THE

CHRISTIAN WITNESS:

CHIEFLY ON SUBJECTS

CONNECTED WITH THE

PRESENT STATE

OF

THE CHURCH.

VOL. II.

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OBEDIENCE.

I have found that one of the points on which the condition of the Church of God hangs very much at the present time, is whether obedience precedes blessing or blessing obedience. Many are in some degree, though perhaps by no means altogether, aware of the extent to which the principle, that blessing must precede obedience where the will of God is ascertained, has gone; or, how widely its influence is spreading. It is a strange point of connection between Newman Street and the subsisting systems. The directions, as far as they are apprehended in the minds of those concerned, which is the only way in which we are concerned in them, which have emanated from Mr. Irving or those speaking with him, have certainly varied; but they have all borne directly upon retaining those subject to them in the systems current as religion in the world, (though these are all asserted by them to be Babylon,) and upon the plea that they could take no step until they received the Spirit such as they possessed in Newman Street. This has frequently been the result of direct instructions in that place to persons who have gone there.

Another principle has been adopted by a large body of the religious clergy in Ireland, tending to the same point:—that without tradition no step can he taken, because obedience becomes uncertain, and therefore dangerous. The result is wonderfully similar, and seems to me to proceed from Satan; such uncertainty and difficulty of mind as leads a person to settle down in what is confessedly wrong, and what he knows to be such. This inevitably

dulling the conscience, leads to a state of mind grievous to the Spirit of God, and necessarily lowering the moral energy of the parties concerned; "for to him that hath more shall be given." The coalition between Irvingism and High Church principles in this respect, has an astonishingly wide influence; and often so when the persons concerned little suspect the source from which it flows, while it finds ample aliment in the natural feeling of timidity and unbelief, and assumes the justifiable principle of caution, and is never thought for a moment to be the result of man's disposition to acquiesce in evil, rather than act in trying cirumstances.

In those who decline acting from the want of the power of the Spirit, it assumes the form of greater humility than usual, and great dependance upon the Holy Ghost. On the other side, it appears like great steadiness of character, and an indisposition to acquiesce in the movements unguided by principle, which the easily led human mind is in so many ways making at the present moment. Thus certainly the fairest principles of conduct are brought to bear, though from such opposite, and but for this, mutually opposed sides, upon those who conscientiously do not acquiesce in the evil in which they find themselves placed. Nothing can be more opposed than the principles which lead to the conclusion on one side and on the other. In result only they agree—to stay where circumstances have placed them; which is just what the selfishness of unbelief will always do.

Now there is one thing only which can justly stand the power over the mind of such nominally good views as these, so apparently opposed to evil, and that is *obedience*. There is nothing so humble, nothing so steady as obedience; nothing which so marks the Spirit's presence, nothing so opposed to insubordination, nothing by which every ungodly voice must be so utterly silenced, as by obedience. I confess, when I see such very opposite principles leading to the same conclusion—principles so diametrically opposite in conflict with each other, as resting on the presence of the Spirit and tradition, I am led to think that the result is not the effect of the principles in either case, but of some entirely different motive; and that the only operation of the principles is to neutralize in either case, some other principle which would act in moving those who plead them; and consequently, by so neutralizing it, to leave

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them where they were, without respect to the right or wrong of the case; which is precisely the result in the present instance. And such, I believe, to be just the fact; but if God have any will in the matter, and this consequently terminates in *disobedience*, it becomes a very positive evil, most grievous to the Spirit of God, supposed to be, or waited for; and makes tradition discoverable or undiscoverable, to be such as renders void the word of God. It is reserved for these days, among Protestants, to make tradition a necessary supplement to the word of God; and it is a very great mistake to suppose that it was ever used in the early Churches in the way now proposed. It was there, whether wisely or unwisely, a positive tradition, and in confirmation of doctrines avowedly taught and declared.—A tradition that they had not yet or did not know to be the security of the Church, was an imbecility reserved surely for a state of hopeless decay. But the assertion that obedience is the great principle to go on, obedience to known truth, not plans of our own mind, but obedience to known truth as the portion of a single-eyed, humble, simple mind, and that this is the way of these additional blessings, which are matters of God's gift, obedience to the order of which is then the part of course of every spiritual mind, is of very great importance: but in all cases, and under all circumstances, gifts or no gifts, obedience is the path of a Christian—the path of duty and blessing.

I would first shew the essentiality of the principle, its deep essentiality; then, that it is the preliminary of blessing; and lastly, that it is the order of all special gift in Christ, the ἐφ' ω on which it all flows forth. The first establishes the principle; the last applies it. Obedience is the only rightful state of the creature, or God would cease to be supreme—would cease to be God. God may show the impotency of the creature, by turning all the wilful rebellions it may be guilty of to His own purpose in blessing, and they that are *adversaries* bound to it in His own power; but the only rightful position of the creature is obedience; upon this hangs all the order of the creation—on this hangs sin and righteousness. The definition of sin is lawlessness, doing one's own will. "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Let us see how distinctly this is brought out in Scripture in its broadest lines. The first Adam, and the second, the Lord from heaven,

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the great heads and types of ruin and blessing, are thus distinguished as the disobedient and the obedient ones.—"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners: by the obedience of One many were made righteous." The first Adam did his own will, and he perished by it. He was put under a test of obedience. This was the critical point of the first Adam's standing and blessing. "Thou shalt not eat,"—he did eat, and was ruined: death, the wages of sin came in, the consequence of man's act, that not being the will of God; death was the wages of sin, and sin was disobedience—insubjection to God. Here its character and result was determined,—the hinge of man's fate,—the now wide open door to every evil: but at which indeed mercy entered before man was excluded, that he might bear it with him in the desert, into which he was driven, justly driven without.

Precisely the opposite was found in the blessed and perfect Saviour. Would you know His character, His style, now that He is ushered in, in His own humble but holy and perfect announcement? "Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, (His everlasting character) to do thy will O God.—I am content to do it, yea thy law is within my heart." This was His constant character, His perfectness as man. So we read in the course of His life;—"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." This character was stamped on every circumstance; "He took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:" and as in life He did always such things as pleased His Father, for He sought not His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him, so there was no limit to its extent any more than to its perfectness; for loving His own to the end, He became obedient unto death, the death of the cross; for though willingly doing it, "this commandment had He received of His Father."

He had now ears dug for Him. (Ps. xl. 6.) The Lord God had opened them, and He was not rebellious, neither turned away back, but "gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair;" nor hid His face from all that obedience brought Him into, power or no power; for He was crucified in weakness, though He liveth by the power of God. His power was the powerful service of God. His weakness the patience of

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all His will. So it was—obedience was the principle on which He acted in temptation; "it is written," was His reply ever to the tempter's suggestion; and when the tempter would thereupon have guilefully alleged a promise, "It is written He shall give," &c., our Lord met him by the answer "it is written;" an answer shewing the principle of obedience as contrasted with the principle of assumption, of the assumption even of true privilege—a most important truth. But of this more hereafter. Perhaps I have said more than is needful on this; for the one sentence "Lo I come to do thy will O God" to the believer, stamps the character, and fills up the principle of the life of the Holy Jesus. He was the type of obedience. Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.

The essential contrast to this is in Antichrist; "the king shall do according to his will."—This is *his* characteristic, not regarding any, "he shall do according to his will and magnify himself."

Let us now trace other parts of Scripture. In Exodus the word of the Lord to Moses is, "Thus shalt thou say, ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on Eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself; now therefore if ye will *obey my voice indeed*," &c. And all the people answered together, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." I speak not here of their competency to fulfil their undertaking, but of the principle of association,—the only principle on which God could deal with man, or man walk with God.

So in the blessing of Abraham, in the 22nd of Genesis, the Lord closes with this—"Because thou hast obeyed my voice." And Jeremiah takes up the word of the Lord to Israel, by Moses, chap. vii. 22. "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, saying, obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you."

Such is the tenor of the covenant on which the existing comforts of the land were held as detailed in Deut. xxviii., after they had broken the former. Such is the principle of the restoration covenants of faith, when they had lost the fruits of the former, as given in

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Deut. xxx.; "shalt return and shalt obey His voice, according to all that I commanded thee this day."

So in the apostasy of Saul in 15th of 1st of Sam., we find the same hinge of judgment,—"Why didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord? behold to obey is better than sacrifice." Even as we find its principle and its perfection in our Lord's constant walk—it is the character of the believer's sanctification,—"sanctified unto obedience and the blood of sprinkling." (1 Pet. i. 2.) This is that to which the believer is sanctified; this the purpose, the object of his sanctification; so where the contrary state is spoken of in Ephes. ii. "Wherein in times past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of *disobedience*."

Nor does any thing ever affect this essential principle; nothing but sin can draw a man out of it; the doing our own will is always sin, always the acting of the old man not subject to God, or it would do His will not its own.—The nature which does not bring in God, but acts for itself. The object of obedience may be in question, but self-will is always wrong. Thus Peter, when charged before the High Priest's council with disobedience to their behests, does not plead a right to do his own will, a right to do what he pleased; he had no such right as towards God, it would have been the expression of self-will; he would not have been honouring God therein. His word was not I have a right to do what I like without reference to you, but "we ought to obey God rather than men." It would have been really disobedience to have obeyed them; God would have been disobeyed in the result: he would have acquiesced, yea taken a leading part in disobedience, as far as he was concerned.

Thus we find how the principle is preserved in all the trying circumstances of refusing subjection to human authority. It can be swerved from in no instance without breaking through the first and only principle of accepted relationship to God;—it is the only exercise, save praise, of life to God.

It appears to me that this principle is greatly lost sight of and abused by all religious parties. As to this they are divided into two great classes,—those who plead obedience, and those who plead liberty. Peter's answer, it seems to me, meets both. The

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dissenters, as a body, plead liberty—rights—the title to do, as regards men, what they please. The Churchmen claim obedience, and plead frequently the principle ; but it is still to men, and not to God. We ought to obey God is the christian's answer to both. We ought to *obey*, I say to the Dissenter who claims rights.—We ought to obey *God*, to the Churchman who pleads the principle of obedience in the defence of all the corruptions which rest merely on the authority of man and his ways—we ought to obey God *rather than man*. How perfect is Scripture in setting in order the ways of men, the narrow path which no other power detects, as revealing the principles of the human mind, and judging them. Self-will is never right. Obedience to man is often wrong—disobedience to God.

The next thing I would mark in connexion with this, is, that the commands of God, though the literal circumstances of blessing associated with them may be gone, never lose their power ; for they are always, unless as connected with these blessings in detail, moral in their character; exhibiting and expressive of God, on which relationship to Him is necessarily found. This is what the word in Deuteronomy, quoted by the Apostle, means. "It is not in heaven that thou shouldest say who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it, &c. But the word is very nigh unto thee in thy heart and in thy mouth, that thou mightest do all the words of this law." Now the Apostle calls this the righteousness of faith. (Rom. x. 6.) The force of which we shall see in a moment, if we examine the place where it occurs in Deuteronomy, and learn also the accuracy of scripture quotation ; and that this quotation in Romans, as every thing else in scripture, is the mind of the Spirit of God. The statement of Moses was not the covenant on which, in literal obedience, they held the land ; that would not have been the righteousness of faith. But the principle of *do*, and then the blessing. It was, *besides the covenant which was made with them at Horeb*, (xxix. 1.) and proceeds upon the ground of the total loss of the literal blessings, which were the result of literal obedience in the land.—"And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind, among all the nations whither the Lord thy

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God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey," &c. That is, after the covenant of literal obedience had been so broken, that they had lost the fruits of it in the possession of the land, and were driven out; at once the evidence that it was broken, and constituting the impossibility, in that exclusion from the land, of such literal obedience; thereon the Lord says, " For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven," &c., but it was nigh them; that which faith recognized in its power and principles; although, in exclusion from the land, its literal observance was impracticable. Here the Apostle took up the Jews and planted them on the principle of the obedience or righteousness of faith, (to them still " Lo-ammi,") that is, the confession of Messiah, at any time the great hope and comfort of their law to them, but specially while they were thus in bondage and sorrow. No other but a basis of faith could be available to them. This was its strength and surest object; while the obedience of faith for His name was withal spread to the nations also. The obedience of faith, whatever the state of, however apostate the Church, is still the principle of all righteous individual conversation. It is not the exactitude of literal observance which is here imposed—that may be impossible. It was so with the Jews, when there was the highest exemplification of faithful obedience, as in Daniel, for example; neither is the oldness of the letter the character of the Christian dispensation; that is not the obedience of faith. But the obedience of faith, in the newness of the Spirit is always open, and finds its path according to the spirituality, and therefore spiritual discernment of the people seeking it; and upon this God rests it. Exact conformity to His mind may be, and surely was accompanied by direct and immediate witness of blessing, such as we have not now, and could not have, because it would be the recognition of inconsistency, which God could not sanction, whatever be His individual prerogative of mercy. It was God's testimony of sanction to that which was His moral witness in the world. It is precisely in these circumstances that the obedience of faith comes in on which the blessing comes, as may be seen in Deut. xxx; not the alliteration of literal ordinance, but the power of moral consistency, according to the expressed mind of God.

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Nothing can be more important than the position which the book of Deuteronomy holds in this respect, nor than the principle which it affodrs. The privileges attached to the dispensation were gone; obedience in the literal sense, was impossible: the Ark was gone; the Urim and Thummim was gone. The Temple, where literal services could be accomplished, was desolate and burned with fire, where their prescriptive services alone could be performed; and they were captives moving to and fro. What then could be done? The word was nigh them, in their heart and in their mouth, that they might do it. Here was the principle of God's accepting favour: here is the principle on which alone, in darkness, we can walk acceptably with God. Compare the 50th and 51st chapters of Isaiah, where we have the application of this—the progressive triple link of obedience; and then, "Awake, put on thy strength O arm of the Lord."

On the other hand, the notion of tradition neither recognizes nor amends this state of things; it does not recognize it, for it assumes the literal state of things precisely, but does not fulfil it. It does not acknowledge the evil and fallen state of the Church. It assumes the continuance of that literal exactitude of services: and that these being present, *there* is the security of the Church. It acknowledges not that it has lost its glory in the display of present power to the world; it says give me my ordinances and all is well; not seeing that it has not been deprived of power, because of its moral departure from its constitution with God. It may have been God's wisdom so to order this dispensation, I speak merely of the fact. Neither does tradition amend it, it puts the Church wholly on the wrong ground. The Spirit of obedience, the righteousness of faith, is that which we need, if indeed fallen. Though we had the most certain information of traditional forms of worship or ordinance, it would not make the Church of the living God. It is not the sign, nor suited to the humiliation of the Church in its fallen and low condition. The perpetuity of ordinances is not its position in Babylon, but the Spirit of humbled obedience—the word nigh it; the present spirit of obedience to the word nigh them is that which marks the Spirit of faith, and acknowledgment of God not making haste. If we repent, we may, according to the word to Ezekiel, be shewn more. To mock the fallen Church with tradition is but a bitter and death bearing substitute for the living power of the divine presence, or the obedience of

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faith, the only sure ground on which to stand if we have fallen from the manifested glory of it.

But to trace the other parts of the subject.—

To show that it is the preliminary of blessing, few words, after what has been said, will be needed. If any man will do His will, says our Lord, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. Now this is precisely the obedience of faith; and shows that moral preparation for blessing given, is conversion of will into the spirit of obedience, εἴ τις θέλει. It is not the literal fact of outward act, but the Spirit of mind, (which will be therefore necessarily shown in outward acts when that will is set before him.) The next point is to *do* my *will;* then he shall know the gift of knowledge founded on the Spirit of obedience; for what is the avail to confer gift on the disobedient, unless God should provide for His own dishonour?

I would refer also, without dwelling on them, to Luke vi. 4—9., Matt. iii. 15. John xiii. 16, 17., and xii. 26. The same truth is very distinctly taught us in John xiv. 21—23, where love to Jesus is thus definitely marked, and blessing marked as consequent upon it.—"He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him." Nothing can be more distinct, nothing more distinct than the sovereignty of grace to the sinner, through the obedience of Christ; the sureness of blessing to the saint in the order of obedience to the Word. The chastenings of unchanging love, I speak not of here. But the doctrine is very express in the Word, as to the order of all special gift, that it is adherence to the obedience of Christ, that it hangs upon, and finds its scope and exercise in obedience. There may be an extraordinary act of everlasting sovereignty, as Balaam and Caiphas; but this is not ground that the Church of God can go upon; these are not given to the Church as examples, unless they would associate themselves with apostasy as God's order. God may set light to His Church upon the most dangerous rock on the shores of destruction, there may be beacons all around them, but no attractive guide to the place where they stand, though we may bless the hand that set them there, a warning for none to approach, though a guide to all that pass. Unhappy people, the witness of the ruin that rolls around themselves.

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One would have thought that it had been amply enough to have seen the broad and essential principle on which the whole order of Christian truth is founded, to have determined the Christian mind as to its righteousness and judgment: one would have thought that its conclusion would have been intuitive, and the fruit of the presence and leading of the Spirit shown at once in the recognition of obedience as the path of the saint: that path which, as a saint led of the Spirit, is the only one in which the Spirit can lead. But the enemy of our souls is not met by the simplicity of truth because of the want of simplicity of our minds; according as they are not spiritual, and in any sort affect any thing not the object of, to which they are not led by, the Spirit; therein the simplicity of truth fails to keep them, and the power of the enemy can avail itself of its subtlety against them. If there be any measure of positive, though mixed spirituality, apparent rejection of the Word would not be received: but Satan does not so proceed; he does not therefore propose disobedience, but modifies obedience, proposes preliminaries to it, or substitutes something instead.

Nor does Satan deceive the saints or those under the form of saints, with an open and simple lie; they are not the subjects of that;—he has not ordinarily done so. If Satan said ye shall be as Gods, (*Elohim*,) One, far above all created beings; repeated, "The man is become one of us, knowing good and evil." But oh! what a store of accompanying evils and ruin come in upon the act of disobedience founded on this devil-used truth. Using it out of place, suppressing what went along with it, when man acted on it, was the foundation of the ruin that came upon the world. We must then meet Satan, not only by the simplicity of truth, which is the happiest way, which is happiness; but when our weakness and inconsistency open the way to his guile, by the wisdom of the word which applies to the case; which the unbounded and illimitable goodness of our God has provided for the weakness and necessities of His children; knowing the subtleties of their enemy, and providing for them who are assailable by reason of that weakness. Thus the Lord, far, most far from inconsistency or evil, but assailed by that which would act upon ours, met, by the testimony of the Word, the subtlety of the enemy of our souls. What subtlety! an unconditional promise; a promise to Him, alleged to be His as Son of God, by virtue of His privilege.—"If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down hence, *for it is written.*"

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Oh high drawn wit, a refinement of evil! Was it not true, and was not Satan a liar, and could it be Satan to produce a true promise of God, would not God be true to it? If thou be the Son of God, act faith upon this promise; claim its effect, shew the power and glory which belongs to the dispensation. And how bright the glory, how fair the witness, how singular and suitable the testimony to what he was; what strength imparted in his service, what foundation to claim the credence to the mission which presented him in this very character. Why not do it, what reason could be alleged, must they not be the cavils of unbelief, were the promises not true to the Son of God, would God prove Himself a liar? It was the characteristic honour and place of Messiah, the ministering angels of the dispensation were to approve their Head in it; what could be more suitable or approved? But it was Satan's proposal—the Lord's total refusal. If a Son, He had yet made Himself a servant. There was no command on which to act; had there been, ten thousand temples would not have stopped His course, be they ever so goodly, ever so high, adorned with ever such goodly stones or gifts.

It is remarkable too, in connection with what we have said as to Deuteronomy, that all our Lord's answers were taken from them. The word "Lo-ammi" had never been erased from the badge of the Jewish people, since the day of their captivity; they bore it still upon their forehead: but the Lord took the part of scripture precisely applicable in their present estate. He took the phylacteries of God therein afforded, and bound them round *His* forehead; and Satan could not touch Him then. And here was another most important principle connected with this subject. The promises of God were true, and the gifts and calling of God without repentance; (and this passage refers directly hereto to these very Jews,) but they did not apply to their then present state. Satan would have used them so; but the path of obedience was to understand the mind of God: and the Lord applied in their acknowledged apostasy that which God had applied to that state of things.

The Jews applied the promises to themselves, without the recognition of their fallen estate; and herein showed that they had not the Spirit of God; and by their application of these promises of God, came under the power of Satan, and were led of him. The Lord declined them, and rejected and baffled Satan. He took and kept

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the path of simple obedience: He rejected tradition, He rejected the promises: aye, He rejected the promises used not in the path of obedience, and the understanding of the Divine Word. The first evidence the first point of the teaching of the Divine Spirit, of the wisdom of God in Christ, who was the Wisdom, is the apostate state itself—where the Church is fallen. Here is the key, the at once solution of all the rest; where this is, it is and must be the first instruction of the Spirit to us in our Church-acting capacity, and all our conduct flows from it; and God has expressly provided the obedience of faith for such a time, never, never deserting His own wherever the apostasy may be; for He cannot, and does not turn away, nor is His faith made of none effect; and in the time of all these difficulties, the Scriptures are able to to make us *wise* unto salvation, (through faith which is in Christ Jesus,) and are profitable, &c.; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished to *every* good work. Oh what a blessed word; what a blight upon the holders of tradition as the pretenders to any light which should guide them further than the perfectness of the man of God;—the strength, the comfort,-the wisdom of the divine word. May we be occupied with His commandments.

Let us turn to the third part of the subject,—that obedience is the order of special gift. We have here direct and topical instruction of Scripture on the subject, in the 15th chap. of John's gospel. Of the principle of it, we have an illustrious instance in Sampson and his history. There was one separated to God, sanctified for the Lord, and therefore put into the order of defined obedience; his hair was not to be cut. While the commandment and precept was observed, his strength was with him. There might have seemed little connection between long or uncut hair, and all overcoming strength; but God was in it: and an obeyed honoured God is a God of strength. It was God's strength, and given to one so definitely recognizing Him; it was a gift hanging as to its retention on obedience, consistency with the undertaken vow of separatedness to God. This secret betrayed to the world, the corrupting influence which had wound round the deceived Nazarite, his locks were cut by one nominally the friend, and associate of the God devoted man; in truth, the sure ally of the Philistines, and suited instrument of Satan's power. Once shorn of his strength, and in the Philistines' hands, his eyes are put out; and if in any sort he regains his strength,

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it is blindly to destroy himself with his enemies. That which I insist on here however, is the sign of separation to obedience, being the order and hinge of the possession of the given strength, the presence or absence of the one depending upon the presence or absence of the other, however unconscious the unhappy victim was of the strength of others thereupon against him: a sorrowful yet instructive history to our weak and wayward will.

But I have referred to the 15th of John as direct instruction upon the subject, it is most exact as to it. The Lord had stated the truth as to personal blessing, the special gift of His manifested presence, as contrasted with the world in the 14th chap. "He that hath my commandments," (how different from a tradition we have not got)* "and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." Here the broad principle of general blessing is *laid down, and we may observe what is most important in it*—"*he* that hath my commandments."

Let us turn to chap. xv. 4. "Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me." This is practical abiding, or it could not be a command; abiding in Christ as the True Vine, not in anything else, for the Vine of the Earth, its grapes shall be cast into the winepress of wrath. Again, ver. 7. "If ye abide in me, *and my words abide in you,* ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you;" and in the 10th, "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love:" that love from which all the gift and blessing flow, "even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love." Would the Church presumptuously assume a higher prerogative of the sureness of the Father's love than the Lord Himself, who says as to the order of its continuance, "As I have kept my

* The Lord's commandments are always moral, and not of ordinance, with the exception of those two ordinances which separate the Church from the world. Ordinances are always separation; if I have any prescribed act, that act distinguishes me, and connects me with all those who have it as a body contrasted with those who have not such prescribed form; hence all peculiar ordinances minister to separation among Christians, those that are God's, to separation of them from the world corporately. I read, "we have no such custom," where evil was sought to be introduced, never of any circumstance, *we* have such an ordinance. I do not think the Apostles themselves had the power to ordain any thing, but as morally conducive to the good of the Church. "So ordain I in all the Churches," was a common order profitable for the glory of God.

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Father's commandments, and abide in His love?" Can any thing be more definite and clear that the ground of the assumption of blessing, the continuance of gift or blessing, is continuance in the words of Christ, of His words in the Church? The assertion is not more clear than the ground of it is most plain and intelligible,—the Holy Commandment. God's power, His glory, would otherwise serve as the sanction of unrighteousness. So in the 14th ver. stating the ground on which the communications of His mind, special revelations would rest, He says, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Nothing can be more definite, nothing more certain than its thrice repeated accuracy of assertion.

The order of God to Christians, is, not obedience upon blessing, but blessing on obedience; not to wait for blessing in order to obey, but to act on the command; and the blessing follows. And *this is faith;* there would be no faith if the blessing came first. Even Christ obeyed before He had the blessing, speaking of Him as the self humbled man. So we are justified, and in our obedience are the consequent blessings; to Him that *hath* shall more be given. It is the business of spirituality to ascertain His will, to be in our measure of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" If it be said yes, but the Church had to wait for the presence of the Spirit, before it could do any thing; I answer, True,—before, *properly speaking, it was a Church;* but when it had received it, all that was so dictated, became the subject matter of the obedience of all who were under the influence of the Spirit thenceforward; and it was denying the Spirit, to say, we must wait for the Spirit, to obey what the Spirit has taught. It was mocking the Spirit; the Spirit of God had revealed it, and spirituality of mind would discern; the holy purport of the thing would surely do so, and act on it according to the power given, waiting for all other gift. Such is the necessary consequence of spirituality, and any thing else is only denying the Spirit, not waiting for it. He that is spiritual, says the Apostle, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord; and if so what then? *they are to be obeyed* as the occasion and skill of obedience arises. Used in obedience, the gifts certainly were to be received in it also; for we are sanctified unto obedience. The Church is sanctified unto obedience; becomes, by conversion, obedient; that is

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the thing done with it in time, the man is turned to obey God instead of doing his own will: "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" and it receives blessing, it walks in obedience—the obedience of love; and it continues to receive a blessing, disobeys and receives judgment, only for the long suffering waiting upon its rebelliousness.

On the whole, the Scripture is plain as the principle is uniform; that obedience is the way of blessing, and that we are not to wait for power to obey a command, but to obey it that we may find power. The Lord did not restore the hand that He might stretch it out and shew it, but ordered the man to stretch it out, that it might be restored; and this is true in all possible cases. *The Lord is* obedient; therefore He is exalted to the place of power, to be giver of gifts, He took upon Him the form of a servant, and became obedient, and that even to death: wherefore also God hath highly exalted Him. Now while the redemption of the Church is herein complete, for by one man's obedience, many shall be made righteous; in the work *in* the Church, obedience always goes before the *manifestation* of blessing. Thus Saul struck to the ground, says, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and the Lord answered, go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee what thou oughtest to do;" he went, and received comfort, and strength, and blessing, through the means of Ananias, there sent to him; he acted in obedience in the first instance, So the poor blind man, in the days of the Lord being in the flesh, a pattern and type of the whole case.—"Go wash in the pool of Siloam, and he went and washed, and came seeing;" and having been faithful to this, was able to teach his teachers, because he had obeyed the Word; and being cast out for it: the Lord hearing this to be the case, finds him, and reveals Himself to him. Is it then that we act without the obedience of faith? We are so led: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." "Go wash seven times in Jordan," is an humbling thing, instead of having the Prophet's hand struck over the Leper; but going and washing, proved that he believed the testimony of God—the Spirit of God to be in the Prophet; it owned the Spirit when it was in the obedience of faith, and the blessing came. So in the Word we own the pirit of God, the sure Spirit of God in the word, and act upon it; which shews that we own the Spirit of God, and that He is able to bless, and the blessing comes from that Spirit vindicating His truth. Whatever blessing is incon-

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sistent with obedience, is not really a blessing in result, though it should have the form of an answer to claim on the faithfulness of God ; as we see in the quails in the wilderness. Our whole inquiry must just be what is the will of God ? The blessing of the Spirit goes with it, for that is the testimony of the Spirit, and taking it as the way of the blessing, is honouring the Spirit. Therefore the very acknowledging the Lord, is made a matter of obedience. It is the command of God to acknowledge His Son, to honour Him as we honour the Father. This is the work of God, that we believe on Him whom He hath sent. Yea, the Lord, while He shewed that He loved the Father, yet in His yielding Himself to death, declares, "this commandment have I received of my Father," and the Gospel is sent "for the obedience ; of faith of all nations for His name." The operation of the Spirit is to make us obey : there is no owning of the Spirit but in obedience ; and obedience is the evidence that we do acknowledge the Spirit, that we are led of it—that which God will own, whether the world own us or not. And I suppose that the highest progress of Spiritual Life is not energy, but the enlarged discovery that all is within the sphere of obedience, and that all our efforts are so far profitable as they are within obedience—God's prescribed order ; and all without to be the energy of our own will and evil. Does the Spirit of evil or our own will lead us in obedience ? Clearly not ! We have only then to plead the Word, and we necessarily plead the operation of the Spirit of God in us ; its energy is but to enable us, and to reduce others to the same thing. Our having the commandment is the sign of an obedient heart taught of God ; the communicated apprehension of the Divine mind as in the Word, spiritual communion with God giving that discernment ; our keeping them, of a patient will under Him to follow on as led and established by Him ; and in spite of, and overcoming the enemy : God working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. To lean upon tradition is to prove that *we have not His commandments ;* to wait, as men speak, for His Spirit, is to prove that we are not inclined to keep them ; both concurring to show that we do not really love Him : and the latter, the merest though most subtle sophistry, and making us deny obedience to the Word of the Spirit, in order that we may obtain His presence ; a way as strange in its proposal, as it is contrary to the Word of God ; as we have seen in John xv : denying that we have it, whereby

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alone we can have it or obey it, whereby we have it more abundantly, a hiding of the talent in the napkin, as though God were an austere God. Our whole dependance then is on the Spirit of God, for we have no strength in ourselves; the object of our desires and prayers, the great and continual object, all hangs on His presence: for by it alone we recognize ever what the Father and the Son are to us in the blessed counsels of His will,—we recognize it as a present thing. The Spirit is the immediate agent in all divinely led human conduct, as indeed in all operation on Creation. But the measure of the Spirit is known by the obedience of faith, the understanding obedience of faith to that which that Spirit has laid before us in the Word of Truth—the true Spirit of God. Whatever its power we shall ever seek its increase as to its exercise under the Divine will. It will ever lead us on further and further into the path of obedience, and will unfailingly sanction all our previous footsteps in this way; for indeed, howsoever little known, itself has led us in them.

JERUSALEM.

"*Mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.*"—2 Chron. vii. 16.

"As truly as I live, saith the Lord, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." (Num. xiv. 21.) Many thousand years have passed away since this solemn promise was made, and it still remains *unfulfilled.* It is still, to use the language of the Apostle, "NIGHT." Darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the people; and evil spirits continue to rule the darkness of this present age. (Eph. vi. 12.)

But the Lord has not forgotten His promise. He has silently carried on the thread of His counsels through the long and dreary period; and it is most interesting and important for us to trace as far as we may be enabled, the operation of His hand; and to see in the light of His Word, the various positions in which man will stand before Him, until "that day when He will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see His glory." (Isaiah lxvi. 18.)

And there is one thing which makes this inquiry very easy, which is this,—the connection of all His dispensations with Jerusalem. Jerusalem is "THE place which He hath chosen to put His name there." It is "THE city of the Great King;" and therefore the history of the world, *as God's world*, becomes in other words, the history of Jerusalem.

Very soon after the flood all flesh began again to corrupt themselves; and in order that some blessing might remain in the earth, God *separated* unto Himself the family of Abraham; and from that moment to the present, SEPARATION has been the one only channel through which blessing has been received from Him. Jerusalem was chosen to show forth the blessedness of being separate unto the Lord—"trusting only in Him." And while she continued to value her distinctive privilege, she continued to be "the virgin of Israel;" she was able to laugh her enemies to scorn.

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No Gentile empire was allowed to rise inte pre-eminence,* but all were kept, as it were, in check, until it had been fully proved whether or not Jerusalem was worthy to bear the glory.

It is not intended here to trace the moral reasons of her unfitness. The Jews in their self-ignorance had voluntarily put themselves off the ground of "promise," on which Abraham had stood; and at Sinai had voluntarily accepted other terms, which made the blessing to depend on *their* faithfulness to God, instead of God's faithfulness and love to them. And here was the fountain of the future evil.

But we will not pursue this subject, for we are seeking now into the facts of their history. The glory of the reign of Solomon faded quickly away: they went on from evil to evil, until at last they *professedly* made the kings of Assyria their trust: and therefore, as being no longer "separate unto the Lord," were rejected as unfit for the glory which He could not give to those who sought to vanity for strength.

Until this time, universal dominion had been kept in reserve for them. "The Lord was among them." (Num. xxiii.) Their religious and their civil system were alike sanctioned by Him. Their Priesthood was the one Priesthood which He owned as His, and their kings were rightly named the Lord's anointed. For a short season there was *one* natural system upon earth accredited by Him.

But now it was so no longer. The first great crisis in the history of Jerusalem was come, when universal dominion which had hitherto been kept in reserve, was taken from Jerusalem and given to the Gentiles, who, in the person of Nebuchadnezzar, were now first allowed to rise into undisputed sovereignty; and hence the

* It is a remarkable fact that there is no authentic Gentile history previous to the time when the Gentile empires began to be raised up as the scourges of Jerusalem, i.e., about the year 778 B.C. In this century the Assyrian power began to be consolidated under Pul; the nucleus of the Persian empire was formed by the revolt of the Medes; the Grecian æra was introduced by the establishment of the Olympiads; and the city of Rome was founded. And not only so, the migrations of the Cimmerian and Scythian nations, on which all the arrangements of modern Europe are founded, commenced in this century; affording a fresh comment on the truth of what is written:—"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is His people: Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." (Deut. xxxii.)

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importance of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. It commences, what is called by our Lord, "The times of the Gentiles," which are being continued still, and will only terminate when Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden down any more.

But let us attend to the great and practically important fact which marked the transfer of authority to the Gentiles; a fact which the Gentiles have hidden even from themselves. The time of the transfer was the time at which God withdrew the presence of His glory from the earth;* for Ezekiel beheld it depart, and it has ever since been hidden in the heavens. (See "Vision of the glory of God," No. 3.) The authority was transferred, but the name of God was not transferred together with it. And this important truth is strikingly brought before us in the repentant words of Israel, (Isa. lxiii. 17.) "Return O Lord for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance. The people of thy holiness have had possession but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary; we are thine: *thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name.*"

From the hour of Jerusalem's rejection, and Nebuchadnezzar's rise, He has never recognised as before, any natural system as His own, nor given to Gentile kings the name of the Lord's anointed.† On the contrary, He expressly declares that He has withdrawn the manifested exercise of His power; His words are these, and they apply to the whole period of the Gentile dominance: "I will go and retire into my place, till Israel acknowledge their offence." (Hosea v. 15.) And again, "I will take my rest, and consider in my dwelling-place." (Is. xviii. 4.) And so it will be till the end of the "Times of the Gentiles," and then the Lord is said to "Awake as one out of sleep," (Ps. lxxviii. 65.) and to "*Come out of His place*, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." (Is. xxvi. 21.)

These things are written as with a sunbeam. It was not to be

* The sure rise of the Gentile power was made known to Daniel by the vision of the Image, at the period when Jerusalem was first captured. The glory did not depart until some years afterward. On the part of God it was a period of long-suffering,—on the part of Jerusalem, of increased rebellion.

† It is fully admitted that the Gentile "powers are ordained of God." If we were living in China or in Turkey, we should be bound to render implicit subjection to the respective heads of those empires, and to regard them as powers ordained of God; though no one I suppose, would say that the Turkish Sultan was the Lord's anointed; yet the kings of France and England have no better claim to that title, for Christianity never set the Gentiles into the possession of earthly power.

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expected that the Gentiles at large would recognize a fact so humbling and so full of warning. It was far more consistent with their pride to contend, as they have deliberately done in a matter of unspeakable importance, that because Solomon in virtue of his kingly office, was authorized to degrade Abiathar from the priesthood, and to require implicit subjection from the Priests and Levites, that therefore Kings and Queens have a similar authority now in the arrangements of the Church of God. (Burnet on the 37th article of the Church of England, p. 484.) Gentile believers as well as others, have systematically erred in this, and have spoken, and continue to speak of the Gentile power, as if like the Jewish, accredited and administered by God. And consequently they neither recognize what the earth has lost in the departure of the glory, nor the sin which caused its removal, nor search into what is written respecting its return.

Indeed there is nothing perhaps which more strikingly shows how far our minds are warped from that right application of things into which the Spirit would lead, than the difference between *our* feeling respecting the desertion of Jerusalem, and the feelings of those, who, like Daniel were taught to apprehend these things aright; he saw in them a temporary frustration of every hope that he was cherishing; "As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me." (Dan. vii.) "And I Daniel fainted and was sick certain days." (Dan. viii.) "In those days, I Daniel, was mourning three full weeks; I ate no pleasant bread." (Dan. x.)*

* The ascension glory was as yet unrevealed to the faith of God's people. If Daniel had known the glory of the saints in the heavenly places, which will be distinct from that of Jerusalem on earth, though inseparately connected, he would have found increased reason to sorrow for the absence of that link in the chain of blessing in which Jezreel, the earth, the heavenlies, and the heavens are to be bound together. (Hosea ii.) It seems to me that the full understanding of the 16th of Leviticus, depends on seeing this connection between the heavenlies and the earth—the holy of holies and the holy place, with the vail rent between them, representing the future connection of the heaven and the heavenlies, where the saints will be. In Leviticus they are, except in the 33rd verse, both comprehended under one name, viz. the holy place into which the high Priest has entered *alone*, in order to hallow it. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, *until he come out*, and have made an atonement for himself and for his household, (i.e. the Church as Priests with him,) and for all the congregation of Israel; as soon as he comes out he hallows the altar of burnt-sacrifice which was outside the holy place, and finally turns away ungodliness from Jacob, by confessing the sins of the congregation over the Scape-goat.

It appears to me that Lev. xvi. 33. enumerates,—

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But the chastisements of the Lord are mingled with mercy, for the sake of those who fear His name; and therefore the time when the desolations of Jerusalem commenced, and when the "Times of the Gentiles" were brought in, was the period which He chose for revealing afresh the counsels of His love. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel were raised up at this period. The first testified of the moral evil, and of the moral glory which should hereafter be; the second of the departure and return of the *outward* glory; whilst Daniel was enabled to reveal the character and number of the Gentile empires which were successively to arise, and to detail their history *so far as it was connected with Jerusalem.**

1.—The Holy of holies, which answers to the Heaven of Heavens in the Millennial glory, where God dwelleth.

2.—The Holy place, or the heavenlies where the altar of incense, candlestick, and shew-bread were placed, and where the Church of the first-born will minister. These places are now being hallowed by the High Priest even Jesus, who remaineth "alone." "the first fruits of them that sleep," until He cometh out into the court of the tabernacle to hallow the altar which was in the open air at the door of the Holy place. As the two Holy places already mentioned are types of the place of Christ's Heavenly Ministry, (Heb. ix.) so the court of the tabernacle, where the sacrifices of blood were offered, was the place of His earthly service.—The place will be hallowed as the place of earthly service for the sons of Levi, when he shall purify them that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old." The altar of burnt sacrifice, the earthly priesthood, and the congregation of Israel, all of which are mentioned in this verse of Leviticus, will then be hallowed for ever.

* That is with the Jews *existing nationally* in Jerusalem.—He gives a consecutive history of the actings of the Gentiles towards them, till Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus; then there is a break in every vision, and the prophecy will not connect itself again with the course of events, till the Jews return in *unbelief*, and re-assume a national existence in Jerusalem; and this strikingly shows how entirely the earthly dispensations of God revolve around Jerusalem as their centre.

There are two principles which appear to me, to make this book very easy to be understood in its outline.—

I.—In giving a detailed history of the "Times of the Gentiles" in their connexion with Jerusalem; *it passes over in silence the whole period during which Jerusalem had ceased to exist nationally.*

II.—*Each vision amplifies the preceding.*

The parts which *yet remain to be fulfilled* in each vision appear to be these:

In chap. ii. the ten-fold division of the Roman earth, as denoted by the ten toes.

In chap. iv. the cutting down, and subsequent judgment on the power of the Gentiles, as represented by Nebuchadnezzar's chastisement, and its final restitution to the favour of God.

In chap. vii. the ten-fold division of the Roman earth, (from the Euphrates to Scotland) the rise and blasphemies of Antichrist, and the consequent judgments.

In chap. viii. the origin of Antichrist, and the development of his power in Jerusalem.

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The moral character of the power of the Gentiles, as estimated by God, is taught us in the vision of the Tree. It represented Nebuchadnezzar, who, as being the head of the Gentile Image, is representative of the Gentile power throughout the whole period of their dominance. And we learn principally two things:—

I.—That the Gentile glory, though great and glorious in the eyes of men, is "watched against" by God.

II.—That in the latter period of its existence it will exalt itself against Him, and be cut down with judgment.

But first the glory of this power was to be possessed by four successive empires; of which the Assyrian or Babylonish (for Babylon had now become the head of the Assyrian empire) was the first. It lasted only 70 years; and the Persian and Grecian, the former of 206, the latter of 301 years' duration, succeeded: and when the last remnant of Alexander's broken empire was merged in the Roman by the conquest of Cleopatra, the fourth empire was manifested under Augustus Cæsar.

And here was the second crisis in the history of Jerusalem. It was needful, because it had been prophesied, that four Gentile empires should arise and bear universal rule. This prophecy had now been fulfilled; and a very short time was and is required, to accomplish every prediction which remains to be verified previous to the time of Jerusalem's final blessedness. It would seem as though the Lord, anxious to show His readiness to bless, had caused these empires thus rapidly to pass away, that it might be clearly seen that the hindrance was not in Him. Although He had long withdrawn His glory, and ceased to invest Jerusalem with His strength, yet He had continued to watch over it with pity: and now, as soon as ever the last of the Gentile empires was established, He sent His Son, saying "It may be they will reverence my Son."

He was saluted at His birth by strangers as King of the Jews. He entered Jerusalem, He was crowned, and He was crucified as King of the Jews:—and when the babes and sucklings sung praise

In chap ix. the events described in the concluding verse, which describe the same power under the name of the Prince who shall come.

In chap. xi. all after the 33rd verse, and all the 12th chap. The Gog and Magog powers (Ezekiel) are not, I believe, referred to in Daniel, because they are never to be allowed to tread down Jerusalem.—The Gentile Image alone is permitted to do this.

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to Him in this character, He fully sanctioned the truth of their words, saying, "Have ye not read, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?"

But Jerusalem knew not the time of her visitation. "Behold! your house is left unto you desolate; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not SEE me thenceforth TILL *ye* shall say" (as well as the babes) "blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."—They will SEE Him again THEN.

The lifting up of Jesus on the cross, was the entire and final dissociation of God from the systems of earth, as they then were, and still are. He had come "eating and drinking," i.e., He had come to meet them in familiar love, and to prove whether they were capable of amendment. But their entire contrariety to the mind of God was finally proved by their rejection of the Son. Jerusalem which had THE Law, and the Gentiles who had THE power, united in destroying Him whom God had sent. And therefore it was that, on the night of His betrayal, He formally assumed the sign of Nazarite separation (see Num. vi. 3.) by refusing any more to drink of the fruit of the vine, i.e., to receive any joy from communion with earth, until the "present evil age" (Gal. i. 4.) should terminate, and the kingdom of God should come. And let us not forget that when Jesvs became a Nazarite in relation to the systems of earth, those systems as a whole, fell necessarily under the power of Satan; who then emphatically became "the Ruler of the darkness of this present age;" (Ephes. vi.) whilst salvation became "deliverance out of it," (Gal. i. 4.) through union with Jesus, as the second Adam, in a new creation.

Moreover, whilst Jesus was on earth, He was not a Priest; (Heb. viii. 4.) but the hands of His murderers who lifted Him up from the earth, constituted Him directly a Priest unto God; and presented Him in such a character of grace as had never been manifested before, able to meet in mercy the sins of his murderers, able to bear the iniquity of the most holy things of His people.

The "House of God,"—i.e., the Church, is placed under Him in this character, (Heb. x. 21) being themselves made priests unto God. And the very fact of their being so, is a perpetual memorial of what the world is, and their relation thereunto: for how did Jesus become a Priest except by being rejected of men? and they are priests through

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Him. They are priests only in virtue of their connexion with Him, who is still, as to earth, the rejected Man ; and has on that account sat down on His Father's throne, and not on His own throne. (Rev. iii. 21., compared with Dan. vii. 14.)

By the rejection of Jesus then, a new kingdom, not of earthly but of ascension glory, was opened to all who should believe in Him; in which there is no distinction between Jew nor Gentile, because it is not of earth. The testimony was sent unto Jerusalem, even among His destroyers, and was not withdrawn till after Jerusalem had again put the seal upon her iniquity, by shedding the blood of Stephen. Yet even here, as if in token of the sovereingty of grace, and in type of the future forgiveness of Jerusalem, the chief murderer of Stephen was converted ; just as Jerusalem hereafter will be, by the manifestation of the Lord from heaven ; and was sent to be the herald in suffering of that which Jerusalem will one day testify in glory, when she shall say unto the cities of Judah, " Behold your God !" (Isa. xl. 9.)

The rejection of the Spirit's testimony in the Church, marked the THIRD crisis in the history of Jerusalem. They judged themselves unworthy of eternal life; and they were left in utter darkness.— " Brethren, I would not have you ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part is happened unto Israel." (Rom. xi. 25.)

It was called a mystery, because it was a thing which had not been revealed through the Prophets of the Old Testament. They had given the detail of what should be until " Messiah was cut off;" (Dan. ix.) they have also revealed what is to be in the last end of the indignation ; but the long and wonderful interval which has already extended to 1800 years, appears to have been measured by no dates nor illustrated by any detail. It is spoken of in such language as this : " The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without teraphim." (Hosea iii.) "And they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, and by captivity, and by spoil, many days." (Dan. xi. 33.)*

* The same period which is referred to in the concluding part of each of the visions of Daniel, viz., that which immediately precedes the glory of the latter day, is described with far greater largeness of detail in the Revelation. The leading feature of this period, viz., the existence of a blaspheming and persecuting power of universal sway, is dwelt upon both in Daniel and the Revelation. It is important to remember that the prophecies of the Old and New Testament are not distinguished by the latter being mystical, and the

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During these many days the Gentiles continued to flourish in the full enjoyment of the power of earth. The bright beams of the Sun of righteousness have rested for a little season upon Jerusalem, but the Gentile empires regarded it not; the darkness had now closed in, but darkness or light were all alike to them. It was not till they began to hope that power and moral influence might be added to them, by naming the name of Christ, that they began to prosecute their evil plans, which have almost made even His people to forget that they are Priests unto God; have caused them to act as though "His kingdom were of this world," and made what is called Christianity, a pillar to the very systems from which Christ came to deliver. But we will not pursue this subject now, only it is well to remember the words of the Infidel: "The annals of Christendom have been the annals of hell!"

We know not how long the patience of the Lord may wait, but let us not forget His dying words: "If they shall do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry?" If in the youth-time of their apostasy, they crucify the Sent of God, what will they do when their iniquity is old?

It is abundantly manifest from the repeated testimony of Scripture that the old age of man's iniquity will be developed in Jerusalem; for the place which God has chosen to set His name there, is that which Satan has chosen for the development both of Gentile and Jewish apostasy.

Jerusalem therefore must be nationally restored before the "Times of the Gentiles" end. In other words, the Jew while yet remaining in unbelief, will return and restore both their city and their temple. This is a fact which is seldom recognized; but when this is seen, the prophecies which refer to the latter end of this dispensation, became, *as to their outline,* almost as plain and comprehensible as those which have been already fulfilled. The 12th and 14th chaps. of Zechariah, are most important, as establishing this fact. They clearly shew

other not, for both reveal plain literal palpable facts; but the difference is this,—the facts are revealed to Daniel as one who had the hopes and judgment of a Jew who looked for earthly glory; they are revealed to the Apostle, as no longer knowing any thing after the flesh, but having the hopes and judgment of a Saint who saw things in the light of ascension holiness and glory.

The central part of the Revelation, from the vi. to the xviii. chapters inclusive, describes the world as visited by the awful chastisements of the Father, previous to the day of the wrath of the Lamb.

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that the Jews are in Jerusalem, and surrounded by Gentile armies, at the time when they are finally delivered and brought to the confession of Jesus. "Behold I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, WHEN THEY SHALL BE IN THE SIEGE, both against Judah and against Jerusalem. In that day, I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem; and I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications." (Zech. xii.) The 2nd of Joel and the 8th of Daniel, are equally striking. In both, the temple is expressly mentioned; (Joel ii. 17.) and in Daniel it is distinctly said that the description in the 8th chapter exclusively referes to the "LAST END OF THE INDIGNATION" against Jerusalem; words which seem to have been entirely overlooked in the ordinary interpretations of this vision. The means by which they will effect their re-establishment in their own land, is, I believe, no where revealed; but it appears to be referred to in Dan. xi. 34; "Now when they shall fall, they shall be helpen with a little help; but many shall cleave to them with flatteries." I believe this verse is the point in this chapter of Daniel, at which we are now about to arrive; all after it is future.

The "Last end of the indignation" against Jerusalem, accords in point of time with the last end of the fourth Gentile empire: i.e., the last Gentile empire will be swept away, as soon as ever Jerusalem is forgiven. The many changes which have befallen the fourth Gentile empire during the time that Jerusalem has ceased to have a natural existence in the earth, have, as has been already said, passed unnoticed in Daniel and the Old Testament Prophets. All that we know, is this:—that when the times of the Gentiles shall be about to close, and when Jerusalem is entering on the "Last time of the indignation against her," ten kingdoms shall divide all that was once united under the empire of Rome.

Soon after their establishment, a mighty king will arise, such as the world has never yet beheld. As this wonderful person and his future actings have frequently been referred to in this publication, we will for the sake of those whose attention may not have been awakened to the subject, enter more minutely into the particulars of his awful history.

To bring man, man who has been the object of such long suffering

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goodness, (Rom. ii.) into direct and blasphemous oppostion to God, is a work worthy the malice of Satan. The higher he could raise man upon the pinnacle of glory, the more he could encompass him with the goodness of the things which God has made, the better would the opposition be. It would seem therefore, that from the beginning he had thought of this; to collect the power and glory of the earth, and concentrating it in the person of man, to bring it into direct and impious defiance of God. And he dared to tempt the Lord Jesus to be the instrument of his abominable design.

Its execution has hitherto been delayed, because the agency of the Lord hinders. (2 Thess. ii.) In the mean-while he is diligently employing every instrument of moral or physical influence, which gives him command over the energies of men; and Popery,* Mahomedanism, and the pride of democratic self-will, are to be regarded only as so many instruments of control by which he is bending men to the accomplishment of his final purpose; and he will fearfully succeed. He that hindereth will hinder until he be taken out of the way; and then shall that wicked one be revealed, *whose coming is after the working of Satan,* with all signs, and powers, and lying wonders, and all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. (2 Thess. ii.) All shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life; (Rev. xiii.) for God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie. (2 Thess. ii.) Alas! who is expecting these things.

It might be expected that an event of such an astonishing character would often be refered to in the Scriptures, not only as a fact of awful interest in itself, but also as exhibiting the full picture of what man became by apostatizing into the hands of Satan; and so affording a measure by which we may try the commencements and progress of departures from God.

Accordingly, this instrument of Satan is frequently described in Scripture, and under other names; of which those in the Old Testa-

* Many attempts have been made to explain away the awful prophecies respecting Antichrist, by referring them to the past history of Popery or Mahomedanism. But the 8th chap. of Daniel affords three criterions, to which neither Popery nor Mahomedanism answer.

I.—The power predicted, is to arise from one of the divisions of Alexander's empire, and therefore neither from the West, nor from Arabia.

II.—It is to find the temple standing, and the Jewish sacrifices offered.

III.—It is to exist in *the last end* of the indignation against Jerusalem.

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ment especially apply to him in his connexion with Jerusalem: "for whatsoever the Law says, it says to them who are under the Law;" —i. e., in other words, whatsoever the Old Testament says, it says peculiarly to those who are under it—to those who have chosen it for their portion. The 14th of Isaiah describes the surpassing splendour in which he will be invested in the eyes of men, and in which he will be manifested in Jerusalem "on the Mount of the Congregation" —i. e. Mount Zion: (ver. 13.) and the name which is there given him appears intended to describe the character in which they will view him as Lucifer, son of the morning, who brings them Light.

In Daniel, who describes *the destroying violence of his power*, he is symbolised by a Horn, the emblem of destructive strength. (Dan. vii, viii.) And he is also called "the King who shall do according to his will;" (Dan. xi. 36.) in indication of the unhindered character of his rule.

In the Thessalonians, (2 ch. ii.) as viewed in the estimation of the Church, he is called "the Man of Sin and the Lawless One." (ver. 8.) And in 1 John ii. 18., as viewed more directly in personal opposition to the Son of God, he is called "THE Antichrist." (ὁ αντιχριστος.)

In the Revelation he is called "the Beast," as denoting his moral estimation in the sight of heaven; and he is described as uniting the forms of the three Beasts which symbolise the three first empires in the vision of Daniel. (Dan. vii., Rev. xiii.)

If these chapters be referred to, it will be found that the following are his characteristic features:—

The *Eastern** part of the Roman empire is that from which he is

* The identity of Dan. vii. and viii. seems clearly proved by the connection of both with the 11th, as is seen by the following quotations:—

Between chap. vii. and xi.

vii. He shall speak great words against the Most High.
xi. He shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods.

vii. He shall change times and laws.
xi. He shall not regard the God of his fathers, but honour another.

vii. He shall continue until the saints possess the Kingdom.
xi. He shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished.

Between chap. viii. and xi.

viii. He waxes great towards the pleasant land.
xi. He enters into the glorious land.

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to arise, viz. from one of the four divisions of Alexander's broken empire. The period of his power is the last time of the indignation against Jerusalam ; or, as it is called in the 11th chap., "the time of the end." (ver. 40.)

"He shall not regard the God of his fathers nor any God, but shall magnify himself above all." (Dan. xi. 37.) "He shall speak blasphemous things against the God of gods." (Dan. vii.) "He shall deny both the Father and the Son." (1 John.)

He shall come to Jerusalem, where he will find the sanctuary standing, and the daily sacrifice offered. But he will cast down the sanctuary, and take away the daily sacrifice. Mount Zion, the glorious holy mountain, (Dan. xi) is the place of his blasphemous exaltation. "He will sit upon the Mount of Congregation, on the sides of the north, saying, I will be like the Most High." (Is. xiv.) "He will plant the tabernacles of His palaces on the glorious Holy Mountain." (Dan. xi.) "He, as God, will *sit in the Temple** of

viii. At the time of the End shall be the vision.
xi. At the time of the End shall he enter.

viii. He prospers in the last end of the indignation.
xi. He shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished.

Between Dan. vii. and Rev. xiii.

Dan. vii. He shall speak great words against the Most High.
Rev. xiii. Speaking great things and blasphemies.

Dan. vii. He made war with the saints and prevailed.
Rev. xiii. He made war with the saints and overcame.

Dan. vii. They shall be given into his hands for a time, times, and dividing of times,— i.e. 1260 days.
Rev. xiii. He continues forty and two months,—i.e. 1260 days.

The UNIVERSAL dominion of chap. viii. and xi. must be identical with that of chap. vii. if it exists at the same time; and it does exist at the same time, viz. in *the last end of the indignation.*

* It is important to observe in this chapter (2 Thess. ii.) how carefully the distinction is made between the principles of Antichrist (which is the mystery of iniquity already working) and Antichrist personally.—And it is said not of the principles, but of himself, *personally*, that he shall sit in the Temple of God. The Temple of God is used in Scripture to denote either the body of the Lord Jesus—the bodies of individual saints—the *elect* Church—or the Temple at Jerusalem. The man of sin cannot sit *personally* in any of these except the last: and so it is said in the Old Testament—"He shall sit on the glorious holy mountain." There is no discrepancy in this with the 8th of Daniel, for he is there said not to cast down the Temple but the *Sanctuary;* though even if it were the Temple, it would be only a description of different periods of his action, as in the case of the accounts of the death of Judas, and other instances.

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God, showing himself that he is God." (2 Thess. ii.)

In order to accredit his power, Satan will enable him to work miracles, (σημεια) and lying wonders. The prophet who ministers before him will be enabled to make fire come down from heaven in the sight of men, and to make the image of his sovereign to speak. And this will be accompanied with the command to worship him, and all will worship him whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life.

He will come in his own name, and will be received by them who rejected Him that came in His Father's name. He will come to Jerusalem in peace at first, and by peace he will destroy many. (Dan. viii. 25.) He will also confirm the covenant with many, (Dan. ix. 27.) but will soon break it, (Ps. lv.) and cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease; and desolate the sanctuary, in order that he may spread abroad his own abominations.

The abominations and hypocrisy of this period are frequently described in the Scriptures. It is marked as being immediately followed by destroying judgments, and the deliverance of the remnant who are to be preserved; and it is this which distinctly marks the descriptions of iniquity as belonging to the latter time. In the Psalms the moral history of this period is especially given. Indeed the great object of the Psalms is to describe the various relations in which man has stood in regard to God; and therefore they frequently dwell on both the period of His perfect righteousness, as exhibited in the person of Jesus, and on that of his perfect iniquity, as exhibited in the person of Antichrist—"the Man of the Earth." (See Ps. ix, x, xi.) And as we *interpret* only of Jesus those passages which describe the righteousness of the Perfect Man, but *apply* them *in a limited sense* to those who walk in His Spirit; so also it is with these other descriptions, which though *strictly* true of that period only when the fool shall really say "No God"—are nevertheless applicable to every one who has ever walked in the spirit of him who is to consummate Apostasy. In describing the greatest we comprehend the less.

From the Psalms as well as other parts of Scripture we find that while the greater part of the Jews are given over to the delusions of the wicked one, there are some, who like David in Babylon, refuse to sanction his abominations. They are described as crying for succour

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unto the Lord, "Holy Lord! for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful are minished from among the children of men." (Ps. xii.) "My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me; for the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of the enemy and avenger. All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenaut." (Ps. xliv.)

"Yet for all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." The distress of Jerusalem is consummated by the gathering of the *Gentile nations* against her, who are commissioned by the Lord to be the instruments of His final and bitter chastisement. We earnestly request that the first eighteen verses of the 2nd of Joel may be read, as describing this period:—"Woe is me, for that day is great, it is even the day of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. For when they weep before the Lord and say, spare thy people O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach; THEN will the Lord be jealous for His land and pity His people." (Joel ii. 17, 18.)

The Lord will assemble the Gentiles, that they may put into the hand of Jerusalem, the cup of His fury: (Isa. li. 17.) but not only this, He will gather them that they may drink the dregs of it themselves. Hear His word to Jerusalem in Isaiah.

"These two things are come upon thee, who shall be sorry for thee? desolation and destruction, and the famine, and the sword, by whom shall I comfort thee?"

"Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets as a wild bull in a net; they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of my God."

"Therefore hear thou this thou afflicted; and drunken, but not with wine; thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of His people, Behold! I have taken out of thy hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; *thou shalt no more drink it again.*"

"But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee, which have said to thy soul, Bow down that we may go over; and thou hast laid thy body as the ground and as the street to them that went over."

"Awake, awake, put on thy strength O Zion; put on thy

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beautiful garments O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean."

"Shake thyself from the dust, arise and sit down O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck O captive daughter of Zion."

"For thus saith the Lord, ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money."

"Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that it is I who do speak; behold it is I!"

"Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem."

"The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

And then contrast it with His word to the Gentiles.—

"Drink ye, and be ye drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you,"

"And it shall be if they refuse to take the cup at mine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, thus saith the Lord of hosts, ye shall certainly drink."

"For lo I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and shall ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished, for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts."

"Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, the Lord shall roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation, He shall mightily roar upon His habitation; He shall give a shout as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth."

"A noise shall come even unto the ends of the earth, for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations; He will plead with all flesh, He will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord."

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth."

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"And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered nor buried: they shall be dung upon the ground." (Jer. xxv.)

But we will not pursue the subject any further at present, trusting that we shall have another opportunity of recurring to what is revealed concerning Jerusalem in her glory, when Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

We would only say in conclusion, that there are two evils which we have carefully to watch against, in the study of prophecy.—The first is that in which the Church has long slumbered,—the belief that the prophecies have been gradually exhausted by the events of the Gentile dispensation. And thus many awful and awakening passages which refer to a future crisis of evil and of judgment, have been referred to Antiochus, or Constantine, or Mahomet, and we gladly deceive ourselves into the belief that to us they are past for ever. From this fatal error many have been rescued, and they have laboured to shew that the prophecies are not exhausted, except by the closing events of the latter day, when man's iniquity shall be gathered into a mighty aggregate, to be destroyed by the manifestation of the Lord. They cannot be too thankful who have discerned the truth of this. But it is also true that the attention of some has been so exclusively fixed on the future aggregate, as to neglect the present working of those principles of evil, which though scattered and half developed, may yet practically affect our daily conduct. It is true that the Antichrist shall come, but even now there are many Antichrists. It is for us to watch against, and detect by the light of prophecy, the comparatively disconnected and imperfect principles of evil, whilst they are advancing into that maturity and union which prophecy represents them as attaining in the latter day; and to beware lest, because our present position appear bright, when contrasted with the coming darkness, we should be tempted to congratulate ourselves on its superiority, and insensibly begin to try ourselves by the standard of man's greatest iniquity instead of by the holiness of God.

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He who knowingly and designedly tolerates partial evil now, has surely no right to conclude that he will be delivered from the desire to tolerate it " when the enemy shall come in like a flood."

" When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, *then* shall they be trodden down of it. For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His strange work, and bring to pass His act, His strange act. Now therefore be ye not mockers lest your bands be made strong; for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts that a consumption is even determined upon the whole earth."

ANTINOMIANISM AND LEGALISM.

The Law has ever furnished subject of disputation in the Church from the time of its earliest records. Some, by their strong assertions of Christian liberty, have given occasion to others to turn the grace of God into licentiousness, because they have not perceived that the end of that liberty is service to God.—" Being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness." " As free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." Christian liberty is in the Spirit, not in the flesh. Others have not only spoken but acted as though we might sin that grace might abound. They have asserted liberty for the flesh, and established that form of Antinomianism, which is apparently the counterpart of the doctrine of the Nicolaitans of old.—" They speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error; while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." Such is the result of perverted and mutilated truth. And here the Legalist comes in, and asserts the Law to be the rule of Christian conduct, although they are delivered from it as the groundwork of justification. Such a statement carries with it great plausibility, but the principle is quite as erroneous as the one it would condemn; and it is remarkable how two such opposite principles alike result in a fearfully low exhibition of Christian character. " Many;"

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says the Apostle, "have turned aside unto vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm." Man to get rid of a difficulty of his own raising, has invented a Theory which the Scriptures by no means warrant, for reconciling the grace of God in the salvation of His people, with the obligation they are under to serve Him. It is maintained that although the Law is not the ground of justification, it still remains the rule of Life. It is repealed in its condemning character but unrepealed as a directory :—the ceremonial and civil part is abolished, but the moral remains obligatory. In every departure from Scripture there is danger; and I believe such a departure as the one above stated to be attended with the most mischievous results. The Law is spoken of in Scripture as one thing.—"The Law was given by Moses." It is true the word Law is used in a less definite sense : but when *the* Law is used, it generally means the whole Mosaic economy, which was not partially but entirely superseded by that which was introduced by Christ.—"The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." In no place in Scripture is that distinction found which is commonly insisted on between the moral and ceremonial law ;—in this the Antinomian is right in principle. The Law was fulfilled and set aside by the work of Christ in order to make way for the display of the wondrous grace of God. God in Law is God imputing trespasses. God in Christ is God not imputing trespasses. It is true that such a distinction exactly suits our selfishness, which is to render unto God no more than He absolutely requires, which is just the principle of Law. It is obligation, it is duty, that which is rendered unwillingly, or which would not be rendered at all, were it not demanded. The mischief of such a statement I believe to be two-fold. It tends to lead the children of God into bondage, and to lower their walk and conversation.

There is one sentence of the Apostle which exactly meets the difficulty.—"Not without Law to God but under the Law to Christ," μη ων ανομος θεω αλλ' εννομος Χριϛω—the Article inserted in our translation confuses the sense—"Not lawless to God but under law to Christ." Here I believe the cases of the Antinomian and Legalist both to be met.

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Whilst the Antinomian has clearly seen the putting away the Law, he has not seen the necessity of this in order to introduce a new relationship between God and Man—even that of Father and Son.—" God sent forth His Son made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons." (Gal. iv. 4, 5.) The Law stood as a barrier to this, it was given to those who were servants, they were to do that which was commanded them, and then receive their wages;—the principle was do and live. But the condition in which a Believer in Christ Jesus stands is very different; he is " no more a servant but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." He is redeemed from the Law, he is dead to the Law, and the Law dead to him by the body of Christ, it cannot attach to him in any way whatever. It is no longer the Rule by which he walks, because being suitable for the relationship of master and servant, is not suitable for the relationship of Father and Son. The end proposed to those under the Law was obedience unto Life.—" This do and thou shalt live." But the result of that which in itself was good, and holy, and just, acting upon fallen man, was that it worked wrath and death. The Law could not give life, although it proposed it. But the Believer hath life,—" He that hath the Son hath life;" it is that from which he sets out, not that which he is pursuing. " Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my words and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." And as to the source of this Life, it is thus stated, " Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." " Of His own will begat He us." The Believer is not therefore without Law to God, but the rule that subsisted between the Lord and the servant would not apply to this new relationship. And hence it is that not having been brought to know the Father, many a Christian, resting indeed on the all-sufficiency of the Atonement of Christ, does not stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ has made him free.—" For ye are all the children of God by faith of Jesus Christ." And not rejoicing in the liberty of Sonship, they see not their calling to be to walk as " obedient children, not

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fashioning themselves according to their former lusts in their ignorance, but as He which hath called them is Holy, so are they also to be holy in all manner of conversation." They still look to the Law as their rule, and "receive the spirit of bondage again to fear," questioning as to the extent of the obedience required, instead of returning the answer of a willing heart unto a loving Father. The Law deals in former enactments, but the Spirit, which is liberty, more in the application of some great and acknowledged principles. What Law could accurately define the measure and quality of the obedience of a child to a parent? It would be shown in an hundred ways which the loving heart would be quick-sighted in discovering, and none but the father's eye could detect. And is not this precisely the character of a Christian's obedience to his God? His liberty makes him not lawless to God, but his obedience is much carried out where no human eye can behold him. He prays, he fasts, he gives alms, in the presence of his "Father which seeth in secret." It is indeed blessed liberty into which we are called as children of God, but it is a high and holy responsibility. "Be ye therefore followers (imitators) of God as *dear children* and walk in love." The perfectness of the Father's love is the only standard proposed to the children.—"Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Just in proportion as the relationship is raised in dignity from that of a servant to that of a son, so is the standard of obedience raised also.

The Law might tend to tutor the flesh, but the Spirit alone could serve God. "If ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under the Law," and this applies to the Law as a rule of Life; for the question in this passage is not concerning justification, but Christian conduct.—"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." In Jesus we have One made under the Law, meeting every one of God's requirements, even fulfilling all righteousness; in Him also we have One lead by the Spirit into the wilderness into conflict with Satan to show His perfect dependance as a Son. His obedience was beyond Law righteousness, for He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, that the world might know that He loved the Father, and that as the Father gave Him commandment so He did." He

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had right and title to have entered into life, because He had kept the commandments. But that life He laid down, "He had power to lay it down, and power to take it again;" and His perfectness of obedience in this respect, was that which was so well pleasing unto the Father. "Therefore doth my Father love me *because* I lay down my life."

He as the servant, met every requirement of the Law; but as the Son carried His obedience as unto the entire surrender of His own will, to the will of Him who sent Him. And this sure standard does Jesus hold up to His followers; If, says He, speaking to the young man of great possessions, (who evidently connected eternal life with earthly enjoyment,) "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments; but *if thou wilt be perfect,* go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come follow me." (Matt. xix.) It was His own entire self-renunciation which Jesus proposed as the standard of perfectness; not the servant under the Law, but "The Son learning obedience through the things that He suffered." Surely then, freedom from the yoke of bondage, is not that we may be without Law to God, but that we may be obedient children. And the knowledge of the Father, whilst it is our most blessed and perfect security in the confidence of His ever watchful care and love, is at the same time His security against any abuse of that liberty into which we are called by His grace. It was the great object of Jesus to manifest the name of God, even the blessed name of Father, to those whom the Father had given Him out of the world, in order that by them that name might be hallowed. It is to the Father, as the Holy Father and righteous Father, whom the world knew not, that He commends His disciples on leaving them, upon the ground that they knew Him as such, and therefore would reconcile that seeming paradox to the world, how at the same time a believer is living in the most perfect sense of security, and aiming to walk in perfect obedience. It is the *Righteous* Father. There is no difficulty in this to one "led by the Spirit," yet I believe there always must be an insurmountable difficulty in putting theoretically before the minds of men Liberty and Obedience, so necessarily do they suppose the one to exclude the other.

But the consideration of the remainder of the Apostle's statement,

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as to a Christian being "under Law to Christ," will most plainly prove that he is in no sense whatever under *the* Law. "The Law is not for a righteous Man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane:" it may be used lawfully as the expression of God's mind with respect to a variety of actions. It may be used lawfully too as exhibiting any great principle of the divine conduct; as such the Apostle uses it, when insisting on children obeying their parents in the Lord, where he shews that there was in the Law an express promise to obedient children. So again he uses it lawfully when he presents it as the general expression of the divine mind, that labour of any kind is entitled for support.—"Say I these things as a man? or saith not the Law the same also? for it is written in the Law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." (1 Cor. ix. 8, 9.) If we use it not thus, we deprive ourselves of the benefit of God's own expressed mind on a great variety of subjects,* and therefore of that wisdom which cometh from above. But fully allowing all this, I would assert that the Believer who proposed to himself the Law for his rule would constantly be walking disorderly as a disciple of Christ. It was given by Moses for a specific purpose, and especially in reference to earthly blessing. It met therefore, as far as it possibly could, man's weakness, as we find in the case of divorce. (Matt. xix. 7, 8.) "It made nothing perfect." "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." And we are under Law to Christ, not to Moses. This must appear immediately to any one marking the authority that the Lord Jesus Christ assumes to Himself in the sermon on the Mount. "It was said by them of old,—but *I* say unto you, whosoever heareth these sayings of *mine*." Christ being Mediator of the New Covenant established upon better promises, the Rule of conduct must necessarily differ, even as the dispensation under which we are, essentially differs from the former. God in that, was dealing with man in righteousness, but with us in grace. The blessing to which we are called, is heavenly; and the rule by which we are guided is the Rule of heaven. All the difficulties in walking by it, arise from the

* It is doubtless yet to be exhibited that God's own arrangements for securing earthly blessing are alone calculated for that end. But such arrangements cannot apply to the present dispensation.

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circumstances in which we are placed. To do God's will in heaven, where all is in accordance with that will, must be the highest blessedness to which a moral creature of any capacity can attain. "Bless the Lord, ye His angels that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless ye the Lord all ye His hosts, ye ministers of His that do His pleasure." (Ps. ciii. 20, 21.) But to do God's will on earth, where all is disorder, is the great trial. There was One who did it perfectly, "Lo *I* come to do thy will O God." It was His alone to say, "Father I have glorified thee on the earth;" and He who had done this was fully qualified to give us a directory, as well as to leave us an example that we should follow His steps.

But obedience to Law and protection from the Lawgiver are reciprocal. It is always supposed that the Legislator has power to protect those who own his authority, as well as punish those who do not. It is on the principle of ability to protect, that our Lord Jesus claims our unreserved obedience, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, go ye *therefore* and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;* and lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Now here the claim of our obedience is, that He has all power in heaven and in earth, and is therefore fully able to keep those who acknowledge Him in His ways. It is therefore that the test of discipleship is the confession of His name as Lord, as well as Saviour. It is after He has given His disciples such directions, the following out of which would inevitably throw them against the whole course of this world, that He adds, "And why call ye *me* Lord, Lord, and do not the things which *I* say? (Luke vi. 46.) And again, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name &c.; and then will I profess unto them I never knew you, depart from me all ye that work iniquity." (Matt. vii. 22, 23.) He will not own that as confusion unto Him, which does not show itself in subjection unto His word as authoritative. The whole of His directions for the conduct of His disciples assume the principle that

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they are heavenly men. He who, whilst on earth, was the Son of Man in heaven, was the only One who ever passed through this world untainted by its evil; He overcame the world, and shewed that implicit subjection to the word of God was the only safeguard against evil,—that God was the only wise God, whose wisdom could guide through the intricate maze of evil in which the world was and is. "Concerning the works of men, by the words of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." (Ps. xvii. 4.) He met all evil in meekness and lowliness; but the Father was with Him. And that which He has given us is that wisdom which is from above, which is pure, and peaceable, and gentle, and easy to be entreated, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. It is every thing the reverse of what man calls wisdom, because it overcomes by enduring, and not by avoiding or resisting. This wisdom is hid from the wise and prudent and given unto babes, as those whose place in this world is helplessness and exposure to danger. But here comes in the blessed understanding of power to protect in following out His commandments, which necessarily leads to suffering from the world. Here is the great need of recognizing the standing of a Christian, under Law to Christ and not to Moses. It is to fidelity to Him in this that the Lord especially looks, *The obedience of a Christian is the obedience of faith, the obedience of Law the obedience of sense.* In the latter case to the Jew, as under the Law, the result of obedience was immediately manifested in blessing. Not so now, (outwardly at least;) but our calling is to patient continuance in well doing, "for in due time we shall reap if we faint not." We are called to sit down and count our cost, if we are content to follow Jesus out of the world; for assuredly His precepts do set a man entirely against it. And what, unless the assurance of competent protection in walking in His ways, from Him who could say, "All power is given unto me," can for a moment keep us in the narrow way that leadeth unto eternal life? What but the assurance of sufficiency of strength, from Him who says, "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," could induce felt weakness to set itself in array against the enemies it has to contend with? "Who is sufficient for these things," can only be answered by "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." It is most needful ever to associate in

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our thoughts the distinct character of the commandments of the Lord Jesus as leading to suffering in the world, with His power to keep and protect those who are walking in His ways. This is to walk by faith and not by sight. This is the happy deliverance from that perplexity which must ever meet one who knows no power above the will of this world; and who is therefore always calculating no results which may only disappoint him, or balancing evils to choose between them. The Christian, in proportion to his faith, is delivered from these; he has to expect from the world nothing but evil:—"sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." And as to good he knows that to be only the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God. In taking that for his guide it may lead into humiliation and suffering, but the end is deliverance from evil. The prayer of Jesus for His disciples was not that they should be taken out of the world, but be kept from the evil—that they should occupy His standing and place in it. "The disciple is not above his Master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his Master." And how is this to be but by keeping all things that He has commanded us. "We are not under the Law but under grace." And that which is required of us is widely different from what was required of those under the Law. We may notice this in a few striking instances: Under the Law, divorce was permitted on many accounts,—under Christ, only in case of fornication on either side. Under the Law, Polygamy was tolerated; but under Christ, in whom was shown the antitype of marriage, it is not permitted. Christ is one, and His Church is one,—so in the beginning, God, to show His plan, made them a male and a female. Under Moses a man was entitled to assert his right, and to receive compensation for injury; not so under Christ—"*I* say unto you resist not evil." "Avenge not yourselves." "Rather suffer wrong." "Forgive till seventy times seven." Under the Law it was permitted to amass treasures as the proof of God's blessing; but Christ says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on the earth." This might be followed out into lengthened detail, but enough has been said to show that to be under the Law to Christ, is to be under heavenly rule in the midst of evil; and therefore necessarily produces that wonderful anomaly in the present state which faith alone can clear up—righteousness suffering, and wickedness flourishing. "The earth is

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given to the hand of the wicked, he covereth the faces of the judges thereof: if not, who and where is he?" (Job ix. 24.)

In the present day when allegiance to Christ as their Lawgiver, has been so lamentably forgotten by the Lord's own people, when their fear towards Him in this character has been taught by the doctrines of men, it is only known to those who are seeking in simplicity to serve Him, how difficult is the obedience of faith. So intimately have the two directories of Law and Grace been accustomed to be blended, that many a Believer is found thinking, and speaking, and acting unconsciously as a Jew. Men have gone on unconsciously confounding things that differ, so that the simplest commandment of the Lord or His Apostles, is often met by setting the conduct of a Patriarch, or the language of the Law against it. Hence we must needs discriminate between that which is Scriptural, and that which is Christian. For war is Scriptural; Jehovah Himself went forth as the Captain of Israel's host; but says Christ, "They that take the sword, shall perish by the sword." Vengeance is Scriptural; the avenger of blood might pursue the murderer, but says the Spirit by the Apostle, "Avenge not yourselves." But not only in these great things, but in things of minor importance, (and fidelity to the Lord is therein much shown) shall we find occasion of confessing to Him as our Lord. Only let it ever be borne in mind, that because we are called to liberty, even the liberty of Sons, because we are already made of the household of God, and have our mansions prepared in it, that the Lord Jesus as Head over that house, claims our allegiance to Him. It is because we belong to heaven that He exercises this authority over us, in order that we may walk worthy of our high and holy calling. It is because we are Sons, and if Sons then Heirs, Heirs of God and joint Heirs with Christ, that the Son who has made us free, shows us how to use that freedom in service to the Father. The Master of the house is absent for a while, but behold he cometh, and "that servant that knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes." Here it is that reasonings come in, and here the Spirit of God comes to bear, casting them down and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. I believe obedience to Christ to be now of great difficulty, from lack

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of that Spirit in power to make use of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, from our having been so habituated to act on results instead of Faith. The Lord does not show His people how they are to be kept, or what will be the consequence of their acting in obedience to Him. But He will *with* the trial, make a way for them to escape. And if any man will do His will, he shall know the blessedness afterwards. It is astonishing how little any are able, from the habit of looking at consequences, to judge righteous judgment. The Apostle prays for the Phillippians, that their love might abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; (αισθησις, spiritual apprehension) that they might approve things that were excellent, and be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ. From the habit of not comparing things with *the Truth*, but with one another, very few are capable of estimating the principles on which they are acting. A very great principle may be involved in a very trivial action; and here the craft of Satan works, as we may see in the temptation of our Lord; his object is to undermine a principle, and then the people of God are tossed to and fro, and hindered in their service to the Lord. And what will be security against him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, but simple dependence on the blood of the Lamb, and on the Word He hath given us for our guidance? The time calls for decision. He that is not with Christ, is against Him. Fidelity to Christ, is protest against evil; for what concord hath Christ with Belial? The path may be difficult, because so many good and useful in themselves, are mingled with that which is evil; but the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, will guide (οδηγησει) into all truth. Satan's object is to accredit the evil, by mingling it with good: ours must be to discriminate between them, "to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." As under law to Christ, our calling is, not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, but to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God. There is, now, as in the close of the Apostle's career, more trial from the worldliness of disciples, than from the persecution of the world. May then the last charge of the Apostle to his beloved Timothy, be written on our hearts, "Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath called him to be a soldier." "So run that ye may obtain."

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VALUE OF PROPHECY.

THE energy of the Holy Ghost has of late been remarkably displayed in Europe, by a renewed interest in the study of the Bible as a whole, and of the prophetic parts in particular. Strong confirmation as to the origin of this energy, (that it is indeed from God) is found in the character of the hindrances, still withholding many that are dear to Christ. The mind, the heart and the spirit afford, in different individuals, various excuses and pretexts, yet they all savour of principles unworthy of the redeemed of God.

To notice some of those hindrances—the first and foremost is "ignorance of responsibility." How often are the weaklings of Christ's flock exercised with the question, have we *liberty*, have we *the right* to study prophecy? Now this is but one of a large class of difficulties, (it is well to notice it) whose whole force proceeds from things being viewed in wrong connection, in an order of Satan's designing; for the question is so contrived, as that the answer, if strictly according to the letter, should prohibit that which is commanded by the word of God; if, on the other hand, it be simply according to the thought of the inquirer, it sanctions a principle most evil. For what possible connection can there be between *liberty* or *right*, and our study of prophecy? The real query is not *may we*, have *we right* to study prophetic revelation? but has God a right to prophecy, and are we *bound* to hearken? A simple recognition of our position of dependence upon God, allegiance to Him, would solve most of our difficulties, and almost all of Satan's strongest dilemmas. May we learn to view Him as Head of every thing, and to know ourselves as ordered by the powerful obligation of His love. It is indeed a proof of most awful blindness to concede that the Creator has spoken, and that we are creatures, without at the same time apprehending the fearful authority with which His every word lays claim to our attention. What then shall we say when the responsibility is increased by the privilege of Sonship and the Spirit of adoption,

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while yet no obligation to listen to the words of our Father is recognized? Let us judge ourselves in this matter, and especially beware lest under the supposition of dependence, we be found fostering the spirit of independence, and in reality contemning the responsibilities and obligations God has laid upon us. The heart of man likes not the consciousness of its ignorance, or dependence upon God: or to have to seek the teaching of the Holy Ghost, especially when as in our own day, there seems instruction ready prepared by the hand of man, on every subject.

Again, ignorance of the purpose of God, and unbelief as to the saints' privileges, hinder many. The former has been greatly strengthened, if not nurtured, by forgetfulness of the unity of Scripture, and by a careless perusal of its various parts, as if they were unconnected. The mind perhaps is fixed upon the person and work of Jesus, as set forth at His incarnation; and admiration drawn forth to His love and pity. Should not these subjects then occupy attention? Surely, but not exclusively; for the unavoidable result is, that the *very* object of that work, and that, in the understanding of which its chief blessedness consists, has been forgotten, and this simply by its being disconnected from its origin and end. The object of the coming of Jesus was not to reveal Himself, but to reveal the Father; and if it be rested upon itself, (as it almost universally is) little if any thing is seen. Love is apprehended to be only in Jesus, and too often at least supposed to be contrasted, to, instead of the emanation from, and expression of the mind and heart of the Father; the chief object also of this exhibition of love, is imagined to be individual salvation, instead of the fulfilment of the purpose of the Father. This is the necessary result of the attention being occupied with one act of the Sacred Drama of Redemption, and thought being limited to it as unconnected with the continuous course of the whole. Now the results of all the different parts of truth, are the grand topics of prophetic revelation, and IT must be studied, if we would rightly apprehend any of them; but most of all the past work of Jesus. The latter, unbelief of the greatness of our privileges is shown, thus—We are told "these things are not *essential*, are not *necessary*. Necessary to what? essential to what? God thought them both necessary and essential to *His purpose* in writing the Bible, else would they not have been

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therein. And if it is not meant thus to judge God, to what are they non-essential? to what unnecessary? To Salvation! Why this is just to grant that the place held by the objectors, is that of the unconverted, instead of that of the Church. Their minds are *not* at rest as to individual personal acceptance, their thoughts are not within the limits which become the unconverted and them alone: "What must I do to be saved?" they know not the power or glory of this dispensation. To us who believe, every thing *has been* given, not one single necessity left unmet; we are washed, we are justified, we are sanctified, yea, we are risen with Him, and sitting in heavenly places and blessed with all spiritual blessings. And why has there been all this superabundant profusion of grace towards us, but just that the attention of the mind, and the affections of the heart might be engaged in the service of our Redeemer? For ourselves we can seek nothing, every thing that self could need is freely, fully given: so that if we believe the fulness of the promise, and would not stagnate, we must seek after the things of Jesus. For the search and interest of a saint to be limited in scripture, to that which he thinks immediately affects himself, surely argues some most radical moral defect. Such an one cannot have entered into the distinctive privilege of fellowship with Him who was dead, but is alive again for evermore; and having received the Spirit of the living God, had been made conscious that the written Word, that he is a son of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. But more than this, he can scarcely understand *in what* eternal life consists, even in the apprehension of the moral glory of the Father, as set forth in the Son; as it is written, "This is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" for that is to be seen and known wherever Christ is found. If this be recognized as our life, and the strength of our life, our research in Scripture will be simply for Christ, and every set of circumstances past, present, or future in which He is found, will be dear, unspeakably dear to us. It is to be feared that the hypocrite too often deceives himself, as well as others, by solicitude and carefulness as to the things of God; when in fact he cares nothing at all about them, save as far as they seem to bear upon his own individual self, or can be applied thereto.

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Another very popular difficulty is, that these things remove the mind too much from things present to those with which, from their distance, we can have nothing to do. The whole force of this argument rests in a complete misapprehension of the character of the present dispensation ; for the distinctive mark of it is victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil ; by a transfer of the heart and mind from things present unto those which are to come, which have no substantive existence save to faith, through the energy of the Holy Ghost. (See Heb, xii. 22—24., Rev. xxi, 5, 6.)

But obstacles in the mind, either to entrance into truth, or progress in it are not the first causes of the evil ; the seat of disease is one more closely identified with life itself, the thoughts of the mind err, in proportiont o the unsubduedness of the affections of the heart ; and it is greatly to be feared that some secret love of the world, and the fair forms in it, ministering so sweetly to self, is frequently at the root of resistance to, or neglect of the study of prophecy. The spirit of prophecy with unhesitating, unfaultering voice, pronounces judgment, speedy judgment and destruction on all around. This comports not with our desires, either in the predicted end, or in the unquestionable decision and verdict found therein against their present character ; for if judgment lingereth not, what is the present character of that which shall be judged ?

There are among opponents, blessed be God, some characterized simply by weakness, ignorance, and inattention ; but opposition to any part of God's truth, raises immediately a question as to the nature of the Spirit whereby we are led. And this is a most solemn consideration. " The Spirit of God searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." To the glory of Jesus He is not indifferent, neither to any fragment of revealed truth, because it all treats of Him. So far as we oppose, we are unquestionably led by our own spirit, which is necessarily, (because the spirit of a fallen nature,) enmity against God ; and even indifference marks the absence of the Spirit of God. There is no mark of genuine spirituality beyond a diligent search and love of the written Word. Since the office of the Holy Comforter is to reveal the glory of Christ, and the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, it is most evident that the spirit which turns away from the prophetic page, however

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specious his arguments, cannot be the Holy Spirit; but is either of rebellious man or of Antichrist.

There is a want of delicacy of perception, as well as tenderness of touch in spiritual things in our day, for which it is difficult to account. In some degree it may perhaps be looked upon as a judicial hardness for the spirit of self-will and disobedience; and in some measure as the necessary result of a limitation put upon the Holy Ghost's manifested power in the Church, when its purpose, and objects, and position are wrong. The Holy Spirit will not work save by the truth, connected with the person and work of Jesus; nor even by it, save to where the glory of Jesus is the recognized end of the action. Now the saints are most erroneously occupied in trying to give the Spirit the place pertaining to Jesus; not rightly dividing the Word, and see not Him as the end of every action. Howbeit, from whatever cause proceeding, such is the case, and it argues that there is very little of the power of godliness among us.

Be it observed, no reference has been made or meant in the preceding remarks, to any individual as such. In treating the case of an individual, the greatest delicacy, forbearance, and discrimination are needful; lest from the unrighteous position of the saints, we should cause sorrow to the weak and feeble. But in speaking as above, on the nature and character of abstract principles, widely leavening the mass, no such delicacy is needed. Dear as the individual in whom they may work, either partially or fully, may be to God, or to the saints, *their* nature and character is not changed, they are altogether sensual, devilish, and originate from none other than the father of darkness and lies.

To those however in whom this responsibility has been met, it is blessed to contemplate the value of this study; for, as the Apostle writes, "We speak wisdom among them which are perfect." Prophetic inquiry then brings before us every subject with which we have to do, in its strongest and brightest colours. By its means, God is presented to us in the clearest exhibitions of His character; for it leads us into scenes which are the results of all His dealings with the earth, where His principles have actually brought all things into allegiance to Himself; and where the power

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of His attributes is sustaining those principles. And even anterior to this, it presents us with an enlarged exhibition of the power of our own foundation—the Cross of Jesus. For what is the power of redeeming love and atoning blood, as exercised to individuals, and as to the sins of those individuals during a portion of three score years and ten, (marvellous as it is,) when compared with that which will be seen when the application is made to the sins of a whole nation, and the calander heavy with a black catalogue of crime throughout nearly 4000 years. The day of Israel's acceptance, shows us this, even an application of the principles embodied in the Cross in power far transcending that which is *now* witnessed. From the first promise and type, down to the Cross of Jesus, no *form* of truth avails for blessing in itself, independent of the intelligent apprehension of the principles set forth in it; they that despise prophecy ought, in order to be consistent, to despise the Cross; for, as is seen above, their principles are one and the same. Instruction may be gathered from looking at the subject as a whole, in its connection, not only with the Author of our salvation, but also with that salvation itself, as well as with the great adversary to it. As to the first of these, we learn in the contemplation of God's dealing, that without prophecy there was no salvation. With the fall departed all knowledge of God. Into personal contact with man in his fallen state, God could not come save in judgment; the revelation therefore which spoke of mercy, was necessarily prophetical. It is not meant to say that God could not have chosen another way, and have redeemed man at once into the glory of Sonship; but that we ought to admire the way in which His perfect wisdom did display itself, as the most perfect, because to us indeed it is the very standard of perfection. Had God met man in sin, destruction must have been his lot; a revelation therefore of His own character, suited to the prostate state of man, was made as the only hope of deliverance from the power, as well as guilt of sin; and the form of that revelation was a prophecy of the last and fullest act of grace,—"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Again, prophecy by opening Satan's future acts, casts a light backward upon his more covert and secret workings—a result in judgment always arguing a progress of evil.

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I would add, as bearing upon the case of the Prophets in the Old Testament, whose predictions are not written, but were suited to the exigencies of the passing day, only that perfect truth is the accompaniment of every Prophet of the Lord's raising. (Deut. xviii. 22.) Satan as an angel of light, is continually using predictions as an ensign of power; but let us not be deceived, falsehood is invariably found mingled with his prophecies; now, though perhaps no measure of light or truth proves a work not to be of Satan, any single point of falsehood disproves its being of God. The strength of Satan in this character is partial truth, partial holiness, partial light; whilst God's distinctive property is pure unmingled truth! and He has written, that in prediction such a restraint shall be put upon his servants. "When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him."

The chief and the peculiar value of prophecy seems to be that before referred to—a light shining in a dark place: in the midst of our sorrows, trials, and temptations, it presents before us glory and immortality; and in the midst of blandishment and seductions, warns, as to their true character, because it shows the results and final classification of every principle. In the power of prediction it shows us the foreknowledge of our God, His sovereignty and self-existence, pointing Him out as the one source of governing action, even in the midst of evil. In its declaration to man, there is love in forewarning, and a vindication of the Divine holiness, for they who reject are without excuse. It reveals also a wonderful mystery concerning Satan and his followers; for their history* all set before them, they deceive themselves so as to concur (though not willingly) and to bring about God's purposes. In opening to us another field for the contemplation of God's character, we must rejoice in it; but how much more when we consider the peculiarities connected with it? for the claim made in it is not simply that found in the Cross—"My son give me thine heart," but over and above this, "My son give me thy hand." Surely the children

* No doubt it is this which makes Satan oppose prophecy so much—the sovereignty of God as hated, prophecy still more: for it is directly the sentence of death to all Satan's plans, and all man's proud self-sufficient thoughts.

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of God have despised this greatest of privileges, even "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, should give unto them the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they might know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." (Eph. i. 17.) It is strange that whilst God is waiting to communicate of the fulness of His glory, that we should care so little to hear Him speak, preferring above the reception of His fulness which is strength, to busy ourselves with our own weakness and feebleness. Even the prayer within us of the Spirit, with groanings which cannot be uttered, should be only means to an end; for that which we want is the fulness of truth as set forth in the Word. Without prophecy where is the approbation of the Father to Jesus to be found? In His priesthood Jesus indeed showed out His fellowship with the Father; for, though Himself the glory of the Father, He was rejected by the world which knew not God. And what know we of the reward *therefore* appointed Him by His Father, when "every knee shall bow of things in heaven, and things in earth," to Him, who shall then be King of kings and Lord of lords: it is all future, and unless we take Him now for our Prophet, blind shall we be to it indeed. But the real fact is, that man's mind like his bodily eye was not formed to be content with the things immediately beneath it—forward he will look. As there is an evident mark of his original constitution still left in the natural tendency of conscience to think of doing God's will though the power is now lost, so perhaps is there an evidence of his having been formed to anticipate blessedness from God by the determined habit of his mind to prospect and hope. The practical question will, after all, be found to be just this—whether this propensity shall run in a channel of God's providing, the mind gathering strength for service and self-denial in its exercise, or whether it shall pursue a track of its own, in hourly contamination from evil all around, fostering hopes connected with self and the earth, which must all perish ere matured. The formal objections generally advanced against the study of prophecy are usually either wide of the point or else prove too much. We are told for instance, that the subject

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is too deep for the human mind. What is this to the purpose, unless it be also too deep for the mind of the Spirit? But who is he who dares thus to arraign the wisdom of God, or the unity of His plan? Where, till the incarnation, was *any* salvation to man save in prophetic hope, and where even now, is the power and force of any one truth given to be believed, if severed from things still future? So deeply did an Apostle's mind feel this, that he hesitated not to say, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable;" and again, "If the dead rise not let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." And is the world commanded to repent? it is because God hath appointed a future day of judgment. (Acts xvii. 30, 31.) Is the saint in lack of strength against a censorious spirit? here will he find it. The Lord cometh to judge. (Rom. xiv., 1 Cor. iv. 5.) The commandments to mortify sin; (Col. iii. 5.) to be comforted; (1 Pet. iv. 12., Rom. viii. 17.) to be confident; (1 John ii. 28.) not to sorrow as those without hope, under loss of friends; (1 Thess. ii.) carelessness to the world; (2 Pet. iii. 11—14., 1 John iii. 13., &c. &c.) all are planted in the same soil. And to come to facts, why were the Jews so zealous for God, but because their minds were cradled in glory? why we so like the Laodiceans, but because, though reconciled by His blood, (ver, 9.) the hope whereby we should be saved, is hidden from our eyes. (Rom. viii. 24.) But the folly of objecting is really too gross, for it virtually condemns the Holy Ghost in His incessant mention of things to come by the Prophets of old and the Apostles, and upbraids Jesus who spake very little about His death, and then only in private; whilst in public, before friends and adversaries, He declared His future glory. It also altogether destroys the unity and joyfulness of the gospel; for what is the description found in Rev. xxi, and xxii., but a development of the first promise, Gen iii. 15; and what is the present result of faith, but suffering and sorrow? But enough, *it is written*, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." (Heb. x. 37., xi. 4.) "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. viii. 24.) "If in this life only," &c. (1 Cor. xv.

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19.) Now these subjects of hope include directly or indirectly all prophecy; for all the great things which God hath yet to do are connected with that new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; for which we, according to His promise, look. (2 Pet, iii. 13.) It is written indeed, "if any man be ignorant let him be ignorant;" far be it therefore for any who have found in prophetic vista a heaven of hope and glory, to condemn or judge those who are weak; let them rather bear their infirmities. On the other hand let the ignorant remember that it is folly to be asking what is the use of prophecy, when we have such words as these:—"Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy name." (Ps. cxxxviii. 2.) "Every word of God is pure." (Prov. xxx. 5.) "To the law and to the testimony," &c. (Is. viii. 20.) "Sanctify them by thy truth, thy word is truth." (John xvii. 17.) "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. ii. 10.) "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things." (1 John ii. 20., see also Deut. xxix. 29., 2 Tim. iii. 16., &c. &c.) And again, that to say it is unintelligible, is a concession of one of three things;—that they have not read it, —that the promise of blessing (2 Pet. i. 19—21., Rev. i. iii. & xxii. 7—6.) is not true; or that they have not asked for wisdom. (James i. 13.)

An use has been found which, though partially true, is not the whole of it:—viz. that it is a mine of evidence after fulfilment: this is doubtless true, and it shows the importance of studying every part, for how else can the part which has been fulfilled be known? and again, if any be still unfulfilled, we are by this very view called to watch for its fulfilment. But this cannot be the great object of the testimony, because there is *more* about the last confederacy and apostasy, than about all the rest together; and who after it will be on the earth to profit from such use? A large class of objections proceed from its past and present abuse, or from evils thence immediately resulting. Of the former it might be well at some future time to treat, namely, on the temptations likely to arise from our weakness and the malice of Satan in the performance of this duty: of the second be it remarked that, like certain symtoms after long illness, though in themselves painful, they are

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the marks of constitutional vigour and means of returning strength. Among these are the controversy and contention to which a renewed application to the study of the prophetic calendar has led. One great good hence resulting, has been the oversetting of self-love, which only loves those who echo our own opinions, and the re-establishment of one of the great principles of the Church fellowship,—that union is in the things which are in Christ, viz., in divine life, and love, and glory; and that the means of it—unity of purpose and object, are totally independent of uniformity of judgment.

All rejection of prophecy is from Satan. It well becomes those who are tempted to this sin to consider that contempt of it is distinctly declared to be a sign of the latter day iniquity, (2 Pet. iii. 4.) as well as the very means of the Gentile apostasy. (Rom. xi. 25.) Our Lord has also predicted it in His parables. (Matt. xxiv. 50, 51., xxv. 1.) The folly is greater because the experience of the Church speaks warning to us. For in their own days these escaped judgment through attention to prophecy, even Noah, and Lot, and Rahab, &c. &c.; and these despised and escaped not—Adam in the garden—the Antediluvians—the inhabitants of Sodom—Pharaoh—the Jewish People. May we remember that all these things were written for our instruction.

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THE WATERS OF BETHLEHEM.

How mighty and effective a principle is love!—How sustaining in difficulty, how cheering in enterprise! It is true, that all natural love takes its circuit round the creature, and never rises above that level to God; and therefore the more it is seen in natural life, the more does it mark the creature's shame, that He that made the heart, and gave it its sweetest feelings, should not have one throb given to Him; but it is love still, and as it works in the natural heart for the creature only, so in the renewed heart does it flow on in an expanded course to God; or I would rather say, finding its rest and centre in God first, it flows into the creature with all the pure and generous feeling that it has found in God. It might well be questioned whether any one is so selfish as to be unable to respond to the melody that is in that word—Love: though so limited in its meaning, as it must ever be to the unrenewed heart. Surely it must strike some chord; father, wife, child, brother, sister, friend. These names of fellowship and tenderness, must awaken many a happy thought, and draw forth many a desire that love will give birth to, from almost every heart; and every ardent pursuit for this world's bubbles, will find its strength and nourishment in the love that rests on them. At the very onset of the natural man's course in this sinning and blighted world, when first starting to be competitor with others, for the honour which cometh from man only, we all know how love enhances the value of the school-boy's prize. It is the thought of the pleasure with which the heart of our father or mother will beat on hearing it, that gives ten-fold beauty to the laurel we have won, and causes our heart to bound and leap again within us; and we may well doubt whether the most selfish of this world's warriors, when the acclamations of others were turning him into a god, so that he could almost fall down and worship himself, and kiss his own hand, whether the then almost quenched love of his heart for any but himself, did not yet find some liberty to think of the beating heart of his wife, and the joy

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it would give her. Nay, whether as the honours which were his became hers also; there was not a value given to them they never could have had, if love had not been there to brighten them into light and radiance.

It has been said, that when Mr. Heber recited his Prize Poem in the Theatre at Oxford, that his father was there, and that at every shout of praise, the eyes of all were turned to see, not the self-complacency of the victor, but the bright eye and happy face of the father. I need not explain this. Every heart that is not hardened by the selfishness of this day, will find plenty of scope in that scene, and know full well that speaking comparatively, the shouts would have been spiritless, and the Theatre gloomy, had not that father's gladdened face been there to brighten it.

We might go on through many scenes to prove the power of love to heighten enjoyment; and surely it is not less true that it is the basis of all strength in expectancy. What nerves the fainting breast in daily unremitting toil? Surely the joy of being able to feed and clothe those we love, for whom we labour; and we need only ask any to think of the pleasure of that man who by the sacrifice of himself can fill the lap of his wife and children with his wages, and so turn their hopes into surety; and he will at once understand this. But it must be so. Every principle that is brought into actual enjoyment, must be brought into the intelligent hopes of that enjoyment, or hope would not have its full power to influence the daily conduct. The magic of love also in destroying the power of present evil over our minds, is most strikingly seen when pestilence is among us; our common associates, or neighbours if stricken by it, become objects of dread to us, and we avoid them; but if our wife, husband, or child are smitten by it, the very desolation of their state draws out our love in greater strength; because shunned by others we love them the more: and infection with all its danger has no power to quell the activity of love; and a mother will clasp her tainted, and tainting babe to her heart with tenderer love than when it was fair and pure. But alas! how limited the circuit; how quickly fading, how transient the joy, that has no place beyond the creature. Where is the brilliant and happy eye of Heber's father? and where the bounding heart of his more happy son? How narrow the circle of that joy, that the earthly heart can

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make merry in, even were its portion all joy ; whereas joy is but a stranger, and trouble and trial its universal heritage.

But love is love still, when all that God is, and all that God has, becomes the unbounded circuit in which it finds its home. Love is the same, but the object different ; nor does it cease to include the narrower circle of human affections, but takes them into one full object—God ! Now all that know the great and terrible One that inhabiteth eternity, with the true affection of an humble and devoted heart, know him only in Jesus. We may be dismayed at His power whether clothing the heavens, or in putting life into the tiny veins of innumerable animalculæ, millions of which are not larger than one grain of sand ; we may shrink with terror from that holiness that needs a better answer than any tainted service of ours may give. We may yet be more dismayed at the disparity between us, when we reflect on the sunshine that lightens the path of His enemies, as well as those that fear Him ; but what can produce our love, what can give boldness to our hearts to love Him that we have offended, but his grace in Jesus? Here we learn His love, as it is written, " In this was manifested the love of God towards us, that God sent His only Son into the world, that we might live through Him ;" and in that service to the Father's love for us, do we learn all the love of Jesus, fulfilling the word of truth—" Love is strong as death ; jealousy is cruel as the grave ; the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a most vehement flame : many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it : if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." This was the power that carried Jesus through all that tried Him in the days of His flesh—Love ; first to the Father, and then to us ; nay, uniting both in one service, and always in suffering. He could ever say with joy, " I do always those things which please Him ;"and when going to death, " That the world may know that I love the Father, as the Father has given me commandment, so I do." Again in the agony of His soul, " Not my will, but thine be done." This was in no way a work of mere righteousness, it was no question of His personal answer to the righteousness of God ; but one of willing service unto others, in self-sacrifice to please the Father; and it was love which the floods that poured into His soul (Ps. lxix.)

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could not drown. So also to us, "Greater love hath no man than this, that He lay down His life for his friend's." "Having loved His own, He loved them unto the end," even to shame and death. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, that He laid down His life for us." Now it is the knowledge of this that subjects the soul in love to God, and puts the believer into the position, not of righteousness only, which is true, but something beyond it—the desire of doing all things which will please Him, in the circumstances in which we may be placed. It is not a question of duty merely, but of love. I speak as I doubt not, the Apostle does, of the new creature in Christ Jesus, in saying, "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not." "He that doeth righteousness is righteous;" but is this all? Alas! is it not where we have stopped, where the Church has taken its place? Nay, but is it not the right place of the Church (in the spirit of course as subjecting the flesh which is ever contrary to God,) to be as Jesus, not merely fulfilling righteousness, but going forth in the Spirit in happy service to do the will of Him that is Love, in the sorrowful circumstances of this sin-darkened world, giving itself up in obedient service to what love would direct in a world of sorrow, and as bearing upon an individual saint in conduct towards his brethren; how clearly is this marked in the example of what Jesus did, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us;" *we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* "I have given you an example that ye should do, as I have done unto you," when the lowly Servant in washing His brethren's feet. This is not righteousness, nay, far beyond it; the deeper the love of righteousness might be implanted within us by the Spirit, the more would it hurry us away from a sinning world and erring brethren; but would this be love either to our God or to them? Let us judge by the example of Jesus. His conduct was not the conduct of righteousness only,—it was that, but ever far beyond it; so ought ours to be. Oh if there is a dreary thought in these gloomy days, it is this—that there is no perception in the Church of its standing in love. The righteousness of Jesus was ministered to it in love, or what would His personal righteousness have availed us? it would have entitled Him when once humbled to all glory, but it would have given us no claim; and this would not have pleased the Father.—No, but

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when personally entitled at once to glory, (as we become, when we believe on Him,) to become a Servant to our wretchedness and the Father's love, this pleased Him: this pleased His merciful desires, and so He could say, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again." How narrow the circle of duty, how cold and chilling the word. It was not duty only in Christ to die, (save the duty of a Son, which is ever what love tells to be the hallowing of the Father's name,) it was the full desire of a Son's heart, saying, "Father glorify thy name," while the sorrowful word, "now is my soul troubled," (John xii.) told the depth of the sacrifice that heart could make.

Let us carry this solemn truth to explain the narrative of mutual love between David and his warriors in the 2nd of Samuel, 23rd chap. The whole history of David, the beloved, chosen, and anointed of God, is a beautiful drama of typical events; and his conduct in them, imperfect indeed, yet in every scene, giving some bright glimpse of that perfect grace that we have learnt in our "Son of Jesse."—His election to the throne—his anointing—his harp—his victory over Goliah—his outcast state—his devotedness in it to Israel that was hating him—his submission to Saul—his lowliness and trust—his tenderheartedness to his enemies when in his power—his true sorrow over them, even Saul and Abner—and at last his triumph and putting all his enemies under his feet—as the man of blood,—are surely the Spirit's living prediction of the history and character of Jesus from His baptism in Jordan, and the opening of the love and glory of heaven on His blessed head, till He comes forth as the crowned King, with His vesture dipped in blood, to obey that word, "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."

During the continuance of Saul in power, many were separated in faith to David; day by day some were added, "until it became a great host as the host of God." They gave up present power and rest with Saul in the faith of David's anointing, taking part with him as "hunted like the partridge in the mountains," knowing him to be the chosen of God, and that his kingdom would come, while God's judgments were pronounced on the kingdom of Saul; of which the anointing and choice of David was in itself full proof.

Here then, surely, we have the part of those who are now called

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to be saints; they are separated to the true David—to David's interests and hopes; separated from present things to future, all of which are dependant on the person of God's choice. They must stand therefore or fall with Him who is now rejected in hope. Need I say there is but one thing that gives to those whose true character is that they are "in distress, and discontent, and debt," boldness to go to David, even simple trust in that love that brought Him to seek and to save them that are lost; and surely nothing but trust in that blood which He shed to give them His own holy title to the kingdom and glory, can identify them with Him in hope. But when thus separated from the world to David and to David's glory, to partake of the fellowship of His sufferings, to be wanderers with Him in hope, to go in and out with Him, following Him whithersoever He goeth, in learning all His grace and all His beauty,—oh! how will the heart learn to love Him in the depths of His exquisite grace. Every trial brings out his faithful attachment to Israel amidst such provocation.—His reluctance, nay His refusal ever to resist evil.—His patient endurance, His trust in God, shining brighter and brighter at every step. Surely it was no wonder that they loved and wondered, and therefore do we find all the prowess of His valiant followers brought out as it were, by this principle. They constantly erred, but their love never failed.—They said indeed, in ignorance, when in the cave with helpless Saul, "Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, behold I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand," as also his faithful Abishai in the camp, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day, now let me therefore smite him I pray thee." (1 Sam. 24—26.) And so also Peter, "This be far from thee Lord," when He spoke of suffering and death: and when they came to take Him, in the spirit of Abishai, with the same misjudging but true love, he smote off the ear of the High Priest's servant. Personal attachment to their Lord, and complete identity of interest with Him, is however marked throughout, however they failed in judgment: and oh where is this now? I do not say that it is not far better, that while our love abounds that it should be in knowledge and in all judgment—But where is the love? How straight would many a crooked path be made; how clear much that is now involved in the obscurity of double-mindedness, if all

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things were tried by love. It would not then be said or thought, "how little may I sacrifice for Jesus and yet be saved? how much of Saul's kingdom may I retain and yet have part in David's?" Nor should we so often hear "Surely there is no harm in this," "It is not right to be so ascetic," and "We must keep our stations." Let us hearken to the word of Jesus,—"He that is not with me is against me; he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." And there is nothing too little to be gathered with Him, and to give us an opportunity of proving our love. "Is this becoming a follower of Jesus? Is this suited to the glory and character of His kingdom? Will this please or displease our Lord and Saviour?" these, these are the questions of love, and surely all clever advocacy of evil, or the toleration of evil; all the skilful alchymy of the unloving heart to divide the world into what is allowed, and not allowed; all the power of heresy which detracts from the glory of Jesus in His person and Godhead; all the wiles of the enemy in substituting a prospering Church in the Spirit, for the personal presence of its Lord, and the glory of His heavenly and earthly kingdoms—all are put to flight by the simple power of love. Nay, yet further, it is love that writes in full and clear characters, Ich-abod on all which is so boasted in. If there is brotherly love brought to pass, and sustained by self-sacrifice; if Christians are the servants of one another, each seeking to be the lowliest, heavenly-minded, and acting on principles that get no recompence here save the Spirit's assurance that they are pleasing Jesus; if faith which will sacrifice all present things, and be a stranger and pilgrim, declaring plainly by its conduct, the brightness of its future crown be seen in the Churches now, then are these words of Scripture warning "There shall come a falling away."—"If ye continue in His goodness, if not, ye shall be cut off," when applied to them, nothing but the querulous murmurings of discontented spirits; but if not, and the commandments of Jesus are not kept, and the dishonour of His sacred name unwept and unregarded, then will love to that name weep, and in sorrow of soul go on to utter its mournful cry amid the merriment of idolatry, "Ichabod, Ichabod."

"If we are beside ourselves, it is to God; if we are sober, it is for your cause; for the love of God constraineth us," saith the Apostle,

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"Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ: no man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." "To him that overcometh, will I give a white stone, and on it a new name written, that no man knoweth but he that receiveth it." Love to Jesus, made the Apostle beside himself; love to man, made him sober; but it was all love—a love so like his Master, that he could say to them, "The less I am loved, the more abundantly will I love you;" so like his Master's, seeking always to please Him as He had pleased the Father, that no perils could check or quench it; and in the midst of all endurance from the world without, and the misjudging hearts of brethren within, where did he look for recompence but to that day and to that hour when the voice he loved would say, "Well done good and faithful servant?" and the hand he loved would give him "the white stone, and the crown of glory which would not fade away," because he had pleased Him who had so called him to be a soldier; and when as they had suffered together, so would they be glorified together.

It was in warring against Israel's unfailing enemy, the Philistine, that David was in the hold, and thirsted for the waters of Bethlehem. The war of the true David and his men, is not indeed, as yet, with flesh and blood, but with the mightier Philistine,—"the ruler of the darkness of this world:" and surely as they are expecting, so is He; and as they are warring, so is He in them. David longed and said, "Oh! that one would give me water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate." No command was uttered, duty was not called upon. Need so expressed never could have found its way to the cold heart of duty, and if it had, there were many suggestions at once to keep it still. The Philistine garrisoned Bethlehem, and the well was within the guarded gate, and there was much hazard in the way. The thirst of David could not be quenched without much risk, and why quench it? it would please him indeed, but it would not advance his kingdom or his people's, and could indeed further no object but that of pleasing him. It is enough too, if a soldier strictly performs his duty, and diligently attends to all directions given to him, more cannot be required of him. "David has not told us to attack Bethlehem.—It is his personal need merely, and why should we hazard our lives to meet that?" Is not this the language of duty, but is it

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the language of love ? Has our David no need now ? is he not thirsting now for that which is only to be obtained by the self-sacrifice of his people, acting on the only recognized principle of this dispensation ? "He that loveth his life shall lose it; but he that loseth his life for my sake shall gain it unto life eternal." This is the place of the loving believer, seeking to please at all loss the Lord of his heart and life; and learning by communion with Him, to know not only his general commands, but what will give an answer to the present desire of his soul. "Filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that we might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;" and it is to this he looks.

Let us judge by His word to the Churches, "I know thy works." What are they ? surely not "thou hast kept the sabbath, and refrained from the pleasures of the world;" not mere uprightness and integrity of conduct, not attention to what are called ordinances and acts of occasional benevolence.—These are not the works that gladden His heart as the fruit of that faith that worketh by love; nay, "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil, and hast borne, and hast patience, and *for my name's sake* hast laboured, and hast not fainted." Surely it is for this, and more, that he thirsts; and if his desire is unsatisfied, does he not add, "nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Again, how is this seen in the message to Pergamos ? "I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is, (as though within the hosts of the Philistines) and thou holdest fast my name and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr." How does his love appear to tell its gladness in those words, "*My faithful martyr;*" he had met the thirst of His soul, that the Father should be glorified in their fruits, and His love answered. He had been a faithful martyr for Antipas, and Antipas was through his grace faithful in the same love; he had held fast the name of Jesus, and in death had given the waters of Bethlehem to meet the desire of his master's soul. Again, to Thyatira, "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience, and thy works, and the last to be more than the first." And again to Philadelphia, as love was fast receding

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from the Church, how sweet to hear him say, "I know thy works; thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name;" and as though he would give the fullest recompense to this, he adds, "*my*" to every promise, "The temple of *my* God." "The name of *my* God." "The city of *my* God, and *my* new name." These then are the waters of Bethlehem,—labour, patience, service, charity, faith, holding fast the name and glory of Jesus. Faithfulness in suffering, in death; works, the fruit of faith in all the past love and coming glory of Jesus. Works, not of obedience to the law of Moses, but accordant with the grace of Christ. Works that were in Him to the glory of the Father,—charity, service, faith, patience, in life and death. Love which seeks to please and satisfy. Love which looks onward to approval, the spring and life of it all. Love which when David said, "Oh! that one would give me to drink of the waters of the well of Bethlehem," was answered thus, "Then the three mighty men broke through the host of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was in the city, and brought it to David." How keen the hearing of love! how eagle-eyed the sight of love! how strong and skilful the arm of love! how undaunted, how resolute the heart of love! David longed for the waters, and the waters were won; and as the hazard and peril were great, so the joy of the warrior's heart that their love could be so proved. The greater the jeopardy, the stronger the love; and these were the waters to meet David's thirst, as the willing offering of tried love. They had given up their lives for his sake, to satisfy his thirst, and win his smile; and oh gracious and loving master, the waters so won, were too precious for him to drink. "Is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? and he would not drink it, but poured it out before the Lord." He calls it their blood, or their life, for they had not counted it dear unto themselves. They had given up their lives, and the waters were as their life to him, and this is our calling, "Losing our lives (John xii.) for His sake!" and all that is given to him by self sacrifice, is by him accounted so precious that he gives it to the Father, as it is written, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples;" and "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God." (Phil. i. 11.)

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And as in the days of His flesh, it was ever the delight of Jesus to satisfy the Father's desires by His own faithful and loving obedience; even now, what is His joy but that those that are His should glorify the Father too? and how, but by owning the glory of Jesus, being constrained by the love of Jesus to give themselves through Him to the Father?—"*He* poured *it* out before the Lord."—Fruit from the "True Vine" to the Great Husbandman.—The life of Jesus which is love flowing on to these the branches.—All coming from the Father through Jesus, by the Spirit, and ascending up again through Jesus to the Father. Jesus is the winner of the fruit; for love to Him, personal attachment to Him, is the intelligent principle that must work every deed of holy chivalry. The Spirit is the life of every deed, as teaching the heart the love of Jesus, and working this the will of God in us, and the Father receives the fruit through the blessed Son; for "He poured it out before the Lord." Oh! marvellous thought! a cup of cold water, taken from ourselves and given to any for Jesus' sake, trifling as it is, must yet involve in its gift the whole work of the Godhead. And shall we be careless about these things? Surely our gracious Master thirsts: the hosts of the uncircumcised garrison this evil world, but yet the waters of Bethlehem are in it. The greater the danger, the more sweet the water to him who thirsts;—and the day is at hand when a loud voice will be heard saying in heaven, "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.*" (Rev. xii.) Even so come Lord Jesus!

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THE WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH.

Πᾶσα πατριὰ ἐν οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπι γῆς. (Eph. iii. 15.)

THE blessing of man, and with him of all creation, is to be determined simply by his position before God. Therefore to be without *God* is to be without *hope* in the world; and thus every renewed soul proves, in the daily, hourly history of his own little kingdom within, that his blessing is in the favour of the Lord, and that clouds and sorrows arise when that favour is withdrawn or forgotten. As man at first stood on the face of this earth of ours, his blessing was all of this character. He was blest because his whole condition reflected the kindness and love of his Creator. His very constitution was as the *Image of God*, the manifestation of Divine perfections and dominion; (Gen. i. 27,) in the Sabbath a standing witness of *fellowship between him and his Creator* was ordained; (Gen. ii. 1.) *over* him he had a most gracious Lord, who enjoined on him only a *necessary* burthen; (Gen. ii. 16.) *around* him he saw a fair creation spread as his own domain, made willingly subject to him in its ten thousand sources of tribute and service, by their great Creator; for, in token of man's lordship of them all, the Lord brought them to him to be named, and whatsoever name Adam gave them the same was the name thereof; (Gen. ii. 19., see Isa. xl. 26.) *By his side*, to complete his blessedness, he had given him of the Lord a companion fully meet for him, a part of himself,—bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; (Gen. ii. 22.) and thus was his condition perfect and blessed in every relation, shewing forth the kindness of God; and he had access to the Tree of Life to keep it so. But all this state of things was forfeited by transgression;—all blessing was gone when the divine favour was withdrawn, when enmity fell out between the righteous God and His offending creature; so did it between the creatures as among themselves. There was no longer the due subjection of the earth to Adam, when Adam had failed in his subjection to God; the earth yielded thorns and thistles to him, as soon as he had brought

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forth the fruit of a heart revolted from God, and the joys of innocency between the man and the woman were all likewise fled,—their nakedness was now their shame, and confidence was changed for covering.

The whole economy of creature-blessedness in Paradise, thus presented for a moment, and thus disturbed, was however a mystery; the tabernacle there was, it is true, quickly taken down, but not until we had seen in it the shadows of better things to come.

The purpose of God is not affected by this failure in man. The order of creation, as set in subjection to Adam for the glory of the Lord God, and the union of man with woman taken out of him, and thus made the partner of his name and dignity, is "a great mystery." We have divinely traced for us in all this, the union of Christ and the Church, and the creation put in subjection under Him; (see Ps. viii., Eph. v. 32.) and we look now for the opening of a happier Paradise, for the erection of a second Temple, that is never to be taken down, but to continne the blessed witness of the sustaining faithful strength of the Second Man, who is the Lord from heaven; who having bruised her enemy under her foot, will go in and out there with His espoused Church, made "bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh," who shall then know the support and comfort of His right hand for ever.

The opening heavens do thus, as it were, shine around us in the opening of the book of God; the fellowship of heaven and earth that is there presented, the fellowship of man and his woman, the fellowship of man with the creation around him, shall all be displayed again, and that too in still more blessedness and glory; because of the dignity of the person, and the unspeakable riches and excellency of the work of Him, in and by whom all this is to be established. Christ Jesus our Lord is the single-handed power of God to do all this: He alone is the slayer and abolisher of every enmity; the reconciler and fixed centre of all this order and fellowship for ever; as it is written, "Hereafter shall ye see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the *Son of man;*" (John i. 51.) and again "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, He (God) might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, *even in Him.*" (Eph. i. 10.)

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Our Lord Christ who is at once "God over all, blessed for ever," and "Son of man," "made of a woman," who in the work given Him to do according to the everlasting covenant, descended first into the lower parts of the earth, and then ascended up far above all heavens, has title to "Fill all things:" (Eph. iv 10.) and in Him when He has asserted this His title, "the whole family in heaven and on earth" is to be gathered. May the Spirit who witnesses to Him, and shews the saints things to come, so trace before us those varied features of His glory, that desiring Him we may ever in Spirit be saying, "Come Lord Jesus." And let us not be ashamed to own, "That hope long deferred maketh the heart sick," seeing that we should know no full satisfying joy till we see Him. (John xvi. 21.) The Lord Jesus Christ, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, and by whom through faith in His name, the poor sinner has even now full remission of his sins, and access to God as his heavenly Father in full assurance of His love, is known in Scripture to sustain the glorious character, among many others, of *King of Israel* and *Head of the Church.*

The Jewish nation had constant expectation of Messiah, in the first of these. To the hope connected with Him as *King of Israel,* the twelve tribes, as the Apostle says, instantly serving God, day and night, hoped to come. It was therefore simply by such a character that the Jews tried the claims of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus when He spake to them of being lifted up, signifying thereby what *death* He should die, they said to Him, (John xii. 34.) "We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou the Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?" They had known their Messiah under this title of Son of man, but then it was in connexion with a dominion, and glory and kingdom, that should never pass away; for thus had their Prophet spoken. (Dan. ii. 13, 14.) "But who was *this* Son of man who was thus to be lifted up?" And His own Apostles whom He had called and chosen for Himself out of Israel, were thus Jewish in their expectation respecting Him; as appears, I might say, from the whole tenor of their intercourse with the Lord, and particularly from the request of Zebedee's children, and from the Apostles, saying, even after He had risen from the dead, "Wilt

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thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 6.) Besides there was equal ignorance in the Jews and the Apostles, touching the mystery of "The little while." (John vii. 34., xvi. 16.) The difference between them did not rest in any different expectation respecting the Messiah, but rather in their faith or unbelief concerning the truth, that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

And this knowledge of Christ, according to the measure of Jewish hopes even by His own chosen ones, was only "after the flesh;" (2 Cor. v. 16.) for it linked their expectations with this earth merely, it did not take them out of the system of human affections and associations, or guide them into the apprehension of any heavenly inheritance in and with Him; for this rests in the revelation of Him as *Head of the Church*, and this character of Messiah is to be known only by the ministry of the Holy Ghost among the saints.

This second character of the Christ, Head of the Church, with its resulting power in the Church or body mystical, I judge to have been the mystery laid up in the purposes of God, but hid from ages and generations, i.e., not disclosed in former times or by previous dispensations. (Rom. xvi. 25., Eph. iii. 5.) And there is involved in its very nature, if I may so speak, a necessity for its being thus hidden: for the blessed Lord entered into this character of Head of the Church on His entrance into His heavenly glory, and that resulted from Israel's rejection of Him; so that the revelation of the Christ as Head of His body the Church, has to wait the manifestation of Israel's apostasy, and thus could not by dispensations, have been disclosed till the apostasy was so evidenced.* That the Lord's entrance into His present glory in heaven resulted from Israel's apostasy, among other passages, is intimated by His own words in the presence of the great organs of Jewish unbelief, in the day of the power of darkness. When challenged of the Elders, Chief Priests, and Scribes, to say whether He were "The Christ the Son of God," after speaking in terms full of righteous condemnation of them, convicting as it were, the place of judgment, that behold iniquity was there, saying, "If I tell you, ye will not believe; and if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, or let me go;" he adds, "From henceforth (απο τον νυν) shall ye

* See Christian Witness, Vol. 1. p. 435, "The Secret of God."

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see the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God;" that is, that now was the time of exalting Him to His *heavenly* glory, since Israel had rejected Him, giving Him no place of glory on *earth*. (Luke xxii. 68, 69.)

The Father has thus made man's wrath to praise Him; the Christ has lost His earthly glory for a season, being the heir of the vineyard and yet cast out by the vineyard's wicked husbandmen, but the Father has raised this rejected stone to the highest, and thus prepared larger joys and new honours to await Him in the coming day of the revelation of His glory.

During this present age (while waiting for Him who has turned away His face in righteous anger from the house of Israel, until He repent and leave a blessing behind Him) (Is. viii. 17.) the Christ as Head over all things to His Church, is gathering His saints by His Word and Spirit. The Saints, "whose conversation is in heaven," who "sit in heavenly places," by the ministry of the Spirit, shall be brought to their perfect measure, and thus being constituted "The family in heaven," who are knit together in "The knowledge of the *Son* of God," will have their place with the Son in the *Father's* house; and in His the Son's kingdom. (Eph. iv. 13., Is. xiv. 1., Rev. iii. 22.)*

This family ordained for heaven, are already through the Spirit, brought into circumstances altogether ultra-Jewish, if I may so speak. They are in the *adoption*, and not merely in the place of *servants;* (Gal. iv. 1—4.) they are even now "blest with all spiritual blessings in *the heavenlies*;" not merely with blessings of the *earth*, they are in the expectancy of the inheritance of all things *with* Christ; and not merely becoming the subjects of a kingdom under Him; (Rom. viii. 17.) they are in present conflict not with flesh and blood, or with the nations of the earth, but with spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies, and are taught to hope for final victory over them, and of completely dispossessing them of their present place and power. (Eph. ii. 2. with 1 Thess. iv. 17. see also Rev. xii. 10.)

When the Church is thus complete and her fulness brought in, "all Israel" is to be saved. (Rom. xi. 26.) This present dispen-

* See Christian Witness, Vol. 1, p. 361. "Jehovah-Jesus,—Son of David and Son of God."

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sation will have its purpose answered in the taking of the saints into their place of union in heaven with the Lord their Head, which is the first resurrection. Then the same blessed Lord, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in power, and on whose head are to be "many crowns," will turn His hand to gather His Family on earth, (for the blessings of the earth are Israel's, and all the nations in and through them) in the character of the *King of Israel*, or "God of the whole *earth*." (Is. liv. 5.) His glory shall then arise on Zion, and the Gentiles shall come to the light thereof. He shall be set on the earth as God's Salvation, to be the glory of His people Israel, and to embrace all the nations within the light of His presence. (Luke ii. 32.) Then shall come the glorious dispensation of the fulness of times, when all, whether in heaven or on earth, will be gathered together in one, even in Christ. (Eph. i. 10.) Then shall the fellowship of heaven and earth be restored, and Christ, as the true Jacob's ladder, be the ruler and sustainer of it all;—truth shall then spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven; the heavens and the earth, the morning stars and the children of Israel, the angels in the height, and kings with all people of the earth, shall together praise the name of the Lord. (Ps. cxlviii.) "His will shall be done in all places of His dominion, and the days of heaven shall be upon the earth." (Deut. xi. 21.)

That verse which I have selected, as summarily presenting that truth which I am desiring to trace in this paper, (Eph. iii. 15.) has no doubt been commonly read as describing the saints who have departed this life, and are now, as is judged, in heaven; and those who are still in their bodies on the earth. I would be understood fully to grant that there are numbers of God's dear family now disembodied, as in heaven, and member of the same family still on earth, and that these are of course, included in "the whole family;" but then they cannot assuredly constitute of themselves that family in its *wholeness*. The family presented in its wholeness must wait for the day when all whom God regards as His are gathered together; and to which this passage in its natural bearing has respect. The purpose of the Holy Ghost in this verse (which may be treated as an adjective or parenthesis,) is, to tell us that "the whole family" acknowledges one God and Father, "the

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Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" thus leaving it for other Scriptures to instruct us as of whom it is that that "whole family" is to consist; and which as desiring and praying to be fully subject to those Scriptures, I am now aiming to do. May the Lord give us the Spirit of humble worshippers in all our labours.

This family then, though part in heaven and part on earth, shall be one, as owning one Father, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The heavenly branch of it are to be with the Firstborn in the Father's house, His God their God, His Father their Father, His dwelling their dwelling, His inheritance theirs also, the fulness of the Father's love theirs as His. (John xvii. 26., xx. 17.) "Ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." And the branch of it which shall be found on earth, shall be gathered by and into a Father's love also; for the true Solomon, Christ as David's Son, the Head of Jewish glory, shall enjoy that ancient promise of His God, "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son;" and this joy resting in fulness on His head shall circulate among the thousands of His Israel; this oil of gladness shall descend from the beard to the skirts of the Aaron clothing; for Jehovah of old spake of Israel as His Son, as His Firstborn. (Ex. iv. 22.) So, in equal dispensation, believers are made now the righteousness of God in Christ. (2 Cor. v. 21.) And the Prophet anticipating the day of Judah's salvation, says of Jerusalem, "This is the name wherewith she shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." (Jer. xxxiii. 16.)

This leads me, then, to consider what is to be the *principle* upon which this "whole family in heaven and on earth" is to be formed. I design, then, to consider the *order*, or successive acts of Christ by which these branches of the family of God are to be thus formed; and then the *connection and intercourse* that may be maintained among them. Sweet meditations for faith and hope; though knowing but in part, we can but speak or think of these things in part.

As to the *principle*, by which the family of God is to be formed, it is mere *grace*—grace setting the saints in heaven, and establishing Israel with the worshipping obedient nations in the earth; grace coming forth from the love of God, to bring us home into the love of the Father. "God hath concluded them all in un-

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belief, that He might have mercy upon all," is the Apostle's summary of the Lord's dealings with the Church and with Israel, after He had been tracing Israel's rejection for a time, in order to let in "the fulness of the Gentiles," and in the end to save all Israel;" thus shewing that mercy should alike rejoice through the gathered and blest families in heaven and in earth; and in the satisfying sense of this, he breaks forth into that note, not of *ignorant* but of *intelligent* admiration, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out." (Rom. xi. 33.) Here may our souls rest for ever; here may we dwell, having our delight therein, the mercy of our God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

That *grace* is the principle of our present salvation, and our future inheritance, of that which is now reserved *in heaven* for us, is the sweet burthen, I would say, of all the New Testament Scriptures, and to which every thought and feeling of the renewed soul must fully consent. I would not, therefore, speak particularly upon it. But that Israel is to come hereafter into the blessing of the earth, simply by *grace*, may be more carefully traced. Though gradually presented in many parts of Scripture, yet it is specifically so in that beautiful scene recorded in Exodus xxxii—xxxiv., which has been already slightly referred to in one of the papers of this publication.* I would here shortly refer to another passage, (Deut. xxix, xxx.) as exhibiting the same doctrine

Moses had just pointed to the people the blessing and the curse that was necessarily appended to their obedience or disobedience; (Deut. xxviii.) when he calls them again to listen further to words of covenant between them and the Lord. (xxix. 1.) He then recites generally the mercies they had enjoyed at the hand of God from their days in Egypt, telling them however that the Lord had not as yet circumcised their heart. (2—9.) He then solemnly places them before the Lord as His people, warning them as he had done before, that disobedience would but cause them to be scattered through the earth, their land to be left a wilderness, and then themselves to become, as it were, a proverb and wonder to the nations of the world. (10—29.) He proceeds then further to unfold the Lord's covenant with them, shewing them that when

* See Vol. 1. Page 331.

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they had thus fully entered into the curse of disobedience, if they or the children (for that covenant equally embraced all generations) of them, (xxix. 15., xxx. 2.) should repent, then the Lord would have compassion on them and gather them, and circumcise their heart so that they should live for ever, and be blest in every work of their hand, in the fruit of their body, of their cattle, and of their land. (xxx. 1—10.) He then darkly hints to them on what this repentance was to be founded, i.e., *faith; for he uses the very same words which the Apostle quotes as expressive of the dispensation of faith or grace in opposition to that of law and works.* (11—14., Rom. x. 6.)

This dispensation then, of faith or grace, is that which is hereafter to establish Israel in the blessing of the earth for ever, when they repent, or in faith turn to Jesus their Messiah, looking to Him whom they pierced, (Zech. xii. 10) and welcoming Him as their King and Deliverer, (Matt. xxiii. 39.) saying, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." So also in Moses' Song, which follows very closely upon this, (Deut. xxxii.) we have the same covenant presented; for there, after the Prophet had been forewarning his nation of the curse that was to come upon them for their unfaithfulness to Jehovah, he points to the land of the people, in the distant future, as receiving *mercy*, and speaks of this as that which was among other things *sealed up among God's treasures*, (xxxii. 34—43.) as he had before called the grace or mercy of God to Israel, God's "secret;" (xxix. 29.) and it is these *sealed treasures of grace*, this *secret* of *mercy* that the Spirit largely discloses, and makes known in our dispensation, shewing, as He graciously does, "plainly of the Father."

That grace is thus the fountain of all blessing to Israel, and shall hereafter establish them in the land of their fathers, is presented to us also very strikingly in an event in the life of the Patriarch Jacob.—When he was returning with his households and flocks out of the land of his exile, his brother's heart was moved against him, and he came forth to meet him with four hundred men. Jacob commits his case into the hands of God, and from Him in the action of wrestling with the Angel, until he had prevailed, he receives a pledge that the mercy he desired should be his.—And so it was; the anger that stirred in his brother's heart

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was quieted, and Jacob passed safely and honourably into the land of his covenant. (Gen. xxxii. 24.)

Now Jacob in all this stands before us as the type of Israel in the last times, when they shall come forth from their present exile to claim their promised inheritance; and their God and deliverer shall shew Himself in the house of their need, still the enemy and avenger, and give them the land of their fathers.

Jacob, Israel's representative, was taught by the Angel's touch disjointing the hollow of his thigh, to know that the blessing then pledged to him, was all of grace: for that the Angel had not put forth all his strength, but had either *allowed* himself to be prevailed over: and just as our Apostle was given in like manner and with like purpose, a thorn in the flesh, that he might learn that he was weak in himself, but through grace had all his sufficiency in Jesus. (2 Cor. xii. 7.)

Israel then, as Jacob was, shall be taken through *grace* into their *earthly* inheritance, and the Church shall, through the same grace be taken into the heavenly glory, and thus mercy alone shall establish the whole family in heaven and on earth.

I would now behold (through the mercy of our God, who would have His saints to meditate in His ways, and humbly and yet freely inquire in His temple,) seek to trace from Scripture what will be the *order* or procedure of our God when He comes to form His households and to set His whole family in heaven and on earth. And what shall we ask Him by the Spirit to give us in this and in all our inquiries? The temper of children who consciously know nothing but through His word and teaching; the mind of friends who delight to use the privilege of friendship by learning his secrets, and claiming his confidence: the unshod feet of worshippers ever heedful that the ground is holy. For though whatever things are written, are for our learning; yet are they the things of the blessed God, and we are but the creatures of His hand. And O for faith to trace these things, and meditate upon them, as though we stood in the presence of them; so that we may enter more and more into the substance of the things hoped for, and be less sensible of the things that are present, whether joyous or sorrowing; having blessed deliverance from their power, through the faith of the things that lie beyond them all.

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The blessed Lord Jesus is now ascended up far above all heavens and has been seated on the Father's throne, the place of incommunicable glory and majesty. He has gone up on high as a mighty conqueror, and has all power given unto Him in heaven and on earth. He has gone up on high as a mighty High Priest, to do the service of the heavenly temple for us, waiting in sympathy on our infirmities, and being our advocate with the Father. In these His ascension glories, He is exercising Himself for the completing the full measure and stature of His body the Church, until it come to the "perfect man" in Christ. His long delayed return is "salvation, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And thus His ascension state is not to be the last stage in His wondrous history. The heavens only retain Him *until* the times of the decreed restitution of all things be come. He then is to come again in like manner as He once went into heaven; as the High Priest who once a year went into the holiest, came forth again to meet the people.

Now the order and progress of the Saviour's journey of old, back to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and also of His return and entrance into that glory which is still reserved for Him, may be somewhat traced in Scripture. And what paths are these to trace?

In passing from the grave to His glory, having broken the bands of death because it was not possible that He should be holden in it; He stayed for a while on this earth, which of old He had given to the children of men. Here He spake with those who were His for forty days, concerning the kingdom of God; shewing pledges to them of His constant faithful love, and shewing not only that He was dead was alive again, but that He was going to glory; the same gracious Master whose love in the days of His sojourn with them, had been ever so present to comfort and keep them.

In passing upward from them to His seat higher than all heavens, we may trace Him spoiling principalities and powers, the spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places, leading captivity captive, making shew of them openly, triumphing over them, (it may be in the sight of elect angels) as the Serpent's mighty bruiser, who had come down to the earth, the house of the strong man, and as the stronger than he, had bound him and spoiled his goods.

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Then having accomplished His way back to the highest heavens, He was received of the Father and seated at His own right hand, in token of the Father's infinite complacency in Him, and, for His sake, in the Church, for whom He had thus humbled Himself, and fought and conquered. "Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool," was the welcome with which He was then received. Sweet consolation for Him who had heard the cry from earth, "We will not have this man to reign over us." The fulness of joy anointed Him there, though here He was crucified; "In thy presence is fulness of joy," said the Lord, anticipating His ascension to the Father.

The season of His return from this His seat on high, waits the Father's pleasure. He hath put this in His own power, for the Son had subjected Himself according to the covenant for us; He *receives* a kingdom and then returns. The present prince of this air, the spiritual wickedness that is now in the heavenly places, ruling the darkness of this world, is to be displaced. Michael and his angels are to fight against the Dragon and his angels. Jesus is to descend from "On high" into these lower heavens, and as Michael to prevail, till the great Dragon, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, is cast into the earth, and his angels with him, and no place be found for them any more in heaven. (Rev. xii. 7—9.)

The Dragon thus cast out of heaven, comes down with great wrath to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, his persecution being directed especially against Israel, who will then be brought into expectation of their Messiah as the heir of David's throne; and thus consequently be witness to Him as heir of the world against the Dragon the usurper of it, and the kings of the earth his champions. The Dragon's title to the earth is always disproved, as indeed the Lord's right to every thing from the grave of death to the throne of the highest in heaven, has been blessedly manifested by His passing throughout all these, rising in the execution of His mighty work as the descended and the ascended One; but He the rightful heir has not actually assumed His right; and thus the usurper has still power and seat, and great authority to confer, which he will do until He comes whose right all power is.

And come He will with "Ten thousands of His saints," to smite

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the kings of the earth, to shew Himself as the mighty God, the Kinsman-Redeemer, who shall deliver the inheritance of the family of God, and fix it in their possession for ever.*

His action, as the Goel or Redeemer, as appears, will be conducted in the *wrath of the Lamb*, against the Antichrist and his company, who have despised His *grace* as the Lamb of God presented to them for the taking away of sin; and in the *wrath of the Son*, (who as being Son should have been acknowledged to be Heir also) against the kings and judges of the earth who refused to do righteously, as for Him King of kings and Lord of lords, but held themselves as the ministers of iniquity and champions of the usurper. (Rev. vi. 16., Ps. xi. xii.) The citizens of this world sent after the departing Lord the cry, "We will not have this Man to reign over us;" that cry has been echoed through their ranks ever since, and will be kept up until it is answered in righteous wrath, "These mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me." (Luke xix. 27.) "O my God, make them like a wheel, as the stubble before the wind; as the fire burneth a wood, and as the

* The rapture of the saints into the air, or place of glory, has been often typified in the course of the history of God's Church and people. Thus it was in the person of Elijah; because in the holy mount, where was presented a vision of the majesty of the Lord, the Son of man, that Prophet with Moses is seen in the glory, Moses representing that portion of the saints who having slept in Jesus are to *rise* first, and with the Elijahs, or *translated*, or *changed* saints, (1 Cor. xv. 51.) be taken to meet the Lord. And again, the resurrection of those who sleep in Jesus, is further pledged to them by the opening of the graves, when Jesus gave up the ghost; and the rising of the bodies of some of the saints after His resurrection. But I would still rather refer to the catching up of St. Paul into the third heavens, believing it to be a similar type, though as far as I have heard, little regarded as such. In the opening of 2 Cor. x. we find the Apostle setting himself to vindicate his office against the slanders of some (it may be) judaizing intruders. In the progress of his argument with them, he refers to the signs of an Apostle which had been wrought by him, of his perils, his stripes, his shipwrecks, his journeyings, and at last comes "to visions and revelations of the Lord;" that he "a man in Christ" had been caught up into Paradise, and there heard unutterable words. (2 Cor. xii.) Now in all this, I look on our Apostle as the Church's type, now in suffering as she is, in conflict with a world that gainsays or slanders her hopes, but for whom is reserved rapture into Paradise; there to know a joy which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. For we observe that Paul merely speaks of himself on this occasion as "A man in Christ," which is assuredly the common suitable description of all the saints. And O that the saints, like the Apostles, may preserve in the presence of the world's unbelief and gainsaying, "the gentleness and meekness of Christ;" patiently waiting for the day when they shall thus be taken into the heavenly glory, and ever like the living Moses, be saying to their neighbours "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you come with us and we will do thee good." (Num. x. 29.)

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flame setteth the mountains on fire, so persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm; fill their faces with shame, that they may seek thy name O Lord; let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea let them be put to shame and perish; that men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art Most High over all the earth." (Ps. lxxxiii. 13—18.) How terrible that such language as this should be righteously taken up on the lips of those who are now beseeching the powers of the earth to be reconciled to this blessed Son; "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed ye judges of the earth, serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling; kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little; blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." (ii. 10—12.) But if the counsel of the Lord be now set at nought, the coming calamity will be laughed at. Blessed, blessed Lord, write all thy word with thine own living Spirit on the fleshly tables of our hearts, that we may not in our weakness only speak of these things, but in His power have our life in them, and according to them! It is then that the Lord will awake as out of sleep; (Ps. x. 12. xliv. 23.) then will He, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew Himself; (Ps. xciv. 1.) He whose right hand (the emblem of His power) is now folded in His bosom, will then pluck it thence to use it; (Ps. lxxiv. 10, 11.) to use it as the true David for the clearing of the promised inheritance of all the enemies of God and His people; and then for the sitting down as the true Solomon, in the fulness and peace of His kingly honours; His sun rising on the earth as a morning without clouds: (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) His light enlightening the Gentiles, and being the glory of His people Israel; the first dominion, the kingdom brought to the daughter of Jerusalem, but the people of the nations flowing into it—the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel being then called the God of the whole earth. (Is. liv. 1—5., Ps. lxxii. 8—11., Mic. iv. 1—8.)

This shall be the gathering of "The family on earth," the full coming of the kingdom, when the will of God shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven, when the days of heaven shall be upon the earth; (Deut. xi. 21.) all bowing their knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and every tongue confessing

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that the once rejected Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 11., Eph. i. 10)

This order of gathering, *first*, the family in heaven, and *then* the family on earth, is, as I apprehend, represented in several Scriptures, as in Rom. xi, already alluded to, "The fulness of the Gentiles," preceding the salvation of "all Israel." I will however, in addition, only notice the 12th chap. of St. John, which very fully and graciously gives us to look at this order of Christ's procedure in taking the heaven and the earth, and gathering His families there.

When the chapter opens, our blessed Lord's paschal sufferings were approaching very closely.—He was on His way to Jerusalem as the place out of which a Prophet could not perish. He first reaches Bethany, which lay outside the city; and is there refreshed: and the scene represents us with a lively figure of the Lord in the bosom of His Church, as we may draw from the following considerations:—

1.—This house in Bethany exhibited a sample of faith in Him as dead and alive again. The anointing His feet by the loving, worshipping Mary, was in token of her faith in His burial and all its blessed wondrous fruit. It expressed her faith in Him as the Holy One of God, whose body should not see corruption, but that He, the Jesus, who was about to be crucified, should be anointed, and glorified, and consecrated to a royal priesthood; for this was signified by the ceremonial oil of the law, whose mystical virtues her pot of spikenard would fain rival and set forth. And such is the faith of the Church now; she stands as believing in Him who raised up Jesus from the dead; (Rom. iv. 24.) who wrought His mighty power in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and dominion (Eph. i. 20.) in God, who has exalted Jesus, obedient unto death; and given Him a name, at which every knee in heaven, and earth, and under the earth should bow. (Phil. ii. 8—10.)

II.—So this house, as the Church does, witnessed His resurrection-power in the person of Lazarus. "You hath He quickened," is the word to every member of the Church, "who were dead in trespasses and sins." "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ

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he is none of His :" "but if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." And Lazarus, the witness of Christ's resurrection-power is, in this house of blessing, seen *seated* with the Lord, in token of that full fellowship which the Church is to have with Him, when she sits at His table with Him in His kingdom. (See Matt. xxvi. 29.)

III.—This house in Bethany was the place into which the Lord retired when He was rejected by Israel; (see Matt. xxi. 17., Mark xi. 11—19.) as the Church is the place of His presence, the witness of His grace and power, while Israel remains in unbelief, and separation from Him.—"Bind up the testimony, seal the law *among my disciples*, and I will wait upon the Lord that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him." (Isa. viii. 16, 17., see also Deut. xxxii. 21., Isa. lxv. 1, 2.)

Thus are we given to trace in this happy household at Bethany the sure resemblance of the Church of God; which the Lord by His Spirit is now gathering, and which is, when brought to its fulness, to constitute the family of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven.

After giving a view of our Lord in the midst of this beloved household, our next chapter presents Him entering into the royal city as Son of David. On this occasion He is attended with crowds of His willing people, triumphantly bidding Him welcome as the King of Israel. All this was illustrative of that day, when after the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, or the Church be perfected in all its members, this same Jesus shall come to Zion, "and all Israel shall be saved;" when He for whom as Head, His body is now preparing, shall as King of Israel, gather His willing people around Him, and sent Himself on earth the heir of all its glory.*

And when the Lord has thus taken His throne in Jerusalem, the destined centre of the whole earth, "the city of the great King;" He will speedily receive the heathen for His inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for His possession; for the Holy One of Israel shall be called the God of the whole earth. (Isa. liv. 5.) The one Lord shall be King over the whole earth. (Zech. xiv. 9.) To

* See Christian Witness, Vol. 1. p. 80.

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the Shiloh of Judah shall then be the gathering of the peoples; (Gen. xlix. 10.) and the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. (Rev. xi. 16.) And so, as this chapter proceeds, we have a sample of this gathering to Shiloh; for after His royal entry into Jerusalem, we see our blessed Jesus receiving the willing homage of the Gentiles, who came to worship there, in pledge as it were, of that day when every one shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles: (Zech. xiv. 16., Isa. lxvi. 23.) and "when many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts at Jerusalem." (Zech. viii. 22.)

Then shall the family on earth be collected under the same blessed One as is the Head of the family in heaven, and the promised "greater things," shall then be seen, the union and yet distinctness of heaven and earth, "the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (John i. 51.)

Thus does this chapter give us a view of the *order* in which the gatherings of the Lord's households are, as I believe Scripture teaches us, to be conducted. The Church brought to her fulness, and seated with the Lord at His table in His kingdom—Israel saved—their Kinsman-Redeemer, their Royal Deliverer in their midst, and on His throne in Zion; and then the uttermost parts of the earth taken into possession, and made the worshippers of Him who is "the desire of all nations." (Hag. ii. 7.) When these scenes had thus passed in review before Him, the blessed Jesus was wrapt into vision of the day of His glory.—"The hour is come," says He, "that the Son of Man should be glorified." (John xii. 23.) We shall not however here follow, (though of deep and affecting interest to the soul that adheres to Him in love and desire,) the course of His thoughts in the verses that follow; only this we will observe, that He at once recognized the necessity of His previous sufferings; for thus had the Prophets testified beforehand, "The *sufferings* of Christ and the *glory* that should follow.* (1 Pet. i. 11.)

* I would here just suggest that the presence of Judas in the household of Bethany, was a sad presage of the apostasy that was to arise in the bosom of the Church. So do the Pharisees exemplify the apostasy in Israel, for they refused to rejoice in Jesus (the true Messiah,) as Lord of the earth, the promised and anointed Heir of the world. But the families when set in heaven

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I have been tracing the *principle* upon which this family of God is to be formed, and the *order* in which the several branches of it are to be gathered. I would now close with presenting a few hints from Scripture of the *connection* and *intercourse* that is to be known between the family in heaven and the family on earth, all acknowledging, as they will, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And we have many distinct intimations of the character of intercourse which may then be enjoyed between the glorified saints, "the children of the resurrection," and the subject-people of the earth.

Our Lord Himself had fellowship of a very peculiar character with His disciples after He risen from the dead. He did not dwell among them as one of themselves, as He had done before He suffered: their lodging and their repast was not His, as they had been; but He went in and out among them as it *pleased Him, or the Father;* (Acts x. 40. εδωκεν αυτον εμφανη γενεσθαι.) and, though just the same Master as before, full of the graciousness of an Elder Brother, yet was He, to their sense, and indeed, in another form.—His body had passed through its change, it was flesh and bones, (Luke xxiv. 29.) instinct with spirit and not with blood; (1 Cor. xv. 44.) but consistent with His glory, He appeared at pleasure in different forms to His elect; as of old while predestinatively assuming His *risen* body, He had appeared to Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, and others. (see Luke xxiv. 12., John xx. 5—15) And I believe He did then shew Himself after His resurrection, in order, among other purposes, to give us to know something of that manner of intercourse that shall pass between the glorified saints, and the restored and sanctified families of man upon the earth.

A passing glimpse we have of the same thing in the bodies of many of the saints arising, after the Lord had risen, and coming out of the graves, and going into the holy city, *and appearing to many.* (Matt. xxvi. 53.) We have also, as I judge, a gracious sample of this fellowship given to us, at the time when Israel was first brought into covenant with Jehovah, while the blood of sprinkling was still warm and fresh upon them, and before they had done

and in earth shall be purified of these, for "the Son of Man shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those which do iniquity." (Matt. xiii. 41.)

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any despite to the mercy of their God, but had rather said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient." Moses with his train, went up to the Lord, "and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in clearness." Moses alone came near, alone goes into the Mount, but the Elders were eye-witnesses of the Majesty of Israel,—they stand undismayed in the *sight*, though not, like Moses, in the *midst*, of the cloud of glory;—"they saw God, and did eat and drink;" (Exodus xxiv.) thus shewing the distinction of being *in* the glory, and *outside* of it, and yet in some sort in fellowship together.*

So, in the holy mount, we have a very sweet exhibition of the same intercourse, and Moses is seen in the same place of glory. The Lord is there with His raised and changed saints Moses and Elias in glory, and His disciples, still as inhabiters of the earth, in their bodies of flesh and blood, are brought into nearest view of that glory. The holy Jerusalem having the glory of God, with the Lamb the light thereof, is there, as it were, shown to us; its pearly gates opened before us, and the nations of the saved seen as walking in the light of it. (Rev. xxi. 24.) The disciples were not in the heavens; for as one of them says, the "voice which came from heaven we heard;" (2 Pet. i. 18.) but though they did not enter with Moses and Elias into the cloud of the excellent glory, (see Luke ix. 34, Gr.) yet they saw it and have spoken of it. (2 Pet. i. 17.) They have testified to us that they had been "eye-witnesses of His Majesty;" as hereafter in the kingdom, the remnant that is saved shall go "to the isles afar off," saith Jehovah-Jesus, "that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles." (Is. lxvi. 19.) And this distinction of being in the glory, and of only standing in the presence of it, appears to be given to us by the Apostle as the several callings of the Church, and of Israel. (see 2 Cor. iii. 12—18.) He there anticipates the day when Israel shall turn to the Lord, and the vail shall be taken away; when they shall be able to *look* on the glory without dismay, that glory *into the*

* All these pre-incarnation appearances of Christ were in *power*, and not *humiliation*.

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image of which by the Spirit, the Church, like Moses, was to be changed. (Phil. iii. 20.)

In the day when Israel, the unfaithful, is betrothed to the Lord for ever, and her land is married, the harmony of all the parts of the redeemed system of the heavens and the earth, (having Jehovah in the highest, and beneath, the whole creation, which now groans and travels in pain, brought into the liberty of the Sons of God) is again exhibited to us by the prophet Hosea,—"And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground; and I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely: and I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies.—I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord; and it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel." (Hos. ii. 18—20.)

So, Jacob's vision of the Ladder, whose foot was set upon the earth, and the top of which reached into heaven, gives us another image of the same fellowship. The heavens were then seen, as it were, shining in their brightness, high above the earth on which the Patriarch was resting, but all the while the angels of God were travelling up and down the Ladder. So shall the saints, the children of the resurrection, who shall be "as the angels," and having become sharers of the Son's throne, pass and repass throughout the regions which acknowledge Him the heir of all things; and what less shall the earth then be, than "The gate of heaven?" (Gen. xxviii. 17.)

And I will here further observe, as so taught by the word of God, that when heaven is thus opened upon the earth, hell will be shut; for He that prevails to take the keys of heaven, and claim it as his throne, and to open it to all believers, who prevails to take the key of the house of David, and in like manner to claim the earth for His footstool, and to gather His ransomed tribes and worshipping nations there, will likewise prevail to take the key of the bottomless pit and there bind and shut up the dragon. And is it

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not sweet in the midst of present distraction, to think on the concord of the whole acknowledged creation when thus the offence is taken away, when nothing shall hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain, when "there shall be one Lord and His name One?"

The vision of the glory, which Ezekiel had, appears specially to mark out this *harmony* throughout all the reigns of the government of the Son of Man in His day. The hosts of heaven in their glories, the movements upon earth in their multiplied complexity still obedient to the same Spirit, under the sceptre of Him who will then exercise, as now He has title to, "all power in heaven and in earth." (Ezek. i.) So this harmony is as the Temple, which with its holy and most holy place,—one for the *ark*, the other for the *footstool* of our God, (1 Chron. xxviii. 2.) was still one Temple. As when Isaiah saw the Lord, He was seated *within* the vail, but His train *filled the Temple;* the *body* of the glory in that day shall be in heaven, but its presence shall be known and felt on earth: and O what gladness for man then, when, like Jacob, he shall walk on the earth in the blessed consciousness that it is none other than "the gate of heaven!"—the whole earth an extended Bethel!—"The house of God."

Thus it is said, that it is in the *manifestation* of the sons of God creation shall rejoice: the heavens, where the sons are set, shall shine unhinderedly upon the earth; and the creation, as it were, consciously repose in the light thereof. For all things shall be gathered into one; and though still they be things *on earth* and things *in heaven*, yet the earth shall, as it were, touch the skirtings of the heavens, as now, at times, we know not whether it be the clouds of heaven, or the high lands of the earth, that we see in the distant shadowy prospect! Paradise with its tree of Life, shall be restored, without access for the Serpent; and no tree of knowledge shall be there to put man to the proof of his subjection to God; but, instead of it, the Priesthood of the King shall be there, to witness this subjection in the continued offering of praise to our God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, shall be heard saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, unto Him that sitteth upon

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the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever!" "They shall speak," O Jehovah-Jesus, "of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." "O Lord, our Lord," shall Israel and the nations sing, "how excellent is thy name *in all the earth*, who hast set thy *glory above the heavens*," and the heavens shall shout "Alleluia."

ON THE CHARACTER OF OFFICE IN THE PRESENT DISPENSATION.

It is remarkable how the Lord, when he has led us a little way by faith in simplicity of dependence on Him provides for the exigency of circumstances, which the failings of men produce around us, by the intervention of His gracious loving-kindness and guidance; thereby teaching us to depend on Him for circumstances, as well as for ourselves; and keeping us, the great position of truth, in continual dependence, that we may, in our feebleness, learn the fulness of His resources, and the faithfulness of His love; His watchful care thus to keep us leaning on it, our only security from the power of selfishness and evil. Men, in all circumstances, shrink from the sense of dependence—dependence upon God. It requires faith; they are willing to trust upon man present, not upon God to their eyes absent; though a thing to be learned—the great lesson of the Christian dispensation—the character of all sanctity. It is true of righteousness in the Christian dispensation, and of course, therefore, ever in truth; and it is true in every circumstance of individual life, and of the necessities of the Church. The book of Numbers, the history of the Israelites, is a lesson of this—a lesson of faith. We get out of Egypt, not knowing perhaps how, whither, or where we are going, only that we are leaving Egypt; but when Canaan is our constant hope, the wilderness is our constant way; whether our journey be long or short, of vigour, of attainment, or of self-earned weariness of unbelief, it is still through the wilderness; and God is there with us teaching us faith, teaching us to depend upon God, where there is

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nothing else to depend upon. There may be green spots from Him who gives rivers in the wilderness, yea from our own souls rivers may flow, fed from the Rock that never fails; at the commandment of the Lord we may journey, at the commandment of the Lord we may rest awhile; manna may daily surround our camp, surely fed every morning's early dawn, but we are still in the wilderness, in entire dependence upon God, learning to enjoy in the well taught lesson of whence the enjoyment really comes. The losing the sense of this was the very mark of guilt in the Israelite in the land.—A Syrian ready to perish, was their constant confession in their faith, when they brought the first fruits of that good land, a land of vallies, and watered with the dew of heaven, a land where the Lord's eyes continually were. This is our continual failing in the service of the Church, namely, in the sense of entire dependence. There is nothing so hard to the human heart as constant dependence; when faith fails we constantly find out where we are. It is the wilderness or God: nothing is so foolish as self-dependence; for, in very deed, it is God or the wilderness. Thus it is in the righteous position of the Church's exigence—apt to loathe the light food, but conducted ever of God.

But there is another state of things far worse than this; when Babylon has carried the body of the people away, the reluctance of the residue to stay in dependence of faith, and their determination to go down into Egypt for help, where judgment would surely overtake them. Such is the continual tendency of the human heart, such help is the Church therefore continually seeking. But the Church is not of this world, even as Christ is not of this world. And how is Christ not of this world? Surely in Spirit and in character He was not of it, as an evil world, unholy, opposite to God. When His spotless excellency passed through it, it was unscathed, though passing through every scene that wearies, bows down, our frail and feeble hearts. But it was with other thoughis also that Jesus is not of this world, and so said He of His disciples. He was not of it but of heaven—the Lord from heaven; and we are not of it, but from thence, associated with Him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and is now separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens, now in manifested association—i.e., in faith, as the object of it there, in the accomplishment of what forms the

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dispensation in the heavens. The founding of the dispensation upon the accomplishment of the exaltation of its Head, is of the highest importance, because it is the ground of ascertained righteousness and its extent, and the seal of the character of the whole dispensation. It belongs, as being rejected in its Head from the world, to the heavenlies. But it is not merely in the result of the treatment of the Lord, and His being glorified, that the dispensation had such a character, and held such a place. In the purpose of God it had no other place. It was the secret of God hidden from ages and generations, and formed an extraordinary break in the dispensations, to the rejection for their unbelief, of the proper earthly people of God, a forming out of the earth but not for it, a body for Christ; a heavenly people associated with Him in the glory in which He should be and should reign. when the full time was come, over the earth, in those times of restitution which should come from the presence of the Lord. A system forming no part of the earthly system, though carried on through the death of Christ in the forming of its members in it, but that when all things are gathered together in one Christ, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, these should be associates of His glory, in whom it and the riches of His grace should be shown, given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, according to the gift of the Father; a purpose formed for Christ's especial and personal glory before the worlds, and kept secret till the time of His sending down the Spirit after the actual glory was accomplished, after He had entered in risen Manhood, into the glory which He had with the Father before the world was.

The Church has sought to settle itself here, but it has no place on the earth. It may show forth heavenly glory here according to that given to it, but it has no place here, but in glory with Christ in heavenly places at His appearing. We, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

This subject, as to the special distinctness of the dispensation, has been treated on in a former number, in an article under the title of "The Secret of God," and therefore I do not enter into it at large here. I believe it to be the most important point for the Church to consider now—looked at as an earthly dispensation it merely fills up in detailed exercise of grace the gap in the regular

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earthly order of God's counsels made by the rejection of the Jews on the covenant of legal prescribed righteousness, in the refusal of the Messiah; till their reception again under the new covenant in the way of grace on their repentance. But though making a most instructive parenthesis, it forms no part of the regular order of God's earthly plans, but is merely an interruption of them, to give a fuller character and meaning to them. As to the thing introduced, we are called to the obtaining of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not the place or time of His glory; our calling therefore is not at all here, but when Christ who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory. Ministration upon earth is merely to this purpose. The moment there is a minding of earth'y things, there is enmity to the cross of Christ; for "our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." The system was a system of derived earthly authority, and while the Church was among them simply, it never lost its earthly character entirely; it was open at any time to the return of the Lord, and was formed upon the order of derivative authority from Him when He had not yet ascended into glory, though it was accompanied by the Spirit which enabled them to testify to His ascended glory: but they were Jews, and they maintained the character of the earthly system so far as it was associated with the risen Saviour, the hope of Israel; for that which was identified with the resurrection of Christ, was the "sure mercies of David."

Thus we find the Lord telling them "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, He shall testify of me, and *ye also* shall bear witness of me, because ye have been with me from the beginning." Accordingly we find the eleven choosing Jewishly by lot, before the descent of the Holy Ghost from heaven, the witness of the glory, one to be a witness with them of the resurrection; one who companied with them all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them. So in the sermon to those who came together on hearing of the tongues, we read "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are witnesses;" and then he uses the descent of the Holy Ghost as

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the witness of His exaltation. Again in the sermon in Solomon's porch, "Whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses," and then goes on with a sermon purely Jewish. In Acts v. 22, the double witness is directly referred to, and distinguished. So the Lord breathed into His Disciples, after the resurrection, the Spirit of God, saying "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins ye remit," &c. Subsequently they received the Holy Ghost, the witness of exalted glory.

Thus the Apostles became the heads of derivative power apparently, at any rate the existing depository of authority, for derivative commission was never conferred upon them; and stood before the world the founders of the Church among the Jews, with commission to extend it to all nations. But the Lord, save in the testimony of apostasy by the Apostle John in the Revelation, gives us no authentic account of any such transmission of it through the world. It formed no part of the record, nothing on which the Church of God had to rest for its rejection. It is remarkable too, that the prayer of our Lord in the 17th of St. John was *literally fulfilled* in the Jewish Church, in the 1st chap. of the Acts of the Apostles, in them who were one together in the unity of those who believed on Him through their word, their separation out of the world, even to the surrender of their goods, and the witness thus afforded to it, praising God and having favour with all the people, great grace being upon them all. Here the scene all but closes, such we see not elsewhere at all. This was the Church of those connected with Christ in the flesh, who had seen Him in the resurrection, and derived their authority from Him in earthly association, though endued with power from on high; ignorant of the times when the kingdom should be restored to Israel, but knowing that the heavens had received Him who was able, and was to do it; and looking for the repentance of the people that He might return.

But they did not repent. Another witness was raised up when this witness of His resurrection was refused, and the power of the Holy Ghost in it rejected, to declare Jesus at the right hand of God; and to show demonstratively in His power, that they were doing as their fathers had ever done, resisting the Holy Ghost; but this was in fact, a testimony against them in their rejection of the Apostolic word and power recorded in the previous chapters, and

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is closed by the testimony of seeing heaven now opened, launching the Church into a new scene, a scene of death to itself, but into which it entered by the perception of heaven open, and Jesus seen there. With this accordingly, Jewish testimony to it as a Church closed. Jesus was not now sitting as we see Him in spirit, but standing at once to receive His suffering Church. Here the Jewish scene finally closed till they should say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," accomplishing this word of the Lord, and the view of Him in heaven thus opened to the Church. Individuals might be converted and doubtless were, but the order of Jewish ministry ceased: heretofore it had been confined to Jerusalem, and in regular witness by the Apostles, eye-witnesses of His resurrection to the Jews, and filling up and arranging the necessary offices, as we read in the Acts. But death and the heavenlies were now the portion of the Church of God; its earthly order and continuance gone: and though Peter preached among the Jews and the rest we know not from Scripture where, succession and order as to them we find not in Scripture at all. There is no authentic statement at all, save that Peter continued his labours as Apostle of the circumcision, the only place he holds in Scripture; and that the Apostles continued at Jerusalem, as we find in the Acts and other parts of the Apostolic writings. But another scene now opened. The heavenlies we have now seen as the positive known and only portion of the Church; for the earthlies were Jewish, and they had rejected the testimony of Christ risen and exalted by the Holy Ghost, from the Apostles and Stephen. Stephen's ministry was suited to this,—chosen among the Hellenists, he formed the link, having purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness to bear witness, not as an eye witness, but by the Holy Ghost, of Christ. Accordingly this is entirely his charge, not "We cannot but speak of the things which we have seen and heard," as Peter says to the Rulers, but the witness of the rejection of the Holy Ghost, of which being full, he saw Jesus in the heavenlies.

Thus he formed the link of Jewish rejection, and the position and state of the Church which followed.

And what succeeds? Not Jewish order, but sovereign grace approving itself by the energy of the Spirit.

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They were all scattered abroad except the Apostles, lest it should seem derived from them; and they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the Word. Who sent them? Persecution. Who enabled them? The grace and spirit of God: and it reached the Gentiles. There was no Gentile Church but by what in these days is called irregularity; what is really the sovereignty of the grace by which any Gentile is called in the extraordinary and seemingly irregular act of God; for salvation is of the Jews, a Jewish Jesus is not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but a glorified Jesus doth what seemeth good unto the glory of the grace of which He is now the indiscriminate, as to men, but sure distributor. But the character of the change which took place, is at once shewn by this dispersion, and universal preaching wherever they went. The ordinary Christians preceded the Apostles, that it might be plainly not derived from them. The whole matter then to justify any thing, was "The hand of the Lord was with them, and many believed," a very irregular and out of the way thing for human nature, but which God has ordered as the way of salvation. Thus we find the instantaneous cessation of derivative arrangement in the Jewish rejection of the Apostles, and the whole dispensation as carried on upon earth assuming a new character. This was the actual breaking of the earthly order, as the former seen with Stephen was the closing of the Jewish possibility of the dispensation.

But a new scene now opens, the regular Gentile form and order of the dispensation in the hands of the Apostle Paul, the Apostle of the uncircumcision, the Apostle of the Gentiles. Did he then derive it from the Apostles, or was he indeed a successor to our Lord by earthly appointment and derivation? No, in no wise. It was his continual boast that it was not so, his continual conflict with judaizing teachers, what was often charged on him, as though he needed it, with which they pressed his spirit, but which he as sternly and steadily refused, withstanding them who had such authority to the face. He is the type of the dispensation. Every dispensation has its character, from the manner in which Christ is manifested and introduced in it; and its order from Him under whom it takes its rise as to ministration. God not yet known to the Church in covenant, but the same God revealed as Almighty,

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was the dispensation to Abraham called out to trust in Him, gave its character to the path in which he had to walk in hope.

Christ, for now it was in covenant, revealed as Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was that under which Moses the leader in the wilderness, and Joshua in the land, led in succession the children of Israel under the order of successional priesthood for ever.

Christ manifested as Messiah, God manifest in the flesh, the end of the law for righteousness, the head of all Jewish order, was He whom they should have received, and could give and did give His derived authority to the Apostles whom He had chosen. Christ risen, still a Jewish hope, the securer of the sure mercies of David, was He, whom they rejected, in spite of the testimony of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Christ glorified and supreme, the hope to every Jew scattered abroad, and every Gentile sinner, the witness of sovereign grace, whatever the failure in evil. Those in whom it was deposited, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, formed the characteristic of the time in which the Spirit wrought by them. So of the twelve, Christ was the true Vine, not the nominal Israel, and they the branches, deriving their authority from Him as the Patriarchs from Israel; the dispensation thus far taking its entire and orderly character from them. It was a Jewish, though a Christian thing—that is, it was Jewish in its present order; it began at Jerusalem; but this ceased as a line when the risen Christ was rejected. The grace of God flowed in through the sandy desert and wilderness of the world, to make green where it flowed, what it found buried in evil in it, when no watering of the tree which He had planted could cause it to bring forth good fruit to His glory, and its own profit and acceptance.

And as the Spirit went as the wind where it listed, every one that was born of it was, according to the measure of the grace, the witness of the grace that he had received; for God had not lit candles to put them under bushels. St. Paul became the head and characterizing agent of the dispensation among the Gentiles, not derivative but efficient. Hence God made him so powerful and so tried against derivative mission. I received it, says he, not of man *nor by man*, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised Him up from the dead. So of the Gospel which he

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preached, he certified them, he was zealous of this point, he neither received it of man, neither was he taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ; and he gives this general character of himself, "Last of all He was seen of me also, as one born out of due time," as an *ektroma;* and this character attaches to the whole dispensation, an extraordinary arrangement and provision, something *ektromatal*, born out of due time, for the time present till the earthly system is just ready to be restored, but belonging entirely to the heavenlies, having no earthly derivation or connection in its power with the succession of that order which was first outwardly established. It derived its stream higher up from the same source, though recognizing it in its place. (see Gal. ii.) If it had such connection, what was all St. Paul's reasoning about, or why did he take such pains to prove it did not derive itself—why the Spirit of God to refute the notion of St. Paul's derivative character when he preached the same doctrine, and held the same truths? It was the grand testimony to the break of successional authority, which was Jewish; the Church, as a separate thing for glory, being now set on this unearthly footing on its own basis of apprehension of it by the Spirit.

Accordingly the evidence which the Apostle affords of his Apostolate, is never derivative, or that he had authority from others; but, "If I am not an Apostle unto others doubtless I am to you; for the seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord: for though ye have ten thousand instructors, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the Gospel." "If ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, examine yourselves; know ye not that Christ dwelleth in you except ye be reprobates?" "Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." So his argument, as to the dispensation, is "When He ascended up on high, he gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets;" &c. Now the twelve were Apostles, and had the express name from our Lord's commission before He ascended up on high at all. Yet they do not come into the Apostle's contemplation in spirit at all,—i. e. in any *such* character, because they did not, in that state, constitute a part of the dispensation of gift, and authority by gift, of which he was the minister and expounder. This was associated with the ascended

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glory of Christ—"When He ascended up on high He gave." Accordingly, when the Apostle was called, he was called not as knowing Christ after the flesh, if he had he would know Him no more; but as one, who, as a Jew, in ignorance indeed, consented to that very act against Stephen which shewed the rejection of the Jews, and was a killing Apostle of the Sanhedrim who had been so guilty, to find any of those who called upon His name; he was identified, not with the believing, but with the unbelieving portion of the Jews when the question was between them, and he was not a Christian at all while the Church had this character. He was the witness of the calling of grace, and the perception of supreme glory. The manner of his call was declarative of both. He was in the career of opposition to Christ, and arrested to be the witness of His glory, and of whatever had been revealed to him—not of his earthly career, to that he had been a spiritual stranger; not of his fellowship when risen with his brethren, from that he had been a careless outcast, or a bitter opposer to it, but of His ascended glory; not the patient tracing with slow understanding the unfolding of the Man Jesus conversant among them, till it followed Him, through the apparent death of all their hopes, by the resurrection, seen of Him forty days, into the known certainty of His exaltation, following Him to the clouds in which He should one day appear again so coming, and the witness of where He was, because the Spirit had been sent down from the Father. But the sudden and unlooked for perception of the heavenly glory of the Lord, above the brightness of the Son, and finding that *this* was Jesus,—that is, beginning at the glory, the heavenly glory, and aware that he saw and heard the Lord speaking from heaven, he asks and finds that this glorified One, this glorious Lord, was Jesus, whom he was persecuting. Hence his mission was wholly of the glory in its scource, not a witness of the suffering and a partaker of the glory to be revealed, but a witness of the glory and a partaker of the sufferings; and so ever preaching this mystery among the Gentiles, "Christ in you the hope of glory." This then was the calling of Paul, a sovereign calling by grace, revealing the Son in Him—one born out of due time; and when the Church was entirely heavenly, entirely underived, and necessarily rejecting derivation, or he would have denied the character of his calling, and

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lost the authority of his mission, for the Jewish things would have remained. It was heavenly, underivative, of grace, and by revelation, and that of the glory; and drew all its character and all its evidence from this; and this is carefully insisted on by him, and urged by the Spirit of God. The ordination of the Apostle stamped the seal on the same truth. First it was secured by the divine counsels that he should preach and testify within and without synagogues and congregations, concerning the Lord Jesus, without any thing further than the calling spoken of, he preached the faith which he had once destroyed, as he himself expresses it, "as it is written, I believed and therefore I spake, we also believe and therefore speak; as the other Apostles, we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." And so is the energy of the Holy Ghost ever, whether it be the sure resurrection of Jesus, the revealed glory of the Lord, or with Jeremiah, in derision daily because of his words to the people,—it is in his heart as a burning fire shut up in his bones; he was weary with forbearing and could not. If in liberty there was the rejoicing as being counted worthy to suffer shame; if reluctant and tried by the abounding of iniquity in a state ready to be judged, the Word of the Lord was more powerful than the fears, though on every side,—he believed and therefore spake. The glory of the Lord must be vindicated; and it becomes a positive responsibility. Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, and not to be set upon a candlestick? For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested, neither was any thing kept secret but that it should come abroad: and it is *our* business to manifest it in the truth and energy of the Spirit; therefore "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear;" and "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you, and to you that hear shall more be given."

Hence we also find the Apostle declaring, "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were Apostles before me, but I went into Arabia and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter,

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and abode with him fifteen days; but other of the Apostles saw I none save James the Lord's brother." Fourteen years after, he went up, but it was by revelation; and in conference he found that those who seemed to be somewhat, added nothing to him; and this was the point with him. It was no haughtiness of spirit, and he was willing to try his word by theirs, but he found they could add nothing, and they owned the grace that was in him; though he derived no authority from them the appointed Apostles of the Lord, and recognized none in them save in the sphere which God had allotted to them, and they owned the grace of God which was in him. When need was, he withstood them to the face, because they were to be blamed who were insisting upon the old ordinances. To such things he would give subjection, no, not for an hour.

And what after was his career because of the glory revealed to him, his ordination as men speak, if he did not go up to those who were Apostles before him? The energy of the spirit consequent on the revelation of the Lord still held its character in securing the breaking through the Apostolic succession. There was no derivative link from the Lord, there was the revelation of the Lord and mission by Him, but no human ordination; and in this he worked long: and not only in preaching or teaching strangers, but Barnabas having gone to Tarsus to find him, brings him to Antioch; and it came to pass that for a whole year they assembled themselves with the Church and taught much people. Who settled this? Who appointed them here? Who, Paul? Who, Barnabas? The grace of the Spirit of God wrought effectually in them, and so the Apostles, as we have seen, had to judge; they *perceived the grace of God that was given to him*, and they gave them the right hand of fellowship. But still in public mission had they no derivative authority from some human ordination? Or was not abstract Apostolic mission the ground on which it rested? Long had it been so, for God was securing, in every way, that human dependence, human derivation should be broken in upon, for its place was gone in the earth. The dispensation was one born out of due time, it must prove itself by its energy from on high; so it had been proved both in preaching Christ and teaching the Church. But now Barnabas and Paul were to be sent out on a definite mission, and of course they had derived authority now. Whence? Every

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thing still made to depend on the energy and calling of God. "As certain prophets and teachers were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them; and when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Did the Apostle derive his authority, his Apostolic authority from his ordination? That would be a strange assertion, and he says, he had it neither of, nor by man. If this had been his first going forth to preach, it would have been almost impossible to have hindered the conclusion that it had its source in this, and the Apostolate would merely have been from the Church at Antioch. Therefore the Lord, to maintain the character of the dispensation, makes the Apostle not confer with flesh and blood, but immediately preach on his calling, and afterwards separates him merely to the particular work to which he was called, thus securing its underivative character. Its value the energy of the Spirit of God, because of the glory to be revealed, and the heavenly character of the dispensation which had its place in the glory (to be revealed,) not here at all, and so ordered of God; otherwise Apostolic authority is derived from laymen, by modern theory, self-ordained men, and the Apostle's assertion of his Apostolate falsified. But it was not, it was the Holy Ghost's separation of him to Himself for the work to which the Lord had called him, not the conferring a gift as if his Apostolate depended on that mission, for this the Apostle denies at large in the Epistle to the Galatians, and passes by this going forth from Antioch entirely in the account of his mission which he gives to them, not the derivation of authority, for this he is equally earnest to deny.

In Paul then, we have the founding of the service of this dispensation, resting on the fully recognized Apostleship, but caused in the way it is founded to be entirely of a heavenly character, springing from the Lord known then in the glory, having its working and energy by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and breaking in upon the derivative character of the Apostolate in the Jews by every careful arrangement of God; and the laying on of hands made little of as regards the Apostolate, and coming not from superior derivative authority, but entirely collaterally, that every link of the sort should be broken. And we may add, failing

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as to its earthly position, the moment the energy of the Spirit failed, the moment the unstained godliness which kept out evil, and left the operations of the given spirit free, failed. Because the witness of the glory among the Gentiles, was not to take the place of the glory, any more than the witness of the resurrection among the Jews was to take the place of the resurrection-glory (and it was only a witness, and therefore shown only to the Apostles and Teachers among the Jews, and Paul for the Gentiles ;) but having been witnessed, to fail as regards holding any place here, though effectual by the Spirit to them that believe, that abounding in hope through it, they might have an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, when He shall be manifested as the risen and glorified One, and sorrow and trial pass away. And though the filling up as it were, was in the ascended glory, of which Paul was the special witness, and therefore he laboured more abundantly than they all, as the full testimony was to be given to the world in him, the continuous Gentile dispensation, yet, though he sustained it (by the energy of the Spirit) during his life, he knew well that it would end then, that is, as thus corporately held together. "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in, not sparing the flock. Also of your ownselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." It was not that God, in the word of His grace to which He commended them, as able to build them up, would not both gather out, and sanctify souls; but he felt and knew well that Ichabod was written on the dispensation, as on every other; till He comes who could sustain it, enduringly in the present power of a manifested life, Satan being bound from before Him. So it was among the Jews, the resurrection denying Sadducees being raised against the testimony of that, as the self righteous Pharisees against ministry of the righteous one. So it was among the Gentiles, false teachers bringing into disrepute the energies of the Spirit of God, and thus devouring the flock, because of the feebleness of the shepherds. Oh how little does the Church know the service of crying and tears, the humility of mind which accompanies the watching the fold of Christ against the inroads of the enemy—of Satan. But it is gone. Yet there is one that is ever faithful, who, be the

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shepherds ever so cowardly, does not let His scattered sheep be plucked out of His hand. To return to the subject.—

Let us turn to what we have afterwards of the maintenance for a little season, of the order of the Church of God before the re-assertion of the human derivative claim came to take the place of the Spirit of God. Let us take a glance at another part of Scripture, connected with this—laying on of hands. The Priesthood of Christ is the great characteristic of this dispensation. hereafter in glory manifested for joy and praise, now for the intercession and gifts of grace, still the same in person. It is ministering by the Spirit below, that it might be a witness to the world of what it was in Christ, the Father of what He was; and this is what is brought out in John 17th, not the thing itself till the glory comes, and Christ appears, and we appear; but a witness of it by a supply of grace from Him who will appear, and we with Him, the fulness of this, of both, that is, being in Christ. Hence is it that Paul, the Spirit as in the ministry of Paul, addresses the Hebrews, not the minister of the circumcision as speaking to them in their place, but as calling them out of that into the consciousness of the *heavenly* calling, speaking to them from the glory of the Son, so speaking, and sustaining them in the present failure of the dispensation in them, by the security of an enduring Melchisedec Priesthood. "Wherefore," says he, "holy brethren, partakers of the *heavenly* calling, consider Jesus Christ, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession;" such an High Priest, because such as was not only harmless, undefiled, but was separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. "If He were on earth He should not be a Priest." He is gone, not into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. But this was not all; for, as we have seen, when teaching the understanding of the mystery among the Gentiles, we find this ascending up on high was leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men; and He gave," &c. So we find many of the worthies said to act by faith, in Heb. xi., the great point then of trial to the Christian Hebrews, testified of, as led by the Spirit, in their history in the Old Testament. But this is not the point I rest on here, but the comparative use he makes of the Priesthood in its Melchisedec character with

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the very circumstances here spoken of.—"Wherefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us," he says, "go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith towards God, and of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment; and this we will do if God permit." From the 4th to the 6th, he then speaks of those things which are the proper portion of the Church emerged out of its Jewish shape, the word of the beginning of Christ—that failure from this is irremediable after such patience of God; and in the rest speaks not therefore of the blessings of the given spirit, save as to the danger of apostasy, but what, while Aaronical intermediate intercession indeed subsisted, their portion under the Melchisedec priesthood would be according to the word of the new covenant.—Of this the Holy Ghost was present witness. It is not my purpose to open this out now; I refer to it to shew the contrast of what were the first principles, or the Word of the beginning of Christ, and the going on to perfection, i.e., the knowledge of the priesthood of Christ—the heavenly priesthood now witnessed to us by the presence of the Spirit. This is given in this Epistle on account of its object, merely in parenthesis, as the Gentile character of the dispensation and its danger of apostasy in chap. vi. 4—6. But we find thereby the way in which the Jewish elements are treated, not as though they had not their place, but the place they had explained; and they are Jewish elements. These they are:—The dead, we admit will be raised—Eternal judgment will be, or guilt, more properly, will be judged.—Repentance from dead works is acknowledged to be needful.—Baptisms and laying on of hands we have heard of as existing.—But they constitute not the glory and power of the dispensation. The exercise of the Church's mind about them proves its return to Judaizing principles. The notion of derivative authority is a positive lapse into the order of the dispensation broken in upon by God, in its losing its Jewish character, and becoming the spiritual witness of the heavenly glory and fulness of Christ. Who is St. Paul's successor? I have heard of the successors of St. Peter, the direct and remarkable witness to the character of the association with derivative authority. It is all identified in the Gentile Church with

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Peter, who was not the Apostle of the Gentiles at all. It is the Judaizing of Gentilism, and the whole structure and fabric of the Church rests upon this. St. Paul, as the Apostle of the uncircumcision, held the witness of the character of this dispensation Where is his successor? Of what See was he head? Was it Rome, the source of the present derived authority? And of what character then is all this derived authority? where is it in Scripture? Let us see the facts a little further.—

It is not to be denied that St. Paul and the Presbytery laid their hands on Timothy, and a gift was in Timothy by the laying on of Paul's hands. The same does not appear in Titus at all, neither was he circumcised, which Timothy was; and Timothy, it appears, also laid hands upon others, for he is desired to do it suddenly on no man. They were thus special temporary deputies of St. Paul for setting the Churches in order in the things wanting, and appointing Elders: that they were not permanent Episcopal superintendants is clear, because when St. Paul passed by Ephesus, he addresses the Elders or Bishops there, so as to demonstrate them not to be under the care of Timothy as from Apostolic derived authority; and, in the second Epistle, charges him to come to him, as he does also Titus, to come to him at Nicopolis, wanting them to be with him; they were his chosen assistants in ordering the Churches, not his successors in them, unless he himself was Bishop of both. We find St. John subsequently exercising the care under Christ, apostolically, of the Ephesian and other Churches in those parts, quite inconsistent with the notion of Timothy's Episcopacy derived from St. Paul. The energy of the Spirit then using whom it thought fit in an authority of office, we find, in the conception of the Church, derivative authority and jurisdiction no where. There was the conferring of gift, there was the ordering by those enabled to order, there was the appointment of Elders in every city by those enabled to do so, and the committal of doctrine to faithful men, there was every care of the Church, but no Apostolical derivative authority, except the false derivation of Peter, who was the Apostle of the circumcision not of the uncircumcision, and whom the Scriptures only so recognize.

I would only add a few words as to the term "Ordain."—There is no such word in the Scriptures in the modern sense of the term.

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Laying on of hands, to have been used in given instances, I do not at all deny. We have seen an Apostle ordained by Laymen, afterwards conferring a gift by the same ordinance, and Timothy charged not do it suddenly; but as we find the whole energy of the Church continually and long carried on without reference to it, so the word translated "ordain" has never, in Scripture, any connection with laying on of hands. Used or not used, it does not so state it, foreseeing, I am persuaded, the apostasy of the latter day.

In Acts i. 22. The expression here is merely an assertion of the translators.—See the original, where it merely is—"must one of them be a witness of the resurrection."

The other passages are Acts xiv. 23., Tit. i. 5. In the one "chose" or "selected Elders"—in the latter, "appoint"—Χειροτονεω and καθιστημι.

There is no evidence that Timothy was left for such purpose. The Apostle states it to have been to guard doctrine, not for the purpose of appointing Elders. It is a general instruction as to his conduct in the Church, and it does not appear that laying on of hands was peculiar to any such office. It may have been used in it—they are never so connected in Scripture. When Elders are spoken of, laying on of hands is not; when this is spoken of, they are not. It may have been used—there was no Scriptural identification. Probably it had a much wider scope. It was clearly used among the Jewish Christians for sickness and miracles, and by the Apostle for conferring gifts.

Further I would remark, that while the present case of the Church was exactly what would be consistent with the looking for the coming of the Lord, which possessed the mind of the Apostle, the arrangement of prospective provision by derivative authority, for future ages was wholly inconsistent with it. When he was passing by Ephesus in the consciousness that his personal care was closed, he warns the Elders himself on their own responsibility, although long before Timothy had been left to watch the place, though it would appear he did not stay there long. But the charge to Timothy was doctrine.

All present care was as to the way in which they would wait for the Lord, and committal of trust to those called and gifted where needed. But the arrangement of derivative authority would have

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been positive unbelief. Accordingly we find it broken among the Jews, where it had this character, never attempted among the Gentiles where the glory was manifested; but taken nominally from St. Peter, when he was gone who withstood these things to the face. Our present duty is every possible care of the Churches which God by His Spirit may enable us to take; using with all diligence, humility, and energy, with crying and tears, in which we surely may expect to use it, whatever He give us to keep out Satan and feed the flock of God, where we may be or He send us, but lean in constant dependence for the constant supply of the Spirit of His grace, as our only ground of strength, and when we fail, commend them to God and to the word of His grace which is able to build them up, and give them an inheritance among them that are sanctified. He who knows this in spirit, will well know its sorrow, and how near it draws one to God. But all this is God's provision, and not for the wickedness of man, but for that failure which in man's foolishness shall cause all to centre in the glory of the Lord.

But there is one further point with which we must close. To the mere laying on of hands, if done spiritually, I know of no objection; but reference, reference of the heart to derivative authority has quite another character. It is Judaizing. It is, if insisted on, the principle of apostasy, as denying the power and calling of the Holy Ghost, or His competency to send, bless, and sanctify. Wherever we return to Jewish practice as an imposed necessity, we return to the idolatry of the world. There was a special sanction of worldly elements to a given purpose, and worldly elements; and glory, and honour, had their place while so ordered. The principles of the human heart which sought them, were dealt with on their own ground and terms, though in God's way; because, till the rejection of Christ, man and the world were not treated with as dead in trespasses and sins, as lying in wickedness, as at enmity with God; and riches, and honours, and worldly things, accompanied the love of wisdom, and human principles were dealt with. But in the rejection of Christ, the truth was brought fully out to light, the system of the world was set aside as to all its elements, as evil: God's sanction to it in any form or sort ceased. Its friendship was enmity with God. It was convinced of sin, and righteous-

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ness, set up not there but in the heavens, hid with God, revealed to faith. Judaism had been the place of righteousness, but iniquity was found in it, and being set aside, its principles became merely the simple worldly elements, without any sanction of God at all, and with merely their own worldly character; and the return to them became apostasy, return to the mere evil world. This is the Apostle's statement, the force of which is by no means in general sufficiently estimated. Writing to the Galatians he says, "Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service to them which by nature are no Gods. But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire *again* to be in bondage? Ye observe," &c. That is, Gentiles become Christians; and looking to Jewish principles, were returning to their own old Gentile state; for what else was Judaizing now? it was simply joining the world, the ungodly world, which had not the Spirit of God in it, ending in the flesh. So the Apostle argues in Col. ii. 19—23., especially ver. 20. Wherever then we turn to what is Jewish, a right thing while God's work was of this world, we have the principle of apostasy in us; these things have the rudiments of the world in them, and the world we shall more or less join which has not the Spirit, which is at enmity with God. And where, I would ask, has the Church looked at this derivative character as essential and necessary that it has not joined the world? Receiving the principle of the world into its bosom, it soon fell into its practice, and this is the character, the form of apostasy; and the absence or subversion of justification by faith, and maintaining the doctrine of works for salvation, derived authority and the Church in the world have astonishingly gone together. However this may be, I refer to it here merely as a fact; certainly the Church so fell, at first gradually. Of this we may be sure, whereever we join any Jewish principle of ordinance now, as that which is our order, or obligatory on us, *we join the world in its rejected state*, for these are now demonstrated the profitless elements of the world, and nothing else, and the apostasy of the Church is involved in principle. With whatever patience we may bear with those subject to them while they are under them, their imposition as though needful, is the snare of Satan leading us back whence we

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are delivered, for our conversation is in heaven. History will prove it as to facts, to be the apostasy of the Church, though the Spirit of God can alone prove or shew the principle. I do not reject conferred authority from God where it can be shewn in the grace of its exercise ; derived authority from man I believe to be most evil, and to have apostasy in its character and principle.*

The preceding observations may seem protracted, yet I think, the importance of the principles, warrants the deepest consideration of the subject ; my own mind is very clear upon it in principle though I may have much to learn in detail. I have endeavoured, under the Lord's mercy, to confine myself to the principles, to hurt no one, the matter being not of controversy but of deep and everlasting truth. It is a remarkable thing that, while almost all the Churches more or less, hang on derivative authority ; where it is settled as a system, we may note, first, —human derivation is its first basis as a principle ; secondly,—it is connected entirely with St. Peter, and the succession from him, and in conferring the authority it uses the words used by the Lord in conferring it on His Jewish Apostles, previous to His ascension.

* It is one of the things which has troubled me as to the people in Newman Street, that they will recognize the latter and reject and despise the former.

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THE

CHRISTIAN WITNESS.

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DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH IN NEWMAN-STREET CONSIDERED.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

IN considering the Doctrines which have been promulgated through Newman-Street, it is important to remember that Mr. Irving's teaching, respecting the human nature of our Lord, had the distinct sanction of that which they believe to be the Spirit of God. Mr. Irving himself declares, in a letter to Mr. Baxter, that three several testimonies, "in power," were given by Mrs. C. and Miss E. C. to the general correctness of Mr. Irving's statements respecting the human nature of our Lord: and in consequence of Mr. Baxter's opposition to those statements, Mr. Irving was called upon "to maintain them more firmly than ever" (Baxter's Narrative, p. 104, 105). Moreover, in the very same letter which contains this important fact, Mr. Irving says, concerning the flesh of Christ, that it had "a proclivity to the world and to Satan," and that "the law of the flesh was there all present" (Baxter, p. 107).

In order to form a scriptural judgment on these things, it is needful to consider attentively the state in which we, as the descendants of

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Adam, are placed before God. There are three particulars which mark our condition as sinners before Him :—First, Original, or Vicarious Guilt, imputed (or reckoned) to us on account of the transgression of our first parent, of which the 5th chapter of the Romans treats. Secondly, Original Sin, or Indwelling Corruption. And thirdly, Actual Transgression.

The distinction between imputed transgression, and indwelling corruption is often neglected. It may thus be illustrated:—The children of an exile in Siberia, though innocent of rebellion themselves, *might* yet be involved in all the penalties of their parent, and be punished for and on account of *him*. Even so the one transgression of Adam in the garden, exposes all his posterity to be treated by God as transgressors on account of him. The penalty of death would still have impended over them, even though they could have been born pure as angels in themselves.

But, secondly, it soon became apparent that all the *natural* descendants of Adam were not only subject to the penalties which another's transgression had incurred, but that they had also derived from him a corrupted nature, even a law of sin in their members, which the 7th of Romans describes. With a view to manifest this evil, a law was proposed which was "holy, just, and good;" and it was promised that all who kept it should enter into life thereby. But this, instead of saving, worketh death in every one *naturally* born of Adam; so that the commandment ordained to life, is found to be unto death: for instead of delivering from the original penalty, or proving a corrective for indwelling corruption, it rouses into activity the sin that was dormant before, and therefore is ineffectual in leading unto life; not from any defect in itself, but through the sinful weakness of those to whom it is addressed. Thirdly, we have multiplied personal transgressions—the foolish thought, and word, and action; and he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all.

Now it is written of the Lord Jesus Christ, that after the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made *under the law*. He was miraculously conceived; and "THEREFORE," though deriving His manhood from a sinful Mother, was born spotless and holy, even as it is written, "That *holy thing* which shall be

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born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Nothing can be more express than this declaration; and God could not call that *holy*, which, standing by itself and unbenefited by mediation, had in itself "a proclivity to the world and to Satan, and the law of the flesh, all there present."

There is no difficulty in discerning this.—Only let it be seen from the Scripture what sin is, and then exclude it from the person of Immanuel, and we have the sure basis of truth whereon to rest, believing where we cannot understand.

The Lord Jesus was as free from indwelling sin as from actual transgression: yet nevertheless He was a member (so to speak) of the exiled family, and was therefore born subject to their penalties. But He was made under the law; and being essentially holy, He was able to fulfil the law, and so to rise above the penalties to which He had become subject on account of Adam's guilt. He was able to enter into life by keeping the commandments; and the very same law which had been death to every other, was unto Him life, even as it is written, "If there could have been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." On account of our sinful flesh, to us the law was "weak;" but strong unto Him, because He had no sinful flesh, but was essentially the Holy One. He learned obedience in the midst of suffering, and was proved to be the righteous One, who might have entered into life by Himself alone, but who preferred to lay down His life that he might take it again, that so, through the knowledge of Him, many might be justified.

All that the soul of a saint recognises as true in the writings of Mr. Irving, respecting Christ being in "that condition of being and region of existence which is proper to a sinner," will be found to be altogether comprised in the fact of His being born under the curse of the exiled family, vicariously incurred. But He rose out of this "region" through the power of His own inherent holiness; and therefore never would have come "into that experience into God's action which is proper for a sinner," unless He had chosen to abide it for the sake of others. And when He had chosen this, then it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, and to lay upon Him iniquity; a burthen

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which He felt just as if it had been His own iniquity: without having any sin, He was made to feel the consequences of sin, even so as to say, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me." But this was not because He was "in our region of existence," but because he was pleased, whilst being there, to become the sin-bearer for others.

Perhaps no text is more important in connection with this subject than the 3rd verse of Rom viii. "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." A Believer need not be told what "sin in the flesh" or indwelling corruption means; it is another name for his natural self; and God could do no otherwise than deal with it in judgment; but He judged it in His dear Son, as bearing it *representatively* for us. The word "condemned" feebly conveys the meaning. God passed the sentence of death upon it; or (as it were) transfixed it with the nail of death when Christ was crucified, even as it is written, "Our old man was crucified with Him;" so that a Believer can rejoice over it as a crucified enemy, which, however it may struggle, shall not prevail. In this passage then, it is God who is said to inflict the punishment—Christ, as the mediator, to receive it on account of our "sin in the flesh"—and we, as Believers, to know this enemy crucified with Him, i. e. virtually destroyed.

Mr. Irving frequently quotes this text; but, unobserved, he applies it as though it were Christ condemning sin in his own flesh, instead of God condemning it in the person of Christ; whereby Christ is exalted into the throne of judgment, and His humiliation as the sin-bearer set aside. And this is a just example of the manner in which mediation and atonement are overthrown by this evil system.*

I will only add, that not only have none of the published statements been recalled, but the doctrines are still taught by the missionaries from Newman Street, as any one who has an opportunity of probing them with pertinent questions will readily testify. In a Tract written by their present missionary† in Dublin, the doctrine of imputed

* Irving's Human Nature of Christ. p. 14.
† Hardman. pp. 68 & 83.

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righteousness is called "a fiction," and it is said that "Christ assumed our very fallen nature to expel sin therefrom."

DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH IN NEWMAN STREET.

It must be manifest to all who know even a little of what is now passing in the Church of God, that the present is a time of perplexity and sorrow to very many; and that some have been shaken to the foundations of their faith. Indeed we might be discouraged very greatly, if we did not know that the Church, like the Bush which burned without being consumed, shall surely be preserved through every trial, because of the grace which was given it in Christ Jesus before the world was. In our time of weakness, we have need more especially to remember the grace—to comfort the feeble-minded, and earnestly to resist the least departure from the doctrines of Christ.

The Church of God, as being preserved in Christ, have certain blessings, which time cannot alter, nor circumstances change. "They are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." It is true even of the little children, that "they know the Father." "Sonship" has been, since the resurrection of our Lord, the characteristic distinction of the Household of Faith. The holy men of old who lived before the incarnation of the Lord, though sons as to God's purpose, yet, as to their *felt* and *manifested* relationship to Him, differed nothing from servants (Gal. iv.) But when the Son of God was sent forth, and redemption had been effected by His death, the time of manifested adoption was come. The character of the Lord's teaching to His disciples, which prospectively reached forward to the time when they should be able to understand and realize His instructions, clearly shows that they were henceforth to consider themselves as the family of a Father which was in heaven; and as soon as the perfectness of their redemption was proved by His resurrection from the dead, His

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first words refer to the blessed relationship which was now substantiated for ever:—"Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and *your* Father, and to my God and *your* God:" for God had sent forth His Son to redeem them, that they might *receive* the adoption of sons.

But the disciples, even after He had thus declared the consequence of His resurrection, were not yet able to realize the truth of this relationship; and they were commanded by the Lord to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, which, said He, "ye have heard of me." What this promise was, we learn from the 14th of John. "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." "The time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father." They were to receive the Spirit of adoption. They had received the adoption of sons by the death and resurrection of Him IN WHOM they were adopted; and *because* they were sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying Abba, Father. Here was the fulfilment of the promise. The 8th of Romans, and the 4th of Galatians, describe the eternal immutable heritage of all Believers in all possible circumstances; and they mark the possession of the Spirit of adoption as being a *distinctive characteristic* of this dispensation of Sonship; so that every one who has the Spirit of adoption, has received the promise of the Father—has the Comforter *dwelling in him*—is baptized with the Holy Spirit, even though there should be no other sign of His indwelling presence. It was on the day of Pentecost, that the Apostles received that Spirit "who was to abide with them for ever," even the Spirit of adoption, who enabled them for the first time to say (what none before could say), "Abba, Father:" and whosoever has since been enabled to utter the same cry, has received a Pentecostal gift. The same may be said also of such passages as the following:—"He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. i. 21). And again, "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance" (Eph. i. 14).

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We live the life of faith in proportion as we practically realize, according to the mind of God, the circumstances in which we are before Him; for faith seeth things as He seeth them. It is, therefore of unspeakable importance to know "the things which have been freely given to us" of Him, especially at the present time, when this endowment of the Church has been doubted and denied; for it has been frequently said of late (and perhaps more frequently imagined), that the Church has ceased to possess the promise of the Father. Yet we could not feel that God was our Father, nor know our union with the Lord, without the Spirit. The experimental knowledge of these relationships, with all their practical consequences, depends entirely on the personal presence of the Spirit, of whom it was said, that He should "abide for ever;" so that if the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn as soon as what are usually called His *miraculous* manifestations ceased, the Church of God must, for ages past, have sunk back into bondage under the elements of the world, and known nothing of their adoption, nor of the blessedness of their union with Christ. But the experience of true Believers, in every age since the day of Pentecost, sufficiently disproves this. They have rejoiced in their adoption as children, and have known that the Spirit helpeth their infirmities.

One of the chief blessings which flow from His presence, is the gift of a spiritual understanding. It is very frequently mentioned in Scripture:—"I cease not to pray that ye might be filled with all spiritual understanding" (Col. i). "The Lord give thee understanding in all things" (2 Tim. ii). "The Son of God hath given us an understanding" (1 John v). "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened" (Eph. i). "In understanding be ye men" (1 Cor. xx). "Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. v). It is the precious gift of God to His children, in order that they may be enabled to "judge" and "prove"* all things aright, otherwise their judgment must be in the flesh; but it is written, "The Son of God hath given us an understanding;" and the measure of it will

* "*Prove* all things, hold fast that which is good." \"The spiritual man *judgeth* all things."

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doubtless be suited to the requirements of the time, in the case of every one who really looks to Him; so that he may confidently prove all things and not walk in uncertainty: for God hath not given the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

And if we do indeed believe that "many false spirits have gone out into the world," we may well understand the necessity of this gift. If God had not given a *spiritual* understanding whereby to judge, we must have received every thing untried (for the natural mind could profit nothing), and so we must *nesessarily* have been deceived whenever Satan transformed himself into an angel of light. And if we do not estimate our privileges, and refuse to obey the commandment to be men in understanding;—if we mistrust our power when the Lord has spoken, what is this but unbelief?—It is not humility, but it is doubting the truth and faithfulness of God.

A Believer's knowledge may be limited; but every Believer possesses some *certain* knowledge. There may be mysteries which he cannot comprehend; but though unable to explain, he *understands* that God has revealed them, and therefore knows them to be true, and believes. He possesses *certain* knowledge, and this knowledge is as a test whereby he may prove other things. And therefore it is written, "Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." "If any bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." The character of the claims which have lately been advanced in Newman-Street, has driven back many Believers from considering and judging them as they ought. Yet the very greatness of the claim makes it the more necessary that it should be judged; and though our right to judge has been denied, and although they have commanded us not to judge but to believe, yet in this we have to obey God rather than man.

The claim is this:—that an ordered Church has again been formed by the Lord, having not only Elders, Pastors, and Evangelists immediately appointed by the Spirit, but having Apostles also. Now, if this were so, we surely might expect the signs of an Apostle: but supposing them to be withheld in judgment upon unbelief (though evidence has never been refused by the Lord, except when super-

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fluous and unneeded), yet the moral signs could not be wanting, and they are these;—in doctrine, sound speech that could not be condemned; in practice, separation from the systems of this present evil age.

Infallible truth in doctrinal statement is the least we could expect from a Church under direct Apostolic government; even as the Church at Jerusalem was able to say—"It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and to us." If the Lord were pleased to reconstitute an Apostolical Church, it would doubtless be found to be a sure witness of His mind in things in which His children might need instruction. It would give no uncertain, no erring testimony. It would speak the things which become sound doctrine.

The doctrines of the Church in Newman-Street have been widely promulgated through the "Morning Watch," and the writings of Mr. Irving. We may therefore refer to these publications as affording a satisfactory criterion of judgment.

In a paper written by Mr. Irving in 1832*, it is said that the truth, according to his views, has not been advanced for the last 1500 years. His doctrines therefore profess to be new. If they referred merely to some point of prophetic inquiry or scriptural information, such a statement might possibly be true. At any rate, it need not create alarm. But his statements do not refer to any point of secondary importance; they concern the vital and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel of Christ.

Perhaps there is nothing on which real Christians have in all ages been more entirely agreed, than in their sentiments respecting sin; that it consists not in the outward act, nor in the deliberate purpose of the soul only, but in the secret unseen propensity or bias of the human mind. It is a thing which the children of God daily know and feel to be *in itself* sin, though not imputed to those who believe, *for Christ's sake*. It is their burthen and their sorrow; for it lusteth against the Spirit, so that they cannot do the things that they would. "The concupiscence of the flesh, against which the good Spirit lusteth,

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* See Frazer's Magazine for March and April, 1832.

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is not only the punishment of sin, and the cause of sin, but it is also sin" (Augustine). "This infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek *φρόνημα σαρκὸς* (which some do expound, the wisdom; some, sensuality; some, the affection; some, the desire of the flesh), is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the Apostle doth confess that concupiscence or lust hath of itself the nature of sin" (English Articles).

So also the French Protestant confession:—"We believe that this *taint is truly sin*, because it makes all and every man, not even those little ones excepted that lie hid in their mother's womb, guilty in the sight of God. We affirm, also, that this taint, even after baptism, is truly sin, as far as refers to the fault of it." The confession then goes on to state, that though sin, it is not imputed to them that believe.

So also the Lutheran confession:—"These defects, and this concupiscence are a thing that is under condemnation, and in its own nature deserving of death. And this original taint is truly sin, bringing men under condemnation."

And lastly the confession of Saxony:—"This whole corruption we affirm to be sin, and not simply the punishment of sin, and a thing indifferent. *Ambiguities are to be avoided in the Church.* Therefore we expressly call these evils corruption, which is often called by ancient writers 'evil concupiscence.' This evil concupiscence we affirm to be sin; and we assert that this whole doctrine concerning sin, as it is set forth and determined in our Churches, is a doctrine which has had the perpetual consent of the true Church of God."

Here are the testimonies of many saints. But the testimony of the Scripture is conclusive: for it teaches us that this corruption both when resisted, and, what is more, when so dormant as to be unknown even to ourselves, is sin in the sight of God. "I had not *known* sin but by the law, for I had not *known* lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." The law did not create the sin, it did not create the evil tendency; but it manifested its existence, and made the

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Apostle know that sin was in him. And, therefore, the very object of the chapter is to shew that since restraint and resistance could effect no change in our bodies of sin, restraint and resistance could, therefore, open no way of deliverance or hope. It is this fact which is made by God the foundation of His scheme of mercy. The necessity of God's creating "A new thing in the earth" (for these are the words in which Scripture describes the miraculous generation of the Lord), that so we might be made new creatures *in Him*, is grounded on this truth of the evil tendency's being in itself sin. But this is that which is denied in the following words:—"I deny that it is unholiness to be tempted through the mind, provided the will yield not to the evil suggestion, provided the will consent not to the evil consciousness" (Irving's Orthodox Doctrine, p. 153).

If it had been said that the guilt of unholiness was not charged upon those who resisted the evil propensity, because Christ had borne the guilt instead of them, every Christian heart would joyfully have responded to the blessed truth. It is, indeed, true, to use the words of Mr. Carlile in the "Morning Watch," that "No sin is in the Scriptures imputed to the saints for having a law in their members warring against the law of their mind, so long as by the power of God's Spirit dwelling in them, they resist its influence." This is true, and more likewise. But why is it *not* imputed *to them?* only because it *was imputed* to Christ. But if Christ had had these sinful propensities, where was the Lamb provided for Him? He would have had no sin-bearer. And yet Mr. Carlile goes on to say that these evil passions did exist in our Lord's human nature (p. 136, "Morning Watch," No. ix).

The following are the words of Mr. Irving ("Doctrine of our Lord's Human Nature") respecting the human nature of our Lord *after* it was taken into personal union with Himself.*

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* I am hardly justified in using words which seem to give to Christ's human nature an abstract existence apart from Himself. He derived His human nature from His mother; but then it was her nature, not His. There was no human nature which could be called His, until He was made flesh and dwelt among men as Immanuel.

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"Conceive every variety of human passion, every variety of human affection, every variety of human error, every variety of human wickedness which hath ever been realized inherent in the humanity, and combined against the holiness of Him who was not only a man but the Son of Man, the heir of all the infirmities which man entaileth upon his children" (p. 17). "Was He conscious then to the motions of the flesh and of the fleshly mind? In so far as any regenerate man is conscious of them, when under the operation of the Holy Ghost." ....."I hold it to be the surrender of the whole question to say that he was not conscious of, engaged with, and troubled by, every evil disposition which inhereth in the fallen manhood, which overpowereth every man that is not born of God; which overpowereth not Christ, only because He was born or generated of God" (p. 111).

"Manhood, after the fall, broke out into sins of every name and aggravation, corrupt to the very heart's core, and from the centre of its inmost will sending forth streams black as hell. This is the human nature which every man is clothed upon withal, which the Son of Man was clothed upon withal, bristling thick and strong with sin, like the hairs upon the porcupine."....."I stand forth and say, that the teeming fountain of the heart's vileness was opened on Him; and the Augean stable of human wickedness was given him to cleanse; and the furious wild beasts of human passions were appointed Him to tame. This is the horrible pit and the miry clay out of which He was brought" (p. 126). "I believe it to be most orthodox, and of the substance and essence of the orthodox faith, to hold that Christ could say until his resurrection, 'Not I, but sin that tempteth me in my flesh;' just as after the resurrection, He could say, 'I am separate from sinners.' And, moreover, I believe that the only difference between His body of humiliation and His body of resurrection, is in this very thing—that sin inhered in the human nature, making it mortal and corruptible till that very time that He rose from the dead" (p. 127).

If Christ had been "troubled by every evil disposition which inhereth in the fallen manhood," and if He could have said, like the Believer, "Not I, but sin that tempteth me in my flesh," how was not Christ personally a sinner? There are only two ways in which

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this question can be answered by those who maintain these doctrines. They must either deny that the evil propensity is *in itself* sin; or else consider the human nature of the Lord as something distinct from Himself *personally*. The last is very plainly the doctrine maintained in the "Treatise on the Human Nature." I suppose a hundred quotations might be made therefrom, in which the name Christ is given not to Jesus, as being God and Man in one person, but to the Word acting in and surrounded by the flesh as by a garment. The whole purport of the book appears to be this, to represent the Incarnation as the imprisonment (so to speak) of the Eternal Word in sinful flesh, against which He had continually to struggle, just as the Holy Spirit in us is *separate* from, and struggles against, our evil nature. The flesh of our Lord, to use Mr. Irving's illustration, stood to Him in the same relation as a pit to the person who is in it, or as a garment to the person whom it covers; and thus the true doctrine of the incarnation is denied.

For the true doctrine of the incarnation is this—that God and Man were ONE Person in Christ; that all His actions were not those of God *simply*, nor of Man *simply*, but of God and Man united in One Person, never to be divided. "Two whole and perfect natures, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in One Person, never to be divided, whereof is *one* Christ, very God and very Man." Let us not then be deluded by the repeated assertion, that He was "sinless in sinful flesh;" for the explanation of this either alters the definition of sin, or otherwise explains away the reality of the union of two natures in *one* Person. If there had been sin in either nature, it must have been sin in Immanuel.

But the distinctive characteristic of the Lord Jesus, in being the "Word made flesh," was little recognized by Mr. Irving. If any thing is plain from the Scripture, it is this—that the Lord Jesus, from the moment of His birth, and long before "He was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power," was, in virtue of His miraculous generation, the Holy One:—"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; THEREFORE also, that *Holy Thing* which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." It was not until thirty years after this that

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He was baptized with the Spirit.* But Mr. Irving denies that Christ's holiness was derived from an "extraordinary" work of the Holy Ghost, different from that experienced by Believers, and traces His holiness to an "*anointing of the same kind*" (p. 140) which Believers receive: otherwise, he continues, "the fruits of holiness in us cannot be after the same completeness." Here then there are two dangerous perversions of the truth: for first, the holiness of the Lord Jesus is made to depend, not upon His miraculous generation, but in His being "anointed"—i. e. baptized with the Holy Ghost and with power; and secondly, it is implied that the fruits of holiness in us can be equally complete with those of the Lord Jesus; whereas we know that His were perfect *in themselves*, and that our's are only acceptable *through Him*: "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God *through Jesus Christ.*" Such is the testimony of Scripture; but the whole tendency of the paragraph from which I am quoting, as, indeed, of the whole work, is to bring down the Lord Jesus from the essential peculiarity of His position as Mediator, and to assign to Him the characteristics of those who are "adopted in Him." The two following passages supply sufficient evidence of this:—"It is an heretical doctrine that Christ's generation was anything more than the implantation of that Holy-Ghost life in the members of His human nature, which is implanted in us by regeneration" (p. 140). And again, "He was conscious to the motions of the flesh and of the fleshly mind, in so far as any regenerate man, when under the operation of the Holy Ghost, is conscious of them" (p. 111). May we look at these things with a holy humble jealousy for the preservation of the comforting and sanctifying truths of God; for there can

* The Holy Spirit, when He descended and abode upon the Lord Jesus, became His guide in service, as it is written, "He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." "Through the Spirit He gave commandment unto His Apostles." The truth of His being Immanuel, God manifest in the flesh, was *proved* by His ability to follow perfectly and without any failure, the leadings of the Holy Spirit. What a Believer is able to do imperfectly (Gal. v. 17.) by regeneration, He was able to do perfectly without regeneration in the natural state in which He was born into the world: naturally we live contrary to the Spirit; whereas His natural condition as Man was not contrary to the Spirit.

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be no false doctrine respecting the person of our Lord, which does not affect the very foundations of our salvation.

If Christ could say until His resurrection, "Not I, but sin that tempteth me in my flesh;" then not only would He have been unable to say, "I give *my flesh* for the life of the world" (for it would have been a *blemished* sacrifice), but He Himself would have become individually deserving of death; so that, to use the words of Mr. Irving, He "*must* have died" (p. 91). Now, the Lord's own words seem purposely intended to set aside such a doctrine: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. *No one* (οὐδεὶς) taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He would presently give me more than twelve legions of angels; but how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

Nothing can be more important than rightly to distinguish between Christ, in His own independent individual character, and as He is in His official relation to us. If we can conceive of Him, apart from the responsibilities which attached to Him as Head of the Church, we can understand how, as the Holy One, He was ever ready to enter into the Holy Place without paying any price for the remission of sin. But He did not enter thus: He entered as the High Priest, who had also become the Head and Representative of His body the Church; and in this character it was that He could not enter without blood (Heb. ix. 12). It was needful that He should die:—"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth *alone*." The unclean state into which a clean person was brought by touching, even unawares, the body of an unclean man or beast, very clearly indicates what the contracted defilement of our High Priest must have been. Without having any of the sin, He had every consequence of the sin, in trouble of mind as well as suffering of body. He felt as though the sins were His own, "so that He was not able to look up:" and it is in this respect only that the type of the goats in Lev. xvi. falls short in illustrating the manner in which sin was imputed to the Holy Lamb of God.

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But in the treatise above referred to, it is stated that these sufferings were not inflicted upon Him "because He was *considered* that which really He was not," viz. a sinner; in other words, that He was not punished exclusively for *our* sins, but because of that condition of being into which He had come. Now, it is fully allowed, as has been stated in the preface, that He was born into our "condition of being" in the sense of being born out of Paradise.* And also that He *exposed Himself to the danger* of receiving all the punishment which followed upon the imputation of Adam's offence: but though exposed to it, yet He rose above it all, because He was by birth the Holy One, made under the law; who did not, as we, find it weak through the flesh, but effectually "ordained unto life," because His flesh was holy. "This do and thou shalt live," was unto Him a word of delivering power. So far, therefore, from His having been punished on account of the condition of being into which He had come, He would not have been punished at all, unless He had freely chosen, whilst standing as the "justified One," to offer atonement to the Father, and to become the substitute and sin-bearer of all who believe in His name. But this is the blessed truth which Mr. Irving thus denies:—"The man who will put a fiction, whether legal or theological—a make-believe into his idea of God, I have done with: he "who will make God consider a person that which he is not, and act "towards him as that which he is not, I have done with. Either "Christ was in the condition of the sinner, was in that form of being "towards which it is God's eternal law to act as He acted towards "Christ, or He was not. If He was, then the point at issue is ceded, "for that is what I am contending for. If He was not, and God "treated Him as if He had been so;—if that is the meaning of their "imputation and substitution, or by whatever name they call it, away "with it from my theology for ever." (p. 116).

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* Hunger, thirst, pain, &c. may fall on us, as men, in three ways. I.—As the mere consequence of being out of Paradise, and not having our natural wants properly supplied. This was experienced by the Lord Jesus. II.—The pain, &c. which is the naturally appointed result of transgression, or the working of indwelling corruption. This was never experienced by the Lord. III.—Pain, &c. as a judicial infliction from God. This was experienced by the Lord, when He was bruised as the sin-bearer.

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Here again there is not the slightest appearance of the distinction being recognized between Christ, as He was *personally*, and as He was *relatively* in connection with His Church. By becoming responsible for His bride, He *did* bring Himself into a condition, in which it was according to God's eternal law, to act towards Him, as being what *personally* He was not,—i. e. a sinner. "He died the Just *for* the unjust." "God made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God *in Him*." If God's law allows not the substitution of the innocent for the guilty, it is quite plain that the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice is at an end, and so every foundation of a sinner's hope is swept away for ever.

It is vain to answer and say to an anxious soul, earnest to find in the Scripture the warrant of its salvation, "That the sufferings of Christ procure me salvation by giving me an object of faith in God's love, in all extremities and under all conditions: and by giving me a proof that a person into my conditions brought, and in my conditions subsisting, may through faith, be brought out victorious in every conflict" (p. 166). This may be true, but where is there hope in this? It is a just and reasonable thing for God to say of His Holy One, "Because He hath set His love upon me, *therefore* will I deliver Him; I will set Him on high, because He hath known my name;" but there is no such reason for His delivering a sinful wretch whose will is worse than his actions, and whose desires are worse than his will. The taint of corrupt earthly affections is the hindrance. Where is the atonement for them?

The Scripture answers that Christ paid, as an atoning price, His own blood, whereby all who believe are justified from all things, and have peace with God: for the work of the Lord Jesus has a two-fold aspect: first,—towards God, as necessarily *requiring expiation*, and secondly,—towards the worshipper, as *receiving reconciliation* thereby. But Mr. Irving answers in the very words, and with the very argument of Socinianism, grounded on the unchangeableness of God; for he says, "that atonement and redemption have no reference to God; they are the names for the bearing of Christ's work upon the sinner, and have no respect to its bearing upon the Godhead."

Now it is wonderful that any one who does not utterly reject the

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Old Testament Scriptures should think such a thought as this. When the Lord God smelleth the sweet savour of Noah's offering, and says, that He will curse no more, what are we taught as to the *atoning* power of sacrifice? What are we taught by the High Priest entering within the veil and sprinkling, *not the people*, but the mercy-seat, that *he might not die?* Surely in this act the blood had reference to God *only*. "Go quickly," said Moses, "make atonement, for wrath is gone out." Indeed, out of the many places in which the word "atonement" is used in the Old Testament, there is, I believe, not one instance in which it is not used in reference to God. The holiness of our God required *expiation;* it needed an atoning sacrifice. He is unchangeably holy; though it is quite true, also, that He is unchangeably Love; and therefore His love freely provided* what man was unable to procure, even a Lamb without blemish and without spot. He found the ransom. The atoning work of the Mediator was the result, and not the cause of His love. But the Scripture, while it testifies of the love of God in providing the sacrifice, testifies as plainly of its necessity in relation to His holiness:—"To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." The righteousness of the Father in having remitted past sins, as those of Abraham and the fathers, was vindicated by the atoning offering of the Son. It justified the exercise of love by Him who had said, that He would by no means clear the guilty.

One part then of the work of the Lord Jesus is entirely set aside in this treatise; but if we inquire as to the result in reconciling those who believe, the answer is, "That it is no reconciliation of individuals, "but a reconciliation of human nature. It is not thine, it is not mine, "it is not Christ's, but it is the common unity of our being. Bare He "the sins of human nature? He bare the sins of all men. Bare He the "infirmities of human nature? He bare the infirmities of all men." (p. 95.) So, that if a sinner inquire respecting reconciliation with God, he must be told, not of the *blood* whereby ALL WHO BELIEVE are justi-

* And Isaac said unto his father, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My Son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

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fied from all things; but of the reconciliation of human nature carried, by means of the incarnation of the Son, through suffering and through death, and so at length reconciled unto God.*

The love of God towards the world, as declared in John iii. 16, is indeed a most precious truth: but the Scripture no where speaks of human nature being reconciled to God, nor of all mankind being reconciled, in the sense of having their sins borne by Christ. It can be said of the Church only, that He bore their sins in His own body on the accursed tree. The scape-goat typifies His relation, not to the world, but to the Church, even to those who believe in His name; so that not only is the work of the Lord Jesus towards the Father set aside by Mr. Irving, but the result in blessing to the Church is done away, by its being represented as nothing more than the reconciliation of human nature; nor can I see that the value of the blood and the perfecting of the Church by the One sacrifice, is recognized even in name.

Indeed the distinctive *value* of Christ's blood is unequivocally denied. The Scriptures speak of it as the *precious* blood of Christ—the blood of the Son of God. But the following are the words of Mr. Irving: "The atonement, upon this popular scheme, is made to "consist in suffering, and the amount of the suffering is cried up "to infinity. Well, let these preachers, for I will not call them "divines or theologians, broker-like, cry up their article—it will not "do; it is but the sufferings of a perfectly holy man, treated by God "and by men as if He were a transgressor" (Doctrine of Human Nature, 95, 96).

I would make no remark on the language, but would only observe that there is clearly no recognition of the *value* of the blood, as being the blood of Immanuel. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten

* It is obvious that Mr. Irving assumes that all mankind were united to the Lord Jesus because He had a common nature with them. But the possession of a common nature is not *union*. Two vines planted side by side have a *common nature*, for they are both vines; but there is no *union*, unless I could so insert the fibres of one into the other, as for nourishment to be communicated between them. The Lord Jesus then has a common nature with all men; but is united, and that through the Spirit, with those only who believe, even His body, the Church.

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of the Father), full of grace and truth." And again, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which *we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled* of the Word of life: for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," &c. This is the testimony of the Apostle John as to the nature of the Person who suffered and shed His blood. He saw in those sufferings something more than the sufferings merely of a perfectly holy man. But when the mind of any one has once been drawn to disbelieve or misconceive of the great mystery of the Incarnation, and to regard the Divine and Human nature as separate, in the same way in which the Holy Spirit is separate from the bodies of those in whom He dwells, we can easily see how such a mind would almost necessarily fall into such conclusions as these.*

* "It is an heretical doctrine that Christ's generation was something more than the implantation of that Holy-Ghost life in the members of His human nature, which is implanted in us by regeneration." (Irving's Cath. Confession, p. 140).

It has been observed by Mr. Goode, in a recent publication, that the real character of these doctrines is detected with the more difficulty, on account of the use of ordinary terms in new senses. "Atonement," which is the work of Jesus as Son of Man towards the Father, whereby a power of salvation indefinitely extensible was left in the hands of the Father for Him to apply according to His own good pleasure, is used as if necessarily equivalent to "reconciliation," which is only true of those who have been brought nigh by the foolishness of preaching, and made children of God by faith in Jesus; and "Redemption," in its relation to the saints who believe, is described by Mr. Irving as being, not the purchase of the whole man, in body, soul, and spirit unto God, and therefore unto faith, holiness, and everlasting deliverance; but it is made to consist in the deliverance of the human will out of bondage: and the way it is said to be effected is this;—"The person of the Word did take a human will under these very bondages into union with Himself, and acting therein, did deliver it completely out of all these oppressions of the devil, the world, and the flesh; which, if it were true, would have caused the Lord Jesus to need redemption as we do, because this human will was included in, and not separate from His Person. *Substitution* is His human nature, being considered as the substitute or representative of the whole human race, so that His human nature being brought in all things into a state of obedience to His divine nature, the whole human race were made *at one* with God" (pp. 113—117). The *sacrifice* of Christ is the mortification of the evil propensities of His human nature, terminating in the death of that human nature (13, 14, &c. Orthodox Doctrine). In connection with Mr. I's views of "Substitution," it is needful to remind the reader of what has been already said; that the possession of a common nature is not the same as *union*, and consequently that there is no union between *mankind* and *the Lord Jesus* in the flesh.

However much individuals in this party may differ from one another in their modes of expression, the same leading tenet is held by all of them. Mr. Camp-

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These are the doctrines contained in the writings which (as never having been disowned) are identified with Newman-Street in the estimation of the Church at large. These are some of the things which, on the ground of the Holy Spirit's having departed from the Church, we are commanded not to judge. But we do judge them as utterly contrary to the word of God, our sure and blessed rule. The least that can be said of them is, that they virtually deny the reality of the Incarnation, whereby God and man were made One Person—that they set aside the work of the Son towards the Father—that they mis-state its aspect towards the world, and deny its efficient application to the Church—that they identify the state of the Lord Jesus with that of a Believer, and the privileges of the Church with those of the world.

One of the steps to these things has been a rash attempt to *explain*, where we ought to *believe*, because we know that God hath said it. It is written, "Great is the mystery of Godliness—God was manifest in the flesh:" and again, "No one knoweth the Son but the Father." Let us ever remember this, if we are *obliged*, in defence of the truth, to write or speak of these things.

And why should we attempt to explain (when Scripture has not explained it) the manner of the union of God and man in one person, in whom two distinct natures were so marvellously combined as to render ONE Being only, even Immanuel, responsible for the actings of both alike. If we fancy that we have succeeded in explaining it satisfactorily to our foolish minds, it only proves that we have lost the truth. It is sufficient for us to receive by faith the stream of blessing which flows from knowing that unto us a Son is born, even a babe in a manger, whose name is called the everlasting Father. And it is our blessing also to learn practically, in comfort to our souls, that He was in all points tempted like as we are, *yet without sin*. This is written for us to *believe*, whether or not we are able to explain: and the poor

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bell's expressions are, "Sinful flesh, flesh requiring to be overcome, having in Christ the same nature and *tendency* as in us, which had to be stamped with condemnation on account of its condition of *enmity against God*, a foe difficult to contend with." Mr. Erskine's are, "The taint of the fall, the rebellious body, tendencies opposite to God's character," &c.; and the Morning Watch teems with papers on this subject, upholding Mr. Irving's views. (Goode, p. 39).

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in spirit will receive the comfort of it, and at the same time believe what the Scriptures testify, that nothing which the Scriptures mark as sinful, that no sinful desire, was either known by Him or was in Him.* "He *knew* no sin," (2 Cor. v. 21). "Sin was not in Him," (1 John iii. 5). He was the Holy One from His mother's womb; and when He was "anointed by the Holy Spirit" (Isaiah lxi.), it was not that He might be made holy or maintained in holiness, but that He might fulfil the work which the Father had given Him to do. And so it

* The following are the observations of Mr. Goode, in a recent publication:—"But it is said that if this view of the matter be correct, Christ was not 'in all points tempted like as we are,' for He was not tempted by evil inclinations; and therefore that this view overthrows all the comfort and encouragement to be derived from the doctrine of the sympathy of Christ. Now observe the unavoidable consequence of this reasoning.—If it be necessary that Christ should have had evil inclinations to contend with, in order to know the strength of the temptations that assail us, then it is necessary that he should have committed actual sin; for it will not be denied, that the strength of the temptation to commit a sin which has been for some time habitually indulged, is much greater than such a temptation when the sin has never been indulged. Every *actual* sinner then must despair of obtaining the sympathy of Christ in the temptations that assail *Him*. He must say, 'Christ cannot sympathise with me, for He has never committed sin, and therefore cannot know how strong my temptations are.' To make out this doctrine then, that Christ could not sympathise with us, unless He had been in all respects circumstanced as we are, it must be affirmed that Christ had evil *habits*, as well as evil *inclinations*; for if this doctrine were true, He could not sympathise with a man, who, after a long life of indulgence in sin, is tempted to repeat his sins, unless He had Himself committed sin in the same way.

"The asssertion, that temptations to sin are no temptations to one who has no propensity or inclinations to sin to second them, is contradicted by this one fact, that *such* persons have *fallen* under those temptations. The pressure of the besieging temptation is not less because there is nothing within to give it admission into the soul. The governor of a fortress (if I may be allowed the illustration) that had been fiercely besieged, but was prepared at every point of attack, and had none within to aid his assailants, would know full well how to sympathise with the commander of one, that, when similarly attacked, had no sufficient power of resistance, and also had a betrayer within its own walls."

A general assertion made by those who hold these doctrines, is, that *Incarnation and union is the principle of Justification; and that it is erroneous to hold that our completeness is through Substitution.*

It is quite plain that one who believes that justification comes by union with Jesus in the flesh through incarnation, cannot think that those who believe are *justified by His blood.* He deceives the world by saying that those on whom (according to the Scriptures) the wrath of God abideth, are justified—i. e. cleared from all things by the Incarnation; and deprives the Church of its distinctive privilege of having died and risen with Christ. The circumcision, death, and resurrection of the elect in Him, as unfolded in the Ephesians and Colossians—i. e. the state of the Church, not in themselves, but in their Head—is either not regarded, or is denied by those who hold these doctrines; and thus the great instrument is lost whereby is wrought practical circumcision and death to the world, viz. the testimony to the past operation of God, whereby not only Jesus, but all who believe in Jesus, have died and have risen again IN HIM.

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is written, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath *anointed me to preach* good tidings unto the meek" (Is. lxi.). "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and *shall make Him of quick understanding in* the fear of the Lord" (Is. xi.). "He was *led by the Spirit* into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matthew). By the Holy Spirit He gave commandments to His Apostles whom He had chosen.

He was tempted of the devil; but the temptation was external, and the prince of this world could find nothing in Him. "It is no sin to be tempted;"—such was the temptation of our Lord. But there are temptations which *are* sinful, even those which arise from, or are combined with the easily excited evil in ourselves; and it is these of which the Apostle James speaks: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." Nevertheless, when resisted and mortified, through the Spirit, these temptations are not imputed as sin to those who believe, for Christ's sake. On the contrary, it is said, "Blessed is He that endureth temptation." With such temptations, Believers have to struggle daily; and one reason why the writings above referred to have taken so firm a hold on many minds, is, I believe, this,—that they draw so true a picture of the conflict with *internal* evil;—true when applied to ourselves, but utterly false when applied to the Lord the Mediator. Only let us find what the Scriptures pronounce to be sinful, and then we know what Jesus had NOT; and so, without exercising our minds upon things too hard for them, we shall walk in quiet decision of judgment, because of the light of God's Word.

It is very needful, that the attention of those who love the truth should be aroused to the real character of these doctrines. They have in them the power of much misapplied truth and profession of holiness, otherwise they would not deceive the saints: but we may be quite sure, that the commandment of God can never be really kept by those who do not abide in the faith of Jesus, who "do not hold fast the faithful word." It is written, "Buy the truth, and sell it

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not ;" and I cannot but believe that they who have these doctrines clearly brought before their understandings, and then wilfully maintain them, are to be withstood to the face, "as those who are subverted and sin, being condemned of themselves" (Tit. iii).

But on the other hand, let us beware of priding ourselves on our orthodoxy, and making it our trust. The fallen state of the Church—its need of the Spirit—the destruction which awaits every system which has been or is being formed by the world—the personal coming of the Lord Jesus, when judgment shall begin at the house of God ;—these things are not the less true because they have been testified of by some in Newman-Street. They are true, because they are the testimony of God's own word ; and blessed are they who have ears to hear, and to obey.

NOTE ON PROPHECIES.

THE following are a few of the instances of prophecies which have proved false ;—

That at the end of three years and a half from the beginning of the prophecy of the witnesses, Satan should take to himself the sovereignty, and stand forth in all hideous power in the person of one man, to receive the worship of all the earth. The person who should be so energized of Satan, and be set up as his Christ, was at a subsequent period declared to be *young Napoleon.* (Baxter's Narrative of Facts, p. 31).

At the time this latter point was prophesied, it was declared that within three years and a half, the saints would be caught up to the Lord, and the earth wholly given up to the days of vengeance.

The power came upon another at the same time, confirming the rapture of the saints within three years and a half.

The failure of this prediction is well known. The 14th of July, 1835, was the day on which the rapture of the saints should have taken place, and no such event occurred ; but those who believed the utterance, continued their expectation till the following month, but with no better success.

It was distinctly revealed in the power ; and, says one who spoke,

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"In it I was made to utter, that the American Indians were the lost ten tribes, and that they should, within the three years and a half appointed for the spiritual ministry, be gathered back into their own land, and be settled there before the days of vengeance set in; that the chief who was now [then] in London, was a chosen vessel of the Lord to lead them back; that he should be endowed with power from on high, in all signs and mighty wonders, and should lead them back, though in unbelief—that he would receive his power here, and be speedily sent forth to them.

"On another evening, I was made, in a most triumphant chant, to address him as the vessel chosen of God, and to be endowed of God for the bringing back of his brethren. The chief went away an unbeliever in the work, and none of the powers have been manifested" (p. 81).

"There followed an appalling utterance—that the Lord had set me apart for Himself—that, from the day I was called to the spiritual ministry, I must count forty days—that this was now well-nigh expired—that for those forty days was it appointed that I should be tried—that the Lord had tried me and found me faithful, and having now proved in me the first sign of an apostle, "patience," (referring to 2 Cor. xii. 12), He would give to me the fulness of them, in the gifts of "signs and wonders, and mighty deeds"—that the Lord had called me to be an Apostle, and by the laying on of my hands and the hands of the other Apostles whom the Lord should call, should the baptism of fire be bestowed. Then was added a repetition of the fearful oath given on the declaration of my call to the ministry: 'By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord:—by myself have I sworn. By myself have I sworn, that I will not fail you; I will never leave nor forsake you.' I was commanded to go back to the Church, where my mouth was opened; and on the fortieth day, power should be given, the sick should be healed, the deaf should hear, the dead should be restored, and all the mighty signs and wonders should appear; Apostles and ministers should be ordained, endowed, and sent forth to the ends of the earth, to warn the world of the rapture of the saints, and make a people prepared for the Lord."

It is true that there are those in Newman-Street, who claim the Apostolic office: but where are the signs of an Apostle? In Mr.

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Baxter's own case, the whole proved false, and disappointment only ensued: he has seen the fearful delusion into which he fell; but no signs now seem to be required, as the office is held without them.

These are but a few instances of palpable failure in the prophecies uttered by the spirit in Newman-Street. "How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. xviii. 21, 22).

THE PROMISE OF THE LORD.

Matt. xviii. 20.

THE two leading features of Prophetic testimony, in its immediate application, were the exposure of the principles of Apostasy then at work; and comforting the hearts of the Remnant, who were groaning under the sense of it. The contrast to this was, the testimony of false prophets, who always lulled into security the many, and treated the groaning Remnant as the enemies of God and His people. "Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life; therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations; for I will deliver my people out of your hand; and ye shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. xiii. 22, 23). In the period just before the Babylonish captivity, we find the two pleas of the Lord against His people to have been, either that they justified continuance in avowed evil, as though the case were so desperate that they could not serve the Lord; or, that they asserted their innocence, and that their state was one of which the Lord approved. "Thou saidst there is no hope; no, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go: yet thou sayest, because I am innocent, surely His anger shall turn from me: behold I will plead

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with thee, because thou sayest I have not sinned" (Jer. ii. 25—35). These, therefore, are the two things which the Lord hateth;—contentedness with avowed evil, under the plea that there is no remedy for us, so that we must make the best of it; or forgetting the holiness of God, by giving the sanction of His name to that which He disowns, by asserting our innocence, and saying, "The temple of the Lord," &c. It is just here that the ministry of the prophets came in; they were raised up, as Apostasy was setting in, and their testimony multiplied as it advanced to a head. The Spirit of Christ in the Prophets, taking up the principles then working, carried them out in all their fearful result, looking through the long and dreary vista, to that great and terrible day of the Lord, in which they would be consummated, and met in judgment by the Lord. But whilst there was the most uncompromising witness against present evil, and testimony of God's sure judgment against it, there was invariably the promise of God's favour and protection towards the feeble Remnant, faithful in the midst of abounding evil. "The hearts of the righteous were not made sad."—"Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings" (Is. iii. 10). To take one example—in the prophetic strain of Isaiah, chap. vii. to xii.—The Spirit in the Prophet, at the very time that apostasy was set in under king Ahaz, after shewing the unchangeableness of the counsel of the Lord, which would stand, in spite of all the failures of man, and all the confederacies against it, takes a discursive range, through all its minor developments, up to the great Apostasy. But in the midst of this gloomy prospect, there is the word of comfort for the faithful Remnant.—"Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.—Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread; and He shall be for a sanctuary." And when the promise of security is thus given to the Remnant, he fully opens the prospect of increasing judgment, in the oft repeated burthen—"For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

In the Lord Jesus Christ was the perfectness of the Prophet, as well as of the Priest. He was that Prophet, into whose mouth

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Jehovah promised that He would put His words, and that he should speak unto the people all that he commanded them (Deut. xviii. 18). He had the pre-eminence as a Prophet; and, accordingly, we find in our Lord's discourses the principles embodied, which, though not understood at the time, were carried out into detail by the Apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who led them into all truth, and brought to their remembrance the things that Jesus had spoken unto them. In the eighteenth of Matthew, we find the Lord marking, as His Spirit had done in the Prophets of old, the rise of that which, apparently trivial, would issue in the most disastrous consequences; not only meeting the evil by solemn warning, but viewing it in its results, and comforting His people at all times in the midst of it. The bane of Christianity is there marked as "Emulation," the total contrast to Him who did not strive, nor cry, neither did any man hear His voice in the streets. It is striking to observe how this spirit, which is the very cherished principle of the flesh, and which Satan would fain carry into the Church, showed itself in the disciples on occasions apparently the least likely to have excited it. Here we see the Spirit of Christ, and the spirit of the world: that which was to regulate the Church, and that which carries on the world, distinguished and set in the strongest contrast.

In Luke xxii. after the Lord had instituted the memorial of His death and sacrifice, and had spoken of His betrayal; instead of finding any sympathy in their minds, we read, "There was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." And so we read in the chapter before us, "At the *same time* came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" This question was asked after Jesus had, by the payment of the tribute money, exhibited the deep humiliation into which He had come for their sakes. The payment of the half-shekel, the offering of the Lord, Exod. xxx. 13—16, was demanded of Peter, which every one that was numbered, rich or poor, was to give, to make an atonement for their souls; and this money was to be spent in the service of the Temple. Peter answered hastily for His master; but Jesus, having first asserted His own right, as the Son, to be free from the payment, yet, as being made under the law, and having come to

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redeem them that were under the law, He fulfilled its righteousness in this, as well as in the baptism of John. It was at such a season as this, when the Son was humbling Himself as the servant, that the minds of the disciples were selfishly seeking exaltation for themselves in the kingdom of heaven. Little did they think that real greatness, the greatness of God, was in His ability to minister to weakness; that He who has His dwelling so high, should humble Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in earth; that He who inhabiteth Eternity, and whose name is Holy, should dwell in the humble and contrite heart.

It was in this they needed to have the whole current of the thoughts of their minds entirely changed. They must be converted, and become as little Children, or they would not enter into the kingdom of heaven. To come into the lowest place here, was the necessary result of greatness in the kingdom of heaven. The only place of greatness in a world of evil, is necessarily to be of no esteem in it. The world knew not the Son: had He been great in its estimation, it must have been greatness in the estimation of those who had lost all moral perception. This is the hard lesson that we have to learn, and where we are constantly erring as the disciples of old did; the Lord knew it would be, because of its contrariety to the flesh. The necessary discipline, in order to teach His people their place of blessing, would be constant mortification, the cutting off the hand, the plucking out the eye. He who knew what was in man, did not merely meet the evil as it showed itself in individuals, but seeing its tendency, most solemnly warns against it, as affecting both the Church and the world. Presumed greatness in any, would be a stumbling-block in the way of the weak, power such as the flesh could recognize; authority which the world could own, would always be a stumbling-block in the way of the weak. Even supposing that it was not, as unhappily we know that it has been exercised against the poor of the flock, yet it would not be that which they needed. Their necessities craved that which was in fulness in the great and good Shepherd; authority in the hands of those who would be examples to the flock, not as those who would lord it over God's heritage. And not only so, the Lord has also marked the effect produced upon the world by the desire of greatness

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in the Church. He, whilst in the world, stood the humbled and separate One, and, therefore, His witness against it was so powerful. He was dead to all that was of credit in it, and thus testified that its deeds were evil: so long as He was in the world, He was the light of the world, and His people were to take His place where He left it. "Ye are the light of the world." They by their separateness standing aloof from all its dignity and glory, were thus to be its light. But woe unto the world because of offences. When His people began to assume worldly greatness and fleshly distinction, then the witness was gone; then the veriest woe came to the world, because it was either deceived into the notion that it was itself owned of God, or confirmed in its unbelief by its quickness to mark the entire inconsistency of the professed disciples of Christ, with the precepts of their Master. This is the woe which now presses on the world; the only convincing testimony to it of the truth of Christianity is gone, the holiness and love of those who profess it. So blind, indeed, are Christians to this, that amidst all their boasting of an increase of godliness, it rarely comes into their mind that the one thing needful is wanting, both to answer the heart of the Lord Jesus, or the purpose of their being left in the world, "That they may be one, that the world might believe that Jesus was sent of God." The Lord in leading on the minds of His disciples, proceeds on the assumption of their weakness. He takes up that as the place in which His eye ever saw them; He could only recognize them as "little ones;" and just in proportion as their standing in the world was otherwise, they ceased to be subjects of His condescending ministry of love, however in faithfulness He might chasten and rebuke them. He opens to us the great principle of heaven, as being that which ministers to weakness, placed in the situation of danger from surrounding evil. He would have His people always aware of this their blessing—that the real feeling of their own weakness was strength.—It was this that displayed God's power, sustaining weakness, and making it triumphant over every obstacle. "My strength is made perfect in weakness." The moment we assume any place of strength, and have that support which the flesh can rest in, our proper strength is gone. No human arrangements, however wisely made, and however, as man may think, directed to the Lord's

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glory, can avail, because they must necessarily interfere with the revealed principles of Him who chooses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." It is, therefore, as "little ones," that Believers are the subjects of angelic ministry, who are sent forth to minister to them who shall inherit salvation. "Take heed that ye despise not *one* of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." And this is heaven's blessed ministry; this ministry was His glory who came from heaven, not to be ministered to Himself, but to minister to others. Real greatness needed not the ministry of others; and in an evil world, the only place of real dignity is the ability to rescue from and to keep in the midst of it, that which had no strength against it. "The Son of Man is come to save that which is lost." But as if to open to us the whole mind of heaven, and to shew us its most favoured aspect towards us—as if to meet the subtle lie of Satan, that our insignificance is beneath God's notice, the Lord proceeds in the detail of blessedness of those who have no strength to shew how their necessity is graciously met.—"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that *one* of these little ones should perish." Thus out of weakness are they made strong. The Lord keep us in the abiding sense of the blessedness of our portion as little children.

That which the Lord had first applied in the way of individual blessing, He next applies to the Church collectively. He would not allow of an appeal from any of His people to the world, because it was a tribunal incapable of judging between brethren.—Its judgment being necessarily based on presumed right, not on grace. Hence, the injured party is put by our Lord in the place of the conciliator.—"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; and, if he shall hear thee, then thou hast gained thy brother." This rule would necessarily prevent the assumption of preeminence among brethren; he would really be the greatest in the estimation of heaven, who had most to bear. The only appeal was to the Church, as that which alone could judge righteous judg-

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ment; and its award, in case of insubmission to its authority, was putting without its pale, regarding the offender as a heathen man and a publican. It appears to me, that the Lord, still keeping in view the tendency of the principle *then* at work in the disciples' minds, as that which would seek after visible greatness in the world, casts contempt upon all its glory by only owning it as the place into which those would be driven who were excluded by the Church. The solemn sentence of the Church, in excluding any from fellowship, would appear, in the sight of men, as a powerless act, attended with no immediate results, and not affecting the person or property of the offender How unlike the award of a worldly tribunal! There the convicted offender is affected by its sentence in present shame, and loss of property, liberty, or life. But the seeming powerless sentence of those, to be excluded from whose fellowship would appear nothing to be dreaded, had the sanction of heaven, and involved consequences not only unseen but permanent:—"Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." The leading feature of this discourse of our blessed Lord, is the constant counteraction of the desire after greatness, such as would be cognizable by men. He is always putting His people and the Church in the place of weakness on earth, and giving them strength in heaven. His people, if in their proper place, would be, as Himself, the weak One on earth; for He "was crucified through weakness," but strong in the unseen power of God. Thus has the Lord met the necessities of His people at all times; however fearful the tide of Apostasy, it could never shut out the real blessing of the faithful Remnant, be it ever so small.—And the reason is, that whatever fearful exhibition of evil there may be in the visible Church, and however unable an insignificant minority are to testify against it, or to meet it in ostensible power, yet the blessing of the dispensation is open to them: and however little their strength, it is real, for it is the strength of heaven. And in order to meet the extremity of the case of His people, He who foresaw the fearfulness of that Apostasy which would come in, through the desire after greatness and love of preeminence, most graciously meets the case of the feeble few, faithful to Him in their weakness. "Again I say unto you, that if *two* of you shall agree *on earth* as touching any thing that they

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shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven: for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Now, taking this in its moral connection, with the point from which our Lord began this discourse, I believe it to be the abiding testimony to the blessing of His people under all circumstances. We have seen the Church set up most mighty in power and authority, in its entire separateness from the world, even to the merging of all worldly distinction in it. We have seen its spiritual and unseen power acknowledged even by those without (Acts ii. 43—47; iv. 37). We have seen Ichabod written on all this; and in vain search for another exhibition of convincing testimony against the world, by heavenly power and unity. That which then wrought in the minds of the disciples, even emulation, soon wrought effectually in the Church; and being of the flesh, *led* the Church to seek that greatness which the flesh could recognize; and has issued in that which we do see in Christendom—a system avowedly great in the earth, boasting its superior light above surrounding nations, apparently swaying their destinies, accrediting every worldly distinction, and giving the authority of heaven to principles the most opposite to those of Christ. This is beginning to be felt and acknowledged by thousands; and what shall they do? Whither shall they go? What would avail their feeble protest against evils inveterate, fondly cherished, and so entwined with everything around them? To reconstitute the Church would be to subvert Christendom. Now, the question in many minds naturally is—The professing Church has not abode in the goodness of God—it is that which is to be judged: are we still to tolerate it—still to cry "The temple of the Lord!" &c.? Again, we can see nothing standing in the plenitude of authority to which to look. Shall we say there is no hope? It is here the Lord meets His perplexed people; He neither forces them to own that as of Him, which He disowns Himself (save as to judgment), nor drives them to despair by holding out no hope. Here is their rest,—"WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM." And this is the peculiar blessing of our dispensation—the promise of the Lord's presence

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by His Spirit, under all circumstances — "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Let the Remnant be ever so small, even, if it were possible amidst the visible body, two or three only, still the blessing remains to them. The beauty and glory are departed; but to so insignificant a Remnant as this, is the word addressed by the Lord, "Meet together in my name;" and the promise, "I am in the midst of you." That which constitutes this very dispensation—the abiding presence of the Comforter—the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, is what we are continually prone to forget. We are ever inclined to that which the world can receive, instead of casting ourselves upon that which is our portion. It is not now to go here or there; the Father is not to be worshipped in any given place; neither are Believers to look to any thing ostensible to attach themselves to, but to meet together in the name of Jesus. Meeting in His name is the entire counteraction of the two snares to which we are exposed;—either of courting fellowship with the world, or cherishing sectarian feelings. Men have been so long accustomed to seek the strength of an Establishment to rest on, as almost, if not altogether, to forget the communion of the saints. This is never closed to us by the Lord, however it may be to our unbelief; and the proof is this—that even two shall experience the blessing of it; for where the Lord's presence is, can there be any thing lacking? It is, therefore, that the Apostle so presses the "not forsaking the assembling of *ourselves* together," as that which would cheer and direct us in trying circumstances. But union with the world, or the exclusion of any brethren, hinders this effectually: the Lord's Spirit is grieved or restrained, because we are not gathered in His name. Our foolish hearts crave something imposing —it is most contrary to them to continue in the faith of God's promise —we have to watch against an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. We have to watch against ourselves, lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. And that is deceitful which would make us judge by appearances, and not righteous judgment; this we never exercise, except in doing God's will. We are never, I believe, except by our own unbelief, placed in circumstances of balancing evil in order to choose the lesser. So full is the Word of

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God in its detail, so elastic are its principles, that we can be placed in no trying circumstances, but we shall find a way for us to escape, through the Spirit applying the Word, and thus guiding us by His counsel. Now the dilemma in which many of the Lord's people suppose themselves to be placed is this: they allow that it does do violence to their conscience, to accredit, as of the Lord, any system wherein the world has dominance; and they cannot construe into an approval of evil, His long-suffering with it. But they allege that they cannot see any thing around them with that real moral glory with which the Church was once invested, and which might claim their attachment, by affording that resting-place which their hearts sorrow after. They are in a strait; and if they do not violence to their conscience, it either interrupts their peace, or hinders their service. It is here the Lord meets them. He anticipated all their weakness, as well as their possible fewness. He knew the desire of their heart unto Him, and could sympathize with that hesitation, which would falter in acting in the face of presumed authority, and prevented, if we may use the expression, the desire of a real visible authority to stay upon, by throwing His people entirely off it on Himself:—"Wheresoever two or three are gathered together in my name, *there* am I in the midst of them." Here, therefore, will be the wisdom of those who are led, by God's Spirit, to the discovery of the fearful departure of the Church from the goodness of God. Whilst they will mourn over their common sin in the departure of that glory which the Lord, on leaving the earth, bequeathed to his Church, they will not be looking for that which might present itself as another witness for Christ, in all the glory of power and authority; but remembering whence they are fallen, will be zealous and repent; and in their penitence they are met by the Lord, who, though He has no where pledged Himself to reconstitute that which man has marred, has pledged Himself to His people to be *ever* with them. And in the blessing thus secured to them, He has provided, at the same time, for the honour of His own name. He has invested them with power to put away from them any one, who is called a brother, who continues to walk disorderly after being warned. Thus, in the worst possible circumstances, two things are secured to the Lord's people—their strength and com-

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fort in His presence, and their right to regard as a heathen man, and a publican, any one who brings a scandal on his profession, and blasphemes that holy name by which He is called. The people of the Lord can always *act*. If they be His, they have His Spirit, and in that Spirit can meet together, and by that Spirit they can judge, and withdraw themselves from any brother who, after remonstrance, still continues to walk disorderly, so that the comfort of His worshippers, and the purity of His worship, is secured, by this charter of the ever gracious and loving Lord, to His very feeble Remnant. The simple principle is, that the Lord would never oblige His people to sin. Now, I believe it to be just as binding on a Christian to meet together with Christians, as to abstain from those things which may even shock the natural conscience. There is one Lawgiver; and who shall presume to say where His authority is to be qualified? He that said, "I say unto you, Swear not at all," said also, "Let him be to thee a heathen man and a publican;" and the one ought to be no less binding on the conscience of a true disciple than the other.

This I believe to be the leading of the mind of the great Prophet of the Church throughout this discourse. Clearly perceiving where the spirit working in the minds of His Disciples would issue, He looks to that, and amidst all the maze of difficulty in which they might be placed, provides the simple way for their escape; and in the darkest periods of the Church's history, we can find those who have been obedient to the Lord's direction, and found the blessing. The Lord Jesus, the Prophet, has not made the hearts of His people sad, nor strengthened the hearts of the wicked. He has not forced them into the assertion—"The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these!" as though He sanctioned every species of worldliness: nor reduced them to the plea of slothfulness—"There is no hope, the matter is desperate." All that is needed for action and blessing, is faith in the Lord's word. He never is contented with the evil, however His people may be. It is a most fearful instance of the want of a sound mind, when we find so much perverse ingenuity, so many subtleties, so many analogies drawn, in order to lull the awakened consciences of many into contentedness with evil. Here is a plain direction of our Lord, which was given for them to act on, and applicable to any

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circumstances. And here is a plain answer to those who charge that as schism, which is bounden duty—separation from the world, as a necessary preliminary in order to our meeting together in the name of Jesus. Blessed be His name, He has not left us comfortless; and whilst it becomes us to be humbled to the very dust for our grievous departure from Him, let us not add this to all our other sins—either to charge Him with unfaithfulness, or to tempt Him by saying, Is God among us or not? Whoever believeth on Him shall never be confounded: even in the most disastrous times, when iniquity abounds and the love of many waxes cold, the Lord's people may assemble together, and exhort one another; and the more so as they see the day approaching. As it was of old, so it is now—"Ye have said, It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. *Then* they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. iii. 14—17).

CRITICAL NOTICES.—No. 3.

I SEND you some additional verbal criticisms, of importance connected with truth, though comparatively insignificant in point of learning. Those who love the truth will not despise them.

It appears to me that while, in general, the authorized English Translation is one of incomparable value; on the subject of the dispensation of the glory to come, there are several passages which the

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Translators have forced from their plain sense, in consequence of their not seeing or not believing in it; and, therefore, not seeing how it could be possible to take it in the sense the passages plainly represented—otherwise their pains are very remarkable. Some of these passages I will notice. There is one very important passage, of some length, exceedingly obscured by a fear, I suppose, of popular mistake. The word translated "condemnation" in John v. 24, and in *v.* 29 "damnation," is the identical word rendered "judgment" in *v.* 22 and 27, and correctly so rendered. The word properly used for "condemnation" is different, as in Rom. viii. 1; κρίσις is the word in John, κατάκριμα in Romans. A plain and beautiful passage is obscured by this effort to meet common thoughts, or a fear of strange ones.

The statement of the passage is, that there are two things in which respectively the Son's glory is shown—quickening and judging. In the former, as a blessing, He exercises His power conjointly with the Father. In the latter, as the vindication of His honour against those that have despised it, He is alone, and executes it in the way in which He was despised; He judges as Son of man: but as to those who are quickened, there is no need of bringing them into *Crisis*, for they, through grace, have honoured the Son when the rest dishonoured Him unrighteously; and it is just out of such Crisis they are saved, as the subjects of the exercise of the Son's quickening power; but that all men should honour Him, judgment is committed entirely to Him whom they dishonoured, securing His honour as the Father's. These then are the two great instruments by which honour is brought and secured to the Son—Quickening Power and Crisis. They, therefore, that are quickened, do not come into Crisis—they have passed from death into life. How are they known? They hear Christ's word, and believe on the Father which sent Him: thus we know that they have eternal life, and shall not come into Crisis at all. Before the Βῆμα (*Bema*) of Christ they may stand to have righteous appointment before Him; but into Crisis they do not come. This is the statement of 2 Cor. v. 10. "We must all appear before the Βῆμα of Christ, to receive the things done in the body, good or evil." This then is the positive assertion of the Lord, that the quickened shall not come into *Crisis*, but have everlasting life. The same is the result of resurrection, when

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this truth is disclosed. They that are in their graves shall come forth at the power of the same voice. They that have done good to the resurrection of life of which they have been made partakers, not to Crisis; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of judgment, a distinct thing, which is the result of the exercise of Christ's voice on an unquickened soul, and in which none at all can stand, as in Psalm cxlii. (LXX.) μὴ εἰσέλθῃς εἰς κρίσιν, Enter not into judgment with thy servant (Heb. and Eng. Ps. cxliii). Thus the resurrection of life, is the filling up the quickening power of Christ as to this mortal body, mortality being swallowed up of life: the resurrection of judgment, to *Crisis*, that is for the wicked only, for none can stand in it. The connection of this with present blessing is manifest; the beautiful connection with the exhibition of the power of Christ is made most plain. The change of the word destroys the consequence and connection of the passage. We cease to have the double exhibition of the power of Christ in its pursued effects, and we lose the present peace which results from knowing, conformed to our complete justification in Him who is Himself the judge, that we shall not come into *Crisis*—into question of judgment as to our reception at all. How indeed should Christ do it, save as despising His own sacrifice and righteousness, when it is before Him we stand? Our resurrection is a resurrection of life, whatever our responsibility, which 2 Cor. v. maintains complete in its place.

To turn to another passage (1 Cor. xi. 29, et seq.), where this word is misused: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh *damnation* to himself." The apostle is speaking of Christians fallen under chastenings of sickness, or even temporal death—sleeping (the common Christian word for a Believer's death), because of evils into which they had fallen; and tells them they are but eating and drinking judgment to themselves; but that when they were judged they were chastened of the Lord, *that they should not be condemned with the world.* They were Christians, and therefore chastening judgment came upon them here, that they should not be condemned along with the world. But if, says the Apostle, we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord. The first word "judge" is here again a different one, διακρίνει, discern ourselves—if by the

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cherished use of the presence of the Lord with our souls, by the Holy Ghost, we discerned the springs of evil or circumstances of evil therein, which were the occasions of what called forth the chastening, we should not come under it. Examine yourselves—and how? By the light of the presenee of the Spirit of God; and hence the importance of keeping it undimmed, ungrieved in the soul, and exercising oneself by examining watchfulness so as not to lose it, otherwise the very power of discernment is gone comparatively, by which the evil is discerned; we become blind, and cannot see afar off. The good Shepherd may restore us, and does, for His name's sake; but it is by chastening, and possibly sorrowful evil. Our wisdom is the spirituality by which evil is seen in its springs, not in its effects,—and the watching ourselves in this, so as that unconsciously the power of discernment be not weakened by losing the sense of the very evil which calls for it, and the remedy be the sorrowful but still loving stroke of the Lord's hand. "Make the heart of this people fat," is the worst sorrow of judgment, but any measure of it in us is a grievous evil. May we, by thus discerning ourselves, be kept or made very bright and joyful in spirit, of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; our estimate of holiness high; because our communion, and consequently understanding, is bright, even with Him who makes us partakers of His holiness.

Another passage I will now refer to (Acts iii. 19): "Repent, and be converted, so that your sins may be blotted out *when* the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord:"—read, "so that," ὅπως ἂν, the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. The mission of Jesus, whom they had lost as a nation, would be on their repentance. It is not here, "Repent and be baptized every one of you," and individual matter of salvation, as in the former sermon; but an address to the assembly of the Jews, explaining the position in which they stood by the rejection of Jesus, but that even so upon their repentance, Jesus would be sent to them again; and on their repentance and conversion, the times of refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord, ὅπως ἂν ἔλθωσι, the only sense of which is "so that they may come." The sermon is a Jewish sermon to them as Jews. It states ver. 18th, the sufferings—21st, restitution of all things; Jesus in heaven till then; and on their repentance the seasons

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of refreshing to come. I would also remark that "raise up," ver. 26, refers, I apprehend, not to resurrection, but to the same words "raise up," ver. 22, stating that what the Prophet promised was indeed raised up in the person of God's Son, Jesus; the "sent Him to bless you," was on His mission from the Father, but it was not done on repentance now, for He would send Him now fore-preached, in the times of refreshing which would be on their repentance. The προκεκηρυγμένον is the προηλπικότας of Eph. i. 12. The alteration προκεχειρισμένον, as to the matter, comes to the same sense, though it is of stronger reproach to the Jews as actually manifested and produced to them. But the whole passage is completely a Jewish sermon. To you first—ye are the children of the Prophets. The translators, I suppose, could not see the national repentance, or the dealing of the Lord with the Jews still, as a nation; and the passage is quite changed into rather unintelligible Gentile Theology.

We have a similar instance in Rom. xi. 31, "Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also might obtain mercy." This is asserting that the Jews, as a nation, are to obtain mercy by the Gentiles' mercy. So doubtless the translators thought; but it is a mistranslation, οὕτω καὶ οὗτοι νῦν ἠπείθησαν τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐλέει ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθῶσι: these have now disbelieved in the mercy to you Gentiles, that they also might be brought upon terms of mercy. Promises had belonged to the Jews; but they forbad to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always, so that wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. Thus, like mere sinners of the Gentiles, it was a matter, though true to Himself, of sovereign mercy to bring in the Jews; fulfilment of promise they had rejected in Him, who was a minister of circumcision to confirm them. God concluded all in unbelief; the Gentiles naturally—the Jews now, in the wisdom of dispensation, that both might come in on like terms of mercy, as the Jew surely shall on the latter day.

There is another passage which sometimes perplexes people with deep inquiries, which I believe take their rise merely from obscurity of expression. In Rev. xxii. 9, we have, "For I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the Prophets, and of them which keep

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the sayings of this book: worship God." And again, xix. 10, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus." Now this is commonly taken as if the angel had the testimony of Jesus, and was Himself as one of the Prophets. But it appears to me the rendering is simply this—*σύνδουλός σου γάρ εἰμὶ καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου τῶν προφητῶν*, "I am but a fellow servant of thee, and of thy brethren the Prophets;"—*thee* and the *Prophets* being in opposition, not the *Angel* and the *Prophets*: in the other, "of thy brethren which have the testimony of Jesus," which makes the passage very simple.

I would repeat here what has been noticed elsewhere, which makes an obscure passage very easy: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former" (Hag. ii. 9);—this should be, I apprehend, "The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former;" and this is not yet properly fulfilled. If we refer to the third verse, we shall see at once how "this house" is used as to both its states: the house is looked at as one thing—it is the Lord's house, the temple in different states; of which her first glory is one; and then, "how do ye see *it* now?" The unity of the house in all its states makes the sentence very plain. Many of these passages may seem very simple; but it must be remarked that one passage, where the mind is subject to Scripture, will arrest it in all its course; and thus all its principles will be more or less affected; and thus it becomes of great importance to free the mind from its difficulty.

There is a slight correction in 1 Pet. i. 11. which makes it more strong and clear. The sufferings, the *glories* after these, *μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας*. It enlarges the scope of the abounding glories of Christ to come, not His present glory, merely, at the right hand of the Father.

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To the EDITOR *of the* "CHRISTIAN WITNESS."

SIR,

I should feel highly obliged for a Scriptural definition of the word "Backslider," as set forth in the word of Eternal Truth. It has indeed been a subject of debate in my mind, whether the term is, or is not, synonymous with "Apostate."

Your obedient Servant,

Z.

BACKSLIDING AND APOSTASY.

IT is very difficult, if not dangerous, for us to attempt accurately to define the words used by the Holy Ghost in the Scripture of truth. Great, as increasing acquaintance with the word of God may prove to us, as is the nicety of the expressions used by the sacred Penmen, yet as they are things and facts which the Holy Ghost presents to faith, we are not left to philological distinctions, but the unlearned is led by the Spirit's teaching to gather the meaning of any word from the context. It is very well for us, who see through a glass darkly, to define the terms we use, lest in attempting to communicate any thing to others, we should darken counsel by words without wisdom. In the case, for example, of the two words proposed for our consideration, we are persuaded there is a real moral distinction, which verbal accuracy would by no means meet. And we would remark, that as the term Apostasy often occurs in this publication, we would avail ourselves of the present opportunity to show the sense in which it is used. And first of all, the word itself, "Backslider," does not occur in the New Testament; although there are expressions equivalent to it. Neither is the word "Apostasy" to be found in the Old Testament; although the thing is evidently described: and therefore there will be places where Backsliding may mean the state we would characterise as Apostasy.

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The word most usually translated "backsliding," which so often occurs in the prophet Jeremiah, simply means "to turn, or return:"* its moral sense being gathered from the context. Thus Joshua xxii. 16. "What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, *to turn away* from following the Lord, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel against the Lord?" (See also ver. 29.) And in the next chapter we find the word without any adjunct, used thus, morally (ver. 11, 12),—"Take good heed therefore unto yourself, that ye love the Lord your God. *Else if ye do in any wise go back*, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations," &c. From these expressions, the meaning of "backsliding" may be gathered; although the term is not used. There is another word† more rarely translated "backsliding" only (Hos. iv. 16), "Israel *slideth back* as a *backsliding* heifer; and in the margin (Zech. vii. 11), "They gave a *backsliding* shoulder." In other places it is translated "stubborn," "rebellious," "revolters." Deut. xxi. 18—20, "If a man have a *stubborn* and *rebellious* son, which will not obey the voice of his father," &c. "I have spread out my hands all the day to a *rebellious* people" (Is. lxv. 2). "They are all grievous *revolters.*" (Jer. vi. 28).

In the 5th of Jeremiah both the words are used; and it will help to show us that a backsliding state is one of degree; and in this may be said to differ from Apostasy, which is one of fixed and settled purpose. This chapter sets forth the Apostasy of Jerusalem, and the way she was led into it: "Run ye to and fro the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find *a man*, if there be *any* that executeth judgment, that seeketh truth." Then the charge is: "Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have *refused to return.*" And this was no partial, but a general defection. "I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them, for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of our God: but these have altogether broken

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* שׁוּב See also Num. xxii. 15. † סָרַר

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the *yoke, and burst the bonds.*" Then their fearful judgment: "Because their transgressions are many, and their *backslidings are increased,*" or strong. Lastly, "This people hath a *revolting* and rebellious heart, they are *revolted* and *gone*" (ver. 23). In chap. viii. 5, we have, "Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a *perpetual backsliding?* they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return." Had not the backsliding been continuous, it might have been remedied; but they went on from bad to worse. From these instances we may safely conclude that Backsliding is the subject of chastisement and warning, but Apostasy, of judgment. So far, therefore, as the state is one which God continues to deal with in the way of correction, it is Backsliding; but when God says, "Why should ye be stricken any more, ye will revolt more and more" (Is. i. 5), it becomes a state of settled departure from God — "they are gone away backward." It is Apostasy—and only to be dealt with in judgment, according to the word: "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1). It is important to remark how constantly backsliding is connected with a refusal to hear. And this, when it becomes habitual, brings about that moral state most hateful in the sight of God, and which He gives up to judgment; as it is written, Deut. xxi. 18 — 20: "If a man have a *stubborn* and rebellious son, which will *not obey* the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and when they have *chastened* him will not *hearken* unto them, they shall say unto the Elders of the city, This our son is *stubborn* and rebellious; he will not *obey* our voice;... all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die." Here is the direct contrast to the one in whom God was well pleased, even the obedient son, whose constant language was, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

And now, to turn to the New Testament; we have the words, ἡ Ἀποστασία, the Apostasy (2 Thes. ii. 3); and it is only here used in the sense we popularly attach to it. It occurs in one other place, Acts xxi. 21: "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses:" ἀποστασίαν ἀπὸ Μωσέως. Here we see the kindred idea of the first word we considered in the Old Testament "to depart from." We

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have the root from whence the noun is derived, often occurring in the New Testament, and used both in a good and bad sense: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some *shall depart* from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits" (1 Tim. iv. 1). Again, Luke xiii. 13: "Which for a time believe, and in time of temptation *fall away*." And in 1 Tim. vi. 5: "From such withdraw thyself." 2 Tim. ii. 19: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, *depart* from iniquity." These examples would show the impropriety of attempting a verbal definition, at the same time that they convey most distinct ideas to our mind. There is one verse, Heb. iii. 12, which may be said to be God's own definition of Apostasy; "An evil heart of unbelief in *departing* from the living God." In this indeed backsliding is included.

The Corinthians had declined, in respect of the purity of their communion; i. e. they had gone back from the standard they had previously attained (1 Cor. v); also in respect of love in ministering to the Saints (2 Cor. xiii. 10); and as such were in the one case the subjects of the Apostle's severe animadversion and threatening of heavy chastisement; and in the other, of his earnest exhortation; but these were not cases properly of Apostasy. In both cases there appears to have been warning: the warning was received, and led to repentance (2 Cor. vii), and the exhortation stirred up love. So the language of the Apostle to the Galatians: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you" (chap. i. 6); and "ye did run well" (ver. 7), proves a sliding back both in faith and practice; and the Apostle's fears and hope,—at one time, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain;" at another, "I have confidence in you through the Lord,"—prove that whilst he saw the Apostasy in which their departure might issue, he looked on that departure as remediable. The evil heart of unbelief was not confirmed in departing from the living God. They were not beyond warning and being reclaimed, as the Jews were, to whom the Apostle addressed himself in the language of the Prophet Isaiah, giving them over to judicial blindness (Acts xxviii. 7). But where we shall see the distinction most clearly marked, is in the case of the seven Churches (Rev. ii. iii). These were so constituted that the

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Great Head of the Church, and its Bishop, could own them as Churches, and deal with them as He who walked in the midst of the Churches as the Son of Man, judging them. With His eyes of flaming fire He was quick in detecting their backslidings and exposing them — backslidings in practice, which if not repented of, would lead to Apostasy, and the removal of the candlestick. Hence the message invariably is, "I know thy works." These Churches were in a state to be dealt with in exhortation, warning, and reproof, and chastisement. But if there was no ear to hear what the Spirit said to the Churches, they would be brought to the state already mentioned, as described in Jeremiah: "They would not hearken," and therefore would only be dealt with by the Son of Man in judgment. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. ii. 4). Here is Backsliding, not Apostasy; but if the warning be not followed by repentance, there follows Apostasy, and thereupon judgment: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of *her* place, except thou repent." Here we see the first declension in practice; and in the Church of Laodicea the last stage of blacksliding verging on Apostasy; a state not beyond the reach of rebuke and chastisement, but just ready to be spued out of the mouth of the Lord. Now what is remarkable is, that the Lord Jesus Christ, as Son of Man, does not appear again till chap. xiv. 14, i. e. the Harvest and the Vintage. He could exercise direct judicial authority as Son of Man, and as the Bishop of the Church, up to a certain point; but when His message by the Spirit was rejected, then was Apostasy consummated, and He could only recognize the visible Church as that which He would meet in judgment. When therefore we speak of the Apostasy of the Church, we mean that settled departure from the principles of its original constitution by its Head, so that he cannot directly administer to it as the Church, because to do so would be to give the sanction of His name to evil. Now the constitution of the Church is the abiding presence of the Comforter; He is the foundation of its authority, the dispenser of its ministrations, the source of teaching, the author of holiness, the cement of its unity—in a word, its only strength. Now

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we have seen Backsliding in those several particulars and warnings against it, but they would not hearken; and now the Church has settled down on another basis, which may, in general terms, be asserted to be the rejection of the Holy Ghost, in authority, ministration, teaching, and power; and substituting either fleshly order or popular election in its stead. The evil heart of unbelief has issued in departing from the living God. And the misery is, that we are so little sensible of the Apostasy—so little recognize the removal of the candlestick, that the necessity of an establishment of some sort is generally assumed by Christians as an axiom. Where can we see any thing like a candlestick under the immediate ordering of the Son of Man? The very claim to be so *now*, carries with it the stamp of Apostasy. Will any now be so bold as to claim the sanction of the Lord's name for the avowed evils of their respective systems? "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not, and come and stand before this house which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold even I have seen it saith the Lord" (Jer. vii. 9—11). When therefore we assert the Apostasy of the visible Church, we mean that it has ceased as a whole to be God's witness in the earth exceptfor judgment. But it must be ever borne in mind, that to be in an Apostasy, is not necessarily to be an Apostate. In the preceding dispensation, as Apostasy was setting in, God raised up His witnesses against it, in the persons of the Prophets, who were multiplied as it increased, and to them the poor of the flock gave heed. Even in Babylon, Daniel existed in all the individual blessing of his dispensation. And so from the time of the Lord's removing the candlestick, He has never left Himself without a witness; the Spirit in individuals has ever been found protesting against false doctrine or corrupt practice: and the Lord has made provision of blessing for them in their little strength. But not to pursue this here, we would remark three things: 1st,—that it has been God's method to own the partial truth held by any association gathered even in the name of man, as a testimony against the prevailing evil of the Apostasy. Hardly any one will be disposed

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to deny that the Society of Friends, however defective in doctrine, did raise a most decided testimony to the presence and power of the Spirit, and thus were capacitated to testify against truth held in ungodliness on the one hand, and a mere routine of formal ceremonies on the other. The same might be said of other associations, which, however they might assume the name of a Church, did not stand in the place of the candlestick ordered by the Son of Man, although His grace would recognize any portion of truth they held in righteousness, or any zeal for His name. The Lord "hewed" His fallen people by the Prophets (Hos. vi. 5); but the Prophets did not constitute the nation of Israel; and analogous to their ministry has been either that of individual testimony by the power of the Spirit, or the associations arising from it; but that does not make them the Church.

II.—As to individual Backsliding, the case is supposed in admonitions of this character: "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." "But to do good and to communicate, forget not." And these are the correctives to meet the continual tendency in us to grow weary in the service of the Lord, and to draw back. But here we must specially guard against the advantage that Satan might gain against us, in presenting to our view the energy we once had, and from which we have declined. Our wisdom is to discriminate between the energy of the flesh and power of the Spirit: that energy is soon gone when no results answering its expectations are realized; but in the Spirit there is continuance. Fruit to God is brought forth "*with patience.*" The excitement of the flesh is often mistaken by novices for the power of the Spirit; and when it fails, they may be led into trouble of conscience, from feeling that the buoyancy of spirit in which they were once carried on in service is gone, at the very time when in the judgment of a spiritual mind, their state may be more healthy, if they have exchanged carnal excitement for *patient continuance* in well doing." He that *endures* unto the end shall be saved. If it be asked, At what stage does backsliding become Apostasy? it may be answered, when discipline fails of reclaiming. It is hard for us to distinguish between the weakness of the flesh and settled purpose of the mind, as well as to enter into the great acquired power of Satan over those who, by back-

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sliding, have been taken captive by him at his will. In the pride of our self-conceit we might have branded Peter or Cranmer as an Apostate, and yet the Lord knew them as His. But were they not Backsliders in act? This we can judge of, and deal with in discipline; but the Lord knoweth the heart, and "the Backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways" (Prov. xiv. 14). As such he is an Apostate, he is avowedly gone from his principles; and when such a case is clearly made out, we may apply the word: as for example, in the case of many of those who, professedly being Presbyterians, have fallen into Socinianism. This case is supposed as one that might happen: "A man that is an Heretic after the first and second admonition reject: knowing that he that is such is *subverted*, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (Tit. iii. 10, 11). May it not therefore safely be said, that though every Apostate is a Backslider, not every Backslider is an Apostate; and that Backsliding refers to a state in which a Believer has been, and from which he has declined: but Apostasy is the settled renunciation of a profession once made. He that is born of God may be a Backslider, and hence the way in which the Scriptures are written as "profitable for correction and reproof;" but he cannot be an Apostate, because "*His seed* remaineth in him." This may be gathered from the solemn warning, Heb. vi*. Every possible attainment, short of a new creation, is there supposed as possible, and from these a falling away; but there says the Apostle, "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak: for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of *love*." "Every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." Most salutary therefore is it for us not to be resting in any of those attainments which might minister to our self-complacency, but to be exercised in that patient love, the work and labour of which always crosses the flesh. It is in this we are apt to be *slothful*, and to seek for knowledge, or some other gift, instead of the manifestation of God's own nature in us.

Lastly, we must bear in mind, that since that which was set up by God as His witness on the earth, even the visible Church, has failed

* Some light is thrown on this often perplexing passage, in vol. ii. page 105, &c. of this publication.

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of its purpose, and is in Apostasy; that the proper place of Believers and bounden service to the Lord, is testimony against the Apostasy of the professing body. As in the Apostasy, but not of the Apostasy, we must "go without the camp." Fidelity to the Lord now forces his people to enter their protest against whatever bears His name, but is not of Him. No plea of expediency, no dread of marring unity, ought to prevent our disowning the sanction of the Holy Name by which we are called, to whatever system virtually disowns Him as its only Legislator. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ *depart from iniquity*,"—ἀποστήτω ἀπὸ ἀδικίας. It is actually so to depart in principle and practice, as an Apostate does from the truth as it is in Jesus. The iniquity may be covered up under seeming order, and may be even venerable by its antiquity; but it is sanctioned, and we cannot depart from iniquity without protesting against that which accredits it. The most aggravated form of evil, is glossing it over with the name of good; the sure mark of Apostasy is calling evil good, saying, "We are delivered to do all these abominations," having the form but denying the power of godliness: "from such turn away." It will therefore be our wisdom to cultivate that Spirit which will make us of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, in order to separate between "the precious and the vile;" and to allow no plea of personal convenience, no assumption of authority, to interfere with our departing from that iniquity which the Lord will judge: "I have told him that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth: because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (1 Sam. iii. 12). It is a solemn principle of judgment; a man might be walking apparently blameless before the Lord, and yet by sanctioning evil, helping on judgment. Let us beware of the sophistry of our own hearts, which are ever prone to palliate evil. It is to the workers of iniquity that the Lord says, "Depart from me, I never knew you." And therefore, whatever definite application may be given to the call, yet it is our wisdom to look at it as continually addressed to ourselves: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

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THE VERITY OF THE REVIVAL OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH IN NEWMAN-STREET AND ELSEWHERE, EXAMINED; OR, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRUE CHURCH TO BE READY TO MEET HER LORD.

DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER,

MANY of the topics of our last conversation have recurred to me, and I have been pressed in spirit (since personal intercourse is at present impossible) to commune with you by letter. On one especially, and that of the deepest interest to us both—"The verity of the revival of the Apostolic Church in Newman-Street, and elsewhere"—I would now write. Two things tend to give liberty in this communication; first, the consciousness of an excellent gift of grace in you, that, while ready to hear every brother, you will receive nothing from any, howsoever dear, till you have compared it with the word and the testimony: and, secondly, your perception that God's gift in me is that of a spiritual judgment, which, though weak, was given, not for my sake only, but chiefly for the glory of Jesus, in the service of His members.

If the Scriptures are to be our guide and standard of right and wrong, the principles and practice of the primitive Apostolic Church should surely be our pattern as to the fellowship of saints. There are indeed Churches many, and principles of Church constitution many and diverse, yet the Spirit has sanctioned but one:—to be again conformed to that, from which we ought never to have departed, should be our ambition and prayer. The only question preliminary to this is, that of individual salvation. Now if there is one single truth of which I can be confident, it is this, that I have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, the blessed Paraclete, for whose presence and sake it was even expedient (John xvi. 4.) that Jesus should go away. The evidences of the possession of the Spirit are clear and unanswerable.

To my own self, there is, first, consciousness, in every sensibility and in every act of divine life, as satisfactory, to say the least, as consciousness of natural life is in any question raised concerning it: and,

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secondly, as the necessary result of the Spirit's being present with a view to permanent blessing, there has been the communication from Him who has thus made me a temple for His residence, of moral principles, through faith in the truth as it is in Jesus.

To the world around, which can judge of that which is within, only by its results in action, there is also a double testimony: first, actions characteristic of these moral principles; and secondly, gifts not natural, and therefore, exhibitive of the presence of One who is above nature. Yes, beloved friend, I do know, blessed be God, the answer of the Apostle's prayer, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe; according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come: and has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." This I do know; for I, who was dead in trespasses and sins, under the power of the spirit of disobedience, and was by nature a child of wrath, have been quickened together with Him, being raised up and made sit together in the heavenlies in Christ. Wondrous grace! that I should thus be brought into living fellowship with the Father and with the Son—fellowship in nature and life ["partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. i. 4); "Know ye not that Christ is in you?" (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17), &c.]; fellowship in object and purpose; fellowship in power, and blessedness, and glory; and therefore, fellowship in the obedience and sufferings of the Man of sorrows, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His body's sake, which is the Church."

This distinctive mark of the present dispensation, extending from

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the day of Pentecost to the day of our Lord's appearing a second time, without sin unto salvation, has been too little thought of. It is one, however, which distinguishes the present from every former period, and is most marvellous. That we should now be able to sing, "Glory and dominion unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father;" that we should have the indwelling of the Holy Ghost making us now, even now, at this present time, sons of God, yea sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, so that as Christ is, so are we in this world; and if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together; these are indeed privileges to marvel at and admire. I rest not here, longer that just to remark how generally the saints have forgotten this, and how, therefore, their services to the Lord are more like those of the Israelites when making bricks without straw, than those of the children of the Father's love. Concerning graces and gifts testifying of the Spirit's presence in blessing, I would remark briefly, first, as to the former, that of all the evidences of the truth of Christianity, I know none more remarkable than this, even the communication to me, in whatever feeble measure, of the character and works of God Himself. When I remember what I am by nature, and what the character of all my own works was in times past, and is still, whenever they appear, and then contemplate in me the works, graces, and fruits of the Holy Ghost, I quite wonder, and admire Christ in me;—I say *admire*, and surely I ought, for it is not myself, but Christ in me, in whom is seen love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, holiness, obedience, &c.;—to think that I, whose subjection to selfishness had filled me with hatred to both God and man, that I, even I, should love God, having confidence in His love; and for that love's sake, should be dying daily for my brethren who are in the world, that they may also be saved. And this is our Lord's witness in us to the world, for "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John xiii. 35, and xvii. 21—26). Secondly, As to gifts I should be a fool to boast to you, seeing how before my God I can boast in nothing save Christ crucified, risen, and soon to be openly glorified; yet there is a time to

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speak of these things, and to point out what He has given us, ascribing all the glory to His grace; and that time is now. But, first, let me say a few words on the sanability of the Church's disease. That there has been, since the day of Pentecost, as complete an Apostasy* (standing off or departure) from the principles of the dispensation, as there ever was at any former period, cannot, I think, be denied. I do not allude to the present state of things, but to the dark ages of the Church previous to the Reformation. Taken as a whole, the Church was then unquestionably apostate from the truth, execrating every doctrine of salvation, and even withholding the Scriptures. Placing myself at the commencement of Reformation, I would ask, how far is restoration from the present dominion of superstition and worldliness to the primitive glory of the Church possible? Can *the whole* outward and visible Church be brought back into a full exhibition of the truth as it is revealed in the word? Certainly not; for, first, it is contrary to the whole analogy of God's dealing to restore a dispensation *as a whole;* for He displaces that which falls away by something better; secondly, the Scriptures are express, that the present Church, whose characteristics should have been those of *election* and *suffering*, is to be rejected in judgment (on account of sin) in order to make way for another, in which truth shall have universal sway throughout the earth, in the fulness of external glory. The Spirit of the Lord in the

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* It may be well to observe, that 'apostasy' and 'purity' are indefinite, unless the laws and matter of that of which they are spoken are known. If we used the term 'purity' as applied to God, we should mean something wide of that which would be our thoughts, when using the same word in reference to the Church in its present militant state. Again, Apostasy is the departure from, or practical renunciation of, principles given of God; but Apostasy of an individual and of a body, differ widely; because the laws of individual salvation and Church congregation differ.

The law of individual salvation has ever been the appropriation, through the Spirit, of God's moral character.

The law of the Jewish polity, was the recognition of Jehovah as God and King.

The congregational law of the present Church, is the recognition of the Holy Ghost as Christ's vicar, through the written Word.

So that an Apostate Church may contain many individuals who are not apostate—*i. e.* the Church of Rome was apostate just before the Reformation, yet every one in it was not apostate, as an individual, though doubtless each was guilty of the Church apostasy. It was apostate, just because, like all the sects of our day, it stood off from God's principles of congregational association; yet as many of its members as loved Jesus, as individuals, were not apostate.

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Apostles, continually predicts Apostasy and judgment; and never, even in one single passage, admits the possibility of a renewal of the whole. The 9th of Romans is most distinct on this point—"*Continue in goodness,* OR *be cut off.*" Again, "Thou standest by faith, be not high-minded, but fear," &c.; the only alternative, "fall under judgment." But while both analogy and express Scripture negative universal restoration, both suggest the hope and expectation of partial renewals; for though Apostasy, as was predicted, has fearfully prevailed, and the Holy Ghost has been grieved and quenched exceedingly, yet God has not forgotten the remnant according to the election of grace. Though the outward Church has, as a whole, proved a false witness, losing the truth and despising the Spirit; yet, in those that come unto Jesus, God's grace shines forth. For now (as in every former and future dispensation) it must be seen, that, whilst man cannot stand, whatsoever be the fulness of the truth, privilege, and power of the Spirit dispensed, or the limitation put upon Satan, Jesus can, and will, keep the good gift in His members. In the midst of Apostasy, and even judgment following on it, we have seen in Daniel and his followers, how faith can immediately administer, to him that exercises it, all the blessing of the dispensation; and not to him only, but, in the appointed time, to a remnant of the nation also. If this was the case *then*, how much more so now? because *then* the blessing and privilege of the individual, as a believing, faithful servant of God, and of the outward Church, of which he was but a member, was not one and the same, but two distinct things, differing in their very nature; *now* they are one in nature and essence, the blessing and glory of the outward Church being nothing more than the concentration or accumulation of that of many individual members, the light and power of each of whom was increased by such association. To enlarge upon this:—under *that* dispensation, the blessedness of Daniel, as an individual servant of the Most High, was in the sweetness of repose in his God and Master; but the nation's (Israel) blessing was in outward glory in the land. True, there was only one way in which the faithful servant could spend his strength, namely, in looking after that in which his Master's glory was concerned; nevertheless, it is clear that Daniel might have known the

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full blessedness of being God's servant, yea, and even have realized to himself in Nebuchadnezzar's court, earthly glory (which was part of the nation's promise) without God's returning the captivity in any measure. There was, therefore, *then*, a difference between the blessing of the individual and that of the outward Church—the nation Israel. But this is not so *now;* for each individual stands at the fountain head of the present Church's glory, and has perfect right to it, even if the only Believer in the world—the testimony of the witness, as a whole, being nothing but the necessary result of many individuals standing in their full enjoyment of privilege. This is seen by a reference to John xvii. 20—26, in connection with Acts ii. 44—47: and iv. 33—37. The Spirit is mine, and the glory is mine, and the name of God is mine, whether others possess them or possess them not; but when many are living in the enjoyment of these, then, and then only, is the object of these present revelations fully answered: "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that the world might believe that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." How beautifully is the result of this prayer on the part of Jesus, and of faith on the part of the saints, seen in the church at Jerusalem! and how clearly is its declension to be traced to the forgetfulness of these unities, the enjoyable common property of all believers (Acts. vi. 1—3)! Surely the possession and exhibition of such love (one heart and one mind, and all things in common) was the greatest glory the present witness ever knew, for herein she both resembled Him to whom she was espoused, and met the desires of His heart and mind for her. It has also often struck me, how much more she effected through this fellowship than through any endowment or gift of power. See for instance, in Acts. xii. the deliverance of Peter from prison and death, in answer to the prayers of those who, though praying, had not faith to expect an answer. And so it must ever be; for when the saints are standing with one heart and one mind, desiring the glory of the holy child Jesus, the Father's ear is open to them, and the Spirit's power is unrestrained: in such cases, then, there is no fixed limit to their power; for the question is not, "Has the Holy Ghost dispensed to any of us ability to do this or that particular thing, as in gifts of healing, miracles," &c.

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but is our God able to do this, and is it His will to glorify His Son; and is union our right position before Him? The contrast, in quantum of power possessed, is as great as between one who has a right to draw a daily measure of water from a living spring, and the man to whom the living spring pertains. The progress of my mind in truth, though slow, has been in the course in which most are led. When at rest as to individual salvation, through faith in the blood and righteousness, and the resurrection of Immanuel, the Spirit pressed much upon me the glory of Jesus. To glorify Jesus is His peculiar office—the object and end of His presence and operations. And who can thus with faith draw near unto the Saviour, without perceiving the answer in Him of every need and every necessity? Not one single thing that self can crave, left unsupplied. And with what object is all this superabundant profusion of grace displayed, but just that our minds and hearts might be won to seek His glory, and His alone, above and around whose Person the bow of our glory is stretched. Within the veil I behold the Lamb that was slain, alive again for evermore: whilst waiting for His coming, to take unto Himself the kingdom and reign, how oft and pressing has been the question,—Are His saints ready to meet Him if He come now? Alas! no; His people are in confusion, His disciples rent and divided—no unity, no love, no forbearance among them; but the carnal mind manifesting itself in "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas," &c. &c. It is lamentable to see how innumerable the sects are, and how there is not one single thing called a Church, such as God can recognize as His faithful witness, because not one built upon the principles laid down in the word for congregational association; consequently not one, from the Establishment down to the lowest sect, capable of receiving, out of each of the remaining sects, some who might love God, without a compromise of its peculiarities; none come together simply as saints, "after Apostolic order and precedent." Alas! how seldom do the saints even perceive the importance of this. Their thoughts seem limited to themselves: for any thing more than individual salvation, or at most, individual testimony, few have a thought; and the few who admit the necessity of visible unity, have still acted upon the principle of self; for they have formed "a Church" for themselves, instead of yielding themselves to the

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principles of "the Church," as laid down in the word. The first and great Schismatic in England, has clearly been its Hierarchy, for it was first in point of time; and by not adopting the grounds and principles of the Church constitution found in the New Testament, it has sanctioned the flesh in separatists from it, yea, and forced the Holy Ghost, if indeed He would glorify Jesus by any full display of truth, to raise up other witnesses for the many parts of truth it despises. The Lord has revealed a basis for His Church, and principles for her organization and regulation, but they are not those of the Establishment or any of the other sects; so far from it, they are practically renounced by all of these parties. With divisions, also exist the liberty of the flesh, the love of the world, and of traditions: moreover, so artfully has Satan blended truth and falsehood, that sin, and worldliness, and subjection to Himself, are all sanctioned for *religion's* sake. Who can perceive this, and be conscious that the Lord's glory is concerned in it, yea, and that the sins and ignorances of brethren are our own (for we are one with them in Christ), but must anxiously seek to gather together the saints out of sin, and tradition, and folly, to meet Him who cometh quickly. Oh! He does come quickly, and His saints look not for Him, but are in the midst of worldliness, like Lot in Sodom. Unprepared for His coming, how can they meet His precursor Antichrist, who, with all the strength and artifices of Satan to sustain him, will soon appear, deceiving if it were possible, even the very elect? And why is it that the saints do not come together in love upon the principles and foundation of the primitive Church; "speaking the truth in love, growing up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: *from whom the whole body fitly joined and compacted by that which every joint supplieth*, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love?" Do they not recognize the universal desolation around? Can they not perceive the beauty and comfort of such a position? Are they not ashamed to think of the Lord's appearing while His people are in such confusion, lest both He and they should be ashamed at His coming? All these things are felt and freely confessed by many, both before the Lord and before man, and yet no deliverance wrought, by reason of despondent

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unbelief and disobedience. We wait, say they,—Wait! for what? Have we not every thing as means which the primitive Church possessed? The Holy Ghost is not changed, either in nature or power; neither is He withdrawn, though sadly grieved; neither has the truth ceased to be truth, — "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one." These were the powers which, when known by faith, first modelled the Church; and they are sufficient to reproduce the same effects, at any time, according to the measure of faith. And if it be not disbelief of the continued grace of God, then can it only be disobedience which hinders *; because, if the Spirit has been continued, we have still the power to return. The duty to do so is more imperative than may at first sight appear; for as the glory of the Church was but the concentration of that of many individuals, the full weight of guilt for the absence of it rests upon the individual whose position is such as would hinder its development. Again, the fulness of love incoming and outgoing, is the privilege and duty of the individual as such; and this can be found only when and where God's object is answered, namely, among saints associated together in the Spirit. Let us beware, lest in unbelief we seek to clear ourselves

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* It is evident from what has been said before, that the individual can never in the present dispensation, find himself in the midst of the Apostasy of the Church, and feel bound passively to remain under and support it; but must immediately cleanse himself from every thing which hinders the Spirit and is opposed to the truth; for in himself he possesses the Spirit (or he is none of Christ's) and the truth, and is responsible to God by them to be prepared for the union of the saints collectively. This is important to notice, because so long as there was a difference in nature between the individual's blessing and that of the outward Church, it was not so. The Jews were *ordered to abide* under, and voluntarily to serve the king of Babylon; neither had they power to return. This is still more clear, if we consider how the nature of the oppressor necessarily depends upon the nature of the thing oppressed. Jesus, as Head of Providence, then took up the Jewish nation; and when they refused to obey Him, He raised up another nation to oppress them. His glory, in the nature of things was no more tarnished by connection simply with Nebuchadnezzar than with the Jews. But now Jesus, as Head of the Church, has called those that bear His name to dwell in the living exhibition of love. When they forgot His commands, He gave them up to their own courses, and they have subjected themselves to the world, the flesh, and the devil, under many a fair and specious guise. To say that God requires His saints, when they have discovered their evil connection with these things, still to abide under them, is nothing less than blasphemy; for it charges God as being the sanctioner both of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and of His Saints grieving the Holy Ghost and despising the truth.

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of sin by taxing God with having been unfaithful to His promise of the continued presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church till the end: and again, lest, confessing that God must have been faithful to His promise, the spirit of disobedience should prefer a covering of hypocrisy in some system of man's devising, in preference to bearing the shame of our weakness and shorn locks, by returning and renouncing every head save Jesus, and every principle of unity save that of fellowship in the Spirit. Surely it is nothing but unbelief and rebellion which hinder any from recognizing and submitting to the Spirit as the only authority and power among the saints when gathered together, if even but two or three, in the Lord's name. And yet how few are there who do not seem resolved to deny the Holy Ghost His place and presence among the saints as the vicar of Christ, as well as the principle of fellowship, 'Mutual dependence of the members on Him.' This, moreover, is obvious, that if we cannot have fellowship in the way and mode God enjoined, then must we not attempt it; yea we cannot have it at all; but every member must be dissociated from the rest. But as many as are members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones, are members one of another, associated by the common life of the Spirit; and this is all that is needful to fellowship. I bless God for His grace, that I know that His Son cometh quickly, and that it has pleased Him to enable me, in the hope of this, to have fellowship in His sufferings for the Church's sake: yea, I count not my life dear to me, if so be that I can gather His saints together out of selfish worldliness and sectarianism, to be ready in the fellowship of the Spirit to meet my Lord and theirs.

But I digress; the gifts of the Spirit were my thesis. In 1 Cor. xii. 8—11, we have them declared to be diverse: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge; to another, faith; to another, the gifts of healing; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." And as to offices in the Church, "He gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; for the

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perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 11, 12. and 1 Cor. xii. 28); first, Apostles; secondly, Prophets; thirdly, Teachers; after that, Miracles; then gifts of healing, helps, governments, &c.

Let the infidel unbeliever mock and scoff at these things, and let the hypocritical formalist deny our need of them; the truth of God remains undisturbed. If a man does not believe that there is such a person as the Holy Ghost, it is of course impossible for him to admit that certain powers and actions originate from Him.—And again, if a man admit His blessed existence, and the truth of God that He is to remain with the saints in His gifts of office* (Eph. iv. 13), and gifts of edification† (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10), yet cannot recognize His gifts in that which he thinks is the Apostolic Church, one of two things must be the cause—either He is not a Believer at all, not having as yet received the Spirit, and therefore *of course* he cannot discern; or, that which he reckons the Apostolic Church is no such thing: and till he leaves it and stands in a position in which the Spirit will be without constraint, though himself and others may as individuals possess the Spirit, His presence cannot be clearly seen among them *collectively*, as many members of the same body of which Christ is Head; for whatever energy there be of the Spirlt allowed, it is attributed to a wrong origin. Blessed be God! we that believe, do know that it is a sin of AWFUL magnitude to tempt God like Israel of old, saying, "*Is God among us?*" The graces and gifts we have received, we dare neither deny nor attribute to any origin save the Spirit. I bless God I have received gifts both for edification and office; not that I boast therein; to me the gifts I have unquestionably received, are very small things indeed, when compared with the moral glory and personal presence of the Comforter. For the bestowal and possession of some of them, I am distinctly conscious of responsibility to Christ and His Church. On account especially of comparative misuse of the gifts of faith, and prophesying, and speaking forth under the power of the Spirit to exhortation, edification and comfort (1 Cor.

* "*Till* we *all* come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

† "We know in part and we prophesy in part. But *when* that which is perfect is come, *then* that which is in part shall be done away."

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xiv); of some gifts of office, and of dreams,* I do feel deeply humbled before my God and Father. In another and more faithful brother, I see and have used the gift of the word of wisdom, of knowledge, and of one more rare still, the discerning of spirits; in another all the energy of the Spirit's gift goes forth in faith. I do not remember ever yet to have met with any pretending to possess the gift of healing, such as that recorded in Acts iii. 1—9. and xiv. 8—11, &c. by which one man could bid another, in the name of Jesus, immediately to arise and be well; though immediate answer to the prayer of faith, I have frequently known and received. Well do I remember on a brother's bursting a blood vessel, the second or third time it had occurred, our not rising from our knees till he was made well and whole, and he has been so from that time to this; and on another occasion, our continuing one day waiting beside the bed of a sick sister, till it pleased the Lord to raise her up, giving strength and causing to subdue a stiffness of the throat and neck from some rheumatic affection, which fixed the head in one position. The similar cases which occur to my mind while thus writing, are innumerable; but they are only proofs, either that the effectual fervent prayer of one righteous man availeth much, or, that whatsoever two or three shall agree to ask, they shall receive: they are, therefore, no novelty to the Believer. I pass them by, because irrelevant; for they are so intimately and inseparably connected with the common principles of the every-day walk of faith, that no Believer can wonder at them; though had we time to open them, the grace of our common Father might be admired. The gift of miracles also I never saw in clear exercise, unless the subjection of evil spirits, of devils, and of maniacs to the name of Jesus be considered such; of which I have known frequent instances. Nor tongues have I ever met with; or, of course, if so, the power of interpreting them. The facility of acquiring languages given me in answer to prayer, has been remarkable; and if any of these gifts should at any time come upon me, I should not be the least surprized. How should I, dwelling in fellowship with the Father and with the Son, wonder at any thing save His grace and love? Besides,

* Dreams and visions of events future I have known frequently

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possessing the originator of all these things in the person of the Holy Ghost, the less is included in the greater: all things are mine, not, blessed be God! according to my foolishness, but according to the purpose and counsel of love of Him, who, being mine own, is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Any and every gift might come upon me at any moment: the Lord grant that I may use those I have, whether as yet I recognize them or not! and in such case, those that are added, to the edification of His body; and may I not prove in understanding a child, like some of old (1 Cor. xiv), carnally glorying in the gift, and insisting upon using it whether to edification or destruction of the Church! I confess, however, that in carefully examining the word, I have thought I could perceive that tongues and the working of miracles had specific objects; and that these being answered, they would not be restored. But I am not assured of this; I will not enlarge upon it, for I am quite prepared, if the Lord be pleased, to be His instrument in this as in every other way. Unto the Father of Jesus I stretch forth my hands without fear or doubting, for *every* good and perfect gift which His infinite love and wisdom may see fit to bestow upon the saints through me; yea, and the Spirit oft maketh intercession within me with groanings which cannot be uttered. As to requests for specific gifts, *He* regulates my mind, who dealeth of these things unto every man severally *as He will;* so that here also it is neither of him that willeth, nor of him that seeketh, but of God that showeth mercy.

As to the Spirit's gifts in office, as some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; I would say two words: First, It is a matter of *faith* with every one that maketh not God a liar, that these things have continued, for they were given "for the edifying of the saints *until* we all come unto a perfect man." Secondly, There have been in times past many, both among the Reformers and since, and there are many now fitted, some for exhortation, edifying and comforting, some for Pastorship, and some for Evangelizing; now *to whom* are these powers, howsoever weak in measure, to be ascribed? There is no good gift but what cometh down from God; our only alternative, if we will not ascribe them to the Spirit, is to deck ourselves with His glory. God has written, that

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these things shall continue, therefore they are certainly among us. To impute the works of God to ourselves, not only argues great self ignorance, but is a very near approach to the sin of the Jews, who attributed the Holy Ghost's work to Satan: the difference is merely in *degree*, that we are not so completely enemies to God as is the devil; yet the principle of the two imputations is one and the same — the attributing the glory of God to an impure origin. But, beloved friend, we who have drawn near unto Him who discerneth the thoughts and intents of the heart, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, are not blinded as to the grace of our God in this respect. We possess and use many such excellent gifts, yea, all of them in the name of our Lord — even* Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers.

Thus then I see in myself and others around, the clear evidences of Christ's resurrection. Say you, "these things are so indeed, yet are they in weakness?" True, dear friend; yet let us not despise the day of small things; let us rather remember why they are weak, even by the past and present Apostasy of the outward Church as a whole; and let us admire the goodness of our God, for except the Lord had left unto us *a very small* remnant, we should have been as Sodom and Gomorrah. If you deny that you can see them at all, I can only suppose that you are identified with some system whose principles are at variance with the Spirit's order. All the sects of our day, from the Establishment downwards, are thus guilty; for they have terms of communion other than the simple *one* found in the word, even "the recognition, through the Spirit, of the Father, as set forth in the Son;" and all have systematically excluded the Spirit's free energy in the Church meetings. To the members of any of these sects, *of course*

* There is a difference between the twelve Apostles of the Jews with the one of the Gentiles, born out of season, and the other Apostles spoken of in Scripture, though a correspondence, in that the work of all was the *ordering of the Churches*. The former seem to have held a much higher place, and one peculiar to themselves as witnesses of the resurrection, who had seen the Lord (Acts i. and 1 Cor. ix. 19), and had signs (2 Cor. xii. 12). The word Apostle means, simply, "sent;" I would call those now Apostles, who are sent with gifts of helps, governments, &c. for the ordering of the Churches; in which sense alone, I think Barnabas is called an Apostle in the Acts; and again, Silvanus and Timothy (1 Thess. ii. 6), and the brethren (2 Cor. viii. 23).

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the recognition* of such energies and powers of the Spirit is difficult; for they are standing in places where these cannot and may not be freely exercised, into which they cannot fully come without disorder and confusion: and in fixing *through whom* the Spirit may speak among them, they have not only grieved Him, but blinded themselves as to their dependence upon Himself and His grace in that little energy he may still vouchsafe among them. Blessed be God! though in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling, in leaving these things to return to "the Apostolic Church principles," we have found that our God was still the same, and His gifts and calling without repentance. Many indeed underrate the comparative power of these things in our day, from want of observing the mode in which God works throughout redemption, hiding His power in the midst of weakness. Throughout the whole history of redemption, God, as though from consciousness that with Him is the residue of strength and power, is found under every circumstance to measure out His power in exact proportion to the exigency of the case; and moreover (to which I particularly refer), to hide His almighty power in the midst of weakness. I pray you to observe it; for it really manifests the perfection of His power and Godhead more than anything, and is most marvellous. A creature in all the wretchedness and infirmity of the fall is used by the Lord Almighty, infirmity being allowed to remain, but hindered working beyond a fixed limit, and yet the individual not conscious of constraint. The responsibility of the creature, or the perfect freedom of his will, *never* destroyed, *never in*

* It has been said by some, with a view of obviating the force of this, that the present pretension to the χαρίσματα of the Spirit is unhappy, because we cannot bring forward and show those, the exercise of which would bring conviction to the open infidel; an objection which identifies him who makes it with the infidel himself; for who are we that we should judge God, or be His counsellor, as to what He should or should not give. The Church and the world being now identical, visible signs cannot be expected to any great extent, because, first, she who should have had them as love tokens of her Lord's approbation of her collective state, has been and is unfaithful; secondly, they to whom they would, in our own country at least, be signs, *profess* to be "of the Church," i. e. to have spiritual discernment, and thus neutralize their claim to gifts. But is it really meant to be said that we have not any of the χαρίσματα by any one pretending to be spiritual? The χαρίσματα (Rom. xii. 6) are prophesy, ministry, exhorting, giving, ruling, showing mercy.

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the least interfered with; but the weak, and infirm, and responsible instrument made *willing* in the day of the Lord's power. Moses affords a remarkable exemplification of this, on many and diverse occasions. Jehovah would use him, but not as a passive tool, impelled by constraint contrary to or without the exercise of judgment; but only made willing and left under responsibility. Thus we find him declining at first to undertake the mission, angering God by declaring his insufficiency, &c. and even when invested with power, and when being used to give the people water, refusing to do so in God's way, and choosing one of his own. So Jeremiah determined that he would not speak; and so Jonah ran away from the work to which he was called, and in which he was being used. The increased power of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost, so far from changing or altering this great principle of action (which is one most intimately connected with the whole scheme of redemption), greatly confirms and establishes it. For we are told that the spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets; and when one is prophesying in the Spirit, the rest are ordered to sit by and judge (or discern how far the matter spoken accords with the truth of God). What! judge a man's words, he speaking by the Holy Ghost? Yes; and more than this, every energy of the Spirit which, from circumstances, would not be unto edification*, is to be refused. A gift of tongues is not to be used in the Church, unless there be one that can interpret, present: and in the midst of prophesying, one may have to stop, a matter being revealed to another that sitteth by (1 Cor. xiv. 27—32). Peter also had to satisfy *the judgment* of the Church on the subject of his obeying the Lord's command, "Go ye unto all nations," &c. when he had gone to the Gentiles (Acts xi). Paul had to travel all the weary way to Jerusalem, about the question of circumcision being binding on the Gentiles; and when there, the solution of the difficulty was by no oracular response, but by a deliberation in council. So we find him exhorting Timothy and Titus to remember their responsibility, and exercise a *sound judgment* as to the subjects they choose to ordain as Elders or Deacons; and submitting himself to his own converts,

* I would add, "or according to order," as a woman in the Church assembly.

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"I write unto you as unto those that are spiritual, judge ye what I say." The Apostle describes himself as having many tears and temptations, being in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling; in the midst of trial and sorrows, under deep consciousness of responsibility; as having to glory in infirmity, as in the thoughts of some weighty by letter, but in *bodily presence weak, and in speech contemptible.* Where then was that outward show of power and majesty, which you attach to the idea of the Holy Ghost's presence, in him who was not a whit behind the chiefest of the Apostles? And if it was not to be found in him, how comes it we are expecting it to be in *us?* Oh! my brother, it is because we are carnal, thinking that by fleshly power, and an exterior bearing of majesty, the Spirit's presence is marked, instead of by a deep sense of weakness and dependence upon God. Above all, the evidence of my service to the Lord being by His Spirit, is this, the abiding consciousness of my weakness, foolishness, and insufficiency for any of them whatsoever; and this, oft whilst in apparent desertion of the Lord, conversion and establishment of the saints were following my ministry, which to myself has no power, so that all the glory and praise go to the Lord. And are we indeed so stupid as not to have observed this ourselves, or not to be able to remember it, as the remark of almost every preacher, that the time of the Spirit's power through His servant, either in conversion or building up, is seldom the time of great sensible enjoyment, but often of embarrassment and straitness both in thought and expression; and again, that seldom when the speaker is greatly enlarged, is there any great blessing to the hearers? If Paul were to come among us, I verily believe the great difference between him and us would be his more perfect apprehension of weakness, feebleness, and insufficiency; and I am confirmed in this by such passages as these: "We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised—the offscouring of all things unto this day" (1 Cor. iv. 9, 10, 13). "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest I be a cast-away" (ix. 27). "The sentence of death is in ourselves," &c. (2 Cor. i. 9; iv.—vi. &c. &c.) The life of the Christian is dependence; the strength of that life, consciousness of dependence; and he who has most of these,

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approaches most nearly to the Lord Jesus in the day of His humiliation, and can therefore be most used by the Lord. Sure I am of this, that many, in the conceits of their own minds about what the Spirit's presence *must* have been in that day, have now rejected many of His gifts, or imputed them to a wrong origin. Not that I say they are as clear now, or ever again will be, as in the primitive Church, WHEN THE FULNESS OF THEIR POWER MARKED GOD'S SANCTION OF THE CHURCH AS A WHOLE. The proportion may be as that of the glory of Israel after its return, contrasted with that in the day of Solomon; or, alas! the union and love of the present day when compared with that recorded at the commencement of Acts. While the saints are standing, one for Paul, and another for Cephas, &c. it is *love* and mercy to withhold any great power of such things; for the fleshly mind, thus evinced, cannot use them save to individual exaltation and condemnation. If we would seek in love to one another more, greater favours might perchance be evinced. Howbeit, gifts we have, in what feebleness soever; and they cannot come save from the Spirit. But what is a stronger confirmation to a Believer than even experience itself, the continuance of the Holy Ghost with the saints is a matter of faith, for so it is written: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever" (John xiv. 16). "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," &c. &c. "He gave some, Apostles, and Prophets, and Evangelists, and Pastors, and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ *till we all come* unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv). "We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but *when* that which is perfect is come, *then* that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. xvi). The purpose of God is so plainly revealed that the Holy Ghost (His graces and gifts dispensed after the sovereignty of the divine will) should continue, that I will not listen to any argument which denies this; for He that advances it, has made God a liar.

But I fear you will think I wander sadly from the question; so I will at once proceed to it. The only feeling I can have, on hearing

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that any brother or brethren have received the Holy Ghost, is that of joy unfeigned and thankfulness to God. While Joshua, who had not these things, said, " My lord Moses, forbid," he, who had partaken of them replied, " Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them." Alas! my sorrow is quite on the other extreme; for the practice and feelings of the saints almost universally is, " We have not so much as heard if there be any Holy Ghost." Oh no! for the seal of the Spirit, or for signs exhibitive of His presence, praise, honor, and glory be unto our Redeemer! The full possession of the Spirit by every saint on earth, would not detract from my enjoyment through Him, but rather confirm and strengthen it; yea, for this purpose it would be given. I know indeed no sign of the unbelief of these days more strong than the excessive disquietude occasioned among the saints by this report of an outpouring of the Spirit. At first one might suppose that it was an enemy who had appeared unexpectedly: sure I am that the hearts of many have been more shaken than a saint's would be, if abiding in fellowship with the Father and with the Son, at the revelation either of Antichrist or Satan. From the wonder and amazement expressed, we might imagine that they knew not the Holy Ghost at all, and had not received of His graces and gifts. And what means all the questioning, 'Yes, but if it be true?' but just a denial that the Holy Ghost in the Believer is *able* to obey the written word, " Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." All this argues, alas! sad unbelief and misapprehension of privilege; I speak of the saints themselves; for the conduct of the outward Church generally has been just that of open infidelity. Secure in the bosom of God my Father, and in fellowship with Jesus, Lord of all, I will now tell you what the Holy Ghost has enabled me to discern concerning this revival of the Apostolic Church. As a whole, I doubt not that this discernment is the Lord's; though, doubtless, mingled with much of my infirmity. But first let me make a few remarks, independent of any judgment formed, concerning the spiritual manifestations. The testimony of the letters from Scotland recording its commencement, sent by one who took a lead in it there, as well as that of many with whom I have conversed, who have been subject to it, is,

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that the workings of the Spirit are by constraint on the bodily faculties; and this is evident in intercourse with them. The Lord, say they, speaks through us as a man speaks through a trumpet or other passive instrument. This is important, because, first, *it seems* contrary to Scripture; and secondly, *it appears* to make the Spirit responsible for every word, not leaving any possibility of mistake from the infirmity of the vessel, as is supposed in 1 Cor. xiv. You are aware that Mr. Baxter has distinctly declared, that the Spirit among them predicted several gross falsehoods through himself, that the time is past, and the events not realized.—He adds, that the Spirit in other gifted persons pledged itself to the Spirit in Him as being one and the same. Mr. Mac Neile also has averred, that the Spirit uttered falsehood concerning himself, and misquoted Scripture in a remarkable way. Why when these statements were made in private no answer was returned, and still more why no public notice has been taken of them by the *leaders* of the work, now that they have been told unto the whole Church, remains to be seen. For myself I pronounce no verdict on the case. The mode of operation, I confess, pains me; it reminds me of the Pythoness, the Montanists, &c.; yet I read, "there are diversities of operations," and so forbear, with this single observation, that granting it is "an operation" of the Spirit, it is clearly of the number of those not intended for Church edification, since the very constraint it brings with its exercise, would clearly and unquestionably exempt it from the regulations laid down by the Apostle for the Church meeting.

As to the nature, however, of the Spirit among them, I feel totally unable to form any judgment, because the very unrighteous way in which, by their walk, they set at nought Scripture, and thwart and quench that which I know to be the Holy Ghost's energy, render it very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to divide in them between the flesh and Spirit. Conceding, however, that they had not the Spirit's gifts previously, and that this is the gift to them of the same Holy Ghost which I have; nevertheless I altogether and entirely withstand them, and refuse to have any fellowship whatsoever with them, because they are to be blamed for withstanding the Holy Ghost in the very point of contest peculiar to our day. The day of the Lord is at hand, and the grace of the Lord is now striving to gather together the saints out of

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all the specious forms of Apostasy, and worldliness, and confederacies of the flesh, into readiness to meet their Lord, a witness and warning to the professing Church and world that judgment is at the door. Now it is in this very point that they are found hindering His energies, and withstanding both God and His saints. It is no unimportant work in which they are engaged; for whilst many are lagging behind the Lord, content to be *in the way*, as they think, and are forgetting the necessity of stedfastly and incessantly gazing upon their guide, in pleasant enjoyment of fair scenes around, these have advanced before Him, and are found preventing and perverting the energy of the Spirit to make the Bride ready for her Lord's return. They are right, perfectly right, as to their *professed* principle of Church union and Church order; it is the truth of God Himself. The Holy Ghost is the only energy in the Church of Christ, the only power and authority; and where the fellowship is not simply in Him, then there is no fair exhibition of the Apostolic Church at all, which is but one, even that over which Christ is the Head. These things they hold in principle distinctly, and the devil abhors and dreads the promulgation of them in righteousness and truth; it is Satan himself, and none other, who is trying, through the inconsistency of their practice and principles, and other means, to bring these most important truths into disrepute. They do hold these things in word, but in practice deny them; just like Peter, when Paul rebuked him, they would in practice support pure unmingled truth by principles of a carnal worldly nature, thus building again the things they have destroyed. And, therefore, if each of them was endowed as highly as Paul or Peter, yet would I not give place, by subjection, no not for an hour. What are they to me? from them I received nothing. The Lord has ordained me; and by Him alone have I been taught: yea, and in conference they have added nothing to me. I deliberately repeat it;—if they had all the powers of the Pentecostal effusion, every one that is led by the Spirit is bound by responsibility to Christ, and the desire to see the saints gathered back into the Apostolic order, that Christ may be glorified by the Spirit, to withstand them, because they use not whatsoever power they may have for the purpose for which *alone* it was given, but by it contend against and withstand the Holy Ghost's gracious effort to glorify Jesus

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by associating the saints together again as saints. In this, though individually children of God, they are serving Satan and accomplishing his ends. I beg you to observe, that against the divine origin of the Spirit among them I here pronounce no thought, nor concerning the disorderliness in heresies, in women speaking in the Churches, in the use of tongues when no interpreter is present. The one first and great question is this, "Is the work of the Lord being carried on by them upon God's revealed principles?" The answer is at once, The gathering of the saints in the fellowship of the Spirit, is altogether hindered and opposed. The Holy Ghost's energy and purpose has now some time been too obvious to be longer unperceived—to gather the elect remnant in the Spirit out of the power of the world, the flesh, and the devil, to be ready to meet their Lord. For this purpose *they* profess to have been raised up: this is the purpose of God; and though the whole outward Church is in arms against it—it, as the counsel of the Lord (I believe), shall stand. In England they profess to stand as the representatives of it (blessed privilege if rightly used!); but, alas! through them Satan is bringing it into disrepute, for they hold it neither in righteousness nor truth. Not in righteousness; because heresy is unrebuked among them. I enter not into the specific forms of false statement among them, as to the humanity of our Lord, &c.—It is written, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father only." Any analytical investigation, therefore, of the mode of combination of the Godhead and manhood* in one person, must be the working of the carnal reason; because that which is not revealed, *cannot* be the subject-matter of an exercise of faith; and by this alone, all their testimony is as much destroyed, perhaps more so, than if they had lived in open unholiness and sinfulness. Not in truth; because, if subject indeed to the Spirit, they would recognize, first, Christ's power and authority, and it alone; and, secondly, the doctrine of the written Word. Now the test of Christ's household is—"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God:" but the unity of the Spirit these practically deny, as I have found to my sorrow. They say, indeed, that the unity of the Church is in the Spirit alone: but

* Let me not be understood to detract from the Scripture doctrine of the Lord's humanity; who, being of the seed of Abraham, was tempted like as we are in all things, yet without sin.

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on this they act not—recognition of their gifts being their terms to full communion. I speak advisedly—they are prepared even to say, and have said—"Dear brother, it grieves us that there should be these divisions among us," to one with whom they had refused even to pray, and that in private, but five minutes before; "because he could not pronounce any judgment as to the origin of their gifts." This is schism and sectarianism; and consciously to sanction it, is to be guilty of despising the unity of the Spirit. Again, as to the regulation of God's family; so far are they from recognizing Christ's ordination, that they deliberately reject those whom He has ordained, and sent with many seals to their Apostleship, casting them out: thus did not the Church at Jerusalem towards Paul. And, to leave no doubt on the subject, what is their plea? You have not been ordained by us, nor by the Church of England!!! whilst, at the same time, they recognize, as authorized teachers, those whom it has ordained, but with whom the Holy Ghost never thought of working, because unordained by the great Head of the Church. More than once, also, have they rejected men sent of God, because not either sanctioned by themselves or the Church of England; and received others not sent of God, because so accredited. As to doctrine, their testimony is rarely that of joy and rejoicing, either in the full and perfect forgiveness of sin through the blood carried within the veil, or in the discriminating sovereignty of electing love. But that on which I chiefly rest here is on the doctrine of fellowship. In the first place, their doctrine of combination is not that of the primitive Church:—"The glory which thou gavest me I HAVE GIVEN them, *that they may be one*"—the lifting up of the Believer's heart and mind out of time and its circumstances, into the presence of the Lord of glory: but, contrariwise, they maintain that it consists in that which is but the sign of this—viz. gifts or endowments of limited power. They teach also, that the present dispensation is partly of earthly things. In consistency with this, see the parade and show in Newman-Street. I need not wait, to prove that Infant baptism, as conducted in the Establishment, is wrong; that regeneration does not necessarily follow upon water baptism, as stated in that office; neither need I pause, to show how contrary to truth is that which necessarily flows out of this, namely, national religion, with all the false doctrines practically

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involved in it. Now they uphold both of these, especially the latter, with all its guilt of fornication; and require God's children, for its sake, to prostitute themselves to the world. More than this, they condemn those who, for the sake of conscience and Jesus, have renounced it and the glory of this world, under whatsoever form.

I would enlarge upon this a little, retracing the means by which the present position has been assumed. Any one sufficiently acquainted with the history of the work, may recognize the following steps, and behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth. It commenced in Scotland among a few obscure individuals, in whom false spirituality, or morbid excitement of affection and feeling, had destroyed all spiritual judgment. On their hearing of the primitive union of the Church and its then endowment of wisdom and power (conscious of the want among themselves of such union, as well as the absence of such gifts), they blended the two together as cause and effect, assuming that they had no union because no gifts; the reverse of which was probably the truth, for, even at Jerusalem, the gifts followed the being of one accord in one place. They then set themselves to pray for *gifts*. Now here it was that Satan snared them in their partial truth. The Holy Ghost was with them; and the truth given was not only sufficient, if faithfully acted upon, to have purged them from dead systems and brought them into fellowship one with another in the Spirit; but, moreover, made them responsible for being so. Then, in whatsoever weakness, they would have found the Spirit sufficient for love, and order, and mutual edification. But they knew not that the personal presence of the Spirit, and the gift of glory, and the declaration of the Father's name, were the dynamics of union and power; and they made it to depend upon the presence of gifts of a certain class. Herein they committed three sins; first, they denied that God's gifts and calling are without repentance; secondly, they contemned the Spirit still left them, and the truth; and thirdly, removed the responsibility of the Church which flowed out of the continuance of these things. The taxing God with unfaithfulness to His promise of the Spirit's abiding, was folly; and see this in their argument, — "We must expect a return of the Spirit, and give God no rest till it is vouchsafed, because the expressed purpose of

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God is, that the Spirit should abide for ever :" i. e. we are bound to look for a return of the Spirit, because He was never to go away. They have thus also set their own wisdom above God's, giving pre-eminence to that which passeth away, over that which abideth for ever ; and setting the possession of limited gifts of power by man (a subject of wonder only in man's day, and in a world of weakness) above the fulness of God's love shed abroad by the Spirit in the hearts and minds of sinners : which will never cease to be a wonder and a praise, and this with the view of producing *union !* The Apostle's " Doth not even nature?" might fairly be borrowed to show the folly of such a course for such an end. Hence also they have ordered so many to remain in evil, yea, in the worst streets of Babylon (as they say) till they have power ! ! ! the veriest delusion Satan ever coined ; for what is this practically, but just " Continue in sin (not that grace may abound, but) till you cease from sin ?" The real question at issue between myself and them, is one of overwhelming moment, to wit, " whether or not the professing Church is responsible to God for their past and present abuse and neglect of the Spirit and His gifts?" And this, I believe, is God's controversy with all the sects of our day, and with themselves among others. They maintain that we are *only* responsible for being without the originative energies of Church constitution through past sin, so making God's promise of none effect, yea, declaring that His faithfulness has failed. I stand by God's word ; God *has* continued them, because He said He would, and that the Church will neither believe their presence, nor obey God in using them, and that therefore her guilt is that of continued, increasing, persevering obstinacy and self-willedness ; taking to herself the glory of the Spirit, hiding His light in her, and declaring it is her own. In truth, the possession of the glory and the Spirit by the saints, brings with it a responsibility of no light character to all Believers. And if this were simultaneously recognized in every town throughout Christendom, then simultaneously and without concert would there be in every such town, a renewal at one and the same time, and without any greater subjection the one to the other, than is found imposed by the truth as it is in Jesus. But these judge their brethren, and do not fear to threaten those whom God has thus led, because " they follow

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not us." The ground on which most of them maintain their position, also savours of the old principle—self. Instead of its being said, "This practice accords with the principles revealed in the word for Church association, and has therefore a claim upon every believer, independent of all practical abuses, which, however great, belong to the individual perpetrators," what have we? but, "I heard the manifestations, and they searched *my* heart and mind, and led me to more individual devotedness, and therefore I counted them to be of God, and so joined it." Another painful evil hence resulting, has been that attention has thus been fixed upon the form of the Church at the time it was perfect, instead of the principle which, when fully received, moulded that form, and would now in measure, if believed, tend toward the same again. They despised the true sources of Church constitution for the form's sake; and thus attributing its well being to outward gifts, they have erred like all other sects, through abstract views of right and wrong, as to Church form. In this respect, the present dispensation differs widely from the last. In that, God moulded the form of a kingdom, &c. sanctuary, &c. to embody a principle, and gave rules (distinct from the directions as to formation) for the administration and regulation of it, when thus brought into being. In this, He gave principles to organize a form, and which, because sufficient to organize, were sufficient to regulate. No outward conformity to an abstract form will now therefore suffice; for the only value of the form originally was, and still is, its being the result of the exercise of principles innate in the Church. What then have they done, but like so many children playing at Church, made one man a Pastor; and another, an Evangelist; and another, an Angel; totally independent, yea, and oft in direct contradiction to the Holy Ghost's gifts in the respective individuals. This is a great moral mistake, far too common in our day, not to perceive that true spirituality consists in following after God in His thoughts, words, and ways; instead of preceding Him. A Pastor, for instance, is wanted, as it seems to man, in some place; one not the least fitted is made so, under the impression that God will follow our foolishness, and give gifts to adorn our systems; this has been frequently done by those who have drafted men out of places and offices, for which they have been remarkably

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fitted by the Spirit, into others for which they neither had nor have, one single requisite. The third step in the process, was, an appeal to the Spirit, instead of the mind of Christ—"as it is written;" and then (the mind being drawn off from the substances of faith to imagination) fourthly, easily have entered false doctrine, heresy, recognition of false systems, &c. &c.

In *word*, then, they recognize the right character of the present dispensation, as set forth in Eph. i. to iii. and 1 Cor. xii. and xiv. inclusive, but in practice afterwards deny it; first by denouncing and rejecting brethren who saw it before themselves, and are acting upon it more simply and truly than themselves, because both holding and practising the unity and the authority of the Spirit, which they do not; and secondly, by conceding authority, during its absence, to a succession in the flesh, and a so called Church, which, on their own showing, is not the Apostolic Church at all. Christ, as the Lamb* with the seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth, they refuse to acknowledge; for while in word they admit the perfect unadulterated administration of the Spirit (that the perfect complete order and government of the Church is by Christ through the Spirit alone), they denounce those 'who follow not us,' and acknowledge that in which another rules besides the Lamb: declaring also that the Spirit is not sufficient, so making more to be needful for a revival of the Church than for its original constitution. They see, indeed, that ordinances will not do without spiritual power, nor spiritual power without ordinances; but that the two should and must be conjoined; but then, instead of having both ordinances and power from the Spirit, they maintain the Spirit's power, but ordinances from and through, and in a fleshly carnal channel,

* They boast of being the only recognizers of Christ as the holder of the seven stars and seven spirits (Rev. iii. 1); i. e. of ordinances as well as of power; declaring that all others take up either with ordinances without power or with power to the contempt of ordinances, if they do not despise both the one and the other. Now these are the titles of Christ in office previous to the apostasy, after which He is the Lamb with the seven horns and seven eyes. To declare that He is still in the former, is to remove their own foundation, for all their arguments rest upon the fact of Gentile apostasy—Instead of taking up with ordinances, through fleshly succession, they should have recognized God's power, and have waited for ordinances growing up out of that.

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speaking great swelling words against those who, in simplicity, adhere to the ordinances delivered to the saints in the written Word. In these things they refuse to recognize Christ as the alone and sole Head of the Church as to endowment of power, order, and grace. Whilst at the same time they commit the sin of Jeroboam, recognizing a worship and persons to conduct it, not only unsanctioned by God, but in direct contradiction to those which He has enjoined. This is their sin and guilt, and herein do they grieve and wound the Lord, casting out God's Spirit, and recognizing that which is evil. They know it not indeed; but whilst professing to seek the unity of the Spirit, they are rending and tearing the saints one from another, by means of a question about the origin of certain gifts; and at the same time are driven to impute the energy and obedience of those who, led by the Spirit, contemn all tradition, and, adhering to what is written, are prepared to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, to Him who is the spirit of lawlessness and misrule. The spirit of disobedience among them is most fearful; in cases inumerable I have known them prohibit a man's leaving circumstances under which neither the Spirit of God nor conscience could remain ungrieved, and throw the sin of disobedience upon the Spirit among them.

Yes, my dear friend, whilst professing to seek that which is the aim of the Lord the Spirit — viz. the gathering together of the saints in the fellowship of the Spirit in righteousness, truth, and practical separation from the world, the flesh, and the devil, to meet the Lord Jesus, they have brought in principles of the flesh as a new condition of communion, giving a place and preeminence (on pretexts derived from fleshly and carnal grounds) to many things prohibited and condemned by what is written, while at the same time they reject much which He has ordered, and wherein He is found; and *therefore* in fervency of desire that the gifts they have received may be effectually employed, we must resist the evil they have conjoined. The gifts of discernment and of a sound mind, they do not pretend to have received; nevertheless their babyhood of understanding is extraordinary. Between the possession of a gift, and its use to edification, they seem unable to divide; between conscience, which is of the first Adam, and an understanding enlightened through the Spirit, and between reason (which

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is of nature, with the carnal judgment thence flowing), and the Holy Ghost (with His gifts of spiritual understanding and judgment), they can discern no difference. This is evinced thus—the moment I (as one bound to obey my Lord, and judge all things, and try the spirits whether they are of God, not by the reason of the flesh, but by the Holy Ghost and the Word), directly I say I would do so, I am met with—"You must not reason, you must not carnally judge; this matter is to be received by conscience, and not by judgment." Again, between the Headships of Jesus, Lord of all, as Head of the Church, and Head of Providence (and therefore of magistracy, kingly and military power, &c.), they cannot separate; and thus they claim, by allegiance to the Head of the Church, many in the pomp and pride of these offices, who, because disciples, ought to have nothing to do with them, save to obey. Any thing like practical forgetfulness, or renunciation of the glory of the world, they term humility in the flesh, and say that it excludes the power of fellowship in heart and mind with the Lord.

God gives privilege to bring responsibility, and to give strength under it: Man would take the privilege either for personal aggrandisement, or to remove the responsibility.—This has caused many to join this work. The proud heart loves the supposed infallibility here formed; and the timid heart the removal of the fear and trembling of duty and service to the Lord, in the midst of such awful alienation from God, and such individual weakness. Who can go forth in service to the Lord in this day, especially if independent of the systems of man's raising, without feeling weak and feeble, and ready to perish in the toil. Oh it would be very sweet *to the flesh* to get rid of this sense of weakness; but, unhappily, to do that, we must get free from the Spirit of God, and from the work of God: for it is this very sense of weakness which is at once the proof of our fellowship with God in work, and of our strength in Him under it. The flesh loves it not, and lusts against it; but let us, who are spiritual, rather glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us; for when we are weak, then are we strong in the Lord.

Yours, &c. &c.

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P.S.—"The work," as Mr. Irving called it, can only be looked upon in one of two ways, if true; either, first, it is something *sui generis*, entirely and altogether new and unprecedented; or, secondly, it is a revival of the primitive Apostolic Church. In the latter light they placed it at first, and fairly enough quoted the Scriptures, which describe the Church's original constitution, to show the possibility of such a thing among a remnant now. Viewed in this light I have nothing more to say. To my surprise they have lately shifted their position, and declare that this is no revival at all, but a new thing; and either the ark of salvation for the remnant of the dispensation, or the restoration of the Apostasy. I do not mean that they profess to be ignorant which it is; but that, at different times, they assert and maintain different things. When they take the former ground, all that any man may ask them is, for 'the credential or mark that they are so:' and this, inasmuch as if they be so indeed, all who are not found with them will be destroyed. Now, if they reply,—"Our return to the principles, constitution, order, and government of the primitive Church;" this, whether the pretensions were true or not to the full extent, would have weight, IF they really were so doing. But this is not the case: they say and do not. The moral claim such a thing would have upon every beholder to join it, both through the judgment of the mind and the affections of the heart, would be quite sufficient. It is clear it would be folly to demand Scripture in proof that such a thing should be; for it would have an equal claim on the saint, whether it were the ark of dispensation or not; and every one led by the Spirit would join it. If, then, they rested upon its moral claim, I would say not one word; but when they consider this deficient (as indeed from inconsistency of practice and principle in their case it is), and attempt driving God's children into it by terror, I dare not be silent. They boast great words about the day of judgment being actually come, and of Apostasy having come to its height, and the judgments actually commenced; talking about analogy, of which they know next to nothing. They tell me, for instance, that "the whole analogy of God's dealings, and not analogy only, but example, the whole revealed character of God, shows that He never "does come to judgment without providing for a remnant an ark, a

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"Zoar, a pillar of cloud and smoke, a Pella, &c. and that it would be "contrary, and in direct opposition, to the whole character of God, "as given in a book written to describe His method of dealing with "men through a course of six thousand years, not to find some place "or other into which He does invite His people to retire." Now what is this but just sheer ignorance, quoting analogy *just* when analogy fails, and arriving thereby at a conclusion (not only without one single Scripture to support it, but) distinctly and unequivocally denied by the very letter of the Scripture. The conclusion is, that there must be a Pella, or such like refuge, provided *on earth;* now the Scriptures say No, it is to be in the heavens, a cloud of glory.—Then, say they, analogy fails; yes, because the connection of this dispensation with the next is totally dissimilar from that of any two preceding; hitherto the remnant saved out of that which was destroyed, became the seed of the next; now all found in this, will rise into glory with Christ, the seed of the next being Jews, who have had no part in this. So far from judgment having already commenced, it can easily be shown that Apostasy has not come to its full; and that signs, not as yet seen, are to precede,—as a violent persecution, the revelation of the person of Antichrist, &c. &c.

The other position, that it is the restoration of the Gentile Apostasy, is still less tenable. They tell me, that "an Apostasy is the fal-"ling down from a certain standing, στάσις: we read but of three;— "first, Adam, and all men in him; secondly, the Jewish Church; "thirdly, the Christian Church. God created Adam, and the Devil "cast him down, and he has never been restored: God set up the "Jewish Church, and the Devil cast it down, and it is yet in ruins: "God then set up the Gentile Church, at Pentecost, and the Devil "cast it down; turned the woman, the spotless bride of Christ, into "the mother of abominations: thus far, then, the Devil appears "stronger than God. But all these shall be restored, and God mani-"fested to be, in flesh, stronger than Satan, yet in inverse order to that "in which they fell: first, the Christian Church to be prepared to "meet her Lord: secondly, the Jewish Church, after He is "come; thirdly, all mankind, through the preaching of the "Jews." "Again," say they, "the analogy of the Jews and the

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"Gentiles is perfect; in both cases, Apostasy issuing in judgment; "which, in both cases, leads to renewed mercy." In the first of these assertions the *only* mistake is the forgetting into what place the return of the Apostasy casts the saints, even into the presence of the Lord Jesus in glory: in the second, besides other mistakes, there is the oversight of this, that judgment on the Gentiles has *not yet* been poured out.

Here we must demand Scripture basis, for the expectation is quite novel. On asking for Scripture, I have been told it is found throughout the whole word, from beginning to end, *if men will but see it;* this to me is just saying, that it is no where to be found save by a mind preoccupied with it; and, accordingly, not one single passage has been adduced which, in connexion with its context, could mean any such thing.*

THE preceding Letter, which has been put into our hands, we consider of interest to our Christian friends, as containing much valuable argument, calculated to meet, in many points, the false ground on which numbers have fixed themselves in the present day. The deep importance of the principle which it upholds—the reality and abidingness of the presence of the Comforter—and the unchangeableness of the Gift of God, cannot be too strongly pressed at a moment when so many, who feel responsibility, do not realize their actual strength in God, and so many more are halting in faithfulness towards Christ, because they wait in the slothfulness of unbelief for something more than the means which God has given before they will obey. But, whilst we are fully aware of the value of the general argument, it

* I would just notice that it has been most strangely assumed that there is a passage in Joel, in which the outpouring of the Holy Ghost is called the former rain, as given at the day of Pentecost; and that it is said, the Lord will give also the latter rain in its season. Now, if it were so, the Jew alone would be the recipient; but, in fact, it is false; and any one reading the chapter, will see at once that *the rain* is not the Spirit at all, but a promise of something quite different in nature, object, and time.

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appears to us, that the necessary distinction between the Spirit's not being in power in the Church, and its still dwelling, the same promised Comforter, in the individual Believer, should have been more strongly pressed. With the latter, it is now as always, "He shall abide with you for ever;" and in proportion to their faith, Christians feel the truth and comfort of this, and especially in these evil days, in connection with the promise of Jesus, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," &c. But not so with the former. As a collective body, the Church has not the Spirit in power, nor can we say with the writer, "the blessing and glory of the outward Church were nothing more than the concentration or accumulation of that of many individual members;" for neither is the simple gathering of all the separate units, supposing such a thing possible, all that is now lacking to us, since there would still be a decided loss of former glory, not merely in the felt weakness of present power of the Spirit, but in the absolute defect of many spiritual gifts which once existed.

It may appear also to the minds of some, that the writer, in speaking of himself, seems to assume individually too exalted a ground; and that it would have been better to assert universally and unrestrictedly, the full extent of the actual privilege and responsibilities of the household of God, from the first member to the last, as derived from the immutable principles of the dispensation, than to exemplify them by a particular instance. In reply to this supposed objection, the writer states, "I have found that general statements are often pointless, because they are thought to be *indefinite* instead of *universal*." If I say "the saints are risen with Christ," every body agrees, not understanding the nature of the necessary connection of saintship with resurrection in Christ, supposing it to mean, some are, and some are not. If I say "all saints," &c. this is doubtingly acceded to by many; who then try to escape with the thought, "I may be saved without knowing I am a saint, perhaps." But if I say "I, because a saint, am risen with Christ," I find it instantly disputed, because somehow or other, it is an *argumentum ad hominem*. With regard to the individual application of expressions which were first used of themselves by the Apostles, it should be remembered that these were true as to them only *because they were members* of Christ's body,

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in which I have as sure a place as they ; and in which I have responsibilities and privileges as great, according to the proportion of my faith : I assume no authority herein, I only recognize privilege, and responsibility, and grace.—[ED.]

" YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD; A CITY THAT IS SET ON AN HILL CANNOT BE HID." Mat. v. 14.

THE world has ever judged that it can do well without God's interference in its course—that it has enough in itself, if faithfully and skilfully used, for its own present joy ; and a moral power, which, if duly heeded, will give a full title to everlasting life and blessing. The experience of ages has not destroyed this delusion ; the stream of past time, strown as it is with the wreck of man's diligent folly, flows on unregarded. History tells one simple, though varied tale of sorrow, crime, and death : we read it from our childhood, and only think that our generation is a wiser one, and do not see in all that is past and present, the mere expression of an evil condition, which man's wisdom can never remedy or improve. It was God's abounding mercy, in the knowledge of the blessings that his shortsighted and perverse creatures were casting away (even while extolling their own wisdom to one another), to reveal the truth to them, telling them that separation from Him left them the prey of all evil; that nearness to Him, and knowledge of His will, secured to all, wisdom and happiness : that they were afar off from him, and therefore, the victims of sorrow and crime : but showing also, as the fruit of His own marvellous grace, a way of return, and therefore, a sure remedy for all the evil of their condition.

The Deluge—the discomfiture of man's pride at Babel, and the

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subsequent universal idolatry, soon proved how incredulous the heart was to so humbling a revelation of what cannot be changed by that incredulity, for it is truth. The revelation was, doubtless, universally known, though promulgated orally, and kept in trust by the succession of the Sons of God. At the birth of Noah, several of the fathers were living, all of whom must have conversed with Adam, Methusaleh and Lamech dying but a little before the deluge. Noah was the last witness for truth, or preacher of righteousness in the old world, and the declarer of the same unerring truth in the new: and from his family instruction, the truth must have been universally known in the new world; for all were his family.

God thus gave to the world the light of truth; He gave it to some in trust for others, not a written revelation indeed, which is a far greater mercy, for that is ever consistent and perfect; but by speaking the truth through living men, and enabling them in action to live the truth they spoke. The children of Seth were the election of God in the antediluvian world: and while they were personally happy and blessed in God's favour; they were to fulfil another purpose in election, to bear witness to the world of what they had more than others—the knowledge of God, "holding forth the word of life," in life or death. Abel spoke in his death, and "yet speaketh;" Seth, in his life, but yet more fully Enoch—for "he walked with God, and was not;" and he spoke too, in the triumph of His translation, of resurrection-glory, the portion of righteous Abel as well, when "the Lord cometh with His ten thousand saints" (Jude 14). In the days of Enos, "men began to call upon the name of the Lord," or, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord;" purporting either way an union in truth. This associate body, or the Church, was then the light of the world; and while consistent in separation unto God from the evil practices of the Cain world, God's desire in them of mercy to others was answered: but, alas! it is written, that, "when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the *sons of God* saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." There ceased to be a living revelation of truth, light was mingled with the darkness, and God unknown, except in the faithful remnant Noah, who "found grace in the eyes

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of the LORD," and of whom it is emphatically said, "According to all that God commanded him, so did he." The earth was soon "filled with violence, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth;" and how could it do otherwise? The light to God's way had been almost quenched, at least was too feeble in Noah to give light to the multiplied world; the Church, the world's moral teacher, had become corrupt; and what was to save an ignorant world from corruption? for that was its own way. The darkness quenched the light—Belial overcame the truth—Idols were set up in God's temple—the world was wedded to the Church—the daughters of men to the sons of God; and so the Lord destroyed man, whom He had created, from off the face of the earth (Gen. vi).

In the rapid and complete departure from the ways of God into idolatry, of Noah's descendants, we have another signal proof of the indifference of man to the wisdom of God: the "deep calling unto deep," the roar of the destroying waves, and cries of the lost, were so recent, that it would be thought impossible men could be so madly rebellious, were it not on record. The grace of God, however, shone the brighter, like the light of the pillar of glory over the darkness of Egypt's fate, when He called Abraham from the land of the Chaldees, and put him and his descendants in trust with "the oracles of God," that they might teach them, by word and act, to the world. I do not say that all the meaning of the election of God is declared in this; far from it: but I do say, that there is no right understanding of God's act of grace in election, whether with reference to one or many, unless we see that while the blessing is direct and special to the elected, it is mediate to the world; that the possession of blessing is a trust committed to them to exhibit to the world.

Israel thus, when brought out of Egypt (then first recognized as God's people, Exodus iii), was an election from among the nations of the world unto Jehovah, to declare to the world out of which they were taken, the blessings they realized, in a fellowship of which the uncircumcised knew nothing.

They were to be God's living revelation to the world; they alone had "the oracles of God," and by careful and obedient conformity to them, they were called to show a compact and living image of the

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truth, formed in that mould. It was as though God had said to all the nations of the world, "I have told you what was true wisdom, but you would have none of my counsel; but I cannot let you perish. I will prove your folly to you: I will form a people for myself; and in my dealings with them, and their consequent joy, might, glory, and abundant prosperity, you will see and learn what you have lost and are losing." To this end did Jehovah separate a people unto Himself: "Marvellous things did he in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan" (Ps. lxxviii. 12). "He shewed His signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham" (Ps. cv. 27): "and turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink" (Ps. lxxviii. 44). "Go," said the Lord to Moses, "stand before Pharaoh, and say, Let my people go, that they may serve me: for I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; *that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth*... And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, *and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth*" (Ex. ix. 14—16).

"He made a way to His anger; He spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence: and smote all the first-born in Egypt; the chief of strength in the tabernacles of Ham; but made His own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. And He led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies" (Ps. lxxviii. 50—53). And yet it is written, as to Israel, "Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies;...nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake, *that He might make His mighty power to be known*" (Ps. cvi. 7, 8).

Was it possible, after such signal proof of the blessing attendant on being the Lord's, who had so used His power in behalf of the people of His love, that any should prefer trusting in the chariots of Egypt to "the arm of Jehovah, that cut Rahab and wounded the dragon,... which dried the sea, the waters of the great deep, and made the depths of the sea a way for His ransomed to pass over?" (Is. li. 9, 10). Yet so it was; for not only did the nations of the Amalekites, Amorites, Moabites, &c., rise up against the people who had "the shout of this mighty King among them;" but the very people who had learnt the

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strength of that arm in their own deliverance, left it in after-days for the chariots of Egypt that it had overthrown (Isaiah xxx). Oh! marvellous folly! why were not all subject to this King of kings? The history of the Rechabites, and the crafty Gibeonites too, is proof to us, that all might have flocked around the camp of Jehovah, and been blessed with His favoured people.

But the revelation was but partial in the deliverance. It asserted the sure exercise of a power that nothing could withstand, in behalf of His chosen people: but how became they His people? We answer, that the cause which originated their blessing was the choice of His own will; for none had the slightest title to any favour—all were alike mad and wicked: but this too, though a true part of revelation, is not all; for how were they brought nigh? I answer, by blood. The people of His love were not absolved from guilt by any arbitrary act of emancipation; but the blood of the Paschal Lamb was their title, and their gracious Father's "power unto their salvation" (Rom. i. 16). The blood of the Lamb, and the waves of the Red Sea, were the significant witnesses to the world of God's only method of bringing any people into fellowship with Himself. Circumcision also, and the perpetual stream of blood that flowed in Israel's camp, told broadly and in living characters, the same solemn truth, that "without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin." Every Israelite, therefore, personally by circumcision,—Jerusalem and the priesthood, in the holy ceremony of the "daily sacrifice,"—and all Israel, in its yearly gathering to the feast of the Passover, proclaimed the necessity of cleansing, before any could draw nigh unto God; and in this they were "the light of the world."

But in more than this; for when the Lord had brought them to Himself in the wilderness, He revealed to them His will; and, in obedience, they were to exhibit that will to the world, showing the world's disobedience by their obedience—the world's ignorance by their knowledge. And thus Jehovah speaks to them: "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exod. xix. 5, 6). So also Moses: "Behold I have taught

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you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me: keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding *in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and shall say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.* For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day?" (Deut. iv. 5—8). A reference to the 14th of Numbers, in which the intercession of Moses for the people is recorded, will show how the glory of God in His actings with that people, as witnessed by surrounding nations, was the subject nearest his heart, who was the great type of the coming Mediator; and the answer of the Lord will show too how nothing can defeat His purpose to manifest Himself in and through a people, before the face of all men: "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."

The wilderness-state, however, was in itself the witness of the support that would ever be given to those who trusted in God, though surrounded by enemies, and without sustenance from earth. Jehovah was their leader—their covert from the storm—the glory in the midst of them; and heaven opened its rich store to feed them where the earth was barren; and Israel's undiminished strength, unworn clothing, and unswollen feet, as they came to Jordan's banks from their forty years' toilsome course, said to the world, "I will never leave nor forsake the people of my love;" and it should have met but one answer, "Blessed is the man who putteth his trust in the Lord; in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." In this they were the "light of the world;" and Rahab is a solitary instance of the shining of that light into a heathen's heart, as she came, like Ruth in other days, to put her trust in the Lord God of Israel, and to shelter herself under His wings.

But the completeness of Israel's distinct witness was in the Land, the typical reward of righteousness. "A good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou

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shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass" (Deut. viii. 7—9).

Its gift to them was the witness to the world of the happiness of "that people whose God is the Lord: yea happy is that people that is in such a case" (Ps. cxliv. 15);—the destruction of its previous wicked inhabitants, a proof of the certainty of righteous judgment on iniquity; in both "a light to the world:" and in all that followed while Israel walked in obedience—the sure periodical rains from heaven, independent of all natural chances; the consequent abounding fertility of their hills and valleys, with their stores and streams of honey and milk; the security of the homes of the people during the feasts of worship, when all the males were gone to Jerusalem, leaving all that was dear to them apparently unprotected; the supernatural abundance of the sixth year, making provision for the two following; the sabbatical day, month, year, and sabbath of sabbaths or Jubilee, in which the God of revelation was declared as Creator of all things in the face of the world; the armies of chariots and horses from heaven, that ever shielded or went forth with the armies of Israel against their enemies (2 Kings vi. 17), when they trusted in God; superiority indeed in all things, and in all circumstances while they owned their own inherent weakness, and used their privilege of leaning upon the arm of Jehovah, and that superiority not the effect of human skill or diligence, but entirely arising from the direct interference of God, irrespective altogether of human calculation, and oftentimes by the setting aside of the order of His own creation,—in all and far more than this, were Israel's people, Israel's laws, Israel's abundant riches and wondrous prowess "a city set on an hill"—a voice to the whole world, saying, "Happy is the people whose God is the Lord: come, and put your trust under the shadow of His wing."

In this place of high and holy trust, Israel failed; all outward prosperity was but the result of obedience to the holy will of their God; if they had prospered in iniquity, it would have been encouragement to the world's abominations; and it could not be, for God is holy; and His word to Israel was, "And ye shall be holy unto me, for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that

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ye should be mine" (Levit. xx. 26); but they failed in this, according to the word of the Apostle: "*For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you,* as it is written" (Rom. ii. 24). That there was a remnant, as in the antediluvian world, ever true to their trust, the 11th of Hebrews is proof to us; but Israel collectively walked according to the deceit of its heart, "as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke;" and the fearful word of judgment was pronounced by their rejected Prophet and Messias: "Behold your house is left unto you desolate."

The city of solemnities, the central point of gathering for all obedient worshippers, was razed to its foundations, and not one stone left upon another; the people sifted as corn through a sieve into all the nations from which they had been visibly separate hitherto; the former and latter rain ceased to fall, the milk and honey to flow; and the heart of Israel and the land of glory became alike withered and sterile. Thus the city the Lord had set on an hill, became first a Babel, and then was sowed with salt: the light He had lifted up to give light to the nations, became fainter and fainter, flickering in its socket till it was finally quenched; and the candlestick was removed out of its place; and no voice spoke from Israel except in sorrow and mourning, as though it had said (as it still speaks)! "Woe! woe! to the Apostate. "If the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men."

"I am the light of the world" was the title assumed by the blessed Son of God, as bringing, in His own humbled person, all the brightness of the Father's moral glory into this dark world. Dim was all light before: it is true, that it had shone in the darkness from the very first; but, as in creation, three days had passed away ere the scattered radiance was gathered into one body of light (Gen. i.), so as to moral light, it had shone but obscurely, even where it was true. All that God had thought about us, all that He was Himself, He had been telling little by little from the beginning; but so untutored was the fallen world, it was but the milk of the babe at first; all was partial till Jesus came; and then all truth, all that the unknown unseen Father was, stood in the face of Israel and the world embodied: and He said

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O gracious word!), "I am the light of the world." He had come to shine in all that pure and holy light upon this dark and tainted world: and it has shone and is shining still in that faithful record which the Holy Ghost has dictated; but how few are entranced by its brightness! alas! how few think of the charity of that living revelation of the Father. Men know that ignorance shuts up nearly all the channels of natural joy, and they strive to be wise; but God's wisdom, God's truth, God's heart and will have been personified before them, and they love darkness rather than that light, for it is holy and pure, and their deeds are evil; and we who say and know that we love it, through the imparted grace of our God, are ever seeking that it should not shine so brightly, but will rather turn back to some obscurer and dimmer light, and think *that bright enough.* I believe there should ever be a living transcript of the inspired record. It is true, if this fails, the record stands; but the record is rather (I would say this very humbly) the pattern by which the living thing is formed by the Spirit; if any thing is contrary to that, it is darkness: but the Church is called into the place of the "true light," informed by His Spirit, to stand in charity to the world by living the truths the record teaches; the Word, I should say, was for the Church,—the Church for the World. Is not this what the Lord means when promising to send them the Comforter; viz. that he was to be directly their Teacher and Comforter; and that through them He was to act upon the world? "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John xvi. 8—11).

"Ye are the light of the world: a city that is set on an hill cannot be hid," said the Lord Jesus to the little flock gathered around Him out of the apostate and stiff-necked Israel, to those who were to bear witness of Him far and wide, when He had ascended into His glory, and to hold His blessed and life-giving words in trust for others; the representatives and teachers of His Church: and thus surely in them did he address the whole Church, and place them by that brief emphatic charter on the highest eminence of holy privilege, confirmed in the words of the Apostles, in after-days, "Do all things without

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murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom shine ye [margin] as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (Philip. ii. 15). "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, *that* ye should show forth the virtues [margin] of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Pet. ii. 9). "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth); proving what is acceptable unto the Lord" (Eph. v. 8—10).

"Ye are the light of the world; let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Shall we cavil at these simple and solemn words? do they not assert the condition of the elect Church, holy and beloved, to be that of a revelation of their unseen Father to the world, who are in darkness and ignorance? or, in the language of the Apostle, the Epistle of Christ to the world, saying, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life," written with the Spirit of the living God on the fleshy tables of their hearts, and uttered to the world in language more emphatic and eloquent than any other, their lives of holy charity. It is not my object here to express the sorrow of my heart, by any comparison between the words of Jesus and the Church's actual condition; but I will quote the words which mark what the light should be, as placed so near, and clearly leading to the Church's title, "ye are the light of the world," and let my readers judge: "Blessed are the poor in spirit—blessed are they that mourn—blessed are the meek—blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness—blessed are the merciful—blessed are the pure in heart—blessed are the peacemakers—blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake—blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake: rejoice and be exceeding glad;—ye are the salt of the earth —ye are the light of the world."

I say unto you, "Swear not at all—resist not evil—give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou

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away—love your enemies—bless them that curse you—*do good* to them that hate you—and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."—"*What do ye more than others?*"

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v).

There is in every way a distinction between the light revealed through Moses and the Prophets, as to conduct, and that taught by the Lord Jesus, which is the Church's rule. The way of salvation must ever have been the same, though only typically and prophetically declared till Jesus came: but every principle of conduct became amplified almost into contrast: so also the character of the testimony to the world in external things; there ceased to be any *present* recompence, and the Church stood in suffering, as its Lord, to declare God's entire alienation from the world that had rejected His Son, and to declare in its separation that it was saved by hope, that its recompence was future, that a time of surpassing glory was coming, and that those who suffered with Him would be glorified together with Him. There ceased to be any witness in earthly prosperity, that it was well with the righteous; but the Church was called to declare that it was begotten again to an inheritance *reserved in heaven*, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that would not fade away. It was to declare the brightness of its reward, and the glory of that inheritance, by a steadfast refusal to be tainted with any thing that was esteemed by man; its place was another world—its principles those of another world—they could not suit this—they left a man a prey to all wickedness in this, and therefore made him a constant sufferer in some way—the child of hope and promise—the antitype of the destitute fathers, and not of prosperous Israel—strangers in a strange land—walking in a course so contrary to the course of this world, that every breath must strike some note of discord on the heart attuned only to heaven and the glory there—risen with Christ—setting their affections on things above, and called to live the principles of heaven on earth, the charter and rule of the house of God in the midst of a world in all things ignorant of aught so morally bright and beautiful.

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The abundant riches of Israel were the present proof to the world of God's favour to them, and a foreshowing of the riches of heavenly glory,—not yet given to the saint,—but future. All that Israel was in this world, the Church will be in immortality in the world to come; and any who use Israel's condition as a title to present earthly prosperity are not saved by hope (Rom. viii. 24); are not witnesses of future glory; but are ignorant of the Church's place, to show by its present poverty (though it may be God's almoner of plenty to others) the full revealed light as to the world's judgment and resurrection-glory.

But where would not this strain lead me? alas! far and wide, into all that at times passes as a dark and heavy cloud, muttering its thunders around my heart—the false and perilous condition of almost all things around, "deceiving and being deceived;" fearful words! "In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." "When they shall say, Peace and safety! then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men."

If we judge by the sight of our eyes, and by the hearing of our ears (and this Jesus did not ever), we may hear the music of rejoicing in the Church, and see their banners floating for conquest; but if we say, as He did, "As I hear I judge," and do give heed to the holy and searching word of the Lord, this will not shut from us His solemn assurance, "If ye continue in His goodness, if not ye shall be cut off;"—"as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth;" and we shall take up our parable and say in sorrow of heart, "Alas! who shall live when God doeth this?"(Num. xxiv. 23); going forth from the proud city with Jesus to Mount Olivet, as ready to ascend after Him to glory, weeping over it as knowing its coming desolations, though many as dear to Him as we are may be saying, "See what manner of stones, and what buildings are here" (Mark xiii. 1).

But the purposes of God cannot be frustrated—"As I live, all the earth shall be filled with my glory;" and the time, I believe, is rapidly hastening on, when the elect out of each dispensation, in the full

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glory that they have figured on earth, gathered together from the depths of the sea and the heart of the earth; wherever their dust has been—burnt to ashes—scattered to the winds—lost in the rapid tide; all will be gathered together, when "the Lord shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God;" and *when caught up to meet Him, they shall descend with Him, conformed* to His likeness in all things—living stones of a living city—the new Jerusalem—the habitation of Jehovah—the bride of the Lamb—the assembled choirs to utter Jehovah's praises on their harps of gold—warriors on white horses—kings and priests unto God—" *The light of the world; a city set on an hill which cannot be hid.*"

Thus it is written, "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) . . . . *that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ.*" Here then is the end of election, that the saints in their high and exalted state, in their preeminence of glory, raised far above angels, principalities, and powers, proving in their own joy, that the Father hath loved them, even as He loved the Lord Jesus, *should show*, in all they had attained to, the happiness of that people whose God is the Lord! their moral conformity to God—their visible conformity to Jesus in the resurrection—their far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, seen and known by a peopled world, in the *ages to come*—as kings to rule in righteousness (and how kings without subjects?); as priests to minister (and to whom except those in dependance?); as joint inheritors with their Lord of mediatorial glory (and a mediator is not of one, but God is one; therefore it has reference to others): and thus it is revealed in the book of the prophecy of the Church, "I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; . . . . . and I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it: and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. *And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it* [the city, the Church]; *and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the*

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glory and honour of the nations into it." "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, *and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations*" (Rev. xxi. & xxii).

The elect body in glory are here described bearing the light: the nations, all the nations that are saved from the judgments described in the 19th chapter, walk in the light of it, and are blessed; for they see the Lamb's glory and the glory of His bride.—In the midst of the saints is the tree of life (surely the Lord Himself), and its leaves are for the *healing of the nations.* Is there not, then, a peopled world, blessed remotely, or blessed through the dominion, not of the King of kings only, but the kings His fellows? Oh! most wondrous calling! "the kingdom and glory of God;" surely "the sufferings of this present moment are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be *revealed in us*;" and for this "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth until now," and never will be delivered from the bondage of corruption to which it has been unwillingly subjected, until this manifestation of the sons and heirs of God, joint heirs with the First-born among many brethren (Rom. viii. throughout): but then it will be delivered, and the creature too, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Surely it is most true that the world shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest; and through the Church too, but when? when the Church has attained its stature, and will give unfailing witness, in the lustre of its inherited glory in the resurrection, to the mortal world beneath, to that truth which the life and resurrection of the Lord Jesus declared, and which their feeble faith now, and their possessed reward then, will for ever declare, "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies" (Ps. xl. 4. the new song of the Lord in His resurrection).

The beautiful and comprehensive prayer of the Lord Jesus in John xvii, opens to us the same result;—the world had rejected Him: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee;" but He presents the election as the immediate objects of His anxiety and love—"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine." And what does He pray for? their security in the world in the knowledge of the Father, separation from the evil of the world, and their eventual unity when the number out

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of every nation, people, and tongue, are called; for they cannot be one, as a numbered body, till then; and the Lord surely prayed not for less than this: and further, He prayed for their unity in the possession of the glory; the ultimate desire of His heart in them, their possession of all they were destined to—unity in life and glory. And I would say, that a knowledge of this, or the prayer of Jesus imprinted on our hearts, would cause us to strive for unity now, and hasten to the glory.

After He has expressed the desire of His heart for His Church, He prays for the world, but mediately, or through the Church, "that they (the Church) all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me*" (ver. 21). To believe that He was sent of the Father, was and is the ground on which the elect stand:—"And they have believed that thou hast sent me" (ver. 8). Then does Jesus pray that after the election is completed, or they are *all one*, by seeing and knowing that unity, "the world may be saved, or believe that He was sent of the Father." Further, He says: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one (the perfection in unity being in the glory only); and *that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me*" (ver. 23).

How distinctly may the purpose of God be traced in this wonderful prayer! first, the whole election ("I pray not for them only, but for *all* who shall believe on me through their word"), *out of* every nation, kindred, people and tongue, as seen in Rev. vii.; and then the world blessed through them; but not blessed till the Church is taken from suffering and trial to the glory prepared for it; "The firstfruits of God's creatures" (James i. 18) waved before Him, as gathered from the north, south, east and west; the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed ones, redeemed *from among* men, the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb (Rev. xiv.); and then, after judgments upon Christendom (as so fully detailed in the Apocalypse), universality of subject blessing. The second Adam and His favoured Eve having dominion over the works of God's hands, and a peopled and happy world; saying, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, *who hast set thy glory above the heavens*" (Ps. viii).

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The mighty and royal conqueror, having subdued His enemies under His feet, with His queen in gold of Ophir, and raiment of needle-work, by His side (Ps. xlv.); judging the people with righteousness, and the poor with equity (Ps. lxxii. throughout); those who have been faithful in His grace over a few things, made rulers over many, and partaking all their Lord's joy (Matt. xxv. 21). Having overcome, and therefore sitting with Jesus on His throne, even as He overcame, and is now with the Father on His throne; (Rev. ii. 26, 27; iii. 21); "glorified together" (Rom. viii.) and coming with Him into the world, "when He comes in flaming fire, glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe in that day;" coming to judge, first in destroying the sinners out of the earth, and then to rule in equity and love; so that that coming shall be as the rain upon the mown grass; men shall be blessed in Him, and *all nations* shall call Him blessed. Israel shall say, "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things;" and all nations shall say, "Blessed be His glorious name for ever, and *let the whole earth be filled with His glory*" (Ps. lxxii). "O clap your hands, all ye people, shout unto God with the voice of triumph; for the Lord most high is terrible, He is a great King over all the earth; . . . . . Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness" (Ps. xlvii). The city of God will come down from heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband, the true city of the great King; this tabernacle of God will be with men; and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God (Rev. xxi). "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness; beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King; God is known in her palaces for a refuge" (Ps. xlviii). "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God" (Ps. lxxxvii). "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men;" "*The Light of the World;* A CITY SET ON AN HILL, THAT CANNOT BE HID;" SET ON HIGH, TO GIVE LIGHT TO ALL THAT ARE IN THE WORLD.—Amen and Amen.

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THE

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THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

The doctrine of the resurrection of the body, is one held by almost all Christians in a *general* manner. And this very circumstance, whilst it has tended to show the faith of God's elect in all ages, has deprived the doctrine of its power as animating the believer under present suffering, with the prospect of life and glory, and causing every thing now before him to be stamped with vanity and death. The Scriptural statement of this doctrine, as the believer's proper hope, is very definite; and it is here proposed to set it forth, to show how very harmonious are the Scriptural testimonies to the First Resurrection. But first let us notice briefly the importance of the doctrine in connexion with others. It is important, because of its immediate connexion with the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. From Him, in His person and work, all doctrine flows. If doctrine be separated from Him, it becomes a mere intellectual scheme, as little comforting as it is practical. But the doctrines of grace so blessedly centre in Him, that the infringing of one necessarily invalidates others. It is thus that the Apostle, in meeting those that denied the resurrection of the body, proves such a denial to be an entire subversion of faith.—"Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you

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that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." (1 Cor. xv. 12—14.) There is, therefore, in the resurrection, the connecting link between our Faith and Hope. There were two great truths involved in the resurrection of Christ:—1st, the complete justification of the Church; and 2ndly, the transfer of every hope of blessing away from the first Adam to the second; from him who was of the earth, earthy, to Him who is the Lord from heaven.—"For," says the Apostle, "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." (ver. 17.) "He was delivered for (because of) our offences, and was raised again for (because of) our justification." (Rom. iv. 25.) The resurrection of Christ is, in this passage, stated to be the consequence, not the cause of the justification of the Church. It was because He had borne our sins in His own body, on the tree, and there been made a curse for us, because He Himself had met the righteous wrath of a holy God, because God had condemned sin in the flesh, that therefore He was raised up by the glory of the Father to shew the complete putting away of sin. Hence the deep importance of those words,—"Lo! I come to do thy will O God: by the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the *body* of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. x. 10.) "Ye also are become dead to the law by the *body* of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit to God." (Rom. vii. 4.) The resurrection of Christ was God's own vindication of His righteous cause—was His declaration that He was that which He claimed to be,—even His Son. When He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheek to them that plucked off the hair, He could say, "He is near that justifieth me." But it was likewise God's own vindication of the Church:—"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, *rather* that is risen again." And in another passage we have the double vindication of Christ and His Church,—"And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom *He* raised from the dead; even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

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(1 Thess. i. 10.) He was raised because we were justified; or, if Christ be not raised, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins.

But the other truth involved in the resurrection is equally important. It stamped death on man's hope of blessing in this life, or in the flesh.—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It is in Him as the Head of a new creation, in Him as the second Adam, that we have hope.—Old things pass away, all things become new. Corruption, dishonour, weakness, are now known and felt to be the portion of the Adam body. Incorruption, glory, and power, that of the Christ body. The believer has an earnest of resurrection glory in the quickening power already put forth in his soul. He confesses himself a pilgrim and stranger here, because a child of this glorious hope; that as the first-born from the dead has already risen into glory, so those whom God foreknew, He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren: the Church of the first-born (Heirs) are to be brought into like glory. But, says the Apostle again, if there be not this blessed hope, if the dead rise not, why then make the best of the Adam-life, seek enjoyment for the Adam-body, eat and drink for to-morrow we die. Be not deceived: this is a holy doctrine, one that purifies the soul. It might appear to one who treated the subject superficially and saw nothing of the harmony of God's truth, that the hope of the separate spirit being in glory when away from the body, would be something more spiritual and of a more purifying effect than the resurrection. But not so: it has not the power to prove the worthlessness of the flesh, neither has it the power against present self-indulgence. "The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body; and God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power. (1 Cor. vi. 13, 14.) In fact the little real holiness exhibited in the Lord's people, is attributeable to this, that they have lost their proper hope, and realize not their present portion as risen with Christ; and therefore look upon the present state as one of possible enjoyment. To this the resurrection says, No; it is only as bearing the image of the heavenly Man that we can have blessing. No blessing to be had in the place of death, no good to be

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found in the flesh. Hence Jesus and the resurrection, was the sum and substance of the gospel preached by the Apostles. It was this that provoked the enmity of the sensual Sadducee, and the mocking of the intellectual Athenian. Both could see in the resurrection the vanity asserted both of man's pleasure and man's wisdom; both therefore, were equally set against it. And when the Apostles preached through Jesus, the resurrection from the dead, no wonder that the Sadducees were grieved; they felt the force of that word, "Jesus of Nazareth, whom *ye* crucified, whom *God* raised from the dead." It did place them in such an awful position; it so entirely showed their contrariety to God, that well might they threaten them, "that they henceforth should speak to no man *in this name*." And so at Athens, the most polished and intellectual people when told that they had been ignorant of God, and that now God commanded all men every where to repent, because He had raised one Man from the dead, to judge the world in righteousness. What was this but to disprove the world's blessing under man's wisdom? Full well then did they mock. Now this holy, soul purifying, and at the same time, soul-sustaining doctrine, Satan has contrived to blunt; so that the doctrine is held by most Christians as a powerless theory. It has not been consistent with the craft of Satan to deny this doctrine, but to generalize it; and to prevent the believer from rejoicing in it as his hope, or resting on the resurrection of Christ as his security. All general statements are wanting in power; it is therefore held that there will be one simultaneous rising of the dead, and then judgment follows. Now this vague statement places the Lord's people on quite a wrong ground; it makes resurrection only desireable because we must die, instead of being that which makes us to triumph over death. It connects it with the feeling of fear instead of joyful hope. It does not make us feel what that word means, "Mortality," "this Mortal," as a state and condition which it would be our wonderful gain to exchange for its opposite, "Life." (2 Cor. v.) We call this "Life;" which in the proper view of the resurrection we ought to call and feel to be "a body of death." And this vague statement has tended also to lead believers away from a full apprehension of the completeness of the Church's justification,

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proved by the resurrection of Christ—"that they have died to sin, and that their portion is to reckon themselves alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The First Resurrection is mentioned by name only in the 20th chap. of Revelation:—"I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands: and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.—This is the First Resurrection."

Now in examining this Scripture, let us first show that its only meaning necessarily must be, that which is stated, the First Resurrection; secondly, its harmony with other statements of the resurrection; thirdly, its connexion with other facts stated in Scripture; and lastly, its deep practical importance as the Christian's hope.

It has been asserted, that as the book of Revelation consists of symbolical representations, this cannnot mean a real resurrection; but must be taken figuratively. Now it is quite admitted that this book abounds in symbols, which are not to be taken literally. But then we frequently meet with the explanation of the symbols in the book itself. For example, there is in the first chapter, a vision of seven candlesticks and seven stars in the hand of the Son of man; but these are explained to be the seven Churches and the seven Angels of the Churches; this interpretation is to be taken literally. So again we are told that the golden vials full of odours, (ch. v.) represent the prayers of saints; and (chap. xix. 8.) that the fine linen in which the Church is clothed, is the "righteousness of saints."* Now in the passage before us, we have first a vision, "I saw thrones" &c., and then the interpretation of the vision—"This is the First Resurrection;" or, "this is the resurrection the first." So that we are obliged by all consistency of

* In this chapter the Dragon and the Old Serpent are symbols; but they are here explained as relating to one person—"which is the Devil and Satan." We know in this case how detrimental it has been to the truth to confound symbol and explanation together; so that by this very means the personality of Satan is very loosely held by believers. But the expression Satan and the Devil are strictly explanatory of the symbols the Dragon and the Old Serpent.

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interpretation, to take the vision of the thrones as meaning a real resurrection, and described as being the First Resurrection; and the rest of the dead, as meaning those that do not partake of the First Resurrection. We cannot depart from this interpretation without giving up all the previous information that we have from the explanation given of symbols by God Himself. For we might as well dispute that the candlesticks meant Churches, as that the thrones, &c., meant a resurrection. It has been indeed hastily asserted, that it is not consistent to interpret this vision of a resurrection, and the remarkable vision of the dry bones, (Ez. xxxvii.) figuratively. But here is the difference;—In Rev. xx. the vision is "the thrones;" and the interpretation, "the First Resurrection." In Ezek. on the contrary, the dry bones shaking, coming bone to his bone, and the sinews and flesh coming upon them and the skin covering them, is the vision; but it was not intended to convey the truth of a real resurrection, for the Lord Himself explained what He meant by it. (ver. 11.) "Then he said unto me, Son of man these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say, our bones are dried and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts." It is not because I interpret this Scripture figuratively, which frequently means setting our imagination to find out a meaning for God's word, that I say it means the restoration of Israel to their own land and not the resurrection of the body, but because I am forced so to interpret it, since God has explained what He meant by the vision. And I can with equal confidence say the vision of the thrones and the souls slain for the testimony of Jesus, which John saw is a real resurrection peculiar to those who have part in it, and that the vision of the dry bones which Ezekiel saw, is the restoration of Israel; because I have the authority of the same interpreter, God Himself. It is only easier for us to receive God's explanation in Ezekiel, because our minds are not so much pre-occupied with the time and order of Israel's restoration, but having been taught by the tradition of man the doctrine of a general resurrection, at the end of time, we hesitate at receiving God's own interpretation of a vision, as pointing to a first resurrection one thousand years before another more general one. And not only so, but we are apt to think that this doctrine does not harmonize

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with the other statements made by the Lord and His Apostles, concerning the resurrection of the dead.

Let us therefore in the scond place, examine other Scriptures bearing on the resurrection, to see whether they will support or contradict the doctrine of the resurrection the first. In Matt. xxii. 22., Mark xii. 18., Luke xx. 27., we have our Lord's conversation on the subject of the resurrection with the Sadducees, in the presence of the Scribes and Pharisees. Now let us examine this last passage, as that which enters into the greatest detail on the subject, in connexion with the doctrine of the First Resurrection. It was after the Lord had displayed His wisdom in escaping from the snare which the chief Priests and Scribes had laid for Him, through those who should feign themselves to be just men, that the Sadducees come to him, "who deny that there is any resurrection." They were a proud and sensual sect, who sought to reduce every doctrine to an absurdity, which taught something the manner and method of which they could not comprehend. They were great reasoners, opposing the conclusions of their own minds to the authority of God's word, and ready ever to forget that there was omnipotence to perform that which was written. It was therefore that the Lord showed them the wrongness of their principle, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." This is in fact at the bottom of all error: men have accustomed themselves to receive as truth not what is written, but the doctrines of men. But while the Lord had to meet the errors of the Sadducees, He had at the same time to rescue the truth from those who held it in unrighteousness. The Pharisees held the doctrine of the resurrection, the Sadducees denied there was any. But the doctrine with the Pharisees, was not the doctrine as a lively hope, it was held vaguely and generally, and not as it ought to have been, *the great promise of God made unto the fathers.* (Acts xxvi. 6.) It therefore had lost all its moral power, because it had lost its distinctness. As received by the fathers, it acted so powerfully on them as to make them confess themselves pilgrims and strangers; as held by the Pharisees in a general manner, it had no power, leaving them formal, covetous, and worldly; just as the general doctrine does professing Christians now. It was therefore the

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Lord's wisdom not only to assert the doctrine in opposition to those who denied it, but to rescue it from the abuse in which it had been held, by stating its speciality. The case supposed by the Sadducees was equally crafty as that put by the Pharisees, in respect of the tribute money. They thought He must have denied the doctrine altogether, in answering their question, or else set up His authority against that of Moses. Most artfully do they begin, "*Moses* wrote unto us, if any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife and raise up children unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren, &c. Last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection whose wife of them is she, for seven had her to wife? Jesus answering, said unto them, The children of this world (of this age,) marry and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (that age,) and THE resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage." And here let us pause.—*The* resurrection of which the Lord here speaks, cannot be a general resurrection, because it is limited to those who are accounted worthy. No words can more definitely mark that it is a resurrection of distinctive privilege. "They which shall be accounted worthy (not all, surely, but only some) to obtain *the* resurrection of the dead," says the Lord. Blessed and holy is he which hath part in *the* resurrection the first, says His Apostle. There can be no two statements more corresponding in sense though differing in words. Our Lord implies that there is the resurrection of which all will not be thought worthy to partake. John declares the peculiar privilege of those who have part in the resurrection the first. So far therefore, the correspondence is exact; and if our Lord spoke of a real resurrection, so does the Apostle.

"Neither can they die any more." This is a remarkable assertion, implying that there will be those raised from the dead, who will again be subject to death. And this fact would have been simply revealed to faith, without our being able at all to ascertain what was the character of that death which is here implied, had we only this Scripture to speak of it. But the Lord has been pleased to clear up this to us, and to shew us the death to which

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some that are raised from their graves are subjected. And the very Scripture which gives us this additional light, is the one we are considering—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection; on such the *second* death hath no power:" "Neither can they die any more," says the Lord. "On such, or over such the second death hath no power," says His Apostle. The words may differ but the sense is the same; only the Lord is pleased to show us by His Apostle what the second death is, to which those who are not partakers of the First Resurrection are subjected. "Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death." Now unless we deny that our Lord in Luke xx. is speaking of the resurrection of the body, we are obliged to interpret this passage which so exactly corresponds with it of the resurrection of the body. Surely it would be a fearful trifling with Scripture to say the Second Death meant any thing but punishment, and punishment after a resurrection: and if this be allowed the expression the First Resurrection, must mean a real resurrection. The lake of fire is no more figurative than the language of the Lord, "Depart ye cursed into *everlasting fire*, prepared for the devil and his angels."

But to proceed: "For they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of *the* resurrection." Now this clearly cannot apply to the resurrection of "the unjust," or to the "Resurrection of judgment." (John v. 29.) Those who partake of it are not as the angels, neither are they as the children of God. But what are the blessed privileges of God's children? That they shall be conformed to the image of His Son, that He may be the first-born among many brethren; that they partake of the glory of Jesus, that unknown as sons of God now, even as Jesus while in the world, when He shall be manifested they shall be manifested with Him in glory. (1 John iii.) Now as the Son, Jesus is constituted King and Priest, as it is written, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion; I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." (Ps. ii. 6, 7.) And again, "So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest, but He that said unto Him, thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee." (Heb. v. 5.) This is the privilege attached to Sonship, and the same

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words are expressly applied to the resurrection of Jesus. (Acts xiii. 33.) Our Lord says, they are children of God, being children of *the* resurrection: the Apostle, "they shall be priests and kings of God and of Christ: and how so but by being sons of God, and if sons, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ?" Here again the correspondence in the doctrines is remarkable, though it is rather implied than clearly stated.

But our Lord proceeds—"Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; for He is not a God of the dead but of the living, for all live unto Him." It may appear at first sight, that however this text might prove that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were still living and not annihilated, that it does not so clearly prove that they must rise from the dead. Nor indeed could it be proved from the doctrine of a general resurrection. The force of the passage depends on the expression, "The God of Abraham." It had pleased Jehovah of His own will to enter into a covenant relation with Abraham, making him many most free and unconditional promises, which were not made good unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Among these promises was this, without any condition whatever—*I am the Lord* that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give *thee this land* to inherit it." (Gen. xv.) The fulfilment of this promise depended upon the unchangeableness of Him who said in making it, I am Jehovah: "And he said, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it." Then follows the solemnity—"And in the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, unto *thy seed* have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." This then, was the answer to Abram's inquiry, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? "Unto thy seed;" and we know why it was a sufficient answer, because it is testified that the seed was Christ. (Gal. iii. 16.) And Abram knew it, and "rejoiced to see the day of Christ, and he saw it and was glad." He saw every one of these promises made good by seeing Christ, in whom *all* the promises of God are Yea and Amen. Now the effect on the mind of this father, was not to be anxious to have the land then, but in another state, even a resurrection state; when he from "the city which had foundations, whose

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maker and builder was God," even "a heavenly city;" would inherit it and be made a blessing to it, as it is written, "Thou shalt be a blessing." (Gen. xii. 2.) Let us hear the testimony of Stephen to this, "He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to *him* for a possession, and to his seed after him." And again, that of Paul, "By faith Abraham when he was called to go out *into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance*, obeyed; by faith he sojourned in the *land of promise*, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob the heirs with him of the same *promise*. These all died in faith, not having *received the promises*, but having seen them *afar off*, and were *persuaded* of them *and embraced them*, and confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city." Now this can only mean that the promises they had not received they would receive; but when? even in a resurrection state, even when "many should come from the east and from the west, and should sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. viii. 11.) For these all *received not the promises*, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Now if we take our Lord's answer to the Sadducees in connexion with the promises made to the fathers, we see its conclusiveness as to the doctrine of the resurrection. He was still their God in covenant with them; and as He had never fulfilled the promises unconditionally to them, as their covenant God, He would do so in resurrection, or His faithfulness would be impeached. That He intended to bring them into a far higher glory for the manifestation of His own grace, did not prevent the fulfilment of His purpose in blessing all the earth in Abraham and in his seed. Nor let us forget the Apostle's doctrine, that the law given by Moses did not break God's previous covenant with Abraham.—"And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." (Gal. iii. 17.)

God is still the God of Abraham, still in covenant with Him,

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and will raise him up, and the fathers to inherit these promises; which however man may have forgotten, He cannot; for by so fulfilling them, all shall know that He is Jehovah. Surely therefore the promise which God made unto the fathers, He hath fulfilled, in raising up Jesus, as the first fruits of them that slept. (Acts xiii. 32.) And from these words of our Lord, we are taught God's purpose to bless man in the resurrection, as well as that the resurrection state was that in hope of which the fathers lived. But when we come to apply this statement to the First Resurrection, it gives great distinctness to it. Because that our Lord's argument from Jehovah calling Himself the God of Abraham, &c. is this—that the earthly promises made to Abraham, are to be fulfilled to him in the resurrection state. "The meek shall inherit the earth." And what says the Apostle in Rev. xx? they, the partakers of the First Resurrection shall reign with Christ a thousand years. And over what shall they reign? over the earth, as it is written, "The Lord shall be king over all the earth;" (Zech. xiv. 10.) and again, "*We* shall reign on or over the earth." (Rev. v. 10.) So that this part of our Lord's doctrine of the resurrection, agrees with that of the Apostle concerning the First Resurrection; they shall reign with Him a thousand years." For the promise that He should be the *heir of the world*, ("all things are yours, the world," &c. 1 Cor. iii. 22.) was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith; therefore it is of faith that it might be of grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, before Him whom he believed, even God who *quickeneth the dead*." "So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham." (Gal. iii. 9.) Abraham's blessing is in the resurrection state, when there shall be the blessing of all the earth in Him; the saint's blessing is at the same time, i.e. in "the resurrection the first."

But truth will bear the strictest investigation, and supposed difficulties constantly arise from the insubjection from our minds to the Scriptures, or from our superficial acquaintance with them—"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God." The testimony to the First Resurrection has been hastily

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dismissed by many Christians, as if such a doctrine was quite inconsistent with our Lord's statement on the resurrection. (*John v.* 28, 29.) It is but fair therefore to examine this statement in connection with what has previously been said; because if it be proved that this, the strongest ground usually assumed by those who oppose the doctrine of the First Resurrection, at least does not contradict, if it does not directly support it, the question may be considered as settled. Let us then transcribe the passage, with its context, that we may fairly judge of its bearing:—

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, the same also doeth the Son in like manner.* For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth, and He will shew Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father *raiseth up* the dead and *quickeneth* them, even so the Son *quickeneth* whom He will. For neither doth the Father judge any man, but hath committed all *judgment* to the Son, that all should honour the Son even as they honour the Father; he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that sent Him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me *hath everlasting life*, and shall not come into *judgment*,† but is passed from *death into life*. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when *the dead* shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear *shall live*. For as the Father hath *life* in Himself, so has He given to the Son to *have life* in Himself, and hath given Him authority to execute *judgment* also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in (the) which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto a *life* resurrection, and they that have done evil unto a *judgment* ressurrection."

Now mark the contrasts in this passage.—The Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them; the Son quickeneth whom He will, and in their several order raiseth *all*. He is "the resurrection

* The translation is slightly varied, to show the claim of the Son to equal authority with the Father.

† It is the same word which is rendered judgment, above and below.

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and the life." It is *now the hour* of exercising the quickening power, and has been for 1800 years, even from the time that Jesus spoke the words, to this day. But to the Son of man is given another power, even the right of judgment—of all judgment; and how can this be exercised? even because the Son raiseth the dead, and that resurrection power is to be put forth at a given period and in distinct order. This authority He exercises not now, but *the hour* cometh in which He will exercise it; but not simultaneously, any more than the quickening power is now exercised simultaneously. But mark! the resurrection power will be in its order exercised over all that are in the graves; not so the quickening power, that is special and distinctive; "whom He will, He quickeneth as Son of God; the dead now hear His voice and live." And they who hear come "not into judgment, but have passed from death to life," and await His further power to a *life resurrection.* The dead who hear not His voice *now* unto quickening, will hear it in their graves, and come forth to a *judgment resurrection.* This is the important and deeply interesting doctrine laid down here. Two powers in Jesus, the one of quickening, and the other of judgment: the one exercised now, the other not yet. Two classes, the one who hear and believe, and the other who hear but believe not. Two ends, to which they are respectively tending—Life and judgment. If there be a portion which is precious to the Believer, it is this—present life now in the Spirit; and as to mortality in the body, that to be swallowed up of life in the First Resurrection, which is his hope. And if there be a solemn warning to the unbeliever, it is this—still in the sight of God, *dead* in trespasses and sins; the power of Jesus to be exercised over him, is in a *judgment resurrection;* all that he has presented before Him of God is a fearful looking for of judgment to come, and dead now, has the second death before him. Now if words are capable of conveying distinct ideas to our minds, these words express two resurrections; the question of time does not come in here. There is a resurrection to life, and there is a resurrection to judgment. All do not rise together to be separated after; but they arise as the Apostle states, "Every one in his own order." Now this so far from contradicting the doctrine of a First Resurrection, does easily fall under it; and gives both definiteness

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as to a Christian's hope, by excluding judgment (save as to reward) from the resurrection, and gives solemnity to the warning likewise of judgment to come by excluding the idea of generality from it, and giving it that definiteness which alone impresses the mind. "He that is unjust let him be unjust still, he that is filthy let him be filthy still;" his prospect is a judgment resurrection; only to know the resurrection power of Jesus, in order to the second death.

The latter testimony in the Revelation goes into the question of time, and into more minute detail; and it will be increasingly our wisdom to bring former declarations to this last Revelation of the Lord to His servants, and not to neglect its light, because its plain import runs counter to our preconceived notions. Our Lord says there is a resurrection to life; His Apostle says of those who were presented to his view as having suffered for the testimony of Jesus, "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.—This is the First Resurrection." Our Lord says there is a resurrection to judgment; His Apostle states the time relative to the other resurrection. The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished; and then describes the character of the judgment, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire—this is the second death."

The same remark will apply to Acts xxiv. 15. "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of just and unjust." Here again there are two distinct resurrections mentioned, but no mention made of the time between them. The resurrection of the just as a distinct resurrection, is mentioned by our Lord, Luke xiv. 14. "Thou *shalt be blessed*, for they cannot recompence thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." "*Blessed* and holy is he which has part in the First Resurrection."

Once more; it is made a matter of *special promise* that those who are given of the Father unto Jesus, shall be raised up at the *last day*. (John vi. 39, 40, 54.) This therefore cannot be common to all; in fact we are here deceived by sound. The last day in Scripture, is not associated with the circumstances with which our minds have associated it, who always think in the pride of our hearts that the dispensation of God to us must be the final

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one. The last day is used relatively—it is the last day of God's long suffering and the beginning of the day of the Lord. As it is written, "The angel lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever that there should be time no longer; or that the time should be no longer: but *in the days* of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall *begin* to sound the mystery of God should be finished, as He declared to His servants the Prophets. (Rev. x. 5—7.) "And the seventh angel sounded and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. xi. 15—18.) So that the last day is identical with the day of the Lord; and in the morning of that day the righteous dead shall be raised, as it is written, "Like sheep they (the men of this world) are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them, (they will be subject to the second death) and the upright shall have dominion over them in the *morning*. (Ps. xlix. 14.) Here then let us leave the question. The investigation of Scripture shows many harmonious and no contradictory statements of the doctrine of the First Resurrection. And this is the sum of what has been stated under this head: *all* the Scriptures touching the resurrection may without violence be classified under a first and second resurrection; many of them cannot apply to a general resurrection, and one general simultaneous resurrection is expressly negatived by the statement of Rev. xx. "This is the First Resurrection," which it has been before shown is not a symbolical statement, but an explanation of a symbol.

And now thirdly, let us briefly examine this doctrine in connexion with other facts stated in Scripture.—In considering our Lord's discourse with the Sadducees, (Luke xx.) we have already shown the resurrection state is exhibited as in relation to an earthly state. And this is a most interesting point. During that period of predicted blessedness, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, when the burthen of the Prophet's testimony to a period of physical, moral, and spiritual blessedness, shall be accomplished; when every knee shall bow at the name of Jesus, of things in earth, as now do things in heaven; what relation do the saints who have suffered

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here with Jesus, whose names are blotted out from man's remembrance, over whom death appears to have triumphed hitherto: what relation shall they bear to this state of things? shall they be spectators of the Lord's triumph, even as they have been spectacles to men and angels? or shall they remain in the state in which they are now, as yet unclothed upon with their house from heaven? No; the First Resurrection is that which brings them into relation to the earthly state of blessing of which they shall not be only spectators, but actually administrators. The Lord will confess them in the day that He shall come in the Father's glory and that of the holy angels, to be His; and they shall be owned too as His, when He coming from heaven, shall raise them in incorruptible, powerful, glorious, and spiritual bodies; fashioned like to His glorious body. When He shall be *manifested* as the Son, publicly declared as such; the adopted sons shall be manifested also. Now there are three Scriptures I would press as to this relation of the risen saints to the earth and its inhabitants, especially the people of Israel in THAT DAY. The first is 1 Cor. xv, of which no doubt can remain as to its referring to the resurrection of the body; and that all the detail applies exclusively to the resurrection of the dead saints, or change wrought on the living ones, "according to His mighty power, who is able to subdue (or subject) *all things* to Himself." (Phil. iii.) Now the "all things" here and in 1 Cor. xv. 27, includes all things in the earth, as it is written, Ps. viii. "Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put *all* things under His feet; all sheep and oxen." This dominion is not yet *asserted*, "for we *see* not *yet* all things put under Him." (Heb. ii. 8.) But it is to be asserted, when the Lord Jesus Himself, to whom the Father hath subjected all things, shall come forth and take His great power and subject them; and shall begin by showing forth His mighty power on His raised and changed saints. The 8th Psalm therefore, will not have its accomplishment until "those that are Christ's are raised at the coming of Christ."

Again in ver. 54, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying *that is written*, Death is swallowed up in victory." Now this saying is written in Isa. xxv. 8,

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" He will swallow up death in victory ;" and stands in immediate connexion with the destruction of the enemies of Israel, and their deliverance and exaltation ; for " In *that day* shall this song be sung in *the land of Judah*—we have a strong city, Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." But more than this, it stands connected with the removal of the moral darkness in which men are now groping :—" And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations ; He will swallow up death in victory." And this we see at the time of the resurrection of the saints. Take another passage, Rom. viii. 18—23, " I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed *in* us ; for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected it in hope ; because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For *we know* that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now ; and not only it, but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the *redemption of the body*." There is a set time for the deliverance of creation, which fell into bondage when man, its lord, fell into sin. The time called the times of refreshing and restitution of all things, (Acts iii. 19.) will not be (as it is here clearly stated) until the manifestation of the sons of God, i.e., until they are publicly announced as His sons in their glorious resurrection bodies. (1 John iii. 1, 2.) The groaning creation is now waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. The saints, having the spirit of adoption, are groaning, waiting for *the* adoption, even the redemption of the body. This text most unequivocally states the deliverance of the creation to be cotemporaneous with the resurrection of the saints ; so that it is clear that there is an earthly state co-existent with the resurrection state. The next text will shew us the relation of the resurrection saints to the delivered creation. It is written, Heb. ii. 5, " For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak ; but one in a certain place testified saying, what is man that thou art mindful of him ? thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,

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thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands ; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." Now this is rightfully true of the Son of man : He is made heir of all things ; but His saints are joint-heirs with Christ. The glory the Father gave Him (as Son of man) He has given to them What is the assertion here plainly made, but that the delivered creation shall be under the immediate ministry of the Lord Jesus and His saints ? It is for this that it is now longing ; and oh that the saints were longing for it also. " But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool ? are *they* not all *ministering spirits* sent forth to *minister* unto them who shall be heirs of salvation ?" This ministry of angels is from heaven to earth ; but it is invisible and hindered, as it is written, Dan. x. 12, 13, " Fear not Daniel, for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words ; but the Prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days." But under the Lord Jesus and His saints, the ministry will be likewise exercised, from heaven to the earth ; but with this difference—it shall be visible and unhindered. To those on the earth it is the realization of Jacob's dream,—" a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven ; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it:" (Gen. xxviii. 12.) or, as our Lord testified, to show its connexion with Himself. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall *see heaven open*, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (John i. 51.) Now we know that the power exercised by the Lamb effectively at this present time is, through the Spirit, invisibly to the world ; " for the world seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." The Lamb as it had been slain, as seen by John, had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And we know also that His power in controlling the events of the world, and checking Satan, and restraining evil, is secret, and as we say, providential. This must necessarily be the case in such a dispensation of long-suffering and forbearance as the present is. But the hour is coming when the Lamb exercises direct and visible power on the earth, as He did " in the day of battle." (Zech.

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xiv. 3.) "We give thee thanks because thou hast *taken to thee thy great power* and hast reigned." (Rev. xi. 17.) This is the great change, that instead of the world being under the providential government of the Lamb through the invisible ministry of angels, it will be under the direct and righteous government of the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall "sit as a priest on His throne;" and the risen and glorified saints, as priests unto God, shall be the channel through which blessing comes to the earth—"the heavens shall hear the earth;" (Hos. ii. 21.) and as kings unto God, shall exercise direct power over the earth; and that power unhindered, because Satan will be bound. For it is written, "To him that overcometh I will give power over the nations." (Rev. ii. 26.) And what is this, but God's original purpose in the creation of man, as He announced at the beginning,—"Let us make man in our image and in our likeness, and let *them* have dominion?" The failure of man must first be fully proved, in order to show that power belongeth to God only; and then is God's purpose realized in the Lord Jesus Christ and His saints, even in the second Adam in whose image and likeness His saints are created in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephes. iv. 23, 24.) It is those alone who have been taught their own impotence and know what salvation by the sovereignty of grace meaneth, who can be entrusted with power to use for God's glory and man's blessing.—So that in the very exercise of power they must necessarily ascribe it to its right source, "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of all nations, &c., and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

How many are fondly cherishing the hope of a world's regeneration through the instrumentality of man; how many imagine that the progress of events is tending to such a consummation! Blessed therefore is it to be able to say, WE KNOW whither things are tending—we know that there is a regeneration for the world, but not in man's way but in the way of God's judgments; that all the increase of knowledge, science, and civilization, will be permitted to run its course only to prove its impotence against moral and physical evil, and will issue in a system of decided exclusion of God from the plans of man and thoughts of his heart, and the bringing in of a more corrupt state of things on the earth even than that before the flood;

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(compare Rev. xi. 18. last clause, and Gen. vi. 11, 12.) and this brings "on the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." And it will not be till after this, when the saints of the Most High (margin, heavenlies. Eph. vi. 18.) possess the kingdom, which is after the destruction of earthly power or the man of the earth, that this cherished expectation of man will be realized. "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in THE REGENERATION, WHEN the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. xix. 28.) "I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.—This is the First Resurrection."

And now fourthly; as to the deep practical importance of this doctrine as the believers proper, blessed, and glorious hope. It has been already noticed how it connects every thing with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that it can alone be held in power by the recognition of the completeness of the believer's justification, by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. It is always so blessedly connected in the Scriptures with the work of Christ at His first coming, that the Holy Ghost leads on from one to the other, or in proposing the hope, immediately throws us back on the suffering of Jesus. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God." "Looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave HIMSELF for us."

But we constantly mistake our standing in the present world, by not realizing the resurrection as our portion. How are believers not of this world, but because Jesus gave Himself up for their sins, to deliver them out of this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father?—Because they died with Him and are risen with Him through faith of the operation of God, and are seen by Him who calleth things that are not as though they were,

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as now sitting down in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. Wherefore, says the Apostle, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though *living in the world.* &c., it was not their place to be as though living in the world. It was their place as risen with Christ, to see every thing from heaven, in the light of God's truth. In what light do man's efforts, man's wisdom, man's politics appear there? do they occupy any place in the mind of heaven? no; there is joy there over one sinner that repenteth; but heaven knows only of power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and blessing, as belonging to the Lamb. Hence, as children of the resurrection, do believers find their proper place as ministers of grace to a world lying under the wicked one, and as testifiers by their separation from it, of its judgment.

Do you groan being burdened in this tabernacle? The First Resurrection is set before you, as the time when mortality shall be swallowed up of life. Do you mourn at the failure even of the best efforts of yourselves and others, in testifying unto Jesus and His salvation? Remember it is but a first fruits now, and not till after the First Resurrection, when the Lord and His saints directly administer to the world, will the great ingathering of the nations be; *then* "unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. xlix. 10.)

Do you feel indignant at the presumptuous self-confidence of man in his attempt to do without God? "Be patient till the coming of the Lord." He is still long-suffering.—Be you so likewise. The time is fast coming when He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and you shall, in the First Resurrection, sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. "Who shall not fear thee O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are made manifest."

Let us learn to view every thing in the light of this hope, and how vain will all the efforts of man appear, and how light and momentary all present trials, in comparison with the glory to be revealed *in* us.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." As Jesus overcame it by dying, rising, and ascending into heaven, let us overcome it through faith; and now shout, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory."

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BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

SIR,

I SEND you some Analyses of Books of Prophecy, which I may be enabled at some future period, with the divine permission and blessing, to fill up with some further details. I feel this to be a more satisfactory method than framing any system which the study of Scripture makes me feel I possess. What does appear plain and distinct to me, I trust may be occasion of study and of information to other minds.

I would begin with Daniel. This book is clearly divided into two distinct parts. The former comprising visions and dreams of unrenewed heathens, or circumstances connected with their conduct;—this ends at the 6th chapter. The latter, communications to the faithful Prophet of the events in their moral character connected with the people of God; many of them antecedent, in point of time, to what is related in the former part; but separated into a distinct portion or book of themselves, as having a specific character. Thus the visions of the 7th and 8th chapters clearly precede in point of time the circumstances in the 6th; or, we might, I think add, even the 5th: but they are revelations to Daniel, instructing him in the bearing of the subjects of previous visions on the state of the saints. The former portion shews the history of the world in its outward character, its manifested forms, and the question thereon raised between their powers and God. The latter, as might naturally be expected in revelations to a Prophet standing as the representative of the people of God, reveals the position and character of the agents in relation to the saints, their full moral character, and all that internal history in which those saints were most especially concerned. The latter part is from chap. 7 to the end. I shall give the briefest outline of this structure now. We have then Daniel's visions only from the 7th chap. inclusive; the former are facts, or the king's visions. But in the former we shall find distinct portions. The 1st chap. merely gives us the character of Daniel as separated from the pollution in which he was mixed up by the

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judgment of God on the nation; and the privileges of him and the three other children; and Daniel's continuance to the year of deliverance to his people. We have then in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th chaps. Nebuchadnezzar's history. In the 5th, the destruction of the remainder of his empire, for the profane usage of what belonged to God. And then, in the 6th chap. another scene—the kingdom of Darius.

In the 2nd chap. the first prophetic one properly speaking, we have the divine wisdom setting forth distinctly *the man of the earth*, in all his varied characters; beginning with, and represented by, the head of gold—Nebuchadnezzar; that which attracted the attention and comprised the power of the visible world beneath.—The destruction of this by the agency of power in its last form; and the substitution of that power which filled, not merely awed and overlooked as it were, the whole earth.—Daniel's God owned therein in the acknowledgment of Him; as it is written, "that seek thy face O Jacob:" and Daniel's exaltation over the known world—he stood there as the Jew. We have the general character attached to this period in the person of the golden head of the whole. It was connected with religion—that was not left out. It was not merely secular power; and while the man was the power in the world in the previous dream, here is that which it did openly: the exercise of its power, or Satan's power by it would not be complete. It was not infidelity, in the common sense of the word, or atheism, but a compulsory religion; in which the power and will of this *man of the earth* was shown, to which the honours of the state were compelled to bow; an image all of gold set up—a most beautiful and gorgeous display; and calculated to attract by its own excellency, and illustrate the honour of him who had set it up. It was, however, an image in the province of Babel—a furnace to the faithful: not however, I remark, to Daniel, who I believe to have represented the Jew distinctively, but those whose help was found in one like to the Son of God being with them in the furnace, while they were thus in it, making them free.

The 4th chap. states the external glory of a tree, the symbol of exaltation in the earth, which God had made to flourish; and this change takes place:—Instead of subduedness and intelligence, to wit, of God, there is given to this exalted representation of power,

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a beast's heart—ravening and ignorance of God, till they should learn that the Most High ruleth.

That a man's heart signifies this quietness and subjection, is shewn chap. vii. 4. The result is, that those that walk in pride He is able to abase. (compare Ezek. xvii. 24.) In the 5th chap. it seems to me (sorrow is it to think) that profaneness against God in a degraded state, will be the mark of final judgment on this apostate state of things. We have then another state of things entirely—an utter open casting off of God; bringing Daniel, the prophetic representative of the Jew, into the den of lions. That which had taken the place of the previous state of things, seized on Babylon; but was not it, in its power or its source; openly throwing off God in folly, and thereupon the Jew made a prey; but delivered, and the everlasting kingdom acknowledged, and the princes taken in the net which themselves had laid. I do not excuse the Jews from the former similar case; but this seems exclusively and definitely to belong to them. The character of the apostasy is different: Darius sets up himself as God, or at least as alone to be prayed to, not setting up in his glory an image to be worshipped: both perhaps may characterise, in some form the apostasy of the latter day; this seems in all its character confined to it, and to make way for the everlasting kingdom. The King of heaven, the Most High, is the acknowledgment of the former.—The everlasting kingdom of the living God, of the latter.

All these things are consequent upon "Lo-ammi" being written upon the Jews; and the manifest throne of God amongst the Jews having ceased and been cast down. Then, I take it, the beast's heart properly had its rise. Man could be given up to folly, and Babylon become the seat of exalted madness and folly of heart: he might exercise it uncontrolled, save by the watchful eye of God ruling from the heavens; for Jerusalem was cast down—the throne of God had departed from the earth—his earthly care was now hopeless. (see Exek. x. 19, and the reasons in the previous chapters; the 11th chap. and the statements following to the end of chap. xii.) Daniel iv. 30, shews what took its place; and then properly came in the beast's heart for the seven times.

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We have now arrived at the second portion of the book, wherein their general characters and characteristics of apostasy are brought into far greater detail in connection with the saints; and the book assumes the form of regular, though symbolical prophecy; being direct communications to the Prophet himself. We had before, the beast's heart—we have here the beasts described.

But in this portion also, there are distinct and definite parts;—the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th to the end, are all distinct visions.—Four distinct visions, as may be seen by their dates. However, we shall see there is further order amongst them. The 7th and 8th describes the conduct and circumstances of the four beasts, with interpretation and prophecy added.

The 9th is the specific considerations of the desolations of Jerusalem, with its appointed time.

The 10th, to the end, what shall befal Daniel's people in the latter days, preparatory to this; as God had not taken His eye off them, and yet they were "Lo-ammi." The circumstances through which they should be passed, until connected with the prince that should come, as given in chap. ix. at the close, are detailed most accurately and minutely in the former part of the 11th. The real history, God's history, of what is given apocryphally in the uncertain books of the Maccabees.

Thus chap. ix. also, it appears to me more particularly connects itself with the 7th; and the 11th with chap. 8. The close of it, however, connecting both,in *The King;* and the king of the north, and the king of the south. The last being the conclusion of the whole matter.

Thus the 9th, like the judgment on Belshazzar, comes in, dividing the general history of the beasts, and the specific detail of the last climax of deliberate open apostasy.—The king shall do according to his will, not regarding any God.

Let us turn back to the 7th and 8th; and here I must remark as to what is called interpretation in the prophecy, that it is by no means merely explanation, but a use and application of some previously declared general symbol to specific results; often involving therefore material additional revelations, or omission of circumstances not affecting those particular results.—This we shall see plainly in those two chapters.—I turn to their analysis.

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The 7th contains three distinct visions, and then interpretations. The first vision is from ver. 2 to ver. 6.—Four beasts, but the description only of three; the last being reserved for a distinct vision.

The second vision is from ver. 7 to the end of ver. 12. The third is contained in verses 13, 14.

The first vision sees the first beast reduced from violence to subserviency, and is so disposed of.—It ceased to be a beast. The other two are merely described.

The second describes the fourth beast, its little horn, and the judgment of the Ancient of days upon the life and body of the beasts because of it; but only considered as between it and the judgment.

The third is the subsequent and consequent giving of the kingdom to the Son of man, brought before Him, with its character and extent.

Verses 15, 16. contain the request for interpretation.

Verse 17, the interpretation of the first vision,—Kings arising out of *the earth;* with, in verse 18, an additional revelation, that the saints of *high places* are to take the kingdom.

Verse 19, is the request of the truth about the second vision, with some additional character in verse 20, of the little horn; and an additional vision in verses 21, and 22; for it is to be remarked that in the visions, the outward position of the beasts in the world with the saints, or their internal history, are not at all introduced.

From the 23rd to the end of the 26th, is the interpretation, with many additional particulars; the 27th gives the result of the third vision on the earth; but being indentified and involved in its causes with what precedes, it is given continuously. The interpretation in a word, is the bringing in of The Heavenlies into the subject, though only as known in effect upon earth; but attaching that name which implied the possession of heaven and earth—the Most High. It has been already, I believe, observed in some previous paper that this word when connected with *saints,* is, as in margin, "high places, or things;" the same I doubt not, with the heavenly places of St. Paul. I would also refer the Christian reader to the 4th verse of the 2nd Psalm, to me it opens a distinct field in Rev. xiii. 6.

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This is all connected with the fourth beast, which as well as the first, was thus far previously passed over.

In the 8th there is quite a distinct vision. We have two active powers, with characters sufficient to identify them with the beasts, but given in distinct and peculiar forms ; their own actings to the exclusion of the other two. We are told that they are, The kings of Media, and Persia, and of Grecia.

The vision continues to the end of verse 12. In 13, 14, there is testimony as to the continuance of a given point of it.

Verse 15. The Prophet seeks the meaning of the vision. The vision is to be at the time of the end ; the former part being merely designative of character, for it includes the first king ; and the interpreter only is occupied in showing as his object, what shall be in the last end of the indignation. This connects itself, in my mind, with Isa. x. 25. It appears to me, that the accomplishment of the indignation is a distinct thing, as the fulfilling or accomplishment of a storm, and the end of a storm would be different. Having then, identified the parties in ver. 20—22, verses 23, 24, 25. give the account of the person who is to appear when the transgressors are come to the full; the people are to suffer under or be destroyed by him, and he is to stand up against the Prince of princes, but be broken without hand. In the 26th, the vision of the 13th and 14th, *which was told*, is declared to be true, wherefore it was to be shut up, for it was manifestly for many days,

It is remarkable, that in the vision there is no mention of the putting an end to the practices of the little horn. In the interpretation, no mention whatever in his misdoings of any thing to befal the daily. or the place of the Prince of the host's sanctuary, but he is to stand up against the Prince of princes.

I do not mean to say that nothing has struck my mind in connection with these circumstances, but I prefer leaving them at present to the consideration of my brethren taught of the Lord.

I would just add, that in the 11th verse, " From him," appears clearly the right translation, and I confess I should read the 12th, "a settled time of affliction was appointed to the daily." This I leave to better critics to inquire into.

On the 9th, I have little to add, as a continuous prophecy, in-

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cluding petition and answer. Only I would refer to ver. 7, that it involves all Israel, as well as Judah and Jerusalem; so in verse 11, "Thy city and thy people," and the matter of supplication. I would only remark, how intercession, in the time of intercession *holds the expression*, "Thy people;" (as in Moses in the Mount) in spite of Lo-ammi written upon them, or a broken covenant; but the reference is at once in Moses to God's covenant, not the people's: so here the confession is complete.

The answer includes, after the decree to rebuild, Messiah, the people of the prince that should come, i.e., the Romans, and I believe Anti-christ as that prince therefore, and consequent desolations. A desolator till the consummation, and that decreed shall be poured upon the desolator. This is the portion of Jerusalem. Where defined it is connected more particularly with the 4th beast, but merely under the character "of the people, &c.—In the 10th chap. we have a much fuller account of all the doings of the ram and the he-goat, founded upon the statement that the full exercise of the angelic providential power of God was continuing for the Jews, for the purposes of God, however as a nation they might be tossed to and fro in the times of the Gentiles: the power of evil in Persia was contending against, and though the prince of Grecia should come, all his doings were measured and understood in the counsels of God; the difficulty was felt, but measured. Michael their prince stood with the angelic messenger in these things, and he was now sent to let him know what would befal his people in the latter day. The history is complete, but abrupt whilst Jerusalem stands restored; all the actings of the kings of the north and the south, are detailed particularly, but the whole scene changed by the introduction of the ships of Chittim. It was not as the former, or as the latter. Sword, flame, captivity, and spoil, many days await the people, though those that understood instructed. The sanctuary of strength was polluted; so they continued to the time of the end. Then one well known in Jewish history—i.e. prophecy, "The King," is seen in his wilful career, one whose character is infidelty, disregard to what is loyal to God, and the honouring a false god—who that is we may well know. The previous powers of north and south shall push at and come against him, still he shall pursue his career, till tidings from, the north

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and east arrest him; he shall come to Jerusalem, set up in blasphemous array on the mountain of God's holiness, and come to his end and none to help him. Here it appears to me both the parties we have spoken of before are brought before us; the prince that should come and the king of the north, and the king of the south, of the which, save the king, nothing is told us here, but there shall be a time of trouble such us never was since there was a nation, and that every one written in the book should be delivered; it is then Michael, leaving it previously to the service of angelic messengers, merely standing with them in these things in ministrations, counteracting and controlling the power of evil, himself stands up, in connexion with the people immediately, for the people, and deliverance comes. Many scattered ones brought in, and all receive their just place. I speak entirely of Jews, to which this prophecy refers. It is sealed to the time of the end; and again we have, not a vision, but a distant separate account of periods connected with, first, the finishing these things when the scattering of the holy people was finished; and then, after further petition and sealing these things, the period from the setting up of the abomination, and till the blessing is told; with this word added, that the faithful prophet should in the end of the days stand in his lot, making known to us, i.e., revealing the resurrection of the expectant Jewish saints; and though he told not then the precise times revealedly, he did tell that he should be then in his lot at their conclusion.

I remain Sir, yours, &c.

I. N. D.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

It must have been familiar with us all to have observed, that the certainty of our view of an object has depended very principally on the light in which it was set: and that our enjoyment of a prospect has been greatly determined by the way by which we approached it.

I venture thus to introduce my observations upon the Transfiguration of our blessed Lord in the holy Mount, because, as I judge, the way by which He was led there has not with sufficient care been traced out and preserved by those who have since, in faith, followed Him there. The road was much longer to Him than we generally suspect; and yet to be on the Mount with Him, so as to enter rightly through the Spirit into the design of His being there at all, we must be patient in marking the way which conducted him to that secret place of His heavenly glory. We will then, trusting to His guidance, track this way after Him somewhat more carefully,

It was apostasy in Israel that prepared "the place that is called Calvary;" and under the determining hand and counsel of God, there erected the cross: so that the Lord Himself said to the Jews, "when ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He." (John viii. 28.) For the Son had been sent forth to preserve and reign over the house of Israel for ever; but Israel would none of Him. Of course in all this the purpose of the counsels of God was only effected; but still the Cross is the witness of Jewish unbelief; as is said, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts iv. 27—28.)

The Cross therefore directly led to the casting off of Israel as God's people on earth; and to the consequent present call of the Church out from among the Gentiles. Accordingly, as in the progress of the Lord's ministry, the Jews were at times betraying

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their unbelief, so was the Lord ever following this with intimating either to themselves, or in secret to His disciples, the judgment for which this unbelief was preparing them ; or its further results in the call and edification of His body the Church.

And if we but carefully trace His ministry, we shall at once discover this as one of its characters, and be led in this way : and I will say only in this way, justly to apprehend the purpose (most gracious in Him and blessed to them, and to the whole Church with them, as it was) for which He ever took His favoured disciples up to that heavenly hill with Him.

The Gospel of St. Matthew as confessedly the completest narrative of our Lord's history, is that through which we will trace Him until He reach the Mount of Transfiguration in the 17th chapter ; for I am assured that there is to be discovered through all this part of His ministry and the circumstances attending it, that which was opening His way to that Mount.

Every thing previous to the imprisonment of John, will be found to be only introductory to our Lord's ministry—i.e, all that is recorded by our Evangelist, down to chap. iv. ver. 12. But the tidings "that John was cast into prison," drew Him forth : and we read, that "from that time, Jesus began to preach." Then did light spring up to them, which sat in the region and shadow of death : then did the Shepherd of Israel begin to feed the flock ; and unlike those who had come before Him, to strengthen the diseased, to heal the sick, to bind up the broken, and to seek the lost. (Matt. iv. 23—25. see Ezek. xxxiv. 4.)

In the three following chapters, we have the sermon on the Mount ; the purpose of which, I judge, to be this—to reveal the Father in heaven (from whose bosom the Son had come down,) in connection with Israel : to exhibit the characters of a people brought into this blessed connection ; but at the same time, on the ground of the corruptions and hypocrisy of their present accredited fathers to disclose, though as yet but darkly, the mystery of Israel's full apostasy and rejection, and the consequent call of our election from among them, and the opening of a new scene of blessing to them.

In the 8th chapter the Lord pursues His ministry of mercy, and as yet He pursues it unhindered. Every step in His bright path

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of blessing, leaving behind it the traces of one who had come as "the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the paths to dwell in." The 9th chapter however, presents to us, for the first time, the enmity of the blind guides of Israel, "because their deeds were evil" against this Light of Israel. The occasion for this first manifestation of their enmity and unbelief is very specially worthy of our notice—it is the case of the man sick of the palsy, who had been let down through the roof in order to meet the eye and compassion of the blessed Jesus; (see ix. 1., Mark ii. 1—4.) "and Jesus," as we read, "seeing *their* faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, son be of good cheer, *thy sins* be *forgiven thee.*" Here then the Lord witnessing the faith of this little band of His people, at once proclaims remission of sins in Israel, and consequent healing—power *on earth* to forgive sins now manifested;* the Jehovah of Israel now appeared among them, "forgiving all their iniquities, and healing all their diseases." Every sickness and every plague had through disobedience been brought upon them; (Deut. xxviii. 29.) but He who had once led them out of Egypt, was saying to them again, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." (Ex. xv. 26.)

He was, as it were, renewing His covenant with them, His covenant of health and salvation; He was taking away from them all sickness, and dispensing healing through the land. (Deut. vii. 15.) Faith would have rejoiced and begun that song of praise prepared of old for repentant and believing Israel; "Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name; bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities and healeth all thy diseases." (Ps. ciii.) But Israel's guides and rulers now thinking evil in their hearts, whispered, "this man blasphemeth."† The enmity of the rulers thus

* The blotting out of Israel's sins is connected with "the times of refreshing" and "the restitution of all things," as St. Peter speaks in Acts iii. 19—21; and so the Lord says in this very case of the palsied man, that the *healing of disease* was the sure and certain proof to Israel of *sins forgiven*, for says He, "but that ye may *know* that the Son of man hath power *on earth* to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy) arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house." (Matt. ix. 6.)

† The forgiveness of sins to Israel was not connected, as to us now, whether Jews or Gentiles, with glory and eternal life in heaven, but with the restitution of all their Canaan blessedness; all present earthly blessings were "to come upon them, to overtake them," (as the glorious promise of the Lord ex-

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once awakened, worked more and more as the gracious Shepherd went on to gather "the poor of the flock;" thus we find Him immediately afterwards calling Matthew the publican, and sitting at meat in company with sinners, and the rulers rebuked Him for this grace that was in Him. But it was that grace of the divine physician which they all equally needed: yet ignorant of this, they were vainly and fatally to themselves making it the occasion of judging and comparing among themselves, instead of knowing and confessing the "whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint;" they had now been smitten according to the curse on disobedience, (Deut. xxviii. 28.) with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart, as every city and village of theirs through which Jehovah their healer was passing, witnessed, but knew it not. The Lord their God was even now shewing them that He would not contend for ever: for though He had seen their ways and the frowardness of their hearts, yet that He had come to heal them. (Isa. lvii. 18.) He was now shewing that for the hurt of the daughter of His people He was hurt, and that balm was now to be found in Gilead, and a physician there; but the daughter of His people was refusing health, (Jer. viii. 21, 22.) for she knew not that she was sick. (Matt. ix. 12, 13.) The enmity still working; the fairest and most favoured portion of Israel next came forward with their challenge; "the disciples of John"—they who had been under the ministry of him, than whom, among them born of woman there had not risen a greater;—the burning and shining light of Israel in his day. In answer to them, the Lord darkly intimates the mystery hid from ages and from generations, and for the full disclosure of which the unbelief of Israel was thus gradually making way. He speaks to them of the strange act of the bridegroom's removal, Israel having heard out of the law only of Christ's "abiding for ever;" and with this gives them notice, as by a parable of Israel's apostasy and consequent rejection as an old garment, and as a vessel in which there was soon to be no pleasure; and the Lord's consequent election of another witness of His grace and blessing. (Matt. ix. 14—17.)

pressed it) if Israel would but hearken to His voice, and among these blessings the removal of all sickness, as is again and again said; (Ex. xv. 26., xxiii. 15. Deut. vii. 15.) and thus the pardon of their sins and healing are treated as the same. (see Matt. xiii. 15.)

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In the close of this 9th chapter, the Lord takes a solemn and affecting view of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," seeing that their shepherds had caused them to go astray, and had turned them away upon the mountains. But He not only pities, but hastens to relieve; and in the following chapter, without delay, He prepares and sends forth among them shepherds according to His own heart, to heal and restore them.

The 11th chap. begins by telling us that when the Lord had thus given them this commission, He Himself, in like manner departed "to teach and to preach in their cities." But that chapter does not close until we listen to Him in all the grace of ill-requited, and as it were, dissappointed love, upbraiding those cities "because they repented not." "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." (ver. 21.) But sad to His soul, as this view of the unbelief of Israel must have been, He finds His relief in the consciousness of the stability of the Father's purpose; in this, as St. Paul did afterwards, that the foundation of God still stood sure, and that therefore there would be still a gathering to Him of all those whom the Father foreknew, and who should hear His voice as the good Shepherd, saying, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden."

In the next chapter, we see the Jews still further manifesting their unbelief, by the Pharisees holding a council against Him how they might destroy Him; (ver. 14.) and again by saying of Him, the gracious Physician who was forgiving all their sins, and healing all their diseases, spending His love and His strength upon them throughout all their coasts, "this fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of devils; (ver. 24.) and again, by desiring to see a sign from Him. (ver. 38.) In the course of His reply to this last expression of unbelief, our Lord gives them solemn and full warning of the judgment they were hastening upon themselves, shutting them up under the condemnation of the sign of the Prophet Jonas.

Jonas is, generally, the witness of burial and resurrection. Thus does He set forth the mysterious history of the blessed Son of man Himself: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the

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whale's belly ; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (ver. 40.) But the sign of Jonas equally sets forth the history of Israel ; inasmuch as that nation is now doomed to the judgment of death and the grave : but in the purpose of the love of God, is destined to be called forth from under the power of death, and to rise again into the life and liberty of God's people. (see Ezek. xxxvii. 1—14.) But for the present they are in the grave ; that unrepentant generation which was thus challenging the Lord for a sign was laid there ; for there the Lord solemnly consigned them when He thus gave them the sign of the Prophet Jonas. And when He had thus delivered them over to the judgment of death and the grave, He discloses to them in the parable of the unclean spirit, that fulness of iniquity which they were to accomplish, and which would mature them for the full judgment of God. " When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith I will return into my house from whence I came out ; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there : and the last state of that man is worse than the first.—Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." (verses 43—45.)

Israel had been once possessed with an *unclean* spirit. Before the Babylonish captivity, the idols had defiled that land where Jehovah had set His own name and the witness of His presence ; but this unclean spirit had now gone out of Israel—the house was swept, and emptied, and garnished : the altars, and the groves, and the images were no more. But this was all : God had not been restored to His place there : idolatry had now yielded to the spirit of scorning and unbelief. The Lord came, but there was no man ;—" He came to His own, but His own received Him not." (John i. 11.) And thus into this empty house, the full *or sevenfold* energy of Satan had entered : the unclean spirit had taken with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and was preparing to dwell there ; and so has he since dwelt ; the god of this world has blinded the nation to the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ : and they continue to this day to deny the Son of man, and to leave their last state worse than the first.*

* Malachi was stationed as a prophet in Israel after the return of the Jews

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The next chapter begins to present our Lord as a teacher, with a new style and manner; He opens His mouth in parables and utters dark sayings of old, and on being questioned by His disciples, why was it thus? He answered and said unto them, "Because it is given unto you to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand; and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which saith, by hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see and not perceive; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." This change of manner in the ministry of this blessed and perfect master in Israel was thus awfully judicial; He had spoken to them plainly, and spoken no proverb; but when he had thus called, there was none to answer; and now as the Lord in judgment, He began to pour out on them the spirit of deep sleep and to close their eyes, that the Scripture might be fulfilled which saith, "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying read this I pray thee, and he saith, I cannot for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, read this I pray thee, and he saith, I am not learned." (Isa. xxix. 11, 12.)

We are too careless in marking all the actions of the blessed

from Babylon, and when the Jewish system was revived and put on trial again. But He witnessed, as it were, the gathering together of these seven spirits; the mystery of that iniquity was in his days beginning to work. The Lord does not complain through him of the return of the unclean spirit of idolatry, which had before been in the house, but of the spirit of *scorn* and *unbelief*, of the first workings of that which should one day end in the manifestation in its full energy of the god of this world, which ended in the cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him;" and which left them in their last and worst state ripe for the judgment of God.

To the close of this chapter our Lord's thoughts appear to be still full of the same awful truths, when He formally ceases to identify *real* and *fleshly* connection with Himself, as He would have been enabled to do had the *seed* of Abraham been also the *children* of Abraham—had they who came of the loins of Abraham, done the works of Abraham.

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Jesus. Among ourselves the eye and ear of a friend will discover in little things the heart of him with whom friendship has made us familiar; and how does the Holy Ghost trace for the saints the less discovered paths of the Spirit of Jesus when on earth, so that when once let into the secret of communion with Him, we may see Him where the eagle's eye of this world's wisdom would never have discovered His path. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." (Psa. xxv. 14.) Now we read after this, (chap. xiv. 13,) that when Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, "He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart." This action of the Lord is full of meaning. The murder of that righteous man was a chief matter in filling up the measure of the nation's sin; it was the sure witness of their deep revolt from God—they had done with God's servant "whatsoever they listed;" served the lust of their own evil hearts upon him, instead of receiving him as the messenger of the Lord of Hosts to them. And what ripeness for judgment was just then exhibited among them; only mark the scene in Herod's palace at that time, what a living in pleasure was there and being wanton! what a nourishing of the heart as in a day of slaughter, did the court of Israel's king then present! Herod's birth-day was kept, the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine were in the feast, and the blood of the righteous was mingled with it all. The just was condemned and killed, but there was to be no resistance—no present redress. The sin of Babylon was found in Jerusalem, and more than the sin of Babylon; it was a feast full of more horrid rites than that which drew forth the hand-writing of death upon the wall, to seal the fate of Belshazzar and his kingdom; the vessels of the temple were profaned there, but in Jerusalem the blood of the righteous was shed; but there was no second hand-writing, the Lord came not to break the bruised reed, nor to quench the smoking flax; He came not to visit Israel's sin upon them. And so we read, that when He had heard of this deed which so stained their land, "He departed into a desert place apart," His Spirit thus leading Him away from the view of the nation's sin (which was not as yet to call forth His right hand from His bosom), to pursue, as we find, His patient labours of mercy through their land, though they were thus rewarding Him evil for good, and hatred for His love.

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In tracing further the ministry of the Lord, we find Him in the 15th chapter brought into view again of other evidence of Jewish apostasy, such as shewed that all their worship had been now turned to vanity; that loving the praise of men rather than the praise of God, they were honouring man in his traditions, and for the sake of this, forsaking God and His commandments, and thus were they forsaking their own mercy, and travelling on in the darkness of this world, were not knowing whither they were going, and would speedily stumble, and be snared, and taken.

Thus witnessing all the way the deepening of Jewish unbelief, and the settling of the purpose of their revolted heart not to receive Him, we are at length conducted to that scene in the Lord's ministry which prepares for His ascent without further delay up the holy mount. On His again being challenged to show the sign from heaven, (xvi. 1.) after upbraiding them with their hypocrisy, we read that He "left them and departed." Another action of the Lord big with judgment, having this voice, that the time was at hand when they should be judicially deserted of God. We find that He pursued this solemn journey of separation from them, till He reached the coast of Cesarea Philippi, the most distant corner of the land. Here we must pause with Him, and meditate on this most interesting moment of His ministry, when having taken up this lonely and remote position, judicially separating Himself as far as He could from all Jewish associations and recollections, He breaks open both to the eye and ear of His disciples the secret that had been hid from ages and from generations, that is, *the special and distinctive glory which in the purpose of God had been of old ordained for His Church.*

Here in the solitudes of Cesarea Philippi, the Lord, as we read, "asked His disciples, saying, whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" By this He designed, (closing His controversy with them) to draw forth the full and formal proof of the nation's unbelief, of their having failed or refused to discover in Him the light that was to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of His people Israel. And such was now drawn forth; for the disciples who had been more than their Lord mixed with the multitudes, and had known their present ways, could only say, "some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias;

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or, one of the Prophets;" but they had no tidings to bring Him that any had echoed the joy of the Prophet, "to us a child is born, to us a Son is given;" that they had ever heard through their towns and villages, one saying, "I am the Lord's; and another calling himself by the name of Jacob; and another subscribing with his hand to the Lord, and surnaming himself by the name of Israel." (Is. xliv. 5.) His hand was as strong now for them, as when He rode with His chariots of salvation through the sea, and covered the Egyptian heavens with sackcloth, but there was no man when He came—none to answer when He called. (Is. l. 1, 2.) Israel did not know, the people did not consider, the heir of the vineyard was refused and disallowed by the husbandmen.

Thus was the earth shut upon Him; for His earthly throne by His own ancient decree, was set in Zion. (Ps. ii. 6.) The people of the earth had rejected Him; "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not: He came to His own, and His own received Him not." And now was the time for His unveiling another and hitherto hidden region; the heavens must open if earth be shut to Him and His people; if the key of the house of David laid upon His shoulder cannot as yet be used to give Him entrance to His inheritance of the fulness of the earth, the keys of the kingdom of heaven must open the glories and joys of heaven to Him and His Church. And therefore as we read, the Lord designing to draw forth the faith of His elect, and to bring this into direct contrast with the unbelief of Israel, said to the disciples, "but whom say ye that I am?" and so He will draw this forth, for Peter as confessing the faith of the body of Christ, the faith of the family that belongs to the Father *in heaven*, "answered and said, thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." For this is just the knowledge by which the *heavenly* family have their very being, "he that hath *the Son* hath life:" and the body of Christ is fashioned by the power of the Holy Ghost imparting this faith; as it is written, "till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge *of the Son of God* unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. iv. 13.)

And the Lord therefore at once acknowledged this confession to be the confession of the Church; the proper faith of all those who have had the Son revealed to them by the Father in heaven, and

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thus made one with the Son in the present love wherewith He is loved and in the coming glory wherewith He is to be revealed;—"And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt lose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (ver. 17. 19.)*

Here then, for the first time, the Son and the Church—the destined Bridegroom and Bride are manifested in the presence of each other: here do they for the first time salute each other, and enter into that fellowship of knowledge and those blessed embraces of love which shall endure for ever. Then did the Church in Spirit sing, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine;" and the Son could rejoice in opening to His brethren the very heavens themselves, and giving them seats with Himself in the Father's house. In His esteem, as it were, the earth was too low for them, and the heavens must open to them. His members should be fashioned here, but the body in its perfectness should find its place on high for ever.—The throne and not the footstool should be theirs.

I do believe there was no moment like this in the ministry of our blessed Master. This was the great moment of transition from earth to heaven: the one was refusing its increase to God, and would now cast out the heir of all its fulness; the other was preparing a throne for Him, and for all who would love and adhere to Him in this scornful and rejecting world.

Thus can we discern, during the ministry of our Lord, the unfoldings of that character and unbelief in Israel which carried His prospects, if I may so speak, from earth to heaven; and so are we able to trace that way which conducted His steps to the distant coasts of Cesarea Philippi; and from thence, as we shall presently see, up the heavenly ascent of the Mount of Transfiguration.

The earth being thus, as He now saw, closed upon Him, the

* I may just remark, that here, for the first time in Scripture, the term "*Church*" is used; Israel being rather the *people* of God.

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Lord begins, as we read, from that time to reveal the mystery of His death; which was the finishing of the earth's sin, and its rejection of God. It was a circumstance in the history of their Messiah that lay quite beyond all Jewish calculations, that was *beside* His character as Son of David in which Israel knew Him. This was the time, therefore, (the Son of David being thus disowned by Israel) for the Lord to speak fully and openly to His disciples, of His death.—"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." (ver. 21.)

And here, alas! how far below the power of His own blessed confession so lately made, does the Apostle come; like Abraham of old, he had just come out, as it were, from his home and kindred *on earth*, in the energy of the faith of the Son of God, which was really separating him unto the heavenly glory; but, like Abraham, how soon the world and the god of this world has him under the power of his own spirit. (see Gen. xii.)—"Then Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, be it far from thee Lord; this shall not be unto thee: but He turned and said unto Peter, get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." (vers. 22, 23.)

Could Peter promise himself that his Master would be any thing but a sufferer in a world which had thus been manifesting its rejection of God? and should Peter or those whom Peter's confession represents, look for any portion for themselves in a world which has now rejected the Son, and still saying that they will not have Him to reign over them? It is only of Satan that the love of it can savour, and thus cannot abide in the same heart with the love of the Father. The saints through the Holy Ghost have met the Father in affection, on the person of the Son; and the world by the spirit of the wicked one, is at enmity with the Father, by still refusing to kiss the Son, counting that there is no beauty that they should desire Him.

In accordance with this reprobate character of the world, the Lord shews His disciples, drawn to Him in Spirit out of it, what their suffering condition must also needs be while in it. "Then

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said Jesus unto His disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." But at the same time He graciously sustains them thus called to be His suffering followers, with the promise of reward in the glory of His kingdom; a glory too, which He at the same time intimates to be far above all Jewish measures or expectations of glory, being "*of the Father.*" "For", says, the Lord to them, "what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? for the Son of man shall come in the *glory of His Father* with His angels: and then He shall reward every man according to his works." And so great, so wondrous, so exceeding all previous calculations was this "*glory of the Father,*" which He now speaks of, that He gives His disciples a most solemn pledge of it, promising them (in terms most strikingly expressive of the deep and interesting value of it) a sight of this glory; that by the two witnesses, as it were, His prophecy and their vision of it, the thing might be adjudged to be no "cunningly devised fable;" but be established in their faith, and ever live in the remembrance of His Church, till the day itself dawned, and till the power and coming of our Lord Jesus in the majesty of His kingdom, should rest no longer in vision or in promise, but be manifested to the everlasting satisfaction of all who wait for it. "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom."

Accordingly this gracious pledge He quickly redeems, for as we read, "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringing them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light: and behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him: then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;

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hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid: and Jesus came and touched them, and said, arise, and be not afraid: and when they had lift up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." (Matt. xvii. 1—8.)

Now the single purpose of the Lord in giving Peter, James, and John, this vision in the holy mount, was, as I have thus been endeavouring to shew, to give His Church a sight or sample of that heavenly glory which is their inheritance, and which is quite beside and above all previously expected glories, quite of another character from all the promises of glory made by Jehovah to Israel. The secret of God was here in vision disclosed to these favoured disciples; the heavenly Jerusalem stood with her opened gates before them for a little passing moment, and though the disciples were then but "eye witnesses" standing on the earth, still in flesh and blood, and separated from that which they were beholding, they were afterwards, through the Holy Ghost, taught to know that their portion was to be *in* that glory, that they were to take the better place of Moses and Elias with the Lord. (2 Pet. i.) And thus they might have seen reflected in Moses and Elias glorified with the royal Son of man, the inheritance of the saints in light, the hope of the calling of the Father of glory, the glory given to the Son, and imparted by the Son to the Church, that they might be one with Him in it for ever. (Eph. i. 17. John xvii. 22.)

Peter's joy in the presence of this glory, and his desire to continue there, (such was the satisfying delight which his soul was taking in the scene,) may give us to know something of the character of the blessedness of Israel and the nations continuing in *natural* bodies, "of the earth earthy," in the kingdom of the Son of man when this His glory shall appear.—But all this was merely incidental. The single purpose of the vision was to shew *the Church her portion in the glory*, and not to let Israel know their joy merely in the presence of it. The Church's high calling of God in Christ Jesus, was that which was to be established by this vision. The God of all grace has called us unto *His* eternal glory by Christ Jesus, and this was then exhibited. Accordingly the Transfiguration passed on the Lord, on Moses and Elias—they all appeared in the same glory. Moses and Elias were no more, as they were once on earth, than was the Lord Himself; their vile

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bodies had been fashioned like unto His glorious body, and He then appearing for a little time, they also appeared in glory with Him. But what a mystery was this, that they should be fellow heirs and of the same body. In other ages it was not made known to the sons of men,—but now was manifested, visibly manifested; so that, as we may say, we have seen it with our eyes and have looked upon it. But truly it was so strangely excellent, so far surpassing the thoughts even of these chosen ones of Israel, that it was worthy of this solemn pledge and assurance, in order that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, and have strong consolation who have fled to this hope set before us. And O that this was more and more our consolation! O that we abounded in the hope of this! that our anchors were more firmly cast within the veil, and that we were more with desire wishing for the day! And not only were the saints in their glorified bodies exhibited in that holy mount, but the enfolding of the Church with her blessed Head in the cloud of her excellent glory was seen there also; the promised "glory of the Father," of which the Lord had spoken, (xvi. 27.) and in which He is to come when He brings His reward with Him, now descends on that holy hill. Surely this was none other than the house of God—the house where the mansions are preparing for the saints in the Father's presence. In that presence are the saints to be presented without spot; and then will they know the blessing which ear hath not heard nor the heart conceived. There will be the presence that refreshes, and the happy service of the redeemed, day and night before the throne, while He that sitteth thereon is dwelling among them: there shall they see His face, and His Father's name shall be on their foreheads. But "the blood of the Lamb" will have washed them and made them meet for this their inheritance in light; and therefore do we find that when Moses and Elias spake with the Lord in the Mount, they spake of "His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." (Luke ix. 31.) And how suited was this also to rebuke Peter, who had so lately rebuked his Master for speaking in this manner of His decease!—*In glory* they speak of it, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." O what has made entrance for the glory, but the sufferings of Christ which it follows!—The way to it has been opened by the nails and the spear, and the precious blood, tracks it out for us all.

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And here too we learn the secret of the disciples' fears in the presence of this excellent Glory,—"they feared as they, i.e. the Lord and Moses and Elias (see Luke ix. 34.) entered into the cloud." For nothing will strengthen us to stand assured in the presence of the glory, but *the knowledge of the humiliation of Christ;* and this, Peter and they who were with Him knew not then. Humiliation is the only ground, but the sure (most blessed) ground of fellowship with even the excellent glory; for it assures us that all that which this glory would have otherwise found in us to judge and to consume, has been already judged and put away in Him who bore all our shame. And this was most graciously assured to the disciples on this very occasion; for Jesus came to them, amazed and confounded as they were, and with a voice and touch of a Son of man, restored them; and these were the signs of His humiliation: the voice and the touch could tell them that He who was in the form of God, was found in fashion as a man like themselves, and that they need not fear. As in a like case, the glory of God being found in the person of the Son of man, the conscious patriarch could say, "I have seen God face to face, and *my life is preserved.*" The Majesty of the God of heaven was not therefore his destruction. (Gen. xxxii. 30.) So the Prophet's comeliness was turned into corruption, and he retained no strength in the presence of the same Majesty; but he knew in himself that he was strengthened when the hand of one, in the appearance of a man, had touched him. (Dan. x. 18.) And thus it is ever; the divine terror shall not make us afraid, nor the hand of the Almighty be heavy upon us, (though of old it meted out heaven and measured the waters, and gathered the winds,) if we know Him, who has been formed out of the clay like ourselves, and is according to our wish in God's stead. (Job xxxiii. 6, 7.)

And it was with this humiliated One that the disciples again, (it might be too soon) found themselves alone "when they lifted up their eyes," not knowing but that they should still behold the excellent Glory. But they saw no man save Jesus only. Jesus! the title of all which men despised and rejected; the sign of the Carpenter's Son, of Him who belonged to Galilee, the Nazarene. With such an One did they now find themselves *alone.* The vision was yet to be for an appointed time, the glory had been folded

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up and was departed, aud they were still to know only fellowship with Him whom man was despising and the nation abhorring.

And with Him should we be walking still. And O for more and more power, through the Holy Ghost, to know this blest companionship—companionship in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. For though we know not how short, yet still the vision is for an appointed time; but then in the end it shall speak and not lie. The glory is within the vail; but will surely come forth and not tarry: and all who have waited for it and are in the power of the secret of it, shall find it to be their salvation, while it is consuming all things beside. Gideon and the house of Israel stood, for they were in the secret of the Lord, when the glory shone forth from the broken pitchers, but the host of Midian—the army of the aliens cried and fled, and were discomfited.

TYPES.—No. I.

Before the foundation-stone of the work of eternal redemption was laid in the heavens, in the person of the Lord Jesus, as having by Himfelf purged our sins, and then sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; the very blessed purposes of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, even that He should gather together again all things in Christ, (Ephes. i. 9—11.) were made known at sundry times and in divers manners, by many skilful devices and varied similitudes; some shewing forth the way by which this great result was to be obtained—the death of the Son of God: others taking up the glory itself, and but lightly touching on the wonderful method of love by which it was realized. These beautiful devices by which God has, as it were, forecast all His great and everlasting purposes, are of very frequent occurrence in the Old Testament; for the instruction, doubtless, of His people of old, as well as showing always that wherever and whenever His hand wrought, it was but to express the purpose on which His mind was bent; and that He was tracing or sketching the outline so amply to be filled up in the fulness of times, whether respecting the suffering of His blessed Son, or the glory that was to be

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the reward of it. I may say, indeed, that the Old Testament, excepting of course the Prophets, is one varied type; every line of which must add some feature to the beautiful scheme: the words of the Prophets according with the typical acts, and indeed, in many cases, especially in the Psalms, used by typical persons, the force of their words not being fulfilled save in the Antitype.

There are typical persons, seasons, actions, and things; and these all coincide and are contrived so as to tell the same story of the good pleasure of God's will; just as in a drama—the scenery, the persons, and the acts or periods of time, with the events embraced in them, are all adapted and necessary to one another, to produce the unity of effect.

That some persons in the Old Testament, not expressly referred to as such, were types, is I think, generally acknowledged: as for instance, in the case of Joseph, rejected of his brethren and sold into Egypt; and perhaps many actions are acknowledged too—such as that of Abraham offering up Isaac; or the death of Abel by the hand of Cain; besides the constituted service of Levitical sacrifice, which the Spirit expressly declares to be typical. (Hebrews throughout.) So also, as to things and seasons; though not so generally considered.—The brazen serpent referred to by our Lord, and the whole detailed arrangement of Jehovah's tent as the pattern of heavenly worship, and the passover and sabbath among the times and seasons, may lead us diligently though humbly to search for other truths, or the same, more amply delineated, from the same stores of riches and beauty.—Who would have thought the story of Sarah and Hagar (and how unconscious must they have been of it) was a living allegory of the law and gospel? and the very obscurity of this may give humble boldness to those who would seek to follow the mind of the Lord in these living characters or letters, by which He would teach us the great spiritual and eternal truths, partly realized indeed in the death of the blessed Son of God, but yet to be fully realized in the day of His glory, with His risen saints, in dominion over a happy and subject world.

In the book of Genesis types are more frequently and variously repeated; and for this reason—that it is the history of individuals, or at the most, of a few people. All the principles which are sub-

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sequently enlarged and more perfectly developed in the later books are contained in this, gathered into a very small place; and the knowledge of truth throughout Scripture, alone enables us fully to unfold them: they are emphatic, condensed, and generally individual expositions of every important truth: for instance, we have the history of Abraham, in his Exodus from Mesopotamia brought into a wilderness, that is, a wilderness to him, though the land of promise; for he had not as much as to set his foot on: there dwelling in a tent—living by faith—and looking forward to his inheritance in hope.—Also Jacob's Exodus from his servitude to Laban, with much substance. These things were afterwards realized in a nation—Israel went into servitude, was brought out of it into the wilderness; there dwelling in tents—living by faith—and waiting for the Canaan of promise. This, the book of Exodus largely opens; and it is applicable, in all its principles, to the Church now. Again, each individual saint noted in the book of Genesis, had offered his sacrifices of blood to Jehovah, from Abel, downwards; of which we have full proof in the colloquy between Abraham and Isaac, at Mount Moriah,—"where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" &c. and in other instances; but the book of Leviticus is the enlarged and detailed arrangement of the same thing in the nation.

Typical things represent the work of the Lord Jesus.—Typical times and seasons, the periods or dispensations in which God's purposes are wrought, as well as the character of His sufferings and coming glory: but in typical persons, the believer who has learnt to look with wonder and delight on the grace of Him who "is fairer than the children of men," and "into whose lips grace was poured," will have many a sweet recollection revived, and the loveliness of his Lord and Master retraced on his heart. I do not say that this is all we have to learn in typical persons, far from it: but this is one, and not the least valuable, of their many instructive lessons. In that which I am first very briefly to consider, we learn nothing indeed of this but exclusively a living picture or forecast of God's purpose in Christ, which is yet to be fulfilled; but in future expositions, I hope to gather much of this sweetest honey, refreshing as it ever is to the weary heart.

In beginning with Adam, I would state there is full scriptural

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authority, as will be shown, for so using the first part of his eventful history. In some that I may hereafter consider, I may not have the same direct authority; yet as I found no argument or doctrine on what I adduce but what may at least be fully proved from other Scriptures, I leave them to the spiritual intelligence of the believer: if they impugn no article of his faith, they may confirm and strengthen it; and if so, they will comfort and delight, and bring conviction by this that nothing will be able to shake.—One theme alone, the one unvarying theme of the Holy Spirit's teaching do I learn or seek to learn in them—the past suffering and coming glory of Jesus; and as learning Him so do I of necessity learn the Father. All Scripture, either directly or indirectly, proceeds from and attracts to this great centre of all revelation and all glory—the Lord Jesus, the blessed subject of the believer's holiest and happiest thoughts. The day is coming when every creature will be gathered together unto Him to be blessed, as the centre from which every joy will flow; and this is now the Spirit's work in the believer's soul, that all his thoughts and affections should centre in, and revolve round, the person of His Lord; and as the Spirit uses the word to this end, it is in this, and in every part of it, that we must seek Jesus.

There are many features in Adam's history in Paradise, which when put together, form a very complete portrait of things now in progress, and to be realized in "the world to come," which is given as an inheritance to the Lord Jesus; and I would put them in order, though resting but little upon each feature.

First.—His created condition, the character of which is noted in these words, "Let us make man in our image." This was limited indeed; for he must have been intellectually far below what he was after he had fallen; for it was then said, "Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." (Gen. iii. 22.) Yet must he have been morally beautiful, and his gentle heart and pure spirit reflective of all that he knew of his God: personally too, though but flesh and blood, which could not inherit the kingdom of God, therefore far short of the glory of his great Antitype; yet surely was he in form, and we his maimed descendants also, a copy or cast from a previous mould, even the assumed form of the eternal Son of God; and in this was he "the image and glory of God."

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(1 Cor. xi. 3—7.) But the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory and express image of His person, (Heb. i., Coloss. i.) became incarnate, and having tasted death for every man, was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and in the transfigured form seen for a moment on Tabor, but in which He is now revealed in heaven, (as noted in Rev.) and in which He will be revealed to every eye, He is the Antitype as He was the pattern, of the creature of His own hand.

Secondly.—His fatherhood or headship in natural life, from which root has sprung unnumbered branches, having life in himself for extension, even as the animal and vegetable creation subject to Him, "whose seed was in itself *after His kind.*" The Antitype to which condition is Christ's headship of eternal life to the Church; the innumerable multitude which no man can number, and of whom He will say, "Behold I and the children whom thou hast given me;" and this is plainly stated in 1 Cor. xv.—"For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order: and so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit; howbeit that was not first which was spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual;—the first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven: as is the earthy such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption: Behold I shew you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. xv. 45—52.) Every epistle indeed is burthened with this great truth, doctrinally; and all their comprehensive and detailed precepts are founded on it, though perhaps that to the Colossians is most replete with it: "And He is the head of the body the Church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence:" "The head from which all the body by joints having nourishment ministered and

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knit together, increaseth with the increase of God ;" " For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." And all the consequent precepts are suited to such relationship to the second Adam, crowned with glory and honour, as the heir of the world to come, and under whom all things are put in subjection : (Heb. ii.) and who is exalted far above all principality, power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ; and under whose feet all things are put, and to whom it is given to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 21—23.) The distinct perceptions of spiritual life, as obtained from the second Adam, are so clearly taught, and their growth too, even as in natural life, that we have a profitable monitor, may I not say a constant teacher in ourselves of our privileges in the life of Jesus, by the distinctness of our natural feelings and actions, though the bent and purpose of one is evil and earthly, and the other holy and heavenly. " Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more," said the blessed Lord to His own little flock ; " but ye see me : because I live ye shall live also : at that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John xiv. 19, 20.)

Thirdly.—Though in contrast as to the thing done—one being the father of disobedience unto death, the other of righteousness unto life ; yet was Adam " the figure of Him who was to come," (Rom. v. 14.) in the way by which sin and death, through his disobedience, were entailed upon all his descendants ; not only that they were subject to death as the children of one who fell under the judgment of death because of his disobedience, but that "by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners :" as inheriting an evil and disobedient nature, and that death therefore was due to them personally.—So in the second Adam ; by His one undivided act of obedience, (when all things were against Him,) all his descendants (those who are born again by the " quickening Spirit") are entitled to life in Him relatively, and in themselves personally, by receiving His obedient life by the Holy Ghost dwelling in them ; —" by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous," the old nature being dead in his death. (Rom. vi. throughout.) These things cannot be separated though they are distinct ; and it is in

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this blessed manner of love and grace, by which all that was against us is overcome, that we learn in every feature of our derived sorrow and judgment, to trace also by the faith of Jesus the completeness of our blessing—the one being the exact counterpart of the other: and so was Adam "the figure of Him that was to come." The type expresses the sorrowful unity of disobedience, (by one man, &c.) in which unity we all by nature stand: the Antitype, the blessed and joyful unity of obedience, (by one man, &c.) into which unity the believer is born again.

Fourthly.—His dominion; the extent and nature of which is thus stated: "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, *and over all the earth*, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth: so God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them: and God blessed them and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the face of the earth." (Gen. i. 26—28.) In the 8th Psalm, expressly applied to the humiliation and inherited glory of the Lord Jesus, by the Spirit in the 2nd of Hebrews, we have this dominion in all its parts, spoken of, as God's mindfulness and bounty to the Son of man.—"What is man, that thou art mindful of Him? and the Son of man, that thou visitest him? for thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned Him with glory and honour. Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under His feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" "For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection *the world to come* whereof we speak. But one, in a certain place, testified, saying, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of man that thou visitest Him? Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set Him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under

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His feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him. *But now we see not yet all things put under Him.* But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." (Heb. ii. 5—10.)

These Scriptures are very plain. The Lord Jesus is not the second Adam in humiliation, but the seed of the first; and as becoming the seed of the first, stood in that condition that made it wonderful that God should visit it or be mindful of it. Not that it was wonderful that He should visit Him and crown Him with glory and honour, but that He should be so mindful of us, as that the blessed and everlasting Son should become the אנוש or weak man, lower than the angels for the suffering of death, and for the sake of His lowliness unto death, so visit us as to crown us with glory and honour with Him. Jesus was the descendant of the world's outcast, because sinning, Lord, and as such inherited all but His sin, which He put away in His death. And as the second Adam in the resurrection became the very contrast of the lowly one He had been, and the Antitype of the world's Lord before sin had entered into his heart and the sceptre had fallen from His hand. God hath now put all things under His feet, hath set Him over the works of His hands, but not yet is this true in fact, though it is to faith;—Jesus has the title, and sits at the right hand of the Father in expectancy: and the world to come, of which the Apostle speaks, even as one in a certain place testified, will be put in subjection unto Him; and then will it be said, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock:" for they will be under His dominion, whose presence will set aside the curse.

Fifthly.—The relation in which Adam stood to his received bride, which was so intimate as to express unity—"one flesh." There are three things noted in this relationship—she was given to him to be his associate in glory and dominion, which is her own marvellous distinction and preeminence; also to be an help meet for him, and therefore necessary to his complete happiness: "it is not good for man to be alone:"—and she was besides so completely allied to him or part of himself, being taken out of his side,

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as that Adam said, "this is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." (Gen. ii. 23.)

In this unity they were contemplated by God, both in their joy and subsequent sorrow; as it is written, "so God created man, in His own image created He *Him*, male and female created He *them*." (Gen. i. 27.) "This is the book of the generations of Adam; in the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and called *their* name Adam, in the day when they were created." (Gen. v. 1, 2.)

It is indeed most blessedly said, (remembering its typical character), that while Adam had universal dominion, and all things were put under His feet, and like Solomon in after days, with the complete knowledge of the creature and creation that was subject to him, he had named every living creature; yet "for Adam there was not found an help meet for him; he had no companion in his glory or joy, and his happiness was incomplete; but this desire of his heart was to be answered, and his joy to be enhanced by hers, and the companion too to be taken out of his own side; (for God set His hand to make but one, all have come from that one,) and he could say, "this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife: and they two shall be one flesh." (Gen. ii. 21—24.)

The Spirit of the Lord again leaves us in no doubt as to the blessed meaning of this in its typical import, and I need but quote in His own words,—"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: *for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.*

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For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." (Ephes. v. 22—32.)

This is very explicit; for it is a direct application of the circumstances stated in the 2nd of Genesis, to the mysterious union of the second Adam and His bride.—Union of nature and of interests everlastingly sustained by the necessities of love on either side; she preserved and cherished by His power—He needed her love to complete His joy; for "it is not good for man to be alone." "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii. 24.) Eve was brought to, or presented to Adam on the first dawn of the day of his glory;—this is the hope of the one complete Church, out of every nation, kindred, people, and tongue;—the day of Christ's dominion, the day of His espousals, and the day of the gladness of His heart. (Solomon Song iii. 11.) When the Queen is brought to the King of kings in raiment of needle-work, and gold of Ophir, and all glorious within. (Ps. xlv.) And oh! what a hope! how full of pure and holy expectation; and how emphatic the word that declares it—"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great: and I heard as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many thunderings, saying Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready: and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And He saith unto me, write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb; and He saith unto me, these are the true sayings of God." (Rev. xix. 5—9.) "And I John saw the holy city New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband: and there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, come hither, I will shew thee the bride the Lamb's wife; and he

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carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as chrystal." (Rev. xxi. 2—9—11.) "You that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you *holy and unblameable* and unreproveable in His sight;" (Coloss. i. 21, 22) "to present you faultless before the throne of His glory, with exceeding joy." (Jude 24.)

Sixthly.— The time or season, which is typical of dispensation. The last day of creation was that in which the two-fold Adam (the man and woman) was formed from the dust: on the morning of the seventh day, or day of God's rest, "When the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy;" the man and his bride stood together to receive the fealty of all creation, as having dominion over all delegated to them. It was the day of God's delight and complacency in His own work—the last day of a perfect period, six days of which had been employed in producing this beautiful result; but it was the first day of man's existence, though he entered with God into the rest and joy;—the labour had been the Lord's: the creature did not participate in it, though he did in the rest; but the last day of this seven-fold period and the first of man's existence, were identical—alike the sabbath of Jehovah and His creature, as to the work of His hands. Now there is a time and season, or, as it is called in Scripture, "The dispensation of the fulness of times," when the more comprehensive seven-fold period of millenaries will be realized, i.e., when the times will enter into that period which will make their fulness; in which all that has been just noted will be seen in Antitype: when, as I judge, the second Adam will from His "throne high and lifted up," say, "Behold I make all things new;" and when all that is now subject to vanity, but not willingly, and which is groaning for its deliverance from the bondage of corruption, (Rom. viii.) now wrecked and cursed for his sake who subjected the same by his sin, will be prononnced good again by Him whose right it is, for He has redeemed it: and who with His holy and immortal bride will rule over it, (as set over the works of God's hands,) then delivered

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into its promised liberty and blessing. To all within the limits of creation (the work of God's hands,) the heavens and earth, the restored Israel and converted nations, it will be but the sabbath of the millenaries—the last day, the day of universal creation blessing, when in fuller tones by far, the morning stars will again sing, and the sons of God shout for joy, because of the blessedness of God's work: not creation only, but creation redeemed and delivered. But to creation's Lord and Redeemer, and His holy and resurrection bride, it will be the first day, not of time, but of eternity. It is the common testimony of Scripture (which we may be able to consider, in the Lord's mercy, another time, more fully;) that there is to be a period in which some will be blessed in eternity, and some in time, and yet blessed together; some in the glory which the Son had with the Father, before the world was: (John xvii.) others yet looking to immortality as their hope, though blessed in all the fullest blessings of an earthly state.

Is not this, indeed, the simple meaning of the sabbath days? one rightly preserved by the Jew as the seventh or last day, as declaring a period of earthly or creation rest yet to come: the other, the first or Lord's day, the witness of that hope of resurrection-glory with the risen Son of man into which the saint has already entered in spirit; as quickened together, raised together, and made to sit together with Him in the heavenlies; (Ephes. ii.) and in which He will be manifested when presented faultless to the Lamb, and before the Lamb's throne, on the morning of that day which will be without clouds, and as the clear shining after rain. Heaven will be the throne, earth the footstool, of His majesty and glory. The one will be the place of the Father's children and the Son's bride; the other, the subject though yet blessed place of the servant—alike the house and household of God. The day or dispensation of blessing will be identical; emphatically "The Lord's day."

Seventhly.—The place, Paradise; or, the garden of the Lord. This was but a part of Eden: for "the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed;" (Gen. ii. 8.) and thus as a place specially appropriated to God's vicegerent, surely typical of the distinctive glory of the Son of God and His sainted company: and so in the message

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to the patient and devoted Church at Ephesus, it is thus brought into prominence for its encouragement in trial; "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." (Rev. ii. 7.) Thus also the Apostle speaks of the glory revealed to him in vision, "I knew a man, (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth,) how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakeable words, which it is not possible for man to utter:" (2 Cor. xii. 3, 4.) and this glory of the third heaven was doubtless to be his portion in the day of Christ: and in the last chapters of the Apocalypse, where the city of God, having the glory and throne of God, and the Lamb in its midst, is so circumstantially described, it is said, "in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations;" identifying that glory with the Paradise of God, for, "he that overcometh shall eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

Eighthly and lastly.—The blessing resulting from the union and dominion of Adam and his help meet, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." This was not however fulfilled in the brief history of the first man before he fell: sin came in, and with it sorrow and subjection: but in the day of the union of the Lamb and His wife, it will; the voice from the throne will call upon all in heaven to rejoice, and all will rejoice, not only because "the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, but because the marriage of the Lamb is come and His wife hath made herself ready." It is not the joy of the wife that is so noted, but the joy of others consequent on the great event of the Lamb's marriage, because *all blessing* results from it; for though it is true that the first act of the righteous rule of the King of kings, will be judgment on the nations of Christendom, (in which the saints will be associate with Him, (Rev. ii. 26, 27, xix, 14.) yet will He afterwards rule over the world escaping the wrath, and not trodden in the winepress, so graciously and justly, as that all will be blessed in Him and call Him blessed. (Psa. lxxii. throughout.) Now it is of these things that the closing chapters of the Apocalypse speak so plainly, as the first two of Genesis do of the union and

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government of the world's first ruler, and in the following order;—in the 19th chapter, is seen, first,—the gathering of the bride to Jesus, and her readiness for the marriage, (surely in a resurrection state only,) and the joy of heaven and earth announced; secondly,—the coming of the warrior king, of whom it is said, "in righteousness He doth judge and make war." The sainted armies of heaven follow Him in the same service of righteous judgment.

In the 20th chapter they are seen in peaceful dominion as kings and priests for a thousand years, and a yet further judgment at the end of that period opened in the vista, and the scene closes.

In the 21st, another scene opens of the same bride, in another form, as the city of God, having the glory of God descending from heaven, as the tabernacle of God to be with men; (the men are not the tabernacle, but the saints are, in symbol,) "The nations of them that are saved" from the judgments, walk in the light of this city of glory, the habitation of Jehovah Jesus, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour into it, and they bring the glory and honour of the nations into it; and the tree of life in the midst of this city of life bears leaves for the healing of the nations. (chap. xxii. 1, 2.)

Who are the nations saved, walking in the light of the city, bringing their glory into it, and eating of the leaves of this healing tree? who are these nations? not the Church of God, not the bride of the Lamb, for they are the city. (chap. xxi. 9, 10.) Nor can that bride ever be called by such a name as "nations," it is the gathered elect out of every nation, kindred, people, and tongue, so designated "the Lamb's wife;" and it is in the light of that wife's glory that the kings and nations of the earth will walk, though the light is not her own, but the Lamb's. That bride cannot come from heaven, till gathered there in the resurrection; that bride is not ready till perfected, not only in glory, but in number; and then, and not till then, will the world be converted and blessed under the united dominion of the Lord God Omnipotent and His associate and most exalted saints, who have suffered with Him, and will reign with Him; and the words, "be fruitful and multiply," will be antitypically fulfilled in the universal gladness of a peopled earth.

I cannot now fill this outline up, but may the Lord grant it

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enough to give some holy thoughts and feelings to His saints, as to what a day is before them now labouring to enter into that rest which remaineth for them. God is working now; "my Father worketh hitherto, and I work:" but there is a rest into which He will enter when His present work of blessing ceases; and this hallowed sabbath of redemption comes, when He will pronounce all good, but above all, that beautiful bride, in all things the reflection of the glory of the Son, "conformed to His image, that He might be the first-born among many brethren."

What a day is before us, not of rest only, though it be God's rest, and ours too; but to be glorified together with the Son of God in the morning which will be without clouds to a happy world, when every thing will be taken out of Satan's hands and given to Jesus; when "the righteous will compass about" their deliverer: the 144,000 on mount Zion around the Lamb, answering every call from the throne of the Father, with the one rejoicing chorus of their multitudinous golden harps, and that new song of triumph that none could know or learn but those blameless ones arrayed in unsullied glory—washed white in the blood of Him who loved His Church and gave Himself for it;—behold He cometh quickly!—Amen.

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THE VOLUNTARY SYSTEM AND AN ESTABLISHMENT.

It is plain to the most casual observer of what is passing around him, that there has been awakened in the minds of Christians an inquiry of what the Church of God is. Christians have been for a long time accustomed to walk as individuals, little caring the one for the other, and never asking the question of how they ought to walk so as to please God, so long as their consciences did not accuse them of habitual disobedience to the commands of the Lord, which applied to them individually. But while this has been the case, we may affirm that there has been habitual disobedience among all real Christians to those repeated commandments which can only attach to them as walking collectively—as members one of the other, who must have a care and regard for one another's interests. We are not so ignorant of the devil's devices, as to be unable to discover how he has attempted to thwart this new craving after a more wholesome state of things, both by attempting to discredit any approximation towards it, by the introduction of heresy and disorder, or by turning aside the attention from the real question to some collateral points. In those which have been made the subject of appeal to the world, there are some who plead on the score of authority and tradition for things as they are: others plainly shew that they would set up self will in the place of Christ; whilst the infidel looks on as umpire, and confirms himself even from the very letter of the Bible in his delusion, that Christianity is mere cant or hypocrisy; seeing it in the Bible so distinct a thing from the world, and seeing it before him accredited by the world, and in return accrediting the world. Amongst other questions, the one which has been most extensively canvassed, is that of "The Voluntary System and an Establishment." The determination of the whole matter, as it regards a Church, has been thought to hinge on this; when in fact, on their own showing, the discussion has nothing at all to do with a Church; but only sets before the public a kind of ecclesiastical statistics, to shew which employs most teachers, occupies most territory, and gives religious instruction (the quality does not enter into the account) at the cheapest

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rate. It is deeply painful to a mind at all sensible of the high and holy calling of the Church of God, to see the attempt made to settle the question by an appeal to the world. It is not my intention to enter on a review of the question, because, in fact, it has *nothing* to do in the form in which it is presented with Church Constitution at all, but only tends to embarrass the minds of those who are anxiously seeking for God's glory and their own blessing in Church fellowship. But it appears to me that the way may be cleared, in order to lead the inquiring mind onwards, by showing the principles of God's truth, which are involved, however perverted they may be, in these supposed antagonist systems.

First.—With respect to the Voluntary System, as far as it really is what it professes to be, it is true in principle. The absurdity of calling the dissenting system by this name, has been abundantly proved in this controversy ; the preachers neither preach the gospel freely, nor do the hearers hear it for nothing. But it is the theory we have to do with,—it is written, "Freely ye have received, freely give." There is nothing so abhorrent to the genius of Christianity as stipulation or exaction. All its great principles are but the shadowing forth of God's principles. As Christians, "He has given to us His Son :" in Him He has given to us eternal life. All we have is a "gift by grace ;" it is on this basis that God lays His claim upon us for an unreserved surrender of ourselves unto Him. Now it is a most melancholy proof of the very low state of Christianity, and of the little measure of practical separation between the Church and the world, when the question is made to turn so much on giving and receiving, a question in which the world may be a very competent judge, for it is its own principle ; so much service for so much hire. But how little could the world recognize the Apostle's statement, "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ ; and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing trespasses unto them, and hath put in us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. v.) It is most true that those who minister the word, are the servants of the world ; they are "debtors both to the Greeks and barbarians,

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both to the wise and the unwise :" the privilege is to be as their Master was in the world, "one that serveth." But immediately the question of payment comes in, then the world claims the service as its rightful due in consideration of the payment of that which is alone valuable in its eyes, even money. Hence instead of the ministers of the word standing on the high ground as ambassadors for Christ, they are looked upon merely as of a profession, the valuable service of which is secured as in other professions,—by payment. This is indeed a sorrowful state of things: all the power of testimony to the world that there is something far beyond it and above it, is lost. As these judge, one gets a livelihood by preaching; and another by a farm or a shop. Now it seems that our Lord and His Spirit in the Apostles took much pains to shew the entire distinction between those whom He sent, and mere professions of the world, in this particular point. In the first place, during His own stay on the earth, He stripped His disciples of every dependence, to shew His own power in providing for their necessities through others, even when He was with Him. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; nor scrip for your journey; neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. (Matt. x. 9—10.) To this the Lord refers in the concluding scene of His ministry: "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? they said, Nothing." (Luke xxii. 34.) Their wants were supplied without any care or stipulation on their part. The Lord knew they had need of sustenance, yea they were worthy of it, and might very properly look for it; but as to its measure and quality, that they were not to concern themselves about. "The workman is worthy of his meat," even of that which the Lord would provide for him. Again, He says, "into whatsoever city or town ye enter, inquire who in it is *worthy*, and there abide till ye go thence." In this, clearly we see that maintenance from the world was not to be expected; it was only to be from those who received them as prophets or righteous men, or servants of the Lord, they were to receive support if it were offered. In Luke x. some further particulars are specified, all exemplifying the same great principle, that their support as preachers of the gospel, was not to be derived from any other source than the free and voluntary supplies of those who re-

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ceived them. "In the same house remain, eating and drinking such things *as they give*, for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from *house to house*, (as if to get better fare:) and into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat *such things as are set before you.*" In the Apostles, afterwards, we find that whilst it is maintained that those who were sent forth of the Lord to spend and to be spent in His service, had undoubted right to expect a maintenance, yet that it never comes in the shape of demand from unwilling contributors—never was to be looked on as a fixed payment; for the Lord loveth the cheerful giver. It is never told the minister to demand, but it is pressed on the people of God to support. This, excepting their prayers, was the only return that those who had received blessing from them in spiritual things could render. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" And thus we see the principle exemplified; "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized and her household, *she besought* us, saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us." (Acts xvi. 14, 15.)

Here we find the same principle carried into practice as our Lord enforced Matt. x., with this difference,—They in going only to the children of Israel, had to enquire who among them "was worthy." It was positive enactment to them not to go into the way of the Gentiles, and not to enter into any city of the Samaritans. On the contrary, the Apostle and his companions were led of the Spirit from city to city, and country to country, and had now passed over to the isles of the Gentiles; excepting Jews dwelling in these countries, who was to be found worthy? This now was not discovered by previous inquiry; but immediately the grace of the Lord opens the heart, the house is open to the messengers of that grace.—They find a house to abide in whilst they are there, and maintenance; but this is not demanded but forced on them. And let it be noticed, that as it was in an individual at Philippi first, so in the Church at Philippi afterwards, this pressing support on the Apostle was shown.—"Now ye

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Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated with me concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God." (Phil. iv. 15—18.)

In reading 1 Cor. ix. 1—19, we find the right to a maintenance fully recognised for those who were necessitated to forbear working, in order to give themselves to the work of the ministry. Analogy from the law, the reasonableness of the thing itself, and the Lord's own order are all brought forward. True, the Apostle preferred the more excellent way, and had not used his liberty;—he had worked with his own hands; (Acts xx. 34, 35) but he would not make his own instance any infringement on the right of others; though by pressing his own example, he plainly intimated his desires.—"I have *shewed* you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, it is more blessed to give than to receive." It is thus that he tacitly leads on the mind to his greater liberty in not asserting his right, so that there could be no hinderance to the gospel on this account; and he had thereby brought himself into the very place of his Master, to become as he that served.—"For though I be free from all, yet have I made myself the servant of all, that I might gain the more." (ver. 19.) In this instance, as in others of Christian conduct, we find that nice line of distinction which those led of the Spirit practically, though it may be unconsciously, know how to draw. Here there is right recognized, but not asserted. And the same principle applies in other cases;—there is room left for the exercise of grace in waving right, but the assertion of right immediately puts us out of the standing in grace. Abstractedly there would be nothing morally wrong in any Christian seeking redress of wrong: an act is not changed in its character because done to a Christian. But here would be the difference, the same act or outrage perpetrated against a believer and a worldly man, would immediately give

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occasion to shew the real differance of principles. A man of the world would appeal to the world, the principle of which is selfishness. One led of the Spirit, cannot look at himself but unto God, whose principle towards him is grace. If he sought reparation from the world, it would argue a very low state indeed.—"Now therefore, there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" (1 Cor. vi.) It is on this principle that the question concerning maintenance, hangs. "The labourer is worthy of his hire." "They who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel." Maintenance, therefore, they have a right to expect; but could they demand it? let any one led of the Spirit judge. The whole difficulty of Christian ethics in theory, lies in this—we are under the law of liberty. Man only knows law as positive enactment. But this law of liberty always leaves room for the service of love and showing grace. We cannot, therefore, draw out a scheme of Christian ethics because this law of liberty needs, as supplemental, the Spirit to apply it. "Where the Spirit is, there is liberty;" and it is thus that simple-minded Christians are led on happily walking in the Spirit, finding in the word an expansiveness and application to circumstances which could not easily be imagined. He who gave the rule knew what was in man; and as a believer by the word, the sword of the Spirit, is taught to know himself and his standing before God in grace; he is able readily to apply the great principles which Christ has laid down, to the circumstances in which he is. In the word of God, whilst it is ruled, that a minister of that word, if for the word's sake, and work's sake, he forbear working with his hands, has a right to expect maintenance; yet as to how much he is to expect or the quality of his maintenance, it is simply what they give: there is no stipulated quantity as to giving, that is left open to them—"the Lord loveth the cheerful giver;" it must not be exaction, but a free-will offering. Thus is there room left in this matter for the exercise of grace, both in those who sow to others spiritual things, and those that receive them. Had there been positive enactment this could not have been. But the Church has lost her own principles in this, and let the world regulate for her; and that which was left open for grace has been used for

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evil. The minister has a fixed hire, and the people must pay a fixed sum; so that the real Voluntary Principle has been nearly lost, though it be the only principle sanctioned by Christ and His Apostles. It is not the principle of those who profess it, but theirs is another under the same name, giving the rein to man's self-will, and leading to most painful practical results. But I pursue not this farther, but now turn briefly to consider the theory of an Establishment.

The theory of an Establishment is quite true in principle. It is truly said, that man is insensible to his spiritual necessities, and therefore that there ought to be means employed to force them on his attention, to shew him the evil case in which he is before God, and the gracious remedy provided by God Himself to extricate him from it. Man, it is said, may safely be left to his own feelings in case of bodily suffering, or of difficult circumstances, he will be led under the pressure of these, to consult either the physician or the lawyer. The supply of these, may therefore be left to the demand for them. But not so with respect to religious teachers, for them there would be no demand, because their assistance would not be felt to be needed. Hence the necessity of providing a body of men to act *aggressively* on the mass. Now, fully recognizing the necessity of acting aggressively on man, in reference to his soul, has not God made provision for this necessity? and is not an Establishment a virtual counteraction of that provision? It is God Himself who has been constantly acting aggressively on man—this is just the love of God. He left not Adam to discover his necessity and then apply to Him; but He forced Himself on the notice of Adam, that he might be sensible of his misery, and then graciously proclaimed the remedy for the ruin into which he was fallen. And so again, God came to Abraham, and called him out of his country: and when God Himself vouchsafed to be the lawgiver and king of a special nation, after that nation had committed the great sin of rejecting Him, still He continued to act upon them by His servants the prophets, testifying to the evil they were in, and calling on them to repent; as it is written, "And the God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up by times and sending, because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling-place; but they mocked

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the messengers of God and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against His people, till there was no remedy." (2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16.) But again, we see the aggressive principle in God, it is His principle. He knows the necessities of man, and that his most fearful state is ignorance of the necessity in which he is: He waits not to be asked, but He *gives*, He *sends* His Son. "God *so* loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son;" "God *sent* not His Son into the world to condemn the world." And He that was sent, forced the message with which He came, even on unwilling hearers. He was not stationary for men to come and hear it if they would, but Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." (Matt. iv. 23.) "And He said unto them, let us go forth into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for *therefore came I forth.*" (Mark i. 38.) "And He went round about the villages teaching." (Mark vi.) "And it came to pass afterward, that He went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God." (Luke viii. 1.) In a word, *He went about* doing good. The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him; He had anointed Him to preach the gospel to the poor. Here was the real aggressive principle—and it did not end with Him. He sent forth the twelve, limiting them indeed to the cities of Israel, but still on the principle of testimony, whether they would hear or whether they would forbear, "As ye go, preach; and they departed and went through the towns preaching the gospel." God's love had sent Him, His love had sent them; "As my Father has sent me, even so send I you." Their commission was enlarged after His resurrection; there was to be no limit to the space allotted, save by the interference of the Holy Spirit in His sovereignty. He had been lifted up from the earth to be the attractive point to any. All power in heaven and in earth was given to Him, and their commission was thus large, "Go ye and teach all nations; and lo! I am with you alway." Here was their warrant and the assurance of protection; but one thing was wanting—the same heart for the work which animated God in the sending of His Son, and the Son in sending them out. This was supplied by the coming down of the Holy Ghost, the other Comforter, glori-

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fying Jesus to them, and shedding abroad the love of God in their hearts. They were now constrained by the love of Christ, they needed no other motive. God had reconciled them to Himself by Jesus Christ, He had put into them the word of reconciliation; and as ambassadors for Christ, they present themselves thus, "As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." No principle short of this could have met the difficulties to be encountered; nothing could command the needful service but God's own constraining love. Animated by this, they went forth devoid of every external credit, and without any support from the world to act aggressively on it. They compelled men to come in. There was in them that which did not stop to calculate the good possibly to be effected, or reckon on consequences; they saw the fearful evil in which men were, and they knew the only remedy. And thus we are told, when Paul waited for Silas and Timothy at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met him. (Acts xvii. 16, 17.) "And when Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia, Paul was *pressed in the Spirit*, and testified to the Jews, that Jesus was Christ." His feeling was, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and the unwise; so, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." (Rom. i. 14, 15.) And how expansive was the principle, how constraining the love of God: through how many difficulties, through what a tract of country had its energy working in Him mightily, carried one individual. Hear his own testimony, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which *Christ* hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders *by the power of the Spirit of God;* so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." (Rom. xv. 18, 19.) But his soul was not satisfied, he had still more distant regions in view, "Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you:" (ver. 23.) again, "not boasting of things without our measure, i.e., of other men's labours: but having hope when your faith is increased; that we shall be enlarged by you according

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to our rule abundantly, to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you." (2 Cor. x. 15—16.) We see in the Apostle, not the stimulus given to exertion by an Establishment, carefully watching over those who are under it, that they give themselves to the work; but the unhindered energy of the Spirit. He was one sent not *of men*, nor *by men*, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead." (Gal. i. 1.) In other words, he was not sent out by an Establishment; which, however excellent its constitution, must have hindered this energy in the Apostle, by turning him aside *necessarily* both from singleness of motive and singleness of object. Now Paul is a type of the present dispensation, and his ministry the pattern of what the Church's ministry ought to be. The same spirit in her as in him ought to think nothing done whilst there remained a region where "Christ was not named." In this she ought only to look to the "God of measure," who would make known to her as to St. Paul, where He would have His gospel to be preached. But this guidance an Establishment neglects; it acts on its own principles, and therefore we see the anomaly in our days of providing a place of worship and a ministry, (in a country confessedly heathen,) before there are converts. And what is the result but the binding down the Spirit of God, if he be in the minister, to the station in which he is placed, so that God's principle of constraint to preach Christ is made secondary to the duty owed to the Establishment; the service of the Church or chapel must go on, although it has been as plainly shown, that the Lord has not a people there, as when Paul was forbidden to preach the gospel in Asia, and called into Europe. But lest it should be said that the example of the Apostle Paul is not a fair one, he standing in all the plenitude of conscious authority, and in all the fulness of spiritual energy, let it be remembered, that He says, "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ." But more than this, I would say that the interests of an Establishment (and surely if we be of it, we must be interested in it) would necessarily have hindered the energy of the Spirit in Paul.

But farther, the same energetic principle is marked in others—"Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers, which have borne witness of thy charity be-

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fore the Church, whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, (worthy of God: marg.) thou shalt do well; because that *for His name's sake they went forth*, taking nothing of the Gentiles, we therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth." (3 John, 5—8.) They were not sent forth of men—they were neither supported nor accredited by an Establishment; the love of Christ constrained them to go among the heathen; and the love of Christ constrained others in supporting them to be fellow-helpers to the truth. Now an Establishment has put itself in the place of this constraining love; and by its organized plan tends greatly to exclude both the showing of sympathy on one hand, and feeling of it on the other; so that he who goes forth among the heathen even for the Lord's sake, in simplicity, does not feel assured of the sympathies of those from whom he goes forth, acting as they do rather officially than as brethren. In a word, an Establishment is in theory, the attempt of man's wisdom to do God's work in its own way. God provides an adequate energy for a single object; an energy expanding with the demand for its exercise, but an energy which, unless it be quite free, is disabled for the work. If there be a second object beyond the one God has proposed, and it be forced into a channel to work for this object, God's object is lost—the energy mispent and wasted. The energy of God's Spirit is such that it cannot be helped, as man fondly thinks it can, without being hindered. Now the evil of an Establishment on any theory, whether it be national or dissenting is this, that it can go on as well (quoad Establishment) without, as with the Spirit of God. The whole routine may be most orderly, the appearance in their paper documents most satisfactory; ministers may be well paid; subscription list most flourishing; pews and schools well filled; and yet the single question which a truly spiritual man would ask—is the Spirit of God working? might receive no satisfactory answer. There is, undoubtedly, much Christian zeal to be witnessed around us in individuals; many highly gifted men in the ministry; much energy of the Spirit which has not room to expand itself, because it cannot work aggressively through the very means that men have proposed to act aggressively. No one judging as a spiritual man, can but lament at that which he sees around him—

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much spiritual energy restrained within unnatural bounds by the effort of men to uphold an Establishment—the strange ground on which Christians alone can meet, that is, generally where the world can join them (as for benevolent objects)—the secret fellowship which those led of one Spirit often find one with another, but which cannot be manifested, because it would violate the order of the Establishment—the ground of compromise taken as the point of union instead of oneness in the Spirit—the necessary hindrance to progress in the truth, because all truth is supposed to be that only which the Establishment accredits. It is thus that any Establishment necessarily fetters the energy of the Spirit; and oh! that we were wise in profiting by experience. God had once an Establishment of His own on the earth, and mark what happened,—His people leaned on it and not on Himself; God interposed in testifying against this their sin—He raised up a series of Prophets to do that which the Establishment ought to have done, to act aggressively on the mass, and at the same time to testify against His own Establishment, so perverted by them.—"Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel: and now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, *wherein ye trust*, as I have done to Shiloh." (Jer. vii. 12—14.) The prophetic testimony came in on the failure of the Establishment, through man's evil. It was by "the ministry of the Prophets," not the established priesthood, that God wrought. (Hos. xii. 10—13.) Precisely analagous has been the way that God has acted. Christians have sought unto Establishments, some, more or less according to His word, but all necessarily hindering the Spirit. All revivals have been through the energy of the Spirit in individuals in these several Establishments, who have usually tried to avail themselves of what is good in them, till they have been unwillingly forced out of them, because the question of trusting in God or in them was the point; faithfulness to both being impossible for those whom God had sent for His witnesses. The misery has been that those who have been forced out of one, it may be, great Establishment,

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have gone on in their own wisdom to set up another more limited, and, as they believe, more pure; but which in the event stands really as much a hindrance to the Spirit of God as the one they had left.

Whilst, therefore, we cannot but feel that real unity of the Spirit is effectually hindered in our own country by our having a second object to look to in the respective Establishments to which any belong;—these are a real hindrance also to preaching the gospel with power among the heathen. Let one speak: a most devoted Missionary, and one whose case is a practical comment on the deadening effect of attachment to a system more than to Christ.* "We are called ministers of the gospel, of Christ, of "God; and as such we should draw our instructions from Christ "our Head and Master, through the approved channel, the Scrip- "tures.—But being connected with different bodies or societies, "and being sent out by them, we have become *too much the* "*ministers of those societies rather than of Christ*, promulgating "their peculiar sentiments, and, consequently, all the unchristian "divisions which they maintain. True, those societies charge "their Missionaries to go out as servants of Christ, and give them "high encomiums as such, but at the same time they add also that "they must not differ from them in their peculiar sentiments, "forms, &c. Now what is this else but saying, 'you must be ser- "vants of Christ, *but in our way?*' This cannot but be detrimental to "the cause of union."

"Were the societies to say to them, as the Apostle said to the "Churches, 'Be ye followers of us as far as we are of Christ,' "then all would be right, for then the Missionary would still be at "liberty to look solely to His Head and Master, the Lord Jesus "Christ; and the society also would be content with whatsoever "he does, if it but agree with Christ's instructions; but now he "has, as it were, *two* masters—Christ, and *the society or denomi-* "*nation* to which he belongs! By this, the Spirit of Christ whom "he desires to follow, is often *restrained*.—His heart gets strait- "ened—he cannot follow Christ altogether so as his conscience "dictates, because the society, who cannot possibly understand "local circumstances, has different regulations, &c. That this has

* See a Tract published by Mr. Groves, entitled, "Union of all Christians," by C. T. E. Rhenius, Missionary, Tinevelly. Nisbet, London.

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"produced much mischief in the Missionary body is, I think, evi-
"dent. Their minds have been divided and cramped. They
"have been hindered from doing all the good, which, as ambas-
"sadors of Christ, they ought to have done. Now this should
"not go on any longer. If you are ministers of Christ and His
"gospel, take heed to your Master and His instructions.—Set
"*Him* always before your eyes,—Act as He has told you in His
"word, and as *He* teaches you by His Spirit; in conformity to
"it, keep your dignity, your high vocation, steadily in view, and
"act accordingly. And these venerable societies should not expect
"more nor less from their Missionaries. They ought to have a
"watchful eye upon them, that they do follow Christ and His
"word, but not cramp their usefulness by peculiar sentiments and
"forms, nor make them proud and anxious to please rather men
"than God, by praising them for following the same. Then they
"will see their labours prosper and their heart's desire for the over-
"throw of Satan, fulfilled. Thus, both the societies and their Mis-
"sionaries will be servants of Christ indeed. Let us remember how
"even Peter was led into error by the peculiar sentiments of a certain
"body and how Paul reproved him." (Gal. ii. 11—14.)

"And here I beseech every one of my brother Missionaries, to
"consider further this word of St. Paul. 'But, as we were allowed
"of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak;
"not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For
"neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a
"cloak of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we
"glory, neither of you, nor yet of others.' (1 Thess. ii. 4—6.)
"Remember also that a certain divine, after they had made him
"a Doctor of Divinity, when he preached *faithfully the word of*
"*God contrary* to the received notions of the body to which he
"belonged, when they began to be alarmed, and desired him to
"refrain from such a course, 'They have made me Doctor of the
"bible,' said he, 'and made me swear that I will teach according
"to it; now then I must do so.'—Fear not the faces of men! The
"approbation of our heavenly Master, and the blessing which He
"vouchsafes on our labours, as His servants, are more worthy of
"our desire than the favour of the whole world."

"Whoever then is a minister of Christ, he will have to give an

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"account of how he ministered, unto Christ; he must therefore "think himself to be such. And shall he be puffed up by thus think- "ing of himself, and acting accordingly? The Apostle has "warned him against it. (1 Cor. iv. 6, 7.) In this respect also, "the injunction of the Apostle is applicable, 'Be ye not the ser- "vants of men.' (1 Cor. vii. 23.) Too much has this been "forgotten: how much better would it stand with the Missionary "cause, had every Missionary, with deep humility, as unworthy of "the high calling, taken his title in reality, and stood upon this "high ground as a servant of Christ, independently of men. And "had *every* Missionary Society restricted themselves to this, and "not circumscribed the authority of Christ by so many rules and "formulas. It seems as if they believed that the bible was defec- "tive in rules, or that Christ our Head would not do what is "necessary to direct His servants, as if His influence had ceased, "and that they were obliged to take His word into their own "hands. But He will not give His glory to another."

"Is it not strange that various societies think so *little* of a pledge "given to minister the word of God faithfully, and so *much* of "pledges given to the keeping of their particular rules and articles? "It seems as if they feared the word of God was not plain enough, "as if they must necessarily mistake its meaning when left by "itself: so that they must make additions to the divine word. "How dishonourable to the word of God! Or they mistrust the "person who gives such a pledge, and regard him not as a minis- "ter of Christ, *whilst* yet they tell him that he is one. What "strange inconsistency! They seem to fear that he is not able to "teach the word as it is. In that case they ought not to send him out. "This would be the best security against false teachers or loiterers "in the great cause, but not pledging him to keep human rules. "If it be said that these rules are perfectly consistent with the "word, containing neither more nor less than the bible warrants, "then, wherefore the rules? Is not the word of God sufficient? "Why bind a man to human compositions as if they were the "original word of God? Every society should be afraid of ven- "turing on so bold a step."

And here then I pause: let any led by the Spirit of God judge of the value of Establishments by the Word and not by his own

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reasonings, and I think it will clearly appear that it is the abortive attempt of man's wisdom to perpetuate that which can only be perpetuated to blessing by the presence of God's good Spirit;—that the stimulus they provide falls far short of the exigencies of the case;—that the only real aggresive principle adapted to man's moral necessities is the constraining love of God; and that so far from Establishments proving helps to the energy of the Spirit, they have been and are now actually hindrances; and finally, that they have altered the constitution of Christ's Church from unity in the Spirit to uniformity, which the flesh can readily recognize.

I would shortly notice, that the question of the union between Church and State, is not necessarily that of an Establishment. It is in theory true, but not now; it is the anticipative attempt of the Church to rule the world, which will be true only in the Millennium. But now it puts the Church entirely on a wrong ground—i.e. in power instead of suffering. The Church can only exercise power in righteousness, even as the Lord Jesus Christ as Son of man, her Head will do. She cannot therefore judge those without, although in faithfulness bound to judge those that are within; not however with the sword, but by putting away evil from her midst. (1 Cor. v. 12, 13.) The Church cannot tolerate evil, the civil governor must; yea, almost all human legislation is on the principle of remedy, a lesser for a greater evil; between which Christianity cannot choose. So far as the theory is concerned, many who are quick-sighted to discover the absurdity of identifying the Church and nation, because they see the error palpably before them, do not perceive that they are acting on the same principle themselves. A Christian dissenter desiring to become a legislator for the nation, is in fact seeking to exercise power now. True, he tries to distinguish between his Christianity and his citizenship, but we are taught "whatsoever we do in word or in deed, to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." We are not reckoned as "living in the world, (Col. ii. 20.) but as risen with Christ." "Therefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, for if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." The Christian who seeks power individually now, is attempting to apply his principles to rule which they cannot be,

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while the Lord is dealingwith the world in grace; and hence instead of the exhibition of real spirituality of mind, Christianity is beginning to be accounted a mere philanthropic and humanizing system to better the world instead of convincing it of coming wrath.

The theory of Church and State was most perfectly shown out in practice in the darkest ages of Christianity. Then the Church entirely disposed of the world: and yet in theory, the Church kept up her own independence; so marvellously are truth and error blended in that system of Satan's wisdom, that the judgment of the Church ended in excommunication; *then* came in the secular arm. The same is shown in a measure, in the less perfect exhibition of the theory in this nation; excommunication in *fact*, becomes putting out of the world: since it and the Church are one. But it is remarkable, that so far as the theory goes, the Church of Rome has more faithfully exhibited it than the Church of this nation; she never surrendered her own independent legislation; the Church of this country has, for the sake of making laws for the world. And now the world has turned against her and thrown off her legislation, (as virtually done by the repeal of the test act;) she is left in the anomalous position of a vast body unable to make even a by-law for its own regulation.

Surely we ought to profit by this, and learn that Christians have never attempted to use the world, but they have lost their own principles; and their moral influence has been used by the world, and eventually turned against themselves. What we need, is separation on our own principles, to show that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever: the same in doctrine—the same in practice—the same in the midst of an evil world. In the midst of the shifting morality of the world, we are called on to show that we have an unvarying standard, even Him whose conversation was in heaven, whilst He was on earth; and who proved by His contrariety to the world that its deeds were evil. And so it is our proper standing to know ourselves as of God, and the whole world lying under the wicked one. Thus alone can we be in any measure the lights of the world, and cause that men should see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

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SCOPE OF PROPHECY.

THERE are two great subjects connected with prophecy—the hope of the Church, and the order and accomplishment of that system of earthly government which, with the Jews as its centre, has formed the great subject of ancient prophecy: its proper subject as a literal and distinct testimony of what should happen in the earth. As it is written, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." "For the Lord's portion is His people; Israel is the lot of His inheritance." There is another point, the connection of the two, the passage from the failing dispensation, failing as in man's hand in which we stand, into that which is to come; the portion of the remnant in the Gentile body and of the restored Jewish people, which, it seems to me, from involving both, induces greater difficulty of judgment than either considered apart. The moral state too both of the Christian remnant and of the Jewish remnant, is so immediately involved in the question—their responsibilities and the divine judgment concerning them, that responsibility in estimating their place I feel sensibly increased. Nevertheless the faithful word is our sure and only guide, and wherever this directs us, the Spirit shedding light on it to our souls, we shall find the light and power of life in it. Nor will its connection with our responsibilities weaken its importance and value to us; I should value therefore exceedingly any light upon this subject. But though I have thought in the study of the word, on many things connected with it, I do not feel my mind so distinctly ascertained of that portion of the mind of God as to state myself at present any thing concerning it, though quite alive to the enquiry. I would state very briefly as to the second point, what would enlarge the basis on which our enquiries into Scripture may be conducted; and by extending the limits of that which is certain in things revealed, increase our power of spiritual judgment, both within those limits and also as to those things in which we may be yet untaught. The essential difference of the government of the world during the four beasts, is not, I think, sufficiently considered.

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During this time, there ceased to be, properly speaking, Jews and Gentiles. That which had given importance to the Jews, was that they were God's people. Otherwise "have not I brought (says God) the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?" This removed, they were but as one among the nations made of one blood in all the earth, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him.

It is true, this distinction once constituted, was never, and never is to be recalled; "for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." And hence the Jews, or people of Israel, always constituted a distinct subject of government in the divine mind, never lost sight of and kept continually for the purposes formed therein for His glory, whatever the circumstances were through which they were passed. But they ceased to be the immediate manifested object and centre of the divine government upon earth, the moment "Lo-ammi" was written upon them; they ceased to be the scene in which God displayed His character as a recognized people, and from which, as identified with Himself, He exercised righteous judgment on surrounding nations, accounted but as strangers meddling with the place of His sanctuary.

Identical with this inscription of "Lo-ammi" (for a little season and still reserved for mercy, and it counted long of Jehovah) was the setting up of the Gentile power, the kingdom of the beasts which should arise out of the earth. This is matter of common knowledge, and has been noticed in "THE WITNESS;" and the whole history of the Jews connected with Nebuchadnezzar makes it too plain to one familiar with Scripture, to need the evidence in detail here. But the inscription of "Lo-ammi" being set upon the Jewish people, their present distinction as God's people from the other nations of the earth ceased; not in purpose nor providence, but as the subject of manifested government and revelation. And though for the purpose of the manifestation of Messiah, there was a suspension of the final accomplishment of these things, and a partial restoration, or rather setting in such a place as that they might be the subject of Messiah's restoration, the rod that was upon them of the stranger, was never taken off, let it be light or gilded. There was no Jewish history, but of the fact of their rebuilding under the favour of the Persians, and of the rejection

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of Messiah under the government of the Romans and Herod; and then they are lost to historic Scripture after the death of Stephen, forbidding that which was now come to the Gentiles to go to them, and wrath come upon them to the uttermost.

In the setting up of Nebuchadnezzar as the golden head of the image—the man of the earth; the times of the Gentiles began, and Israel was lost. It was not Ammi and Goiim,* but government left in the hands of the Gentiles, now exercising it in the covetous greediness of self-will, and the apparent government of God in principle lost, though never of course, in providence.

With the four beasts connected with this state of things, every reader of prophecy is familiar. But it is taken notice of here as co-limitaneous with Israel's, whatever their circumstances, being "Lo-ammi," not God's people. And consequently the distinction of Jew and Gentile lost in present manifested exercise, unless in priority of judgment.

I think we shall find a very distinct division of prophecy connected with this subject, and appropriation of it, much calculated to clear the ground on which we stand.

There are three Prophets connected with this state of Jewish rejection—Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Each have their separate portion of testimony, and their several place of giving it. Jeremiah prophesied in the place and habitation of the rebellious people. "The sin of Judah was written with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond."

Ezekiel prophesied by the river of Chebar, among the captives.

Daniel in the midst of Babylon, when the golden representative head had been set up.

In Jeremiah, we shall see, therefore, the sin of the people proved, and they made Goiim (heathen) of; and then after various judgments on all the nations, the new covenant with Israel and Judah, their captivity brought again; in a word, "Lo-ammi:" and Ammi as to both in restoration; while the history of their present wickedness is given and their necessary captivity, ashamed of Egypt as they were ashamed of Assyria.

In Ezekiel we shall find the sign of the glory departed, the consequent disallowance of the remains of the people in the land.

* *Ammi*, my people; *Goiim*, Gentiles or heathen.

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Then the setting aside of every other power previous to Nebuchadnezzar, and the fact of his prevailing as king of Babylon over the last of them; but then, a passing by the whole history of, or any allusion to, the beasts: and, after setting aside the previous nations by the king of Babylon, the immediate recurrence to the principles of God's dealings with the house of Israel, their restoration and deliverance as one stick in His hand; and, consequently, the *heathen* knowing that He, Jehovah, did sanctify Israel when His sanctuary was in the midst of them for evermore. And what subsequently happened of Gog prince of Magog, is a coming up against *my people* Israel. Thus way is made in the suppression of previous powers (and of Israel) for the introduction of the beasts, but they are wholly omitted; and the Prophet passes over, after the principles of God's dealings are discussed, to the restoration of the people and God's dealings among the heathen, as with them as His people.

Daniel precisely fills up this gap. Nebuchadnezzar is seen as the golden head in the outset, and a king of kings to whom the God of *heaven* had given a kingdom, and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven had He given into his hand, and made him rule over them all.—He was the head of gold. Then the character and proceedings of this system and of the four beasts is given, but no mention of any thing before or after, nor of the Jews or Israel as God's people at all. It is the times of the Gentiles, of the four beasts in which God's people are "Lo-ammi;" and when mentioned, it is not my people, but thy people, addressing Daniel.

This gives the subjects of these books, I think, great clearness; and shews the character and importance of the time subsequent to the renewal of the distinction between God's people and the heathen. The convulsions and trouble preceding this, are of the utmost importance, and have their place; but are to be viewed as a distinct subject from Israel acknowledged of the Lord. Israel is still lost in the midst of the nations rising one against another; Jerusalem may be taken, but He is not come whose right it is, and therefore, though it may be the occasion of the Lord's fighting against these nations, still it was not Jehovah Shammah, (Ezek. xlviii. 35.) that was taken; nor could that be, as the final post-

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Millennial confederacy, and Hezekiah's typical trial, prove.

I would advert to a few passages illustrative of what I have stated, and then allude to one or two consequences.—

First.—As to Jeremiah. Up to the 24th chapter, we have the sin of Israel, and specially Judah continuously proved. In the 25th, the judgment; recapitulating the testimony—shewing immediate judgment also on Babylon the type of all the nations. The judgment, however, actually runs thus, "Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand and cause all the nations (Goiim) to whom I send thee to drink it; then took I the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the Lord had sent me; *Jerusalem and the cities of Judah*, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation;" and then the rest, to "all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth, and the king of Sheshach after them;" but this definitely involving Judah and Jerusalem in the indiscriminate and common name of Goiim; "Judgment beginning in the house of God." (see ver. 29.) Then, after various details to the 30th; in that chapter we have the new and sure promises connected with God's purpose concerning the nation, to the end of the 33rd. The rest is historically probative or relative to Egypt, till the 46th, when we have the word against the Gentiles, but restoration to many of them.

In Ezekiel, the same 24th chapter divides the book, we have the utter rejection of the city. The glory of the Lord is seen at the outset in its full providential governing power; and in the 10th its departure from the city and temple: then in the 25th chapter, getting rid of other nations; these within and surrounding the land. Then two are mentioned who would fain have been beasts in the earth—Assyria and Pharoah Necho. The first however had fallen. What was the latter better? he should fall; "So was Pharoah and all his multitude, saith the Lord God." Then in the 32nd we have their common dirge. Here the Prophet closes. Instead of pursuing the history of the earth then further, which must have brought in the beasts, he turns at once to the shepherds of Israel. All but the beasts are disposed of, these Daniel is occupied about in Babylon, not Ezekiel at Chebar. Restoration under the Lord's salvation from evil shepherds is the only remedy.

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So in the 33rd chapter, 4th verse; and in 34th chapter, and 7th verse. The restoration; then Gog against Israel *as God's people,* settled on their own mountains no longer waste, but dwelling in peace; Israel now no longer "Lo-ammi," as 36, 28. The judgment on Seir, chap. xxxv. seems special.

Of Daniel I have already said enough, it is manifestly the history of the unnoticed period, the times of the beasts and their doings and character; the account in Babylon of all that belonged to it or arose out of it while Israel was no more a people, and power was recognizedly in the hands of those who knew not how to use it, who had beasts' hearts and left to be so and not man's till the due times had passed over it.

We have then these three agencies to look for, connected with Israel, and at the close of these times, when the great concentrated crisis comes to take effect. First—the heathen as looked at under Jeremiah, nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom, in which Jerusalem and the Jews have a place in the secret enmity perhaps of the wicked one, knowing what is to be and happen there; and surely in the providence of God. Yet still as one of the Goiim, merely mixed up in the troubles with all the rest, only the first to drink the cup.

Secondly—The beast (or beasts) then in his power, having his own specific and distinct character as such. That which constitutes the power, may be heathen perhaps in race; but it is not merely this but a beast: and lastly—we have the renewed position of Israel as God's people, and the heathen definitely distinguished from them, and opposed to them as such; and God acting on this principle. The other Prophets give many details as to them, their proper statements are of course of the Jews as Jews, and treating the heathen as such, and therefore not concerning the beasts at all. And I suspect if Antichrist be mentioned in them he is spoken of in his professed character as the king; and the state of the people merely alluded to on the critical time of change, when the summons of the Lord is addressed on the coming of the heathen, when the Lord is just about to go forth, rejected indeed by the nations, but listened to by the remnant.

Thus Joel describes some Goi (nation) going up against the land, &c. and summons the inhabitants of the land, and alarms

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Zion, and sounds for the gathering. When there is this cry, then the Lord is jealous for His land and pities His people; and the answer to them, not before so called, and blessing, and consequent judgment on all the heathen is described.

So in Zechariah, we have the city taken by the nations gathered together, and against those nations the Lord will go forth and fight. This is the only place where this taking is mentioned, unless the 2nd of Joel, and once perhaps in Isaiah; and not, I conceive, alluding to Antichrist or the wilful king, but omitting or leaving out the whole history of the beast and his doings, which stands on other ground. His place, I conceive, rather holds the place of the covenant with death, made with the scornful men which dwell at Jerusalem, which is disannulled. But I will not enter further into details. I have mentioned these passages as immediately affected by the considerations I have offered. If one could see the Jews and Jerusalem as shown in the paper, under the title of "Jerusalem," in a previous number, as the great subject and centre of earthly government and prophecy; we should better understand the force of *nations*, &c., and then, looking at Israel as lost in them and mixed in their troubles, and the object of their hatred; then the subject of the wilful king's special, though wicked interference; and subsequently, on *his* destruction, as the scene of the Lord's deliverance and power, who then holds it in His hand as His weapon against the nations, now again recognized as in opposition to Ammi (my people,) and He therefore putting them under His feet, we should see much of the prophecies more distinct and more simple. Though I acquiesce in and value the general scope of the article I have alluded to, let me just say that it seems to me in some of its details, to have trespassed the limits of evidence. I cannot see that the 7th and 8th of Daniel and the 13th of Revelation are necessarily identical, however analogous the language may be. The connection of the 7th of Daniel with Revelation I cannot doubt. The proof of the identity of chapters 7 and 8, arises not from direct interpretation, but the necessity, if both be universal, and at the same time, that they should be the same: the argument is good enough, (though I distrust and feel difficulty in all illative reasoning about Scripture,) but depends, and is justly made to do so, on the universality of both and also the sameness of

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time. But I cannot see the universality in chapter 8. Thus by him the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, should, I apprehend, be from him; though this by-the-bye. I entirely recognize the working of Antichrist as the head of the last beast, or, the last head of the beast in Jerusalem in his place in his close: but it seems to me, there is not enough scope given to the *other* actors in that scene, who derive their importance, not from present associations, but their then connection with, and opposition to, Jewish interests. I have felt that the consideration of the office allotted to these three Prophets I have here spoken of, reduced and simplified the ground on which we could judge these things. It is but one narrow point of the subject; still if by interpretation in which the Lord leads and will justify us, any part of the subject is cleared, so much is positively gained. What may be imperfect or erroneous in it the saints will soon detect, if they wait for the revelation and instruction of God. I do confess it has cleared a good many details, but its ground is quite independent of them; and I am reluctant to write on them, as undue determination of them seems to me the ground of our difficulties, the ascertainment of them always a step in our knowledge.

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THE

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RUTH.

"If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to *redeem* it, then shall he *redeem* that which his brother sold." (Lev. xxv. 25.)

Redemption, as one has said, was no *afterthought* with our God; it was His purpose from the beginning. By the work of redemption He prepares the richest glory for His own blessed name, and the fullest joy for His creatures. "The morning stars sang together," it is true, "and all the sons of God shouted for joy," when the foundations of the earth were laid; but the shoutings of *grace*, when the new creation is finished by the bringing forth of the Head Stone, will be louder still. Never were such music and dancing in the house before, as when the poor prodigal had returned, and been received as one alive from the dead. Never had such affections been awakened within him before. Never had the father's treasures been brought forth till then: till then, the fatted calf, the ring, and the best robe had been laid up; and never had the father himself so full a joy in his child as when he fell on his neck and kissed him. And so is it in the wondrous ways of our God. Creation brought forth the resources of His love, and wisdom, and power, and heaven on high was glad through all its order; and earth smiled beneath, the

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fair witness of His handy-work; but redemption has drawn forth still greater treasures that were lying hid in God; has awakened still more adoring joy and praise "in the presence of the angels;" and has given new and diviner affections to the children of men.

And nothing now hinders us from sharing in these joys of the Father's house, but refusal to take the character and place of returned prodigals. "Thou never gavest me a kid," said one who trusted in himself—he had never tasted of real gladness; no feast of fat things had ever been spread for him, for he drew upon himself as though he were something; for "these many years do I serve thee," said he in his own sufficiency, "neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments." He was of those who "trusted in themselves." And then, and then only, is our joy hindered, when in this pride and vain conceit of our own sufficiency, we come not to God as received prodigals. For to come as such, is the decreed way of the whole family of God, and so their only spring of joy and triumph; as it is written, "And every creature which is in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and *unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*"

Every thing is to stand in grace. Love was of *old*, because God is love; and love was therefore made known in the work of *creation*, and that by communicating goodness and blessing. But love has found a fuller scope for expressing itself in the work of *redemption*, in bringing grace and shewing mercy; and this is its *new* character. (See 1 John ii. 8.) Grace, the source and power of redemption, is, "the glory that excelleth;"—the light that shined from heaven in converting grace and power round Saul of Tarsus, was "above the brightness of the sun at mid-day." Grace is the fullest, and indeed the only worthy expression of the unsearchable riches of divine love. The heavens will rejoice in grace; (Rev. v. 11, 12.) and Israel, as representing the joy of the earth, will, in the end, triumph in it also. (Isa. xl. 1., lxi. 10., Zeph. iii. 14, 15.)

Among the witnesses to this final security and joy of Israel, in the grace of God their Redeemer, the book of Ruth appears to me, to have a very distinguished place; presenting as it does, an

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illustration of the duties of the Goel or Kinsman Redeemer ;* and thus we shall find, furnishing the type of Israel in their sorrows and captivities, down to the time when the Lord their *Redeemer*, will, through the riches of His grace, delight in them again, and their land shall be married.

But in order the better to apprehend this typical character of the book of Ruth, we must use a little diligence in tracing the ways of God with Israel, previously to the times of Ruth, and the distinct character of some of the books which introduces us to it.

Deuteronomy exhibits to us the perfecting of the covenant between Jehovah and Israel. After Moses had rehearsed their ways, delivered to them ordinances and commandments again, and warned and encouraged them, he stands before the people of Israel and says, (Deut. xxvi. 16—19.) "This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and to hearken unto His voice; and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people, as He has promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all His commandments, and to make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as He hath spoken." This was a formal binding of the Lord and the people in covenant together: and thus the compact is solemnly and duly witnessed by the book of Deuteronomy.

The book of *Joshua* which follows, shews the wonders of Jehovah's outstretched arm in the sight of the nations, and in the behalf of His people: His leading them in triumph from city to city, and subduing kings before them; till Joshua, their captain, had taken the whole land according to all that the Lord had said unto Moses. For thus is it written, (Josh. xi. 23.) "So Joshua took the whole land according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes, and the land rested from war:"

* See Lev. xxv. 25., Numbers xxxv. 19., Deut. xxv. 5.

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and again, (xxi. 45.) "There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel—all came to pass:" and again, Joshua when about to go the way of all the earth could stand before Israel and say, "Ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof." (xxiii. 14.) And thus the book of Joshua abundantly asserts the truth of the Lord and His covenant faithfulness.

The book of *Judges* follows; and as the preceding book had been the witness *for* the Lord, that He had fulfilled all His covenant with Israel; so does this book witness *against* Israel, that they had utterly broken their covenant with the Lord. It is true that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord that He had done for Israel. But that generation were gathered to their fathers; and as we read, that "there arose a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph," but became unmindful of all the kindness which the Lord had shown for His nation by Joseph, and was turned to be the adversary of Joseph's brethren; so we see another generation now risen in Israel, who with uncircumcised Egyptian-heart knew not the Lord who had visited and redeemed their fathers.

Throughout these times of the Judges, we see their repeated backslidings, and the Lord again and again, correcting them by judgments, and turning in mercy to forgive their iniquities, and heal their diseases. Often as a hen gathereth her chickens, would He have gathered His erring people; but the closing testimony of this book against them is, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Judges xxi. 25.)

Thus we have in *Deuteronomy*, the covenant solemnity settled and entered into; in *Joshua*, the Lord's accomplishment of all His mercies engaged to Israel under that covenant; and in *Judges*, Israel's utter breach of all their vowed and pledged allegiance. This was the righteous forfeiture of all their blessings. So that the time had now come when the Lord must decide either to lay hold on judgment or to bring mercy. He now might swear in His wrath that Israel should never enter His rest; they had been

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assayed, and were found "reprobate silver." "O Israel thou hast destroyed thyself," might now be the lamentation over them; but the Lord was about to reply "but in me is thine help," for Jehovah is God and not man: He who in righteousness might now have eased Him of His adversaries, and avenged Him of His enemies, prepares mercies for them, allows mercy to rejoice against judgment, and says, as at this time, "how shall I give thee up Ephraim, how shall I deliver thee Israel, how shall I make thee as Admah, how shall I set thee as Zeboim!" And therefore in the history of Ruth, the Moabitess, which immediately follows the book of Judges, *He gives them a sample, not of final severity for their sins, but of the grace by which they shall be gathered, and the glory into which they shall be brought in the latter day.*

The constant respect that is had in Scripture to the histories of the people of God in older times, for the illustration of His further and still future ways, either in such an artless and passing manner as may at first be unperceived, or in the more full and distinct interpretation of them as types or allegories, gives us great authority for considering the book of God generally as being of a prophetical character. The scenes in Paradise, Cain, Abel, the Deluge, and the ruins of Sodom, the times of the Patriarchs, the Exodus, Joshua, David, and Solomon, the sufferings and the Acts of the Prophets—these with others are all taken up and treated as typical; and how distinctly does the Spirit give this character to the Scripture histories in Psa. lxxviii. where after announcing that he is about to open his mouth "in a parable," and to "utter dark sayings," he details simply the ways of Israel's rebellions and perverseness, and Jehovah's judgments and mercies; thus giving us to know that all this history was a parable also. In like manner when in 1 Cor. x., the Apostle had traced the manners of Israel in the wilderness, and the consequent judgments of the Lord, he says "now all these things happened unto them *for ensamples.*" The history of Sarah and Hagar with their children is more distinctly announced to be an allegory; Cain, Balaam, and Korah, are pointed out as the sign of Christendom's offences and judgment; and Babylon is revived in spirit, though the name and remnant, and son and nephew, have been cut off from it, and it

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has itself been swept with the bosom of destruction. And I doubt not that the history of Ruth, beautiful and attractive as it is, is designed of the Spirit to be something more than a help to discover the genealogy of the Lord, (Matt. i. 5.) or, than a pleasing moral and affecting scene in domestic life; but that we may also read in it, and vindicate by it, the ways of the Lord of Hosts with His loved and still remembered Israel.

I know that the watching of the imagination, that we offend not by it, may be much needed here; but the comfort and edification of the saint in the unfoldings of the ways of God by means of such allegories will witness for them; and as it is again and again promised, "to him that hath, shall more be given," our delight in the holy oracles and godly use of them will enable us, like instructed scribes, to bring forth further treasures. May the Spirit of truth make us such!

The book of Ruth opens with a simple scene of domestic sorrow. The family of Elimelech of Bethlehem, in Judah, is forced by stress of famine to seek a livelihood in the country of Moab. Here he dies; and his two sons form alliances with the daughters of that strange people, and in process of time, none was left of this family, but the widowed, childless Naomi. "Woe is me for my hurt;"—in the words of the daughter of Zion, by the Prophet, might she then say, "my wound is grievous; but I said, truly this is my grief and I must bear it: my tabernacle is spoiled and all my cords are broken, my children are gone forth of me and they are not, there is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains."

Now here we have at once something to arrest our thoughts. Behold famine in that land which the Lord Jehovah had promised should flow with milk and honey for His chosen people! But this was the sure testimony that that chosen people had been unfaithful; and therefore all this evil estate, (the sorrows of the land and the captivity of her children,) exhibits Israel as *they now are** suffering for their unfaithfulness under the righteous displea-

* Elimelech, who was the father and head of this afflicted family, signifies "My God the King," and is properly and characteristically the title of Messiah *in connection with the Jewish people.* As the Elimelech, Israel is his household, and *not the Church;* and now truly has this household of his become a wanderer in strange lands, no longer Naomi but Mara. But the Church is not properly set in connection with him in this character; and therefore, as for other reasons, I do not judge that the Church is typified in this book.

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sure of the Lord. Their cities are wasted, without inhabitant now, as then partially in the days of Naomi, the land is utterly desolate, the Lord has removed her children far away, and there is a great forsaking in the midst of the land. Famine then was what dispersion is now ; for the transgression of the people must account for both; one reason, and only one, can be given for their sorrows in all periods ; the voice in every calamity of Israel is the same, " My God will cast thee away, *because they did not hearken unto Him.*"

The marriages of Mahlon and Chilion, sons of Israel, with the daughters of Moab, shew us Israel's present utter loss of their sacred Nazarite character, that the " holy flesh had passed from them," that they are no longer sanctified and separated unto God, but are mingled with the nations, have learnt their works, and are become defiled as sinners of the Gentiles. And Naomi left of her two sons and her husband, exhibits their destitution, and loss of every thing that could wear a trace of their former estate ; for though reserved of God, as a people, to meet the purposes of His future mercy, yet their special character is, for the present, utterly lost and gone ; they have become, in God's judgment, as one of the nations, and " Lo-ammi" is written on them.

But the Lord, as we learn from this history, in due time returned in mercy to Israel ; for His constant word to them is, that " He will not contend with them for ever." Though He make a full end of the nations, yet will He not make a full end of them. He visited and redeemed His people in giving them bread again ; and the earliest tidings of this awakens all Naomi's recollections of Israel. As soon as she heard that the land might be dwelt in again, she arose and went forth out of the place where she was : and though naked and afflicted, and needing ever thing, she traces her way back to Bethlehem-Judah.

What a mother in Israel is here ! She would yield up her daughters-in-law, loving and faithful as they had been to her, and at once surrender all the alliances which she had formed among the Gentiles, and the sources of relief and comfort which had been opened for her there, and return, as Mara, empty and afflicted, rather than be any longer a stranger to the land of her fathers ! She appears before us a true Rachel, who now refuses, as we

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know, to be comforted, and will refuse till her "children shall come again to their own border." (Jer. xxxi. 15—17.) For such is the heart of the children of Israel.—Gladly would they come forth from all the advantages and comforts which have been made theirs, in the places where they have been scattered, and return, Mara like, to their own land. Let the tidings but reach them which reached Naomi at this time, that the land is open to them, and the ways to Zion which now mourn, and all her gates which are desolate, shall rejoice, and speedily again be full of people.

And here the character of Ruth fully, and at once, developes itself.—She is fixed upon being one with Naomi, her mother-in-law.—She will forget kindred and father's house.—She is tempted on the one hand by the dreary prospects which Naomi presented, as awaiting her if she would still go forward; and she is tempted on the other by Orpah's revolt, and return to the more profitable promises of Moab; but all this serves but to manifest and approve her—she stood in the evil day. Like Elisha, in such a case, whom neither the voice of his master on the one hand, nor the taunts of the sons of the Prophets on the other, could move him to change that word, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." (2 Kings xi. 4.) "Entreat me not," says she to Naomi, "to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people; and thy God shall be my God." She would leave behind her all recollections of Moab and her people; she would be one with Naomi, though in widowhood and destitution. No longer a daughter of Moab, she was steadily minded to be only of Israel, one with the people of the Lord. Thus is this sinner of the Gentiles found among the children of the kingdom; and from this moment Israel becomes represented in Ruth: therefore, as we shall find, takes up after Naomi the wondrous tale of God's ways with His people. Their fortunes now become typically set for in her's, for the chosen Israel of God in the latter days will be as this sinner of the Gentiles; Israel shall then be accepted through the same riches of grace that now saves the Church, the fulness of the Gentiles, as says the Apostle speaking to the Gentiles, "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so

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have these also not now believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy, for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." (Rom. xi.)

It is on this principle I rest assured that the present call of the Gentiles has no place in the typical history of Ruth. She was, it is true, a Gentile; and this has led some to misinterpret the mystery. But *Israel is now as the Gentiles, and as Gentiles will be finally accepted.* For as we who are sinners of the Gentiles, and as such were "no people," but have now, through grace, become the people of God; so will Israel, who are now "no people," be made the people of God in the latter days. Israel shall hereafter be made the vessel of mercy for the making known of the riches of glory, as the Church has now been made; (see Hos. i. —iii., Rom. ix. 23--26.) and thus the Gentile birth of Ruth was needed to set her forth a fair and perfect type of Israel, who are *treated* now as strangers, but to be finally gathered with the same mercy as is now gathering us, who were strangers *indeed.* Blindness in part has now happened to them; but in the day of their covenant their sin shall be taken away.

This suggests, (and I would here turn aside to speak of it a little,) the very striking exhibition of the dealings of the Lord with Israel, which is made in the Prophet Hosea, and which is similar to that made in Ruth the Moabitess.

Hosea is presented to us as under orders to take a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms, and he does so. He takes Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and by her he has a son, whom he is commanded to call Jezreel; then a daughter, whom, as in like manner commanded, he calls Lo-ruhamah; and then another son, whom he names, still at the bidding of the Lord, Lo-ammi. The first of these children's names signifies the *dispersion of Israel;* the second, *mercy denied to Israel;* the third, *the Lord's rejection of Israel as His people.*

In this action Hosea might say in the words of another Prophet, "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel;" for in all this the apostasy and judgments of Israel are clearly set forth. The marriage of the Prophet with the wife of whoredoms is Jehovah's covenant with faithless Israel, yielding therefore, as its fruit, judgment upon

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judgment, till the children of Israel were found, as they now are, reprobate silver, a " Lo-ammi," a people disclaimed of their God.

But this marriage of the Prophet, typical as it was, of the sin and judgment of Israel, is grounded on a fact in their history to which he consequently alludes. Hosea prophesied, as we read, in the days of Jeroboam, who was of the house of Jehu: and the circumstance that brought that family into the honour of the kingdom, that is, "*the blood of Jezreel*," is the sin which called forth the typical marriage of the Prophet, and is taken up by him as the pattern of Israel's transgression; and thus the ground of God's dealings with them. We will open the scene to which he thus makes allusion, and we shall find, that like Ruth, it illustrates the duty of the Goel.

The times of Ahab were corrupt in the extreme. There were none like him whom Jezebel his Queen stirred up to sell himself to work wickedness and to do very abominably in following idols. But in those times Naboth of Jezreel stood as the righteous one in the land. Though it were to please the King he would not depart from the law of the Lord and sell his inheritance. He knew that it was the decree of the God of Israel that inheritances were not to remove from tribe to tribe, but that every one in Israel should keep himself to the inheritance of his fathers. (Numb. xxxvi. 9.) But for his righteousness sake he is called to suffer. Through the subtlety of Jezebel and by the hand of certain sons of Belial, his blood is shed in Jezreel, (1 Kings xxi. 13.) and his inheritance, the inheritance of his fathers, is usurped by Ahab. For this deed the Lord by His Prophet, denounces judgment on Ahab and his house; and accordingly by stroke upon stroke he makes a full end of them, and the blood of Ahab, and the blood of Joram his son, and the blood of Jezebel, are shed in the portion of Jezreel. Jehu, the son of Jehosaphat, the son of Nimshi, is called forth to finish this judgment, to be the avenger of blood, and to cleanse the land that had been thus polluted with it; (Numb. xxxv. 33.) and as his reward, the throne of Israel is secured to his family for four generations. (2 Kings x. 30.)

But Jehu in all this had himself in view; and while pretending zeal for the Lord, was really satisfying his own lust. As Ahab had coveted the vineyard of Naboth which was in Jezreel, hard by his

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palace, and for the sake of it had shed the blood of the righteous, so Jehu loved dominion, and for the sake of it, and not in the spirit of service to Jehovah, did he execute the judgment of God upon the house of Ahab. And therefore in his turn, like Ahab, he is made to answer for the blood of Jezreel: as says the Lord by Hosea, "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Ahab." But the Prophet adds—"and I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel, and it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel." (Hos. i. 4.) Thus upon this sin, i.e., the blood shedding at Jezreel, the Prophet suspends the final judgment and excision of Israel; and justly so, for the sin of Israel, as I will now shew, was as the sin of Ahab, or as the sin of Jehu.

Our blessed Lord was the righteous one of Israel in His day, as Naboth had been. He was properly the heir of all the nation's greatness. He was the Son of David, and claimed to be received as such. (Matt. xxi.) The vineyard, the inheritance, was His; but the wicked husbandmen, though allowing His title, refused Him possession, and said, "this is the heir, come let us kill Him, and let us seize on His inheritance." And they did so; they desired that the vineyard might be their own; they loved their "place and nation" under the Romans, and in the spirit of Ahab, and of Jehu, they caught the heir and cast Him out of the vineyard, and slew Him. His blood at this moment thus stains their land, it is upon them and upon their children, as the blood of Jezreel, the blood of Naboth, the Jezreelite, was upon the house of Ahab; and for this they are now in the character of the Prophet's children, scattered as "Jezreel," denied mercy at "Lo-ruhamah," and disowned of their Lord as "Lo-ammi." And as Jehovah said, of Naboth's vineyard, "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, and I will requite thee (Ahab) in this plot;" so are the wicked husbandmen still to answer blood for blood, that the land may be cleansed; (Numb. xxxv. 33.) and that that which is now the Aceldama may become the portion of the righteous again,—the vineyard of the Lord of hosts. (Dan. xii. 1., Zech. xiii. 8., Matt. iv. 1.)

Jehu acted in this as the avenger of blood, the kinsman of Israel, and was rewarded, as we have seen, with the kingdom for

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four generations. And so the true Kinsman and avenger of Israel, the blessed and glorified Son of man, shall fall on the rebellious, and grind them to powder, and be brought near before the Ancient of days, and receive dominion and glory, and a kingdom to possess it for ever and ever.

But how should we be warned by this and remember Naboth's vineyard, as we are graciously taught to remember Lot's wife. It was "the stuff in the house," that was lusted after, and has made both of them, as it were, "pillars of salt," *perpetual witnesses* to us, that "they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." Jehu would be religious too, he would be zealous for the Lord, if that could serve himself. The interests of Baal and his worshippers were not one with his; he rather was served by the judgment of Jehovah upon them, and therefore he could break down the image of Baal, and make his house a draught house unto this day. But it was *himself* he was serving all the time; he took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord. O brethren! the friendship of the world is enmity with God; nor is it less so, though it may clothe itself with zeal for the Lord.

But in the Prophet Hosea, as in the type of Ruth, (as we shall in the end see,) mercy is made to rejoice against judgment. The "woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress," is received again after many days. (Hos. iii.) Jezreel the dispersed is gathered; Lo-ruhamah who had not obtained mercy, does obtain mercy; the Lo-ammi, who were no people, become again the people of God. For thus saith the Lord by His Prophet, "It shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God: then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel." (Hos. i. 10, 11.) Then shall Jezreel, the whole land and people, be the witness of *grace* as it is now of *judgment;* for as the Lord saith, "I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion." (Joel iii. 21.) The portion in Jezreel shall become the portion of the righteous again, the vineyard and inheritance of the Lord shall be given to a

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nation (in the latter days) bringing forth the fruits thereof. And so in the kindred types of our Ruth.—She that was a sinner of the Gentiles, who came from among the Lo-ammi, is made, as we shall find, the wife of "the mighty man of wealth," and the mother of a new and honoured race in Israel, the fair and perfect pledge of Jehovah's everlasting love. And this typical character of Ruth is indeed afterwards distinctly acknowledged, for it is said to her, "The Lord make thee like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel;" which leaves us no liberty to doubt that we read a parable in her history, and that Israel is represented in her. (Ruth. iv. 2.)

To resume the history, then, we may here notice that we have Naomi and Ruth in the land of promise, the place of all desired blessing, the appointed scene of glory and the land of the living. But they are there at first empty and afflicted, though the land is fruitful again, and the harvest is gathering. But so will the Lord's remnant be found, when the nation has returned. As says the Lord by His Prophet, "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. iii. 12.)

But Ruth and Naomi are not wholly unblest, they are at least *at home*, and though in scanty measure, living on the gleanings of another's field, and waiting for the crumbs that fall from another's table, yet kindness is shown to them of one who was "a mighty man of wealth." (Chap. ii. 8—13.) And so will the kindness of a mightier and more generous one than Boaz be seen, when tending again "the poor of the flock, the flock of slaughter," and when bread shall be given them and waters shall be sure. (Is. xxxiii. 16.) And so will the poor of the flock trust in Him, and wait upon His hand as their Shepherd in the cloudy and dark day, so will they enter the pavilion of His presence and hide themselves while that day passes by, and remembering the days of their fathers they will humble themselves, like Ruth, as less than the handmaids of the Lord.

But Ruth ere long was destined to look on this "mighty man of wealth," as her kinsman and husband, sharing with her, gladly sharing with her, the treasures of those fields, where now she

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gleaned a scanty living; as will his poor and afflicted* remnant that shall trust in him for bread and water, soon see their *Kinsman* "The king in His beauty," and their Zion "a quiet habitation never to be removed."

Israel of old had been taught to love the stranger as one born among them, for they had themselves known the heart of a stranger; and in the mercifulness of Him whose they were, and who feedeth the young ravens that cry unto Him, and openeth His hand and filleth all things living with plenteousness, they had been thus commanded, "When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest; thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard, thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger." (Lev. xix. 9, 10.)

As a true son of Israel, Boaz, the Bethlehemite, remembers this word of the God of Israel, and does even more than was commanded. This poor stranger from Moab, as we read in the story, is well reported of to him by the reapers, he salutes her kind and condescending favour, and she accepts his grace with thankfulness, satisfied with what her toil could gather, while he exceeds all her desire, serving her with his own hands, and giving a place among his sheaves. Sweet expression of our Lord's ways with His waiting poor ones now, and of His feeding His remnant in the land hereafter! And we here observe how this kindness of this "mighty man of wealth" encourages the faith of those afflicted daughters of Israel. Ruth repeats the story of his kindness to her mother-in-law; and then the recollection, which appears till now

* We speak here of the elect people in the last days under the title of "the remnant," for so the Scriptures speak; inasmuch as the true Israel, or the Israel of God has at all times been but as a remnant in the midst of the reprobate nation, (as now and at all times with the Church, the saints are as the elect in the midst of corrupt Christendom.) And so will the true Israel be but a remnant when Israel becomes a nation again, resettled in the land of their fathers. (See Isa. vi. 12., lxv. 8., Rom. ix. 27—29., Rom. xi. 26.) And this last remnant will become the seed of the future nation, the "all Israel," which is to be saved. (Rom. xi. 26.) As it is written, "a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." And till then, while the troubles continue, they will suffer, as alone faithful and righteous in the midst of evil; they will then cry to the Lord, (as the Psalms largely, I believe, present to us,) and then will the Lord in due season appear for them; and when His indignation on the enemy begins, His remnant shall be preserved. (Isa. xxvi. 20, 21.) Blessed be He who ever heareth the cry of the poor destitute.

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to have slumbered, that this mighty one was of their kindred is awakened in Naomi, and she is stirred up to lay hold on his strength and expect a still larger blessing at his hand.—"It is good my daughter," said she to Ruth, "that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field."

Further encouragement from Boaz, we may presume, and other takens of favour shown unremitingly till the end of the harvest, at length brings Naomi's faith to exercise itself in his full and perfect favour. From his very gifts she seems to draw a plea for her hopes of further and greater, till the heart is enlarged to the full measure of his utmost bountifulness, and she speaks in confidence of this to her daughter, saying, "Shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? and now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshing-floor; wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking; and it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do." Naomi would have nothing less than *himself and all his wealth;*—her lips will scarcely utter the large desire of her faith, but she counts upon it, and lays her plans for it. The name of Baali will no longer satisfy her, she must call him Ishi. And in like manner how sweetly will his chosen ones be encouraged, and allured and comforted by their Kinsman in the second wilderness of the latter day. For a time they may remain unacknowledged.—"Doubtless thou art our Father," will they then say, "though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou O Lord art our Father, our *Redeemer.*" The remembrance of their *Redeemer* their *Kinsman* will come into their mind, and they will plead with Him then. (see Is. lxii. 7. lxiv.)

In full faith of the blessing, and that Boaz would, as Naomi had expected, tell her what she was to do, Ruth enters on the plan prescribed to her for acquiring Boaz as her husband. In all this Noami and Ruth were as one—the one by counsel, the other in action, helping forward the common blessing. Thus Ruth now

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hearkens to the counsel of Naomi, goes down to the threshing-floor and does accordingly. There she seeks a pledge from Boaz. She comes to trust in the shadow of his wing. She would have him spread his skirt over her, doing for her the full services of her near kinsman. She trespasses as far as faith warrants her, but no further; for Boaz, as they judged, was the nearest kinsman on whom it lay to repair the ruins of Elimelech's house; and thus Ruth is strong in faith, and seeks the blessing confidently, but withal humbly and graciously. And her faith is rewarded; according to it, is it done to her. She finds no terrors in this "mighty man of wealth," but all is the law of kindness; for though he cannot acknowledge that he is the first bound to her as under the law of the next kinsman, yet he blesses her in the name of the Lord as his daughter, his adopted one—pledges to her his love, vindicates her, and is her ready debtor in grace to do all that she required. Tenderness and delicacy mark all their intercourse through the night, confidence on her part, and full grace and readiness of love on his; and in the morning he dismisses her with tokens of his affection and care. And laden with these she returns to Naomi, and they rejoice together. Naomi again, in counsel, interprets all the ways of this mighty kinsman, assuring Ruth that he "will not be at rest" until he had perfected his kindness to her.

In all this, we are given clearly to trace the coming ways of God with Israel. Of old He had sought them; He found them in a desert land, He led them about, till He made them to ride on *the high places of the earth. This was their time of love.* Unsought He then took Israel for His inheritance, and spread His wings over them;—"When I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee and covered thy nakedness; yet I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee." (Ezek. xvi. 8.) But in the latter day, *the Lord must be sought unto,* as Ruth now seeks Boaz, and as He witnesses by His prophets, "I will go and return to my place, till *they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face*: in their affliction they will seek me early." (Hos. v. 15.) "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you, and ye *shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*" (Jer. xix. 12. And

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again, "*I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel,* to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock." (Ezek. xxxvi. 37.) Then Israel, like Ruth and Naomi, shall encourage themselves in the Lord, shall seek the shelter of His wing again, and the covering of his skirt again, and plead with Him for His land and for His people: the remnant shall return *unto the mighty God of Jacob. And the confidence and delicacy* of her approach, and His ready acknowledgment of her virtuous and worthy name, which we have observed, sets forth something of the way between the Lord and His Jewish remnant in the days when she is waiting for Him, and desiring to be taken into His banquet house, and have Him perform all the part of a kinsman to her. The book of Canticles, in its full prophetical import, appears to exhibit the same in beautiful mystical characters. Confidence in His love, and yet tenderness and humility will surely mark the path of the spirit of His waiting Israel then.

And their hope shall not be disappointed; for according to Naomi's largest expectations, Boaz seems to take no rest till he finishes the matter. On the morning after he had in grace pledged his kinsman vows to Ruth, he begins his services in accomplishing them, and there is none else that will own her, or take her poverty and ruin upon them. She is disclaimed by him who should have been the repairer of her breach, and Boaz alone will stand forth her kinsman and redeemer. Without delay in presence of the appointed witnesses, he takes Ruth in all her degradation for his own, and endows her with his name and wealth. The poor gleaner of his fields is made to share the magnificence of "this mighty man of wealth;" the poor stranger from Moab is made the first of all the mothers in Israel. Rachel and Leah may be forgotten now, for one has come in their stead to build up the house of Israel.

And the figure of Israel as they shall be, is here beautifully given to us. For it shall be, when the Lord sees that there is no man, when He wonders that there is no intercessor, that then His own arm will bring salvation. Of all the sons that Zion has brought forth, none will guide her or take her by the hand; the nearest kinsman will fail in that day: counsel will have perished from the wise, and understanding from the prudent; in vain will salvation be looked for to the hills and to the multitudes of moun-

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tains. "Then will the Lord be jealous for His land, and pity His people: then will He put on zeal as a cloak, and appear for the recompenses for the controversy of Zion." As the true Boaz, He will not be in rest till He "has finished the thing;" till He clothe her with garments of salvation, and rejoice over her as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride.

"So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife; and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son." The blessings before pronounced upon them by the people that were in the gate, and the elders, are now made theirs by the hand of the Lord Himself. "The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem." And so it came to pass. They called the name of this son, that was born to Boaz and Ruth, Obed; and he was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of David; and in David, the Bethlehemite, was the throne established for ever; worthy deeds shall be done in Ephratah, and famous things shall be spoken of Bethlehem; for out of Bethlehem-Ephratah has the seed of Ruth according to the flesh come forth, who shall be Ruler of His people Israel. And then shall the house of Israel be built through this most honoured mother. The Lord who, concerning the flesh, has come of her, shall make His Israel again a crown of glory in His hand, and a royal diadem; the first dominion, even the kingdom, shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem: Zion shall no more be termed forsaken, nor her land desolate, but she shall be called Hephzibah, and her land Beulah, for the Lord will delight in her, and her land shall be married.

Then shall she blossom and bud, and fill the face of the earth with fruit; the barren shall sing. She that was "the poor and the stranger," the daughter of Moab, and the widow in Judah, shall forget the shame of her youth, and the reproach of her widowhood, for her Maker will be her husband; and she that was desolate and a captive, and removing to and fro, shall receive her children again within her own borders. The barren shall bear seven. The gleaner shall be the honoured partner of the mighty; for "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that He may set him with princes, even with

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the princes of his people; He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children." (Psa. cxiii. 7—9.)*

In this action we observe that Boaz, treating with the kinsman, seems to bind himself not to redeem the inheritance of Elimelech, except by taking this poor and afflicted stranger to be his wife. In like manner has the Son of man so joined Himself with Israel, that He will not stand up to claim as His own the earth and its fulness, the world and its kingdoms, but as "King in Zion," as "Son of David," as one with that nation whom of old He had separated to Himself as the lot of His inheritance. (See Psa. ii. 6—8.) For it is in Israel that He will glorify Himself (Isa. xliv. 23.) as He says by Isaiah, "this people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." (Isa. xliii. 21.) And it is the *full and complete duty of their kinsman* that He will then graciously acknowledge and perform—He *will avenge their blood*, He *will redeem the inheritance*, and *build up His brother's house;* (Lev. xxv. 25.—Numb. xxxv. 19.—Deut. xxv. 5.) for "thus saith the Lord, behold I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places, and the city shall be builded on her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof; and out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry, and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few, I will also glorify them and they shall not be small; their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish them that oppress them." (Jer. xxx. 18—29.)

In connection with Ruth, I would here further observe, that the person and action of the Lord Jesus, as the Goel, the *Kinsman of Israel, and the Redeemer of the inheritance*, is again strikingly exemplified in the Prophet Jeremiah.—

Jeremiah was the faithful Jew in his day: he witnessed the sin and foretold even weeping the sorrows of his people. And so the Lord in His day stood in the midst of the evil, alone faithful;

* We may observe, that there was but a comparatively short interval between *the return of Naomi* and *the marriage of Ruth.* Naomi had been in captivity ten years; but before the harvest, during which she returned into Judea, was well over, Ruth was the wife of this mighty kinsman. So Judah's night was long as well as dreary; but, comparatively, *soon* after their return, (though like desolate Naomi, in all their present degradation,) the remnant may become the strong nation, and Judah made a praise in the earth.

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and as a second weeping Prophet, He told of the coming judgments of the daughter of His people. In Jeremiah we have the Christ, not in the character of the Lamb of God, but in that of the Kinsman, the faithful weeping Prophet of Israel. And it is in this character that we must hear Him saying, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." For who can estimate the bitterness of the tears of Jesus when He wept over the city, saying, "If thou hadst known at least in this thy day the things which belong unto thy peace."

But He, who sowed in tears then, shall reap in joy hereafter, and gather His sheaves in the land of Israel, even filling His bosom with them. And so we have also this reaping typified to us in the action of the same Prophet purchasing, as the nearest kinsman, the field in Anathoth, which belonged to Hanameel his uncle's son.

In this mystical action, Jeremiah was under the direct instruction of the word of the Lord. (see Jer. xxxii.) At this time he was in prison for the testimony of God against Israel, and the Chaldean enemy was at the gates of the city. But the Prophet has nothing to do but to obey the word which the Lord had sent him. He does not stand to question the way of the Lord in this strange procedure, nor does he for a moment pause to take counsel in his own heart about it, but being so commanded of the Lord, he weighs the money, subscribes the evidence, seals it, and takes witnesses that he may purchase the field in Anathoth. In faith that "the end of the Lord" would surely appear to be in all truth and mercy, he takes care to secure the evidence of the purchase according to the law and the customs. He gives them into the hand of the faithful Baruch, that they might be put into a place of safe keeping, there to "continue many days;" and then, when his obedience was thus fulfilled, but not till then, he inquires of the Lord why was all this? why in the present threatened ruin of Israel, when all there was soon to be the sport and spoil of the invaders, should he have been thus required to bury his money in the devoted land? The Lord in answer, tells him the purposes of His heart, for His secret is with them that fear Him. He tells him that the land which now for a season was to be desolate without man or beast, should return into the possession of Israel again, that fields should

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be bought there for money again, and evidences subscribed, and witnesses taken again in the land of Benjamin, and in the cities of Judah.

And such is the action of Israel's true and faithful Kinsman. He has already paid the price of redemption, He weighed it in the balances, when "He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," and the Lord has been well pleased, and has "crowned Him with glory and honour," and thus sealed his title to the inheritance, and He, the blessed Kinsman, "continues for many days," expecting till He shall see, in "the world to come," "all things put under Him." (see Heb. ii. 5—9.) Then shall He return into the long lost inheritance, be seated in Adam's forfeited dignity, have dominion over the works of God, and be brought forth as the heir of all things. The earth and the fulness thereof shall be His then in possession, as it is now in title, and the everlasting doors shall be lifted up to Him. (Ps. ii. viii. xxiv. cx.) And then shall the full joy of that song be known, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

Beloved brethren, what a company and what a joy is this to be! That you and I may have increase of faith to gain fresh spoils from "this present evil world," and to wait for "the world to come." The world that now is, has rejected the Son of God; but "the world to come" shall own Him.—It was "this present evil world" that sold Him for thirty pieces of silver.—It was this world that crucified Him.—It was "the pride of life," "the deceitfulness of riches," the receiving "honour one of another," the every day buying and selling, planting and building, eating and drinking of this world, that crucified Him.—It was "that which is highly esteemed among men," that did this thing. And it is all this that still refuses to have Him to reign—that would have Him still to delay His coming. But it is all this upon which His day is to come as a thief. O beloved, love not the world, nor the things that are of the world; "Remember Lot's wife," be ye like unto men that wait for their Lord; desire the days of the Son of man; be on the house-top; as those who are looking out for His re-

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turn; abide in the field as those that are apart from the "stuff in the house." (see Luke xvii. 31, 32.) Die with Jesus—glory in His cross; own as precious the blood of the Son of God, (which the world has shed, and is to answer for,) by being willing to be rejected with Him. And know that ere long, He will own your worthless names before the angels of God, and present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To His name, which alone is the worthy one, be all praise for ever and ever.

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HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS.

Τα ανω φρονειτε. (Col. iii. 2.)

One great end with God in the gospel of His grace, is at once so to bring those who believe into fellowship with Himself, that they may be like-minded with Him. Until this be the case there can be no well ordered blessing for any intelligent creature. The misery of man's state is, that he is fulfilling the desires (*wills* θελημαta) of the flesh and of *the mind;* "that he is alienated in his mind" from God, that his very element is dissociation from God in thought and act. And here is the grace and wisdom of God in the gospel of Christ, that while He meets man in the craving of his own selfishness, His manner of meeting man's selfishness by the blood of the Lamb at once brings man near unto Him. It is not mere escape from coming wrath, but immediate reception into the bosom of the Father. It is reconciliation through the blood of the cross; amity restored between those who had been separate, and this mighty power of the cross is the one grand object of the mind of heaven. Christ crucified, to them that are saved, is the power of God and the wisdom of God; and then is there unison between man on the earth and heaven; thus he "minds the things above."

There are two ways in which the mind of heaven becomes ascertained to us. The one is in that which is revealed to us respecting Jesus as in heaven, and the other respecting Jesus on the earth. In the first, He is represented to us as the one grand object of thought and theme of praise; in the second, He Himself applies the thoughts of heaven to the things of earth. Into both these it is our blessed privilege to enter. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." "Whom not having seen ye love, in whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." "We are come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of

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the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." It is thus that to faith a door is opened in heaven.

On the other hand, as spiritual, we are called on to judge all things—and ourselves can be judged of by no man. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord that He may instruct Him, but we have the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. ii. 15, 16.) "Being now light in the Lord," it is our privilege to walk as children of light, and what is this but the application of the mind of Christ to the circumstances around us, in other words to be heavenly-minded. And here is the great importance of the subject, it is not abstraction of mind from the reality of the misery around us into an ideal world, neither is it to become an ascetic, but the ability to associate heaven with the present state of things, through the knowledge of Him who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world.

When God had finished the work of creation, He saw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. Then for man created in the image and after the likeness of God, it was fitting to mind earthly things, to see the wisdom and goodness of God in the beautiful creation which He had put in subjection to him. Then the mind of heaven and earth was one, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." God, angels, and men could take complacency in the earth; it was the expression of God's power, and wisdom, and goodness. Wheresoever man turned to the things around him, they would necessarily be associated in his mind with God. But when man fell under the power of Satan, and subjected the creation to vanity, groaning, and misery, God could no longer be associated in man's mind with the works of creation, except to his own terror and confusion. Every thing around him must have been a speaking testimony to his own sin and dissociation from God. He could not look to the earth and then look with confi-

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dence towards God. He saw the withering power of his own evil. He can no longer rejoice in the earth, as the work of God's hand, because the constant object presented to his view was the ruin and desolation he had introduced. But God did not immediately interfere in judgment; He left man to the trial of his powers to undo the mischief he had done. But evil increasingly developed itself in man, and through him its baneful influence passed on all around him. "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." "And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them, and behold I will destroy them with the earth." When, therefore, the state of the earth grew worse and worse, instead of improving under the management of man, the condition of blessing could be no longer in minding earthly things, but in walking with God as Enoch, prophesying in word of the Lord coming in judgment, or in testifying by act, as Noah, of its speedy approach.

After the flood, the Lord introduces a dispensation of forbearance and long-suffering, pledging Himself not to curse the ground any more for man's sake; "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Again, it is said to Noah, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth;" but instead of investiture of dominion, as unto Adam, and willing acknowledgment on the part of creation to man as its Lord, it now is only "the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth—into your hand are they delivered; every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb have I given you all things." But there was a reservation, and that reservation a constant testimony to man that his life was forfeited.—"But flesh *with the life thereof*, which is *the blood* thereof, shall ye not eat." This one injunction placed man as a sinner before God, as one who had lost all title to blessing, and needed to approach God through blood. At the same time God himself interferes in the government of the earth, proving that it was taken out of man's hand into His own, and that He was the God to whom vengeance belonged. And surely your blood of your lives will *I* require, at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image

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of God made He man." God had not interfered in vengeance against the first murderer, Cain; on the contrary, He had set a mark on him lest any should slay him, that man might learn, being left to himself, whether he could undo the evil he had introduced. But now God interfered in the ordering the earth, and earthly things could only be so minded, as to blessing, by man's seeing his own condition, as before God, and God's rule in the earth.

But the presumption of man only increased by God's forbearance; and instead of acknowledging God in the earth, he purposed the vain attempt of subjecting heaven to his rule. When the Lord had scattered them abroad in all the earth, then did he give them up, as it were, as to palpable interference, though "He left not Himself without witness among them, in that He did them good and gave them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons." But they speedily turned aside to lying vanities; and since God had left them to themselves they made gods for themselves, according to their own minds, and rejoiced in the works of their hands. Now it pleases the Lord to interfere in another way; He calls out an individual from an idolatrous world, and makes special revelation of Himself to him. And this communication of Himself to Abram by Jehovah, is the introduction of a new principle, even the knowledge of another portion than things present and seen, in having Jehovah for his shield and exceeding great reward. In Abram therefore was the introduction of a new principle; he was the one to whom the promises were made, and that which was now to be minded, was not the state of things before the eye, but those things which were presented to faith afar off—leading to the confession that they were pilgrims and strangers in the earth. Abram knew that a long period of darkness and distress would intervene, ere the land, in which he was a stranger, should become the possession of his seed. But when the set time was come, the Lord, faithful to His word, brought them out of Egypt; and, as though he would not hinder the earth's blessing, proposes to the children of Israel to vest that blessing in them, by Himself becoming their Lawgiver and their King.—"Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for *all the earth is mine*, and

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ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an *holy nation.*" This was the distinguishing blessing—a holy nation—a wise and great nation; because the Lord God was in the midst of it. Here, then, was one nation in the earth, wherein to have minded earthly things would have been to have recognized God;—"For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for." (Deut. iv. 7.) An Israelite would have seen God, not only in the tabernacle service, but in his civil relations, in his judicial arrangements, in his household economy,—every little circumstance became of importance when sanctioned by—"Ye shall"—"for I am the Lord." (Lev. xix.) To have minded all these earthly things would have been to have recognized God.

But the people would have the blessing apart from God, they minded the blessing, but became impatient of having God so near unto them; they liked not the tenure on which they held the blessing, even the acknowledgment that it was a trust to them from God; they said unto Samuel "now make us a king to judge us like all the nations," Thus they rejected God; and although He bore with this their sin, and "gave them a king in His anger," and set up one in all plenitude of wisdom and power, yet it was only to show how abortive must be the attempt, in man's hand, at remedying the evil he had introduced into God's creation—it was all vanity. But although Solomon failed in getting blessing from earthly things, God did not give up the earth; He still recognized one people in it, whose happiness depended on their acknowledgment of Him in the things around them. But they only rejoiced in the work of their own hands—they would "none of the Lord their God," so He gave them up unto their own heart's lust, and they walked in their own counsels. All His testimony had failed by the mouths of all His Prophets, saying, turn unto me and I will bless you—till at last He sent His Son, saying, "they will reverence my Son." He came with the power of earthly blessing in His hand, and presented Himself to their acceptance as the seed in whom they and all nations of the earth might be blessed. But He was despised and rejected of them. He was by wicked hands crucified and slain; but heaven received Him, as the only One in whom blessing centred. And now the wide difference,

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between what is the mind of earth and heaven, is made manifest. There is but one mind in heaven, and that is the acknowledgment of the worth of the Lamb that was slain. "Him hath God exalted;" to Him hath Jehovah said, "Sit on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool." The whole intelligence of heaven is occupied in discovering all the glories of the Person and work of the Son. Here, then, is heavenly-mindedness; it can only be the portion of those who are risen with Christ. They are already come in spirit to an innumerable company of angels, and together with them desire to look into the sufferings of Christ, and the glories to follow them. There is one all-absorbing subject—it admits not of a divided mind—the loins of the mind must be girded up. It is a subject too which is inexhaustible. He who is a father in Christ is the one who has unlearnt all else, in order to know Him that "was from the beginning;" and has yet to pray, "that I may know Him." It is, therefore, by knowing Jesus, that we know the mind of heaven. There is nothing fanciful or speculative in this; it is not giving the rein to a lively or warm imagination, in order to picture to ourselves what might be the employments of heaven; but it is our ability, through the knowledge of Him who descended first into the lower parts of the earth, and then ascended far above all heavens, to have fellowship with those who are there. The same substantial reality, which is presented to us, is also to them the engrossing subject, even the Lamb that was slain. It is this which measures the utter distance between the utmost stretch of human intellect, or loftiest flight of man's imagination, and one led by the Spirit—the subject is so different. "Canst thou by searching find out God, canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" It is no longer a God felt after, if haply we may find Him, but a God made known in ministering unto our necesssities. For redemption is God's medium for displaying what He is, even to those who needed not redemption themselves. When the fulness of time came for sending forth His Son, made of a woman, it was not those to whom He came to minister blessing, not those with whom He had associated Himself in nature, but another race, whose nature He had not assumed, and whom He had not come to help, who sung the song of praise. The wonderful plan of redemption was first recognized in heaven.—"Glory to God in the

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highest." This is the great reality: till this, which occupies the mind of heaven, occupies man's mind, he only walketh in a vain show—he disquieteth himself in vain. That which is before him is vanity—the world passeth away and the lust thereof. His only reality is the sin, sorrow, and death he inherits, and which he seeks to forget in the pursuit of happiness from the creature: but the reality with which heaven is conversant, is the triumph of Him who overcame it all, and who says to His disciples, "be of good cheer, because I have overcome the world." This is the victory, they celebrate; not greatness in the world, but triumph over it through suffering from it. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." How marvellous is this! every thing that the heart of man craves, in order to its happiness, all ascribed to Him whom men by their wicked hands crucified and slew. Who can enter into the thoughts, who into the joys of heaven, but he that glories in the cross of Christ, and sees the world, through that medium, as lying under the wicked one. Surely to mind earthly things, is to be entirely forgetful of this triumphant song. It is assuming a right to ourselves now to receive power and riches, &c. and thus to justify man in his crucifixion of the Lord of glory, and in our hearts to say that Jesus was accursed. He was and is worthy to receive all this because He was *slain*. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; therefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name. Jesus sought not honour of men, and would not receive the glory of the world, but showed forth its real character and opposition to God, not only in renouncing it, but in suffering from it.—He died to it and by it.

How needful, therefore, is unison with the mind of heaven, in order to ascertain our own proper standing in the world. How do *they* view all those things which man craves—power, riches, glory, honour, *they* cannot recognize them as in the hands of man, for there they are only turned to evil, *they* only know them as in the hands of Him that was slain. There we should know them, and live by faith on them as ours invested in Him for us also, Heirs of all His glory. He has received in order to give; and the glory He has so hardly earned, He wills should be given to those who believe on Him.

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But while we thus learn the mind of heaven, and, as taught by the Spirit, are led into unity with it, there is yet another way in which that mind was exhibited, and of this our calling is to be practical followers. Whilst we have seen the strong contrast of the mind of heaven with the mind of earth, there is another contrast which we are called on to survey, and that is between the beloved Son of God and the world in which He was. It is thus we not only learn the entire alienation of the world from God, but we have the heavenly mind brought before us, in very minute detail, concerning the every-day occurrences of life. It was He who alone could say, "No man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven;" who could show us the thoughts of God concerning the evil in which we are, and point out how those who were made partakers of the heavenly calling, were to walk worthily of it. It is thus that every circumstance becomes an occasion of showing forth heavenly-mindedness. It is easy for us now to see that one use the wisdom of God has made of man's evil, has been to manifest His own blessedness through it. It is in His dealing with evil that the character of God has been made known to us, and not only to us but to angels. And a further display of God's wisdom is now being manifested unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, by the Church, called to act in the world on the very same principles that He is acting in it. It is this which gives such distinctiveness to Christian morals, which, whilst they do most fully recognize all that is honest and of good report, at the same time present to us that which is really lovely because a transcript of God. The new man is created in righteousness and true holiness, but the sphere of its exercise being evil, it must only be in suffering, in endurance. He is "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him;" but that knowledge is to be applied to the circumstances of man, to shew that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding;" and that the wisdom which cometh from above, is at direct variance with that of man, as applied to like circumstances. Here is the grand distinction, "that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, *being alienated from the life of God,* through

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the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be ye have heard Him and have been taught by Him *as the truth is in Jesus*:" Now Jesus indeed is *the* truth, for all truth centres in Him; but here the Apostle is speaking not of doctrine but of Christian conduct, and the real walk of a believer is only to be seen "as the truth is in Jesus."—This is the lesson before us. "Learn of me;" the Master does not order the disciple to do any thing but to follow Him. And the standard proposed, is, "every one that is perfect shall be as his Master." It is therefore in Jesus, come into the world, that we find what real heavenly-mindedness is, and at once discover that one so minded, could not take complacency in the state of things around him. We, indeed, who are born under the law of sin and death, are made to feel, in our ownselves, what misery is; we are "of the earth and earthly, and speak of the earth," but He came from heaven and spoke that which He had seen and heard; and, acquainted with the pure blessing of heaven, He could not take delight in the things of the world, He that came from above could make the contrast, and became a Man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, from the keen perception of the moral desolation and ruin into which man had hurried God's creation. Separate from sinners Himself, He could deeply sypathise with the misery of man. He was of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, and saw man without the fear of God before his eyes. Knowing the blessedness of being in the Father's bosom, He saw man seeking his happiness in the creature.—He knew the wrath of God, and that it was coming, and beheld man living as though he were in the sunshine of God's favour. He dwelt in the holiness of God, and saw man dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air. All these realities were brought before Him, and He mourned and marvelled at man's unbelief, and was grieved at the hardness of their hearts. He saw the full sway of death, and wept at the grave of Lazarus, and yet man had become so familiar with death as to forget that it was the penalty of sin. This is heavenly-mindedness; no complacency in any effort of the flesh, but seeing all its glory fading before the power of death, no rejoicing in what man was rejoicing—even in the works of his hands, but seeing

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God in his works, and discovering more real glory in the lily of the field than in all the splendour of Solomon.

This is heavenly-mindedness; it is the ability to rate evil at all its fearful extent, and to know God to the full extent of His blessedness. It is no ideal speculation, no refined mysticism, but the soul apprehending God in Christ, and applying its apprehension of Him to present circumstances. Here is one great value of the incarnation: it is to us the expression of the mind of God on our circumstances.—"I," says Jesus, "am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He did the will of Him that sent Him, and therefore could judge righteous judgment; and it is only as doing that same will, that we are in the capacity of exercising right judgment. Our judgment must ever be according to appearances, until we have come to recognize Jesus as God's standard by which He tries every thing. It is in this that we fail so much of heavenly-mindedness. The circumstances before us are the things which present themselves,—we judge them good or bad relatively to our convenience or interest; but we fail of getting God's judgment of them, by not bringing Jesus into them to see the truth as it is in Him. It is marvellous how often man is calling that light which He called darkness, and that good which he showed evil. There is much need to suspect our own judgments, and to see, in the case of Peter, how man's mind *φρονεις τα των ανθρωπων* (Matt. xvi. 23), is exercised erroneously even in the things of God. This is what the Apostle found wanting in the Hebrews.—They had not their senses "exercised, by reason of use, to discern both good and evil." Our portion is to have the mind of Christ; and, in virtue of the Holy Spirit, which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, to ascertain His thoughts, and to apply them to circumstances around us.

It is as quickened together with Christ, and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Him, that we are enabled to survey the world and all that is in it by the light of heaven.—"If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." "Mind the things above, not the things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." It thus that we learn that the system of things on

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the earth is the subject of the long-suffering and forbearance of God, who will put off the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, until man's iniquity is again come to the full. We see the Lord Jesus Christ *ready* to judge the quick and the dead, but patiently expecting in order that the testimony may go forth unto His sacrifice, that none may perish unwarned. How needful for us thus to be heavenly-minded, and to learn our place in separation from the world—to bear with it as God does; not to avenge ourselves, but to leave vengeance to Him, and to show the same grace towards it that He shows, and to use unremittingly the present opportunity of testimony. Here truly, is the wonderful glory of the mind of heaven—the power to endure. We know not what manner of spirit we are of till we enter into the full mind of Him, the greatness of whose power is the ability to restrain it. "God hath spoken once—twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God; also unto thee, Lord, belongeth mercy." (Psa. lxii.) Where, but in God, shall we find power to rid Himself of His adversaries, so restrained by mercy, and He Himself beseeching sinners, the meanwhile, to be reconciled to Him.—"Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, humbleness of mind, forbearance and long-suffering, for this is the mind of heaven."

But whilst we learn that heavenly-mindedness is necessarily sorrow of heart, as to things around, we learn also, that to do God's will on earth is necessarily suffering. The Son of man, which was in heaven on earth, was the just and holy One; He fulfilled all righteousness Himself, but He exercised it not for Himself. To others He was all grace: it was cast into His teeth as a reproach—"this Man receiveth sinners and eateth with them;" and does the Lord vindicate Himself from the charge? on the contrary, He takes it as the occasion of showing what the mind of heaven was;—that whilst one sinner would indignantly cast away from His presence another, infinite purity and holiness was exhibited, as able to receive such and to bless them. This is grace—this is what God had in store to reveal of Himself, after that His goodness, and holiness, and righteousness, had been made known to no purpose. This is His great glory: here is set forth the infinite contrariety between God and man; man who loves sin, puts

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away from him his fellow-sinner; God's counselled grace, in showing His hatred of sin, brings blessing to the sinner, and brings him near to Himself to bless him. It is in this that He abounds towards us in all wisdom and prudence. Here it is that God's thoughts are so far above our thoughts, and His ways far higher than ours; and yet His thoughts and His ways are the rule He prescribes to us. Not only, therefore, in doing God's will are we called on to put on the new man, created in righteousness and true holiness, but to walk in grace towards an evil world—hence necessarily to suffer—he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. God is not judging, he must not judge—God is not taking vengeance, he cannot avenge himself.—God is not resisting evil by righteousness exercised in power—he must not resist evil. But beyond this, the blessedness of that grace we do know, is to be shown forth practically. It was not compulsion on our part that brought the blessing from heaven to man. Even had man urged God to bless him, he never could have thought of the possibility of such a blessing being conferred, as to be so brought unto God's favour, as to be made His sons. God's own grace far exceeded even the exigencies of man's misery. This is the mind of heaven, and how is it applicable to us? "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." We are called upon to show the vast superiority of grace over selfishness, the only natural principle of man, to do more from love than he would exact from interest. And then follows the perfect love of God, seen in His loving those who loved not Him, as the only standard proposed for our imitation.—"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in *heaven* is perfect." And the same standard is held up to us as walking in connection with brethren, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you; be ye *therefore* followers (imitators μιμηται) of God, as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." (Ephes. iv. 32, v. 1, 2.)

But the most remarkable characteristic of the mind of heaven in reference to the world, is, that God should now forego for a time His right to the world. "God sent not His Son into the world,

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to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." The testimony unto its coming judgment in righteousness, is in order to point sinners now to Him, to whom all the prophets bare witness, that through His name whosoever believeth on Him should receive remission of sins. "There is now joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

It is the rule of heaven which is prescribed to us, now we are called on to rejoice in the triumphs of God's grace; but the time is approaching, when the period of God's long-suffering will be spent, and iniquity come to its full, and then the mind of heaven will be differently expressed.—"I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia! salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are His judgments." Here is the infinite importance that the tone of our mind should be in unison with that of God; that when He is dealing with a ruined world in grace, we should be like-minded with Him in reference to it, but that when His judgments are made manifest, we should be prepared to praise Him for His holiness. This it is into which we are now brought, instead of "being without God in the world," to acknowledge Him in it. The world as evil, is the sphere of God's display of His forbearance, and Jesus, in such a world, asserted not His right because the assertion of that must have been its judgment. He always took the place of one who receded from that which He might justly have asserted. John had need to be baptized of Him, yet with the full allowance of this He comes to be baptized of John, that thus in obedience He might fulfil all righteousness. So again, as the Son, He was not compelled to pay the half-shekel for the temple service, yet He waived His right. It was thus that He taught us our place, "But *I* say unto *you* that ye resist not evil." Here is the grand contrast, the system of the world is the resistance of evil: to this end are all the energies and wisdom of man, whether individually or collectively, directed. The standard assumed is man's convenience, hence much that is evil in God's sight is tolerated and accredited by human legislation, and the very end for which man is brought up in the world is the assertion of His supposed rights. The believer has not so learned Christ, he knows God's right and title in all justice towards Him is condemnation, but God has waived that, and

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given Him the right of a son, of His free grace, having made Him accepted in the Beloved. His place and standing in the same evil world in which the Beloved Himself stood, is to follow Him; to bring to bear the same mind on it as He exhibited. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," "Dearly beloved, *avenge* not yourselves, but rather *give place unto wrath*, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord." That which orders the world in any measure now is vengeance and wrath,—these are the principles of rule in the world as ordered of God. "The powers that be are ordained of God," and the power beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, a *revenger* unto wrath upon him that doeth evil." Here is the most distinct mark between God dwelling in the Church, and God's owning authority in the world. The Church is partaker of the heavenly calling, and her place is to show forth in the world the heavenly mind. And where can this be shown more clearly than in the two simple regulating principles, "the world will love its own," "Love seeketh not her own." Self-interest is the world's grand maxim, self-denial that of Christ. It is fellowship alone with the heavenly mind that enables us to walk in a straight path. We know, alas! that the consummation of apostasy is the establishment of the world's own principle upon the seeming basis of Christianity. "In the last days perilous times shall come, men shall be lovers of their ownselves." The attempt of the Church to act on the world's principle of asserting present power, has ever been to tolerate iniquity and persecute truth; while the attempt of the world to act on anything like Christian principles, has been to give the rein to ungodliness and strengthen the hands of the wicked. The new piece put to the old garment makes the rent only worse; the new wine put into old bottles causes them to burst, and the wine is spilled. Such has been the result of attempting to apply those blessed principles which can only be acted out in the Church to the rule of the world. It is only as closely following in the steps of Him, the Son of man in heaven, even while on earth, that we shall walk in the light and not stumble.

As we see that the crisis, to which all is hastening, is the victory of the world over the professing Church, our place is to be followers of Him who could say to us, "Be of good cheer, I have

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overcome the world." The Lord puts in direct contrast the two things which the world and the Church have both sought to unite, that is, power and grace. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." As He is, so are we in this world; He is the beloved Son and Heir of all things too; we are dear children, and joint-heirs with Him. Now as the Father loved the Son, and gave all things unto Him, and He stood in the midst of the world as one who could say, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father;" so it was in the recognition of the completeness of His title to all things that He said, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Here, then, is our place,—in title heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; but as children, now only called to manifest the mind of our Father in bearing with and ministering grace unto a ruined world, and in doing all things without murmurings and disputings.

But there is another way in which we learn the truth as it is in Jesus, in seeing Him, the Son, humbled to the place of the servant, and there learning obedience through the things that He suffered. Our calling is unto obedience and suffering.—"Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience." "To you it is *given*, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also *to suffer* for His sake." This is our heavenly calling—obedience; and as this is exercised here, it must be obedience in suffering. To obey, when the world is ordered by a king reigning in righteousness, would not be to suffer; the work of righteousness would be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness; but to obey God when He is dealing with the world in grace, is necessarily to suffer for righteousness' sake; and therefore are we called upon to "do all things without murmurings and disputings, that we may be the sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, holding forth the word of life. Obedience is the one rule of heaven; and strange must be the disorder to their apprehensions of man, a crea-

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ture, presuming to set up his will against that of God. The will of God is known in heaven as the only blessedness;—"Bless the Lord ye His Angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." Now this was to be shown forth on earth as the only blessedness; and therefore, He who came from heaven, and had no right to obey in heaven, came to learn obedience by the things which He had suffered. This was the great lesson to teach man; this was heavenly-mindedness, obedience to God under any circumstances.—"Lo! I come to do thy will O God." Obedience carried Him unto death; and thus He speaks to His disciples, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal; if any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me him will my Father honour." And thus it is that heavenly-mindedness is to be shown, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. The obedience of the Son is the great wonder of heaven, as well as the deeply laid instructive lesson to those who dwell on the earth, "I have glorified thee on earth." All were glorifying God in heaven, but this was His alone to say, because He willingly became the subject in which the Father's name might be glorified; He turned not away His back. He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to those who plucked off the hair; He hid not His face from shame and spitting; but obedience and confidence went hand in hand, "For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." And the result of the humiliation of the Son unto obedience shall be, that the mind of earth and heaven become one.—"God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven." Then shall man say as Jesus said, "I know that His commandment is eternal life."

It is of unspeakable value to us to have the steady light of heaven to guide us through the darkness of this world. The example of Jesus ever bears on His own precept. The precept is general, the example affords the limitation, and it is our wisdom to bring the two together, that we may know how to walk and to please God. "I," says Jesus, "am come a light into the world

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that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." We have a most remarkable instance of Jesus, as the light, in His early days, an instance of immense value to those who, on the one hand, are called upon to forsake father and mother for Christ's sake; and, on the other, are warned as to disobedience to parents, being one of the marks of the apostasy of the latter day. He could say, "wist ye not that I was about my Father's business?" and then went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. He recognized God as the only fountain of authority; and when that authority came directly to bear on Him, He would suffer no derived authority to stand in its way.—This is the mind of heaven. Power belongeth unto God, and it is so to be recognized both in a parent and in a ruler: but they cannot use the power with which God has intrusted them against His own authority. Where that is the point, we must obey God rather than man,— obey God, and suffer from man. Obedience to man, in such a case, would be disobedience to God. How many questions would be avoided, how many difficulties solved, had we the mind of Him whose meat it was to do the will of Him that sent Him. There was in Him a single object; and those cases, which are only perplexing because there is self-will in us, were plain unto Him.

It is thus, then, that heavenly-mindedness is to be exercised in the most common things. The children of God are thus called into direct contrast with the world in which they are—in it, but not of it, and shewing forth His praises "who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." Almost all the casuistry we are exercising, arises from the supposition that we are still debtors to the flesh, that we must take a lower standard than that into which union with Christ brings us. The word to us is, "Ye are dead." No longer ought we to look on ourselves as united with the first man Adam, otherwise than unto the disowning of the flesh, but with the second man, the Lord from heaven; and as the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. It is now to live and walk in the Spirit, now having put on the new man to be renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him, having thus the earnest of that perfect conformity which awaits

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them at the resurrection, unto which they are predestinated, even the image of His Son.

And how blessed, amidst the shifting morality of man, to have an unerring judgment ; at once to find deliverance from the thousand perplexities and inconsistencies which distract the mind of one seeking to serve God and mammon. "The flesh profiteth nothing ;" all its glory is grass. "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." This is the righteous judgment of him who, taking his stand with Christ at the right hand of God, views all things from thence. How is the fond delusion vanished, the moment we get to our proper standing, of any expectation of good from man. The vain pursuit is given up, and the only desire is to mortify the members which are on the earth, and to find the blessing that follows ;—"If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

THE COVENANTS.

THE Covenant is a word common in the language of a large class of Christian professors, and also of many true Christians ; but in its development and detail, as to its unfolded principles, much obscurity appears to me to have arisen from a want of simple attention to Scripture.

The giving of the Church to Christ before the worlds, and the consequent giving to us of the blessings therein involved, seem to me indeed to be most clearly declared in Scripture, as in 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. But little heed seems to have been given to that which is really contained in this Covenant, as administered in dispensation, in its connection with the character and hope of the Church. Without weakening, then, the foundation whereon all rests, or pulling stones out of it to polish or carve for less needful and ap-

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propriate uses, while that whereon they should rest is gone; let us see the plain revelation afforded by the blessed word, on what, in their great branches, the Covenants are founded.

The mystery of God's will, according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself, He hath made known unto us;—even that He should gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him. This (however consistent every thing was with it, or even typical of it) was hidden from ages and from generations. In fact, however progressive the intimations might be, (better hopes sustaining believers in greater darkness, as was the case in prophecy) the limits of the actual dealings of God, as to dispensation, were narrowed, and the terms of them lowered with the falling condition of man and that growing darkness. The promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, had a wider scope and was a more comprehensive promise than was any subsequent revelation of resulting details, in the sphere subject to his power, it took the character of the work higher up. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." The call, and the promise to Abram again had a wider and a fuller meaning and purpose than any dealings with the Jews, not only at Mount Sinai, but even the previous deliverances which constituted them a nation—a people marked by God as the favoured subjects of His strong hand and mighty arm, however more immediate and manifest the hand of God might be. It had, therefore, a more immediate and determinate object;—not the out-reaching prospect of faith, but the visible actings towards the subjects of present deliverance.

The law, given from Mount Sinai, took entirely another ground; and whatever was contained in it (as a figure for the time then present), was based upon the obedience of man, as to its terms of promise and blessing, and not in the supremacy of God, however flowing from it.

If we turn to the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb, we shall see at once the characteristic difference, (even in the subjects of praise) in the dispensations. The whole song of Moses, most beautiful as it is, is about the hand and power of God doing wonders. "Thy right hand O Lord is become glorious in power."

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—So in the 15th of Revelation, "Great and marvellous are thy *works*, O Lord God Almighty." The song of the Lamb is, "Just and true are thy *ways* thou King of saints." *We* have the mind of Christ; and as Christ is the wisdom of God, and the power of God, so is made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God; and so in the resurrection, when the Lord returns, shall in the Church also be manifested the power of God in Christ, "according to the working of His mighty power, whereby He is able to subdue even all things unto Himself." And then, in *fact*, (as now known in *faith*) being indeed quickened, shall be manifested "the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe; according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places."

But now let the Church learn, and let the saint learn that, if it looks with marvel and admiration at the deliverance wrought by the right hand of the Lord at the Red Sea, it too shall long sing even in higher and more blessed strains; but now it has a more intimate and distinct lesson to learn,—a peculiar, a privileged lesson—the ways of God—the mind of God,—and therefore it must be content to suffer. It is not the time, properly speaking, for power to be exercised in its behalf, but for "being renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Now in this there is often found in us that which savours not of the wisdom of the holy and graceful ways of God, there must be suffering; this must be wrought out in the understanding of His mind.—Often we have so to learn it. For the rest, the sufferings are the occasions of the perfect display of this grace in a spirit and character altogether beyond the wisdom of man. He, who through death destroyed him that had the power of death, is the pattern of the wisdom in which the Church is led forth into beauty. So we find in the 139th Psalm; in which the wisdom and knowledge of God, shown in power manifested in weakness, is illustrated in the fashioning of the members of Christ out of the lower parts of the earth, and in "awaking still with thee;"—the wicked are afterward to perish. Hence, in leading forth the people which He had redeemed He led them not in the triumph of power, altogether above the circumstances through which they passed, as was the

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case in the deliverance from Egypt, even the present destruction of their enemies by power entirely above them, which they knew only in effect;—but, "when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them and they follow Him." "It became Him by whom are all things, and for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering; for He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee."—I mean our fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus; having the quickening of that eternal life which was with the Father;—a place, not merely of effects in deliverance, but fellowship with Him who so delivers. Hence, I say, Jesus having led the way in grace, and the grace being thus fully manifested, let us not shrink from the sufferings in which we are formed inwardly; for it is communion with, and being conformed to the image of the Son.

But in looking at the Church's introduction into the knowledge of this image, and fellowship with it, I have, perhaps, wandered too far from the simple question of the Covenants. Now I say that this fellowship with the Head triumphant, formed no part of the revelation of the Covenants, though clearly purposed and formed before the world was, before the ages or dispensations which came in meanwhile, but was reserved for the revelation of the Holy Ghost, sent down upon the exaltation of the Head into the place, according to the character and glory of which the fellowship itself was to be. And this was manifestly necessary; for until the glorification of the suffering Man, there was not that to which the Spirit could testify as existent; nor that accomplished by reason of which the sinner could righteously apprehend fellowship with the glory of the Holiest. Indeed this glory was consequent upon the wages of sin, as it was acquired by the exceeding excellency of that by which sin was put away. It was not the perfecting of the creature, but his change into that which by nature he could not inherit, for flesh and blood could not inherit the kingdom of God. It was not the fashioning of creature glory, but the result through death, of redemption and higher glory. It was

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not blessings of creature things conferred on the creature, but the communion of the creature with the Creator; a new, and clearly an infinite truth; not casual, not medial, but infinite and supreme; the knowledge of which is the Church's present portion by the Holy Ghost; known in Jesus and known in communion with Him; —the highest link of the supreme glory; a new, a very glorious truth, in which God is revealed (as not otherwise) manifest in the flesh, revealed without in personality.

Now I would inquire in how far the Covenants unfold these things. The Abrahamic Covenants (though wider in the scope and testimony, as we have seen, than the local blessings and promises to Israel, as the Apostle also so fully argues) contained none of these things; they proposed the person of the Redeemer, the promised Seed; they proposed the blessing of all nations, but they went not beyond Abram's being the heir of the world. This may disclose brighter things now that the veil is rent; but in the promises and Covenants given to Abraham, he did not outstep as yet in expression the limits of what belonged to the first Adam because the second Adam (who was also the Lord from heaven) was not revealed, and was simply testified of as the seed of Abraham in whom this blessing should come whatever it was.

These promises and covenants are in Gen. xii. and xv. and confirmed in chap. xvii. and xxii. The first promise runs thus, "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless him that blesseth thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Afterward the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, "To thy seed will I give this land;"—here we have nothing beyond the earth and the families by whom it has been divided.

In the 15th chap. we have the promise of a seed, numerous as the stars of heaven, and (after stating the circumstances in which they would be intermediately placed) the giving of the land to them from the river of Egypt, to the great river, the river Euphrates, confirmed by the Covenant of the Lord passing between the pieces of the victims.

In the 17th chap. this is established as an everlasting Covenant with Abraham (his name being changed), and with his seed after

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him, throughout their generations,—that God would be a God to him, and to his seed after him; and that He would give to him, and to his seed after him, all the land wherein he was a stranger for an everlasting possession; and that He would be their God, and circumcision was given to Abraham as a seal.

In the 22nd chap. we have the confirmation of the promise to the seed. "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is by the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed." In the latter part of this promise we have the confirmation of the blessing of the families of the earth to the seed, that is Christ; which was (in the 12th chap.) made originally to Abram. Still (whatever be the manner of its accomplishment), it reaches not beyond the original promise to the families of the earth; nor is *He, in whom it was to be fulfilled, revealed otherwise than as the* seed of Abraham. The other promises, and the formal Covenant are all of the land, and of a seed numerous and prosperous, who should inherit it, and be a blessing. In all this (however unconditionally it establishes that) we have nothing beyond that which is earthly. The promises and covenants in Abraham are established upon grounds which cannot be shaken, not the stability of a professed obedience, but the stability of the declared promise of God; —two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, His promise, and His Oath. Whatever intimations of circumstances, or gathering of hope there might be, the Covenants themselves expressed no more. They were confirmed to Isaac, chap. xxvi.; and to Jacob, chap. xxviii., but no particular remark is called for as to the terms of the Covenants in them.

We then come to Mount Sinai. The first Covenant made with Israel as a nation; and here, as the Covenant was of course confined to the nation or literal seed recently delivered, so the subject matter of the promises was honour and blessing before that God whose all the earth was. This was the Old Covenant, as we afterwards read of the New Covenant, which latter implies (as expressed in its terms) that it was made with the same people:— both (whatever their character) dealing with them as a people— i.e. in reference to earth, although putting them as on earth into

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relationship to God. The New Covenant (however its terms then might introduce new principles applicable to strangers) could not be said to be, "not according to the Covenant I made with their Fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt," were it not a Covenant made with Israel,—the same people with whom the former Covenant was made at Mount Sinai. Whoever will but examine the 31st chap. of Jeremiah, from which this very important testimony is quoted, will at once see that the New Covenant is to, and with Israel; as moreover it is not quoted by the Apostle in any Epistle except that to the Hebrews.

The first Covenant, then, was a Covenant made with Israel;—the second Covenant is a Covenant made with Israel, but not yet accomplished in its effects. The use which the Apostle makes of it is to shew that the Old Covenant was faulty, and they should not rest in it:—that it was ready to vanish away; thus leading them on to the Mediator of the New in the manner which I shall now just attempt to set forth; but without in any way speaking of the Covenant (as made with the nation) being brought in as to the effects therein described, or that they had come under it; although God's part in it was sealed.

We have, then, (passing by at present the wider Abrahamic Covenants) two Covenants with the House of Israel, on distinct and different terms. The first at Mount Sinai,—The second with Christ as its Mediator and its seal.

Now as to the Covenant made with Israel on Mount Sinai,—its terms were these:—the people undertook to obey all that the Lord should command.—"Now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. And all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do; and Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord." Nothing could be more distinct and express than was this condition, "*If* ye will obey my voice, and keep my Covenant, ye shall be," &c. and the people undertook the terms explicitly. Now it is remarkable that the previous condition of the people had been unfolded as resting entirely upon grace; as such

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it was manifested in their deliverance from the power and prince of this world,—in the healing of the water which they had to drink,—the giving of the sabbath in which the manna would be an abiding portion,—bread given daily otherwise, the needful and surely apportioned supply of grace,—the waters given in the time of their need, though they murmured and tempted the Lord, yet freely given to them from the stony rock;—in the power of Mediatorial intercession against their enemies, with their discomfiture, the Lord being their banner, and Joshua their leader;—in the ordering of needful government in the household of God; though this was not of principle but from a stranger.

But though the real ground on which they were the people of God, and were known and shown to be such, was thus of grace before the terms of Mount Sinai and its Covenant came in at all, yet for God's sure and wise purposes, and the sure (I do not say the whole) wisdom of which we can see in the exhibition of man's failure and the progressive unfolding of dispensation; in this wisdom the conditional obedience is proposed to Israel, and on that stipulation they take all the promises. How long it lasted was displayed by the noise of those who sang;—the first principle and foundation of the whole system was broken and laid low before the Mediator returned with the order of that obedience which was pledged in it. The Covenant was gone,—So much for the Covenant of works of man's undertaken obedience. "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." But the Lord was not only shewing the failure of man in obedience, and the characteristics of the perfection required under the law, but there was also, however narrowed the scene in which they were displayed, the progress therein of unfolding dispensations. The first Covenant had ordinances of divine service, a holy order. It is remarkable to observe here that coincident with the failure of man under natural principles, there arose the testimony of another foundation, and other and gracious ordinances of divine life. When I say coincident with the failure, I mean rather with the exhibition and evidence of the failure, and then is seen the evidence of the scheme of grace. Progressively had the character of the connexion between God and man lowered, and progressively had man sunk to the hopeless state of having a broken law, a re-

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jected God of glory, whose hand had been itself shown in their favour as a Covenant God. But as the natural portion of man was thus evinced to be hopeless, the dawn immediately arose with coincident and answering clearness of that work and order of grace on which the divine purpose and mercy could stand.

The Covenant of Israel at Mount Sinai, at once contained the proof that the obedience of man was a hopeless ground, under any circumstances, for relationship with God to rest upon; and it also contained the complete typical development of that on which it surely would and could rest;—on which comfort, and peace, and divine blessing could refresh the heart of man, weary with his own way; and this is the use which the Apostle makes of it.—It is not, Behold here the effects of the New Covenant on earth; but The Old Covenant is a defective faulty Covenant. But the foundation of the New has been laid in the blood of the Mediator. It is not to us that the terms of the Covenant (quoted from Jeremiah by the Apostle) have been fulfilled, or that we are Israel and Judah; but that while the Covenant is founded—not upon the obedience of a living people, to whom the blessing thereupon was to come, and the blood of a victim shed by a living Mediator,—but upon the obedience unto death of the Mediator Himself, on which (as its secure unalterable foundation of grace) the Covenant is founded.

But, as we have seen in the very act of forming the Covenant, that the obedience of sinful man as its foundation was evinced to come to failure, and that therefore it carried with it, in the good mercy of our God, the testimony of another and a stable foundation,—so did it also of the place into which we were to be brought by it. The holy order which accompanied the Covenant (or which the Covenant had) was the type of heavenly things. It was not, "the days come in the which I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and Judah," but a hope which entereth into that within the vail; and to this I repeat, the Apostle immediately turns. I am not of course, denying that practical righteousness will accompany this through the love of it in the heart, surely it will; but the manner in which we are associated with the bringing in of the New Covenant, is the revelation of that of which its holy order was the pattern and type;—that is just this, we have seen

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the Covenant sealed in the death of the Mediator, and therefore the end to us now of all hope from any earthly association with Him, or any blessing on earth; the Mediator's own death to this world being the foundation of our entrance into, or portion in, the place we hold with God. On this, in the 9th of Hebrews, the Apostle laboriously insists, and it is indeed a distinctive characteristic of the dispensation. Then if we turn from the Mediator, as the foundation in giving or sealing the covenant to us, to consider Him as maintaining it for us toward God, we shall again find in the pattern of the heavenlies (introduced in connexion with the Old Covenant,) the place belonging to us, by virtue of our connexion with the Mediator. The High Priest enters, by virtue of the blood of the Mediatorial victim (which in accomplishment we know to be Himself), into the holiest of all; hence, in the Antitype, necessarily is resurrection and ascension life. This is His special place of High Priesthood, that in which He exercised it as distinctively such, where Christ is now entered for us, even into heaven itself. This, then, is our portion in the New Covenant, so far as we have any ordered interest in its being sealed in the blood of the Mediator. That Mediator, being gone into the heavens, into the holiest of all, has not accomplished the actual New Covenant formally with Israel and Judah, as it shall surely be fully and distinctly accomplished; but as the patterns of the things in the heavens were given when the Old Covenant, dependent on their own obedience, was given from Mount Sinai,—so now, when the New Covenant has been founded in the blood of the Mediator, (not yet accepted or owned in grace by the nation,) the heavenly things themselves are disclosed to faith, by the entering in of the Mediator into the holiest through resurrection. The vail being rent in His flesh and the Mediator Himself dying, (the exercise of His priesthood, and the offering of His blood in the holiest, by which we have access there, being necessarily a resurrection and ascension work,) we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way through the vail (that is to say His flesh.) During the first, this way was not yet made manifest; nor moreover, was the conscience so purged once for all as to have a portion there;—both these blessings are now the

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portion of the children of God, and the whole of our portion now is not in the formal accomplishment of the New Covenant with Israel and Judah, but entirely in the heavenlies with Christ, according to the pattern of the then tabernacle, with this only added,—that the vail is rent from the top to the bottom.

It is, then, the annexed circumstances of the Covenant with which we have to do, not the formal blessings which in terms have taken place of the conditions of the old, though some of them may, in a sense, be accomplished in us. Thus the heavenly and distinct character of the dispensation is most plainly brought out, and we find that our place is to be identified with the Mediator, as gone within the vail; not in the blessings which result to Israel, in conquence of His title and power to bless in grace therefrom resulting. It is generally stated that the High Priest came forth and blessed the people on the day of atonement, when he came out of the most holy place, but there is nothing of the kind in the account of it in Scripture, and to me it seems rather to involve mistake, for his place on that day formed no part of his kingly office; but on that day it was either humiliation or ascension glory, or offices purely priestly—death, confession, intercession, and the like.

There is a passage in the 9th chap. of Leviticus, which (being of a more comprehensive character) seems to embrace this part of the subject more distinctly. This chapter embraces the offerings of the High Priest on entering on his office. Then Aaron offers his offerings, and having gone through each several kind he blesses, and then comes down. This was a priestly blessing after the offering, but before he came down from the offering;—and then Moses and Aaron (which show forth the union of the kingly and and priestly office) went into the tabernacle of the congregation (not necessarily implying the holiest of all, but the house, including the holy place and holiest), and came out and blessed the people; and then the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people; and then was the complete and public witness of the complete acceptance of the burnt sacrifice by the Lord. This (as it is a more general statement of all connected with the institution of the priesthood) seems more definitely to set before us both the priestly blessings from the offered sacrifice; and then (after the return

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from that) the royal and priestly blessing of the people; whereupon the full glory came in public witness. This, however, I remark by the way, for though to me it is a deeply interesting type of the order of these things, that which I now desire to rest on, and to present in its brief heads for the consideration of others, is that the place into which the founding of the New Covenant in the blood of Christ has brought us, is not that of the terms of that Covenant made with Israel and Judah, nor yet of the Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for that the sphere of their ministration was the earth; but it is into the revelation consequent upon the death of the Mediator, and His assumption of the High Priesthood in resurrection and ascension glory—a heavenly state of things—a place in the heavenlies, in which we have fellowship with Him, gone within the vail previously unrevealed, though founded in the death of Him that was promised and typified by the ordinances given with the Old Covenant, as to the constitution of the tabernacle of the congregation—the vail only being as yet unrent, and the way into the holiest not yet made manifest, nor the communion of a purged conscience with it established; the identity of the body of Christ with their Head, and their privilege there to sit (as now represented in their Head) being as yet unknown; thus confirming in the distinctest way, in the ordering of dispensations, many principles often alluded to in previous papers. There are many subjects and principles of the deepest importance connected with the Covenants, which are here barely or not at all alluded to, such as the difference of the very nature and terms of the two, whatever their application, on which in fact all our practical peace rests. The unconditional character of those made with Abraham, as the ground of the infallible warrant of Jewish hopes, not dependent on that in which to their own present sorrow and the instruction of mankind they have so entirely failed. All this, though I would not pass it without allusion thereto, I do not lengthen this paper by entering into substantively, having very briefly (and I fear superficially) endeavoured to touch upon those heads which bring out the Covenants into their proper place, and which shew our position as connected with them.

There is one passage connected with this subject, which I have

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omitted, to which I would allude. In the statement of restored blessings to Israel in the 36th of Ezekiel, the detail of earthly things is most distinct, it is all of it restored Israelitish blessing; amongst them, however, we find a work to be done in them to qualify them for the holding and enjoying of these blessings before God, "I will bring you into your own land, then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, then shall ye be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and and ye shall keep my judgments and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers, and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

This is not expressly the New Covenant, but it is in fact a more explicit statement of the manner of the blessings contained in it, and connected with it. Hence the reproach of Nicodemus by the Lord, when stating in terms tantamount to these, what was needful for a man to see to enter into the kingdom of God, he was met by the uninstructed question "How can these things be?"—The Lord indeed shows the universal character of the operation, "So is *every one* that is born of the Spirit;" but its application in the conversation is Jewish; it was that which was necessary for the enjoyment of the earthly things of the kingdom of God, of which the promises and the Covenants with Israel and their forefathers were the pledges and assurance from God. Hence does our Lord add the observation, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" even of these other and higher things, which belong to the kingdom entered into by the new and living way; and hence our Lord, though not then revealing these things at once, introduces His death—the death of the Mediator, the Son of Man, in whom the earthly things were expected, which was the door which opened the way into any heavenly things whatever, (as yet undisclosed) and ordered by the rejection of the Son of man (then beginning to shew itself) by those to whom He came in present earthly blessing; "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up," but founding every hope of

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eternal life then on this lifting up, and its opening to the world, for as sent on an errand of mercy had He come, and thus was the distinction between the earthlies and the heavenlies.

I scarcely feel it necessary to add that I take the whole of the 9th chap. of Hebrews as having one uniform subject, the *Covenant;* and that the terms *testament* and *testator*, are but accommodations to the English reader which obscure or destroy the sense.

LETTER TO A FRIEND ON THE STUDY OF PROPHECY.

My dear Friend.

We must expect to find difficulty in learning from Scripture, i.e., there will be many things which will appear hard to be reconciled with our pre-conceived opinions, or perhaps with other parts of truth. But if we see any one truth clearly revealed in any portion of God's word, it would be wise to cling to it, and to wait until its reconcileableness with other parts of truth be made apparent; and, in the meanwhile, to hold both in their apparent irreconcileableness, trusting to the Lord. Difficulties may be permitted to cross our way in order to try our faith, but surely not to check our inquiry into any part of the revealed counsels of God; for "the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children."

It is remarkable that the Prophetic Scripture is especially and peculiarly marked as the guide of the Church in the latter day. The Transfiguration was vouchsafed to the Apostles as an evidence that they were not following cunningly devised fables; "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here who shall not taste of death until they see the Son of man coming in His

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kingdom ;" and after six days He taketh three disciples, and they see an earnest of the glorious manifestation of Jesus with His risen saints, whilst they themselves typified the position of others, who, being in unglorified bodies, shall behold and walk in the light of the glory. This transitory vision of "the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ," (for so it is termed by Peter,) was an encouraging earnest to the Apostles of that, for which they were still waiting, even at this present hour; "but, (says he) we have a more steadfast or abiding (*βεβαιότερον*) evidence, even than that vision; viz. the word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed until the day dawn;" and the reason of its importance is this, that is not the setting forth or exposition of ordinary individuals, (*ιδιας επιλυσεως*) but of holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* I believe it to be of great importance to remember that Scripture is in reality the *επιλυσις*, the solution from God, and not the thing to be solved;—that it is a revelation, and not a thing hidden, though unbelief acts and thinks differently, and so nullifies the end of God in revealing.

The words "whereunto ye do well to take heed," do to my mind afford a solemn warning not to neglect the study of prophecy; we may be saved, through grace, even though we neglect obedience to this and many other commandments of the Lord; but faithful and wise discipleship is a different thing; and it appears to me that this one text would authorize me to say, (what daily facts corroborate,) that attention to this part of Scripture is essentially necessary to all who desire to be *wise servants* in the latter day.

Let us take, as an instance, one branch of our service only; viz. testimony to those around us. We see the world anxiously pursuing their schemes of political and moral improvement, avowedly expecting the predicted period of the earth's blessing to be reached hereby, and drawing many Christians into sanction of and union with their projects. Surely we are not to be silent here, but to shew from Scripture that Babylon (Rev. xviii.) is the end, and

* The meaning of (*επιλυσις*) (wrongly translated *interpretation*) seems clearly explained by Mark iv. 34, "When they were alone He *expounded* all things to His disciples."

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judgment the only portion of all the efforts of Gentile greatness. It is the word of prophecy which alone places us in the position of Noah, or Lot, enabling us authoritatively and definitely to point out the character of the coming ruin, even though we may seem to be as those who mock. Without referring to the prophetic record, how could we say that Joel iii., Zephaniah iii. 8, and Zechariah xii. and xiv., will all take place previous to the Millennial blessedness? and if this were all, surely the knowledge of this alone would supply us with an all-important subject of testimony. And so it is felt to be, by all who have availed themselves of this blessed light, and we continually see of our brethren who refuse to attend to it, not only failing in testimony, but encouraging the delusion and actually co-operating in the plans by which worldliness and infidelity are lulling themselves into their last fatal sleep; taught as they are even by Christians to believe that the awful prophecies of judgment have been for the most part *exhausted*, and that promises of Millennial blessing are alone before them. This has been the distinct and repeated testimony of many servants of Christ, since the present century commenced. They have spoken of the period when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord," but Satan has thrown a veil over the connected and preceding events, and so they have been made false witnesses of God, and have cried "peace, peace," when they ought to have said, "Behold I come as a thief;" when not only the world but even many of our Christian brethren have fallen into this delusion; it is no little privilege to be able unhesitatingly to say, that instead of a gradual and uninterrupted progress into Millennial rest, not only must the Lord be first revealed in His glory, therefore (1 Thess. iv. 16.) the saints be raised; but also that the manifestation of the Man of Sin, the greatest and most marvellous exhibition of Satan's power which has ever yet been witnessed, is to be the concluding event of the present dispensation, and that consequently things are tending thereunto, instead of to the Millennium.

If we have learnt nothing more than this from the Prophetic Scriptures, we have no little reason to be thankful. It enables us to put before the believer his proper and prescribed object of hope, viz. the coming of his Lord; and before the world, and those

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Christians who are in the world, the awful fact that yet a little while and God will withdraw the check which He is now keeping on Satan's power, (2 Thess. ii. 7.) and will also send on men strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. It enables you to say that the 7th of Daniel, from the 8th verse downwards, and the 2nd of 2nd Thessalonians, and similar chapters, are yet to be fulfilled; and you know not what practical effect may be produced, even from the mere circumstances of having these passages brought to bear upon the mind; for the Scripture is the sword of the Spirit; and if we simply desire to bring its edge upon the soul, to let it speak its own message, we need not fear being presumptuous, we shall not be *adding* to what is written.

If we are asked what evidence there is for the occurrence of the events just referred to previous to the Millennial blessing, I would refer to the two following passages, where it cannot be said that figure or symbol obscures the meaning, and which must I think be conclusive to every candid inquirer.—The first is Isaiah xvi. 21., where it is written:—

"Behold the Lord cometh out of His place,

I.—"To punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity.

II.—"To punish the Serpent." (chap. xxvii. 1.)

III.—After this it is said, "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill *the face of the world with fruit.*"

The second is in Zechariah xiv. where it is written,

I.—"The Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee." (verse 5.)

II.—"The Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord and His name one." (verse 9.)

III.—"Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited," (verse 11.) and even "upon the bells of the horses shall be holiness unto the Lord." (verse 20.)

The present dispensation terminates, or rather the next commences, with these events. The present dispensation commenced, *as regards the earth,* at the flood. It was then that the efforts of man were renewed, and they instantly began to operate again against God,—"Let us make ourselves a name;" God has interfered with merciful chastisements and testimony, but He has never

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since the flood broken the chain of human projects, neither will He, until the Son of man is revealed: and then it will be as it was in the days of Noah. (Matt. xxiv.)

The history of this dispensation, as given in the Scripture, may be divided into three parts:—

I.—The history of the Jews, commencing with Abraham, and terminating at the coming of the Lord, as described in Zech. xii. and xiv.

II.—The history of the Gentile nations, as commencing from Nebuchadnezzar, and concluded by the events described in Joel iii. and Rev. xvi. 4, and xix. 19.

III.—The history of the Church commencing at Pentecost, and terminated by the coming of the Lord, as described in 1 Thess. iv. 15.

In the present dispensation we see the Jews made a "hissing and reproach," and enjoying none of the blessings promised unto Abraham, and confirmed unto David. We know that this, their present state, will not continue for ever; for our Lord Himself has said, that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles," not for ever, but "TILL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," (Luke xxi.) i.e. till their time of allowed pre-eminence shall have concluded; or, to use the language of Scripture, till the Gentile image, revealed in vision to Nebuchadnezzar, shall have run its course, and shall be smitten with the stone of destruction. Again, we are told that the moral blindness of Israel will continue until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in—i.e. till all those, who are to be gathered out from among the Gentiles into the Church by the preaching of the gospel, shall have been gathered out: for as soon as the elect Church shall have been fully gathered in, the *visible* Gentile Church, as a branch bearing no fruit, will be broken off, and then the Jewish will be graffed in again.

Without then attempting to determine the times or seasons, we learn from these two passages, that the termination of the dispensation towards the Gentile nations, as regarded in Daniel, in the responsible exercise of entrusted power from God, and also the termination of the dispensation towards the elect Church, as viewed in the Epistles, will be co-temporaneous with the restoration of the

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Jews *to the favour of their Covenant God.* The Scripture history of the Jews, at the close of this dispensation, after their spontaneous return in unbelief, is contained in such places as Isaiah xxix. —Isaiah lxvi. 6.—Joel ii.—Zechariah xii. and xiv. and similar chapters—i.e. wherever final deliverance by the Lord is mentioned as vouchsafed to them in extremity of distress.

With respect to the history of the Gentile nations, it is obvious that those included within the image of Danial are specially the subjects of judgment at the close. Every vision either in the Old or New Testament, which refers to their history, unvaryingly describes their systems as continuing to flourish till sudden destruction comes upon them; because they speak great words against the Most High, in the person of their last glorious Head. And the characteristics of all these systems is this from first to last, viz. contrariety to the precepts of the sermon on the Mount. And as to the elect Church, they, until the end of the present dispensation, are called to be like their Master, and not to reign.

Indeed every thing testifies that the curses, and not the blessings of the Prophets, are now resting upon Israel and Judah;—that darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the peoples;—that saints are not reigning over (επι) the earth;—(Rev. v. 10.) that Satan is unbound, and that creation is not freed from the bondage of corruption, and rejoicing in the glorious liberty of the children of God.

But if we know from the plainest testimonies of Scripture that the earth is hereafter to be blessed,* there is one thing which surely must be allowed to be essential to its blessing, and that is, righteous rule. Man's anxious endeavour in every age, and in every country, to secure for themselves right laws and right go-

* "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." (Numbers xiv. 20.)
"The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah xi.)
"The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. ii. 14.)
"The earth is my footstool,"—"I will make the place of my feet glorious." (Is. lx.)
"Creation shall be freed." (Rom. viii.)
"He shall send Jesus, whom the heavens must receive TILL the times of RESTORING of ALL things." (Acts iii.)

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vernment, and also the manner in which Scripture speaks of the character of King and Judge, sufficiently show that government is a thing which God knows and man practically feels to be all-important to welfare and happiness here. Accordingly the Scripture always marks the assumption of governing power by the Lord Jesus, as the necessary pre-requisite to the time of earthly peace, —"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a KING shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the EARTH. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely." (Jer. xxiii.) "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful," &c. "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever.—The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." (Is. ix.)

What was it the earth lost when the visible glory of the Lord departed, or was grieved away from His Temple at Jerusalem? Not the secret-sustaining power of Him, who still upholds both it and every thing in it;—not the controlling power with which He graciously interferes to check the god of this world, who animates its systems, and rolls along its evil course; but it lost the blessing of that power wherewith He was proposing to order the distribution of all His gifts, and to reign as alone supreme. I say *proposing*, for the result was in part dependent on man's fitness to receive, and therefore the blessing failed. But when the vision, which represented this power of Almighty rule, is again seen by the Prophet Ezekiel returning to Jerusalem (as it yet shall), the words are, "Son of man, the place of my THRONE"—sufficiently indicating what the character of the blessing is.

This, then, is not the power bearing upon the world now. God has indeed, in mercy provided for its government; but He has left it in the hands of man, and they ought to have used it for His glory—He gave it to Nebuchadnezzar, and has continued it through succeeding kingdoms of the Gentiles down to the present hour.* Like

* The authority of early monarchs was *king-like*, deriving neither its title,

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health and strength, or fruitful seasons, it is a blessing from Him; but it has little of the character of His supremacy now—it has been progressively debased from the gold, into the silver and the brass, and finally the iron; and in the meanwhile He, "whose right it is," (Ezek. xxi. 27), who was seen by Ezekiel sitting on the throne of sapphire, above the firmament of terrible crystal, is despised and rejected by them all.—"They stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe: and when they had platted a crown of thorns they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand, and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, hail! King of the Jews; and they spit upon Him, and took the reed and smote Him on the head."

It was thus that He was treated by them who could have had no power against Him, except it had been given them from above; and it proves that the Gentiles who not only "lived and moved and had their being," but also *governed* by Him, were using *against* Him and not *for* Him all that they had received. And has their conduct been altered since? Are their laws and their enterprizes now in more accordance with His precepts delivered on the Mount, or with the words of His Apostles?—"Recompence to no man evil for evil. If thine enemy hunger feed him."—Let the offender's *individual* benefit be the paramount consideration in all your conduct toward Him, and let every law by which you rule be sufficiently flexible to be bent to this. It can be so in our families and in the Church, for the rule, which we exercise as a master or parent, owns no directory but the law of Christ, and no human authority comes in between our heavenly Master and ourselves. The fountain of legislation is in Him. But is it so with the world's laws? Do they emanate from Him or are they not rather based on principles of pride, and selfishness, and revenge, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now worketh in the children of disobedience? Shall we then covet their administration, and laying aside the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour, take for the time another directory, which is of man; and that because we seek honour of men, and not that which cometh from God only?

nor its strength from those beneath it. But there has been a gradual process of debasement through aristocracy, oligarchy, &c. until it is now said, that the governed are the rightful source of power, and that by them kings rule.

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If we accept the honour, we owe allegiance to that from which the honour cometh, and we are bound to fulfil the service that is due to our self-chosen master. We must punish and we must praise as he commandeth: or even where the service may not be so directly or positively marked, as prescribed law will often cause it to be, yet a regard to expediency and the good of society—i. e. the good "of the course of this world," will often be found to place us in the circumstances of Pilate, who would gladly have released the innocent, but he feared the words of the Jews when they cried out, saying, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend, for whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar."

Subjection to power is different from the administration of it. The Lord Jesus shewed full subjection, and the Apostle teaches us not only to obey the powers that be, but also to recognize them as blessings from God, quite as much as health, or rain, or fruitful seasons. But the Lord disclaimed all desire of administering this power, and plainly said, now is my kingdom not from hence; for how can the laws of a world, which lieth in the wicked one, be otherwise than contrary to the mind of Christ? and until Satan is bound, this must be its unaltered state.

If then, in discipleship to Christ, we could shrink from wielding the power of the world, even in the world's own sphere, how much more should we tremble at its introduction into the Church of God? The world can choose fit instruments for the prosecution of its own plans, and can see where the suitable qualifications are. It appoints to "Office," and "Office" gives to him who bears it an instant claim to my reverence and honour, as it is written, "fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour:" nor does moral qualification enter into the question at all. But never, till apostasy prostrated every principle of truth and spiritual judgment, was "Office," apart from qualification by the Holy Ghost, recognized in the Church of God. Though Titus or Timothy had appointed one destitute of the qualifications which the Apostle describes, his authority must have been disowned. How much more when they, who have no part nor lot in Christ's service, appoint those who are equally aliens with themselves, and then say, let his "Office" be honoured. Surely it is the lie of Satan, and it behoves us watchfully to remember that word,

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"Thou hast tried them who said they were Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."

Unless we give heed to these things, we cannot rightly estimate the present condition of the earth. The Gentile national system, as commenced in Nebuchadnezzar, has a distinct character,—a beginning and an ending of its own; it is watched and prophesied of by God, and is responsible to Him; but it is as essentially distinct from the Church of God, as the eleven, when gathered in the upper chamber at Jerusalem, were distinct from those who were treading the courts of Cæsar. Whether any such distinctness has been preserved, and whether we are seeking it, or whether we are accessary to the maintenance or spread of the world's authority and principles in the Church of the first-born, it is for our consciences to answer. We know how the Gentiles will end their course, even at Armageddon, and we know that the vine of the earth will be cast in the wine-press of the wrath of God. Then shall that word be fulfilled, "Remove the diadem, take off the crown, exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. 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."

But what is written of Him "whose right it is?" That He is long-suffering, not desiring that any should perish, but rather that they should come to repentance. The circumstances of His abasement, when He was mocked by the soldiers, not only shew the character of the world's rebellion, but present us also with a just and most blessed picture of the still continued forbearance of the Lord of glory, rightfully clothed in purple, for He is and ever was a King; rightfully crowned, though allowing it to be with thorns, and consenting still to hold over the world a reed instead of the rod of iron, even though all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth.

He hath entered into the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and reigneth as God over all blessed for ever; for Jehovah said unto Him, as the Son of man, "Sit thou at my right hand TILL I make thy enemies thy footstool." But the instrument which is still being used towards His enemies is the testimony of love. Behold a sower went forth to sow. This is

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the character of His present dispensation towards a rebellious world, which, as God, He sustains and nourishes, for otherwise it could not continue to BE. He sows the word of peace. It is not the agency of the wheels of Ezekiel—i.e. of Almighty and resistless power, but the foolishness of preaching is the instrument whereby He saveth them that believe, but will this instrument (new and mysterious to the disciples who expected only the exercise of such destroying power, as their forefathers had witnessed), accomplish the work of *universal* blessing? The next parable to the sower tell us—No! for tares preclude the universality of the wheat, and prove the existence of an enemy capable of hindering universality until he is himself bound. But still it is written, "As I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."

When then will this blessing come? in other words, when will the earth rejoice? The Scripture answers, "Before the Lord, when He cometh to rule." (Psa. xcvii. 11.) This and the following Psalm describe Him, not as mocked and crowned in derision, but with a fire going before Him and burning up His enemies round about Him. (Psa. xcviii. 3.) THEN it is said, "The Lord reigneth, *let the earth rejoice;*" and the Apostle quoting from this very Psalm, declares it to refer to the time when Jehovah shall again have brought (*οταν παλιν εισαγαγη*)* the First-begotten into the world. Here, then, we have one direct evidence of the dependence of the earth's blessing upon the second coming of Christ to REIGN.

Again, when our Lord Jesus was asked by the High Priest, "Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed? He answered I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and *coming in the clouds of heaven.*" (Mark.) We know that He hath not yet *come in the clouds of heaven.* But these words are the words of the Prophet Daniel, and it was to these that our Lord referred,—"I saw in the night visions, and behold one like

It should be observed that the force of this passage does not depend on the right situation of *again*, as it is found in the marginal reading.—It rests even still more on the title "First-born," which belongs to Christ, in virtue of His resurrection—so that it is equivalent to "when He shall again bring the *risen* Jesus into the world;" the word translated "judge," in the 97th and 98th Psalm, and in other parts of Scripture, is the same as is applied to the judges after Joshua, who were not merely judges but sovereigns.

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the Son of man *came with the clouds of heaven*, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him; and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that *all people, nations, and languages* should serve Him." Therefore the still future time when He *shall come with the clouds of heaven*, (See Matt. xxiv. 30. Rev. i. 7.) is the time when all people, nations, and languages shall own His power; and the kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom UNDER the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.

The words of the Apostle, 3rd of Acts, shew with equal distinctness that the heavens retain the Lord Jesus only TILL the times of the restitution of all things; and the 8th Psalm, which describes creation placed in blessed subjection to the power of man, gives us (as proved by its quotation in Heb. ii.) not only the Scripture's own description of "the world (or rather inhabited earth) to come whereof we speak," but marks subjection to Jesus as the leading characteristic of the earth's blessing. But it is a *future* subjection, as indeed facts testify; for, says the Apostle, we see not yet "all things put under Him." It is only when the seventh trumpet is sounded, which marks the conclusion of the present dispensation of the Father towards the world which has rejected the Son, that it is said, "*the kingdoms of this world* are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." Thus, then, we have four concurrent testimonies, not only that the time is FUTURE when He taketh to Himself His great power and reigneth, but also that the blessing of the earth dependeth hereupon.

Accordingly it is said "The Lord reigneth, let the EARTH rejoice." But not to the nations of the earth; on the contrary, the nations are angry when the time comes that He should destroy them that destroy the earth, for they are its destroyers, and it is they that will be "broken to pieces together and become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor."

It is said, "the nations were angry;" but more than this is revealed respecting the closing period of this OUR dispensation.—The Apostle in the Revelation, records the vision respecting it; *he explains the symbols which he saw*, and their explanation is this:—" They (i.e. the

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symbols which he saw) represent the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." This is but one of the passages which describe the fearful power of Satan in the latter day, and it shows that man, when forsaken by his long-suffering God, becomes only the devil's slave, unconsciously though willingly led on to quick destruction. They are gathered to Armageddon—to the valley of judgment (Joel iii.)—around Jerusalem, (Zech. xiv.) there to be finally smitten by Him, of whom it has been said that, "the *rod of His power* shall be sent *out of Zion :*" (Ps. cx.) for even as it cannot be that a Prophet should perish out of Jerusalem, as Jerusalem has been, and (when the Jews return in unbelief) will again be the theatre, on which the fulness of human iniquity is exhibited,—so is it also the destined sphere of the manifested judgments of the Lord, even as it is written, "Whose fire is in Zion, and His furnace at Jerusalem." (Is. xxxi. 9.) Accordingly, the Mount of Olives is marked as the place on which He shall stand when He cometh to enter on the exercise of His great and dreadful power. (Zech. xiv.) And again, it is written in Isaiah, "A voice from THE TEMPLE, a voice from THE CITY, a voice of the Lord, that rendereth recompence to His enemies." "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake." (Joel iii.)

"By fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many." How many we cannot tell; but none, I believe, of the gathered Gentiles will be spared, nor any *tares* throughout the world. The Gentiles, having received power from above, are accordingly answerable for its exercise.—The professing Church are accountable to Him as Son of man, whom they have professed to follow in humiliation; and I do not see it written that any of these are spared.

But to the Jews, beloved for the fathers' sakes, the following promise is made in Zechariah: "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein; and I will bring the third part

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through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried ; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them ; I will say it is my people ; and they shall say the Lord is my God." In Isaiah lxvi. also it is written, "I will send those that escape of them (i.e., the Jews) unto the nations, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory, and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles." Of Israel also (or the ten tribes), it is written, "Behold I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." So that we know from the certain testimony of Scripture, that some at least of the Gentiles, some of the Jews, and many of Israel will be preserved *through* the period of judgment.

But there are some will be preserved not *through*, but *from* this period of judgment, even those who have washed their garments, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: for they shall be caught up to meet the Lord when He cometh.—"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we, which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep ; for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." They shall be taken into heavenly glory, even unto the heavenly Jerusalem, where they cannot die any more, for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of the resurrection—where nothing shall be earthy or according to the flesh, but where all shall be according to the Spirit.

But if it is not unworthy of God and of Christ to humble themselves unto the things of earth, if it is not unworthy of the Son to take as HIS kingdom a ruined creation, groaning beneath the power of the devil, that he may reclaim and bless it, surely it is not unworthy of glorified saints to say, "Thou hast made us unto our God, kings and priests and we shall reign over (επι) the earth." ×

But I must postpone to a future occasion the Scriptural evidence respecting *this* glory of the saints, and also a few remarks respecting the progressiveness of Millennial blessing. May we have grace to see

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why judgment is coming on the Gentiles and on the professing Church, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Yours, &c.,

X. Z.

END OF VOL. II.

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