him; what may be called a shadow, not the very image. The symbol was plain in the one loaf when the church began.

Some excellent men have supposed the two loaves to be the Jew and the Gentile; but it seems to be too much to assume. Ecclesiastical history may assure us that Peter and Paul founded two churches at Rome; but we know that the church of Rome was founded by neither apostle, and indeed by no apostle. It is perfectly certain from scripture that the saints in Rome were gathered long before an apostle went there; and it is very hard to learn on what ground they ever went there, except as prisoners of the Lord. Peter may have been crucified there; Paul went there to prison, and on the second occasion to death; but as to founding the Roman church, they never did; and no claim is put in for any other apostle.

Further, in the book of The Acts (so called) we have the fullest evidence of the care then taken to avoid having two churches anywhere. When Philip went down to Samaria, though people were converted and baptized, there was no church formed till the apostles Peter and

John went down. Thus the link was kept up with the church in Jerusalem in the most careful manner. Of laying on of hands we hear not in Jerusalem, there being no necessity for it that day; in Samaria without it there might have been ground taken for an independent church, of which there is no trace in scripture. Geographically there may be ever so many churches, but there is only one church of God: but one communion is recognised on earth. No doubt many persons are exceedingly sore as to the point; it is usual when people feel their weakness. What they need to see is that it is no question of opinion or will, but of submission to God and His word.

Assuredly the two Wave-loaves do not mean two churches, a Jewish and a Gentile: the very worst notion possible, one may add, as it keeps up the old distinction; while the very essence of the gospel, as well as of the one body, is to break all this down, to unite as well as to save, in Christ.

When God speaks of a witness, His regular way is by at least “two.” So we read “that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” When there was to be a full witness, and not a barely valid or sufficient testimony, there were three. So the Lord was three days in the grave; there was the fullest witness to His death. Two witnesses were necessary. And so it will be by-and-by, when things come to a serious pass for the truth in Jerusalem. There will be “His two witnesses:” not that we need to understand this said numerically, but according to the figure of adequacy. Here Christ was risen, the Wave-sheaf. What witness was given next of the power of His resurrection? The assembly, as the two Wave-loaves. The Christian company are witnesses, not

to the law of God like Israel, but to His grace in Christ risen from the dead. Such is the contrast that Paul brings out in 2 Cor. 3, where he speaks of our having Christ written on us. He takes particular pains to show that it is not on tables of stone. This he leaves to the Jew, who, without doubt, was called to bear witness to the law of Jehovah, as the Christian is to a dead and risen Christ in the power of the Spirit.

The Wave-loaves, we read, were to be of fine flour baken with leaven. Here are two constituents in the type, so opposed to each other that one who knew their use elsewhere might well wonder what to think of them here. Fine flour! - why, this is like Christ, pure without sin: but leaven! — this is like ourselves, naturally corrupt end corrupting; and is not this just what scripture teaches? It is exactly where so many find a difficulty about the two natures; but really it is hard to find an excuse for such want of light as to both scripture and themselves. Christians ever so young in truth should not be slow to believe that they have two natures within them: one craving after what is evil, the old habits of self; the other delighting in the will of God and loving what is of Christ. We have the truth plainly in Epistles like those to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians. Here we have the type to guard against the snare. Moses refutes all pretension to perfection in the flesh. For we have two seemingly incompatible things mingled in what typifies Christians — fine flour and leaven. Yet sad experience tallies with it. Not that there is the least excuse for yielding to sin; but sin is there, set out by leaven, not working but baked in the bread.

Thus we see how truth all hangs together, and from first to last God above reveals perfect truth. Man, without

Him, can only find out and utter what is untrue in spiritual things. Our part in the things of God is not to theorise, but to believe. But the Spirit is as necessary to the understanding of the word, as the word is the necessary material for the Spirit to use. Hence it is that one really finds the truth, not as a mere student but rather as a believer. God is dealing with the heart and conscience. We cannot separate growth in the truth from the spiritual state of the soul: if we essay it, we may appear to run on fast in “mastering” the Bible; but it is to be feared that the next step will be a fall.

Again, in ver. 18, we read of the accompanying offerings of sweet savour. The Christian should have the sense of complete acceptance through and in Christ before our God and Father. But even that is not all. In verse 19 we are told of Sin-offerings and sacrifice of Peace-offerings. “Then ye shall sacrifice one buck of the goats for a sin-offering, and two he-lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of Peace-offerings.” With the Wave-sheaf there was enjoined a Burnt-offering and a Meal-offering. It is just the same here: the church by grace has the same acceptance as Christ had in Himself. The object of redemption was that we might be even now as completely freed from sin, yea, and as acceptable before God as the blessed Saviour. He in His own perfection, we in virtue of His work for us. Nothing can be plainer than the type, unless it be the divine explanation in the New Testament. Consequently we have the same figures and similar language used; but now we come to a different thing, for there is a striking difference. With the Wave-loaves there was to be a Peace-offering, and also a Sin-offering; there was none in the case of Christ. In Him was no sin. It is not merely that Christ never

sinned, but in Him was no sin; and this must be particularly pressed. He never had a sinful nature, else He must have required a Sin-offering for Himself. For it was absolutely needful that an offering for sin should be essentially sinless. And again, when it was a question of Him or of His person, Peace-offerings have no place. The Peace-offering was when communion was restored (or when it was not in question); but thus it followed the Sin-offering. Compare Lev. 7:13, where we learn that cakes of leavened bread were to be offered with the sacrifice of Peace-offerings for thanksgiving. So it must be where we are directly concerned, but not in what foreshadowed Christ. The application is to us and not to Christ.

The Feast of Weeks then is a distinct type of God's grace to, and ways with, the Christian calling. It is hardly possible that any one possessing an intelligent claim to the name of believer should question the fact. The Feast tallied to the very day with God's sending down the Holy Spirit, and beginning to gather together His scattered children in one. No doubt they all were Jews or Proselytes at first, but along with it went this remarkable peculiarity: they were Jews that spoke every language under heaven. Jews that spoke not only the language of Canaan but the tongues of the Gentile world. Was it not a most significant fact? More than this: not only were such brought in, but Jews of Palestine, yea of Galilee, were employed by the power of the Holy Spirit to address them in the various Gentile languages never before learnt. The miraculous sign showed the widely-flowing grace of God that was come and to go out. It was not as yet that all creation, groaning in bondage, was to be delivered, but the whole of it under

heaven was to hear the gospel. Hence the power of the Spirit enabled the unlettered fishermen of Galilee thus to address their fellow Jews in the language of every land into which the judgment of God had scattered men.

Besides a gathering power to Christ as a centre, grace would meet men in the variety of tongues to which the judgment of God had doomed them at Babel. For it needs no reasoning to prove that God's work at Pentecost was not merely to save sinners. Those who say so have a most superficial idea of the great work done that day. Undoubtedly salvation was going on, and it was a new fact. Salvation before this was only held out in promise. Now the promise was accomplished. Clearly then those who believe salvation to be no more than promised do not understand the immense step God had taken in His ways. It is really because of the low estimate they have, not perhaps of Christ, but of His work. The root of the mischief lies there; it may seem a distant point, but, when approached, it will be found as the rule to be an inadequate view of redemption. There is not the full reception of God's testimony within. Of course one speaks here of soul-salvation, as we read in 1 Peter 1:9, "Receiving the end of your faith, [even] the salvation of your souls." The salvation of the body is not come yet; the salvation of the soul is as complete as it ever can be. This is Christianity, in fact; which comes in after the work of Christ was done, to save the soul before He comes again to save the body. It is exactly within that interval that we find ourselves now.

But there is another thing besides salvation, and that is the kingdom of God in mystery, for it is not yet manifested. The Lord Jesus is exalted, but not in a public manner. He is not yet on His own throne, but on His

Father's. He is not therefore in the New Testament spoken of as the King now reigning, but as rejected and glorified on high at God's right hand. "King of saints," in Rev. 15:3, is often cited to prove that He now reigns by those who ought to know that it is a clerical error discarded by all critics, and on evidence of the most satisfactory kind. Thus, while there is now a kingdom of God, it is of course in a mysterious way, with its own distinctive principles accordingly. All Christians are priests and kings destined to reign with Christ. None who bear His name can escape the responsibility of such a place of privilege; while those who are in the secret by the Spirit suffer with Him now, as they walk in grace and will be glorified together.

Besides salvation and the kingdom, there is a still more wondrous work going on at the same time — the calling of the church. Let me warn you against confounding these things. This confusion has been one of the early causes of the ruin of Christendom, and essentially characterises popery, which could not subsist without it. Papists abuse the idea of the kingdom to get earthly power. But it is gross ignorance of the word of God; for it is the "kingdom and patience" now, not His power. The Lord Jesus always draws a marked distinction between the church and the kingdom, as in Matt. 16 and 18.

These three things then go on now: first, the salvation of the soul; secondly, the kingdom of God, or of heaven, as the case may be (which differ somewhat but are substantially the same great fact); and thirdly also, the church, the body of Christ. This last was in a general way intimated in the portion of the chapter we had before us under the figure of the two Wave-loaves.

On another word of the Spirit we must be brief. In verse 22 we read, ‘‘And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field.” What is the meaning of this? Does it not seem rather singular that, after the two Wave-loaves have disappeared from the scene, good corn should be found still in “thy field?” The Wave-loaves, as all agree, mean the Christian body. Some may go farther back than others, but none deny that it refers to Christians at any rate. How comes it, when these ere gone, that we hear of grain left in the corners of the field? Can the Wave-loaves typify all saints? Does not such an instance as this confirm that true believers will be on the earth after the church has gone on high and before the day of Jehovah? There will be some little good corn. Of course they are not members of the one body then complete. But God has other purposes, and purposes for both the Jew and the Gentile; as here some corn was to be left for the poor and the stranger.

In the corner of the field then corn was to be left. It is not meant by this that members of Christ will be left behind by the Lord when He comes for His own, but that God’s Spirit will work in another way, and that believers will be called after the church is gone. They will be found in the little interval which follows, in the last or seventieth Week of Daniel.

If any one wishes to trace the history of this transitional space, the details of it will be found in the latter half of Daniel and the central parts of the Revelation. The Psalms are full of their sorrowful experience but also of their blessed comfort in faith, and of their aspirations in hope before the day of His appearing. There may be

read the full answer to the question of the corn which is to be left in the corners of the field.

The Feast Of Trumpets

We find ourselves in presence of an entirely new scene from verse 23. “ 23 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, 24 In the seventh month, on the first of the month, ye shall have a rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. 25 No manner of work of labour shall ye do, and ye shall present a fire-offering to Jehovah.” So far from the gospel being a continuous work to the end of the world, as many suppose, we see here that the Lord will begin a fresh testimony with a suited instrumentality for this new aim when the church is gone. Observe that it is said here ‘‘in the seventh month;” this was the last month in which Jehovah instituted a feast. He here brings to a completion the circle of His ways on the earth and for Israel.

In the very beginning then of this closing period of God’s dealings, what do we read? “A memorial of blowing of trumpets.” God is inaugurating a fresh testimony. The trumpet is clearly a figure of His intervention to announce some signal change. It may be for judgment, as we find in some cases; it may be a distinct testimony in grace, as we know elsewhere. It is clearly a loud summons from God to people on the earth. Here, as we read, it is not merely a blowing of trumpets, but “a memorial” of blowing of trumpets. It is a recall of what had long passed out of memory. It is God calling to mind what had once been before Him, but long dead and gone. What can this be? It is the recall of His ancient people on the earth. The Jew is again brought into

remembrance before God. No wonder that there should be such “a memorial of blowing of trumpets.” Hundreds, one might say thousands, of years had passed since they had stood before Him as His people. For the return from Babylon was only a partial work: as a whole, Israel never returned, but remained a dispersion over the world. Where was the bulk of them? They were lost among the Gentiles; and so to this day they have remained in a peculiar condition, unlike any other since the world began. They are in all countries without possessing one of their own, and yet a people; they are without a king or a prince, and yet a people; without the true God and without a false god, yet a people (Hosea 3): a standing rebuke to the infidel, yet largely and deeply infidel themselves!

But this very people, as the same prophecy lets us know, are yet to return to their land, and seek Jehovah their Lord and David their king; they shall fear Jehovah and His goodness in the latter days. But what does God do in the first place? He awakens them. The day of shadows is gone for ever. The cross of Christ has closed unrealities. By the power of His resurrection the Christian is introduced into the new creation. The old is gone, the new come; and before God we have our place in Christ. When this work is finished, grace will begin to act in Israel, and they shall be awakened.

Nothing more distinctly proves that God will have done with the Christian; for the gospel went out to the Gentiles (though to the Jew first), and in the church, as in Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek. The Feast of Trumpets is God’s taking up Israel afresh to awaken them. Undeniably then this feast is after and quite distinct from Passover and Pentecost in which we have

our interest. Hence the first thing disclosed in it is God's loud summons to a people who once had a place before Him and again come into remembrance for mercy, not judgment. It is evident that this could not consistently apply to the gospel that has been at work singe Christ's death and resurrection. We have had His sacrifice, and call to practical holiness, and the gift of the Spirit long ago. But when God has done with our blessing, the chapter reveals that in the seventh month dead Israel is to be raised from the grave by God's trumpet, as Ezekiel predicted long after (Ezek. 37). As this is clearly a new work for a people long disowned, let us trace what light other scriptures furnish on it.

Let us refer to the Psalms. There you may learn how truly they and the prophets agree with this figure in the law. See Psalm 81. There is a plain enough testimony as to its forge: "Sing aloud unto God our strength; make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the time appointed, on our solemn feast day." If men were not prejudiced, none could deny the application to Israel. The moon, that luminary which wanes and loses her brightness, once more renews her light, as mercy will do for the rebellious people.

How strikingly is this to be verified in Israel! It could not be said of the world-church, or Christendom. The apostasy of the Gentile is fatal. Take Babylon; and what does scripture teach as to this? Babylon never recovers her old light; Babylon is the corrupt woman who assumes the credit of being the bride whilst false to Christ, a mere harlot with the kings of. the earth. Once the Roman empire carried her, but this she has no more.

Once she was drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. Still she has a golden cup in her hand, full of abomination and the unclean things of her fornication. But her end will be judgment and destruction: no renovation for her; no new moon shining out in fresh strength and brightness. Babylon will never rise again. Destruction is determined, and determined from the Lord God, but by the hand of the revived Roman empire and its satellite kings, avenging those she had corrupted too long.

It is quite different with Israel, which never had the privileges of the church. The Jew was under the law: what did he know of being under grace as we are? By and by Israel will be put under the new covenant; but this cannot take place till the trumpets have blown once more, and the new moon is shining, as we hear in the Psalm, the new moon at the set time of God. The language is suited for Israel, and not for the church. They sing and make a joyful noise to the God of Jacob. Why confound this with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? Why deny Israel's hope of mercy?

How mischievous the perversion to apply everything of the sort (the blessing at least, not the curse) to the church! Are we not blessed in heavenly places? We are entitled to take delight in these promises; but it is not truly to enjoy them if we misappropriate them to ourselves. Let us rejoice that they are yet in store for other people, for Israel in the latter days. We have the new covenant in spirit, if not letter; we have also our own special privileges far beyond Israel's, even in the days of the Kingdom.

If we know any converted, are we to be jealous of their blessing? Are we not to rejoice that the grace of God which visited ourselves reaches out to many others? that it will embrace a larger circle by-and-by? So here, when we see in the scriptures that loved but guilty Israel is to emerge from the grave, from their long sinful and dense darkness of unbelief, why wish to hear only of the church? Indeed it is to lower our character of blessing from heaven to earth. Let us rather rejoice that at length God will awaken His people and accomplish all His earthly purposes not only in them but in all the nations through them.

Here let me briefly call your attention to a passage on this subject poorly enough rendered in the Authorised Version: — “A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel’, (Luke 2:32). “A light for revelation to the Gentiles” in the R. V. is no better; but the margin is right. It should be “A light for revelation (or, unveiling) of [the] Gentiles.” This means that Christ is a light for bringing Gentiles into divine view; and it is accomplishing now, besides His being the glory of Israel by and by. The Gentiles, instead of being in darkness as they once were in the ways of God, have now, as privilege and responsibility, the true testimony of God. Not before the millennium will He be the glory of Israel. The Gentiles were once in the dark as the Jew is now; ere long the Lord will come for the glory of His people Israel. Luke’s is the only Gospel where we have the coming of Christ thus viewed as present light for revealing the Gentiles and as future glory for Israel. It is important for us to seize the intended and real bearing of God’s word. We must not be too hasty in assuming it;

but when assured of it, let us hold it fast and use it for the Lord with one another.

Psalm 81 then speaks of the blowing of trumpets distinctly in connection with Israel. No one doubts there is the figure of a trumpet for ourselves — in a general figure now, as in 1 Cor. 14, or in a precise and future way most impressively given, as in 1 Cor. 15. But it is never in our case "a memorial of blowing of trumpets." Thus the "last trump" is a blessed and solemn word as to us. What is its source and bearing? A figure taken from the military usages of the Romans, then familiar to everybody. We must remember that the Romans were at that time masters of the world, and that most people knew too well what their legions were. Few and distant were the places where men did not feel the grinding iron bondage of that imperial power. Josephus is one who describes their encampment, and lets us know the various and successive signals given for the different movements of the army. But finally sounded the "last trump;" and, the moment this was heard, they all moved off. This may serve to explain the Spirit's application of the phrase to the final summons of His people for meeting the Lord in the air.

Another scripture has its interest here, Isa. 27:12. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah shall beat off from the flood of the river unto the torrent of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel." This is the gathering, not of believers to heaven, but of the children of Israel to their land. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come who were perishing in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at

Jerusalem." Is not the application evident and sure? "Perishing" would not apply to the gathering of the church to heaven. We shall be glorified in that day, after being objects of grace, as Christians, and Christ's body on earth. It is equally clear that, just before God interferes, the Jewish people are to be in the last extremity of tribulation, and set upon by all their enemies, when their Deliverer appears.

As long as Israel is unnoticed or chastised by God, the Gentiles can be peaceable. But directly any movement for good is afoot, and God works to make Israel the head and not the tail, the old enmity soon revives. In that day they shall be gathered by God to Jerusalem. It is not Jerusalem above, where our portion is by grace; but Jerusalem on earth, where Jehovah in due time shall reign according to His goodness and many promises. The future awakening of Israel then is clearly what answers to the Feast of Trumpets.

In Matt. 24:29-31 it is written, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other." The context proves that His elect here are of Israel, not elect Christians. Such a remark may not satisfy some, who, whenever they see good things held out in Scripture, are apt to assume that it must be for

the church. But we can well afford to rejoice in the future gathering of Israel. Have our brethren learnt the parable from the “fig tree “? What is its forge? Not more surely is the rose the emblem of one part of our land and the thistle of another one could name, than the fig tree was similarly used of Israel. “When its branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh.” They have had their long winter, and soon shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings for them.

The Day Of Atonement

Next, we come to the most solemn of all the feasts, the great Day of Atonement. “ 26 And Jehovah spoke to Moses saying, 27 Also on the tenth of this seventh month is the day of atonement: a holy convocation shall it be to you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and present a fire-offering to Jehovah. 28 And ye shall do no manner of work on the same day; for it is a day of atonement; to make atonement for you before Jehovah your God. 29 For every soul that is not afflicted on that same day, he shall be out off from among his peoples. 30 And every soul that doeth any manner of work on that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. 31 No manner of work shall ye do: an everlasting statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 A sabbath of rest it shall be to you, and ye shall afflict your souls; on the ninth of the month at even, from even to even, shall ye keep your sabbath.”

But it is well that we should observe how events crowd on during this eventful month. When the day comes and on its fulfilment, God will soon finish His work on the earth. Be will at length put out the evil that had so long

ravaged among men, and bring His ancient people into fulness of blessing, with the world blessed also, and both through Christ the Lord.

On this Atonement Day Israel shall be brought under the propitiation of Christ. But first bear in mind how impossible it is to think that in the chronological scheme of the Feasts this can be for us. We have had Christ as our sacrifice in the Passover long ago. There can be no want of it for the Christian a second time. For to repeat the work for us would be to impeach its everlasting value on the principle of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is really therefore the work of Christ applied to Israel. Once they had the testimony to the Lamb; but they refused it. We meanwhile by grace have been brought into the blessing. Are they to be left out for ever? Assuredly for a time only, as Rom. 11, yea Law, Psalms and Prophets assure us. The day of Atonement in the seventh month, so long following the Passover, indicates, not that the work is to be done over again, but that a second and distinct application of that work is to be of course to Israel as God pledged His oath. Do you ask for scripture proof of this? John 11:51 sufficiently answers: — "And this spake he not of himself; but, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." In this passage we have most clearly put, the double bearing of the work of Christ. Of old ''that nation," the Jews, rejected it, for to the Jew first the offer was made. But it was not only for them, but to gather in one the children of God, who are both saved and also gathered into one. This is the church baptised by the Holy Spirit. But the prophets and the

N.T. declare that there remains for Israel the blessing by and by. This is suspended for the present; but the precious blood, the death, of the Lord Jesus in all its efficacy cannot fail for them also — for the very people who were of old so unbelieving and rebellious. How patient, yet powerful and victorious is the grace of God!

On the tenth of the seventh month, God's set time, the day will surely come. But remark the most striking emphasis in the language employed here, compared with that used of old: "And ye shall afflict your souls, and offer a sin-offering to Jehovah." We do not find such words as these under the paschal lamb; and no wonder. God will make Israel specially feel their sins, as He could not be unobservant of their long unbelief; and when their day of blessing comes, can any one think that they will be insensible? Is it conceivable that the Jews will regard themselves as other than sinners? Certainly not. They will justly say, We are the guiltiest people on earth: the Messiah, the Christ of God, was sent to us after the fullest prophecies, with rich signs, and what a life! Yet we despised and loathed Him; He was not yours, yet you Gentiles bowed to Him and the gospel. For the Messiah rejected by Israel became the suffering yet exalted Son of man, and the Gentiles do hear Him, as Israel will another day.

Joseph rejected by his brethren was in the land of Egypt exalted to the right hand of the throne. There too, while next to the one who set him in the highest place, unknown to his brethren. When the true Joseph presents Himself to the sons of Israel, will they not afflict their souls as Joseph's brethren did, while the house of Pharaoh heard it? Never was so genuine a mourning as this for the seed of Jacob. So, yet more, yea

incomparably, will it be in the day that hastens. It could not be otherwise, if God wrought real repentance as He will in Israel. The day of atonement bears the distinct mark of what will historically and most fully, apply to His people in that future day, when God's plans for the earth are to be completed.

But this is not all. In verse 28 we read, "And ye shall do no work in that same day; for it is a day of atonement to make an atonement for you before Jehovah your God." Could this be said so fittingly and emphatically to any other people? For a nation is in question here, the one chosen people of Jehovah. Were they not the people of all others who boasted of their works, and so, going about to establish their own righteousness, "stumbled at the stumbling-stone"? Acceptable works are found only in believers. We know that those who have the Spirit of God working in them really show forth the fruit of the Spirit and do not boast). Where all is felt to he of grace, how could one brag? Others who slight faith and consequently talk of the law do in fact nothing acceptable to God. The Jew boasted but stumbled over the lowly Nazarene, the crucified Saviour; but it will not be so in that day; when the reality of faith will not only work repentance but exclude pretensions of self. Not that works will not follow; but the Day of Atonement for the time shut out everything, if I may so say, but Christ, their propitiation and substitute; so that their self-loathing will be as complete as their abandonment of their own works. The very fact of their then believing what God had done for them in Christ makes them ashamed of the least reference to any of their works: nothing can mix with His work.

These are the two effects of grace: on the one hand, affliction of soul in the confession of their sirs; and, on the other hand, no mingling any thing of their own with that which Christ suffered for them before God. Verses 29, 30, repeat it with solemn emphasis: “For whatsoever soul it shall be that shall not be afflicted on that same day, he shall be cut off from among his peoples. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.” Again, in verse 32, “It shall be to you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls.” The two moral realities, no work of man and true affliction of soul, mark the Day of Atonement for Israel.

How blessed when Israel know and feel thus! And here again one may appeal to other parts of scripture. Listen then to one of the prophets in connection with the still unfulfilled day of Jehovah, Zech. 12:9. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.” For then the nations will be again jealous of and hostile to Israel. “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.” Is not this their Day of Atonement? “And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him.” It is a day of afflicting their souls, “As one mourneth for an only one, and shall he in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for a first-born.” “In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart, and their wives apart.” Conscience leads one to be alone with God, that confession may he true and deep. Such is the effect of real Spirit-wrought

sorrow; for the conscience, when it is thus truly reached by the Spirit of God, always isolates itself, and makes the soul desire to go alone to God. To whom, alas! could one tell out honestly all he is? What good would it do any one else? It might do harm. It is to God then we must go, and to God we must confess. It is good for the soul; for God will have sterling honesty; He will have guile taken away; and this is accomplished by His own grace and truth. It is their Day of Atonement, when Israel hide not like Adam, but pour out their sins into the bosom of God. The Lord Jesus gives them the boldness of faith. They see Him Whom they pierced.

“Every family apart.” So close, so real, is the work that we hear of even “their wives apart”: the nearest and closest relationships are severed, that there may be now, for the first time, “truth in the inward parts.” And which are the families named? “The family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart.” Why David and why Nathan? Once there was a time when the king trembled as he stood thoroughly convicted, and the faithful prophet was strengthened of God to convict him: “Thou art the man.” Now what a change! It is no humbled king nor convicting prophet. All are convicted, and so profoundly filled with the sense each of his own sins, that they feel thoroughly the need to be alone with God It is not only real but deep work; it is not the mere effect of feeling or sympathy fed by a weeping crowd. They go alone, each before God’ that all may be out and clear. Surely this should be a word of warning as to the danger in these days of multitudinous meetings, revivals etc. This is not said to weaken any one’s confidence, but

that all may see how momentous it is for souls to be alone with God as to their sins.

Nor is this the only picture; we have two others to complete the scene. “The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart.” The margin gives “Symeon “as the alternative, and so does the oldest version, the Septuagint. Of course there is a difference of opinion as to this as in most things. Then it is a common thing in Scripture to find two names for the same person, as, for instance, Paul and Saul, Silas and Silvanus, Jude and Thaddeus. But if we accept the view of the Greek translators, it recalls two sons of Jacob painfully notorious in their earliest history. Revenge then brought them together. No doubt the Gentile was guilty of gross wrong, and dishonoured their sister; but the brothers’ wrath was cruel, and their revenge as deceitful as outrageous. Therefore was Jacob also full of shame at his unworthy sons, who had been united in deadly purpose under the guise of religion. But now they (that is, in their offspring who are then alive) have found the Saviour, or rather the Saviour has found them, and they are confessing each his own sins. Thousands of years had passed over; but here, it would seem, are the descendants of these two fathers in Israel bowing down before the Lord who died for them.

However it be as to the last names, the true meaning of the Day of Atonement here is its application to Israel; and let us rejoice that God will extend thus His grace, through our blessed Saviour, to His guilty people, kept for this and other great ends of God.

The Feast Of Tabernacles

The last feast begins in verse 33 “ 33 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, “ 34 On the fifteenth day of this seventh month [is] the feast of tabernacles (or, booths) seven days to Jehovah: 35 on the first day is a holy convocation: no manner of work shall ye do. 36 Seven days ye shall present a fire offering to Jehovah: on the eighth day shall be a holy convocation to you: and ye shall offer a fire offering to Jehovah: it [is] a solemn assembly; ye shall do no work of labour. 37 These [are] the set feasts of Jehovah, which ye shall proclaim as holy convocations, to offer a fire offering to Jehovah, a burnt offering and a meal offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, each in its day; 38 besides the sabbaths of Jehovah, and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your voluntary offerings which ye give to Jehovah. 39 Surely on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep the feast of Jehovah seven days: on the first day a sabbath, and on the eighth day a sabbath. 40 And ye shall take on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palms, and boughs of bushy trees and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before Jehovah your God seven days. 41 And ye shall keep it a feast to Jehovah seven days in the year: an everlasting statute throughout your generations: in the seventh month shall ye keep it. 42 In tabernacles shall ye dwell seven days, all born in Israel shall dwell in tabernacles; 43 that your generations may know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in tabernacles, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am Jehovah your God. 44 And Moses declared the set feasts of Jehovah to the children of Israel.”

First then it is to be remarked that we have had nothing about seven days since the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and this, as was shown, signified our walking in sincerity and truth, in Christian holiness, the true import of that feast, because Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. It is the pilgrim course of those who are under the privilege of grace. Now here are seven other days for a different purpose; and what are they, Seven days of glory on the earth. This may startle some; for there are very many Christians who, when they think of glory, always connect it with heaven. So they speak of souls having gone to glory at death. Now we are very far from denying that the Christian is destined to heavenly glory. We do belong distinctly to Christ on high; we depart at death to be with Him.

But we are far from thinking, with a celebrated Scotch divine (Dr. Chalmers), that the glorified church is to live and reign on the earth. It is not in a likeness of heaven we are to dwell for ever; we are going to the true — to heaven itself. The Father's house does not mean the earth, however sublimated or etherealised, but the brightest part of the heavens. Look not for some distant corner or outskirt of glory, but where the Son abides now, where the Father's love satisfied itself in receiving the Son. There shall we be with Him, in the Father's house of many mansions. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." We go where He is. The portion of the Christian is Christ in the Father's house; so we shall be ever with the Lord. He would not tell us so if it would raise our hopes too high. He did so tell us that He might inspire us with the same expectation that filled His own breast. The bride is to be

with the Bridegroom. The notion therefore, is altogether unfounded, that the scene of our glory is to be on the earth. No matter what the piety of men who have such views, we must reject them as low and doubly injurious. They deny the church's glory to be distinctively heavenly, and they leave no due room for Israel's future glory, according to promise, on the earth. It is really therefore a mistake of grave consequence, which affects our interpretation of the Bible, and deprives of an adequate scheme of God's ways.

Hear what the New Testament teaches: ''Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." We are blessed there in title already in Christ, as we shall be there in fact with Him when He comes for us, and we shall be changed, caught up, and ever with the Lord. But in the portion before us quite another truth is brought out. Here it cannot mean our going to heaven, for we do not speak of time there. It is one eternal day in that sphere of unchanging light and blessedness; and by a figure it may be very well called the "day of eternity." Indeed this is the way the apostle Peter does speak in the last verse of his Second Epistle: "To Him be glory, both now and to the day of eternity." But glory will assuredly come to the earth. Thus "Arise, shine; for thy light is come," etc. Where is this to be? In heaven? No; Zion is here on the earth. Was it not that mountain on which the king's palace was built? and how significant of grace yet to build up the broken house and realm of Israel, when God will give them the true David!

Let me draw your attention here to two schools of theology, as the truth in question is of practical moment as well as doctrinal. It may be instructive to see how

they both come short of what the Holy Spirit reveals for the glory of God. As to the future we find each of these schools in opposition. One says that the scene of future glory is to be the earth, where Christ died and God has wrought so graciously, and as to which He has promised such glorious things. Fully is this admitted; but the inference that we shall be glorified there is unsound. The other school holds that heaven will be the only scene of glory; and this so exclusively as almost, if not quite, to forget the body and its future resurrection from the grave. They are in danger of thinking only of the soul, and of heaven as a place for pure spirit; which is a poor substitute for the Christian's hope, and not at all what the word of God teaches. It is quite true and blessed that even now the separated spirit goes to be with Christ; and no believer should seek to weaken this truth. The just converted robber was to be that day with Him in paradise. It is lamentable to know how little this is believed by modern theologians; and no doubt their feebleness here is due to their scanty knowledge of Christ and redemption. But this intermediate blessedness is not resurrection; though departed saints, when risen, shall be, as now, in the ''paradise of God'' (Rev. 2:7). As the paradise of Adam was the brightest spot on earth, so the "paradise of God" is the brightest portion in heaven. Sinful man was cast out of the one; believing man is received into the other. Christ was the first-fruits, as but due to Him, the Son and Saviour; afterward those that are Christ's at His coming.

But there is another thing, the kingdom of God, which has "earthly things"; and for these man needs new birth (John 3), as well as for "heavenly things." So it will neither be heaven alone, nor the earth alone, but troth

in harmonious yet suited blessing (compare Eph. 1:10 and Col. 1:20). In scripture faith finds no real difficulty, though it be far larger than theology, which invariably stops short of the truth of God. For theology is an attempt on man's part to reduce the word of God to a science, and a science for man, converted or not, to learn. No wonder that this always proves a failure, as it deserves to be. You cannot squeeze what has life into this iron vice of theirs without destroying its strength and tissues and beauty. Heaven, earth and sea, and all creatures in them, are to be under Christ, the distinct but united spheres of His reign to God's glory. In the fulness of the times, God is going to gather "all things" under Christ; not all persons, for this will never be; Alas! those who despise the Lord Jesus must, at the end, be cast into the lake of fire. But "all things," the groaning creation, guilty of no sin, but suffering from the sin of man, shall be delivered through the victory of the Second Man. For this we and it are waiting, as Christ Himself is.

It is not true, therefore, that the earth is to be the only scene of glory, but also heaven. One might prove this from other scriptures besides the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. But remember well that it is no good sign to require many passages. One scripture, if plain, is conclusive. Who would admire the state of soul that, when one scripture is given, asks for another? Even if one had only to do with a man's word, would any wish him to repeat the same thing half-a-dozen times over? In fact, if he habitually did so, might it not arouse suspicion. But, if such be the case with man, is it not most dishonouring to God to look for ever so many assurances from Him? Granted that in certain cases He

may present the same thing in various forms; but this is only pure grace in consideration of the weakness of man.

Take as an instance Ps. 73:24; and it is chosen in order to clear out a singular mistake of our translators. There we read these words, a favourite text with many: “Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” It may be good Christian doctrine; but is it the object of the Psalm to teach anything of the sort? Let us be subject to scripture. You see the word “to” is inserted. And what is the reason for it? “To” or “with” would require authority, for it cannot be inserted or left out in this sort of way The truth is that our translators did not understand the meaning of the words as they stand, especially as it was taken for granted that the Psalm speaks directly of our Christian comfort; hence they conjectured it must mean, “Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me [to] glory.” They never thought of the peculiar hopes of Israel, and so they could not find out the bearing. It was confusion to apply these words to the church now, but natural, as they did not know anything worth mentioning of God’s ways for the future, when Christ shall reign over the earth.2 Now, people are learning to translate accurately, whether they understand the meaning or not. This may not be pleasant; still it is more honest; and thus grace may the sooner use some one else to help toward the meaning. Further, years ago, one of our American kinsmen brought out a new translation of the Psalms. The late Dr. J. A. Alexander, of Princeton, was a man not to be despised. His book on the Psalms, as a version, is respectable, though some of us might think its exegesis rather dark. He did not understand the Jewish relations

of Christ; yet he was a scholar, and translates uprightly his text. But being a pious scholar only will never enable one to understand the scriptures. The one and only means of understanding is by the Holy Spirit, Who gives us God's mind there. If it be the church in the New Testament, we must see it in it. relation to the Head; if it be Israel in the Law or the Psalms, we must see them as they are related to their Messiah.

Now the late Dr. Alexander never saw the true distinction between Israel and the church, but being honest and conscientious, though he did not know what the passage meant, he translated it as it really stands, "In (or, By) Thy counsel Thou wilt guide me, and after glory Thou wilt take me." But what is the meaning of this? The last clause is obscure, he says; and no wonder: he had no notion of the special hopes of the ancient people of God, which are here presupposed.

The Christian, no doubt, is received now, and will be caught up at the coming of Christ to heavenly glory; but His dealings with Israel are quite different. He will come in glory to the destruction of their enemies, and bring them in deep penitence to Himself; and then they will be received as His people before the universe. This will only be "after glory." The glory will have shone first. Take Saul of Tarsus for instance, though he was a pattern not only of the Jew but for the Gentile. All will remember that he had a vision of the Lord in glory, and also after that, he was given acceptance before God.

When we see this, it helps us to understand how the children of Israel will be brought into their blessedness. There were to be "seven days" of suffering in grace, as we have them now under the type of the Unleavened

bread; and seven days of glory in the age to come. This will be the Feast of Tabernacles in its ordinary character for Israel on earth. How plain is the truth! Further, verse 39 adds, “Surely on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto Jehovah seven days.” It was when they had gathered in the produce of the land, when the harvest was past, and the vintage over. Why should a believer doubt its meaning? God’s judicial dealings on the quick will have taken this course. The harvest is that character of judgment where the Lord discriminates the good from the bad. The vintage is where He will trample down wicked religion unsparingly. It is the infliction of divine judgment, and, mark, it is on the living. The judgment of the dead is at the end of the kingdom, which is not spoken of here. This is the judgment of the quick at the beginning of the Lord’s reign. Of this men speak constantly in the creeds: do they really believe what they confess?

We get something further in verses 39, 40: “Ye shall keep a feast unto Jehovah seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath:” an earthly rest for a long while, a heavenly one for ever.

It is not only that there shall be a complete term of glory then on the earth as we are now going through a complete term of grace. In this one feature, we may see, the Feast of Tabernacles stands distinct from all the others; it has an eighth day. There has been no mention of this in the other feasts. The seven days, we said, were glory for the earth but there is the “eighth day” too. This opens heavenly and eternal glory! So it is not “days” now, but this one! day,” “the eighth day.” Therefore it

has a beginning, but it shall never have an end. If it be objected that for the Wave-sheaf there was “the morrow after the sabbath” (ver. 11), it only confirms the principle. For as that morrow beheld Christ risen, so the eighth day points to a new scene of resurrection glory above that of the “seven days.”

But this is not all. “ 40 And ye shall take on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palms, and boughs of leafy (or, bushy) trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before Jehovah your God seven days. 41 And ye shall keep it a feast to Jehovah seven days in the year; an everlasting statute throughout your generations; in the seventh month shall ye keep it. 42 In tabernacles shall ye dwell seven days, all born in Israel shall dwell in tabernacles; 43 that your generations may know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in tabernacles when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am Jehovah your God “(vers. 40-43). Indeed it was this dwelling in booths for seven days, not on the eighth, which gave this Feast its ordinary name. It was the Feast of Ingathering; but Israel dwelt thereon in booths. Yet the booths consisted, not of tents but of the fruit of goodly trees with all latitude, of branches of stately palms so characteristic then of the land, not only on its north-western border, but in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, even to the Dead Sea on the east, and generally. Boughs of leafy trees or brushwood, as myrtle, etc. were to be used, and willows of the brooks.

It was the solemn recognition in the days of glad fruition when they had gathered in the fruit of the land, that they had been, after deliverance from Egypt, sojourners so long in the dreary desert. Thankful joy it testified that

they once knew the wilderness who were now in the promised land. Then alas! was the provocation during the day of temptation in the wilderness where their fathers tempted by proving God instead of walking dependent and obedient and thankful, to the ruin of that generation. Now they are surely to keep the feast with rejoicing, but with the memorial of wilderness shame and sorrow to chasten yet enhance the joy. It was for Israel still on earth, for man not risen though in a day of glory, when joy needs such a remembrance, lest even joy alone might be a danger if not death.

But the eighth day is the link with the heavenly places and the higher glory of resurrection, not of Christ now but of those who are His reigning with Him. This of course is not set out, but an implied allusion. It was the last day, the great one, of the feast; and the Lord in John 7:37 stood and cried, saying, If any one thirst, let him come unto He and drink: he that believeth, as the scripture said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spoke He, says the Evangelist, of the Spirit which those believing on Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet [given], because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Thus the rejection of our Lord by the Jews postponed for them the blessing, and they therefore meanwhile have no part in the Passover and Pentecost, to speak only of great Feasts; and need the rich mercy which provides specifically for them in those of the seventh month, as we have seen. But in John vii. we also learn that for us who do believe during their eclipse, grace gives us characteristic blessing even according to that final Feast of Tabernacles which of course remains to be fulfilled for heavenly as well as earthly men. It is not that we are in

the glory yet, but Jesus is, and He has already sent the Spirit for the believer to receive Him, not only as the Spirit of grace to spring up in worship (as in John 4), but as the Spirit of glory (compare 1 Peter 4:14), and not to drink simply but to be as rivers of water flowing from his inward affections in testimony of Christ to perched and weary and wretched mankind. How this shows that all things are ours by the grace of Him to Whom we owe all we boast!

We have seen then in this chapter; — first, the purpose of God generally sketched, next, the work of the Lord Jesus for eternity, with the holy call it involves for all blessed by it, and the witness to Christ's resurrection for those risen with Him. But the application of that work has been in the main to the Gentiles now called in, or rather to the effacing of all distinction as in the church. In the "seventh" month ''Israel shall be awakened to confess their sins, when the day of glory dawns on earth: and not only this, but a glance at that which is heavenly and eternal on the eighth day."

" 44 And Moses declared to the children of Israel the set feasts of Jehovah." If these Feasts have been truly expounded, they carry no slender evidence of a genuine prophet. But what a witness are they not to Him Who is not only the Prophet greater than Moses, but the Lord God of the prophets, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!

May the Lord bless His own word, so that you may be simple and clear and wise in the truth unto salvation! And may we have our faith strengthened as we see how God has given a complete cycle of His ways in one of the most ancient books of the Bible. When the theological

professors of our day are misusing their position to give currency to the cavils of unbelief, which have lost much of their acceptance even in free-thinking Germany, it is time for men whose fathers valued revealed truth, assuredly for God's children, to wake up to these insidious efforts at undermining their faith under the pretentious claims of learning and science. The best of all answers to Satan is a deepening entrance by the Holy Spirit into the truth, and an enlarged sense of that divine wisdom and grace in the word, which is as much superior to Elohistic and Jehovistic theories, or such like vanities and speculations, as the Second man is above the first. "Sanctify them by Thy word: Thy word is truth."

1 The Authorised margin "up to" is not justified by Levitical usage in the LXX. which entirely conforms the textual rendering. Besides the verb is in the aorist, which expresses simply the fact and is transient not continuous which would require the imperfect. In every point of view the interpretation of Drs. John Brown, H. Bonar, and the like, is not only wrong but excluded by this scripture, as by others.

2 In the Revised Version the case is still worse; for the unlearned reader cannot see that it is a guess, as they often omit to mark their conjectural insertions in italics.

Sinai and Its Terrors

Hebrews 12:18-21

From the triumph at the Red Sea was a succession of divine dealings in nothing but grace to Israel, the Gentile at the end, bringing to Moses his wife and sons, and, after offerings and sacrifice, eating bread with Moses and Aaron and all the elders before God.

The words just read which describe its distinctive character with all vividness, were addressed to confessors of Christ. They had been Jews, and still were exceedingly attached to what they called, and what might reasonably seem to be, the covenant. All know that ancestral religion with any show of coming from God, must have no small fascination for the natural heart. Men assume that what God Himself introduced with the utmost solemnity must be the right thing for man to receive and retain at all cost. But this scripture is expressly far otherwise. God was here giving the plainest warning that although His sovereign grace had brought His people out of Egypt, and they had promised to keep His covenant as the condition of being His peculiar people, it could issue in nothing but failure and ruin. None could live by the commandment holy and just and good, because they were all sinners.

How could sinful man be saved by the law? It was not given to save sinners. It was meant to convince such as seriously tried to obey it, that none could stand on that ground before God. Life is of His grace to the believer. We are saved by grace through faith. He that breaks the law must surely die. Hence no matter what helps may later accompany the law, it is said in 2 Cor. 3 to be the

ministry of death and of condemnation. Its real aim is to overwhelm the guilty, that they might turn from self and law to the Saviour.

Accordingly when man fell in Eden, the divine resource was made known. The bruised Seed of the woman was to crush Satan's power. It was Christ, not only before the law, but long even before the promises to the fathers. It was the due time to reveal it when the first pair sinned and became outcasts from paradise.

Long after, Israel undertook to obey Jehovah's voice, and keep His covenant. "All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do" (Ex. 19:8). They trusted themselves; they forgot all the solemn witness of the past; they pleaded not the promises to their fathers, still less the everlasting gospel for a lost paradise. On the contrary they made promises to God which sinful man never keeps, and only pretends to in an outward form and with lip homage. There is no reality in it. A groundless hope may buoy up, along with a fearful looking for of judgment. It is terror that rests on men's consciences, and terror is not the way to God or His salvation.

That is what the Epistle to the Hebrews here portrays. The reference is to Ex. 19, 20, the unmistakeable evidence of what all Israel then felt, nay, of what Moses could not but share, and was inspired to state for all time to all that heed the word of God. Such was the inevitable character of God's law-giving at Sinai. It is in vain for men to forget the facts and to imagine a fond dream for religious pride out of what was spoken, seen, and heard at Sinai. God displayed His awful majesty there and then to Israel in a way that was never known in this world before or since. Therefore the Jews boasted

of such a beginning of their religion as unparalleled. Only their fathers stood round that Mount of God: but were they not there in abject fear and excessive trembling? Where was there shown the least real knowledge of God? where any true sense of their own state in His sight? What a contrast with him who said, “I have heard of thee by the bearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes” (Job 42:5, 6). How little they owned that they were guilty sinners, and that there could be no approach to God until their sins were judged and blotted out from them!

What the scene at Sinai presented was the certainty of God’s judgment of sin; of this the passage I have read is a simple, clear, and solemn declaration. Least of all ought Israel to forget that Jehovah is God armed against sin, a jealous God that visits the fathers’ iniquity on the children unto the third and fourth generation of those that hate Him, and shows mercy to thousands of them that love Him and keep His commandments. But how could the sinner appear before God arrayed with such terrors? How was he to get rid of his sins to stand before Him? Not a word to this effect appeared in the ten words God spoke that day. It was but little indeed that He did then say, but every word was beyond doubt tremendous and fatal to the guilty. It was meant to fill the heart of man with terror because of his sins. But it is the goodness of God that leads to repentance; it is faith in our Lord Jesus that gives assurance of salvation.

But alas! it is the sad fact and incurable malady of man’s heart as he is naturally, that he thinks, feels, and does everything wrong. The gospel he scouts because it is sovereign and divine righteousness. The law he perverts

to make out his own righteousness, though it only pronounces death and condemnation on him. His conscience trembles every now and then before the law of God; but he renews his sins ere long. For if there be nothing more but such a dread of God, after the lightnings and thunders pass man returns to his vomit or to wallowing in the mire; so it is that he perishes.

Hence, even in the early days, when the gospel of grace was first sent out by God, there was a constant tendency among both Jews and Gentiles that confessed Christ, to hanker after the law in one shape or another. So the apostle had to seek the recovery of the Galatian saints, and here was led by the Spirit to set forth to the Jews that professed Christ the true character of the law, and its entire difference from the gospel. It was not merely the unconverted who were in danger but those who had begun well. There is the same peril now.

How often where a man is entirely unexercised about his sins, he is occupied with the sins of others! Thank God, I am not “a swearer,” nor “a drunkard,” nor “a whore-monger,” nor “an usurer.” And because he can acquit himself of the more glaring transgressions of the law, whereof he sees others guilty, he flatters himself that he is in a position by no means bad. If he be also rigid about the Sabbath, paying his debts to the Levite! remembering what is due to the priest, and making an offering to the Temple of God, is he not a good and religious man? There are not a few like this now. The Lord puts that very case into the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax-gatherer. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself. Here was one thanking God that He was not as other men, extortioners, unclean, unjust, or even as “this taxgatherer.” Therefore he believed he was

righteous and despised others. But the Tax-gatherer, standing afar off would not lift so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote on his breast, saying, God be merciful to me, not merely a sinner, as one of the crowd, but the sinner, who has not a word to say for himself.

How fatal to turn the law, which God gave to prove how man fails, into a means of pretending to righteousness before Him! How blessed to own the truth as to ourselves, and yet to rest upon the mercy that provides a Saviour!

Then again, there is another danger. In returning to the law since Christ came and died and rose, it is to abandon the great reality of grace and truth to take up a mere shadow. At that time when the apostle wrote, confessing Jews still brought their sacrifices and offerings and such like ordinances of the law. God had forborne since Pentecost, but He would have these shadows to cease before He swept away temple, city and people from the land, which was really but Aceldama, Blood-field. And the apostle lets them know here that when God pronounced the law at Sinai He showed its death-bringing character. The lesson really inculcated at Sinai was that as a man in the flesh, that is in my natural state, there is nothing for me from the law but wrath. It is quite certain that I cannot live before God save in Him to whom God pointed as Saviour from the beginning. “It was for Him that all believers waited. They counted, not on themselves but on the Christ. Yet they accordingly offered sacrifices as a witness and they walked before God, as they worshipped Him, before that Moses was raised up to introduce the Levitical system with all its multiplicity of types and shadows. These were things

that they honoured as provisional and preparatory to the One whom they awaited.

But God also looked onward to His own Son becoming flesh, and replacing that system by His work on the cross. It was He who was to be incarnate that appeared to tell of grace in the judgment of Satan before Adam's expulsion from the garden of Eden. Directly man transgressed against God, He came there, and spoke to them of another that should take up the cause of man; of another that should be bruised, but should also and completely bruise the old serpent, the devil.

The Deliverer of man, the Seed of the woman, was to be therefore a person far above man, however truly He might become man through the woman, to do His work righteously and suitably to God's glory.

A believing man is rightly called to resist the devil when he tempts 1 but how can any man apart from Christ bruise the devil under his feet? Only a divine person could really effect that. Hence one is sure that He Who was spoken of when Adam and Eve fell in the garden was none other than the divine person Who deigned to come of woman, and will bruise Satan shortly under our feet.

Very touching it is to know that none other was He who was first Himself to be bruised. Whether He appeared as angel of Jehovah to Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, it was He that we own now as the Son of God before all that He wrought and suffered in the fulness of time. He became man because in Him alone were the elements of His person united that could adequately meet the exigencies of both God and man. He must be able adequately and perfectly to present man to God, as well as God to man.

Further, He must be man to sympathise with man, no less than to die for him. He must be absolutely without sin if He were to become a sacrifice for sin. He must be the propitiation or atonement for our sins if we are to be righteously forgiven. None of this could come to pass, save in the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross.

At Sinai not a ray of kindly light shone, not a token of grace for sinners was given, not a word to encourage approach to God: nothing but the most awe-inspiring menace of death, save for such as love Him and keep His commandments. How inexcusable that any should be so blind about himself and his sins as to take his stand on law before God! It was Cain-like insensibility. Let me help to make the truth plainer by referring you to the scene itself of which the apostle treats.

“The people stood afar off; and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness, where God was.” How different from God being in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and committing to us the word of reconciliation! So John 1:17 contrasts the two: “the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” At Sinai was heard the law; and by the law is the knowledge of sin. The saving grace of God is what teaches us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godlily in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The law is not of faith, and can only kill and condemn the sinner.

The law is associated with that which could be touched, and that burned with fire, and with blackness and gloom, and tempest. Every instrument of divine service

was visible and tangible. It essentially met the eye of man. The unconverted man could see and touch its objects, just as much as the believer. There was nothing there that was characteristic of faith. The Christian, on the contrary, walks by faith. We have to do with what is not seen and cannot be touched. Take the cross of Christ. Although there was evident enough the worst effect of man's evil in His pain and shame, the infinite work that was wrought thereon was between Him and God. This was hidden entirely from the eyes and ken of man. It was not the outside of the cross which any one could see that saved believers. It was the council of peace between both. Indeed we may notice that there was a time for Christ upon the cross when all was shrouded in supernatural darkness the very time when our sins were laid upon the head of Jesus. Who saw this within'? None but God. Sin is rebellion against Him, and atonement is entirely between God and Jesus His Son. It was for His glory, as well as for sinners that they by faith might be saved. For no other reason was it possible for God to bruise His own righteous Servant and Son. Why else should He forsake Him in whom His soul delighted? One word explains it: grace on His part; on man's-sin, that even in this the Son of Man should be glorified; and God in Him. It was sin that brought Him down from heaven; it was sin that led Him to the cross on earth. Then and there was our guilt by Jehovah laid upon the Lord Jesus, when He in love, and obedience, became a sacrifice for sin, even for our sins (Isa. 53).

This was all purposely kept from the eye of man; as it most fittingly was made matter of faith in God.

While the work so fully predicted in both O. and N.T., was being enacted, who on earth entered into its

wondrous import and bearing? Not a single disciple, not one even of the twelve apostles whom He had so often apprised that so it was to be.

Whether we consider God's doing in love, or man's misdoing in I hatred, we can apprehend in our measure that there should be that darkness of a supernatural kind. Throughout the land of Egypt darkness had been inflicted as a plague by Jehovah, while Israel had light in their dwellings. For three days it lasted, so that they saw not one another nor did any one rise from his place. At the cross of Christ it told a tale to the ear of faith still more profound. It was not an infliction upon wicked men. This darkness surrounded the Holy One of God made sin, and God forsaking, Him because of sin, our sins laid on Him.

He undertook that burden which none other could bear, yet more intolerable to Him than to any other; and God must judge the sin-bearer as sin deserves in His sight. And the certainty that so it was, that it was borne fully and as fully accepted by God is the ground of perfect peace with God.

Man had wrought ill guiltily, incessantly, audaciously for many hundreds of years, and the deplorable result now seen, especially in Israel, who became worse and worse until God destroyed them nationally and dispersed them over all the world. Since then they have never been able to establish themselves in their own country. Such is their state now, "abiding many days without a king and without a prince, and without a sacrifice."

Christianity is altogether different. There the Lord is saving sinners, and gathering saints to His name. He alone bore the burden of sin; and He alone is the Head

of the body. But not one word in the verse read treats of either; because Sinai is the theme, and not Christ's work of atonement or of gathering God's children in one. The darkness at Sinai was in view of His law and its war with transgression. At the cross it surrounded Jesus made sin, that sinners who believe might be brought to God without a trace of sin, washed in His blood. The law was so spoken as to strike terror into every heart. At the cross, Christ was doing the deepest, greatest and most loving work He ever did; to man utterly strange, the most wonderful even for God, the most profound for saints. Nothing more abhorrent to God than our sins; yet He that hated them absolutely laid them upon the head of His own Son that He might bear them away for His enemies, henceforth His family.

Christ must bear the burden, which, if He bore it not away righteously, must sink us everlastingly in hell. The perfect sacrifice on our behalf to God, He completely clears every one that believes in Him, from the judgment of God.

It is positively declared by our Lord (John 5:24), that he who believes has life eternal and does not come into judgment but is passed out of death into life. Such is the virtue of life in Him, as the apostle John witnesses; such the efficacy of His death, according to the apostle Paul. Christ bore the judgment at God's hand, that we who believe might be set free.

Nothing can be clearer than the astonishing work of divine grace in salvation. Christ bore that judgment alone, even those most concerned being wholly ignorant of such wondrous grace, the foundation of God's righteousness till He revealed it in the gospel. None

could intermeddle. No stranger could intermeddle with our joy; still less could any stranger intermeddle with the judgment of God and our sins. Hence it is that the gospel goes forth fully and freely to the greatest sinner upon the earth.

It was altogether different at Sinai. There they stood afar off at the foot of the mountain all aglow with fire, the very mediator, Moses, quaking with terror.

But when the Holy Spirit led them to apprehend the cross of Christ what a contrast! Where sin was atoned for the victim was consumed by fire. In such sacrifices, the blood was brought in and the body burnt without the camp. The one part attested His absolute fitness for God's presence and efficacy there; the rest attested His identification with our sins and was burnt by fire outside. Christ, perfectly holy, identified Himself with all our evil.

To bear our evil He came, and evil cannot be got rid of except by divine judgment, which the fire represented.

But here, the mountain, Sinai, on fire was to warn men of what must be their portion who, neglecting Christ, betake themselves to law and fail under it as they must.

Yes, blackness, gloom, tempest, preternatural trumpet, and God's voice, more terrible than all the fitting accessories of the law, threatening wrath and death to those that trust themselves instead of Jesus the Christ.

"The law worketh wrath," instead of saving from it as Christ does.

And the trumpet's sound was no earthly trumpet, its blast sounding louder and louder only added to the abject terror of their hearts.

Did God's voice at Sinai relieve the Israelite? Calm, distinct, unmistakeable, it pronounced what must be the knell of death for each guilty of slighting or dishonouring Him: for him who went after other gods or broke any commandments of Jehovah, this voice was more terrible than all the other signs and sights of that tremendous day.

Not one word of His glad tidings was then breathed with the law. This is the work, not of God: but of Christendom all over which mixes up the law and the gospel. I should be thankful to hear of a single denomination where it is not habitually practised. Nor is this mixture in the large buildings only, in the little ones too. But whether in little or in great, the issue is that man is mixed up with the divine work of the cross; and what Christ has finished is supplemented and smothered under works of law.

Here the law is wholly distinct from the gospel. At Sinai it was unrelieved terror, and God purposely did it that they might cry out for Messiah, the Saviour. They never thought of Christ. They cried out in fact for Moses as the mediator between them and God. But His mind was to give a far better mediator; but it was kept quite distinct from the law, its fears and its distance.

Therefore they entreated that they might never hear that voice again. What! never hear the voice of God! Yes, when He made known the law God's voice was far more awful than the unearthly trumpet, or the gloom or the thunder and lightning at mount Sinai.

Such was the ushering in of the Jews' religion. It was wholly devoid of mercy for the sinful; it threatened death on failure. It presented nothing of Christ; and only filled them with alarm and despair. God could use it to

crush self- righteousness and thus negatively drive to grace in His Son. The background and surroundings of Sinai had for their object to set aside all hope of life from the law. Righteousness in that way is a perfect impossibility for mortal man.

The law can only prove death to the sinner. For “The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.” It is Christ who is life, and gives life to the believer.

The law can but kill fallen man. Yea, here we are told of the proclamation at Sinai: if so much as a beast touch the mountain it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart. Yet, a beast having neither guilt nor conscience, is incapable of moral responsibility to God. Hence if a beast devours another beast none thinks of murder in the case. But God would mark at Sinai that the law overflowed with the threat of death all round, and that sinful man under it stood in the worst case of all: for who can deny that he is most guilty, and not a beast? Fallen man has a conscience which habitually bears witness against him and his sins.

Accordingly, at Sinai, God left no sort of doubt that there was no comfort, nor even hope, for man under the law. “As many as are of works of law are under curse” (Gal. 3:10). Such is the character and issue of the law of which the Jews boasted. Yet have confessors of Christ sought to mix it up with the gospel. And how very many all over Christendom to-day have been crying: “Have mercy on us and incline our hearts to keep this law.”

Used to this cry once, I have not, thank God, heard it for sixty years. Still it rises up continually, where the gospel is professed. But such a mixture is a grievous mistake. It is to perpetuate what this scripture before us and many

more were meant to avert. The law, says the apostle, is good if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man [which is not a lawful use of it] but for the lawless and disobedient. If you put yourself under the law, it can and must condemn and kill you; not because it is bad but because you are. The law is necessarily a killing power to the transgressor. The crucified Christ is the only Saviour of the lost. The law as such executes its office to the bitter end; but when it brings the sinner to the sense that he is a dead man before God, grace shows him how Christ suffered for sins that he might believe and be saved.

This mixing up of the law with the gospel is as pernicious as it is unscriptural. “For ye are not come” to Sinai, but to Zion, even had we been Jews. “By grace ye are saved through faith.” It is on a wholly opposed principle. No doubt there is another way of ruin; not by going back to rites and ordinances, but by giving up to sin and licentiousness. Compare Heb. 6:4-8, and Heb. 10:26-30.

The aim here was to point how, when law was given, God indicated the folly of expecting salvation through it. So terrible was the sight that even Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake.” Who can say that this is the effect of the gospel? Does God’s glad tidings produce dread, or take it away from the believer?

It gives life, pardon and peace. It assures of Christ’s love and of God’s love, which is more than even glory. The glory manifested will be the proof of the love that gave it; but love is the source of that gift and of a vast deal more.

Look at the Saviour and the sinful woman who came into the house of Simon the Pharisee. Weigh if you can, the love shown and vindicated in that uncongenial abode. Her sins were many, but she believed and loved; for love so gratuitous and divine drew out her love. And the Lord manifested it, delighted to make it known, not to the unbelieving Simon only, but to all present, and especially to her. He was not in the least degree ashamed of grace to the sinner. He knew, laid bare and refuted all that was passing in the Pharisee's heart; but He manifested God's love in His own. That love is shed abroad in the heart now; and so it will be in the presence of the Father and the Son.

May the Lord, therefore be pleased to deliver from all misuse of His word. For we have to do with the grace and truth which came through Jesus Christ. It is neither grace alone, nor yet truth alone; for either way would be the utmost danger. Grace alone tends to laxity and even licence; truth alone to a hardness and rigour, offensive to God and unbecoming to man. Grace and truth in all their fulness we know in our Lord Jesus; and thus alone were we won and blessed. Thus too we live, walk, serve and worship. Can there be a stronger contrast with the scene of Sinai?

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