

BIBLE SUBJECTS

FOR THE

HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

"YE ARE NO MORE STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS, BUT FELLOW-CITIZENS
WITH THE SAINTS, AND OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD."
Eph. ii. 19.



LONDON :
W. H. BROOM, 34, PATERNOSTER ROW.
G. MORRISH, 24, WARWICK LANE.
1864.

mind you of what has already been stated, that what we Christians wait for is the coming of the Son of God from heaven. This is an event independent of all the details of our present subject, and for anything that any one can tell to the contrary, *may* take place ere the dissolution of this assembly. It would be madness to affirm that this *will* be so, or to fix any time for the event. But everything connected with Israel's restoration may transpire, and all the more important events will do so, I believe, after the Lord Jesus has descended into the air, and received the church to himself in glory. The heavenly mystery, the church, being fulfilled, God's eye will be turned toward his earthly people, Israel, who will be called to remembrance, and brought back.

First, it is clear, from several passages, that many of the Jews will return to their own land in unbelief. In Isa. xvii. 10, 11, we find them there, still forgetting the God of their salvation, and unmindful of the Rock of their strength, planting pleasant plants, and setting it with strange slips; but the issue of their husbandry is thus described: "In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow." It is evidently the time of trouble we have been hearing of already—the time when the nations and multitude of many people shall rush like the rushing of many waters; but it is to *their* destruction, and to the deliverance of Israel. "God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like thistle-down (see margin) before the whirlwind." (ver. 13.) It is the last great crisis—the shortened period of unequalled tribulation. How suddenly it closes! "Behold, at eveningtide trouble, and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us." (ver. 14.) The next chapter speaks of some maritime country which, it appears,

is to take a prominent part in these transactions. Its messengers are to go to "a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible (or wonderful) from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled!" Who can fail to discern that Israel is here spoken of? Universal attention is demanded whenever these things begin to occur. (See ver. 3.) It is not, indeed, that God is yet acting in the scene himself, save as he always acts in providence. Verse 4 represents him as looking on, taking his rest and considering in his dwelling-place. The verse is somewhat differently rendered by scholars,* and is understood to suggest the idea of that awful season of deathly stillness and oppressive heat which precedes the bursting of some dreadful storm of thunder and lightning. "Not a gleam of sunshine breaks for a moment through the sullen gloom; not a breath stirs; not a leaf wags; not a blade of grass is shaken; nature seems to be numbed;" all seems at a stand-still, and in suspense. But it is only for a few moments, and then the storm bursts upon an affrighted earth. Such is the figure used to illustrate the character of that short period in which the Jews, aided by some great maritime country, are returning to their own land, and re-settling there in unbelief. They are represented in ver. 5, 6, as sour grapes ripening in the flower, thus showing that morally they are unchanged since the day when God complained of them as his vineyard which brought forth nothing but wild grapes. They are not suffered, however, to come to maturity—the sprigs are to be cut off with pruning-hooks, the

* Faber translates it thus: "For thus saith the Lord unto me: I will sit still (but I will keep my eye upon my prepared habitation) as the parching heat just before lightning, as the dewy cloud in the heat of harvest." Lowth's translation is—

"For thus hath Jehovah said unto me,
I will sit still, and regard my fixed habitation,
Like the clear heat after rain,
Like the dewy cloud in the day of harvest."

branches are to be cut down, and left for the fowls of the mountains to summer upon them, and the beasts of the earth to winter upon them. Still, though this be the end, as always, of their own self-righteous, self-willed, self-sufficient endeavours, it is the last time they attempt thus to accomplish their own deliverance. God takes up their cause; and the last verse of this chapter speaks of this same people—the Jews—being brought “as a present to the Lord of hosts—to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts—the Mount Zion.”

From Is. xxviii. 14, 15, it would appear that the rulers of those who return to Jerusalem in unbelief, will enter into covenant with the great anti-Christian head of the Gentiles, who will then be bearing sway. Having refused the foundation which God has laid in Zion, they will seek shelter under the wing of him to whom Satan will then have given his seat, and his authority, and his great power. (See Rev. xiii. 2.) But their covenant with death will be “disannulled, and their agreement with hell will not stand.” Dan. ix. 27, seems to refer to this. It says of this great enemy of God, “He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (of years, of course), and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and upon the battlements (see margin) shall be the idols of the desolator, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” This, there can be little doubt, is what our Lord terms “the abomination of desolation, spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place.” Thus will be fulfilled that solemn word of our Lord’s as to the unclean spirit, who having left his house to wander in dry places, at last returns to it, and, finding it swept and garnished, takes seven others more wicked than himself, and comes and dwells there; and so the last end of such an one is worse than the first. “Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.” (Matt. xii. 45.) The unclean spirit of idolatry having abandoned the

128

Jewish nation from the time of the Babylonish captivity, returns and takes possession of them at the end; and many of them will be found subject to and in league with him of whom we read (Rev. xiii. 15), "And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed." "I am come in my Father's name," said the blessed Jesus, "and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." (John v. 43.)

Secondly, the whole of those that return to their own land in unbelief, will not be involved in these abominations, and in the judgments consequent upon them. There will be a remnant who will hear God's voice, and tremble at his word. Repenting deeply of their own and of their nation's sins, they will cry to the Lord in their distress, and be preserved from the paths of the destroyer. Instructed by the words of our Lord, when they see the abomination of desolation, they will flee into the mountains, and so neither worship the beast nor perish by his wrath. Still, they will suffer tremendous afflictions, while many others, as we know, will submit to be slain, rather than worship the idols of the desolator. It is the cry of this godly remnant of Israel that we hear in so many of the Psalms, and in Is. lxiii. (latter part) and lxiv. The Lord answers them in ch. lxv., roughly at the first, as representing the whole nation in their sins; but ver. 8-15, he distinguishes between them and the nation at large. All are not to be destroyed. This elect remnant are to be preserved to inherit the land. (Ver. 8-10.) For the elect's sake, as we have seen, those days of trouble are to be shortened. In ver. 11, 12, the bulk of the nation are addressed, who prepare a table for that troop (of Antichrist, it would appear), and furnish the drink-offering to that number. They are to be numbered to the sword, and to bow down to the slaughter. We then have the portion of the remnant and the nation alternately stated,

13-16, while the following verses exhibit the state of rest and blessedness which succeeds, when "the former troubles are forgotten, and hid from the eyes." The first five verses of chap. lxvi. afford a similar contrast between the remnant and their unbelieving brethren.*

But Zechariah gives us the most definite instruction as to the lot of those who first return to the land. Chapter xii. 9-xiii. 1, announces the conversion *in the land*, about the time of their last tribulation (see ver. 9), of the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Chapter xiii. 8, 9, we read, "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 through the fire, and I 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." From ch. xiv. 1, 2, we find that this third part, who are brought through the fire, are reduced to the last extremity of distress. But in this last extremity the Lord interposes. (ver. 3-5.) The church—the saints—having been, as we before remarked, previously caught up to meet the Lord in the air, now return with him; "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." The poor, oppressed, perishing remnant of Jews, are delivered by his coming. The Lord fights against all those nations who fought against Jerusalem. The Jews, delivered by his coming, become themselves instruments in destroying their adversaries. (See ch. xii. 2, 3, and 6; ch. xiv. 14.) We have the blessed result of all this in ver. 8-11, and 16-21, the reign of Christ over all the earth, with Jerusalem for the centre of worship and of blessing.

But, thirdly, the restoration of the ten tribes seems to be in a different manner. We have just seen how

* For further inquiry into this subject, see a tract entitled, "The Jewish Remnant in the latter day."

the Jews pass through the last tribulation *in the land*; the wicked being thus purged from amongst them. They are the progeny of those who crucified their Messiah, and they suffer the consequences to the very end of this age. The ten tribes having gone into captivity long before the first coming of Christ, have not to suffer for the sin of crucifying him, and so are not involved in these final troubles *in the land*. The wicked are purged from amongst *them* before they reach the land. "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you; and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. . . . And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they *shall not enter into the land of Israel*; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezek. xx. 33-38.) It would seem to be to this part of the nation that Amos ix. 9, 10, and Jer. xxxi. 8, 9, refer. The return of the ten tribes would appear to be in progress at the time the Jews, properly so called, are undergoing their final sifting in the land: the arrival of the ten tribes occurring soon after this sifting has been completed. In Isaiah xlix. we have their arrival predicted, and a most touching picture of the effect produced by it on the poor heartbroken remnant, who survive the desolations at Jerusalem. We have a view (verses 9-13) of the return of the ten tribes, guided by the out-stretched arm of God, while heaven and earth are called on to rejoice in his mercy to them. Then, in verse 14, we are led back to the moment when Zion said: "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my

131

Lord hath forgotten me." God himself addresses Zion in verses 15-17. And then, as though calling her attention to something on which his eye had been fixed, but which she had not yet noticed, he says: "Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold; all these gather themselves together and come to thee," &c. (verses 18, 19.) Nothing can exceed the beauty of verses 20, 21. "The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?"

Finally, there are several passages which appear to foretell a still further process of restoration. We have noticed the return of many of the Jews in unbelief, with their sin and judgment, and the preservation from both of a remnant amongst them, who are delivered out of their extreme distress by the coming of the Lord with all his saints. We have seen this remnant joined by the multitude of the ten tribes brought back by the hand of God, who has purged out all the rebels from among them ere they arrive at the land of Israel. But it would seem that besides all this, messengers will be despatched from the place where the Lord has appeared in glory and destroyed the enemies of his people, to bring back any Israelites who may yet be found among the nations. "And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord." (Isaiah lxvi. 20.) It appears to be to this part of the subject that Isaiah lx. 4-9, lii. 10-12, and xlix. 22, 23, refer.

I would only beg, in conclusion, that you will consult the passages which have been quoted or referred

to. It is in personally examining and comparing them, with prayer to the Lord for his guidance, that we shall, by his blessing, gain acquaintance with his mind. May his blessing be vouchsafed. Amen.

W. T.

CHANGED IN A MOMENT.

HARK to the trump ! behold it breaks
The sleep of ages now :
And lo ! the light of glory shines
On many an aching brow.

Changed in a moment—raised to life,
The quick, the dead arise,
Responsive to the angel's voice,
That calls us to the skies.

Ascending through the crowded air,
On eagles' wings we soar,
To dwell in the full joy of love,
And sorrow there no more.

Undazzled by the glorious light
Of that beloved brow,
We see, without a single cloud,
We see the Saviour now !

O Lord, the bright and blessed hope
That cheered us through the past,
Of full eternal rest in Thee,
Is all fulfilled at last.

The cry of sorrow here is hushed,
The voice of prayer is o'er ;
'Tis needless now—for, Lord, we crave
Thy gracious help no more.

Praise, endless praise, alone becomes
This bright and blessed place,
Where every eye beholds unveiled
The mysteries of Thy grace.

Past conflict here, O Lord, 'tis ours,
Through everlasting days,
To sing our song of victory now,
And only live to praise.

E. D.

OUTLINES OF LECTURES ON THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.

Lecture X.

THE BARS OF THE TABERNACLE.

Exodus xxvi. 26-30.

“AND thou shalt make bars of shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the two sides westward. And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end. And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings of gold for places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold. And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.”

THE BARS.

Ver. 26. *And thou shalt make bars of shittim wood.*] We have already considered the *boards* of the tabernacle, fitly framed together, and firmly fixed in the sockets of silver, as typical of believers standing in redemption, and associated together in Church fellowship. We have now to consider the *bars* of shittim wood, overlaid with gold—God’s provision for compacting together and securing the whole.

The fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians will furnish us with a solution of the spiritual import of these bars.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is largely occupied with priesthood and sacrifice, and there we find the corresponding types richly unfolded.

The Epistle to the Ephesians preëminently treats

of the Church, and it is there we especially find the interpretation of the things connected with the tabernacle.

In the first six verses of Eph. iv., the seven-fold, or perfect provision for the unity of the Church is mentioned; one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.

Then, from verses 7 to 11, the *five* gifts given from a once humbled, but now ascended and glorified Saviour, are noticed—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

Then the object for which they are given is stated from verses 12 to 16: “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; 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: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together, 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.”

These five bars of the tabernacle answer most strikingly to these five gifts from a risen Christ, and their object and end is the same, the “perfecting,” “edifying,” and “compacting” of the whole together.

THE MATERIAL.

“Bars of Shittim Wood.”

They were to be of *shittim wood*, reminding us that those who have received gifts for service to the Lord and to his saints, are men of like passions with others. They have this treasure in earthen vessels,

that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of them. Not sufficient of themselves to think anything as of themselves, they can of their own selves do nothing.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE BARS.

Verses 26–28. *Five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the two sides westward. And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end.*] There are five bars for each side of the tabernacle, and there are four sides, one north, one south, and two sides westward.

God's arrangements and provisions for ministry are simple, perfect, and uniform, and adapted to the need of the Church of God throughout the whole world.

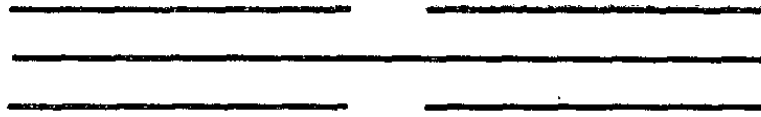
The gifts of the Spirit are for the edifying of the whole body; and wherever believers are gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus, there these gifts have their place and service.

All believers everywhere have need of all the gifts of the Spirit for their compacting and edifying; and according to God's arrangements, whatever gifts there may be, are available for all.

The apportioning a certain number of souls for one man's care, or one man to a certain number, is entirely contrary to God's order. The gifts are for the body, and God sets them in the Church for the benefit of all.

The leading of the Spirit, or the providence of God, may indeed place some in certain localities; but all believers have a title to their service, and they are debtors according to their ability and opportunity to all. Every human arrangement which interferes with this, is a thwarting of God's gracious, benevolent plan.

There are two bars lying side by side near the bottom of the boards of the tabernacle (not one above the other), one in the centre, and two side by side near the top; thus,



The two under bars may be taken to represent the gifts of the *apostles* and *prophets*. These, as to doctrine and practice, according to the ability given them of God, have laid the foundation. And the Church is said to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

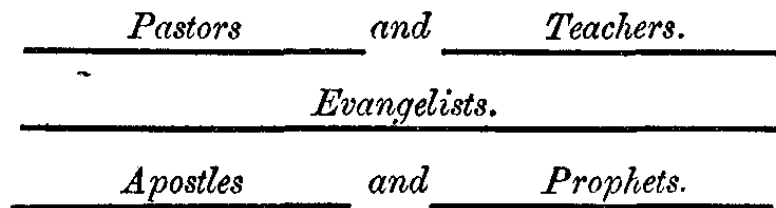
This they did by their labours, example, and teaching in their lifetime, and in the inspired Scriptures of the New Testament which they have left, the Church has still the benefit of their gifts.

The foundations have been laid; the word of God filled up and perfected. Since then there have been no new revelations of doctrine, and no new directions for practice, the doctrines, precepts, and principles of Scripture being fully adequate to meet all emergencies. Therein the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Hence, apostles and prophets, in the strict sense of the words, are no longer to be found among living men; but we have them, as I have said, in the inspired word, for every necessary purpose.

The middle bar in the centre of the boards was entire, extending the whole length of the tabernacle from end to end; whereas, the other bars met in the middle, extending only half way each.

The middle bar is beautifully suggestive of the wide, extended sphere of the labours of the *evangelist*, whose commission is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," and in whose experience the prompting of the Spirit is ever "to the regions beyond"—"the regions beyond."

The two bars near the top represent the ministry of the *pastors* and *teachers*; the *pastor* watching over the souls of the converted, feeding the flock of God. And the *teacher* leading them onward and upward into further and higher acquaintance with the truth of God, and of the love, person, and ways of Jesus. Thus,



THE OVERLAYING OF THE BOARDS WITH GOLD.

Ver. 29. *And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold.*] It is remarkable that the direction for overlaying the boards does not occur in the portion which treats of the *boards* themselves (verses 15 to 25); but here in connection with the *bars*; and, doubtless, there is significancy in this.

The boards were of shittim wood, for they represent believers, *in themselves* the partakers of *human nature*, in its weakness and frailty. But the boards are overlaid with gold; signifying that, *as one with Jesus*, believers are also partakers of the *Divine nature*. (2 Pet. i. 4.)

As associated together in the confession of the name of Christ, they are not regarded as they are in themselves, but as seen of God in Christ Jesus,—the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty.

As we are by the grace of God—as seen by him in the Son of his love—such we ought to be practically and experimentally at all times, but especially when gathered in the name of Jesus, under the searching eye of him with whom we have to do, that, as builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, there may be nothing to grieve or quench that Holy Spirit of our God, or to hinder the full flow of blessing from our God and Father.

Oh for grace ever to remember this! As the shittim wood in the tabernacle was nowhere to be seen, so the flesh, or that which is merely natural, should never be manifest in the assembly of God's saints. But putting off the old man, and putting on the new, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the Divine nature should appear, and Divine charity be ever in full exercise.

Thus it would come to pass that the distinctions and graduations which exist in the arrangements of Divine providence, and which cannot be overlooked with impunity in the outward walks of life, would disappear when believers were assembled together in the Church; and each and all, as children of God, members of Christ, dwelt in by the Spirit, partakers of the same Divine and eternal life, loved and loving with the same Divine charity, they would hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, without respect of persons. (James ii. 1.)

But more than this. "Holiness becomes God's house." The infirmities of the flesh may be confessed in the closet, but ought never to mar the worship of the assembled saints. Collective failure may be acknowledged in the prayer meeting; but when met in the Church, as, for example, around the table of the Lord, we should meet and worship as the sons of God, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, shewing forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Pet. ii. 9.)

Yet, while the gold glittered on the surface of the boards, the shittim wood still existed within. So it becomes us ever to remember that, notwithstanding all that Divine grace has made us, in ourselves we are nothing at all. "The true circumcision, worshipping God in the Spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, but having no confidence of the flesh." This, however, is no excuse for sin or failure; for the grace of Christ is sufficient for us, and his strength is made perfect in weakness.

But why is this direction to overlay the boards with gold reserved for insertion here, in the midst of the instructions respecting the bars?

Does it not intimate a connection between the exercising of the gifts given, and the fuller participation and manifestation of the Divine nature?

Thus holding the Head, all the Body, *by joints and bands*, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth *with the increase of God*.

And while God, "according to his Divine power, has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, *that by these we might be partakers of the Divine nature*,"—is it not through the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, in the ministry of the Word, that very especially, both individually and collectively, these great and precious promises are realized, and that this growth in grace is experienced? (2 Pet. i. 3, 4.)

THE GOLDEN RINGS.

Ver. 29. *And make their rings of gold for places for the bars.*] There is a divinely given and provided place for ministry, in the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, in the Church of God.

"Rings of gold for places for the bars;" how significant!

Yes, there is a place provided and appointed of God for each of the several kinds of ministry.

A place for the apostles and prophets, which none else can occupy: a place of authority and power.

A place for the evangelist, and a work of vast importance and responsibility; having to do with souls and with eternity.

A place for the pastor and the teacher, in watching over, and leading on, the souls of the redeemed, with which the saints' well-being, and the honour of the Lord Jesus, is intimately connected.

THE OVERLAYING OF THE BARS.

And thou shalt overlay the bars with gold.] "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ."

Real ministry is the exercise of a gift received from God through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Ghost, according to the ability which God giveth, and for God's glory.

It is not mere natural ability, however highly cultivated, or however fully recognized by human authority. It is something far more precious, more glorious, more important than this.

How vividly the Apostle Paul realized the truth so beautifully set forth by these bars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold!

"I magnify mine office," he exclaims; "not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, *but our sufficiency is of God.*" "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, *that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*"

To sum up these various figures of ministry which we have already considered.

In the *cherubim* on the mercy-seat, in the holiest of all, we have set forth *ministry in its heavenly origin and source.*

In the golden *candlestick* in the holy place, over against the table, and by the altar of incense, we have *ministry in the assembly, and in connection with communion and worship.*

And in these *bars of the tabernacle*, uniting the boards together, we see *ministry for the building up and compacting of the Church of God.*

THE CHARGE.

Ver. 30. *And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.*] All important, and ever important words! Whether as to Church gathering and constitution, or whether as to ministry in the Church, God's pattern, and that alone, is to be followed;—a pattern not earthly and human, but heavenly and Divine.

Is there not pride, presumption, and sin, in pretending to improve on God's order of things in any particular? or in setting aside that order to make way for man's?

How thankful should we be to God, that he has condescended so minutely to arrange and order every thing for us in his word!—in type in the Old Testament, in example in the Gospels and the Acts, and in express directions in the inspired epistles of the apostles!

May we be prayerfully diligent to ascertain God's order by means of every portion of his word, and hearty and earnest in seeking to carry it out, in our humble measure, according to the grace given to us: esteeming all his commandments concerning all things to be right, and hating every false way, fully persuaded that God's plans are the best plans, and that in keeping his commandments there is great reward.

T. N.

[The Vail, and Hanging for the Door (D.V.), in the number for June.]

AN AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS TO THE CHILDREN OF GOD,

CONCERNING THE SECOND COMING OF THE GREAT GOD AND OUR
SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST IN GLORY, AT THE COMMENCEMENT
OF THE MILLENNIUM.

THE writer desires to lay before his dear brethren in the Lord what the GOD *of truth himself* says concerning the Lord's future coming to establish his glorious kingdom, the great events by which it will be preceded or accompanied, the state of the world during the Lord's millennial reign, and the events which will mark and attend its close.

His object is to remove the prejudices which blind the eyes of many of his beloved brethren, so that they cannot see and receive the glorious truths which the word of God reveals respecting the afore-mentioned subjects.

"Great peace have they that love God's law: and nothing shall offend them," says the Holy Ghost. And if my dear brethren did but perceive how much peace they lose by rejecting this part of God's gracious testimony, and how great a stumbling-block, or rock of offence, they place in their own way by not receiving these truths, sure I am they would "search the scriptures daily to see" whether the scheme of prophetic interpretation here advocated be or be not in accordance with Divine truth; and equally sure I am, that if they would patiently investigate the word of truth for this purpose, in humble teachableness of mind, and prayerful dependence upon the Holy Spirit, they would arise from the investigation convinced of the truth, and rejoicing in the happy discovery that the Lord's personal advent is at hand, and the day of

their redemption and the world's renewal near to come. And the more they studied this large portion of Divine revelation, the more would they perceive how "profitable" it is "for instruction in righteousness," how calculated to promote holiness in heart and life, and how rich in solid consolation and heavenly hope.

If a regard be had to those parts of the word of prophecy which have already received their accomplishment, it will plainly appear that they have received a *literal* fulfilment: *e.g.* how *literally* have been fulfilled the judgments of God respecting Israel and Judah, and in how remarkably *literal* a manner also have been accomplished the predictions respecting the first coming of Christ, in great humility, to be the sacrifice for sin: indeed, a little attention to the subject will shew how ALL *fulfilled* prophecy has received *the most* LITERAL accomplishment. Such being the fact, is it not reasonable to believe that what remains to be fulfilled of the word of prophecy will be accomplished in the *same literal* manner? Let but this simple rule be applied to guide us in our expectations, with regard to unfulfilled prophecy, and I have no doubt but that the happy result will be a unanimity of views and anticipations as to those "glorious things" which "are spoken" concerning "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him."

Whilst on this important subject, I would add force to my remarks on the *literal* interpretation of prophecy by the following interesting and convincing anecdote:—

A sermon was preached, a few years ago, in London (St. Clement Dane's Church, in the Strand). Among the congregation were two Jews. After the sermon a discussion arose in the vestry on the subject of a psalm which contained a prophecy respecting the restoration of the Jewish nation. The clergyman denied the interpretation of the national restoration. One of the Jews, who spoke for both, interposed and

said, "Then how can you wonder that we deny what you call the incarnation?" The Jew then asked for a Bible, and opened it at that passage which contained the address of the angel to Mary: "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." He then invited this clergyman to go on with him through the passage. The clergyman went through the first three or four clauses, and the Jew allowed the *literal* interpretation to pass. But, when he came to this passage, "And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign," &c., "That is," said the clergyman, "he shall reign in the hearts of his people." "Is that so?" said the Jew, "and not at Jerusalem where David reigned? Then I deny that Mary had a son; it signifies only that the Messiah was pure from his birth; that is the meaning of the virgin having a son. I take your mode of interpreting this verse, and I carry it back to the former verse, and deny the incarnation." "But," said the clergyman, "we believe in the *literal* interpretation of *this*; because the event has shewn it to be literal." Then said the Jew, with an indescribable mixture of scorn and contempt, "Hah! you believe because it is done: we believe because God *spoke*." O let us, my dear brethren, take God at his word; let us believe the word which the Lord has spoken; and not bend the words of eternal truth to meet our prejudices and preconceived opinions; lest by so doing we be tempted and ensnared to turn the truth of God into a lie, to his dishonour and our souls' loss. Suffer the word of exhortation, while I intreat you to give a close and prayerful consideration to the following texts. They are but a few in comparison of the large number which might be adduced; but they will be found

sufficient to show that the future coming of the Lord in glory will be, not, as the generality of Christians suppose, at the *end* of the Millennium, but at the *commencement*; and to *usher in* that glorious era of the world's regeneration and of the saints' perfected glory. That, therefore, his coming is near at hand, and speedily to be looked for, and daily to be anticipated; and that "*blessed* is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments" (*i. e.*, "unspotted from the world"); "for unto *them* who look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." How inconsistent it is for any of our dear brethren not to be looking and longing for the coming of that blessed and "holy One, whose voice is harmony, whose smile is life, whose will is law, and whose law is love;"—at whose coming "the forms of nature shall be renovated in beauty, and all the graces of heaven shall attend and adorn the spirits of men. The eye shall be satisfied in seeing, the ear in hearing, and the heart in loving; man shall be restored to his right position in the world, the world to its right position in the universe, and the illimitable universe shall break forth into joy and praise over a world which was lost but is found!" (Ps. xcvi. 1; Isa. xlv. 23.)

In the anticipation of so glorious a consummation of the Christian's divinely-taught prayer, who would not exclaim with the writer just quoted, "O thou who art the Joy of the universe, the Saviour of the lost, whose right it is to reign, come, wear thy many crowns. Thy saints are waiting for thy coming! The earth groans for thy coming! Heaven is silent for thy coming! 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'" *Amen.*

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST,

AND THE UNIVERSAL BLESSING OF THE EARTH, CONNECTED
WITH THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS.

Read Psalm lxxii.

I WOULD address myself, in the first place, this evening to the examination of a popular notion connected with our subject, which I hope to be enabled to shew you is nothing more than a popular error. It is one, however, that greatly tends to mislead the minds of many, respecting the whole class of subjects into which we are now inquiring. It refers to the meaning of the two expressions—"the day of judgment," and "the day of the Lord." It must be obvious that these two expressions are of the same import—that they both refer to the same period. If there were any doubt on the subject, it would be removed by referring to 2 Peter iii. There we find the apostle, or rather the Holy Ghost by him, using these two expressions as identical in their meaning. Having spoken of the heavens and the earth which were before the flood, and of their destruction by water, he thus proceeds: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (verse 7.) "The day of judgment," then, is the period in which the heavens and the earth are destroyed by fire. So far the popular idea is correct. Look now to verse 10, and you will see that the apostle uses the expression, "The day of the Lord," to denote the same period. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with

fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." Clearly it is of one period he speaks in both verses; designating it in one "the day of judgment," and in the other, "the day of the Lord." Now what is the idea attached by Christians generally to these expressions? Is it not that of a literal actual day of twelve, or four-and-twenty hours? And it is supposed that this literal day is at the end of time, at the final dissolution of all things, at the close of the millennium, when the Son shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and God shall be all in all. An examination of Scripture, as I judge, will shew that this is a mistake. "The day of the Lord" and "the day of judgment" both imply a lengthened period; not, as people imagine, an actual day of twenty-four hours. And let me remind you that we are in the constant use of the word "day" in such a sense as this. You hear men speak of "the day of despotism," and "the day of liberty;" "the day of ignorant barbarism," and "the day of enlightened civilization." Do they mean by these expressions a literal day of twenty-four hours? So when we speak of "Paul's day," "Cæsar's day," "Luther's day," "Wesley's day," "Napoleon's day"—we do not mean a day of twenty-four hours, but the period during which the person named, lived and acted; and when we thus speak, it is because we deem the person to have been one of such prominence as to give a character to the period in which he lived. And this is almost as common a use of the word "day" in our language as well as in the language of Scripture, as its application to a period of twelve or four-and-twenty hours. In Scripture we read of the day of temptation, the day of trouble, the day of prosperity, the day of adversity, the day of visitation, the day of vengeance, the day of salvation; and I know not how many instances besides we have, of expressions in which the word "day" is similarly used. Take the last named, "the day of salvation,"—how long has it lasted?

Full eighteen hundred years, at all events, and more than that. And for anything the word "day" proves to the contrary, "the day of judgment" may last as long as the day of salvation has lasted already. The fact is, that it is a lengthened period characterized by these two features among others; viz.—*judgment*, and the *the presence of the Lord*, and therefore it is termed "the day of judgment," and "the day of the Lord." Nor have I any doubt myself that it is termed "the day of judgment" in contrast with "the day of salvation;" "the day of the Lord" in contrast with "man's day,"—an expression which you will find in the margin of 1 Cor. iv. 3: "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment;" in the margin, "man's day." He proceeds: "But he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." "Man's day" is the long dreary period in which man judgeth by the sight of his eyes and the hearing of his ears. Deceived by Satan and his own heart, he has come to false conclusions on almost every subject; and acting on these false conclusions, these partial and erroneous judgments, he has filled the earth with violence, misery, and wrong. "The day of the Lord" is the period in which he shall rule, of whom we read, "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." (Is. xi. 2-4.) The character of his judgments, and the effects of his reign, are described to us in the beautiful Psalm we have read.

Before leaving this point I would remark, that this solemn, blessed period is ushered in and closed by *special acts of judgment*. To see this is very important to the clearing up of Scripture on these subjects. It is ushered in by those judgments which desolate the earth at the coming of the Lord. It is closed by the judgment, before the great white throne, of the dead who had not been raised at the commencement of the thousand years. And it is then, at the close, that the earth and the heaven flee away. Peter says, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; *in the which* the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." *In the which*. He does not say in what part of the day, whether at its dawn, or at its close. He gives us no information as to this. But we know well from Rev. xx., which describes to us the whole period, and tells us that it lasts a thousand years, that it is at the evening, the close of the day, that this takes place. Just as at the dawn, the morning of the day, the righteous dead are raised to live and reign with Christ throughout the period of the thousand years; so at its close, the wicked dead, "the rest of the dead who lived not again till the thousand years were finished," are raised from their graves, and judged before the great white throne. And it is then that the heavens and the earth pass away, and new heavens and a new earth are created in their stead. Well may the millennium be termed "the day of judgment," when it is ushered in by the judgments which attend the coming of the Lord; characterized by his righteous, though peaceful rule, throughout; and terminated by the judgment of the great white throne.

Let us now turn to Zech. xiv. We shall see there that "the day of the Lord" is not a literal day of twenty-four hours; that it is identical with his reign as king over all the earth; and that this is inseparably connected with what we were considering a few even-

ings since—the restoration of the Jews. “Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.” Here we have the commencement of the day, when in the extremity of Jerusalem’s final sorrows, the Lord goes forth to fight against her enemies. Now mark the recurrences in this chapter of the expression, “that day.” *What day it is*, we have just seen. “And his feet shall stand in *that day* upon the Mount of Olives,” &c. “And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. And it shall come to pass in *that day*, that the light shall not be clear nor dark: but it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.” We are thus told expressly, that it is not an ordinary, natural day. It is distinguished from this by two marks. First, “the light shall not be clear nor dark,” which the translators seem to have very properly explained in the margin thus, “that is, it shall not be clear in some places and dark in other places of the world.” The light will be equally diffused. Secondly, “at evening time it shall be light.” Instead of the light diminishing as the day declines, as in the natural day, the light shall be unabated to the last. At evening time it shall be light. To proceed: “And it shall be in *that day*, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.” So that the “day” is of such continuance that, at least, it embraces summer and winter. But what follows? “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in *that day* shall there be one Lord, and his name one.”

Is it not plain from this passage that "the day of the Lord" includes the whole blessed period of the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ? It is his coming that brings, his reign that constitutes, the day.

The chapter then speaks of physical changes which are to take place in the land. "All the land shall be turned into a plain," &c. "And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." Speaking of the judgments that shall fall on those who have been assembled against Jerusalem, it says, "And it shall come to pass in *that day*, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them," &c. "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." "In *that day*" (the *day* of which we have heard throughout the chapter—the *day* of which it can be said, "in summer and in winter shall it be;" "from year to year"—the *day* in which "the Lord shall be king over all the earth"—in *that day*) "shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD: and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in *that day* there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." Will you turn to this chapter, my brethren, in your closets, and read it there attentively, with prayer to the Lord? You can thus hardly fail to see that it places the whole matter in so clear a light, that if there was not another chapter in the Bible on the subject, we should have no excuse for being under any serious mistake respecting it.

Let us pass on to consider Isa. ii. "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last

days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem:" (ver. 1-3.) No doubt we have all often heard this passage quoted at missionary meetings, and on other similar occasions: quoted in connection with the subject of the spread of the gospel. But however important missions and the spread of the gospel may be (and God forbid that I should undervalue them for a moment), they are not the subject, nor are they in any way connected with the subject, of the passage before us. The passage before us records "the word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem." Judah and Jerusalem are the subject, not the Church and *its* missions. "Out of Zion," not out of the Church, "shall go forth the law: and the word of the Lord," not from Britain, but "from Jerusalem." We have got wise in our own conceits, my brethren, and supposed that to us was entrusted the work of introducing, by our labours, the blessedness of the millennial state. This is a work not associated with our calling, but with that of Israel. Ours is really a far higher calling—a heavenly one; a calling above earthly things and earthly scenes altogether. Forgetting this, and seeking a place on earth, we have sought to assume the place assigned of God to Israel. We have not had faith for our own place in the heavenlies with Christ, and having come down to earth, we have aspired to that place on earth assigned in the counsels of God to Israel. Israel's place we cannot fill, however we may attempt it; and in attempting it we deny our heavenly calling altogether. But more of this when we come to consider the distinct calling and glory of the Church. It is out

of *Zion* the law shall go forth, and the word of the Lord from *Jerusalem*.

“And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people.” Is this the gradual, peaceful spread of truth by human instrumentality? “And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks : nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” (ver. 4.) Ps. xlv. connects itself with the prospect of universal peace here held out, and we will turn aside to consider it for a moment. People say that it is not only by the spread of the gospel that this prospect is to be realized, but by peace societies and other confederations to spread pacific principles, and to promote among the governments of the earth pacific counsels and measures. But is this what the Word of God testifies? Look at this Psalm. It relates to a time of tremendous trouble, the period we were considering in a former lecture, the time of Jacob’s trouble, out of which he is to be delivered. This Psalm expresses the confidence of the faithful Jewish remnant, while surrounded by the horrors of that day of unequalled tribulation, and of the judgments with which it terminates. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea : though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.” (ver. 1–3.) This is surely most unlike the gradual spread of truth, and the conversion, by its imperceptible influences, of the whole mass of mankind to holiness and peace. Convulsions are here described of a character the most formidable. “The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved : he uttered his voice, the earth melted.” (ver. 6.) Again do the remnant declare their confidence amid the desolating storm. “The Lord of hosts is with us ; the God of Jacob is our refuge.” (ver. 7.) And now the storm is past. God has arisen to his strange

work; and his judgments having been accomplished, we are invited to contemplate the results. "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. HE *maketh wars to cease* unto the end of the earth; HE breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: He burneth the chariot in the fire." It is not the slow and gradual progress of peaceful principles, but God's solemn interposition in judgment at the coming of the Lord, that puts an end to the strifes and wars which have for so many ages desolated the earth, and that introduces the period of universal peace. And what is the moral drawn from all this by the Holy Ghost? Is it, "exert yourselves—put forth all your energies—labour with all your might, to impregnate society with principles which will introduce the golden age of universal concord, and harmony, and peace"—is this, I ask, the moral drawn by the Spirit from this solemn prophetic history? No, my brethren, it is this: "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (ver. 10.) It is by *his* power—not by human energy; to *his* glory—not to the exaltation of proud, vaunting man—that these wonders are accomplished.

Let us now turn again to Isaiah ii. Solemn words of warning and exhortation follow those already quoted; and then, from verse 10, we have a magnificent view of the "day of the Lord;" a view corresponding exactly with what we have seen in Zech. xiv., and supplying further instruction not communicated there. Verse 10 is an invitation to all who have ears to hear, to enter where the remnant, whose voice we have been hearing in Psalm xlii., are hid during the convulsions and terrors of that day. "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is

proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." Every thing that has ministered to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life—every thing that men have delighted in, so as to shut out God and exclude Christ from their hearts—every thing that has contributed to the self-exaltation that has characterized man throughout—which increasingly characterizes him now—which characterizes this day in which we live, to an extent fearful to contemplate—the day of the Lord shall be upon all that. Think, my brethren, of what the pride of man's heart is doing at this very moment, in concentrating the wealth and energies of all nations in making one grand display to all the world of what man's skill and energy can effect!*

The day of the Lord shall be "upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." May these serious words sink into our hearts. To read on: "And the idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty." When, my brethren? When the gospel has spread universally? When Christianity and civilization are everywhere diffused? When the truth has won a peaceful and universal triumph? Ah! this passage is often in part quoted, as though this were the doctrine taught in it. But *when is it* that idolatry ceases? "WHEN HE ARISETH TO SHAKE TERRIBLY THE EARTH." Yes, "In *that day*, a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made, each one for

* This refers to "The Great Exhibition" of London, 1851, which was in preparation when these lectures were delivered.

himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, WHEN HE ARISETH TO SHAKE TERRIBLY THE EARTH." And the moral here is of the same import as in Psalm xlvii. Here it is negative; there positive. Here it is, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" He may account much of himself, as, alas! he does. He may boast much of his powers, so varied and so ample as he considers them to be. He may improve them by all the inventions and appliances of art, and multiply them by combination to any extent he pleases. God has but to arise, and all his glories fade away as a leaf. God has but to interpose, and all that man has boasted of, and gloried in, withers at once. May our hearts remember this. Truth like this is needed at all times; but in this day of man's loudest boastings and loftiest pretensions, it is surely of all importance that these two words, "Cease ye from man"—"Be still and know that I am God"—should be ever present to our souls.

The views of prophecy which so widely prevail in the present day, confound with each other two periods, as entirely contrasted in their *character*, as they are distinguished from each other by the fact that one commences after the other has closed. Most Christians suppose that by the preaching of the gospel, and the increased outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Christianity will gradually spread—the nations of the earth be gradually subdued by its influence—till at last all men become Christians; and, that the world having thus become Christian, it will remain so for a great length of time. And this universal prevalence of Christianity which they anticipate, is what they understand by the millennium. But not only is this idea not founded on Scripture—not only is it contrary to all the plain Scriptures by which it was proved to you a week ago that there can be no

millennium till the return of the Lord Jesus Christ—it is based on a complete misapprehension as to what the character of the present period is, as well as the character of the next, the millennial age. They stand in direct contrast with each other. What is the character of God's present dealings with mankind? *Grace*, unmingled *grace*. This is the period of God's long-suffering, the day of salvation. God is not now *openly* acting as the righteous Governor of the world, distributing good and evil according to the character of men's ways. Every body sees this, and infidels try to prove thereby, either that there is no God, or that he takes no concern in human affairs. Whence all the unrequited treachery and rapine, and oppression and blood, which make the head giddy and the heart sick to contemplate, if God be now rewarding people according to their works?—if, in other words, he be now openly governing the world in righteousness?

Ah! but there is a "day of judgment" coming. Not a period of twelve, or four-and-twenty hours, but of a thousand years, throughout which the world's government, administered by the Son of Man himself, shall be of such a character as to clear up all that is now obscure, and fully vindicate and manifest the glory of God. God having got for himself a name by all the grace manifested throughout the present period, and by the results flowing from it to all eternity, he will, in the next dispensation—in the millennial age, manifest his character as "the righteous Lord who loveth righteousness." "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." (Isaiah xxxii. 1.)

Am I denying, then, that God does at present by his providence secretly and effectually control all things? God forbid. Even Satan himself is in that sense subject to him, accomplishing his purposes, and doing his will. But I speak of the open, public, manifest government of the world. Is that conducted on the principle of righteous retribution and

reward, or is it not? There can be but one answer. No doubt, man's evil and Satan's malice are kept in check by the secret restraints of God's providence, as well as by the institution of human government and laws which he has appointed, and, until now, upheld. If it were not so, men would destroy each other till the earth would be depopulated. But still, where is the person who can imagine that there is at present, or has ever been since the fall, a distribution of temporal good and evil, according to men's character and conduct, so as to be an adequate witness to God's character of holiness, benevolence, and rectitude, as the righteous Judge and Governor of the world? Why the fact is, that goodness has been allowed to be so oppressed and trodden under foot, and evil has been allowed to be so rampant and triumphant, that when the blessed One himself, the perfect, the sinless one was here, HE was put to death! We know *why* this was permitted. But I want you to consider the fact—it was permitted. Yes, God looked down from heaven and witnessed the murder, by man's wicked hands, of his only-begotten, well-beloved Son!

What a contrast was that scene to what the Psalmist anticipates, looking onwards to the millennial reign. "For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance: but judgment shall return unto righteousness; and all the upright in heart shall follow it." (Psalm xciv. 14, 15.) Long have judgment and righteousness been separated. *Judgment* was in the hands of Pilate who sate on the judgment-seat. *Righteousness*, perfect righteousness, human as well as divine, stood before him in the person of the blameless victim, of whose innocence he declared his conviction by vainly washing his hands, while he yet gave him up to be crucified! And God looked down on that scene, and has borne for eighteen hundred years with the world that was defiled by it! And could we expect him to avenge any lesser wrongs while that greatest crime of all continues unavenged? Unavenged, did I say?

Did I speak of God *bearing* with the world? How far short of the truth this is! He took occasion from that crowning act of men's hatred and wickedness, to display to us all the depths and fulness of his own love. He sent his Spirit to testify that the blood shed *by* man on earth, was accepted *for* man in heaven; that even those who actually shed it, if they did but take refuge in it for eternity, should find it a sure hiding-place. And what has God been doing ever since, but proclaiming to the whole world—Jews as well as Gentiles, and Gentiles as well as Jews—that all who believe on Jesus become united to him, fellow-heirs with him of the glory yet to be revealed. And surely this is not judgment, but mercy; not righteous government, but infinite grace. And what has been the effect where this testimony has been believed? Why, that those who have believed it have shared the treatment which their Lord received at the hands of men. And has God avenged their blood? No, the blood of Christ's martyrs, as well as of Christ himself, remains unavenged. And God suffers the world to pursue its wicked course, treasuring up wrath to itself against the day of wrath, while his patience still waits, and his long-suffering still lingers, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Such is the character of this present period—this day of salvation. But how does it act upon men's souls? what effect does it produce? A few indeed are gathered out from the world by almighty grace to believe in Jesus, and confess him, and suffer for his name's sake. There have been a few such in each succeeding century and generation. But what is the effect upon the mass? Hear it in the words of God himself—"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is only set in them to do evil." (Ecc. viii. 11.) All this patience and forbearance and grace of our God have just the effect of emboldening men in iniquity. How, then, is a dispensation, of

which perfect grace is the characteristic, to bring in universal blessing? It is not to be expected. Isaiah xxvi. 10, bears just the same testimony. "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." So that, however long the patience of God might wait, and his present dealings with mankind be continued, it is evident that the result would never be what men suppose. The world would never be converted, the millennium would never be introduced. It is by judgments that God will bring this about. "Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see." That is, as long as it is lifted up in mercy, they will not see. "But they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at thy people: yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them." (verse 11.) So also in verse 9: "For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." We have thus the express declaration that favour, grace, will not do; men abuse it, to the hardening of themselves in iniquity; their heart is fully set in them to do evil. Then there is the equally express declaration that when God's judgments are in the earth, men *will* learn righteousness. *Grace* does not accomplish their subjection: *judgment* shall and will accomplish it.

Scripture testimony to this truth is uniform and abundant. At so early a period as the days of Eli and Samuel, Hannah, the prophetess, sings: "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed." (1 Sam. ii. 10.) The last words of David are: "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God; and he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springeth

out of the earth by clear shining after rain." He owns that his house is not so with God; yet comforts himself with the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: and then says, "But the sons of Belial shall all of them be as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron, and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place." (2 Sam. xxiii. 3-7.) The second Psalm is also very full and clear as to this. The confederated kings and their people are represented as saying of Jehovah and his anointed, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." How is their impiety to be rewarded? "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." To this king, thus to be established on Zion, in spite of all opposition, Jehovah says, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." I dare say you have all heard this text quoted at missionary meetings, to prove that all nations will be converted by the Gospel. But is this its meaning? How does Christ take possession of the inheritance thus assigned to him? Read the next verse. "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (verse 9.) They are not given to him, as people suppose, by the gradual, gentle diffusion of Gospel truth; men's hearts and ways being moulded thereby till the world becomes a holy and happy world. No; at a certain definite moment yet to come, a moment for which Christ is waiting, ("expecting till his enemies be made his footstool,") the heathen shall be given to him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. And he will take possession by breaking his enemies with a rod of iron; dashing

them in pieces as a potter's vessel. It is thus by judgment, not by the extension of the present economy of perfect, unmingled grace, that millennial blessedness will be introduced.

One other passage, closely connected with what we have been considering, I would now refer you to. It is Psalm cx. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand,"—how long?—"until I make thine enemies thy footstool." What follows then? "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." While these enemies are crushed by the rod of his strength, his iron rod, there will be those, as we have already seen, who will be made ready to welcome him when he comes. His people, his nation, to whom he came eighteen hundred years ago, will be made willing to receive him at last. "He came to his own," but coming in humiliation, "his own received him not." So far from receiving, they crucified him; and he submitted to this—he suffered it to be so: "he was crucified through weakness." But when he comes again, it will be in power and glory. And to him it is said here—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." And how will he deal with those that gather against him, and against his willing people then? "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of thy wrath. He shall judge among the heathen; he shall fill the places with dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries." Yes, my brethren, it is by judgments—desolating, destroying judgments, that Christ will, at the commencement of his reign, cut off the wicked. Even as we read in the New Testament—"The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xiii. 41, 42.) The survivors, awed

by those judgments—the Spirit, moreover, being poured out upon all flesh—the whole world will own the supremacy of Jesus, and be made happy under his sway: as we read at the beginning this evening, “He shall judge the poor of the people; he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. . . . He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts—yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. . . . His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.”

HYMN.

JESUS shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

People and realms of every tongue,
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.

Blessings shall flow where'er He reigns,
The prisoners leap to loose their chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want be blest.

Where He displays His healing power,
Death and the curse shall reign no more;
But Adam's race in Him shall boast
More blessings far than Adam lost.

Then all the earth shall rise, and bring
Peculiar honours to its King;
Angels respond with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen.

OUTLINES OF LECTURES ON THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.

Lecture XI.

THE VAIL AND HANGING FOR THE DOOR.

Exodus xxvi. 31-37.

“AND thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: and thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver.

And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy place. And thou shalt set the table without the vail, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side. And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold, and their hooks shall be of gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them.”

THE VAIL.

Ver. 31. *And thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made.*] The spiritual signification of the vail is given us by the apostle in the following words:

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through

THE VAIL, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near." (Heb. x. 19-22.)

This vail represents the flesh of Jesus, and in connection with his atoning sacrifice, it shows him as the way of entrance by faith into the holiest of all.

Before the death of Jesus, "The priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." (Heb. ix. 6-8.)

But when Jesus expired on the cross at Calvary, "The vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom." (Matt. xxvii. 51.)

God by this act distinctly intimating that the way of access was clear—the glory could shine out, and the believer in Jesus could enter in. God could be just while he justified—and manifest himself as glorious in holiness, while the pardoned sinner was accepted and brought nigh by the blood of Jesus.

In this beautiful vail we thus behold set forth typically, Jesus—God manifest in flesh; who by his atoning sacrifice becomes himself the *way* of near approach to God in the very holiest. Precious Jesus! Precious privilege! How little apprehended or estimated in proportion to its value!

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE VAIL.

"*Of blue,*" &c.] We may trace in these colours and fine linen with cherubim the various excellences combined in the person of Christ. The *blue*, his perfection as man, and the heavenly beauty of his character, "the Son of Man which is in heaven."

"*And purple.*" The combination of the heavenly and earthly dignities in him who was at once Son of David and Son of God.

“And *scarlet*.” He was born King of the Jews, and, though rejected of his own, he yet shall reign.

“And *fine twined linen*.” He was “that holy thing” born of the virgin in his incarnation, and “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners” in his whole life and conversation here.

“Of *cunning work*.” What beauteous blendings, what exquisite harmonies may be discovered in the character of Jesus! How each grace tempers the others, and enhances the glory of the whole!

“With *cherubim* shall it be made.” The cherubim, as we have before said, represent the various characters of service to God, in the accomplishment of the Divine will.

In the garden of Eden it was *angelic* ministry.—As shewn by the cherubim on the mercy seat, the *gifts of the Spirit* for ministry at their heavenly source.—In the vision of Ezekiel, *prophetic* ministry and its characteristics.—And in the four living creatures around the throne of God, and of the Lamb, the ministry of the *redeemed in glory*.

Here, on the vail, the cherubim represent the various kinds of service to God, which were seen in perfection in Jesus, who came down from heaven to do the will of the Father, and in whom the apostle and prophet, the evangelist, the pastor, and the teacher were combined and manifested in all their excellency.

THE PILLARS OF THE VAIL.

Ver. 32. *And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon four sockets of silver.*] This beautiful and significant vail, representing the incarnate Saviour, Immanuel, God with us, was to be suspended on four pillars of shittim wood, overlaid with gold. And can we be at a loss to ascertain the fact which answers to this foreshadowing? Did not God employ *four* individuals, men of like passions with

ourselves, but Divinely qualified by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to hold up to view the great mystery of godliness,—God manifest in the flesh?

In the *four* inspired records of the life and death of Jesus, the whole truth of his person is exhibited as the Incarnate One. Whereas the *five* gifts given from an ascended Saviour go a step beyond, and in addition present him in his risen glory at God's right hand.

Their *hooks* were to be of gold.

Their capacity to take hold of, to select, and to arrange, the various incidents in the life and death of the Man of sorrows, his words and teachings, so as to bring out the truth of his Person in all its fulness, was of God.

So that those apparent discrepancies between the narratives of the four inspired historians, which so puzzle the natural mind, and so often render futile the attempt to form a harmony of the four Gospels, these seeming blemishes are, in fact, the marks and proofs of the handiwork of a Divine Editor.

Under his all-wise guidance and control, *Matthew* selects and arranges those materials which present the Lord Jesus especially as the Son of David and of Abraham, in connection with the kingdom, and with the promises made of God unto the fathers.

This corresponds with the *scarlet*.

Mark presents him especially as the Son of God and Son of Man, in his untiring service. The *purple*.

Luke, as the social Son of Man, and in connection with mankind at large. The *fine twined linen*.

And *John*, as the Divine and heavenly Stranger, in all the perfection of his character and ways.

Answering to the *blue*.

The full-length portrait—the perfection of the truth of the person of our precious Immanuel, is the result of the whole combined.

These pillars stood on four *sockets of silver*.

For while the four inspired historians were employed and capacitated of God to exhibit the truth of

the person of Jesus, they themselves reposed on his redeeming work, and on his precious and atoning blood.

THE POSITION OF THE VAIL.

Ver. 33. *And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.]*

These taches connected together the two larger curtains, composed of five smaller ones each, thus forming one Tabernacle. (Chap. xxvi. 3-6.)

The vail was to be hung immediately beneath these taches, dividing the tabernacle into two parts: twenty cubits for the holy place, and ten cubits for the most holy.

Into the first tabernacle, or the holy place, the priests went continually, accomplishing the service of God. Setting forth the ordinary privilege of believers in their priestly service and worship.

But into the second, or most holy place, the high priest alone entered once every year. For while the first tabernacle was yet standing, the Holy Ghost signified that the way into the holiest was not made manifest.

The vail *divided unto Israel* between the holy and most holy place. But the true light now shineth; the vail has been rent; the glory of God's grace has shone out; and the believer has boldness to enter in through faith in the blood of Jesus. (Heb. x. 19-23.) The vail now no longer *divides* between the holy and the most holy place; but he whom the rent vail typifies rather *unites*. He is himself the *way of access* by faith into the very presence of God. Our true place of worship and communion is in the holiest of all. How far is this realized by the majority of Christians?

The heart must be sprinkled from an evil conscience, in order to the enjoyment of this privilege in reality. The body must be washed in pure water;

that is, the believer must apprehend his interest in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, which this washing or baptism in water signifies, or access into the holiest is not enjoyed. It is a practical, personal, experimental thing.

Unbelief cannot enter there. Neither can the believer and unbeliever worship together within the vail. The presence of sin, in the license and love of it, in the holiest of all, is as impossible as the existence of darkness in the brilliance of the noon-day sunshine.

A firm standing in grace, and separation from evil personally and corporately, are indispensable to entrance, abiding, and worshipping in the holiest of all.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE VESSELS OF THE SANCTUARY.

Ver. 33. That thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony. . . .

34. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy place.

35. And thou shalt set the table without the vail, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side.]

The ark and the mercy seat were to be placed within the vail in the holiest of all. Thither Jesus our forerunner has for us entered: and there it is, from off the mercy seat, that God delights to hold communion with his people.

The table and the candlestick had each their appointed position in the holy place without the vail; for they typify communion and testimony in the Church on earth assembled.

The table has its place on the north side, or side of judgment; for it is in connection with the table of the Lord that discipline is to be maintained.

The candlestick was to be set over against the table. For the ministry of the truth of Christ is

designed to throw its light on the communion of saints. And it was to be on the south side; for it is to be a testimony of grace.

Neither is communion to set aside ministry, nor ministry to supersede communion; but each is to occupy its proper place, the place assigned to it by God in his word.

The altar of incense, afterwards described, had also its place before the vail and mercy seat; for worship comes in beautifully and blessedly in combination with communion and testimony.

THE HANGING FOR THE DOOR, OR THE DOOR OF THE TENT.

Ver. 36. *And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework.*] This hanging for the door of the tent is precisely similar to the vail, with this exception, that there are no cherubim on it.

It presents to us Christ, the incarnate Son of God. The blue intimating his heavenly perfectness—the scarlet his earthly dignity and glory—the fine twined linen his pure humanity—and the needlework his exquisitely beautiful character, in which every grace and virtue were combined and blended.

The *vail* represented him as the way into the *holiest*—the *hangings for the door* as the way into the *assembly*.

It is Jesus, through whom alone, by faith in his person and work, in the confession of his name, and in subjection to his Lordship, there is admission into the assembly of God—the assembly which is the witness for Jesus in the earth, and the dwelling-place of God through the Spirit.

Christ is the door into the assembly of saints. How important is this truth! It is not a ceremony, a creed, a set of opinions, or an agreement in a certain course, that is the door of entrance; it is Christ,

and Christ alone—the Christ of the Scriptures and the Christ of God: “He that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth.”

THE PILLARS OF THE DOOR.

Ver. 37. *And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold, and their hooks shall be of gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them.*

And chap. xxxvi. 38, *And the five pillars of it with their hooks: and he overlaid their chapiters and their fillets, (or suspending rods) with gold: but their five sockets were of brass.*] As the four pillars of the vail represent the four-fold provision made by God in the divinely inspired histories of the life and death of the Lord Jesus, so the five pillars by which the hanging for the door is suspended, represent to us those gifts of the Spirit from a risen and ascended Christ, by which he is made known as the way, the truth and the life; the gifts of the apostle and prophet, the evangelist, the pastor and the teacher, corresponding with the five bars of the tabernacle, and with the cherubim on the mercy seat, and in the vail.

But while there are correspondences, there are also distinctions. The *cherubim on the mercy seat* signifying these gifts in their Divine and heavenly source. The *cherubim on the vail*, these gifts as possessed in all their fulness by the Lord Jesus when on earth. *The five pillars of the door of the tent*, the gifts as connected in their exercise with admission into the assembly. And the *five bars of the tabernacle*, the same gifts employed for the edification and compacting of the Church together.

This suggests the reason why there are no cherubim on the hanging for the door, as in the vail,—the truth of the cherubim being signified in another form by the five pillars which sustain it.

THE MATERIALS OF THE PILLARS.

The pillars are of shittim wood, as pointing to the human agency employed. But they are overlaid with gold, for it is by the grace of God that this ministry is fulfilled.

Their hooks are of gold, for those employed are divinely capacitated to lay hold on and to exhibit the truth of Christ, so as to lead the soul into fellowship with those gathered in his name.

Their chapiters also, and their fillets or suspending rods, are of gold, significant of the Divine glory which crowns, and the Divine grace which accompanies this service.

But their five sockets are of brass; for decision, strength, and firm standing are requisite in this presentation of Jesus.

T. N.

[The Altar of Burnt Offering in the number for July.]

THE DISTINCT CALLING AND GLORY OF THE CHURCH, AS BRIDE AND CO-HEIR OF CHRIST.

Read Eph. ii. 11 – iii. 19.

I FEEL that nothing could more appropriately introduce to our attention the subject which is to occupy us this evening, than the few verses which have now been read. We see in those verses that the calling of the church is not only distinguished from all that existed prior to itself; but also from all that had been revealed to the prophets of Old Testament times, as to what has yet to be the manifested glory of Christ, in connection with Israel on the earth, in the millennial reign. Look again to what the apostle says, chap. iii. ver. 4, 5. “Whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.” And as to how the apostle had become acquainted with this mystery, he tells us plainly enough—“How that by revelation he made known to me the mystery; as I wrote afore in few words.” (ver. 3.) There was a mystery revealed to Paul, made known to him by revelation from God, which had not been made known in former ages, as now, in Paul’s day it was made known—revealed to Christ’s holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. Now it is to this mystery, the distinct calling and glory of the church—for it is here we shall find this mystery developed—that our attention is to be directed this evening.

One thing I feel to be important at the outset; that is, to define the principal term employed in the announcement of our subject. You may suppose that the expression “the church” is so commonly used, and so generally understood, as not to need defining. But the fact is, there is hardly an expres-

sion as to the meaning of which people's thoughts are so vague and indefinite. Some apply the term to the building in which professing Christians meet for worship. And even among those too well instructed for this, it is still far from being distinctly understood. It is either applied to any religious association with which men happen by birth, or conversion, or other circumstances, to be connected; or it is understood to mean the aggregate of all such associations, the whole world over; or in a still wider sense, it is considered as including all true believers of all ages, from Abel down to the last person who shall be saved. Now it is well to remember that it is only in the New Testament we find the word; and this of itself might suggest the inquiry, whether that which it denotes be not peculiar to New Testament times. In former ages, as all Christians understand, there were individual believers, such as Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and all those spoken of in Heb. xi. whether their names be mentioned there, or included among those of whom the apostle says, "The time would fail me to tell of them." Besides this, there was one nation which God had outwardly separated to himself, as his people. The vast majority of that nation were, however, in every period of their history, unconverted. There were individual saints not gathered together in a body; and there was a nation, a body of people in that sense, outwardly owned of God: but the mass of them were never God's people in truth; but stiff-necked and hard-hearted adversaries of God. Now the church of God is God's assembly. The word rendered church is derived from one which means *to call out*, and is used of any assembly of persons, called out from among others for any purpose whatever. But the use of the word in the New Testament is what must determine its meaning there; and there it is applied either to the assembly of all believers from Pentecost to the coming of Christ into the air, to receive his saints to himself in glory—or to the assembly of all believers

alive upon the earth at any given time between these two epochs—or to the assembly of all the believers in any given locality; as, for instance, the church at Jerusalem, Antioch, or Ephesus, and even “the church in thy house.” There are but two instances in the New Testament in which the word “church” is used in any other sense or application than these. In Acts vii. 38, it is applied to the assembly of the Israelites in the wilderness; and in Acts xix. 32 and 39, the same word in the original is translated “assembly,” not church. But it is the same word; and there it is used of the assembly of Ephesian idolaters and others. With these exceptions, which hardly could be confounded with our present subject, the word church will be found in the New Testament to mean either (1) all believers from Pentecost to the taking up of the saints at the coming of Christ; or (2) all believers at any one time upon earth, during the period between these; or (3) all the believers in any given locality, or assembling as such in any given place. I do not stop here, to prove that such is the use of the word in the New Testament. Many considerations will present themselves in proof of it in the course of our evening’s inquiry into Scripture on this subject; and I would intreat you to give to the subject the most diligent examination afterwards, when you have leisure to do so. But it is important, when we speak of the distinct calling and glory of the church, that we should have clearly before our minds *who they are that form the church*, to which this distinct calling and glory belong. And it is evidently in the widest application of the term, that is, as including all true believers from Pentecost to the taking up of the saints, that we use it in our present inquiry. Both the other uses of it are included within this.

When we speak of the *distinct* calling and glory of the church, it evidently brings in view some other body or bodies, from whose calling and glory that of the church is distinguished. And what is it that has

been occupying our attention for the last two evenings? It is the prophetic testimony of God as to Israel and the other nations of the earth in millennial times. We have been studying the gracious promises of our God as to the restoration of the nation of Israel, and the blessing of all nations in subordination to them, under the reign of Christ. But when we speak of the *distinct* calling and glory of the church, we mean that "the church" is called to a higher glory than will belong to Israel or to the nations. These will doubtless be happy under the reign of Christ; and that reign will bring fuller and higher blessing to Israel than to the other nations, who will really be subordinate to Israel; but "the church" will be manifested as the bride—the heavenly bride—of Jesus when he reigns; not blest under his sway, but sharing his dominion and glory; and sharing it, moreover, in the character of his bride.

That we may the more clearly discern the difference between the calling of the church and that of Israel, let us look a little further at what Scripture reveals as to the latter. It is only that we may better see the contrast between them. In Deut. xxviii. we have the blessings promised to Israel in case of their obedience. They have entirely failed in obedience, as we know, and have thus forfeited all those blessings. But, as we have seen so largely in Scripture, they are to be brought back. Grace will reinstate them in all their forfeited blessings; and they will be maintained in the enjoyment of these blessings, by the righteous rule of the Lord Jesus Christ. And what are these blessings? "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth." You see it is one nation in contrast with, and exalted above, all other nations. "And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto

the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. . . . The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy store-houses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto: and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." What have we here but a fulness of earthly blessings, by which this one nation was to be distinguished from, and set above all others? The effect which was to have followed is stated also. "And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee." Abundant and continual prosperity in earthly, temporal things, was what all nations could understand; and this they were to have seen in Israel, had Israel been obedient: and by this they were to have seen, that Israel was called by the Lord's name. "And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord swore unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them." How manifestly, then, was Israel's calling a calling to pre-eminence and glory and power, and plenty and prosperity and blessedness *on the earth*. And though through dis-

obedience they have entirely forfeited these their promised blessings; and though when they are restored, (as they surely will be,) it will be entirely of grace; this will not have changed their calling, and the character of their blessing. They will inherit spiritual blessings, it is true—forgiveness—regeneration—the saving knowledge of Christ—but they will enjoy these spiritual blessings not in *heavenly* but in *earthly* places. And the fulness of earthly blessing will still be the distinctive mark of their calling. All the prophecies of their restoration, and subsequent happiness and prosperity, prove this. One only I will quote in addition to those already cited in former lectures. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.” (Amos ix. 13–15.) How beautiful are these words. And yet how evidently do they promise to restored Israel *temporal* blessings in *earthly* places. These will be enjoyed by them, it is true, as God’s people; they will have become such then in reality, in truth. They will have been born again; for there is no entrance into the kingdom, even as to its earthly department, but by being born again. But there is an earthly department, as well as a heavenly; and the chief place, and richest blessings, in the earthly department, are promised to restored and repentant Israel.

I say *the chief place*; for nothing can be more clear than that in the millennial reign the distinction between Israel and the Gentiles will exist in full force, and the pre-eminent place on earth belong to

Israel. Why should "ten men take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you"—unless God be with them in a sense different from that in which He will be with the other nations of the earth? (See Zech. viii. 22, 23.) The following beautiful passages from Isaiah lx. are very clear as to this point. To Zion, to Jerusalem, it is said, "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee." God will then have glorified Jerusalem, and its glory will thus be acknowledged by all. "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually: they shall not be shut day nor night, that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." Surely the mere reading of these passages is enough to shew, that it cannot be of the present dispensation that they treat. One of the most common and familiar thoughts connected with Christianity is, as we all know, that in it all distinction between Jew and Gentile has ceased—has passed away; that in Christ "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all." (Col. iii. 11.) But these prophecies treat of a period when the distinction between Jew and Gentile, between Israel and the other nations of the earth will be as fully recognized as it ever was: and when Israel shall occupy the place of full pre-eminence on the earth. "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed

your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen, and your vinedressers. But ye (restored Israel, the citizens of Jerusalem, the city of the great King) shall be named the priests of the Lord; men shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves." (Isa. lxi. 4-6.) Can anything more plainly demonstrate the superiority of the Jew over the Gentile in millennial times?

But now, my brethren, I am reminded of what some one has most justly said, that "Christ is the great purpose of God." This is, in other words, what Peter says, "Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." The entire sum of prophecy is here stated—the sufferings of Christ and the glories (for it is *glories* in the original) that should follow. It is only as you see this, and bear it in mind, that you can profitably consider these details of prophetic inquiry. This is the only point from which the details of prophetic truth can be rightly surveyed. You can hardly have a *correct*, and are sure to have a *contracted*, view of the landscape, if you are but a little elevated above the plain. It is from the higher ground that you are enabled to descry the length and breadth of the glorious prospect; and the nearer you approach to the point of moral survey occupied by the blessed One who drew the picture, and whose office is to glorify Christ, the more you will find that your view has been distorted, as well as curtailed, by occupying any lower position. God's own glory in Christ is his great object; and it is as we bear this in mind, and view everything in connection with this, that we shall receive a correct understanding of God's blessed purposes and ways.

Glory may be said to be the manifestation of excellency. Gold is precious, even in the ore. But the glory of it is not discerned till it has passed through the crucible, and been separated from all the baser

elements which were mingled with it. The sun is the fountain of light and heat to this whole system, even when clouds interpose, and obscure its brightness; but when the clouds have passed away, and it shines forth in all its majesty and strength, then we see its glory. And whatever may constitute, in millennial times, the manifested glories of Christ, they will all be found to be but the display of what he is now; and of what faith now knows him to be. It is only by faith that we can discern these glories now; but it will surely be found that each glory to be manifested then is but the display of some excellence residing in his blessed person, or in one or other of the offices he sustains. How the heart stops short, alas! of entering by faith into the contemplation of these wondrous and varied glories of Christ! Would that we knew them better, by the teaching of the Comforter, whose office it is to glorify Christ, by taking of his, and shewing it unto us!

We have been seeing, both to-night and on former occasions, how Christ will "reign in Mount Zion and before his ancients gloriously." In what character does he possess this glory which will then be displayed? It is as the Son of David. Faith knows him to be the Son of David now; the One of whom it was said by the angel to his virgin mother, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever: and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i. 32, 33.) What do we understand by this? A person once told me seriously, that his idea of those who hold pre-millennial views was, that we believed the identical chair of state in which David sat—his literal throne—to be still somewhere in existence, and that in the millennium it would be occupied by Christ! I should not have ventured even to seem to trifle with the subject, and with your feelings, by repeating such a statement as this, had it not been made to me by an intelligent person, a

minister of Christ. One need not, of course, disclaim such a thought. But if they be such ideas of pre-millennial doctrines as these, that lead our brethren to reject them—if this be what they understand by the personal reign, denouncing it, as they do, as a carnal expectation—why, then, on the one hand, we cannot be surprised at their opposition; while, on the other, it is to be regretted that they take no better pains to inform themselves what pre-millennial doctrines are. This only would I ask them,—What do *they* mean when they speak of “the throne of the Cæsars?” How would any one understand the assertion that Louis Napoleon now occupies “the throne of the Bourbons and of Charlemagne?” Need we to explain to people that this means that he wields the authority once possessed by the Bourbons?—that he reigns over the country once ruled by Charlemagne? And what is meant in Scripture (for it is *Scripture* language, not *ours*) by Christ sitting on the throne of David? Surely it means that he is to exercise the authority once entrusted to David; that he is to rule over the nations of which David was king and lord. He is “of the seed of David according to the flesh.” He was born “King of the Jews.” And where Peter, speaking of the resurrection of Christ, quotes from David’s words in Psalm xvi., he thus explains them: “Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne: he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ,” &c. (Acts ii. 30, 31.) So far from the death and resurrection of Christ setting aside his title and his claims as the Son of David, *it was in resurrection* that this title was to be verified—these claims fulfilled.

But Christ has higher glories than that of being David’s royal Son and Heir. He is the seed of Abraham; and there were promises to Abraham of wider scope than those which were made to David.

It was promised to Abraham "that he should be the heir of the world." (Rom. iv. 13.) "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. xxii. 18.) We surely know who the seed of Abraham is. "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. iii. 16.) As the seed of David, he is to inherit David's royal dominion; but as the seed of Abraham, all nations, yea, all the families of the earth, are to be blessed in him.

But Christ has higher glories yet. He is the Son of Man, the second Adam; and, as such, he inherits all the dominion entrusted to the first Adam, but forfeited by his sin. "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." (Gen. i. 26.) Such was the dominion over this whole lower creation which was confided to the first Adam. By his sin, as we all know, this was forfeited. But was it lost never to be regained? No; to *man* it was entrusted, and by *man* shall it yet be exercised in full blessedness and glory. One of the psalms takes up this point, as you will remember; bringing in the fact that there is a "Son of Man" to whom this place of universal power and authority pertains. "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 sea." And then, as marking the period in which this prophecy will have its fulfilment, the psalm ends as it begins, with "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name IN ALL THE EARTH!" (Psalm viii. 4-9.)

In Heb. ii. we have this very passage quoted by the apostle, and applied to our blessed Lord. "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." (ver. 5.) By the expression "world to come," most people understand the state of disembodied spirits after death. But there is no such thought as this in the passage. It is literally, as all scholars agree, "the habitable earth to come." In the coming age, or dispensation, the earth is not put in-subjection to angels, but to man. "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man," &c., the passage just quoted from the eighth psalm. "But now," says the apostle, "we see not yet all things put under him." (verse 8.) It is the purpose of God that all things shall be; but we see not yet the accomplishment thereof. But what do we see? "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (ver. 9.) Part of the divine purpose is fulfilled. Jesus is personally crowned with glory and honour; but he awaits, at the right hand of God, the arrival of the time when all things shall be subjected to his sway. He is yet to inherit, as the second Adam, all the glory of the dominion entrusted to the first, but forfeited by his fall.

But while it is as Son of Man he inherits all this glory, it is as the *rejected* Son of Man, as having died and risen again, that he actually takes it. This accounts for the passage just quoted going so far beyond Psalm viii. We do indeed read there, "Who hast set thy glory above the heavens:" but here we find the Son of Man himself in heaven, crowned with glory and honour.

There are deeper wonders, too, of his blessed Person, disclosed in connection with all this. Christ has a higher glory than any we have been contemplating. He is more than the Son of David, more than the Son of Abraham, more than the Son of

Man. He is the Son of God; the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. We shall see directly that the very first mention of "the church" in Scripture, is connected with the confession of this highest, divine, essential glory residing in the person of Christ, as Son of God. But surely we need to remember here that we tread on holy ground. Turn to Philip. ii. 6-11, where we read of Christ Jesus, "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." What follows? The announcement that he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." First, as God, he humbled himself to become man. Then, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself still lower, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. What ensues? "Wherefore"—because of his having thus humbled himself—"God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Now here is a glory *conferred* on Christ which surpasses all that we have been glancing at. *And it is to him, in this highest place of given glory, that the church is united.* You will not mistake me. I am not affirming that we are associated with his essential Godhead glory. To affirm that would be blasphemy. Such glory he can share with no one. "He gives not," in this sense, "his glory to another." Nor am I affirming that we shall participate in receiving the adoration to be rendered by every knee to that blessed name—"the name of JESUS." No; but yet it is to him as in this, his highest place of given glory—the glory conferred on him not as the Son of David, not as the

Son of Abraham, nor, simply, as the Son of Man, but as the One who, being God, the Son of the Father, humbled himself to become the Son of Man, and not only so, but to become obedient unto death, the death of the cross—it is to him in the place of glory conferred upon him as the reward of this, his wondrous, infinite condescension, that the church is united. She is associated with him thus as head, sovereign, ruler over all things. Turn to Eph. i., where the apostle prays for the Ephesian believers to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, “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 heavenly places, 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 hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things TO THE CHURCH, WHICH IS HIS BODY, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” The church is the body, the fulness, of him whom God has thus raised from the dead, and set at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all powers, all things being put under his feet. And, *as his body*, the church is associated with him in this place of wondrous, highest glory. God “gave him to be head over all things *to the church, which is his body*.” The One who went down into the dust of death, having first stooped from the throne of the Eternal to become man, *that he might go down into death*, is the One whom God has raised from the dead to put all things under his feet; all things in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth. And God has thus given him to be Head over all things “to the church.” It is not here that he is Head of the church. That is

true likewise, blessed be God. But here he is presented as "head over all things to the church which is his body." *His body, the church, is thus associated with his glory, in this headship over all things.*

Let us now turn to John xvii. You will observe that in this chapter our Lord is praying to the Father, as the One who had come forth from the Father, and could speak of the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. But he had veiled that glory in flesh and blood; and in the human nature which he had thus assumed, he had glorified the Father on the earth. He is here in Spirit beyond the cross: for he speaks of having finished the work which his Father had given him to do. He prays for his disciples; and not for them only, but for all who should believe on him through their word. So that the prayer of Jesus embraces us, my brethren, as much as the disciples of that day. It is surely through their word we have believed on Jesus. Well, for all such Jesus prays, "that they 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." Now mark the next words. "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: and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." There is a glory which the Father has given to Jesus, and which Jesus has given to the church. By this glory, which the church thus shares with Jesus, the world is to know in millennial times, *that the Father has loved the church even as he loves his own Son.* When the world shall see the church in the same glory with Christ, they will know that she has been loved with the same love. And when is it that the world shall see us in the same glory with Jesus? "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. iii. 4.)

It is the church alone which is privileged to know and confess the humiliation of God's only begotten Son, while his glory is yet hidden from the view of the world. Saints before the incarnation of Christ could not own him thus, for he had not then taken flesh. Saints after the return of Christ cannot own him thus, for then his glory will be manifested: it will neither be veiled as when he was here on earth, nor hidden as now while he is at the right hand of God. But those who during the period of his humiliation and rejection have been led to know and to confess him as the Son of God, form the body, the church,—a body which is associated with him in that highest place in heaven as well as on earth, which is his reward for having humbled himself from such infinite glory to such depths of sorrow and of shame.

I have said that the first mention of the church in Scripture is connected with the confession of Christ as the Son of God. It is in Matt. xvi. Our Lord asks, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." No one knew him. Even in his lesser glories, as the Son of David and the seed of Abraham, no one by nature knew him or acknowledged him. "But whom say ye that I am?" our Lord inquired. This draws from Peter the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He does not merely say, Thou art the Christ. Blessed confession this, as a Jew, of the One who was the Messiah promised to Israel. But he goes on, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. The *living* God. His faith embraces the whole compass and blessed fulness of the truth as to the person of Jesus. He evidently lays emphasis on the word "living"—the Son of the *living* God! What is our Lord's reply? "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also* unto

* Or, "I also say." The Father had revealed to Simon who

thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Romanists say, that Peter is the rock on which Christ declared he would build his church. But the heart which has been taught of God to join in Peter's confession, needs no arguments to prove that "this rock" means, not Peter, but the blessed One himself, whom Peter had just declared to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God." He himself, known and confessed, not as the Son of David merely, or the Son of Abraham, or the Son of Man, but as the Son of the living God, was the rock on which the Church was to be built. And the gates of hell (or hades) were not to prevail against it. The Romanists speak of error as one of the gates of hell; and assuming that their church is the true and only one, they argue that no charge of fatal error can be justly brought against it; because of this assurance, that the gates of hell (of which they say error is one) should not prevail against the church of Christ. Such is their grand argument for the infallibility of their church. But the word here rendered hell, is not *gehenna*, the place of torment for the wicked, but *hades*, the place or state of separate souls; and it is evidently used here as expressive of the power of death, in contrast with Peter's confession of Christ as the Son of the *living* God. The church is founded on that which is beyond the reach or the power of death:—even on the Son of the *living* God. With such a foundation, how could the gates of hades prevail against it?

Observe, too, it is "upon this rock *I will build* my church." It is not "upon this rock *I have built*," or "upon this rock *I am building*—but, "upon this rock *I will build* my church." The work was still a future one when our Lord spake. He was presented to Israel as their Messiah; but they knew him not.

Jesus was; and Jesus says, "I also say"—I have something further to reveal. This has been suggested by another, and is the literal rendering of the Greek.

There were those, indeed, whose hearts, like Peter's, grace had touched; but they discerned in him a better glory, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." In this character, and as known in this character, he was to be the foundation of the church. But ere he could build it, he must pass through death; and of this he immediately goes on to speak in the passage we are considering. "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." Peter having confessed him as the Son of the living God, he declares that upon this rock he will build his church. When? is the question which here seems to be supposed; and the answer is, "I must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." All this must be accomplished ere the building of the church can commence. There is a passage of deepest interest as to this in John xi. Caiaphas had said, "It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." "This," we are told, "spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." It was for the nation of Israel he died; and so all the blessing of the earth, when that nation is the centre of rule and of blessing in the millennial kingdom, will flow from the efficacy of his death. But it was not for that nation only. It was also to gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. There were children of God, but they were scattered abroad; to gather them together in one was the immediate object of the death of Christ. And what was this gathering together in one of the children of God? It was the formation of the church. It was the joining together of the till then separate,

isolated stones, by building them upon the foundation,—the Son of the living God. But in order to do this, he must die. Sin must be put away by his one sacrifice, ere saved sinners can be builded together for an habitation of God. The foundation indeed is the Son of the living God; but it was not as incarnate merely, but as having died and risen again, that he was actually to become the foundation of the church. He must be *declared* to be the Son of God, and that was by resurrection. He “was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and *declared to be the Son of God, with power*, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” (Rom. i. 3, 4.) It is not only on Christ as the Son of the living God that the church is built as a foundation; but ere he actually became the foundation of the church, he had passed through death atoningly; in his resurrection he had set it aside, “abolished” it (see 2 Tim. i. 10); and having ascended into heaven, the Holy Ghost having come down by virtue of his work and in answer to his prayer (see John xiv. 16), the church was formed by his uniting into one body with Christ in glory all who believed in his name. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” (1 Cor. xii. 13.) If, then, we are thus one with him who is the Son of the *living* God, and who has passed through death and set it aside, how can the gates of hades prevail against the church.

Let us now for a moment return to the epistle to the Ephesians. We have seen Israel’s calling is to temporal blessings in earthly places, even in the land promised to their fathers. But what are our blessings, as set forth in this epistle? “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all *spiritual* blessings in *heavenly* places in Christ.” In *heavenly places*. Not a heavenly frame of mind, as many understand this passage. That would surely be included in *spiritual blessings*. But we are taught what the region is in

which we are thus blessed with all spiritual blessings; it is in *heavenly places*. Let me ask you, my brethren, where is the Lord Jesus Christ? Where is the risen and glorified Son of Man? Is he not in heaven—literally and actually in heaven? And is it not in this very chapter that we are told of “the exceeding greatness of God’s 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 heavenly places*?” This is exactly the same expression as in ver. 3, “Blessed with all spiritual blessings *in heavenly places*.” Our place is where he is, at the right hand of God. Our portion, treasure, inheritance—our life, our peace, our joy—in a word, our blessings are all there; “Blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” We are the body of him who actually sits there; and vitally united with him by the Holy Ghost, faith reckons—even as God accounts—his place to be our place in him.

In the beginning of Eph. ii. we have a glance at what our natural condition is, “dead in trespasses and sins.” Then in ver. 4, “But 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;” given us one life with him whom he raised from the dead; “(by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together *in heavenly places* in Christ Jesus.” And for what end is this? That all the nations of the earth may see how happy a thing it is to be under the government of the Prince of peace? No, that is the object of Israel’s calling. But why are we thus raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ? It is “that in the ages to come, he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.” And then in chap. iii. 9, 10, we find that there is even a present display to those in heaven. “God who created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent that *now* unto

the principalities and powers *in heavenly places* might be known BY THE CHURCH, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is God's eternal purpose that even *now* unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places—and *in the ages to come* to all—shall be exhibited, *by means of the church*. his manifold wisdom, and the exceeding riches of his grace. May our hearts enter more fully through grace into this stupendous design.

The Apostle proceeds in Eph. ii. to shew, that instead of the distinction between Jew and Gentile being maintained in the church, it is entirely obliterated. It is not that the Gentiles are brought into blessing, as they will be in the millennium, in a place subordinate to that of the Jews; but that both Jews and Gentiles are brought out of their natural state and position altogether, into vital union with Christ in glory. "Wherefore, remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh, made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ"—Christ was of Israel according to the flesh, but the Gentiles sustained no such relationship to him—"being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Such was our condition as Gentiles. God was the God of Israel, and they had the hope of their Messiah's coming, to fulfil all the promises made to their fathers. "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." How nigh? So nigh as to be servants to Israel? their ploughmen and vinedressers, as the Gentiles will be in millennial times? Is that our place? Are we the favoured ploughmen and vinedressers of the more favoured nation of God's choice, Israel on the earth? Hear what the Apostle says. "For he (Christ) is our peace, who hath made both (Jews and Gentiles who believe) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition

between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Can anything be plainer than what we are here taught? We are not brought into that place of subjection to Israel which will belong to the spared nations of the earth in millennial times. We are not brought into the position which Israel itself will then occupy. No, but we are brought into one immeasurably higher and more blessed than either. The Jew, with all his privileges, is by nature dead in sins. The out-cast far-off Gentile is but in the same condition before God. What has God in his grace done for us both? Rich in mercy, he has quickened us, whether Jews or Gentiles, together with Christ. He has brought the Jew out of his natural position as a Jew, and the Gentile out of his natural position as a Gentile, and brought both into the entirely new and wondrous position of being the body of the heavenly, glorified man; of him who being in the form of God, and thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, humbled himself to the death of the cross. He has now as his reward for this, a name which is above every name—the name of JESUS—at which name indeed the church herself bows the adoring knee; but he is also "*head over all things,*" and *we are his body*. He died, as we have seen, to make in himself of twain one new man. There is a new, mystic man; of which Christ in glory is the head, and of which all who believe during the period of its formation, are members. And this is the sense in which we are said to be "the fulness of him that filleth all in all." All my members are the fulness, or complement, which constitute my body. If a joint of my little finger were wanting, I should not be a complete man. Thus is the church, the fulness, the complement, of this new heavenly man. Christ in glory is the head, and in all things he has the pre-eminence. But the feeblest

saint is essential to the completeness of the body. The head (and we know who that is) cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you. (See 1 Cor. xii. 21.) Hence in Eph. iv., the gifts are said to be bestowed "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 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." It is not "till we all come to be perfect men." No, but till we all come unto "a perfect man:" that is, until the body, the bride of Christ be completed. It was for this that Jesus died. "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." (Eph. v. 25-27.) Wondrous truth! "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." "This is a great mystery," says the Apostle, "but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

To one other point I would advert. Peter exhorts the saints to whom he wrote, to desire, as new-born babes, the sincere milk of the word, "if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed, indeed, of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. ii. 3-5.) To whom coming as unto a *living* stone. Of whom is it that Peter speaks? Of himself? Impossible. It is of him whom he had confessed as the Son of the *living* God. But observe the next words, "disallowed indeed of men." To whom coming as unto a living stone, *disallowed indeed of men*. The church is

founded on Christ, known and confessed as the Son of the living God ; but this stone is one "disallowed indeed of men." It is a Christ rejected by the world, on which the church is founded. Here we have a most solemn test, and one of easy application, by which to judge any association professing to be the church, or a part of the church of God. If it be that which man can allow—if it be an institution which the world can own and adorn with goodly gifts—it is not the rejected church of the rejected Son of God. Let me not be misunderstood. There may be true members of the church of God associated with that which in its corporate character is wedded to the world, and impregnated with its spirit. But, clearly, the word before us would not only entitle us to ask, but would render it obligatory on us that we should ask, as to anything pretending to be the church, Is it, or is it not, disallowed of men? He who is the true foundation is so ; and that which is really based thereon must share with him his rejection by the world. That which is supported by the world's strength, adorned with the world's glory, and crowned with the world's plaudits, can scarcely be viewed as the lively stones built up as a spiritual house, on the one living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious ! The Lord quicken our consciences, and give us understanding in all things.

Time would fail to occupy half the ground which is covered by this most interesting subject. But there are two or three essential characteristics of the church, the body of Christ, which must not be passed by. And, first, its holiness. Separated to God in a nearness of relationship and intimacy of communion which attach to none besides, how can it be otherwise than holy ? How affectingly is this taught in John xvii., where our blessed Lord, praying for those who were to compose his body, the church, says, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." Again : "I have given them thy word ; ~~and the~~ world hath hated them, because they are not of the

world, *even as I am not of the world.* (Think of this, beloved brethren.) I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world (that is, take them away to heaven at once), but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" Could anything present the holiness of the church, as one in life and character with its Head in glory, in a more solemn and affecting point of view than this? What is the measure of the holiness and separation from the world which properly attach to the church? Precisely that which attaches to her Head in glory. May we all lay these things to heart!

Then there is the unity of the church. I put it to your consciences, my brethren, How many churches has Christ? We know, indeed, that unity is the false boast of Rome; and there are others who advance the same pretensions. But what is the unity thus gloried in? Not the *holy* unity for which Jesus prays in the seventeenth of John, but a unity which embraces the whole world in any given sphere where it is pretended that it exists. Rome (and would that in this she were alone) baptizes whole nations, and calls them the church, and then boasts of her unity and catholicity. But a unity subversive of holiness is not the unity of the bride of Christ. Has she, therefore, no unity at all? Has Christ many bodies, many brides? The thought is almost blasphemous. His spouse, his undefiled, is one. It is a solemn thought for us to ponder: "There is *one* body and *one* Spirit, even as we are called in *one* hope of our calling." My brethren, is this that to which we are practically bearing witness—that there is but one church, including all who are living members of Christ, quickened into union with him by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven?

Further, one most essential characteristic of the church (may we not say *the* essential characteristic?) is, the presence of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. Both the holiness and the unity of the church flow from this. Saints, disciples of Christ, children of

God, there were, before the descent of the Holy Ghost—persons quickened by the Spirit, born of the Spirit, as all saved persons in all dispensations are—but no church. It was the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost that formed the church; and though the mystery of the distinct calling and glory of the church thus formed was not revealed until Paul received grace and apostleship from the Lord, still the body itself was formed at the day of Pentecost, and has existed from that epoch. When the Holy Ghost had descended from the Head in glory, to indwell, and animate, and govern, and build together, the members here below, then, and not until then, it could be said, “There IS one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.” Blessed truth! may our souls receive it and hold it fast.

Finally, there is that in the relationship between Christ and the church which is deeper and more blessed than the highest glory. Glory, as we have seen with regard to Christ himself, is *displayed* excellency. But are there not beauties and delights in Jesus, for the heart taught and enabled of the Holy Ghost to enjoy him, which cannot be *displayed*? Oh, yes! and if the church be, indeed, the bride, the Lamb’s wife, can it be her highest pleasure and delight that she shares all the given glory which displays the excellency of her Bridegroom and Lord? Surely there are reciprocal affections pertaining to that relationship which cannot be exhibited; a fellowship of spirit, a union of heart, a mutual joy in each other, perfectly ineffable. And into this we are called by faith, through the power of the Holy Ghost, to enter even now. But if we do speak of glory, what is her glory? *All the given glory of her Head.* Specially associated with him in that which is his highest given glory, what is there of his that can be communicated or shared in which she will not partake? Ask you what is the Bride’s portion? Her title declares her participation in all that constitutes the inheritance of the Bridegroom. Here

it is we see the surpassing glory of the church. There is nothing like it in heaven or in earth, save the glory of him by union with whom it is she inherits it, and who in all things has the pre-eminence. It is by union with him that we receive this portion. And this explains what could not otherwise be understood. Suppose a certain king, the monarch of wide domains, should pass by all the several ranks of nobility in his empire, and choose for his bride and the partner of his throne one who, by birth, and parentage, and condition, was immeasurably beneath them all. Inferior to them as in herself she is, the moment she becomes, by his sovereign choice, the monarch's bride, she takes her place by his side, and all others rank beneath her then. Well, what are we, beloved brethren, in ourselves? Poor, wretched sinners, dead in trespasses and sins. Where has sovereign grace placed us? In living union, as his body, his bride, with the One whom God has raised from the dead, and set at his own right hand in heavenly places, 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! Yes, God hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things, *to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all!* And to think that most of those who form this body are poor sinners of the Gentiles. Surely the crumbs which have fallen to us, poor Gentile dogs, prove to be a far richer portion than the children's bread! Would that our hearts were more conversant with these blessed realities! How dull and unattractive does all earthly glory seem in the light of this glory that excelleth. And how may we reckon, with the apostle, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. God grant us thus to know, and thus to estimate, the place of blessing and of joy in which he has set us, in union with Christ, at his right hand.

W. T.

OUTLINES OF LECTURES ON THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.

Lecture XII.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR; OR, THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING.

Exodus xxvii. 1-8.

“AND thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof shall be three cubits. And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt overlay it with brass. And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his fleshhooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass. And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brasen rings in the four corners thereof. And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar. And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with brass. And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be upon the two sides of the altar, to bear it. Hollow with boards shalt thou make it: as it was shewed thee in the mount, so shall they make it.”

And thou shalt make an altar. (Or, more literally, *the altar.* Compare chap. xxxviii. 1.) *And he made the altar of burnt offering.*] The sin-offering was burnt, or consumed, without the camp: the burnt, or ascending offering, was converted into a sweet savour on the altar of burnt offering, by the fire which came originally from God, and which was kept always burning in it.

In the one case we see Jesus, who knew no sin,

made sin for us, and putting sin away by the sacrifice of himself.

In the other, Jesus, the spotless victim, offering up himself as a sweet savour unto God, and his acceptance manifested by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to the right hand of the Father.

Outside the camp it is wrath *consuming*, and for ever setting aside the sins which Jesus bore.

At the brazen altar it is justice and holiness *feeding* with complacency on the excellency of the victim.

At the golden altar it is holiness *delighting* itself with the preciousness of him who lived and died for us.

The altar of burnt offering, cleansed, anointed, sanctified—an altar most holy, on which the fire was always burning, and the sacrifice always consuming, was the place of communion between God and his people, and between the people and their God. (See Exodus xxix. 36–46.)

It sets forth Christ, through whom we draw nigh to God, and through whom God draws nigh to us, on the ground of his atoning work, and of his accepted sacrifice; a sweet savour of rest, on which every perfection of the Godhead reposes with infinite satisfaction and delight.

THE MATERIAL.

Thou shalt make the altar of shittim wood.] “Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith a body hast thou prepared me.” (Heb. x. 5.)

In order that Jesus, through his atoning sacrifice, might furnish a meeting place between God and the soul, it was requisite that he should become incarnate. This truth is set before us in the shittim wood.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE ALTAR.

Five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof shall be

three cubits.] Twice the length and height of the ark of the covenant.

These dimensions were fixed by God himself, who also prepared a body for Christ, every way adapted and adequate for his work and sufferings, wherein he has laid the foundations for unbroken communion between God and his people.

THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR.

And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt overlay it with brass, ver. 2.] The horn in Scripture is the emblem of power.

“Bind the sacrifice with cords,” says the psalmist, “even unto the horns of the altar.” (Ps. cxviii. 27.)

In the garden of Gethsemane we see this thought strikingly exemplified. There we see Jesus, the *beloved* Son of the Father, whose dwelling place eternally was the Father’s bosom; that *holy One*, who knew no sin, and that *blessed One*, “God over all blessed for ever,” drawing back from, and deprecating the enduring of, God’s *wrath*, the imputation of *sin*, and the infliction of the *curse*.

Yet the cords of love and of obedience bound him—love and obedience to the Father, love and compassion to us. So that, in the end, we see the willing victim passing through the three long hours of darkness, made *sin* for us, and nailed to the *accursed tree*.

This as to the victim; then as to the sinner or the worshipper.

In 1 Kings i. 50, we read, “And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.”

And again, chap. ii. 28, “And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.”

What strong consolation is provided for the poor sinner who flies for refuge, to lay hold on the hope

set before him in the Gospel, founded on the perfect and accepted sacrifice of the sinner's Saviour and the sinner's friend!

And the believer, too, finds here a refuge and a rest.

And the shittim wood and the brass—emblems of the tender human sympathy, and the Divine Almighty power of the Saviour of the lost, and the sustainer of the saved, give faith its firm holdfast.

The sinner and the saint find in Jesus, who is here set forth, one *able to sympathize*, and *mighty to save*.

By laying hold on the horns of the altar, faith identifies itself with the altar and the sacrifice. The sinner or the believer appropriating to their own necessities the provisions of God: drawing nigh to him in the way of his own selecting, and through the sacrifice of his own providing.

The wood and the brass—the sympathy and the power of him who is thus set forth, giving faith its grasp of undying tenacity.

But what a solemn lesson is read out to us from these horns of the brazen altar! In Exodus xxi. 14 God says, "But if a man come *presumptuously* upon his neighbour to slay him with *guile*, thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die."

For the *presumptuous* sinner, and the hypocritical *deceiver*, the atonement of Jesus itself provides no shelter, *while he continues such*.

It is of no avail for a person to say, I am trusting in the blood of Jesus, while *presumptuously* continuing in sin, or *hypocritically* professing repentance. "Thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die," is the stern command of Divine inflexible justice.

Solemn, solemn thought! How many a soul has gone on for years, clinging with vain hope to a mere profession of faith in Jesus, lulled into a false peace, with a spirit unsanctified and a soul unsaved, to perish at last. Thus was it in type with Adonijah.

"And Solomon said, If he will shew himself a

worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth; but if wickedness be found in him, he shall die." (1 Kings i. 52.) And so it turned out. "And King Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he fell upon him that he died." (1 Kings ii. 25.)

More solemn still, when in this false hope and unfounded peace the soul passes into the unseen world, to be taken from that altar and plunged into eternal death. Falling asleep in the presumptuous security of a mere profession, to awake in everlasting torments. "I will die here," says Joab, and he died there; but he fell by the hand of justice. (1 Kings ii. 29-32.)

Still, while we thus speak because Scripture so teaches, Jesus is able and ready to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. And as the horns were at the four corners of the altar, so there is a refuge provided in Jesus for those who come from every quarter. Here is provided a harbour of refuge and a shelter of rest

"From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes."

And upon these horns of the altar the blood of the sacrifice was put—faith's warrant to lay hold.

There is no crown to this altar, as on the golden altar of incense, because it sets forth Jesus on the cross, and not on the throne, dying, rising, and ascending, but not yet as glorified. If any crown were suitable, it must be a crown of thorns!

THE OVERLAYING OF THE ALTAR.

And thou shalt overlay it with brass.] Brass is the emblem of enduring strength. In the case of Jesus that strength was Divine. The shittim wood expresses his human susceptibility of suffering, the brass his Divine power of endurance.

As God, he could not suffer; as man, he could and

did; and as the God-man he could endure the sufferings adequate to the salvation of sinners.

THE VESSELS OF THE ALTAR.

And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his fleshhooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass, ver. 3.] Every thing connected with the atoning work of Jesus needed to be of enduring strength, and so it was. There was nothing imperfect; nothing that gave way under the mighty stress of enormous suffering and woe.

THE BRAZEN GRATE.

And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brasen rings in the four corners thereof. And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar, ver. 4, 5.] This brazen grate was fixed by the brazen rings in the centre of the altar, half way, or one and a half cubits from the bottom, and thus *on a level with the mercy-seat*. Sweet and significant fact!

This grate of brass formed the support for the fuel and the sacrifices, and sets forth, in the internal experience of Jesus in his sufferings, the strength of endurance within. It is thus expressed by the psalmist: "In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul." (Ps. cxxxviii. 3.)

THE STAVES.

And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with brass. And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be upon the two sides of the altar, to bear it.] The staves adapted the brazen altar to the wilderness condition of God's people, so that the altar accompanied them in all their journeyings.

Wherever the camp pitched, the altar rested; wherever the court was enclosed, the altar was placed within at the entrance; wherever the tent of the congregation was set up, the altar stood at the door.

The daily sacrifice on the altar of burnt offering, was the standing link of communion between God and his people typically. So that the taking away of the daily sacrifice was a national calamity.

The fire was always burning in this altar, and never permitted to go out. The victim always consuming on it by day and by night, and the sweet savour of it was always ascending. Thus the ground of communion was at all times prepared, and the way of communion at all times open. On this perpetual burnt offering the other especial sacrifices (as on the Sabbaths, new moons, &c.) were burnt, and the sin and trespass offerings presented as the occasion required. Even so now, though our God is a consuming fire (and the apprehension of this is ever to be kept alive in our hearts, and never to be forgotten), the sacrifice of Jesus has met, and for ever satisfies, all the demands of holiness and justice on our behalf. On this account, "if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The ground of communion has been made good, the way of access is ever open, the fragrance of the sacrifice of Jesus is ever before God. So that wherever we are, and whatever our circumstances, communion with God may be maintained unbroken, and our walk down here may be an Enoch walk—a walk with God.

The staves of the table of shew bread were connected with the border (chap. xxv. 27); for the guarding of communion is especially important in connection with our wilderness state. The staves of the golden altar are connected with the golden crown; for it is a glorified Christ through whom we worship. The staves of the brazen altar are connected with the grate of brass; for it is a suffering Saviour who laid

the foundations of our constant communion with God.

THE DIVINE PATTERN.

Hollow with boards shalt thou make it: as it was shewed thee in the mount, so shall they make it, ver. 8.] "Hollow with boards." Jesus, though mighty to suffer, and almighty to save, was the empty and dependent one. "He was crucified through weakness."

"As it was shewed thee in the mount." How different is the appearance of Calvary, and of him that suffered there, when seen on earth's low level, and with human thoughts and feelings, to what it is when looked at in the light of God,—as God himself reveals the marvellous scene! In spirit, raised above surrounding things, and upon the mount with God, looking down on Calvary's Cross! Thus are we to form our conceptions of it; thus shall we learn its mysteries and its uses, its value and its power; and thus shall our souls experience the blessing which God has provided.

And communion with God on the ground of sacrifice must be according to God's order and thoughts, and not according to the plans and opinions of men.

T. N.

[The Court of the Tabernacle in the Number for August.]

THE
PREDICTED CORRUPTION OF CHRISTIANITY,
AND ITS FINAL RESULTS.

Read 2 Thess. ii. 1-12; and Rev. xvii. and xviii.

THOSE who were present here last Tuesday evening will remember the happy and exalted theme of that evening's lecture. My brother addressed you, on that occasion, upon "The distinct calling and glory of the church" of God. The varied glories of him who is the church's living Head came under our review, whilst we were shewn the distinctive glory which he will share with, and confer upon, "the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." But how opposite a scene is that which we have to contemplate to-night! We have to consider "The predicted corruption of Christianity, and its final results"—the history, character, and doom of "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." This is descending as from heaven to earth. We have to turn away from a scene of purity, and holiness, and glory, to one of impurity, and drunkenness, and shame. We have to turn away from the contemplation of the one true and heavenly church—the living body which is united to its risen and glorified Head, and which is called to a heavenly walk and conversation even now, and to the participation of his glory and his throne hereafter—we have now to turn away from all this, to the revolting spectacle of a shameless, drunken woman, sitting on a wild beast,* and minis-

* The word *θηρίον*, rendered "beast" in Rev. xiii. and xvii., literally means "wild beast." That rendered "beast" in Rev. iv. and v. is another word, *ζῷον*, which literally means "living creature." It is important to bear in mind this difference in reading Revelation.

210

tering, even under a religious guise, to the vilest passions of the kings, and governments, and people of the earth. Yet who shall deny that this is, in proper time and place—if we cannot say our privilege—yet still our duty. It was said by one of the wisest men of old, “There is a time for all things.” And surely there is a time, not only to look on the bright side of things, but when, however painful it may be, it becomes our duty to descend from the contemplation of so happy and so cheering a theme as that of the heavenly calling and glory of the church, to the very different subject of “Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.” And may God preserve us from presumption, and give us teachableness of mind, while these terrible and sorrowful scenes pass under our review.

I would remark, in the second place, how important it is to avoid confusion of thought in our endeavours to interpret the wonderfully varied imagery set before us in the prophetic Scriptures. It has been very common with expositors to explain almost all the prophetic symbols of evil as meaning Popery. How often do we hear it said, “This beast means Popery. The woman on its back means Popery. The little horn that grew on its head means Popery. And even the two-horned beast of the thirteenth chapter of this book means Popery.” Now, surely, there must be some strange confusion here. The whole of these varied, differing, and in some cases even contrasted symbols, *cannot* be rightly interpreted of one and the same system. Surely the woman must denote something else than the beast which carries her! Surely the woman on the back of the beast must mean something else than that which is intended by the horn upon this beast’s head! Surely the beast, the woman upon its back, the horns upon its head, and the other two-horned beast, *cannot* all mean one and the self-same thing!

But let us at once address ourselves to our task. The portion we have read, from 2 Thessalonians,

211

predicts in most impressive terms that there should be a "falling away," an apostacy in the church. The mystery of iniquity was already "working" therein in the apostle's time; it was to result in the revelation of "the man of sin," the "wicked one;" and he is to be destroyed only by the brightness of the revelation of the Lord in flaming fire from heaven. Such, in brief, are the scriptural predictions as to the corruption of Christianity, and its final results.

In the symbol of Babylon the Great, however, we see the "mystery of iniquity" in its full maturity. "MYSTERY" is the inscription that is written on the forehead of the mystic woman, of this, the seventeenth chapter of the book of Revelation. It is, we believe, the same *mystery of iniquity* that is spoken of by Paul in 2 Thessalonians.

I beseech you, dear friends, to mark with close attention the vision here presented to us. Read specially verses 1 to 6. There was seen a woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, and having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications. This woman was seen sitting on a beast, and the beast had seven heads and ten horns. The ten horns ultimately prove the destruction of the woman; they "hate her, and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Then those horns themselves, along with the wild beast, the power of which they wielded, are overcome in a last conflict by the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Ponder well these mystic scenes. Do not say that "it is better to let such mysteries alone." They are *revealed* mysteries, and they belong to you, *because so revealed*. God would not have given us them had he judged them "better let alone" by his people. It is written of this very book, filled as it is with mystic scenes like these, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein; for the time is at hand." Let us then ponder well the reve-

lation here presented to our view. Let us treasure up its instruction ; and may God, by the Holy Ghost, seal it upon our hearts.

We have said that in the symbol of "Babylon the Great" is shewn to us the full maturity of the "mystery of iniquity"—of the apostacy, or "falling away" in the church of God. Let us define and consider this explanation somewhat more closely, and in detail.

1. The woman is seen seated on a *beast*, as well as on *many waters*. Now this beast certainly denotes *the Roman empire*—the Roman empire, I believe, throughout its whole duration, whether in its pagan, its papal, or its future antichristian state. It means the same thing as the *many waters*—the "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." It means *Rome secular, Rome civil and political*. Whatever may be the religion Rome professes, it is still the secular empire of Rome that is denoted by the "beast." Whether the empire be considered in its past whole and undivided condition, or in its present broken and divided one, still it is represented by this symbol of a seven-headed beast. Our next lecture will furnish proof of this position, that by the "beast" here is meant *the secular empire of Rome*. But if by the beast is meant the secular and political power, what explanation shall we give as to *the woman* that is here seen seated on it? What great system is there to be seen seated upon, and supported by, the secular power of Europe? Is it not plainly *the ecclesiastical or church power*? Is it not the church in alliance with, and maintained by the state? We repeat it once more, that we believe this symbol denotes *corrupt and apostate national Christianity*.

2. One of the seven angels previously seen, here calls on the apostle to come and see "the judgment of the great whore." Afterwards (see chap. xxi. 1–9) another of those angels calls him to come and behold "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." There is seen, then, that which is true and that which is false—that

which is chaste and that which is corrupt. There is seen that which is genuine and real, and that which is but spurious and fictitious—that which is betrothed to the Lamb, and that which is united with and seated upon the beast.

In each case it is worthy of our notice, that there is a two-fold symbol—a woman and a city. Each woman is represented also as a city. Each city is symbolized also as a woman. In the one case it is said, “Come hither, I will shew thee *the Bride, the Lamb’s wife*. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me *that great city, the Holy Jerusalem*.” (chap. xxi. 9, 10.) In the other we read, “*the woman which thou sawest is that great city*, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” Thus the heavenly Jerusalem is seen as the Bride, the Lamb’s wife; and that great city, mystic Babylon, is seen as “the great whore, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”

May we not, then, presume, that by this mystic Babylon is meant, in principle, that corruption of Christianity which is our subject this evening? May we not regard all that is true to Christ as belonging, in principle, to the one symbol; and all that which, being nominally of Christ, is, in reality, false to him, as belonging, in principle, to the other symbol? May we not say, that while every true Christian is a member of the bride of Christ, every spurious one is a member of this corrupt system which pretends to be such?—that, while every truly quickened person is a living stone of the heavenly city, every one that has merely “a name to live” may be regarded as a stone in this mystic Babylon.

3. But is there not also to be seen *a definite organization* now so prominently existing throughout what is called “Christendom,” as to justify the application to it, in a special way, of this symbol of a great mystic whore? We doubt not that there is.

In this very chapter, indeed, we have *both a general and a special locality* assigned to the woman. In verse 3, she is said to sit “upon many waters;” and in verse 15, these waters are explained by the angel to mean “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues;” whilst in verse 9, we read that “the seven heads (of the beast) are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.” This seems distinctly to fix upon Rome itself—that notoriously seven-hilled city—a city which, not only as to its ecclesiastical system, but also, in by-gone ages, as to its secular power, has reigned over the kings of the earth—upon ROME itself, we say, as the centre of power, and special seat of this great scarlet whore. Yes; though “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues,” are, in the wide sense, the seat of Babylon, yet is the centre and special locality of her power to be found at Rome.

We doubt not, then, that whilst all that is Christian merely in profession and in name belongs, in a wide and general, yet true and solemn sense, to Babylon the Great, yet that enormous system of foul ecclesiastical corruption, of filthy spiritual fornication, of which the metropolis is at Rome, is what is here *specially* intended to be set forth in its own true and revolting colours.

4. That the power of the woman is something distinct from the power of the beast, we may further learn from this important consideration, that the beast is seen in supreme power after the woman has been destroyed. (Read verses 12 to 14, and also chapter xix. 19, 20.) There are ten horns that give their power unto the beast, and destroy the woman. The power of the beast is ultimately the destruction of the woman. How, then, can the two be but one? It is said that the beast is Popery, and that the woman also is Popery. Then Popery destroys itself, and exists in full power after its own *felo de se*! This interpretation surely cannot stand! Both symbols cannot mean Popery. Neither, for the same

reason, can both the woman and the beast symbolize the secular power.

The one rides upon the other, until the beast, wearied out by the extortions, the impudent pretensions, and the arrogant assumptions of the whore, will bear her hated weight no longer. The woman is then thrown down and trampled on, and gored to death. Yet still the beast is seen in all its strength.

5. What power, then, have we witnessed thus seated upon the secular powers?—that has even “reigned over the kings” and governments of the earth? What great system is there to be seen thus ruling the nations? What but the *ecclesiastical* power? What but the corrupt *national churches* of Christendom? They are indeed supported by the secular powers, and yet they constantly aspire to their control.

And, indeed, what emblem can be imagined so aptly suited to characterize a corrupt and spurious religious system as that of an unchaste woman, here designated, “Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth”? The loathsome thing professes itself to be betrothed to Christ, to be espoused to him. Yet it is wedded to the sensual pleasures, and wealth, and power of the earth. What emblem so fit, then, to describe it, as the one here actually employed! The secular power avows its own stern character—acts openly on the principle of force. The “wild beast” therefore fitly characterizes *it*. But this other system, whilst it rides upon the beast, and rejoices when, enraged, it scatters and devours—still acts by subtlety and treachery, rather than by any direct, open exercise of force. It presents “a golden cup, full of abominations, and filthiness of fornications.” With this wine does it make the kings and nations of the earth drunk and infuriate. What is there that has done this, except Popery, and that which partakes of its nature and its principles? And what could set forth more vividly much that we see in actual, powerful

operation, even in our own day, than the emblem presented to us? What is the struggle that at this very time engages the earnest attention of all classes throughout our own nation? It is a struggle between an ecclesiastical and a secular system. It is a struggle between the woman and the beast. The woman will, if possible, not only ride, but hold the reins! It is a struggle as to the terms on which the beast will condescend to carry—to *support* the woman. Shall *she* hold the reins? This is the gist of the serious and exciting struggle of these “latter days.” Alas! that any evangelical denomination should be found in this day that would not repudiate such support!

6. Such thoughts, however, lead us to a further important contrast. The great whore rides upon and is supported by the beast. What, on the other hand, is the support, the stay, the strength, the life, the hope, the joy of “the bride, the Lamb’s wife?” We see her elsewhere (or that which is of the same life and spirit with her) represented as “coming up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved.” Yes, here we find the answer. The true church leans on Jesus. He is unseen now, it is true. But faith rests on him notwithstanding. “In whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” Here is the source of energy and consolation to the bride. This explains the mystery of her unwearying foot, and her unworldly carriage. She is heaven-sustained, and heaven-bound, for she is heaven-born—“*born from above.*” Christ is—or should be—*all in all* to her. She is *one with Christ* indeed; by “joints and bands” has she nourishment ministered from him. But this false woman, however she may boast, knows nothing of that life which is by faith. No, “sight”—the world—its patronage and endowments—is all she knows. She knows “the beast which carrieth her,” “the many waters” (and mark well here in passing, that those “many waters” are precisely what the symbol of

“the beast” sets forth)—she knows the “many waters” upon which she sitteth.

What a picture, then, beloved friends, is here presented to our view, of corrupted and apostate Christianity! Here we see it in its matured and most hideous deformity. It is painful to look so closely into it. Such, however, it actually is, as drawn by the hand of inspiration. But how does it reach a pitch of wickedness so monstrous and revolting? For a solution of this question let us look to prophetic details, and then briefly at what is revealed to us, as to the doom of this Babylon the Great. Let us observe the introduction, and then trace the progress of this apostacy.

The first mention we have in the New Testament of that divine institution into which this corruption has been introduced—in which this apostacy has taken place—at least the first mention of it by its specific name, “*the church*,” is in the 16th chap. of Matthew. Peter’s confession there recorded, proves that he had truly discerned the right foundation of the church. The *building* of the church, however, is not spoken of there, as if it had then been commenced. The Lord said, “On this rock I *will build* my church;” not, on this rock I *am building* it. The building of the church upon that foundation—of the church *properly so called*—did not commence till Pentecost. The foundation was indeed being laid—laid in the incarnation, and death, and resurrection of the Son of the living God. But the building thereon, in their proper church character, of the living stones, was a work not commenced at that time. Living stones indeed there were—“children of God” there were; but never to that time, nor previously to Pentecost, were they gathered into the unity, or framed together into the building, of *the church*.

In the eighteenth chapter of this gospel we have further and most important instruction as to the church. Only in that place, indeed, besides the one just noticed, have we throughout the four gospels

any distinctive mention of it. We have there, (Matt. xviii. 15–20,) in connection with an important rule as to discipline, the grand principle of the constitution of the church of God. “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Of such an assembly it is that the Lord says, “Tell it to *the church*,” and, “if he will not *hear the church*.” This passage presents the very simplest idea of the church. “Wherever two or three are gathered together in *the name of Jesus*,” there is the church.

We may now turn to the Acts of the Apostles, where, in the early chapters, we have a narration of the actual commencement of the divine work of the building of the church of God. We must quote one or two passages—we must look, for a moment at least, upon the fair and lovely spectacle of a pure and uncorrupted church. For a moment—alas! for a moment only, did the church so exist. “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all.” “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Such was the church when first established. Beautiful spectacle! Fair and lovely scene! Would that no other features had ever been developed therein!

But a change most disastrous had been already predicted. I may here refer, though very hastily, to

those parables in the thirteenth of Matthew, at which we glanced for a different purpose in the second of these lectures.

And, first, as to the parable of the sower. What is the instruction given us therein, as to the special point in question? It is this: that there should be very many plants produced which should bring forth no fruit to perfection. Some of the seed should spring up only to be burnt up by the sun, picked up by the fowls, or choked by thorns. Already, then, we have intimation of much spurious, or, at least, abortive, vegetation. Surely this is no favourable presage for the church!

But we have a second parable—that of the wheat and the tares; one still more marked as to its import. The explanation of it, as given by the Lord himself, is as follows:—“The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are the angels.” This is most clear and solemn. Amongst the wheat there should be sown “tares;” that is, a plant with a specious but spurious resemblance to wheat. The *tares*, then, denote, not all the children of the wicked one, but such only as are sown among the wheat, as counterfeit and spurious plants. They are hypocrites, and, indeed, false professors of all descriptions, whether consciously so or not. Now these were not only to be sown, but to grow together with the wheat, even until the harvest. Corruption will exist in the church, so-called, until the end of the age. The *harvest* is the end of this mixed state of Christendom. Plainly, then, there will be no millennium before the harvest. But this we have already seen; and I introduce it now only as a passing thought. We shall see more as to the harvest when we come to the question of the final results of the apostacy.

The third parable spoken by the Lord is as follows:—“Another parable put he forth unto them,

saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; which, indeed, is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Such was to be the progress of Christianity, and of the great institution that should result therefrom. The gospel seed was a very little thing at the first. But the plant that sprung therefrom grew very great. While the affair was very little, the world despised it. When it grew somewhat strong—strong in its own native, heavenly strength—the world began to hate it, and oppose it; yet, as is the case with certain plants, it grew the faster as the world trampled it down yet more and more. It even gained over to itself at length both wealth and worldly influence. Then came a crisis and a change. The world would enter into a compact with it. The world came over to it—not really—but in pretence and profession only. The world will be anything, or profess anything, or adopt anything, that may turn out to its temporal advantage. The world will go wherever there is any earthly benefit to be got. When the ecclesiastical tree had grown great, and afforded comfortable shelter, without being scrupulous as to those who came for shelter—then worldlings would nestle in it. Then the unclean birds—the harpies, vultures, cormorants, owls, and bats—would flock beneath its branches. Behold the attractive branches of this mystic tree! What a lure does the worldling find in its dignities and endowments—its dues, and fees, and tithes—its rights episcopal and hierarchal, monastic and manorial! Truly this tree is great! The Babylonish monarch—the Babylonish empire itself—of old, was symbolized by this very metaphor of a great tree. Nebuchadnezzar, as you will remember, was shewn to himself as a vast tree, "the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the

fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt under the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it." (See Dan. iv. 10-12, and 19-22.) Such was the literal Babylon of old. How fitting, then, the parable of this great mustard tree as a symbol of *the mystic Babylon* of modern days! Yes, let us be assured, this great attractive tree is none other than mystic "Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth."

But we must notice, also, the parable of the leaven, which was hid by a certain woman in three measures of meal. On a previous occasion we likewise referred to this parable, as affording proof that the second advent will be pre-millennial. We now refer to it, because it furnishes most remarkable instruction as to our present subject—the corruption of Christianity.

We saw, on that occasion, that "leaven" always means *something evil*—that it never represents *the Gospel*. We saw that when typically used in the offerings of old, it denoted sin and imperfection; that when Christ—Christ alone—was typified, there might be no leaven introduced. Thus specially the paschal bread must be unleavened; since in "Christ our passover," there was no sin: whilst, in certain offerings of thanksgiving made by imperfect worshippers, leaven was to be introduced. We saw that the Lord spoke of leaven in an evil sense, but never in a good one. "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Paul also used the term as indicative of evil only. The church (see 1 Cor. v. 6-8) was to be a new, unleavened lump; the "old leaven" must be purged out. It was not that *a new leaven* should be introduced. No; the lump must be "unleavened;" there must be, not "the leaven of malice and wickedness," but "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." In Galatians, too, the warning was, "This persuasion cometh not from him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Here the leaven was *legality*—they were

leaving the simple gospel for the abrogated bondage of the law. This leaven would leaven the whole lump, if not faithfully purged out.

Alas! the parable before us declares that the whole lump should at last be leavened. The "kingdom of heaven"—that vast system which, at the first, was the kingdom of heaven in reality, and which assumes to be so still, but which shall be the kingdom of heaven *in name only*, when the leaven has wrought in it thoroughly—the whole of that vast system shall at length be "like unto leaven." No meal shall be easily discerned therein. The leaven only shall be prominent and visible everywhere, and to all; even the Christians shall be infected by it. At first the church was a pure, unleavened lump. Into these "three measures of meal"—not into the world at large, but into the new unleavened lump—the pure and pentecostal church—was the leaven secretly and clandestinely introduced. A "woman" hid it therein. Who was she? Was it not the mystic woman of Revelation xvii.? Was not the working of this leaven, the working of that "mystery of iniquity" which, in 2 Thess. ii. 7, we are told did, even in those apostolic days, "*already work?*" Is there not, I appeal to you, an obvious identity between the leaven of Matt. xiii., the mystery of iniquity of 2 Thess. ii., and the mystic Babylon the Great of Rev. xvii.?

There is also, in this chapter, the parable of the net, which gathered fish both good and bad, the separation of which takes place only at the end of the age. The kingdom of heaven—popularly, but not accurately, called "the church"—would thus gather all kinds of people into it. Thus all that we have been setting forth receives here further confirmation.

The parable of the "ten virgins," in Matt. xxv., tells us the same sad story. They all slumbered and slept. If not all asleep, still none remained quite awake. The midnight cry alone aroused them. Thus

again it appears the apostacy lasts until the coming of the Lord.

These numerous predictions began almost immediately to have their sad accomplishment. Ananias and Sapphira are well-known proofs of this. The Grecian widows, too, soon felt the sorrowful results of partiality; or else were themselves guilty of evil surmising. The Acts of the Apostles gives still further instances of incipient evil. In the Epistle to the Romans we have a solemn warning as to the failure and cutting off of the Gentile branches of the "olive tree." But at Corinth things were already in a fearful state. There were parties formed within the bosom of the church. There were strifes, and envyings, and divisions. There were also great disorders at the table of the Lord. There was even the toleration of a flagrantly incestuous person in communion. There was also a system of Judaizing, of legal and unevangelical teaching, boastingly pursued there.

The churches of Galatia were in a worse position still. There the foundation-error of Popery was being openly introduced. People ask when Popery began—how early its errors were introduced—whether six hundred, eight hundred, a thousand, or fourteen hundred years ago. And Romanists themselves boastingly inquire whether their doctrines were not held even by the primitive and apostolic church. This is the answer: *Many of them were held by persons even in the days of the inspired Apostles themselves.* The proof of this is most decisive: we have in the apostolic epistles most earnest *protestations against many of those doctrines*—doctrines then actually held and taught. The Epistle to the Galatians is a divinely inspired protest against some of these doctrines. Luther but re-published it at the Reformation. It was found to contain the whole strength, the grand drift, the very pith and marrow of the controversy between him and Rome. Why then should we post-date any Popish error? No, let us grant this to the

Romanists, that though many of their doctrines are new and modern, yet others of them are in very truth, as old—or very nearly so—as the Church of God itself. Their doctrine of justification by the united and blended merit of Jesus Christ and of human works, is especially a very old one. The whole Epistle to the Galatians was written against it. The apostacy had set in with terrible and bewitching power throughout Galatia. The Apostle Paul had to change his voice, even as to his own children in the Lord. He “stood in doubt of them.” Was it possible that he had laboured in vain? They had evidently fallen from the liberty of their position, and were again entangled with the yoke of bondage. Well might he exclaim, “This persuasion cometh not from him that calleth you. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*” (See chap. v. verses 8 and 9.) Here again we have the *leaven* mentioned. In this case it was the leaven of *legality*—in other words, of self-righteousness; at the bottom of it was *pride*. It was the result of unbrokenness of spirit—of a defective apprehension, both as to the wickedness of the human heart, and as to the strictness—the exceeding broadness and spirituality of God’s holy law. This, doubtless, lay at the foundation of the error; and the teaching of Judaizing partizans helped it into avowed form and shape. *This leaven*, we may say emphatically, *leavens the whole lump*. My dear friends, the root of the corrupt tree lies here. This is the core of the apostacy. All its other evils follow in due course. The *Puseyite* movement, as it is called, began with a revival of this error as to justification. The popular “Lectures on Justification,” by a leader of that school, are a proof of what I assert. Popery has its origin here. It is indigenous in the corrupt soil of the unregenerated heart. We all have within us, by nature, these Popish tendencies. We do not need baptismal regeneration, and Popish rites to impart them. But we need to be born again of the Spirit of God as the only possible means of

correcting them. There is no other way of escape from the dread fowler's snares. *We must be born again*; and we must learn that our salvation is *altogether of grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and that we are not "under law, but under grace." *Then* only do we know the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free. Then only are we placed beyond the power of priestly pretensions. But then we are free indeed! Salvation in Jesus, by grace alone, through faith—salvation in him, known and realised in blessed peace and power, lifts its possessor clean out of the world of superstition and delusion! It raises him above the region of priestly mediatorship. The One High Priest above does all the proper priestly work for such an one. A thousand bonds are snapped asunder in a moment, when the soul of a poor sinner finds its full rest in Christ. You need not prove to *him*, that pains and penalties—purgatorial fires, and priestly indulgences and absolutions—pilgrimages, high masses, and beads, and crosses, are all empty, needless, and vain. No! the *vital principle* of all these has been nailed already to the true cross. The *principle* of them no longer triumphs in his heart. Grace reigns there now. He stands fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free, and he rejects every priestly interference that would bring him into bondage. The true priest—the Great High Priest—has emancipated *him* from the thralldom of every usurper. The snare is broken, and the captive is escaped.

This, dear friends, is the only way to meet and to expel the leaven of Rome. I deeply lament that so little on this vital doctrine is urged in the disputations of our day. We hear of what are called Protestant discussions very frequently; but *justification*, which should be the grand and prominent question, is often—I believe *generally*—omitted. This is a portentous omission. Romanists will argue for ever on other questions, if you will only keep the Gospel out of view. Only let the opponent argue with them

on other points—if he will just grant them this, that he will not “preach”—(that is their own mode of putting it) if only he will avoid the declaration of salvation *by Christ alone*, and of the glorious Gospel of God, which proclaims a full salvation *by him for ever*, they can bear all else. But *that* they cannot bear! When you proclaim the Gospel full and free, you then begin to drag them beyond their depth—you drown them in deep waters. There is a mysterious power attending it, which they feel and know full well, baffles all their skill, and which translates all those who heartily receive it into another world—a world of liberty. It translates them out of the kingdom of darkness and delusion into the heavenly, free, and happy kingdom of God’s own dear Son. May we then have grace to remember where our true strength lies! May we know both our best weapon, and how to use it.

Let it not be supposed, however, that in thus speaking of the actions and pretensions of *priests*, I refer to those true servants of our God, who assume under him, and as called by him, the *pastoral* or the *evangelizing* office. To feed the flock, and preach the Gospel, are ministrations both important and Scriptural. But *priesthood*, which is the proper and untransmissible prerogative of the Lord Jesus, if assumed by man in any other sense than that of the spiritual priesthood of all true believers in common, is, in this present dispensation, a false and wicked pretension. But let us hasten on. We have seen the apostacy working thus early and powerfully in Galatia. The Ephesians themselves are warned against the cunning craftiness and lurking watchfulness of the false apostles of that day. The Philipians, too, are warned respecting some of whom Paul declares, “They are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame; who mind earthly things.” The Colossians were reprov’d for a tendency, even then to be discerned among them also,

towards the legality, and consequent superstition, which have been already noticed. Even the Thessalonians were not altogether blameless. There were some among them who walked disorderly, "not working at all." The mystery of iniquity, they were told, also had begun. Great grace, indeed, still rested on many of the churches—and God forbid that we should fail to recognise this, or joyfully to give him glory—but it is obvious that everywhere the apostacy had already set in.

To Timothy the apostle has to announce—what Timothy, indeed, already knew—that striking proof of human fickleness and instability: "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me." Before Paul died, all they that were in Asia had become the partizans of opposing and schismatic teachers. The Catholic church of Asia had erred already! Foolish and ignorant people tell us in this day, that what is *Catholic* must be right—that the doctrine which is universal, or which is held by the vast majority, must be true. They make a gross and palpable mistake. That which generally prevails is very probably erroneous. All that were in Asia had turned away from Paul. In the very first century of Christianity, so *Catholic an apostatizing tendency* as that was manifested; so *Catholic* had error become even at that early period!

In the same Epistle we have a character of the "last days," which we must not omit. We have a catalogue of their numerous and aggravated evils. Nineteen various features of the apostacy are expressly mentioned. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such

turn away." To crown the whole, the evil men of those perilous times should be professors of religion. I beg you to mark this. The apostates of the last days are those who maintain "a form of godliness." How dark and mournful is the picture here presented to our view!

To Titus the apostle says, that there were, even then, many unruly and vain talkers, who subverted whole houses, and that for filthy lucre's sake: chap. i. 10, 11.

The Hebrews generally are warned against apostasy, and against being "carried about with divers and strange doctrines." All this bespeaks the danger which was threatening the church.

The apostle James, throughout his epistle also, gives similar warnings. And in chap. v. 4-7, he speaks expressly of fraud, and robbery, and riot, which should end only at the coming of the Lord. The intervening days should be as "days of slaughter," and the patience of the just would be most severely tried till then.

Peter's epistles are still more solemn. The whole tenor of them intimates his apprehension of the approaching evil and disastrous days. There is not throughout them the slightest allusion whatever to an anticipation of times of progressive truth and righteousness. All is emphatically indicative of apostatizing tendencies. The sure word of prophecy is pointed to as the only light which could safely guide through the dark days that were coming on. Scoffers, it is said, should arise in the last days, walking after their own lusts, and mocking at the promise of the coming of the Lord. But "the day of the Lord," he adds, "will come as a thief in the night," and will terminate the dismal period. That day alone—nothing else than *the day of the Lord*—will terminate it.

John, too, speaks in all his epistles of antichrists, or antichristian men. Those to whom he wrote had heard that antichrist should come: but even then there were many antichrists. The *spirit* of antichrist

was already in the world. (1 John iv. 1-3.) In the last epistle, John himself says he had been expelled the church by Diotrephes. Alas! even then corruption and apostacy ruled.

Jude, as you all know, dear friends, is, if possible, even yet more fully occupied as to evil and apostate men, and evil and apostate days. It was needful that he should give all diligence to write thus. Ungodly men had already crept in unawares. They were "clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withered, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." Enoch had prophesied of them, that the Lord would come with ten thousand of his saints, and assuredly execute judgment upon them. In that way only will the evil be subdued and ended. Read the whole epistle.

We now come to the Book of Revelation—to the solemn and concluding scenes of the apostate church's history. The epistles to the seven Asiatic churches speak chiefly of incipient evil. We read of first love forsaken, of first works given up, of heresy allowed, of garments mostly defiled, and of a condition neither hot nor cold. The rankest worldliness was prevalent, and even gloried in. Read chapters second and third. Then, shortly afterwards, the sad scene of full-grown evil bursts upon us: Babylon the Great is seen in all her painted, gorgeous, and illusive beauty. We must now contemplate her doom.

The doom of Babylon the Great, then, is as follows. Let us mark it well. It is the end of ecclesiastical corruption, which we are going to survey; and, my friends, I do not confine it to the church of Rome. It becomes every one of us to consider how far he may be in any wise associated with it. "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one

mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." (Rev. xvii. 12, 13, 16, 17.) Such is the predicted doom of Babylon the Great. Such is her fate *as a system*. The *persons* who have formed her living agency, we believe, will generally survive this downfall of their system. They then fall under strong delusion, judicially allowed of God, and they perish amid the fearful judgments attending the advent of the Lord. The destruction—the sudden, total overthrow of the system, and of the organised, endowed, and world-sustained power of Babylon the Great, I conceive to be what is set before us here.

"Ten kings" arise, and power is given them for "one hour" purposely to destroy the woman. This, it would appear, signifies a revolution of the secular powers against the ecclesiastical. The beast is wearied out by the rapacity and treachery of the woman. The woman's impudence brings on at last her own destruction. The ten kings shall league together with the masses of the "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues;" "and they shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." They will strip the system of its wealth, and honours, and of all its vested rights. They will break up its establishments, and appropriate its revenues. The ten kings, in union with the nations, will at length do this. Babylon the Great will wear out their patience. Yea, "her sins" will "reach unto heaven," and God himself will "remember her iniquities." These fierce executioners will have it "put into their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast," until the words of God, as to Babylon's destruction, "shall be

fulfilled." Under such a providential disposition will they, as we have seen, "hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." The divine word is, "Reward her even as she hath rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup that she hath filled, fill to her double." Most signal retribution! Thus ends the supremacy of the false church! And what other end so very probable? Is she not in our own day taking the very course which, of all others, is most likely to provoke and to exasperate the nations upon which she rides? Her voice, indeed, is made to utter inviting and alluring tones; but pride and self-aggrandizement reign in her heart. "Come home, my children; come to the peaceful bosom of your holy mother," is her most subtle and deceitful cry. A *mother* truly! Yes; in the estimate of the Spirit of God, she is a "*mother* of harlots and abominations of the earth." But her days are numbered, and she shall fall. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God will speedily avenge your blood upon her."

Such, then, is the predicted doom of Babylon the Great. But the results of the apostacy reach further than her downfall. When Babylon shall have disappeared from off the scene—when there shall be no longer seen this woman sitting on the back of the beast—the apostacy will still conduce to *results* most fearful and amazing.

There shall ensue that "strong delusion to believe a lie" which is set before us in 2 Thess. ii., as we have seen. The moral result of Babylon's misdoings will be the open rejection of the authority of God, and of the very name of Christ. From the "mystery of iniquity" will spring the "strong delusion" of the "man of sin"—of the "wicked one"—of the "antichrist." (Read 2 Thess. ii. 1-12, once more.) Under the power of this "strong delusion to believe a lie," the blinded nations will gather together under antichrist, to "the battle of the great day of God Almighty." I do not believe that the "man of sin"

means *Popery*. We have seen that Popery is specially set forth in the symbol of the mystic Babylonish woman, and is destroyed by the confederated nations, and not, as the man of sin, by the personal coming of the Lord. The "man of sin" I believe to be an individual person, a human being, a "false christ," a secular warrior, a king. Daniel xi., from which Paul quotes, almost literally and verbally, in this second of 2 Thessalonians, proves this, I think, very clearly. In our next lecture, however, we shall have to look at this result of the apostacy more closely.

I will sum up briefly this imperfect notice of these sad results. We cannot complete it now, since the *final result of all* will include the judgment of the assembled nations, at the great day of the revelation of the Lord himself, from heaven, in flaming fire; and it will be one special purpose of our next address to take further notice of the numerous predictions in which this *gathering of the nations* is set forth.

Thus far, however, we have seen. The evil leaven which was secretly introduced into the Church at first, became openly developed at last in the foul system of "Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." The end of Babylon we have also seen. The secular power, that has long been her source of strength, will at last destroy her. Suddenly, and in one hour, this revolution will take place. Ten kings will arise for that "one hour" only—for that very short time—and will lead on the beast to the destruction of the woman. Then will come the crisis. "Strong delusion" will fall upon those nations that constitute the "beast;" there will ensue a great gathering together of those nations against God, and against Christ, and then the open revelation of the Lord from heaven will ensue, and close the whole scene. Such is *the final result* of "the corruption of Christianity." But more of this, as we have said, when we come to speak of "The character and doom of the great Gentile powers."

OUTLINES OF LECTURES ON THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.

Lecture XIII.

THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE, AND GATE OF THE COURT.

Exodus xxvii. 9-19.

“AND thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long for one side: and the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets shall be of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver. And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings of an hundred cubits long, and his twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver. And for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward shall be fifty cubits. The hangings of one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three. And on the other side shall be hangings fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three. And for the gate of the court shall be an hanging of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework: and their pillars shall be four, and their sockets four. All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver: their hooks shall be of silver, and their sockets of brass. The length of the court shall be an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty every where, and the height five cubits of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass. All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, shall be of brass.”

THE COURT.

And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle.
Ver. 9.] “Whatsoever things were written aforetime
were written for our learning;” and the things which

happened unto Israel “happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” (1 Cor. x. 11.) Thus the children of Israel, redeemed out of Egypt, are the types of the redeemed people of God.

In the scriptures we have Israel presented to us, in their history, and in the Divine arrangements respecting them, in various degrees of nearness to God.

First, we see them *in Egypt*, groaning under the bondage of Pharaoh. This is typical of the experience of the soul under the first convictions of the Spirit, feeling the evil of sin, its bitter bondage, and heavy guilt, “labouring and heavy laden.” From which deliverance is only obtained by taking shelter under the blood of the Lamb—“Christ our passover sacrificed for us.”

Secondly, we see them *in the wilderness*, having crossed the Red Sea, wherein all the power of the oppressor has been overwhelmed. Typical of the soul realizing the triumph of the Cross. Principalities and powers spoilt and made a shew of, and death, and him that had the power of it, destroyed. And the believer no longer at home in the world, but become a pilgrim and stranger here.

Thirdly, we see them *in the camp*, occupying therein the various positions assigned them by God. Typical of believers in their different callings, ordinary occupations, and their social relationships. Outside the camp the sin-offering was consumed. Outside the camp the lepers and the defiled were obliged to remain. Within the camp the people of God were required to be a holy people to the Lord their God, who walked up and down in their midst—to be holy in all manner of conversation, and in all the callings and relationships of life.

Fourthly, we see them assembled *in the court of the tabernacle*. Here the people of God are represented in their *religious* character. This is the especial subject of our present consideration.

Fifthly, the priests are seen entering daily through

the door of the tent into the first tabernacle, or holy place, accomplishing the service of God. Typical of believers in their priestly character and Church association, engaged in the worship and service of God.

Sixthly, the High Priest is seen entering through the vail into the holy of holies. Typical of Jesus, the High Priest of our profession, entered for us into heaven itself; and of the believer in him having boldness to enter through the rent vail into the holiest of all. (Heb. x. 19–22.)

Seventhly, we see Israel *in the land*, having crossed the Jordan. Typical of believers as in spirit raised up together and made to sit together with Jesus in the heavenly places. (Eph. ii. 6.)

i. Egypt; ii. the wilderness; iii. the camp; iv. the court; v. the holy place; vi. the most holy; vii. the land. Divided by—i. the blood of the Paschal Lamb; ii. the Red Sea; iii. the sin-offering; iv. the hanging of the court; v. the door of the tent; vi. the vail; vii. the Jordan.

This is the scriptural “pilgrim’s progress,” written not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.

But to return to the court of the tabernacle: the children of Israel seen in this court represent the people of God in their *religious character*. Not as associated in Church fellowship; this is typified by the boards of the tabernacle, but in their general religious aspect. Not only seeking to maintain and to exhibit holiness in the assemblies of God’s saints and in Church relationship, but also in the wider sphere of ordinary and every day life.

These curtains of fine twined linen formed a court around the tabernacle, and kept it separate. As the table of shewbread has a border, so the tabernacle of God has a court—a court with hangings of fine twined linen all around, marking separation to God in righteousness and true holiness, maintained by God’s saints, not only when met in Church fellowship, but also in their general intercourse, and in the ordinary

walks of life. Such is God's plan. As a table without a border is not according to God's pattern, so a tabernacle without a court is contrary to God's order. There must be consistency without, as well as holiness and fellowship within—separation from the world in daily life, as well as in Church fellowship, and in the devotional exercises of the assembly.

The court contained the altar of burnt offering and the laver, and had the tabernacle, or dwelling-place of God in its midst. And the Israelites collected there represent believers, realizing atonement and acceptance through the sacrifice of Jesus, sanctification in Christ, and walking and acting in the presence of God.

THE HANGINGS OF THE COURT.

Ver. 9. *For the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long for one side.*]

"The fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Rev. xix. 8.)

"I counsel thee to buy of me white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed," says Christ. (Rev. iii. 18.)

"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," is the exhortation of the apostle. (Rom. xiii. 14.)

The court of the tabernacle, surrounded by these hangings of fine twined linen, represents believers in their ordinary Christian character and intercourse, walking in the presence of God in holiness and righteousness before him, keeping their garments undefiled by sin, putting on and living out Christ, and exhibiting him before men.

THE PILLARS AND SOCKETS.

Ver. 10. *And the twenty pillars thereof, and their twenty sockets (shall be) of brass. Or, as expressed in chapter xxxviii. 10, Their pillars were twenty, and their brazen sockets twenty.*]

The pillars themselves were probably of shittim wood, fixed in sockets of brass, representing individual believers in their religious character, and their firm standing.

There were twenty pillars on the north and south, corresponding with the twenty boards of the tabernacle on those sides. The *boards* representing believers associated in Church fellowship, and the *pillars* of the court, believers in their wider and ordinary Christian walk.

Each pillar stood firmly fixed in a socket of brass, as expressing the firm and decided stand which is requisite in living out the Christian character.

As united in Church fellowship, in the sight of God, we stand in redemption, like the boards of the tabernacle on the sockets of silver. But as walking before God, and living before men, in our daily course, we need a holy decision of character, standing strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, as the pillars of the court in their sockets of brass. "Having done all, stand," says the apostle. "Stand therefore." (Eph. vi.)

If the Church of the living God is to be the pillar and ground of the truth, individual believers in their Christian character and ordinary conduct should seek to maintain the truth, by walking in it with firmness and decision, like James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars in their day, and especially like the Apostle Paul.

THE HOOKS AND FILLETS.

Ver. 10. *The hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver.*] The hooks were to receive the fillets, and the fillets, as the Hebrew word for fillet implies, were *connecting rods*. These silver rods connected the pillars together, and formed the rods on which the linen curtains hung.

The hooks and connecting rods were to be of silver, and silver is typical of *redemption*; for the atonement money was in silver. (Ex. xxx.) And silver is also typical of *communion*; for it was the ordinary medium of circulation. And the hooks fixed in the pillars were always in readiness to receive the connecting rods.

Thus these pillars, standing in the brazen sockets,

with their hooks and connecting rods of silver, sustaining the curtains of fine twined linen, and forming together the court of the tabernacle, most strikingly and beautifully represent the people of God in their ordinary religious character, established and settled, walking in righteousness and holiness, always prepared for, and constantly maintaining communion together, on the ground of their common redemption by the blood of the Lamb, in their intercourse one with another, and in the presence of God.

And it is a sweet and happy thought, affording some consolation in the present state of things, that even now, in the outwardly divided condition of the Church of God, when *Church fellowship* with the majority of Christians may be sought in vain, we may still maintain communion and love in our intercourse one with another on the ground of our common redemption, by the same precious blood, and of our agreement together in the same fundamental truths of salvation.

THE LENGTH OF THE COURT.

Ver. 11. *And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings of an hundred cubits long, and his twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver.*] One hundred cubits north and south. "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south," is the language of the Bride in Sol. Song iv. 16. Whether the chill north wind of adversity blows, or the genial south wind of prosperity breathes, there should be the same firm standing and decided walk, the same maintenance of righteousness and holiness, the same manifestation of Christ, and the same readiness for fellowship with all saints, on the ground of our common Christianity.

THE BREADTH OF THE COURT.

Ver. 12. *And for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten.*

13. *And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward shall be fifty cubits.*

14. *The hangings of one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three.*

15. *And on the other side shall be hangings fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three.*

In length—namely, one hundred cubits—the court of the tabernacle was one-half the length of the outer court of Ezekiel's temple, which is two hundred cubits; and in breadth—namely, fifty cubits—half the breadth of the inner court of the temple, which is one hundred cubits.

THE GATE OF THE COURT.

Ver. 16. *And for the gate of the court shall be an hanging of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework.]* The hanging for the door of the tent, and the vail, were both ten cubits by ten—one hundred cubits square; and the gate of the court twenty cubits by five—one hundred cubits square also; each representing Christ in different aspects:—The *gate of the court* being typical of Christ, by the faith of whom alone any really become Christians, and have a title to be regarded as such, and power in the Spirit for true fellowship in the Gospel. The *door of the tent* representing Christ, through whom alone there is access into the Church of God. And the *vail* representing him as the way by whom only there is access by faith into the holiest of all.

THE PILLARS OF THE GATE.

Ver. 16. *Their pillars shall be four, and their sockets four.]* By these four pillars, corresponding with the four pillars which sustain the vail, are represented, I believe, the four divinely-inspired historians of the life of Jesus.

There are some differences, however, which are significant. The pillars of the vail have their hooks of gold, and their sockets of silver; while the pillars of the gate have their hooks of silver, and their

sockets of brass. The hooks of gold being significant of a divinely-given ability for laying hold on and exhibiting the perfection of Immanuel, as the way of access by faith into the holiest; and the sockets of silver significant of their standing in redemption. The hooks of silver, and the silver connecting rods of the pillars of the gate, expressive of a capacity for communicating the truth of Christ; and the sockets of brass, of decision and steadfastness.

It is interesting to trace in the four inspired histories of the "Word made flesh," the various beauties and perfections of Immanuel, as signified by the blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, composing the gate of the court.

In John's account, the *blue*, or *heavenly perfection* and glory of the Lord Jesus, is manifest.

In Mark, the *purple*, or the *combination of heavenly perfectness with the earthly glory*. And hence it is worthy of notice, that, in Mark xv. 17, the robe in which, in mockery, Jesus was arrayed, is by the leading of the Spirit said to be of *purple*.

In Matthew, the *earthly dignities* of the Son of David, as typified by the *scarlet*, appear: and Matthew says, they "put on him a scarlet robe" (xxvii. 28).

Whereas in Luke, the *white*, or *pure and spotless*, yet exquisitely-beautiful, humanity of the Son of Man, is prominent, as typified by the fine twined linen. And Luke says, they "arrayed him in a gorgeous robe."

Gorgeous, "*Lampros*," meaning also shining, resplendent, dazzling, white. Compare Acts x. 30, Rev. xv. 6, xix. 8, in the Greek.

SUMMARY.

Ver. 17. *All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver; their hooks shall be of silver, and their sockets of brass.*

18. *The length of the court shall be an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty every where, and the height five cubits of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass.*

19. *All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, shall be of brass.*

All the pillars of the court were connected together by the silver rods, and all were furnished with hooks for attaching them: teaching us that all believers should maintain fellowship together in redemption-truth and brotherly love, and all be prepared for it as occasion presents.

All the pillars stood on sockets of brass; and all believers have need of enduring strength in Jesus, to maintain, in such a world as this, their religious character and standing.

All the vessels of the tabernacle for all the service of it, and even the pins of the tabernacle and court, were to be of brass; for the same enduring strength is needed for all manner of service, down to the minutest particulars, in work connected with the name of Jesus and the presence of God.

In Exod. xxxviii. 17, we also read, "The overlaying of their chapiters was of silver; and all the pillars of the court were filleted with silver:" shewing that the chapiters, or heads of the pillars, and the fillets, or connecting rods, are distinct; though both were of silver, and all formed out of the redemption money. Exod. xxxviii. 28: "And of the thousand seven hundred and seventy and five shekels he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their chapiters, and filleted them."

The redemption which is in Christ Jesus is not only the foundation of the Christian's *faith*, as shewn by the silver sockets of the tabernacle: it is also the ground of Christian *love* and communion, as signified by the silver hooks and connecting rods. And it is also the crown and joy of the Christian's *hope*, as signified by the silver chapiters, or crowns of the pillars. His faith, his love, and his hope, having each its ground and centre in Jesus, and in his atoning work.

T. N.

[The Golden Altar in the Number for September.]

THE
TIMES OF THE GENTILES: THE CHARACTER AND
DOOM OF THE GREAT GENTILE POWERS.

Read Daniel vii.

THIS history of the four great Gentile empires, which are set before us here as *four great beasts*, is the history of the *times of the Gentiles*. The times of the Gentiles transpire during an interruption of, or interval as to, the *times of the Jews*. That interval began with Nebuchadnezzar, the first monarch of the kingdom of Babylon, and it will terminate with the last monarch of the empire of Rome. The *times of the Jews* closed, or were interrupted, by their being carried away captive into Babylon; they will recommence when Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden down of the Gentiles, and when the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled. Thus the expression, "times of the Gentiles," denotes the times of Gentile dominion over the Jews. This Gentile lordship is exercised during the whole period of the existence in power of the four great beasts, which Daniel saw in his vision.

This vision furnishes us with a complete outline of the whole subject of this evening's lecture. It also furnishes us with the completion of our previous lecture:—with *the final result* of the apostacy and corruption of Christianity. The fourth of these great beasts will prove to be the "ten-horned beast," on which, in Revelation xvii., the mystic Babylonish woman was seen sitting. The character and doom of that "woman" occupied us at our last meeting; we saw that, as an organised system of power, she was to be thrown down, and destroyed, and to dis-

appear from the stage. The very beast which carried her, would ultimately destroy her. But this evening we shall see the doom of the beast itself. We shall see in outline the whole career of that beast, and that though it existed before there was any "woman" to aspire to mount its back and ride thereon, and will exist after the destruction of its rider, yet even *its* so called "eternal" course shall close at last—shall close in judgment, and "destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." The doom of this fourth great beast is indeed the final result of the apostacy of Christendom. The beast, having thrown off its spurious support and profession of Christianity, will openly rebel against the divine authority, and by thus filling up the cup of its transgression, will bring on its final and total overthrow. So that it is one and the same solemn and decisive crisis, which brings to a full end both the ecclesiastical and the secular apostacy. The battle of the great day of God Almighty will terminate them both—will consummate the whole.

Such, then, is the subject of this evening's lecture. We have a vast field of prophetic truth before us, and a rapid and elementary survey of it is all that we may hope, on this occasion, to accomplish.

1. In the chapter which has been read—the seventh of Daniel—we have, as we have seen, a vision of four great beasts; the first like a lion, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard, and the fourth a "beast dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly—diverse from all the beasts that were before it, and having ten horns." Read verses 3–7. Moreover, among the ten horns of the fourth beast there came up another "little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots, and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." Then follows, in the vision, a solemn session of judgment, which effects the destruction both of this little horn, and of the beast itself; then the Son of Man is seen

coming with the clouds of heaven, and the whole dominion under heaven is given to him, and to his saints. The narration of the vision ends in plain and literal terms, which tell their own manifest and undoubted meaning.

2. But what is meant by these four symbolic "beasts?" The answer is furnished in verse 17: "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth." But by the term "kings," we are to understand *kingdoms*, for this is the interpretation in the 23rd verse. "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be *the fourth kingdom* upon earth, which shall be diverse from all *kingdoms*." And, in the second chapter of this prophet, we likewise learn that there should be *four great kingdoms*—manifestly *the same kingdoms*—which are set before us here. There was seen a great image, as is well known to most of you. It was composed of a golden head, silver breast and arms, brazen belly and thighs, iron legs, and feet part of iron and part of clay. Daniel was enabled to explain the meaning of all this to the king Nebuchadnezzar. He said to the king, "Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise *another kingdom* inferior to thee, and *another third kingdom* of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And *the fourth kingdom* shall be strong as iron," &c. Now the fourth iron kingdom in this case, is represented as having ten toes, whilst in Dan. vii. the fourth beast had ten horns. Besides, in this chapter, as well as in the seventh, a solemn crisis destroys the fourth kingdom, and introduces a fifth and heavenly one. *Here*, a mystic "stone" smites the image on its feet, and grinds the whole to powder (see ver. 44 and 45); and *there* the judgment sits, and the Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven. The millennium in both cases is the grand result. Manifestly, then, the four great beasts, in the vision of the seventh chapter, set forth the same four great *kingdoms* that are seen in this symbolic image of the second. In both chapters the rise of

four grand, universal empires is presented. Let us now return to Dan. vii.

3. Can we ascertain anything further as to these four empires? Certainly. We can ascertain what empires they are, which are typified by these four great beasts. We desire to shew this on Scripture authority alone. We have proof, in the first place, that the first and lion-like beast meant the Babylonian or Chaldean empire. We have seen that Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar expressly, "Thou art this head of gold." He said to him, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. *Thou art this head of gold.*" This golden head was the first of the four kingdoms. The sovereignty of the kingdom was concentrated in the person of Nebuchadnezzar. He was monarch over the empire of Babylon. (See ch. i. 1.) So that we have the plainest proof as to what is meant by the lion, or lion-like beast, the first of the four beasts in the vision before us.

Now, here began the "times of the Gentiles." In ch. i. of this prophetic book we read, that "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came unto Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand." In 2 Kings xxiv. and xxv. we have special record of no less than three several successful expeditions against Jerusalem by this same Nebuchadnezzar. The last was the complete and decisive one. Since then, Israel has been subject to Gentile sway. Its kings have been but vassals. The nation has been tributary to, and dependent on, the will of successive Gentile powers. These times of Gentile dominion, we repeat it, are "the times of the Gentiles."

4. But what kingdom does the second or bear-like beast symbolize? The fifth chapter of this book

supplies an answer. Belshazzar succeeded Nebuchadnezzar in the kingdom of Babylon. He made a sacrilegious and impious feast to a thousand of his lords. A mysterious hand appeared, and wrote upon the wall those solemn words, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." Now the interpretation of one of these words contains the very information we require. The meaning of the concluding word was thus given to Belshazzar by Daniel, "*Peres; Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.*" The *Medo-Persian* kingdom, then, was to succeed that of the Chaldeans. And so the event proved; for we read, in verses 30, 31, that "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. *And Darius the Median took the kingdom.*" This is most plain and conclusive. We are not left to conjectures, nor even to the testimony of profane history. The second great Gentile empire was that of the Medes and Persians."

To this Gentile power, also, Israel was subject and tributary. Darius appointed Daniel to be chief governor in the kingdom. From the Book of Esther, too, we know that, on one occasion, King Ahasuerus was induced to decree the destruction of the whole Jewish people. He, too, was a Medo-Persian monarch, as the last chapter of Esther, as well as other portions of the book, distinctly shews. Then in Ezra i., &c., we read much both of "Cyrus king of Persia," and of "Artaxerxes king of Persia," and we learn how thoroughly subject to their power, for good or evil, the Jewish nation continued. The "times of the Gentiles" were still fulfilling their slow and—to the Jews—most dreary course.

5. But what is the third kingdom—the leopard-like one? The 8th of Daniel solves this question also. The prophet saw a vision of a ram having two horns, which was at last destroyed by a he-goat, having on its head a "notable horn." The he-goat then "waxed very great; and when he was strong the great horn was broken, and for it came up four

notable ones towards the four winds of heaven." The meaning of these two symbols is stated in verses 20, 21: "The ram which thou sawest, having two horns, are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king." So that it was the *Grecian* he-goat which destroyed and seized upon the power of the Medo-Persian ram. The *Grecian*, then, is manifestly the third or leopard-like kingdom. This, also, we are thus enabled to assert, on the express testimony of Scripture itself.

We may notice, also, here, that this third beast had four heads: "The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given unto it." (ver. 6.) We have seen in ch. viii. that this beast is Grecia, set forth in that chapter as a he-goat, having, first, a great and notable horn, which represented the first king, and that then, "for it came up four notable ones, towards the four winds of heaven." The explanation of this is given in verse 22, as follows: "Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." The fulfilment of this prophecy is a well-known historic fact. The "first king," here mentioned, is evidently Alexander the Great. He founded the mighty but short-lived empire of Greece. On his death, the empire was seized upon, and divided into four kingdoms, by those who are known as "the four successors of Alexander." Much information is given us as to all this in Dan. xi. We have there, on the prophetic page, a minute history of those Grecian times—a striking proof, we may observe, of its Divine inspiration.

But during the days of this empire also, the Jewish nation was subject and tributary. The times of the Gentiles were still in progress. There were, indeed, seasons of partial mitigation of their sufferings vouchsafed ever and anon, but even the circumstances connected with such temporary and partial relief prove the enslaved state in which the Jews continued.

Fresh and successful attacks upon their country and their capital generally resulted. In Dan. xi. we have mention of more than one such devastation. In ver. 16, we read of one of the successors of Alexander, "He shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed." This "glorious land" was, doubtless, Palestine. Then, in verses 28-33, we have reference to another invasion. It is said, they should "pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and place the abomination that maketh desolate." Whether this should be understood of Antiochus, or of the Romans, I will not seek now to determine. The character of the transaction predicted is plain. Both Antiochus and the Romans so acted. The Apocryphal Books of the Maccabees, which we may receive as authentic history, describe at length the Jewish sufferings under Antiochus. Though Alexander the Great was no more, and though his empire had been divided, still the Jews were a degraded and suffering people. They at last sought the alliance of the Romans, purposely to strengthen themselves against those who successively held the reins of power after Alexander. This alliance with the Romans doubtless prepared the way for that subjugation to the Roman yoke under which we find them when our blessed Lord appeared. Thus, from age to age, they fell under Gentile power, fulfilling the prophetic word, "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."

6. What empire the fourth symbolic beast denotes has been anticipated. It was the *Roman* empire. The Chaldean, or Babylonian, was succeeded by the Medo-Persian, the Medo-Persian by the Grecian, and the Grecian by the Roman. These are the four great Gentile powers. I believe no author worthy of any regard has doubted that *Rome* is intended by the fourth beast. There were to be *only four such* empires, and the three first we have ascertained from the

Scripture itself. The fourth was to be brought to a full end only by the judgment which would establish the universal and everlasting kingdom of Messiah. Rome has so far fulfilled the predicted course of the fourth beast—fulfilled it with marvellous distinctness—and no other empire has done so. The whole description of this beast “with great iron teeth,” and of the “iron legs” of the great image, points unmistakably to the proverbially “iron rule” and “iron yoke” of the Romans. Further, this beast, as described by John, in Rev. xiii. and xvii., had “seven heads,” as well as the ten horns that are mentioned here. These seven heads were explained as denoting “seven kings,” or governments; of which it was said, “five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come.” This seems manifestly to allude to the seven successive forms of Roman government, the first five of which even heathen historians have enumerated as having taken place, even specifying their distinctive characters. Those seven heads are said, in Rev. xvii. 9, to have also denoted “seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.” This, too, points to Rome. Rome has been known for ages as “the seven-hilled city.” Besides, in Luke ii., the Roman emperor, Cæsar Augustus, is acknowledged by an inspired pen as being the head of the empire of the world: “There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.” This should be decisive. There were to be *but four such* empires; three of them have been previously identified, and here a fourth is recognised of God as being in that supreme position. The Roman empire, therefore, is the fourth and last.

7. We know that it may be objected, that this empire has long since passed away, whereas the one seen by Daniel is to exist in power at the period of the still future judgment. But this apparent difficulty actually increases the amount of evidence that it is the empire of Rome which is meant. Both Daniel and John gave information, as to the fourth

empire, of this precise nature. Daniel says, "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, *the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron*, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay." Now this is just what has taken place as to the once compactly united Roman empire. It has been "divided," but still "there is in it of the strength of the iron." In this sense, the Roman empire still exists: no longer indeed as one undivided whole, but in broken and fragmentary parts. Most of the strong nations of Europe are but broken portions of the old Roman empire. These fragments will, at the time of the end, we believe, be re-united under a revived, or *eighth* headship. In this way will the prediction of Rome's final doom have its full accomplishment.

There is, however, a further feature of this "divided" state pointed out by Daniel. "And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," &c. (See Dan. ii. 40-45.) What is meant by the words, "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another?" Is it not this—that all the attempts that are being made to blend, and fuse, and harmonize the conflicting parties that are occupied with political affairs, will fail?—that the absolute and the popular wills will not concur?—that the "reactionary," and "revolutionary" elements will not really and permanently unite?—any more than one can fuse or weld together the iron and the miry clay. Does not this singular and yet striking imagery teach us, that under the kingdom of the God of heaven alone will jarring elements and con-

flicting passions wage war no more? Indeed, already many despotic European powers seem resolved to make no further trial of the mixed, or "constitutional" mode of government. *They* at least seem resolved not to mingle with the miry clay. Though politics be not our sphere, as certainly, dear friends, they are not; yet we may look on, and endeavour to view all surrounding things in the light that this sure word of prophecy throws upon them. And such I deem to be the lesson specially needful to be learnt by Christians with reference to the political character of our own times. We seem to have lived in the special period when the despotic powers have been considering how they might "mingle themselves with the seed of men," and in many cases they have attempted it. All possible schemes to settle and give quietness to that which judgment must shortly end, are, or have been attempted. The *mixing* and *mingling* system has recently been specially resorted to. But even it will fail. The end will be, "In the days of these kings, the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom." That is what Daniel goes on immediately to declare.

In the Revelation too, the present state of the Roman empire is, we believe, pointed out. "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition." (See xvii. 8.) The Roman empire "was," but now "it is not;" yet it "shall ascend" once more. It was one powerful whole, but now it is divided—as an empire it "is not;" yet the *materials* still exist, and they apparently shall be re-united in the crisis which hastens on—re-united only to be judged. Again, we read, "The beast which thou sawest, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." (See ver. 11.) When ascended, he will be the "eighth," that is, under his eighth "head," or form of government. Still he "is of the seven," for though newly ascended to power, it is only an old and previous form of power revived. As to the

special form of power, it is one of the seven brought into re-existence; but as to its actual appearance, it is an "eighth," or new headship over the empire.

8. This brings us to the concluding portion of the prophetic history of this fourth beast. The ten toes of the image, we have said, are ten kings. This interpretation is certified by Dan. vii. 24, "The ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise." And further, by Rev. xvii. 12, "The ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast." Now these kings seem to receive power just for "one hour," or "one day," (see next chapter v. 8,) at the time of the end. They arise just at the period when Babylon is to fall. They receive power, in the providential dispensations of God, for that special purpose, to destroy Babylon. Here comes in the event we were considering when last together. The mystic woman, called also Babylon, had ruled the empire during its broken and disorganized state. Rome, Papal and ecclesiastical, arose out of the ruins of Rome Pagan and Secular. When Rome Secular is to revive, Rome Papal and Ecclesiastical shall disappear. When the beast has thrown the woman from off its back, then shall it arise once more, and stand upon its brazen feet, in more than human—in Satanic power. But the ten kings will be the agents of Babylon's destruction. The ten kings, we believe, do not yet exist. They are still future. We do not believe that ten broken divisions of the empire—ten kingdoms said to have been in existence for many centuries—were intended by these "ten horns." They grew *on one of the heads*—the eighth we believe—of the beast; they were not portions of its divided *body*. Besides, they have power for "one hour" only, that is, for a very short period—and that just at the period of the final crisis.

9. But another "horn" still, an eleventh horn, is to arise "after" the ten. And very solemn and

253

specific is the information given as to this eleventh horn. "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." We submit that this eleventh horn denotes a person, a single individual, *a king*. A variety of reasons conspire to prove that the common notion, a notion of modern days only, cannot be the correct one. This little horn "prevailed against the saints till the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Now Popery, specially presented to us in the symbol of Babylon the Great, *will not continue till then*. The ten horns will destroy the woman. But this blasphemous horn falls only when the judgment sits, and the books are opened. Again, the horn we are now contemplating arose "after" the ten. Now the ten did not arise till Babylon the Great had well nigh finished her long career of crime and blood. How, then, can the horn that came up *after them* be Babylon? Further, this eleventh horn is to subdue three of the ten; it is indeed to destroy them, for it is said, that "before it were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots." Now Babylon was destroyed before this; for in Rev. xvii. we find that *the ten* horns were to destroy her; consequently, these three had not then fallen. Further still; is there not a mani-

fest difference of *character* between a *woman* on the back of the beast, and a *horn* growing out of its head? We submit, therefore, that this horn is not Popery, but a political potentate of most blasphemous pretensions, and of Satanic energy. He is, in fact, THE ANTICHRIST. It is of him, we believe, that this same prophet Daniel speaks in ch. xi. (Read verses 36-45.) Then compare with both 2 Thess. ii. 3-12. In Dan. xi. 36, we read of him thus: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done." This "king," then, shall "prosper till the indignation" of God against Daniel's people, the Jews, "shall be accomplished," which will be only when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, and when "Jacob shall be delivered out of" the last and unequalled "time of trouble." That time of trouble is predicted, indeed, in this very prophecy, in the plainest terms: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time, thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." See the first verse of the twelfth chapter. Now, in the verses that occur between the passages we have now quoted, we read, that this blasphemous king "shall enter into the glorious land," that is, into Palestine, and that then "he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." This "glorious holy mountain" is manifestly Mount Zion in Palestine, on which the earthly, literal city of Jerusalem, is erected. Jerusalem is the city "between the two seas;" that is, between the Mediterranean, or "great" sea on the west, and the "Dead Sea" on

the east. The map of Palestine will make this plain. Now there, after a course of military conquests over "many countries," will this wicked king "plant the tabernacles of his palace;" and there will "he come to his end; and none shall help him." This is all quite distinct and different from the end of Popery—of Babylon the Great. Of this king we further read in this same prophecy, "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Lybians and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many." Then immediately follows the verse already quoted as to the place where he will plant the tabernacles of his palace, and where he will meet his doom. Now all this narration of military expedition and progress, is something completely different from an unchaste female sitting on the beast, and from the intoxications of her luxuriant cup. Here it is plainly an individual commander, whose single will is absolute, and whose armies rush on from country to country, till they reach their final rendezvous, and their end overtakes them there.

It is of this very "king" that Paul speaks in 2 Thess. ii. 4. He seems to quote from Daniel almost *verbatim*. Daniel here says, "The king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself,

and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods ;” and then, that having “entered into the glorious land” of Palestine, “he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain.” And Paul says, “And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; *who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*” In both these places we have the two great marks, opposition against all that is called God, and the planting of his throne on the scene of the Jewish temple, in the glorious holy mountain. Paul’s expression is, “*That man who opposeth and exalteth,*” &c. What man is it who acts so? Plainly the king that Daniel had spoken of, who would so exalt and oppose himself. The reference to Daniel seems beyond doubt.

Now Paul gives us the following order of events. The “mystery of iniquity,” or, as we believe, the “mystery, Babylon the Great,” is to work until the time when the man of sin shall be revealed. Then comes a permitted judicial delusion, upon all those who “believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness;” and thus they fall under the power of this wicked one. Then the personal advent of the Lord closes the whole.

Now, let us observe, my brethren, how all this bears upon the revelation given us as to the “little horn,” in the chapter specially before us this evening. (Dan. vii.) “In this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.” (See ver. 8.) Then in ver. 11; “I beheld, then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain.” Again in ver. 20, “even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.” And finally, and specially, ver. 25, “And he shall speak great words against the

Most High; and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand, until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit," &c. This is all of the same blasphemous character that both Dan. xi. and 2 Thess. ii. describe. The judgment of the great day here also winds up the whole.

10. We must say a few words as to two or three other particulars connected with this man of sin, before we pass on to the concluding scene.

First, there will be an awful, general delusion, judicially permitted of God to come upon the nations that compose the body of the "beast." In 2 Thess. ii. this is put most solemnly: "For this cause shall God send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Heretofore God has sent them the message of strong consolation and of richest grace, that they all might be saved; but *then*—oh, dreadful, appalling prospect for all obstinate rejecters of the Gospel!—*then* will He "send them strong delusion to believe a lie, that they all might be damned." Oh, dreadful doom! Oh, terrific declaration of God's sure unerring word! Sinners, what mean you? Will you continue to rush onwards to destruction? Will you continue to slight God's message of love, regardless of your own salvation? Now is God beseeching you to be saved; but if you make light of the invitations of His grace, you know not how soon you may be permitted to fall under "strong delusion," which ends in utter perdition.

We must give one other scripture as to this judicial "strong delusion." In Rev. xvi. we have, connected with the same crisis to which reference has been already frequently made, the following passage: "And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

For they are 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. And he gathered them together unto a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Now here is plainly predicted a dread, and, apparently, almost universal delusion. It issues forth specially from three sources; from the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. What mean these symbols? In Rev. xii. and xx. the "dragon" is expressly said to be "the devil and Satan." The first delusion therefore is *diabolical*. The "beast" is the same "fourth beast" that has already been described. The second delusion, then, would appear to be *political*. The "false prophet" is certainly the second, or two-horned beast of Rev. xiii. Compare Rev. xiii. 14, with Rev. xix. 20, and no doubt will remain. Whatever may be denoted by this two-horned beast of Rev. xiii. as seen there, it seems clear that, at the time of the crisis and decisive battle, this "false prophet" will be the *religious* agency of the beast, in its last state. So that the third delusion appertains specially to religion. It is an agency that "causes the world to worship" the beast. (See Rev. xiii. 12.) Here then is a threefold delusion;—diabolical, political, and religious. How much of the *spirit* of these three delusions may be perceived working around us even in the present day! The prime actors themselves may not as yet have come upon the stage, but how much is there of their nature already in the world! They will surely come, ere long, and gather the deceived, deluded nations together, to the battle of the great day of God Almighty!

We must not omit to notice the solemn warning that is inserted abruptly in the middle of this prophetic scene: "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 warning actually breaks out in the midst of the narration. The Spirit says, "Watch! Be ready specially, when such a time shall come. Be ready then for him who shall appear in flaming fire!"

A second particular is this—The time of the full power of the antichrist is said to be "a time, times, and half a time." This is expressed both in Dan. vii. 25, and Dan. xii. 7. We have it, I believe, in other terms, in several other places. By "a time, times, and half a time," is meant, I apprehend, three and a half literal years. This period is yet future. It is a short and tremendous crisis, or the "time of trouble," the days of which shall be shortened for the elect's sake. "Times" always denotes literal years, I believe. In Dan. iv. 32, "*seven times* shall pass over thee," and in Dan. xi. 13 (margin), "at the *end of time, even years*"—in these cases, the term certainly means, not "prophetic" years, but literal years. In the cases before us also, we believe, the meaning is similar. If the little horn represents an individual person, it must be so; for no one will contend that an individual man will exist throughout three and a half "prophetic years," that is, years of years, or twelve hundred and sixty common years. Besides, those who profess to find so long a period in "a time, times, and a half," are compelled to make a double figure of the expression. They first say, "*a time* means a year," and then, "*a year* means a prophetic year." But, as we have seen, "times" does *not* mean "prophetic" years. So that this *doubling* of the figure is wholly unwarrantable, not to say, absurd. The period of antichrist's full power, then, will be very short, and at the time of the final crisis. How soon may it not arrive!

Is it not at this period that Rev. xi. 1–13 has its fulfilment? The witnesses will be slain in "the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom, and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." This seems plainly to be Jerusalem. Jerusalem is

spiritually called *Sodom*. (Isa. i. 10.) There, too, our Lord was crucified. For "three days and a half" these witnesses are to lie dead. May not this be the very period of the "time, times, and a half?" But this I will not seek to determine now.

Thirdly: The grand and special act of decisive judgment will take place around Jerusalem. The man of sin and the beast, the false prophet and the infatuated nations, will be gathered thither to the final conflict. This is a very important portion of prophetic testimony. Many scriptures tell of this last gathering of the nations of the earth around Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be the scene of the special act of the judgment of the great day. We repeat it, this gathering of the nations of the earth is matter of most prominent prophetic notice. Indeed, a whole host of events crowd together in connection with this great gathering of the nations.

We have already seen in Dan. xi. that the man of sin "enters into the glorious land," and seeks to establish himself and his forces "between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain." We have seen, too, that the frog-like delusion gathers the nations together, "unto a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon." Now, there is quite reason to believe, that this Hebrew word means "mountain of Megiddo;" and *Megiddo* was a place a short distance northward of Jerusalem. The *mustering* then is to that place, but the final scene is around Jerusalem. In Joel we have this set forth in the most simple and express terms. "Behold, in those days and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there," &c. (Joel iii. 1, 2. Read specially, also, ver. 9-17 of this chapter.) We must give a portion of the passage: "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe:

261

come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." The valley of Jehoshaphat is said to be at the foot of the Mount of Olives, close to Jerusalem. This gathering of the nations is into that valley. And it is at the time when God "shall bring again the captivity of Judah, and Jerusalem," not when that captivity commenced. The "day of the Lord" ends this grand and infatuated confederacy, and the millennium ensues.

Zephaniah, too, makes solemn reference to this gathering together of the nations, though he does not specify the locality to which they are gathered. In chap. iii. 8, 9, we read as follows: "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." Mark this Scripture well. It is said, "THEN will I turn to the people a pure language," &c. WHEN? When will this general turning or conversion be? Plainly when this great gathering and judgment of the nations has taken place. THEN will the millennium commence, and not until then.

Zechariah speaks with exceeding clearness as to this gathering of the nations, which he expressly says shall be gathered "against Jerusalem to battle." Read Zech. xiv. as a whole. It commences thus: "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee; for I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle," &c. But your attention has been called to this chapter in a previous lecture.

The crisis of the nations, then, will certainly take place around Jerusalem. The "beast" will perish

there. Rome will perish at Jerusalem. Man's centre of unity and of metropolitan power will close its doings in presence of that city which God has ever pointed out as *his* elect centre of unity, and *his* sphere of metropolitan supremacy. Man has chosen Rome, but God hath chosen Jerusalem. Man's scheme will come to nought, but "the counsel of the Lord, it shall stand" for ever!

11. We may now see the character of these four great Gentile powers. They hold delegated power, but they use it as a wild beast uses its power,—they make a selfish and rapacious use of it, even unto the end. Unregenerate human nature will ever do so. God permitted, by providential arrangements, this power over the world to fall into the hands of these successive monarchies or empires. They all pervert and abuse it. As Israel had done with its power, so do the Gentiles with theirs. God will provide for himself a king, who shall rule in righteousness; and all the kingdoms of the earth, with all their glory, shall be brought beneath his sway.

12. We must notice here, however, a progressive deterioration in the character of this delegated power. This is indicated by the character of the metals enumerated, commencing with gold, and descending by gradations of silver, brass, iron, and even to the commixture of iron and clay.

We do not mean to give any opinion as to what is the best and most advantageous form of political power. This is entirely outside our province. Politics—worldly, secular politics—we have not to meddle with. We have to thank God for the protection which *Cæsar* affords us, and to render unto him quietly and submissively what he demands of us. We sojourn in Cæsar's country, but we are not citizens of earth. Our citizenship is in heaven. We seek a country. Our home is the skies. All we have to do, therefore, is to provide things honest in the sight of all men, to thank God for the protection to life and property which the provision of secular government affords, to

pay tribute as demanded, and to pray for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Vengeance belongs to God. Power belongs to him. He giveth it to whomsoever he will. God's *secular servants* are responsible to him. But God's *sons* have a nobler calling than that of striving with the "potsherds of earth." Earthly turmoil befits not their high vocation. No ; services of love and mercy, and non-resistance of evil, become the pardoned, washed, and freely-adopted *sons* of God.

Still, we look at all that is around us, and judge of it according to God's revealed light. Nebuchadnezzar's power, then, whether best for the earth or not, was the highest and most complete form of power. His will was law, and he did whatever he pleased : he was "the head of gold." But the power of the Medo-Persian monarchs was plainly inferior—in degree, at least. When they had made a law, to it, while it remained a law, they themselves must submit ; for "the law of the Medes and Persians altered not." Grecian power was still lower, as to its character. The silver was succeeded by *brass*. Then came the *iron* ; and then *iron and clay*. But we must leave this subject for your investigation at leisure. We have just hinted at the spirit and meaning of these types, and must pass on quickly to the concluding scene.

13. And now, behold the issue of the whole ! The great day of God Almighty is the consummation of the history of the four great Gentile powers. There is a sense in which even literal Babylon, and Persia, and Greece, are still existing. In connection with the judgment of the fourth beast, in this seventh of Daniel, we have the following parenthetical allusion to these three empires : "As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away ; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." Chaldea, Persia, and Greece, were to exist after their power over the surrounding nations had been wrested

from them. Thus *Persia* exists to this day. So does *Greece*. This, I believe, explains Dan. ii. 35: "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together." The four kingdoms are included here as sharing in a common doom. Indeed, as has been observed, all the nations that descended from the posterity of Noah, as specially mentioned in the tenth of Genesis, are mentioned again, in either one scripture or another, as appearing on the scene at the period of the great judgment of the nations, and as meeting with judgment then. God knows how the nations have descended through all their generations. He knows the pedigree of all, however we may feel puzzled and entangled even by a casual glance thereat.

Behold, then, the end of all these things. Psalm ii. thus shews it: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Dan. ii., as we have seen, speaks of it thus: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." This is the stone that was set at nought by the builders. It will become the head stone of the corner. But alas for those on whom this stone shall fall! It will grind them to powder. The stone does not roll along, converting the image into its own substance. The stone is not *the Gospel*. The Gospel tells us that this mystic stone *now*, while the day of salvation lasts, is a *foundation stone*, and that thereon poor sinners may safely build for eternity. But this stone has been raised to heaven, and will descend thence like the destructive thunderbolt, and awful will be the end of those on whom it falls. It will fall specially, however, upon the "feet and toes" of this great image. Then succeeds the kingdom of the God of heaven.

T. S.

OUTLINES OF LECTURES ON THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.

Lecture XLV.

THE GOLDEN ALTAR, OR ALTAR OF INCENSE, AND THE PERFUME.

Exodus xxx. 1-10 and 34-38.

“AND thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon. And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the Lord.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight: and thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy: and thou

K

266

shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tent of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy. And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people."

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it.] There are two altars, the brazen altar of burnt offering and the golden altar of incense. They are both typical of the work and person of the Lord Jesus Christ, but in distinct aspects.

At the brazen altar, we see Christ in death and resurrection, offering himself without spot to God, and accepted in all the sweet savour of his perfect sacrifice. The ground of the believer's acceptance and communion with God.

At the golden altar, we see Christ in resurrection life and ascended glory, in all the excellency of his character and ways before God, through whom the children of God draw near and worship with confidence and joy.

Both the brazen and the golden altar were made of shittim wood within, as shewing that the incarnation of Christ lies at the foundation of his whole work on behalf of his people; for the children being partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same.

THE DIMENSIONS.

A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof. Ver. 2.] In size it is smaller than the other vessels, but it stands half a cubit higher than the mercy seat, the table, and the brazen grate of the altar of burnt offering.

The table is on a level with the mercy seat and the brazen grate, for the table sets forth *communion*

267

on the ground of atonement made, and in the remembrance of the death of Jesus.

The golden altar is half a cubit higher, for it shews *worship* in the apprehension of a risen and ascended Saviour, and in the apprehension of the preciousness of his character and ways.

THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR.

The horns thereof shall be of the same. Ver. 2.] The horn is the emblem of strength; and there is power in Jesus, on which faith can lay hold in drawing nigh to God; while the human tenderness and sympathy of Jesus give sweet encouragement to faith in this its exercise.

THE OVERLAYING.

And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof. Ver. 3.] The Divine glory and excellency of the Lord Jesus, as well as his humanity, and in combination with it, is thus set forth.

And the horns also are overlaid with gold; for faith not only apprehends the human sympathy, but also the Divine all-sufficiency of Jesus, through whom we worship.

THE GOLDEN CROWN.

And thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about.] There was no crown to the brazen altar, for that sets forth Jesus in his humiliation, suffering, and death; and the only crown he wore on earth was a crown of thorns. But there is a golden crown to the altar of incense, for it presents to us Jesus risen, ascended, and crowned with glory and honour.

The crown also is significant of the Divine beauty and excellency of his character and office, as the one through whom we worship and draw nigh to God.

THE RINGS AND STAVES.

And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under

the crown of it, by the two ribs thereof (margin), upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. Ver. 4, 5.] The Hebrew word translated in the text "corners," and in the margin "ribs," is the same word which occurs in chapter xxvii. 7, and which is there rendered "*sides*"—"and the staves shall be upon the two *sides* of the altar to bear it,"—which gives the sense. Translating the word "corners," here and in chap. xxxvii., only, is apt to mislead. It signifies a side, or, as in the present instance, an appendage to a side.

In the table of shewbread the rings and staves were connected with the *border* (chap. xxv. 26, 27), to teach us that in travelling through a polluted world, separation from evil ought to characterize our communion. But in the golden altar the rings and staves are connected with the *crown of gold*, for, though strangers and pilgrims here, we worship in connection with an ascended and glorified Saviour.

The rings and staves adapted the altar to the wilderness condition of Israel; they were "to bear it withal," that it might accompany them in their various journeyings. So Jesus, in the character in which he is presented to us by the golden altar, is ever present with us in Spirit wherever two or three are gathered in his name. And both his humanity and his Deity adapt him to our wilderness necessities.

THE POSITION OF THE ALTAR.

And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. Ver. 6.] In Heb. ix. the golden altar in the holy place is omitted in the enumeration of the sacred vessels, and the golden censer in the holiest of all is inserted in its stead.

The reason of this appears to be, that in Heb. ix.,

as also in Heb. x., the High Priest is represented as on the day of atonement, entered into the most holy place within the vail, typical of Jesus entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

But in the type before us, the same precious and Divine Saviour is represented as present in Spirit in the midst of his assembled and worshipping people on earth, by whom the sacrifice of praise is offered up to God continually, and their prayers go up with acceptance.

It is the vivid setting forth of those invaluable words in Matt. xviii. 19, 20: "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they 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."

The altar stands before, and not within, the vail in the holy place; for it tells of Jesus in the assembly, and yet it stands before the ark and mercy seat, from whence God holds fellowship with his servants; for by the faith of Jesus we have boldness to enter into the holiest. Yea, come boldly unto the throne of grace, and there may hold sweet intercourse with God from off the mercy seat.

And in Jesus, who is present in Spirit with us on earth, and present in person for us above, all the promises of God are yea and amen to the glory of God by us.

And all this is true to the believer individually, as well as to the saints collectively.

THE PERPETUAL USE OF THE ALTAR.

And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning. Ver. 7. A perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations. Ver. 8.] So Christ, the High Priest of our profession, ever liveth to make intercession for us.

In the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel by John

we have the reality and substance of these Divine foreshadowings.

We there see Jesus on earth, surrounded by his disciples; but, in Spirit, entering into the holiest, his work finished, and the crown of glory won.

In *act* it is the High Priest at the golden altar—in *anticipation*, the High Priest on the day of atonement entering into the holiest.

Let us look at him as at the golden altar, and listen to his words: "Father, I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." "I have manifested thy name."

He is thus presenting before his Father, as sweet and fragrant incense, the memorial of what he had been in his character and life on earth; and then claiming for himself the just recompense of reward, he obtains on behalf of his disciples, and of believers through their word, the richest, choicest, highest blessings.

And these words he spake in the world, that we might have his joy fulfilled in ourselves, in being thus enabled to enter into his thoughts concerning us, through this magnificent specimen of his present and perpetual intercessions, in the knowledge of the glory which he has, and which he will share with us.

THE TIME OF INCENSE.

When he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it.] We have already considered the Candlestick, with its seven lamps, as the type of ministry or testimony in connection with Christ, and in the power of the Spirit.

It is Christ himself who *prepares* his servants for this ministry in the word, and he gives grace and power for its *exercise*. Just as Aaron dressed the lamps in the morning, and caused the flame to ascend at even, or between the two evenings. In Revelation i. ii. iii., the Lord Jesus is thus shown as one like unto the Son of man in the midst of the

seven golden candlesticks, giving and directing the testimony which was to be borne in his name.

And testimony to Christ is a sweet savour unto God, as says the apostle in 2 Cor. ii. 14–17, “For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish.” But this is not all; the type before us beautifully and expressively shews the connection between the preparation and exercise of ministry, in fellowship with Jesus, and the fragrance of his own intercession.

When the servant is preparing, or being prepared for testimony, the intercession of Jesus is ascending on his behalf; and when he is giving his testimony, the sweet savour of the name of Jesus is going up before God.

ITS EXCLUSIVE USE.

Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon. Ver. 9.] Thus the altar of incense is kept perfectly distinct from the altar of burnt offering. And we do well to remember this in drawing nigh to God.

No strange incense was permitted, any more than strange fire. Jesus pleads no other excellency than his own as the ground of the acceptance of our prayers and praises.

The believer's priestly access to God is a progressive thing. We go from strength to strength. The question of *sin* being settled, at the sin offering consumed without the camp. Acceptance in person and as to nature, and the joy of God's salvation, is realised at the brazen altar.

Here, at the golden altar, the soul draws nigh to God in full assurance of faith, having the heart sprinkled and the body washed, pardoned through the death of Christ, and accepted in his resurrection, and holding fast the profession of the hope without wavering, and in spirit entering within the veil.

272

In the sin offering consuming without the camp, we see Jesus *delivered* for our offences.

At the brazen altar, we see him *raised* again for our justification.

At the golden altar, he is presented as *ascended*, and ever before God in all the preciousness of his person, character, and ways.

In the first, we have Christ dying; in the second, Christ rising; in the third, Christ ascended, and ever living to make intercession for us.

As guilty sinners, the sin offering without the camp met us as we were, and where we were.

As pardoned sinners, we find acceptance at the brazen altar, through the accepted sacrifice of a crucified and risen Saviour.

At the golden altar, we have fellowship with God, and nearness of access to him, in all the preciousness of the life and person of Jesus, as he was and as he is. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." (Rom. v. 10.)

THE BLOOD ON THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the Lord. Ver. 10.] The foundation is laid in atonement, and we know from Hebrews x. that this yearly act was a type of the one offering of Jesus, whereby he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

And while no burnt sacrifice or meat offering was to be offered on this altar, yet the blood of atonement on the horns of it speaks of peace once made, and the remission of sins once for all through the sacrifice of Christ.

THE PERFUME.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight. Ver. 34.] The name of the first spice, "stacte," comes from an Hebrew word, signifying to drop, to fall in drops, to distil, as in Sol. Song v. 13: "His lips like lilies, *dropping* sweet smelling myrrh." Beautifully significant of the grace and gracious words which proceeded from the lips of Jesus.

Onycha, in Hebrew, means also a lion, and suggests the thought of the uncompromising faithfulness, firmness, and decision of the character of Christ, setting his face like a flint, boldly acting for God, and reproofing all manner of evil.

The root of the word for galbanum signifies milk or fat, and connects the thought with the "fat which covered the inwards," God's portion of the sacrifices, and emblematical of the internal preciousness of Jesus.

Frankincense, white and fragrant, speaks of the purity, piety, and acceptability of the character and ways of him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

"Of each shall there be a like weight." How expressive of the character of Christ! What an even balance do we there discover! His grace, his firmness, his internal excellency, and outward piety, how exactly proportioned!

And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy. Ver. 35.] Perfume and incense is the same. There is but one word in the original.

The graces and virtues which compose and make up the character of Jesus, how exquisitely tempered together! Not only equal, but harmonized, blended, and combined.

"Tempered together, pure and holy." What purity!

what holiness also in the character and ways of Jesus!

And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tent of the congregation, where I will meet with thee; it shall be unto you most holy. Ver. 36.] All these varied and combined excellencies of the Lord Jesus are to be discovered in the minutest act and thought, and are available for us in each particular.

And when met in the presence of God, the sweet memorial of all this is there for the encouragement of our faith, and for the comfort and joy of our souls before God; "for ointment and perfume rejoice the heart." And thus we realize our acceptance with God in his own beloved Son, and enjoy communion with him.

And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people. Ver. 37, 38.] This preciousness of Jesus is inimitable, and must not be counterfeited. Self-conceit, through supposed resemblance, will put the soul out of communion.

Strange fire is natural or fleshly excitement. Strange incense is nature's imitation of the peerless preciousness of Christ.

Both are alike forbidden of God. But fire from God's altar, and the sweet perfume of the excellency of Jesus, are provided for the true worshippers of the Father, through the Son.

T. N.

[The Brazen Laver in the Number for October.]

THE SABBATH.

I SHALL add a few words on the subject of the Sabbath, submitting them to the spiritual thoughts of my brethren. It is well to be subject to the Word. First, the participation in *God's* rest, is what distinguishes his people,—their distinctive privilege. The heart of the believer holds that fast, whatever may be the sign that God has given of it. (Heb. iv.) God had established it at the beginning, but there is no appearance that man had any share in it. He did not work in the creation, nor was he set to labour or toil in the garden of Eden; he was to dress and keep it indeed, but he had nothing to do but continually to enjoy. However, the day was hallowed from the beginning. Afterwards the Sabbath was given as a memorial of the deliverance out of Egypt (Deut. v. 15), and the prophets specially insist on that point—that the Sabbath was given as a sign of God's covenant. (Ezek. xx., Ex. xxxi. 13.) It was plain that it was but the earnest of that Word, "My presence shall go, and I will give thee rest." (Ex. xxxiii. 14; xxxi. 13; Lev. xix. 30.) It is a sign that the people are sanctified to God. (Ezek. xx. 12, 13–16, 20; Neh. ix. 14. Comp. Isa. lvi. 2–6; lviii. 13; Jer. xvii. 22; Lam. i. 7; ii. 6; Ezek. xxii. 8; xxiii. 38; xlv. 24.) Besides these passages, we see that whenever God gives any new principle or form of relation with himself, the Sabbath is added. Thus, in grace to Israel (Ex. xvi. 23); as laws. (Ex. xx. 10.) See also, besides the verse we are occupied with, Ex. xxxi. 13, 14; xxxiv. 21, when they are restored afresh by the patience of God through mediation (xxxv. 2), and in the new covenant of Deut., already quoted in the passage.

These remarks show us what was the radical and

essential importance of the Sabbath, as the thought of God and the sign of the relation between his people and himself; though, being only a sign, a solemnity and not a moral commandment. But if that be of the utmost importance, it is of an equal and even higher importance to remember, that the covenant between God and the Jewish people is set aside for us, although God's rest be quite as precious to us, and even more so; that our rest is not in this creation—a rest of which the seventh day was a sign; and, moreover, which is more important still, that the Lord Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath,—a remark *of all importance* as to his person, and null if he was to do nothing with regard to the Sabbath; and that, as a fact, he has omitted all mention of it in the sermon on the Mount, where he has given such a precious summary of the morality of the law, in its fundamental principles, with the addition of others (connected with the heavenly light brought by the name of the Father and the presence of a suffering Messiah, and the revelation of the heavenly reward), making a whole of the principles of his kingdom; and that he continually thwarted the thoughts of the Jews on this point, is a circumstance which the evangelists, that is, the Holy Ghost, have been careful to record.

The Sabbath itself Jesus passed in the state of death—a terrible sign of the position of the Jews as to their covenant: for us, of the birth of better things. It has been tried, with much trouble, to prove that the seventh day was in fact the first. A single remark demolishes the whole edifice thus reared; it is, that the word of God calls this last the first, in contrast with the seventh. What is then the first day? It is for us the day of all days—the day of the resurrection of Jesus, by which we are begotten again unto a lively hope, which is the source of all our joy, our salvation, and that which characterizes our life. Thus we shall find the rest of God in the resurrection. Morally, in this world, we begin our spiritual life by the rest, instead of finding it at

the end of our labours. Our rest is in the new creation; we are the beginning, after Christ, of that new dispensation. It is clear, then, that the rest of God cannot, in our case, be connected with the sign of the rest of creation here below. Have we any authority in the New Testament for distinguishing the first day of the week from the others? For my part, I do not doubt it. It is certain we have not commandments like those of the old law; they would be quite contrary to the spirit of the gospel of grace. But the Spirit of God has marked out, in divers manners, the first day of the week; that day is not made binding upon us in a way contrary to the nature of the economy. The Lord being raised on that day, according to his promise, appears in the midst of his disciples gathered according to his word—the week following he does the same. In the Acts, the first day of the week is marked as the day on which they gathered together to break bread. In 1 Cor. xvi., Christians are exhorted to lay by what they had earned, each first day of the week. In Revelation, it is positively called the Lord's-day; that is, designated in a direct manner by a distinctive name by the Holy Spirit. I am well aware that it has been sought to persuade us that John speaks of being in the Spirit in the Millennium; but there are two fatal objections to that interpretation; first, the Greek says quite another thing, and uses the same word that is used for the Lord's Supper—lordly or dominical—the dominical supper—the dominical-day. Who can doubt as to the meaning of such an expression? or, consequently, can fail in admitting that the first day of the week was distinguished from others? (as the Lord's Supper was distinguished from other suppers)—not as an imposed Sabbath, but as a privileged day. But the reasoning against this thought is founded on a totally false idea, in that only a minimum portion of the Revelation speaks of the Millennium. The book is about the things that precede it; and in the place where the expression is

found, there is decidedly no mention whatever of it, but of the existing churches, whatever besides might be their prophetic character; so that if we hold to the word of God, we are forced to say that the first day of the week is distinguished in the word of God as being the Lord's-day. We are also bound to say, if we desire to maintain the authority of the Son of man, that he is superior to the Sabbath—"Lord of the Sabbath;" so that in maintaining for us the authority of the Jewish Sabbath as such, we are in danger of denying the authority, the dignity, and the rights of the Lord Jesus himself, and re-establishing the old covenant, of which it was the appointed sign, of seeking rest as the result of labour under law. The more the true importance of the Sabbath—the seventh day—is felt, the more we shall feel the importance of the consideration that it is no longer the seventh, but the first day, which has privileges for us. Let us take care, on the other hand, because we are no longer under the law, but under grace, not to weaken the thought, not only of man's rest but of *God's*,—a governing thought, in the whole of the revelation of his relationship with man. The final rest for us is rest from *spiritual* labours in the midst of evil; not only from sin,—a rest which we, as fellow-labourers, shall enjoy with him who has said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

J. N. D.

HEBREWS VI. 1-8.*

AN abstract consideration of a passage of Scripture, irrespective of its context, generally leads to error,—a remark particularly applicable to the one now to be considered; and which may account, in a great measure, for the variety of inconsistent and unsatisfactory explanations which commentators have offered of it. Confessedly difficult as it is, it is hoped the following exposition will commend itself to the spiritual judgment of the saints; and, by the divine blessing, remove a stumbling-block from the way of many.

The character stamped upon the whole epistle to the Hebrews, especially marks this portion of it; it is briefly this: Warning to Hebrews professing Christianity, exposed to persecution without,—and having to contend with their natural unbelief, and habitual attachment to the laws and institutions of Moses within—against a wilful and deliberate return to Judaism. Much of the difficulty of the passage may be removed by a closer translation, which is here given.

“Therefore, leaving the word of the beginning of Christ (see margin), let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God; of the doctrine of washings, and of laying on of hands; and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if indeed God permit. For it is impossible to renew unto repentance those who have been once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and

* This tract is simply an abridgment of the pamphlet of the same title. It is not designed at all to take the place of the latter, which is very valuable; but to render the substance of the truth it contains more accessible to those of limited means and leisure.

the powers of the age to come, and have fallen away again; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them for whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned."

The several clauses of this passage will now be considered in succession.

1. "Leaving the word of the beginning of Christ." This does not mean leaving the first principles or foundation-truths of Christianity, but those doctrines, the belief of which constituted a man a Jew. This is clearly gathered from what follows, which does not give the gospel at length (compare it for example with Acts xvi. 31; Rom. iv. 23-25). The "word of the *beginning* of Christ," means *generally* all teaching concerning Christ previous to the perfect and full revelation of Him. Its *special* meaning depends upon the times and persons spoken of in connection with it. Thus to Adam this "word," &c., was prophetic, the single promise. (Gen. iii. 15.) To Abel it was, in addition to what went before—typical—the lamb slain. To Abraham it was all this, and promises and figures given specially to him besides; and so on, until the Jewish dispensation, into which they were all drawn up and embodied; and then, to the Jews, "the word of the beginning of Christ," was the laws and institutions of Moses; and the Prophets and the Psalms added, as it were, but so many more letters to the alphabet, by which they spelled out Christ: for it was, after all, but an alphabet; it was but "the word of the *beginning* of Christ." This explanation appears the more confirmed, by referring to the previous chapter (v.), which, indeed, ought not to have been separated from the present one, and to which we are expressly directed by the word with which this one begins, "therefore," &c. The apostle had told the Hebrews that when on account of

the time they ought to be *teachers*, they had need that one should *teach them again*, "what were the *elements of the beginning of the oracles of God*" (Gr.); it was needful, that is, to teach them again the true and spiritual import of "the elements of the beginning of the oracles of God," by which expression the most elementary of the Jewish elements are signified, under which the simpler truths of Christianity were set forth; they were unprepared for an explanation of those higher elements, in which were wrapped up the deeper mysteries of the Christian faith; he calls them "*babes*," without experience (margin) in the word of righteousness, in contradistinction to those who were of "*full age*," or perfect (margin). This same comparison occurs in 1 Cor. iii. 1, which compared with ii. 6, gives us the meaning of the word babes in both places, as well as what the apostle means by the "*perfect*," or those "*of full age*." The former denote such believers, who from their carnal walk and instability, were unfit for aught but *elementary instruction*; the latter such as were steadfast in elementary truths, and prepared for further attainment in the knowledge of mysteries. It was the Hebrews being in the condition of the former, that made the apostle break off, whilst unfolding (as he had been doing from the beginning of the epistle) the apostolic and priestly offices of Christ, and when about to speak of Melchisedec, in order to rebuke them for their slowness, and warn them of their danger: *their* danger as Hebrews being not simply unpreparedness to receive higher teaching, but the *cause* of this unpreparedness in them, the tendency, that is, of their hearts to rest in those things as substance, which he had been treating of as shadows, and thus deliberately to apostatize, and become involved in hopeless ruin.

2. "Let us go on unto perfection." We have seen, that *babes* means here, not persons who have need always to *feed upon* the milk, that is, the simple truths of Christianity (this is most needful for all)

but such as actually required to be *taught over again* what these elementary truths were. To them are opposed those “of full age”—*perfect*, not because of their advanced knowledge, but because being habituated to the milk, that is, having received and fed upon the elementary truths, they were prepared for strong meat. So far, then, from desiring the first to leave (to dismiss or put away, Gr.) the first principles of Christianity behind, it is to those very principles he presses them to go forward, leaving the *Jewish elements* behind. Now this is called *perfection* in the *dispensational* sense in which the word is used throughout this epistle. (See vii. 11, 18, 19; ix. 9; x. 1, 2; xi. 40.) As a living body is more perfect than a lifeless shadow, so is the covenant under which we stand entitled to be called *perfect*—perfect as to apostleship—as to priesthood—as to sacrifice. It is true there is a perfection to which even the established believer is often urged to press on, though not in this passage. But it is a moral perfection: his perfectness and completeness *in* Christ being the goal from which he starts; likeness *to* Christ being the point towards which he reaches (2 Cor. vii. 1; 1 Thess. v. 23; Col. ii. 10; compare iv. 12, &c.; Phil. iii. 12, comp. ver. 16). In this sense we are exhorted to be “perfect, as our Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

3. “Not laying again the foundation.” This is readily understood to be the same as the “word of the beginning of Christ.” The special foundation of the present dispensation is spoken of in 1 Cor. iii. 10. The foundation of the last dispensation is comprised in the particulars which follow,—repentance from dead works, &c. The new foundation is similar to the old foundation in its scope and end, but quite distinct from it in character: so much so, that now to build upon the old is to reject the new; and this is to reject Christ (Gal. v. 2), &c. This was Paul’s fear for the Hebrews, and therefore he exhorts them not to *lay again* the old foundation. If his words

applied to the new foundation, he would rather, in case they had renounced it, have urged them strongly to lay it again. Other Scriptures besides throw light on this expression, "laying again." (See Rom. viii. 15; Gal. ii. 18; iv. 9.) This last is indeed a case quite parallel with the one before us. That the above is, however, the true interpretation of this clause, is most evident further from the examination of the particulars comprised in this foundation—particulars in which we find no mention of the name or the work of Christ, or any thing to bear out the common idea, that the passage is an enumeration of the principles of what is *distinctively* Christian doctrine. Who, indeed, would give it as a statement of the gospel (although the gospel is contained in it, as it is in many of the shadowy Jewish ordinances and other Scriptures) to a poor sinner, who inquired, "What shall I do to be saved?" It is the full creed of a spiritual Jew. True, there are doctrines enumerated in it which are essential to Christianity, but not less essential at the same time to *all* true religion at *all* times. If, then, it be shewn that these doctrines were *all* known to the Jews, whilst some of them are exclusively Jewish, then, of course, to preach them alone would be to "lay again" the old foundation—to preach *Judaism*—to reject Christ.

4. "Repentance from dead works." The character of true repentance is the same under all dispensations. It is hardly necessary to adduce proofs that it was a thing understood by the Jews. Take, for example, the confessions and repentance of Job, Daniel, Josiah, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c.; the national confessions of sin, and declared resolutions of amendment (Judges x. 15, 16; Neh. ix. 1–3), &c.; the exhortations of the prophets (for example, Jer. iv. 4–14; Joel ii. 12), &c.; and, lastly, the national promises (Deut. xxx. 1), &c. The doctrine of repentance was also taught in various ceremonial ordinances. To us now it is intimately connected with the name and work of Jesus (Acts v. 31; xvii. 30, 31; xx. 21), &c. Apart from the cross,

or the grace of Christ, *we* cannot fully know it as we ought. In this passage, however, it stands unconnected with either—with anything that is peculiar to the present dispensation.

5. "Faith toward God." This is not simply believing *in* God, but *believing God*, his word, his promises, &c. In the eleventh chapter we have examples of this faith, not only under the Jewish dispensation, but from the world's infancy: its definition is given in verse 1 and 6 (comp. verse 26 and 27). But even giving this, its highest sense, to the doctrine of "faith toward God," necessarily common to all dispensations, it is presented to *us* in a new and blessed connection (John xiv. 1; Rom. iv. 24, &c.; 1 John iii. 1). In *our* mind, the doctrines of faith and repentance are linked with associations which never entered the mind of a Hebrew. It is necessary to remember this, to put ourselves in their place, in order to understand the meaning of such words in their present connection.

6. "The doctrine of baptisms." The word here translated baptisms, and generally understood to mean in this place Christian baptism, is different in the original to the word used for that ordinance. It is to be remarked, too, that it is in the plural, whereas in the present dispensation we have but one baptism (Eph. iv. 5), &c. There are but three other places in the New Testament, besides this passage, where the Greek word occurs in the plural; and in each of these places it is applied—not to Christian baptism, but to the Jewish washings. (See Mark vii. 4, 8, which illustrates the *use* of the word, notwithstanding that the washings there alluded to were a superstitious abuse of similar divine ordinances. Lev. xi. 32.) Heb. ix. 10 exhibits a completely parallel use of the word, which is there employed in the same sense, and with the same object, as in the passage before us. For the most important of these washings under the Jewish dispensation, see Exod. xxix. 4; Lev. xiv. 8, 9; xv. 13. They represented the

washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and were also typical of that mighty agent the Spirit of Life. A *master in Israel* should have known the truth they conveyed (John iii. 5, 9, 12); for it was taught both by type and prophecy (see Jer. iv. 4, 14; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26), &c. This plural word, baptisms, or washings, is never in the New Testament applied to Christian baptism. This latter ordinance, whilst symbolizing all the truth taught by the Jewish baptisms, does far more; for it represents the death and resurrection of the believer, by virtue of union with Jesus (Rom. vi. 3-13; 1 Pet. iii. 21); things hidden, and not known under the earthly dispensation (Eph. ii. 4, 6; iii. 4-10).

7. "The laying on of hands." A variety of unsatisfactory interpretations have been given of this, as also of the preceding clause, arising from an erroneous view of the whole passage; but all difficulty disappears, if we regard this article as a Jewish element (see the various ordinances connected with laying on of hands in Exod. xxix. 10; Lev. i. 4; iii. 2; iv. 4; and xvi. 21). All these were declarative of the great truth, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." He who laid his hand on the victim's head, acknowledged that he deserved to die the death of the victim, but looked for mercy and forgiveness through the shedding of blood. Truths of such magnitude as were set forth by this, and the baptismal ordinances, may well account for the mention of both here; and the order in which they stand is precisely the same as in Exod. xxix. and Lev. viii.

8. "Resurrection from the dead and eternal judgment." That both these doctrines (intimately connected as they are) were known to the Jews is abundantly manifest, Acts xxiv. 15; xxvi. 6, 7; John xi. 24; Heb. xi. 35; Luke xx. 37; Job xix. 26; Ps. xvii. 15; Dan. xii. 2; Ps. i. 5; &c., &c., however dark and imperfect their knowledge of them compared with ours (see John xi. 25; vi. 40, 44, 54; 1 Cor. xv.; Col. iii. 3, 4).

From what has been said, it is probably manifest that the "foundation" which the Hebrews are desired not to lay again is the Jewish and not the Christian foundation; that *all* the particulars thereof were *known* to the Jews: known, for example, as well to Saul the blasphemer, as to Paul the Christian, while *some of them* were *peculiar* to Judaism; and that they are now known in a new connection and aspect. If it be remembered, too, that the "*perfection*" to which they are urged is not the knowledge of higher mysteries, but simple Christian truth, and intelligent establishment in it, we can fully account for the awful warning which follows, from the danger of a wavering and unsettled mind on such foundation-truth:—one perilous backward step, and they were again plunged into Judaism, which would *now* be a deliberate rejection of that "only name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). The word "for," with which the warning begins, shews that it flows out of the preceding statement, although in the commonly received view of the passage it seems quite out of place and connection. Many a one has been disturbed by this terrible warning, to whom it neither *was* nor *could be* applicable. Its several clauses, as before, will now be considered in order.

9. "For it is impossible to renew* unto repentance." The apostle here distinctly speaks of a sin which placed the person guilty of it beyond the possibility of repentance and the reach of mercy. It will probably appear, on examination, that this sin is that of *deliberate apostasy*; not apostasy in the abstract; for apostasy is capable of various degrees and modifications; nor yet apostasy *simply* from Christianity to Judaism; but *this latter, under the very circumstances here detailed*—that these circumstances did not necessarily denote true conversion to God, being such as were common both to the regenerate and to the mere

* The word "*again*" should be connected with "*fallen away*," not with "*to renew*."

professors in that day,—and that those only who stood in these actual circumstances could incur the irremediable guilt of this apostasy.

“Those who have been once enlightened” (or *illuminated*, see ch. x. 32, Gr.). We may easily conceive what a blaze of light was thrown upon all the Jewish types, institutions, and doctrines, by preaching from them, and in connection with them, the doctrine of the Cross (a doctrine understood by none, with one or two exceptions, until after the resurrection), and how applicable the expression “illuminated” was then to those who might have only intellectually received it. Light, and light only, is intended here. Daily experience teaches how much of it may exist in a person without its being accompanied by *grace*; and this is what is implied too in 1 Cor. xiii. 2. It is possible that all whom Paul here addressed were the children of God; and, indeed, the apostle speaks of his persuasion that they were so, although (and this is to be observed) he does not ground this persuasion upon the experience or privileges here enumerated, but upon the fruits he had seen in them (ver. 10, and ch. x. 33). But though Paul might *hope*, he could not *know* that they were all saints; and, besides, he is not describing *their* state, but *a* state into which it was possible for those who were not rooted and established in the truth to fall.

10. “And have tasted of the heavenly gift.” Most probably the gift here spoken of is “God’s dear Son” (see John iii. and vi.); in these chapters we read much of this “*heavenly gift*,” but even if the outpouring of the Spirit, as some think, be intended, the main argument of this exposition remains untouched; for ungodly men, as will be shewn, received these gifts. There is no necessity for understanding the expression *tasting* of the heavenly gift, to imply true Christian experience; the import of the word *tasting* must be fixed by the subject and context where it occurs; and it does sometimes mean full experience of the things to which it is applied, as Heb. ii. 9. It

is probable that it means here something more than mere illumination. No word, perhaps, would be more expressive of the way in which he who received the seed into stony places (see the parable of the sower, Matt. xiii.), received it, than this very one, *tasting* of it (comp. Mark iv. 16, 17; Luke viii. 13). Such, probably, was the short-lived, evanescent experience of the persons here described; an experience of some joy and satisfaction at having been enlightened so as to see in Christ the end, accomplishment, and fulness of the law and the prophets; but not being quickened of God, not being sensible of the deep corruption of their nature, they had "*no root in themselves*;" they were by and by *offended*, and they exhibit plainly what it is to have merely "*tasted*," without having an abiding desire or appetite for the heavenly food.

11. "And have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost." This is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, peculiar to the present dispensation (John i. 33; Acts i. 5; ii. 1, 4). It does not mean the quickening of the Spirit, which existed under every dispensation; but the descent of the Holy Spirit, by imposition of the apostles' hands, and conferred by the apostles *alone* (Acts viii. 17, &c.; xix. 6). It seems quite clear that mere confession was the ground upon which they were conferred, irrespective of the sincerity or true conversion of the individual who made it. The case of Ananias and Sapphira might, perhaps, prove this; but that of Simon Magus plainly does, who, there is no reason to doubt, was partaker of these gifts (see Acts viii. 12, 13, 17), yet he had neither part nor lot in the matter. (That he had received the gifts seems plain also from this, that his proposal was to purchase the power of conferring them *upon others*, not *for himself*, for whom he would otherwise doubtless have sought them in the first place.) But there is independent proof of this, from the fact that the apostles had not necessarily, or at all times, the power of discerning, as in the case of Ananias and

Sapphira, the hearts of others. It was after *manifested evil*, and not till then, that Peter rebuked Simon, "*I perceive*," &c. So, also, it was after *manifested evil* that Paul and John wrote such passages as Philip. iii. 18; 1 John ii. 19. (see, too, 1 Cor. xiii. 1; comp. xii. 28, &c.) It seems, then, clear that these gifts were intended as a seal, not to the *sincerity of the confessor*, but to the *truth of the confession* (see also Matt. vii. 22).

12. "And have tasted the good word of God." This clause seems to be exegetical or the second; viz., "and have tasted of the heavenly gift" in another form: yet, if either one or the other means a more decided or prolonged profession of the gospel, and enjoyment of the Scriptures generally, the frequency of such a profession, apart from any real grace, is abundantly proved both by experience and Scripture (Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32; Matt. xiii. 22). Many have been, perhaps, convinced of their *sins*, who have not learned to judge their *nature*. Such may have "tasted the good word of God," yea, and have found its flavour pleasant, though they have never fed upon it or grown by it.

13. "And (tasted) the powers of the age to come." The word here translated "powers" is the same as in many places is rendered "*mighty works*" (see Matt. xiii. 54, 58; xi. 20, 21, 23; Mark vi. 2; Acts ii. 22, &c.), and this is most likely its import here. As to the meaning of the word translated, in the common version, "*world*," it depends upon the context in which it occurs. In Eph. ii. 7, it is correctly translated "*ages*." In Matt. xiii. it should be "the harvest is in the end of *the age*;" so also ver. 40 and 49, the same should be the rendering in Matt. xxiv. 3; xxviii. 20; and in this sense it may be defined to be "a periodical dispensation of Divine Providence," which is probably its meaning here. It is true, the apostle speaks of it as of a thing yet future, "the age to come;" but this difficulty is removed by considering that he has been speaking of a previous

dispensation, to which this was future. Thus, in chap. x. 1, we read, "The law having a shadow of good things *to come*;" whilst that those things were already come is the very thing that Paul is proving (see, too, Col. ii. 17); the words "*to come*," then, imply futurity in reference to the Jewish dispensation; and so the meaning of the clause is not the age that *is to come*, but the age that *was to come*. Though the Lord, in his wisdom, saw fit to bestow these gifts of working mighty works upon ungodly professors and self-deceivers (Matt. vii. 22, 23; 1 Cor. xiii. 1), yet it appears that here they are spoken of, not in reference to the few (comparatively) who *possessed*, but to the many who *witnessed* them, not as the special *privilege of some*, but as the *evidence to all*: and in this sense all "*tasted*" them (See Gal. iii. 5).

To sum up, then, the circumstances detailed. There is, I. *Light*; "once enlightened." II. *Experience*; "tasted of the heavenly gift"—"tasted the good word of God." III. *Evidence*; "partakers of the Holy Ghost"—"tasted the powers of the age to come:" evidence *overpowering and convincing*, though, if unaccompanied by the renewing power of the Spirit of God, *not converting*. Now, it was this evidence, and the conviction which it produced, that gave its special character to the apostasy of which the apostle proceeds to speak: and in the absence of these, though in the mind of God, there may, under more ordinary circumstances, be a point at which *He* will cease to strive with man; yet *we have no scriptural authority* for pronouncing any degree of apostasy irretrievable, or *strictly* applying these tremendous words to any class of persons, and saying, You have sinned beyond the possibility of repentance, therefore it is in vain for you to seek it.

14. "And have fallen away again." This clause contains the apostasy itself. It is most important to correct the inaccurate rendering of this in our version. The verb, like all the others in the two previous verses, expresses past time, and should not be ren-

dered hypothetically, "*if they shall fall away.*" The Scriptures are, indeed, full of most searching warnings to the Lord's people; but can one be found which supposes a child of God to have already actually apostatised, or fallen away? The characters, however, here supposed and described, are represented as having done so—"*And have fallen away again.*" We must, therefore, distinguish here between this description, and the exhortation at large, of which it forms a part. The former is declared *of those only who had never truly known the Lord.* The latter is addressed *to all.* The former is spoken *of actual apostates* (whether there had been such, which is probable, or the apostle only supposes the case, it matters not); the latter is addressed *to all the Hebrew professors*, whether sound in the faith or not; and is one of the means used by the Lord for keeping and confirming those who were (see 1 Cor. xi. 19). Moreover, the word, "*again,*" belongs, as is most probable, to this clause, and not to the other, "*to renew unto repentance.*" It is placed in the same position after the verb, in Gal. iv. 9, "*Why turn ye again,*" &c.; or "*back,*" as in the margin, which is the true force of the word both there and in this place; and not—a *second time*; for according to the tenor and terms of this passage, a second apostasy was impossible. This also removes the difficulty created by the supposition, that a previous renewal unto repentance is here supposed.

15. "Seeing they crucify unto themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." This clause gives us, in distinct terms, the actual amount of guilt involved in this apostasy, and the reason of its being impossible to renew unto repentance those who were guilty of it under the above circumstances. The terms of this clause, often unskilfully and erroneously applied, express a wilful malignant opposition to the name and Gospel of Christ. They surely imply more than mere sin, however aggravated: even the temporary denial of the Lord could never be said

to bear the application of these terrible words. Peter was restored after thus falling, and the very crucifiers of the "Lord of Glory" did not irremediably sin (Luke xxiii. 34; Acts iii. 17, 18); "they knew not what they did." But how different were the circumstances in which the Hebrew professors, to whom Paul is writing now stood! They had been convinced of sin in the act of rejecting Jesus (John xvi. 8-11). They had witnessed and believed the testimony of the apostles backed by miracles (Acts ii. 37, 38, 43). They had confessed the name of Jesus, had been baptized, and had received the seal of God on their confession, by the descent of the Spirit upon themselves (Acts v. 30, 32). To renounce, therefore, this their profession, to return again to Judaism, and thus "deny the Lord that bought them," after all the grace extended, and all the light and evidence afforded them, was to vindicate the deed of darkness they had done; to declare that they *had acted righteously in slaying "the Holy One and the Just,"* and thus virtually and in spirit to "*crucify unto themselves the Son of God afresh.*" The expression, "*put him to an open shame,*" is the same in the original as that which is rendered in Matt. i. 19, "to make a public example;" it is equivalent to the other in chap. x. 29, "treading under foot the Son of God;" whilst it could not *now* be said that "they knew not what they did." The awful act of crucifying the "Lord of Glory," the very climax of Jewish apostasy and guilt, was yet met by God's mercy, which rose above it; for in the terrible deed itself was contained the remedy for all. But where was the remedy for this second deed of darkness, wrought in the midst of noonday light—this second crucifixion of the Lord of Glory? Surely there was none; for the deed itself was the proud and spiteful rejection of what they had themselves seen to be the *only remedy*. For such an apostasy there remained "no more sacrifice for sin" (chap. x. 26, 29).

[To be concluded in our next.]

ON LAY PREACHING.

THE question of lay preaching is one of the greatest importance, and one in which, it is obvious, the interests of the Church are deeply concerned; because, if God give his Spirit to laymen for the purpose, there is positive loss in the hindrance, and the Spirit of God is grieved. The point to be proved by those who are opposed to it, is this, either that no laymen have the Spirit of God in testimony, or, that having it, the sanction of man is necessary for its exercise. I do not purpose here a general investigation of the principles of the subject, but merely to inquire whether laymen are entitled to preach, if the Lord give them opportunity; or, whether there be any human sanction needful for their doing so. I affirm that there is not; and that no such sanction can be proved to be necessary from Scripture; and that no such sanction was therein afforded. The question is not, whether all laymen are individually qualified; but, whether as laymen they are disqualified, unless they are what is commonly called ordained; I say, commonly called, because the word, as used in Scripture, does not in the original convey what it does to an English ear at present. I affirm that no such ordination was a qualification to preach in the days of Scriptural statement. I do not despise order; I do not despise pastoral care. I love it where it really exists, as that which savours in its place of the sweetest of God's services. Though it may be exercised sometimes in a manner not to our present taste or thought, a good shepherd will seek the scattered sheep. But I confine myself to a simple question—the assertion, that laymen ought not to preach without episcopal or other analogous appointment. My assertion is, that they are entitled; that they did so

in Scripture; were justified in doing so, God blessing them therein; and that the principles of Scripture require it, assuming of course here that they are qualified by God; for the question here is not competency to act, *but title to act if competent*. Neither do I despise herein (God forbid that I should do so) the holy setting apart, according to godliness, to any office such as are competent, by those that have authority to do so.

Let us see what Scripture says upon the subject. The question can only arise as to their speaking *in* the Church, or *out of* the Church. These admitted, all anomalous cases will readily be agreed in. And, first, *in* the Church. And here I remark, that the directions in the 14th chap. of 1 Corinthians, are entirely *inconsistent* with the necessity of ordination to speak. There is a line drawn there, but it is not "if ordained, or unordained;" "Let your women keep silence in the Churches;" a direction which never could have had place, were the speaking confined to a definitely ordained person, but takes quite another ground; and which implies directly, not that it is right for every man to speak, but that there was preclusion of none, because of their character as laymen. Women were the precluded class: there the line was drawn. If men had not the gift of speaking, of course they would be silent, if they followed the directions there given. The apostle says, "Every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation." Does he say none ought to speak but one ordained? No; "Let all things be done unto edifying." *That* is the grand secret, the grand rule—"in a tongue by two, or at the most by three, and by course, and interpret." Prophets two or three, &c. "For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." "For God," &c. "Let your *women* keep silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto *them* to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience." We have then a distinction, not of ordained and unordained, but of those who,

from their character—*women*—are not permitted to speak, *and the rest are*; and directed in what order to do so, and the ground of distinction stated. And this is *God's* plan of decency and order. For the rest, they were all to speak, that all might learn, and all be comforted; not all to speak at once, not all to speak every day, but all as God led them, according to the order there laid down, and as God was pleased to give them ability, for the edifying of the Church. I apply all this simply and exclusively to the question of laymen speaking; and I assert, that there was no such principle recognised as that they should not, but the contrary. It will be said, I know, that these were the times of extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; but this is a false view of the case. Do they mean to argue, that ordination did not begin as a distinctive title till after the departure of the Spirit of God? Moreover, the Spirit of God does not justify, by systematic rules, breaking through its own order: it would be most mischievous to say it did. But the case was not one of the prerogative of spiritual gifts, but of order, for women had spiritual gifts, as we read elsewhere, and directions are given for their exercise; but they were not to use them in the Church, because it was out of order, not comely. But there was no hint that any of the men were not; *but the contrary*, because it was *not* out of order. Aptness to teach may be a very important qualification for a bishop; but it cannot be said, *from Scripture*, to be disorderly for a layman to speak in the Church, if God have given him ability. Besides, though these extraordinary gifts may have ceased, I by no means admit, that the ordinary gifts for the edification of the Church, of believers, have ceased. On the contrary, I believe they are the instrument, the only real instrument of edification; nor do I see why, on principle, they should not be exercised in the Church, or why the Church has not a title to the edification derived from them. If I were to speak of lay preaching, I should be referred to the orderly way in which Christ had given—in His Church—

some apostles, &c. Now, unless one man centres all these in one person by virtue of ordination, I do not see how it applies. I read, "some, one; some, another." The Head, Christ, "from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which *every joint supplieth*, according to the effectual working in *the measure of every part*, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love." And I read, that there are given, one the eye, the other the foot, the other the ear, that there *might be no schism* in the body. And if we have lost many, and ornamental members, it is no reason why we should cut off the rest; the word of wisdom, or the word of knowledge, or the like. If the Spirit of God be clean gone out of the Church, how came that about? Was it when laymen spoke, or office was maintained? It will then be said, they may do it *out* of, but not *in* the Church. Why not? Thus far, then, for speaking in the Church. I advocate no system. I mourn over the departure of many of the comely parts, on which God set comeliness. I take these Scriptures as scriptural evidence, that the notion of laymen speaking in the Church being wrong, has not the Scriptures to rest on. I speak not here of elders, or appointed teachers; their value or not. I speak merely of the one point, the wrongness of a layman speaking in the Church as such. If we are told of the danger arising from all teaching, I admit it at once. But we are warned against it, not by wrongness as regards office, or its effect merely on others; but as one of the things in which, as evil will come out, so the remedy is applied to the spirit from which it flows: "My brethren, be not many teachers, for so shall ye heap to yourselves greater condemnation." But the warning still again shews, that there was no such restriction of office as is now supposed, for it would have been, "you have no business to teach at all, you are not ordained." But, no; the correction was turned to *moral* profit, not to formal distinction of pre-eminent office.

But it comes to be more important out of the

Church; because it precludes the testimony of the Gospel by a vast number of persons, who may have faithfully borne it to others. Let us inquire the scriptural facts. In the first place, then, all the Christians preached—*went every where preaching the word*. (Acts viii. 4.) Some critics have endeavoured to elude this plain passage by saying, that this is *speaking*, which a layman may do. The short answer is—It is not. It is *εὐαγγελίζομενοι*,—Evangelizing the word. And we read elsewhere, that “the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.” Now, unless all the Church were ordained—I think they *are* to preach, as far as they have ability—here is the simplest case possible; the case in point. The first general preaching of the gospel which the Lord blessed beyond the walls of Jerusalem, was by laymen, or, however, it knew no such distinction. It had not entered into their minds then, that they who knew the glory of Christ were not to speak of it, where, and how, God enabled them. And the hand of God was with them. Paul preached without any other mission than seeing the glory of the Lord and His word; in a synagogue, too, and boasts of it. And he gives his reasons for Christians preaching elsewhere—“as it is written: I *believed*, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe and *therefore* speak.” Apollos preached; and when Paul would have sent him from Ephesus to Corinth, would not go. Yet, so far from being ordained before beginning to preach, he knew only the baptism of John. And Aquila and Priscilla took him to them, and expounded to him the way of God more perfectly. At Rome, many of the brethren, waxing bold by Paul’s bonds, preached the word without fear. And here I must add, as critics vex themselves about this too, the word is *κηρυσσουσιν*—are heralds. The same habits of wandering preaching we find in 2 John and 3 John, guarded *not* by ordination, but by doctrine. Nor is there such a thing mentioned in Scripture, as ordaining to preach the gospel. Paul preached before he went out on his work from Anti-

och. And if they will plead his being set apart there, they are quite welcome; for I reason not against such setting apart, but against the assertion that laymen are incompetent to preach. But the case, if it proves any thing for them, proves that laymen can ordain as well as preach, that is all. The only other passage not commonly quoted, but which seems to me nearer the purpose is, "The same commit thou to faithful men, able to teach others also." But the thing committed here was the doctrine, and proves tradition, if any thing, not ordination; for it does not appear that they were ordained for the purpose. I have now produced ample evidence from Scripture to a simple mind. I am not attacking ordination, nor any thing that may, in the eyes of others, appear valuable; but simply the assertion, that laymen ought not to speak *in* or preach *out* of the Church; and I say that that assertion is a novelty in Christianity, for that Scripture recognises their doing so. I have abstained from diffusive discussions upon what has led to it, or the principles which are involved in it—I put the scriptural fact to any body's conscience: and I call upon any one to produce any Scripture positively, or on principle, forbidding laymen to preach, or requiring episcopal, or other analogous ordination for the purpose. And here I will advert to what is commonly adduced upon the subject, the case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. It is remarkable that those who do so, should pass by a case immediately preceding, bearing upon this immediate subject; Eldad and Medad prophesying in the camp, though they had not come up to the door of the tabernacle, because the spirit rested upon them. "Would God," said the meek man of God, "that all the Lord's people were prophets!" What was here typically proposed—the pouring out the Spirit on all—was, in principle, fulfilled in the Christian dispensation. Then, subsequently, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, acted not under the influence and energy of the Spirit in testifying to the people, but would have assumed authority—the kingship of Moses, and the

priesthood of Aaron. This was their fault. These things were typical of our dispensation. So the Apostle states. They make universal preaching desirable, and the assumption of priesthood a sin. If this be not the force of these passages, let those who object to the explanation, explain what is. To the same is the argument of the apostle applied, the exclusion from the office of priesthood save by such call as Christ had; in which, in one sense, all believers are partakers; in another sense, he is alone, unaccompanied into the holy place. In a word, the assumption of preaching by laymen is right. The assumption of priesthood by any, save as all believers are priests, is wrong. This is the dispensation of the out-pouring of the Spirit here, qualifying for preaching any here who can do so—in a word, speaking of Jesus—for the distinction between speaking and preaching is quite unsustainable by Scripture, as any one may see, if he takes the trouble—and in which Christ alone exercises the priesthood within the veil in the presence of God for us. This, I believe, then, to be the force of these passages. The type of the pouring-out of the Spirit in the camp, with the gracious wish of Moses is the characteristic, the essential distinction of christianity. Accordingly we find in its primary presentation to the world, the Spirit poured out on the one hundred and twenty who were assembled together, who thereupon began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance. And St. Peter, standing up, explains to the *Jews*, that they were not drunk, but that it was the thing spoken of by Joel—the undistinguished pouring-out of the Spirit upon men of all classes, servants, and hand-maidens, their sons and their daughters prophesying—the pouring-out of the Spirit upon all flesh. This was the characteristic of its agency, and this we have seen acted upon in the subsequent history; to deny this is to mistake the only power of the dispensation, and, I will add, to lose it. And what is the consequence? Irregular action goes on, and cannot be restrained, for kingly power cannot be assumed to

such purpose, or they are taking the part of Dathan and Abiram; but the power of the Spirit, in which God would give competency to restrain evil, has been slighted; and office which has been relied on affords no remedy, unless the rights which the Roman Catholic system has assumed be attached to it, which is the assumption of power not given to the Church at all. It is not for me to assert what is the evil of the present day, I am sure it is not the overflowing boldness of testimony against evil; and if evil teaching exists, the remedy is not in hindering or rejecting (for hindered it surely will not be, nor cannot be) lay preaching, but the cordial co-operation of those who hold the truth, by which the common energy (and common energy is infinite energy in this matter) should be exercised to sustain it against that which does not hold the truth, and the clergy and all may be persuaded it will be needed. Thus the distinction will be between truth and error, and not office and the Spirit, the most mischievous that human wit could have devised. In the mean time, those who hold office really from God, will find those who have the Spirit, but not special office, gladly, aye, thankfully, most thankfully, recognize them in it, instead of being thrown into opposition, colour given to those who have not the Spirit, in their apparent similarity of conduct; and apparent evidence afforded, that those who have office are opposed to the Spirit, in their prohibition of those who have it exercising it.

The times call for decision; and the only thing which will withstand evil and error, is truth, and truth wielded as a common cause against error and self-will by the saints under the Spirit, and then God can be wholly with them, instead of being obliged to withdraw *His* countenance from them when they are opposed to their brethren, and rejecting them when *he* must justify them, when it is the order of his glory, and all their blessing to do so. May *he* by his Spirit guide us into all truth.

J. N. D.

**"WOULD GOD THAT ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE WERE
PROPHETS.**

"There ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp."—NUM. xi. 27.

ELDAD they said, and Medad, there
Irregularly bold,
By Moses uncommission'd, dare
A separate meeting hold!
And still whom none but heav'n will own,
Men whom the world decry,
Men authoriz'd by God alone,
Presume to prophesy!

"My Lord Moses, forbid them."—xi. 28.

How often have I blindly done
What zealous Joshua did,
Impatient to the rulers run,
And cried, "My lords, forbid!
Silence the schismatics, constrain
Their thoughts with ours t' agree,
And sacrifice the souls of men
To idle unity!"

"Enviest thou for my sake?"

Moses, the minister of God,
Rebukes our partial love,
Who envy at the gifts bestow'd
On those we disapprove:
We do not our own spirits know,
Who wish to see suppress,
The men that Jesus' spirit shew,
The men whom God hath bless'd.

"Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them."

Shall we the Spirit's course restrain,
Or quench the heav'nly fire?
Let God His messengers ordain,
And whom He will inspire:
Blow as He list, the Spirit's choice
Of instruments we bless;
We will, if Christ be preach'd, rejoice,
And wish the word success!
Can all be prophets then? are all
Commission'd from above?
No! but whomsoe'er the Lord shall call
We joyfully approve.
O that the Church might all receive
The spirit of prophesy,
And all in Christ accepted live,
And all in Jesus die?

OUTLINES OF LECTURES ON THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.

Lecture XV.

THE LAVER AND HIS FOOT.

EXODUS xxx. 17-21.

“AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tent* of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat. When they go into the tent of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord. So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.”

THE LAVER AND HIS FOOT.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal.] These scriptures are “the word of God;” this gives them their importance and authority. They are also “the testimony of Jesus Christ;” this gives them their interest to us as redeemed sinners, and their value to our souls, as containing God’s testimony concerning his Son.

God’s thoughts about Christ are embodied in type, and given us in the scriptures, that we might have fellowship with the Father in his own estimate of his Son. In the laver and his foot, we have the divinely given figure or shadow of CHRIST as our SANCTIFICATION.

“Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and SANCTIFICATION, and redemption.” (1 Cor. i. 30.)

In this 30th chapter of Exodus, from verse 11,

* Tent, not tabernacle.

typically the believer is regarded, first, *redeemed* by the *blood* (11–16); secondly, *sanctified* with the washing of *water* (17–21); thirdly, *anointed* with the *oil* (22–33); and, fourthly, *accepted* in the *perfume*. (34–38.) “The Spirit, the water, and the blood.” (1 John v. 6–8.)

Or, in another aspect, 1st (ver. 11–16), Christ is seen in his atoning death for our *redemption*.

2nd (ver. 17–21), in his life, death, and resurrection, as our *sanctification*.

3rd (ver. 22–33), ascended to God’s right hand, receiving and *giving the Spirit*, for our anointing.

4th (ver. 34 to end), in the assembly, and within the vail, appearing before God *in all his preciousness* on our behalf, for our acceptance.

In Solomon’s temple there were ten lavers, standing on their ten bases, and one *molten sea*, standing on twelve oxen. (1 Kings vii. 23–26.) In Ezekiel’s temple there is no laver nor sea, but a *river*, whose waters issue out from under the threshold of the house eastward, deepening and widening as it flows.

In Rev. iv. 6, we read of a *sea of glass* like unto crystal before the throne. In Rev. xv. 2, of a sea of glass mingled with fire. And in Rev. xxii. 1, of a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

All these are so many figures of Christ, and of the cleansing, sanctifying, life-giving, life-sustaining power of the Spirit of God, full of the richest interest and instruction: but on these we cannot now enlarge.

The word “laver,” in the Hebrew, signifies, “like a river;” and there is beautiful significancy in this.

The laver consisted of two parts, “the *laver* and his *foot*.” The upper part, or laver, being a large reservoir of water, from which, when required, the water poured down “like a river” into the *foot* or basin at its base. The lower part being alone used for bathing or washing, so that the water in the laver remained always pure and undefiled.

This construction reminds us forcibly of the expression in the Epistle to Titus, iii. 5, 6: "The washing (or laver, λουτρον,) of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

The laver thus constructed presents Christ in two aspects; the foot, Christ in humiliation on earth; and the upper part, or laver proper, Christ in his exaltation in heaven.

In his life on earth, Christ left us an example that we should follow in his steps. And on the Cross, from his pierced side came forth the water and the blood.

But it is from Christ crucified, risen, and exalted, that the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of purity and life, is now given. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John vii. 37-39.)

In Eph. v. 25, 26, we read, "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word." This is his present action, "That he might (ultimately) present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." (Eph. v. 27.)

ITS MATERIAL.

A laver of brass, and his foot also of brass.] Brass is the emblem of strength: and Christ, as our sanctification, is the strong one, mighty to sanctify as well as mighty to save. Precious and encouraging truth! How many are there who trust in Christ for their salvation, but have recourse to their own efforts, or to the law, for sanctification! Justification by the faith of Christ is the doctrine of the Reformation;

but sanctification by the faith of Christ, how little apprehended! How little have our souls entered into the depth and fulness of those words of Jesus to Paul, with the thorn rankling in his flesh, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness."

There is *power* in the example of his life; constraining power in his dying and redeeming love; power in looking unto Jesus glorified at God's right hand above. And Stephen found it so. Power in the Spirit sent down from this ascended one. The secret of power in the Christian experience is having Christ "all" as our object, "and in all" as our life.

In Exodus xxxviii. 8, we read, "And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses (or rather brazen mirrors) of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tent of the congregation."

This, doubtless, is significant, and intimates a connection between self-examination and sanctification. James writes, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James i. 22-25.)

Christ, in his life on earth, left us an example that we should follow in his steps. And it is well to compare our walk and life with his. The foot of the laver was made of burnished brass.

But sanctification to the believer now is especially and effectually connected with the contemplation of Christ, once crucified, but now risen and glorified, as exhibited in the mirror of the word, through the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Real and divine photography: "Now the Lord," &c.

THE POSITION OF THE LAVER.

And thou shalt put it between the tent of the congregation and the altar, ver. 18.] The progress of the soul in drawing near to God is thus set forth. The soul first realizing *pardon* at the sin offering without the camp.

Secondly, *acceptance* at the brazen altar within the court.

Thirdly, *sanctification* at the brazen laver.

Fourthly, *nearness in worship* at the golden altar.

Fifthly, *entrance into the holiest* through the value of the blood, and of the sweet incense from the golden censer, carried by the High Priest within the veil.

THE WATER.

And thou shalt put water therein, to wash withal, ver. 18.] "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. v. 26.) "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth," is his prayer to the Father. (John xvii. 17.) "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," he says. (John vi. 63.) Not the word apart from the Spirit, nor the Spirit apart from the word. It is the truth that sanctifies, and the Spirit is truth. But it is the truth of Christ, "as the truth is in Jesus."

The water which filled the laver in the wilderness came first from the smitten rock (Ex. xvii.); the type of Christ crucified, from whose pierced side flowed forth the water and the blood. For "that rock was Christ." (1 Cor. x. 4.)

Secondly, it came from the rock which was to have been spoken to, at the end of the wilderness wanderings, in connection with the blooming, blossoming, and fruit-bearing rod. (Numb. xx.) Typical of Christ glorified, and sending down the Spirit in answer to prayer. (Acts ii. and John vii.) How

significant! And how precious to the soul of the believer are these divine foreshadowings!

THE USE OF THE LAVER.

To wash withal. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: when they go into the tent of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord: so they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations, ver. 18–21.] The laver sets forth Christ made of God unto the believer, sanctification practically. (1 Cor. i. 30.)

It is the action of the Lord Jesus in John xiii. embodied in type.

The washing at the laver was twofold. First, of the entire person, as at the consecration of the priests, (see Ex. xxix. 4,) where it should be translated, "*bathe them in water.*" This washing, or bathing in water, at their consecration was not repeated. To this the Lord refers in John xiii. 10, "He that is washed, or *bathed*, (ὁ λελουμένος) needeth not save to *wash* his feet, (νίψασθαι), but is clean every whit." The signification of this bathing is given in Rom. vi., Col. ii., &c. It sets forth the death, burial, and resurrection of the believer with Christ, and faith's apprehension of it.

Secondly, this washing was partial, the washing of the hands and feet; and it is this which is here especially mentioned,—its constant use.

"Aaron and his sons," typify Christ and the Church in their priestly character. (Heb. iii. 6.) The sanctification is one: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." (John xvii. 19.) And he is our sanctification.

"The hands and feet" express the whole character of the believer's *action* and *conduct*. In John xiii.

the feet only are mentioned, as including the whole course of the believer's walk.

"They shall wash their hands and their feet *thereat*." It was not sufficient to wash elsewhere. It is the practical and conscious cleansing which flows from faith's apprehension of Christ, and not that which flows from mere moral considerations or precepts, which fits for God's tent and God's altar.

"When they go into the tent of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not." This cleansing by the faith of Jesus is essential to living fellowship with the Father and the Son in the Spirit, and to true fellowship with the saints.

There is no *living* communion apart from this. Apart from the sanctification which results from association with Jesus, and faith in him, communion is a lifeless form, and the place of assembly a region of spiritual death. Holiness becomes God's house for ever.

"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Solemn and weighty words! May our souls enter into their divine import!*

"Or when they come near to the altar to minister." *Priestly service* to God in *living* power can only be carried on in connection with that practical separation from evil to God, which results from faith's apprehension of Jesus, who is made of God unto us sanctification, and abiding communion with him. Holiness becomes God's service, as well as God's house. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." "I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord."

"That they die not." (Ver. 20.) This is repeated in ver. 21. It may be taken as a warning. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." Spiritual deadness is the inevitable consequence of the foot defiled, and sanctification through personal intercourse with

* Real, living, intimate communion with Christ, is connected alone with the practical sanctification which is effected by Christ himself.

Christ neglected. Or it may be taken as a promise; for the words might be rendered, "and they shall not die;" an assurance twice given, that living communion with God and his saints, and living power of priestly service and worship, is indissolubly associated with that practical holiness which fellowship with Christ secures.

"It shall be a statute for ever;" a principle from which God never departs. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Grace meets the sinner outside the camp. And the sweet savour of the sacrifice is ever ascending from the brazen altar; while the laver ever stands between the door of the tent and the altar of burnt offering; and the water is ever there.

Christ once died for our sins—once was raised again for our justification, but he ever lives to make intercession; ever lives the source of life, holiness, and power to all that draw nigh to God by him. His grace is sufficient for us; his strength is made perfect in weakness. Because he lives, we shall live also; and our life will be a life of holiness, if "we live by the faith of him." Thus full provision is made in Christ, that the blood-bought heirs of glory, and the royal priests of our God might ever worship him in the beauties of holiness, as well as in the confidence of faith and love.

[*"Directions for the setting up of the Tabernacle, and its anointing," in the No. for November.*]

HEBREWS VI. 1-8.

Concluded from page 292.

But this apostasy involved yet further guilt; for it was by the miracle-working power of the Holy Ghost, witnessing to the resurrection of the crucified Jesus, that such apostates had been convinced that he was the "Son of God" (Rom. i. 4); convinced

too of sin, because they had not believed in Him before. (John xvi. 9.) These "mighty works" they could not deny or doubt, but they might deny the truth to which they were the seal (which, too, they had confessed, and with which they had been at least intellectually acquainted), and thereby deny the veracity of the Divine Witness, and thus impute falsehood to the "Spirit of Truth," or ascribe his mighty works to the spirit of falsehood—the father of lies. The former the more daring blasphemy; but *either* falling, as it would seem, under that awful commination of our blessed Lord—"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost *shall not be forgiven unto men* whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, *it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, nor in the age to come.*" (Matt. xii. 31, 32.) And this, "because they said he had an unclean spirit." (Mark iii. 30, comp. ver. 22.) The tenth chapter of this epistle, verse 23 to the end, treats of the same apostasy as we have been considering in chapters v. 11, vi. 8. In both places, this unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost seems to be involved; and the wilful and malignant character of the apostasy is also apparent, from the apostle's comparing those who were guilty of it to the *despisers* of Moses' law; and he speaks of them, not as ignorant or careless, or even unsound in the matter of justification (perilous as this is in itself), but as *adversaries* (chap. x. 27, 28). The case for which "no more sacrifice for sin" remained, was the rejection of Christ *altogether*, after knowledge, conviction, and confession of the truth of the gospel, confirmed before their eyes by the mighty works of the Holy Ghost.

The similitude in the two following verses (comp. Isa. v. 1-6) is very plain and simple, and corroborates what has been said concerning the circumstances of the supposed apostates. The rain is represented as *falling upon* the barren and the fruitful

ground alike: but the latter only "*drinketh it in.*" The former expression accurately describes outward advantages, as light, instruction, evidence, gifts, &c.; the latter is equally suitable to genuine faith and inward grace. (See Matt. xiii. 23; Heb. iv. 2, &c.)

Probably it has been sufficiently proved, that the subject of this warning is not apostasy from a state of grace, but from *outward profession*, under very special and peculiar circumstances. If so, the great doctrines of the sovereign will and purpose of God (Eph. i. 4-6, 11; Rom. viii. 28-30; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; 1 Pet. i. 2, &c. &c.)—the "election of grace" (Rom. xi. 5; Eph. ii. 8, &c. &c.)—and the consequent perseverance of the saints (Rom. viii. 35-39; 1 Pet. i. 4, 5; John x. 27-30, &c. &c.) remain untouched by this passage—doctrines revealed, not for the hindrance of *sinners*, though too often used so as to hinder them, but for the comfort and joy of the *church*, and fraught with consolation in trial, and support in conflict, to those who truly believe them, and which doubtless virtually afford comfort to many who unconsciously rest in them, whilst denying them in theory and terms. These are among the "deep things of God," and "those ways past finding out," of which Paul speaks (Rom. xi.); and he simply meets with a stern rebuke the cavil of the unsubdued and carnal mind, without giving any explanation of the mystery. (Rom. ix. 19-21.) Many an attempt since then has been made to explain what *he* left unexplained, but "such knowledge is too wonderful for us; it is high; we cannot attain to it." Many will judge, however, that the theory which rejects them, besides being opposed not only to the fairest deductions from Scripture, but its most express statement, is replete with difficulties as great as those which it was framed to avoid, and is the offspring of insubjection of mind, and a desire to bring the counsels of God down to the level of our own understandings.

In regard to those who are tempted by Satan, to

suppose that they either have committed, or are in danger of committing the unpardonable sin here treated of, we may ask them, "Are you disposed deliberately to renounce your hope in Jesus—to pronounce Christianity a 'cunningly devised fable'—to slight the doctrine of the Cross as 'foolishness'—to fall back upon the law, and daringly take your stand upon your own merits, or upon carnal ordinances, for justification before God? If not (to say nothing of the miraculous evidence, and the peculiar circumstances necessary to fill up the measure of this sin), notwithstanding you may be harassed at times by blasphemous or unholy thoughts about the glory, the person, or the work of Jesus, the evil suggestions of Satan, or the workings of your fleshly mind, rest assured this apostasy is not chargeable upon *you*. Are not such thoughts utterly abhorrent to your souls? Do they resemble at all this hardened enmity against the Son of God, this proud rejection of Him? The Scriptures, then, which specially address themselves to *you*, are such as these: '*Resist the devil*,' that he may flee from you. 'Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the *fiery darts of the wicked one*.' (Jas. iv.; Eph. vi.; 1 Pet. v. 8, 9.) Or have you fallen into *open sin*? Sad as this is, it is not a hopeless fall. Paul, the inspired writer of this passage, commanded one as guilty as you can be to be restored, on repentance, to the holy fellowship of the saints, 'lest, perhaps, he should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.' (1 Cor. v. comp. 2 Cor. ii. 6–8.) Such is the patient grace and tenderness of the Lord. But, perhaps, your case yet more closely resembles that of persons guilty of this unpardonable apostasy. Perhaps your conscience has been awakened; you have professed to embrace the gospel, and you have walked, apparently for a while, in the way of righteousness, and then relapsed into worldliness and sin. If so, you have indeed been guilty of apostasy, but not of the apostasy here described. You may have even been guilty of

scoffing, or speaking evil of the truth; but who dares limit the mercy of God, where *He* has not set a limit to it? *You* have never stood in the circumstance of the apostates here spoken of—*you* have never ‘been made partakers of the Holy Ghost,’ nor tasted ‘the mighty works of the age to come.’ Repent, therefore, and believe; for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient to extend *even unto you*.”

As to warning to the saints, the Scriptures abound in it; and it is not more difficult to reconcile with God’s electing love, warning as a mean for *preserving*, than preaching as a mean for *calling* his saints to himself. In the one case, as well as in the other, He who has ordained the *end*, has ordained the *means*; and both must stand, for both are the ordinances of God. Let us refer to such a warning, for example, as 2 Pet. i. 5–11. May we all have grace to take earnest heed thereunto.

THE CHURCH REMOVED BEFORE THE APOCALYPTIC JUDGMENTS.

THERE is one difficulty which meets the student of prophecy soon after he has crossed the threshold of his earliest inquiries. These inquiries may be supposed to have resulted in an entire conviction that the second advent precedes or introduces the millennium; that the Jews are to be restored to their own land—some of them in the first instance undergoing the utmost extremity of trouble there; that this trouble arrives at its height through a gathering together of all nations against Jerusalem; and that the nations thus gathered meet their doom at the hands of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is revealed from heaven in flaming fire, and whose coming brings deliverance to the poor oppressed Jews, while it discomfits and destroys their adversaries. It may be

supposed, moreover, that it is pretty plainly seen, from the whole tenour of New Testament teaching, that what is placed before us Christians, as our hope, is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ: that for this we are exhorted to look, and watch, and long, and yet patiently wait; in a word, that our proper posture of mind is that of continual expectation of this blessed event. But here it is that the difficulty I speak of arises. "If," says the inquirer, "a whole train of events are to occur on earth preparatory to the Lord's coming—if the Jews are to return to their own land—the Gentiles to be gathered together against them there—the time of unequalled tribulation to occur—the seals, and trumpets, and vials of the Apocalypse to run their course of judgment—and the coming of the Lord to ensue all this—how can we, seeing that none of these things have begun to come to pass, be intelligently looking and waiting for the coming of the Lord? For these intermediate events we may wait; and until they commence, and as they transpire, we may look beyond them to that in which we know they will surely terminate; but how can we be in a posture of continual expectation of Christ, if his coming has thus to be certainly preceded by a number of yet unfulfilled events?" I think I have stated the difficulty in its full force; and it is to meet this difficulty, as far as any present light on Scripture may enable me, that these pages are written.

But first, I would remind you, my brethren, that difficulties are no reason for unbelief. If it be plainly revealed in the New Testament that our place as Christians is to be always waiting and looking for our Lord, faith would receive and welcome this revelation, however many difficulties might encompass the subject. And that it is so revealed, who that is acquainted with the word of God can question? Our Lord himself had described the position in which he would delight to have his people found at his return—"and ye yourselves like unto men that

wait for their lord." (Luke xii. 36.) The definite assurance with which he comforted them in the immediate prospect of his departure was, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John xiv. 3.) The very first thing presented to them after he had gone, while they were yet straining their vision, as it were, to catch another glimpse of him in the clouds whither he had ascended, was the assurance of his return. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts i. 11.) The Corinthian believers came behind in no gift: "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. i. 7.) The apostle says of himself and his fellow Christians, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." And again, "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.) He declares, that what he and his brethren longed and sighed for, was "not that we would be unclothed, (*i.e.*, disembodied,) but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." (2 Cor. v. 4.) "For our conversation is in heaven," is his language elsewhere; "from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body," &c. (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) The Thessalonians had been "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven." (1 Thess. i. 10.) In one form or another the coming is referred to in every chapter of this epistle. In the fourth chapter, the twice repeated expression, "we which are alive and remain," marks definitely enough what the posture is that becomes the church. How easy would it have been for the apostle to say, had such been the mind of the Lord, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so *us also, who are to sleep* in Jesus, will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that they *which are alive and remain* unto the coming of the

Lord, shall not prevent *us, who will ere then have fallen asleep.*" Why does he not speak thus? Surely, because it was the Lord's will that his saints should ever be expecting him. Not that the apostle could say, or that we can now say, that we shall certainly be alive and remain: the apostle afterwards knew by special revelation that he himself would not; and we may not. It may please the Lord to tarry till we have all fallen asleep in him. But in the absence of certain information to the contrary, faith would say, as is said in these passages, "we who are alive and remain." Faith puts us where our Lord would have us, in the attitude of readiness and expectation. The virgins "went out to meet the bridegroom." And if faith should be tried, and hope seem to be deferred, it is still not for any of us to say, "My Lord delayeth his coming." The apostle prays, "and the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the *patient waiting* for Christ." (2 Thess. iii. 5.) He speaks again of a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give him at that day; "and not to me only" he adds, "but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. iv. 8.) "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Tit. ii. 13.) "Unto them that look for him," we are told, "shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 28.) And lest we should get weary, and hope deferred make the heart faint as well as sick, we are encouraged by the assurance, "Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." (x. 37.) And though Peter knew from our Lord's own lips that he was not to tarry till his Lord should come; though he had been told by what death he should glorify God; he does not say a word in his epistles to lead those to whom he wrote to suppose that they too should certainly depart, ere the Lord returned. No, he exhorts them rather, and us too, in such words as, "wherefore gird up the loins of

your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. i. 13.) "Looking for and hasting unto the coming (or as in the margin, hasting the coming) of the day of God," is the way in which he describes our proper position in his second epistle. The coming is referred to in 1 John, both by way of exhortation and encouragement. (See ii. 28, and iii. 2.) In Revelation, the closing book of Scripture, "Behold, I come quickly," is a word so often repeated; the volume finally closing with "Surely I come quickly," from the lips of Jesus, while the church responds, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus;" that there can be no doubt as to the impression left on the heart of the simple minded believer, that it is our place of faithfulness and blessing to be always expecting our Lord, and awaiting his return. And with such varied and copious testimonies on the subject as these, if we had no solution of the difficulties that present themselves, it would clearly still be our place to maintain this attitude of expectancy, leaving, as we surely might, our gracious Master to clear away all the difficulties, *as* and *when* it may please him. But there is a clue to the unravelling of this mystery. He has not left us without a solution of the difficulty in question. If he had, it would not have excused our taking any position but that which he has so plainly assigned us; while his tender, considerate love is the more displayed in relieving our hearts by the positive light he has shed in his Word on this question, so interesting to the heart that finds its joy in the daily expectation of his return.

Suppose, then, my brethren, that there should be an interval between the coming of Christ into the air, where he receives the saints to himself, and his coming onwards to the earth, attended by his saints, to execute judgment; suppose there should be an interval long enough for the accomplishment of all those prophetic events which must be fulfilled ere he

does thus come in judgment; suppose that the Jews should return to their own land, the Gentiles be gathered together against them, the antichrist arise, the great tribulation take place, the apocalyptic seals be opened, trumpets sounded, and vials poured out; suppose all this should occur *between the taking away of the Church and the coming of Christ to execute judgment on his congregated foes*; suppose this, I say; would not this meet the difficulty in question? Could we not, in the light of such a fact (supposing it to be a fact), see clearly how we may be intelligently waiting for our Lord, without the idea of a single interposing event? Many events may, of course, interpose. But in this case we could not say of any of them that they certainly will. At any moment our blessed Lord might come to receive us to himself; and yet, in the interval supposed, all the events come to pass which we know from God's word must be accomplished, ere Christ comes to consume the wicked one with the breath of his mouth, and to destroy him with the brightness of his appearing.

Be it remembered, moreover, that the mere possibility of the occurrence of such an interval meets the difficulty which has been stated. If it be only possible that there may be such an interval between the descent of Jesus into the air, and his coming onward to the earth in judgment, what should prevent our being in the posture of daily and hourly expectancy of his return? What is the difficulty we are considering? Why, that the Jews have not yet returned to their own land, nor the other events occurred, which must occur ere Christ come in judgment. But then, if it be possible that after Jesus has descended into the air, and we have been caught up to meet him, an interval should ensue, in which the Jews may return, and all the predicted events come to pass, and then the Lord come onwards to the earth, his risen and glorified saints following in his train,—if this be but possible, I say,—does it not shew that it is equally and blessedly possible,

that Jesus may come at any moment, and that there is nothing to hinder our receiving those scriptures in their simple, obvious sense, which exhort us to be always waiting and looking for his coming? And who will undertake to say that there may not be such an interval? Who would have thought that between two clauses of a verse, in Isa. lxi.,—two clauses only separated from each other by a comma—an interval of eighteen hundred years would have come in? Any one reading or hearing the prophecy in Isaiah's day, would have concluded that "the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God," were one and the same period. But when our blessed Lord quoted these words in the synagogue at Nazareth, he knew that there was to be an interval between them, and that he had only then come to preach "the acceptable year of the Lord," and not to introduce "the day of vengeance of our God." And accordingly he only read as far as the comma, and then "he closed the book, and gave it again to the minister, and sat down." (Luke iv. 20.) And if in this instance there was room left in God's precious word for the whole of the present dispensation to come in between the two clauses of a sentence, who will be so bold as to affirm that in our Lord's second coming there will certainly not be an interval of a few years between the first stage of it and the next? between his coming into the air to receive the saints, and his coming with all the saints to execute judgment, and reign on the earth? And again would I press it, my brethren, that *if there may but be* such an interval, *if it be possible for any one to prove from Scripture that there will not be*, then is it our privilege, even without a shade of difficulty on our minds, to be always looking and waiting for our Lord.

But I believe we are not left to the thought of what may be. There are several considerations which satisfy my own soul, not only that there *may be*, but also that there *will be*, such an interval. These considerations I desire in all simplicity to

present, leaving them to be weighed by my brethren in the balances of the sancturay. The Lord grant to each of us deep and real subjection to his blessed word.

The first consideration I would present in proof that there will be such an interval, is not in the form of an exact quotation from Scripture, but drawn from an extensive comparison of one part of Scripture with another. I trust, however, to be enabled to make it plain to the most simple. We are all aware of the continual exhortations we have in the New Testament to a spirit of forgiveness, and to manifest towards others the grace in which our heavenly Father has dealt with us. And perhaps there is hardly a Christian anywhere who has not been perplexed with passages in the Psalms and elsewhere in the Old Testament, where the heaviest curses and judgments are invoked by the worshippers on the heads of their enemies. And many of these psalms are evidently prophetic of the time immediately preceding the coming of the Lord to execute judgment. Can it be for us, my brethren, for the Church, that these prophetic utterances, full of imprecations, are prepared? And yet it is clear that they can have no place after the Lord has come in judgment, destroyed his adversaries, and delivered the remnant of his Jewish, earthly people. Whose language then can that of these psalms be? and when can it be uttered? I believe it to be the language of the Jewish remnant, amid the deep darkness of their final tribulation, after the Church is removed. And you can neither suppose the Church to utter such language, nor to be still on earth while the Spirit of God leads the Jewish remnant to utter it, without confounding those things which the Holy Spirit in Scripture has been most careful to distinguish from each other.

The present dispensation is one of unmingled grace. God is not now imputing to men their trespasses, but freely forgiving all, the vilest and the worst, who believe in Jesus. And to us the exhortation is, "Bless

321

them which persecute you; bless, and curse not." "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing: knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." Our Lord himself said, while his enemies were nailing him to the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." The first martyr for the name of Jesus cried, in like manner, while they were stoning him to death, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." But there is a time coming when prayers like the following (inspired prayers, be it remembered) will ascend up to heaven. "O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture? Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this Mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt." Pause here a moment to remark, that this must apply to the condition of Israel at some period subsequent to their going into captivity; yea, to a period *long after* they have gone into captivity. "Lift up thy feet unto the *perpetual desolations*; even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.....We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knoweth how long. O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever? Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom.Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.....Arise, O God, plead thine own cause; remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily. Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually." (Ps. lxxiv.) This shews plainly enough to what period this class of psalms apply. It is to the period of the last Jewish tribulation. Look at another. "O God, the heathen are come into thine

inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled: they have laid Jerusalem on heaps. The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem: and there was none to bury them.....How long, Lord? wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire? pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name. Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed.....And render unto our neighbours seven-fold into their bosom, their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord." (Ps. lxxix.) Once more. "Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.....O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind. As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire, so persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.....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 the Most High over all the earth." (Ps. lxxxiii.) I need not further multiply quotations. There are such prayers and anticipations as these: "Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth." (Ps. lix. 13.) "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked." (Ps. lviii. 10.) Need I ask again, Can it be

the Church that uses such language, presents such prayers, and rejoices in such anticipations? Impossible. But may not the Church be still on earth, while the Jewish remnant thus pour out their souls? What! the one Spirit of God put a prayer for forgiveness of enemies into the heart of one, and inspire another to ask for their destruction! Besides, in the Church there is neither Jew nor Gentile; and the dispensation must be entirely changed before a body of people can be in existence, led of the Spirit to use as their own the language of such psalms as have now been quoted. If there be an interval after the Church is removed, during which the Jewish remnant is formed, and passes through its deep and unparalleled tribulations, looking forward to the coming of Messiah to deliver them, by the destruction of their adversaries and oppressors, all is plain, and easy enough to be understood. Without this, all is one inextricable mass of confusion.

Some one may be ready to say, "But these passages are all in the Old Testament; have we no intimations of like character in the New Testament?" Yes, indeed we have. Turn to Rev. xi. 3-6, where we read of God's two witnesses who are to prophesy in sackcloth twelve hundred and sixty days, that "if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will." Is this the ministry of the gospel of God's grace with which the Church is entrusted? Is there any resemblance between the two? Once, when our Lord was here below, a village of the Samaritans refused to receive him. "And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did?" What was his answer? Did he give

them the permission they asked? Nay, "But he turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." (Luke ix. 54-56.) How entirely must the dispensation have changed, and how evident that the Church must have been removed from the scene, ere a testimony such as that of the sackcloth witnesses in Rev. xi. can be raised up.

But let us look a little at the entire structure of the Book of Revelation. It is here we shall find the most definite, positive evidence of the fact, that the Church is taken up prior to the judgments under the seals, trumpets, and vials. We have strong presumptive evidence in what has already been considered. Here we have, as it seems to me, direct and conclusive proof.

In Rev. i. 19, the favoured disciple is thus instructed: "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter," or "after these." The Greek words are *meta tauta*, which every Greek scholar knows simply and definitely mean, *after these*. They have not the force of our indefinite expression, *hereafter*. *Meta* is the Greek word for "after;" *tauta* is the Greek word for "*these*;" and, seeing that it is the neuter plural, it must be "these" *things*. Here, then, we have, on the authority of the blessed Lord himself, the division and arrangement of the book of the Apocalypse. "Write the things which thou hast seen"—these we have in chap. i., the vision he had beheld at Patmos: "and the things which are"—these we have in chs. ii. and iii., the seven churches, with the judgment of their state pronounced by the Son of man: "and the things which shall be after these"—the visions which commence with ch. iv. and extend to the close of the book. Let us consider these a little more in detail.

As to the first division, "the things which thou hast seen," it needs no remark; it is obviously contained in ch. i. "The things which are"—the second

division of the book—requires a little more attention. There can be no doubt that the seven letters of chs. ii. and iii. were addressed to the seven churches whose names they bear. But why were these seven selected to be thus addressed? Was it not, as very many who have studied prophecy judge, that they were chosen to be thus addressed, as representing in their spiritual condition, and in the warnings, threatenings, exhortations, and promises, needed by them, the whole course of the dispensation? That is, these epistles to the churches were prophetic of the several and (as I for one cannot but conclude) *successive* states of the church from the time that they were written down to the taking up of the true Church at Christ's coming, and the rejection of the false professing body as a loathsome thing, fit only to be spued out of Christ's mouth. Thus "the things which are" are presented to us in chs. ii. iii. Now turn to ch. iv. 1: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter," or "after these." It is exactly the same expression as before, *meta tauta*. So that, this voice that John heard being witness, the third division of the book begins here. "The things which shall be after these" begin to be unfolded in ch. iv. What are these things? Chaps. iv. v. present to us a scene in heaven,—a scene which neither answers to the existing state of things in the present dispensation, nor to the state of things in the millennium. The throne of him who is worshipped as "the Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come," is here seen by our apostle, and out of it proceed "lightnings, and thunderings, and voices." Surely this is different from the throne of grace to which we are now invited to come boldly, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. "Lightnings, and thunderings, and voices," tell of judgment, not of grace. And yet it is

evidently not the millennial state; for the seven-sealed book, which has not begun to be opened in ch. v., unfolds the judgments which precede the millennium. The Lamb, too, is here in the midst of the throne, and receives from him who sits thereon this seven-sealed book, as the only one in heaven or in earth who prevails to open it. Evidently, then, these two chapters describe a transational state, an interval between the present dispensation of full grace and the millennial dispensation. The question is, Where is the Church during this interval? The only answer afforded by the Book of Revelation is, IN HEAVEN. Who are they that are symbolized by the twenty-four crowned elders in white raiment, and the four living creatures in these two chapters? Let their song give the answer. "And they sung a new song, saying, 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." They are clearly not four-and-twenty individuals literally. How could they, in that case, have been redeemed out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation? They are symbolic personages, representing the whole company of those who are thus redeemed, and who are to reign on the earth. Thus we see that those who are to share Christ's royal glory during the millennium, are, during the transitional period between the present dispensation and the millennium, assembled around him in heaven, owning his worthiness, and anticipating their reign with him over the earth. And every glimpse that we have of them in chs. iv. v. vi. vii. xi. xiv. xv. xix. presents them in the same place. As another has beautifully observed: "In ch. iv. we see the living creatures and crowned elders around the central throne of God Almighty in the heavens. The action in the course of the Book changes, but the place of these mystic personages

never does. They are interested in the action, they sing and rejoice at certain stages of it, but they are never engaged in it, or leave their high habitation."

My space allows me to notice but one or two points more. Rev. xix., where, in v. 4, we have the last mention of the crowned elders and the four living creatures, goes on to inform us of the marriage of the Lamb, his wife having made herself ready. Surely the Church must be complete and in glory, when, as the Lamb's wife, she is ready for the marriage. The marriage is in heaven. After the marriage heaven opens, and the rider upon the white horse comes forth to the final conflict; to tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Now mark the 14th verse: "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." The fine linen has been explained in v. 8 to be "the righteousness of saints." *The armies which were in heaven.* In chs. ii. iii., we have a sevenfold presentation of the Church in its responsibility here below. In chs. iv. to xix. 4, we find the Church in heaven under the symbols of the elders and living creatures. The seals are opened, the trumpets blown, the vials poured out; all these bring dreadful sorrows on the earth and its inhabitants; but it is from heaven that the Church views the whole, and celebrates the praises of God and the Lamb. While waiting thus in heaven for the time when, with the Lamb, they shall reign over the earth, they are symbolised by the crowned elders and living creatures. But in ch. xix. the false pretender, Babylon, having been judged, the marriage of the Lamb with the true bride takes place, and we hear no more of the crowned elders and living creatures. The Church, now married to the Lamb, comes in his train when he comes forth, conquering and to conquer. In ch. xx. the reign takes place, and in ch. xxi. 9, to xxii. 5, we have the Church's glory as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

The Church is never seen on earth, or anywhere but in heaven, from the end of ch. iii. till in ch. xix. Christ comes forth from heaven, and the armies which were in heaven follow in his train.

One word more. It is the positive promise of Christ in Rev. iii. 10 to those who have kept his word, and not denied his name; "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from (not keep thee *in* or keep thee *through*, but *keep thee from*) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Amen. W. T.

OUTLINES OF LECTURES ON THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.

Lecture XVII.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE SETTING UP OF THE TABER- NACLE, AND FOR ITS ANOINTING.

Exodus xl. 1-8, and 9-16.

“AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the vail. And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof. And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony, and put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle. And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. And thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shalt put water therein. And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court gate.”

THE TABERNACLE.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. Ver. 1, 2.] The first day of the first month is significant of a beginning, or beginning anew. A type of the commencement of the Christian dispensation at Pentecost.

On the first day of the month the moon began to shine afresh on the earth with light reflected from the sun; so the Church, during the present night time of the world, is set to shine in the light of an absent Christ.

M

“The first day of the first month.” A dispensation altogether new; characterized by Messiah rejected, and the Comforter present, to communicate to the Church the truth of Christ, and to maintain his Lordship.

“The tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.” Both titles are here combined; the tabernacle being the type of a dwelling-place for God through the Spirit, and the tent of the congregation typical of believers assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus.

THE ARK.

And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the vail. Ver. 3.] The ark is first mentioned, for it sets forth Jesus, God’s centre of gathering to his own people, and in whom they are builded together for an habitation of God. (Eph. ii. 22.) God begins with Christ, and so should we.

But it is the ark covered with the vail; for it is Christ incarnate in whose name we are to gather.

“The ark of the testimony.” Such is the title here given to it. The house of God, the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, is set for the testimony and maintenance of that great mystery of godliness, “God manifest in the flesh,” with which is closely connected those other precious verities, “Believed on in the world;” “received up into glory.” (1 Tim. iii. 15, 16.)

Until Christ came in the flesh, there was no Church of God on the earth, no “habitation of God through the Spirit,” nor “living stones built up a spiritual house.” The tabernacle in the wilderness, indeed, foreshadowed the Church’s earthly sojourn, in connection with heavenly things (Heb. viii. 5), and the temple in the land foreshadowed its heavenly glory. But until the Word had been made flesh, and from a crucified and exalted Saviour the pentecostal Spirit had been sent down, there was no Church on earth.

331

THE TABLE.

And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it. Ver. 4.] Where believers are gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, for an habitation of God through the Spirit, there, in God's presence, the sweet and sacred memorials of a Saviour's sufferings and death are to be observed.

It is remarkable that, after the ark, the table is first mentioned; and at Troas, on the first day of the week, the disciples came together to break bread. (Acts xx. 7.) This was their first object; and although the inspired ministry of the Apostle Paul threw its light on the sacred subjects of the person, suffering, and glories of the Son of God, like the candlestick in the tabernacle over against the table, yet their object in coming together was to remember Jesus, and to enjoy the manifestation of his presence in the breaking of bread, to which all else was made subservient.

But if the communion of saints in the presence of God, and in the remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ, is to be observed, it must be observed in God's *order*. "And set in order the things which are to be set in order upon it." "God is not the author of confusion." He has his order, and this order must be maintained. The table is to be a pure table, and all things which are done in connection with the table, must be done decently and in order—as in the presence and fear of God.

THE CANDLESTICK.

And thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof. Ver. 4.] Ministry, according to God, in the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, and in testimony to the truth of Christ, has its place in connection with God's dwelling-place. It is to be brought in, and its light maintained.

The best gifts are to be earnestly coveted. The

332

Lord of the harvest is to be entreated to send forth labourers, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ for testimony to him is to be sought and obtained by fervent and united prayer. Although it is possible for believers to meet together, and to edify one another by mutual exhortation, and the reading of God's word together, without distinct gift for ministry; and thus provision is made for weakness, and the present state of things: yet ministry, in the power of the Spirit of God, is God's order, and according to his mind and will; and the gifts of an ascended Saviour are "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

THE ALTAR OF GOLD.

And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony. Ver. 5.] The worship of the Father, in spirit and in truth, by purged worshippers drawing nigh in conscious acceptance through Christ Jesus, and in all the preciousness and perfume of his sacred name,—this worship is to be presented and maintained before God.

The altar of gold for the incense was to be set immediately before the ark of the testimony, as teaching that this worship is connected with Christ risen and glorified within the vail, through whom the believer has boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him, in drawing nigh to God.

THE HANGING OF THE DOOR.

And put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle. Ver. 5.] Christ is the door; and faith in Christ, and the confession of him, is the only way of access into the habitation of God. This is to be held up and insisted on. The entrance was not to be left unguarded, and nothing but the hanging for the door was to be put there.

Saving faith in Christ is indispensable; and no mere ordinance, or any thing else, is to take the place

333

of Christ, as the way of entrance by whom alone any can be admitted into the fellowship of saints gathered together for an habitation of God.

THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING.

And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. Ver. 6.] Christ, in death and resurrection, in his atoning and accepted sacrifice, is to be set forth as the only ground of communion with God and with his saints.

Before the door of the tabernacle, or dwelling-place of God. For it is only through the accepted sacrifice of Christ that communion with God can be enjoyed, or that any one can form part of God's habitation.

And before the door of the tent of the congregation. For only on this ground can real fellowship with saints be realized, or any one be admitted to their number.

THE LAVER.

And thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shalt put water therein. Ver. 7.] Christ is also to be set forth as the sanctification of the believer; and the rich and full provision of the Spirit in him, for sanctification, is to be testified to.

The washing of water, by the Word. That is, the application of the truth of Christ, living, dying, risen, glorified, and separate from the world—these truths, brought to bear on the conscience and the heart, in the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from Christ exalted, producing practical sanctification—this cleansing is essential to living communion with God's saints, and living priestly service and worship towards God.

THE COURT.

And thou shalt set up the court round about. Ver. 8.] Consistency of character and conduct, duly and firmly maintained, and the exercise of fervent charity one

334

towards another, is also to be pressed on the consciences of believers. A distinction between the Church and the world is to be maintained and exhibited, even when the saints are not assembled together in Church fellowship.

THE COURT GATE.

And hang up the hanging at the court gate. Ver. 8.]
And Christ is to be testified to as the only one, through faith in whom, any person can be considered as connected with the people of God in religious association.

THE ANOINTING.

And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy. Ver. 9.]

THE ANOINTING OIL.

The directions for making the anointing oil are given in Ex. xxx. 22-25 :—

Moreover, the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, and of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin: and thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil.

PURE MYRRH.

“Of pure myrrh five hundred shekels.”

The gum, issuing spontaneously: bitter, but fragrant; flowing freely. Beautifully emblematic of the Spirit of Christ,—a sympathizing Spirit,—a Spirit which may be grieved, and touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Myrrh is also a soother of pain: and the sympathy of Jesus, how comforting!

335

SWEET CINNAMON.

“And of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels.”

Sweet cinnamon is the *inner bark*—sweet and also fragrant. Expressive of the sweetness and excellency of the *internal character* of the Lord Jesus.

SWEET CALAMUS.

“Of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels.”

Calamus is the *pith*—sweet and fragrant also. Emblematic of the sweetness of the Spirit of Christ, in all his *internal* thoughts, feelings, and affections.

CASSIA.

“And of cassia five hundred shekels.”

The cassia is the *outer bark*—sweet and fragrant. Expressive of the gentleness, sweetness, and excellency of the *external* character and conduct of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pure Myrrh.....	500 shekels.	Bitter.
Cinnamon	250 shekels.	Sweet.
Calamus	250 shekels.	Sweet.
Cassia	500 shekels.	Sweet.

500 shekels bitter, 1000 sweet—such is the composition.

“After the shekel of the sanctuary.”

The weight or estimate was to be after the shekel of the sanctuary; for it is God’s holy estimate of the graces of the Spirit of his Christ, which is here set forth.

OLIVE OIL.

“And of oil olive an hin.”

This pure olive oil is typical of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, as the holy anointing oil is the emblem of the Spirit of Christ, with its various and combined graces.

THE ANOINTING OIL.

“And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment,

336

an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil."

Two things strike us here: First, its holiness; this is twice mentioned; for the Spirit of Christ is a holy Spirit. Secondly, the tempering of the precious spices together. Expressive of the incomparable excellency of the Spirit of Christ, produced by the exquisite blending of the various graces of his character in perfect and harmonious oneness.

The *perfume*, described in Ex. xxx. 34–38, typifies the excellency of Jesus, God-ward. It was to be wholly burnt on God's altar, or in the censer of the high priest, which he carried into the holiest.

The *anointing oil*, on the other hand, is typical of the Spirit of Christ, and the various graces of his Spirit, which are communicated to believers, and shared by them, through the anointing of the Holy Ghost sent down from Christ exalted. "Like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments." (Ps. cxxxiii. 2.) Thus they become Christlike. Thus the character and graces of Christ are reproduced in those who drink into his Spirit.

THE TABERNACLE TO BE ANOINTED.

And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle. Ver. 9.]

For believers "are builded together for an *habitation of God* THROUGH THE SPIRIT." (Eph. ii. 22.)

So, on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit from Christ risen and glorified constituted the assembled believers the dwelling-place of God, and by that one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body.

THE TENT OF THE CONGREGATION.

In Ex. xxx. 26 we read,—*And thou shalt anoint the tent of the congregation therewith.*

When believers are gathered together in the presence of God, and in the name of the Lord Jesus,

337

that which is of all importance is the presence and power, unquenched, of the Spirit. This makes the assembly of believers the place of power, and joy, and blessing.

THE CONTENTS OF THE TABERNACLE TO BE ANOINTED.

And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy. Chap. xl. 9.] We have these vessels mentioned in detail in Ex. xxx. First,

THE ARK ANOINTED.

And the ark of the testimony. Ver. 26.] Christ risen from the dead, exalted at the right hand of God, *and anointed*, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, is the centre of gathering to the Church of God, and in him all the purposes of God meet. He is the subject of testimony, and in him all the promises of God are Yea and Amen to God's glory by us. A risen, glorified, and anointed Christ.

THE TABLE ANOINTED.

And the table and all its vessels. Ver. 27.] The communion of saints, in the precious and sacred remembrance of the sufferings and death of their divine Saviour, must be in the present power of the Spirit of Christ, and all things connected therewith should be done by the unction of the Holy Ghost.

Oh, for grace ever to remember this, when on the first day of the week we meet as disciples to break bread! The table and all its vessels—our communion together, and all that is connected with it, is to be in "the unction of the Holy One."

THE CANDLESTICK ANOINTED.

And the candlestick and his vessels. Ver. 27.] Testimony to Jesus, and the ministration of God's word, is to be in the exercise of the gifts of the

Spirit, given by Christ exalted, and by His present guidance and grace; and everything connected with this ministry is to be in the power of the Spirit of Christ.

THE GOLDEN ALTAR ANOINTED.

And the altar of incense. Ver. 27.] The worship of the Father in spirit and in truth can only be by the Spirit of adoption—the Spirit of an ascended Christ—the unction of the Holy One. The Spirit helps our infirmities, he makes intercession, he causes our praises and our prayers to ascend, accompanied with all the fragrance of the preciousness of the name of Jesus.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR ANOINTED.

And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy. Ver. 10.] It was through the Eternal Spirit that Jesus offered himself without spot to God; and it is by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven that testimony is to be borne to the value of his blood, and to the fact of his resurrection, as the ground of communion between God and the soul. And it is by the Spirit that this communion is enjoyed.

And the Spirit of God renders the truth of Christ, crucified and ascended, a sanctifying truth, and communion with God through Christ, sanctifying communion. “An altar most holy,” or literally, “Holy of holies.”

THE LAVER ANOINTED.

And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it.] The same remarks will apply to Christ looked at as our sanctification. The Spirit of God reveals Jesus in the holiness of his person and walk down here, and makes him practical sanctification to us. He also reveals to us a glorified Christ, and conforms us to him, changing us into the same image

from glory to glory. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) And he is the living link of union with this exalted one.

THE ANOINTING OF AARON AND HIS SONS.

And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tent of the congregation, and bathe them in water. Ver. 12.] (So the Hebrew.) This is similar to the consecration service of the priests described in Ex. xxix. and Levit. viii.

Aaron and his sons were types of Christ and his Church. (Heb. iii. 6.) They were to be brought to the door of the tent of the congregation, which was the place of communion with God, on the ground of sacrifice. (See Ex. xxix. 42, 43.) They were then and there to be bathed in water. Not simply washed, but bathed in water; for so the Hebrew expression is rendered ten times in Levit. xv. This bathing in water is significant of death, burial, and resurrection. (See Rom. vi.; Col. ii.) This bathing is one; that is, Aaron and his sons were washed or bathed at the same time, though anointed separately. So we are buried *with* Christ in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him. (Col. ii. 12.)

Then Aaron was invested with the priesthood, and anointed. "And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office." (Ver. 13.) For it is *as risen from the dead* the Lord Jesus was anointed for priesthood; and it is in resurrection he enters on his priestly office, in separation from the world to God. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (Heb. vii. 26.)

After this, Aaron's sons were clothed and anointed. "And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats: and thou shalt anoint them as thou didst their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations."

(Verses 14, 15.) It is as risen with Christ "through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead, that we are invested with, and enter on, our priestly office and service in association with Christ, the high priest of our profession. And it is by the Holy Ghost sent down on Pentecost, that we are anointed to this priestly service.

A priesthood which we enter on by faith, when we have realized our death, burial, and resurrection with Christ: and which we shall continue to exercise when we are conformed to him in the glory, and are associated with him in his heavenly and everlasting priesthood.

T. N.

CONCLUDING LECTURE.

[The Tabernacle raised up, and filled with the glory, in the Number for December.]

THE MOUNT OF GOD.

EXODUS i.-xviii.

PART I.

I SEPARATE these chapters, because they present us, I judge, a distinct subject for meditation, and afford us some of the grounds on which it is that Horeb or Sinai in Arabia is called in scripture, "the Mount of God."

They open with Israel in Egypt, and that land is seen in her guilt before God; for it is here written of her, "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph." That land was thus the ungrateful, the apostate. She had departed from Joseph, and so from God himself, from him who had filled her storehouses with plenty, and her throne with honour and strength. Thus Egypt was, in miniature, the world,—the great apostate from its rightful Lord and gracious Benefactor. And the Lord had no sanctuary, no altar there. His people

would have sacrificed the abomination of that land (viii. 26), and therefore they must go into the wilderness to hold their feast or do their service to the Lord. All was apostate and ripe for judgment. Joseph's memory had been despised, and all that remained to Joseph was put to the brick-kilns. (i.)

But in such a place the Lord has a cluster, and in the cluster a blessing. The cluster of Israel in the vineyard of Egypt at this time savoured, it is true, too much of the soil where it grew; for as the one had forgotten Joseph, so does the other now refuse Moses, saying, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?" But God has his remnant even in such a generation, his blessing in such a cluster (Isa. lxxv. 8); and it is found in the tribe of Levi, to which this second Joseph, this offered but rejected deliverer of his nation, belonged. "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."

But the name of this child, this predestined deliverer of his people, has its meaning. Pharaoh's daughter, as we know, called him "Moses," because she had "drawn him out" from the waters. But God had his purpose, it appears, in that name also; for it is from henceforth to the end owned by the Spirit of God. He was another Noah. Noah had been "drawn out." An ark had kept him in the waters till the dry land again received him; and that was, as we are divinely taught, a like figure with baptism of death and resurrection (1 Pet. iii. 20, 21). And so Moses now. He had been kept in an ark through the waters, that place of death, till he stood again in the place of life, as one that had died and has risen. (ii.)

Thus was he, mystically, the dead and risen man: and he acts, "when he was come to years," in the power of resurrection, refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, rather choosing affliction with the people of God; that is, disclaiming his advantages in the flesh and in the world, and walking by

faith, seeing him who is invisible, and having respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Such an one is he, thus, both in his person and character, ere he goes forth to run his appointed service, whether among strangers or in Israel. Through their present unbelief, rejecting this deliverer, the children of Israel are left for a time longer at the Egyptian brick-kilns. But he whom they thrust from them is accepted in another place, and seated, not at the head of a *nation*, but of a *family*, enjoying intimacies and affections sweeter and closer than ever he had known among his own kindred. A stranger receives him. Jethro the Midianite opens his house to him, and gives him his daughter in marriage, because he had been her deliverer, though, in spite of the same grace towards them, Israel had just refused him.

This family of strangers is, mystically, the church taken from the Gentiles during the Lord's estrangement from Israel, as has been often observed among us, beloved. I do not, therefore, stop to look at it particularly. But, as we generally know, the blessing is not to be spent on this family of strangers. Israel is had in remembrance still, though they have once refused the deliverer. Accordingly, Moses, in due season, is called forth to change the scene of his action again, and bear God's redeeming love and strength back to Israel in Egypt; for he is their only hope and channel of blessing. If in their distress Israel cry to the Lord, the answer must come by the hand of him whom once they refused. The Lord has no other help for them. From the outcast Joseph alone is the Shepherd and stone of Israel. But he can and will answer. The ears of the Lord of Sabaoth have heard the cry, and Moses is immediately put in readiness to return from Midian into Egypt for the help of Israel.

The burning bush is now the symbol of God's constant care of Israel, though in the furnace of Egypt. It tells Moses how in all their affliction the

Lord had been afflicted, and how the angel of his presence had still preserved them. And it is in connection with this mystic bush that Horeb is first called "the Mount of God;" for now it is that the Lord is first telling of himself there. He "who dwelt in the bush" had a "goodwill" towards them; for if the Son of God be in the furnace with his people, it is to preserve them. And this same spot, which now thus testified of grace, should by and by testify of glory to them, as is here said to Moses, "When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God on this mountain." (iii. iv.)

Thus was it now between the Lord and Moses at this holy mount. Then, by miracle upon miracle, in the sight of Egypt, and with plague upon plague, and fury poured out, this deliverer rescues Israel from under the hand of their taskmasters;—it was the day of judgment to Egypt, as afterwards it was to Canaan: for Egypt was the world, as I have said. She had filled up her sins; she had despised the day of grace in Joseph; and now comes the day of judgment by Moses. It is as the wrath of the Lamb coming on those who refuse the blood of the Lamb. Pharaoh said he knew not the Lord; but Pharaoh must know him. (v. 2; ix. 14.) If Pharaoh would disown him in goodness, he must know him in righteousness; for his judgments were now to be made manifest, and "the Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth." As his holy prophet says to him, "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." God would be known in grace; but if that lesson be refused by Egypt, she must know him in the uplifted hand of power, as she now does, till the strength and flower of her people lie on the banks of the Red Sea. (v.—xv.)

But I desire, in the midst of these scenes which these chapters give us, to look for awhile at the children of Israel between the paschal night and the banks of the Red Sea.

The blood on the lintels had secured the firstborn, and the Egyptian had then allowed Israel to pass out of the land; but the Egyptian himself was not yet destroyed, neither was Israel clearly beyond the borders of the enemy. These results waited till the Red Sea was reached and crossed; and till then they are not at ease, nor have they any song. The Egyptian has gone out after them, and they judge, as it were, that it is nothing but death before and behind. They see the cloud, and they cannot but remember the shelter of the blood, and that they have, in some sense, left Egypt. But in some sense, also, they judge themselves to be in a worse state than ever. And such often is a stage in the history of a converted soul. There is the quickening, the rising up as out of Egypt, the sudden new direction which the soul takes with some sense of the value of the blood of Christ. But withal, this quickening, this rising up, does but lead the soul to judge worse of its condition than ever. A new sense of death comes in—death in trespasses and sins is apprehended, and no adequate assurance of the completeness of redemption. There is a shutting in between Jesus and God, if I may so speak. The soul can look to Jesus; his blood on the door-post has told of his love; but God has not been so apprehended as to give certainty and ease of heart. All the virtue of the Cross is not known, as all the virtue of the cloud and the rod is not known by Israel here; for the cloud had virtue not only to lead the redeemed, but to overthrow their pursuers. It could change its ground and stand between the two camps, and while it was light to the one, be darkness to the other; as its companion, the rod, could make a passage for the one, and bury the other in the mighty waters. And so, in like manner, has the Cross its full and double virtue. It rescues the sinner, and silences all his accusers. But until those virtues be understood, the soul will be kept as in the interval from the passover to the Red Sea. Let, however, the cloud and the rod fully display

themselves; let the Cross of Christ publish all its virtue in the ear of faith; then Israel can sing their song, and the believer can say, "If *God* be for us, who can be against us?" God, as well as Jesus, can then be triumphed in,—the whole character of the Cross being made known to the soul. The enmities are seen to be all abolished (Eph. ii.); the law to have found its end (Rom. x.); sin to have paid its wages, and thereupon discharged (Rom. vi.); the great enemy to have been led a captive with all his powers (Col. ii.); death to have been abolished (2 Tim. i.); and the flesh to have been found out, rebuked, and discharged also. (Rom. vii. viii.) And as the enemy is thus seen dead on the shore, so the sinner sees himself fully rescued—accepted in the Beloved (Eph. i.); happy in the adoption and love of God (Rom. viii.); treated as in the spirit, and not in the flesh (Rom. viii.); safe in that hand out of which none can pluck (John x.); dwelling in that love which leaves no room for fear. (1 John iv.) Israel has passed the waters.

Thus is it oftentimes still with the soul, as here it is with Israel. Of course, the full victory of Jesus for the sinner may be understood at once, for the Gospel publishes it without reserve; but till it be, the song is not learnt, the redeemed one is on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea.

But the sea once crossed, Israel understands the cloud and the rod, and Egypt and its enmity are gone for ever. Ere, however, they reach "the Mount of God," where they were to hold their feast, they are to learn the hand that would lead them, as well as the arm that had just saved them; for there is to be a journey from the sea to the mount, as there had been from Egypt to the sea; and on this second journey we would also linger with them a little space. (xv.—xvii.)

Five distinct lessons are taught the people on this journey, the value of each of which the soul of the saint still also enters into. The song has already

instructed them in the Lord's victory, and that song should be kept alive in their hearts all through, whatever other lesson they might learn; for that was a deathless victory, and the fruit of it they were gathering every step of their way. But after it we get the healing of Marah—the wells and palm-trees of Elim—the manna—the water from the rock—the discomfiture of Amalek. These five distinct actions, displaying the Lord's varied grace and power, pass before us in this interval from the Red Sea to the "Mount of God;" and each of them tells us of his care for his congregation in the wilderness. The healing of the waters of Marah by the tree tells us of the *consolations* which are provided to meet the sorrows of this evil world. Paul gathered of that tree when he could say, "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." The wells and palm-trees tell us of the *occasional refreshings* which the saint gets through communion and ministry. The camp passed them, and saw them no more, after taking, as it were, one repast of them. So the apostle could sit down at them for awhile, when comforted by the mutual faith of himself and others. The manna, in its turn, tells us of blessing also. It speaks of *Jesus, the bread of life*. Unlike the provision of Elim, it remained. It waited morning and evening for forty years on the camp, and fed them till they reached the land of corn and oil; as the true bread which the Father gives can feed us, let the place of the desert be what or where it may. The water from the rock tells us, in due order, of *the Holy Ghost, the abiding Comforter*. Unlike the wells of Elim also, this water follows through all the way, as the Giver of the true water says, "that he may abide with you for ever." And lastly, the overthrow of Amalek tells of *the strength of the right hand of the Lord* over that which would dare to withstand the way of that ransomed people, over whom the glory of the Lord was hovering.*

* When the people murmur for water, Moses knows not what to do. (Chap. xvii.) But when Jesus stands in the same

Thus they learn the sufficiency of God's grace and strength for all their necessity. He has the bread and the water for them, the healing tree, and the palms of Elim, though the place be desert and dry, and victory for them when the enemy appears.

And here let me say, that the Lord acquires his holy honours by all those acts and mercies which he accomplishes for his poor people. *Thus his memorials are engraved on our blessings.* Wonderful grace, and perfection of goodness this is, that God should be celebrated by and in that which blesses us. He got the title of "Jehovah-jireh," because he graciously provided a ram in the place of Isaac; he was celebrated as "a man of war," because he got the victory for his people in the Red Sea; he was "Jehovah-rophi," because he healed the bitter waters for the camp; he was "Jehovah-nissi," because he was their banner against the face of Amalek. And so I might shew still further. But this is enough to tell us how the Lord makes himself a name, as Jeremiah says (Jer. xxxii. 20), by his doings for us, and acquires (such is his grace) his own praise and honour by that which secures his people their blessing. The victory of Christ was over our enemies. *If we believe his victory, we must believe our own salvation.* To question our *blessing* is to refuse him his *praise*. And it is a blessed economy of goodness that thus weaves the two inseparably together.

But the last of these lessons has large instruction in it, and I would look at it a little more particularly. Amalek was the grandson of Esau, and Esau, as we know, was the profane one—the man of the world. And Amalek appears before us in this place as one connection with the poor sinner of Samaria, without delay or any sense of difficulty, he undertakes to give her water. (John iv.) For he was (and knew himself to be) that rock which Moses saw, and which was ready still with its living streams to wait on the thirst of every poor sinner along the paths of this wilderness-world. But what infinite distance, personally, does this shew between Jesus and Moses! Moses was indeed but the servant, Jesus the Lord, "that spiritual Rock."

in that long line of wilful ones, who run their course across the face of the earth, "mighty hunters before the Lord," or defiers and rivals of God himself. At this moment the glory was seen over Israël, and the rock was following them with its streams. But what was all this to Amalek? What did he care for the glory? Such as Isaiah or Daniel might learn their own vileness from it, and Peter in its presence might know himself to be a sinful man, but the glory had no lesson of holy fear for such as Amalek. He comes out, the rather, to measure strength with it. He is as the one who, by and by, will dare to plant his idols on the battlements of the holy city, and his tabernacles on the glorious holy mountain. What is the glory to such as these? "Our tongues are our own," say they. Their standards may rival the Lord's pillar. But the hand that holds them shall wither, as Amalek here falls, and as the last of the race shall hereafter fall (Dan. xi.), with none to help him.

This may be fearful, and it is so; but it ends the trial and discipline of Israel. As in that future day also, when the last Amalek falls, Michael will stand up, and every one found written in the book shall be delivered. So here the discomfiture of this enemy makes full and easy way for Israel to "the Mount of God." That place, out to which they had been called from Egypt, under promise that there they should serve the Lord, and hold their feast to him, is now reached, their toil and discipline and danger all over.

And this long promised and now attained mountain is again called "the Mount of God." The first time Moses is seen there, the burning bush, as we then saw, told him of grace; but now there is to be something to tell him of glory. Then he saw the pledge of redemption, now he is to see the pledge of the kingdom. (xviii.)

Zipporah and her children had been sent home to her father's house; and, as far as we can judge, immediately after the circumcision of the child (chap. iv.), and naturally so. For there was something in

that action that was not according to the mind of a Gentile wife. But Moses, when returning into connection with Israel, should have owned the circumcision of the God of Abraham. Coming back to his kindred in the flesh, he should have remembered the legislative national token in the flesh. The reproach of Midian should have been put away then, as the reproach of Egypt was afterwards. (Josh. v.) But Zipporah, who had no fleshly kindredness with Israel, could not have been prepared for this, and therefore with her the Lord had no controversy. It was Moses or his child, and not Zipporah, whom the Lord would have slain at the inn, according to the ordinance. (Gen. xvii. 14.) And his life being forfeited to that ordinance, it was grace that spared him. And it is altogether likely that it was just at that moment Zipporah was sent home. The Spirit, however, has left it without certainty. And justly so, as I judge, because her departure home to Midian is typically the hiding of the Gentile, or heavenly family, in the Father's house, till the Lord, the true Moses, conducts those judgments on this Egypt-world, which are to issue in the deliverance of his earthly people, and the kingdom.

But Egypt being judged, Israel redeemed, disciplined, and led to the borders of the mount, the due time had come for the re-appearance of Zipporah, the Gentile wife. She is now manifested, led out by the hand of her father for re-union with Moses at "the Mount of God," when all the action of judgment and redemption was now gloriously and fully accomplished.

The scene here is thus strikingly beautiful and significant. We have here (as another has justly called him) "the mysterious Kenite;" for Jethro is a type or mystery, a sign of that which is especially *the* mystery. He here meets the redeemed heirs of earthly blessing, till now a stranger to them. He comes from regions unknown to Israel. But when they meet there is no want of full companionship.

A common hand seems to have led them towards each other. The deeds of the Lord, his famous deeds for Israel, are rehearsed, when Jethro and Moses had kissed each other, and the family affection had taken its course. The strangers congratulate the earthly tribes on their recent rescue and prosperous journey to "the Mount of God," and now the union of the great deliverer of Israel with this distant unknown family was made manifest. Hitherto this had been a hidden union. But now the wife and the children, led forth by the father, appear in the presence of his fleshly kindred, and take a place nearer to Moses, the great centre of the whole scene, than any of them.

The stranger likewise soon takes the highest dignities, as well as fills the place of nearest affection. He occupies, as it were, both the throne and the temple, giving direction to the lawgiver, and offering sacrifice in the presence of the priests. The last is first—the younger before the elder—the stranger in higher honour than the kindred.

But what is all this but, in figure, the dispensation of the fulness of times, the gathering together in one of all things in heaven and in earth? What is it less than the raising of the ladder between heaven and earth? Do we not here listen to the intercourses of the kingly priestly stranger with redeemed Israel, rejoicing in their blessing, but holding still the place of holiness and honour? Jethro assumes the place of Melchizedek. In no less glories than those of king and priest together does he here shine before us. He offers the sacrifices and spreads the feast for Aaron, and sits as chief in the seat of judgment with Moses. And when he had thus displayed his glories, rejoiced in the prosperity of God's chosen, and led their praise for the mercy, "he went his way." As was said of the God of Abraham before, "And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had done communing with Abraham." (Gen. xviii.) So now Jethro, having rejoiced with Israel, and displayed his glories,

goes his way. For both were as strangers in the earth, and a distant way led them to their proper home.

Thus we have great things in this chapter. The opening of it shews us the heavenly one descending, and the close of it shews us his return or ascending, in figure, as the angels of God once ascended and descended on the mystic ladder, and will again upon the Son of man. And it shews us, also in figure, all things in heaven and earth gathered in that one who has connection with the two great households, though in different ways, while they themselves were unknown to each other till now. All this tells, indeed, of the dispensation of the fulness of times. (Eph. i. 10.) This mount, where all this is seen, is now again called "The Mount of God," as being in this manner the place of *glory*, as before when it was called "the Mount of God," it was as strikingly the place of *grace*, or the burning bush. It well deserves the praise. It surely is the mystic holy ground where the traces of the blessed God are thus to be seen, and where we learn those ways of his, that establish the heart both in faith and hope.

This intercourse between the heavenly and earthly families having one great centre, as it will be enjoyed in the coming kingdom, so has it been typified in many past shadows. The ladder which Jacob saw, and to which I have alluded, gave it in figure to us. The passing and re-passing of Moses from the cloudy tabernacle to the camp of the congregation (Ex. xxxiii.) was another expression of this intercourse between the place of the glory and the earth. The vision on the mount of transfiguration, where the glorified family were seen, and also the representatives of Israel, gives us another pledge of it. The interviews between the risen Lord and his disciples, still in their earthly places, is a like figure; for then at seasons he shewed himself to them, but his place was more duly in heaven, his word being, "Touch me not," though at times he would eat and drink with them

as before. So the notice that is taken of the ascent by which Solomon went up to the house of the Lord, and which was one of the principal objects that rested on the vision, and filled the spirit of the queen of Sheba, is another intimation of the same (2 Chron. ix.); for it looked somewhat above, and apart from, the mere earthly places, to which the sitting of the servants, the furniture of the tables, and all the royal magnificence and fulness pertained, and would properly have drawn her thoughts upwards. And so this, our closing chapter, shews the same. Here is the ladder again, the communion of the heavens with the earth in the days of the glory. Moses's estrangement from Israel for a season; his secrecy among the Gentiles with his father, his wife, and his children there; then his return to Israel, and their redemption and discipline under his hand; the overthrow of the great enemy who dared to affront the glory of the Lord; and, finally, the place of peace, "the Mount of God," where the strangers and Israel (both, though differently, having found their union with Moses the common deliverer) meet for the first time to rejoice together, while the stranger fills the nearer intimacies and the higher dignities; all these tell out the mystic tale of the heavens and the earth in the coming kingdom or fulness of times. The union of the bride and the bridegroom, which before had been hidden, is now published, and the Gentile stands nearer to Moses than all his kindred in the flesh.

There is a voice in all this, beloved, that we cannot but hear; for thus will it be in the kingdom, surely. Is not all that is royal and glorious to be on the earth, then, with the ascent to heaven from Jerusalem? Is not the true ladder to be there, and the ministers of the kingdom passing and re-passing upon it? Is not the glory, then, to be a covering on the dwelling-places and assemblies of Zion? "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad." Tales of mercy and salvation will then be rehearsed, as here; and the Church will learn the joy of Israel's