Genesis - Commentaries by William Kelly

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 9:25-29

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HUMILIATING as the fall of Noah was, far was he from being forsaken of our faithful God, Who knows how to restore and can make even the weakest to stand. When restored, Noah had fresh honor put on him. We may be assured that the righteous man deeply judged himself, and not the less because it gave occasion to Ham's impiety, if it also brought out the reverent sorrow of Shem and Japheth. There was no waiting in their case as in Jacob's for the Spirit of prophecy on his dying bed. It would seem to have ere long followed that event in his circle which led to the striking prediction here given. It is the first prophecy properly so called which man was given to utter recorded in Genesis. The word given in Gen. 3:15 is of a yet higher nature. It was worthy of Jehovah Elohim to make known, in judging the old Serpent, His gracious purpose in the woman's Seed. Nor is the poetic strain of Lemech to his wives more than typical of the future, though most interesting in that way. Here it is strictly a prophetic prayer.

As Peter, honored among the twelve, was reinstated after his still more grievous and inexcusable sin, so was Noah given to present the broad outlines of what should befall his sons throughout the ages, yet in an aspect precisely suiting that government of man on earth, which he was the first to exercise, and which God would sustain notwithstanding the fault of its representative. Enoch was inspired to prophesy in a wholly different vein of the judgment which the Lord, when He comes with myriads of His saints, will execute on all the ungodly here below. This, however surely uttered at that early day, and appropriate then, was fittingly reserved for its best place of permanent record and warning in the Epistle of Jude. But that of Noah is just where it should be no less certainly, and of a character and scope exactly in keeping with the context.

“And he said, Cursed [be] Canaan; and he said, Bondman of bondman be he to his brethren.

Blessed [be] Jehovah God of Shem, and Canaan be bondman to him;

God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in tents of Shem,

And Canaan be bondman to him” (vers. 25-27).

Appearances were long as usual against the truth. Experience seemed to favor the sons of Ham. His grandson Nimrod, as we know from the next chapter, “began to be a mighty one in the earth.” “He was a mighty hunter [or plunderer], before Jehovah.” It became a proverb. Wherefore it is said, Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before Jehovah. Babel, that ominous tower of confusion, was the beginning of his kingdom, and his kingdom did not stop there. No doubt an evident curse, which none could deny but an infidel, fell on Canaan, when because of their enormous wickedness the guilty cities of the Plain were destroyed by fire out of heaven. But even this was far from being an event of Noah's age, nor growing out of a condition of things yet existent, nor affording any such contact with the then circumstances as rationalists pretend prophecy requires. There was of course a true link which the Holy Spirit saw between Ham's sin, and his descendants' corruption; but it was in no way the mere immediate fortune-telling to which this deplorable unbelief would pervert the prophets. Still less can it be said of Canaan reduced to the lowest bondage, as when Israel took possession of the land of promise. Yet scripture is plain that both the curse and the blessing are not complete till Israel re-enter the land under Messiah and the new covenant, to be rooted there and blessed as long as the earth endures. “And in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts.”

Undoubtedly for the earth, and God's government, Shem has the richer promise, as that day will establish and proclaim. But all history even in the past attests God's enlarging Japheth, the great colonizer of the earth, and in the strongest contrast with Shorn as to this. For he was not only to spread nationally as Shem never was, but to dwell in Shem's tents. Europe and the north-east of the old world sufficed not, nor yet the new world of America, Australia, &c., but he must also encroach on Shem's tents in the east. So it was to be, according to this earliest oracle; and so it has been, to the letter, as no foresight of man could have anticipated. This closes the divine account of Noah: “And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years; and all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died” (vers. 28, 29).

The reader may note the exquisite propriety of “Jehovah the God of Shem” in ver. 26, and of “God” only in ver. 27 for Japheth, where enlargement in providence is meant rather than the promised blessing of special relationship with Himself. And here is an internal ground, in addition to grammatical reason, against the idea, which many like the late Mr. S. Faber adopted, that the same verse means (not Japhet's, but) God's dwelling in Shem's tents. Had this been intended by the Spirit of God in Noah, would it not have been said Jehovah Elohim, rather than simply Elohim?

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 9:20-24

IN these verses we see the fall of him to whom primarily government was committed by God. Noah failed to govern himself by his abuse of God's creature, and gave occasion to such sin in his family as brought in a special curse there; instead of making good comfort “for our work and for the toil of our hands.” It is the sad and familiar story of the first man; directly he is put to the proof, he breaks down. Nor does the evil terminate with himself. The vilest can see it and despise the guilty, where love would cover a multitude of sins. How deep the ruin where the shame of the father drew out only the contempt of son and grandson! But God is not mocked; and His moral government fails no more than His grace, which answers every failure of man by some better thing in His goodness and wisdom, while He judges impenitent wickedness as it deserves.

“And Noah began as husbandman (a man of the ground); and he planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took the garment and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward and covered their father's nakedness; and their faces [were] backward, and their father's nakedness they saw not. And Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his younger son had done unto him” (vers. 20-25).

It is not merely the fall of a righteous man, and its wholesome warning for all time; for scripture does not withhold the profit from any. But there stands the humbling fact. God reveals the truth without respect of persons. Man was no sooner put to the proof, in the new trial to which he was subjected, than he is seen breaking down in the very point which he was responsible to maintain intact before God and his own fellows. Government over life and death was entrusted by God to his keeping; and he to whom the trust was first made was beyond comparison the most suited by piety and by experience. Yet the next fact recorded of him is that, doubtless through self-indulgence and unwatchfulness, he not only sinned himself, but brought God's ordinance of government into flagrant dishonor. And the sin and dishonor wrought not godly sorrow but contempt in his own household. His younger son Ham was as insensible to God's glory as to what was due to his father, even in such calamitous circumstances; he only manifested the wickedness of his own heart by the unfeeling mockery he put on Noah, and the ready desire to spread his father's shame and ensnare his two brothers. Their reverence was as plain as Ham's impiety, who forgot to whom he owed his life as well as his preservation from the deluge.

But God is not mocked by the sinner any more than He forgets a work of love shown to His name. And it was a work of love which the two brothers did, roused to it all the more through the graceless hardness of their own near kin. Yet what sorrow must have filled their hearts, when their piety compelled them to turn their backs on him to whom ever before they justly looked up with constant affection and honor and gratitude. And this, not only in requital of his fatherly care, but as a righteous man, perfect in his generations, who walked with God, when all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.

Thus, if man quickly fell, and shamefully, where we might have least expected it, and, as far as he was concerned, tarnished irreparably from the start the new and honorable commission with which he was invested, God did not fail, even when it wrought disastrous effects where it ought not, to work in His goodness the beautiful activity of His grace. And we shall see in due time that the ways of His moral government meanwhile are no less perfect. The wicked and scornful son reaped the fruit of his evil in his own offspring Canaan; as the reverent modesty of Shem and Japheth was remembered in their posterity. Salvation is of grace, and cannot fail, because it is the work of God in Christ where all is infallibly secured to His glory. Even where salvation may not be, God puts honor on obedience and respect paid where it is due. Scripture often indicates this, conspicuously in the Rechabites whom the God of Israel brought before the prophet (Jer. 35) to reprove disobedient Judah. Therefore, when Jehoiakim Josiah's son was disgracing both God and his father, Jonadab, Rechab's son, should not want a man, Gentile though he was, to stand before Him forever.

But whether among the righteous or among the unrighteous everything opposed to God's nature and word bears its consequence Nothing is slighted by Him. And a time of evil is just when fidelity to His will becomes all the more imperative for those who love Him; while its prevalence encourages the evil-minded to become more indifferent and abandoned. Without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him. And there is no real believer who does not begin and go on with that self-judgment of himself and his ways before God which scripture calls repentance.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 9:18-19

But there dawns another dealing with mankind, ere long to be consummated by a most striking act on God's part, here marked in an initiatory way as characteristic of the earth since the flood. We need not therefore do more at this point than present a few remarks as general as the text. In due time we may dwell particularly when details come before us.

“And the sons of Noah that went out of the ark were Sherri, and Ham, and Japheth. And Ham is father of Canaan. These three [are] sons of Noah; and from these was all the earth overspread” (vers. 18, 19).

We have already remarked on the principle of government introduced for the first time. Life, man's life, was a sacred thing. It came from God in a way altogether peculiar, as was made known from the outset in Gen. 2:8. Man alone became a living soul by the inbreathing of Jehovah Elohim; other animals without any such immediate association breathed through their organization according to His will. Adam's sons were of Adam naturally, yet inheriting the relationship which Adam had of God differently from all other creatures here below. He, and his alone, had consequently an immortal soul. But to Noah and his sons emerged from the ark there was laid down the root of government, without defining those forms which developed later, all of which have the sanction of His providence.

When the free use of the lower creatures of God was granted, beast of the earth, bird of the air, fish of the sea, every moving thing that lives was to be food for man. As the green herb, God gave all, save the blood, its life, which was not to be eaten: a most significant and instructive reserve, owning Himself the sovereign source of life. Still more solemnly does He speak of man's life. “And surely your blood, [that] of your lives will I require, at the hand of every beast will I require it; and at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth Man's blood by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He Man.” We repeat it, because of its signal and abiding importance; and the more so, because other and inferior grounds are often allowed to take the place of divine right with which nothing else can compare.

This, followed up by the covenant with man and the subject creation, and sealed with its appropriate sign of mercy, was settled before attention is again drawn to the three heads of Noah's race, “Shem and Ham, and Japheth,” in the same order as before (Gen. 5:32; 6:10; 7:13). Now, there is an ominous addition, “and Ham is the father of Canaan.” This receives a speedy comment in the sad incident and yet more in the solemn prophecy that follows to the end of the chapter; it not only reverberates through the Old Testament as a whole, but will be only consummated in that kingdom which awaits the Anointed of Jehovah, when all the earth shall be filled with His glory, and the knowledge of it, as the waters cover the sea. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts shall perform this, as surely as His fire is in Zion and His furnace in Jerusalem.

Next, we read “these three [are] sons of Noah; and from these was all the earth overspread.” The last word first indicates that which has been proceeding ever since. There is no sufficient ground to affirm it of the ante-diluvian earth. What strikes one more perhaps is to see how slowly it was carried out after the deluge. Indeed, whatever the causes which acted on men to hinder the plan of God, it soon was plain that mankind resolved on a united community, and not only to congregate together, but to build a city and a tower with its head aspiring to the heavens, and to make a name to themselves lest they should be scattered over the face of the whole earth. This, we are assured, only brought out divine power and wisdom on God's part, not merely in frustrating their vain purpose, but in the accomplishing of His will that they should overspread the earth. He judged their self-exalting folly by breaking the bond which knit them together, and by introducing in the simplest and surest way a separative principle He compelled them to scatter, abandoning their unfinished tower, the abiding monument, not of man's union for strength and fame, but of God's pouring confusion on self-will to its shame. A vast deal more was done by God's interposition, as will appear in due time; but this much may be stated here on the overspreading of all the earth, without anticipating the surprising details that are to follow. As ever, fallen man cared not for God's will—had pleasure in his own will. God was in none of his thoughts, but self which always exposes to some fresh and ruinous device of the great enemy.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 9:12-17

VERSES 1-7 set out the blessing of God pronounced on Noah and his sons for the world that now is. Man henceforth was allowed animal food, yet forbidden to eat blood due to God; and government, was put for the first time into man's hand for the protection of human life and the vindication of God where it was taken. Now vers. 8-11 give the covenant God established with mankind and every creature set under man: the largest covenant God ever made, and still subsisting under a merciful pledge that cannot fail. Neither the one nor the other applied to the ante-diluvian earth. In the verses that follow (12-17) God deigns to give a sign or token of His covenant with the earth. Of a covenant with Noah we first hear in chap. 6:18.

“And God said, This [is the] sign of the covenant which I set (give) between me and between you and between every living soul that is with you for everlasting generations: my bow I have set in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of covenant between me and between the earth. And it shall come to pass when I bring clouds over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember nay covenant which is between me and between you and between every living soul among all flesh; and no more shall the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the clouds and I will look upon it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and between every living soul of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said to Noah, This [is the] sign of the covenant which I have established between me and between all flesh that is upon the earth” (vers. 12-17).

It is an unprofitable question, seeing that scripture has not furnished adequate evidence to decide it absolutely, whether the rainbow was then seen for the first time, or had been familiarly known to the early ages. One can readily conceive that the Creator may have reserved it for the days of Noah: a slight physical disposition could have hindered the phenomenon. But the language seems rather to favor the inference that, often as it may have been noticed before, God took it up now and established it as a covenant sign between Him and the creatures here below for everlasting generations. The least that can be drawn from the words is that God was now, since the deluge, pleased to graft on it a new and merciful meaning. For men might well tremble after that tremendous catastrophe when dark clouds veiled the skies, and the rain fell in torrents, and tidal waves rose overwhelmingly. An accusing conscience would the more loudly speak of what had been shortly before experienced so disastrously. Man naturally looks for it that what once was will surely recur; and the more if old sins still prevailed, and new evils sprang up.

Hence the immense comfort which God's goodness pledged in the bow He set in the cloud.1 It is not seen as the rule unless there be rain, of course; and it is only seen when the sun shines brightly at one's back from the opposite quarter of the sky. Thus no sign could be more appropriate. If the rain might awaken fears, the gorgeous bow was entitled to calm them; for God Himself thus deigned to assure man of His unfailing covenant. Indeed the accuracy is the more remarkable, as its terms run, “It shall come to pass when I bring clouds over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living soul among all flesh.” For “rain” does not seem absolutely indispensable, but “cloud” is. So Col. Sykes, treating of the Meteorology of the Deccan (Phil. Trans. 1835), describes a rainbow which he saw from the top of a perpendicular precipice, among the Ghauts, overlooking the Concan, on a fog cloud. “A circular rainbow appeared, quite perfect, of the most vivid colors, one half above the level on which I stood, the other below it. Shadows in distinct outline of myself, my horse, and people, appeared in the center of the circle, as in a picture to which the bow formed a resplendent frame.”

The same witness describes a white rainbow which he saw in a fog bank near Poonah: “Suddenly I found myself emerge from the fog which terminated abruptly in a wall some hundred feet high. Shortly after sunrise I turned my horse's head homewards, and was surprised to discover in the mural termination of the fog-bank a perfect rainbow, defined in its outline, but destitute of prismatic “colors.” Such a white rainbow has been seen by other travelers, and in other lands; but it is not so uncommon as with the usual colors on a fog-cloud. But all attest the faithfulness of God even if man forgets its meaning. “No more shall the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh.”

And how affecting the condescension of the words that follow! “And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living soul of all flesh that is upon the earth.” It was much that man should see it: how gracious that God too would look on! Nor is this all; but it is added, “And God said to Noah, This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and between all flesh that is upon the earth.” How good is the God we adore! Such repeated assurance is only the more to be prized by vain forgetful man.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 9:8-11

THUS the situation is entirely new. It is governmental distinctively, and therefore wholly different in this from the world before the deluge. Life is guarded solemnly as that which belongs to God, and may not as the rule be taken from a fellow-man without the forfeit of his that took it. It

is not a sinless state like Adam's in Paradise. Innocency lost is lost forever, however grace may step in, and by the Second Man replace all in due time by a new and holy creation, Himself being both Creator and new-creator, as He became the sacrifice which vindicated God as to evil and was the basis of the good that should abide forever.

But man meanwhile had government in his hand. The fear and the dread of him, in a sinful world where man was now called to govern, should be on all the subject creation, the flesh of which, not the blood, was now to be his food, given henceforth as freely by God, as before was the seed-producing herb and the fruit-bearing tree. But the sacredness of life is all the more maintained. Whose shed man's blood, by man should his blood be shed. Details were not given; but God established government, as a root-principle, in man's hand, responsible to him as from Him he received the charge.

It is the blessing of God, Preserver of all men, especially of faithful. Through one man sin had entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned. Yet the sacrifice which faith offered, God accepted, looking on to Him Whose sacrifice of himself would be the crowning completion of His will, and the savor of everlasting rest. Even now He could, would, and did bless the delivered Noah and his sons. But all creation was delivered afresh to man; the new warrant had government inscribed also, with the license and the restriction man is called to own responsibly to God. Nothing can modify this rightly, nothing justify neglect or forgetfulness.

“And God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold I, establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living soul that is with you, in bird, in cattle, and in every animal of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark to every animal of the earth. And I establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, neither shall there be a flood any more to destroy the earth “(vers. 8-11).

Here again we may observe that it is “Elohim” Who blessed (ver. 1), and spoke (ver. 8); nor could it with propriety be any other designation. “Jehovah” would have been entirely out of place. For, far from being an occasion for the expression of special relationship, the object before us is of the most comprehensive character. It is the Creator Who is declaring Himself the Preserver of all here below, notwithstanding the imagination of man's heart evil from his youth, which had so recently resulted in the universal destruction of all on earth outside the ark. God could and would and did bless on the footing of sacrifice provisionally till the infinite sacrifice, in virtue of which would come in the new heavens and new earth, save for such as despised it and so justly perishing both here and hereafter in that day. In all this unfolding of His mind about the earth and man upon it unrestrictedly, it is exactly God, “Elohim,” which is requisite, to the exclusion of “Jehovah,” which first reappears in the momentary introduction of His peculiar relationship with Shem (ver, 26), where only and precisely it is demanded, whereas “Elohim” is immediately resumed with Japhet, who enjoyed no such special place, but only providential dealings of an external kind.

Here accordingly God establishes His covenant with Noah and his sons on a footing which ignores all question of the soul or moral considerations. Where these enter as at the close of the chapter, the divine title is changed in harmony with what is revealed. But in the previous portion all is general as expressly as possible. God never forgets His rights as Creator and Preserver; and even when our blessed Lord brought out heavenly and eternal things, He was far from teaching us to despise the birds of the heaven or the lilies of the field, or God's care in either case. Their Creator and Preserver was our heavenly Father, without Whom not even one sparrow falls upon the earth. No doubt the Christian is called to things higher beyond comparison; but God did not omit to testify and teach His people His mind as to the least of His creatures in the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets, of which last the closing verse of Jonah is not the least remarkable. And the New Testament is quite as clear as the Old in keeping before us the blessed deliverance which He will surely effect for all the creation groaning and travailing in pain together until now. It waits for the manifestation of the Second man, Head over all things to the church which is His body. For when Christ, our life, shall be manifested, then shall we also with Him be manifested in glory.

Meanwhile God Who remembered not Noah only but every living thing and the cattle with him in the ark, covenants not only with. Noah and his sons and with his seed after them, but with every living creature, cattle, bird, and beast; and He so establishes His covenant as to cut off from every heart that trusted in Him the least fear of destruction of all flesh by a deluge any more, or of any such dealing with the earth. Without such a covenant, what could guilty man expect but repeated strokes of the same judgment which had just taken them all away? Would not old sins renewed and fresh sins added provoke like punishment? Not so; God's covenant with man and the earth interposes absolutely. “I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth.” He will certainly judge and destroy otherwise, as He warns elsewhere; but it was no small comfort, when the world that now is began after the deluge, that God assured their trembling hearts against a blow so naturally and justly to be dreaded.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 9:1-7

FROM the specific dealing in the last section of chap. 8., on the ground of burnt offering with its savor of rest, which necessarily brought in the name of “Jehovah,” we return in chap. 9. to the general ways of God, of “Elohim,” till the special blessing of Shem requires “Jehovah” toward the close of the chapter. The propriety of the usage in each case is apparent and undeniable. It has no reasonable connection with the fancy of distinct authors or legends, but is founded on the exigencies of the truth and the exactitude of inspiration. Interchange of the name in any, case would touch, not of course the substance of the facts, but the moral perfection conveyed by their due occurrence.

“And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. And fear of you and dread of you shall be upon every animal of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, with all that moveth [on] the ground, and with all fishes of the sea: into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you: as the green herb I give you everything. Only flesh with its life, its blood, ye shall not eat. And surely your blood [that] of your lives will I require: at every animal's hand will I require it; and at man's hand, at the hand of each [the blood] of his brother, will I require the man's life. [Whoso] sheddeth the man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in God's image made he the man. And ye, be fruitful and multiply; swarm on the earth and multiply on it” (chap. 9:1-7).

Such is the tenure of man and the lower creation in the world that now is, in marked distinctness from the world that then was, when Adam was set up as head of the race in Eden. It was conferred dominion then for man made in God's image, after His likeness—dominion over fish of the sea, and over bird of the heavens, and over cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. Now it was a fallen world, and the fear and the dread of those blessed by God and charged to replenish the earth were to be upon every beast

and bird with reptile and fish. The creatures were delivered into men's hand. Sin pervaded, and God took it into consideration as an existing fact which could not be ignored; as we saw just before in its proper place, where sacrifice intervened, spite of the evil in man's heart and its imagination from his youth.

But if God now first gave every moving thing that lives to be food for man (ver. 3), as freely as green herbage had been originally given to beast and bird and reptile (chap. 1:30), there was marked restriction put on the blood. Of this man was not to eat (ver. 4). It was the life, and this God reserved for Himself. The liberty for animal food to man's use made the divine claim more conspicuous. Life belonged to God; and woe be to those that despise or defy His rights. It is the condition of a fallen world, and God is a Preserver, or a Savior, of all men as says the apostle, especially of those that believe. He governs in His providence. It is no longer the dominion given by the Creator. Now He licenses, and He prohibits.

For this reason God stringently guards human life and death. The very governing authority placed in man's hand would soon be misused and perverted by his will without the fear of God; and rivers of blood would flow, not merely through lawless corruption and violence as before the deluge, but by ambitious kings and governors after it. Therefore does God in His prescient wisdom and considerate goodness declare from the starting point of the new tenure, “Surely your blood [that is] of your lives will I require; at every animal's hand will I require it.” Specially of course would He require the life of man at man's hand, even at the hand of each man's brother (ver. 5). And this is set on its sacred and sound principle in ver. 6; By man should his blood be shed who shed man's blood; for in God's image did He make man.

The image of God expresses man's place and responsibility of representing God. Man alone has that image generally, Christ of course specially and alone perfectly and pre-eminently. It is not His likeness; for alas! man lost this by sin and begat in his own likeness, however grace might act as it does by faith to God's glory. But His image, even when fallen as here, man retains; and the man who slays another (save by competent authority) is guilty of denying God's right in this respect; which we see here that God asserts with the utmost plainness, precision, and solemnity. The murderer meddles not merely with man and injures him to the last degree, hut he also defaces God's image by killing a man, and God sentences him to die. Murder is unwarrantable assumption of what belongs to God. In no other way but by death of the murderer is God's honor vindicated, and God's will maintained. Men may have decreed otherwise; but they that do so are flying in the face of Him from Whom1 they derive their own title to govern. For here it is laid down before separate nations began, and before His special legislation for Israel where it was guarded with minute care, and not least in the exceptional case of manslaughter. To Noah was said what binds all mankind since the deluge.

Notwithstanding all He foresaw of rebellion and bloodshed, God repeats in ver. 7 His word to men, “Be fruitful and multiply; swarm in the earth and multiply in it.” This they have assuredly done.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 8:20-22

HITHERTO the account throughout this chapter, as also much the greater part of the preceding, has been general history: all since chap. 7:6, save the beautifully appropriate exception of the last clause of chap. 7:17. Now, as in that exception, special relationship is meant to be put forward, and Jehovah appear, rather than Elohim, in the close of chap. 8., as in the opening of chap. vii. Never was a weaker effort to account for the use of the divine names than the fancy of two distinct writings joined into one, never a scheme more utterly unproductive of good fruit. Who was ever helped thereby to a ray of light divine? What holy affection was ever exercised by it? Its direct and inevitable tendency is to destroy reverence for the sacred letters, and to undermine the Lord's authority Who declares that Moses wrote of Him, not the mythical legendists of rationalist imagination. Accepting the scripture as God-breathed, we may easily and surely learn the propriety of the change of designation in the verses before us, and the enhanced value which the name here employed imparts. “And Noah built an altar to Jehovah, and took of every clean beast and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And Jehovah smelled the odor of rest. And Jehovah said in his heart, I will not any more again curse the ground on account of man, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will not any more again smite every living thing as I have done. Henceforth all the days of the earth, seed and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease” (vers. 20-22).

After such grave and long detention, with death and desolation all around in judgment executed on bold and open sin, the natural impulse would have been to build a house for himself and houses for his sons. But as Noah had found grace in the eyes of Jehovah, so he remained righteous before Him; and his first thought, on emerging with all entrusted to his care from the ark, was to own Jehovah and His grace sacrificially. This needed no fresh commandment. It had already received His signal recognition from the beginning, when Abel, just because he had faith, approached Him with the slain firstling and its fat, and Cain was rejected, because he rose not above the religion of nature. There was no sense of sin in himself, nor of grace in God reigning through righteousness to eternal life through the coming Savior.

Noah perceived now the fit provision of the seventh clean beast and bird. He saw by faith that it could only be rightly for an offering to Jehovah. The seventh was not one of a pair: how suitable for presenting on the altar! And so he took of “every clean beast and of every clean bird.” It had thus afar larger range than Abel's; appropriate as his was for one coming to God by faith. Nor was Noah's any more than Abel's a sin-offering. What then suited was a burnt-offering. It was of a sweet savor, or savor of rest, and of course propitiatory; but here there was no question of individual acceptance as in Abel's case. It was no less a righteous ground for presenting the renewed earth to Jehovah. No such position was taken by Adam when set in Paradise. It was exactly right and due to Jehovah now, that man and every living creature and the earth might be before Him in the sweet savor He smelled: the witness of an infinitely efficacious offering whereby Christ in His death would reconcile all things. Now came, it would seem, the fulfillment of Lamech's word in calling his son Noah, This same shall comfort us concerning our works and concerning the toil of our hands, because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed (Gen. 5:29). Only Christ coming in power will remove the curse; but Noah brought in meanwhile alleviation and comfort for man in his toil.

Nor was this all; “Jehovah said in his heart, I will not any more again curse the ground on account of man, for the thought of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will not any more again smite every living thing as I have done.” How blessed was the effect even of this witness to the great Sacrifice! Compare chap. 6:5-7. When Jehovah saw, not the sacrifice, but man's wickedness great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart only evil continually, it grieved Him in His heart, and He said I will destroy man, &c. Now when He (according to the gracious language of scripture) smelled the savor of rest, He said in His heart, I will not again any more curse the ground, nor smite any living

thing, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. Sacrifice made the difference, bringing Christ's death before Him as it should be later. And grace could flow righteously even then. Man was no better in himself; but here the chief of the new world acts in faith, and God answers in grace on this righteous ground. The earth was to be spared. During all its days the seasons should follow, not in the fullness that Christ will impart when He reigns over it, but adequately; seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. And so it has ever been, though many willfully forget why it is, less grateful than the ox which knows its owner, or the ass which knows its master's crib.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 8:13-19

Life is not all, nor life amply secured in the face of death and desolation all around. This the ark had been, not only to Noah and his house, but to every living creature which found shelter within. The power of death, the judgment of God, had fallen unsparingly on all that breathed outside; but the grace that provided salvation was equally evident. And the word of God was no less simple, intelligible, and in fact understood by all that believed it. Those who discredited the warning of God were the witnesses of its truth when the flood came and swept them all away. The waters of Noah did go over the earth, as surely as they shall go over it no more. A still more terrible destruction awaits it, however long it may seem to linger. The heavens and earth that are now by His word are kept in store, reserved for fire against a day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. The one is as certain as the other. But we according to His promise look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Meanwhile it never was the mind of God that there should be life only, but liberty. Life out of death ushers into liberty. Christ not only quickens and shelters, but this as a preparation for the freedom of grace. With freedom He set us free. Flesh had long been tried under the legal taskmaster; and it had been demonstrated that its mind is enmity against God. But now that there is life, after death and judgment have done their worst on Him Who is risen out of both, there is liberty also for the regenerate.

But it is beautiful to note how Noah can wait. Many days had passed before he opened the window of the ark; many more while he tried the condition of the renewed earth by the messengers he sent forth repeatedly, and not in vain. A further step was now to be taken in the spiritual intelligence given to him.

“And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dried. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dry” (vers. 13, 14).

His faith had been tried not a little, but the prospect was comforting even from the first. “The face of the ground” was dry when he looked; and after near two months more “the earth was dry.” But if thus and rightly exercised and comforted, he still waited on God's word to go out, as he went in at His word. He will not hasten in the impetuosity of nature and its self-confidence; he depends on God and obeys His word; and the word in due time was given, as it ever is to those who look up to Him.

“And God spoke to Noah, saying, Go forth out of the ark, thou and thy wife, and thy sons and thy sons' wives with thee: all the animals that are with thee of all flesh, among bird and among cattle and among every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, bring forth with thee, that they may swarm on the earth and be fruitful and multiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives, with him: all the animals, all the creeping things, and all the birds—everything that moveth upon the earth after their families, went forth out of the ark” (vers. 15-19).

Now comes the faithful word of God to His waiting and watching servant: how welcome to the prisoner of hope! It is the type of those preserved through the great hour of temptation which shall come upon all the habitable world to try those that dwell on the earth. Hence it is referred to in that part of our Lord's great prophecy which sets out a future remnant of the chosen people left for blessing, when the Lord comes in power and glory to establish the kingdom of God publicly here below, on the cutting off of His open enemies. So also we find it in the Gospel of Luke (chap. 17) where our Lord contrasts God's kingdom as a matter not of show but of faith, as it was then and is now, with that public display and resistless power in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

On the other hand, when Christ's coming to receive His own to Himself for the Father's house on high is brought before us, it is after the pattern, not of Noah passing through the scene of judgment, but of Enoch translated to heaven before the time of trouble came, as we may see in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17. So, in Rev. 4 and onward, the symbol of the heavenly redeemed is above, around the throne during the entire period of the judicial dealings of God, which have for their object to put the Lord in actual possession of the inheritance earthly as well as heavenly. Even in that solemn time mercy will rejoice against judgment, and there will be prepared on earth multitudes of the spared (Rev. 7:14.) from not Israel only but all the Gentiles, to welcome the returning Son of man; as others slain for their faith (chap 6:13 etc.) will be raised from the dead before His world-kingdom begins, to reign with Christ no less than those caught up before (chap. xx. 4). There must be a fit condition for men on earth, whether of Israel or the nations, as He has the glorified in heaven. And when the kingdom comes in manifest power and glory, the merely animal creation is to rejoice; and indeed all that is now travailing and groaning through the fall of its head. How beautifully this suits the glory of the Second man needs no argument, however offensive to rationalists, who never rise above the first man.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 8:6-12

Another step was now taken by Noah after the tops of the mountains were seen. God had given necessary warning to save life, but exercised his dependence and patience abundantly.

“And it came to pass at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. And he sent forth the raven; and it went forth, going to and fro until the drying of the waters from off the earth. And he sent forth the dove from him, to see if the waters were abated [become light] from off the face of the ground; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and returned to him into the ark, for

the waters [were] on the face of all the earth. And he put forth his hand and took her and brought her in to him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days, and again he sent the dove out of the ark; and the dove came to him at eventide, and behold the leaf of olive fresh plucked [was] in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again to him more" (vers. 6-12).

We may easily gather from scripture that "forty" is habitually used, days or years, for a term of trial, both O. and N. Testaments furnishing instances. So it would seem to have been here. And temptation must be borne, not evaded; as we have the assurance not only that God will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but that He will, with the trial, make also the way of escape that we may be able to endure. So here after duly waiting Noah opened, not the light or roof, but the window of the ark, and sent forth the raven, which kept going to and fro till the waters were dried up from off the earth. He also sent forth the dove. In this case it is added to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground. The raven and the dove were true to their habits. The unclean bird found congenial food in that scene of desolation, and sought no more an entrance into the ark, content with what death provided everywhere. The bird of associations afterward so hallowed found no rest for the sole of her foot, and returned to Noah and to the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth; and he put forth his hand, and took her, and brought her to him into the ark. This was conclusive. They must still wait. The historic facts seem to be comprised here; and their design is evident.

But without contending for a type more or less faithful, we may readily admit the moral instruction derivable from the description. The raven is notorious for its restlessness and its voracity, as the dove for its harmlessness and expression of love; the one prohibited from the Israelite's use, as the other was expressly fit, not merely for his food, but for a burnt sacrifice to be offered to Jehovah, and in certain cases as a sin offering also. There is surely nothing far-fetched in observing how the unclean nature finds its satisfaction without where death reigns; while that which is clean returns to the shelter of the ark, first, without a sign of life, next after seven days more with a freshly plucked olive leaf in her beak, the pledge of coming "fatness" wherewith God and man are honored, making man's face to shine. Plainer if possible is the result after seven days further; for the dove, when sent forth, could find rest for the sole of her foot in the renewed earth, and returned not again to him more. The dove, strong of wing to flee from that which was out of harmony with her pure and gentle nature, had now a sphere which attracted her; and Noah could not but draw the right conclusion.

So it is in a far more serious region. Those that are according to flesh do mind the things of the flesh; as those according to Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace. Nor is there any difficulty in apprehending this; because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; and those that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye, said the apostle to the saints in Rome, are not in flesh but in Spirit, if so be that God's Spirit dwelleth in you. And there He is given to dwell, as had been shown in a preceding part of the Epistle, where souls justified by faith have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. They are justified in the power of His blood, and are anointed of the Holy Spirit accordingly to have His objects theirs henceforth.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 8:1-5

THUS was the ante-diluvian world purged of its abounding and flagrant evils by divine judgment: the standing witness and warning of another judgment which impends over the habitable earth. There were two witnesses then, first Enoch, then Noah, each with his own characteristic points of difference, both concurring to announce judgment about to fall on the ungodly while living here below. So it will be in the day when the Son of man is revealed (Luke 17:30).

How deeply and universally the judgment of the quick is overlooked in Christendom! It may be said that it is attested in the creeds; and this is true. But even when the creeds were composed, the truth had faded distressingly; and their recital seems to have been an effort to preserve it from utter ruin through the ever rising flood of failure in faith, of worldly ways, and of heterodoxy on every side. Even then all distinctness was lost, no less than the living power was dwindling. For we can read how the baptized were already mixing up the judgment of the quick with that of the dead, because the Lord is to judge both; and no wonder, for they were far and wide substituting the error of a general resurrection for a resurrection of life and a resurrection of judgment, with the millennial reign between them. Such confusion is an error which in itself tends to destroy enjoyment of gospel deliverance and of eternal life as present facts, to darken the proper hope of Christ's coming to receive us for the Father's house, and to frustrate all testimony to His world-kingdom when He returns with power and glory. There is little of truth left by this desolating scheme, harmless as it may appear to men who are not thoroughly subject to the written word—little more than the person of Christ, which may be and is seen truly (thank God) notwithstanding, but which cannot exercise His full power over souls, where there is feeble entrance by faith into His work.

Hence the importance of appreciating the deluge as God's then judgment of living man on the earth and of the creation subject to him there. It was used by the prophet Isaiah (chap. 54) for Israel's comfort; for they must experience Jehovah's face hid from them in overflowing wrath for a moment, before His everlasting kindness rests on them—a state which is in no way true of them yet. So did the Lord compare the days of Noah with His coming or presence as Son of man to introduce the kingdom of the heavens, not in mystery as now, but manifestly over the earth (Matt. 24:37, Luke 17:26). And the apostle of the circumcision does not fail to illustrate and enforce his rebuke of the mockers at the close of the days by a solemn application of that divine intervention (2 Peter 3:4-7). But the Judge stands before the doors. Jehovah's end will be seen, that He is full of pity and merciful; and so we find the faithful Creator here.

"And God remembered Noah, and all that lived, and all the cattle that [were] with him in the ark; and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. And closed were [the] deep's fountains and heaven's windows, and the rain from the heavens was restrained. And the waters returned from off the earth continually (going and returning); and the waters were abated at the end of a hundred and fifty days. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on [the] seventeenth day of [the] month, on Ararat's mountains. And the waters were abating continually (going and abating) until the tenth month: in the tenth, on the first of the month, were the mountain tops seen" (vers. 1-5).

Here again we see, as in every previous instance, internal evidence of the Holy Spirit's design in speaking of God (Elohim) rather than Jehovah. It is the general care of Him Who had created all; and hence every living thing and all the cattle are remembered along with Noah. We have not here specific relationship, where "Jehovah" (Lord) would be requisite and in keeping. So it was in describing the divine action of

bringing on the flood; here, of removing the infliction for His creatures that were preserved. Thus God remembered all, and God made a wind to pass over the earth; and the waters subsided, and the extraordinary stores from below and from above were closed, and rain was restrained. It is thus simply God's way generally from chaps. 7:17 to 8:19 inclusively. From a chap.8:20 we have special relationship, and Jehovah is at once introduced with the strictest propriety. The notion of distinct authorship is merely the device of blind men groping in vain. The same writer was led to vary the expression of the divine name, exactly as the change of subject required. The design of the Holy Spirit is therefore completely lost by the dream of distinct documents and authors, where this change of title ensues, which involves also new associations and different terms, which they in their ignorance work into their hypothesis. To the believer in true divine inspiration the design of God is thus made apparent, instructive, of deep interest, and of no little fruit. On the unbelieving hypothesis all is reduced to barrenness from Dan to Beersheba.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 7:17-24

Next we have the prevalence of the deluge described in language alike simple and impressive; but entirely free from the realistic details of horror in which the moderns delight. The effect was complete over all that breathed on the dry land and over bird life.

“And the flood was forty days upon the earth, and the waters increased and bare up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth. And the waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high mountains that [were] under all the heavens were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh that moved upon the earth expired, bird and cattle and beast and all the creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all mankind: all died which [had] breath of spirit of life, of all that [was] in dry [land]. And every living substance which [was] on the face of the ground from man to cattle and to reptile and to bird of the heavens; and they were blotted out from the earth; and Noah only remained, and what [was] with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days” (vers. 17-24).

It was for God now to accomplish His word of judgment: whether or not He caused His wind to blow, the waters flowed. It was no question of His ordinary regulation according to the laws He impressed on creation. His word is paramount. Man must learn that He is, and that He punishes, even in this world where He sees fit, the iniquity that exceeds. He is long-suffering, but He gave thus early a lesson to the ungodly which they can only forget or deny at their peril. “Behold, He breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; He shutteth upon a man, and there can be no opening. Behold, He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; also He sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.” No doubt there were the deceived and the deceivers then, as at other times, who had to learn, whatever their pride or indifference, that they were His Who stood by His warnings and dealt publicly with all that despised Him and them. With Him is strength and wisdom, whereof destruction and death say, We have heard its fame with our ears, if it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the bird of the heavens. For man, behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding!

God has let us know the process of the deluge, as well as the destruction outside and the deliverance for all within the ark. In vain does the writer of the “Genesis of the Earth” seek to transfer the catastrophe to the low lands of the Euphrates and the Tigris, where an inundation of fifteen cubits would little affect the earth in general or its denizens. This is to overlook or disbelieve “the mountains of Ararat” (chap. 8:4), where the ark rested when the waters were abating. Its chief peak, being 17,000 feet above the sea, may give some notion of the appalling fact. For forty days was the flood i.e., the extraordinary outburst from beneath and from above (vers. 11, 12), which bore up the enormous structure of the ark upon the face of the waters; and the waters so prevailed that “all the high hills that were under all the heavens were covered.” This seems naturally to go beyond Ararat; yet if even its highest peak were far beneath the water, what then for the earth? “Fifteen cubits upward did the water prevail; and the mountains were covered.”

As the apostle Peter comments, “the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished"; so here the narrative has every mark of truth without exaggeration or the least approach to imaginative coloring. The universal death which suddenly befell every living creature of the land or the air, is vividly set before the reader; no less than the security of Noah alone and those with him in the ark. It is childish and sinful to cavil at the destruction of the lower creation, which had already been subjected to vanity through the fall of its head. And now that man's wickedness called aloud for divine judgment, the birds and beasts share his ruin on earth. Yet even in this the goodness and the wisdom of God secure the victory in due time. For if the creation fell with the first man, what joy to know in God's word that all its groaning awaits the triumph of the Second man when the manifestation of the sons of God takes place! For as surely as through Adam's transgression it was plunged into sighs, and travails in pain together until now, so surely will the Last Adam appear, when it also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. Christ, besides being Firstborn from the dead, the Head of the church, is also Firstborn of all creation, its Chief, and Heir of all things. And He died to reconcile, not all believers only, but all things unto Himself, whether things on the earth or things in the heavens. As the word of God is pledged, so His return will vindicate the word and display the reconciliation in power.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 7:11-16

WE have thus had clear examples of God's ways in prophecy; not only a short and precisely marked interval of “seven days” in Gen. 7:10, when the blow was to fall, but this after an amply long warning of “a hundred and twenty years” in chap. 6:3, when man's days were to close judicially for the world that then was. Both are undeniable on the face of the record: each worthy of Him Who alone could authoritatively utter, as He punctually fulfilled, both. If He executes judgment on a world that hardens itself in iniquity and disbelieves His word, He provides for the display of His mercy toward such as keep His word in faith, and obey Him, as Noah did to the saving of his house.

So, in the downfall sustained by the chosen people at a later day, Isaiah was raised up to warn of the captivity in Babylon, when no ground for hostility was dreamed of on either side, and Judah's king, saved from the great king of Assyria, too eagerly showed the treasures of his house and kingdom to the friendly Gentile envoys. But Jeremiah was given to speak of Jerusalem's ruin then just imminent, and of the exile for 70 years when Babylon should fall and the remnant return. Both prophets wrote to Jehovah's glory in different times, ways, and circumstances;

both served to nourish the faith of souls looking to Him out of human elation on the one side or depression, fear, and despair on the other: and both foretold of the final destruction of the power which led the Jews into captivity. The avowed or the insinuated supposition of anything short of distinctly divine inspiration is mere infidelity flowing from the idolatry of the human mind. In the early predictions of the flood, general or specific, it is idle to imagine any historical circumstances of the smallest bearing on either. It was a divine judgment of the world then existing, and no occasion conceivable to account for the limit of 120 years, any more than for the precision; and He Who thus judged and destroyed guilty man was pleased to fix out of His own wisdom both the one and the other. But He did reveal them beforehand to Noah, not for His preservation only during the judgment, but for the comfort and blessing of his soul in the knowledge of His gracious interest and of His righteous ways, and for all believers who should profit by the word afterward. And He is the same God still, only revealed fully in Christ and known by His Spirit sent forth from heaven in such a sort and measure as could not be then.

“In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, and the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were broken up all the fountains of the great deep, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights. On the same day went Noah, and Shen and Ham and Japheth, sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; they, and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind—every bird of every wing. And they went unto Noah into the ark, two [and] two of all flesh wherein was the breath of life. And they that came came male and female of all flesh, as God commanded him; and Jehovah shut him in (lit. after him)” (vers. 11-16).

As we have seen the double form of prophecy, snore distant and more immediate, and yet both unmistakably of God only, so we have in the great event which befell the ungodly world of that day a stupendous miracle of destruction from His hand which swept away the entire generation of unbelievers, with subordinate creation, from the face of the earth, when man's corruption and violence in the face of testimony from God became insupportable. So tremendous an event is recorded with the utmost precision and solemnity. We are told of it to the year, month, and day, when the judgment was executed. From below as from above, the brief but clear account tells us of what was never before man's creation and has never been since; and we may add on God's assurance, what will never be again, but a still more solemn and significant and all-pervading dissolution of the world. It was no mere question of the clouds or of the sea, as ordinarily. The inspired narrator speaks of quite different and altogether unexampled sources. All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of the heavens, as the phrase is, were opened. Neither the one nor the other was according to the course of nature God established before or since. This is exactly what makes a miracle evident and impressive; for all admit the regular action of the physical principles by which God orders the universe. But only skepticism is unwilling to own His title, especially in a morally ruined system, to interfere whether in judgment of evil, or in the testimony and triumph of grace: both alike worthy of His goodness and due to His character, fraught too with the richest blessing to His creatures, and subserving His glory.

No doubt it was not ordinary experience, any more than the resurrection of our Lord. It is a question of extraordinary facts proved by adequate testimony and even overwhelming evidence. To set induction from experience against such facts, or indeed any facts, is essentially illogical. “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater” (1 John 5:9). A miracle has nothing to do with ordinary experience, less even than those primeval and permanent causes of which logic avows it can give no account; yet there they have been from the origin of all things as certainly as the actual sensible course of things which we call experience. They were miraculous, just like the deluge on the one hand, or our Lord's resurrection (as indeed His entire appearing here below) on the other. They are wholly beyond that experience, and above the ken of science; but they are the surest and most momentous of facts; and God has taken care to give His irrefragable witness to them all. The infidel argument begs the question and refutes itself to an honest mind. For it assumes that there is nothing beyond the general laws in ordinary experience; while it is compelled to own that, even for initiating that course of nature, there must have been primordial causes of which it knows nothing and can give no account. How much more was it for God, holy, righteous, and good, to judge iniquity and to reveal grace and truth, yea life eternal in His Son. For “this is the witness, that God gave us life eternal; and this life is in His Son” (1 John 5:11).

The real reason why these illogical reasoners dislike miracles, whether judicial or in grace, is because they dread God, as they must with a bad conscience; and they are too proud to own their sins and be saved through the faith of Christ, Who died for them and rose from the dead. If they refuse to believe now, God will enforce the honor of His Son by their resurrection to judgment executed by Him Whom they refuse now as Savior.

It is striking to observe how the last touching incident here recorded rises up against the irrational hypothesis of pseudo-criticism. The hypothesis of Elohistic and Jehovistic documents so fails to account for the use of the divine designations, as well as the other phenomena of the text, that they are obliged to imagine another modifying element, which they call “the Priest's Code,” and even a redactor of it. But all this is unintelligent jargon which explains nothing, and is as unreliable as the most trifling traditions of the Babylonish Talmud. To the believer the usage of scripture is full of interest and edification. In our chapter Jehovah's care for Noah, with his house, whom He had seen righteous before Him in this generation is attested in the opening verses.1-5. From ver. 6 we have the action of Noah in view of Elohim's word as such, where accordingly the entrance of creatures, clean or unclean, two and two, is named as in chap. vi.; and the more strikingly here, because in the previous verses the clean by sevens had been enjoined by Jehovah as befitted His dealings with His own. The difference is owing to the divine design, however dull we may be in seizing or yet more in expounding it. But ver. 16 is remarkable for its disproof of the dream. For there we read that they went in male and female of all flesh. Now this ought to be, as it is, and only could be accurately, “as Elohim commanded him.”

But there is immediately following the words, as if to explode by anticipation the diverse document notion, “and Jehovah shut him in.” On the believing view, one cannot conceive any addition more pertinent, beautiful, or consoling. It is the expression of special care on Jehovah's part to the one that honored Him and was thus guarded peculiarly at that great crisis. In judgment He remembered mercy and provided generally for the preservation of creation; but He had His affections in a closer way for Noah, and, by that divine name which expressed the relationship, He meant to let, His people know in His imperishable word that He secured His faithful servant: Jehovah shut him in.” Here the scheme of “higher criticism” not only loses the lesson of His grace, but sinks into puerility. It is well that those who believe should resist and resent these “evil workers;” who appear to be as wholly insensible to the grace of God as to His truth. They as scholars avail themselves of the plea of literary questions to fritter away divine authority, and all that is vital and God-glorifying which is bound up with it. But no faithful soul should be deceived. It is not Hebrew learning which is the point, but the skeptical mania of the day.

THE decisive moment and a fresh message now arrived.

“And Jehovah said to Noah, Go (or Come) into the ark, thou and all thy house; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take [by] sevens, a male and its female, but of the beasts that [are] not clean two, a male and its female; also of birds of the heavens [by] sevens, male and female: to keep seed alive on the face of all the earth. For yet seven days and I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and all the living substance that I have made will I destroy (blot out) from off the face of the ground. And Noah did according to all that Jehovah commanded him.”

“And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was on the earth. And Noah went in and his sons, and his wife and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because (from the face) of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that [are] not clean, and of birds, and everything that creeps on the ground, went in two [and] two to Noah into the ark, male and female, as God commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth” (vers. 1-10).

A good deal is sometimes made of the word “Come” in the A. V. of ver. 1. This is really beside the mark. The verb may be either, as best suits the context, which is often as here a delicate question if made one. When it means entering where the speaker is, “come” is the more correct in the usage of our tongue; where no emphasis of this kind calls for it, either may be used correctly, as for instance here. Accordingly they are both used freely in translating this and other Biblical Hebrew words into English; and so any special force appears to be inadmissible, except in circumstances which hardly apply to the present case.

Yet we cannot but own the mercy shown to Noah, and for his sake where there could be no personal ground of commendation. All his house benefited by its head. “And Jehovah said to Noah, Go into the ark, thou and all thy house; for thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation.” It was not a small thing to say “righteous before Jehovah,” and especially “in this generation,” so reprobate as it was already, and so pronounced by Him.

The propriety of the change from Elohim (God) as in the latter half of chap. vi., to Jehovah (the Lout)) here is strikingly and beyond all just doubt confirmed by internal considerations. It is no longer the faithful Creator merely, but special relationship, and ends of a higher and more intimate nature. Hence we have a quite new call to the patriarch as one who had found grace in the eyes of Jehovah and was righteous before Him. “Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee seven, seven, a male and its female, and of the beasts that [are] not clean two, a male and its female; also of birds of the heavens seven, seven: to keep seed alive on the face of all the earth.”

Here the distinction, afterward minutely expounded under the law, first appears, where the special name of Israel's God is introduced: a distinction thus early enforced in the preservation of animals, where the claim of sacrifice was met and the need of suitable food foreshadowed. For only after the deluge was man allowed to eat of flesh without blood (chap. 9.). How exactly this falls in with “Jehovah” speaking requires no argument; not with the shallow and unintelligent supposition of different authors or legends, which explains nothing but only confuses, but with due reverence to scripture and resulting instruction and living interest.

Next, we have Jehovah's considerate care in the notice given of but seven days before the flood, that Noah and his family might the more calmly enjoy their deliverance and the goodness of their Deliverer. The world of unbelievers had refused the warning that sounded through one hundred and twenty years; the seven days' notice was a fresh proof of gracious concern in those that believed. “For in yet seven days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; all the living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the ground. And Noah did according to all that Jehovah commanded him.” “Forty” appears to be the number of trial or endurance put to the test; as in Moses, Israel, Elijah, Jonah, and Ezekiel (for Judah): so in the legal strokes inflicted on an evildoer, with the limit not to exceed; and so here and such in the Temptation.

The special force of these five verses is the more confirmed by the general statement which follows in vers. 6-10, where “God” appears rather than Jehovah, and consequently nothing of moral relationship in particular. Here we have Noah's age when the flood came—six hundred years; and that the entrance of himself and all his house into the ark (vers. 6, 7). And this is so true that, though birds, and reptiles, as also going in, but two and two male and female are spoken of “as, God commanded Noah” (vers. 8, 9), because it is simply in view of perpetuating the race, high or low. “And it came to pass after the seven days that the waters of the flood were upon the earth” (ver. 10). He who enjoyed the favor of Jehovah had the previous communication in grace; none could be unconscious of God's judgment when it came.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 6:18-22

IN the face of the coming destruction of the earth's corrupters God is pleased next to indicate His intended use of the ark Noah was directed to build.

“But I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt go into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy son's wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every [kind] shalt thou bring into the ark to keep [them] alive with thee; male and female shall they be. Of the birds after their kind, and of the cattle after their kind, of every reptile of the ground after its kind, two of every [kind] shall come to thee, to keep [them] alive. And take thou to thee of all food that is eaten, and gather [it] to thee, and it shall be for food for thee and for them. Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him, so did he” (vers. 18-22).

He that walked with God, a righteous man, blameless in his generations, is the object of His care; and God would have Noah to know it, especially when so tremendous a blow was hanging over a careless unbelieving world. Therefore to him that believed does He intimate His intention to deliver himself and his wife and his family in the way appointed. The execution of this was a suited and notable trial of Noah's faith, involving a long time of waiting, continuous labor, and entire but active submission to God's word. Noah had before his spirit habitually, on the one hand, that the world was doomed, and that judgment would fall upon it at God's hand because of its iniquities; on the other, that he and his would without doubt be sheltered from it in the ark, with the creatures needed to renew the world to come after the flood.

It was a dealing most evidently divine in both its parts for destruction and for rescue, and with ample testimony beforehand. “Shall there be evil in a city (says Amos), and the LORD hath not done it? Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets.” So it was now when He disclosed to Noah that the waters should overspread the earth, yet with mercy glorying against judgment as ordinarily. No doubt it was an outward temporal judgment of His, as we find even at the fall of man; yet just as there it furnishes principles of the profoundest importance for what is inward and everlasting. Though this last is the gravest beyond question, yet is the former of so much the greater moment, as Christendom has been long prone to forget it or to merge it in the final judgment of the dead. Not so the Lord or His apostles, any more than the O. T. prophets, who constantly urge the judgment of the world (i.e., of living men here below, before He reigns in righteousness over all the earth, and therefore long before the scene of His Great White Throne). In this the unbelief of Gentiles under the gospel is in contrast with that of the Jews under the law, who were apt to overlook the everlasting judgment through preoccupation with the day of Jehovah which shall judge all the heathen and the apostates of Israel. The N. T. reveals the final judgment for the dead, small and great, far more clearly than the older books of Scripture; but it is no less distinct in warning that God commands men that they should all everywhere repent, inasmuch as He has established a day in the which He will judge the inhabited earth by the Man Whom He has appointed, giving assurance to all in that He raised Him from the dead. This is beyond controversy His judgment of the quick, not of the dead; and the deluge is its counterpart, as the Lord shows in Matt. 24, and elsewhere.

It has been supposed by some that Moses introduced previously existing records here and there with that which was more strictly his own. But this is a gratuitous fancy to account for seeming repetitions that occur, or even for what they call discrepancies. Now, to say nothing of the irreverence implied, how vain is the expedient! For the differing accounts are presented by Moses without the slightest comment; which no human historian would think of doing. We can easily understand inconsistent reports in two distinct works. Do they really mean that such a one as Moses from different sources put together in immediate juxtaposition accounts which, do not tally, either without perceiving their opposition, or indifferent to the perplexity of readers? On their own ground is the hypothesis reasonable? If inspiration be allowed in any real sense, there can be no question.

For the intelligent believer there is, not only not a shade of difficulty, but the evidence of divine wisdom in the design which governs these respective accounts, as in fact all scripture. Take the case before us. It is God as the faithful Creator preserving a line to perpetuate the succession of all flesh, notwithstanding the flood of waters He was about to bring on the earth, when everything else there akin, in which was the breath of life, must expire. Hence in this point of view, as “Elohim” (God) is required for precision, and not “Jehovah,” so of the human family, as well as of the subordinate creatures, we find simply pairs, male and female. We shall find another aspect following, where different thoughts and languages are necessarily employed, in order to convey the truth with divine exactitude. A man left to himself would in all probability have written but one statement, and contented himself with the general fact modified by certain exceptions. God has been pleased to lead His inspired servant to give the double account, so as to mark off that which He ordered according to His rights as Creator from His specific dealings in moral government. This distinction may be trivial in unbelieving eyes; but it is of deep interest and profit to the souls that ponder His word, and learn His mind thereby. Inspiration explains it all, as nothing else can. And if we believe that the scripture is inspired, one can readily understand God using Moses to present both views distinctly; whereas it seems surely a roundabout and cumbrous alternative to imagine two unknown men uninspired to write separately each of these accounts, and Moses as a third, but inspired, editor employed merely to tack them together. The fact is however that those who keenly urge these suppositions betray for the most part their aim and desire to blot out true inspiration altogether, or, which comes to the same result, to allow inspiration only in a sense which leaves out therein divine action and the certainty of truth. For the same men strive to persuade themselves that the accounts contradict one another, that the compiler was so weak as to accept them as consistent and true, and that Christendom has had the narrative in the same easy-going faith, till the self-styled “higher critics” arose to open men's eyes and give them a Bible without God's truth. Such is their “growth” of scripture.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 6:13-17

Chap. 6:13-17.

THE crisis is fully set in view by divine revelation. When the audacious and unholy mixture to which Jude refers so solemnly was stated at the beginning of the chapter, Jehovah set a term to His Spirit's pleading with man. And fearful consequences ensued, however gratifying to human pride defiant of the warning. “These were the heroes which were of old, men of the name.” A mighty impulse was thus given, on the earth, to human iniquity which Jehovah felt deeply; and the sentence was pronounced. “I will wipe out man whom I have created from the face of the ground,” as well as the subject creation, but with a careful expression of the favor Noah found in His eyes.

Yet it was important to note, not only the offense and its effects against moral government and special relationship, but for the divine nature the abhorrence of the earth corrupt and full of violence, in contrast with Noah a righteous man, blameless among his generations, walking with God when all flesh had corrupted its way on the earth. This introduces express intimation of the impending destruction for the earth and its guilty inhabitants, and of the means of deliverance for Noah, his house, and the creature, which were thus to be preserved.

“And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is full of violence through them; and behold I will destroy them with (or from) the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood: rooms (nests) shalt thou make in the ark, and pitch it within and without with pitch. And thus shalt thou make it: three hundred cubits the length of the ark, fifty cubits its breadth, and thirty cubits its height. A transparency (or, light) 1shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit thou shalt finish it above; and the ark's door thou shalt set in its side: [with] lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. And I, behold I, bring the flood of waters on the earth to destroy all flesh wherein [is] the breath of life: all that [is] in the earth shall expire” (vers. 13-17).

The deluge was not an event according to secret ways in providence, as we may see in the history of Esther, the importance of which is great in itself and profitable for our learning. It was an inflicted judgment which prophecy made known. And It had a character of universality which separated it from other interventions of God, however real and instructive, and made it suitable to compare with the days of the Son of man when every eye shall see Him as well as with the narrower but awful doom of Sodom and the other cities of the plain when it rained fire and sulfur from heaven: “So shall it be when the Son of man is revealed.” Hence, as Enoch had already prophesied in that vast sweep which, as

given by Jude, embraces the ultimate with the beginning of the senses, Noah is made the depositary of the definite accomplishment of what was at hand. The God Who predicts as He pleases, directly or indirectly, is the judge of the suitable occasion; and faith accepts it at whatever time He speaks; but all have not faith. For the believer it is enough for Him to say, Who doeth these things known from eternity. But He makes known also to His servants, as here to Noah, we have seen, expressly a hundred and twenty years before the place of longsuffering testimony closed: a fact early in the Bible and in God's revealed dealings, as irreconcilable with the fundamental principle of skeptical criticism (a very moderate leap forward out of actual history), as with the fallacy of professed believers (prophecy only of value when fulfilled). That there should be this early prediction, with so considerable an interval as one hundred and twenty years, is plain in the one case; as in the other the folly of conceiving the profit to be only when the flood came and took them all away.

But we are fallen on evil days when men, bearing the Christian name and assuming to enlighten their fellows, are not ashamed to designate the inspired account of the deluge a Bible-legend and a poetic myth, chiefly in deference to the difficulties of physical science and the objections of natural historians. Now it is of all moment to stand firm and unbending in the faith. It is no question of mistakes in copies, in translation, or in interpretation. Poetry and its tropes are not before us, but the language of sober history treating of facts, and of God's declaration in respect of them. “Make thee an ark of gopher-wood: nests (or compartments) shalt thou make in the ark, and pitch it with pitch (or bitumen) within and without. And thus shalt thou make it: three hundred cubits the length of the ark, fifty cubits its breath, and thirty cubits its height. A transparency (or light) shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second and third stories shalt thou make it” (vers. 15, 16). It is the plain, and unvarnished expression of fact. The question is, Are believers to accept unhesitatingly the word of God? Every scripture is inspired of God. This is and ought to be absolutely decisive for all who admit that His authority is in it; as the word will assuredly judge him that rejects both in the last day. He and His word are indissolubly together. Nor is it the chiefs of science who speak thus presumptuously, unless they be also infidel. These influence the incredulous mass and the worldly-minded Christians, who are cowed by their arrogance and are ambitious of standing well with men who despise them and abhor the truth. What is it but a day of rebuke and contumely?

Of this too God has spoken. “We should remember the words spoken before by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through our apostles, knowing this first that in the last of the days mockers should come with mockery, proceeding after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For from the days that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this escapes them of their willfulness, that heavens were of old, and earth subsisting by the word of God out of water and in water; by means of which the then world flooded by water perished, and the now heavens and the earth are stored up, being, kept for fire against judgment day and perdition of ungodly men.” 2 Peter 3:2-7. It is man's will that ignores the deluge, his infidel will in despite of revelation. He hates and dreads God's judgment, as that was the harbinger and witness of a judgment still more scathing and final. As men easily believe what they like, so do they willingly forget and deny what is most repulsive, alas! to their destruction. But thus it is that ungodly Christendom works out against itself the fulfillment of that tremendous day; as the Jews fulfilled the voices of the prophets read on their sabbaths by judging the Judge of Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.

The fact is that the heathen, dark as everywhere they were, ought to put such unbelievers to shame. It would be hard to say what race or land or age, of which we have record, forgot the deluge: so deep and universal was the impression on the dispersed children of men where the Bible alas was unknown. But the news of that awe-inspiring catastrophe of the world, that then was unexampled in fact since man existed, was carried by the dispersed families of mankind north and south, east and west; they did not forget it, but colored it by local or national pride in self-flattery. Those disposed to examine the traditions of Egypt (Osiris, or the Sacred Ship, &c.), Greece, Rome, Asia Minor, and elsewhere may find an only too full collection (for fanciful etymology has exaggerated or erred not a little) in J. Bryant's Ancient Mythology. Vol. iii. of the third edition 8vo. is devoted to the subject; as also vol. v. 287-313. It used to be said that only the Semitic and the Aryan nations handed down the legend of the deluge. Modern research has proved its prevalence equally among the Turanian races. Captain Beechey (Vol. ii. 78) found it among the aborigines of California; Mr. Schoolcraft (Notes &c., 358, 359) among the Iroquois; Sir A. Mackenzie (Travels, ch. xviii.) among the Chippeways; Dr. Richards (Frankland's Journey to the Polar Sea, 73), among the Crees; and Mr. West (Journal 131, 133) on the Red River. So did Mr. G. Catlin (N. American Indians, i. 180, 181, fourth edition) among the Mandans “That these people should have a tradition of the Flood is by no means surprising; as I have learned from every tribe I have visited that they all have some high mountain in their vicinity, where they insist upon it the big canoe landed” &c. (ibid. 177, 178). Justly therefore has Dr. J. C. Prichard (Researches, v. 361) cited Mr. Gallatin for a judgment among Americans weighty and unprejudiced, that the native traditions had their source “in a real historical recollection of an universal deluge which overwhelmed all mankind in early ages of the world.” Again, Mr. Ellis (Hawaii, 451; Polyn. ii. 57, 58) attests other varieties of the tradition in the Sandwich Islands; and Wilkes (Exploring Expedition) found similar tales at Fiji or Viti. So with the Araucanians (Molini's Chili, ii. 82). Much to the same effect is given of the Mexicans and those before them by A. von Humboldt from the MSS. of Pedro de los Reos and from Bp. F. N. de la Vega (Researches, i. 96, 320; ii. 23, 64, 65). So he found in Guatemala, and among the tribes of the Upper Orinoco, &c. (Pers. Narr. iv. 470-473). No wonder that he, no hasty generalizer, was constrained to say, “The traditions affecting the primitive state of the globe among all nations present a resemblance that fills us with astonishment. So many different languages, belonging to branches which appear to have no connection with each other, transmit the same fact to us.” See also his “Vues des Cordilleres” &c., 226, 227. Caligero (Hist. Mex. i. 204) tells us that the Peruvians preserved the same report, as he says also of the Indians in Cuba; and Nieuhoff (Voyage to Brazil) relates it of Brazilians.

It was not otherwise in Asia: Kotzebue (Sec. Voy. round the world, St. Petersburg, 1830) found the tradition in Kamtchatka. In China the tale is that Fuh-he, their founder of civilization, was preserved from the flood with wife, three sons, and three daughters; in which legend Mr. McClatchie (Journal of Asiatic Soc. xvi. 403, 404) recognizes Noah and his family, as Archdeacon Hardwick lets us know in “Christ and other Masters,” third ed. 279. The Parsees have their strange version (Anq. Duperron's Zenday. 350-367); the Hindoos have theirs in their old Sanscrit epic, as Bopp showed in the part he translated (Diluv. Mahab. 1829); also in their later Puranas, where eight are said to have been saved from the waters (Burnouf, Bhag. Pour. Tome iii. Pref.). There is a third and simpler form in the Yajur-Veda, which with the two others Hardwick cites at length; but the detail is not worth reproducing. So the Mission Field (July 185S) reports that the Dyaks say four couples were saved from the Flood.

If we listen to the ruder voices of Africa, there too, as in Darbin near Darfour, we are told (Bull. Univ., 1830, 127-9) that the traditional story of the deluge lingers. According to it all perished; so that the Great-Great had to create men afresh. Here the traces are faint; but the form is perhaps characteristic. Mercy in God was unknown there. The true God had vanished from their knowledge.

Turning far back, the cuneiform inscription which Mr. G. Smith deciphered gives the legend as written of old in Erech (now the ruins of Warka), (Car. Milli. Frag. Mist. Gr. ii. 496 et seqq.), confirming what Berosus and Abydenus wrote (Mfiller's Frag. &c.) as cited by Eusehius (Praep. E v. 414, ed. F. Viger, Col. 1688), and indeed Josephus (c. Apion. i. 19) only with greater detail. Xisuthrus i.e. Noah speaks of the world's wickedness, the command to build the ark, with its erection and filling, the deluge, the resting on a mountain, the, sending out of the birds, &c.

How account for all this mass of tradition converging from of old on one fact of the strangest character, and withal of the nearest and widest interest, varied by the appropriating vanity of race, yet at bottom self-evidently akin? The truth explains it, nothing else. As to the coin of Philip the elder struck at Apamea, Eckhel (Doctr. Numm. Vett. iii. 132-139, ed. sec. Vindob. 1828) refuted Barrington and Jeremiah Miller in the Archaeologia iv. 315, &c., and strengthens the timid conclusions of the Abbe Barthelemy. He proves that refers to the patriarch only and without doubt, and that the emblem engraven represents him and his wife, first in the ark with one bird resting on it, and another flying with the olive branch in its mouth; next the same pair out of the ark with the right hand of each extended above in gratitude. From the lines in the Sibylline Books which refer to Ararat and the ark he clearly shows that the medal does not allude to Deucalion, as Falconeri had thought (the Greek form of the story), but to the Mosaic account, only adapted to give luster to their own city Apamea in Phrygia, formerly called Kelaenae (or near it, Dr. Smith's Diet. of G. & R. Geog. i. 153), and Kibotlis, i.e. the word given by the LXX for the Hebrew Tebet or ark.

It is needless surely to plead for Scripture in its moral power and its historic dignity, with characteristic repetition of a touching sort, brief yet committed to details found nowhere else, which would only have been given because they were known to. be true and on divine authority. It rises unadorned, adorned the most, above all competition of the glimmering lights in heathendom; though in their measure, and notwithstanding human change, they too testify with unwonted unanimity to that mighty judgment which ushered in the second birth of mankind, followed after no long interval by the lesser but momentous dealing of God which distributed Noah's descendants into their lands, after their tongues, after their families, in their nations.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 6:9-12

SPECIAL relationship is now dropt; and we are brought back to the more general dealings of God with man. Hence it is no longer “Jehovah,” as in the previous verses of our chapter, but “Elohim” (God) henceforth to the end. The designations employed are therefore completely consistent, and could not be otherwise with propriety. The suggestion of a difference of authorship is not only uncalled for, harsh and barbarous as well as altogether imaginary, but due to a total want of spiritual apprehension; as it arbitrarily conjectures a fortuitous concourse of fragments, and thus loses the profitable design in the same mind adapting the use of each title to the object in view, as each portion or even clause may require.

“These [are] the generations of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in (or among) his generations; Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth” (vers. 9-12).

Viewed in his relationship and its peculiar obligations, Noah, as we have already observed, “found favor in the eyes of Jehovah.” This has its importance. But it is not all. And here we are told of him on the broader ground of the faithful Creator toward all mankind. Noah's piety was recognized as real, but he is also as a righteous man among his fellows. Assuredly so it ought to be always; for the working of the divine nature, of which all born of God partake, is not only upward in dependence and thanksgiving, but vigilantly obedient, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust. Yet we know too well that failure creeps in too often through lack of prayer and watchfulness. In both respects the record of Noah is excellent.

“These [are] the generations of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect among his generations; with God walked Noah.” So it had been said, in chap. 5:22, 24, of that singularly honored saint Enoch, and with the emphasis of a repeated mention in a list of others where not one but himself was so described. Here it is applied to Noah, already distinguished by his father's prophetic expectation of comfort through him (chap. 5:29). It is of deep moral interest to note, that the Holy Spirit records the grace Noah found in Jehovah's eyes, before He tells us that Noah was a righteous man, perfect, &c., and walked with God. This is really and emphatically the true order. Even the manner in which scripture presents the account ought to have guarded (Matthew Henry, for instance) from the thought that Noah's character in ver. 9 comes in here as the reason of God's favor to him. Reason of grace! What an idea and expression! Had he forgotten the real truth of grace? Had he not before him the pointed negation of any such thought in the apostle's words in Rom. 11:6? “If it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace” (R. V.). His alternative (but how strange for a pious commentator to waver between oppositions!) is alone right: Noah's righteous ways, his walk with God, flowed (as always) from God's favor. Old. or N. T. makes no difference as to this, save that the N. T. is most explicit. See 1 Cor. 15:10 expressly; but is it not really so everywhere?

Further, it is not correct to say that he was a just man, that is justified before God. The confusion is similar to what we have already noticed. The grace that justified him wrought in and by him practical righteousness before man. So in the N. T. the doctrine of James is no less true than the apostle Paul's. They are not the same; and when mixed together, instead of being distinguished, the result is darkness and error. But apply the latter to what the soul wants before God when arrested about its sins, and “to him that worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4:4, 5). Whereas in James 2:14-26, where baptized Jews were making Christianity a merely new law and school of dogma, instead of living faith in Christ, the word is “Show me thy faith apart from works, and I by my works will show thee my faith” (ver. 18). The one (in Rom. 4) is justification before God, the root of all; the other is the resulting fruit “shown” before man. Each is indispensable in its place; both united in their season in every true believer. Practical righteousness is the effect, in no way the cause, of justification by faith. Here we are on the ground expressly of Noah in his generations, just, perfect, walking with God. But we know also from Heb. 11:7, that faith was the originating principle through grace of the conduct which distinguished him in that day, by which too he condemned the world as heir of the righteousness that is according to faith.

“Perfect” here simply means as in Job 1:1, 8; 2:3, &c., one of integrity or blameless. The evaporation of the old man, or absorption into the new, even with the richest N. T. privileges, is a dream, and a dangerous one.

But “Noah walked with God,” as Enoch had before him. And this is a blessed thing for us to learn authoritatively of men far from enjoying much which could only come in Christ and His redemption, and in the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven. Alas! we all offend in much, as we are told; yet it is inexcusable, for if the flesh lusts against the Spirit, what of the Spirit against the flesh? And are they not opposed, one to the other, that we may not do the things that we would? The A. V. here is sadly astray, and excuses sin, instead of leaving no room for any such thing.

The three sons Noah begot are again named (yen 10); and solemnly runs the word: “And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth” (vers. 11, 12).

Not a word here or elsewhere gives a hint of other gods or of image-worship for the true God. Scripture speaks of that religious abomination only after the deluge. But, apart from it, what floods of corruption drown men! It was so then, and violence too filled the earth. They are indeed the two ruling forms of human iniquity. But bad as the violence may have been, and it was great and prevalent everywhere, the corruption of the earth, and of all flesh in its way, we can read here at least as most of all odious in the eyes of God then, Noah, we are taught by other scripture, was a preacher of righteousness in that day of universal corruption; but we hear not a word of his voice raised to God in intercession, unless possibly Ezek. 14:14, 20, be supposed to imply it. Certainly the pleading of Abraham, when he knew the impending destruction of the cities of the plain which menaced his kinsman, is touching and instructive. And it is hard to conceive such a man as Noah not deeply moved by the awful fate awaiting an incomparably larger sphere, a world of ungodly.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 6:5-8

THUS far we have had the new, strange, and portentous evil which played its part in calling for the righteous judgment of the deluge. But this was not all which made the catastrophe necessary in the eyes of the divine Governor.

“And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man [was] great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart only evil continually (all the day). And Jehovah repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And Jehovah said, I will wipe out man whom I have created, from the face of the ground—from man to cattle, to reptiles, and to bird of the heavens; for I repent that I have made them. But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah” (vers. 5-8).

Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Could He be indifferent to the general state of man morally? It is not God simply in His nature, but He who concerns Himself with the ways of His creatures. Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth. Nor would it be easy to find a more solemn appraisal: “every imagination” of them was before Him; and He who loves to accredit the least thought or feeling that is good saw nothing but evil all the day. He is assuredly the God of judgment, and after due testimony will not be slow to execute it.

Yet the language employed is affectingly suggestive of the grief it cost Him Whom the unbelieving mind of man is pleased to treat as impassive. “Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners. Wake up righteously and sin not; for some have ignorance of God,” as the apostle speaks to our shame. Converse with the world lowers to its own level those who thus indulge; and as the world by its wisdom, when it boasted most, knew not God, it never without Christ finds Him out; for Christ is the image of the invisible God; and Christ never showed Himself insensible to human evil, whatever His patience and endurance. No doubt, as is so characteristic of these early revelations, the expression is by grace adapted in childlike fashion to the heart and conscience of man. Jehovah felt deeply what man ought to have felt but did not. “Jehovah repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.”

Here however we need to distinguish: else we shall surely and seriously stray. Jehovah is here said to repent of mankind that He had made on the earth. His work is a thing quite different from His purpose. And when corruption pervaded it, He was in no way bound to perpetuate what existed only to His dishonor. On the other hand, when a prophet was sent to cry against a great city because of its wickedness before Him, and its inhabitants, from the greatest to the least, repented at the preaching, God saw their works that they turned from their evil ways, and God repented of the evil which He said He would do unto them, and He did it not, to the disgust of the prophet too self-occupied to appreciate the compassion of God, even for the babes and the cattle. But here we are not told of the slightest effect. The preacher of righteousness testified many a long year, and, as far as we know, in vain. Oracularly warned concerning things not yet seen, and moved with fear himself, he prepared an ark for saving his house, with no recorded result save condemning the world of that day and the imprisonment of their spirits, disobedient as they were then, till eternal judgment come. It was a singularly hard generation in the days of Noah; and the Lord declared that so it will be also in the days of the Son of man. They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were given in marriage until the day, that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Alas! Christendom is rapidly becoming as unbelieving as the Jews were when divine judgments befell them all; and both will be surprised when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with angels of His power, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those that know not God—and those that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But even in that day it will be made clearer than ever that without repentance are the gifts and the calling of God (Rom. 11:29). He may repent of making man, and He may on man's self-judgment repent of His threats; but His gifts and His calling are subject to no such change of mind. So at an early day He compelled the wicked prophet to testify on behalf of Israel (Num. 23:19); and so He confirmed by His holy apostle looking to the latter day. He leaves room for the action of sovereign grace at the close of the age. As we Gentiles were once disobedient to God, but now became objects of mercy by their disobedience, so also the Jews were now disobedient to the mercy that has reached the Gentiles in the gospel, that they too, instead of their old pride of law, may be objects of mercy. For God shut up them all (whether Gentile or Jew) into disobedience that He might show mercy to them all.

For the day of Noah the word of judgment goes forth. “And Jehovah said, I will wipe (or blot) out man whom I have created, from the face of the ground—from man to cattle, to reptiles, and to bird of the heavens; for I repent that I have made them. But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah” (vers. 7, 8). For those who believe the language is unmistakable while grace is shown to Noah. Is it possible to use terms more sweeping and unsparing for all that breathes on earth or flies above it Jehovah deals with the creatures set under the headship of Adam. How blessed to know on an authority equally beyond doubt that the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons

of God! For this creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that all the creation together groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only [so], but even ourselves having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, waiting for adoption, the redemption of our body (Rom. 8:19-23). It is God's honor for Christ in this creation. As man's sin dragged it down with himself into ruin, so shall the Second Man raise it out of its degradation and misery. But the inheritance cannot be delivered before the heirs. Therefore are we now brought by faith of Christ into the liberty of grace, having in Him redemption through His blood, the remission of sins. But we await also the redemption of our bodies, and have meanwhile the Holy Spirit, the witness that we are God's children, and the earnest of the inheritance to come. And the groaning creation longs for that day, which will bring it into the liberty of the glory which Christ will have given us, Himself the Heir of all things, as we are by grace His joint-heirs. It is indeed a joyous prospect, in the midst of present weakness and manifold sorrows, truly a prospect full of glory, and most sure and indestructible, because it rests on the holy basis of Christ, the Worthy One, and of His redemption.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 6:3-4

THESE verses follow up the subject of that mysterious fact already stated, adding the expression of Jehovah's mind on the one hand, and on the other the far different thoughts of man.

And Jehovah said, “My Spirit shall not strive within man forever, for that he also [is] flesh, and his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. The Nephilim (giants) were on the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare to them. These [are] the heroes, mighty men who [were] of old, men of renown (the name)” (vers. 3, 4).

We may see from Job 1:6; 2:1, that various documents have nothing to do with “Jehovah” occurring here along with “sons of Elohim.” The moral question in both scriptures require “Jehovah” as such, whilst the designation of the angels as “sons of Elohim” was equally correct. Further, in the same context we have repeatedly one that feared Elohim (Job 1:1; 2:3), and the kindred language in Job 1:5, 16, 22; 2:9, 10, where Jehovah is emphatically used in that moral trial both by the inspired writer and in the mouth of job (chaps. 1:6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 21, 2:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), so as to demonstrate the vanity of the hypothesis. The reason for one or other lies in the due requirement of the case, wholly independent of any imaginary change of authors. So, in our chapter of Genesis, verses 1-8 demand “Jehovah,” save in the name of the offending angels, as 9-22 call for “Elohim” without exception.

Translators and commentators differ considerably as to the rendering and scope. Onkelos and Saadiah, the Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Vulgate substantially agree in the sense of “remain” for “strive.” But the force is moral rather than physical existence, and fairly given in the A. V. Some prefer “in his wandering” instead of “for that,” which may well be. So it is said in Isa. 31:3, that Egypt is man and not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit. Man had now proved himself no better. But if Jehovah warn that His Spirit will not always plead, He sets a term of patience. For the hundred and twenty years refer, not to man's span of life, but to the space given for repentance.

This verse it is, and especially it would seem “My Spirit,” to which the apostle Peter refers in his first epistle (chap. 3:18-20). He speaks of Christ put to death in flesh, but made alive in [the] Spirit, in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, once disobedient when the long-suffering of God was waiting in Noah's days. The second epistle too (chap. ii. characterizes Noah as a preacher of righteousness. Thus, among other ways, for he prophesied also (Gen. 9), did the Spirit of Christ which was in him point out, testifying beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them. It was this testimony, which made the days of God's longsuffering and of Christ's Spirit preaching through Noah so apt an allusion for the apostle. For Jews ask for signs of power, as Greeks seek wisdom, the wisdom of the age; but Christ is God's power and God's wisdom, Christ crucified to Jews a stumbling-block and to Greeks foolishness, but made to us that believe wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Believers from among the Jews (and to such the epistle was addressed) stood peculiarly exposed to the taunts of their unbelieving brethren after the flesh, who would hear only of the visible Messiah exalting Israel and putting down the nations in power and glory; as they scorned the little flock that confessed Him dead and risen and glorified in heaven, and that claimed through Him salvation of souls. Hence, of all the Jew owned true in O.T. story, nothing more suggestive than the few souls saved through the flood, when the mass perished in unbelief. Yet God sent men testimony by Noah, as He does now in the gospel. If that generation paid the penalty of slighting Christ's Spirit in the preaching then, let them beware of resisting the same Spirit still; for, though Christ be not present bodily but, in heaven and at the right hand of God, He is ready to judge living and dead; for which those who rejected the warning in Noah's day are reserved in prison, as are all unbelievers.

It might seem incredible, were it not fact, that anyone could say, “Not a word is indicated by Peter on the very far off lying allusion to the fact that the Spirit of Christ preached in Noah: not a word here, on the fact that Noah himself preached to his contemporaries.” No person has ever shown in the O. T. a case more germane to the apostle's aim, which was to strengthen the believing remnant against Jewish or any other mockery of an absent Deliverer and a spiritual deliverance only enjoyed now by faith. The allusion was strikingly near in its bearing: “very far off” in time is nothing to one who ranges through all scripture, in this very passage expressly introducing Noah, and the Spirit; as he elsewhere styles Noah “preacher of righteousness,” and those who disobeyed in his days “spirits in prison,” awaiting (as we all know) far more than a temporal judgment. Did not all this lie very near those surrounded by unbelievers who jeered at the fewness of Christians and rejected Christ's present testimony by the Spirit? The fact is that not a word connects the time of the preaching with the imprisonment of the spirits. Peter does not say that Christ went into the prison and there preached to the spirits, but that He went in the power of His Spirit and preached to the spirits that are there, disobedient as they once were in Noah's days. So the Jews were in danger through despising the Spirit of Christ now. What the text means is that their imprisonment is because they disobeyed once on a time when the longsuffering of God was waiting out in Noah's days, while an ark was being built for the few that entered and were saved. The nicest and strictest interpretation here lends not the least support to any preaching in Hades, which is foreign and opposed to the rest of God's word.

The superstitious view in effect denies and uproots the gospel, and is wholly baseless in either the O. T. or the New. Nor is the fancy inconsistent only with the testimony of scripture in general; it is opposed to the plain drift of the apostle's reference to Noah in each of his epistles. For how unmeaning, not to say inexplicable, that, if Christ be supposed to have gone in person to preach to the imprisoned spirits, those only should be singled out who had once been disobedient in Noah's days during the preparation of the ark! What revealed principle of

either grace or righteousness applies to such a dealing with them in particular? Especially as the original text, Gen. 6:3, implies just the contrary—that the striving of Jehovah's Spirit was with man in this life, and that the limit to His patience with those in question was tied to the hundred and twenty years of their days on earth? To imagine the spirits of those very persons appealed to afterwards seems to annul the scripture in hand and therefore so much the less credible as an inspired comment on it. For it would involve the strange doctrine of Jehovah's striving after death, and with those exclusively who had been the objects of the longsuffering of God for an allotted period previously.

Again, the reference in 2 Peter 2 equally shuts out the notion as the dream of the untaught and unstable. For the apostle speaks of God's not sparing, not only angels when they sin and reserving them extraordinarily for judgment, but the ancient world also, though He preserved with seven others Noah, a preacher of righteousness, when He brought a flood on a world of ungodly persons (and afterward He dealt similarly with Sodom and Gomorrha); as proofs of His rescuing godly ones out of trial and keeping unrighteous people under punishment for judgment day. The heterodoxy we are considering treats these very persons, if not all the wicked dead, as kept for hearing Christ to save them from judgment! Can one conceive grosser ignorance, and, what is worse, more arrant trifling with solemn scriptures, or a more evident desire to bring their meaning to naught?

As to ver. 4, the construction is not without difficulty. It appears to distinguish between the Nephilim1 or giants in those days, as afterward also, and the Gibborim, mighty ones or heroes, who were the fruit of the union of the sons of God with men's daughters. In fact, notwithstanding the dark confusion of the old heathen remains, traces of this distinction are not wanting; though nothing can be more marked than the superiority of scripture in the very little it says on this painful subject over the traditional lore respecting the Giants and the Titans, which the later poets jumbled inextricably. Num. 13:33 of itself easily accounts for the clause here parenthetically marked. It may run, without parenthesis, “And also after that the sons of God....these [are] the mighty ones which were of old, men of the name,” thus distinguishing the giants and these heroes. One shrinks from boldness in speaking of such a phrase; but the latter part distinguishes a class which was not found afterward: “These [are] the heroes, who [were] of old, men of renown.” These, as being of quite a different source and character, had a fame peculiar to themselves for might. The reputation they acquired of old was not founded on mere stature, like that of the Nephilim.

In result it is clear that the bounds of creation were wickedly traversed by certain angels, and thus a peculiarly evil corruption introduced among men, where evil in its ordinary character grew apace as we are afterward shown. But that unnatural amalgam touched the rights of Jehovah, though outwardly He had left man to himself since his expulsion from Paradise; as it played its grave part in calling for divine intervention in the governmental act of the deluge of which Genesis speaks, but in those deeper, lasting, and unseen ways which the epistles of Peter and Jude reveal in unison with N. T. truth for eternity. The evasive reading of the passage which many pious ancients and moderns have adopted to escape its only fair interpretation, because it conveys what is to us beyond measure strange, if not incomprehensible how it could be, is nothing but a makeshift of unbelief. Received simply, it gives the sure, though purposely reserved, revelation on the darkest scene of old, the true source of what was expanded, after its wonted fashion in Jewish tradition and Pagan mythology. In scripture the evil was dealt with in holy judgment; among men it became the basis of fame for beneficent might on man's behalf in vain struggle against envious but superior gods: no untrue description of beings who were really demons. “Jehovah, what is man that Thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that Thou makest account of him? Man is like a breath, his days are as a shadow that passeth away. Bow Thy heavens, Jehovah, and come down.”

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 6:1-2

THE chapter opens with a brief and calm notice of a mysterious fact, on which heathen mythology revels much. What scripture does say is pregnant; but the reticence on such a theme is as suggestive of holiness, as man's tradition as usual indulges prurient curiosity. The recital no doubt seems strange to minds accustomed to reason from existing phenomena and disposed to discredit what is “marvelous” in men's eyes or all that is beyond common sense. Yet Peter and Jude render striking testimony, not only to the truth of the narrative and the divine judgment of the exceptional sin committed, but to the solemn and needed warning it renders to guilty Christendom. God has not spoken in vain whether by Moses at the beginning of the O.T, or by those two inspired men verging on the close of the N. T. If any one has a mind to read a scathing exposure of modern unbelief as expressed by the commentators Patrick or Gill, D'Oyly and Mant, Scott or A. Clarke, he can find it in Dr. S. R. Maitland's Eruvin, Essay vi. 124, (Sze. Henry Ainsworth in his Annotations and Matthew Henry in his Commentary were no better. There is a slight difference in the popular view, some holding the sons of God to be great men, or nobles; others, the progeny of Seth.

But it is impossible to deny that “sons of God,” in the early books of the Bible (Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7), are found appropriated to angels. So in a slightly different form of the Hebrew we read in Psa. 29:1, and 89:6. When the prophet Hosea predicts in chap. 1:10 (or 2:1) what the apostle Paul applied (Rom. 9:26) to the present call of Gentiles during the eclipse of Israel, the phrase is pointedly distinct, besides its having no retrospective bearing. Indeed in the Alexandrine MS. of the Septuagint version of Gen. 6:2, for of the Vatican is read . But apart from this, which goes rather beyond the place of a translator, there is n ground from .. usage to question that the application of the phrase is to angels, and not to men even if faithful and righteous. And the apostolic reference is indisputable. Peter and Jude, regarding the awful crisis at the end of this age in the light of this scripture, though from quite different aspects, bear the concurrent testimony of the Holy Spirit that angels were here intended by “sons of God.”

This to a believer in divine inspiration is decisive. God knew all and cannot lie. Difficulties there assuredly are to us, who know little of what is possible to beings so far transcending human estate. But we learn even from the reserved terms employed in the original text and the inspired comments that angelic commerce with mankind was exceptionally heinous in itself and in its results. God therefore avenged the flagrant departure from all the bounds He had laid down for the indigenous dwellers on high, as well as for the creatures of earthly mold by a judgment that slumbered not nor spared either. For it is evident that the fruits of the iniquity no less than the guilty mothers perished in the deluge; while the appalling sentence of consignment to everlasting bonds under darkness befell such angels as kept not their own first estate, to await the great day's judgment. Their lot, so different from that of the devil and his angels, marks the enormity of their sin for which God cast them into Tartarus (2 Peter 2:4). They had so daringly abused their liberty that they were handed over to the gloomiest custody; unlike the rest of the fallen angels, who have even access to heaven and accuse the saints and deceive the whole habitable earth as yet.

“And it came to pass when mankind began to multiply on the face of the ground and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of mankind that they [were] fair and they took to them wives of all that they chose” (verses 1, 2).

Such, we shall see, was the prelude of the deluge, the apostasy of the antediluvian world, the horrible commingling of these sons of God with the daughters of men, which led to such violence and corruption as brought down destruction from the hand of God. Yet it is instructive to notice how the fact stated in our chapter, and pointedly applied by Peter and still more plainly by Jude, is not merely evaded but denounced, if not by the earlier, by the later, fathers Greek and Latin, by some of the Rabbis, and by many of the Reformers as utterly impossible and unworthy of credit.

Abuse on a priori grounds is vain against the direct force of the record according to unquestionable usage, and as interpreted by the highest authority of the N. T., so clearly as to leave no doubt for any soul subject to the written word. That angels could appear as men is beyond controversy, and eat or drink if they pleased is certain from scripture. It is not for believers to recoil from the further and fullest intimations of God's word, because we cannot account for that which was avowedly a strange and portentous violation of nature, i.e. of God's holy will. But if He pledges His word that so it was before the flood, outrageous as it may seem and really was, who are we, who are any, to set up human opinion, and deride as well as oppose the confirmed and reiterated declaration of Holy Writ?

Philosophic difficulties are trifles light as air against scripture; especially as the explanation which takes the place of the literal meaning, supported by the full induction of O.T usage, lands the popular hypothesis in a trivial sense, unsuitable to O.T. thought and expression, and foreign or misleading to the context, as will appear when we examine verses that follow. Calvin's preference of his own judgment to the word drove him, not only to slur over the earlier statements of Gen. 6., but to get rid of the peculiar dealing of God: intimated in the Epistles of Peter and Jude for the apostate angels. Thus he says “We are not to imagine a certain place in which the devils are shut up! for the apostle simply intended to teach us how miserable their condition is, since they apostatized and lost their dignity! For wherever they go they drag with them their own chains, and remain involved in darkness!” 1 Such is the fruit of insubjection to plain scripture, because of our incapacity to understand or explain: a pious man in what is obscure misled to explain away and contradict what is transparently irreconcilable with and corrective of his superficial view! Faith alone is always right: whether we can answer objections or remove difficulties is another question, and merely one of our spiritual measure. In this it is wise and comely not to have high thoughts above what one ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt a measure of faith to each.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 5:25-32

IT is but little that is said of Adam's line through Seth. They lived many days on the earth; they begat sons and daughters, besides the one who continued the succession; and they died. This gives great significance to all that is said beyond. Thus we saw the strong moral difference expressed in Seth's case compared with Adam. But the vivid contrast appeared in Enoch, the witness and manifest enjoyer of life which shone out in his walk, and superior to the power of death, as it pleased God to prove, when his comparatively tried pilgrimage closed in a sort altogether heavenly.

His son was Methuselah. “And Methuselah lived a hundred and eighty-seven years and begat Lamech; and Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred and eighty-two years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died” (vers. 25-27). In his instance it might have seemed that man was exceptionally to reach a millennium. But not so. This is reserved for the reign of the Last Adam; and He will make it good throughout His world-kingdom as the rule, and not the exception, for such as welcome Him when He appears to reign in righteousness. Mighty and beneficent the change in that day, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea! It is in vain to reason from the first Adam experience, the prolific source of unbelief.

He is Jehovah Who deigned to become a shoot out of the stock of Jesse and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit in days to come; in virtue of Him shall Jacob “take root; Israel shall blossom and bud; and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit.” For in truth he is also the root of Jesse. “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse: standing as an ensign of the peoples: it shall the nations seek; and his resting place shall be in glory.” Then, when he that had the power of death is bound, and the Conqueror reigns over the earth, man shall fill his days. And Jehovah will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in His people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thenceforth an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the youth shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And as Christ is the key to our understanding the scriptures now, so will He be the One in that day to put down evil in power and righteousness, and to bless man subject to His scepter.

“And Lamech lived a hundred and eighty-two years and begat a son; and he called his name Noah, saying, This [one] shall comfort us concerning our work and concerning toil of our hands because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred and ninety-five years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died” (vers. 28 31).

Here again the Holy Spirit pauses on the occasion of Noah's birth; and his father was made to utter an oracle about his son. The prophetic spirit is evident in Lamech's utterances. Noah he recognized as the witness of comfort for man's work and toiling hands. And so Noah is the type of Him Who will govern and bless the habitable world to come, after it has passed through His judgment of those that defile or destroy the earth. Lamech acknowledges time righteous dealing of Jehovah no less than Enoch does in his prophecy recorded by Jude. But the difference is characteristic. Enoch speaks openly of the Lord's coming with myriads of His saints; for a heavenly portion only adds to the sense of coming judgment of all, and not only in their works is ungodliness which they ungodlily wrought but in the hard things which ungodly sinners spoke against Him. Lamech was given, though more darkly, to see in Noah the pledge of consolation for the earth, after the judgment of the quick has done its work.

They are the complement one of the other; and both look on to a day not yet come; for a judgment in providence makes nothing perfect more than the law did. They are shadows of what is coming, and not only of destruction at the Lord's hand, but of comfort to follow for this toiling earth. It is well to accept the pledge; it is better still not to rest in that measure, but to await the full blessing Christ alone is competent to

bestow. Then Jehovah's work will appear to His servants, and His glory upon their children; then the beauty of Jehovah their God shall be upon His people, and He will establish the work of their hands upon them; yea He will establish the work of their hands. No doubt to share Christ's position on high in the Father's house is incomparably more, and this we shall have who share His rejection; but it is wrong to overlook and worse to deny the blessing He will also pour on the earth, and on the ancient people, and on all peoples, in that day of glory.

Nor is there any question that on Christ's first advent and on His infinite work of atonement all depends for blessing to souls now, and for glory in the heavens and the earth at that day, because therein God was glorified in Him even as to sin, the otherwise insuperable block in the way. But while owning this fully and finding now in Him life, peace, joy, liberty, relationship with God as children and union with Himself our glorified Head, through the Holy Ghost given the more ought we to be freed from every hindrance and testify with might from above His coming, not only to take us on high, but to execute judgment on a guilty world and a guiltier Christendom, and to bless the earth gloriously and Israel and all the nations; and so much the more, because we see the day approaching.

We need not dwell on Noah more now, but just observe what we are told in verse 32: “And Noah was five hundred years old [son of 500 years], and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.” Shem is first named, not because he was eldest, which Japheth was, but as in the direct line of the blessings of Israel.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 5:6-20

Chap. 5: 6-20.

JOSEPHUS and certain Arabian writers, quoted by Hottinger, allege details of ancient worthies here enumerated; which are not worth repeating, because they are destitute of real authority. The inspired writer all the more impressively gives the same simple outline of these lives so prolonged. Two exceptions occur of most notable character which claim appropriate heed in their places. The general line is all that now comes before us. Divine purpose is the key to both. It explains alike the mention which looks so meager, and the special record in the cases of Enoch and Noah. It accounts for the omission of all particulars in the general genealogy beyond the direct line of the chosen people, and so especially of the Messiah, God's salvation, light for the revelation of the gentiles, and glory of His people Israel. The rest of their progeny, however numerous or distinguished in a human way, are merely merged in “sons and daughters” they begot.

“And Sheth lived a hundred and five years, and begat Enosh. And Sheth lived after he begat Enosh eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters. And all Sheth's days were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died. And Enosh lived ninety years and begat Kenan. And Enosh lived after he begat Kenan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters. And all Enosh's days were nine hundred and five years; and he died. And Kenan lived seventy years and begat Mahalaleel. And Kenan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters. And all Kenan's days were nine hundred and ten years, and he died. And Mahalaleel lived sixty-five years, and begat Jared. And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters. And all Mahalaleel's days were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died. And Jared lived a hundred and sixty-two years, and begat Enosh. And Jared lived after he begat Enosh eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And all Jared's days were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died” (vers. 6-20).

It is in vain for men to decry the longevity of the men before the deluge, and, though diminishing, after it. Oriental and other nations long retained the tradition, however disguised, pointing to the primitive facts. To argue that it is contrary to the known laws of physiology is only the resort of narrow-minded and ignorant unbelief. For God if He pleased could easily by change of conditions reduce man's life from 900 years to 90. It is a question of fact for which His word vouches. Nor is there any need to labor on behalf of the plain statements of scripture; for man unfallen never partook of the tree of life; and, when fallen, he was driven out lest he should. The gradual experience of men since the deluge is of no validity against the immensely greater age of mankind as scripture avers before that great event, whatever the physical or secondary causes may have been before or after, as they are presumptuous who deny it.

We are not in a position to ascertain where God has said so little; but there were reasons we can appreciate why in the early history of mankind their prolonged span of life was of incalculable moment. It was in their high interest that the origin of the race should be attested, as well as of the earth and heavens, and of all creatures in them; still higher was it to hear of the fall and its solemn results; highest of all, to know that He, alike the Creator and in moral relationship with man, had interposed in a way not more righteous than graciously revealing a suffering Deliverer, the woman's Seed, to destroy the enemy: the victory of good over evil for all who believe as well as creation. What can be conceived of such great weight for God and man as to convey aright this pregnant revelation of grace, and to those so immediately concerned as the fallen race, or at least such as had ears to hear? And how was a revelation as yet oral to reach the family of Adam effectually save by the longevity which characterized that early day?

Hottinger, allege details of the ancient worthies here enumerated; which are not worth repeating, because they are destitute of real authority. The inspired writer all the more impressively gives the same simple outline of these lives so prolonged. Two exceptions occur of most notable character which claim appropriate heed in their places. The general line is all that now comes before us. Divine purpose is the key to both. It explains alike the mention which looks so meager, and the special record in the cases of Enoch and Noah. It accounts for the omission of all particulars in the general genealogy beyond the direct line of the chosen people, and so especially of the Messiah, God's salvation, light for revelation of Gentiles, and glory of His people Israel. The rest of their progeny, however numerous or distinguished in a human way, are merely merged in “sons and daughters” they begot.

For Methuselah lived to tell Shem what Adam communicated from God Himself, and Shem lived to repeat all to Abraham and Isaac: facts and prospects briefly expressed, of plain meaning, and profoundly important.

Then again one can understand how favorable the lengthened span of life in those days was to carrying out God's word in blessing the first pair, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over fish of the sea, and over bird of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. Thus not only is the fact unquestionable for all, that respect revelation, but the wisdom, not to say necessity, of that exceptional condition, is pretty apparent.

The fact is, so far from the truth are those who judge solely from present experience, that man was naturally made at the outset to live. Death was sin's wages, not then a physiological necessity. God had provided the means for prolonging his life if obedient; but deprived him of that means peremptorily when fallen. For what greater misery, or moral anomaly, than an everlasting life of sin? Death therefore is in no way a debt of nature but of sin; and here we read its knell for each even of those who stood aloof from the evil way of Cain, the ancestors not of Israel only but in due time of the Messiah. Of Adam, so of Seth, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jared, it was alike said “he died.” Now that man is a sinner, it is the one event that happens to all in the seen world; in the unseen there will be another still more solemn. “For it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this judgment” (Heb. 9:27).

How sad, were this all! Not so however; it is only the first man. “But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, first-fruits of them that are asleep. For since by man [is] death, by man also resurrection of dead persons.” He that had the power of death, that is the devil, is brought to naught through the death of Him Who in grace submitted to it, but could not be holden thereby. And so in Christ shall all be made alive, but each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's at His coming; then the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to Him Who is God and Father. The second man is of heaven and has all things in His hand. They that are His will enjoy a resurrection from the dead like His own; as the unjust shall be raised by His power for judgment, who despised His grace and would not have the life eternal that is in Him. For all must honor Him; if not now by believing in Him unto all blessing, by-and-by when raised to be judged for the ills they did. How blessed is the portion of those that hear His word and believe God that sent His Son! They “have eternal life, and come not into judgment, but have passed from death into life.” So declares the Lord with solemn emphasis on its truth, His “Verily, verily.”

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 5:3-5

THAT chapter 5. is in its only proper place, supposing one and the same hand wrote all the sections preceding it, is manifest from the exclusion of reference to Cain and Abel, and its notice of Seth as the true and appointed continuator of Adam's line to Noah. Previous and fragmentary documents, or not, is quite a subordinate question. But this is the more inviting for the speculative to discuss, as there is the slenderest basis whereon to display their skill in building their ingenious but shadowy schemes. The believer has before him the solid fact of a divinely carried out design, on a principle which discovers the enmity of a mind above man's, not here only but throughout the O.T. Nor is there a single instance known to me of sure evidence against Moses as its writer. The ancient heathen themselves, spite of their undying animosity against the Jews, were not in this as unbelieving as our modern critics who call themselves Christians.

For where could the fruitful episode of chap. 4. stand suitably but where we find it? Yet this, to be exact, required the use of Jehovah alone for the first time in the narrative. Neither Elohim as in chaps. 1. 2: 3 would be in keeping, nor yet Jehovah Elohim as in chaps. 2:4 and 3., each in its proper place, which is only proved the more by the exceptions in the language of the serpent and of Eve (chap. 3:1, 3, 5). The conditions in chap. 4 were no longer paradisiacal but such as appealed to all the race now fallen, especially before men lapsed into idolatry, having still the traditional knowledge of God, not as Creator only but in special relationship as Moral Governor of His offspring. Not for two millenniums and a half was that Name with the law given to the chosen people as their distinctive possession and responsibility. But here they were shown, on the small primeval platform of Cain and Abel, the vanity for a sinner of natural religion, slighting, as it always does the guilt and the judgment of sin, no less than sacrificial provision of grace bound up with faith in the coming and suffering Messiah Who should destroy the enemy.

It is remarkable that Eve, who had been misled by the serpent to forget the special relationship of Jehovah Elohim, said on the birth of Cain, I have gotten a man from, or with the help of Jehovah. It was like Sarah in Hagar's case looking for the seed of promise through nature. On the other hand, and in the same chap. 4:25, she said on the birth of Seth, Elohim hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel: the more to he observed, because in the next verse we are told that then it was men began to call upon the name of Jehovah. Now each of these designations is employed with exquisite propriety, and with an aim evident save to men walking in the darkness of Egypt. So mistaken are they who, ignorant of what is all-important spiritually, fall into the delusion of striving to account for these differences and their accompaniments, by the fancy that the sections in which they occur are by different hands. It is the design, and this a divine one, which alone satisfactorily explains all the phenomena, and the more strikingly because they come from the same inspired writer.

So in our chap. 5. Elohim is the only proper term till we come to verse 29, where Jehovah is demanded by the aim of the inspiring Spirit. Difference of hand is the resource of incredulous ignorance. Cain and Abel had played their parts respectively, as all that hear the truth must, in the darkness of unbelief or the light of faith; and Eve, profiting by her early mistake, acknowledges her son Seth as substituted by Elohim for Abel whom Cain slew. Son of Adam, he the firstborn had gone out impenitent and in despair from Jehovah's presence, was building a city called after the name of his son, and began the world of arts and sciences, civilization and pleasure, a wanderer far from the God Who reveals His will and judges those that despise His Christ. With the appointed Man people began calling upon His Name, the foreshadow of the millennial day (compare Isa. 11:9.10;, Jer. 3:17; Zech. 14:9; Mal. 1:11).

Here till the close the sole correct designation is Elohim, and could not be Jehovah. It is the line of Seth from Adam to Noah.

“And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat [a son] in his likeness, after his image, and called his name Sheth. And Adam's days after he begat Sheth were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters. And all Adam's days which he lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died” (vers. 3-5).

When Elohim made man, chap. 1: 26, He proposed it to be in His image, after His likeness. So He created him in His image, as it is said twice (ver. 27). And we have already seen, that, as likeness resembles, image represents: a distinction which it is of moment to seize, as it holds everywhere in scripture. The “likeness” consisted of qualities corresponding to God, as no other nature on earth had; the image was man's place in presenting Him to others, as not even angels of heaven did or could. As man was made upright, so he was called to dominion over the lower creation. Angels fulfill His word and do His pleasure, yet they only minister, never rule. But now that the head of the race was fallen, he “begat in his likeness, after his image.” It was in his own likeness, not God's; and it was not Cain but Seth that is said to be “after his image.” Adam was represented by Seth, though he could not be said to be begotten after Elohim's likeness but Adam's. Yet it still remains true that man, even though fallen, is the image and glory of God (1 Cor. 11:7). Hence the guilt of murder demanded death, for it was the extinction of what represented God on earth, even when man was no longer after His likeness (Gen. 9:6). The comparison of our verse 1 makes it all the plainer: “in the likeness of God made He him” (Adam). The “image” of God was the emphatic point in Gen. 1:27, and even in

26 takes precedence, however important the “likeness” which sin destroyed for Seth, whom Adam “begat in his likeness, after his image.” The race is fallen.

What progeny Adam had during this early time we are not told, but simply that his “days after he begat Seth were eight hundred; and he begat sons and daughters.” How little is said of the line of faith, especially if we compare the striking picture which the preceding chapter furnishes of the world's rapid progress in all that life which nature deems worth living!

“And all the days which Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died” (ver. 5). There is not the slightest sound reason to doubt the longevity here attributed to antediluvian man. Man was made to live, not to die; his death came in through sin. The truth of life will appear when the Second man takes the world-kingdom (Rev. 11). Those who live righteously when He reigns shall continue through the thousand years, none dying save under curse for rebellion; and the righteous, as scriptural principles imply, are at last changed, without passing through death, into everlasting in-corruption; as Christians are entitled to expect who are alive and are left to the coming of the Lord, before His displayed kingdom begins (1 Thess. 4., 1 Cor. 15.). Lengthened as the span of years may seem, compared with the measure which the prayer of Moses (Psa. 90) lays down as the ordinary rule of human life, they were but “days” of Adam or any other here recorded. After Adam they were begotten, and they begot; they lived and they died. This sums up the history of most; but of this more when we review the account of others, as well as the exceptions.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 5:1-2

The chapter on which we now enter strikingly refutes the hypothesis of separate documents, so much in vogue with the neo-critics. For according to it this book of Adam's generation originally followed Gen. 1; 2:1-3, as the more ancient Elohistic record, supposed to be dislocated by the singular compound (Jehovah Elohim) in chaps. 2:4, 3., and by the Jehovistic interpolation of chap. 4. But such an arrangement as is thus assumed not only yields a result barren of any good fruit, but deprives us of truth most interesting, momentous, and necessary about God and man, as well as the enemy of both. For what is omitted thereby? The instructive lesson of the temptation; the awful fact and consequences of the fall; the solemn intervention of Him Who blessed and tried but, by man's sin, was made his Judge; the mysterious revelation of a suffering Destroyer of that enemy who ensnared our first parents by disobedience unto death, and of a Conqueror Who, in some way as yet unexplained, should be born of woman, and yet deal with Satan as not all mankind of all ages together could. Nor is this brief summary of chap. 3. anything like a full appraisal of the most needed truth left out.

Consider next how deep and searching is chap. 4., where sin against man, one's brother even, is as fully out as against God in chap. 3! The sole ground of acceptable approach to Jehovah is by sacrifice; for this was the then acknowledgment of man as sinful, and of God in grace looking on to a remedy in righteousness. So we see the younger son Abel offering and accepted by faith, the elder Cain rejected with his offering of nature in unbelief, though Eve had fondly counted him a man gotten from Jehovah. Then, in pride rankling into hatred, notwithstanding the gracious expostulation of Jehovah, Who points to the remedy and maintains his title after the flesh, Cain slays his righteous brother, is convicted (spite of heartless and insolent prevarication), gets cursed from the ground, and is sentenced to be a wanderer in the earth. What a type of the Jew guilty of the death of Jehovah's righteous Servant, their own Messiah, yet with a sign given that they shall not perish; and in the end under Lamech confessing the sins and avenged seventy and sevenfold, when we hear of another Seed appointed of God instead of the slain, and in due time men calling on the name of Jehovah! For this in its turn is no other than the pledge of the One Who combines the slain Messiah with the appointed Heir of all things, our Lord Jesus. Yet much as is here traced, there is also the picture of the world and its civilization, its arts and sciences and delights, away from God, Who refuses its natural religion and vain efforts to worship Him after the flesh.

Think then of the critical judgment, which can regard the narrative (call it Elohistic, or Book of Origins, or Priest's Code, or anything else), when disengaged from the rest where designations other than Elohim occur, as “a nearly complete whole!” Surely men learned or unlearned, who thus manipulate the scriptures in honor of the crudest fancy which ever rose into a popular fashion, betray their own lack of faith and their consequent inability to interpret that Mind which opens to the believer only. It is just as under another form in Israel of old, “All vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned” (Isa. 29:11, 12). What! “a nearly complete whole” in God's history, or the Priest's Code, of man, without one word about the details of his divine relationship founded on his peculiar formation, his body of the dust, the inner man as directly inbreathed by Jehovah Elohim! Without one word about paradise lost and death gained by disobedience inexcusable! Without one word about the knowledge of good and evil incompatible with innocence pure and simple, but after his transgression man's condition for good as for ill! Without one word about woman's relationship to man founded on her most singular, but touching; and beautiful, building up under the wise and good hand of the LORD God, with all its fruitful admonition whether men hear or forbear! Without one word about the simplicity of sinless man and woman naked and without shame, their instant ineffectual covering of a natural sort, and the profound truth and grace, though merely as yet a shadow, of the LORD God's effectual clothing based on death! And withal the mysterious serpent's ominous and dark insinuation to man's ruin and his own sure destruction by divine power in the person of the woman's Seed—not a word about this dire and constant adversary of God throughout the sad history of man's responsibility, or the final judgment!

Really the freaks of human speculation are far stranger and more unaccountable than the unvarnished narrative of inspiration as it stands, which to the believing ear requires the distinctive titles of Elohim, Jehovah Elohim, and Jehovah (as others also in due time) according to the varying character of the communications, and therefore intrinsically necessary to the perfection of the divine word. It is the phenomenal ignorance of unbelief, absolutely unheeding God's mind, which, in despair of real intelligence by the Holy Spirit, seeks the superficial, unsatisfactory, and baseless hypothesis of a composite from distinct sources welded together by a later compiler into a continuous whole, which after all is full of inconsistencies in details and wholly unreliable. In truth it is but infidelity and veiled with no better than fig-leaves which betray sin and nakedness. Different points of view there are, as there ought to be for full truth, which account for differing traits of style; but as chaps. 2. 3. pre-suppose chap. 1., so does chap. 4. follow up both, as the actual conflict of nature and grace. Chap. 5., like other scriptures, employs each designation and its accompaniments as truth demands: so we may hope to show to such as, receiving Holy Writ, accept it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth God's word.

Needs it further proof that the so-called duplicates are due to differing design, not to distinct hands, still less to bastard legends? Thus in chap. 2:4 and onward, there is no thought of setting out the order of creation, already given generally from first to last in chap. 1., but the momentous fact of such special truths as the Moral Governor, Jehovah God, set up in the scene of Adam's relations with Himself and paradise, with earthly creation as a whole and the woman in particular. Opposition between the chapters whether materially or formally is a libel. And hence, as in many respects the condition was peculiar to the primeval state, we never in the Pentateuch find Jehovah

Elohim regularly used but here, save exceptionally in Ex. 9:30. It is untrue that chap. 2:7, 19 represents man as created before the birds and the beasts; it is untrue that chap. 2:7 (Adam's formation out of the dust) contradicts chap. 1:27 (created in God's image); it is untrue that chap. 1:27 asserts that the man and the woman were created together, or does not consist with the woman being formed specifically out of Adam's flank. Such objections spring solely from the spite of unbelief. The two chapters, like those that follow, are from the same Mind guided of God; but some to their shame have no knowledge of God.

With the light derivable from all that precedes, chap. v. takes up man in the succession of his generations from Adam to Noah and his sons; and therefore Elohim rather than Jehovah was the correct title, Jehovah only appearing once where it was more proper. And this to the eyes of our “wise and prudent” critics “can only be accounted for upon the supposition that the sections in which they occur are by a different hand” (Driver's Lit., O.T.)!

“This [is the] book of Adam's generations. In the day God created man, in God's likeness made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam (man), in the day when they were created” (vers. 1, 2).

Now suppose the different-document hypothesis a fact, and this chapter had ever followed chap. 1. 2:3, as the immediate sequel, how insipid such a continuation as the opening of chap. 5.! We say nothing of omitting such all important particulars as are ignored between the two, as we have already noticed. If on the contrary we receive these scriptures as they are, the new departure on ground similar to the earliest section most suitably calls for a tracing down from Adam through Seth to diluvian times, just as we have it. The intervening history which brought out God not simply as such, but as Jehovah Elohim, and then in the usual style of Jehovah, where special relationship is treated with rebellion against it, made it all the more requisite to resume the genealogical line from its source till God judged creation.

Even here it is far from mere repetition, which it might seem to the careless reader. For chap. 1:26 says that God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness, and reiterates not His “likeness” but “image” twice in ver. 27. Here it is said that, in the day of His creating man, He made him in the likeness of God. Both were true, but they are not the same statement; and an imitator or later redactor being uninspired would rather have made them identical. He Who knew the whole truth could and did use each appropriately; as we may see for the form here employed, when ver. 3 comes before us. But the shade of difference is undeniable, understand it or not as we may.

Further, here only are we told that God “called their name Adam (man) in the day they were created.” It was Adam before the fall who called the woman Ishah, because she was taken out of Ish. It was Adam, after the fall but also the revelation of the woman's Seed, who called his wife's name Eve (Chavvah), because she was the mother of all living. Unbelief might have naturally called her Death, as the mother of all dying. But Adam looked in faith for her Seed Who entitled him and them to better things than he and she had any right to. But here it is the racial name, common to both, which God called in the day of their creation. How wise is every change, every difference, embodied in God's word! And how foolish the incredulity that can see nothing beyond the discrepancies of different hands, none of them inspired in any true sense!

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 4:23-26

We have had in Cain the moral history of man outside Paradise, sin fully developed, not against Jehovah only, but, because his own works were evil and his religious service an offering of impenitent folly and rejected, against his believing and righteous brother Abel. Along side of it the long-suffering yet righteous dealings of Jehovah are of the highest interest and instruction, the manifest foreshadowing of His ways in due time with His people Israel, who would abandon promise by God's grace in Christ for conditions of law which flesh presumes to fulfill to its own ruin. Like Cain too, the Jews slew in result Jesus Christ the Righteous, though He came of them according to flesh, their own Messiah, Who is over all, God blessed forever. Hence they also are gone out from the presence of Jehovah, cursed from the earth for blood-guiltiness, dwell in a land of wandering exile, and, in the evident loss for the present of their divine mission of blessing to all families of the earth, betake themselves to city life, to bold adventure, to the inventions of art and science, and to the amenities of the civilized world. Man's will governs and pursues its onward way, totally indifferent to God's will and glory.

It is therefore not man only, but the firstborn in sin, answering to God's favored people, men religious after the flesh, but in fact unjust and rebellious even to the death of the Righteous One, Whom by the hand of lawless men they did crucify and slay. By fierce imprecation of all the people, His blood is on them and on their children, and their land as yet like the potter's field to bury strangers in, justly called Akeldama, Blood-Field.

This is followed up in the account of Lemech's words to his wives, on which tradition has hung its myths, and theologians have speculated through not seeing the divine mind and purpose to be gathered from the scripture. Either way God's word is not honored by faith; and who can wonder that edification fails?

“And Lemech said unto his wives,

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;

Ye wives of Lemech, hearken to my speech:

For a man I have slain for wounding me,

And a youth for hurting me;

If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold,

Then Lemech too seventy and seven[fold]" (vers. 23, 24).

It is the first recorded poetry in the Bible; and God is in no way the object, but self for this life: another and weighty addition to the picture of the world. Whatever the historical circumstances, the aim was to reassure his wives who dreaded the consequences of his violent deeds. Lemech appears to plead that the blood he had shed was shed in self-defense, not murderously like Cain; and therefore he avails himself of the divine shelter of his own forefather as the surest pledge of intervention on his own behalf.

The fact is certain that God watches over His ancient people, guiltier far than Cain, but of blood that speaks better than that of Abel. For if the Jew has been kept, in the face of man ever hostile and ready to slay, in the face of more spiteful Christendom, Greek or Latin, utterly ignorant of God's secret purpose to pardon and bless in the end, neither bloody crusades of old nor cruel ukases now, will succeed to exterminate Israel, but only to bring punishment another day on their adversaries. There they are, wanderers but preserved, as no people ever was, for everlasting mercy when their heart turns to God and Him Whom they cast out. And here in Lemech's words, though he may have meant nothing higher than the sad facts of Cain's deed or his own, can we not hear the inspired image of the Jew's confession in the latter day? Assuredly we know on authority which cannot be broken, that the repentant Jew will yet own, like their forefathers in the analogous case of Joseph, but about One greater and better than Joseph, We were very guilty concerning our brother. For the prophet declares what divine goodness and truth will yet fulfill:— "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon ME whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zech. 12:10).

Lemech's saying, therefore, is an unconscious prophecy like that of Caiaphas, but of the Jews acknowledging, not hiding, blood-guiltiness (Psa. 1), the blood of their own King: and of what a King! Himself, the sacrifice for the sin which slew Him; and those who in their blind unbelief were thus guilty brought to true faith and real repentance, thenceforward to have God blessing them, causing His face to shine upon (with) them that His way may be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations.

"And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Sheth: for God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, for Cain slew [him]. And to Sheth, to him also was born a son, and he called his name Enoch: then it was begun to call on Jehovah's name" (vers. 25, 26).

Abel had been cut off; Cain is not recognized here, save as guilty. All hangs upon the one that God (Elohim) appointed. It is not nature's hopes, but, after all had failed, the intervention of God's grace, and man taking his true place, weak, wretched; for so Sheth called his son. Then too it was begun to call upon Jehovah's name. So it will be in power and fullness another day. It is not Christ come and slain, but the coming Son of man. Jehovah will be owned fully. In that day, says the same prophet, shall Jehovah be one, and His name one. Rivals shall vanish away, false religion no more lift its head. The absurdity of the dovetailed hypothesis is here plain, as is the divine wisdom in the use of designations purposely employed. Men too unbelieving to understand, too conceited or impatient to learn, invented it to throw the blame off themselves on the book. Only think of the credulity of such as believe them instead of God!

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 4:18-22

We have seen under Cain the cradle of public civilized life, the first building of a city; his son named with an expression of initiation or culture, earthly as it was; and the city named in the pride of life after the name of his son: a little beginning of that vast system to rise up ere long in opposition to God, where the knowledge of the Father and of His love never penetrates, where Christ and they that are His cannot escape hatred. It was the resource of man under curse in the land of his exile, who went forth from His presence Who convicted him of sin against man, his brother, no less than against God. Faith alone purifies" the heart; but faith was as far from him as love, the fruit of that divine love which unbelief never sees or feels. And as there was no dependence on God, so a bad conscience engendered dread of man: "whosoever findeth me shall slay me," his own words. Within that wretched breast grew up the notion of a city; as his son's name furnished the idea of perpetuating a family boast on earth. Jehovah's name was nothing to his soul, save one of horror, because of his own conscious guilt. He must die like his parents, but his city, like his family, shall continue forever, his dwellings from generation to generation, and then at least the name should not die. Expulsion from paradise, going out from Jehovah's presence, only gave the occasion to prove how a brave and determined man can rise above the dreariest lot and turn a land of wandering into a settled habitation and secured from marauders and other foes.

"And to Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begot Mehujael; and Mehujael begot Methushael; and Methushael begot Lemech. And Lemech took to him two wives; the name of the one [was] Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was father of such as dwell in tents and [have] cattle. And his brother's name [was] Jubal: he was father of all such as handle harp and pipe. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-Cain, forger of every tool of copper and iron; and Tubal-Cain's sister [was] Naamah" (vers. 18-22).

In this first genealogical draft, what is said of Lemech arrests us. He is marked as violating first the divine order of marriage. It was "not good that the man should be alone." But His provision was not two or more, but one woman, "a helpmate," his counterpart. Self-will, ever growing, did not not longer hesitate to traverse God's mind, evidenced sufficiently for those who fear God in His act: and "Lemech took to him two wives." From the beginning it was not so. Our Lord treats the account, not as poetic, or mythical, but as authentic and divinely authoritative fact. He also, we may notice, binds together chaps. i. and ii. as parts of one inspired narrative, whatever the difficulties or dreams of soi-disant higher criticism, not only erring but in its overweening vanity ignorant of the scriptures, and of the power of God, which faith alone in the nature of things can apprehend and enjoy. Polygamy is a direct transgression of that unity which is of its original institution according to God's will. The law no doubt permitted a measure of license in view of the hard-heartedness of Israel (i.e. of man in the flesh); but the law made nothing perfect: Christ vindicated, as He is, the truth.

The names of Lemech's wives are given, as of our first mother, and these only, with his daughter Naamah, of the antediluvian women. As Eve was named with express significance, it may well be that Lemech's choice denotes the gratification of taste in the growing world. For Adah means "beauty ", Zillah "shadow ", and Naamah "pleasant." God was not in the thought of their designations. They fell in with the advances

of civilization, which disdains the pilgrim and stranger character, so dear to faith. Earth is its home, and every accession to present loveliness is welcomed. Why think of sin or righteousness, of death and judgment, of Christ and His coming? Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die. A “garden” of Epicurism soon opened when Paradise was closed; and votaries were not wanting long before Epicurus rose among the Greeks or Sadducees among the Jews.

Still clearer or more certain is the inference from the verses that follow. “And Adah bore Jabal: he was father of such as dwell in tents and [have] cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was father of all such as handle harp and pipe. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-Cain, forger of every tool of copper and iron; and Tubal-Cain's sister [was] Naamah.”

Agriculture was the early occupation of Cain, as Abel had been a shepherd. “Building a city” followed guilt and dread of man without the fear of God acting on a mind stimulated by energy and fertile of resource, and a heart set on earthly hopes. Thenceforward the race progressed rapidly. Some, of whom Jabal is chief, pleased themselves in the rough and adventurous life of nomad herdmen; others struck out and pursued the inventive path of art and science. For Jubal, brother of Jabal, was father of all such as handle stringed and wind instruments: inventions cherished almost alike without a city as within, as experience shows. Nor this only: Tubal-Cain follows, forger (or furbisher) of every tool for cutting instruments of copper and iron. The road to eminence lay open for man alienated from God and indifferent to it, independent of God in will, if not really, and of course wrongly. He acts of and for himself to make the land of his wandering his paradise, of which he is the more proud because these useful or pleasant inventions he can boast of as his own. But he is God's creature, and responsible to obey, and must give account. By Adam's sin he lost his true place and relationship; and instead of seeking another and a better open to faith in the Second man, he prefers his own will, his fancied independence, which is no other than Satan's service, with Satan's doom at the end.

It may not be amiss to notice how the word of God overthrows the modern speculator who assumes the three ages of stone, bronze, and iron, through which they will have early mankind to have passed in pre-historic times. Even had we no inspired record, enough has been gathered from facts of the past to dispel the illusion. Epochs in chronology they are not in any sense. There are regions even now, and not all confined to Australia, whose use of rough stone implements would thus fix them in the palmolithic age. A similar condition was attested a century ago of races in the northern and eastern districts of the Russian empire, European and Asiatic. And we have good authority (Prof. Rygh, of Christiania, before the Stockholm meeting of the International Congress of Pre-historic Archeology) that, north of Nordland in Norway, the inhabitants remained in the practice of the so-called Stone age till the beginning of last century, though for hundreds of years in communication with people who used iron. See Academy, August 29, 1874. Again, the races of Mexico, Central America, and Peru, employed weapons of obsidian and implements of bronze, when the Spaniards overran and conquered them. So it was in the early age of Greece, which used stone and bronze together, but not iron any more than did S. America. And what evidence is there of a stone age in Egypt, however early we trace the facts? No one doubts that a few traces of stone appear, and even bronze only prevailed a short while. In Babylonia both flint and bronze were used for war and peace; as were leaden pipes and jars, along with iron; as, much later, stone implements continued to be used, when ancient civilization had reached its zenith with cutting instruments of metal in familiar use (Smith's Anc. Hist. 375).

To this day the people in Northern Abyssinia use stone hatchets and flint knives, along with iron poignards. And as to cave dwellers, they are still found, not only in distant lands, but even in a land so near as Spain, where many perished quite recently through sudden floods which surprised whole families. It is a question, not of antiquity, still less of definite ages in that imagined succession, but of civilization; and scripture is express that the settled, ordered, and combined life of a city, as well as the working of metals, and the invention of musical instruments within two main divisions, began early in the life of Adam. The mythical treatment of the question is entirely due to skeptical men of science who prefer hypothesis to well ascertained fact, and seem pleased in opposing revelation.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 4:16-17

The way of Cain thus demonstrates the worthlessness of natural religion to meet the need of fallen man, still more to suit Jehovah. It ignores both the ruin through sin and the nature of God. “Thou thoughtest,” says the Psalmist, “that I was altogether such a one as thyself.” Spiritual insensibility like this, when reproved of God as with Cain, becomes furious against such as by grace bow to the truth, even were they in the nearest ties of flesh and blood. Finding acceptance with God is intolerable in his eyes who was rejected of Him. There was no self-judgment, though Jehovah pointed out the way of mercy for the evil-doer, and maintained Cain's natural primacy intact. His religious observance covered a heart darkened and defiled by unbelief; the word of Jehovah slighted left him a prey to the evil one; and murder followed. For Satan is a murderer, as we saw him a liar in ch. 3. And Cain declares himself hid from Jehovah's face; as the man and his wife themselves from the presence of God when they heard His voice after their transgression.

But there is more for us to weigh in this instructive history. Despair not only closes the heart to the word of God, no matter what the grace He reveals, but it urges on the spirit to ever growing departure, and to fill up the void with present objects of sense. This is the fresh lesson taught here. The time was not yet arrived for the enemy to bring in idolatry, of which we never hear in scripture till after the deluge; and we are not entitled to affirm it without proof. In the antediluvian earth, bad as men were and ever sinking lower, they did not yet worship the powers of nature; still less did they change the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds and quadrupeds and reptiles.

But Cain shows us the progress of an impenitent soul in a field for the energies of man without God. His worship is dropped; the world morally begins.

“And Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of Nod [wandering] east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived and bare Enoch. And he was building a city, and called the city's name, after the name of his son, Enoch” (vers. 16, 17).

The language of inspiration is most significant. Jehovah did not leave Himself without witness, even to wicked Cain. He knew the end from the beginning, yet remonstrated with him when He could not accept his offering, urging righteousness, but disclosing the resource of grace when wrong was done. He laid the conviction of guilt on Cain after his secret murder of the suffering saint whose blood cried unto Him from the ground. What interest even in so wicked a man! What long-suffering with man as he is!

How can any believer venture to treat such early and gracious interventions of Jehovah as other than plain and sober, however solemn, facts! Undoubtedly they became rarer as the rule in man's history here below; and this in large part because they really were vouchsafed for his learning at the beginning. In no sense are they to be regarded as mythical, but as His actual dealings with man for his profit now and evermore, if he have ears to hear.

It was Cain then who “went out from the presence of Jehovah,” and dwelt in that land which seems named from his exile; east of Eden. Jehovah was no longer before his mind. The world was his object. There were such as he feared already (ver. 14); and Jehovah had given or appointed for him a sign, lest any should find and kill him. Fear of Jehovah he had none. What actuated mankind later wrought in him henceforth. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” The space which grace gives for repentance, ungodliness perverts to pursue its own will and indulge its lusts, in defiance of God and His word. His sin is the “initiated,"1 whose name his father gives to the city he was building: a most striking fact for that day, and above all notable in him whom Jehovah had sentenced to be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth.

It is the rise of civilization without God; the effort of man to make a paradise for himself and forget that he is an outcast through sin. Cain shows us the first budding of what was to bear the bitterest fruit. Psa. 49 is a moralizing of the godly Jewish remnant, who in it see man, whatever his pretensions, no better toward God than the beasts that perish. With all their pride, then self-seeking meets its rebuke, for death shall be their shepherd, they being appointed as a flock for Sheol, and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning. Their inward thought is, their houses are forever, their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. This their way is their folly; yet after them men approve their sayings. Such is the world, till the Lord appears and executes judgment.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 4:13-15

The sin of Cain was not simply self-will in rebellion against God like Adam's, but despite of grace in the fallen state; which broke out in murderous violence against the accepted man, not a neighbor only but his brother. It was the type of the Jews' sin against Christ; and the sentence was not death but to be cursed from the earth, a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. This too we see strikingly verified in that people, who as yet show as little compunction as their prototype, tenacious of religious forms, but leaders of the world in rationalistic infidelity with a bad conscience. “And Cain said to Jehovah, My punishment (or iniquity) [is] greater than to be borne. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day on the face of the ground, and from thy face I shall be hid, and I shall be a wanderer and a fugitive in the earth; and it will come to pass [that] every one finding me shall slay me. And Jehovah said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, it shall be avenged sevenfold. And Jehovah set a mark on Cain, lest any finding him should kill him” (vers. 13-15).

Here we see the reaction, from unbelieving indifference and dislike of grace and hatred of its object as well as its source, to despair. How deep the lesson and solemn the warning! How hard the heart which so slightly regarded his own fratricidal guilt, to say nothing of such a brother as Abel; and which so ungratefully received the goodness of Jehovah in all His ways and words with himself, which left the door open for repentance and, it would seem, a sin offering also! But his pride rankled with hatred because of his unbelieving and rejected oblation, even though his primogeniture was expressly declared to be intact.

How true is that which our Lord lays down! If, on the one hand, a man love Me, he will keep My word, as, on the other, He that loveth me not keepeth not My sayings. The holy pleading of Jehovah with His vain worshipper never entered that unhappy heart. In man fallen the beginning of moral goodness is in the confession of one's badness; and faith in the Deliverer coming, and yet more as come, produces this repentance, which bows to God and confides in His mercy. So it was with Abel; not so with Cain whose bitterness rose up everywhere rebelliously, the form only changing with the circumstances. Cursed from the earth though he was, he was to live a wanderer here below: Jehovah does not act on the precepts of earthly government He had not yet divulged.

What space for self-judgment, if the appeals of Jehovah had been laid to heart! Heedless of His words, thankless for His longsuffering, Cain sheds not a tear over his murdered and martyred brother; his whole feeling is for himself. It was not his iniquity that overwhelmed his conscience. Of his punishment he complained as too great to be borne. That this is the true meaning of his words the context shows. “Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day on the face of the ground, and from Thy face I shall be hid.” But what care for Jehovah's face had he, who, without a victim, without the confession of sin and death, still less of a Savior to come, dared to approach Jehovah with the fruit of the ground cursed for man's sin? His worship betokened his wickedness, his incredulity, his dark unexercised conscience; as Abel's told out his sense of ruin, but confidence in the One revealed of God to destroy the destroyer on man's behalf and to His own glory.

We shall see ere long how little Cain respected the divine sentence which he next repeats: “And I shall be a wanderer and a fugitive in the earth.” It was really a most mild and merciful dealing with the wicked man whose hands were imbrued with his brother's blood, directly suited to furnish time for bitter reflection and self-loathing and anguish, had not sin hardened his heart into a mill-stone.

Bold as he was, his consciousness of guilt could not keep his fears hid: “And it will come to pass that everyone finding me shall slay me.” There however he was mistaken. Jehovah's long-suffering with His adversaries is amazing; as men now would feel and own, if they only let in light enough to see their own dark enmity to God. “And Jehovah said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, it shall be avenged sevenfold. And Jehovah set a mark on Cain, lest any finding him should kill him” (ver. 15).

Cain was preserved, notwithstanding that which deserved immediate and condign punishment; he was reserved for the special dealing of Jehovah at the end; for He had even a mark set on him (of what sort it is not said) that none should find and slay him. He had the wretched consolation that man's meddling with him to his hurt, certainly to seek his death, would be avenged to the fullest degree. How evident a type it is of God's dealings, and in the revealed character of Jehovah too, with the Jew because of His blood Who was raised up from among His brethren after the flesh to be the anointed king and prophet and priest on His throne, all this and more, being in His own right Son of the Highest and no less God than the Father, Who alone of men and as man had glorified Him in all respects to the uttermost! Yet was He, yea because He was and spoke the truth to the Jews and witnessed the good confession before the Gentiles, slain far more wantonly and ignominiously than Abel was of Cain. But God in that unspeakable wickedness and crime of man made Him sin for us, that we might become divine righteousness in Him: the deepest and most needed and withal most effectual proof of what the God of love is toward man in salvation

of the lost at all cost to Himself and His Son. But the Jew, blinded by religious pride and hardened yet more than the Gentile in his guilty course of evil, remains preserved of God, and awaits the special dealings of Jehovah at the end of the age, in that unequaled tribulation which is his predicted portion, before the indignation shall cease and Jehovah's anger in the destruction of the enemies of Israel.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 4:9-12

Even the atrocious crime of Cain only brought Jehovah once more on the scene. What a contrast with pagan philosophy or poetic myth! The true God deeply concerns Himself with man.

“And Jehovah said unto Cain, Where [is] Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: [am] I the keeper of my brother? And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground. And now cursed [be] thou from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield its strength to thee; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be on the earth” (vers. 9-12).

Not that Jehovah was ignorant any more than heedless; but He would bring home secret sin, and to the guiltiest give space and ground for repentance. Yet in the case before us the conscience was hardened by religious pretension without reality, and exasperated by the acceptance of him who stood only in the faith of divine grace, though in fact Abel's works were righteous and Cain's evil. He that received the best good in hope did good in his measure; he that despised it envied and hated and slew his own brother, that looked up in dependence on the God of grace.

The questions of Jehovah were searching: not, as before to Adam, Where art thou? but Where is Abel thy brother? and What hast thou done? Adam went away from God, self-convicted, before God pronounced on his sin and made known the resource of His mercy in Christ. Cain to his sin against Jehovah added sin against man, no a neighbor wily but his brother: type of the world's, especially the Jew's, sin in the cross of Christ, Who had deigned to come of that people according to flesh. But unbelief blinds the heart to the highest favor which godless will can torture into a wrong to justify its own murderous pride. “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak (excuse) for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other hath done, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But [it is] that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause” (John 15:22-25). The Son of God come and rejected proved the state of the world and of Israel in particular.

But Cain was as impenitent as faithless, and had the effrontery to fall back at once on falsehood. He knew not! he knew not where his victim lay! Yea, to a lie he added the insolence of “Am I my brother's keeper?” Had he laid to heart Jehovah's remonstrance in ver. 6, 7, he would have judged himself and brought a suitable offering, thankful that his brother had profited by taking the shame of sin and giving God glory for His grace. But as indifferent to God as to his sins, he was puffed up and fell into the devil's fault and snare, manifesting himself as a child of the evil one.

His second question Jehovah follows up with the direct and terrible fact. “And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now cursed be thou from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand” (vers. 10, 11). The ground had fallen under curse for Adam's sin; and Cain, utterly thoughtless of sin and of God's sentence had brought of the fruit of it under his tillage, itself a consequence of the fall, as an offering to Jehovah. This might have been, had man not sinned. To ignore sin is to show neither repentance nor faith, without which no sinner can find the way to God. No believer would have offered what lay under curse, what spoke of his own toil. Now the proof of the unbeliever's evil was flagrant: violence and falsehood and irreverence. For his brother's blood cried to Jehovah from the ground. He himself too most righteously was pronounced accursed, not the ground now but the man who tilled it, because of the wrath which burned to white heat, not at the instant but the more his haughty spirit brooded over his own worship disowned, his brother's accepted.

It is to be observed that nothing answering to civil government was instituted originally; nor was it invented by man during all the centuries which preceded the flood. God set it up for the first time after that great event which ushered in those dispensations of God which still run their course till the Lord come. Hence it is that Cain was not punished by man, as responsibility would have required after the sword was committed to Noah. Thenceforward did God solemnly require blood for blood: “whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man.” The sword of civil government was only borne by man as God's minister after the deluge.

Nor do we find explicitly the eternal judgment in Cain's case any more than in Adam's. No doubt words employed occasionally imply more to the ear of faith; but the open statement speaks of God's government of the earth, as was suitable in a revelation given to His people Israel. Therefore we hear not of heaven or of hell; but “when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield its strength to thee; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be on earth” (ver. 12). Heavier than before was to be the lot of him who slew his righteous brother, cursed himself on the reluctant earth, whence with difficulty he should draw his food, and where he should be a constant prey to a had conscience and anxious fears, shunned by all around him.

How blessed the contrast in the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel (Heb. 12)! This called for vengeance, as that will for blessing on the earth when the day arrives for the liberty of the glory, as Rom 8 speaks: how due to an infinitely better than Abel!

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 4:4-8

The Epistle to the Hebrews is not the only inspired comment on the primitive account of Cain and Abel. There the faith of Abel, who offered thereby a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, stands prominent; through which the former had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness to his gifts. He approached God as in himself fallen and sinful, in the faith of Another, presenting the sacrifice of a slain victim. This was righteousness, and Abel is characterized accordingly. “And Jehovah had respect to Abel and to his offering; but to Cain and to

his offering he had not respect: And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And Jehovah said to Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, will it not be lifted up (lit. is there not a lifting up)? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door; and to thee [shall be] his desire, and thou shalt rule over him (ver. 7)."

Cain had neither faith, nor righteousness, nor love; but he was not a hypocrite. He was not insincere. He then thought with himself that he ought to bring an offering to Jehovah; and what, he considered, could be more acceptable to Him, what more suitable to himself, than fruit of that ground on which he put forth his daily toil? Alas! it was the offering of that worst "folly," which slights sin, forgets judgment, ignores grace, exalts man, and dishonors God. To have respect to such an offering and to such an offerer was morally impossible on God's part. It would have been indifference to evil. Jehovah appreciated. Abel and his offering. It was the divine testimony that Abel was righteous, not Cain. Men are proud Godward who bring nothing but sin and are wholly insensible to it. The believer owns his ruin by sin, but looks to a Savior from God, This faith Abel expressed in his sacrifice; and God, rejecting impenitent self-satisfied Cain, testified to Abel's gifts, as he accepted himself.

Nothing rankles more in a natural man than disrespect to his religion; and it assumes the most deadly character where God's disapproval is even insinuated. Yet what can be plainer or more certain than that a sinful man cannot be accepted of God in himself or in virtue of anything he can do? Sin is not canceled so, nor is God thus glorified. The believer judges self before God, not selfishness only but all that is in man as he is, of which nature is proud till God unveils all, too late for salvation; and this justly, for the evil of man, and the resource of divine grace, were before Cain no less than Abel. But Abel laid it to heart believingly, Cain did not and paid the penalty of woe, as all must who proceed in his way (Jude 11): a danger specifically laid before men in the Christian profession. So speaks, expressly in view of "the last hour," the apostle John in the First Epistle, (chap. 3:12), where Cain appears as of the evil one and slaying his brother; and this, because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. If sin begins toward God, it goes on toward man, even if that man were a brother with the loving claims of a relationship so near. Thus the irritation from a worship rejected of God broke out in hatred of the accepted man, and murder was the result then as ever since (Matt. 23:35, Rev. 18:24), For scripture lifts the veil and proclaims the truth, whatever appearances or pretensions say; the Cain worshippers hate and, if they can, slay those like Abel because their own works are evil, those of the persecuted, righteous.

Here skepticism plies its destructive craft, and imputes a mythical character to the God-inspired history of Moses. To the believer what can be more touching than the intercourse of God, not merely with Adam unfallen, but as here with wicked Cain? How shallow to reason from later reserve, when the law kept man at a distance, or from the total change of the gospel when the intimacy of redemption became expressly one not of sight but of faith! Ought we not with adoration to admire His patience with His enemy, no less than His grace with the fallen if they might believe and be blessed? Unbelief gains nothing by its cavil but loss of God; and what a loss! How strengthening to the soul is the enjoyment of what is alike simple and profound, in His thus adapting Himself to the nursery days of mankind—the same true God Who went down infinitely lower for us in Christ and His cross. But the wise and prudent love not what our Lord Jesus delighted in, as in their measure do babes to Whom the Lord of heaven and earth revealed them.

Superstition no less surely loses the truth, though it wears a more reverent veil and in its odor of sanctity deceives itself more completely than can vain and empty skepticism. Yet is it only man's religion, and the world's worship, in direct rebellion against that worship of the Father in spirit and truth which our Lord announced for the true worshippers of the hour that now is. The total ruin of man is as unknown as the salvation of God in Christ. Grace in God toward the sinner by faith is hateful to both alike; and hence these two, adversaries as they are ordinarily one to another, may be found habitually to unite against His truth and His love. At the same time one thankfully owns that among the superstitious rather than the skeptical appear individuals who believe in the Savior, and are so far taught of God, in spite of their system which under its earth-born clouds, swamps and hides the Christ they love. If superstition is a corruption of what is good and admits of degrees, skepticism also may not be absolute, but is essentially antagonistic to divine revelation. In their common hatred of God's grace and their common confidence in man, both flow from the same unbelief of the flesh, which will not own and abhor its own enmity to God, and will not trust His love in a Crucified Savior and the free gift of eternal life to every believer. Religious or profane, unbelief resists God's sentence on man as lost, and misled by the devil, strives to improve the flesh and ameliorate the world: the denial of Christ and the gospel.

Cain, like every unbeliever, was insensible to the truth. He judged himself as he was capable of coming to God with gifts of the earth, which expressed neither sin nor death, neither judgment nor expiation. How could Jehovah have respect to him or his offering? Nor was this all. The acceptance of Abel provoked his proud spirit to fury and unrelenting hatred: Abel, his righteous and weak brother, was its object ostensibly; God's grace really and beyond all. Jehovah interposed with words of truth and grace, all in vain. "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, will it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin (or, a sin-offering) coucheth at the door."

It was Dr. John Lightfoot who first, as far as I am aware, suggested "sin offering" here rather than "sin," as preferred in the ancient and most modern versions. Many since that great Hebraist, have followed in his wake, notably Abp. Magee in his well-known work on the Atonement, who argues from the admitted and peculiar form of the connected verb (couching) as strongly confirming an animal ready for offering, and not the sin calling for it, which he regards as, to say the least of it, "a bold image." Then he summons to his aid the grammatical fact of the substantive, which is feminine, with a verb of the masculine, which he follows Parkhurst in thinking perfectly consistent with the supposition of a sin offering, the victim, and not the thing "sin." This however is a slender proof, for in the passages cited the words stand as subject and predicate, and therefore do not require sameness of gender, as anyone can see by examination not only of Hebrew, but of Greek and Latin and perhaps almost all if not all languages. There is no doubt that, besides the primary sense of sin, the word admits of the secondary meanings of sin suffering (i.e., punishment) and sin offering; which latter the Septuagint; translators render by , (or) , as we also find in Rom. 8:3, Heb. 10:6, 8. There is also in the Sept.,. text or various readings, simply , as for example in Ex. 29:14, Lev. 4:21, 25, 29, 33, and 34, (.), ver. 9. It is a question of context, as we may observe in ver. 13 of our chapter, where the Sept. gives , a charge, fault, or crime; as the Auth. and Revelation Versions have "punishment" in the text, "iniquity" in the margin. It is therefore legitimate to conceive that a sin offering may be meant in ver. 7, especially as Jehovah uttered the words, though it was reserved to the law to define and demand them in due time, for by law is full knowledge or acknowledgment of sin. The Septuagintal rendering of the clause is far from happy. "Didst thou sin, if thou hast brought it rightly, but didst not rightly divide it? Be still: unto thee" &c. The Vulgate like the English is intelligible. The question is whether Jehovah simply charges home the conviction of sin on the wrong-doer, or intimates a sacrificial means of getting cleared, according to the proposed correction. In this case a burnt offering would not be in place, since it is generally expressive of man's actual state in approaching God, not a specific bearing away of positive and personal wrong-doing as is here implied. Even if certainly thus, what believer can doubt that the mind of Jehovah has in these words Christ and His cross before Him? What grace in bringing sin to the door!

There was no ground in any case for wrath or despair. God is the God of grace now, as by-and-by He will judge by the Man He has raised from the dead: the witness to the believer that he will not be judged, being already justified; to the unbeliever that he cannot escape judgment, having refused saving grace in Christ Who will judge him. Meanwhile the title of the firstborn remains intact for the unbeliever over the younger brother that believes; just as the man's over the woman. What a just God is ours even to an unjust Cain!

“And Cain said to Abel his brother...And it came to pass when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him” (ver. 8). The Samaritan, the Greek, the Syriac, the Latin, read “Let us go to the field.” But it is far more impressive to leave the words as they are in deference to the Hebrew, as striking almost in its silence as in what is said. What matters it to learn the terms by which Cain deceived his brother? How beautiful the comment on the dark deed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “He being dead yet speaketh”! But it is through his offering, not his suffering, though this shall never be forgotten above or beneath.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 4:1-4

Man was now, as he is still, an outcast from Paradise, where Jehovah Elohim had placed him in original innocence; he was an outcast, because he had sinned knowingly, deliberately, and without excuse. It was sin against God; and death the consequence, with its bitter accompaniment for all the creation subjected to man as its head, no less than expulsion from the garden of Eden. Yet man was not driven out before the revelation of the woman's Seed (oh what grace) a Conqueror of the enemy, Himself to be bruised though the Bruiser of the serpent's head. And withal Jehovah Elohim clothed both Adam and Eve, guilty and vainly covered as they were, with coats of skins: a clothing which could only be through death, and death inflicted on the victim for the covering of those guilty.

Now those who truly feel their fallen condition, yet believe in the true God of light and love, never forget but ponder in their hearts both His words and His ways. This is faith; as indifference to them is unbelief. The inspired record that follows brings both before us solemnly; for so it ever is from that day to this in a world and a nature under sin and death. Some believe the things spoken, and some disbelieve. Faith and unbelief have everlasting results: good works, and evil, now respectively; by-and-by life eternal on one side, as on the other wrath and indignation. Thus early does scripture present the principles, and in facts which the simplest may take in and the conscience is bound to heed: how evidently of God and for man

“And the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bore Cain, and said, I have acquired a man from (with) Jehovah. And again she bore (she added to bear) his brother Abel. And Abel was a feeder of sheep, and Cain was a tiller of the ground. And it came to pass in process of time (at the end of days) that Cain brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof” (vers. 1-4).

The “first man” Adam was now a father, but only when fallen; as the “Second man” became head of the new family of God, when attested as righteous in resurrection, obeying God and having borne our sins in His own body on the tree (1 Cor. 15:45, 46).

Further, Eve takes the initiative and expresses her thought religiously, but according to nature, which never rises to God's mind as to either man's sin or God's grace. Hence it is wholly unavailing to bring man out of evil to God: only God's word judging sin can give the truth which faith receives. “I have acquired,” said she, “a man (Ish) from (or, with the help of) Jehovah.” How fatal is the haste of nature! “He that believeth (or trusteth) shall not make haste.” But so it ever is with man or woman, One only excepted Who was absolutely what He said, and waited patiently for Jehovah. Not so Eve who yielded to her own thoughts and saw in her first-born the man gotten from Jehovah, the woman's Seed that should crush the enemy. But the fit time or person was not yet.

Eve knew not that first is that which is natural, not what is spiritual. Yet no truth is more certain, none plainer, throughout scripture, which we ought to know to our blessing. In each dispensation man is first tried in responsibility and fails. As with Adam, so with Noah; so with Israel and in detail, people, priests, kings; so with the Gentiles to whom imperial power was entrusted, while Israel is Lo-ammi; so last and not least with Christendom. Not so Christ, Who as He glorified His Father in obedience all His life, glorified God as such in death and for sin; wherefore also God highly exalted Him And as Christ at His first advent was the Faithful Witness, though outwardly all seemed to fail in the death of the cross, so at His second coming everything which failed in man's hand will stand and shine in Christ—mankind, government, Israel, priesthood, royalty, Gentile, power and the marriage of the Lamb with His bride on high, when God hats judged Babylon the great harlot, “and her smoke goeth up forever and ever.”

It is no wonder that Eve could not forecast that the coming Vanquisher was to be the woman's Seed, still more true and exclusive and glorious than her firstborn, because He, He alone, was to be Immanuel, El Gibbor, as the prophet testified, the true God and Eternal Life, as says the apostle. Yet her language shows that she did hope for a min of worth from, or with the help of, Jehovah, though in the way of nature fallen and so coming to naught.

The same plague-spot reappears in Cain, only darker far, when in process of time the two sons approach God in worship. Nor does any other act on earth so fully decide the state of the heart. So it was here. “The way of Cain” abides to this day, as Jude lets us know in a verse which condenses volumes of truth. For the difference between the brothers did not lie in the presence or the absence of religion; but Cain was in nature, Abel in faith. Now nature ignores sin, and God's judgment of it, as well as the grace that revealed a future deliverer, God giving meanwhile a covering for the naked founded on the death of victims.

Of all this, though presented day by day to Cain at least as much as to Abel, the religion of nature took no account. There was total indifference about God's nature and will, and total insensibility about man's moral state. Cain no less than Abel had heard of their parents' transgression, of a lost Paradise, and of the woman's Seed, a sure Avenger to come and smite the enemy. But Cain had ears and heard not, as untouched in conscience about sin in himself and ruin around him, as he was careless of divine grace and truth. “Cain brought of the fruits of the ground an offering to Jehovah.” He never laid to heart “Cursed be the ground for thy sake.” He had tilled it in the sweat of his face; and this in his judgment added value to his offering of its fruit. The sin of man was no more to him than the curse of God. Why should He not accept the fruit of the ground, the offering of his own toil and pains? Cain knew not that it was but “the sacrifice of fools,” the proof of an unrepentant, unbelieving, heart.

Not so Abel who did not presume to approach Jehovah save by bringing “the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof.” It was “by faith” he “offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.” Faith is by a report or hearing, as the report is by the divine word. The revelation of the woman's Seed had entered not his ears only but his heart, and purified it by faith. He looked for the Person that was coming, the hope of his soul; and the skin, given to his parents when convicted of sin, spoke of an efficacious covering on God's part which could only be by a victim's death. Thus did his faith prompt a sacrifice which acknowledged sin and found rest in the death of another between himself and God. The sacrifice was presented by one that trembled at Jehovah's word; and its character expressed not nature but the resource of grace revealed by God. It testified to expiation, the sole efficacious ground of acceptance for sinful man, confiding, not in himself or the fruit of his work, but in God Himself and the coming Deliverer. For as impenitent unbelief goes back to what might have been well enough, if man were not a sinner, faith looks onward to a Substitute, Man yet infinitely more than man, and to the abolishing of sin and its consequences by a slain but worthy Victim.

It is remarkable too that “the fat” is especially noticed as offered to God in this, the first recorded sacrifice. We know how God loves to guide those who believe, and far beyond their measure of knowledge. For, more than two thousand years after, Jehovah reserved the fat as well as the blood, notably in the sacrifices of peace offerings, where communion was the point more expressly than in any other institution of the Levitical economy. The fat typified inward energy presented to God, and not only what propitiated. How full is the believer's acceptance in Christ! Here alone is truth, here alone righteousness unfailing and perfect; yet all is of God's grace; and man, confessing his sinfulness, blesses Him for Christ, the Savior of the lost. It was a new and supernatural standing which man, though fallen, found from and with God by faith. The ground of nature in such a case denies sin, dishonors Christ, resists the Holy Spirit, and defies God the Father.

Joseph, Genesis 47:1-12: Joseph: 28. Presents His Father

Genesis 47:1-12

As yet however the king had not seen the kindred of Joseph. This now follows.

“And Joseph went in and told Pharaoh and said, My father and my brethren, and their sheep and their cattle and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and behold they are in the land of Goshen. And from among his brethren he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said to his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said to Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers. And they said to Pharaoh, To sojourn in the land are we come; for there is no pasture for thy servants' flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. And Pharaoh spoke to Joseph saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come to thee: the land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell. And if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle. And Joseph brought in Jacob his father and set him before Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said to Jacob, How many are the days of the years of thy life? And Jacob said to Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred-and-thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from the presence of Pharaoh. And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household with bread, according to their families.” (vers. 1-12).

We read of Joseph's becoming attitude towards Pharaoh. On every point of view Goshen was the land most appropriate for his father and his brethren. The land lay nearest for sojourners in Egypt, for those who were destined by God to enter Canaan as the land He had promised long before when their father had not even one son (Gen. 15). Again, it was near Joseph, and the king also; and further, it was the least frequented by the people of the land, to whom herdsmen, shepherds and the like, were an abomination, as Joseph let them know. Even apart from this, we were already informed of their general objection to eat bread with foreigners (43:32). Such was the severity of caste among the Egyptians, as we know it is among strict Hindus. But it was of moment that the king should come to the same conclusion as his minister of state, and decree freely without any pressure from one so near to the sons of Israel. The presenting of an adequate number of his brethren was ordered wisely. When they plainly stated their occupation, as handed down from their fathers, the king not only fell in with Goshen as the most fitting place for their dwelling, but gave hearty welcome. He also laid it on Joseph that he should set capable men from among them to undertake the charge over his own cattle there.

But another deeply interesting interview is next brought before us. “Joseph brought in Jacob his father and set him before Pharaoh.” The aged patriarch was in no way abashed in presence of the world's most exalted monarch. “Jacob blessed Pharaoh.” Never had the king of Egypt stood so high. Through his God-instructed administrator, he had been led to wise and equitable measures, which during years of super-abundant plenty provided for the years no less of famine, relieved the poor amply, enriched the sovereign beyond example, supplied the wants of adjacent lands, and especially for the chosen people, and brought them where they were to multiply, arouse the wicked hostility of their neighbors, and in due time furnish a wondrous spectacle of a deliverance from Jehovah, to declare His name throughout all the earth in plaguing the proud king of that day and vanquishing his false gods, as conspicuous as His mighty hand and outstretched arm on behalf of Jacob's peed in their most feeble and abject state.

“And Pharaoh said to Jacob, How many are the days of the years of thy life? And Jacob said to Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage” (vers. 8-9).

“And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household with bread according to [the mouths of] their little ones “(vers. 11, 12).

The humbled heart of Jacob felt justly in comparison with Abraham and Isaac, but rose up without question of pride to bless the king. God was before his faith, and he could bless Pharaoh simply, out of a full heart. “And beyond all gainsaying, the less is blessed by the better” (Heb. 7:7).

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Joseph, Genesis 46:1-7: Joseph: 25. Israel Sets Out and God Speaks in the Night Vision

{vi 1388-1394}Genesis 46:1-7

Jacob had seen more changes than any of his fathers, and is especially in contrast with Isaac, who never left the land of promise; yet it was a great surprise and effort to one who after so many vicissitudes expected to die in Canaan. And if he remembered the word of Jehovah to Abram in Gen. 15, he might well hesitate, however great his longing to look once more on his beloved Joseph.

“And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-Sheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to Israel in the night visions and said, Jacob, Jacob 1 And he said, Here [am] I. And he said, I [am] God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also certainly bring thee up [again]; and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes. And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba; and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, on the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle and their goods which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his seed with him, his sons and his sons' sons with him, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his seed he brought with him into Egypt” (vers. 1-7).

Beer-sheba was a memorable spot to Isaac, who built an altar there, and called upon the name of Jehovah who had there appeared to him, some time after he had been forbidden, even under the stress of famine, to go down into Egypt, as Abraham had faultily done. But now God spoke to Israel in the vision of the night, after he had offered sacrifices to his father's God who called him by his name of natural weakness, and bade him fearlessly go down into Egypt. There in the land already pointed out as a furnace of affliction they were to sojourn, yet to come out with great substance and multiplied numbers. Till then their increase had been slow. Such were God's ways with His people, as well as with the peoples they were to dispossess; for the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. Jacob was not to hesitate. “I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will certainly bring thee up again; and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.” God entered into the anxieties of his feeble servant and knew how to strengthen his tried heart.

“And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba; and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, on the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him.” But they took their live stock also and their goods which they had acquired in Canaan, and came into Egypt. Jacob and his sons had no idea of entering that land as mere dependents on its prince, whatever his desire to show all honor to Joseph, and the promise that the good of all the land of Egypt should be theirs. They therefore took their “stuff” along with them and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his seed with him; “his sons and his sons' sons with him, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his seed, he brought with him into Egypt.”

It was a sorry spectacle to the eye of sense, not more than a troop of Gitanos in the estimate of Spaniards. Yet there was the nucleus of a people, to sojourn in a land not their own for a while, but to return and take possession of Canaan. Alas! first they accepted conditions of law, wherein they utterly broke down and suffered the penalty of their presumptuous unbelief in idolatry, as in the rejection of the Messiah later. At length they shall be restored on the ground of pure mercy, under the new covenant, with repentance and faith in the returning Messiah, who will set them at the head of all nations, when He will reign over all the earth in righteousness, power and glory. Never till then shall there be the days of heaven upon earth. Even Pentecost was no fulfillment, but the strong pledge of it to come. Compare {vi 27016-27018}Acts 3:19-21.

Joseph, Genesis 46:28-34: Joseph: 27. Meets Jacob

Genesis 46:28-34

Now then the father was to meet the cherished but long-separated son; and his brethren also were to be settled in Egypt through the loving care of him whom they in their hatred had sold to be carried there. Not one of them probably had ever till now expected to meet there, not even Joseph. But God had spoken long before what was just beginning to be accomplished, with much to follow, which may before have not engaged their attention. It was a prophecy, all the more vaguely remembered because it was not yet written as in Gen. 15: a great favor to be spoken at all, a greater still to be read in the written word long after it was uttered in God's grace.

“And he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to give notice before he came to Goshen. And they came into the land of Goshen. Then Joseph got ready (yoked) his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen; and he presented himself to him, and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said to Joseph, This time let me die, since I have seen thy face, that thou livest. And Joseph said to his brethren and to his father's house, I will go up and tell Pharaoh and say to him, My brethren and my father's house, who [were] in the land of Canaan, are come to me; and the men [are] shepherds, for they are men of cattle; and they have brought their sheep and their cattle, and all that they have. And it shall come to pass that when Pharaoh shall call you and say, What [is] your occupation? then ye shall say, Thy servants are men of cattle from our youth even till now, both we and our fathers; in order that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen, for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians” (vers. 28-34).

Civilization was not what characterized the fathers, as it did the line of Cain in the antediluvian earth, and Egypt and Asshur and Babylon, to say nothing of others, after the deluge. But there was a dignity that accompanies the fear of God which is far better than any such worldly gloss, however pleasant to fallen nature. We see the pious sense of propriety as in Abraham and Isaac, here too of Jacob in sending Judah before him to Joseph to give good notice of his own coming to Goshen. Again, we may notice the faith and wisdom of Joseph who had already in chap. 45:10 sent the message as to Goshen, before he had said a word to Pharaoh. It was the outlying part of Egypt, where they could retain their old occupation best, and were least exposed to the idolatrous and moral corruptions of that land. Into Goshen accordingly they

came. And Joseph on his part got ready his chariot and went there to meet Israel his father; and on presenting himself he fell on his neck and wept on it a good while. The affection was great on both sides, and Israel said to Joseph, Now (or, This time) let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou yet livest. Worldly splendor had not weakened that love which knit father and son together in the promised land.

But we also may remark the prudent administrator in his words to his brethren, “I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, My brethren and my father's house, who [were] in the land of Canaan, are come to me. And the men [are] shepherds, for they are men of cattle; and they have brought their sheep and their cattle, and all that they have. And it shall come to pass when Pharaoh shall call you and shall say, What is your occupation? then ye shall say, Thy servants are men of cattle from our youth even till now, both we and our fathers; in order that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen.” Two things made this advice acceptable to the king, and even his people. For Pharaoh had already, as is stated in chap. 45 declared his wish to give them the good of the land of Egypt, that they might eat the fat of the land (vers. 18-20). And as “every shepherd [is] an abomination to the Egyptians,” there would not be the least objection to Israel's settling to this occupation on land most favorable to it, and from its site one farthest off from meeting their eyes day by day. Thus Joseph was enabled to advise his brethren from the start, so as to live where it was best for them, and least offensive to the Egyptians.

Joseph, Genesis 46:8-27: Joseph: 26. Names of Jacob's Sons Who Came Into Egypt

Genesis 46:8-27

If we honestly wish to avoid serious mistakes and rightly understand Scripture, it is important to read the genealogies according to their aim, and not modern ideas. And it is plain on their face that they present difficulties, which no forger nor compiler would have left but have avoided with all care. The writer, on the other hand, knowing details which we might not, expresses simply what he knows to be true without stopping to clear them up. Special motives govern each case; and if this be under the direction of the Holy Spirit, as a Christian is bound to believe, the mistake must be in judging according to his own mind and method, not after the divine design.

“And these [are] the names of the sons of Israel who came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Jacob's first-born, Reuben; and the sons of Reuben, Enoch and Phallu and Hezron and Carmi; and the sons of Simeon, Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Saul son of a Canaanitish woman. And the sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath and Merari; and the sons of Judah, Er and Onan and Shelab, and Pherez and Zarah; but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan; and the sons of Pherez were Hezron and Hamul. And the sons of Issachar, Tola and Puah, and Job and Shimron; and the sons of Zebulun, Sered and Elon and Jahleel. These [are] the sons of Leah whom she bore to Jacob in Padan-Aram, and his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and daughters [were] thirty-three.

“And the sons of Gad, Ziphion and Haggi, Shuni and Ezbon, Eri and Arodi and Areli; and the sons of Asher, Jimnah and Ishvah and Ishvi and Beriah, and Serah their sister, and the sons of Beriah, Heber and Malchiel. These [are] the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and she bore these to Jacob: sixteen souls.

“The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife, Joseph and Benjamin. And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath bore to him, daughter of Potiphera, priest in On; and the sons of Benjamin, Belah and Becher and Ashbel, Gera and Naaman, Ehi and Rosh, Muppim and Huppim and And. These [are] the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob: all the souls [were] fourteen.

“And the sons of Dan, Hushim; and the sons of Naphtali, Jahzeel and Guni and Jezer and Shillem. These [are] the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: all the souls [were] seven.

“All the souls belonging to Jacob that came into Egypt, that came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives: all the souls [were] sixty-six. And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt [were] two souls. All the souls of the house of Jacob which came into Egypt, [were] seventy” (vers. 8-27).

It is God's register of Jacob and his house, “seventy” souls including Jacob, and Joseph with his two sons, “sixty-six” without these. The Sept. cited by Stephen speaks of seventy-five, because it adds Manasseh's son Machir and grandson Gilead, and Ephraim's two sons, Shuthelah and Tahan with Shuthelah's son, Eran or Edom. The time approached when they should exchange the life of a family, already in Genesis enlarged into twelve families, for that of a people; and their growth is one of the initiatory facts of Exodus, the second book of the Pentateuch. Scripture reveals the interest God took in recording things little in man's eyes. Nature revels in what it counts great in its own eyes and before the world.

The fact is that the sons of Jacob were even less than would be reckoned in a modern census. For the principle stated in Heb. 7:9, 10 seems to have been here applied to Judah's offspring, and to Benjamin's also, as we may gather from the previous history, but inserted here as the heads of future families, as we see confirmed by the list in Num. 26 of independent families of the tribes of Israel in the day when Moses and Eleazar were directed to take the sum of the whole assembly of Israel's sons from twenty years old and upward. This is a solution suggested by these versed in such genealogies; and it is but one of several. It was no mistake, but intentional, however outside ordinary thought. Thus the immense increase during the sojourn in Egypt became all the more marked, notwithstanding the cruel and murderous oppression which characterized its latter part, and gave the occasion for Jehovah their God to show Himself greater than all gods; for in the thing in which they acted haughtily He was above them.

Joseph, Genesis 45:16-28: Joseph: 24. Joseph Sends for Jacob and All

Genesis 45:16-28

Thus was Joseph led tenderly to care for his father and his brethren, as he was enabled to administer for the relief of Egypt and its surrounding peoples, that the exceeding and long plenty should not be wasted but turned to provide against the distress of the equally long famine which followed. Thus those who heard the word of God could see the hand of God accomplishing what the divinely-sent dreams

portended of the ruling place which Joseph was to fill, and this not only in patriarchal limits but far beyond, while accomplishing God's ways with His choice line as made known to Abram in Gen. 15 “And the report [or, voice] thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying Joseph's brethren are come; and it was good in. Pharaoh's eyes and in the eyes of his bondmen. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, say to thy brethren, Do this: load your beasts and depart; go into the land of Canaan, and take your father and your households, and come to me; and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. And thou art commanded—this do: take waggons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and fetch your father and come. And let not your eye regret your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt [is] yours. And the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them waggons according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. To each one of them all he gave changes of raiment, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred [shekels] of silver and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent this: ten asses carrying the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses carrying corn and bread and food for his father by the way. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed ; and he said to them, See that. ye fall not out by the way. And they went up out of Egypt and came into the land of Canaan to Jacob their father. And they told him, saying, Joseph [is] yet alive, and he [is] governor over all the land of Egypt. And his heart became numb, for he did not believe them. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had spoken to them; and when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. And Israel said, [It is] enough; Joseph my son [is] yet alive: I will go and see him before I die” (vers. 16-28). No circumstances could be devised by man's wit so favourable for the entrance of Jacob and his sons into Egypt; and none could be conceived more simple than the plain facts of the case, to give Joseph the administration of the land, attaching to him alike the king and his subjects. If they did not surpass fable, they were true; and they bear thus the clear impress of God's ordering, as they prefigure that which the prophets pledge in Jehovah's name of what a greater than Joseph was exalted to do when rejected by His brethren to sit on God's right hand in richer supplies to a famished world, and about to make Himself known “the second time” to His brethren with broken hearts and deep repentance, entering for the first time their real and unchanging history of obedience, when all the nations shall indeed be blessed in the one Seed, which is Christ as the apostle speaks in Gal. 3:16.

Even in the world that now is, how rare to find a king and his servants united through respect for an alien governor to yield a hearty and harmonious welcome to his alien fathers and brethren! And Egypt had its strong prejudices then as it is known to have had for ages afterwards; and to none could it be so strongly opposed as to those who confessed God (unknown to them), who denied their gods, with that exclusiveness which ever must be where divine truth is consciously professed. So it was with the believers of Israel; and so it is with the faithful Christian. Neutrality in God's things condemns itself as false and evil to such as know Him.

Here at any rate they had special reasons showing no doubt that the Egyptians, king or people, could not deny how warm a reception was proffered to all the kin of Israel for Joseph's sake. The very waggons suggested by the king and left for Joseph to supply played their part in assuring the father to credit the tale, which made his heart fail at first, that Joseph still lived. “The Jews ask for signs;” and there it was in the means of going down into Egypt which his sons could not have provided, as indeed in much more which his loving and bountiful son gave for the whole of them, Benjamin in particular, and his father yet more.

But we can recognize words, so characteristic of Joseph and so suitable to his piety, which scarce one but he would have thought of at such a moment of excited wonder and self-judgment. “See that ye fall not out by the way” is the last thing for a forger to invent, the expression of godliness and affection in perfect keeping with him who uttered the words.

Joseph, Genesis 45:1-15: Joseph: 23. Made Known to His Brethren

Genesis 45:1-15

The dealing with the conscience of the guilty had done its work. So it will be with the righteous remnant of the latter day. The chastening seemed at the time grievous, but was really in love and for profit, in order to the partaking of God's holiness. After that grace can display itself freely.

“And Joseph could not control himself before all those that stood by him, and he cried, Put every man out from me. And no man stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brethren. And he gave forth his voice in weeping; and the Egyptians heard, and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said to his brethren, I [am] Joseph does my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were terrified at his presence. And Joseph said to his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I [am] Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. And now be not grieved, and let it not be an occasion of anger in your eyes, that ye sold me hither; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine [hath been] these two years in the midst of the land; and [there are] yet five years in which [shall be] neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance. And now [it was] not you sent me here, but God; and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and governor over all the land of Egypt. Haste and go up to my father, and say to him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down to me, tarry not. And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near to me, thou and thy sons and thy sons' sons, and thy flocks and thy herds and all that thou hast. And there will I nourish thee, for [there are] yet five years of famine; in order that thou be not impoverished, thou and thy household and all that thou hast. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that [it is] my mouth which speaketh to you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither. And he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck. And he kissed all his brethren, and wept on them; and after that his brethren talked with him” (vers. 1-15).

Judah's appeal gave full and conclusive proof that the means employed by Joseph had wrought its designed effect. What a true sense of their cruel wrong toward their guiltless brother! What intense feeling for their father, only less wronged of old than their brother Joseph, and now to be fatally smitten in his old age by the loss of his beloved Benjamin! Judah craved as the greatest favor to remain instead of the lad as slave to his lord; for how could he go to his father without Benjamin? Joseph could not, would not hold out longer, but without delay yields to his pent up affection; and, that he might do so freely and fully, charged every attendant to leave his presence. No stranger must intermeddle in such a scene. “And no man stood with him, while Joseph made himself known to his brethren” (ver. 1). All must be out now; and as in chap. 43:30 he sought to weep apart, and refrained himself, he now gave vent to his feelings without measure that they might be delivered from

their fears and be assured of the love which was ever in his heart. For well he knew that the discovery must fill them with dread no less than astonishment. And he yielded to weeping so loud that the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard (2). “And Joseph said to his brethren, I [am] Joseph: doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were terrified at his presence” (3). Who can wonder that they were mute? But his love would cast out their fear. “And Joseph said to his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near.” And not content with divulging the great secret, as “he said, I [am] Joseph your brother whom ye sold into Egypt,” so he at once seeks to remove their terror by the words, “Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither; for God sent me before you to preserve life.”

Now what a lesson follows in rebuke of the shameless unbelief of prophecy that prevails among this generation of professing Christians! Joseph speaks with the calmest confidence to his brethren, as he had to the king and court of Egypt, of the five years of famine in addition to the two which had led his brethren to repair to the stores, which the years of exuberant plenty enabled him by his faith to provide against the years of want. Near or distant is alike easy to the revealing Spirit of God: both are beyond man's power. Incredulity would explain both away. All the more the grace of God which was pleased to make the future known in a veiled shape, that the sufferer in the dungeon should not only be vindicated, but become the witness that God gives wisdom to the wise, and reveals the deep and secret things as He sees fit, and on behalf of His people even in their lowest estate.

We can truly and rightly judge how low the fathers of Israel's tribes had fallen and how calculated Joseph's words were to give them a new confidence in God's interest in them, far more intimate than His beneficence to Egypt's king and people and the lands which profited by His wondrous ways. “And God sent me before you to establish you a remnant on the earth, and preserve your lives by a great deliverance.” Here was the true key, not merely the discovery to Pharaoh and the rescue of Joseph, and the provision generally in the singularly long plenty and the equally long dearth, but the accomplishment of His plans, long before divulged to Abram (in Gen. 15), whereby His ancient people should grow up from the family of Jacob in a stranger land of bondage and affliction, the oppressing nation to be judged, and themselves to emerge with great substance.

Who can fail to see that the prophetic powers for Abram, and now for Joseph, were equally from God, whether for centuries beforehand, or for running septads of years? What difference can this make to God, known to whom are all His works since time began, yea, from all eternity? It is only a question of His pleasure directed by wisdom and love. And if Israel were called to own and witness the privilege vouchsafed, how much more Christians who are entitled by the Spirit to search all things, yea, the depths of God For we can discern a greater than Joseph herein and anticipate the day when the Jews shall be brought to learn by grace their incomparably worse conduct to Him, who, though God over all, deigned to become their Messiah, who died to save and will restore them as a people to their land, and to reign King not only there but over all the earth, equally Jehovah as Messiah. In that day shall there be one Jehovah, and His name one. Yea more, He shall have things in the heavens and the earth summed up and together under His headship of all the universe, and all the earth filled with His glory as truly as the heavens. We can read in Zech. 12 The recognition scene for the Jews when the long despised Jesus appears in glory to the confusion of their enemies and their own everlasting salvation.

But to return to Joseph, what concern to console his brothers! “And now not ye sent me hither, but God; and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and governor throughout all the land of Egypt” (ver. 8). Was not this the truth by grace to faith, not to the blinded skeptic? Thereon in vers. 9-11 he bids them go up to his father without delay, tell him all, and bring him down to dwell in Goshen near Joseph, both him and all his with flocks, herds and possessions. “And there will I nourish thee, for yet [are] five years of famine,” lest all should come to poverty.

And what more touching than his final words? “And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin that [it is] my mouth which speaketh to you. And tell my father all my glory in Egypt, and all ye have seen; and haste, and bring my father quickly hither.” Not content with this, “he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck. And he kissed all his brethren, and wept on them; and after that his brethren talked with him.” Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, not only he with them, but they with him. But what is even this compared with that which is yet reserved for Israel?

Joseph, Genesis 44:18-32: Joseph: 22. Judah's Plea

Genesis 44:18-34

What can be found more candid and lowly, or more affecting, than the appeal to Joseph of the man once so hard and heartless?

“Then Judah came near to him, and said, Ah! my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou [art] even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said to my lord, We have an aged father, and a child born to him in his old age, a young one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother; and his father loveth him. And thou saidst to thy servants, Bring him down to me that I may set my eyes on him. And we said to my lord, The lad cannot leave his father; for [if] he should leave his father, he [his father] would die. And thou saidst to thy servants, Unless your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more. And it came to pass when we came up to thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, buy us a little food. But we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down; for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother [be] with us. And thy servant my father said to us, Ye know that my wife bore me two [sons]; and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces, and I have not seen him since. And if ye take this one also from me, and mischief should befall him, ye will bring down my gray hairs with evil to Sheol. Now therefore, when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad [is] not with us, seeing that his soul is bound up with the lad's soul, it will come to pass, when he sees that the lad [is] not [with us], that he will die; and thy servants will bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to Sheol. For thy servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, If I bring him not to thee, then I shall be guilty toward my father all the (or, my) days. And now let thy servant stay, I pray thee, instead of the lad a bondman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren; for how should I go up to my father if the lad [were] not with me? lest I see the evil that shall come to my father” (vers. 18-34).

The immense change God had wrought in his brethren was thus made manifest to Joseph. Their envy and selfish cruelty had given way to tender love to their father and his affection for the younger son of Rachel. The old jealousy was supplanted to the root; and he who took the lead was ready to become a slave to the governor, that Benjamin might return to be his father's joy and consolation, instead of death if he remained a bondman. What Joseph had sought was given him, though, none as yet knew what he realized, the fraternal guilt how gladly forgiven, the father about to taste comfort beyond all his hopes; and his own pious heart recognized God's goodness and wondrous ways in bringing about all that was about to be the portion of the family of promise.

Good M. Henry casts about for reasons why Judah should be here so prominent. But those who favor either Patristic expositors or Puritans will pardon me if I point out the great loss which all sustain who do not study the dispensational ways of God in scripture. They consequently are too little versed in the prophets, who rendered invaluable and indispensable aid for apprehending the types. There is no real ground for conceiving Judah “a better friend to Benjamin than the rest were,” or “more solicitous to bring him off.” Nor need we think that “he thought himself under greater obligations to endeavor it than the rest, because he had passed his word to his father for his safe return; or the rest chose him for their spokesman, because he was a man of better sense and better spirit, and had a greater command of language than any of them.” I am not aware that anything is extant from Origen, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Cyril which treats of this, or from Augustine, Jerome or any ancient Latin father. For they too entered so little into the study of the purposes of God as revealed in scripture that we could not expect gleanings of weight on this score.

Yet to those who have profited anything to speak of from prophecy it is evident that to a romancer Reuben would have seemed from Gen. 37 the natural one to have taken up the case, and Judah far from promising, especially when we read the revolting figure which he cuts, in chap. 38. But the truth according to God is that Judah was the one whom grace had now fitted for the work. And this harmonizes with the divine disposition of the land, where Benjamin had a special nearness in their respective lots. “Of Benjamin he said, The beloved of Jehovah—he shall dwell in safety by him; he will cover him all the day long, And dwell between his shoulders” (Deut. 33:12). And so it was ordered of Jehovah, that notwithstanding the almost extermination of the tribe for their defiance of their brethren in a gross case of sin, and later still their natural repugnance to the anointed king of Judah who superseded Saul's line and their tribe, they became attached to Judah and the house of David beyond and unlike all the others.

So it will characterize the future and its bright hopes when the heart of Jerusalem is spoken to, and she will hear the cry that her time of toil and trouble is accomplished, and her iniquity is pardoned. The ten tribes will share the blessing later; but Judah and Benjamin precede. They rejected the true Christ; they will receive the Antichrist. Hence Judah here has a place with and for Benjamin quite peculiar; and He who inspired the scripture did not forget to point to this fact only known to God, which gives it a meaning full of interest to those who honor the word as truly His and not man's, all of it worthy of Him. As Joseph clearly prefigured Him that was rejected by and separated from His brethren, yet exalted in a sphere outside them for the blessing of men in all the world, so Benjamin typifies Him in His tearing to pieces the enemies of the Jew in the day of retribution that is coming, not for blessing only like Joseph, but for power, executing divine judgment on the adversary.

One quite understands how few since apostolic days in the past or present exhibit a state to apprehend or enjoy the things to come. But this, thank God, does not enfeeble the truth, nor hinder faith's delight in looking beforehand to the glorious things for Israel on the earth then made ready for them. Our portion is with Christ for the heavens.

Joseph, Genesis 44:1-17: Joseph: 21. The Crucial Test Applied

Genesis 44:1-17

It was needed in the moral government of God that the brethren should be searched still more thoroughly; and Joseph is His instrument in devising a still more trying means, not only to carry out self-judgment to the uttermost but to prove their affections now sound and fervent to their father and their brother, after their deep guilt in both respects of old. Love joined righteousness in thus working for their best good.

“And he commanded [him] that [was] over (or, the steward) of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food as much as they can carry; and put every man's money in the mouth of his sack. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his corn-money. And he did according to the word of Joseph which he had spoken. In the morning when it was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. They were gone out of the city, not far off, when Joseph said to his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou overtakest them, say to them, Why have you rewarded evil for good? [Is] not this [it] in what my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? Ye have done evil [in] what ye have done. And he overtook them, and spoke to them these words. And they said to him, Wherefore speaketh my lord such words as these? Far be it from thy servants to do such a thing Behold, the money which we found in our sacks' mouths we brought again to thee out of the land of Canaan; and how should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it is found, let him die; and we also will be my lord's bondmen. And he said, Now also [be] it according to your words: he with whom it is found shall be my bondman, and ye shall be blameless. And they hasted and laid down every man his sack on the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched carefully; he began at the eldest, and left at the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and loaded every man his ass, and returned to the city. And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; and he [was] yet there; and they fell before him on the ground. And Joseph said to them, What deed [is] this which ye have done? Know Ye not that such a man as I can indeed divine? And Judah said, What shall we say to my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we [are] my lord's bondmen, both we and [he] also in whose hand the cup is found. And he said, Far be it that I should do so! The man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my bondman; but as for you, go up in peace to your father” (vers. 1-17).

Severe as the trial was, love dictated it in the fear of God, though we may feel that the mode adopted was in no way what the N. T. would suggest to the Christian. Unfriendly eyes ignorantly misapply the light of Christ to such as had not that light as we have, to disparage the ancient scriptures, and set the one against the other. Joseph acted according to his measure, impaired no doubt by the Egyptian life which surrounded him; and scripture tells us the facts as they were, without sanction or apology. So it is even in the N. T. when the true light was already shining: the record is not a divine sanction. But the written word is always the truth of things, be it what it may; and this is what God

alone gives; and it is what we need and can find nowhere else. And the steward knew well what his master intended.

How blessed for us, and to God's glory that we have the unfailing and ever holy wisdom of God in Christ! Here the unbeliever may spy as he pleases; his carping malevolence may assail or pervert. But the wisdom abides without a flaw. By-and-by He will be reigning in power; but when He too suffered as Joseph never did, His every word and way was God's wisdom for us. And so it is when accepted on high and in the highest glory, though it be not yet His promised glory on His own throne, but exalted exceptionally as Joseph was with Gentiles in immediate view, not Israel under Him as when He reigns according to the prophets. He is God's wisdom alike in heavenly glory as in earthly humiliation, as the later revelation of God abundantly proves to our joy and blessing.

His type Joseph was here to carry out the necessary probe for the clearance of all the past mischief, and the forming of a new heart and a new spirit, in his brethren. It was for God's sake and their sakes, rather than his own, that there might be the reality and the evidence of a divine work in their conscience and heart. This dictated the cup in Benjamin's sack. No doubt the shock of its discovery there acutely troubled to the brothers. But so it must be where sin of the deepest kind lay at the bottom of all; and this was but a, means that it might be duly felt and judged. After all, the pain of the means employed was very brief (not more than a few hours compared with what Joseph drank so deeply for years), and the same day followed with forgiveness and joy and tender love.

To reward the governor's good with such an evil as stealing his cup filled the brethren with all the more anguish that it was found with Benjamin. No wonder that they rent their clothes, and loaded every man his ass, and returned to the city heartbroken. And now more than ever they paid Joseph the fullest obeisance in unconscious accomplishment of his dreams, as they fell before him on the ground. In the latter half of the chapter we shall learn the depth of their renewed feeling for their father and their brother: the very issue which Joseph desired, as he on his part proved the reality and depth of his own love for all. But we need not say more now, as we have a pleading to hear which touched and delighted the heart of Joseph, as it has spoken to innumerable hearts since to our day. And what will it be when the type is fulfilled, and the Lord Himself appears to the Judah of the future day when they look on Him whom they pierced, and mourn as for an only son, every family apart, and the wives apart (Zech. 12)?

Joseph, Genesis 43:15-34: Joseph: 20. Benjamin With the Rest Meets Him

Genesis 43:15-34

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. So it will be for Israel when existing shadows yield to the reality Christ's appearing will bring in to the glory of God. So it was for the dawn of heavenly light and blessing in Christ for the Christian; and so it will be when this age ends, and a new one begins for Israel and the nations of the earth.

“And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin, and they rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, Bring the men into the house, and slay, and make ready; for the men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bond-men, and our asses. And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they spoke to him at the door of the house, and said, O my lord, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food; and it came to pass, when we came to the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, [every] man's money [was] in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; and we have brought it again in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hand to buy food: we know not who put our money in our sacks. And he said, Peace [be] to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out to them. And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave [them] water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender. And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon; for they heard that they should eat bread there. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which [was] in their hand into the house, and bowed down themselves to him to the earth. And he asked them of [their] welfare, and said, [Is] your father well, the old man of whom ye spoke? [Is] he yet alive? And they said, Thy servant our father [is] well, he [is] yet alive. And they bowed the head and made obeisance. And he lifted up his eyes and saw Benjamin his brother, his mother's son, and said, [Is] this your youngest brother of whom ye spoke to me? And he said, God be gracious to thee, my son. And Joseph made haste, for his bowels yearned upon his brother; and he sought [where] to weep; and he entered into [his] chamber, and wept there. And he washed his face, and came out; and he restrained himself, and said, Set on bread. And they set on before him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians who did eat with him by themselves; because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that [is] an abomination to the Egyptians. And they sat before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marveled one with another. And he took messes for them from before him; but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs. And they drank and drank largely with him” (vers. 15-34).

The inspired narrative in its own beautiful simplicity shows us God's working in the conscience of the sons of Israel. How little they yet understood that His goodness was leading them to repentance, and that the brother they had so deeply wronged and bitterly hated was but accomplishing their best good by the exercises they passed through! That they were invited into the governor's house filled them with uneasiness. “The men were afraid because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bond-men, and our asses.” Hence their eagerness to tell the story of their mysterious discovery, and to repay the money that was not theirs. But the steward assured them that all was right on that score without further explanation. God would work more deeply yet.

Meanwhile Simeon rejoins them; and all are treated with the kind attention due to guests, and their beasts of burden too. And they made ready the gift for presentation to Joseph when he should appear. And very graphic is the meeting, and the inquiries on his part out of the love which he felt, as they bowed down again and again in obeisance. “And he lifted up his eyes and saw Benjamin his brother, his mother's son, and said, [Is] this your youngest brother of whom ye spoke to me? And he said, God be gracious to thee, my son. And Joseph made haste, for his bowels yearned upon his brother, and he sought [where] to weep; and he entered into [his] chamber and wept there.”

Who can fail to realize it as a scene of human feeling? But it has also a far deeper character to him who reads in faith, and knows the blessed import of grace to be held out by a far greater than Joseph in His restoring His guilty and long alienated brethren to the knowledge of Himself and of themselves, for the glorious consequences when the blessing shall be on the head of Jesus “in that day” which is coming, and on the crown of the head of Him that was separate from His brethren.” No wonder that those who limit the language to the past think scripture hyperbolical. Christ is not only the key to, but the fullness of, the truth, which here so nearly concerns, not the church of the heavenlies, but the earthly people of God, who must be inwardly fitted for the place to which they are destined before all the nations of the earth, “the glory of Thy people Israel.” For figuratively Benjamin, the son of his father's hand must be joined to Joseph, “the separated from his brethren,” in order to the accomplishment of their glory which awaits to be fulfilled in its own time. It could not be at this time while the church is being completed in which is neither Jew nor Greek.

Joseph, Joseph: 19. Jacob Lets Benjamin Go: Gneesis 43:1-15

Genesis 43:1-15

The sons quietly left the difficulty till the family need forced Jacob to speak, which gave Judah opportunity to plead without impropriety. Feeling would yield to famine. Yet God was in Jacob's thoughts, and in a measure in those of the sons, as compared with the past. But the mercy that fails not would shine through the dark clouds.

“And the famine [was] grievous in the land. And it came to pass, when they had finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, Go again, buy us a little food. And Judah spoke to him, saying, The man did positively testify to us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, unless your brother [be] with you. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food; but if thou do not send [him], we will not go down; for the man said to us, Ye shall not see my face unless your brother [be] with you. And Israel said, Why dealt ye so ill with me, to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? And they said, The man asked very closely after us and after our kindred, saying, [Is] your father yet alive? have ye a brother? And we told him according to the tenor of these words. Could we at all know that he would say, Bring your brother down? And Judah said to Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and thou and our little ones. I will be surety for him: of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not to thee and set him before thy face, then shall I be guilty before thee forever. For had we not lingered, we should now certainly have returned already twice. And their father Israel said to them, If [it is] then so, do this; take of the best fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a gift, a little balm and a little honey, tragacanth and ladanum, pistacia-nuts and almonds; and take double money in your hand, and the money that was returned to you in the mouth of your sacks, carry [it] back in your hand: perhaps it [is] an oversight. Take also your brother and arise, go again to the man. And the Almighty God give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin! And I, if I be bereaved [of my children], am bereaved. And the men took that gift, and took double money in their hand, and Benjamin, and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph” (vers. 1-15).

It is in a world of evil and sorrow through sin, where grace works for good. As long as the food lasted, the dreaded condition remained in abeyance. But when their supply came to an end, facts must be faced, and God be found above their hopes as much as their fears, turning their faults to their profit, but abundant in suited mercy to His own glory. The sons left it to their father to propose a fresh visit to Egypt; and not Reuben but Judah states the case. They were absolutely forbidden to see the ruler's face without Benjamin. With him they were ready to go down and buy the needed food; without him they durst not go. Thereon Israel yielded to their complaint; for they could well plead the ruler's keen inquiry. It is indeed a vivid transcript of the situation, and of the agitated feeling on all sides growing out of iniquity, with God not only to exercise and chasten but to carry out His own way for blessing all round.

So it will be with the generation to come of Israel's sons, guilty of far deeper dereliction and against an immeasurably greater than Joseph, whom “this generation” spurned in their blindness and consigned in their hate to a far more ignominious doom than their fathers ever conceived for their brother. And the repentance of the coming day will be proportionate, as the necessary trials through which they must pass retributively in God's government will be immense. But the end of the Lord will be rich in promised blessing, not only for Israel but for all the nations of the earth. And how deep and loud will be their thankful praise and joy and triumph in Him their own Messiah to whom they owe it all in mercy without measure or end!

Here Judah again pleads with his father, with touching effect offering to bear the blame forever. Now Israel yields, however it might wring his heart, and with careful instructions that all should be done honestly and with comeliness, he surrenders his beloved, the more beloved because of the missing link, recalling the proper patriarchal name of strength in their weakness. It was after a long interval, when God recalled it thus to Jacob, and along with El-Shaddai, the name of Israel (Gen. 35:10, 11) with glorious promises yet to be fulfilled in Israel's sons. But this glory turns, as does their salvation, on their long rejected, soon-to-be-received, Jesus Messiah.

Joseph, Genesis 42:29-38: Joseph: 18. Jacob Resists the Demand for Benjamin

Genesis 42:29-38

The way of restoration is not easy when souls had got astray like the sons of Jacob. But conscience had begun its deep and wholesome work, however much might be needful. Joseph knew far better than themselves that God was really at work, and using their self-judgment for their blessing through the very trouble which pressed on them and resulted in Simeon's detention in Egypt, confirmed for one by the discovery of the money in his sack's mouth. Their heart failed through fear, and the question was raised, What is this God has done for us?

“And they came into the land of Canaan to Jacob their father, and told him all that had befallen them, saying, The man, the lord of the land, spoke roughly to us, and treated us as spies of the land. And we said to him, We [are] true; we are not spies; we [are] twelve brethren, sons of our father: one [is] hot, and the youngest [is] this day in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the land, said to us, Hereby shall I know that ye [are] true: leave one of your brethren with me, and take [for] the hunger of your households, and go and bring your youngest brother

to me; and I shall know that ye [are] not spies but [are] true: your brother will I give up to you; and ye may trade in the land.

And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man [had] his bundle of money in his sack; and they saw their bundles of money, they and their father, and were afraid. And Jacob their father said to them, Ye have made me childless: Joseph [is] not, and Simeon [is] not, and ye will take Benjamin! All these things fall on me. And Reuben spoke to his father, saying, Slay my two sons if I bring him not back to thee again; give him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. But he said, My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he alone is left; and if mischief should befall him by the way in which ye go, then would ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol" (vers. 29-38).

The terror of the brethren was greatly increased by the evident purpose of the money in every man's sack. Even one case alarmed them, now that conscience was awakening. Yet this might have seemed a singular accident; but not so the nine. Jacob too was afraid with them. It appears too that it was not mere goodwill on Joseph's part, but done in communion with God to work yet more in consciences so long seared. They were far as yet from understanding the way of the Lord with them; even Jacob was occupied with the wounds to his heart, and at once recalled the loss of Joseph and Simeon as a reason for utterly refusing to let Benjamin go.

Yet these blows which fell so heavily on his affections were the needed path for blessing and joy to all. And such is the end of the Lord for all that fear him, however trying the way. Joseph too had known it and far more deeply than any, in which he was rather typical of Christ, faithful amidst unfaithfulness; his brethren and even Jacob buffeted for their faults, a very different alternative; and so it will be in the latter day for the Jewish saints during that hour of Jacob's sorrow,

But even for Joseph, and a far greater than Joseph, humiliation was the path to glory. And so with the Christian now. Our place is to suffer with Christ in a spirit of uncomplaining grace. But even the godly Jewish remnant will bow before the retributive dealing of moral government. They shall by sovereign grace "be saved out of it," and they shall look upon Him whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only one, and shall be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. And the answer will be, Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins. Yet without Christ's cross all had been vain: on Him Jehovah laid the iniquity of all that believe.

Joseph, Genesis 42:21-28: Joseph: 17. His Brethren in Self Reproach

Genesis 42:21-28

On the third day we have seen the governor of Egypt relented; and instead of keeping all in prison while one was sent to bring Benjamin, he offers the terms of keeping one as the pledge in custody, while the rest convey back the grain which their households required. But he dropped a few words of great significance to the sons of Jacob, and to them also exceedingly unexpected from the great lord of a people so idolatrous as the Egyptians. And he uttered these words as the explanation of a proposal so just and considerate: "I fear God." Who can doubt that this following their serious position and the relief just proposed was calculated to act powerfully on conscience?

"Then said they one to another, We [are] indeed guilty concerning our brother whose anguish of soul we saw when he besought us and we did not hearken: therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them saying, Did I not speak to you, saying, Do not sin against the lad? but ye did not hearken; and now, behold, his blood also is required. And they did not know that Joseph understood, for the interpreter was between them. And he turned away from them and wept.

And he returned to them and spoke to them, and took Simeon from among them and bound him before their eyes. And Joseph commanded to fill their vessels with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way; and so it was done to them. And they loaded their asses with their corn and departed thence. And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the lodging place, he saw his money, and, behold, it was in the sack's mouth. And he said to his brethren, My money is returned, and, behold, it is even in my sack. And their heart failed, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What [is] this God hath done to us?" (vers. 21-28).

Their sin against Joseph as well as their father, their sin against God too, after being hid for some twenty years, had now begun to be brought home to them. God would work not the grief of the world unto death, but according to His goodness repentance unto salvation, that the truth they had heard from their father might be no longer a mere theory but a living reality, as it was in Joseph's soul. Think how their confusion must have touched his loving heart, as he heard them acknowledge the sin of their heartless turning away from his agony when he besought them as his brethren in vain; first in leaving him to perish, and next in selling him as a slave! Who but God ordered the matter so that he should now hear their self-reproach who then conspired to their sorrow and shame in devising one mischief after another? If it was amazing to him that God was giving such a token for good in his hardhearted and envious brethren, how much more would it not have been to them had they known that Joseph was now listening to their penitence?

Reuben who had shown some compunction then recalls to them their wicked deed and his remonstrance. Altogether Joseph was so overcome that he could only turn away and weep. Those tears were not of selfish feeling but of gratitude to Him who had watched over all his sufferings and dangers. Now too he could see God's working not only to humble and to bless his brethren but to cheer his father's heart, both by his own restoration to him as one from the grave, and as to his other sons who had been so little a solace and so often a shame. Their distress must deepen yet, for God does not spare the flesh; but the profit would be all the greater at last.

Joseph soon rose above his emotion and returned to them, and before their eyes bound Simeon (not Reuben) on adequate ground. No chastening seems to be of joy but of grief; but the end is worthy of God, even if we have to wait and trust Him in the trials we need by the way.

But Joseph followed up what he began by directing the money of each to be returned in their respective sacks. He sought to deepen the work beyond the sense of retribution for their past evil toward himself. Provision for their journey alone might not have had any such effect; but the money restored would strike them as not at all the way of sale or of man. And it came on them by degrees. For in their halting-place one only opened his sack to feed his ass and saw his money in the mouth of his sack. And this he told the others, to the consternation of all, who could

but say to each other, “What is this God hath done to us?” A bad conscience brought God before them; for why should the governor act so kindly who suspected that they were spies, had one brother in his custody and imperatively demanded the one on whom their father doted? Surely it was God working for good, which they did not yet at all realize. Part of that good was that they should judge themselves thoroughly, still more that they should learn God's ways and end as they had never done.

Joseph, Joseph: 16. Proves His Brethren: Genesis 42:10-20

Genesis 42:10-20

Here a quite different scene opens for Joseph, yet recalling his earliest associations and God's dealings with him since he last saw his brothers: he discerning the past, the present, and in his measure the future; they as yet nothing aright. In his natural home he told the true dream of the exaltation which God purposed above not only his brethren but his parents, which they were soon to own. In his rejection only short of death he was the interpreter of life for one man and of judgment for another. Out of prison he was called to interpret for the Egypt-world a full period of plenty followed by as long a period of dire want; and not predicting only, but chosen to administer in power, as he had wisdom to impart, according to God. How it was to probe the hardened consciences of those dear to him notwithstanding their baseness to Jehovah, to their father, and to their brother! We left off with his knowing his brethren who knew not him, his remembrance of his own early dreams, and his imputation that they were spies come to see the nakedness of the land.

“And they said to him, No, my lord; but to buy food thy servants are come. We [are] all sons of one man; we [are] true; thy servants are not spies. And he said to them, No, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. And they said, Thy servants [were] twelve brethren, sons of one man, in the land of Canaan: and, behold, the youngest [is] this day with our father; and one [is] not. And Joseph said to them, That [is it] that I have spoken to you, saying, Ye [are] spies. By this ye shall be put to the proof: as Pharaoh liveth, ye shall not go forth hence unless your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you that he may fetch your brother; but ye shall be bound, and your words shall be put to proof whether the truth [is] in you; and if not, as Pharaoh liveth, ye [are] spies. And he gathered them all into ward three days. And Joseph said to them the third day, This do that ye may live: I fear God. If ye [are] true, let one of your brethren remain bound in the house of their prison; but go ye, carry grain for the hunger of your households; and bring your youngest brother to me, in order that your words may be verified, and that ye may not die. And they did so” (vers. (10-20).

Joseph had no thought of vengeance; nor would he invoke or trust process of law. He with grace in his heart does not spare profitable lessons for the conscience of the guilty. So he speaks like a governor as he truly was of Egypt, and makes himself strange to them for no other end than their real good. If God wrought by the pressure, he who had His mind would lead them, by his words and ways which troubled them, to awaken their long-slumbering conscience, that they too might fear God as he did. It is just so in principle that grace wrought with every one of us who has been truly brought to God. The affections are not to be trusted, unless conscience also cries out to God in a true sense of our own ruin and deep distress. We must approach Him about and in our sins, yet in the name of Jesus.

As they were all guilty, which no one on earth knew so well as Joseph, he committed them all to custody. But as underneath the frown of the governor lay compassion to them all, he on the good witness of the third day proposed that one only should remain in prison, and the rest, with the food he supplied them freely (though this they never suspected), should return to the comfort of their kin. But there was one condition, which for their sakes as for his must be stipulated: “Bring your youngest brother to me.” No doubt such a word sent a pang into their hearts; for well they knew what Benjamin was to his father and theirs with the then difficulties. They had sinned against their father and especially about one brother, who to their conviction was not alive yet the very lord who now confronted them. But if the way of transgressors is hard, the way of grace is beyond all thought of man good or bad. Here is nothing but goodness from first to last, if we can rightly say last of that which shall have no end. Only the sinner must learn his own badness, all the more guilty in presence of the love of the Father who sent His Only-begotten into the world, not only that we might live through Him, but that He might die for us as propitiation for our sins.

Joseph, Genesis 42:1-9: Joseph: 15. His Brethren Bow Down to Him

Genesis 42:1-9

How often God is pleased to use straits for His own purposes and in His ways for the good of all, saints and sinners! So it is here. The pinch of want fell on Jacob and his sons; “for the famine was in the land of Canaan.”

“And Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, Why look ye one on another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt: go down thither, and buy for us from thence, in order that we may live and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy out of Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest mischief may befall him. So the sons of Israel came to buy among those that came; for the famine was in the land of Canaan. And Joseph, he [was] the governor over the land; he [it was] that sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brethren came and bowed down to him, the face to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and knew them; but he made himself strange to them, and spoke roughly with them, and said to them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph knew his brethren; but they knew him not. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said to them, Ye [are] spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come (vers. 1-9).

The righteous Jehovah loves righteousness and had a controversy with those brethren of Joseph who had wronged their faithful brother, and had not judged their cruel envy and evil deeds. But this must be for the very reason, that they were His chosen family for His earthly plans, as none other could pretend to be. If therefore they had sunk below natural equity, God in His admirable patience and wisdom knew how to deal with their conscience, vindicate fidelity, chastise self-will, and cleanse from a defiled state. This first meeting of the ten brothers with Joseph had its importance in the moral government of God; who, as He had exalted His wronged and abused servant, was about to break down the hardened, and to clear their hearts from old iniquity which falsified their relationship as bearing His name.

But it was also the first step in the accomplishment of His word to Abram in Gen. 15, “Know assuredly that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall oppress them four hundred years. And also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterward they will come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. And [in a] fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full “(vers. 13-16). Of course turns what it does not understand to aspersion; yet all was made good in due time. God was faithful and accomplished as He spoke, but with His wonted patience toward the corrupt and hostile usurpers, as well as their hard taskmasters, whilst using both as a moral test of His stiff-necked people. It was His way now in progress to effect discipline for the past and present, and to increase family life into a national one under circumstances which soon changed to such as justified His intervention for His afflicted people, and gave a deep moral lesson to Israel when called to avenge His honor on the abominations of the Amorite. No forecast of man could have anticipated such a future. The God who made it known to Abram was now working in providence to bring it to pass.

Famine had wrought before in Abram's day, and not at all to his honor; but grace brought him back to his tent, and the altar as at the first (Gen. 13:3, 4). Isaac was absolutely forbidden, under similar pressure, to migrate; he alone abides in Canaan: the instructive reason has been considered in its own place. But Jacob and all the family were expressly to sojourn there, and for a long though limited season: an altogether different lot from those before him as type of Israel, whose name he alone bore and remarkably represented.

Our chapter opens with the perplexity of the sons, and their father's proposal that they should go down into Egypt for supplies. Only Benjamin must not go, lest mischief might befall him, like his brother Joseph; for that burden, though unexpressed, ever weighed on his heart. How little he could foresee that ere long Benjamin must go too! But God was working out His good and holy design surely if slowly; man's will or intelligence had nothing to do with bringing all to pass according to His word (vers. 1-5). Things as yet were far from His mind. As it was said in chap. 12:6, “The Canaanite was then in the land,” so now “The famine was in the land of Canaan.” How different when Christ reigns in Zion, and Israel is under the new covenant!

Next we hear emphatically of Joseph as governor over the land, the administrator of the vast stores of corn against the predicted and now fulfilling years of famine. “And Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down to him, the face to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and knew them.” This is all simple and true. The change in him from a mere growing youth in their own lowly sphere, to be prime minister and a great deal more in the greatest kingdom of that day, must have seemed immeasurable in their eyes. They, grown men, remained much the same for his observant glance. Yet the fulfillment of his early dreams rolled out so unmistakably as must have brought no small emotion, even to him already familiar with God's relationships and their certain verification.

We need not wonder that one in his position, not in the least through pride or lack of affection, “made himself strange to them and spoke roughly with them.” So he “said to them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.” He was entitled to prove them; as his conduct equally proved his prudence and goodwill. They deeply needed the moral probe, which lay with him above all else; especially as he “knew his brethren, but they did not know him,” as is repeated here.

But there is another element which ver. 9 draws attention to. “And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them; and he said to them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness (or, exposed parts) of the land ye are come.” The reality of God's interest in those who honor Him was plain before him, and the humiliation too of those who slight Him by their unbelief. One might not expect such a measure or manner adopted by an apostle, or a spiritual Christian; but it was quite in keeping with the governor of Egypt, albeit a pious man, and albeit brother of those who had never fully judged their persecution of one who had given them no just ground of offense. It is not love to be indifferent to flagrant evil, even in a brother. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. In remembering his dreams Joseph had God before him, and sought the good of his brethren, who as yet remembered nothing as they ought. But God is faithful, and Joseph in the main, notwithstanding the spiritually uncongenial air of Egypt.

Joseph, Genesis 41:1-7: Joseph: 10. Pharaoh's Dream

Genesis 41:1-7

God however did not forget, and kept Joseph in mind. Faith is tried to our profit (ver. 1), but never disappointed in result.

“And it came to pass at the end of two full years (years of days), that Pharaoh dreamed; and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, well-looking and fat-fleshed; and they fed in the reed-grass. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-looking and lean-fleshed; and they stood by the kine on the bank of the river. And the ill-looking and lean-fleshed ate up the seven well-looking and fat kine. And Pharaoh awoke. And he slept and dreamed a second time; and, behold, seven ears of corn came up on one stalk, fat and good. And, behold, seven ears, thin and parched with the east wind, came up after them. And the thin ears swallowed up the seven fat and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, [it was] a dream” (vers. 1-7).

We may notice how appropriate the dreams were, as ordered of God throughout for each case. In Gen. 37 what more simple and suited to those in view than Joseph's sheaf rising up and continuously standing, whilst the other sheaves came round about and bowed down to his sheaf? or the even more emphatic vision of the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowing down to Joseph? A dream so plain, vivid, and startling as to need no interpreter, and to incur the rebuke of his dearly loving father. Darker and more adapted to an Egyptian were the dreams of the chief cupbearer and of the chief baker in chap. 40, and as matter of fact beyond any interpreter among the experts of their race, the lack of whom they lamented. He who owned a living God alone was enabled to expound its prophetic meaning, soon to be punctually verified as he said. But here in the chapter before us, how wild and strange and portentous the double dream sent to arouse the king! Yet the “river” is expressed by a word pointing beyond question to the Nile, and so is the marsh-grass on its brink which cattle loved to browse. But egregious as dreams may often be in confusing the proprieties of person or object, of time and place, here it is heightened to the utmost, first by the ill-looking and lean kine eating up the fine-looking and fat ones, next by the thin and parched ears of wheat devouring the fat and good ears that grew on one stalk.

Who that believes God's word can doubt that the wonders so opposed to nature were all the more evidently of divine purpose? But that purpose was worthy of His goodness and compassion. In a world of sin and suffering, of death and moral ruin and wretchedness He works alike by uncommon bounty and by the hard pinch of want; and for the good of souls yet more by the pain than by the prosperity, that in his anguish the heart might consider why such an affliction came from such a God. The teaching of the two dreams was enigmatic in their forms, but identical in the aim; abundance to the fullest followed by the most abnormal consumption. But why the seven kine and repeated? why the seven ears of corn no less repeated? This needed His interpretation who sent the dreams, Man's power was powerless to open the lock. Wisdom was essential, not that which is earthly, sensual, devilish, but what comes down from above.

To whom did God give the key? To the humbled sufferer in the dungeon. The hour of his vindication was about to strike, and his exaltation at a bound from the deepest though unmerited dishonor to the highest position a subject could fill, always excepting the Antitype foreshadowed by both, yet with whatever resemblance beyond all comparison. But even then what a scheme of goodness while the evil day still dragged its slow length along! The abundance was not to be wasted in a luxurious and injurious waste; the famine was to be alleviated by a wise policy so as to consolidate the king's authority and power and means, instead of breeding discontent and despair and revolution. Joseph had the place of honor and administrative wisdom, after his long endurance of shame and grief at home and abroad; his father to be permanently comforted, and filled with joy overflowing after his life of trial and change beyond his father's; and his brethren to be rebuked and humbled before his grace and glory, with verification of those dreams in his youth which then only increased their base envy and aggravated their hatred of his purity and love.

But if we may not run on longer in the anticipation of this great and sudden change, let us think of the deep and divine prophetic outlook which underlies even such a history as Genesis supplies. Let us abhor the blind and destructive incredulity, which perverts by false-named knowledge, or the modern veil of “higher criticism” over real infidelity. Let us delight in the written word of God, which would and does unite a simple unvarnished and true tale, which even a child can take in and enjoy, with moral wisdom at the time and for all time. It is the Holy Spirit's vision of Christ's coming both in humiliation and rejection by Jew and Gentile, and in His administration of the Kingdom in power and glory to the blessing of both in the mercy of God at the end. Then He who chastised the unbelief of them all shall show mercy to all manifestly, and with universal confession of the once despised Jesus. O depth of riches both of wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable His judgment, and untraceable His ways! For who knew Jehovah's mind? or who became His counselor? or who first gave to Him, and it shall be given to him in return? Because of Him, and through Him, and for Him are all things: to Him be the glory for the ages. Amen.

Joseph, Genesis 41:9-14: Joseph: 11. Faults and Forgetfulness Confessed

Genesis 41:9-14

The trouble of the king, the failure of the world's resources, the magicians of Egypt and its wise men summoned in vain, touched the chief-butler's conscience and recalled to his memory what he ought never to have forgotten. He who still lay unremembered of man in the dungeon had been years ago used of God, to interpret truly his dream and his fellow-prisoner's. The king's perplexity reminded him of their sadness before light from above came to his own immense relief and on his comrade's shameful end. Might not the same interpreter who so justly forecast the servants' future be enabled to help their king?

“And the chief-butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying, I remember my faults this day. Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, me and the chief-baker. And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream. And [there was] with us a young man, a Hebrew, servant of the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he interpreted. And it came to pass, as he interpreted, so it was: me he restored to mine office, and him he hanged. Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they hastened his exit [made him run] out of the dungeon; and he shaved, and changed his raiment, and came in to Pharaoh” (vers. 9-14).

Here as ever, man's extremity is God's opportunity. The chief-butler forgot Joseph's service, so rare, opportune and unremunerated, which no money could have bought, which God alone could have enabled the blackened but blameless prisoner to render. Was it not inexcusable that the sure fulfillment of his own restoration to honor, and of his companions fatal degradation, awoke no speedy gratitude, not to say burning sense of justice, on behalf of the suffering prophet? But the patience of God is as instructive as His wisdom is reliable, and His love never fails. Who that weighs the fact can doubt, that, while man has every ground for humbling himself, God timed as well as wrought for the greatest good of His servant and for His own glory? Joseph was allowed still to endure grievous things, the chief-butler to confess his faults, the king to be as agitated as his imprisoned chamberlains, and Joseph to come forth in a luster incomparably brighter than through any possible rehearsal of his predictions in the dungeon.

It was the Egyptian monarch that was now at his wits' end, and full proof afforded that the nation's boasted wisdom was as unavailing for its troubled king, as their help would be in vain for Israel at a later day against the Assyrian.

Repentance, too, is for sinful man the necessary condition of blessing to the soul. It is God's goodness that leads to it, wholesome and steadying for him who really judges himself before Him and honestly owns it. “I remember my faults this day.” It was no mere terror of consequences that confessed how much he was to blame. “Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, me and the chief-baker.” He hides nothing of his shame or danger; and he tells how they two had dreams the same night, and repeated them to the young Hebrew (their fellow-prisoner in the state prison), who interpreted them forthwith; as they were fulfilled with a markedly different issue to each and no less surprising than distinct and immediate: “Me he restored to mine office, and him he hanged.” The same God, who sent the dreams to the two Egyptian chamberlains, explained their prophetic bearing through Joseph, and accomplished them by Pharaoh in His providence.

No wonder that Pharaoh was so deeply moved as to send and call the long and deeply wronged prisoner from the dungeon to the royal presence. No wonder that the officials lost not a moment in bringing one of whom such good things were attested by the best possible witness to the king. Gates and guards, bars and bolts, must yield him up without delay. Yet would and must he come with due care and respect for the proprieties of the court. There was strong and sound ground to expect the light which not the king only but all the sages of Egypt craved the

more to receive, after a testimony so weighty and energetic as they had heard from the chief-butler. How little any then could anticipate God's gracious wisdom, when he came in to Pharaoh, by his means, both to enlighten the anxious mind of the monarch, and to provide for the husbanding of the exceptional plenty about to come in, for aiding not only Egypt but those of other lands during the extreme dearth to follow But God meant, and not least of all, to rescue the blameless Israelite from the shame and punishment he never deserved, to raise him at once to a higher honor which was only his due; and to make him as wise, just, and pious an administrator as any king ever appointed, and any realm ever enjoyed. Of a design yet nearer to His affections, in caring for those He had separated to Himself, as witness for the true and living God against all strange gods, we need not speak now. This will appear self-evident from chap. 42 and onward, and, higher than all, as the fore-shadow He was giving of the Coming Anointed One, as to whom more remains to be said in its place; for God ever loves to speak of Him, if deaf and dead man may but hear and live.

Joseph, Genesis 41:45-57: Joseph: 14. Governor of Egypt

Genesis 41:45-57

Had Joseph been adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, had he like Moses been trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, had he enjoyed the king's favor as fully as that of the princess his daughter, we could scarce conceive of a stranger acquiring such confidence with the king and his servants at court as to be made grand vizier earlier than his thirtieth year. Then he stood nearest to the throne. It was God's doing; and at once represented by Pharaoh's seal-ring put on Joseph's hand, by his array—the court attire of byss [the finest cotton], and by the gold chain put on his neck, and by his riding in the second chariot of the realm with the suited proclamation of the honor due to his office. And we hear more; yet his elevation was wholly unknown to his brethren after the flesh.

“And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah, and gave him as wife Asenath, daughter of Potiphera priest of On. And Joseph went out over the land of Egypt. And Joseph [was] thirty years of age when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and passed through the whole land of Egypt.”

“And in the seven years of plenty the land produced by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years that were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; the food of the fields of the city which [were] round about it, he laid up in it. And Joseph laid up corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left off numbering; for [it was] without number.”

“And to Joseph were born two sons before the year of famine came, whom Asenath daughter of Potiphera the priest of On bore to him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh (for God made me forget all my toil and all my father's house). And the name of the second he called Ephraim (for God caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction).”

“And the seven years of Plenty that were in the land of Egypt were ended; and the seven years of the famine began to come, according as Joseph had said. And there was famine in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. And all the land of Egypt was famished; and the people cried to Pharaoh for bread; and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, Go to Joseph: what he saith to you, do. And the famine was over all the face of the earth. And Joseph opened every storehouse [all in which was grain], and sold to the Egyptians; and the famine was grievous in the land of Egypt. And the whole earth came into Egypt to Joseph, to buy, because the famine was grievous on the whole earth” (vers. 45-57).”

Pharaoh gave Joseph a new name, as to which the learned question whether it means “Savior of the world,” or “Sustainer of life.” Either way it points to the eminent service rendered, not in word only but in deed and truth, though the Rabbis and Josephus incline to “Revealer of secrets.” But God had especially His purpose for the people of His choice, not Joseph only but the ungrateful and envious brethren, who led the way in his sufferings, and were yet to behold his glory and share his grace.

The two sons were born before the years of famine; and their names are the more remarkable as indicating the striking difference with those of the sons of Moses, notwithstanding a strong moral and typical resemblance between their respective fathers. Manasseh means “causing to forget"; as Ephraim means “fruitfulnesses"; and they express their father's affections in his remarkable exaltation outside Israel for blessing. The names Moses gave his sons express, not his forgetting his brethren, but his sense of “strangership” in being separated from them, and counting on “God my help.” Both meet in perfection in our Lord Jesus.

The details that follow reveal the admirable administration of Joseph. Exuberant plenty with most leads to prodigality and waste. But he knew in Whom he believed, and entered wisely into the duty which devolved on him more than on any in the land of Egypt, and provided accordingly for the years of excessive want. Thus all living on the soil were to benefit in the highest degree from the sovereign to every subject, and far beyond that land. The superabundance affixed the first seal on the prophetic truth afforded and divinely interpreted; the, famine affixed the second, still more impressive to such as hardly credited a change so disastrous to comfort and increasingly dangerous to life. But the monarch had unbroken confidence in his prime minister and his measures. When the Egyptians, in their distress and fears, cried to hill as the father of the country, his one answer was, “Go to Joseph: what he saith to you, do.”

Grievous was the famine, not only in the outside countries, but in the land which at a much later day became the natural granary for the Empire; the crisis passed without riot, still less a revolution rising against the government. Yet in a simple and righteous statesmanship, which none questioned, the people were fed throughout, and gave up their lands and all they had; so that royalty was thus beyond doubt set on the most favorable position, beyond the ruler's ambition, and with the nation's gratitude to Joseph as their best friend. In all the history of the nations is it possible to find a match for what came to pass under Joseph's ministry for crown or for subject?

Faith marked Joseph's policy throughout, and his wisdom which became increasingly apparent. And if this were so with the type, what is it with Him whom he represents on high? And what will it be when He takes the world under His scepter, and all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah? None can expect, in a pious Israelite called to rule Egypt, the light which the Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension afford to the Christian, and the responsibilities which attach to his relationship as not of the world even as Christ was not. But, according to the measure then vouchsafed, Joseph was a bright witness of faith in that day, as incorrupt in his lofty charge as when a slave of the foreigner, and the persecuted of his brethren.

Joseph, Genesis 41:33-44: Joseph: 13. His Counsel and Promotion

Genesis 41:33-44

Nor was Joseph content only to interpret the dreams of the king, though this he did with a quiet simplicity and decision which so approved itself to Pharaoh's conscience, that he too had not the least doubt that God was in the matter. He saw that the case demanded the most energetic and prudent measures to turn to account the light given from above on the long super-abundant plenty against the no less long, sure, and extreme years of scarcity which were to follow. He therefore rose above all scruples which ordinarily would hinder one emerging from the obscurity and the shame of a prison from tendering advice to a king and his courtiers on affairs of state and of the most urgent and important kind. Confidence in the revealed mind of God took away the fear of slight, as it also drew out his heart in goodwill to the king and his people, not to speak of others, so intimately concerned. Otherwise they might soon forget the dream and its interpretation, as a nine days' wonder, and fall into the usual listlessness of unbelief, wasteful of the coming plenty, and heedless of the scarcity to follow. God indeed was not before the eye of the vast majority, ready on second thoughts to accredit Joseph with no more than ingenuity or, as even professing Christians would say, a lucky hit. The king at once was struck and solemnized, as the rest in measure; so that Joseph was encouraged to advise with prompt seriousness.

“And now let Pharaoh look himself out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do [this]: and let him appoint overseers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt during the seven years of plenty; and let them gather all the food of these good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and keep [it]. And let the food be a store to the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land perish not through the famine. And the word was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, shall we find [one] as this, a man in whom the Spirit of God [is]? And Pharaoh said to Joseph, since God has made all this known to thee, there is none discreet and wise as thou. Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word (mouth) shall all my people order themselves: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in clothes of byss, and put a gold chain about his neck. And he caused him to ride in the second chariot that he had: and they cried before him, Bow the knee (Abrech)! and he set him over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, I [am] Pharaoh: and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt” (vers. 33-44).

Thus without an effort of his own was Joseph elevated from the unmerited depths of suffering and ignominy to be prime minister of the greatest kingdom then on earth. Who could deny that it was God's doing in His providence, though not without extraordinary means in His Spirit's power working in His servant? And how plain the type of a greater than Joseph, Who suffered first from His own people that received Him not, afterward unto the death of the cross from Gentiles who knew Him not, yet in the midst of both the vessel of divine wisdom far beyond Joseph or any other born of women! For He was indeed the wisdom of God in the days of His humiliation, as He is now at the right hand of power while His people are estranged from Him, and blessing flows to the nations (little as they too know Him yet), besides the little flock of faith, the sheep out of both that do hear His voice and follow Him. All authority meanwhile is given Him in heaven and on earth, though He still waits for the kingdom and the restoration of His alienated people; when all the ends of the earth as well as Israel shall see the salvation of God, and the earth shall make a joyful noise to Jehovah, breaking forth and singing for joy, yea singing praises. For it will be manifested power and glory then when He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to Israel, no longer haughty and self-willed, but humbled by grace, self-judging and submissive at the feet of the crucified Messiah come to reign.

No, Christ is not yet on His own throne as it will be then. He overcame the world and its prince that adjudged Him the cross; and, rejected by Jew and Gentile, He is received up in glory to sit for the little while on His Father's throne, while the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ are being called out to await His coming to receive them to Himself for the Father's house above. To this end the gospel of God's grace goes out which the Holy Spirit, sent forth from heaven on the Son's ascension, uses to call them out. This done, the world question will be raised; for He is Heir of all things, and the Jew with Israel will come into the foreground for their deliverance, as distinctly as punitive dealings on His, and their Gentile foes.

Joseph, Genesis 41:15-32: Joseph: 12. God's Interpreter

Genesis 41:15-32

Long had been the trial of Joseph's faith and patience, and the keenest morally and physically at the close, though Jehovah was with him all the while. But then “they hurt his feet with fetters: his soul came into iron, till the time that his word came; the word of Jehovah tried him. The king sent and loosed him; the ruler of peoples, and let him go free” (Psa. 105:18-20). How sudden the change from the king's tower-house to the perplexed king's court, and the baffled sages of Egypt!

“And Pharaoh said to Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and [there is] none to interpret it. And I have heard say of thee, thou understandest a dream to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, [It is] not in me: God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood on the brink of a river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine fat-fleshed and fine-looking, and they fed in the reed grass. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor, and very ill-looking, and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness. And the lean and ill-looking kine ate up the first seven fat kine; and when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had come into their belly, and their look was as at the beginning. And I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up on one stalk, full and good. And, behold, seven ears withered, thin, parched with the east wind, sprung up after them; and the thin ears devoured the seven good ears. And I told [it] to the scribes; but [there was] none that could declare it to me. And Joseph said to Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh [is] one. What God is about to do he hath declared to Pharaoh. The seven good kine [are] seven years; and the seven good ears [are] seven years: the dream [is] one. And the seven lean and bad kine that came up after them [are] seven years; and the seven empty ears parched with the east wind will be seven years of famine. This [is] the word which I have spoken

to Pharaoh: what God is about to do he letteth Pharaoh see. Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt. And there will arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will consume the land. And the plenty will not be known in the land by reason of that famine that followeth; for it [will be] very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled to Pharaoh twice, [it is] because the thing [is] established by God, and God will hasten to do it" (vers. 15-32).

The king forthwith tells Joseph of his dream and of none to interpret it; of him he had heard as one that could. Joseph replies with modest and pious disclaimer for himself, but with faith in God's willingness and goodness in the matter. Thereon Pharaoh recounts it in yet more energetic terms than originally, the two-fold kine, the two-fold grain, the lean and ill-looking devouring the good and well-favored, who came before. Joseph explains that both dreams related to one event, seven years of plenty, followed by as many of famine, beyond parallel. Both were of God's doing for extra-ordinary ends; as was His making all known to Pharaoh, outside the ken of man. The doubling of the dream indicated not only its certainty, but the speed of its accomplishment. God deceives not, nor is He mocked. Behind His good-will to man and those providentially set in authority, He cared intimately for the prophet who had suffered long for righteousness and His name's sake; as He had designs for humbling his brethren, chastising their evil ways, but eventually bringing them in the fourth generation into Canaan, with great substance, out of the land of their slavery, whilst He judged the nation that oppressed them. And this He did as punctually and plainly before the world's eyes, as He now wrought to save life generally and cause the wise dealing of His servant to be at once welcomed.

Indeed Joseph was the type of One incomparably higher, Who shall astonish many nations, and shut the mouths of kings on account of Him, and melt the proud heart of His ancient people; for in their self-will they esteemed Him not but despised Him. Yet it was the reality of His humiliation, and of its infinite grace, not only in bearing their griefs and sustaining their sorrows, but far more deeply in being wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities. These gave the enemy occasion to aggravate their unbelief, as unwilling to allow their sins as to feel their need of a Savior from God, independently of themselves: at bottom the difficulty insuperable to all flesh, of Gentiles as well as Jews. But, strictly speaking, Joseph typified Him, first, in being "the Prophet that should come" and endure all griefs and shame, but be God's wisdom during His humiliation, rejected by His brethren, punished unjustly, though the righteous One, by the Gentiles, yet raised out of the depths to wield the authority of the kingdom outside Israel and the land, to the great relief of Israel and Egypt, before the day come to put the children in fulfilled possession of the promises made to the fathers.

It is intelligible that an ungodly reasoner like David Hume, or a dissolute sentimentalist like J. J. Rousseau should deny prophecy as well as miracle. One can understand too the trifling speculation of philosophers, who talk of alleged miracles or prophecies falling under a higher law which transcends the ordinary rule of natural causes and effects. The common and fatal defect of all such schemes is the sin that forgets and leaves out God, in a day particularly when there was neither the completed word of God or the scriptures, nor the presence of the Spirit imparted as the fruit of Christ's redemption. How sad that their erring and rebellious steps should be followed by men, who are not only professing Christians, but bound by their position to proclaim all revealed truth, and expound it faithfully in its fullness and precision to all disciples as well as opposers. It is both scandalous indifference and real hostility to God and His Son, and in fact less honest than those unworthy skeptics. But the apostasy must come before the day of the Lord, who will execute judgment on all evil among the living here below.

Joseph, Genesis 40:16-23: Joseph: 9. The Chief Baker's Dream and the Issue

Genesis 40:16-23

The fellow-chamberlain ventures to rehearse his dream after the chief cup-bearer. How little did he anticipate its dread import!

"And when the chief of the bakers saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, I also [was] in my dream, and, behold, three baskets of white bread [were] on my head. And in the uppermost basket [there was] all manner of victuals for Pharaoh that the bakers make, and the birds ate them out of the basket upon my head. And Joseph answered and said, This [is] the interpretation of it: the three baskets [are] three days. In yet three days will Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and hang thee upon a tree; and the birds will eat thy flesh from off thee."

"And it came to pass the third day, Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast to all his bondmen. And he lifted up the head of the chief of the cup-bearers, and the head of the chief of the bakers among his bondmen. And he restored the chief of the cup-bearers to his office of cup-bearer again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. And he hanged the chief of the bakers, as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet the chief of the cup-bearers did not remember Joseph but forgot him" (vers. 16-23).

It is clear how far the chief baker was from seeing anything to discourage his telling his dream to Joseph. But God gave Joseph the discerning ear which perceived the immense difference of the cup-bearer's action that Pharaoh should drink, from that of the birds (not the king) eating out of the basket upon his head. In no way is the credit given to his natural intelligence. The secret of Jehovah is with those that fear Him. Joseph was one whose faith was habitually in exercise: who knew that God remains the same in the midst of heavy trials, which had changed only from each great sorrow into a greater. In his lowest abasement he looked up for wisdom to its only source, and was called by His power to solve the enigma for good or for ill in the cases which came before him. For if he confided in Jehovah, his love too went out in compassion to fellow-sufferers whose countenances without a word betrayed the anxiety which their dreams cost them. Was it not faith working by love?

That both should have dreamed characteristic dreams in one night he did not impute to what men call chance. If they were sad because there was no interpreter to explain what they instinctively felt to be of the nearest interest to themselves, Joseph as simply reckoned that interpretations belong to God, the giver of every good gift, and of every perfect giving. So He is the answerer of faith's cry to Him, though unheard by any other ear.

Yet Joseph could not but know the serious and speedy fate that hung over the chief baker. We may notice therefore that he made no appeal to him for remembrance. To the chief cup-bearer only did he say, "Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, to me and make mention of me to Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house." There was nothing random in his words; nor was there any selfish desire for such royal favors as men expect. He sought simply to be delivered from the strange parody of justice inflicted on the righteous one through disappointed lust and falsehood.

In both cases the time was short, as indicated by the dream and interpreted by Joseph. On the third day the two chamberlains had each his head lifted up by the king, on his birthday; but the chief cup-bearer rose to his office near Pharaoh's person, the chief baker to the gallows. It became the cup-bearer to remember the striking service rendered by the prophet in the dungeon. But as far too commonly occurs in this world of sin and self, the spiritual benefactor was quite forgotten. For we are expressly told, that two full years passed away to try the faith of Joseph, when God wrought in His providence to make the same difficulty felt in the royal court as in the tower-house, and thus to rebuke the ingratitude of the cup-bearer, oblivious of him who had been stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews, and who also had done nothing why they should put him into the dungeon. “They hurt with the fetters his feet; into iron went his soul, until the time his word came [to pass]. Jehovah's saying tried him.” Yet he that sowed in tears would in due time reap with rejoicing. Joseph was but matured for the vast and difficult task to be assigned him without the least ambition on his part. How this was brought about the chapter that follows explains with all simplicity.

It may be noticed that Joseph is ever the interpreter, if not also the mouthpiece, of God's mind, and this in the future far off or near, beyond all creature prognostication. He was now at his lowest point of humiliation, as a dead man out of mind among the Gentiles, as before doomed to death by his own brothers, here the herald of restoration on the one hand, and of extreme judgment on the other. Little his brothers knew that they in their envious hatred were only the means of bringing to pass his exaltation for their own homage and preservation.; little could the Gentiles anticipate that the punishment so unjustly inflicted on him the guiltless was the necessary link in God's wonderful chain to have the administration of the world-kingdom committed to his hand Yet from the prison which he endured for years, as an evil-doer of the worst imputation, he was about to pass at one step to the highest dignity and the largest power. “Only in the throne,” as the king said, “will I be greater than thou.” “Without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt.”

Joseph, Genesis 40:9-15: Joseph: 8. The Chief Cup Bearer's Dream

Genesis 40:9-15

God had tried His dear child, and would try him longer. Yet this was an honor to Joseph, who was given not only to believe but to suffer for His sake. But the chain of providential links was being forged which would raise the suffering Israelite from the dungeon to the highest position in Egypt next to the throne. The dream of the chief cup-bearer was an important link in that chain.

“And the chief of the cup-bearers told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine [was] before me; and in the vine [were] three branches; and it [was] as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, its clusters ripened into grapes. And Pharaoh's cup [was] in my hand; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. And Joseph said to him, This [is] the interpretation of it: the three branches [are] three days. Within yet three days will Pharaoh lift up thy head, and restore thee to thy place; and thou shalt give Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his cup-bearer. Only have me in thy remembrance when it shall be well with thee, and deal kindly with me, I pray thee, and make mention of me to Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house. For indeed I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews; and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon” (vers. 9-15).

God works often by simple means, as here by such a dream as fell very naturally to this official of Pharaoh's court. Yet was it truly prophetic; and only a prophet was enabled to give its unequivocal meaning. Here the wisdom of God was as evident as in sending the dream. No one looks for the unities of time and place in such a vision. The events of months, or years, might be crowded into a single transaction, as in the vine budding and blossoming and yielding grapes, and wine fit for a monarch's cup. Nobody ever heard historically of so rapid a result in the hands of a cup-bearer, without a wine press or vat, or the storage in jars, seen on the monuments, and some tomb-walls dating even before the Hyksos. For wine-drinking to excess is known to have prevailed, especially at certain festivities. So that it is without warrant to assume that the liquor pressed out into the king's cup was meant to imply literally mere grape juice from the cluster rather than the fermented issue. But this is an insignificant point, save to a teetotaler's mind.

The remarkable point which Joseph was given to seize is the precision of the three days indicated by the three branches. No priestly interpreter in Egypt would have ventured to say, as Joseph did at once, “The three branches are three days. Within yet three days will Pharaoh lift up thy head, and restore thee to thine office.” It might, if a guess, have been more probably three months; but no. The secret of Jehovah is with them that fear Him; and even more was given here, the exercise in Joseph's spirit, and the divine wisdom that sent the vision to the Egyptian official, with a sadness at its arrival so soon to end in his joyful reinstatement. Interpretation of what God says or does belongs to God, who communicates it as He will, and as the rule, to those whom He loves, even in circumstances of the deepest humiliation. For in this Joseph aptly figured what was verified in the blessed Lord Himself here below.

We too may have dreams; and one may not say that all spring from the busy working of the brain, or that God may not deal thus as of old in slumberings on the bed, to withdraw man from self-will and hide pride from him. But we have as believers, and especially as Christians, far better than such comparatively vague intimations. We have the scriptures in all their fullness, revealing God, His counsels, work, will, and ways, from eternity to eternity. We have also the Holy Spirit sent from the Father and the Son in heaven, and never to leave but abide with us and in us, Who when come was sent to guide us into all the truth, and declare to us the things to come, glorifying our Lord Jesus in both. He is the standing, intimate, and ready interpreter, not like one among a thousand, as Elihu says, nor even as Joseph supernaturally endowed, but a divine Person dwelling in us. May we have grace to abjure all that grieves and hinders, and to cultivate what is of Himself so as to enjoy the privilege and the fruit more and more.

Joseph, Genesis 40:1-7: Joseph: 7. With the Dreamers in Prison

Genesis 40:1-7

It is the way of God to give prophecy in a time of present ruin, that those who sin may be finally warned, and those who believe may be sustained by the hope of “some better thing” in His grace superior to all the powers of evil. Such it was in the midst of His earthly people

when He was mocked in His messengers, and despised in His words, rising up betimes and sending, because He had compassion on the Jews and on His dwelling-place, till there was no remedy. As His wrath arose and fell upon them was exactly the time when the prophets, not content with oral predictions, wrote more formally and fully. Such is the plain matter of fact in the O. T. Here too we find the same principle in the first book of the Pentateuch, given through Joseph the witness of supernatural light in very dark circumstances, and of divine interest even in the comparatively insignificant changes of man; as He had already both gloriously and graciously intervened in announcing for faith the Second man, on the fall of the first in a lost paradise.

“And it came to pass after these things, the cup-bearer of the king of Egypt, and the baker, offended their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth with his two chamberlains, with the chief of the cup-bearers and with the chief of the bakers; and he put them in custody, in the captain of the life-guard's house, into the tower-house, the place where Joseph [was] imprisoned. And the captain of the life-guard appointed Joseph to them, and he served them; and they continued for days in custody. And they dreamed a dream, both of them in one night, each his dream, each according to his dream's interpretation, the cup-bearer and the baker of the king of Egypt that [were] imprisoned in the tower-house. And Joseph came in to them in the morning, and looked on them, and, behold, they [were] sad. And he asked Pharaoh's chamberlains that [were] with him in his lord's house of custody, saying, Why [are] your faces sad to-day?”

Joseph had served as a bondman in Potiphar's house. Now he served as a criminal in the tower-house, falsely accused of what was true of his accuser. But his faith remained simple, peaceful, and bright; and we note its effect on those who had no faith themselves, yet highly valued faithfulness. Joseph was charged by the captain with the care of the king's chamberlains. As before in the house of his master, so now in the governor's state-prison, he became the responsible agent: whatever was to be done there, he did it. Jehovah was with him in each place of trial; and what he did, Jehovah made it prosper.

But it is in God's hand to work out His purpose. And as in his own dreams much had been divulged, while he was a young freeman in his father's house, which drew out the envious spite of his brethren, grace gave him now the opportunity of light from above on the dreams of his fellow-prisoners. So little were they instructed by their having each a suited dream the same night, that their visage presented similar sadness to their gracious and sympathetic attendant the next morning. His soul entered into the iron; but love rose superior to evil, and flowed out readily.

In all this Joseph typified Christ who shone to the eye of faith in His humiliation with a grace even beyond glory. He was manifestly the wisdom of God, where human wisdom proved itself utterly weak, foolish, and malicious. He was the prophet raised up from among His brethren, like to Moses, yet greater and with the highest authority. The deeper the enmity, the more He opened things to come, as not only the Christ for Israel, but the still more glorious if rejected Messiah, the Son of man, that all the peoples, and languages should serve Him: a day not come yet though fully revealed, when He shall be displayed as the power of God. How awful the portion of those bearing His name who help the world to despise His words which will surely be accomplished to the ruin of all His adversaries! Christendom is even more guilty and pretentious than His poor blinded people who cried, His blood be on us and our children; as alas! it is till they repent, as they surely will in God's mercy. But this is not to be now while the church is here.

Bible Treasury: Volume 20, Convicted

Gen. 3:12-13

THE chapter tells how Adam and Eve fell into transgression, with mutual shame, and with undisguised alarm at the presence of God. There was no Sinai smoking as a whole, because Jehovah came down in fire; neither did smoke ascend like that of a furnace; nor did the earth quake; nor the trumpet sound loud exceedingly. His voice without a reproach or a menace struck the guilty pair with terror; and they hid themselves from before Him among the trees of the garden. Compelled to answer His call, the man owned, not his sin, but his fear because he was naked; but he could not escape the searching question, “Who told thee that thou art naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee not to eat?”

Truly the word of God is living and energetic, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to discern thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature unapparent before Him; but all things are naked and laid bare to His eyes with Whom we have to do. As yet there is not a trace of repentance, but hardness of heart and self-justification. Had there been the least self-judgment, any real sense of dishonor done to the LORD God, they had confessed their sin in listening to the tempter, and humbled themselves at once instead of covering their nakedness in their own way. And when they heard His voice, they would have gone to Him though with bitter sorrow, instead of simply hiding from Him in conscious guilt. Each would have said, “Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.” “Now mine eye hath seen Thee, I abhor myself in dust and ashes.”

Far otherwise was it as yet with our first parents. “And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat” (vers. 11, 12). What glaring disrespect and ingratitude to God! What utter lack of affection and compassionate care for his wife, whom he ought to have led and shielded if he could from evil, instead of following her into it! What unworthy and impudent reflection on Him Who gave the woman as a helpmeet for his good, not as an excuse for disobeying God! To hear Him was his first and known duty, even before she was made. Both the man and the woman knew the prohibition of the LORD God; both were fully aware of the penalty of disobeying; and both consciously rebelled, though separately, she quite deceived, he not so yet persuaded by her, preferring the creature to the Creator Who had set them blessed in responsibility to Himself.

It is hard to conceive aught lower, and withal more insolent, than the answer of the man— “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” On the surface the words might be true; morally they were false, unworthy, and irreverent, yea blasphemous. Adam was so debased by sin as to seek to excuse himself by the woman's fault, and even to throw the blame on the LORD God; the woman only pleaded the serpent's craft. Neither felt or confessed personal wrong any more than disloyalty to God. The excuses only proved their guilt, and could not but be their conviction. Thus Adam was condemned expressly because he hearkened to his wife's voice (ver.

17); and enmity was put between the serpent and the woman, who had sorrow multiplied instead of the pleasure she sought.

So it is with their offspring to this day. Sin brings in moral ruin; guilt leads to guile. Man without exception ever since is willful and ungodly. There is no good but always worse evil from palliation or blaming others, as all are prone to do. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks; and as it is corrupted through sin, out of that treasure the wicked man brings forth wicked things.

Thenceforward the sole hope for fallen man lay in God; and God's sole available and effectual good for man was in sending His only-begotten Son to become not man only but a sacrifice for the sinful. And so the Lord Jesus is the Savior of all that believe in Him, as the scriptures abundantly testify: the Savior of the lost, not the poor notion of a reinstatement of the race in what the first man ruined, but the blessing of 'the believer with all that God counts worthy of the Second man, His own Son, and of His redemption. What a blessed refutation of “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me”! God so loved, not His children, nor His people, but “the world,” the Christ-rejecting Satan-serving world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

As this is the greatest blessing God could give, not pardon only, nor even peace, but eternal life; so His Son, in Whom that life is, becomes the test of every sinner here below, small or great, civilized or barbarian, wise or unintelligent. All are alike sinners: there is no difference in that awful fact, though some are bolder than the rest. It is appointed to men once to die, and, after this, judgment. Impossible for any one to escape either by any resources of his own or by other men. But Christ, sent of God to that end, went down into death and bore the judgment from God, as propitiation for sins; so that, when He shall appear a second time, it will be to those that wait for Him apart from sin for salvation. So perfectly did He on the cross bear the sins of believers that none of them, as He said (John 5), comes into judgment.

Therefore does God call on you now, if you have not already obeyed His call, to receive life eternal and salvation in His Son. To receive Him is to receive, not only what you need and can find nowhere else, but all the blessing God loves to bestow. Seek not to extenuate your case like Adam and Eve. Hide not away from Him Who, knowing all your sins, pities you no less than them, and now sends you the gospel in all its fullness, as could only be when Christ came, and died atoningly, and rose triumphant. It is therefore now not only the grace but the righteousness of God. Through Christ's work He is just and the justifier of the believer. For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He that believes on Him is not judged: he that believes not has been judged already, because he has not believed on the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness more than the light; for their works were evil. For every one that doeth evil hates the light and comes not to the light, lest his works should be convicted; but he that does the truth comes to the light that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God (John 3).

Bible Treasury: Volume 20, Where Art Thou?

Gen. 3:8-9

THE word of God is truth, where and when ever written, be the matter in hand what it may. How solemn when He, from Whom no appeal can be, is personally addressing man! So it was here when man had just fallen. “And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where [art] thou?” (vers. 8, 9).

Man was gone from God; and it was now manifest and undeniable. Even before Jehovah Elohim called Adam and Eve into His presence, the fall was working its evil consequences. They were ashamed for the first time, and they sought to hide their shame from themselves and from one another. When they heard the voice of the LORD God, terror was added exceedingly, yet in vain; for how can man escape if summoned there?

Before the fall, how delightful was His gracious presence, Who planted the garden in Eden, and therein put the man He had formed! And out of the ground made Jehovah Elohim to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, besides the two trees in the midst of the garden, the silent witnesses of truth beyond all the others. A river too for watering the garden was not wanting, which after that parted and became four heads. Into this garden then did the LORD God put the man to dress and keep it. More than this He brought every animal of the field and every fowl of the heavens to the man, to see what he would call them; and whatever man called each became its name. But more than all this (the sign of his being the possessor and lord of the lower creation) was the deep interest of Jehovah Elohim in building woman out of the man, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, to be his wife.

But sin now made God's presence most alarming. Man's conscience was bad; and the divine presence, instead of awakening love and gratitude, terrified them to the utmost. The fig leaves failed. Adam and his wife bid themselves among the trees of the garden. The summons told the sad truth: “Where art thou?” Gone from God! Till man sinned, there was no question of judgment. Sin made it necessary for God to judge him. From this man shrinks; his guilt cannot be hidden, and God must judge.

What has man done since? What have you done, dear reader? Added sin to sin. So the Psalmist, writing some thousands of years after, confesses that men are all gone out of the way; and this not of heathen merely who knew not God, but of those that knew Him and His law; for whatsoever the law saith, it speaketh to those that are under the law. But now God commands men that they should all everywhere repent, inasmuch as He has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world, or habitable earth, in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance to all men in that He raised Him from the dead.

Oh, hear His call, while it is called To-day. For this is the day of grace. As God came in quest of man who hid away from. Him, convicted him of his sins, yet revealed the Seed of the woman to crush the great enemy of God and man; so Christ has already come, been made sin on the cross, was there and then once offered to bear sins in His own body on the tree. To Him does God direct the eye of faith. He is the one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. He is the unfailing Savior, being God as well as man. He suffered once for all for sins, Just for unjust, that He might bring us to God. And “be it known to you therefore, through this Man is preached [not promised merely, but preached] unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe [to none other is it pledged] are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38, 39).

You are not only gone from God but lost as you are. For when God in Christ came into the world to reconcile men to God, they would not have Him but cast Him out of His own world; they crucified and slew Him. Such is man's position after all God's dealings: he is lost. But the gospel, which says so, makes known God's salvation in Christ without money or price on man's part, as in truth it cost God everything, His message therefore is that, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up [and so He has been], that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

Do you think that this is too easy a way to be saved, too uncertain for you to trust? Alas! the thought betrays your unbelief. For no way was so hard, even for God, as to give His own Son that you might live through Him, and that He might die in propitiation for your sins. And the only certainty a soul on earth can have is from receiving God's witness concerning His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning His Son. And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life (1 John 5).

Bible Treasury: Volume 20, Naked

HERE was the immediate effect of sin in our first parents— “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons,” or girdles. There was the sense of shame as well of guilt, and they sought to hide it from themselves and from each other.

It is all in vain. Conscience was at work, but not before God or toward Him: else had they cried to Him in self-judgment and sorrowful confession of the evil they had done. “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done that which is evil in thy sight,” said the penitent king. Yet it might be said that his iniquity was grievous wrong to a devoted servant and his wife, hitherto blameless. Adulterous seduction of the woman! Planned death for the man! What could be worse offenses against one's neighbor? But the contrite heart, even in such a case, justly feels that, whatever the crime before man, sin is against God so as to eclipse all else.

Unabashed innocence was gone. Adam and Eve, once guilty, felt the shame of sin; and their first effort was to cover their persons as they could. They knew that they were naked, when they had disobeyed God. But fig leaves cannot cover sin; and they knew this too, when they heard the voice of the LORD God the same day. For sin is against Him, and His voice when heard awakens terror in the guilty.

How good for such (and we all are, or have been, such) to know David's “instruction” in Psa. 32 “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the mean unto whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” What a blessing when God covers sin by Christ's sacrifice! Without this all else is vain. For, being sinners, we must come as sinners before God, Who refuses any other approach to Him in the first place. How perverse is unbelief Men strive to come as saints, which they are not, and refuse to come as sinners, which they are and nothing else. Why do they thus evade the truth to their own hurt as well as God's dishonor? Because they have no confidence in His grace. But His grace brings salvation, for it is possible only through Another. Heaven is through Christ alone, and consequently it is by faith. For faith receives the testimony or witness God has borne concerning His Son. And the witness is this that God gives the believer eternal life, and this life is in His Son. So absolutely true is this, that it is added: “he that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John 5:10-12.

The work of Christ, as the fruit of God's grace, takes guile from the spirit. His blood purges the conscience. The useless apron or girdle, the filthy garment, is taken away; “the best robe” is put on. Shame gives place to uprightness, and perfect love casts out fear. Such are the riches of God's grace to him who believes in Christ. The pretension to work for pardon, peace, cleansing, or life, denies the guilt and ruin of the sinner. “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness” (Rom. 4:4, 5). The ungodly, the sinner, deserves judgment, which is perdition, by his works; but the gospel is sent to him as a lost one, that believing he may be justified and saved. What grace! Yet is it God's righteousness, Who gives the believer what Christ's work deserves; and thus only in the cross of Christ, where man's evil came out to the uttermost, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.

See to it then that you rest on Christ only according to God's word. Without Him faith were as vain as baptism, to say nothing of works. Else when clothed, as the apostle says (2 Cor. 5:3), you will be found naked. For all must rise, unjust as well as just. And the clothing of the resurrection body will not hide but disclose the real condition. Christ alone meets the nakedness of the sinner; He washes, cleanses, and clothes for the eye of God. Without Christ, even when clothed, you will be found naked: a paradox in natural things; a certain truth spiritually. For in that day there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known.

Bible Treasury: Volume 20, Fall of Man, The

Gen. 3:6

The woman then was beguiled, quite beguiled as we are told in 1 Tim. 2:14, and so became involved in transgression; but what of man? Of him we hear not a word in the colloquy of the serpent and Eve. The same N. T. authority assures us that he was not deceived: with his eyes open, he transgressed, swayed by his affection for his wife. It was deliberate disobedience on his part, not here thoughtlessness, or deceived as the weaker vessel by a mightier and subtle rebel; for both and their posterity it was ruin and death, to man irreparable.

Let us then weigh the simple words in which God brings the solemn fact before us. “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (ver. 6).

Eve by continuing to hear the tempter's words more and more lost the authority of God's word, which at first she knew clearly and felt to be paramount. But as she listened to one whose object was to draw her away from God and ensnare her into transgression, she became by degrees less sensitive as to God's honor and Satan's crafty malice. Was it so that after all God did not love man perfectly but reserved good from him?

Perhaps too they might take this fruit, fair and excellent as it looked like other fruits in Paradise, without a blow so dreadful as death. God would not surely be so stern about so small a matter, He that gave them all else! And was it not strange that they (related so nearly to Himself, His offspring, Whose breath was their life-breath, made in His image, after His likeness) should be refused the knowledge of good and evil, to become so far like Himself—was it worthy of Him? Alas! Eve, when tempted was at length drawn away by lust, by the desire to have what God forbad, and was enticed. She used her eyes against the word, and saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes. Emboldened thus she reflected that the tree was desirable to make wise; and so the lust, having conceived, bears sin, as the sin, when fully completed, brings forth death. Compare James 1:14, 15 John 2:16.

The woman had weakly fallen; but the stronger vessel, the man! He well knew the prohibition of the LORD God; he had the fatal yielding of Eve to warn him, if this could be needed; yet he dared to follow her into evil, from which he should have sought to shield her and confirm her soul in allegiance to God; and he too rebelled at her solicitation. All was lost in the fallen head of creation. What dishonor to God! what malignant joy to the enemy! what a root of evil to man! “By one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned” (Rom. 5:12, R. V.).

The ruin was complete. Distrust of God's love, unbelief of His truth, slight of His glory in seizing it, introduced open self-will and transgression. And so it has been since with ever increasing corruption. For Adam was head of the human race and involved his posterity in his own evil. He became a father only after he was a sinner.

It was not so with those who in a higher sphere rebelled against God without a tempter. They each and all departed from God, though they excel in strength. They therefore are left to suffer the due reward of their deeds. But man, in his weakness and exposure to the subtle foe, is the object of God's richest mercy, and gives occasion for the display of His glory in nature and character, in His ways and counsels, as no other creature does or could enjoy; but this positively and perfectly in Christ alone, the Second Man.

Thus it comes out in His headship to the praise of God's grace. For if through the disobedience of the one man the many (or Adam's family) were constituted sinners, so also shall the many (or Christ's family) be constituted righteous. The head according to God determines the condition of the family. We belonged to the one naturally; we belong to the other by grace through faith. No Jew could deny that so in fact the headship of sin and sorrow was with the human race: how could he question that the headship of blessing was just and worthy of God? If Adam sunk his family into that sad estate, why should not Christ raise those who believe into the good portion which He deserves?

But it is not only that the gospel is thus indicated: no otherwise can the sinner be saved consistently with God and His word. “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil.” If this was true beyond question of Israel, is it not quite as manifestly of men in general? How blessed then that God has given His Son to be a man, a Savior, a new head for all that believe! This as a whole scripture testifies from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation. Salvation is in Another, not in the guilty; it is in Christ. And salvation is in no other; for neither is there any other, or a different, name under heaven that is given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Christ glorified God in death as a sacrifice for sin, so as to atone for all that believe in Him; as Adam by his transgression dishonored God and brought death on himself and his race. It was when Christ carried obedience to the death of the cross, that He, risen from the dead, was proclaimed the new head: God was glorified in Him as to our disobedience and its consequences, and not only in His unbroken life of obedience. He from the highest glory took the lowest place of a slave, and endured the most ignominious death, that of the cross. O what a contrast with the man of dust who sought to be as God and disobeyed unto death!

As the work of Christ was morally glorious in the highest degree, so is it efficacious and unfailing for all that believe, even though ruined in Adam and adding their own sins. But where sin abounded, grace far exceeded; that as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bible Treasury: Volume 20, Eve Tempted

Gen. 3:1-5

Tax subtlety of the enemy displays itself throughout. The weaker vessel is deceived, being drawn away by plausible appearances. How like our life! What a light is thrown on facts of every day, with their bitter results through unbelief and impenitence! For God is forgotten, and objects in the scene that now is take His place. Such is Satan's aim till the soul he betrayed into open ungodliness and despair, which hardens an act into a habit away from God.

Here, as the beginning of moral evil on earth, the Holy Spirit relates the fact, in its detail of instruction for every child of Adam, with the grand yet deep simplicity of these early books of inspiration.

“And he said, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (vers. 1.)” It was but a question of what God had said. But where this is allowed, He is dishonored, and a breach is made in the line of defense for the enemy to enter. To doubt God's word is the beginning of the worst evil; it is to sit in judgment on Himself; whereas He only can and ought to judge, and this He does now by His word, as indeed the Lord says will be at the last day. How presumptuous then for man to judge Him! “A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts” (Mal. 1:6). Under the seeming modesty of a query Satan was undermining the prime duty of a creature. And what did he seek in particular thereby? To insinuate a doubt of His goodness. What! May you not eat of all the trees? Is it possible that you are forbidden any? How can God love you and withhold a single good thing from you? Surely there must be some mistake. “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” Is it so?

It is written, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” Eve on the contrary listened and parleyed. The mischief was begun. As the serpent had substituted the more distant and abstract “God” of creation for the Creator in moral relationship with man (Jehovah God), she fell into the trap, and discussed the question raised only to excite desire for what He had prohibited. A rebel himself, he maliciously likes to thwart the Highest and have companions in his sin and misery. Yielding to him, instead of turning away at once, Eve drops notice of the relationship Jehovah had deigned to establish, and becomes a prey while she continues her converse. “And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but of the fruit which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die” (vers. 2, 3).

Had she held fast the sense of her responsibility to obey, she would have resented the question, rather than answered it. And her answer lets us see that the evil intent of Satan did not fail of its effect. She adds to the prohibition, and takes from the penalty. Jehovah had not said a word about touching the forbidden fruit, but had in the most assured terms threatened death in the day of eating it. Exaggeration of truth is no more the truth than diminution of it; either enfeebles, and both are Satan's work. By the truth we are sanctified; and His word is truth.

But knowledge is not truth received in the love of it from God. Eve well knew and could tell the tempter the liberty given as to all other fruit, and the penalty for partaking of the one forbidden tree. Yet she ventured to hear what the serpent had to say when there was already the proof that he was by his question impugning divine goodness. Did not He delight in their happiness? From Whom came their most bountiful provision? Was she cherishing dependence on Him, or confidence in Him? How worthless is knowledge which issues not in grateful praise and simple-hearted obedience! Still more, if it leave one free to distrust Him! Alas! unbelief has grown apace since Eve.

Emboldened by his crafty success the enemy advances. “And the serpent said to the woman, Ye will not surely die; but God knoweth that, in the day ye eat thereof, your eyes will be opened, and ye will be as God, knowing good and evil” (vers. 4, 5). It is no longer insinuation against His good will, but open assault on His truth. And it is the same lie which beguiles mankind ever since. Death is hidden diligently from men's eyes; and when it cannot be, its import is explained away. People are willingly ignorant, and are earnest only to enjoy the present. Let us eat and drink, and to-morrow go here or there and get gain. All! ye know not what will be on the morrow; but certain it is, now that man is fallen, it is appointed to men once to die and after this judgment. But men lend a ready ear to him who deceived Eve, and, though unable to deny, believe it not: else that dark shadow would paralyze their pursuits and poison their pleasures. For the sting of death is sin, of which all are guilty; and into judgment for all their sins must come those who believe not in the Lord Jesus for remission.

Further, the serpent held out as a bribe the good of evil. In eating the forbidden fruit, your eyes will be opened, and ye will be as God, knowing good and evil. God is jealous; I am your friend. He would keep you ignorant and in leading-strings. Take my advice: be independent and know for yourselves as He does. As he veiled the doom of transgression, so did he set off the bribe in glowing colors; and as Eve stayed to listen, she was tainted with his pestilent breath. She received the lying foe as her best friend when his slander of the living and true God entered her heart. Open sin and ruin followed without delay.

The remedy is not in man, but from God in Christ for him, yea, for the most guilty if he repent and believe the gospel. Nor did the law work out deliverance, but on the contrary wrath. The Lord Jesus is the only Deliverer, as indeed this very Gen. 3. foreshows. He vindicated God and vanquished Satan in every respect in which the first man failed. His coming, the gift of Him displayed God's immense love to the world; His death for sin was the irrefragable proof of God's truth no less than of His love; and His personal glory, yet becoming a man to be made sin for us, told out God's majesty as well as His love and truth. O what a contrast with those who, being only human, sought to be as God, and, coveting independence, became Satan's slaves! But thanks be to God Who through Him dead and risen gives the victory to us, even to all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is His voice that speaks from heaven, as of old He warned on earth. See that ye refuse not Him that speaks. For our God, whatever His love, is also a consuming fire.

Bible Treasury: Volume 20, Tempter, The

Gen. 3:1

IT is to be noticed that, when the enemy assails our first parents, he is left in mysterious obscurity. Yet no believer, no serious mind, can doubt, that under the form of a serpent, Satan was at work to deceive and destroy, whatever the misused ingenuity of unbelief may reason to confuse the unwary and credulous. To the first book of the O.T the last book of the N. T. answers here as elsewhere with singular force, and identifies him from first to last as “the old serpent, that is called Devil (slanderer) and Satan” (the adversary), Rev. 12:9, 20:2. Nor are we left to this symbolic prophecy alone; for the apostle Paul, in 2 Cor. 11:3, had given no uncertain sound about this evil one long before. If the serpent lured man into his lie against God, grace revealed the woman's Seed, bruised indeed yet bruising the head of the enemy, the Deliverer not only of all that believe but of all creation also (Rom. 8). The Second man will surely triumph.

Along with the restless seduction of man into sin, Satan is shown us in the ancient book of Job, and with striking clearness, as the accuser of the saint, in the presence of Jehovah (chaps. 1: 9, 10; 4, 5), with permitted power to afflict and within certain limits even to destroy the body, though not Job's life. But the issue for God and those that are His by faith is in every case his defeat eventually, in no case apart from the grace of the Lord Jesus. For there is found the personal antagonism. “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil” (¤ John 8). He may thwart God in each object and plan of His, he may traduce the believer, and for a while seem ever so successful; but he is doomed, as also all who trust him against God and His Anointed, to utter defeat and everlasting ruin.

Under the legal system, as God was hidden, so was the enemy. David first brought out into relief the type of His kingdom; and there we first hear of Satan (1 Chron. 21:1). Numbering the people in the pride of a national ruler was abandoning dependence on Jehovah and a denial of his own early faith; and the chastening was seventy thousand men of Israel mowed down by pestilence.

In Psa. 109 we see Judas, the leader of the Christ-rejecting Jews against Jesus. Nor was it only a wicked man set over him, but Satan standing at his right hand: the plain prediction of the traitor's deed under the devil's instigation; as the psalm that follows is of Jehovah's exalting the Holy One to sit at His right hand till the word is given to judge. It is the same opposition, seemingly carrying its evil way, but only accomplishing the good counsels of God in honor of His Son.

Zech. 3. has no other voice, though speaking of Messiah's people. Did not their guilt and defilement give title to Satan against the high priest who represented them? Unquestionably and irremediably, had not Messiah been stricken for the transgressions of the people, and bruised for their iniquities. Righteously therefore can Jehovah that has chosen Jerusalem rebuke Satan, and say, Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Righteously can He cause the iniquity to pass from their representative and clothe him with rich apparel, and set a fair miter on his head.

In the N. T. the Tempter confronts the Son of God, and in ways more consummately subtle and complete to draw Him out of dependence on God. The last three-fold effort is recorded for our instruction and thanksgiving: the natural, the worldly, the religious temptations utterly foiled by Him Who stands obediently in the truth, as Satan did not because there is no truth in him. The strong one, however fully armed, here found One stronger, Who overcame him, and took his panoply and divided his spoils. But again he appeared as the prince of the world; and as he could not mislead the Messiah out of the path of subjection, he drew the world, the Jews most of all guilty, to kill Him in it; yet this was his own suicidal guilt, as Christ's death was the glorifying of God about sin, and the reconciliation of all that believe, and indeed of all creation, save of course those that reject Him.

But the N. T. is no less clear that the devil and his angels, till judgment is executed, are incessant in their efforts to corrupt and destroy, to accuse the saints and to deceive the whole habitable earth. He works through the world and the flesh; but his own special field is through falsehood; and his direct enmity is against the grace, truth, and glory of His destined Conqueror. Hence the demons whom he commands trembled before the Lord Jesus in terror of His casting them into the abyss, or bottomless pit, where Satan is to be bound when Christ comes in His kingdom. Till then Satan acts as a devouring lion or a beguiler in a serpent-like craftiness, fashioning himself into an angel of light or kindling the fires of persecution, where he fails with his lies. Fallen angels there are already consigned to everlasting bonds under gloom for judgment of the great day. These so audaciously broke through God's order before the deluge that He has imprisoned them ever since; and they ought not to be confounded with those that are still allowed for a season to tempt mankind, and have access to the heavenly places as well as the earth till judgment befalls them. For their leader is the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience; as our wrestling if Christians is declared to be against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual [hosts] of wickedness in the heaven-lies (or heavenly places). And this conflict will never cease while the church is on earth. But Rev. 12 tells us that they are to be cast out of the heaven, at a day still future, with new and marked consequences for a short time on earth, before the binding in the abyss for a thousand years, followed soon after by casting them into the lake of fire.

O my fellow sinner, heed the voice of the Son of God, that you may receive the remission of your sins and eternal life. He died for sins, and has authority now and on earth to give you remission. In Him was life, and He gives life, His own eternal life, to every one that believes. There is no other way; for He is the way, the truth, and the life. You are a son of disobedience, and by nature a child of wrath. Be not deceived longer by Satan, who cheats into thinking yourself strong and free, whereas you are without strength and his slave already. Christ only can save you; and He is as able as He is willing; and God has His pleasure in it, for He loves the Son and pities you. Satan can easily and will surely keep you to be his companion in punishment, as now his servant in sin. Whosoever believeth on Christ shall not be ashamed.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 3:1

We have seen the first Adam in all that variety of relationships which chap. ii. reveals from ver. 4 to the end. No history follows unless so we designate the fact next recorded, the sad and solemn fact of THE FALL, with the righteous but withal gracious intervention of Jehovah Elohim, above all in the woman's Seed. How momentous the issues! Unbelief resists, derides, or at best neglects the word of God to sure and irreparable judgment; faith receives it to such a blessing even now, with heavenly glory soon and forever, as primeval innocence in no way contemplated. For if there be divine counsels revealed when Christ dead and risen was hid in God, all the ways of God are in view of the fall, whether in grace or in judgment, promise or law, government or salvation.

This accordingly the truth continually puts forward and presses, as philosophy no less invariably ignores it. So does man's religion really, though in form owning sin and striving to remedy it after its own fashion. God took care that when man fell, he acquired not only a conscience in the sense of an inward discernment of good and evil, but a bad conscience. He was consciously guilty. When innocent, such an intrinsic sense did not exist in man, and would have been incompatible. But a bad conscience never brings back to God; rather does it, without His grace and truth, lead farther and farther from Him. Sin is not canceled so. Only a Mediator can avail for man with God; and that Mediator God no less than man; and even He by death as a sacrifice for sin. Philosophy ignores the truth, because it seeks the glory of the first man, of the race; human religion, even while professing to acknowledge the Second Man, seeks the same false glory, by priesthood and ordinances. Both undermine the grace of God, are wholly ignorant of His righteousness, and deny present everlasting salvation for the believer; so little or null is the efficacy of Christ's cross to God's glory in their eyes, whether humanly religious or openly profane.

God never made man, the earth, and the lower creation as they are. “He saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.” It is now a ruin; mortality works in animated nature, as sin pervades mankind, and the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now. Bible or no Bible, the world is in a state of departure from God; Bible or no Bible, man is a sinner and unable to stand before the God Who judges sin and sinners. But the Bible alone in its own inimitably simple, holy, and dignified way tells the truth how it came in. The myths of men in their little measure testify here, there, and everywhere, to that truth which scripture alone sets out so profoundly that the deepest plummet has never sounded it, so helpfully that the least draft has ever refreshed a truly thirsting soul. Here is not a word to puff a Jew more than a Gentile. Here man reads God's just sentence on his own inexcusable sin. “Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman, being beguiled, is involved in transgression.” What a key to the moral history of man! What a ground for divine order in God's church! Yet all in a fact which the O.T. records, and which the N. T. applies, as only God could reveal in either.

Undoubtedly the man was first in being, the woman first in sin; yet another being mysteriously intrudes, not yet alluded to, but availing himself of a creature best adapted to his fell purpose.

“Now the serpent was more subtle than any animal of the field which Jehovah Elohim had made. And it said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (ver. 1).

Truly we may say, An enemy, the enemy hath done this. There is no allegory whatever, any more than in a dumb ass which, speaking with man's voice, forbad the folly of the prophet. Here it was the great adversary of God and man, who employed the crafty serpent as the vehicle of his temptation. The great apostle of the Gentiles in 2 Cor. 11:3 has ruled in the Spirit that Gen. 3 presents the actual, no fable or myth, but a positive fact: just as we have seen the fallacy of confounding the six successive days with the vast periods of geology that preceded them. A “scientific” account of creation Gen. 1 is in no way; but it does supply with plain certainty the divine revelation of that creation of which all true science professes its total ignorance. The records written in the rocks are wholly out of view in the scriptural account, which speaks solely of the absolute beginning in general, and in detail only of the time immediately connected with man's earth. The scene of geological research lies between, and is passed by in scripture as quite outside its moral scope, so that those labor in vain who look for a scientific tally there.

But true to God's design scripture here brings before us how Satan directed his first assault on man, a fact of the gravest import and nearest interest to all; and this precisely as it happened. On the other hand John 8:44 is a clear reference to the essential truth, stripped of the actual phenomena; and therefore only is the devil named as a liar and murderer. But the same inspired writer in the last book of the N. T. alludes to the first of the O. T., and here employs symbolically the literal instrument of the earliest temptation. See Rev. 12:3, 4, 7, 9 (where the allusion is put beyond doubt), 13, 15, 16, 17; 13:2; 20:2, to say nothing of vers. 7, 10. With this we may compare Isa. 27:1. But to treat the story of the Fall as myth or allegory, while allowing the essential reality of the truth conveyed, to maintain that the Mosaic narrative is not to be understood as literal history any more than the Apocalyptic visions! is, one may fear, to prove oneself incapable of appreciating either the one or the other.

The universal prevalence of serpent worship is the most powerful witness outside to the fact scripture reveals. For otherwise to worship it is far from being natural like that of the sun. But the form of this strange idolatry also, at many times and in unlikely places, points to that which made the deepest impression on the human mind and was handed down, less or more corrupted, from the beginning. It prevailed from China and Japan to Java; through Africa from civilized Egypt to savage Whidah in Guinea; from Scandinavia to Asia Minor, Phenicia, Canaan, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Persia, and India. North America knew it no less than Mexico and Peru; Russia, Prussia, Poland, France, Macedonia, Greece and its isles, perhaps no country more distinctly than England. Nor are any remains more striking in their way than those of Abury in Wiltshire, or of Stanton Drew in Somersetshire, where the Druids according to their vast conceptions did not merely raise the emblem for the entrance or at the altar, but formed the great temples in the figure of the serpent. In Ireland and Scotland the same worship was found extensively; and in the N.W. of France the ruins of Carnac attest a dracontium of not less than eight miles in length, with many of lesser extent.

Perhaps the engraving given in Humboldt's “Researches” (i. 195) of a hieroglyphic painting of the Aztecs may prove the vividness of the tradition more than most other witnesses. For a naked woman, mother of men, converses with a serpent, not fallen but erect. Why too before a tree? In the Mex. Antiq. iii. of Aglio are representations, in one of a human figure smiting a great serpent on the head with a sword, in another of a divine figure destroying it. In plate 74 of the Borgian series in the same work is a god in human form thrusting the sword into the dragon's head, and his own foot bitten off by the dragon at the heel. Can this be mistaken? Faber too, in his Pagan Idol. i. 274, cites Marsden as testifying that the New Zealanders had “a tradition that the serpent once spoke with a human voice.” From what basis do these scattered fragments come?

Classic fables, as being more familiar as well as divergent through poetic handling, need not be added. But in that universal worship of the serpent we see the superstition into which fallen man sunk, growing out of the fact which Moses relates from God. The time or rather place was not yet come to lift the veil and disclose the evil spiritual agent that made the serpent his vehicle. The book of Job gave the suited opportunity to mark him as the great “adversary.” 1 Chron. 21:1, Psa. 119:6, Zech. 3 add a little more. All is in harmony, and utterly different from the Persian myth of Ahriman in conflict with Ormuzd. Scripture knows no dualism, but a rebel against the true God, a slanderer and tempter, of which after all Gen. 3 abides the witness, only less than Matt. 4 and Luke 4, with a vast detail over the entire N. T.

How then did he approach Adam? Through. Eve, the weaker vessel. It was but a question, as if surprised, at most an insinuation. “Is it so that Elohim hath said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden”? If He made and pronounced all very good, why keep back any? Is this love? Did Elohim really say this? Are you not mistaken? Distrust of God and His goodness was his first effort. And it will be noticed that he carefully withholds the title of divine relationship, Jehovah Elohim, vers. 1, 5, and ensnares Eve into fatal forgetfulness of it, ver. 3, in a section which everywhere else carefully maintains it: phraseology consistent with moral purpose, not at all so with an Elohist scribe, a Jehovist, a junior Elohist, a redactor, or any of the other fancied actors in the rationalistic farce. Scripture tells things simply as they were with the calm and simplicity of divine truth.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 3:22-24

We have still to consider the word and act with which the chapter concludes. They are of importance in clearing yet more the true standing of man before the fall, and the anomalous condition of the race henceforth, wholly confused and lost in reasoning as men are apt to do from present experience. The a priori path is misleading to all who betake themselves to it, whether philosophers or theologians. The believer who yields to the snare is inexcusable; for grace has given an unerring account, concise and clear, of all that divine wisdom deemed well to tell us of the entrance of sin into the world through one man, type of Him that was to come, the Second man and last Adam. Here we have neither legend nor myth, but facts related in the language of unaffected simplicity and transparent truth fullness. What is revealed is as worthy of God, as it is remote from the instinctive popular representation of man, ever averse to self-judgment, ever prone to lower or shirk righteousness, ever blind to grace and hating it. Myths and legends are natural and should be left to heathen destitute of the truth, groping in the dark after God if haply they might find Him. But it is sad to think of Christians slipping after the philosophizing Jews of Alexandria, who turned their back on the Light already shining, lost the plain yet profound historic truth of scripture, and set up a Philonic Logos of their own in consonance with human thought, will, and unbelief.

“And Jehovah Elohim said, Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever,...Therefore (and) Jehovah Elohim sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So (and) he drove out the man; and he placed eastward of Eden's garden the Cherubim and the blade (flame) of the

flashing sword to keep the way of the tree of life" (vers. 22-24).

Philosophy or fear of philosophers has misled very many to conceive that the utterance here received was a taunt on man's groundless pretension and an exposure of Satan's cheat. But scripture is plain, and the truth important. Opposition assumes to it what is false, that unfallen man already knew good and evil. He was innocent and upright, but is never said then to be righteous or holy. Nor could he be so called; for both suppose knowledge of good and evil, which he as yet had not and only got through transgression. In truth such a knowledge would have been useless in, not to say, incompatible with, an unfallen nature and world, where he had only good to enjoy in thankfulness to God, avoiding but one tree because God forbade it. There was not, as afterward, a moral government as to good and evil, which man could discern intrinsically apart from an outward law. And that special law under which man innocent was placed consisted solely in not eating of a tree which was prohibited, not because the fruit was in itself evil, but simply as a test of subjection to God. It was a question of death by disobedience. Disobedient, he lost paradise as well as life; but he acquired the knowledge of good and evil with that of his own guilt. Their eyes were opened, as we saw; they knew that they were naked, and were ashamed. "The man is become as one of us, knowing good and evil." Sense of responsibility he had; but now, when fallen, he could distinguish things as good and evil in themselves. He had along with guilt the moral sense to pronounce this wrong and that right; he had conscience, sad but most useful monitor ever present when man was fallen from God.

Freedom of choice in paradise (or out of it) is an impious absurdity. Was Adam free to choose disobedience? That he did choose it was the fall and ruin. His responsibility was obedience. When he transgressed, God took care that in his sinful estate he should now possess an intrinsic sense of good and evil; and in due time, but not till long after "the promises," absolute and unconditional to a known object, "the law" came in by-the-bye (Rom. 5:20) to raise the question of righteousness which can never be settled save to faith in Christ and His redemption. In the gospel God reveals His righteousness in virtue of Christ's work, and so is just while justifying the believer in Jesus.

A holy being knows good and evil of course, as God does perfectly; but this consists with the revealed fact that man while innocent had it not, and gained it only by disobedience and to his misery. Grace meets the guilty; but it is in the Second man, not by mending the first. Life is in the Son; and he that believes on Him lives of the same life, the ground of a holy walk, even as our responsibility as sinners is met by His atoning death. Righteousness and holiness therefore have no terror for the believer; but this is because of Christ dead, and risen, and at God's right hand. And such faith produces practical and kindred fruit acceptable to God. For not Adam, but the new man was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

But there is further the divine arrest of presumptuous sin. It would have been a chaos morally, and everlasting ruin if the tree of life had been eaten by our first parents in their sin. There was even mercy to them in foreclosing such a peril.

The natural tree of life for innocent man is refused to him fallen. How awful to be everlastingly fixed in sin! Christ thenceforward becomes the object of faith; and as He died for our sins, that they might be blotted out, so because He lives, we also were to live, as He said. Truly all enduring good now is of grace and in Him. There is no restoration to innocence, but to a far better standing. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

The expulsion of the man therefore followed. He was now an outcast from paradise, to till the ground whence he was taken. So Jehovah Elohim drove out the man, and set the Cherubim, the symbols of judicial power, so familiar to every Jew, as represented not only on the vail but overshadowing the mercy seat, to bar the way. Here the force was the less to be mistaken, because there was also the flame of the revolving sword to menace the intruder. There is no way back to the lost paradise. Christ is the way, and "this is He that came by water and blood "; He is the way for the believer to the Father and the paradise that shall never pass away. There accordingly is no tree of knowing good and evil, no tree of responsibility: this was settled for everlasting righteousness in the cross of Christ, and hence in favor of all that believe to God's glory. There is but one tree, the tree of life, whose fruits full and fresh are for the heavenly ones, as the leaves are for healing the nations; for ha the kingdom will be not only heavenly things, but earthly, as our Lord pointed out to Nicodemus. According to the symbolic description of the new Jerusalem, there are twelve gates, shut not at all by day (for there is no night there), and at the gates twelve angels; and the names inscribed, which are those of the twelve tribes of Israel, witness of the mercy that endures forever. But there is no flame of revolving sword to threaten, though there shall in no wise enter into it aught common or one making abomination and a lie, only those that are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 3:20-21

Chap. 3:20, 21.

These verses bring before us two facts of high and pregnant significance, stated with that simple dignified brevity which characterizes all we have had thus far before us: what the man called his wife at this critical time, and the reason why; what Jehovah Elohim did for Adam and his wife, and the effect.

"And the man called the name of his wife Eve (Chavvah), because she was the mother of all living. And Jehovah Elohim made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them" (vers. 20, 21).

In chap. 2. the man gave his wife a name from himself. He was Ish; her he called Isshah. This was in due place and season; for the Holy Spirit there laid down the divinely formed relationship. But here sin had brought in disorder and ruin: our first parents were fallen. Nothing however is too far gone for grace, the grace of God, Who, as He will effectuate by indisputable power in the great day that is coming, revealed enough even from the fall to instruct and comfort faith. So it was with Adam now. He looked not at the things that were seen, temporal as they are but at the unseen and durable intervention of the woman's Seed.

Even when a revelation is clear and full, faith may fall short, as every believer knows too well in himself day by day, and as is plain in the Gospels which make known without disguise how far even the Twelve were from entering into the depths of our Lord's communications, till He died and rose and power from on high was given. But Adam did not hear in vain what Jehovah Elohim had intimated in His sentence on the enemy: a conflict, and not merely a successful temptation, from the enmity set between the old serpent and the woman and above all her

Seed in some exceptional way specialized; and that conflict issuing in the final and irretrievable destruction of the foe, but not without previous anguish to the victorious Seed in achieving it. Hence in the depths of shame and wretchedness because of his transgression, with the woman's special penalty ringing in his ears, with his own doom to the ground cursed for his sake—to toil all his days ending in death, and to return to the dust whence his body was taken—, he calls her not Death but Life, or Living! The divine assurance that the woman's Seed should bruise the serpent's head (can we doubt?) led him to the new name. It was faith, and founded on the word he had heard; faith real, if not explicit. He confessed that which was before no created eye, what rested simply on the divine word, that she was “mother of all living.” Mother of all dying would have been the natural sentiment. But a hope founded on revelation glimmered through the darkness of sin, and Adam's mouth confessed what his heart believed. This he knew without a question that future blessing turned wholly and solely on the woman's Seed; and that woman, actually Satan's means of the mischief, would in due time give birth to Satan's Vanquisher.

It may be objected that scripture, in its roll of the worthies of faith, does not enumerate Adam. Good reason there surely was, in his introduction of sin and death into the world and the race of which he was head, to abstain from singling him out for honorable mention. But not less surely would it be an error to conceive that none believed of old save those that are expressly so designated. And why, in the noble but short account of primeval facts, should Adam's calling his wife by this name be inserted, unless there were something of extraordinary interest, left (as so much in scripture is) to exercise our faith and spiritual intelligence, or to the corrupt speculations of unbelief? For the Bible is a moral book; and the judgments we utter on its sayings betray our own state, whether we reverently learn of Him Who inspired it, or set up ourselves for a very little while to judge Him and it in ignorance of our sinful folly.

Adam then looked above the just forfeits of sin, trusted not to his own strength, wisdom, or virtue, spoke of no seed of his to regain the lost paradise, but took occasion, by faith of God's gracious holding out the suffering but triumphant Seed of the woman, to call her Life, even then because she was mother of all living; an expectation most unsuitable and unwarranted, unless by the faith however dim of Him Who was coming (and now come), Who brought to light life and incorruption through the gospel, he, like those who followed in the growingly bright path of faith, knew little compared with what is now revealed. But they all looked to God for a Deliverer born of woman, yet in some mysterious way to defeat and destroy the evil one; a hope more than realized in Him Who became man that through death He might annul him that has the might of death, that is, the devil, and might deliver all those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

But in immediate subsequence let us note what scripture adds. “And Jehovah Elohim made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them.” It may suit an infidel to see nothing in this but letter and perhaps triviality. A believer is entitled to find and enjoy what is worthy of the only true God. Yet faith does not make haste but waits on God and His word. Imagination which adds to scripture is no more of God than the free-thinking which stumbles at the word, being disobedient. As every word of God is pure or tried, and He is a shield to those that put their trust in Him, so let none add to His words, “lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Our wisdom is to draw from scripture what God put into it.

Now here the force is the greater, because till after the deluge no moving thing that lived was given to be food for man. “Thou shalt eat the herb of the field” Adam had just heard once more. This has induced crowds of theologians to suppose that sacrifice was now enjoined by God and offered by Adam. But we are not at liberty to supplement the word of God with the tradition of man. Sacrifice has its own proper record in chap. iv., and scripture, hath Old Testament and New, attests the all-importance of its antitype for man and its acceptance with God; but we cannot go beyond the inspired word. Before the work of Christ which gave its meaning; faith in Him was the essential, as it still is. The action here revealed was on the part of Jehovah Elohim; not a word is said of what the fallen pair did. Jehovah Elohim made for each (for this is carefully noted), coats of skins and clothed them. More he does not say nor are we called to believe, as to the matter of fact.

Is there then nothing implied beyond a strong garb which efficiently covered their persons, in contrast with the poor aprons of fig-leaves they had made for themselves? There is a truth most impressively taught, that He Who clothed them made for each of them coats which had their necessary origin in skins of animals slain for the purpose. That solemn word, death, was now brought before them as a fact for the first time. Man fallen may vainly essay to hide his shame by some device of nature; Jehovah Elohim bases the clothing He provides on death, the penalty of sin.

Thus whether it be life in ver. 20, or death in ver. 21, both point to Christ, and have no adequate meaning for a spiritual mind short of Christ. The natural man looks anywhere else; or if he does think of Christ, it is only to degrade Him, even when he offers a kiss or a crown. But as the Holy Spirit is come down from heaven to glorify Him, so did He in scripture point onward to Him in things great or small. Christ is secretly or openly the object of the written word. His life and His death were alike essential, and alike blessed, as alike they brought glory to His God and Father. But while we could not live to God without His life, it is only through His death that we could, when clothed, as the apostle says, be found not naked. Christ alone, by His suffering death, removes our nakedness. Those who reject Him, even when in their resurrection bodies for judgment, will be found naked (2 Cor. 5). Clothed or unclothed, present in the body or absent from it, the believer is never naked; he has on always the best robe.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 3:16-19

Then God pronounced on the serpent without parley. As the devil “sinneth from the beginning,” so for this was the Son of God manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. Untempted the wicked one fell, and became the habitual tempter in the circuit of Jehovah's earth, seeking the race of man as his prey, a murderer from the beginning, a liar and the father thereof. How complete the contrast with the divine and personal Wisdom, Whom Jehovah possessed in the beginning of His way before His works of old! He was set up from eternity, from the beginning, before the earth was, Who was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in that scene and in those beings who were the object of Satan's ill will and destructive effort. All deliverance hangs on the woman's Seed, Who is none other than that eternal Word made flesh, bruised only by the Serpent, but his assured victor and destroyer. It is in the power of Christ's resurrection out of that atoning death which sets the believer free.

Whatever the fullness of light cast on this as on all else since God revealed Himself in Christ, it is important to observe that here and throughout the chapter, and in the O.T. generally, we only hear distinctly of divine government on the earth. Fuller revelation discloses more,

especially in the N. T., as to God and man, Christ and Satan, the universe and eternity; and the Holy Spirit, Who includes the less (John 18:9) in the greater, could to faith bring out the greater from the less, as Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day, and saw it, and was glad, looking too, not for Canaan only, but for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. “Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises.” Nevertheless it remains true that the scripture here expresses divine dealings externally, and this in keeping with His relationship to the earthly people, unto whose keeping these oracles were primarily entrusted. So even the bruising of the Serpent's head, whatever else was implied to the pondering heart, is manifestly the destruction of his power over man on the earth; and this is the work of the Second Man.

To the believer at all times there were deeper questions behind. Not only the evil and its judgment, but redemption and the positive blessing of eternal life, are now fully brought to light in Jesus the Son of God. This is so true that to not a few there is danger of forgetting the importance of the earthly consequences because of the surpassing interest and weight of what is unseen and eternal. God made Himself known in the Son as to both His nature and His counsels as well as His will, and this accomplished by the only One, now man no less than God, capable of giving it effect for our reconciliation and blessing, even now for the soul, at His coming for the body also, when He reconciles in power all the creation so long dragged down into vanity and suffering through the sin of its first head. Therefore the apostle says that Christ annulled death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel. Again therein is God's righteousness revealed by (or out of) faith unto faith; while God's wrath is revealed (not yet executed, of course) from heaven against all ungodliness, or impiety, and unrighteousness of men holding the truth in unrighteousness—a still more solemn thing for souls in Christendom, whose orthodoxy if alone, where they be orthodox, will in no way shelter them in that day. Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Now we turn to our first parents with whose conscience He dealt Who loved and pitied them, however inexcusably wrong both had proved.

“Unto the woman he said, Increasing (greatly) I will increase thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; unto thy husband [shall be] thy desire, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto thy wife's voice, and hast eaten of the tree [of] which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it, cursed [be] the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all thy life's days; and thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat herbage of the field; in sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thy return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken. For dust [art] thou, and unto dust shalt thou return” (vers. 16-19).

As with the serpent, Jehovah Elohim speaks to the woman of the present governmental effects of her sin. Woman, more than any other female, was to have sorrow multiplied in her pregnancy and in her bringing forth offspring. Woman, not man, is the victim of reiterated sorrow in this respect. It was righteous, however sad. She first listened to the enemy, despising God and His word; then she drew her husband after her into the ditch. Henceforth she was to be subject; like a younger brother to an elder (chap. 4:7), her desire was to be to her husband, and he should rule over her. The fall would make this hard. How different the original position of companionship! Sin made God a judge: before it, He simply blessed. But grace in Christ leaves Him free now in better and eternal blessings for faith.

To Adam He condescends to explain the reason. His vain plea becomes the ground (and so it always is) of condemnation. He had sought to excuse himself by laying the blame on “the woman,” and aggravated his fault by even imputing it ultimately to God “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me.” How irreverent as well as unthankful! His sentence is unimpeachably just, “Because thou hast hearkened unto thy wife's voice;” and his wife's voice echoed the serpent's in rebellion against Jehovah Elohim. Her solicitation ought to have deepened his horror of her sin; but, instead of this, he dared to transgress, not deceived as she had been, and ate of the tree in the face of the divine prohibition. How different the last Adam, Who suffered being tempted, obeyed His God and Father unto death, and bore in His own body on the tree the sins of those who are now His body and bride, “one spirit with the Lord,” and so made by a higher character and power than that of Adam and Eve who were but “one flesh!” His taking flesh was for our sakes, vindicating God, not in obedience only, but in sacrificially enduring the consequences of our disobedience, that we might be united by the Spirit to Him our glorified Head on high.

To Adam fallen the word is, “Cursed be the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; also thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thy return unto the ground, for out of it vast thou taken. For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Here as before it is present and earthly judgment. On account of the man the ground is cursed. His

superiority entails wider and more serious results. He too must face sorrow here below all his days. Thorns and thistles oppose the food he needs and seeks; and hard toil must be his portion to eat bread, for the herb of the field was allotted, as to the subject beasts, to him who had lost through rebellion the beautiful and abundant garden which Jehovah Elohim had planted. In the sweat of his face he was to eat till he returned to the ground whence he had been taken. How evidently the body only is here regarded, and the end of life on the earth! Yet the source of man's soul had been carefully shown in chap. ii. as emanating from Jehovah Elohim's inbreathing, contrasted with every other creature on earth, to the confusion of materialists old or new. Present government is the theme, and neither hades nor the lake of fire. So in the Psalms, though Sheol or Hades appears appropriately, we read, in Psa. 146:4, man “returneth to his earth: in that very day his thoughts perish.” The body alone returns to dust, out of which the soul was not taken, but, as we are told elsewhere, the spirit returns to God Who gave it. All the notice here taken of man is to humble him who did not look up to God, nor obey Him: sorrow and toil, death and dust. We shall find that more is intimated even here in what follows. If the apostle tells us that the wages of sin is death, we ought not to overlook that the sentence does not mean the whole of sin's wages, but the first part; as in the Epistle to the Hebrews we are expressly told on the one hand that it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgment, on the other that Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time apart from sin to those that look for Him unto salvation: the portion respectively of unbelievers and of believers.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 3:14-15

There is no interrogation of the enemy: his history and character were already known on high, that “in the truth he standeth not, because no truth is in him.” Sentence is pronounced on the proved tempter forthwith. Now he is in fact a murderer, soon to be manifest, so in principle from the beginning.

“And Jehovah Elohim said to the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed [be] thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. On thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all [the] days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall crush thy head, and thou shall crush his heel” (vers. 14, 15).

This is a present and earthly judgment on the serpent, as we shall also hear subsequently on the woman and on the man, whatever else may be implied to the instructed ear. But in the former case there is exceptionally stated much more in ver. 15, which none but a natural man could limit to the animal, whom Satan made at once the instrument and the mask of his temptation. The language therein rises above the government of the world, though fully including this also, which is indeed on the surface. Isaiah, we may say, is very bold, not so much in declaring the serpent's degradation and special curse in ch. 65:25 ("Dust shall be the serpent's meat,” when all other animals share the blessed effects of the glorified reigning with Christ in heavenly places and Israel restored fully and forever), as in the utter overthrow of the malignant spiritual power whether on high or here below (chaps. 24:21, 27:1). The N.T., from its superior depth, now that the Son of God is come and has given us an understanding to know Him that is true, lays bare the unseen chief of evil, and the details of his doom, not in the kingdom only but through eternity (Rom. 16, Rev. 20). Cursed is he in every sense.

It is among the striking points of the scene that the enmity is said to be put between the serpent and the woman, rather than the man. Grace so spoke; for the man might have reflected bitterly on her who had first listened to the enemy, disobeyed the divine command, and enticed himself to follow in the path of transgression, poor and unworthy though such an excuse be. Jehovah Elohim graciously lays stress on the woman, and still more on her Seed. It might have seemed natural to have dwelt on the man, head of woman, image and glory of God; as in the preceding chapter we read that into his nostrils was breathed the breath of life, and Adam was set in his place of privilege and of responsibility, where he forthwith acted on the dominion given by assigning names to the subordinate creation before Eve was formed. Notwithstanding all this God-given position of primacy in natural relationships, grace after the fall no less clearly speaks of the woman expressly as at enmity with the serpent. Of her in a peculiar sense was He to come Who should vanquish Satan. Isaiah 7 predicted it in due time, though here it is sounded out from the beginning for all that have ears to hear; whilst Matt. 1 gives certainty, when the prophecy was accomplished to the letter, that we have not followed cunningly devised fables in believing the inspired words of the law and the prophets any more than the apostle.

The woman's Seed is unmistakable. The first Adam was not that, nor could any of his progeny as such be said so to be. Only the Second man could properly prefer the claim in both spirit and letter. This He was beyond all controversy for every believer, though infinitely more: otherwise why should this have been in His case only? Scripture couples it with His Godhead: see Romans 7:3, Gal. 4:4.

But more than this. It is with the Incarnate Word, the only begotten Son when He became man, that we find the personal antagonism of Satan, as the Holy Spirit opposes the flesh, and the Father is hated by the world. For the development and revelation of all this we await the latest oracles of God; but here we see in the earliest days the enmity of the old serpent to the Lord Jesus. “For this cause the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil “: this the power of death, as He of life, and life-giving; the one the liar, as the other the Truth. Next to His eternal deity, there is nothing truer in itself, nothing sweeter to Christians, nothing more momentous in divine purpose for His glory than His assumption of humanity, spotless and holy, into union with the divine, so that He has both natures in one person.

The truth of His person therefore, as the immediate, unwearied, fatal object of Satan's malice, is the first test of the evil spirits which work in the many false prophets gone out into the world since the Savior appeared. Every spirit which confesses Jesus Christ come in flesh is of God. And every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God: not the fact only but the person confessed. A mere man, however great or good, must have come in flesh. The wonder is that He, the Son of the Father, was pleased so to come. He might have come in His own glory. He might have assumed angelic nature. But it was in grace to us, fallen men, and for our salvation in righteousness. Therefore was He sent “in the likeness of sinful flesh,” for He was born of the Virgin, herself a sinner, like every other daughter of Eve. It was in the reality of flesh: else His had been no valid sacrifice for sin on man's account, as on God's. It was “holy” by virtue of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Highest that overshadowed Mary, and so truly that as thus born He should be called Son of God. In flesh is “how” He came; but Jesus is He “Who” came, even Jehovah the Savior, Emmanuel as Matt. 1 carefully attests.

Granted that Josephus seems to have read these pregnant words as unintelligently as a heathen, divorcing them from the solemn fact of the temptation and the fall just before, ignoring Jehovah Elohim as the speaker and the judge, and utterly dark as to the purpose of God gradually growing into fuller clearness throughout till Himself came, the true Light. Was it the place for nothing more than a common-place on natural history? on the relative position of the serpent henceforth? on its hostility to the human race, provoking no less in turn? on its aptness to bite heels and in retaliation to have its head crushed? This may satisfy those erudite critics who are bent as far as they can on reducing the holy letters to a compilation of legendary tales or myths. But the irrationalism as well as the impiety of these skeptics of Christendom is self-evident to every believer; and the inspired word, though it may by grace convert the worst infidel, is addressed to faith, and given first to Israel, and now, that they are for the time Loammi and worse, to the church of God. Even an unbelieving Jew may not be so blind to the depths of what was meant to arouse inquiry and awaken a blessed hope, as well as search the conscience; as we may unhesitatingly say such a God must do if He spoke to man at all in the circumstances. Hence Maimonides (More Nevochim ii. 30) owns that this is one of the passages in scripture which is most wonderful, and not to be understood according to the letter, but contains great wisdom in it. He too was struck by the mention of the woman's Seed, rather than the man's, as the bruiser of the serpent's head; and both Targums openly point to Christ, Whom we know to be none other than Jesus, not Messiah ben Joseph and Messiah ben Judah, but one and the same Christ, come and coming again to complete in manifested power and glory what He has already done in the efficacy of His reconciliation-work in death and resurrection. His second advent is as sure as his first.

Yet among those orthodox as to His person no error is more serious than attributing to the Incarnation what scripture uniformly bases on the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Beyond doubt the Word made flesh was to save sinners, yea reconcile all things (not all persons), but this by His death. Not otherwise was God glorified about sin, however fully in an obedient man. But sin must be judged by God; and this was not, nor could be, short of His cross. And this betrays the vanity of all human systems, whether of ritualism on the one hand or of rationalism on the other: both agree in the error of making out a possible salvation through the incarnate Word, both therefore slight the redemption grace gives us already in Christ through His blood. It is the bruised Seed of the woman Who bruises the serpent's head. None short of a dead, risen, and ascended Christ is the Savior Whom the gospel proclaims. God is therein just and justifies the believer in Jesus, Whom knowing no sin He made sin for us, that we might become His righteousness in Christ. Thus vanishes the dream of broad-churchism that His birth was the reconstruction of humanity, and so brought every man into blessed relationship with God. Alike disappears the fable on the opposite pole that

the sacraments are “an extension of the incarnation;” whereas in truth they are symbols of His death, and thus, only to faith, of a holy salvation according to God. Both systems stop short, even theoretically, still. more practically, of man's total ruin and proved guilt, and of God's righteousness and salvation, in the cross. Hence they lead souls back to an anterior state of things, to law and ordinances, of probation still going on, and of redemption unaccomplished.

Lastly, be it observed that we have here, no matter what theology of, every sort may say, no promise to Adam, still less to the race. It is really in the judgment of the enemy that we hear the revelation of triumph over him for the woman's Seed. If there be promise to anyone, it is to Christ, the risen Second Man. And this best secures the blessing that results in God's grace to all that are His. Thus it is for the believer, because it is in Him. He deserved all by His personal perfection and obedience; but He took it all by death which annulled him that had the power of death, reconciled us that believe sacrificially to God, and glorified Him in all His love and purpose, His majesty and moral nature. For how many soever be God's promises, in Him is the Yea; wherefore also in Him is the Amen, for glory to God through us (2 Cor. 1:20).

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 3:10-13

Drawn from his concealment by the call of Jehovah Elohim, Adam appears. He might strive to hide his sin from himself; he could not hide from God. The very effort testified where he was, and what.

“And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and was afraid because I [was] naked, and hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou [art] naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee not to eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate. And Jehovah Elohim said to the woman, What [is] this thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate” (vers. 10-13).

The effect of sin was ruinous in all ways. Jehovah Elohim at once became an object of terror, instead of reverence and gratitude, love and trust. Even men own that conscience makes cowards of all. So it was immediately with Adam and Eve. The presence of God is and must be insupportable and alarming to an evil conscience; and this was now acquired. In answer to the divine appeal the man unwittingly tells the tale.”. I heard thy voice in the garden, and was afraid because I was naked, and hid myself.” How different the state, feeling, and conduct, if our first parents had kept their first estate! Still more different, even had they stood in innocence, was Christ, Who waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. He was the Obedient Man. His will was to do God's will. “The words that I speak unto you, I speak not from myself; but the Father that abideth in me, he doeth his works.” Yet these works, stupendous as they were, blessed and blessing overflowing in their nature, were not so characteristic as His dependence. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father.”

But who among those born of women, yea who even born of God, approached His obedience? Power and wisdom, to say nothing of inferior gifts, have been conferred, sovereign and without stint in men as God pleased; but our Lord Jesus stands alone in unswerving devotedness and absolute submission to God. This, the ideal moral glory of man, was His real and crowning perfectness here below even unto death, yea, death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name that is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, [of beings] in heaven and [beings] on earth and [beings] under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Messiah said to Jehovah, Thou art my Lord; He set Jehovah always before Him with an unwavering trust, through life and death, into resurrection and the pleasures for evermore at His right hand. However tried, neither Jehovah on one side, nor Satan on the other, found aught in Him but grace and truth, righteousness and holiness. According to the beautiful type of Lev. 2, in each act of His life He was like the offering of pure flour, mingled with oil, and oil poured over all, with frankincense thereon, an offering made by fire of a sweet savor unto Jehovah. He as a man lived, not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. His meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him and to accomplish His work. As the living Father sent Him, so He lived, not merely “by” but, because of the Father. “I do always the things that are pleasing to Him.”

Such was the Second man; but the first by his own account, as soon as he heard the voice in the garden, was afraid and hid. Fear has torment, for he had a bad conscience. He shrank from Him Whose word he had disobeyed, and recognized himself naked. “And he said, Who told thee that thou art naked?, Hast thou eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee not to eat?” He was in fact self-condemned. It was not sorrow after a godly sort for the transgression; no was there earnest care, nor clearing of self, nor indignation, nor any other such affection as the Spirit works in the conscience Godward. Consequently in nothing did Adam prove himself to be pure in the matter. His sense of nakedness evinced his guilt. “And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And Jehovah Elohim said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I did eat.”

It was too plain. They had believed Satan, they had forgotten and rebelled against God. In both the sin was aggravated. The man was bound to lead the woman aright, not to follow her in disobedience; the woman was not to direct but obey her husband, instead of inducing him from natural affection to join her transgression against the Lord God Who had blessed and warned them. Nor as yet was there repentance toward God. They were convicted and compelled to own their respective acts of sin; but there was no true self-judgment, no grief at their dishonor of God, no horror at the evil and their own guilt. On the contrary, there was the self-justification that proves the spirit unbroken, and the shiftings of the blame one on another, and even on God Himself.

Indeed the man was bold, instead of abasing himself as inexcusably wrong; for he not only put forward the woman as his excuse, but dared virtually to upbraid Him Who had in His goodness given her to be his counterpart. “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” And when Jehovah Elohim asked the woman, What is this thou hast done? her answer was, Not I have sinned, or I am guilty but “The serpent deceived me, and I did eat.” Thus our excuses only make bad worse, and God cannot but righteously deal with pleas so vain and unworthy, which show that unrepented sin is apt to eat as doth a gangrene, and is truly ungodliness.

All this is plain and solemn fact, related not as a myth or allegory but as divinely given history, of the nearest interest and utmost importance to every soul of man. It is wholly unlike the visions of prophecy, such as are given to John in the Revelation, where we read “I was in the Spirit,” “I heard,” “I saw,” &c. Nothing of the kind is found in Genesis. But the history at the beginning and the prophecy at the end have this in common, that their words are alike faithful and true, while the only sense of “myth” which scripture recognizes is that of “fable” in contrast

to the truth. The Christian has nothing to do with the dreamy views of heathen philosophy, but with the revealed mind of God, which leaves no room for either Gnosticism or Agnosticism. W. K.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 3:8-9

We have seen that the recorded effect of disobedience was the sense of nakedness, and this leading to an effort to conceal it from self and from each other. But worse than shame and humiliation followed quickly.

“And they heard the voice of Jehovah Elohim walking in the garden in the cool (wind) of the day. And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah Elohim, in the midst of the trees of the garden (ver. 8). Confidence in the Lord God was manifestly gone and sin had filled their hearts with terror as well as unbelief. For faith would have known that distance or darkness makes no difference to Jehovah, as is so beautifully expressed in Psa. 139. His voice was no attraction now; His rich unvarying goodness toward them was forgotten. They had acquired the knowledge of good and evil, but alas! to their own self-condemnation. So it is always. Not death only, but a bad conscience, they have left as a sad legacy to all their descendants. Man conscious of evil shrinks from God and distrusts Him.

So we find here the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah Elohim in the midst of the trees of the garden. No more flagrant proof could well be of the mischief the enemy had wrought. The wiles of the mighty and subtle Satan had drawn the first pair into rebellion, and their instant attempt to conceal themselves was the unmistakable evidence of it. They “hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah Elohim.” Had there been the least working of repentance, they had sought Him in self-reproach and horror at their sin, they had cast themselves in confession on a genuine repentance without faith, and faith in Him was wholly wanting. The voice of Him as He walked in the garden alarmed them, and they hid mercy which endures forever. But there is no themselves away from Him.

How different Christ and His own, who hear His voice and follow Him, who know His voice and know not the voice of strangers! The voice of Jehovah Elohim awoke nothing but the fear that has torment. Nor can conscience do aught else for man, guilty as he is, till he believes God's testimony to Christ. And Christ is the witness of the love of God, Who has sent none less than His Only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him; yea, more, sent His Son as propitiation for our sins. This indeed is love, not that we loved Him, though we ought to have done so, but that He loved us in spite of our sins. Nor could anything short of this love, not in word only but in deed and in truth, have availed us. For sin is moral death; and it is expressly said that we were dead in trespasses and sins. Divine love therefore, if it intervened to save, could only save by giving life to us who believe, His life, and His death too, that, with our sins blotted out righteously and forever, we might live to God.

Another thing calls for our notice here. God came to visit man in the garden. He had visited him before, when He laid upon him His solemn injunction as well as invested him with his high privileges. But He only visited. He did not dwell even in the sinless garden of delights. He came there as One that loved and was deeply interested in His creature, His vice-gerent. The book of Genesis shows us God visiting the earth again and again, and especially in Abraham's case. The most gracious condescension was that seen in His intercourse with “the friend of God.” But even then there was no dwelling of God on the earth, nor yet in Canaan. This is most instructive and a trait which only inspiration could have conceived or given. It is the mind of God from the beginning and entirely above the thoughts of man. Redemption alone lays the ground for God's dwelling with His own on earth. The absence of it is the more striking here, because in the very next book of Moses redemption is the central truth, followed as it is by a habitation for God in the midst of His people.

It is true that the tabernacle was but a shadowy dwelling place for God; yet this was quite consistent with the facts. For the redemption of Israel out of Egypt was but the type of a better and eternal redemption now come. This Christ alone obtained by His death and resurrection; which accordingly is followed by God's habitation in the Spirit Who dwells with us and is in us, abiding with us forever.

Here, therefore, all is intrinsic, real, and everlasting. In Christ we have redemption. “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost that is in you, which ye have of God? And ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19, 20). Here the in-dwelling of God is individual and unfailing for the believer. But “know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Cor. 3:16). Here we learn that it is equally true of the church, of God's assembly, and no less abiding in this case also. Yet it is only so because of Christ's accomplished redemption. What else could secure it for us and us for it, when we think of our failures individually as well as corporately? But no, there is “one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.” The Holy Spirit only came down because sin was judged to God's glory in the cross; and He abides because of the perfect unchanging efficacy of Christ's work. The unworthiness of man singly or together cannot more annul it, than the power or will of Satan: so the voice of God has surely declared; and so it will be till Christ comes again, yea forever.

Remark the beautiful simplicity of Jehovah Elohim exactly in unison with these primeval days. Here we are told of His “walking in the garden in the cool of the day.” So Jehovah spoke to Cain in remonstrance (ch. 4); shut Noah in the ark (ch. 7); and “came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded” (ch. 11). Favored Moses knew much of this gracious familiarity in a later day; but here even strangers to the covenants of promise were not without considerate communications of a personal kind. Does this provoke wretched man's unbelief, especially in this day of artificial habits? Let him judge himself, believe that every scripture is inspired of God, and enjoy the wisdom and goodness there vouchsafed abundantly.

“And Jehovah called to the man and said to him, Where art thou?” (ver. 9.) It was the first divine utterance to fallen man. What a volume of truth! On the face of things, past all denial, man was gone from God. He had morally doomed himself before he received the dread sentence. “He drove out the man,” we are told later in the chapter; but man hid from His presence at first, and thus drew out the words, “Where art thou?” Away from God! He did not mean to confess his sin, his ruin; but his act unwittingly told the tale, and the word of God, proving it, revealed the truth. Nor is there a road back, save in the Son of God, the Second man, Who is the way, the truth, and the life, as this very chapter shows us authoritatively. He only can break the power of the enemy, though this at all cost to Himself and to the God Who gave Him for this express purpose. How worthy of God, how blessed and reliable for man, is that written word, which unbelief slights now as it slighted Him Who shines throughout it!

Thus did the enemy craftily prepare the way. The woman had heard him undermine successively the goodness, the truth, and the majesty of God; she had continued to listen when he held out the bait of a knowledge which God possesses and man could not have in his innocent state, the knowledge of good and evil. At length the desire for what God had prohibited was insinuated into her soul: when all the safeguards of obedience were sapped by his wiles, lust ensued.

“When (and) the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that [it was] pleasant to the eyes, and the tree [was] desirable to make wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they [were] naked; and they joined together fig-leaves, and made themselves aprons (girdles)” (vers. 6, 7).

Little did the woman know the internal mischief which made the way for the open and positive act of disobedience. It had never been, had she kept the word of Jehovah Elohim before her in the confidence of His love and the fear of His warning. She was really giving credit to the serpent as a better friend than God to Whom he attributed envy in withholding from man so good a gift. She therefore no longer heeded His prohibition, but trusted her own mind, poisoned as it was against God by the enemy. It was the very reverse of the love of the Father, of which the apostle speaks, the fruit of faith in the power of the Holy Spirit, so characteristic of the Christian. Here was in principle the love of the world or of what is in it. And we are assured that all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and the tree was desirable to make wise, she took of the fruit and ate.” Was this obedience? or dependence?

Here was the root of all evil. She judged for herself. Independence means rejecting God and accepting Satan, though she, like her husband and future children, thought of nothing less. Self will blinds the eyes to God an d things as they are, and sees nothing but the fairness and advantage of what it seeks; in truth it is abandoning God's service for Satan's slavery. Verily, verily, said our Lord to the Jews, whosoever committeth (or rather practiseth) sin is slave of sin; and the slave abideth not in the house forever; the son abideth forever. If the Son therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed. Abiding in His word is the grand test. There only is the truth known, which makes free even a slave. On the other hand the devil was a murderer from the beginning and stands not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. He is a liar, and the father of it as we see here; and this not only by direct opposition to God's word, but by a partial and cunning misuse of it which wholly misleads those that parley and listen when he pleads for disobedience. He that is of God heareth God's words. This Christ pre-eminently did, but not our first parent. She saw, reasoned, and was conquered. What she knew well, what she had repeated to the serpent, faded from before her mind. She acted from herself, under the instigation of the devil, and boldly rebelled against Jehovah Elohim. “She took of the fruit and ate.” What a contrast with Him Who did nothing from Himself but as His Father taught Him! He spoke the words of light and truth and love; and He that sent Him was with Him; He left Christ not alone, for He was ever doing the things that please Him.

But the mischief alas! did not end there. She “gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.” Mankind was now fallen. Cleverly had Satan planned his temptation He addressed himself to the weaker vessel, and deceived her as we have seen. He left it to the woman to draw the man into her error; and we are told by authority beyond appeal, by the apostle Paul, that “Adam was not deceived.” This is characteristic. The woman was deceived, not the man. So says the Holy Spirit in the Epistle. We perhaps might have failed so to infer from the ancient record, but feel none the less assumed that the difference is true and important, as appears from the application of it to Timothy. The moan without being deceived was entangled by his affection, and shared her transgression to universal ruin. Affection is an excellent bond and a great support when it works in God's order. But here all was out of course. The woman acted first in weak but known opposition to the divine word, and also, as compared with her husband, was not subject to him as became her. He followed, instead of directing her, in too bold disobedience, and so must share the punishment she had incurred. God was not in his thoughts. Satan triumphed for the while, always doomed to defeat in the end.

The moral effect was immediate; and the effort to hide divulged the disastrous wrong, as ever. “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” Jehovah Elohim knows good and evil as a holy being judging righteously, loving good and hating evil in His own nature. Man was made upright; but innocence was his condition, and obedience his duty. Of the tree of knowing good and evil he was not to eat. When the fruit was eaten, he acquired the intrinsic faculty of pronouncing this, evil, and that, good; as a fallen being, now the prey to that lust to which he had yielded in defiance of God. And this became the sad inheritance of every child of Adam. The Seed of the woman is the one blessed contrast. In Him was no sin: not only He did no sin, but sin was not in Him, and He knew it not. He was “the Holy Thing” born of Mary, but so born by the power of the Holy Spirit as none other before or since, the Holy One of God, as the unclean spirit was compelled to confess. Not that He was spared temptation, but on the contrary tried beyond all comparison with the first man, or Abraham, or any other. He was in all points tempted like as we are, without sin; not only without sinning, but sinful trial excepted. For this kind of trial He could not have from the holiness of His person, human nature as well as divine. A body God prepared Him for the work He was to do, with which “flesh of sin” had been absolutely incompatible. So it is written that God, sending His own Son in likeness of flesh of sin, and for sin (i.e., as a sin offering), condemned sin in the flesh.

Our first parents were fallen, innocence was gone irreparably. Grace might and did intervene to bring in “some better thing;” but there can be no return of innocence, however surely faith finds life in the Son of God and inseparably along with it sanctification to God, the basis of all practical holiness. New birth is not peculiar to any time or circumstances, but belongs to every one that sees or enters the kingdom of God. Believing in the rejected Messiah, the Son of man, the Son of God, we have it in its highest revealed character. For “this is the True, God, and Eternal Life “; and eternal life we have in Him; but substantially this was ever true of the believer from of old, though it could not be made known as a present thing till His cross dawned, as we read in John 3. Some misunderstanding the truth have lapsed into strange and deadly error. But the truth is ever simple to those who are simple in faith; and one part of it is not to be sacrificed to another, but all is consistent to God's glory in Christ, as the single eye sees.

The eyes of the man and the woman were opened, but not as they fondly hoped through Satan's prompting. They knew that they were (not divine but) “naked.” What a lowering of high and evil expectations! The shame of guilt invaded them. They recognized their fallen condition

painfully. “And they joined together fig-leaves, and made themselves girdles.” No doubt fig leaves were broad and well suited to cover nakedness but what a humiliation! As yet there was no repentance. Alas! most men die unbelieving and unrepentant; and how solemn is the issue that awaits them! Few words of holy writ present it more strikingly than the apostle's to the Corinthians, when more or less awaking and restored from their high-minded folly: “If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.” This from its external impossibility may sound a paradox; but it is really in spirit a weighty truth. In time present life, if a man be clad, he is for that reason not naked. But when resurrection comes, it may and will be very different. The true nakedness is not the body unclothed, but the lack of Christ; and this, which may be unperceived now, will be set in evidence then. For all will be raised, and therefore clothed with the body, in their order and season: those that are Christ's, at His coming; those that are not His, for judgment, when they shall be found naked.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 3:2-5

The procedure of the enemy was indeed subtle. It was to awaken distrust of God in Eve's heart. Could it be good to refuse man the fruit of any tree in the garden? Distrust of God opens the door to every sin. Eve ought at once to have turned away. She knew the goodness of Jehovah Elohim. Why then parley a moment more with one who questioned it? To allow it was to sit in judgment on Him, to doubt His love, to accept the serpent as a better friend. She was deceived. Her obvious and urgent duty was to repulse the malicious overture with indignation.

The gift of His only begotten Son is God's answer. For so did He love the world, the fallen guilty world, that He gave His dearest object of affection and delight that every one that believeth on Him should not perish but have life eternal. In presence of the most abounding liberality Satan found his opportunity in the one restriction by which God tested their obedience. In presence of a world of sins and sinners God gave His Son, infinitely more precious than the universe. Yet this was He against Whom grudging was imputed! And Eve alas! listened to her ruin.

“And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said to the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that, in the day ye eat of it, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil” (vers. 2-5).

Eve well knew the goodness as well as the command of God; nor had she forgotten the dread penalty of disobedience. She even added to His words, “neither shall ye touch it,” which adding may seem pious, but is neither seemly nor wise. The serpent advances a bold step now, and dares to give God the lie. This soon follows, when the heart conceives distrust of His love. “Ye shall not surely die.” “Fear nothing of the sort. On the contrary, to refrain from the fruit of that tree is to abandon your just hopes. God does not wish you to know good and evil as He does. He wants you to remain babes and slaves. Instead of dying, He knows that, in the day ye eat of it, your eyes shall be opened to know what He does. Fear not death, and assert your independence.” Divine truth and majesty were thus alike assailed.

It is so always. The moment God's love is distrusted, His word is sure to be speedily annulled, and His honor goes for nothing. If God is viewed with doubt, Satan reaps the spoil. To trust one's self is to fall a victim to the enemy, who is far stronger and subtler than man, and infuses into the human heart his own self will and enmity against God, especially against the Son Who alone reveals the Father and the Father's love. Man is in no real way self-sufficient, though his own pride and Satan's guile hold it out as a prize. Man had been set up to rule the lower creation, but as God's servant even while His vice-gerent, on the tenure of the amplest gifts and the least possible tax of obedience. But the enemy, concealing himself carefully under the serpent, drew on the woman to be his slave by distrust and disobedience of Jehovah Elohim.

As here, the real failure begins in the heart, which quickly betrays its departure from God by open opposition to His will. For one must be servant of God or of sin; and Satan it is who, behind, thwarts God and ruins man. Christ is, in all respects, the blessed contrast, Who being in the form of God counted it not robbery (or a thing to be grasped) to be on equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him. Phil. 2:6-9. The one being a creature was responsible to do God's will in submissive service, yet disobeyed unto death through setting up to become as God. The other was truly God, even as the Father, yet emptied Himself to be a bondman, and, when found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself to the lowest in the death of the cross, to obey and glorify God where He had been shamefully dishonored. He came to do God's will, and did it perfectly at all cost to Himself. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, raising Him from the dead and glorifying Him in Himself on high.

“We know that everyone that is begotten of God sinneth not; but the begotten of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not” (1 John 5:18). It was not so with Eve. Innocent she was like Adam, but not begotten of God, and consequently, instead of keeping herself, she parleyed, and the wicked one did touch her. She knew that the serpent was insinuating a doubt of God's goodness and emboldening her to disobey Him, in defiance of His word and threat; yet she did not turn away with horror, nor cry to God in her weakness. Thereby fatal lust, the desire to have what God forbade, was infused, which gave birth to overt sin. How different Christ! He instead of yielding suffered, which Eve did not; yet was He tempted far beyond our first parents, tempted in all things in like manner as we, apart from sin: the severest temptations ever endured, sin excepted. From our sinful temptations He was absolutely exempt. He knew no sin; which was as incompatible with His person as with the work He came to do. And we may well bless God that so it was: otherwise our salvation had not been, any more than God glorified in the cross of Christ.

The craft of Satan seduced Eve from one degree to another. First, she was drawn away to doubt His love; then she ceased to tremble at His word, His truth; and lastly, she fell by open transgression under the temptation to receive the devil's gospel—to become as God, knowing good and evil. Can any course more aptly portray what has wrought in hearts ever since? The difference is that we are by birth fallen and prone to sin, and that God has spoken and acted to arouse and deliver, above all in redemption by Christ the Lord; so that men are without excuse if they persist in the lie of Satan against the grace and truth of God. Yet do they live as if there were no death or after this no judgment, no real God, no destroyer, and no Savior. When man as he is takes up his own doings, or rites done by others, in the hope that God is too good to consign him to “the second death,” “the lake of fire,” he is evidently listening to the deceiving voice of the old serpent.

None but the Son of God and Son of Man can save sinners; and even He only by dying for their sins and bearing their judgment at the hand of God.

But this He suffered once, once for all: the infinite fruit of God's love to the sinner, and His hatred of their sins. But the heart must give Him credit for such love, and rest upon His redemption by faith: else there is no purification of heart or conscience; and this must be now and here below, that as believers, as His saints, we may serve and worship Him henceforth by the Spirit of God.

Thus the Savior reverses for good to God's glory what the enemy wrought to His dishonor through human weakness and sin. God is believed in His love that gave and sent His own Son; and thus the soul now repentant, taking God's part against itself in its sins, sets to its seal that God is true, looks up with the assurance which Christ and His atoning work inspire, and bows down in worship begun on earth, never to end in heaven, the new song of Him Who was once dead, alive again now and evermore. “He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?”

Joseph, Genesis 39:19-23: Joseph: 6. Blessed in the Tower House

Genesis 39:19-23

We can readily conceive the difficulty for Joseph's master created by the wife's perfidy. On the one hand was the proved unimpeachable trustworthiness of his slave; on the other a wife capable of such solicitation must have long betrayed her evil character in many ways if not in that, so as to make her credit dubious. Still she was his wife; and whatever her bold, impudent, and malicious fraud, we hear of no effort on Joseph's part to vindicate himself by exposing her wickedness. A simple denial of the evil she laid to his charge would not avail against the natural indignation of a husband unwilling to search narrowly into the terrible alternative.

“And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife which she spoke to him, saying, After this manner did thy bondman to me, that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him and put him in the tower-house, a place where the king's prisoners [were] confined; and he was there in the tower-house. And Jehovah was with Joseph, and extended mercy to him, and gave him favor in the eyes of the chief of the tower-house. And the chief of the tower-house committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that [were] in the tower-house; and whatever they were doing there he did. The chief of the tower-house looked not to anything under his hand, because Jehovah was with him; and what he did Jehovah made to prosper” (vers. 19-23).

Unnatural as was the cruelty of his brothers which ended in his slavery, baser still was the fresh trial through a woman's guilty rage. In them both Joseph suffered, for love and for righteousness' sake. In both Jehovah stood by His wronged servant, and caused His favor to rest on him even during the time of his sufferings. Never had his master a slave so efficient and prosperous. Never had chief of the tower-house such a prisoner. Which of the king's grandees in disgrace had ever so won his confidence? In both cases the secret of all was that Jehovah was with Joseph. Brothers, strangers, or jailers made no difference. Violence did not overcome him, any more than corruption; he overcame evil with good; and the heathen recognized it, if the evil state of his brothers blinded them for a while. It was hard enough for a free man to be sold into slavery; it was harder still for a pious man to be condemned for a crime, to which the false accuser had invited him in vain. But Jehovah was with Joseph, and extended mercy to him, and gave him favor where it might least have been expected. Slaves and felons do not as such approve themselves in the eyes of their guardians, as everyone knows.

But God abides the same forever, and in fact now reveals Himself more endearing still as Father to all that believe since the Son came thus to reveal Him. The enmity of the world was even more pronounced when the true Light shone, and made the darkness visible universally, and the ancient people of God deeper in their enmity than the blind Gentiles. In Christ was no sin; and thus He, the righteous One, convicted them as only the guiltier sinners, because of their blasphemous unbelief along with religious pretension. And what were Joseph's sufferings compared with His? Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures. Once (and it was ample) He suffered for our sins, Just for unjust, that He might bring us to God cleared of all charge or condemnation. None but Christ could thus suffer for us; for all others had sins to be atoned for. He alone who knew no sin could be made sin for us, as God made Him on the cross. His sacrificial suffering there furnished the efficacious ground for God's righteousness, not only in raising Christ from the dead, but in justifying all that believe on Him. Thus, where sin abounded, did grace all the more surpass; and man's total failure in righteousness is answered in the cross which lays the necessary, adequate, and blessed ground for God's righteousness which we become in Christ.

But though none but Christ could suffer for sins, we who believe on Him are called, when doing well, to suffer and take it patiently, as grace with God. So the apostle suffered the loss of all things, and went on counting them but refuse to win Christ on high and be found in Him, not having his righteousness that is of law but what is through faith of Christ, the righteousness of God on faith: to know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed to His death, if anyhow he might arrive at the resurrection from among the dead. This was undoubtedly the bright personal experience of the apostle; but it is divinely communicated to us for our like edification, and open to every saint in the power of the Spirit Who alone can make it good in our spirit and conversation. See how his faith shone in what he wrote at the last to Timothy when with a slight exception all those in Asia turned away from the apostle, “ashamed of his chain.” Yet looking for the punishment of death, he sees the crown of righteousness laid up for him, and tells how, when no man stood with him, the Lord did and should deliver him from every wicked work, and preserve him for his heavenly kingdom.

Joseph, Genesis 39:6-18: Joseph: 5. Suffering for Righteousness

Genesis 39:6-18

Every reader of the book of Genesis can see the larger space given to his life than to any of his fathers, even to the first and greatest of them all. We may profitably ask why; nor is the answer doubtful, for it is the key to all the Old Testament. No one in these early days was in so striking and varied ways the type of Christ. Nor did any other arise till David was given pre-eminently that place, both in humiliation and on the throne, to say nothing of his own inspired outpourings in the Psalms.

As seeing Him who is invisible, Joseph repelled the temptation, through which he passed unsullied, and meekly suffered under the false imputation of the shameless lady who sought his seduction. It is evident that he, a young man, not only resisted her importunities, but was careful not to wound his master by the proof of the wife's guilty passion and still guiltier revenge on the blameless. For lust, whether gratified or not, soon turns to hatred: so we see in Amnon, as in this depraved woman.

“And Joseph was beautiful of form, and beautiful of countenance. And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife raised her eyes on Joseph .... But he refused and said to his master's wife, Behold, my master takes cognizance of nothing with me: what is in the house, and all that he hath, he hath given to my hand. None [is] greater in this house than I; nor hath he withheld from me anything but thee, because thou [art] his wife. And how should I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, and he hearkened not to her,... And it came to pass about this time that on a certain day that be went into the house to do his business, and none of the men [was] there in the house. And she caught... and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and ran outside. And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and had fled outside, that she called to the men of her house, and spoke to them, saying, See, he hath brought in to us a Hebrew man to mock us: he came in to me.., and I cried with a loud voice; and it came to pass when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and ran outside. And she laid up his garment by her till his master came to his house. And she spoke to him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant whom thou hast brought to us came in to mock me; and it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled outside” (vers. 6-18).

Egypt, a land of strange anomalies, was remarkable for the combination of a very high standard of morals in theory with extremely lax practice. If one cannot accept the exaggeration of Brugsch (Histoire d' Egypte, 17), we may safely receive Prof. Rawlinson's statement that “the Egyptian women were notoriously of loose character, and, whether as we meet with them in history, or as they are depicted in Egyptian romance, appear as immodest and licentious. The men practiced impurity openly and boasted of it in their writings,” etc. (Hist. of Ancient Egypt, I. ch. iii. 104-107, 147, 292, 552; II. 361, 362, 404). There is extant “The Tale of the Two Brothers,” which experts believe to have been written near the age of Joseph, which tells the tale of female dissoluteness from an Egyptian witness, a romance or novel as it is written to warn of the ruin to which such courses lead. Herodotus, as is well known, charged them with no less immorality at a later day (ii. 60, etc.).

Another remark may here fittingly be made. Learned skeptics have too hastily objected to the freedom which the incident supposes for the mistress of the house, apart from anything wrong. But such men only betray their prejudice, and, it must be added, their ignorance of Egyptian domestic life in that day. The very monuments bear testimony to the liberty which women, and especially the wife or mother, then enjoyed; but these objectors are as ready to credit that testimony as to distrust the Bible. Yet we need not labor so small a point.

Here then we have the holy youth resisting the tempter, and enduring grief, suffering wrongfully. And this is grace in the day of trial. For what glory is it if, when ye sin and are buffeted, ye shall take it patiently? But if when ye do well and suffer, ye shall take it patiently, this is grace with God. For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that ye should follow His steps; Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; Who when reviled reviled not again, when suffering threatened not, but gave [it] over into the hands of Him that judges righteously; Who Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, in order that, being dead to sins, we may live to righteousness; by Whose stripes ye were healed. Of the atonement Joseph could be no real type; but of Christ's suffering unjustly and in grace he was a blessed foreshadow.

Joseph, Genesis 39:1-6: Joseph: 4. Prospered in Potiphar's House

Genesis 39:1-6

It is not without a profoundly moral purpose that, before Joseph's history is continued, the Spirit of God, in chap. 38 discloses the debased state of Judah. We have already seen that the sensual Reuben was the only brother to show the least natural affection, or at least pity, to Joseph. It was he who suggested the pit, from which their offending brother could not escape, in order to bring him to his father again. But Judah, in Reuben's absence, took the lead in taking him out and selling him to the Ishmaelites, who in turn sold him to an Egyptian master. What a presage of Christ, suffering first from a faithless Judah; then too from the Gentile world! Divine history is as truly predictive in the types of the law as in the heart-breathing of the Psalms, or the more direct prophets. And so all must be, if scripture be God revealing His grace in Christ, His own delight, and the only salvation for wretched guilty man.

Judah, about to be not only the pre-eminently royal tribe but the progenitor of the King of kings, is to take profanely to himself a daughter of Canaan. No wonder that wickedness slew his firstborn, and infamy his brother. No wonder that the widow had no regard from the third. But how shocking her shameless and incestuous vindication of right! how self-righteous Judah's readiness to burn the mother of babes unconsciously his own, one of whom is carefully marked out in Messiah's direct line! Such is man, and such Judah; but such too is God. Where heinous sin abounded, grace much more exceeded. Let us now turn to what follows.

“And Joseph was brought down into Egypt; and Potiphar, a chamberlain of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian man, bought him of the hand of the Ishmaelites who had brought him down thither. And Jehovah was with Joseph; and he was a prosperous man, and he was in his master the Egyptian's house. And his master saw that Jehovah [was] with him, and that Jehovah made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found favor in his eyes, and served him; and he made him overseer over his house, and all [that] was his he put into his hand. And it came to pass, from the time he made him overseer in his house and over all that was his, that Jehovah blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of Jehovah was on all that was his in house and in field. And he left all that [was] his in Joseph's hand, and took cognizance of nothing with him save the bread which he ate” (vers. 1-6).

Little did the Egyptian anticipate the treasure one small price brought to his house. But the explanation is not far to seek, and it makes all clear. “Jehovah was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man.” Never before was the word so emphatic. Not that Jehovah had not been with him at home or abroad hitherto. Jehovah was with him when he gained his father's confidence and love. Jehovah was with him when by his fidelity he earned the envy and hatred of his brethren. But now of him, a bondman in a strange land, it was said with marked force. Yet who but one inspired of God would have so written of one torn from his father's house, and this by his own brothers, who sold him for a slave, instead of taking his blood or leaving him to perish of hunger. But Jehovah was with him all the more because the need was greater. The favor

of divine light shone on him even then; and it made him hateful in the eyes of wicked kinsmen who ought to have loved him, if they understood not but only disliked what seemed to his honor, besides the rancor for their evil report which he felt bound to carry to the father for their good.

In the Egyptian's house he recognized a new sphere of duty, and looked to Jehovah that he might serve Him and thus best serve his master. His eye was single, and the whole body full of light. Delivered from a cruel death which seemed imminent, he humbled himself under the divine hand, and sought to do diligently and conscientiously what lay before him day by day to please the Master above. Hence the prosperity that surrounded him and made him master of the situation. Never had Potiphar or any other such a slave: in him was neither self-seeking nor eye-service. “And his master saw that Jehovah was with him, and that Jehovah made all that he did to prosper in his hand.” One cannot wonder that things went wrong under such a mistress, when no Joseph was there, only the bondmen. But now there was a force for good at work with the most marked results of blessing which the discerning eye even of a heathen did not fail to see. “And Joseph found favor in his eyes, and served him.” Not heart only, but faith was in his work; and this gave a new character and power, which a shrewd master with large experience of human deceitfulness and incompetence made him appreciate all the more.

As he was faithful in the least, his master promoted him to greater tasks and much more honorable. “And he set him over his house, and all that was his he put into his hand.” This was no small sphere of service, and involved the administration of an immense establishment. For there is ground to accept the view that Potiphar had command of the White Castle at Noph (or Moph) of the prophets, the Memphis of Greeks and others of later times. But extensive, varied, and new as it was to him who had been so lately and singularly introduced, “Jehovah blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of Jehovah was on all that was his in house and in field.” For “A wise man's heart is at his right hand,” says Solomon.

At a later day, when Israel had become a kingdom and so rebelled against Jehovah that even Judah was carried into captivity to Babylon, we have like faith and allegiance to Jehovah in Daniel and his three companions. On them too for their separateness to His honor the favor of Jehovah rested; and, in a way similar to that of Joseph yet to come, Daniel rose to the highest elevation in the empire of Nebuchadnezzar, and the rest also to high honor. But they knew no such sufferings as fell to Joseph, nor were they proved in such experience of slavery from its lowest form as was his lot. For there was all the difference possible between the house of Potiphar, to say nothing of the dungeon to which he was afterward assigned, and the palace of the first Gentile world-kingdom wherein they were tried. Yet the trial of faith and its bright results were beautiful in their case as in Joseph's before he rose to his great eminence. Here it was manifest blessing in his servitude, and his master's trust at last without limit. “And he left all that was his in Joseph's hand, and took cognizance of nothing with him, save the bread which he ate.” Corruption was in that house, as it came out soon in a shameless guise; but till then “Jehovah blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake.”

How wondrous His grace then shown! how much more now, if the eye of faith were not dim!

Joseph, Genesis 37:17-36: Joseph: 3. And His Brethren

Genesis 37:17-36

The dreams of Joseph were God-sent, and as real in the event, as realities of others are but day-dreams. And what a mercy it was for his half-brothers, who were not in heart brothers, that their cruel purpose took effect but in part, and was turned in divine goodness, wisdom, and power to bring about the elevation which they hated as much as they envied. Cain-like their intent was to slay their brother. And wherefore? Because, at the bottom of all, their works were evil, and their brother's righteous.

“And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan. And when they saw him afar off, and before he came near to them, they conspired against him to put him to death. And they said one to another, Behold, there cometh that master of dreams! And now come and let us kill him, and cast him into one of the pits, and we will say, An evil beast devoured him; and we will see what becometh of his dreams. And Reuben heard, and delivered him out of their hands, and said, Let us not take his life. And Reuben said to them, Shed no blood; cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness; and lay no hand on him (in order that he might deliver him out of their hand, to bring him again to his father). And it came to pass, when Joseph came to his brethren, that they stripped Joseph of his coat, the coat of the colors that [was] on him; and they took him and cast him into the pit. And the pit was empty: no water [was] in it. And they sat down to eat bread; and they lifted up their eyes and looked; and, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, and their camels bearing tragacanth and balsam and ladanum, going to carry [it] down to Egypt. And Judah said to his brethren, What profit [is it] if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he [is] our brother, our flesh. And his brethren hearkened. And Midianitish men, merchants, passed by; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty [pieces] of silver, who brought Joseph into Egypt. And Reuben returned to the pit, and, behold, Joseph [was] not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned to his brethren and said, The child [is] not; and I, whither shall I go? And they took the coat of Joseph, and killed a buck of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of the colors, and had [it] brought to their father, and said, This we have found; discern now whether it [is] thy son's coat or not. And he discerned it, and said, My son's coat! an evil beast hath devoured him. Surely torn in pieces is Joseph! And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, For I will go down to my son mourning to Sheol. Thus for him wept his father. And the Midianites sold him into Egypt to Potiphar, a chamberlain [lit. eunuch] of Pharaoh, captain of the executioners (or, lifeguard)” (vers. 17-36).

Such is the simple but most touching account Moses was inspired to give of the atrocious wickedness on the part of Joseph's brothers, heads though they were of the tribes of Israel. Who but God would have told the tale, with whatever difference in Reuben and Judah? How evident that in Jehovah alone can one boast, and that the objects of His choice are in themselves nothing and worse than nothing! Yet in the midst of heartlessness toward the guiltless sufferer and the father who had sent him in love rises the foreshadow of Him that should come, a greater infinitely than Joseph. He too was the Beloved of His Father, and sent as Son of man in quest of the lost. It was His to arouse the enmity of His brethren after the flesh and beyond all as the Faithful Witness who drew out man's evil by divine good, and in all things pleased God the Father.

But in how many soever ways of love, enough was done and is written to show how the Holy One of God was before His eyes who knows how to effectuate His deliberate counsel and foreknowledge, not only in spite but by means of the apostate unbelief of the Jews, and of the hands of lawless Gentiles, in their blind pride alike knowing not what they did, yet knowing more than enough to make both utterly inexcusable. O what a Father! O what a Son, given up by His brethren after the flesh, Messiah and withal Jehovah, ready to die for their sins, as none other could or would! For His price too was silver paid, as in the case of another Judah: a goodly valuation for the Lord of all! O what is man, be he Jew or Gentile! and what is God but the God of all grace! And what Jesus, full of grace and truth, who if He drew out by His perfection, as God to man and as man to God, the causeless and uttermost evil of man as a whole, died as the efficacious propitiation to purge every sin in those who repent and believe the gospel of God in His Son's death!

Nor is it only that peace was made through the blood of Christ's cross for believers who once were alienated and enemies in mind by wicked works, yet now reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, by which and nothing less it could be. But in virtue of the same death He will at His appearing reconcile all things, whether the things on the earth or the things in the heaven. God's blessed work of gathering out His heirs, the joint-heirs with Christ, to reign with Him in that day must first be completed. Then man's and Satan's accursed work of the apostasy and of the man of sin, the spurious Messiah set up in God's temple and worshipped as God by Jews and Gentiles, will bring down summary judgment by the appearing of His coming. But the manifestation of the Son of God, and of the sons of God in the same glory, is followed by the deliverance of the whole creation that now groans together and travails in pain together unto now. The work that followed Joseph's elevation over Egypt, so striking for its beneficence not only to the heathen but to all the Israel of that day, how small in comparison of a deliverance worthy of His person and of His reconciling work wrought in the cross, wherein God was glorified even as to sin forever; for there met face to face man's sin in its height and God's love in its depth! But where sin abounded, grace more exceeded; and God could send His glad tidings, yea His best, to the worst of men, “beginning,” as the Lord Jesus told them, “with Jerusalem.”

Isaac, Isaac: 33. Isaac's Death: Genesis 35:27-29

Genesis 35:27-29

It was a long while before the close of this life came for Isaac; indeed his was a greater span than fell to Jacob or even to Abraham. But the last forty years of it gave no occasion for the Spirit of God to dwell on. He had canceled his sorrowful desires on behalf of Esau, when he trembled at the discovery of his willfulness; and this was confirmed afterward, when he summoned Jacob to repair to Padan-Aram with his renewed blessing.

Jacob too with his large household and retinue had come back to the land of promise after an absence of more than twenty years, with many a sin and a sorrow, among his children. This delayed his steps; but he now found his way at length to his father's house. The record is brief but affecting.

“And Jacob came to Isaac his father to Mamre, Eiriath-Arba, which [is] Hebron; where Abraham had sojourned, and Isaac. And Isaac's days were a hundred years and eighty years; and Isaac expired and died, and was gathered to his peoples, old and full of days; and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him” (vers. 27-29).

As the Holy Spirit says little, it is not for a believer to say much. But one may remark how truly our patriarch lived to the end of his long life, confessing himself a stranger and sojourner on the earth. Isaac had not even to require a foot of the land of promise, as did Abraham a burying place for Sarah and those who followed. He too knew what famine in the land was, but he did not, under its stress, go down into Egypt like his fathers. And his marriage stood in the strongest contrast with Jacob's, who was forced to leave the land for the country of his kindred, and there cheated of the wife he loved to have another, parents of the twelve tribes of Israel, with many an experience of sorrow, yet blessed and bright in his end, while waiting for the end of God, when glory shall dwell in the land. Isaac remains in the land peaceful and comparatively unseen, but in no way signalized by victorious energy like Abraham, nor even an exile and wanderer like Jacob. His very wife was sought for him, and evidently given him by God from afar, brought across the desert by the father's trusty and honored servant, object of purpose, prayer, and thanksgiving beyond all other brides of whom scripture speaks, as already in due place shown by her typical bearing.

Now Jacob, after varied vicissitudes, comes to Isaac his father. It was at Mamre, or Hebron, once the city of the four, where was the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham and Sarah rested in hope of the resurrection. For this was ever the faith of God's elect; and as they, so in due time slept Isaac in or according to faith, having not the land but its promise, and assured of its fulfillment in Christ's day, but waiting patiently till closes man's day of corruption and violence, when Jehovah alone shall be exalted.

For the burial of their aged father, old and full of days beyond the good old age even of Abraham, came Esau and Jacob; as Isaac and Ishmael had buried their father. Death has a powerful and subduing voice for the heart of man, even where faith is not; and it was surely not for those who believed to forbid the presence of their near of kin at the grave, but rather to welcome them where many a self-seeking and haughty soul has been bowed under the solemn issues of salvation on the one hand and of judgment on the other. The days of mourning were not at hand, when Esau's rage turned to kill his brother Jacob; and when they came, God who has power over all hearts so wrought that no such intention remained. Jacob too had passed through dealings of God which turned to good account his manifold and humiliating trials, at length strengthened in heart to confide in His mercy, above fear of human vengeance, and ashamed to betake himself to any further device of his own. Esau still lived to himself and for present enjoyment of the world and its things, Jacob saw the promises, and from afar greeted or embraced them, like his father and his grandfather; and they that say such things show clearly that they possess not but seek after a better fatherland, that is, a heavenly.

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Jacob, Jacob: 21. Israel Put to Shame and Isaac's Death

Jacob had not yet reached the end of his journeyings, any more than of his sorrows, a man of the most varied experience among the fathers, as Isaac had the least. So he said later to Pharaoh, Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. Yet this painful experience under the governing hand of God was blessed to his soul; and the Spirit of God marks it here by the name of “Israel,” not conferred only but here used historically, as we find it again when years after he took another journey still more eventful (chap. 46:1, 30; 48:2, &c).

“And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent on the other side of Migdal-Eder (Tower of the flocks). And it came to pass when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine; and Israel heard of [it]. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: the sons of Leah, Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun; the sons of Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin; and the sons of Bilhah Rachel's handmaid, Dan and Naphtali; and the sons of Zilpah Leah's handmaid, Gad and Asher. These [are] the sons of Jacob that were born to him in Padan-Aram. And Jacob came to Isaac his father to Mamre, to Kirjath-Arba, which [is] Hebron; where Abraham had sojourned, and Isaac. And the days of Isaac were a hundred and eighty years. And Isaac expired and died, and was gathered to his peoples, old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him” (vers. 21-29). There is a day at hand when Jehovah will assemble her that halteth, and will gather her that is driven out, and her that He hath afflicted; and He will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast off a strong nation. And Jehovah shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even forever. And thou, O tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, yea the first dominion shall come, even the kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem. So brightly Micah (iv.) was given to prophesy of the flock of Israel, as in the next chapter of the Shepherd through whose sufferings alone could come such blessing and glory. Meanwhile he, the father of the twelve tribes, halted slowly in his keenly felt bereavement, who had known both to be driven out and afflicted. But the time was not come for Him whom he too awaited, even to be smitten on the cheek, much less for the birth of that grand change when He returns in power. In that land, which is to be the glory of all lands, through Him who will restore all things to God's glory, dwelt the desolate man. It was a lingering that presented a dismal snare to his firstborn, and, sad to say it, to the concubine of his father, the mother of his brothers Dan and Naphtali. Dinah had been a grief already; but what was that compared to the two-edged dagger that pierced his bosom? “Israel heard of it.” But we are not told of a word that escaped him then. It was a grief too deep, if not for tears, for a passing burst of feeling; but his heart had sense of it when the sons gathered together round his dying bed, and he was given to tell them what would befall them at the end of days, not for the eternal scene, but for “the regeneration” and indeed before this comes. The dishonorer of his father, and in a way not even among the Gentiles that know not God, was forgiven, but lost his birthright and could have no pre-eminence either now or when God's kingdom comes for the earth, and Jesus is the head over all things heavenly as well as earthly.

The enumeration of the family is pathetic at this point in the patriarchal story. No flesh shall glory. Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord. Yet God takes pleasure in recording their names, both early and late in the O. T., and finally in the last book of the N. T., but with instructive variations. For the Bible is not only God's word, but an intensely moral book, little to be discerned by those who make mind their all.

The death of Isaac, with his great age, exceeding Abraham's, is here named, though we must bear in mind that it did not happen till Joseph was not only sold into Egypt but rose, unseen and unknown of Israel, into the seat next the throne. But here it is recounted, as the burial at Mamre brought again together the two sons in a sorrow that set aside strife. Notwithstanding the hatred which God hated was to come out afterward even to the close of the O. T. It must meet its doom in the day of Jehovah's indignation against all the nations, and His sword shall come down on Edom, when the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose, and Carmel and Sharon shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of Israel's God.

Jacob, Jacob: 20. Rachel's Death

It was not without aim and interest that the Holy Spirit recorded the decease of Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, and the oak of weeping under which she was buried at Bethel. God means His people to feel the loss of a faithful domestic, and all the more if that fidelity covered a long space backward. Remarkable is it too that she should now be heard of, not in Isaac's tent but in that of Jacob. What many have inferred hence of Jacob's visits to his father ere this we leave: scripture is silent even as to when Rebekah died. But we may be sure that the aged nurse abode with her beloved mistress at least till then. A nearer bereavement was at hand.

“And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was yet some way to come to Ephrath; and Rachel travailed, and it went hard with her in childbirth. And it came to pass when it went hard in her bearing, that the midwife said to her, Fear not; for this also [is] a son for thee. And it came to pass as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Benoni [son of my sorrow]; but his father called him Benjamin [son of right hand]. And Rachel died, and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave, which [is] the pillar of Rachel's grave to [this] day” (vers. 16-20).

The moral government of God, now by the way, no more fails than His grace from the beginning to the end. Rachel had greatly sinned and kept her husband in the dark, when he unconsciously said that one guilty should not live. Her theft was not only a sin against her father, but in what she stole a heinous insult to God. And we have no evidence that there was soon adequate self-judgment. It is plain that Jacob at length became aware of idols in his household; the sin of which God's call to Bethel laid on his conscience as we have already seen. To take his beloved away was a chastening, not to her only but to him also.

1 Corinthians 11:27-32 is a most instructive teaching on the application of this truth, in which we learn the security of grace on the one hand, and on the other the Lord's dealing with the inconsistent ways of those that are His. The ignorance of the truth even among pious men, notwithstanding their ability and learning is strikingly betrayed in the mistranslation of a word all-important for the true sense. It is not “damnation” but “judgment” in ver. 29, expressly contrasted with “condemnation” in ver. 32. The Lord was then judging by sickness and even death the faulty state and walk of the Corinthian saints, that they should not be condemned with the world, that is, because they were His and to be kept from “damnation.” They were judged in this temporal way for the blessing of their souls. It is a universal principle of God, and as real in the O.T. as it is plain in the N.T. For God is and must be God everywhere. Only the display of grace under the gospel brings out, not only His sovereign grace but His moral government with special clearness.

Rachel's name for the new-born child expresses her sorrow; Jacob, whatever his natural feelings over the dying wife of his heart, looks forward in hope. But it is not in any degree a heavenly hope in Benjamin, as Abraham had in Isaac, received from death to resurrection in a parable; it is the pledge of Israel in power, when she that represented the former state passes away by death. Israel must at the close be brought through deep if not deadly affliction before emerging into victory through their long disowned Messiah over all their foes on the earth.

“Fear not” from the attendant was well-meant. From the Lord it had been a word of power. But He was calling her away from a scene where she had failed in testimony to Him, and compromised her husband too. How could she be trusted in training her offspring in His fear? God had added another son, as she had said in faith, when her firstborn was given. It was fitting that she should depart.

Little thought Jacob, when he erected a pillar of thanksgiving at Bethel in the place where God talked with him, that he would so soon after erect another pillar, and this of sorrow upon Rachel's grave. But he bows to the hand of chastening: whom the Lord loves, He chastises, and scourges every son whom He receives. Jacob could not know, as it was not yet revealed, that near this very Ephrath should be born the King of Israel, the pledge and type of great David's greater Son, whose goings forth are from of old—from everlasting, the smitten Judge of Israel, who gave up His guilty people, but will restore them, so that they shall abide, and He be great unto the ends of the earth. And the day hastens.

Rachel dies, but the pillar that records it stands in Israel's land and history till the kingdom. And her weeping for her children, as the weeping prophet wrote, is with truth and pathos remarkably applied when the King was born, and preserved from the murderous intent of the usurping Edomite, the Rome-favored enemy within. Benjamin himself typifies Christ, not at all as head of the church, but as the conquering Son of might when the kingdom is established in the land as indeed the earth, and the enemies perish before Him. Thus the two wives of Jacob aptly represent, the fruitful Leah, and mother of the nations, and Rachel, Israel's first loved, but only a mother after Leah had borne abundantly. Then of her who typified Israel after the flesh comes Joseph, the bright witness of Christ sold and separate from His brethren, at the right of him who had the larger rule of the world while the Jews were disowned, But at length she dying gives birth to the son of her sorrow, but son of his father's right hand; who shall devour the prey in the morning and at even divide the spoil (Gen. 49:27). “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.”

The effort of ancient fathers and modern theologians to make every type point to Christian associations is the fruit of ignorance as to the extensive and varied glories of Christ, if not effacing yet assuredly lowering the proper brightness of His heavenly exaltation and of the church's union with Him. The late Bp. Chr. Wordsworth was a learned and pious man; but his commentary here and everywhere yields the fullest evidence of this theological bias, shared by the Puritan, the Low, and the Broad Schools, no less than by his own, the so-called High, little as he might relish such companions. Faith alone rises to the enjoyment of heavenly things. Tradition has classes in its school to suit the lovers of antiquity and of novelty, of the law and of free thought. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jacob, Jacob: 19. The Patriarchal Name of God Revealed to Jacob

Slow indeed had been Jacob's steps to Bethel. Long his stay in Padan-aram; and afterward delay followed in Succoth and in Shechem, till he was dislodged at last by sin and sorrow, shame and fear, yet with God ever faithful and true.

“And God appeared to Jacob again, after he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him. And God said to him, Thy name [is] Jacob; thy name shall not henceforth be called Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name. And he called his name Israel. And God said to him, I [am] God Almighty [El-Shaddai]; be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings out of thy loins shall come; and the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it; and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured on it a drink-offering, and he poured on it oil. And Jacob called the name of the place, where God spoke with him, Bethel” (vers. 9-15).

It was no mysterious conflict in the dark as at Peniel with sentence of death put on the flesh. Nor was it a vision of the night as at this same Bethel long before, when Jacob dreamed, and Jehovah stood above the ladder reaching to heaven, with angels of God ascending and descending on it. Still it is not here Jehovah as such, but “God” that now appeared to Jacob in grace, when come after so many vicissitudes to the scene of his vow, and blessed. O what a God is the only true God!

God to him as to his fathers reveals Himself as God Almighty. There is not a word about the faults which rendered chastisement necessary, but simply God blessing him. But no such rich and enlarged scope appears as we have in Gen. 12, no such oath as Jehovah swore on the virtual sacrifice of Abraham's only-begotten, raised from the dead in a parable, with its wonderful distinction between the numerous seed and power over their enemies, and the seed to which no number is attached, the one seed with blessing for the Gentiles, as the apostle draws it out in Gal. 3. Nor are there such terms as when Jehovah appeared to Isaac when He bade him not go down into Egypt, but sojourn in Canaan, spite of famine there, where He would be with him and bless him as He did.

Yet it was no longer Jacob entreating God for His blessing: God of His own accord appeared and blessed him, returned as he was out of the land of the stranger, and taught many a lesson about himself “in the way” as well as out of it. But the blessing however gracious is in a lower key and of a more general character as befitted the name Elohim rather than Jehovah. Still Jacob has Him, truly and unasked, revealed to him, as to Abraham and Isaac, by the proper patriarchal title of El-Shaddai, God Almighty. Nor did any one of the fathers need that assurance of protective might so much as that “worm” Jacob.

His name too is not to be henceforth called Jacob, the supplanter, but Israel, the wrestler or prince of God. The manner is striking. For God speaks of it as if it had been then given, and not merely confirmed, as suited to one who was come back to the land, and not a fugitive from his father's house (though greatly by his own sins, whatever the wickedness of Esau might have been and was). He has like Abraham in Gen. 17 the promise of nations and kings of his line; but nothing here goes beyond the bounds and glory of Israel and the land.

“And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.” We may compare this favor to Jacob with the similar terms as to Abraham in Gen. 17:22. What grace to both! and what an unspeakable difference from the mythological dreams of the intercourse of the gods with Gentile mankind, even if these had been true! But as lies go with moral corruption, and spurious religion degrades man below natural

conscience, what a joy to know that the bright side is yet to come for both Israel and the Gentiles, when the promises are bound up with a rejected Messiah and an everlasting redemption and the new covenant in its literal and direct force! Meanwhile between His two comings the heavenly counsels of God are revealed in Christ dead, risen, and glorified in heaven, and now made known to the church His body, truly the great mystery.

But great too will be the day of Jezreel in the land, and great the blessing of the nations, under Him who will be the head and center of all glory heavenly and earthly (Eph. 1:10).

Can one wonder that Jacob set up a pillar of stone to mark that spot of divine grace, and poured a drink-offering and oil upon it, and called its name Bethel with a fullness of honor unknown before?

Jacob, Jacob: 17. Dinah and Her Brothers

One wrong step in departure from our true position before the Lord leads to many a sin, scandal, and sorrow. So we find here as the consequence of Jacob's buying the land of the Hivite, and building himself a house. His stay at Succoth and Shechem covers some ten years. He must be unsettled to get him back to his pilgrim place; but the way was painful for all, and a deep shame and humiliation and fear for the patriarch.

“And Dinah, daughter of Leah whom she bore to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. And Shechem, son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the land, saw her, and he took her, and lay with her, and humbled her. And his soul clave unto Dinah daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spoke to the heart of the damsel. And Shechem spoke unto Hamor his father, saying, Take me this girl to wife. And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; and his sons were with his cattle in the field; and Jacob held his peace until they came. And Hamor father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to talk to him. And Jacob's sons came from the field when they heard [it], and the men were grieved, and they were greatly inflamed, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; for so it ought not to be done.

“And Hamor spoke to them, saying, My son Shechem's soul longeth for your daughter: I pray you, give her him to wife. And make marriages with us, [and] give your daughters to us, and take our daughters unto you. And ye shall dwell with us; and the land shall be before you: dwell and trade in it, and get you possessions therein. And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give. Ask of me very much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say to me; but give me the damsel to wife. And Jacob's sons answered Shechem and Hamor his father with deceit, and spoke, because he had defiled Dinah their sister, and said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to a man that is uncircumcised; for that [were] a reproach unto us. But only in this will we consent unto you: if ye will be as we, that every male of you be circumcised; then will we give our daughters unto you, and take your daughters unto us; and we will dwell with you, and be one people. But if ye hearken not unto us, to be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and go away.

“And their words were good in the eyes of Hamor and in the eyes of Shechem Hamor's son. And the youth deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter; and he [was] honorable above all his father's house. And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto their city's gate, and spoke unto the men of their city, saying, These men are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein. And the land, behold, [it is] wide on both sides before them. Let us take to us their daughters for wives, and our daughters let us give to them. Only in this will the men consent unto us, to dwell with us, to be one people, in circumcising among us every male as they [are] circumcised. Their cattle, and their substance, and every beast of theirs, [shall] they not [be] ours? only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us. And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city, and every male was circumcised, all that went out at the gate of the city” (vers. 1-24).

The only daughter of Jacob had no doubt a difficult part to play in the midst of so many brothers, to say nothing of other characteristics of the household. As the destroying incident of the chapter was soon followed by all quitting the scene, she may have been about fourteen or fifteen years old. With or without the sanction of her parents Dinah went out to see the daughters of the land. Josephus alleges a festive gathering. What had she to do with them in any way? All but the profane knew that the time would come for their judgment, that the seed of Abraham should possess the land; and their iniquity was great though not yet full. Apart from that, how giddy she and dangerous! She seems to have been as independent of her mother, as the young men certainly were beyond taking counsel of their father. Her gadding curiosity exposed her to the young prince of the land, who, smitten with her and carried away by his passion, seduced if he did not by force outrage her. Her poor father was silent till the sons returned from work. Meanwhile Shechem earnestly sought marriage at any price, and his father repaired to Jacob, pleading hard for his son's set desire to have her as wife, and offering the readiest terms of peace between the peoples, as Shechem urged for himself.

Thereon Jacob's sons interposed with guile the condition of circumcision for every male. Not the smallest thought or wish had they for inviting the Shechemites into the covenant. It was the basest treachery in order to ensnare and massacre them. Jacob had nothing to do with the cruel secret. Their pride and revenge ignored God as it did their father. Shechem was guilty of a great wrong; but Dinah too was in fault. Neither their mothers nor their grandmother came of circumcised fathers; nor did any pious or delicate reluctance appear in their own marriages. The condition was a lying and cowardly pretext to carry out their resentment to the uttermost. Hamor and Shechem fell into the trap, and had influence enough to persuade all their townsmen with themselves to submit to the painful rite, and its unexpected peril.

Then, when the inflammation was at its height for the beguiled Hivites, the bloody crisis came, executed by the two of the least scruple.

“And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took each his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. And Hamor and Shechem his son they slew with the edge of the sword; and they took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out. Jacob's sons came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister. Their flocks and their herds and their asses, and that which [was] in the city, and that which [was] in the field they took; and all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives, they took captive and spoiled, even all that [was] in the house” (vers. 25-29).

How solemn is the calm with which scripture recounts this whole affair of corruption and violence, covered and effected by odious hypocrisy, in which the chosen race were the perpetrators and Canaanites were the victims! Still it is going too far to say that Jacob felt only the consequence, not the appalling iniquity. It is related here, “And Jacob said to Simeon and to Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and I [am] few in number, and they will gather themselves together against me, and smite me, and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. And they said, As with a harlot should he deal with our sister (vers. 30, 31)?” Jacob was no doubt filled with alarm, so as to forget God's promise; but who can forget the sense of this dark and hateful day he expressed on his dying bed in words of prophetic power? “Simeon and Levi [are] brethren; Instruments of violence their swords. Come not thou into their council, my soul; With their assembly be not thou united, mine honor; For in their anger they slew men, And in their wantonness they houghed oxen. Cursed their anger, for [it was] fierce, And their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel” (Gen. xlix. 5-7).

Jacob, Jacob: 16. Succoth and Shechem

GOD was faithful to Jacob, but not yet Jacob to God, Who still kept up reserve, and could not yet reveal His name as He did to Abraham and Isaac, and would in due time to Jacob (35:11). There was not the self-judgment that made the way for it. Hence with all his obsequiousness to his brother there was not even candor, and still less faith in activity.

“And Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him a house, and for his cattle he made booths. Therefore the name of the place was called Succoth (Booths). And Jacob came [in] peace [to the] city Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-Aram, and encamped before the city. And he bought an allotment of the field where he had spread his tent, at the hands of Hamor's sons, father of Shechem, for a hundred kesitahs (lambs). And he set up there an altar, and called it El-Elohe-Israel” (vers. 16-20).

Esau returned the same day to his own place, the scene hostile to Israel, and hateful to God, all the more because of the near relationship which drew down His deepening abhorrence. For vengeance belongs to Jehovah who will not permit unauthorized and guilty man to take it in hand. Jacob evasively journeys to Succoth, which should be marked east of the Jordan,1 though there was a place so named west of that river, as elsewhere too (Ex. 12:37, Num. 33:5, 6). But the Succoth of Jacob's dwelling was the place given to the Gadites (Josh. 13:27) and made memorable by the princes who refused bread to Gideon and his three hundred, and were threshed for their baseness with the thorns of the wilderness and briers.

There Jacob built him a house, as he made booths for his cattle which gave occasion to the name of the spot. But the serious indication of the patriarch's state was the building of a house for himself in manifest departure from the pilgrim practice of his fathers, and indeed his own, as is described in Heb. 11:9, “By faith he (Abraham) became a sojourner in the land of promise [which gave it special emphasis] not as his own, having dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the joint-heirs of the same promise.” It is incorrect to say with Matthew Henry that Jacob “was glad of booths,” as contrasted with his descendants in houses of stone. The very point of God's word here is that he “built him a house,” whereas his fathers dwelt in tents even in the land of promise. It was marked indifference and declension in this respect; and the more because Jacob was only on his way to the land. It was yielding like other men to the desire for the ease and convenience of a more settled and convenient abode.

At length however a movement was made. “And Jacob came in peace to the city Shechem which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-Aram, and encamped before the city. And he bought an allotment of the field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of Hamor's sons, father of Shechem, for a hundred kesitahs (lambs)."2

It is hardly needful to justify “in peace” from “to Shalem” as in the A. V. following the Sept., Syr., Pesch. and Vulgate, nor from the “safe and sound” of the Targum of Onkelos and the Rabbis, with most Germans, in the desire to exalt Jacob, and pretend that his halting passed quite away contrary to any simple impression conveyed by the end of Gen. 32. There is indeed a seeming confirmation of the first sense in the fact of a place still called Salim between Shechem and the Jordan. But this is a mere coincidence, though it weighed with Jerome and Epiphanius. For “in peace” is in contrast with his perturbation of mind through dread of Esau between Peniel and Succoth, which is surely pertinent to the purpose. Yet as he failed in Succoth, so did he yet more in Shechem, which had a pointed claim on him beyond Shalem; for there it was that the father of the faithful had his first manifestation of Jehovah in Canaan, and the promise to give that land to his seed; and there he built an altar to Jehovah that appeared to him. “And he bought an allotment of the field where he had spread his tent, at the hand of Hamor's sons, father of Shechem, for a hundred kesitahs.” How different from him who had none inheritance given him in the land, no, not to set his foot on, save what he bought to lay his dead in at a later day! Jacob thus departed more and more from the position of a sojourner.

But did not Jacob redeem his character as saint by his subsequent act? Not quite as yet. “And he set up an altar there and called it El-Elohe-Israel.” In setting up an altar, where he first spread his tent in the promised land, he was undoubtedly right. He had not raised, nor could he properly raise one, outside the land of God's gift. But he also made evident his falling short of God's mind by the name he gave it. “God, the God of Israel” (ver. 20) did not rise up to the due patriarchal title of relationship; it was not promise, but his own measure of experience. It was short of Bethel; and Jacob must go through more and more humbling experience, and God must dislodge him from settling on the field he had purchased from the Hivite, to bring him to the place of his vow, where he would make an altar to God that appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother. Not even yet were the strange gods that defiled his household put away. How could there be true communion till then? Yet there was unfailing, patient, and tender mercy. But only there and thus could he enjoy the portion of God as He then revealed Himself. How blessed and holy are His ways!

Jacob, Jacob: 15. Meeting of Jacob and Esau

The bringing of Jacob into communion with God was not yet complete; and as God's dealing with him in the last chapter indicates it, so does this chapter confirm it. He lifted up his eyes and looked; but God was greater than his fears, though he still devised the best he could whether Esau came as a friend or as a foe. Jacob can hardly be said here to walk by faith, not by sight; but God was faithful in His providence.

“And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children to Leah and to Rachel and to the two maid-servants; and he put the maid-servants and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindmost. And he passed over before them and bowed to the earth seven times, until he came near to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him; and they wept. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children, and said, Who [are] these with thee? And he said, The children whom God hath graciously given thy servant. And the maid-servants drew near, they and their children, and they bowed. And Leah also drew near and her children, and they bowed. And after drew near Joseph and Rachel, and they bowed. And he said, What [meanest] thou [by] all this band (or, camp) which I met? And he said, To find favor in the eyes of my lord. And Esau said, I have much, my brother; let that which [is] thine be to thee. And Jacob said, No, I pray thee: if now I have found favor in thine eyes, then receive my present at my hand; for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen God's face, and thou wast pleased with me. Take, I pray thee, nay blessing that is brought thee, because graciously hath God dealt with me, and because I have all. And he urged him, and he took [it]. And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go; and I will go before thee. And he said to him, My lord knoweth the children [are] tender, and the flocks and the herds with young [are] with me; and overdrive them one day, then all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant, and I will lead on softly according to the pace of the cattle that are before me, and according to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord unto Seir. And Esau said, Let me leave, I pray thee, of the people that [are] with me. And he said, Why this? Let me find favor in my lord's eyes” (vers. 1-15).

None of the patriarchs passed through such inquietude as Jacob. So it must be if one is out of communion with God; who avails Himself of anxiety and change and danger to do us good and restore the soul at length. Even after God wrestled with him and enabled him to wrestle with God for His blessing, it was as yet far short of God's mind. For how poor that he could say no more than “I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved!” God “talked with” His friend Abraham, revealing His Name as the Almighty, covenanted to make him father of many nations with things to come of Him, and revealed what He was going to do to the guilty cities of the plain, so as to draw out his intercession for righteous Lot.

But here Jacob was still far from peace as he considered Esau. He never thought of God's power over the hearts of all, and His intention of over-ruling Esau's resentment, to fill his heart with warm natural affection. As Jacob passed before the carefully arranged company of women and children, and bowed to the ground abjectly till he came near his brother, Esau ran to meet him, embraced him, fell on his neck, and kissed him. In his dread Jacob had prepared Esau for his abundant substance, but was silent about his family. Hence the inquiry, “Who are these with you?” to which Jacob, now getting more at ease, answers as became a believer, “The children whom God hath graciously given thy servant.” But when Esau asks the meaning of all the band, or drove, he had met, he says, “To find favor in the eyes of my lord.” To this Esau rejoins, “I have” (not only enough but) “much, my brother; let what is thine be to thee,” and Jacob goes yet further in pressing its acceptance, “for I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. Take, pray, my blessing that is brought thee, because God hath graciously dealt with me, and because I have all.” In fact it was a gift meant to avert the anger and strong wrath he apprehended; but the manner and the terms in which it was couched hardly deserve the appreciation commonly expressed thereon. God had wrought pitifully: to Him indeed he owed thanksgiving; while he might well be touched by brotherly affection instead of all that he feared.

It may be painful to notice, but it is well to heed, what follows as showing Jacob's state even then. When Esau proposes that they should proceed, and himself lead the way, Jacob pleads the tenderness of the children and such of the flocks and herds as would all die, if overdriven one day, and begs his lord to pass over, whilst he should lead on softly, till he came unto his “lord” in Seir. Then on Esau's offer of some of his trained convoy he replies, “Why this? Let me find favor in my lord's eyes.” The truth is, that he was most anxious to get rid of his brother, and that he had not the smallest intention of going to Seir. He was going to Succoth. Viewed in the light of God, Jacob was not truthful in what he said to his brother. There was evil still unjudged in those around, and he spoke with little scruple but with characteristic fertility of excuse.

Jacob, Jacob: 14. Wrestling With God

The vision of two bands of angels did not deliver Jacob from fear for himself and his two bands. He was not at ease with God, though a believer. All that hindered communion was not yet judged; and hence his abject dread of Esau, of whose change of feeling toward himself he had no idea. Making his own plan of defense, he then prayed for Jehovah's blessing for deliverance from Esau. Further details are given in vers. 13-21; and the rest follows, where God takes in hand Jacob.

“And he lodged there that night; and took of what came to his hands a gift for Esau his brother; two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats; two hundred ewes, and twenty rams; thirty milch camels with their colts: forty kine, and ten bulls; twenty she-asses, and ten young asses. And he delivered [them] into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself: and he said to his servants, Go on before me, and put a space between drove and drove. And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meets thee, and asks thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? then shalt thou say, Thy servant Jacob's, it is a gift sent to my lord Esau; and, behold, he also is behind us.

And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, According to this word shall ye speak to Esau when ye find him. And ye shall say moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will propitiate him with the gift that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face: perhaps he will accept me. And the gift went over before him; and he himself lodged that night in the camp (or, band).”

Next we come to God's dealing with him that he might be blessed more abundantly.

“And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two maidservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford of Jabbok; and he took them and led them over the stream, and sent over what he had. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the rising of the dawn. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh: and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was

strained as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the dawn ariseth. And he said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. And he said to him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Not Jacob shall be called henceforth thy name, but Israel; for thou hast wrestled with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked and said, Tell, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore askest thou after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And the sun rose upon him as he passed over Penuel, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not the sinew that shrank, which [is] upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip (or, that shrank)" (vers. 22-32).

Jacob must be alone with God. He was not yet at Bethel, but had a needed meeting meanwhile in the dark. Not so much as men say, Jacob wrestling with God, true as this may be in its measure, but yet more God wrestling with Jacob. "There wrestled a man with him until the rise of the dawn." It was grace that gave him perseverance and to prevail, but in a way contrary to man's thoughts; not in any degree Jacob's goodness, wisdom, and power, but God's faithful mercy. Hence He touched the hollow or socket of Jacob's thigh, so that it became out of joint. This would render powerless the strongest; but it was not so here. His grace enabled Jacob to hold on. He deigns then to say to Jacob, Let me go, for the dawn ariseth: as Jacob answers, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. Thereon Jacob gets his new name, no more the supplanter but a prince of God—Israel, "for thou hast wrestled with God and with men, and hast prevailed." So wrought divine mercy while withering natural strength; but there is no revelation of His name as to Abraham; and instead of drawing out his intercession for others, God wrestles with himself. Prevail he must in order to be blessed; but there is no communion. The name is undivulged as later to Manoah, before the man of overcoming strength was born, who wrought heroic wonders, yet with surprisingly little moral power. And so it is here with Jacob in his way, who called the name of the place Peniel; "for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Think of the totally different issue when Jehovah appeared to Abraham both in Gen. 17 and Gen. 18 Then "He went away as soon as He had left communing with Abraham." The wife of Manoah understood God better than her husband.

Thenceforth Jacob halted upon his thigh. God would have him permanently learn the lesson of His strength displayed in human weakness. So the sun rose on his halting as he passed Penuel; and therefore the children of Israel eat not the sinew that shrank which is upon the hollow of the thigh, to this day. Would to God that they read its meaning in the light, instead of going about to establish their own righteousness and refusing to submit to His righteousness! Nor is it Jews only that need to learn this great truth; for it is ever fading more and more away from Christendom, where flesh is increasingly gloried in, and superstition and rationalism contend for the mastery against God and His Christ.

Jacob, Jacob: 13. Jacob in Distress and Praying

Laban went and returned to his place, as we have seen. Of him we hear no more.

"And Jacob went on his way; and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This [is] the camp of God. And he called the name of that place Mahanaim (two camps). And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother into the land of Seir, the field of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak to my lord, to Esau: Thy servant Jacob speaketh thus. With Laban I have sojourned and tarried until now; and I have oxen, and asses, sheep, and bondmen and bondwomen; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight. And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother, to Esau; and he also cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that [was] with him, and the sheep and the herds and the camels, into two companies (camps). And he said, If Esau come to the one company and smite it, then the company which is left shall escape. And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, Jehovah, who saidst to me, Return to thy country and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am less than all the mercies and all the truth that thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two companies. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from Esau's hand; for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, [and] the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will certainly deal well with thee, and make thy seed as sand of the sea which cannot be numbered for multitude" (1-12).

When a lonely fugitive from his father's house Jacob beheld in a dream on his way to Haran a ladder from earth to heaven, with angels of God ascending and descending on it, but above it Jehovah promising His presence and eventual blessing. Here again him, a fugitive, angels of God met, so that, when he saw them, he recognized the gracious aim, This is God's host, and named the place accordingly. But neither the dream nor the sight of angels sufficed for Jacob's need. The fear of Laban was soon followed by his sorry terror of Esau. So it must be, just because Jacob was born of God, but with an unpurged conscience and a heart not at rest to enjoy the only object that satisfies. Even visions in this case are of little power and would soon be forgotten.

We see the lesson of faith feebly learned. Again he has recourse to his plans, and sends messengers to his brother in Seir, with words skilfully framed to conciliate "my lord Esau," and "thy servant Jacob." Esau was not to fear that Jacob needed to encroach on a brother or a father; he had ample resources of his own, and only sought grace in his sight. But no answer from Esau filled Jacob with alarm and distress; especially as the messengers told him that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men. Why, but to overwhelm him? It was unbelief of Him who cannot forget His promise but can control and turn the most alien spirit.

Again, he betakes himself to his devices, dividing the people and the stock into two companies, saying, If Esau come to the one and smite it, then shall the other escape. How short and sad is man's prudence! He that arrested Laban in his hostile intentions and made him depart with a kiss all round, could he not bring Esau to Jacob with an embrace and not without tears? It is his state that the Holy Spirit here recounts for everlasting profit, that we be not anxious for the morrow, but cast all upon the God of all grace, because He cares for us. Jacob had as yet a bad conscience, and never yet faced it all out in God's presence. Yet God was faithful to him, not he to God.

After the trembling man had made his plan, he betakes himself to God, and we may trace the work slowly going on in his soul. He reminds Jehovah the God of his fathers Abraham and Isaac, that it was at His bidding he was returning to his country and kindred. He owns his unworthiness of the least of all His mercies and of all His truth. He compares his destitution when he first crossed the Jordan with his two companies at present. He earnestly entreats his deliverance from the hand of his brother Esau, whom he dreaded both for himself and for the mother with the children. Then finally he reminds Him of His promise of a surety to do him good, and make his posterity as sand of the sea innumerable. We can readily perceive that it was faith, but as yet mingled with human expedients. Hence was he far from peaceful reckoning

on God, and even in abject terror of Esau.

The fact is that he was dissatisfied with himself, and feels the need of drawing near to God in a way he had never yet known. The interesting details of this we find in the next page of the divine story, a very important epoch in Jacob's experience. His plans did nothing toward softening Esau, any more than relieving himself from his dread. But he was now to be alone with God who took him up in a way worthy of Himself, and laid the basis for the deepening work in his soul ever after, and a blessing which at length shone in Jacob's declining years beyond his father or even his grandfather. But in his then low estate spiritually grace was about to meet him that very night, little as his troubled soul looked for it, and in a manner foreign to all natural thoughts.

Jacob, Jacob: 12. Laban and Jacob in Covenant

JEHOVAH was faithful and gracious, Jacob a fugitive. Laban soon pursued in hot haste with no friendly intent, but was compelled at the last to bow to God's protecting Jacob.

“And it was told Laban the third day that Jacob had fled. And he took his brethren with him and pursued after him a seven days' journey, and overtook him on mount Gilead. And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, Take care that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. And Laban came up with Jacob; and Jacob had pitched his tent on the mountain; Laban also with his brethren pitched on mount Gilead. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done that thou hast deceived me, and hast carried away my daughters as captives of sword? Why didst thou flee away covertly and steal away from me; and didst not tell me that I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with tambor and with harp, and hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? Now thou hast acted foolishly. My hand is as God to do you hurt; but the God of your father last night spake to me, saying, Take care that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. And now thou must needs be gone, because thou greatly longedst after thy father's house, why hast thou stolen my gods? And Jacob answered and said to Laban, I was afraid for I said, Lest thou shouldest take by force thy daughters from me. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern what [is] thine with me, and take [it] for thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them. And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two handmaids' tents, and found nothing, and he went out of Leah's tent into Rachel's tent. Now Rachel had taken the teraphim, and put them under the camel's saddle, and she sat upon them. And Laban felt about all the tent and found them not. And she said to her father, Let there be no kindling in my lord's eyes that I cannot rise up before thee; for the manner of women is upon me. And he closely searched, but found not the teraphim. And Jacob was kindled, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What [is] my trespass, what my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast felt all about my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set [it] here before my brethren and thy brethren, and let them decide between us both. These twenty years I [have been] with thee: thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and rams of thy flock I have not eaten. What was torn I have not brought to thee; I bore the loss of it: of my hand didst thou require it, stolen by day or stolen by night. [Thus] I was; in the day drought consumed me, and frost by night; and my sleep fled from mine eyes. These twenty years I [have been] in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy flock; and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Had not my father's God, the God of Abraham and the fear of Isaac, been with me, surely empty now thou hadst sent me away. God hath seen mine affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked [thee] last night. And Laban answered and said to Jacob, The daughters [are] my daughters, and the sons my sons, and the flock my flock, and all that thou seest [is] mine; and what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their sons whom they have borne? And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for witness between me and thee. And Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. And Jacob said to his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones and made a heap and ate there on the heap. And Laban called it Jagar-sahadutha (Heap of Witness), and Jacob called it Galeed. And Laban said, This heap is witness between me and thee this day. Therefore is its name called Galeed and Mizpah (Watchtower); for he said, Watch, Jehovah, between me and thee, when we are hidden one from another. If thou afflict my daughters, and if thou shalt take wives besides my daughters, no man is with us; see, God [is] witness between me and thee. And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold the pillar which I have set up between me and thee. This heap [be] witness and the pillar [be] witness, that I pass not over this heap to thee, and that thou pass not over this heap and this pillar to me for harm. The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. And Jacob offered a sacrifice upon the mountain, and invited his brethren to eat bread: and they ate bread and lodged upon the mountain. And Laban rose early in the morning, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them; and Laban went and returned to his place” (22-55).

The state of both comes out so plainly that no words can give any help when speaking of them. Here all is set in the light; and Laban brings on himself the proofs of his selfishness and dishonesty. Jacob was under no bond to stay. Laban and his sons gave ample signs how distasteful to them were his growth and their decay. He wanted a word from God Who gave it to him. His wives were of one mind with his own. He therefore seized the first opportunity, which Laban's shearing furnished, to be gone. Now that Laban with all the clan overtook Jacob on mount Gilead, what righteous objection could be urged? Undoubtedly the warning God gave Laban alarmed his guilty conscience, though no true fear of God was there, no sense of his injustice, even if Jacob had been no more than a faithful servant. Still on both sides, what a contrast with the day when Rebekah left the same roof-tree, it seems not with mirth and songs, nor with tambor and harp, but with love and honor and the fear of God and the assurance of His blessing, which had much fled from that homestead. If he dreaded spoliation or violence, he complained of his stolen gods. These he prized next to his gains, with no shame for his avowal of heathenism; for where this is, Satan has already brought in darkness and death.

How little Jacob knew that Rachel had really stolen Laban's teraphim, to her own shame! Jacob's house too was not so with God as to make it hateful to her in every way. She had already shown herself the prey of low and vile superstition, which paves the way for idolatry in secret. But Jacob had no suspicion that his beloved was really guilty: else he had not been so quick to propose that such a one should not live. And she that had played false to God little scrupled to deceive her father as well as to rob him. Jacob, ignorant of it, broke into unwonted anger with Laban, whose greed and lack of all justice, to say nothing of affection, he exposes unsparingly, and could well say, that but for God's over-ruling he had now been sent empty away. What could Laban reply but that all were his, wives, children, flock? God was in none of his thoughts, any more than love for his daughters, or their children, or his son-in-law. But he tries to put a good face on the matter, and asks for a covenant between himself and Jacob; who leaves all the terms to Laban, and his wretched thoughts and fears, but solemnly gives execution to it, as well as the name that stood. Not only did he swear by the Fear of Isaac, but he offered peace-offerings; and they ate bread together.

It is a sorry spectacle to the eye of faith; retribution for Laban, rescue for Jacob and his house through God's overruling hand and goodness: but within the chosen family idolatrous images stolen by the wife and unknown to the husband, who, instead of being crushed by Laban, is besought for a covenant with himself. For, as he feared not God, he had no confidence in his own nearest connection. But what had not Jacob to learn, as he weighed his old self-seeking and scheming before Jehovah?

Jacob, Jacob: 11. Flight From Haran

Here we are in quite another atmosphere from that of Abraham or even Isaac. Kindred blood surrounds Jacob; yet what selfishness and deceit in the uncle, and at least planning to protect himself in the injured nephew! But God thwarted the covetous man and helped the long-suffering one. The result was abundance on this side and decay on that, which touched Laban and his sons to the quick: and their connection with Jacob soon came to a close, to his heart's relief. But how Weak the faith!

“And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken all that [was] our father's; and of what [was] our father's hath he acquired all this glory. And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban and, behold, it [wast not toward him as beforetime. And Jehovah said to Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee. And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, and said to them, I see your father's countenance, that it [is] not toward me as beforetime: but the God of my father hath been with me. And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. And your father hath mocked me and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages, then all the flock bare speckled; and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy wages, then all the flock bare ringstraked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and hath given [them] to me. And it came to pass at the time of the ardor of the flock, that I lifted up mine eyes and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams that leaped upon the flock [were] ringstraked, speckled, and spotted. And the angel of God said to me, in a dream, Jacob; and I said, Here [am] I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes and see: all the rams that leap upon the flock [are] ringstraked, speckled, and spotted: for I have seen all that Laban doth to thee. I [am] the God of Bethel where thou anointedst the pillar, where thou vowedst a vow to me. Now arise, depart out of this land, and return to the land of thy kindred. And Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, [Is there] yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not reckoned of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath also quite devoured our money. For all the wealth that God hath taken from our father [is] ours and our children's: and now what God hath said to thee, do it. And Jacob rose up and set his sons and his wives upon camels; and he carried away all his cattle, and all his substance that he had acquired, the cattle of his possession that he had acquired in Padan-Aram, to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan. Now Laban was gone to shear his sheep. And Rachel stole the teraphim that [were] her father's. And Jacob deceived (or, stole the heart of) Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. And he fled with all that he had; and he rose up and passed over the river [the Euphrates] and set his face [toward] the mountain of Gilead” (vers. 1-21).

Truly Jehovah is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in loving-kindness. For when the words of Laban's sons and the looks of Laban himself disclosed their discontent (and no wonder), Jehovah told Jacob to return to the land of his fathers and to his kindred. Divine providence paid Jacob in some five or six years the wages of which Laban had defrauded him for twenty years. They really wanted to get rid of Jacob, but shrank from saying so: for after all what was Laban's substance before Jacob appeared on the scene? Jacob also was too timid to act openly, but, encouraged from above, calls Rachel and Leah into conference. He could truly say that if Laban showed the God of his father was with him; and that if he had sought to cheat him, God did not suffer his hurt. He refers to the recognition of Jehovah as became him, and recalls how God took away Laban's cattle and gave them to himself. Even Jacob was too like Lot, and far from Abraham's superiority to earthly gain. But He that had wrought to repay the servant his kinsman's injustice recalled Bethel to forgetful Jacob, bidding him depart and return to the land of his kindred. The two wives quite fell in. Their father had lost all hope of either love or respect on their part; so that they, low as their thoughts were, encouraged their husband to do as God directed. The moment was opportune. Laban was shearing his sheep, when Jacob without delay set wives and children on their camels, and stole away in hot haste with all his cattle and substance to go to his father's house in Canaan. Jehovah's compassion was clear and wondrous; but how mingled is not the other side? It is a lesson wholesome for us all, and will be so specially for Israel in the coming day.

How affecting is the mention of Rachel's theft! “And Rachel stole the teraphim that were her father's.” It lets us into the secret root of Laban's iniquity. The fear of God was not there. Personal and family idolatry is disclosed which so often accompanied the profession of the true God. But what can be more offensive to God than to make him a senior or a sleeping partner in a partnership of the gods? Think too of Rachel's stealing at all from her father's goods! It is a queer note of the good Non-conformist, Matthew Henry, that “we are willing to hope (with Bishop Patrick) that she did not take them away as being covetous of the rich metal they were made of, much less for her own use, or out of any superstitious fears lest Laban, by consulting his teraphim, might know which way they were gone. Jacob, no doubt dwelt with his wives as a man of knowledge, and they were better than so; but she might design hereby to convince her father of the folly of his regard to those as gods, who could not secure themselves, Isa. 46:1, 2.” This is all amiable but unwise. For we may gather the true reason from Israel, just after the solemnities of Sinai, bowing down to the golden calf “they made, which Aaron made,” and from Israel's history down to the captivity in Babylon. We are bound to believe the profane and evil infatuation of man's heart instead of imagining other things. Jacob was deceived at the time; but Gen. 35:2 proves that his house was not right with God in this respect, and that he too became aware of it.

Joseph, Genesis 37:2-11: Joseph: 2. His Early Days

Genesis 37:2-11

Joseph, it appears from comparison of clear dates in scripture, was born in his father's ninety-first year. He was the elder son of Rachel, long desired by his mother, and at length given of God, when her impatience had met its just rebuke. Leah had her six sons already born; and a daughter followed who later became the occasion of shame and grief to her kin, of a reckless and revengeful desolation to Hivite Gentiles, far beyond the demerit of the one that wronged her.

We need not repeat the tale of Joseph's birth, and of the remarkable utterance of his mother with the name given and the anticipation of the one who was to be son not of her sorrow only but of her death. In Jer. 31:15-17 is a very touching reference to Rachel and connection with the affliction of “her children” in the day of the captivity to Babylon, but looking to the blessed time of gracious reprisal when Jehovah will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. “Thus saith Jehovah, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, bitter weeping: Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are not. Thus saith Jehovah, Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears; for thy work hath a reward, saith Jehovah; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope for thy latter end, saith Jehovah, and thy children shall come again to their own border.” Between the prophecy and its fulfillment in the coming days of Israel's restoration and national blessing, it is applied to the murderous onslaught, in vain meant for Jesus, which Herod brought on all the boys from two years and under that were in Bethlehem and in all its borders. In all their affliction was He afflicted, though exempted from that blow for the anguish of His rejection unto death, under the hatred of His own people and the infinitely deeper suffering in atonement at God's hand for their sins.

Not only was the birth of Joseph an epoch for the spirit of his mother (elsewhere dilated on), but we find Jacob thereon awakening to his due place and to his country associated with the promises of God. “And it came to pass when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, Send me away that I may go to my place and to my country.” The needed discipline was not ended: Jacob had yet to learn more of himself under the good dealings of God. There was still a sadly mingled crop to be seen. But thence we see his heart turned toward the land from which he had been long an exile through his mother's devices and his own. If he served Laban longer, God took care to bless his own portion so conspicuously that the sons of Laban wished him gone, and the word was given which decided him to flee. Then the return by God's grace, notwithstanding his crippled weakness, became no less an epoch for Jacob.

Next, we turn to chap. 37, “The generations of Jacob,” where Joseph, young as he was, becomes the leading figure, with his brothers a dark background, and God at work in a remarkable way.

“Joseph, being seventeen years old, was tending the flock with his brethren; and he was a youth with Bilhah's sons, and with Zilpah's sons, his father's wives; and Joseph brought their evil report to his father. And Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was his son of old age; and he made him a sleevecoat of many colors. And his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, and they hated him and could not speak to him peaceably. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and told his brethren, and they hated him yet the more. And he said to them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed. And, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves came round about, and bowed down themselves to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed rule over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more, and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down themselves to me. And he told [it] to his father and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said to him, What [is] this dream that thou hast dreamed? shall I indeed come and thy mother and thy brethren, to bow down themselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying” (vers. 2-11).

The witness of their evil ways and his father's love made Joseph hateful to the sons of the servile mothers. Nor did the distinctive robe which Jacob gave Joseph soften their asperity, nor yet his two dreams. “Fury is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before jealousy?” Whether it was wise or comely to rehearse his dreams to those who had no love for him may be a question; but the dreams were of God, as the effect on his brethren was of the enemy. Even to his father the second was distasteful, though he kept it in mind. But as all that is recorded stamps Joseph as a pious youth, of moral courage, of faithfulness toward the erring, of a lowly mind that wondered at the dreams as much as any or more; so he too like his father could hardly shut out from his spirit that God betokened some singular exaltation in due time; and the strengthened repetition could not but confirm, as indicating that they were not casual, but from above. This however always provokes adversaries to madness and revenge, while, strange as it may be in their eyes, God turns even their spite and wicked ways to the accomplishment of His purpose, as we shall see beyond fail in the history.

Jacob, Jacob: 10. Jacob and Laban

We need not dwell on the incident that next claims our notice. As the marriage life of Isaac and Rebekah was very different from that of Jacob with his wives and their maids, so does the bearing of Abram toward Lot present a strongly marked contrast with that of Jacob and Laban. We are now in a far more cloudy atmosphere, though in the main Jacob was a faithful servant, and Laban deceitful and selfish. But God is not mocked, even in the day when evil is allowed to work its dark way till judgment return to righteousness.

“And it came to pass when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, Send me away, that I may go to mine own place and to my country. Give [me] my wives for whom I have served thee, and my children, that I may go away, for thou knowest my service which I have served thee. And Laban said to him, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thine eyes: I have discovered that Jehovah hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy hire, and I will give it. And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and what thy cattle hath become with me. For it was little thou hadst before I came, and it hath increased into a multitude; and Jehovah hath blessed thee as I turned [lit. at my feet]; and now how shall I also provide for mine own house? And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shall not give me aught. If thou doest this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock. I will pass through all thy flock to-day, removing thence every spotted and speckled one, and every black one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and [such] shall be my hire. And my righteousness shall answer for me hereafter, when thou comest about my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, let that be stolen with me. And Laban said, Behold, let it be according to thy word. And he removed that day the he-goats that were ringstraked and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white in it, and all the black among the sheep, and gave [them] into the hands of his sons; and he set three days journey between himself and Jacob. And Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks. And Jacob took him fresh rods of white poplar, almond, and maple, and peeled white stripes in them, uncovering the white which was on the rods. And he set the rods which he had peeled before the flock in the gutters at the watering-places where the flock came to drink; and they were ardent when they came to drink. And the flock was ardent before the rods; and the flock brought forth ringstraked, speckled, and spotted. And Jacob separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flock toward the ringstraked and all the black in the flock of Laban; and he made himself separate flocks and put them not with Laban's flock. And it came to

pass whensoever the strong cattle were ardent, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the flock in the gutters, that they might become ardent among the rods; but when the flock were feeble, he put them not in: so the feeble were Laban's and the stronger were Jacob's. And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and bondwomen, and bondmen, and camels and asses" (vers. 25-43).

Jacob was a man of faith, but failed in spirituality, and comes under the Lord's discipline that he might bear more fruit and better. As he had cheated at home, he suffered abroad, and at the hands of his mother's brother most of all. His patience under Laban's hardhearted wrongs testifies that he bowed to God. He could now bear to be lifted up by slow degrees. And the story of divine retribution here recorded is the turning-point.

Rahab's faith too was real and has the Spirit's attestation in the N.T. quite as distinctly as in the Old. But it is evident that, energetic as it was and in the face of the utmost peril, there was the manifest alloy of her old self which accompanied the precious metal. She did not hesitate to mislead. So here, whatever the gracious intervention of God for His injured servant, we could not conceive either his father or his grandfather adopting such an expedient as Jacob employed to acquire the fruit of his long and patient service that was due. Yet God condescended to use what without His power had been, if not in vain, but very partial.

Laban's covetous desire to profit by Jacob's strange bargain turned to the impoverishing of the self-seeking master, and the new and growing affluence of the long defrauded servant. Neither compunction appears on Laban's part for the advantage he had taken of his nephew, nor the least considerate affection for his daughters or their children. It was a righteous thing, as far as it could go in its way, to requite the evil-doer and recompense the sufferer. Nor can one fail to observe, at least as here it is pointed out, how peculiarly appropriate such a divine dealing was toward that one of the patriarchs who, more than any other, sets forth the chosen people. They derived their corporate name from him; their ups and downs were like his endless vicissitudes, failures, humiliations, to be turned at the end through divine mercy into everlasting blessing at the feet of their long rejected but then how endeared Messiah. They too become wrestlers with God and men, and prevail. Great indeed shall be the day of Jezreel. But it will be a greatness due to God's grace and mercy, and deserved only by Him Who died for them, as for us and all others, when they at their worst proved themselves His bitterest foes. Thus shall no flesh glory; but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,

Jacob, Jacob: 9. Leah and Rachel Again

There is a twofold lesson in these divine sketches, which eludes the erudite unbelief which sits in judgment only to despise, and remains in really self-satisfied ignorance. For they present, to the life, the humbling history of the ancestor of a people destined to be God's possession for the earth by His own choice, spite of these petty ways. They also let us into the secret of that grace in God which rose above all that was immeasurably detestable to His nature in light and love, and even looked on to Him who was to come of this very family, the Christ that is over all, God blessed forever, as truly God as His Father. It may well be doubted if such glorious hopes were then before the two wives, as the pious Bishop Patrick credits them with; but we are assured that such halo as this did faith give to many a Hebrew matron, grounded on the promises to their fathers, and stretching on to Him who should appear to make them all good. Besides, was there not food for reflection in that Moses was inspired to write these things down imperishably for their children throughout ages and generations, too sorrowfully like those from whom they sprang? And for us who come in on their downfall and before their restoration, for us who inherit better blessings as joint-heirs with Him who is glorified in heaven, and is coming to take us into the same glory on high, is there not abundant profit for our souls? The flesh never changes for good: in it good does not dwell. If we live, it is by the faith of the Son of God: and Christ it is, not the old self dead to God, that lives in each Christian.

"And Reuben went out in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field; and he brought them to his mother Leah. And Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. And she said to her, Is it little that thou hast taken my husband, that thou wilt take my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to-night for thy son's mandrakes. And when Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, Thou must come in to me, for indeed I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. And God hearkened to Leah; and she bore Jacob a fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I gave my bond-maid to my husband; and she called his name Issachar (There is hire). And Leah again conceived, and bore Jacob a sixth son; and Leah said, God hath endowed me with a good dowry; this time will my husband dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons. And she called his name Zebulun (Dwelling). Afterward she bore a daughter and called her name Dinah (Judged). And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived and bore a son, and said, God hath taken away my reproach. And she called his name Joseph (He will add); and said, Jehovah will add to me another son" (vers. 14-24).

No veil is cast over their deplorable unbelief and self-seeking, no excuse for their superstitious trust in the efficacy of love-apples, just like other Syrian women given only to the vanities of the heathen. It is clear that Rachel profited nothing by the child Reuben's discovery; but that God pitied Leah who sought to share her husband's affection, and bore him now a fifth son and a sixth, besides a daughter. But how strangely low Leah's state in regarding Issachar as her hire from God, because she gave her bondmaid to Jacob; and in calling Zebulun from her fond hope that her husband's love would prove abiding. Nor did the daughter's name indicate any higher view, being akin to that of Dan.

Rachel at length, as we read here, becomes the occasion of refreshment for the heart in the considerate tenderness of God's ways; Who, after her long humiliation because of her unworthy self-seeking, was pleased to pity her and give her a son so earnestly desired. Then she said, God hath taken away my reproach; for notwithstanding her lofty bearing she was sensible that she was under chastening. The name she gave her firstborn is striking; for Joseph means He will add. As she said, Jehovah will add to me another. Her faith saw in Joseph the promise of Benjamin. Never before had she reached this level of expectation. For the mouth tells the secret or certainly the abundance of the heart. God—Jehovah—was now before her. Yet how little she knew that Benjamin would be Benoni, of his father's right hand, of his mother's sorrow; for his birth must prove her death. How much better to confide in unfailing love and wisdom than to set the heart on any object!

When Messiah takes up repentant Israel for everlasting joy and blessing under the new covenant in the last days, how will not the children ponder these early annals of their progenitors, so long reproduced in their own history of painful failure under the law How sweet to their hearts to recognize that their blessing and glory, under Him whom alas! they long despised blindly, are all and only of divine mercy.

Though revelation of and from God is the essential difference of scripture from all other writings, there is much more of the utmost value. We have man as he is, as nowhere else: the truth is told us that we may know ourselves as well as God. Hence the interest and importance of inspired light in what the proud selfishness of man's mind is prone to despise as mere domestic jars. To the believer they not only are full of salutary instruction but suggest the witness of divine concern and compassion, in what must all be manifested before His holy eyes to Whom we shall give account of the things done in the body whether good or evil, yea of the hidden things of darkness and the counsels of hearts. Assuredly no flesh shall glory; and it is well and wise to learn it now, that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

“And when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and she said to Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said, [Am] I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? And she said, Behold, my maid Bilhah; go in to her, that she may bear on my knees, and I may also be built up by her. And she gave him Bilhah her bondmaid as wife; and Jacob went in to her. And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and also heard my voice, and given me a son: therefore she called his name Dan (Judge). And Bilhah Rachel's bondmaid again conceived and bore Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, Wrestlings of God have I wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed; and she called his name Naphtali (my Wrestling). When Leah saw that she had ceased to bear, she took Zilpah her bond-maid, and gave her to Jacob as wife. And Zilpah Leah's bondmaid bore Jacob a son. And Leah said, What fortune! and she called his name Gad (Fortune). And Zilpah Leah's bondmaid bore Jacob a second son. And Leah said, With my happiness; for the daughters will call me happy I and she called his name Asher (Happy)” (chap. 30:1-13).

One understands too well, too sadly, why Rachel should view her own childlessness and her sister rich in children with chagrin. Self wrought and blinded her to her sister's lack of Jacob's heart of which she had the monopoly. It was envy, that base feeling which cannot endure another, even a sister's, having what she had not; and this broke out in unreasonable and impious repining to her husband, as if her barrenness were his fault. No wonder that his anger resented her unworthy state in his rejoinder, Am I in God's stead Who has withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? But he yielded to her proposal, and takes Bilhah that she might obtain children by her maid. Had not honored Sarah done the like? Yes, but through Ishmael its fruit did it not issue in the expulsion of both Hagar and Ishmael? Was this encouraging? How different from Hannah the sorrowful under Peninnah's provocations, or even the high-priest's misjudgment! She broke out into no unseemly murmurs against her husband, but wept and prayed and vowed to Jehovah, and was heard of the God of Israel.

It is the striking difference of the N. T. from the Old that perfection was only established when God spoke, and wrought also, in the Son. The law made nothing perfect, though a divine witness to what was coming and the measure too of human righteousness on earth. And the Lord was able to vindicate on Jehovah's part that, if Moses in view of the people's hardheartedness allowed them even to put away their wives, from the beginning it was not thus. Male and female made He them. Christ alone represented God adequately, and as Son the Father; and this in man, God and man in one Person. This is all to God the Father's glory.

But of old God permitted what was far from His mind, as we see here, till He makes all things new. Jacob was not Jesus, nor was any other, though a man of faith. Jesus is Himself, not a man only, though this He was completely and perfectly, but true God, no less than the Father.

The names Rachel gave the sons of Bilhah expressed the state of her soul, and toward her sister. Dan and Naphtali do not tell us of grace, but of satisfaction in gaining points of strife on her own part. Leah was drawn into the snare and through Zilpah would equal that advantage. And the names she gave Zilpah's sons, Gad and Asher, though not reflecting the contention which governed Rachel's spirit, by no means rose to the level of faith she had shown in naming her own sons. But it is the prerogative of God, while every wrong has its effect among men and its judgment before Himself, to cause all things to work together for good to them that love Him, the called according to purpose. He at least is good and does good, whatever man has to mourn.

Bible Treasury: Volume 19, Two Trees, The

Scarce any fact of paradise seems less understood than that recorded in the latter half of Gen. 2:9, none supposed to be more distinctly an early myth. Yet were these two trees, singled out from the rest, a positive fact suited to that day of primeval innocence, and to no other; but embodying divine principles of the deepest and most enduring value for all time; and this without applying force to either, or indulging in imagination of any kind, but in subjection to the indications of the inspired record itself. And the truth conveyed intimately concerns every soul of man

The first thing to note is that “the tree of life” in the midst of the garden was absolutely distinct from that “of knowledge of good and evil.” To eat of the latter was forbidden on pain of certain death (ver. 17). Only when the man did eat of the prohibited tree, the LORD God took care that he should not take also of the tree of life (Gen. 3:22). It would have been the perpetuated life of sinful man: a calamity, and violation of all order, not a blessing. Apart from that transgression, the tree of life was open to him, and expressly outside the tree of knowledge.

Clearly then the first tree points out the channel of life for man unfallen, the provision of God for Adam in paradise freely given and quite independently of the second tree: so true is this that man forfeited his title to partake of the one tree when he ate of the other. Man was responsible not to eat of the tree of knowledge; if he abstained, he was free to eat of the tree of life. When guilty and fallen, he was debarred, and driven out, with a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life (Gen. 3:24).

Now the constant effort of man, especially of religious man, is as it were to identify the two trees; that is, to suspend life on the fulfillment of responsibility: a notion which flies in the face of the facts, when man was innocent, and still more manifestly false, when man was a sinner, and expressly excluded from the tree of life. The original relationship was lost through transgression. The only natural religion that ever had or could have reality had ceased to be. All henceforth turned on what God is to man in saving mercy. Man in the most favorable circumstances had wholly failed toward God. Sin morally compelled God to be a judge. Love, divine grace, made Him a Savior. Even so it was to lie only in and through His Son, His deigning to become man, and His going down into death and judgment for the guilty. The Father hath

sent the Son as Savior of the world (1 John 4:14); the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).

But consider the intermediate dealings of God before the Advent. The Epistle to the Galatians lays great stress on the promises as given, a covenant previously confirmed by God, 430 years before the law. They, too, were thereby so arranged that the one could not annul, still less be confounded with, the other. Now the promises answered to the tree of life, as the law to the tree of knowing good and evil. The promises were the unconditional and pledged grace of God, designedly long before, and absolutely distinct from, the law, which expressed His righteous demand from man on the ground of his responsibility. If Israel, if any, pretended to stand on that ground before God, the ten words were His terms. Such terms can only be a ministry of death and condemnation to sinful creatures, as Israel were, as all mankind are. The fatal mistake then as always is to seek life by meeting man's responsibility. Israel took that ground and failed utterly, as all sinners must who go the same path. Scripture records the failure in the O.T and explains it in the N. T., that men now may profit by that solemn lesson of old and betake themselves only to God's grace in Christ.

For Christ alone has solved the problem; and this by accepting the full responsibility of man and bearing the consequences of sin and our sins in death, yea, death of the cross; so that, after glorifying God perfectly, He is risen from the dead, a life giving Spirit to all believers. Thus there is no condemnation to those that are in Him, in Whom the two trees are thus brought into blessed harmony for our salvation unto God's glory.

As responsible men, we are ungodly and powerless, as the apostle asserts beyond dispute. So the Lord treats even the Jews as “lost,” which closes the question of that responsibility. What more presumptuous in our sinful state of fallen nature than to seek life by pretending to fulfill our duty as men? Even to innocent man, as Gen. 2 teaches, life and responsibility were set expressly and altogether apart. But as Christ gives life freely to believers in His name, so is He propitiation by His death for their sins. For both were absolutely needed, if we were to be made meet for sharing the portion of the saints in light; and both are now given of God through faith to every believer, who has eternal life in the Son and through His blood redemption, the forgiveness of our offenses. Not that a new responsibility is lacking, but it is the responsibility of a child of God. So Himself said “Because I live, ye shall live also” (John 14:19); and previously that He gives His sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall snatch them out of His hand (John 10:28), yea the Father's hand also securing them (29). Can any assurance be conceived plainer or stronger?

Thus in Christ alone, by His sacrifice and the sovereign gift of life, we have the principle of two trees, and this in fullness of blessing for all that believe; whereas the unbeliever, despising the word, and as self-confident as he is weak and sinful, repeats the error of Adam and Israel to his ruin. As Christians we have the treasure of Christ in our earthen vessel; and are responsible to be always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus, the new nature, may be manifested in our body. W. K.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:24-25

The closing words of the chapter are the more to be weighed, as they were cited by our Lord in His vindication of marriage according to the mind of God, apart from that concession made to fallen man which is characteristic of the law. In reply to the question, Why the command to give a bill of divorce and to put away, Moses, said He, in view of your hardness of heart allowed you to put away; but from the beginning it hath not been so. As He had previously answered, Have ye not read that He Who made them from the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the twain shall become one flesh? so that they are no longer twain, but one flesh. What therefore God yoked together, let not man separate (Matt. 19:3-8). It is not Adam who so said, but God.

How good it is to have divinely given certainty! And this the Lord supplies. We need Him in one form or another to interpret the Bible; and here it is simple and direct. He Who made the man and the woman regulated the relationship from the first; and when things were out of course, the Lord Who made everything perfect cleared it of that allowance which man had abused, and recalled to its original order. This is all the more impressive, because it was so ruled of God, not merely for the transient state of paradisiacal innocence, but as His mind for man on the earth at any time: so the terms prove. Marriage was divinely instituted from the beginning.

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become (be for) one flesh. And they were both of them naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (vers. 24, 25). The former verse contemplates circumstances wholly different from those of Adam who had neither father nor mother to leave; the latter presents the facts which attached to the primeval condition and neither were nor could be with propriety at any other time. Shame followed sin: the knowledge of good and evil led them consciously fallen to cover themselves.

As marriage was to be the social bond, so is it the ground of family life; the oldest of all institutions I relative, yet a fresh start for each man and woman so united, as ver. 24 contemplates. The work of God corresponds with His word. If a man was to leave his father and mother, he was to cleave to his wife, not to multiply wives. So had the Creator made one man and one woman. So had Jehovah Elohim ordained. Self-will too soon broke through the order, and sorrow followed personal and widespread, for man in nothing errs with impunity, even in a world out of course.

But there are deeper things prefigured. The apostle refers to these words both in 1 Cor. 6 and in Eph. 5; and each is of the highest interest and importance, though the one be individual, and the other corporate. The fleshly union, shameful out of marriage, God would have honorable under marriage, honorable in all things (Heb. 13:4); for even the married are gravely exhorted, as the licentious are solemnly warned. But that union is used and meant to remind the Christian of his own blessed privilege: he that is joined to the Lord is (not one flesh but) one spirit. It is indeed in virtue of his receiving the Holy Spirit. Thus is impurity shown to be a sin not only against his own body, but against the Trinity and the price paid. “Glorify God then in your body.” The corporate reference is no less striking. “Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it,” not merely to sanctify it, purifying by the washing of water in the word, but to present it to Himself glorious, the Eve of the Second Man, the Last Adam. Hence He meanwhile nourishes and cherishes it; for we are members of His body. Thereon our text is cited, with the appended comment, “This mystery is great, but I speak as to Christ and as to the church.” In no way does it yield the paltry sense of “sacrament” which Romanism has drawn from the Vulgate mistranslation, though not without the protest of such as Cajetan and

Estius. Holiness is therefore as incumbent on the church as on the Christian; and the Holy Spirit abides in the one as in the other to secure it, and to make the sanction of evil inexcusable in either.

The type is methodically set out. On the man was laid the responsibility, when the woman was not yet in being (Gen. 2:15-17); as He Whom Adam foreshadowed was to glorify the Father and to bear all the consequences of man's failure in the judgment of God on the cross. Then began to dawn the hidden purpose about His bride, but His dominion is carefully shown over the subject creation before laying the basis of that purpose (vers. 18-20). Then comes the deep sleep on the man from Jehovah Elohim and the building up of his wife, owned by him as bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, the intimacy of this relationship transcending every other in his eyes. So was it in the secret hidden from ages and from generations: even Christ, after His death of redemption, raised and glorified in a heavenly headship and universal supremacy, far above promise and prophecy; and the church made one with Him in sovereign grace, the sharer of all that is given to Him, His dependent but associated bride, even now His body, as each Christian is a member in particular.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:21-23

The singular formation of woman is another detail reserved by the Holy Spirit for the section of Jehovah Elohim. Nor could it be appropriately elsewhere, supposing one inspired writer to have indited the preceding section as well as this. In the general account of creation Elohim made man in His image after His likeness, with dominion over all that peopled sea and sky, the earth and all that crept upon it. Or, as it is summed up, Elohim made Man in His image, in the image of Elohim created He him; male and female created He them. Impossible to conceive a more distinctive and express place assigned to the race from its beginning, with marked pre-eminence over all those creatures here below, as God's viceroy and their head on earth. Yet, whatever its exclusion of the evolutionary fable, and the more evidently inspired because it is by anticipation in the simple statement of the truth, special relationships are untouched. Creature nature and position are alone laid down with perfect precision and in language as noble as all was very good even in the Creator's estimate.

From 2: 4 on the other hand we receive an equally fine and suitable development of man's moral constitution and the special scene of his probation in the garden of Eden with its mysterious trees, and his relations, not only to God on the tenure of obedience, but to the subject creatures as their appointed lord, peculiarly also and with the nicest care to woman as counterpart. Hence here only do we hear of Man formed by Jehovah Elohim, dust of the ground, yet the breath of life by Him inbreathed only into his nostrils; so that he alone thus became a living soul. How admirably each in place, Elohim's image in ch. i., constituted a living soul by Elohim's direct inbreathing in ch. 2., yet outwardly dust, His offspring thus as no other on earth was! The perfectness of the revelation is clear from the impossibility of displacing a single particular of either account, which is at once intelligible if the Holy Spirit inspired Moses to write both; whereas it would only add to the magnitude of the miracle, where all miracle is denied, if we imagine two uninspired men writing two accounts going over the same ground in part at least, neither inconsistent in any respect yet without repetition, each true to an evident and most important design, and together issuing in a complete result, necessary to give the believer intelligence in the truth of creation and in the moral mind of God so far as it was then revealed.

The material differences, as well as those of form, flow from the design of each and are the more strikingly instructive as indited by the same writer. To assume that they preclude their being the work of the same hand is ignorance of scripture and of the power of God. That creation should be revealed in a style un ornate, measured, precise, with its recurring forms of expression, exactly suits a subject matter so majestic. That the revelation of the moral place of Man, in relation to all above him and beneath him and in the nearest association with him, should be couched in special terms freer and more varied, with a fullness and picturesqueness of detail out of keeping with the generality of creation pure and simple, is just what was requisite. What more worthy of creation than “He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast”? And so it is in Gen. 1-2:3. But from 2:4 et seqq., how proper and affecting the change to Jehovah Elohim “fashioning” Man, and subsequently “in-breathing” the breath of life, “planting” a garden in Eden for him, and “placing,” “taking,” “setting” him there with its two trees, suited to that scene and time and object, and no other, and with a described environment as full of interest as expressive of goodness on His part; then again bringing the inferior animals to their rightful lord; and, as the suited crown, bringing the woman whom He had “builded” from one of his ribs to fill that place of helpmeet, the lack of which all other creatures only made more apparent!

To call this a “duplicate” of the account of creation is the dregs of skeptical criticism, “higher criticism” only in the eyes Of men divinely ignorant and unsteadfast, who wrest these as also the other scriptures unto their own destruction. No doubt a different hand might account for separate accounts with varied phraseology and style, and distinct objects in each, and this regularly reappearing throughout. But the beauty, truth, and power of inspiration are only maintained by the inbreathed power of God, which enabled the same writer to vary his style and representation, in accordance with the varying design of the narrative, marked by the divine name employed as each part required with all its suited concomitants. We may see in every instance that the unbelieving hypothesis miserably fails to explain the phenomena, or the facts, which to the believer make manifest the divine energy that inspired Moses as every other writer of scripture. It is a libel to impute inconsistencies and contradictions. None but an enemy so says or thinks. To call, a wholly distinct aspect bringing forward different objects, an inconsistency, yet more a contradiction, is not criticism, but ill will. How absurd in the “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire” to set chap. 2. on its union and external prosperity as a contradiction of chap. 1. on its extent and military forces! Yet this is a merely human view, immeasurably short of the comprehensiveness, and depth, the far reaching wisdom and prophetic scope, of the divine word.

In the verses before us is another example falling under the same principles. “And Jehovah Elohim caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man; and he slept. And He took one of his ribs, and closed up flesh in its stead. And the rib which Jehovah Elohim had taken from the man He built into a woman, and. brought her unto the man. And the man said, This time [it is] bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh this shall be called Woman [Ishshah], because out of man [Ish] was taken this” (Gen 2:22-23).”

Apples of gold truly in baskets of silver! The God Who wrought has communicated the truth worthily to us. He would give man the boon of companionship, the joy of fellowship, the interchange of affection; and as the end into good, so the way. For He threw the man into an ecstasy, as the LXX. render it, that he might not feel painfully, yet know perfectly what God was giving him. It was not a separate human being independent of Adam, nor yet a female half severed from the male half of a Janus-like creature as Rabbins fancy. It was not from the head nor from the feet, an absolute equal nor an utter inferior, but from his side, as has been remarked by others, of old, the object of nearest

love and sustaining cafe, an associated yet dependent sharer of all joy, and sorrow.

As Jehovah Elohim deigned to build his rib into an Ishah (woman), so He brought her to the man, the highest and best form of marriage; a source never absent from faith at any time, but as it was then, how admirably suited to primeval simplicity in the innocence of both! He who knew all had said that it was not good for the man to be alone. The recognition of Adam's authority in giving a name to the inferior creation only made the gap more sensible. And now that the woman was received as it were from the divine hand, not from Elohim only but from Him Who in all His action here recorded was laying perfectly the ground for mutual duty in the relationship of marriage, “the man said, This time it is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: this shall be called Ishah, for out of Ish was taken this.” He was instantly conscious of the intimate and suited relationship, though hitherto unacquainted with the divine purpose; and he gave her a name admirably expressive of the fact. How poor are all the imaginations of man on this theme in presence of the truth thus revealed to us! But it, could be appropriately communicated, not under the head of creation simply (Elohim), but of its moral government (Jehovah Elohim). So simple, sure, and unforced is the usage of the divine designations here employed, without the crude, superficial, and skeptical hypothesis of distinct writers, destructive as it is of all real intelligence, and of that good and profoundly wise design for God's glory which is the surest mark of inspiration from first to last.

Attention may also be drawn to the refutation which the simple facts here revealed give to the vain hypothesis that the use of intelligible. speech was a human invention. We need not quarrel in the least with the science of language, any more than with other Science. The ablest of comparative philologists cannot rise above the root welds in the Aryan, Semitic, and Turanian families of speech, pointing to a common source, the darkness of which science utterly fails to penetrate. Nor need it be doubted that imitative sounds and interjectional cries have added to the force and variety of language since early days. It is only when speculators cry up their little contributions, as if they were an adequate account of the origin of language, that they expose themselves to the derision of the Bow-wow and the Pooh pooh theories. For those who believe the word of God the question does not exist. It is certain that Elohim blessed our first parents, and said to them, Be fruitful, &c. It is certain that, When moral relations were established, Jehovah Elohim brought the subject creatures to Adam as to their lord for the names he would give them. Even before this the man had received the injunction imposed on his tenure of the garden with the solemn sanction of death on disobedience; as after naming the animals Adam intelligently expresses the woman's nature and relation to himself in a way beyond all Rabbins on the one hand and all philosophers on the other throughout the ages, giving her and self names accordingly.

To deny the reality of all this is worthy of the, irrationalism of the Rationalist. It is untrue that God addressed the sea monsters and their congeners, though He blessed them. It is the revealed fact that He did from the first address Man. He puts honor on His word throughout; but He “commanded” in ch. 2. as Jehovah Elohim, and was thoroughly understood. So Adam is declared to have exercised speech according to that power of God, alone suited to the beginning, which formed him a grown man in mind as well as in body, and with language as set over the animal kingdom, and with woman the meet companion of his life, where imitative lessons or interjectional outbursts could have no place, any more than rootwords.

This is the truth; and reason is bound to admit that it is as worthy of God as suited to man: even the vain Rousseau, after all sorts of efforts to account for it, was “convaineu de l'impossibilite, presque mantra, que les langues aient pit naltre, et s'etablir, Dar des moyens purement humaines.” (Inegal. des Hammes.) That Adam at once named the animals brought to him; that he learned to speak from their cries is an infidel reverie, not, an honest exegesis. Science even in its lowest yet haughtiest form, the Positive Philosophy of Comte, abandons all inquiry into the beginning of things as hopeless, abjures causes, and heeds nothing but the laws of phenomena. Rational science undertakes to treat of no more than the established course of nature; but absolute silence about the beginning! It can give no light on the ultimate producing cause; yet a beginning, a primordial and permanent producing cause, there must have been; and this, whatever the mode or means employed, was none other than God.

To unfold creation is not the function of science, which therefore, if alone, leaves men infidel. But scripture supplies what science stops short of, speaks with divine authority and admirable clearness to the open ear, and makes the truth a matter of testimony, not reasoning, and hence adapted to all who believe. This was the way and the pleasure of God, if it is not to the taste of men apt to boast of a little science or learning. As the Hindu could not go beyond his imaginary tortoise, neither can the boldest modern speculator beyond the blank wall which bounds his array of secondary causes. Yet to assume that there is nothing, and no one, behind the blank wall is evidently on man's own ground illogical; for he is wholly ignorant. God Who created all knows all, and has revealed what no science can teach, what is of all moment for man to learn; not creation only, but redemption in Christ the Lord. But all have not faith; and faith alone receives what God alone wrought and revealed, momentous to understand on His authority in order to be saved from the lie of the enemy.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:18-20

Here again it is manifest that we have not a second account of creation, but first of all the declared purpose of a moral relationship between husband and wife given through the same inspired writer, every difference of thought and word being strictly required by the divine design in each case. Here therefore the words “male and female,” so appropriate to their creation by Elohim, are out of place where the deeper question of such a relationship comes before us; and Jehovah Elohim expresses His judgment on that which is the chief bond of human society here below. It is accordingly “a help as before him,” his like or counterpart, that is now spoken of, not in Gen. 1 where the race are regarded simply as creatures of God, though constituted chief of all on earth. Each part of the communication is perfect for the varying design of divine revelation, both in entire harmony, the blessed instruction of all which is lost when men sink into the unbelieving superficial hypothesis of documents from different hands, whereby God, the real author who employed Moses, is excluded. No wonder that by such a process the light is quenched in darkness, and that the men who cheat others of the truth (themselves cheated by a subtler rebel against God) boast of their criticism, which sees only men in the case and, according to most, men dovetailing incoherent statements without perceiving it. It is never of such to glory in the Lord, but to rejoice in the works of their own hands. For “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.”

“And Jehovah Elohim said, [It is] not good that the man should be alone: I will make him a help answering to him. And out of the ground Jehovah Elohim had formed every animal of the field, and every bird of the heavens, and brought them to the man, to see what he would call them; and all that the man called a living creature (soul), that was its name. And the man gave (called) names to all the cattle, and to bird of

the heavens, and to every animal of the field; but for Adam was not found a help answering to him" (ver. 18-20).

Even when perpetuation of the race was in view as in chap. i., we saw the marked distinction of Man. There was a single pair, and whatever the varieties to be in different parts of the earth, not a hint of "after his kind" as in the merely animal population of land, sea, or air. Man exclusively was made from the beginning in Elohim's image, after Elohim's likeness, with dominion given over fish of the sea, and over bird of the heavens, and over living thing that moveth upon the earth. But here in chap. ii. Jehovah Elohim, alike moral Governor and Creator, enters with gracious consideration into the daily life and comfort of man on earth, not only has a perfectly kind and wise mind about his well-being but expresses it that it be known as His, and this not by an imperative word as in ver. 16,17, but as the benevolent judgment of Him who absolutely knew all and abounded in favor to Man. "And Jehovah Elohim said, It is not good that the man should he alone." Interchange of affection and interest is good for Man. No wonder that solitude is in general a most severe punishment short of death. Here no doubt intimacy of the nearest companionship is meant, and this as the revealed object of divine counsel. Indeed it is distinctive of the Jehovah Elohim section as a whole to develop, not mere creation, but creation, Man above all, in special relationships as He was pleased to order all; and hence the garden and the trees, &c., could suitably be here only. Difference of authorship or document has nothing to do with the matter, and is the shallowest resource possible, as it explains nothing. Difference—of design—is all the more strikingly instructive because the same writer gives both consecutively.

The lack of a fitting help for Man, as his counter part, is shown and accentuated in what follows. "And out of the ground Jehovah Elohim had formed every animal of the field, and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man, to see what he would call them; and all that the Man called a living creature, that was its name." This is the more noticeable, because it beautifully confirms in the style and associations of the new section what had been said in the foregoing one of the Adamic dominion over the inferior creation (chap. 1:26-28). Here their subject relationship to Man appears by their being brought to him by Jehovah Elohim to see what he would call them. Man's government is not only asserted but exercised in the most precise way. It is not their rank in the scale of creation which is laid down, but their place relatively to Adam formally acknowledged. They are therefore brought by the Supreme to Man who gives names to beast and bird, as their appointed lord. Divine authority in the regulation of all is as manifest here in its moral beauty, as the majesty of creation cannot be hid in the previous chapter. Who was sufficient for these things? God alone Who inspired Moses to write both. Nobody pretends that Adam wrote these particulars as to himself and the subject creation, the garden, and all. And what could Adam of himself have told of the creation before he was made? The divine inspiration of it as it stands accounts for all as nothing else can. God assuredly knew and could give the truth with precision through Moses; and for this we have the highest authority, even the Lord Christ's.

"And the man gave names to all the cattle, and to bird of the heavens, and to every animal of the field." Giving names is a right of sovereignty universally recognized in scripture, as may be seen not only in the book of Genesis but throughout the Bible, even when Gentiles were allotted the upper hand. Indeed, it is inherent in man and exercised to this day over all things or persons subject to him. But the most weighty application of the title, and full of interest, lay in unfallen man fresh from his Creator's hand, Who, Himself Sovereign Ruler, had pleasure in the rule of His earthly representative. Man naturally is not a mere creature, but, apart from the yet higher relationships of saving grace was originally son of God, His offspring, deriving the breath of life from Jehovah Elohim's immediate inbreathing. Thus did not any other on earth become a living soul, and therefore shared in no such relationship with Him. They are irrational, naturally made for capture.

Otherwise Man is regarded as but a brute of greater inward capacity, or, as some dare to think and say without authority and in the face of all truth, a development from any or all. But this is not science nor even its province, which is not to imagine or discuss origins, but to interpret accurately the general laws deducible from phenomena. Evolution is but scientific mythology in contempt of scripture; and the worst class in that school consists of those who are audacious enough to reduce the written word of God to an analogous growth from human elements. The sole field or groundwork of science is the fixed order everywhere observable in the created universe; but of creation, of the production of what exists, true science avowedly and necessarily knows nothing, only of existing natural order, and consequently should be wholly silent where its ignorance is blank. Faith alone understands it on the warrant of God's word, which is infinitely simpler and surer to every individual than in any other way. Nor can any proof of man's need be conceived more demonstrative than the adoption by scientific men of an hypothesis so irrational, which is at issue with every fact really ascertained in the geologic ages no less than in historic times. Speculation is not science, which does not exist save by just deduction from fixed principles or constant order among the beings that exist. This is quite compatible with God's creation; not so the ancient notion of a constant flux or the modern evolution, both of which are ultimately due to man's anxiety to get rid of God and His will and energy here below.

We have further to note that it was this very survey of the subject and dependent creation which evinced the gap for its head. "But for Adam was not found a help answering to him." God did not create the human pair together for the weightiest reasons, as we shall see conveyed in the verses that follow: a fact only in its due place in the second section, not in the first, where creature hood is the truth stated, not that circle of relationship which fills the scripture now before us. Discrepancy there is none, for chap. 1. gives no detail about the forming of the man or about the building up of the woman, but all is purposely general. "Male and female created he them." Here throughout the later section we have details which bear on the relations in which they were placed, not with God only but mutually. And the moral importance of this fresh truth is felt increasingly as we ponder it with conscience and heart before God; otherwise it passes easily without a thought save of ignorance to slight or of malevolence to slander. If any one thinketh himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him take knowledge that the things which Moses wrote are the revealed truth of God; but if any one is ignorant, let him be ignorant.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:15-17

Chapter 2:15-17

We hear again of the Lord God putting Man, the man (Adam) into the garden. This is no vain repetition. In verses 8-14 the general fact was stated, and those special precincts described within a country of delight and pleasantness, where He Who built all things stocked it particularly with everything beautiful and good for His favored creature and representative on earth, but also with two trees, there only, which some have designated "sacramental." Whether this be quite just or not, certainly they were most momentous and significant, the tree of life evidently and absolutely distinct from that of knowing good and evil, which alone was prohibited. In that garden was Man placed to abide in

dependence and obedience, sovereign of all around him, subject to Him Whose goodness set him there with but one test of his loyalty. This we hear only in the second statement of his introduction there, where a river afforded its refreshing waters, which on leaving the garden parted into four heads or chief streams outside, two less known and more described, two more notoriously connected with man's sad history, of which the end is not yet.

The second mention gives the peculiar tenure of man in divine relationship, which is utterly lost when men, or even Christians, trust their a, priori reasonings All is false when inferences are drawn from man and creation under the fall. And philosophical theory is even more remote from the truth than the various and uncertain traditions in almost all lands and races of old, which may partially disguise but ultimately confess a pre-existent state of man and the earth in peace, purity, and happiness. The true golden age is to come when the Man of righteousness, not of sin, the Savior, not the son of perdition, shall rule to God's glory, and His heavenly bride shall reign with Him. Man and the earth are not ever to be the sport of the enemy, but the Most High shall vindicate His possession of heaven and earth. Adam was but a type or figure of the coming One. It ought to be plain, that, as we can know nothing of the glorious as well as solemn future save from God's revelation, so we can have across the ages nothing sure of man's primeval state save from His testimony. It was of the utmost interest and importance to know, not guess, how and for what ends, with what endowments, and on what conditions man was formed, especially, in relation to God; and if accountable to Him, as none but a wicked person doubts (brutalized morally, if he confound himself with brutes, as in effect but a superior brute), surely not left to a cruel and destructive darkness, but with light from God.

“And Jehovah Elohim took Man, and put him into the garden of Eden to till it and to keep it. And Jehovah Elohim commanded Man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou shalt freely (eating) eat; but of the tree of knowing good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day of thine eating of it thou shalt surely (dying) die” (ver.. 15-17).

Now we have, not the locality, its resources and surroundings, however far-reaching, but the moral aspect and end. The divine Governor took Man and put him into the paradise He had prepared. Though all was in unfallen order and beauty, and no taint in Adam or the subject creation, and of course not in its fairest scene, Man was put there to till it and to keep it. Lordly indifference would have been unbecoming, though Man was blessed and everything very good, and toil or sorrow unknown, and no sentence yet pronounced of death or curse, or even of eating bread in the sweat of his face. Still he was to dress the garden and keep it.

But more than this, “Jehovah Elohim commanded Man,” with liberty to eat freely “of every tree of the garden;” there was one and but one restriction, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This was prohibited on pain of death. “In the day of thine eating thereof thou shalt surely die.” It was a law, not the law; positive, not moral; a simple test of obedience in what otherwise was indifferent: the only conceivable condition for an innocent, being's probation in an unfallen earth. For the law supposes a fallen state with lust already existing to do the evils which God interdicted. In both cases, as scripture expresses, transgression resulted; not sin simply or lawlessness (), but transgression of law ( ); for as the apostle justly argues, where no law is, there is no transgression, though there may be sin (as death attested e.g. between Adam and Moses, cf. Gen. 6 and Rom. 5:12, 14). Hence is evident the deplorable misrendering of the A. V. in 1 John 3:4, and its proper and needful correction in the R. V., from which systematic divinity, long deceived, has much to learn.

We may remark the charming simplicity of the earth's prince, but also the suited directness of. God's dealings with man. As there could be no prophet nor priest, there was no angel to intervene. The intercourse was unbroken, and communication immediate. Man needed no argument on the being of God, no disquisition on His attributes Who “blessed” and “commanded” him, Whose voice, or sound, as He walked in the garden in the cool of the day they heard to their fear when they had transgressed. Yet no man had ever imagined such a condition. The truth of it accounts for it to all save those who naturally love a lie and prefer the dark. For present experience would rather lead men to deny it.

The unbelief, which blinds skeptics where it is complete, darkens God-fearing men in the measure of their pursuit of human thoughts and theories. Thus soon after the apostolic age a patristic tradition grew up, from Rabbinism and philosophy, as if Adam, like Israel or fallen man generally, was under a moral government in respect of known good and evil in itself, or such a moral sense as man got by sin and a bad conscience. On the contrary he had only goodness to enjoy in thankfulness to the blessed Giver of all, abiding in that normal condition which was the peculiar position of primeval Man. A general state of government where he could judge intrinsically between good and evil was in no way his originally, though it became his when he transgressed and God drove him out from the garden, with that sad but useful monitor along his fallen pathway. Before he fell, it was his place to live in the constitutional enjoyment of divine goodness and its abundant gifts with a simple test of his obedience. His condition therefore stands in plain contrast with ours, who, being naturally sinful, by faith know Him that called us by glory and virtue, whereby He has granted to us His precious and exceeding great promises. But Man, when unfallen, had just to abide in, not quit his first estate, instead of being called out of a fallen one as believers are. No reward was proposed to him in obeying God's gracious call as to us now, nor was there the least room, as we need, to have senses exercised for distinguishing both good and evil. Adam was simply warned against disobedience in one particular, which was evil because forbidden. Free to act in the sphere subjected to him, he was responsible to obey in refraining from the forbidden tree. Nor can notion here be more evil and false than the thought of freedom to choose. Alas! this suits man's pride, but it is bad and senseless to boot. Free to obey or disobey God! Can these abstract reasoners mean what they say? Unfallen or fallen, man is only and always bound to obey God. He was not a slave of sin then; he is now. This is the truth according to scripture. It was then a natural relationship to God where all was good, but with responsibility to obey, and loss of all—death if he disobeyed. Sin put man out of that relationship to God; grace by faith alone gives a new and better and eternal one in Christ. Reinstatement there is none. The paradise of man is not regained, but the paradise of God opened by Christ to the believer, whom grace makes a child of God and teaches to walk in obedience, as Christ did perfectly and unto death—death of the cross.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:10-14

Chapter 2:10-14

Next, we have the position of paradise set out with sufficient definiteness to mark the locality in a general way. Eden was the country; “the garden” was that choice portion not in the west or center, but “eastward” which Jehovah Elohim planted for Adam, to which scripture alludes subsequently, not only in this book (3,4,13:10), but in the prophets repeatedly (Isa. 51:3, Joel 2:9), and most at length in Ezekiel (28:13, 31: 9-19, 36:39). It is quite distinct from another Eden, spelled in Hebrew somewhat differently, in Babylonia seemingly, referred to in

2 Kings 19:12, Isaiah 37:12, and Ezek. 37:23).

“And a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted and became four heads. The name of the one (first) [is] Pison, that which compasseth all the land of Havilah, where the gold [is], and the gold of that land is good; there [is] the bdellium (B'dolach) and the onyx stone (Shoham). And the name of the second river [is] Gihon, that which encompasseth all the land of Cush. And the name of the third [is] Hiddekel, that which goeth forth before (or eastward to) Assyria. And the fourth river [is] Euphrates” (vers. 10-14).

That the district indicated is the plateau of Ararat ought not to be doubted, though it may be beyond the means of man to determine the great center of interest with precision. What is given clearly it was of interest to know: such particulars are withheld as might only gratify man's curiosity, or perhaps expose to dangerous superstition. The burial place of Moses is not the only spot which divine wisdom has veiled from human ken. And the site of the lost paradise might have been perverted to a still wider, yea universal, pilgrimage of folly and evil. The sad truth is that sin led to man's expulsion. He is an outcast. The natural tree of life was thenceforth barred with unmistakable power and rigor. But a better hope was set before the guilty, if we may anticipate a little, in the to be bruised Bruiser of the old Serpent, the Devil and Satan, who too easily overcame the first man. That God should have sooner or later effaced the Adamic paradise (for it was an extensive park, rather than what a garden ordinarily means) is as intelligible morally, as it accords with the fact that no such scene has greeted the eyes of man in the quarter where it must have been when our first parents were introduced there.

This is confirmed by the notable fact that the river which watered paradise is without a name; silence the more striking, because the four rivers, into which, after its allotted service, it was parted, are carefully named. One can readily understand that fact, if it were caused to disappear as well as paradise. It is implied in the description that it flowed through Eden before it watered the garden, and only after that was severed into four chief streams, two of which are the well-known rivers, Hiddekel or Tigris, and P'hrath or Euphrates. The last was notorious enough to need no description, its companion calling for the very few words, “that which floweth toward,” or in front of, “Assyria.” The first and second are described more fully, as being comparatively unknown to Israel, and in fact nowhere else mentioned in the scriptures. But the account has the difficulties arising from countries obscure to later generations at least, both in their own names and in those of their products. Havilah and Cush have been debated nearly as much as Pison and Gihon; and not less the exact force of B'dolach and Shoham.

Josephus, in the first book of his Antiquities, led the way in strange departure by interpreting Pison as the Ganges! and Gihon as the Nile! Him not only many Rabbis follow (some reversing the case) but the best known of the Christian Fathers, as Eusebius, Epiphanius, Augustine and Jerome, &c., without speaking of allegorists like Origen and Ambrose, who adopted the idea of heaven, as others did the misty ideas of Philo Judæus. They accounted for those distant rivers by the supposition of their immense disappearance in the earth and rising again in the east and the south.

The great Reformed commentator, J. Calvin, was too sober to allow such reveries; but he adopted, or rather invented, the notion that by the four heads were meant, both the beginnings from which the rivers are produced, and the mouths by which they discharge themselves into the sea. Thus he argues that the Euphrates was formerly so joined by confluence with the Tigris that we might justly say one river was divided into four heads. But he misunderstood Strabo (Geog. lib. xi.) who nowhere says that at Babylon these two rivers unite, only that at Babylonia they approximate. The junction (save by artificial canals) is really far below at Kurnah (? Digba), whence their united streams form what is now called the Shatt-el-'Arab, discharging its waters into the Persian Gulf by the town of Bassorah.

Clearly therefore the scheme of Calvin, modified by Huet, Vitringa, and Wells, cannot stand, though the facts were not fully or accurately known before the publication of Colossians Chesney's Expedition of the Survey of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris (London, 2 vols. 4to, 1850). There is not the semblance of reason in making out two new rivers from the confluence of the old ones; nor did they diverge again, as he imagined and displays in his map. Dr. Hales in the second edition of his New Analysis acknowledges the error of this hypothesis (entertained in the first), and owns it to be untenable in every point. Calvin confounded the Eden which had paradise in it with that of a distinct spelling in Babylonia; whereas on the face of Gen. 2 it lay not far from where the Euphrates and the Tigris rose, their beginnings, not the end of their divided course. Nor can language be more perverse, than to count their separate streams after that union, had they really existed, the Pison and the Gihon, still less the mere canals higher up. And it is no improvement of the scheme, to make out that these rivers are the waters which wash Khusistan on the east and Arabia on the west of the Gulf. Another manifest confusion is the Havilah of our chapter with that of Gen. 14:7, Num. 13:29, and 1 Sam. 15:7.

But it is needless to point out the incongruities which will occur to intelligent readers. Reland has proved clearly in his Dissertationum Misc. pars. i. (Trajecti ad Rhenum, 1706) that the Gihon is the Araxes, or. Aras, and given strong reasons to conclude that the Pison is the Phasis, though Colossians Chesney pleads for the Halys. Indeed the great Orientalist contended that Colchis, through which the Phasis flows is no other than the Greek form of Havilah; and certainly the connection of gold and precious stones with that land is attested from ancient times more clearly than can be done for the land skirted by the Halys. That the Cossaei, or descendants of Cush, were compassed by the Gihon or Aras cannot be doubted. There was an Asiatic Cush no less than an African, and widely dispersed too. It is the certainty of this fact which explains “The rivers of Cush” in Isa. 18:1. The nation predicted to intervene for Israel is to be “beyond” those rivers (the Nile and the Euphrates) with which they ordinarily had to do.

On the whole then it is plain that the most celebrated men of research (and but a selection of their less strange speculations is here presented) have failed where they trusted either tradition or personal requirements, one swamp of uncertainty only succeeding another. If Dr. Adrian Reland first stood out speaking with more authority than his predecessors, it was because he adhered with commendable tenacity to the word of God. Not that his vast learning failed him here, for he wielded it with a simple mastery found in no other essayist; and this because he put it in its only just place of subservience to the words written with divine authority, while honestly owning difficulties not yet solved. Those who in our day boast of man are no less uncertain according to their unbelief of God's word.

But it may be noticed that in these verses we first hear of a “river.” Of course, to say nothing of previous conditions, there were such in the Adamic earth since the third day. But it was fitting that mention of a river, should be reserved till the Holy Spirit gave it first in connection with paradise. What the river was which went forth from Eden to water the garden seems intentionally withheld: if it vanished when the garden was no longer seen, it is not hard to see the wisdom of the scripture's silence. But it is certain that those who contend like our Milton, that it was the Tigris, which watered paradise, or, as others, the united streams of Euphrates and Tigris, do violence to the inspired text; and “scripture cannot be broken,” says our Lord. An unnamed river, having its rise in the territory of Eden, flows by the garden which it refreshed,

and from thence (how far off is not said) it parts and becomes four heads, or chief streams, two of which (P'hrath and Hiddekel) are beyond doubt, Gihon only not certainly the Aras and Pison, probably the Rioni, if not the Kizil-Irmak (or Halys). For the river, after watering the garden in the east, may have run so as to cover the beginnings of these four in the west of that region.

As the chief modern explorer shows, even the Tigris has in Central Armenia two principal sources, both of which spring from the southern slope of the Anti-Taurus, near those of the Araxes and Euphrates, and not very distant from that of the Halys (Chesney's Exped. 1. 13). The Kizil-Irmak, he had already said, has its sources at two places, both of which are much farther to the eastward than they are generally represented on the maps. The sources of the Aras and those of the north branch of the Euphrates are about ten miles from one another (J. of the Royal Geogr. Soc. 6. part 2, p. 200). It is a curious statement, cited by 1. 274, from Michael Chamish in his history of Armenia, himself an Armenian, that Araxmais built a city in the plain of Aragaz, near the left bank of the Gihon, the name of which was then changed to Arast or Araxes after his son. Also, Benjamin of Tudela, the Hebrew traveler who visited the east in the twelfth century, calls the whole tract, east of the sources of the Aras, Cush or Ethiopia, and speaks of the river as the Gihon (Chesney 1. 282).

The text then is conclusive for the Armenian table-land as the true locality, and disproves every modification of the scheme that conceives the garden and the described rivers as in Babylonia or even farther south along Khusistan and E. Arabia. Nor does it compel one to explain away the meaning of a “river” or to give to “heads” any meaning which is not the natural and correct one. As to the moral lesson, it was but creature trial, and no permanence in either river or paradise. How different the paradise of God on high, or even that river the streams whereof make glad the city of God on earth! God is in the midst of her: this accounts for all in His grace. But the manifestation of divine grace and fidelity for both awaits the coming of the Lord. Here was but the responsible man in the midst of the garden; and we see how quickly he fell and dragged down all in his own ruin. Christ alone overcomes, and through Him God gives us the victory.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:8-9

In chapter 1 we saw that God allotted to the human race dominion over fish, fowl, cattle, and every living thing that creeps or moves upon the earth, as well as over all the earth. That was all general. Here we have, as regularly, a special portion, a domain peculiarly assigned to the first man in his innocence. The deep moral question of the first man was about to be tried.

“And Jehovah Elohim planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put Man whom He had formed. And out of the ground Jehovah Elohim made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowing good and evil” (verses 8, 9).

As for Israel long afterward, there was full preparation now. Nothing was lacking on Jehovah's part. “My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill; and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes” (Isa. 5:1, 2). So at the beginning Jehovah Elohim planted a garden eastward in Eden. However fair all the earth might be before ruin came through sin, and everything that God had made “very good,” the garden was distinctly superior, and the object of peculiar care to God in His moral government. Man had to be tried; and no excuse was possible, no flaw could be alleged. If He planted the garden, all was there for use and beauty suitable to creation's unfallen estate. If He loves a cheerful giver, He is Himself the pattern of all bountifulness. He had “formed” Man exceptionally; and so did He “plant” the garden into which He put him; “and out of the ground Jehovah Elohim made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowing good and evil.”

In the last clause we have the elements peculiar to the case, and to that epoch, which as they then were for a little moment did not exist for man at any other time, nor can they be so again. Innocence lost is irrecoverable. God may and does bring in for faith a better condition through the Second man at His first coming, as in manifest power at His second; but there is no restoration of the first estate. The continual tendency is to forget this, even among those otherwise taught of God. They exalt unduly the pristine condition of Adam. They fail to see the completeness of the ruin caused by sin. They lower or ignore the new creation in Christ. And the singular fact is that these errors are confined to no school of theology, though more prominent and glaring in some quarters than in others. Andover, Geneva, Leipzic, Leyden, Montauban, and Oxford differ considerably; but they fairly chime together in assigning too much to the first man, too little to the Last.

Thus it is by almost all men affirmed that Adam was created in righteousness and in holiness of the truth. Not so. This is how the apostle describes the new man exclusively. In no way can it apply to man as originally created for he was simply untainted and upright, but in no real sense cognizant of “the truth” any more than “righteous” and “holy.” He was innocent; he had not what scripture here calls “the knowledge of good and evil.” Man only gained it by the fall. He had, of course, the consciousness of responsibility. He knew that he was bound to obey God, though the test of his obedience lay solely in his not eating, as we shall see in ver. 17, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now holiness implies that, having this knowledge, we are separate from the evil to good. Adam had no such knowledge. Unfallen, he had no lust. He could not have understood the Ten Commandments, still less the Sermon on the Mount. He had neither father nor mother to honor. Nor was there a neighbor to traduce or aught to covet, to say nothing of theft, murder, and adultery. When neighbors began to be, man had been long an outcast from the garden, and the one prohibition in it applied no more. Henceforth as a fallen being he knew good and evil, but he had that knowledge with a bad conscience. As a heathen wrote of himself, we may say of fallen Adam and his race, that they saw the better and followed the worse. Such became the state of man till God intervened with fresh dealings which involved other responsibility.

But there is revealed in ver. 9 another fact of the deepest interest. The tree of life was distinct from that of knowing good and evil. The test of responsible obedience was one thing, quite another the means of life. They are thus from the first shown to be separate; and, in fact, as we know, when man disobeyed by eating of the one tree, he was driven out lest he should take also of the other (ch. 3:22, 23), and thus make his fallen sinful estate everlasting. The tree of life was for one who did not eat of the forbidden tree. Be clearly was it here marked that responsibility and life are wholly separate.

In due time (as the apostle shows, 430 years before the law) came promise, like a tree of life alone. And the fathers clung to it by faith, and were blessed. This, however, was not a complete blessing, but provisional. It was important and necessary that the question of righteousness should be raised; and that of man's righteousness was raised in Israel by the law. But man, Israel, was sinful, and could not answer save to

condemnation.

For the law as given by Moses made life contingent on obedience. “Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them” (Lev. 18:5). Nor did the failure lie in the law but in man; “for if there had been a law which could have given life, truly righteousness had been by the law.” But man was guilty, without strength, and, in short, lost. “As many (men) as are of the works of the law (or on that principle) are under the curse.” The just shall live by quite another principle—by faith. “And the law is not of faith.” They are given for quite different ends, and so (and only so) consistent: the law, to convince the sinner that he cannot thus be justified; faith, to assure the believer that he is thus justified. “By grace are ye saved through faith.” For it is by faith in Christ; Who accepted the responsibility, bearing the consequences of our disobedience and evil state generally on the cross, and is now risen from the dead, manifestly the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. Thus has He, He only, conciliated the two trees, which the law had proposed only to prove that to man as such it is impossible. Our new responsibility as believers is grounded on the relation to God and our brethren, which we enter as having eternal life, along with redemption, in Christ. God is glorified even as to sin in the cross; and we who believe have life eternal and are made God's righteousness in Christ.

It is blessed to see how beautifully the last book of the N. T. answers to the first book of the Old. In the New Jerusalem, fruit of divine grace and of heavenly counsel, when all is accomplished and pilgrim days are over, there is found only the tree of life, with the richest and most varied fruits for those within, and even the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations. How beautifully in season, and absolutely true, this will be, needs, or ought to need, no words of mine to enforce.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:5-7

Following up the summary of ver. 4, the peculiar condition of the vegetable kingdom is brought before us just before Adam comes from the hand of God. There is no warrant hence to predicate it of previous ages, even though a similar principle may apply. But all that the text states is that so it was at this time for the abode in immediate preparation for Adam, when Jehovah Elohim made earth and heavens.

“And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; 1for Jehovah Elohim had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground, but a mist went up from the earth and moistened all the surface of the ground. And Jehovah Elohim formed Man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils breath of life [lit., lives]; and Man became a living soul” (ver. 5-7).

It seems clear that it is the description of plants and herbs of the third day's production, before man, the head of creation, appeared. Like man they were of full growth, and not from seed as ever since. It is not a repetition of the general fact of their origin as in chap. 1., but, like all else in chap. 2. from its true beginning, a presentation of special circumstances is here added in the only right place. On the one hand, it is not denied on geological evidence that rain can be proved to have fallen at least as far back as the carboniferous period, however immense the lapse of ages before man. On the other hand, it has been contended that it was a circumstance quite unworthy of notice that the inspired historian should notice these explanatory particulars of vegetation now existing for a few natural days without rain or culture. Evidently this is merely a difficulty and an effort on behalf of the theory of periodistic days. The admirable condescension and interest of Him Who is here shown entering into gracious relations with man are manifested by the intimation, which, in the vast geologic ages, would seem not only unmeaning but untrue. Whatever may have been the divine method before such relations could be, it was of importance for man to know authoritatively that Jehovah Elohim made not only earth and heavens, (changing for similar reason the actual order,) but “every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew.” These productions are specified as needful for the food of the living creatures when called into existence on earth; and there they were by God's ordering in suitable maturity, in contrast with subsequent experience. Two reasons are annexed: one that rain had not yet been caused to fall on the earth as it was now constituted; the other that man was not yet there to till the ground. Nobody could mistake, one might think, so plain a hint, but for the blinding influence of a previously conceived theory. He Who made all, even in His every arrangement, considered man and acted in view of him, now especially revealing it when He made man to know Himself in any measure and to enjoy His goodness. Hence also He would have man to know the especial provision even for that brief and peculiar while, “but there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.” This would be strange for scientific men to predicate of the vast geologic periods since vegetation first began. We may see that it is the simple truth for the few days after the third of the first week; and the naming of it here is not only in keeping with the design of the new section, but most worthy of the special place in which man is now set as recorded.

Next, we come to a revelation of transcendent moment, the formation of man, not merely as chief of the earth's denizens (chap. 1.), but for living relationship with Him Who made all. Here, not in the previous chapter, we learn the particulars of man's constitution. “And Jehovah Elohim formed Man [ha-Adam] of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils breath of life; and Man became a living soul.” To this, the apostle refers in his sublime comparison of the first man with the Second in 1 Cor. 15, which every believer should weigh well and make his own. Here it is simply the first man; but what is said is great indeed: dust from the ground the outer man; the inner animated by the breath of Jehovah Elohim. Certainly it was not everlasting life, but none the less an immortal soul. The immediate in-breathing of the Creator is the ground of its immortality. Other animals of the waters or of the earth are called souls,” and justly so; but man alone from God's in-breathing.

In Eccl. 3:21 we hear also of the “spirit of the beast,” for the beast has soul and spirit suited to its nature. The soul is the seat of will for every living creature; the spirit is its capacity. But for the beast all goes “downward to the earth,” not body only, but soul and spirit, having not only a will but also a faculty of its own. But as to man, his spirit (and so of course soul) “goeth upward;” the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” Other animals when produced breathed the breath of life; man was formed externally, as clay by the potter, but did not breathe, till God gave him distinctly and immediately His own breath. Thus did he alone on earth become a living soul, the body mortal, the soul never said so to be, but what is said implying the contrary. Hence is man alone of earthly beings responsible to God. Thus the seat of his individuality and responsibility is in his soul, though the spirit, his inner capacity, goes along with it, greatly enhancing that responsibility; and the body is the outer man, a vessel for serving God or Satan, as the inner man directs.

It will be seen therefore how far they err from the truth who think that Christians only have “spirit” as well as soul and body. Even beasts have, though in them it may be but instinct, in man an incomparably higher and larger faculty, rising with the immensely higher character of man's immortal soul; whereas beasts, however wonderfully endowed according to God's will, are creatures without reason, mere animals to be taken and destroyed (2 Peter 2:12). Consciousness of “I” is in the soul, and on its real existence hangs personal identity; but capacity of reflex reasoning on that consciousness, as on every other object, is in the spirit of man; as capacity for the things of God is with “I” quickened, the power of which is in the Holy Spirit given to the Christian. It is wholly false therefore to confound mind, still more knowledge, with the soul, though the soul has a kindred spirit capable of reflection, discrimination, and all other mental operations within the order of its being. Reflective self-consciousness distinguishes man; still more does God-consciousness. “There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding” (Job 32:8).

It makes the separate and superior position of man the more impressive, compared with all the subjects of his realm, that he adapts himself to every climate, and to all variety of food, in marked contrast with the brutes whose superficial resemblance is closest. Thus it is plain that the Chimpanzee and Orangutan (or “Hutan” probably) are of small number, limited to a few spots in Asia and Africa, and can live elsewhere, spite of the utmost care, for a short while only.

Yet, of all creatures infant man is the most helpless and dependent on care and shelter during his slow growth; yet he attains in all lands and tribes a longevity thrice as great as his nearest mythical connections. But it is the inner man that differentiates him most truly and essentially from every other earthly being, and enables him (through the family bond that is appointed him) to live above his feeble and defenseless beginning, to make good the dominion given him over fish of the sea and bird of the heavens, and every animal that moves on the earth. Let the waters swarm as they in particular do, let birds multiply on the earth ever so, men were to fill the earth and subdue it as no other being does. Nevertheless, living as he alone does by the in-breathing of God, (he only having his soul thus) is an incomparably higher privilege than all his other natural advantages put together; though in this privilege he perishes everlastingly if he defiantly repent not nor believe in the Savior, instead of submitting to Him, the Lord of all, Who is also full of grace and truth. If by faith subject to the Son, how blessed his portion now and forever, even though his human lot were “most miserable!” Eternal life, eternal redemption, eternal salvation, eternal inheritance, eternal glory: such is the Christian's roll of grace through Jesus Christ our Lord; and he is now sealed of the Spirit accordingly.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:4

A manifestly new section begins with chap. 2:4, though with unmistakable reference to the chapter before, which it summarizes as an introduction to a fresh point of view that looks on to the end of chapter 3. The opening words here and elsewhere are supposed by some who deny neither Moses nor inspiration to indicate that Moses thus interwove separate documents preserved by the heads of the Semitic race, and that this fact is one of the strongest internal testimonies that we have to do with genuine historical records. No believer need deny the principle if God's inspiration be truly maintained. Moses truly have been inspired to incorporate ancient records where authentic, as Luke gives us the confidential letter of Claudius Lysias to Felix. Only it is hard if not quite impossible to conciliate some eleven such documents with the perfect unity that pervades Genesis, especially as a divinely ordered type, i.e., prophetically of the future. But the grand truth overlooked is the reality of divine inspiration and its incomparable character and depth. Documents or not, this is certain. And what document could there have been of the creation? God alone could have given that. Take also this first of “the generations “; how could even Adam have furnished anything of the sort?

“These [are; the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah Elohim made earth and heavens.”

The change in the divine designation harmonizes with no less change in the subject matter and calls out phraseology in keeping with it. It is no longer as in chap. 1. “God” (Elohim) only, but “the LORD God” (Jehovah Elohim). We may see, not only here but everywhere, how wise is the design, and how worthy of God; for the instrument employed may not even have understood the full force of what was given him to write. On the one hand difference there is, though not discrepancy; on the other, call for the exercise of faith and spiritual intelligence. “By faith we understand.”

Of all attempts to solve the questions that arise, none so weak or crude as the fancy of distinct remains of independent authors here put together, not to say slashed or mangled. There is no account of creation but that which we have already had. Now we are told of the relations established, which bring in the specific title of divine government, Jehovah, and identify it with Him Who created all. Can aught be conceived more in place, right, and seasonable? It is impossible fairly to call the new section Jehovistic; for throughout Jehovah never occurs without Elohim, though on a few exceptional occasions easily explicable Elohim occurs without Jehovah. How in the least degree does a different writer account for the usage? It is at best a child's guess and can only mislead. See its absurdity in 1 Kings 18:36, 39, and in Jonah 1; 3; 4, &c.

Jean Astruc in 1753 seems to have first suggested the chimera in his “Conjectures sur les memoires originaux, dont ii parait que Moise s'etait servi pour composer le livre de Genese,” which appeared simultaneously at Brussels and Paris. He was a medical man of strong memory, wide reading, and mental activity, but totally devoid of depth or large views even in the science of his own profession. Yet a supposition equally shallow and easy of refutation, inadequate to meet the facts of the case, and barren of a spiritual thought or a godly feeling, drew after it not a few ingenious and learned Germans with their British and American admirers. For this but one circumstance accounts—the skeptical spirit that preceded and accompanied the last century of revolution. Astruc conceived a double set of longer documents by authors respectively Elohistic and Jehovistic, with nine or ten others of lesser extent, all independent. Even to give unity to such various materials was no small task. This some would assign to Moses: others are keen to bring down the unknown “redactor” or digester as late as is plausible by specious arguments. Of truth and divine design these daring speculators have no notion: God is in none of their thoughts. It is a trifle in their eyes to give the lie virtually to the Lord or any of the Twelve or Paul the apostle. To this their “higher criticism” speedily drags them down. It is a snare of the enemy.

As for scriptural usage, the facts are simple, and the principle plain. Elohim expresses the divine Being, the Originator of all other beings, with fullness of power displayed in wisdom and goodness, and so in contrast with man and creature weakness. Hence “God” is used generally where no specific manifestation is intended, or required; and the term is applicable to judges who represent God in delegated authority on earth, and to angels that execute His will from heaven, or even to the “gods many,” as the apostle speaks of heathen worship. The singular

form, Eloah, occurs not only in Deut. 32:15, 17, &c., but with frequency from Job 3 to chap. 40, yet rarely in the Psalms and in the Prophets. Still more common is the kindred El, the Mighty One, not only in the Pentateuch (save Leviticus most appropriately) but in Job pre-eminently, as well as in the Psalms and the Prophets, often qualified and even compounded.

Jehovah1 is His personal name, “The Name,” and this in relationship with man on earth, especially with His people; the Self-existent and Eternal, always the proper name of the true God for those on earth, and in due time that by which He made Himself known as the covenant God of Israel, in Whose presence they were to walk—not El Shaddai, the Almighty God of their fathers, but the LORD God of their sons, His people. Ehyeh (I AM, Ex. 3:14) and Jah (Lord, Ex. 15:2; 17; 10, &c.) are akin to Jehovah, but each used distinctively where a different author is untenable and sheer delusion. Neither is quite Jehovah God, the Governor of man; but as Jah is the absolutely existing One, so Ehyeh expresses His existence as the Everlasting Now consciously felt and asserted, therefore subjective, as Jah is objective.

Hence, in describing creation from first to last as in Gen. 1-2:3, God (Elohim) is the sole suited designation, as giving existence to everything that is, heavens, earth, and all in them. With no less propriety Jehovah Elohim at once appears when He establishes moral relations here below. Hence in chap. ii. alone man is seen (not simply as a creature, whatever his singular honor as head and lord of all on earth) but formed in immediate association with Himself, though his body be of dust. In chap. 2. only do we hear of the garden of delights, with its two mysterious trees, the scene of his trial. Here the lower creatures are “called” as man saw fit, having title from the Eternal God to name them. Here only we learn of the woman taken out of Adam and builded up divinely—she likewise “called” by her husband, yet as part of himself. Here have we no cosmogony as men say, but God, and the creature, in due relations. There is clear recognition of all in chap. 1, but new and special information of the most important kind morally, peculiar to chap. 2 and preparatory to chap. 3. Inconsistency there is none: only prejudiced ignorance can talk so. Still less is there contradiction, save in the mind and mouth of an enemy of God's revelation. The solemn facts of the fall are the continuation, and the same name follows regularly.

This is exactly what ought to be, were one writer inspired to write all three chapters. It was of all moment to know that the One true God, the Creator, is the living Judge of all the earth; and this is simply and impressively conveyed by the combined title. How much better as well as more dignified than by a labored human argument to prove it! In due time (chap. 17.) Jehovah appeared to Abram, the depositary of promise and chief patriarch of Israel, I am El-Shaddai (God Almighty) he. And God (Elohim) talked with him—not man nor angel, but the true God, Whose name is Jehovah. Yet not this but “God Almighty"2 was the revealed title of Him before Whom the patriarch and his sons were to walk. All the force and beauty of the truth is lost by the low and irreverent conjecture which dreams of so many authors using different names of God, with other points equally misunderstood. “Higher criticism,” indeed! It is really the criticism of the scissors and fit only for the dust-bin of learning without sense. Later still Israel were to have Jehovah given as their God, their national object of worship, and revealed ground of dependence; but He was none other than the God Who created the universe. What a shield against idolatry, had not man been a rebel, a weak and perverse sinner! “He that Was and that is and that is to come” will yet make good His promises in the kingdom. This of course failed under the first man and the old covenant, as everything does; but it will stand forever under the Second Man, the Messiah, and the new covenant when He appears in His glory.

In the chapters that follow it was enough in general to use one or other name alone; and they are invariably employed with purpose, not only throughout Genesis and the rest of the Pentateuch, but in the later historical books, in the Psalms, and in the Prophets. In no instance can they be shown to be confounded; in every case where the generic “God” is not used, special motive calls for “Jehovah “; yet these two by no means exhaust the designations we find. In Gen. 14 El-Elyon (the Most High God) dawns on us, reappearing also in the Psalms and the Prophets wherever it was most appropriate. It is that name of God which upholds His title as “possessor of heavens and earth,” to put down all rivals above or below, when the true Melchisedec appears in the exercise of His royal priesthood on the final defeat of the enemy, even before the last and eternal judgment. See Psa. 92:1, as well as Num. 24 and Dan. 4.

Thus Jehovah had been familiar enough from the first; but it was never before revealed to Israel, still less to others, as the specific ground of assurance to them and so of their appeal to Him. God Almighty was the assigned name on which their fathers relied as heirs of promise; and they never found it to fail. Henceforward the sons of Israel (in their greater circle of change than any other people) were to prove Him true, according to the perpetuity of His being, Who is sure to effect His promises in due time; for He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. Alas! they became false witnesses to Jehovah, and even rejected the Object of all promise, Jehovah Messiah.3 Therefore God has hid His face from Israel for a while, and is now, by the Spirit, making Himself known under the gospel to all who believe, Jew or Greek, as “Father” (2 Cor. 6:18), a still higher and nearer name than that of Jehovah, which was for earth as Father is in and for heaven. The word “Father,” like Jehovah, had been long known, but never all the given name of recognized relationship till the Lord Jesus Who eternally knew it as the Son in His bosom, after declaring it through His living ministry, sent it definitely to His brethren when He rose from the dead, having accomplished redemption (John 20:17); and the Holy Spirit was given them subsequently, crying, Abba, Father.

Clearly therefore the same principle runs through the N. T. as well as the Old. The special name of God, definitely given, is expressive of the relationship in which He is pleased to be known: yet there is also not less but more enjoyment of “God” Himself as such. “The hour cometh and now is,” said our Lord, “when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth".. “God is a Spirit; and they that worship must worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23, 24). Both statements are profoundly true and weighty, but they are far from being the same. No key is so false and foolish as imputing the difference to different authors. But this is modern theology.

Nor is it otherwise with those titles disputed in Genesis, where the Spirit led Moses to employ each in accordance with the subject in hand. Even what might seem exceptional is susceptible of ready solution. The serpent is represented as saying (Gen. 3:1), “Yea, hath God said,” and the woman replies, “God hath said” (3), and the serpent rejoins, “God doth know” (5), never in the temptation saying, on either side, Jehovah Elohim. The claims of the divine Governor were in abeyance through the wiles of the evil one. Jehovah Elohim was no longer before the deceived woman. Otherwise the chapter invariably proclaims the two-fold name most appropriately. Now had it been a, composition made up by many successive hands, or the uninspired writing of even Moses or any other man, is it credible that a difference of such delicacy and expressiveness when duly considered could have appeared, to say nothing of the moral wisdom shown in the Elohim of chap. 1 and the Jehovah Elohim of chaps. 2, 3? The suggestion of independent authorship has no basis and therefore no real evidence to commend it; and were it conceded for the moment, it proves quite unequal to explain the single name or the compound, still less the intervening exception. The intention on His part Who inspired the writer renders all simple, especially when the reader learns to understand the propriety in each case.

In a general sense it will be seen that Elohim would have sufficed, and in some cases is most forcible and becoming; but the addition of Jehovah gives special relation and contextual beauty, especially on the supposition of the same hand. It was not nature or evolution that generated the heavens and the earth with their host. Elohim created all to make it as it was for man; as Jehovah Elohim tested man who fails in the face of every advantage. It would have been incongruous to have said Jehovah in describing the creation; and equally so to have said Elohim in laying down relationships. But the creation being attributed to Elohim, it was of all consequence to identify the Creator with the One Who orders all morally and governs man; and this is best expressed by the actually combined terms, Jehovah Elohim, and not casually but consistently till the sad end of the exiled pair, not without a blessed outlook left them on His part Who pronounced judgment on the serpent.

The self-vaunting “higher criticism” means the destruction of the deep interest and profit spiritually derivable from the inspired use of divine titles, as of all else in scripture. The truth is that there never was a drearier nullity, or a more palpable nuisance of learning falsely so called. Who can wonder, since God thereby is divorced from the scriptures? which they cut, apart from all fear of God, as a profane king of Judah the roll that he dreaded. In modern times as in ancient a vain and wicked illusion! God is not mocked. Other opportunities may occur in detail for laying bare the fragment hypothesis, as well as for clearing alleged inconsistencies and disproving what ill will claims to be corroborative evidence. But the main original plea is already shown to be as shadowy as it is unintelligent, as far as could be expected within a short paper such as the present. There is divine design in every change of God's name, as indeed in every other word which the Holy Spirit gave to be written by the chosen instruments.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 2:1-3

These verses are really the necessary supplement and close of chap. 1, if we divide into chapters on a sound principle. It is well known that such a division, save in the Psalms etc., has no authority and is not seldom erroneous. The new title given to God, Jehovah Elohim, indicates consistently a new subject, as will be shown in its place. Hitherto it is simply Elohim, the abstract name of the Creator. Here as everywhere the name has nothing whatever to do with the question of authorship, as ignorant unbelief has suggested with misplaced confidence, but springs exclusively from internal reasons, as may be seen throughout scripture to much interest and instruction.

“ And the heavens and the earth and all their host were finished. And God had finished on the seventh day His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that on it He had rested from all His work which God had created in making” (or, and made, lit. to make) (vers. 1-3).

The last is without doubt a remarkable phrase, falling in naturally with what we have seen in the opening verses, an original creation where man was not, succeeded by catastrophe, and by fresh creative energy, the details of which refer to the scene where and when man was to be brought into being. Here the work and the rest of God are in clear view of the race; and the seventh day or sabbath has immense importance. On its first mention it was unmistakeably the witness of God's rest: His rest, not from weariness of course, but from the work of creation and making. This work was now ended for the life that now is. And as the six preceding days were literal, so is the seventh the closing day of the week.

This is amply and strictly confirmed by Ex. 20:1-11. The sabbath is not a but the seventh day, the memorial of creation finished—of the Adamic world. “For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; therefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it.” The language is precise. It is not said “created” but “made”. This was the right phrase as a whole for the work of the six days, however well creating is said of parts within that work. It was not the original production, but a special construction of divine will and power with man in view. That the seventh day is the sabbath is with equal care impressed in Deut. 5:12-15, though the connection of heart here is with the deliverance from bondage in the land of Egypt rather than with creation.

Nor is there a commandment on which scripture laid greater stress, when the law was bound on the sons of Israel, than that of the sabbath. All the others were moral in a sense which this was not; for of their own selves they could not but feel and own the duty. But the hallowing of the sabbath was of God's initiation exclusively, and singularly marked out for His people that they should not even look to gather the manna on that day. His honor was pre-eminently identified with its observance; and so was His blessing.

For us, Christians, the first day of the week, and not the sabbath, is characteristic. That only is to us the Lord's-day, as the day of His resurrection, and the witness of our accomplished redemption and of the power of His life as risen from the dead, and our life. It is accordingly as much marked by the new creation and grace as the sabbath day was by the six-days' creation and the law. And, though we have to do with the Lord on the first day, as the N. T. makes plain in manifold ways, the sabbath is not done with but will assuredly re-appear, when Zion arises from her long slumber in the dust, and the light of Jehovah shines in Israel for the universal blessing of the earth and the nations, as it never did even in the days of David and Solomon: so the prophets proclaim, and scripture cannot be broken.

Ours meanwhile is a higher call and a brighter hope; for we are by the Holy Spirit united to Him Whom Jew and Gentile crucified, Whom God not only raised but set at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; we are the body of the glorified Head. Those who had the sabbath, as a sign between them and Jehovah, rejected their own Messiah, Who, slain by the hand of lawless men, lay in the grave that sabbath, “high” or great day as it emphatically was. It was the sin and the death of Israel, the ground of a still more terrible scattering than that of Assyria or of Babylon; yet in God's grace the divine and only efficacious means to faith of blotting out that sin and every other; as we prove who believe the gospel, while hardening in part has befallen Israel. But all Israel shall be saved by-and-by; and when they are, from one moon to another and from one sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Jehovah. We now by the Spirit sent down from heaven draw near by faith within the holiest, and this with boldness by the blood of Jesus. Of our peculiar blessing the first day, not the seventh, is the witness. Nor can lack of Christian intelligence be more decided than confounding the Lord's-day with the sabbath.

But the seventh day is also decisively against the day periods. For what can be conceived more unnatural, save when we let a system of private interpretation carry us away alike from simplicity and from spiritual understanding? Till the six days introduced Adam and his world, it could not be said that the heavens and the earth, still less “all their host,” were finished. Previous states of the creation had their importance; but till man and his congeners, animal and vegetable, there was a great lack. Neither on earth nor even in the heavens was there a creature

made in God's image or after His likeness. This was not a little in itself as bringing in moral ways of and with man, and room for God's manifestation in promise and government, till the infinite fact of Immanuel, the Word made flesh, the Son of God a man, and His work no less infinite of redemption, yet to be the basis not only of the church's blessedness, as also of all saints and of Israel to come, but of the new heavens and new earth through all eternity.

What possible evidence from scripture that “the seventh day is the modern or human era in geology” (Archaia, 235)? or as the author of “Footprints of the Creator” puts it, “God's sabbath of rest may still exist; the work of redemption may be the work of His sabbath day”! Does it need the words of any one to refute such a reverie of self-destroying fancy? The scripture before us points out His rest as cessation from work, not merely from creation, but from creating to make. No doubt, if six immensely protracted periods of several thousand years each were certainly meant by the six days, analogy would claim a proportionately lengthened term for the seventh. But the doctrine of God's word even then would be thrown into confusion. For sin violated the rest of creation; and as God could not rest in sin, so He would not in misery, its effect. This is not our rest; it is polluted.

The argument of Heb. 3-4 is that, even though Messiah is come and the work of propitiation wrought, and we that believed do enter into the rest of God, we are only as yet in the day of temptation in the wilderness. Hence we are exhorted to fear lest any might seem to have failed, and to use diligence to enter in. A sabbatism, then, remains to the people of God. It is not yet come. It is the day of glory and not before when God has no more work to do, all being done so perfectly that He can rest forever. So our Lord pleaded to those who indulged in somewhat similar imagination in His day, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work". But work and rest are in contrast. Hence our Lord did on the sabbath what roused the enmity of the Jews implacably. God's rest was in no true sense come. He must work in grace, yea, the Father and the Son; and this has been done beyond all thought of the creature, and God is glorified thereby, yet the rest remains for another day.

But that work, infinitely acceptable and efficacious, is the very opposite of His rest, though the foundation of it. Meanwhile the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ are being called; the delay, the longsuffering of God, is salvation; and the people of God must be by faith fitted to enjoy His rest. In due time they will enter in, in heaven and on earth. But it still remains; it is not yet come. The idea of a sabbath from Adam till now is a dream wholly antagonistic to all revealed truth. It will be at the end when God makes all things new, and the first things have passed away. This is in the fullest sense the rest of God, not the morning cloud that enveloped the entrance into Canaan, nor the dew that passed so early away in Eden. They were but shadows. The reality is to come, the true rest of God. There cannot be rest and work at the same time in the same sense. To view the sabbath or rest of God as contemporaneous with His work is to be in a mist and to lose completely the truth of both in strange fancifulness.

The absurdity which thus inevitably attaches to the age-day theory is proved by no consideration more clearly than by the seventh day or sabbath. That the natural day is meant is only the more evident from the fact that scripture leaves no room for a symbolic or age-lasting sabbath, after the Adamic world was made, but casts us only on its sure but still future dawn. It is “a promise left us” which the day of glory alone fulfills. Of this the sabbath, the natural day at the beginning, was the pledge, the blessed antitype, when God and the creature shall by redemption and resurrection power enjoy the communion of His own rest, sin, sorrow and death completely effaced, and love, righteousness, and glory triumphant forever through our Lord Jesus. This the scriptures hold out abundantly and unambiguously; but an allegoric sabbath stretching over the fall and the deluge, the kingdom of Israel and the Gentile world-powers, to say nothing of the law, the gospel, and the church, is a mere fiction of some few geologists speculative beyond the rest, for which not a word of revelation has ever been truly advanced.

Jacob, Jacob: 7. Leah and Her Four Sons

The righteous government of Jehovah is clearly seen here also. Jacob was grossly wronged by Laban in what must deeply touch a man's heart, and Leah was beyond doubt a consenting party to the cheating breach of the marriage compact as to Rachel. She might and ought to have told Jacob the unworthy trick her father was playing by her means. But God would have His servant Jacob learn more deeply in his own wounded affections the vileness of self-seeking deceit; and hence He permitted what He would use for chastening and good in the end.

“And when Jehovah saw that Leah [was] hated, he opened her womb; but Rachel [was] barren. And Leah conceived, and bore a son, and called his name Reuben (See! a son); for she said, Because Jehovah hath looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me. And she again conceived, and bore a son, and said, Because Jehovah hath heard that I [am] hated, he hath therefore given me this one also; and she called his name Simeon (Hearing). And she again conceived, and bore a son, and said, Now this time will my husband be united to me, for I have borne him three sons; therefore was his name called Levi (United). And she again conceived, and bore a son, and said, This time will I praise Jehovah; therefore she called his name Judah (Praise). And she ceased from bearing” (vers. 31-35).

It will be observed that it is not Elohim here, but Jehovah, God in special relationship and moral dealing. He looked on the sorrowful and despised wife, and gave not to Rachel but to Leah, the comparatively “hated,” the consolation of a son. Rachel happy in her husband's love was left barren! We can notice how the firstborn loomed in the mother's eyes, and how much she counted on the call to Jacob's heart. But Jacob was slow to forget the wrong done him about Rachel, or to feel his own wrong to Leah. Nor was it only that Jehovah looked tenderly on her aggrieved spirit, but she acknowledged Jehovah's compassion in the matter. Jehovah, said she, hath looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me. This seems premature: we hear as yet not a sound of it on his part.

Again however she has a son, and says, Because Jehovah hath heard that I am hated, He hath therefore given me this one also. The even stronger expression of her husband's alienation does not weaken but renew her sense of the favor Jehovah was showing her; and as with Reuben, so now the naming of her second son bespeaks it: Jehovah heard as well as saw. We do not learn of any relaxation on the offended man's part: he had his Rachel. And again she bore him a third son, and said, Now this time will my husband be united to me; for I have borne him three sons. Therefore was his name called Levi. It is not as before that she called it. All seems more vague and in a lower key here; and Jehovah is not named. But He never fails; and again she bore a son, and said, Now this time will I praise Jehovah; therefore she called his name Judah. Never do we hear of her soul rising so high; the sorrow-stricken woman breaks forth into praise of Jehovah; and her fourth son bears it in the name she gave him that day. Yes, of Judah came according to flesh the Christ, Who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

There can hardly be a plainer warning of the danger to which even pious men are exposed in treating of types than that of the excellent Dr. J. Lightfoot with his vast Rabbinical learning. His knowledge of divine truth was too slender to warrant it. Like others in that day and in almost every other, he was superficial in gospel truth, ignored the Spirit's presence and the church's union with Christ on high, and His coming again to consummate God's counsels for heaven, earth, and all creation, being also utterly wrong as to the restoration of Israel in that consummation. Hence he held that “Leah and Rachel are figures of the two churches; the church of the Jews under the law, and the church of the Gentiles under the gospel: the younger the more beautiful, and more in the thoughts of Christ, when he came in the form of a servant; but the other, like Leah, first embraced and taken to wife."1

A deeper acquaintance with scripture would have avoided such mistakes. For Rachel represents Israel, Messiah's first object of love on earth. But this fails by no fault on His part. And He has Leah, who thus, represents the intervening call of the Gentiles during Jacob's servant state and mighty sorrows, when “more are the children of the desolate than of the married wife, saith Jehovah” (Isa. 54:4, cf. Gal. 4). In due time the barren one bears Joseph who typifies Christ rejected and exalted, but making Himself known to His brethren at last; and also Benjamin, the only one born in the land, son of his mother's sorrow but of his father's right-hand, bringing millennial power before us, as Joseph does its blessing.

Jacob, Jacob: 6. The Marriages of Jacob

IT is well to bear in mind that Jacob, however vigorous, was no longer a young man, being seventy-seven when he arrived in Haran. There he must bow to the divine discipline which had already forced him to leave his father's house, and the late unhappy influence of his mother. So it is with each of God's children. Grace is sovereign in calling even the most untoward; but they pass under a moral government which takes notice of every fault, that they may become partakers of His holiness. Compare John 15 and 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

“And Laban said to Jacob, Because thou [art] my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what [shall be] thy wages? And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder [was] Leah (Weariness), and the name of the younger [was] Rachel (Ewe). And the eyes of Leah [were] tender; but Rachel was beautiful of form and beautiful of countenance. And Jacob loved Rachel, and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy youngest daughter. And Laban said, Better [that] I give her to thee than [that] I should give her to another man: abide with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they were in his eyes a few days, for his love to her. And Jacob said to Laban, Give [me] my wife for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her. And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. And it came to pass in the evening that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in to her. And Laban gave to her Zilpah his maid-servant [for] maid-servant to Leah his daughter. And it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, What [is] this thou hast done to me? Have I not served with thee for Rachel? Why then hast thou deceived me? And Laban said, It is not so done in our place, to give the younger before the first-born. Fulfill the week of this one; and we will give thee the other also for the service that thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled the week; and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife. And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his maid-servant for her maid-servant. And he went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years” (vers. 15-30).

It is no small contrast to remember Isaac the heir, the son abiding in his father's house, and the honored servant Eliezer sent to represent him and his father with suited equipage and Costly gifts for the bride. Here the outcast wanderer has nothing to recommend him but his relationship and his service. Nor was Laban slow to discern the value of so capable a man for interests dearer to him than all other considerations. So the bargain was soon struck, and the warm offer of Jacob instantly accepted. But when the full time of service for his bride arrived, the crafty uncle, under all his show of the wedding-feast to Jacob's honor, felt no scruple in the cruel deceit of substituting Leah for Rachel, the object of his heart from the first.

Then followed the humiliating temptation of this younger daughter offered on like conditions of long service, which to Jacob seemed but a few days, for his love to her. But we must not measure this case any more than others in Old Testament times by the light which the Savior cast on marriage as on everything else. Yet it is refreshing to notice what He could draw from what was instituted at the beginning, before sin entered to throw into confusion the ways of God, by those manifold lusts of the flesh which war against the soul.

Here it was Jehovah dealing with Jacob that he might judge himself, and learn in his own experience the hatefulness of yielding to deceit, even if it were to gain the birth-right or the blessing over a profane brother, who cared only for himself and never had God as a living object before his soul.

Jacob, Jacob: 5. Meets Rachel

Jacob, strengthened by his dream, pursues his journey to the land of his kindred. The first phrase is an uncommon one; the nearest to it is used of the priests in quitting the channel of the Jordan for Canaan (Josh. 4:18), which hardly confirms the alacrity ascribed to it here.

“And Jacob went on his journey (lifted up his feet), and came into the land of the sons of the east. And he looked, and, behold, a well in the fields, and, behold there, three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks, and the stone on the well's mouth was great. And when all the flocks were gathered there, they rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the sheep, and put again the stone on the well's mouth in its place. And Jacob said to them, My brethren, whence [be] ye? And they said, Of Haran [are] we. And he said to them, Know ye Laban son of Nahor? And they said, We do know [him]. And he said to them, [Is it] well (peace) with him? And they said, Well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. And he said, Behold, [it is] yet high (great) day; [it is] not time that the cattle should be gathered together: water the sheep, and go, feed [them]. And they said, We cannot till all the flocks be gathered together, and they roll the stone from the well's mouth: then we water the sheep. While he was still speaking to them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she kept them. And it came to pass when Jacob saw Rachel daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And

Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he [was] her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father. And it came to pass when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house; and he told Laban all these things. And Laban said to him, Thou [art] indeed my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him a month of days" (Gen. 29:1-14).

How strange that pious eyes of old and to our day should see in Jacob's foregoing journey and arrival in Haran a type of Jesus, Son of God and Heir of all things, despised and rejected of men, Jesus leaving heaven's glory to become a wanderer in the world, to accomplish redemption, and to espouse the church to Himself! Here evidently it rather typifies a contrast with Isaac, only son of his father, the dead and risen bridegroom of her that was fetched by Eliezer's guidance, the bride that must pass through the desert to be His bride in the heavenlies. Here it is one that leaves the land of promise after the saddest failure, but not without blessings in grace, with Jehovah assuring him in the dark night of His care, and not to leave him till He do so with His hand what His mouth had spoken. Jacob does not rise above the house of God on earth, the gate of heaven but not glory on high; and his vow, and anointed pillar, and tithe, and hopes, are all in unison with Israel, yet a prince with God here below. He is a type at most of the earthly side of the Lord; which tradition and theology, not discerning, have lowered so as to narrow the truth. These, seeing only the church position, have reduced the Lord's relationship accordingly, and appropriated Israel's place to the loss of the Christian's, as well as to the denial of the predicted blessings of the Jewish people as the head of the nations on earth under His coming reign.

Jacob is characteristically here under God's providential care, even when we hear only of the shepherds of Haran; and Rachel appears and Laban follows. It is His sure but unseen and unnamed direction. Yet we may remark the difference from Eliezer's distinct prayer of faith and immediate worship in chap. 24, also from God's prompt answer, and from the bride's ready response and journey to join him whom unseen she trusted, and for whom she forsook all her existing ties of nature.

Here it is a touching scene, and the quick emotional outburst of Jacob's nature is in keeping, and even Laban's. But the deep communion with God, when it is the type of calling the bride for heaven, and the entire absorption of heart in the risen bridegroom's glory, are as wanting here as they are indelibly apparent in the unique episode of Isaac and Rebekah.

Isaac, Isaac: 32. Isaac's Charge to Jacob: Genesis 28:1-5

Gen. 28:1-5

Rebekah did not speak in vain; Isaac acted on her word as to Jacob; as God directed Abraham to listen to Sarah's voice when she demanded the dismissal of mocking Ishmael and his mother.

"And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-Aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest become a congregation of peoples. And may he give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings, which God gave to Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob; and he went to Padan-Aram to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother" (vers. 1-5).

How pointed the distinction from the blessing Isaac heard from the angel of Jehovah when he called to Abraham! Then on the gift of his son, his only son, to die as far as he knew, came the promise of blessing in the widest terms, and seed multiplied as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand on the seashore. Nor was it only for the numerous seed to possess the gate of the enemies, but "in thy seed" (where no number is named, the one Seed of the apostle's interpretation), the true Son raised as truly from out of the dead, "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." So indeed they are now as Christians. Nothing of the kind is in the blessing Isaac gave Jacob. Nor is this in any respect faulty, but faith speaking according to God's mind in a wholly different case, as we shall see more fully in the sequel.

Indeed it was a charge with which he opens, "Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan." So Isaac in his day was to marry not from the people of the land, but from Abraham's land and kindred; yet how different the manner! Most emphatically he, the bridegroom, must not leave Canaan; but Abraham's servant, the elder of his house that ruled over all that he had, goes under solemn oath to fetch a wife thence for Isaac. Here on the contrary Jacob is asked to go to Padan Aram, and take a wife thence of the patriarch's kin, of Laban's daughters. So early must Jehovah visit Jacob according to his ways. "Jacob fled into the fields of Aram; and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept [sheep]." He became an exile from the land of promise, to be cheated in a strange land by his kindred, the sad recompence of his own crooked ways to gain what Jehovah had given and would have secured in His holy way of faithfulness and truth.

"And God Almighty bless thee," prayed Isaac, "and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee that thou mayest become a congregation of peoples." So it was of old, so it will be yet more in the future. Here, as before, it is strictly blessing on earth. Not a word drops that points to heaven or eternity. Enlargement on earth is assured, but nothing is said of a higher order. Even when Isaac asks God to give him "the blessing of Abraham," to him and to his seed with him, it is narrowed to this, "that thou mayest possess the land of thy sojournings which God gave to Abraham." The stopping short thus of higher and deeper and larger things is surely significant, where Jacob comes before us. Such precision is as marked in this earliest of the scriptures; and the lack of observing it is not less apparent in critical eyes, which, failing to learn what is immeasurably above them, set up to judge them as human documents to God's dishonor and their own shame.

Of an opposite school are those who seek to read the church into every scripture, because they do not see that the glory of Christ will have an object of His love on earth as well as for the heavens. They have fallen into the Gentile conceit, which Rom. 11 was written to denounce and correct. God has not cast away His people Israel. They stumbled at the stumbling-stone, and rejecting their own Messiah, are rejected themselves, while the Gentiles are called, and the church is being formed wherein is neither Jew nor Greek, but Christ is all. But the Gentiles have been as faithless to their privileges as Israel, and must as surely be cut off. Divine mercy will then restore His ancient people when Christ returns and brings in His Kingdom in power and glory.

Israel is here in question for the earth, as the call of Rebekah to be Isaac's spouse typifies the bride for the heavenly Bridegroom. As to the administration of the fullness of times, which will only be when Christ appears, room must be left for all things to be headed up and centered in Christ, the Heir of all, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth—in Him, in whom we also were allotted a portion, being marked out beforehand according to God's sovereign purpose. The Christian is not part of the inheritance, but heir of God and joint-heir with Christ. This truth was early lost. The church judaized wholly after the apostles. Even Irenaeus, one of the best of the early ecclesiastics, betrays this confusion, which has gone on deepening ever since.

Jacob, Jacob: 4. At Bethel

This scene is remarkably characteristic of the outcast from his father's house, but of God's care over the destined progenitor of His earthly people. Fathers and Puritans have alike missed their way, who, not seeing the grand place reserved for Israel in the latter day and Messiah's millennial Kingdom, turn all blessed persons and things to the church's aggrandizement, and thus deny at the end God's ancient people their restored and enhanced dignity here below. This by necessary consequence lowers the Christian and the body of Christ to an earthly place, however favored and exalted. It is to judaize the future; while it balefully reacts on the present also, enfeebling if not blotting out His glory on high and our proper heavenly privileges in the Spirit.

“And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted on the place, and lodged there, because the sun was set. And he took of the stones of the place, and made his pillows, and lay down in that place. And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on earth, and its top reached to the heavens. And behold, angels of God ascended and descended upon it. And behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, God of Abraham thy father, and God of Isaac: the land on which thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt break forth to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I [am] with thee, and will keep thee in all [places] whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee till I have done that of which I have spoken to thee. And Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, Surely Jehovah is in this place, and I knew [it] not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful [is] this place 1 this [is] none other but God's house, and this the gate of the heavens. And Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he made his pillows, and set it [for] a pillar and poured oil upon its top. And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city was Luz at first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and keep me on this road that I go, and give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, and I come again in peace to my father's house, then shall Jehovah be for God to me. And this stone which I have set [for] a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee” (vers. 10-22).

The place on which Jacob lighted was to be notable for the checkered fortunes of Israel; it had no bearing typically on the church. Jehovah made Bethel a pledge of assured mercy to Jacob when utterly forlorn, whatever the king raised up to be a scourge to the people might pervert it to in honor of a strange and rival god. There tarried Jacob all night, with nothing but the stones which he put for his pillows. But he dreamed, and saw set up on earth a ladder, whose top reached to the heavens; and Jehovah stood above it, declaring Himself Jehovah, God of Abraham his father, and God of Isaac, with the promise of the land, whereon he lay so desolately, to him and to his seed; and the seed to be as the dust of the earth (not a word about the stars of the sky), which should break forth on every side to the blessing of all the families of the earth in Jacob and his seed. Whatever the sad and lonely beginning, this should be the glorious end.

All is prophetic and for the earth, a dream from and of God, not such speech and open vision as Abraham had enjoyed, unless when on one occasion of deep sleep a horror of a great darkness fell upon him, when he too learned the power of death in order to establish covenant security for the earthly seed, whatever came meanwhile, and the land was strictly defined and delivered from its usurpers, as the people had been from their oppressors. Isaac had only Jehovah appearing to him whether by day or by night to bless him in Canaan, and multiply his seed as stars of the heavens, and set him above fear. Jacob, however guaranteed by the striking sight of the ladder from earth (where he lay) to Jehovah at the top in the heavens, was afraid, and with angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder could only say, How dreadful this place! none other this but the gate of the heavens! Yet had Jehovah promised to keep him in all places whither he went (and which of the patriarchs such a wanderer?), and never to leave him till He had done all of which He had spoken to him. Could words more explicitly portray the Jewish portion, or stand in more marked contrast with the peace, liberty, and heavenly access of the Christian, while suffering with joy here below like Christ?

Yet the closing verses which give us Jacob's acts and words add still weightier confirmation. For he at once set up his stone pillow for a pillar and anointed it, and called the name of the place Bethel, and vowed the first recorded vow, strikingly different from Isaac or Abraham. Therein he rises not above providential care, and the supply of present wants, yet God with him (for the root of the matter was there as his first thought), so that he should come to his father's house in peace. Jehovah should be to him for God, and this stone pillar, His house, and of all He should give him he would surely give the tenth to Him. It is, indeed, not Christians blessing the God and Father of our Lord, as from the first blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. How Jacob's vow differs from Abraham in Gen. 14 refusing to be made rich by aliens and giving unasked tithes of all to Melchizedek, priest of the most High God, possessor of heavens and earth

Jacob, Jacob: 3. Jacob Blessed and Sent to Padan Aram

After the humbling scene in which Isaac and Rebekah with Jacob, to say nothing of Esau, played so unworthy parts, it is refreshing here to read of Isaac's pious care over Jacob; and all the more, that grace made use of Rebekah to recall the spirit of her husband to faithful and righteous ways about their son called to blessing (Gen. 27:46).

“And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-Aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty [El Shaddai] bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of peoples. And may he give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest possess the land of thy sojournings, which God gave to

Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob; and he went to Padan-Aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Jacob and Esau. Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan-Aram, to take him a wife thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; and [that] Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-Aram. And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father. And Esau went to Ishmael, and took, unto the wives which he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife" (vers. 1-9).

We may notice this peculiarity in the blessing here pronounced on Jacob by his father that a "charge" (ver. 1) accompanied it. Jacob must not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. For they were accursed in Jehovah's eyes, though the execution in any measure tarries till the cup of the Amorites was full. For the wanderer Jacob there was to be as distinct a refusal of alliance with the Canaanite as for Isaac. Only the latter was in the strictest way forbidden to go out of the land (Gen. 24:6, 8), and the bride must be fetched thither: whereas the former goes in quest of a wife to the house of his mother's father (2). Thus are Jacob's earthly place and relations made no less evident than Isaac's heavenly ones. As the prophet Hosea puts it, Jacob fled into the field of Aram, and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept [sheep]. So God decided for him in righteous government. Isaac's history is the type of sovereign grace calling a bride to the Heir of all things in heavenly places.

But it is also to be remarked in verse 3 that Isaac says, "God Almighty bless thee," and in verse 4, "And may he give thee the blessing of Abraham." But it is distinctly limited to a "multitude of peoples," and to his inheriting, he and his seed with him, "the land of his sojournings which God gave to Abraham." Yet we never hear that God appeared to Isaac in that character of revelation, as He did to Abraham very expressly in Gen. 17:1; and it is even contrasted with the name of Jehovah made known to Moses in Ex. 6:3 as the covenant name thenceforth for the children of Israel. But Isaac had it not directly like Abraham and Jacob.

Another trait of distinction is of much interest, to which Gal. 3:16 directs attention. "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed." And the apostle reasons on the one Seed which is Christ, as contrasted with the numerous seed referring to Israel. So we read in Gen. 12:3 to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac in 12:18, though the countless earthly seed had been just mentioned in 17. This however is absent from Isaac's blessing on Jacob.

Scripture tells us in vers. 6-9 of Esau's imitating his brother as nearly as he could in appearance, because his Canaanite wives displeased his father. But God was not in his thoughts; and his imitation fell miserably short. For in addition to the daughters of Heth he took a daughter of Ishmael to wife, the bondmaid's offspring cast out from Abraham's house. There was no faith, but a natural and ineffectual effort after better ways. Apart from faith it is impossible to please God; for he that approaches Him must believe that He is, and becomes a rewarder of those that seek Him out. This was true of Jacob, in no way of Esau.

Isaac, Isaac: 31. The Family Distracted: Genesis 27:41-46

Gen. 27:41-46

Grace alone secures salvation to sinful man, yet only to such as believe. But God ever carried on, as now also, a righteous government, whereby He deals with every fault among His own. So it was then. The sin of Isaac threw all into confusion, and gross evil ensued on the part of Rebekah and Jacob. So great indeed was the complication, that Esau, ungodly as he was, at this sad and shameful moment seemed more an object of pity than any other concerned, whilst those who really cared for Jehovah's will and blessing exposed His name to dishonor by the deceitful means they employed to gain it. O what sorrows and shame they make for themselves who forget that God cannot fail to accomplish His own purpose, and who in their haste for a good end do not scruple to adopt wicked means!

"And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him. And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand, and I will slay my brother Jacob. And the words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebecca. And she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, comforteth himself that he will kill thee. And now, my son, hearken to my voice; and arise, flee to Laban my brother to Haran; and abide with him some days, until thy brother's fury turn away; until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget what thou hast done to him: then I will send and fetch thee thence. Why should I be bereaved of even both in one day?

"And Rebecca said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good should my life be to me?" (vers. 41-46).

Thus Esau soon turned from wailing and tears to murderous hatred. It was not Jehovah that he valued, but the blessing; as he had already proved how far he estimated the birthright when he sold it for one mess of food. He was a profane person. This was no real excuse for the misdoing of Rebekah and Jacob; but it aggravated the sin of Isaac. Henceforth hatred of his brother, even to take his life, filled Esau's heart, though he had received the promise of all he cared for, save the supremacy of his brother which his pride could not brook. So he plots with himself, when his aged father departed, or at least the days of the mourning were over, to slay his brother. Truly Esau went in the way of Cain.

But He whose eye is over all hearts kept aged Isaac for a long while to come, and the days of mourning did not arrive before Esau with four hundred men met Jacob to his sore distress; but God turned the heart that meant to slay him to receive the trembling man with kisses and tears. So truly does God dispose, let those propose as they may who know Him not. Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

Rebecca was the one to send her beloved child away, whatever it cost her. It was meet that she should be the instrument of his exile whom she had so guiltily instructed; it was meet that she should never again behold in the flesh the one whom she knew was the object of God's favor and the true heir to the promises, as Isaac also was, to the exclusion of both Ishmael and Esau. God is, and must be, and ought to be Sovereign; but God is just, and cannot look on cunning with impunity, while He can have no terms with profanity and ungodliness. She herself therefore has to do the greatest violence to her own feelings as well as Jacob's, and urges his fleeing to Haran, that he might abide with her brother Laban. "Some days" did she say? Ah, poor Rebecca, for many a long year to be cheated by Laban, as you and Jacob cheated Isaac No,

never will it be thine, whatever come of Esau's fury and anger, to send and fetch thy Jacob thence. Indeed it is striking that her death is in scripture without notice, We know from chap. 35 that Deborah, her nurse, died in Jacob's company, and was buried beneath Bethel under the oak which thence derived its name of Allon-Bachuth, Oak of weeping. It is certain that Rebecca is not spoken of when Esau and Jacob met at the funeral of their father; whence we may fairly gather that she had died, we know not how long before the most aged of the patriarchs.

But this at least can be said of Rebekah that she shared with Isaac bitterness of spirit over the Hittite wives of Esau, and that she was the more faithful of the two in grief at Esau's godless ways. This was what she pressed on her husband as to Jacob, that he might be saved from so ill an example. Yet there was an impatience in the tone which left not a little to be desired. But scripture tells us things as they were, even of the saints: as it alone reveals God to us.

Isaac, Isaac: 30. Isaac Blessing Esau: Genesis 27:30-40

Gen. 27:30-40

We have now to hear of Esau and his blessing.1

“And it came to pass when Isaac had ended blessing Jacob, and when Jacob was hardly gone out from before Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came from his hunting. And he also prepared savory meat, and brought [it] in to his father, and said to his father, Let my father arise and eat of his son's venison, in order that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said to him, Who [art] thou? And he said, I [am] thy son, thy firstborn, Esau. And Isaac trembled with a trembling exceedingly great, and said, Who then [is] he that hunted venison and brought [it] to me? And I have eaten of all before thou earnest, and have blessed him: also blessed he shall be. When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a cry great and exceedingly bitter, and said to his father, Bless me, me also, my father. And he said, Thy brother came with subtlety and has taken away thy blessing. And he said, Is he not rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: my birthright he took away; and behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved for me a blessing? And Isaac answered and said to Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren I have given him for servants; and corn and new wine have I supplied him; and what then shall I do for thee, my son? And Esau said to his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, me also, my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said to him, Behold, of the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt rove about, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck” (vers. 30-40).

It is all very touching in a natural way. One's indignation kindles at the underhand course of Jacob and Rebecca; one feels for the erring and deceived aged saint; one pities the bitter disappointment of Esau, worthless though he was, and ungodly as he had already proved. But we rejoice at the turning-point of grace in Isaac's soul when he bowed to God's thwarting his endeavor to gratify the son who had ministered to his appetite, forgetful alas! of the already declared will of Jehovah as to Jacob. When God's over-ruling broke on him, instead of reviling the wife and younger son, he bowed in self-judgment and trembled with a trembling exceedingly great, sealing in faith what his lips said unwittingly but under God, “also he shall be blessed.” He felt that, however others were to blame, the error was his own. God was but securing now what He had said before the sons were born. Faith now wrought, unhindered by the flesh which had lately darkened his eyes. And so says the Spirit in Heb. 11. It was not according to his proclivities, but against them; “by faith Isaac blessed,” not Esau and Jacob, but “Jacob and Esau [even] concerning things about to be.”

Jehovah, as the Lord God, is and must be free to act according to the good pleasure of His will, whether for the heavens or for the earth; for man to assert his is alike folly and sin. As a saint he is set apart to obey God, not merely in the Ten Words, but in every respect; as a sinner, he is Satan's slave, and only deceives himself when he boasts of liberty, freewill, and what not. Obedience is the essential duty of the creature; and no reasoning can lessen the obligation, though it may blind man already fallen. But it is a believer's shame to be deceived, as the whole habitable world is. Satan may accuse, but ought not to deceive him who has God's word and Spirit; as we have seen Isaac deceived for a while, but restored.

Still there was a blessing for Esau, and one far more suited to his nature than that which was reserved for Jacob. What did Esau care for the promises or the covenant? What relish had he for Messiah's kingdom? What reverence or readiness of subjection to Messiah Himself? The fatness of the earth was more to his taste, and the dew of heaven from above. Heaven itself was only a sentiment he gladly left for others to enjoy. He was, he flattered himself, a practical man; and the present world was to him a scene of enjoyable excitement, checkered enough to enhance its pleasures. Then what a fine thing to live by the sword when men opposed! He did not envy the poor spiritless creatures who lived, or said they did, by God's word. Such fanaticism he despised. It was true that the word declared that he, Esau, should serve his brother. This was a disagreeable sentence, which had to be proved, and he would do all he could to prevent it. Meanwhile the same sentence said, that he should some time get loose, or rove about, and break the yoke from off his neck. Well, this would be a joy indeed: let his brother have the rest. Esau was profane; and it is a growing sin in our clay, more glaring in Christendom than among the heathen. Without doubt the end of the age is at hand. The day of the Lord hastens; but the apostasy must first come, and the man of sin be revealed, the lawless one, in his own time, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume by His breath and annul by the appearing of His presence.

Isaac, Isaac: 29. The Common Sin and Shame: Genesis 27:18-29

Gen. 27:18-29

The scriptures do not spare us the needed lesson of what man is, even elect man. It is painful reading, and meant so to be, but full of profit; for many believers are slow to allow that flesh is no better in them than in the patriarchal family. Every one of them betrayed at this point the bad state morally of each. The usually blameless Isaac was so overcome by self-indulgence in his appetite as to lose sight not only of the profanity of the elder son but of Jehovah's will and choice of Jacob. Rebekah, however right as to the end in view, was utterly unscrupulous as to the means; and Jacob, not without conscience and fear about the deceit he was to practice on his blind father and lying personation of

Esau, dreaded a curse instead of the blessing which he valued. But O what a God have we to do with, unmoved in His purpose of grace (else never could it stand)! unchanging in His righteousness which chastened every one of them for good even now, yet with pain because of their sins, that they might not be condemned with the world. It may not be that He brings good out of evil, as men say; but His own good to do us good, rising above every fault and dishonor. Thus “we know that to those that love God all things work together for good, to those that are called according to purpose” (Rom. 8:28).

“And he (Jacob) came to his father and said, My father: and he said, Here [am] I: who [art] thou, my son? And Jacob said to his father, I [am] Esau, thy firstborn; I have done according as thou didst say to me, Arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of thy venison, in order that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said to his son, How [is] this [that] thou hast found [it] so quickly, my son? And he said, Because Jehovah thy God brought [it] before me. And said Isaac to Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou [be] my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac His father; and he felt him and said, The voice [is] Jacob's voice, but the hands [are] Esau's hands. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy as his brother Esau's hands; and he blessed him. And he said, Thou then my very son Esau? And he said, I [am]. And he said, Bring [it] near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, in order that my soul may bless thee. And he brought [it] near to him, and he did eat; and he brought him wine, and he drank. And Isaac his father said to him, Come near now and kiss me, my son. And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothes, and blessed him and said, See, my son's smell,[is] as a field's smell which Jehovah hath blessed. And God give thee of the dew of the heavens, and of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and new wine. Let peoples serve thee and races bow down to thee. Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee. Cursed [be] every one that curseth thee, and blessed every one that blesseth thee” (vers. 18-29).

Undoubtedly for the time Isaac was blinded in the eyes of his heart worse than in his physical sight, even in his foolish partiality to thwart the declared mind of God. And this Rebekah overheard and sought to counteract with a woman's craft and quick fertility of resource. Had she looked to God instead of her feeble husband and her fond son, how different all would have been! Even Abraham listened to Sarah's voice when he was deeply moved for Ishmael: how much more ought not Rebekah to have counted on her appeal to Isaac's conscience, backed by the divine oracle even before the birth of the twins, that “the elder should serve the younger”! But she did not now inquire of Jehovah as of old; she yielded to a low deceit, as sinful before God as it dishonored her husband and herself, reckless of its direct demoralizing of the heir apparent of the promise.

Alas! Jacob showed himself an adept to the manner born. “I am Esau thy firstborn,” replied he to his hesitating father; “I have done as thou didst say to me.” Not content with audacious falsehoods, he went on to hypocritical lying; for no sin grows less or better in the use. He meets his father's wonder at the quickness of the supply by his daring answer, “Jehovah thy God brought it before me.” His voice made a difficulty even to dull Isaac; but the feeling of the goat skins which overlaid his neck and hands so cunningly, and the smell of Esau's best clothes, especially after savory food and wine, removed further question from the aged father. And the blessing was given, both from Jehovah in covenant, and from God in sovereignty. Yet did its terms mainly consist of earthly abundance from the favor of the heavens, and the subjection not only of peoples and races of mankind generally, but also and specifically of his brethren and of his mother's sons, closing with a double sentence of larger and deeper import: “Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be every one that blesseth thee.”

Neither Esau's “running” nor Isaac's “willing” could set aside God's purpose. As the apostle says in Rom. 9:18, “So then it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Without His mercy not one could inherit the blessing. But this does not at all hinder His moral government meanwhile, which passes over no fault on their part of His children, and this because He detests their wrongs, and loves themselves. Were they spurious and not His sons, He would leave their iniquities to meet just doom at the last day,

Isaac, Isaac: 28. Rebekah's Advice: Genesis 27:6-17

Gen. 27:6-17

Every scripture is inspired of God and is profitable. How much is passed by without notice in the life of Isaac! Inspiration implies special purpose. When a grave lesson was to be taught, there is no sparing the reputation of a saint: God speaks and writes holily and all is for our profit.

“And Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak to Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savory meat, that I may eat and bless thee before Jehovah before my death. Now therefore, my son, hearken to my voice according to that which I command thee. Go, I pray thee, to the flock, and fetch me thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make of them savory meat for thy father such as he loveth; and thou shall bring [it] to thy father, that he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother [is] a hairy man, and I a smooth man. My father perhaps will feel me, and I shall be in his eyes as one that mocketh, and I shall bring on me a curse and not a blessing. And his mother said to him, On me [be] thy curse, my son: only hearken to my voice, and go, fetch me [them]. And he went and fetched and brought [them] to his mother. And his mother prepared a savory dish such as his father loved. And Rebekah took the clothes of her elder son Esau, and put them on Jacob her younger son, the costly ones that [were] with her in the house; and she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands, and on the smooth of his neck; and she gave the savory meat and the bread into the hand of her son Jacob” (vers. 6-17).

We may assume that Rebekah acted on impulse in circumventing her husband's forgetfulness of the Lord's word, and Esau's profane and evil character. Who can suppose that she “went to inquire of Jehovah,” as when troubled by appearances before the birth of the twins? The sly Syrian character of her family asserted itself, in the assurance that Isaac was altogether in the wrong. But if right in her judgment, how sorrowful to tarnish it, not only by her own means of giving it effect, but by drawing her beloved child, the object of divine promise, into conduct so unworthy of faith!

In nothing be anxious, wrote the apostle; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God, as our gentleness should be known to all men. We walk by faith, not by sight. Do you say that this applies to faith since redemption? But what of the three young Hebrews in view of the burning furnace of fire? What of the aged Daniel with the den of lions before him? No petition, nor visit to the king juggled by vanity into the impious decree pressed by the ruling princes. No hiding of his devotions to God, so well known

to those that were envious of his position. “And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem); and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled together, and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.” He obeyed God rather than men, and he took the consequences to His glory.

Rebekah and Jacob took the way of the flesh; and as they sowed, so they reaped; for God is not mocked, while He showed Himself faithful to His promise, and Isaac's folly was of no avail to reinstate the son who sold his birth-right. But how humbling to the family all round, and not least of all to him who ought to have obeyed God in subjection to His express will, and have upheld in faith the dignity of its head! How foolish and unworthy in Rebecca particularly! She of all best knew Isaac's piety, as she beyond doubt had the liveliest remembrance of the divine sentence that the older should serve the younger. It was therefore the graver failure in her not to be open with her husband in Jehovah's name Who would have blessed all around instead of having to chastise.

Even Jacob felt and expressed his qualms, lest the deceit of his mother which he was about to practice should elicit a curse, instead of a blessing from his father. But Rebekah's will was too much committed to her device; and she displayed no little aptitude in guarding her son from the danger he anticipated. In neither do we find conscience at work, still less any reckoning on God's gracious power to bring to naught the carnal design of Isaac to bestow that title to the blessing of Jehovah which Jacob truly valued, and Esau made of less account than one mess of food.

On me, said Rebekah, be thy curse, my son: only hearken to my voice, &c. Certainly Isaac had no curse to call on Rebekah; but as she was the prime mover in the wrong way to gain a right end, so had she most to feel the chastening of God's unfailing moral government. For soon after the transaction here recorded Jacob took his leave for the land of the sons of the east; and the mother never again saw her beloved child. He too through sorrowful years had to smart under the wily cheating schemes of his mother's brother, his own father-in-law. No flesh shall or can glory. It only remains to glory in Jehovah. He never fails; and alone, when every other failed as in this case, He accomplishes His purpose in mercy and wisdom. How worthy is He of all trust!

It was all skillfully done to deceive Isaac; and Jacob only too ready to comply with his mother to God's dishonor, Who would surely have defeated the father's desire to favor Esau. But unbelief is ever far from God, and is nowhere so low and hateful as when it works in believers.

Isaac, Isaac: 27. Isaac Old and Seeing Dimly: Genesis 27:1-5

Gen. 27:1-5

Humbling for Isaac, and for all concerned yet more, is the scene which opens for our admonition. No such failure stained the testimony of his father nor yet his son Jacob's. His life of comparative easy-going blinded him for a while to distressing forgetfulness of Jehovah's mind and declared purpose. Alas I it was not a new thing that Isaac loved Esau, not simply as his son or on account of his natural boldness, but because venison was to his taste. Whereas Rebecca loved Jacob, whose character in its fleshly traits resembled her own in Syrian craft and selfishness; but in neither was there lukewarmness to divine promise.

“And it came to pass when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, that he called Esau his son, the eldest, and said to him, My son; and he said to him, Here [am] I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and hunt me venison, and make me savory meat such as I love, and bring [it] to me that I may eat, in order that my soul may bless thee before I die. And Rebecca heard when Isaac spoke to Esau his son; and Esau went to the field to hunt and bring venison” (vers. 1-5).

No doubt the words of Jehovah, before the sons were born, the more impressed Rebecca because they were said to her, “The elder shall serve the younger.” But Isaac was wholly responsible as one that loved and feared Him. Then again did not Esau, when arrived at years of discretion, sell his birthright for one mess of food? And was not this profane act aggravated by indifference to that separateness which the chosen family were bound to maintain before Jehovah in the midst of the doomed races who possessed the land? His Hittite wives were bitterness of spirit to both parents: how sad that the father should now treat it so lightly The Holy Spirit puts the matter simply and livingly before us for our profit. Nor let us fail to adore our God for His wondrous patience. Let us delight in the wisdom of His ways, overruling carnal partiality which would make His word void, and securing His purpose, however faulty they were who remembered it. And as they resorted to unworthy expedients to correct the wrong and insure His promise, they each fell under His righteous chastening of their crooked policy. God loves dearly, but rebukes and chastises.

What a grief it is to one who feels for God and His saints to look on this household of faith reversing that godly order which long before characterized Abraham's in His estimate! “For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah to do righteousness and judgment, in order that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham what he hath spoken of him” (Gen. 18:19). Yet what He spoke of Abraham was the Seed of promise, and not only a great and mighty nation, but all the nations of the earth blessed in him. Now the type of that very Seed was oblivious save of present gratification of the flesh, and this with the intention of conveying the blessing to the profane line and away from the divinely designated heir! Again she who once turned her back on kin and country to become the bride of the father's only son and heir in distant Canaan, plotting against her husband, and teaching the true inheritor of the promises to cheat against the father's short-sighted folly! O what shame before God, men, and angels, even if we say not a word of him who hoped through his father's weakness to retrieve his hopes, ruined by his own rash and unbelieving self-seeking! But, if we anticipate, Isaac's words certainly filled Rebecca with alarm. Instead of inquiring of Jehovah as in days of more lively faith, she heard them now to devise her own wretched way of deceit, in order to defeat the wrong her husband had in mind to do. Esau meanwhile went, we may be sure with alacrity as unbounded as his surprise, to gratify his father after his own fashion, and regain what had seemed lost irreparably. But be not deceived. God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life eternal. Even if all faithlessly fail and receive rebuke from above in righteous government, God abides faithful; for He cannot deny Himself; and His word is as sure for the future as it has ever proved in the past and the present.

Isaac, Isaac: 26. Isaac at Beersheba: Genesis 26:23-35

Gen. 26:23-35

We cannot avoid seeing, at least when it is pointed out, how truly Isaac typifies the part of the Christian who is not of the world as Christ is not. He does not resist evil. Smitten on the right cheek, he presents the other also. He does not contend for the goods of which he was deprived, but when his cloak was taken away, he does not fight even for his coat. Neither Abraham nor Jacob was so tried, nor did their patience shine so eminently; the one fought for Lot (Gen. 14), the other for himself (Gen. 48), but never Isaac. The Christian, the church, has this call to suffer still more as a living principle, for which not only the Pagans of old taunted, but no less the skeptics who inherit their enmity.1 Christ was the perfect exemplar.

“And thence he went up to Beersheba. And Jehovah appeared to him the same night, and said, I [am] the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I [am] with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake. And he built an altar there, and called upon the name of Jehovah, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well. And Abimelech, and Ahuzzath his friend, and Phichol the captain of his host, went to him from Gerar. And Isaac said to them, Why are ye come to me, seeing ye hate me and have sent me away from you? And they said, We saw certainly that Jehovah is with thee; and we said, Let there now be an oath between us, between us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; that thou wilt do us no wrong, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done to thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou [art] now blessed of Jehovah. And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. And they rose early in the morning, and swore one to another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came and told him concerning the well that they had dug, and said to him, We have found water. And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

And Esau was forty years old, when he took as wife Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basmath daughter of Elon the Hittite; and they were bitterness of spirit to Isaac and Rebecca” (vers. 23-35).

Patience had a perfect work with Isaac. If the old wells were stopped up out of spite, if the new that were found excited envy and he contended not. Enmity on his side there was none. He departed when the ruler bade him, till at last a well was found beyond for which the opposing herdmen did not strive. Yet thence, however promising it looked, he went up to Beersheba; and Jehovah again appeared to him “the same night,” and bade him “fear not;” His presence and blessing were assured for Abraham's sake. And there a fresh spring was dug, where he raised an altar and pitched his tent.

Nor was this all. The very king with his friend and chief captain seek Isaac, not he them; and on his remonstrance own that they saw plainly that Jehovah was with Isaac, and seek an oath and covenant that he would do them no hurt, though they explained away their own shabby course. “Thou art now blessed of Jehovah.” Yes, this is emphatically Isaac's position, the Philistines themselves being judges. They came and paid homage at his feet, and acknowledged that Jehovah loved him. And as a prince he treated them with a feast and the pledges they sought; for indeed he desired their blessing, as will one day be fully in the Promised Seed to all the nations of the earth. And “the same day” a new well was found, which he called Shebah, and renewed the name of the old city adjoining.

But vers. 34, 35 reveal a bitter sorrow in sad contrast. Not content with despising his birthright, profane Esau took to him at mature age two daughters of Heth, to the grief of both his parents. Was this a man to receive or value the blessing of Jehovah? It was He Who was dishonored most by such a marriage, to say nothing of the family.

Isaac, Isaac: 25. Isaac up to Rehoboth: Genesis 26:17-22

Gen. 26:17-22

Gebab was a district as well as a town. When the patriarch removed from the king's neighborhood, it was still the same country, the valley or “torrent” of Gerar, a wady in our more modern term. At times of much rain a stream ran for a while through the valley.

“And Isaac departed, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac again (returned and) dug the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And the servants of Isaac dug in the valley and found there a well of living water. And the herdmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdmen, saying, Ours [is] the water. And he called the name of the well Esek (Strife), because they quarreled with him. And they dug another well; and they contended for that also; and he called the name of it Sitnah (Hatred). And he removed thence, and dug another well, and they strove not for that; and he called the name of it Rehoboth (Broadways); and said, For now hath Jehovah made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land” (vers. 17-22).

Neither sense of his own failure in the past depressed Isaac now, nor did the unmerited goodness of Jehovah puff him up. It was a pain, though it ought not to be a surprise, that the Philistines envied his prosperity; nor was it wonderful that Abimelech should gratify the popular feeling, and prompt his departure. But if he departed from their vicinity, he kept the word of the Lord and did not deny His name. Egypt was forever barred to him. He encamped in the valley of Gerar and dwelt there.

With none of the wandering fathers do we find wells of water so largely and conspicuously connected as with Isaac. This is manifestly characteristic. In that quarter of the earth they were of the greatest value. They were a needed and welcome part of his blessing here below, not so much for one that sowed and reaped abundantly, but in the possession of flocks and herds with a great retinue of servants, who suffered from the spite which sought to render useless what men did not need for themselves.

But the typical interest is no less instructive. Where but with Isaac should the pledge of spiritual use and refreshment be appropriately sought? The washing of water by the word, and yet more the fountain of water springing up unto life eternal, and the rivers of living water

flowing out richly, have we not this and more in the N.T. as the figure of the Holy Spirit's operations, now that the Son of God is come, redemption accomplished, and the Man (who is no less God) glorified consequently in heaven? What can be plainer than the fact here attested? What less worthy than for believers to allow that inspiration had no divine motive or end in recording such facts as these and very few others in the lowly and peaceful path of Isaac? He dug again the wells of water, dug in the days of his father: even this is reserved for the account of Isaac, and his perseverance in the face of that enmity which has its pleasure in opposing and destroying the unused good.

Another feature in the case it is well to notice, because the blatant skepticism of the hour, more audacious and malicious than Philistinian hatred, perverts it to dishonor God's word as well as to injure needy man. “He called their names after the names by which his father had called them:” a very natural and proper thing for any upright soul to do, and peculiarly suitable to such a son as Isaac showed himself uniformly to be.

But here in vers. 19-22 we hear also of wells unheard of before. “And Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of living water. And the herdmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours; and he called the name of the well Esek, because they quarreled with him.” Change of place does not see change in man. “And they dug another well, and they contended for that also; and he called the name of it Sitnah.” But Isaac did not change from that meekness which becomes the man of God, gentle to all, and forbearing to such as opposed themselves. Nor was his dependence on God without a speedy answer. For removing thence he dug another well, and they strove not for that; and he called the name of it Rehoboth, and said, as accounting for the name, “For now hath Jehovah made room for us; and we shall be fruitful in the land.” Contention was as far from his spirit, as ingratitude to the Almighty protector of him who must not strive. How is it with us? Do we indeed know that all things work together for good to them that love God? Do we give thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to Him that is God the Father?

Isaac, Isaac: 24. Isaac Blessed of Jehovah: Genesis 26:12-16

Gen. 26:12-16

It is well to note the manner of scripture. God does not need to vindicate His holy character, and still less does He attenuate or excuse the faults of His people. He demands and deserves our trust. He tells the unvarnished truth now of Isaac's prevarication, as before of Abraham's. He makes known the successive and humiliating reproofs of Philistine kings. On His part is no hiding of what man would have gladly ignored. The sin was too sadly true; and inspiration preserved the record for warning and profit at all times to His servants' shame but to His own glory. There He stops, leaving us to infer the inner exercises of Isaac. Yet striking is that which follows in the way of external blessing.

“And Isaac sowed in that land and found in the same year a hundredfold; and Jehovah blessed him. And the man became great, and went forward and grew great; until he became very great. And he had possession of flocks and possession of herds, and a great store of servants; and the Philistines envied him. And all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped them, and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said to Isaac, Go from us; for thou art become much mightier than we” (vers. 12-16).

Here it is the silence of scripture which we do well to heed. For nothing is told us of what must have passed in such a man's soul. Did he not review the unworthy cheat by which he sought to screen himself from danger at the cost of his wife? Was he not humbled by its just exposure by Abimelech? Isaac was a gracious and prayerful person, who knew what it is to meditate in the fields at eventide. Is it conceivable that one of such habits would fail to sit in judgment on his own deliberate untruth, stumbling to the world, dishonoring to his Almighty Protector, to his beloved wife, and to himself as a saint? His father's sin in the same way, ought it not to have admonished him all the more, instead of ensnaring him to follow so bad an example? Can, one doubt then, that the fear of Isaac (Gen. 31:42) wrought in his conscience to humble and to clear his spirit from guile.

God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. For he that sows unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that sows unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life eternal. Did not Isaac judge himself? How else can we understand the blessing vouchsafed in so marked a way and degree to the patriarch at this juncture? It was no doubt of an external sort; but so it is that Jehovah wrought of old, and thus did He act then. There was no longer a moral obstacle in the way. The defilement, even when publicly known, grace had removed. “And Isaac sowed in that land and found in the same year a hundredfold; and Jehovah blessed him. And the man became great and went forward, and grew until he became very great,” &c.

Isaac's increase, especially in the great year of famine, drew out the envy of his neighbors. Nor did stay there. The Philistines stopped with earth the wells dug before by Abraham's servants. But Isaac was a man of meek spirit. It was a felt loss to one whose household and herds were dependent on such supplies; it was no less insulting than injurious; but Isaac bowed before the wrong. “If when ye do good and suffer, ye shall endure it, this is acceptable [grace] with God.” None of the fathers manifested the passive virtues equally with Isaac. Even Abimelech failed to rebuke the unkindness and enmity. “Go from us,” said he, “for thou art become much mightier than we.” Even so, He Who is higher than the highest walked in His grace. Indeed it was His portion from a babe and onward, for Satan is “the prince of the world,” —the personal enemy of the Lord of glory. There was no room for the Son of God in the inn: was not the manger good enough for Him? But is the slight nothing in God's eyes? The reproach of Christ ought to be dear to the hearts of His own. Yet is it excellent discipline for the godly, if indeed they walk by faith, not by sight. They declare thereby that they belong to the One crucified on earth but glorified in heaven.

So the Lord in Matt. 5 opens the principles of the kingdom of heaven, that those who follow Him now may clearly know His mind till the Father's Kingdom come, and His will too is done on earth as it is in heaven. Then must evil vanish divinely and judicially, for unrighteousness shall disappear from the earth when the Lord reigns in power; it is His patience as yet. Hence for the present the enemy rules. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens; blessed they that mourn, for they shall be comforted; blessed the meek, for they shall inherit the earth; blessed they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. In the day that hastens, as Jehovah will govern manifestly, His people shall dwell at ease, and the oppressor be broken in pieces; the righteous, instead of suffering, shall flourish, with abundance of peace till the moon be no more. For the Great King shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him. Can contrast be more complete with what the Lord taught us to expect till that day? We shall know His sufferings, with the assured prospect of reigning with Him then, as the Epistles no less than the

Gospels and the Revelation so amply and plainly attest to him that has ears to hear. For the world it will be Jehovah reigning as could not be now.

Isaac, Isaac: 23. Isaac in Gerar: Genesis 26:6-11

Genesis 26:6-11

What candor is in scripture! How truly divine Isaac was saved from going down into Egypt, whither famine had driven his father. He was guided so as to be a suited type of Him Who is now for us only in heaven. But he sinned in Gerar, as Abraham sinned before him. This ought to have been to him a solemn admonition, if he had remembered it as he ought in God's presence. Out of it the failure of one we love becomes a snare to repeat it, and it may be an excuse as not pretending to be better.

“And Isaac dwelt in Gerar. And the men of the place asked him about his wife. And he said, She [is] my sister; for he feared to say, My wife, lest the men of the place slay me on account of Rebecca; because she was fair in countenance. And it came to pass when he had been there some time, that Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out of the window and saw, and, behold, Isaac [was] sporting with Rebecca his wife. And Abimelech called Isaac and said, Behold, she [is] certainly thy wife; and how saidst thou, She [is] my sister? And Isaac said to him, Because I said, Lest I die for her. And Abimelech said, What [is] this thou hast done to us? Lightly might one of the people have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought on us a trespass. And Abimelech charged all the people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely (dying) be put to death” (vers. 6-11).

For the Christian it is the sure proof of a low and earthly state of soul to palliate a lie by toning it down to “incorrect speech.” One thus panders to the world's code of honor, where the truth is unknown, and an impeachment of veracity, however certain, demands wiping out with blood. Still more deplorable is the delusion which plays into the enemy's hand, as if no saint can be guilty of lying. Even the N. T. warns of the danger in Epistles such as those to the saints in Ephesus and Colosse, which treat of the highest privileges of the church. “Wherefore putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each with his neighbor; for we are members one of another.” “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.” The repeated warning proves how readily it might be even among the best taught. Only ignorance or worldliness could think otherwise. In fact it is recorded for our admonition that such was the first sin after the great Pentecost.

But it is intolerable to compare or class with lying any mistakes of inadvertency or hearsay, particularly when there is care to correct them after the facts are better known. The essence of lying is the wish to deceive, whatever the motive; which may be to exalt self or to injure another, to evade through fear or to gain a desired end. There is no difficulty in discerning where the eye is single. Even the least esteemed or those of no account in the church are quite capable of judging matters of wrong or falsehood, though it would be absurd to expect from such a sound judgment on deeper questions. But as the O. T. does not hide or extenuate the fathers, so the N. T. lets us know how far in this very way might fall an honored apostle, who trusted himself and let drop the warning words of the Lord.

Is it not a most humbling element presented in Isaac's case as in Abraham's, that a saint may sink below the world's standard of morality? The king of the Philistines reproved Isaac for untruthfulness, and this in exposing that wife to dishonor and his own people to guiltiness; as either he or probably his predecessor had similarly denounced the same case of deceit in Abraham, made yet worse by his previous failure in a like way with Pharaoh in Egypt. Had Isaac borne all holily in mind, it must have proved a safeguard by grace, instead of a cloak for the flesh yielding through unbelieving terror. Let ourselves now see to it that we profit by the written word all the more, because He Who is the truth, now fully revealed, makes all such failure appear in its full heinousness.

There is an added element in the untruth of Abraham and of Isaac: the betrayal of the relationship of their wives Sarah and Rebecca by their own shortsighted selfishness. How blessed is the contrast of Christ, as the Husband of Israel, and the Bridegroom of the church! Compare Num. 30.

Isaac, Isaac: 22. Jehovah Appears to Isaac: Genesis 26:1-5

Gen. 26:1-5

The chapter opens with the account of Isaac tried by “famine in the land,” as Abraham had been a hundred years before. It was meant to put faith to the proof passingly, as the Canaanite then in the land tried it permanently. But well did father and son know that the time had not arrived for possession. For this the object of their hope must come in power; and the prospect of Christ's day, we may be assured, filled the heart of Isaac with joy, as we are expressly told of Abraham (John 8:56). Meanwhile they were content to dwell in the land of promise, as not their own, looking for the coming glory, not on earth only but in heaven too. Here therefore they bowed to whatever tribulation God might send. We shall see, however, distinctions as interesting as they are instructive.

“And there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine which was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines to Gerar. And Jehovah appeared to him and said, Go not down to Egypt: dwell in the land that I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land; and I will be with thee and bless thee; for to thee and to thy seed I will give all these lands; and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham thy father. And I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and to thy seed I will give all these lands; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws” (vers. 1-5).

Here we have Isaac's distinctive trial of faith. Abraham was called to get out of his land and from his kindred and from his father's house to the land that Jehovah would show him, as He did. But Isaac was charged not to leave, but to sojourn in that land. This had its own difficulties, which grace does not spare. Blessed is the man that endures temptation or trial; for having been proved, he shall receive the crown of life which He promised to those that love Him, and meanwhile the proving of our faith works patience. Isaac accordingly, expressly forbidden by

Jehovah, did not go down into Egypt even under the pressure of famine in the land. Abraham, as we know, did go; but there he dishonored Jehovah, his wife, and himself, however rich he became in consequence.

Personally Abraham was a man of faith far more thoroughly than his son. And the son was forbidden where no interdict was laid on the father. Isaac was called, whatever it might cost, to abide in the land, and not go down to Egypt. The land, as all know, typifies heavenly places, as he does Christ, dead, risen, and in heaven, though the Philistines were there as yet uncleared.

This is the trial now. If we have been given to know that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, our responsibility is to walk worthily of the call wherewith we were called with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love. It is in this very association that we are prepared to face the sharpest trial. We must expect to be visited by every wind of that teaching which is in the trickery of men, in craft for the systematizing of error; but we are exhorted to be truthful in love and grow up unto Him in all things, Who is the Head, Christ. Our conflict is not against blood and flesh, like Israel in their day, but against principalities, against authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies. For this reason we need to take to us the panoply of God; and withal we need to pray at all seasons with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance. Our exposure is all the more because our blessing is of the highest: just as Isaac was the object of incomparable favor then, and called to abide where he was.

So are the saints now. What can match their revealed and blessed relationship? Is it possible to conceive greater privileges? Nothing is easier than to despise the pleasant land, and to cast longing eyes on Egypt. There flourish the resources of the world, the incentives to flesh, the pleasures of sin for a season. In the land such attractions are not; there was a famine as to all that feeds nature. But the word to those whose blessing lay in Canaan is, Go not down to Egypt: dwell in the land that I will tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee and bless thee.

We are diligently to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also we were called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in us all. Far beyond the oath to Abraham is our security, far beyond the lands of Israel or earth is our inheritance, though we rest on the same One Who is the Seed of blessing for them and all the nations; and we boast a Father infinitely above their father Abraham.

Isaac, Isaac: 21. The Sons, Esau and Jacob: Genesis 25:27-34

Gen. 25:27-34

Now the difference in life and manners in the two sons was an issue of deep moment for each, and a warning for every reader who needs God's grace.

“And the boys grew; and Esau became a man skillful in hunting, a man of the field, and Jacob an upright man dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau because venison was to his taste (or, in his mouth), and Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob boiled a dish (or, boiling), and Esau came in from the field, and he [was] faint. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, pray, with the red—the red thing there, for I [am] faint. Therefore they called his name Edom. And Jacob said, Sell to-day thy birthright to me? And Esau said, Behold, I am going to die, and what [is] this birthright to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me to-day, and he swore to him; and sold his birthright to Jacob. And Jacob gave to Esau bread and the dish of lentiles; and he ate and drank and rose up and went away: thus Esau despised the birthright” (vers. 27-34).

As the boys grew, it became plain that Esau had no faith, and that Jacob had. The life, far more truly than the lips, indicated where the heart turned and where the treasure lay. Of those from whom they sprang, it is written that “all of these died in faith,” or according to faith. They had not received the things prescribed; from afar they saw and saluted them, confessing thereby that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth (or, land), of which dwelling in tents was an express token (Heb. 11:9, 13). It was not so with Esau. He had no relish for the believing and expectant posture of the patriarchs. He threw off all the lessons inculcated by the life and confession of his father and his grandfather. Nimrod was his prototype, not Abraham; still less was He the Object, Who shone before the eyes of all the elders that obtained testimony in the power of faith. He chose and gave himself up to the exciting pursuits of the chase; he became a man skilled in hunting, a man of the field. He was bent on visible and present gratification, finding his pleasure in its vicissitudes, in its demand on craft and resources of every kind, and even in its occasional dangers as well as its successes. As with that rebel whom he thus far emulated, God was not in any of his thoughts. What cared he for that bright expectation of victory over the power of evil, through One more than man Who should nevertheless come of woman and taste of the sharpest suffering though triumphant? The unseen was nothing to Esau, whose heart was filled with his own things of every day, catching and killing the animals without reason.

Jacob, on the other hand, could be described as an upright man dwelling in tents. He was an heir, with Isaac and with Abraham, of the same promise. The like faith produced like fruit. He waited for the city that has the foundations, beyond all that earth can furnish, of which God is artificer and master-maker, or demiurge. He had not a little to watch and contend against in his natural ways; but he looked beyond present scenes and so was kept from living according to motives of self-will with no object above the earth. His walk was feeble compared with Abraham, and checkered compared with Isaac. Still he could say ere he departed that God tended him all his life long, and that His Angel redeemed him from all evil. Esau could not and did not speak of any such shepherd care, of which he never felt the need and would have been ashamed. The earth as it is was his one field of enjoyment, and its wild creatures the object of his skilled toils. The future of divine glory was no more to his heart than a dream that is told. But Jacob, faulty as he was, did prove the watchful and gracious care of God now, and wait for “that day.” It is this only which gives integrity before God, without which “dwelling in tents” had been no more than to the Bedouin; but with him it was the mark of his pilgrim character and hopes.

Alas! the faults of children often betray the carelessness or worse of their parents. Partialities, as in ver. 29, may be natural; but they bring inevitable chastening. A parent on the one hand may like a character the most distant from his own, as we see here Isaac did; or there may be preference given to one that resembles, as appears in Rebecca. They had been more blessed and more a blessing, if they had commanded their children with vigilant love in faith, as Jehovah said of Abraham in Gen. 18:19. Here the inspiring Spirit had a humbling tale to tell, as we

learn the retribution in God's moral government.

Passing hunger led to the gravest results. Jacob sod a pottage of lentiles the day when Esau returned faint and famished (ver. 29). This gave the occasion. Jacob earnestly sought that title which to his forefathers and his descendants was bound up with blessing; and he knew that his brother had no such value for it. He therefore availed himself of Esau's need to strike the bargain. “Feed me, pray, with the red, that there,” said the spent hunter. “Sell me to-day thy birthright,” eagerly replied the unbelieving believer.

Thus Esau, ever open to the present, agreed and swore to it (30-33).

“And Jacob gave Esau bread and the pottage (or, dish) of lentiles; and he ate and drank and rose up and went his way,” with the simple and solemn comment, “thus Esau despised his birthright.”

No doubt, the edge of his appetite was keen, and the dish before his eyes was tempting to the hungry hunter. But had he no father that loved him, no mother to pity and provide? Blame Jacob as you will for seizing the opportunity for what he valued if Esau did not. And this was now evident: no hunger and thirst for him an hour longer. “That red there” he must have at once, cost what it might. Let others be for Christ's sake “in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings, in cold and nakedness.” What was that to one who lived only to please himself? He could not fast another hour. “Behold, I am going to die, and what is this birthright to me?”

Ishmael, the bond-servant's son, was evil enough. Born of the flesh only, he persecuted him that was born after the Spirit; he mocked the son and heir of Abraham born under circumstances which pointed to God's intervention for all who believe. But Esau was all the more guilty because according to prayer and prophecy he was born of the heir of promise, with whatever of advantage over Jacob that an earlier birth could give. Was not he equally with Jacob brought up in the familiar sound of God's word and ways as far as this is known? But tried in a way which to a hunter should have been comparatively light, and with resources at hand which never had failed, and which it would be monstrous to conceive could fail his urgent need, he deliberately sold his own birthright “for one meal” (Heb. 12:16), and thus incurred from the Holy Spirit the awful stigma of a “profane person.”

Isaac, Isaac: 20. The Generations of Isaac: Genesis 25:19-26

Gen. 25:19-26

As we have had occasion to remark in scripture, the Spirit briefly notices the fleshly claim before giving us what is of grace: not first the spiritual but the natural; afterward the spiritual. We have had Ishmael's generations of much and speedy show; now we hear of Isaac's.

“And these [are] the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begot Isaac. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebecca as wife, daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-Aram, sister of Laban the Syrian. And Isaac entreated Jehovah for his wife, because she [was] barren; and Jehovah was entreated of him, and Rebecca his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If so, why [am] I thus (or, do I live?)? And she went to inquire of Jehovah. And Jehovah said to her, Two nations [are] in thy womb, and two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels; and [one] people shall be stronger than [the other] people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, twins [were] in her womb. And the first came out red all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out; and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob; and Isaac [was] sixty years old when she bore them” (vers. 19-26).

It is of God that faith should be tried. The promise is sure; but the believer has to wait for it. Ishmael can boast of his twelve sons, with names soon notable by their villages, if not “towns,” and by their encampments, if not castles. Isaac mourned for a mother beloved, and had not a wife provided for him, till he was forty years old. Even then he abides childless some twenty years. “And Isaac entreated Jehovah for his wife, because she was barren; and Jehovah was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.” As Abraham knew that “in Isaac should his seed be called,” yet staggered not at God's call to offer him up for a Burnt-offering, assured that this very Isaac would be given back to him and continue the line of blessing, so Isaac had His word securing the call inalienably in himself, the type of the promised Seed on Whom all hangs. It was grace; but grace revealed the channel through which the blessing was to flow, and this drew out his prayers, while patience had its perfect work. Isaac therefore entreated Jehovah, and Jehovah was entreated of Isaac. The trial of his faith was far from being so searching as Abraham's. It was suited to each in divine wisdom. Strong faith shone in the father, gracious dependence in the son, to the praise of God in the blessing of both.

We may notice too that Isaac and Rebekah were kept from the snare that involved Abraham and especially Sarah in the grief which impatience brought into their home. In Rebekah's case there was no thought of building up the desired heir to Isaac by a concubine; nor did he on his part look to so fleshly a device. Conjugal faithfulness and purity in the main characterized the pair. They hoped for the promised boon which for so long they saw not; but with patience they waited for it, and not in vain. Isaac did not faint, but besought Jehovah according to His promise, and he was heard in due time.

There were to be twins. And the children gave anticipative token to their mother, as we are told, for her trial, so that she too went to inquire of Jehovah. Who can overlook the propriety with which the name of covenant relationship is here employed? All intrinsic value is lost by the supposition that it is due to an accidental occurrence of that designation; it is really divine purpose clothing the account with the title of moral government. Nor is there any ground to fancy that she consulted Melchizedek or journeyed to Moriah. Without either she knew where to find Jehovah and how to inquire of Him. Her faith might be weak, but it was real, and without superstitious dependence on any man or place.

Here was Jehovah's answer (ver. 23): “Two nations are in thy womb, and two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels; and people shall be stronger than people; and the elder shall serve the younger.” Predestination as to their history on earth is manifest here. It is made all the more striking, because the babes yet unborn were of the same mother as well as father, nay twins. So it is that the apostle in Rom. 9:10-12 deduces the truth intended. “But Rebekah also having conceived by one, Isaac our father, (for [the children] being not yet born, nor having done anything good or worthless, that the purpose of God according to election might abide, not of works, but of him that calleth) it was said to her, The elder shall serve the younger.” Divine sovereignty was thus shown to be as free as it is certain to faith. Fleshly descent on which

the Jews founded their exclusive title is disproved; expressly and assuredly of Esau. For here flesh is excluded most distinctly, and the title is drawn from Jehovah's sovereign pleasure. His word made it all the more pointed by declaring that “the elder should serve the younger,” and this in view of their future nations respectively.

The details of fact follow. Esau appeared first, full of evident vigor; Jacob afterward, with his hand holding Esau's heel, which gave his name of supplanter before he had power with God. But it is meet, whatever appearances say, that God should have His way, not man; and if man resists, it is to his own sorrow, shame, and ruin. We perhaps may say of Jacob, that God placed more abundant honor on that which lacked. Is our eye evil because His is good?

Isaac, Isaac: 19. The Generations of Ishmael: Genesis 25:12-18

Gen. 25:12-18

In scripture family connection is noticed by the Holy Spirit according to the well known principle stated by the apostle (1 Cor. 15:46): not first that which is spiritual, but that which is natural. As we have had the progeny sprung from Keturah, and Isaac in his distinct place, so now we have the sons of Ishmael before the line of promise.

“And these [are] Ishmael's generations, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's bondwoman, bore to Abraham. And these [are] the names of Ishmael's sons by their names according to their generations: Ishmael's firstborn, Nebaioth, and Kedar and Adbeel and Mibsam and Mishma and Dumah and Massa, Hadar and Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. These [are] Ishmael's sons, and these their names in their villages and in their encampments, twelve princes according to their peoples. And these [are] the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years; and he expired and died, and was gathered to his people. And they dwelt from Havilah to Shur which [is] before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria. He settled (or, died, lit. fell) before all his brethren” (vers. 12-18), or, it may be, “to the east of all his brethren.”

Flesh has its privileges speedily. Already was the beginning of what Jehovah's angel prepared Hagar to expect, “I will multiply thy seed exceedingly that it shall not be numbered for multitude.” Jehovah hearkened to her affliction, and could not forget Abraham. Ishmael was to be a wild-ass man, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he should dwell before or in face of all his brethren (chap. 16:10-12). This too, as we may easily find out, has been precisely fulfilled from the beginning till now. But yet more minutely as a proximate fact, the pledge of all to follow, in chap. 17 had God said, “For Ishmael I have heard thee: behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will very greatly multiply him. Twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation” (20). So it was now. They are enumerated in their order, as later (chap. 28:9) we read of Ishmael's daughter Mahalath, Nebaioth's sister, whom Esau took to wife, besides those of Canaan.

For scripture clearly shows us the government of God providentially, and outside His covenant, in the same books which reveal the dealings of His electing grace. Nor is it the Jews only who are prone to overlook it. Unbelief rises up against God in this as in all else. Yet His word abides worthy of all trust to whatever it applies. No more graphic a sketch was ever drawn than is given of Ishmael's posterity in the words cited. “Who hath sent out the wild-ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the onager? whose house I have made the wilderness, and the salt land his dwelling-place. He scorneth the tumult of the city, neither heareth he the shoutings of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth for every green thing” (Job 39:5-8). Such exactly are the Bedouins. No sober Christian supposes a perpetual miracle as to Ishmael, but that what God said of that race is as sure as what He said of Israel, no less than of Babylon, Medo-Persia, the Greek power, or the Roman.

No skeptical ingenuity then avails to shake the certainty that Ishmael's singular lot stands revealed from early days. The meaning of Gen. 16:12 is as plain as it is striking, and as applicable to-day as for thousands of years past. This is not true of any other notable people. Compare the Egyptians, the Assyrians, or the Israelites: what differing changes have they not each and all experienced? How little if at all has the Bedouin altered? Cushites have settled here or there in Arabia, or passed across the Arabic gulf to the opposite coast of Africa. Joktanites in varied lines may still abide, especially in the South and the West; but their characteristics are by no means akin. The stamp of Ishmael is unmistakable in the North and East, as well as elsewhere; and the wild-ass marks him indelibly now as of old. Exceptions there may have been in the long tract of ages that have elapsed, but mostly affecting the nomad Arabs, in Yemen far more than where they pitched their tents, but also as to Mecca and Medina; as well as for a while in the North. But these seizures are allowed to have been temporary and local. “The body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies; the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia; the present sovereign of the Turks may exercise a shadow of jurisdiction, but his pride is reduced to solicit the friendship of a people, which it is dangerous to provoke and fruitless to attack.”

It is easy to say that the obvious causes of their freedom are inscribed on the character and country of the Arabs. But God only could and did reveal their course from their earliest progenitor. The same unbelief which attributes Christianity to natural causes seeks to explain away the interest God felt about Abraham's offspring, even outside His covenant, and His expression of it in His word. The believer enjoys His communications and is grateful to the enlargement of heart and mind, as unbelief reaps darkness increasingly and death. It is good to own Him, Who is not only the Highest and only true God, but our Father in that gift of His love, His written word: whatever be its subject matter, it is worthy of Himself. And if in the O.T. He speaks of outward things and His moral government, are we not to appreciate His condescension?

Isaac, Isaac: 18. Abraham Dead and Isaac Blessed: Genesis 25:7-11

Gen. 25:7-11

We have seen the death of Sarah followed by the call of the bride. It was no longer to be “our mother,” free as she was, but the type of the church, the Lamb's wife. The dead and risen Heir of all things has a spouse called out from the world and brought into that which figures the heavenlies. The mystery or secret is great, says the apostle, “but I speak as to Christ, and as to the church,” its two parts. Though the grace

and the glory were intrinsically His only, yet are we called all the more to rejoice; for we delight that the worth is His alone, and this gives all our security to God's glory.

Now we have another weighty and honored link of the past removed.

“And these [are the] days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, a hundred years and seventy years and five years. And Abraham expired and died in a good old age, an old man and full, and was gathered to his people. And Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in Ephron's field, son of Zohar the Hittite, which [is] before Mamre, the field which Abraham bought of the sons of Heth: there was buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife. And it came to pass after Abraham's death that God blessed Isaac his son; and Isaac dwelt at Beerlahai-roi” (vers. 7-11).

Here it is the depositary of promise who departs this life. For many years what had there been of divine moment to record? He was given, comparatively long before, a great place in sending his servant, honored and trusted in the highest degree, to call and conduct the God-appointed bride for his son. And the son was not only in a new standing since the day of Moriah but exclusively associated with the heavenly land. Promise now, like covenant before, fades away before the brighter light of the mystery and its special relationship. The progenitors of many nations who had Abraham as their father as to the flesh were born, owned, given suitable gifts, and while he lived sent away, that Isaac might abide the undisputed heir of all that he had. Now in a good old age Abraham too must expire and die. The new things were to receive their honor without a rival.

Little is said of Abraham's funeral, save to mark the link with Sarah's grave, of which the Holy Spirit made so much in chap. 23. It had its just place for loving remembrance. Faith looks onward to the true hope for “the elders” also. It is the resurrection from out of the dead, which will be the portion of all the righteous departed. Groundless is the unbelief which imagined them in gloom, insensibility, or any other lack, unworthy of His grace Who watched in love over their feeble pilgrimage for His name here below. The love of Him Who in due time became flesh and died for their sins and ascended on high in resurrection life was no transient thing but eternal. Still their resurrection at His coming, so as to be not only with Him but like Him where He is, will be a blessed accession for them as well as for Him to God's praise; and for this they wait in assured hope and full of glory.

As things were, there could be no spiritual sympathy between Isaac and the others who boasted to be of Abraham's seed. But it is here told us that “Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah,” in the field Abraham had purchased of Ephron, where Sarah lay already. The son of the bondmaid was in no way forbidden thus to honor his parent. “Cast out” he must be and was in presence of the child of promise; yet fleshly relationship has its place, and the son of the free in no way disputes it, but is gracious. The feelings of the two before God may have been as widely different as spirit and flesh, by which they were respectively characterized; but there at least around the grave they were together in the sorrow of bereavement, and in loving memory of him who was gathered to his people, “the friend of God.”

The conclusion of the statement here vouchsafed is that after this God blessed Isaac, the son of the deceased patriarch; and that he dwelt at Beer-lahai-roi, the well of the living one that seeth me. Thus Isaac left alone (of the fellow-heirs before him of the same promise) has this marked distinction—God blessing him: a precious reality in a world of curse through sin; and this not in the general form which was extended to those that sprang from Abraham, but as the heir. But there is the remarkable fact noted that he dwelt at the spot first designated by a fountain of water in the wilderness, where Hagar was found of Jehovah's angel, who told her of Ishmael's birth and singular destiny. Indeed He is a God that sees, as surely as He lives. But how different the path which awaited Ishmael and Isaac Here Jehovah heard Hagar's affliction; here God blessed Isaac, already blessed on a still higher plane and with better blessings in hope.

Isaac, Isaac: 17. The Heir: Genesis 25:1-6

Gen. 25:1-6

We may not now meditate on all this closing scene of Abraham's life, for we are occupied with Isaac. Yet it presents not a little of interest in itself, and in its bearing on eastern races who are to play their part in the glorious days of the future kingdom as they have in the past. Whatever tradition says otherwise, Keturah was not a bond-maid like Hagar, nor was she mother of the promised seed, but of six sons born to the father of the faithful.

“And Abraham took another wife, and her name [was] Keturah. And she bore him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. And Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan; and Dedan's sons were Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim; and Midian's sons, Ephah and Epher and Enoch and Abidah and. Eldaah: all these [were] Keturah's sons. And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac; and to the sons of the concubines that Abraham had Abraham gave gifts, and, while he yet lived, sent them away from Isaac his son, eastward to the east country” (vers. 1-6).

To none was Abraham indifferent, nor the God of Abraham who will remember them in the coming era of earth's joy and blessedness. But Isaac has a place altogether distinctive. To the rest Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, to whom he “gave all that he had.”

Thus Isaac stands before us typically as the manifest heir of all things (Heb. 1:2). This title of course belongs only in its full sense to Jesus the Son of God. As the Creator of all, it is meet that He should inherit all (Heb. 1); and through redemption and purchase (Heb. 2) He will take all in the day of displayed glory, as the exalted Son of man. He who humbled Himself as none else ever could is beyond all crowned with glory and honor: though now given, we do not yet see all things put under Him. But unseen of man He has already this supremacy in place and title according to Psa. 8:6 (7) thrice referred to in the N.T.; a supremacy so universal that He only is excepted Who subjected all things to Him. God left nothing unsubjected to Christ, as attested by His actual seat on the throne of God, the Father's throne. But this is quite distinct from the intimation of Psa. 110:2, &c. when the Lord will reign on His own throne and actively subjugate all the enemies whom Jehovah will have made His footstool. For the Lord it is who shall rule in the midst of His enemies and strike through kings in the day of His wrath. It is an evident contrast with all He is doing now at the right hand of the Majesty on high, where till that day He sits during this day of salvation by grace.

It is seasonable to recall here the specific use in the Epistles made of the citation from Psa. 8, where the glorious result of the Son of man's humiliation, announced there for Israel's instruction and joy, is set in the full light of God's final revelation. 1 Cor. 15 fixes the time and the condition. It is when not only Christ is raised from the dead, but they that are Christ's at His coming. The resurrection of the saints precedes the kingdom there described as dealing with all the enemies, even to annulling death, last enemy though it be. It is the proper work of the risen Man, Who, when all things shall have been actually subjected to Him, will Himself be subjected to Him that subjected all things to Him, giving up the kingdom to Him that is God and Father, that God [Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] may be all in all.

In Eph. 1:22 The same words are applied to Christ in His present exaltation as given to be Head over all things to the church which is His body. It is not here the risen Man, with those raised at His coming that are His, reigning to the subdual of the last foe, but the mystery about Christ and about the church, the mystery in unique greatness of Christ set over all things heavenly and earthly, and the church united to Him in that supremacy after the nearest sort, He the Head, she the body.

Heb. 2:5-9 completes the divine picture. Here the words from Psa. 8 are again employed to show that the glorification of the Lord Jesus is the pledge of their future fulfillment as a whole, when all things shall be seen put under Him. Also the habitable earth to come is not for angels to reign over. All the universe will be put under the Son of man, as surely as we see Him already crowned.

Thus we have in the last scripture the blessed fact on which Christianity depends that the once-suffering Son of man is exalted to the highest seat in heavenly glory, the assuring proof that in due time all things shall be seen, as they are not yet seen, to be put under Him. Next, the intermediate scripture lets us know that meanwhile the church is made one with Him, as the body with its Head, sharing His exaltation over all things. Hence the delay; because, as we are all aware, the body is being now formed while He is seated and waiting in the heavens. The first scripture accordingly explains that at His coming we shall be raised and like Him, in order to join the risen Lord in reigning with Him over all things, when He undertakes to reduce to subjection all the enemies which are made His footstool. For He will not reign alone. He, the Heir of all things, has joint-heirs; as it is written in Rom. 8, the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God; and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [Him], that we may be glorified together with [Him]. For as Heb. 10:12, 13 shows, after having offered one sacrifice for sins, He in perpetuity sat down on God's right hand, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made a footstool of His feet. Having suffered all and done all for His friends, He will then trample down His foes, while His own reign with Him in glory.

Jacob, Jacob: 1. Jacob Born and Young

Jacob: Jacob Born and Young

Gen. 25:30-34

If scripture speaks briefly of Isaac, it has much to say of Jacob, as it had not a little of Abraham. Yet the difference between the divine accounts of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is marked and instructive. The grandfather was preeminently a man of faith, in whom God's call was conspicuous, head of a chosen race, as Adam of mankind. Isaac was distinctively the son of Sarah the freewoman; “in Isaac shall thy seed be called,” Abraham's child and heir. In wandering Jacob, supplanter of Esau yet wrestler of God, His merciful purposes for the earthly people appear in their rich and striking variety. Jacob gives occasion to the exercise of God's sovereignty as to the twin children of Isaac and Rebekah. For they being not yet born, nor having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him that calls, it was said to their mother, The elder shall serve the younger. It had been shown before in casting out the bondwoman and her son; but so it was now far more emphatically in Jacob chosen, not Esau. No flesh shall glory; in Jehovah certainly, as it ought to be. Is man only to think and talk of his rights? Sinful man! Has God alone no rights? Is He to be a mere register of man's wrongs? Ah! his wrongs, not rights: this is the truth, as no believer should forget from the dawn of a vital work in his soul.

Without dwelling long, we may notice the youth of Isaac's sons, already traced in the sketch given of their father. Esau did not become a sojourner in the land of promise; but, being at home there and without a heavenly hope, he made the early career of Nimrod his own, if he never thought of him. From the outset he was as unlike Abraham as one of the family line could be. His love of excitement and of reckless adventure made him despise the parental circle, and the monotonous duty of caring for the herds and the flocks. Others might look for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God; but it had not the least place in Esau's heart. For him the present life was all, and the chase in particular as giving scope to courage and address in overcoming difficulties and gaining personal distinction. Therefore was he a cunning hunter, a man of the field; whereas Jacob was a homely or quiet man, dwelling in tents, with warm domestic affections; and he valued too the link with God, though with a heart as yet little if at all cleansed by faith. So the history appears to intimate for many a day.

But those who seek their pleasures without a thought of God like Esau do not find their own path free from the world's sorrow. And his extremity became Jacob's opportunity. The cunning hunter came in from the field without his venison, hungry and faint; and the keen edge of appetite, so whetted yet foiled, made him the more sensitive to the dish of red lentils which Jacob had cooked. And so he, who at other times would have been too proud to ask a favor of his brother, whom he heartily despised as a milksop, stoops to beg: “Feed me, I pray thee, with the red—the red there, for I am faint.” Quick as thought, without prayer to God, but full of that which his mind at least prized, Jacob makes his bargain: “Sell me now (or, first) thy birth-right.” Truly it was the “worm Jacob,” and different indeed from the “Israel” of a later day. But Scripture tells the truth; and the two men were seen as they really were “Behold,” said Esau, “I am going to die, and of what use can the birth-right be to me?” Why so impatient? Could he not hold out a quarter of an hour? The mother's tent was near; could he not wait long enough to ask of them who had never refused his cry of need—never put him off with a stone or a serpent?

No; he must have the tempting food on the instant. In his impetuous haste and self-will it seemed death to wait a few moments longer. Alas! Jacob took advantage of it; and brought in God, whom he himself was selfishly slighting, to bind Esau who had no fear of Him whatever: “Swear to me first.” And he did swear to sell his birth-right to Jacob. How fleshly the act on both sides! Instead of securing Jacob in the sight of God, it was part of those evil days on which he had to look back with shame and sorrow when grace really governed his soul. And it could do no more than widen the gulf between the brothers, rankling as it might, and not unnaturally, in his heart who was drawn into the oath by the pressure of a passing need. So Jacob gave his bread and dish of lentils; and Esau “eat and drank, and rose up and went his way” in the

graphic terms of the history, with the solemn comment: “so Esau despised his birth-right.” What great moral principles are for us in these apparently simple tales of domestic life in early days! Let us not, like unbelievers, leave God out of the account: none can, save to his irreparable loss.

Abraham, the Friend of God, Abraham: Genesis 25:1-10

The first part of the chapter, comprehended in these verses, gives us the closing scenes of Abraham's eventful and instructive history. The Jewish tradition which identifies Keturah with Hagar is not only without proof but set aside by verse 6, which speaks of “the sons of the concubines which Abraham had;” and as Hagar was one, so Keturah was the other, not (as I think) to imply that she filled this relation during any part of Sarah's life, but rather to affirm her inferiority of place. Keturah is expressly called Abraham's “concubine” in 1 Chron. 1:32; as Hagar, on the other hand, is styled his “wife” in Gen. 16:3. Nor need we revert to the Gentile difficulty, that sons were begotten of Abraham after Sarah's death, which has induced not a few of old as now1 to believe that Abraham took Keturah during Sarah's lifetime, and that the whole paragraph, if not chapter, is placed out of its chronological sequence in order not to break the main narrative. Proof of this is wanting, as the whole paragraph flows naturally, after Rebekah's marriage with Isaac, up to the several portions of the sons, as distinguished from the heir, and the death of the patriarch which was severed from Sarah's by at least thirty-seven years.

“Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.” (Vers. 16.)

Here then we see, after the call of the bride, the blessing of nations associated with Abraham. It is a very distinct thing from that which faith receives now; for they which are of faith, the same are the children [sons of Abraham. It is now a blessing open to all or any of the nations; and they are blessed with faithful Abraham. Through the cross the blessing comes to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith; and as Christ is dead and risen, and thus the accomplisher as well as object and crown of the promises, so there is no Jew nor Greek. Fleshly distinctions disappear. All are one in Christ Jesus. In that which is typified by the concubines' sons to Abraham we see the strongest possible contrast with Isaac. Midian may be there, and Jokshan, with the rest; perhaps Sheba and Dedan, Ephah, the sons' sons. All these were Keturah's children.

Still it is written that “Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.” The risen son is the heir of all things; and if we are of Christ, then are we Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise. But unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham, had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away. They receive gifts, not the inheritance of the promises; and they are sent away, instead of abiding in the house forever, as does the son.

So it will be in the age to come on earth, when, the church being completed, the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready. Blessing will flow, and the land of the morning will be no longer “the immovable east.” I do not speak of Israel, the head of the nations under Christ's reign here below; still less of the glorified saints on high; nor do I mean only those that may then be born of God in every nation or people or tribe under the sun. But all the Gentiles are to rejoice with His people—a principle more deeply true, doubtless, in the present election for heaven from among Jews and Gentiles, but to be far more openly and widely seen in that bright day; and this, too, even in that quarter of the globe where dark superstitions of Christendom grow up rank, and side by side, with the Mahometan imposture and heathenism of every type.

"And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre; the field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.” (Vers. 710.)

Thus peacefully passed away the man who, of all in Old Testament story, most strikingly combines the title of “friend of God” with “stranger and sojourner on the earth.” Not that others—his son, grandson, and other descendants—did not carry on the blessed line of pilgrims who also walked with God. As a whole, however, what saint of old equaled him in these respects? Still less could any be said to surpass “the father of all them that believe."

Let us not at the same time forget that we have to do, not so much with the promises as he had, but with accomplishment in Christ (Rom. 4); and that, whatever promises of God there be, in Christ is the yea, and in Christ the amen, for glory to God by us. We are more than Abraham's seed, being blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. 1:8.) Sovereign grace alone accounts for a purpose so rich and above the thoughts of men or even the ancient oracles of God. Do we believe it for our own souls and for all that are Christ's? Do we walk and worship accordingly as we wait for Him from heaven?

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Isaac, Isaac: 16. The Meeting and the Marriage: Genesis 24:61-67

Gen. 24:61-67

How can one be surprised that the Holy Spirit dwells on circumstances such as those we have considered, if they prefigured the call of the bride the Lamb's wife? It is ever and justly a matter of the utmost spiritual interest for all but the thoughtless. What could this be to God if

meant to typify the consummation of His Son's love to the church? What of wonder, love, and joy did He not intend for us who read it in the communion with His mind and His grace which faith gives to those so directly and deeply concerned? Here it is pursued to the close.

“And Rebecca arose, and her maids, and they rode upon the camels and followed the man; and the servant took Rebekah and went away. And Isaac had just come from Beer-la-hai-roi; for he was dwelling in the south country. And Isaac had gone out to meditate in the field, toward the beginning of evening. And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and, behold, camels were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes and saw Isaac, and she lighted off the camel. And she said to the servant, Who [is] the man that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant said, That is my master; and she took the veil and covered herself.

New Series. Vol. 3 No. 4. April, 1900. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. And Isaac led her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her. And Isaac was comforted after his mother ['s death]” (vers. 61-67).

Rebekah thus far answers more clearly than any other in scripture to the requisite type of the church; as Isaac we have seen to set forth in parable (according to the Epistle of the Heb. 11:19) the Son risen from the dead, as the Head of the church is and must be. This last section of the chapter carries out the analogy no less than all the rest. Her decision was simple and true. As the servant urged immediateness of departure, so, notwithstanding every otherwise strong tie of natural affection, the bride was no less unhesitating: “I will go.” There was a most unusual distance that separated, a long journey to be undertaken, dangers of many kinds to be faced, deserts to be crossed; and she was a young maiden under the guidance of one entirely new to her, with no face familiar along the road but of her damsels.

“And Rebekah arose, and her maids, and they rode upon the camels and followed the man; and the servant took Rebekah and went away.” What simple faith, and confidence in love, and hope abounding in her breast! There is no such combination of becoming affections' in any bride that one could name among the many we read of in the entire O.T. circle. Dependence on her conductor along the dreary way was what sustained her heart, looking on to him who was about to bring her into the enjoyment of the most endearing of all relationships. What ample and reliable reports the wise and trusty servant, we may and must assume, told her to wean her mind from looking back on her old home and fill her with worthy expectations of such a father and such a son as awaited her!

It is just so that the Holy Spirit deigns to form our renewed souls with the love of Christ, the grace of His life and His death, the glory that was His eternally as a divine Person, and His present exaltation as the risen Man and Head to the church over all things, His coming manifestation in glory when He will make good His title and subject all things even to Him, having abolished all rule and all authority and power, but never changing in that purpose or the nearness of love He has for His bride.

“And Isaac had just come from Beer-la-hai-roi; for he was dwelling in the south country,” the Negeb. It was Canaan, but that southern district of it which borders on the adjacent wilderness. There he went out to meditate in the field at the eventide. One cannot doubt what occupied the thoughts of that gentle, calm, contemplative spirit. “And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and, behold, camels were coming.”

But another also was quick to perceive as they neared the land of promise. For “Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. And she said (or, had said) to the servant, Who is this man that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant said, That is my master; and she took the veil and covered herself.”

Yes, the Bridegroom is coming! and the Spirit crying, Come ye forth to meet Him. It is good to work for Him; it is better far to wait for Him; nor is there any more needed guard or more precious guide and spring for us in the Spirit for our work than this blessed hope. We require it in a world of seduction on one side, and of destruction on the other, for purifying ourselves as He is pure; we require it even with consecrated and heavenly affection, however truly we believe on Him and His love, and ourselves love Him. Nothing can make up for this hope if it be lacking or even feeble. “I am jealous over you,” said the apostle “with a jealousy of God; for I espoused you to one husband that I might present you a chaste virgin to Christ.”

Rebekah covered herself with her veil; and the instinct should be sure to be for Him only. Thus shall all else be the truer and holier. And our Bridegroom has no such need to hear like Isaac what the servant had to tell; yet He in the communion of the Holy Spirit, one doubts not, takes all interest in her whom He loved as His own for heaven. He had His sorrows over the present death of Israel; but He even had hope in her end, if it be not rather her real beginning. But He loved the church, for which He gave Himself and will present her to Himself glorious.

Isaac, Isaac: 15. The Bride Called for Isaac: Genesis 24:54-60

Gen. 24:54-60

Very unusual in the type are the marks of a marriage altogether extraordinary in itself. After a long journey, and even without such a one, how strange to refuse to eat, before the errand was told! A distinguished commentator remarks that his story seems superfluous. Far from this, it was in perfect keeping with the business in hand: and every part of his narrative to the household conveyed grounds of the nearest interest and of the deepest moment.

If he was the father's servant and devoted to the son's honor, God in His covenant name was before his heart from first to last. He, Jehovah, it was Who had so greatly blessed; He directed his master in the oath exacted to take no daughter of the Canaanites for the heir, only from his father's house and kindred. If election thus dominated, providential mercy would control hearts and circumstances, as indeed was apparent throughout. Prayer was thus stimulated and promptly answered. The desired maiden came before he ended speaking in his heart, met every test with grace proper to her, and convincing to him that she was none other than the woman whom Jehovah appointed for his master's son. Her reply to his question about her parentage sealed the matter, so that he could not hesitate to bestow suited ornaments, and once more bowed down in worship of Jehovah. When they of the house acquiesced in its proceeding from Him and bade the man take Rebecca to be Isaac's wife, again the servant bowed down to the earth before Jehovah, and the gifts flowed yet more to the bride in particular, but abundantly to all the rest also. It is a unique scene in itself and in what it thus appropriately foreshadows.

“And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and lodged. And they rose up in the morning; and he said, Send me away to my master. And her brother and her mother said, Let the maiden abide with us days, at least ten; after that she shall go. And he said to them, Hinder me not, seeing Jehovah hath prospered my way; send me away to go to my master. And they said, We will call the maiden, and inquire at her mouth. And they called Rebekah and said to her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said to her, Our sister, become thou thousands of tens of thousands; and may thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them!” (vers. 54-60.)

Simple and fitting is the figure of communion with which this account opens: how strikingly is this too in keeping with the church's calling! Never in point of fact could there be full communion of saints till the deliverance came to Christians through the efficacious work of Christ and the new relationships founded on it. Hence the picture given in Acts 2 from the day of Pentecost. “And they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles, and the fellowship, the breaking of the bread, and the prayers” (ver. 42); “And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they partook of food with gladness and simplicity of heart” (ver. 46). In the Lord's supper, it was the communion of Christ's body and blood; but it pervaded their new relationship even in the most ordinary things of earthly life. And no wonder; for as Christ was their life, so was the Holy Spirit power against the flesh, that faith and hope, peace and love, in active exercise might fill them with joy. Their associations were based on Christ come, and their crown was to be in His coming again.

He Himself so taught and set them. Compare Luke 12:21-38. Again, in the parable of the Ten Virgins we have the same principle modified by the Spirit's special aim in the Gospel of Matthew. It is in the middle or Christendom section of our Lord's great prophecy, the first part of which (Matt. 24:1-44) presents the future for the Jews to the end of the age, and the third (Matt. 25:31, &c.) that of the nations when the new age opens. Nor is it service in its corporate aspect as in the close of chap. 24, or in variety of gift as in chap. 25 it is the individual responsibility of the Christian, true or untrue; and its character is that thus, having taken their torches, they went forth to meet the bridegroom. For this nothing but the unction, the power of the Spirit, avails. The tarrying of the bridegroom became the test when all grew drowsy and slept. They all failed in the very aim which drew them out to Christ from every link of flesh or world. Where was their hope, if they no longer went forth to meet Christ? When the cry at midnight awoke them, the prudent alone resumed the early and alone right attitude. For they only had oil in their vessels; and, being ready, they joined Him at His coming, whilst the foolish went in quest of what they never possessed. How could such as these wait for His coming? Only those who had oil in their vessels. Alas! All failed in watching for Him, all fell asleep. But only the prudent had the Spirit's power and presence—oil in their vessels. The foolish had barely the torches of profession without His sustaining energy, and must be thus unready when Christ comes.

Only we have to bear in mind that the exigencies of the parable required, not the bride, but the train of maidens prudent and foolish, so as to represent Christendom; as the type demanded not such a retinue but the bride. Rebekah becomes now the prominent figure, as is the trusty servant of the father and the son, who here puts aside the natural feelings of the family. His one thought is to fulfill his mission. They would have her abide a while. He, the more he is prospered, will hear of the less delay. The bride has to decide the matter. “And they called Rebekah and said to her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.” Her heart is made up.

So it is, so at least it ought to be, with her who is espoused as a chaste virgin to Christ; Whom not having seen she loves, on Whom, not now looking but believing, she exults with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of faith, soul-salvation. What is country or kin or father's, house, or all other objects combined in comparison with her Bridegroom? What could she say but “I will go”? She falls in with Eliezer's zeal. This report was answered by her faith, hope, and love. Unhesitating decision was the result. She goes forth to meet the bridegroom; and the faithful servant who had won her heart to Isaac, continues his care, and guides her across the desert. “And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men,” with abundant blessings, short as they might be of her real position. But the picture is unmistakable. It is the bride, delivered out of the present evil age according to the will of God our Father, to belong to Him Who is in heaven, soon to join Him there, typified by the elect maiden who sets out on her pilgrim journey to meet the one to whom she is betrothed.

Isaac, Isaac: 14. The Bride Called for Isaac: :Genesis 24:50-53

Genesis 24:50-53

We may observe how Eliezer acts with the decision given by a single eye. Not only have we prayer in the Spirit, and worship; but there is a walk singularly devoted to the will and word of his master who sent him on this mission for his son. On this he is exclusively set. It was quite outside the world and its objects. Eliezer will not swerve from his errand; he allows no need of the body to interfere with its being the first object before him: to it all other claims must bend.

“And Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from Jehovah: we cannot speak to thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah [is] before thee: take [her], and go away; and let her be wife of thy master's son, as Jehovah hath said. And it came to pass, when Abraham's servant heard their words that he bowed down to the earth before Jehovah. And the servant brought forth vessels of silver and vessels of gold, and clothing, and gave [them] to Rebekah; he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things” (vers. 50-53).

It is just so for the church and the Christian. The Holy Spirit given and indwelling acts by the Father's will for the glory of Christ Whose bride is the church, Whose member is every Christian. He is a spirit not of cowardice nor of indifference, but of power and of love and of a sound mind; above all He is given to be with us forever and in us to glorify Him Who glorified the Father.

Is it objected that this is to confound the Holy Spirit with the church and the Christian? It is really scriptural truth, not confusion. The objection flows from failure to discern that it is of the essence of the Spirit's action to merge Himself as it were in the object He employs or abides in. Hence every good fruit, of which He is the source and power, is set to the object's account. Indeed the case is equally true of those possessed by evil spirits. Thus the two demoniacs in Matt. 8:29 cried out, saying, “What have we to do with thee, Son of God? Didst thou come here before the season to torment us?” Still clearer is this quasi-identification expressed in Mark 5:2, where, when asked his name, the chief of the two answers, “Legion is my name, because we are many.” No less plainly does it appear in Luke 8:28, 29, where the possessed said, “I beseech thee torment me not;” and the evangelist continues, “For He had commanded the unclean spirit to go out from the man.” Hence we see how profoundly correct it is in the history that Eliezer, typifying the Holy, Spirit's action, should represent the church and the Christian

also.

We can scarce fail to note too how God controls hearts as well as circumstances in pursuance of the design in hand. It is not that difficulties or dangers were lacking. They were many and manifold, to exercise faith in Himself Who in the face of contrary appearances knows all beforehand, and works all things according to the counsel of His own will. We have no reason to accredit the zeal of Laban and Bethuel for the divine glory; yet they fell in at once with what was set before them, confessing that the thing was of Jehovah which left them without a word to oppose. Their yielding at once, their recognition that Abraham's word was Jehovah's doing, drew out the fresh adoration of Eliezer.

Then follows the bestowal of proper bridal gifts of silver and of gold, with clothing, for Rebekah, as well as precious things for those connected with her. It will be found by those who investigate symbolic usage in scripture (for example in the tabernacle's construction), that, as silver answers to divine grace, so does gold to divine righteousness. This certainly is plain in the antitype of Eph. 4 where to each one of us, it is said, was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets, and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints unto (or with a view to) work of ministering, unto edifying the body of Christ.” Could any type be more appropriate in this place? Here only, where it was so needful to complete the picture, it is given with marked care. Never were given gifts so distinctly flowing from the grace of God in Christ, and based on God's righteousness.

The power of Christ's victory will be fully and in many other ways manifested in heaven and earth another day. Meanwhile these gifts are the witness of His love to the Christian and to the church, delivered already from the enemy's power. He, the ascended Man, gave them to men; and this in virtue of His previous descent in humiliation the human victims of Satan's malice and of their own folly and sin. All is for the perfecting of the saints unto ministerial work and unto edifying Christ's body; all looks on to the bright future when Christ will present to Himself the church glorious, having no spot, wrinkle, or any of such things, but that it should be holy and unblemished.

Isaac, Isaac: 13. The Bride Called for Isaac: Genesis 24:34-49

Gen. 24:34-49

This portion is entirely devoted to his intervention whom the father sent to fetch a suited bride for the son and heir.

“And he said, I [am] Abraham's servant. And Jehovah hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great; and he hath given him sheep and cattle, and silver and gold, and bondmen and bondwomen, and camels and asses. And Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master after she had grown old, and to him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of a Canaanite, in whose land I am dwelling; but thou shalt by all means go to my father's house and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son. And I said to my master, Perhaps the woman will not follow me. And he said to me, Jehovah before whom I have walked will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way, that thou mayest take a wife for my son of my kindred and out of my father's house. Then shalt thou be quit of mine oath, when thou shalt be come to my kindred; and if they give thee not, thou shalt be quit of mine oath. And I came this day to the fountain, and said, Jehovah, God of my master Abraham, if now thou wilt prosper my way on which I go, behold, I stand by the fountain of water, and let it come to pass that the damsel who cometh forth to draw, and to whom I shall say, Give me I pray, a little water out of thy pitcher to drink, and she shall say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels—that she [shall] be the woman whom Jehovah hath appointed for my master's son. Before I ended speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder, and went down to the fountain, and drew; and I said to her, Give me, I pray thee to drink. And she hasted and let down her pitcher from her, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also. And I drank; and she gave the camels drink also. And I asked her and said, Whose daughter [art] thou? And she said, Bethuel's daughter (Nachor's son) whom Milcah bore to him. And I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her hands. And I bowed down and worshipped Jehovah, and blessed Jehovah, God of my master Abraham, who led me in a way of truth to take my master's brother's daughter for his son. And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me; and I will turn to the right hand or to the left” (vers. 34-49).

Is it not well to notice the immense place which scripture gives to him who was sent from the father and the son to make good the purpose of finding and bringing back the chosen bride? Various types present the bride in O.T. scriptures. In the last book of scripture (Rev. 19) the N.T. discloses her in her heavenly place before the millennium as the Lamb's wife and in the eternal state (Rev. 21:2), no less than as the holy Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God in her millennial relation to the nations and the kings of the earth (ver. 9). We have the type of Eve with her admirable characteristics as Adam's counterpart at the beginning of this book, and at the end we have the wife Pharaoh gave to Joseph when exalted to administer the kingdom in his rejection by and separation from his brethren according to the flesh. So we see also in Moses (Ex. 2) before the time came for their deliverance from the king and land of Egypt. Jacob goes off himself and marries in a way wholly distinct in Haran, and through Laban's craft has another palmed on him before he received the Rachel of his heart, who in no way prefigures the church but Israel, Rachel weeping for her children, but with hope for her latter end. Sarah too not at all sets forth the calling of the bride, but the mother of the child of promise. Ruth again is a special figure, but not of the church any more than is the object of the king's love in the Song of songs, the Psalms, or the Prophets.

Here is the unique figure of a bride not only called from a distant land in marked contrast with any woman of Canaanitish race, but by the extraordinary mission of the father's servant, the eldest of his house who ruled over all that he had, and with a most solemn pledge and charge, quite unexampled in any other case. And we have already drawn attention to the place it fills, for which no other marriage in scripture could furnish such a type as this. For it follows the death and resurrection of the son in the “parable” of chap. 22 as well as the death of Sarah, the figure of the covenant of promise and liberty in contrast with her who is in bondage with her children. Yet even she, the free-woman, disappears to leave room for the bride who is here called.

Again, how striking is the fullness of interest which converges on the trusty servant, and his absorption in caring for the father and the son! We have the whole ground traversed again before the bride's family, and bringing out purpose in the father for the son as nowhere else in this book or anywhere else of old, and devotedness most marked and exclusive on the part of him who was sent to effectuate it! Where is there an approach in another type of God's word to that personal presence and action of the Holy Spirit which distinguishes the church? The time, the

place, the action, the personal interest, the grace in giving, the prominence assigned to prayer and worship, the absolute carrying out of the word or charge, are all in perfect keeping with that which it pleased God to represent here, and here only in the same fullness. Is this all, is any part of it, casual?

Examine the entire range of types (and there are not a few which bring out the object of Christ's love for heaven); but where is one which so fully and distinctively presents her calling, as Rebecca does? Again, where save here have we, closely connected with the bride, the living representative of that other Advocate, Who identifies Himself with the honor and the interests of the Father and the Son, in effectively gaining the bride, then in guiding and guarding through the many trials and the imminent dangers of the desert, safely to join the Bridegroom? How admirably he pleads for those absent, whose envoy he was! As he lost not a moment in engaging the damsel's heart for his master's son, so he hears of no delay in telling his errand to those who might naturally detain, if they did not deny. No picture in other scriptures is comparable with this if divinely intended, as we assuredly believe, to set forth, not merely efficient operation, but personal presence and care in the highest degree. And in no part of the O.T. was this so requisite and significant as in the scene graphically put before us here.

Isaac, Isaac: 12. The Bride Called for Isaac: Genesis 24:28-33

Gen. 24:28-33

Hitherto we have seen the lovely prefiguration of the Father's purpose in calling out of the world a bride for His Son. In this point how sedulously and solemnly the Son is kept from all direct relation with the world. He is seen in a heavenly position exclusively. Nor is less clear the place which is given to the chief servant of the house in executing this charge of entire devotedness, distinct dependence in the prayer of faith, and in ready attitude of worship. These are exactly the qualities looked for in, and suited to the operation of, the Spirit in Christ's body and bride. As Rebecca at once and signally met this purpose from the first, we are now to learn how all that follows was furthered by grace to the same end.

“And the maiden ran and told her mother's house according to these words. And Rebecca had a brother, and his name [was] Laban; and Laban ran out to the man to the well. And it came to pass when he saw the ring and bracelets on his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebecca his sister, saying, Thus spoke the man to me, that he came to the man, and behold, he was standing by the camels at the well. And he said, Come in, blessed of Jehovah: why standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for camels. And the man came into the house, and ungirded the camels; and he gave the camels straw and provender, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. And there was set before him to eat; but he said, I will not eat until I have told my business. And he said, Speak on” (vers. 28-33).

The simple-hearted alacrity of Rebecca is here as apparent as her thoughtful courtesy and kindness before. Such should be the church, and the Christian now. Blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, are we not individually and collectively bound to reflect the grace of Him to Whom we belong in His sovereign goodness? Freely we received; freely should we give. Far from us should be the proud forbidding independence of a Jew, the ever craving unsatisfied covetousness of a Gentile. Yet was the maiden quick to discern the signs of the crisis for her, and ran to tell “her mother's house.” This was in keeping with propriety, even if her father were not throughout singularly in the background: so much so, that some have ventured to think that the name after Laban's (ver. 50) may have been a younger brother rather than the father. Certain it is that Laban is the active leading man of the house from first to last. Here he ran out to the man by the well or fountain.

Nor is it a casual circumstance that we read of Laban's ready proffer of hospitality when he saw the ring and the bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard her report of what Abraham's envoy said to her. Forthwith he came to the man still standing by the camels at the fountain, and gave him a welcome in terms no less cordial than pious, as such characters are apt to say when sure of honor and advantage accruing. The history shows subsequently that Laban was an overreaching man and an idolater. We are compelled therefore to infer from the language here employed that the sight of the jewels given to his sister, and the man's words about his master, powerfully acted on one whose motives were far from unselfish. His salutation was winning however: “Come in, blessed of Jehovah: why standest thou without? for I have prepared the house and room for the camels.”

The remarkable procedure of Abraham's servant is what we have to notice for our edification. He came into the house, ungirded the camels, and had straw and provender given, with water to wash the feet of himself and those with him. But when meat was set before him, he refused to eat till he told his story. This is not at all in accordance with the usual way, especially in the east, and after so long a journey. His errand is all-absorbing. He would not allow his own ease, or the customs of men, to come first or make the way for what he had at heart. He was there for his master's sake. Word and oath bound him, as well as honor and love for his master's son. He would not even seem to let their interests be secondary. “I will not eat until I have told my business.”

So it is most exclusively and in a way altogether worthy of the Father and the Son, that the Holy Spirit devotes Himself to His quest and care of the Bride. We know that all things work together for good to those that love God, to those that are called according to purpose, as the apostle says in Rom. 8. But what should be our confidence when we also know the divine Person of the Paraclete sent by the Father in the Son's name to teach us all things, and remind us of all that Christ said, the words that are spirit and are life, and many other things which could not be borne before redemption? What new and heavenly relationships, as of Christ's body and bride! What light of His heavenly glory! What announcement of the things to come! If the Savior's meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him and to finish His work, the blessed Spirit of God is no less sedulous in speaking, not, from Himself, but all that whatsoever He should hear; for He it is Who here and now glorifies the Son.

Isaac, Isaac: 11. Bride Called for Isaac: Genesis 24:22-29

Gen. 24:22-29

There was astonishment in the servant's mind at the immediate and punctual answer to his prayer. To call it unbelief, as Calvin does,1 is unwarranted. It is the picture of the Holy Spirit's working in man, which never wrought so fully as since redemption, and never will work so again while he is on the earth. But if the servant rightly felt the gravity of the oath taken of him by his master, and the delicacy of the task for his master's son, he was deeply and believingly impressed with the speedy fulfillment of all he had laid before Jehovah, his master's God. The first sight of her could not but impress him. Still more was he struck, when, running to meet her, and asking as he had been led, she simply and completely responded to his petition just spread before God. Even our Lord, perfect man as He alone was, “wondered” at the Gentile centurion's faith. If this expressed His delight, where not a particle of unbelief could be, we need not disparage the servant's “wondering” at her, when he received so marked and ready a token of favor on his mission, “remaining silent to know whether Jehovah made his journey prosperous or not.” His action that follows is the best proof of his faith. “He that believeth shall not make haste;” and this absence of the haste, into which flesh rushes, is what really comes out in one content to take a single step at a time, as becomes man however blessed.

“And it came to pass, when the camels had done drinking, that the man took a gold ring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets of ten [shekels] of gold, and said, Whose daughter [art] thou? tell me, I pray thee. Is there in thy father's house room for us to lodge in? And she said to him, I [am] daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nachor. And she said to him, [There is] both straw and much provender with us, and room to lodge in. And the man bowed down and paid worship to Jehovah, and said, Blessed [be] Jehovah, God of my master Abraham, who hath not withdrawn his mercy and his truth from my master; I [being] in the way, Jehovah hath led me to the house of my master's brethren” (vers. 22-29).

What a testimony to “the riches of grace” we have here from the outset! Where in all the Bible do we find anything to compare with those precious gifts on such an occasion or at so early a stage of it? The Christian reader can read the counterpart in Eph. 1. There as here we have purpose in the early verses, followed up by the boon of redemption in verse 7—the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of God's grace, before the proper privileges of union with Christ are spoken of, or those peculiar gifts which He gave as ascended on high, the type of which we shall not fail to see later on. So, anticipating the gospel of God's grace, our Lord shows how the Father receives the returning prodigal: the best robe, a ring on his hand, shoes on his feet, and a feast of joy greater far to Him than to the son thus wondrously received or to any that shared the feast. The gospel accompanies but precedes the church; and the call of grace is marked variously in both. Can any with open or intelligent mind fail to trace in our chapter the divine design, which is the constant and unmistakable witness of inspired scripture, and which makes it differ from every other book?

But in the history before us, how confirmatory was the maiden's reply to the inquiry of the servant! Truly dependent on God, he tries even the brightest concurrence of circumstances by the word which guided his way and defined his aim. This does not suit the self-confidence of man; but is it not the one path, the inalienable duty, of the saint? For we walk by faith, not by sight. The Holy Spirit, as He thus led the Lord Jesus always and perfectly while here below, deigns now to conduct us after the same blessed pattern. What Rebekah said fell altogether and distinctly within the requirements of Abraham in the bride he sought for his son Isaac. No doubt her character even in this brief interview shone out in love and lowliness, in unaffected respect and readiest service, a meet daughter-in-law for Abraham, a pure and gentle wife for Isaac. Yet this was not everything that the servant sought, true to the interests of the son and to the words laid down by the father. “Whose daughter art thou?” Was she of Abraham's kindred? Her answer was just what he sought, and she assures him and his retinue of a suitable reception.

This draws out another characteristic in the account. For the man bowed down and paid worship to Jehovah. Worship, worship in spirit and truth, distinguishes the Christian and the church. So the Lord told the Samaritan woman. The hour for it is come and now is. The true worshippers worship the Father in spirit and truth, in contrast with Jerusalem no less than the mountain of Gerizim. A people in the flesh, a worldly sanctuary, earthly priests, material sacrifices and offerings, are unacceptable. The Father seeks and has children. They are sons, not distant bondmen nor yet infants; but redeemed and with the Spirit of adoption they cry, Abba, Father. Nor is it less true of the church than of the individual; as we read in 1 Cor. 14 where the Lord enjoins that all be with the spirit and with the understanding also, prayer, and singing, and blessing, and giving of thanks. For not literal circumcision is now of account; but we, Christians, are the circumcision, who worship by God's Spirit, and boast in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence or trust in flesh. Forms avail not, nothing but Christ, our life.

And the man said, for it is intelligent worship, “Blessed be Jehovah, God of my master Abraham, who hath not withdrawn from my master his mercy and his truth; I in the way, he hath led me to the house of my master's brethren.” It is confiding and adoring acknowledgment of His faithful goodness. So in our case the Son of God is come and has given us an understanding to know Him that is True; and we are in Him that is True, in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life; without which, and the Holy Spirit given now that He is gone, we could in no way rise to such worship. But what a wondrous prefiguration of it is the scene before us! It is just where it should be; nor is there a scene like it elsewhere.

Isaac, Isaac: 10. The Bride Called for Isaac: Genesis 24:10-21

Gen. 24:10-21

In the early verses we have the most specific directions laid down by the father for his son's bride. Now we learn how faithful was “his servant, the elder of his house who ruled over all that he had,” in giving effect to his will. It is he who becomes the most prominent throughout the chapter till the bride joins the bridegroom. This is unmistakable typically. As surely as we behold the Father seeking a bride, the church of God for Christ His Son, all the while and only in the heavenlies, so do we recognize the sending and action of the Holy Spirit in this signally honored and trusty servant. In fact his unstinted and unwavering subjection, so far from being a difficulty or objection, is what the type required. For just as the Son became bondman to do the Father's will and secure His glory, so does the Holy Spirit subserve the Son as well as the Father. Thus we read in John 14-16 and other scriptures. Take this one: “He shall not speak from himself; but whatsoever things he shall hear he will speak; and he will report to you things that are to come. He will glorify me: for he shall receive of mine and will report to you. All things that the Father hath are mine,” &c. For the Christian, for the church, we need and have the Holy Spirit as well as the word. The Spirit given is our distinctive privilege and power.

“And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master and departed (now all the treasure of his master was under his hand); and he rose and went to Aram-naharaim [High land of the two rivers], to the city of Nachor. And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water, at evening time, at the time that women go out to draw [water]. And he said, Jehovah, God of my master Abraham, meet me, I pray thee, this day, and do kindness to my master Abraham. Behold, I stand by the fountain of water; and daughters of men of the city come out to draw water. And let it come to pass [that] the maiden, to whom I shall say, Let down, I pray thee, thy pitcher, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also, [be] she whom thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and hereby shall I know that thou hast done kindly to my master. And it came to pass before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah wife of Nachor brother of Abraham, and her pitcher [she had] upon her shoulder. And the maiden was very fair to look on, a virgin, and no man had known her; and she went down to the fountain, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me sip, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord; and she hasted, and let down her pitcher on her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, Also for thy camels I will draw, until they have done drinking. And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw, and drew for all his camels. And the man wondered at her, holding his peace to know whether Jehovah prospered his way or not” (vers. 10-21).

How simply beautiful is the picture here presented of the walk by faith, not by sight or appearance, to which the church is called, and those who individually compose it! In no other part of Genesis, nay of the O.T., can one recall a scene so capable of foreshadowing it as what we have now before us. Dependent and confiding prayer characterizes it. So we find repeatedly in the Acts of the Apostles; even when not exactly “praying in the Holy Spirit,” we are encouraged in everything to make our requests known to God. Compare Ananias in Acts 9:10-17, and Paul in Acts 22:17-21; and that “free address,” which is the exact import of the word translated “prayer” in 1 Tim. 4:5. Christ come, and His work, bring us into the reality of what becomes us before God. Even if we were not so weak and ignorant as we have learned ourselves to be, how blessed to have God near and faithful in fully proved love, so that we may bring before Him “everything” great or small! How dishonoring Him to trust in our wisdom or common sense! See too how the servant keeps before him and puts forward the promises to Abraham, the special relationship grace had already formed as a place for present need, and especially in what had been pressed as of the profoundest moment. Guidance of the Spirit is precious but guaranteed. As many as are led by God's Spirit, these are sons of God. It was not a mere sign he asked as Gideon in Judg. 6; 7, but the very bridal person herself of whom he was in quest, not for himself, but for his master's son. The honor and love of faith filled his heart.

Nor had he long to wait. “Before he had done speaking,” the maiden comes. Freely he had asked, boldly and minutely had he ventured to prescribe. But this reckoning on Himself is most pleasing to God, if unbelief dares to deny it as presumptuous. It was really prayer of rare simplicity, of striking suitability, of entire confidence; and the immediateness of the answer anticipated the day when righteousness shall reign, and Jehovah will hear while His people are yet speaking. So it is now through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, when we have the new covenant in spirit if not in letter, and the Messiah not present, it is true in earthly power and glory, but known on high in a yet surpassing glory.

Accepting the answer, “the servant ran to meet” Rebekah. There was no hesitation but alacrity; for he knew Whom he had believed, and laid before her what he had already asked of Abraham's God, Jehovah. And Rebekah with no less alacrity responded graciously to his request uttered to her, and to that which he had said only to God in caring for “all his camels.” No wonder that he wondered at her, silently waiting for full assurance (as he was but the type of a greater Servant), whether Jehovah prospered his way or not. Even our Lord expressed fully His appreciation of the Syro-Phœnician woman's faith, and wondered at the Gentile centurion's, though it was His own grace which produced faith in both. The servant could and would not disguise from his heart that God had acted according to his heart's desire for his master and his master's son; and he looks for yet more to His own glory.

Isaac, Isaac: 9. The Bride Called for Isaac: Genesis 24:1-9

Gen. 24:1-9

Chapter 22 gave us the new and unique position of the son and heir, dead and risen, the figure of the infinite reality where the antitype was also the lamb that God would provide Himself for a burnt-offering; chap. 23 the passing away, at this point of God's ways, of Sarah, the mother of the child of promise. For those who ought to have received the dead and risen Messiah stumbled at the stumbling-stone, and by their blind insubjection put off for the present the application of a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. As regards the ancient people, it was dead through their unbelief, though grace would not permit it to fail for a godly remnant and for those of the nations who believe the gospel. That blood, which the Jews imprecated as a curse on themselves and on their children (Matt. 26:28), is to Christians the cup of blessing which they bless, Christ's blood of the new covenant that was shed for many unto remission of sins. Its literal terms and full extent for the earth await the chosen nation to whom it is pledged by Him Who will infallibly accomplish it another day. Not more surely shall Sarah rise again than the covenant of grace shall be made good to Israel, notwithstanding all that they have done, when they shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in Jehovah's name. Then will he execute judgment and righteousness in the land, and Jehovah shall be King over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Jehovah and His name one.

But it is a wholly different prospect here, the no less distinct figure of the new and heavenly relationship which grace forms, while the Jew abides in unbelief and therefore postpones the magnificent scenes of predicted glory for Israel and all the Gentiles in that day. It is the call of a bride for Isaac out of that world from which Abraham had been called. The trusty servant, described in terms quite exceptional, “the eldest of his house, who ruled over all that he had,” is charged with the delicate mission of finding her out according to God, and of guiding her across the desert to the bridegroom.

“And Abraham was old, advanced in age; and Jehovah had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said to his servant, the eldest in his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and I will make thee swear by Jehovah, the God of the heavens and the God of the earth, that thou take not a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; but thou shalt go to my land and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac. And the servant said to him, Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land: must I, then, bring thy son again anywise to the land from which thou earnest out? And Abraham said to him, Beware

thou that thou bring not my son thither again. Jehovah, the God of the heavens, who took me out of my father's house and out of the land of my nativity, and who spake to me and who swore to me, saying, To thy seed will I give this land; even he will send his angel before thee; and thou shalt take a wife thence for my son. And if the woman be not willing to follow thee, then shalt thou be clear from this mine oath: only bring not my son thither again. And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter" (vers. 1-9).

No one denies that in the letter the aged father was devising in a grave and pious spirit to help his son Isaac in the most important step of a life, not merely momentous to the Jewish seed which had earthly blessing divinely promised, and in the highest degree, but yet more bound up with still better blessing in his own seed to all the families of the earth. Nor was Abraham content with the long proved fidelity of him who had from earlier days earned and deserved his confidence. Here and now only he exacts of Eliezer an oath of peculiar solemnity, that the bride taken should be, not from the accursed race of Canaan, but out of that land from which he himself had been called, and of his kindred. But he who weighs the typical meaning which the N. T. authoritatively gives to the previous history, as we have seen, will not be disposed to deny it here; where the exceeding fullness and character of the narrative suggest a deeper import, which is itself the certain truth of God, and fits it here, as nowhere else, precisely answering to the new history, but of more exalted application and of the nearest interest to the Christian reader.

"I will make thee swear by Jehovah, the God of the heavens and the God of the earth, that thou take not for my son a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell; but to my country and to my kindred thou shalt go and take a wife for my son Isaac." It is well to remark that here the divine title is most note worthy, besides proving the groundlessness of Astrue's conjecture which has exercised so powerful a spell over rationalist minds. The nearest to it in the book of Genesis, (both without parallel in the Pentateuch) is found in chap. 16. There "God Most High" is in conjunction with "possessor of the heavens and earth;" and the evidence points to the days of the kingdom as yet future, when it will not be merely the "order" in contrast with Aaron's, but the true Melchizedek will exercise His priesthood in blessing the victors at the end of the age, and the heavens and earth shall be united instead of severed as they are still.

In chap. 24 before us "the God of the heavens and the God of the earth" presents the universal rights of the only true God, revealed fully and only when the Son of God is come, and He dead and risen brings out all the truth distinctly in connection with the call of the church, the bride of Christ. Hence, in Eph. 3, the apostle speaks of the mystery or secret hid in God Who created all things (ver. 9) and the Father from whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named (ver. 14), one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in us (or, you) all (4:6). Thus it is not only life and incorruption which are now brought to light in Christ Jesus, but the highest and widest rights of God in His universal supremacy, universal providence, and yet the truest intimacy of relationship with His children, and them all. Now if God intended to communicate this as far as a type (only intelligible with the antitype), where could it be fittingly introduced but here? Truly God's ways are as marvelous as blessed; and His word as here is the revelation of them, as also of His counsels and nature. Of this rationalism is profoundly ignorant, and necessarily so because it is rationalism, and not faith.

The answer of the servant and the reply confirm the force of another and connected truth. "Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land: must I then bring thy son again to the land whence thou camest out? And Abraham said to him, Beware thou, that thou bring not again my son thither." Here we see the utmost stress (and it is reiterated once more) laid on Isaac's abiding in Canaan. There only must he be found; and he only of all the patriarchs. For as his father came out of Mesopotamia, so did he for a time go down into Egypt; and again his son Jacob returned to Mesopotamia, and also went down into Egypt, and died there. But Isaac alone must and did never leave the land of Canaan. In this he most strikingly represents Christ after He died, rose, and ascended; in which condition He becomes Head of the church, and the Bridegroom. He is emphatically the heavenly ( ). God makes Christians "heavenly," not yet as a displayed fact (for we still bear the image of the man of dust), but as a spiritual title and reality, on which we are called to walk while in the world, but not of it as He was not. Compare Eph. 1:3-30; 2:6; 3:10; 4:8-16; 5:25-32; 6:12; also 1 Cor. 15:48, 49.

Hence Abraham continues, "Jehovah, the God of the heavens, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my kindred, and who spoke to me and who swore to me, saying, To thy seed will I give this land; he will send his angel before thee; and thou shalt take thence a wife to my son. And if the woman be not willing to follow thee, then shalt thou be clear from this mine oath: only my son bring not again thither." And so the servant swore. The Head given to the church remains heavenly in the most exclusive terms and according to the most distinct and persistent purpose. And such is the clear and sure doctrine, which the apostle was the inspired vessel to communicate. It was a secret revealed (Eph. 6) to the holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; but Paul became minister of the church (Col. 1:25) according to the stewardship given him to complete the word of God in this respect; as in fact no other writes of the church as he does. Christ is glorified in heaven to be the church's Head; and He is there only while the body is formed in the power of the Holy Spirit sent for this end. "As He is, so are we in this world." The Christian, the church, is called to manifest the mind of heaven on earth. But the ground of this is that we are already joined to the Lord, one spirit with Him Who is on high. Thus it is that we characteristically know Him; no more according to flesh, but dead, risen, and ascended (2 Cor. 5).

Here the shortcoming of Christendom through unbelief is all but universal, though in varying shape. Some are so dark as not to comprehend what answers to Hagar and her child expelled from the house of Abraham. The bondmaid covenant of Sinai is still their rule of life, though they deny not the birth of the true son and heir. Others advance no farther than the covenant of promise in Sarah and Isaac, though they see that the son of the bondmaid cannot be heir with the son of the free-woman. They believe in the atonement; but they have no right apprehension of the new place of the Son as dead, risen, and associated only with heaven. Yet this alone, as we have seen in the figure, gives the proper blessedness of the Christian in union with Christ, by virtue of the Holy Spirit given to us on the ground of His sacrificial death, where He is, being Himself on high till He comes to take us to the Father's house. Hence as the heavenly relationship of the church is unknown as Christ's body and bride, as the truth of having died with Christ and being risen with Him and seated in Him in the heavenlies, is utterly vague and uninfluential, the door lies open to the rudiments of the world, as well as philosophy and the vain deceit of rationalism; hence the baptized set their mind like Jews or Gentiles on the things upon the earth instead of those above, where Christ sits at God's right hand. They are so ignorant of the power of Christ's resurrection and ascension, that they cannot read its wondrous foreshadowing in the first book of the O. T. Thank God, they do not deny His death adumbrated in the sentence on Isaac, though only effected and forever efficacious in the cross of Christ. But they wholly fail to appropriate the new standing prefigured in Isaac risen and never quitting Canaan, while the bride is being called from the world to join him there.

Let us recall the beautiful conformity of the Acts of the Apostles, and of God's ways in this connection. After Christ went to heaven, Peter preached to the Jews in Solomon's porch, as recorded in chap. 3, and pointed out how the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob glorified His servant Jesus Whom they denied and slew. Yet did he assure them that, on their repentance and conversion, not only should their sins be blotted out but God would send Jesus Who was fore-appointed for them, in order to bring in times of restoring all things as His prophets had ever declared. But the Jews sealed their unbelief; and thus the new covenant lapsed as far as the people were concerned; and an apostle was called by the Lord in heaven to preach to the Gentiles and reveal the full heavenly place of the church, one with Christ above. This it is which is called “the mystery,” or secret hidden of old when God gave promises and prophecies. In the Epistles of Paul we have the mystery revealed as to Christ and as to the church.

Isaac, Isaac: 7. The Numerous Seed and the One Seed: Genesis 22:15-24

Gen. 22:15-24

Consequent on the wondrous type of the far more wondrous sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, we have Jehovah's angel announcing to Abraham His solemn oath on that which deeply concerned both Jews and Gentiles, and we may add God Himself most nearly, and His title to bless not only in His righteous government but in sovereign grace according to His nature.

“And Jehovah's angel called to Abraham a second time from the heavens, and said, By myself I swear, saith Jehovah, that because thou hast done this and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thy seed as stars of the heavens, and as sand that is on the sea's shore; and thy seed shall possess his enemies' gate; and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast harkened to my voice. And Abraham returned to his young men; and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

And it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she also hath borne children to thy brother Nachor: Uz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel father of Aram, and Chesed, and Hazo and Pildash and Jidlaph and Bethuel (and Bethuel begot Rebekah). These eight Milcah bore to Nachor, Abraham's brother. And his concubine named Reumah, she also bore Tebah and Gaham and Tahash and Maacah” (vers. 15-24).

Because of Jehovah's appreciation of Abraham's unreserved surrender to Him of what was most precious to his heart, first comes the assurance of rich blessing and great multiplication of his seed according to flesh. It should be for multitude as stars of the heavens and as sand of the seashore. Nor this only, but with power over their adversaries, as befits the earthly people of His choice. Beyond just question Israel is thus in view (ver. 17).

But there follows in ver. 18 a promise intentionally severed, and couched in such terms as point to the True Seed in Whom should all the nations of the earth be blessed. And here not a hint was uttered of a numerous posterity; as indeed the evident aim was to indicate the One on Whom alone depended blessing of a far higher order, and this for “all the nations of the earth.” Here we are recalled to the original promise made to the patriarch and recorded in the last half of Gen. 12:3: “and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” There, as here, it follows the national blessing of the earthly people. It was therefore left open and goes out in unlimited grace as in the gospel. He only could thus speak Who knew the end from the beginning.

Of this the apostle in the power, of the Holy Spirit avails himself in writing to the Galatians (chap. 3), beguiled as they then were into that judaizing of heavenly truth which has been and is the sore bane of Christendom. Works of law are a ruinous principle for sinful man; the promise is by faith, whereby alone believers are blessed with the faithful Abraham. For as many as are of law-works are under curse; not merely such as violate the law, but all that take the ground of law before God. As surely as they do, they being sinful fall under curse. Therefore Deut. 27 is cited, wherein the Holy Ghost passes by all account of the blessings of the six tribes on mount Gerizim, and only gives in detail the curses of the other six on mount Ebal. These alone were effective. The blessings cannot be for guilty man on that ground. It is by faith, says the prophet, the just shall live; and redemption from curse is needed for those under law, that the blessing of Abraham might come to the nations in Christ Jesus, as the gospel declares. Nor is this all. For the Seed is arrived, and the covenant is confirmed, as it was typically in Isaac, dead and risen parabolically. Hence the apostle proceeds, “But to Abraham were addressed the promises, and to his seed"-to the father in Gen. 12, and to his son in chap. 22. “He saith not, ‘And to seeds,' as of many, but as of one, ‘And to thy seed' [where allusion to stars and sand, as well as greatly multiplying,' are quite dropt], which is Christ.”

The reasoning of the apostle, here as elsewhere, only appears weak to presumptuous men, who are unbelieving and so must fail to understand God's mind in it. Where souls accept the divine authority, not only of the Epistle to the Galatians but of Genesis which the Epistle assumes, all is seen to be bright, profoundly true, and of living interest. It is no question of mere grammar, but of context; which, in the promise that distinctly contemplates Israel, makes much of numbers; whereas in that which introduces the Gentiles for blessing, it says not a word about anything of the kind, but only of one, “thy seed.” It was a covenant confirmed beforehand by God; and the law, which came after four hundred and thirty years, does not annul it, so as to make the promise of no effect. Nor does the law clash with the promise: each has its own object; the one, a ministry of death and condemnation; the other, of blessing by faith. Mixing the two does the mischief; and this is exactly to what man is prone, and what scripture ever explicitly sets aside.

In the light of N. T. facts, how the types of Genesis come out! The woman's Seed is surely man, yet more than man, bruised to bruise utterly and forever the old serpent the devil, fallen angel as he is, Abraham's Seed, foreshewn in Isaac dead and risen in figure, portrays the Deliverer in the wholly new condition of man beyond death, able to bless Gentiles in sovereign grace no less than Jews, and unite them to Himself in heavenly glory. And this is just what the gospel now reveals to faith.

The closing verses of the chapter bring before us a brief sketch of Nachor's line (Abraham's brother), whose son Bethuel was father of Rebekah through Milcah the wife, not through Reumah the concubine. How closely this connects itself with Isaac's future we shall have before us in due time, carrying out the purpose of God.

Isaac, Isaac: 6. Isaac Dead and Risen in Figure: Genesis 22:1-14

Gen. 22:1-14

Here begins an entirely new section of the book, which we may regard as stretching over the death of Abraham in chap. 25, though more than once verses seem appended to complete the history rather than higher views. No more profound principle can there be than that which is introduced as the basis in our chapter; for it is death and resurrection in the person of a beloved son, an only-begotten. Such a type is unmistakable save to the blind. The very details are full of living force: what then is the anti-type? All is impressive, lovely, and instructive in the highest degree. As the figure of Abraham looms most in the scene, and as this has been years ago before us in treating of him, it remains to speak here of Isaac.

“And it came to pass after these things that God tried Abraham and said to him, Abraham; and he said, Behold me. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only [one] whom thou lovest, Isaac, and get thee into the Moriah land, and offer him there for a burnt-offering on one of the mountains which I shall tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he clave wood for burnt-offering, and rose up and went to the place of which God told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said to his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship (or, bow down), and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood for burnt-offering, and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father, and said, My father; and he said, Behold me, my son. And he said, Behold, the fire and the wood, but where [is] the lamb for burnt-offering? And Abraham said, God will provide himself the lamb for burnt-offering, my son. And they went both of them together; and they came to the place which God told him of; and there did Abraham build the altar and pile the wood; and he bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And Jehovah's angel called to him from the heavens, and said, Abraham, Abraham; and he said, Behold me. And he said, Stretch not forth thy hand against the lad, nor do thou anything to him; for now I know that thou fearest God and hast not withheld thy son, thine only [one] from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, a ram behind caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for burnt-offering, instead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh; as it is said this day, On Jehovah's mount it will be provided” (vers. 1-14).

We must bear in mind that “the lad” had at least reached his majority, as we say; Josephus (Ant. i. 13, §2) makes him 25 years old. His entire submissiveness to his father indeed, but also to the will of God, is exactly in keeping with his piety. If it was beautiful in the type, how much more in that which it shadowed! For it was unsought and infinite love in both Father and Son.

Here it was not merely a test of the strongest claim ever made on the heart of man, indefinitely increased by the promise so long waited for and so singularly accomplished, and by the full persuasion of world-wide blessing which centered in that very son, and yet seemed to be made impossible by the intensely painful act to which he was called. What was suffered to the full and unsparingly, that God might be glorified, that sin might be condemned in a sacrifice of blessing to sinners without bound or end, that good might surpass where evil abounded, that love might overcome where enmity had wrought its worst, that Satan might be vanquished where he had been a prince and a god, that man might be brought, no longer a child of wrath but of God, out of all iniquity, intense misery, and everlasting judgment to peace and righteousness before God now and to heavenly glory with Christ in the presence of the Father forever?

The father and son brought before us so strikingly here furnished an unrivaled occasion to show in a figure or “parable,” as it is called in Heb. 11:17-19, the real death and as real resurrection of the Lord Jesus. The interpretation given, as it has been believed by all saints of N.T. times, rests on no probability however strong, on no tradition of men, however ancient. He that disputes will have to give account of his inexcusable incredulity to the Lord Himself when we are manifested before His judgment-seat. Very beautiful is the minute accuracy of this N.T. comment. “By faith Abraham when tried hath offered up Isaac; and he that took up to himself the promises was offering up the only-begotten, in respect of whom it was spoken, In Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that even from the dead God is able to raise; whence also he received him in a parable.” We may not in English easily express the perfect in the first instance of the offering; but the force is evident and points to the subsisting or fixed result of that act. Morally it was done; and the effect abides. The second use of the word in the imperfect corrects all possible misuse of that; for it states that literally Abraham was in the act of offering his only son when arrested as Genesis tells us by Jehovah's angel. The spiritual test was complete, though the act was not completed. So had divine wisdom ordered and accomplished.

Nor is this new thing, though only in parable, an isolated and transient fact, but it is connected in the declarations and the events that follow with consequences of the utmost importance, as will be shown in due time. This is the most powerful and conclusive proof that the scripture is in the fullest sense inspired of God. It is not only that a moral pinnacle is here reached as never before; but that the death and resurrection of Christ prefigured by it reflects on what follows a light which shows that what is related stands in perfect keeping with that infinite event, and is a shadow of what we find in the N.T. could only follow it, as it did according to God's counsels and in the development of His ways.

The answer of the father to the son (7, 8) was from above and in a wisdom wholly above man's; God's providing Himself the lamb for a burnt-offering is the basis of the new and only justifying righteousness, God's righteousness. In the infinite reality it was the Son become man and on behalf of men yet to God's glory, after proving Himself the righteous Servant, made sin for us, that we who believe might become God's righteousness in Him. Thus was love maintained as fully as holiness, and that new righteousness, God's righteousness which can justify absolutely him that believes on the Lord Jesus, instead of condemning the sinner as he deserves. It was the Father's will, the Son's work, and the Holy Spirit's witness, as indeed we read in Heb. 10.

Viewed merely on the historical side, what admirable devotedness to God's authority testing the heart to the uttermost! What unhesitating trust in God and His word, that the giving up of what is dearest in possession and hope would result in unimpaired re-establishment of all! And so it truly was in the issue, and beyond all expectation of man as he is.

Isaac, Isaac: 5. Jehovah, God Everlasting: Genesis 21:22-34

Genesis 21:22-34

Though the name of Isaac does not occur in this section, it is in no way a digression, but in strict pursuance of the divine ways on the occasion of his birth, the dismissal of Hagar and her son, and the recognition of Sarah's son as the sole heir of Abraham.

“And it came to pass at that time that Abimelech, and Phichol the captain of his host, spoke to Abraham, saying, God [is] with thee in all that thou doest. And now swear to me here by God that thou wilt not [lit. if thou shalt] deal falsely with me nor with my offspring nor with my son's son. According to the kindness that I have done to thee, thou shalt do to me and to the land in which thou hast sojourned. And Abraham said, I will swear. And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. And Abimelech said, I know not who hath done this, and also thou didst not tell me, and also I heard not but to-day. And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave [them] to Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. And Abraham set seven ewe-lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What [mean] here these seven ewe-lambs which thou hast set by themselves? And he said, For seven ewe-lambs shalt thou take, that they may be a witness to me that I dug this well. Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba, because they had sworn, both of them. And they made a covenant at Beer-sheba; and Abimelech rose up and Phichol chief of his host, and returned into the Philistines' land. And [Abraham] planted a tamarisk (or, a grove) in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of Jehovah God everlasting. And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days” (vers. 22-34).

It was not only that due order of the household was now secured by the expulsion of the Egyptian and her mocking son, and that the child of promise abode without a rival; but an outward event follows of such significance that the Holy Spirit gives it here an imperishable place. The marked blessing that resulted drew the Gentile's heart, and the Philistine with due formality (for the commander-in-chief accompanied him) seeks the pledged friendship of Abraham. So it will be in days to come when the promises are accomplished in the Messiah; and thus far Isaac typifies Him. It was far otherwise when the Lord came the first time, and even the Jew rejected Him in dark unbelief and in bitter hatred that the grace which they refused should be preached to the nations. Unhappy and unholy, they please not God and are contrary to all men; and the wrath is come on them to the uttermost. But the day hastens when they judging themselves shall welcome by faith Him in Whom the promises are Yea and Amen unto the glory of God. Then shall Gentile kings be Zion's nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers (Isa. 49); then shall ten men take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, shall 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 (Zech. 8).

Nor does Abraham at all repel the Gentiles. The Seed of promise—received and honored leads to a new state of things for the earth. To the king Abraham assents, and forms a covenant on oath and other solemnities. In the Seed are the Gentiles to be blessed. Woe to those that curse in that day! A witness of the change to ensue on the largest scale is here given by Abraham's reproving Abimelech. Now only does he speak of the wrong done by Abimelech's servants who had violently possessed themselves of a well dug by Abraham. And Abimelech bows meekly. Righteousness will reign in that day, and princes shall rule in judgment; yea, judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. For the Spirit will then be poured on Israel from on high; and He holds the inflexible scepter over all the earth, the Righteous Servant and Atoning Sufferer, Who in that day shall be seen exalted, and lifted up, and very high. And Israel's seed shall he known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which Jehovah hath blessed (Isa. 61). The limper shall no longer halt, but the first dominion be even to the daughter of Jerusalem.

The Well-of-the-Oath is the name Abraham gives as the permanent sign of the covenant made then and there. Typically it is a total change from strangership to possession, as it will be really in the days of the coming Kingdom. Nor do we hear of a tent now, though Abraham's calling on the name of Jehovah implies a fresh altar here. Only it is not now as the One Who appeared to Him in the far off land, and led him at length, separated to Him, into Canaan; nor is it the altar he built at Bethel any more than at Shechem, nor yet at Hebron. Here only is the striking change, which inspiration alone can account for, to “God everlasting.” For so it will be when the displayed Kingdom comes in power and glory. Fallen and fading things will then give place to permanence and peace and blessing. For “Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.” (Psa. 102)

In unison with all this is the planting of a grove on Abraham's part. Here only do we read of such an act, the beautiful prefiguration of “that day” when the parched land shall blossom abundantly, and all the trees of the wood shall sing for joy.

Isaac, Isaac: 4. Isaac Abiding, Hagar and Ishmael Dismissed: Genesis 21:8-21

Genesis 21:8-21

God knows how to rectify the false position that springs from unbelief. We may therefore look to Him and His word, and have only to obey. But if this ever costs the flesh not a little, blessing surely follows self-denying submission to His will.

“And the child grew and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw Hagar the Egyptian s son, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking. And she said to Abraham, Cast out this maidservant and her son; for this maid-servant's son shall not be heir with my son, with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. And God said to Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy maid-servant: [in] all that Sarah saith to thee, hearken to her voice; for in Isaac shall a seed be called to thee. But also the maid-servant's son will I make a nation, because he is thy seed. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread and a leathern bottle of water and gave [it] to Hagar, putting [it] on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away; and she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. And the water from the bottle was exhausted; and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went and sat down over against [him] about a bowshot; for she said, I will not look on the death of the child. And she sat over against [him], and lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the lad's voice; and God's angel called to Hagar out of the heavens, and said to her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the lad's voice there where he is. Arise, take the lad, and hold him in thy hand, for a great nation will I make him. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, and she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became as he grew up an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt” (vers. 8-21).

As the child born and the son given typified the Son of the Highest, it was meet that the occasion should be marked by consequences of the gravest. What can distinguish inspiration more than the lesson the apostle in Gal. 4:22-26 draws from that which seems on the surface a mere domestic occurrence? “For it is written that Abraham had two sons; one of the maid-servant, and one of the free-woman. But he that was of the maid-servant was born according to flesh, and he that was of the free-woman through the promise. Which things have an allegorical sense; for these [women] are two covenants: one from Mount Sinai, gendering unto bondage, which is Hagar. For Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to the present Jerusalem; for she is in bondage with her children; but the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother.”

This was God's purpose, though none apprehend it save those who have Christ's mind. Hence the unbelieving Jews fill the place, not of Isaac, but of Ishmael. They are as far as possible from suspecting that they are only born according to flesh, and persecute him that is born according to Spirit. Yet they cannot deny that their mother is the Sinai covenant, and that they are cast out by God. They have the law's curse as transgressors; they have not a shred of the promise to cover their nakedness. Their own prophets declare that they are not God's people, and if without a false god without the True, as they have plainly neither land nor prince; and this because they rejected, first Jehovah, next His Christ.

But the apostle goes a great deal farther; and though he does not confound the believing Gentiles with Israel, like the theologians of Christendom, he shows that all who take their stand on law come under the curse (Gal. 3:10). Thus the principle applies in all its force, indeed emphatically, to Gentiles, who have not the excuse of inveterate Jewish prejudice. It is to fall from grace, through which alone can souls be saved. Law cannot save but condemn sinners; and if grace be mixed with law, the mixture is unavailing: grace only can save the guilty and lost. The Galatians who were bewitched to tack law on to grace, he solemnly warns of utter ruin, so sure that as many as are of works of law (i.e., on this principle) are under curse. After having begun in Spirit, how senseless for them to seek perfection in flesh! The law itself, in the tale of Abraham's two sons, convicts of folly those who thus abuse the law. Its lawful application (1 Tim. 1:9) is not to a righteous person, but to lawless and insubordinate, to impious and sinful, to unholy and profane, to whatever in short is opposed to the healthful doctrine Paul taught.

Hence the peremptory tone of the apostle to the endangered Galatians. He will have this “leaven” extirpated, whatever it cost. It was a deeper peril than the “leaven” which he enjoins the Corinthians to purge out. Not even a moral man could defend the gross inconsistency with Christ and His sacrifice of having the wicked man in their midst. But the fair show in flesh set up in the Galatian churches was subtler, and a denial of the grace which the gospel proclaims, when law had been proved to be simply a ministry of death and condemnation. What then “saith the scripture? Cast out the maid-servant and her son; for the son of the maid-servant shall in no wise be heir with the son of the free-woman.” The Judaizing Gentile is even more blamable than the Jew. Alas! the ritualism of the day is incomparably worse still and growingly apostate; for not content with the legal forms of Israel, it incorporates the idolatries of the heathen also, as in the adoration of the sacramental elements, &c.

Yet is it affecting to know God's goodness to Abraham's seed according to flesh. When the mother yielded to despair, and laid her son down to die at a distance from her, “God heard the lad's voice;” and His angel bids Hagar hold him in her hand. Had not Jehovah called his name Ishmael, because He had heard her affliction? And as she was then by a fountain called Beer-la-hai-roi Well of the living who was seen (or, seeth me) from the name of Him that spoke to her (ch. 16), so now God opened her eyes to see a well of water whence she gave the lad drink. If she forgot the divine assurance of a numberless multitude in general to spring from her, and that Ishmael should dwell in the presence of all his brethren, God remembered him and declares that He will make him a great nation. So it has been. There they are with the same characteristics to this day.

Isaac, Isaac: 3. The Son and Heir Born: Genesis 21:1-7

Gen. 21:1-7

The set time was now come. The child of promise was at hand. Many and various had been the premonitions on the one side, and checks on the other; but at length in the face of weakness and drawbacks, of unfaithfulness with gracious overruling, the divine word is proved to be, as it is, unfailing and worthy of all trust.

“And Jehovah visited Sarah as he had said, and Jehovah did to Sarah as he had spoken. And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was a hundred years old when Isaac was born to him. And Sarah said, God hath made me laugh: everyone that heareth will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said to Abraham, Sarah will give children suck? for I have borne a son in his old age” (vers. 1-7).

Here the usage of the divine designations comes before us remarkably. To impute the difference to distinct authors is the despairing or malevolent resource of uubelieving ignorance. First of all “Jehovah” occurs with emphatic repetition (ver. 1). Governmental relationship was in question; and as Jehovah had promised, so also did He show Himself faithful to perform. But it was of no less moment in the next place to indicate that He who thus spoke was God in the supremacy of His nature (ver. 2). Hence “Elohim” is employed, and throughout the chapter, till ver. 33 where relative dealings properly demand the name of “Jehovah Elohim,” as will be shown in due course.

But beyond controversy it was the birth of one who here typifies the Son of Psa. 2:7, 12. This explains why there should have been so many prophetic intimations to prepare the way. This accounts for the serious consequences which followed for such as despised Him when come. So the prophet was given to say, more than seven centuries before the event (Isa. 9:6 and following): “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder. And they shall call his name Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Father of eternity, Prince of peace.” The prediction, glowing and glorious as it is, has nothing to do with His being First-born from the dead, Head of the body, the church, Who is the beginning. It belongs to His other Headship, as born into the world, the Firstborn of all creation. For in all things He must have the supreme place.

Hence we can see that Calvin only expresses the prevalent confusion of these two relationships, when He says that in this chapter God has set before us a lively picture of His church.

Not so. It is not “the mystery” which is here foreshewn, but the new covenant; it is the mother,1 and not the bride. Consequently the Christian has already new covenant blessing in the death of the Savior; but the scripture which most fully explains it to us (2 Cor. 3) points to its being in spirit rather than in letter; it will be formally with both houses of Israel in the day which fast approaches, and forever. But Israel, however richly blessed in that day, will not have the union with Christ as His body, which is ours even now with Him Who is head over all things. And this involves the most important differences, as widely apart as heaven is from earth, of which this is not the place to speak more particularly. The distinction however cannot well be over-estimated.

Next in ver. 3 Abraham called his new-born son Isaac. So he was now, whatever had gone before, whatever might come after. Any laughter of doubt had given place to the joy of grace. And Abraham certainly looked on with joy to wide, deep, and enduring results; he rejoiced that he should see Christ's day, and he saw it and was glad. How blessed will it be for Israel and the earth and all the nations and every creature of God! How different from the day of Massah and Meribah in the wilderness; when man hardened his heart and Jehovah was grieved long years with a generation that erred in their heart and knew not His ways! In that day what singing aloud to Jehovah, what shouting for joy to the rock of salvation, and coming before His face with thanksgiving and psalms! Yea, the heavens shall rejoice and the earth be glad; the sea shall roar and the fullness thereof; the field shall exult and all that is therein. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before Jehovah, for He cometh-for He cometh to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, and the people in His faithfulness (Psa. 96). Isaiah bears the same witness at intervals from his first chapter to his last, notably in 11; 12; 24-27; 30; 32; 35; 40-45; 49-55; 60-62; 65. So we may say in general have all the prophets spoken. So much the more lamentable is the unbelief which merges all in the church's blessings, only to lose its heavenly bridal place to no end obscured by that groundless confusion.

But the joy of Abraham in no way weakened his duty of subjecting his son to the sign of death for the flesh. He circumcised Isaac duly when he was eight days old, “as God had commanded him” (ver. 4). The eighth day points to resurrection in contrast with nature. Circumcision was instituted, not when Ishmael was born, but in view of Isaac, the seal of the covenant. The principle was God's righteousness. Man was judged as evil and flesh mortified.

It is notified in ver. 5 that Abraham was a hundred years of age when Isaac was born. Faith had indeed to wait, but was in no way disappointed: God is faithful. “And Sarah said (ver. 6), God hath made me laugh; every one that heareth will laugh with me.” She had laughed at first when Jehovah announced the set time for her to be a mother, and she added the shame of untruth when taxed with it (chap. 18). But all is here changed by grace. God, she owns, made her laugh now. It was no longer within herself, but of Him; and others who heard would share her joy. “And she said (ver. 7), Who would have said to Abraham, Sarah will give children suck? For I have borne a son in his old age.” Sarah is thenceforth, old as she was, become a child of wisdom; and wisdom is justified of all her children.

Bible Treasury: Volume N1, In the Beginning

Q.-Gen. 1:1, John 1:1, 1 John 1:1; 2:7, 13, 14; 3:8, &c. What is the difference, if any between “in the beginning,” and “from” it? X. Y. Z.

A.-” In the beginning” in Gen. 1:1 is clearly the first recorded action of God in calling the universe into being, the creation of angels (it would seem from Job 38:7) being anterior. It was the beginning of time on the largest scale. But in John 1:1 the phrase goes back into the eternity that preceded, because it expresses the being of the Word Who was God and created all (ver. 3), trace back indefinitely far as you may.

“From the beginning” is always in time, not before it, to whatever epoch or period, person or thing, it may be applied. Take the earliest application, as said of the great angel who fell: “the devil sinneth from the beginning” (1 John 3:8). It was not even the beginning of his existence as an angel, but only as a fallen one.

For the angels were all sinless at first, as Adam was. God never is the author of moral evil.

But the phrase “from the beginning” carries the same time-force as to good. It never means “in the beginning,” even though applied to Him Who was the Eternal also. It refers from its own nature to a time relation. So we see in Luke 1:2, where “those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word” can only mean from the manifestation of Christ in the public testimony. It is even distinguished from in verse 3, by which the evangelist draws the line between many chroniclers from tradition and his own accurate acquaintance with all things “from the outset” or origin. The phrase therefore does not and can not refer to eternity but to what was before its witnesses in time.

So it is in the all-important use of the phrase in 1 John 1:1, ’....

“That which was from the beginning.... concerning the Word of life.” Undoubtedly He Who is thus presented was “in the beginning;” and this is fully implied in ver. 2 that follows, as in John 1:1, 2. But here it is the concrete Person of our Lord, truly subsisting here below, heard, seen, contemplated, and even handled by the hands of chosen witnesses. This therefore can express nothing but the Lord's manifestation on earth among men.

1 John 2:7 is equally conclusive. “An old commandment” which the saints had “from the beginning” cannot refer to the eternal counsels of God as such, but solely to what was enjoined by our Lord when with them here below. They certainly did not hear it from eternity, but in time and at that time solely. This accordingly gives the true bearing of vers. 13 and 14, of course also 24, and 3:11, 2 John 5, 6. “He that is from the beginning “is the very same person” who was in the beginning,” both truths of the highest moment to faith; but they are distinct and in no way to be merged in one another. If I believe in Him that was in the beginning, it is the true faith of His deity and of His personality as the Word; I am not an Arian or a Sabellian assuredly. But this is not to believe in “Him that was from the beginning,” the Word made flesh and tabernacling among us full of grace and truth, Whose glory was contemplated by the apostle John and his fellows, as of an Only-begotten of (or with) a Father. Hence it is the distinctive badge of the father in God's family here below to know “Him that is from the beginning,” certainly not alone His divine personality and Godhead, however indispensable, but to know Him as He was manifested here, unchangingly divine indeed, but in all the wonders of His life among men in the lowliest, holiest, most familiar love and obedience: Christ Himself as He lived,

moved, and had His being with the disciples, not only declaring God but showing the Father. To know Him thus is indeed to be a “father.”

Bible Treasury: Volume N1, In the Beginning

Q.-Gen. 1:1. “In the beginning.” Is it the same word used by our Lord in regard to the devil in John 8:44?

J. C., Clydesvale, Hamilton, N.B.

A.-Not so. The phrase with which Genesis opens is the beginning of creation, and hence of time, though not yet in relation to man and his environment as from ver. 3 and onwards. “The days” are accordingly literal, as the context forbids any sense but the historical. Poetry or allegory is out of the question here. It is all a plain and sure statement of fact, where man's ignorance can only form hypotheses, more or less defective and short of the truth. Phraseology however is not everything; for the same phrase occurs in John 1:1 where it imports a still grander truth, the personal subsistence of the Word, Who was with God and was God, in the depths of eternity. Go back, as one might in the boundless existence of Godhead, there was no moment when the Word was not with God. That this is the meaning is certain from the third verse of this Gospel, where creation is absolutely and exclusively described and attributed to the Word. Consequently John 1:3 coalesces with Gen. 1:1, and its verses 1 and 2 precede creation, setting out the co-existence of the Word with God, while Himself God before He began the mighty work of creation. The same truth appears most precisely in Col. 1, one grieves to say, enfeebled in the R. V. though they could not destroy it. The enemy shows his malice in detracting from the Deity of the Son all he can as God sustains it sedulously throughout scripture.

But John 8:44 supposes neither the measureless depths of eternity nor the commencement of creation, when vast periods preceded the time of man's earth. It means in time, though before man was formed. “From the beginning” is pointedly distinct from “in the beginning” either in its highest application to the being of the Word or in its use to convey the entrance of creative energy. The devil was not always, but an angel that, inflated or lifted up with pride, fell. He had no standing in the truth and became a murderer as well as a liar, its father (cf. 1 Tim. 3). Thenceforward (' from a beginning of this dark and baneful kind) he was a murderer. His hatred was against man, and especially in enmity to God against Him Who deigned to become man for God's glory and to deliver man. See also 1 John 3. Clearly it is impossible to make ' mean from all eternity, which would deny the devil to be a creature and simply that God made him originally a devil, instead of his being an angel like others that kept not their own original state (Jude 6).

Bible Treasury: Volume 19, God Said

Great as creation is, God's word embraces far more and deeper things. “Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” It is therefore worthy of all acceptation, whatever He may say and whatever the theme. Thereby is revealed the truth by Him Who knows it perfectly.

In Heb. 11:3 we read, “By faith we understand that the worlds, have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear” (R. V.) Evolution is an hypothesis which leaves out God and denies creation. It is a mere effort of imagination to account for the universe, and an effort that sets aside that definite and universally observed fact which underlies all natural science, the permanence of species. So the ancients, in the West as well as the East, suggested cosmogonies no less fanciful. But the word of God is now scripture, which alone lets us hear what is worthy of God and satisfactory to man. “He spake, and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast.” Details are only revealed when man was about to be created. For scripture is a moral book; and God's good pleasure is in men. Hence, when the days” begin, how often we read in Gen. 1 “God said.”

Alas sin soon followed. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned” (Rom. 5:12). As man thus universally failed in uprightness and fell under death, it became thenceforth, if he were not to be abandoned to ruin and despair, a question of divine righteousness and of life superior to death. And no sooner did God appear in judgment of the evil than He spoke of the Savior, the Second Man, the woman's Seed; Who, Himself bruised, should bruise the serpent's head. This was what “God said” to meet the fallen. And faith received it. So we learn in Abel; so the elders had witness borne to them. They believed God's word; they looked for a deliverer from sin and Satan. It was plain that He Who had authority had power. They in their way saw, as He saw fully, that everything He had made was very good. They heard that Adam and Eve had violated the LORD God's commandment. But they also learned that, if they listened to the evil tempter and transgressed, He did not leave them to perish, even though, in consequence of their sin, “He drove out the man.”

The Savior did not come yet, nor for ages afterward; but the word of God about Him was given at once. “The LORD God said,” even when pronouncing sentence on the serpent, that the mysterious Seed of the woman should crush the evil power which had misled man to sin and death. Man never thought of such a consummation, still less could he accomplish it. Nay, his proud unbelief refuses the blessing when accomplished, brought to his door, and proclaimed in his ears. It is of God's grace, the work of His righteousness, an revealed by His word; but man, being guilty distrusts His good and holy benefactor, dreads in measure His judgment, yet believes not His mere in a Savior, still less that (through His death for sin) it is God's righteousness unto all, and upon a them that believe. Even those who claimed to be God's people and were not idolaters, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

Faith alone and always received the blessing; and faith is of hearing, and hearing by the word of God. From the beginning it was so, and so it is still. The word of faith is what the apostle preached. “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10)

So ever since the fall every believer looked for the One that was coming, the woman's Seed. They did not know much of Him. It was not yet said that He was to be called Jesus, nor that God would raise Him from the dead. But they heard from God that He, the Seed of the woman, should bruise the Serpent's head: a work altogether beyond man as such. In due time God Who said thus much said more; but the little He

said from the first, faith received; and those who believed were blessed. God in the blood of Jesus showed His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God. Thus was His grace in all past ages vindicated by the same death of Christ, which is the ground of the gospel now sent to every creature under heaven. Those who received what God said, be it less or more, of the coming Savior got the everlasting profit all through, even as Abel had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God testifying on the ground of His gifts. By faith he offered unto God a sacrifice according to His mind. He believed in the bruised Seed of the woman, and brought to Jehovah a sacrifice on which death passed; whereas Cain never rose above the reasoning of nature or the resource of his own wretched self.

Even so is it with the mass now. They trust in themselves or in men like themselves. They confide in human things and sayings. They venerate shadows and shows. They believe in ordinances. They are puffed up by sights and sounds, by ceremonies, processions, and the like. But they hear not Christ's words and believe not Him that sent Christ. They count it presumption for any to have everlasting life, delusion that a believer comes not into judgment, and mystical madness that he has passed out of death into life. The believer trusts God in Christ for eternal life. Self and its works, the church and its ordinances, are the refuge of the fearful and unbelieving, not God's love nor Christ's work as revealed by the Spirit in His word. There is neither repentance nor faith. Whatever good works, or the church, may be for the faithful, it is a snare for the sinner to trust them for salvation.

Development is as false to God's word, as evolution is to His creation. They are the extremes of superstition and of skepticism, alike frigid zones where life and light are unknown. The truth is inseparable from the Son of God; it was manifested in Him, Christ Jesus, a Man; and no lie is of the truth, no matter how long or widely held. Hence we are begotten again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, through the word of God which liveth and abideth (1 Peter 1:23); and by the same word we grow unto salvation. For if we receive the end of our faith, salvation of souls, we are guarded by the power of God through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, when our bodies will be saved as our souls now are.

Hence we are told (James 1:18) that God of His own will begat us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruit of His creatures. By-and-by new heavens and a new earth will display the glory of Him Who is the Father of lights, from Whom every good giving and every perfect gift come down. Believers are now a sort of first-fruit of it, the product and witness of His grace. His will working by His word is the source of the everlasting boon; as our will issues in lust, sin, and death.

But the word cleanses too, as the Lord told His disciples (John 15) that they were already clean because of the word which He spoke to them. Of this water is the well-known symbol, and the Spirit makes it living. Hence the Lord in John 3 explains new birth to be born of water and the Spirit. It is receiving Christ's testimony; and he that has received it has set to his seal that God is true: the blessed reversal of Satan's success at the beginning, when distrust of God entered the heart. Thus is the heart purified by faith (Acts 15:9).

Assuredly this is not all. For Jesus, the Son of God, came by water and blood: both flowed from His pierced side; and he who believes receives the virtue of both. Purification is by His death, and expiation too; as it is the Holy Spirit Who bears witness in the word of God. Sins are judged and confessed, alike hated and forsaken; the blood of Christ that cleanseth from every sin, and not the guilt of the believer, is before God. Faith rests on the perfect and efficacious death of the Savior. And he that believes the word of God, His witness, has peace with God and eternal life in His Son.

Bible Treasury: Volume 19, God Created

He Who “in the beginning” created the universe is also the source of spiritual life, of a divine nature as in 2 Peter 1. Every creature above or beneath is the fruit of His will and power, He sovereign and good, they dependent and subject responsibly if not in fact; for self-will, sin, entered both heaven and earth. As of old, so now, all blessing is in the Son, in Whom life was and is. The Spirit of God took His part then as He does to-day according to the scriptures. From above is every good giving and every perfect gift, from Him with Whom can be no variation nor shadow of turning. Hence, as sin completed brings forth death, He was pleased to bring forth believers by word of truth that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. There is for a fallen creature no holiness possible, no walk acceptable to God, save through faith in virtue of life above the creature; and this is now set in the clearest light of God's word. “He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God, the life he hath not.” Our Lord here below had presented the matter so fully that mistake is inexcusable. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life” (John 5:24, R. V.).

This is grace, which the sinner needs to save him; the believer knows it in Christ. But, even as to nature, how the Bible opens as becomes a revelation from God! There is no discussion, no reasoning to prove the being of God, no unfolding of His attributes. He acts in power, and speaks with authority, as the true God. He is good, does good, and pronounces on good, as One that has pleasure in it. If from the world's creation His invisible things, His everlasting power and divinity, are clearly seen, being apprehended through the things that are made, how much more does revelation make known? Science is here blank ignorance; it knows not and never can know anything of originations. Its field is the investigation of phenomena, and it rises by generalization to the fixed laws which govern what exists in nature. No doubt it may advance, to a fuller degree and a more exact distribution, by a better knowledge. But from the beginning there was a reality in God's creation to be investigated; and man, whatever his hostile will to hide and lose himself in second causes, cannot escape the conviction that there must be a first cause, God the Creator. He it is Who made known His ways to Moses, His doings to the sons of Israel. He it is Who later revealed Himself in Jesus, His Son, His Only-begotten, in Whom is life eternal for the believer, without Whom abides the wrath of God for him that disbelieves. To reject the grace of God in Christ is to remain in unremoved guilt and death, with a fearful expectation of judgment to come.

Only the fool has said in his heart, No God; he is fool morally and in the worst sense. Reasoning, if sound, may argue that so this or that must be; revelation says that so it is. Nothing is so simple, satisfactory, and deep as the truth. This alone in grace meets man's ignorance and his need: the truth answers both, now and forever. Believers are entitled to say, We know, and this on God's testimony, as sure as it is clear, forming the consciousness of the new man by Gods Spirit.

God, and God only, has self-being. He is the “I am,” and so speaks of Himself. He is the Most High, the Almighty, and the Eternal, and thus made His name known in due time; and He alone can rightly say “I will.” So said the Son when incarnate here below; which could not be, if He were not one with the Father, as truly God, and therefore as competent by the sacrifice of Himself to save righteously, as to create.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Here we are not told of all the beings created at the first, for elsewhere we read of the angels of His might. Nor have we particulars first of the states, and then of the denizens, of the earth, before man was created under the new conditions of the six days followed by the sabbath. Previously to this, and it may be (according to men's research) traversing vast periods, far beyond the time-measures which concur with the human race, we have two revealed facts: creative energy originating the universe (Gen. 1:1); a subsequent state of utter confusion, into which (not the heavens, but) the earth was thrown (Gen. 1:2), before that reconstitution which made it the suited sphere for the moral dealings of God with mankind, and the display of His own grace in Christ. Then Adam's transgression wrought ruin to himself, the race, and the earth; but God will have His eventual triumph over evil power, as well as weakness, through His own Son, the Word made flesh. For He was the perfect pattern of obedience, in life and death the overcomer of Satan, the accomplisher of redemption already by His blood, about to come again to effect redemption by power, not only for those that are His for heaven and earth, but for all the creation itself, enthralled even yet by reason of the first man's fall, to be delivered for glory by the Second. The Holy Spirit will not restore all, whatever His blessed work in that day; it is an honor reserved for Him Who suffered on the cross: Jesus is Heir of all things.

Petty unbelief mocks at the littleness of the earth compared with the immense and countless system disclosed by adequate telescopes. Yet here, not in some distant star physically far transcending our sun, God thought fit to make and try man, and, as the needed measure with the fallen race, to wash away his corruption and violence in the waters of the deluge. Here He called out Abram and his seed to a land they shall yet truly and forever enjoy. Here He tested Israel by the law, and gave them priests, prophets, and kings till there was no remedy. Here, as sin had entered by the first man, He sent His Son, a man Christ Jesus, to vanquish in every way the enemy of God and man, and to deliver by His death and resurrection such of Satan's victims as believe. Here therefore was displayed God's moral glory in the humiliation, obedience, and cross of the Son of Man. Here consequently shall His glory be manifested, in Christ and all that are His above and below, to the blessing of the universe, when Jehovah reigns and the earth rejoices, set free from thralldom to Satan and his blinded instruments. No doubt the glory above is higher than what the earth shall enjoy, and those who suffered with Christ on earth shall be glorified with Him on high. In the Father's house, where He is now, they will have their deepest bliss in His love; but they are also to reign with Him over the earth in that day.

Nor is it for believers to heed the debasing dream of the evolutionist, as credulous of a mere materialist craze as heedless of the only sure and safe, holy and majestic, account of creation, which God gave through His inspired servant Moses. In the Bible alone, in Christianity at last revealed, we have the key to the unique place of man. It was in view of His own Son, in due time to partake of blood and flesh, in order to glorify Him in that nature which had so long played Him false; in it to defeat the great foe; in it to expiate sins; in it to intercede now as Priest; in it by-and-by to reign (as we who believe shall reign with Him) till all things be subjected, when He shall deliver up the kingdom, that God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) may be all in all throughout eternity. It is the revealed truth which alone vindicates, alone puts in their place, both God and man, the earth and all things.

See then, my reader, that as you have heard the word of truth, you believe it; for it is the gospel of salvation to all that receive the Savior on God's word. If he that disregarded Moses' law died without mercy on the word of two or three witnesses, of how much worse punishment shall he be judged worthy that trod underfoot the Son and counted the blood of the covenant a common thing?

The Creation: A Lecture on Genesis 1-2, Creation - A Lecture on Genesis 1-2, The: "Without Form and Void"

Then the second verse puts us in presence of another great fact, which has been, no doubt, illustrated by geologists, but in no way are we indebted to them for ascertaining it. Here it is in the Bible without them, and before geology was heard of; "And the earth was without form and void." It is clearly a condition totally different from the first verse. Not a word about the heaven being without form, and void; the earth alone was so. Some, no doubt, have found a difficulty because of the word "and” (!) being introduced, as if it linked the second verse with the first in point of time; but this is all a mistake. If the word “and" had not been here, the first verse might have been taken for a sort of summary of all the rest of the chapter; and thus hasty readers, and preachers, and commentators have been too disposed to treat it in expounding the chapter. They imagined that God's creating in the beginning was set out in detail under the various days that afterward follow; but that little conjunction precludes such an interpretation. Compare such statements elsewhere, as for instance, in Gen. 5 "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him." There we have the absence of the conjunction. The reason is that the first words are an abstract of that which the rest of the chapter brings before us. Had there been no "and" at the beginning of the second verse of the first chapter, the common (or at least what used to be the common) construction might plead some show of reason for itself, as far as the language of Moses is concerned. There might have then been an impeachment of the accuracy of the divine record. As it stands, there is thorough and manifest correctness. The only persons that have made mistakes are either Christians with upright wishes, who have merely attached their own erroneous notion to the scripture, or men of science who similarly misreading it have forthwith sought to malign it. There was no just ground for either; the fault was in both, not in God's word.

"And the earth was without form and void." This is a second fact. There is no limitation of the space that intervened between the original creation of heaven and earth in verse 1, and the dreary ruin depicted in the earlier clause of verse 2. We are not told what were the grounds on which God dissolved the fabric of the earth He had created, and brought it into the chaotic condition so strikingly set forth. But I repeat my assertion that the creation of a chaos, or the existence of a chaos as a primeval state, is a heathen and not a biblical thought. What the Bible says is quite inconsistent with such an idea. "Heaven and earth," we have seen does not mean chaos, but a state of things with an order necessarily distinguishing them. What use God may have made of the earth as it originally came from His fiat is another question, and our curiosity is not indulged by the Bible. The fact, however, is certain; and it is a fact of the utmost moment, and of very great interest in its place. All the facts that have been discovered of the earliest conditions of the earth fall in with it; that is to say, they point to a time when the animal, or even vegetable kingdom, when life in its lowest forms, as yet had no existence on the globe. Is there no difficulty then? I grant you that man has the utmost possible difficulty at arriving at anything more than a First Cause. What the nature of that First Cause is, how can he tell? The very same principle that leads him to feel there must be a First Cause forbids his understanding it. The reason of this too it is not

hard to see. Man himself infers a first cause, but he, a caused being, never can per se understand a first cause that is not caused. It is outside and above the sphere and nature of his own being. There man feels, and alas! would hide, his own ignorance. But here in scripture all is plain. We are told that all things above and below had a First Cause, and that He who caused them to be was God, who by the absolute act of His own will was pleased so to create (verse 1). Then (verse 2) follows another fact-all the earthly part of the creation completely dissolved, and in hopeless confusion. I shall prove that scripture refers to the same words elsewhere; never as the original state, but a state to which God was pleased to reduce the object in question. The importance of this cannot be over-estimated in such a theme as the present.

Thus in Isa. 34:11 we have these same expressions, once more. In describing the judgment upon the land of Edom, we read, "The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness." No man can say that this is a description of the original state of the land of Edom: it is a condition to which God's judgment brought it down. This, then, confirms the interpretation already given of Gen. 1:2. The second verse is brought in as an additional statement to the first (not an exhibition of the state which was before us in the first verse). But, further, the use made of the terms elsewhere (as Isa. 34) shows that they suit there a condition to which God consigned what He had made, and certainly do not describe that in which He made or created it.

Again Jer. 4:23 refers to these same terms, and clearly in allusion to Genesis. There the prophet writes in view of the land of Israel and the judgments impending,-"I beheld the earth" (it was a prophetic vision), "and, lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled." That is, it is not at all a vision looking back to a primeval condition, but one that looks onward to the utter desolation with which God would visit a particular land, the terms being pointedly chosen from the second verse of Gen. 1 What I gather is very simple:-that there is an analogy in the use to which the Spirit of God applies His own words; that Gen. 1:2 is a description of the state, not in which God made the earth, but to which He was pleased subsequently to reduce it.

I may be met by the objection that this represents God as capricious. Far be the thought! Was not, is not, He that made the heavens and the earth all-wise? Ah! it would have been a poor thing for man, as he is now, if God had not broken up the earth;-an imperfect provision, if He had not convulsed it, and many a time too. I am not prepared to endorse, still less to oppose, what men of science, who had, as far as I am aware, no thought of illustrating the Bible, have affirmed as to the number and character of the pre-Adamite convulsions. There is one that I could name among the most exact and comprehensive of modern writers on palaeontology, and he, if I recollect aright, affirms that some nine and twenty times the crust of this earth was broken up, before man was made to dwell here below; that nine and twenty times there have been successive acts of God's power, in bringing in what was new on the basis of the breach of the old. And suppose you that all this was arbitrary? Certainly I am not going in anywise to bind my faith or yours to that which M. D'Orbigny says; however competent he may have been to give a grave and ripe judgment. Convulsions may have happened nineteen times, or nine and twenty, or thirty-nine.

To my mind it is rather a precarious affirmation, the exact number on a point so delicate and difficult to ascertain with precision. Nevertheless, the general outline I cannot but hold to be as sure a series of facts as any other in geological science-that God was pleased to form successive deposits, and after each-or, at any rate, at intervals-violently to break up the surface that He formed. And so far from this being without a worthy purpose, it was the evidently wise course of things, if He destined the earth, after these vast geological eras, to become the home of man, or at least the sphere for man's activity and responsibility in such a world as this. How else would man have reached what lay in the bowels of the earth? How else could he have availed himself, for instance, of the buried coal measures? How else could he have turned to account the minerals deposited in its depths? How else could he have quarried the lime, the marbles, and other stones concealed there. On the one hand, all this chain of successive convulsions was requisite for man, when formed on the earth; but on the other hand, it was entirely incompatible with man, or indeed, any other being, when living on the face of the earth; because these violent disruptions, of course, would have been fatal, as they were when various genera and species of living creatures did exist at each epoch when the crash took place; and consequently the tale is told by the vast beds of fossilized objects, as we all know-when God laid down not merely unstratified formations, but strata with an ascending scale of organic being, before the Adamic earth.

But all this was not without a beneficent design marked with the utmost wisdom and goodness too, as all that God does and says must be. So that although He was pleased here to pass over these geologic eras silently, leaving it to man who was about to avail himself of means to discover such facts by his observation, and by that mind with which God had endowed him, yet He has left ample verge for all in verse 2. it was natural that man should survey that world on which he was made, and of which he was constituted the lord. One can understand that man goes forth and enters with interest into the conditions of the world that was put under him; for things here below were his proper domain. Naturally therefore man seeks to understand the world which has been set in his heart (Eccl. 3:11), where he finds himself now an inhabitant. It is perfectly certain that all the previous states differed more or less from each other, as they were totally different from the conditions in which man was made and tested in Eden.

(Continued and To be continued.)

The Creation: A Lecture on Genesis 1-2, Creation - A Lecture on Genesis 1-2, The: "In the Beginning"

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." If God had been bound to create at any moment before that in which He was pleased to call into being the heavens and the earth, His character must have been denied; He would not thus be the Absolute after all. For absolute means that He is not tied to conditions. That He was pleased, therefore, to exert His own divine energy at the particular time when He chose, flows from the very fact that He is God. Even a man has a will. Is God to be deprived of His will? What sort of a God would that be?

“In the beginning," then, "God created the heaven and the earth." Observe the careful abstinence here from measures of time that belong to man. It is now well known, that not the heavens only but the earth had an existence and suited condition when man was not upon it, when it might be utterly impossible, according to the facts that we know about its circumstances, for man to be there, or for any animated nature to subsist, followed by vast but gradual changes, as well as sudden convulsions destructive of such living things as did afterward exist. For such crises and changes there were, if there be anything ascertained in the "uncertain science," as one called it who was himself one of the chief contributors to the riches of physical knowledge. And an uncertain science it truly is. Humboldt, we may be sure, did not mean to slight any

real fruit of man's mind. If there be, then, anything certain in the uncertain science of geology, it is this, that there were immense tracts of duration when man did not exist upon the earth. God's word leaves ample space for them. "In the beginning" fixes the commencement of the universe indeed, but admits of eras of indefinite extent, and this before the confusion described in the following verse, still more of course before the six days, whose course begins with Gen. 1:3.

To what use He applied them—what were the particular constitution, phase, and denizens of the earth during one space or another, God has not seen fit to lay before us in His word. This is no defect in Scripture: that it lies open to such a charge flows from one of its excellences. The word of God was never meant to be a book of human science. Nevertheless, when science ceases to be uncertain, when it is no longer a heap of hypotheses, one displacing and destroying another, in the measure in which it becomes really entitled to the rank of science, and attains any degree of consistency as a branch of knowledge, it never fails to pay homage to the word of God. I do not speak of every individual who cultivates it. Far from that. But it seems to me true of science itself. And unquestionably men who have largely advanced its domains in all directions have not been the least loud in their acknowledgment of God's word, when it speaks of that which they are generally considered to know best. There is none in this room who would dispute the place of a Newton or a Cuvier. They were not backward in owning the value of scriptural truths. Remember, I do not bring in the names of these great men as if it could be any triumph for the cause of God. It was their gain to bow to His word, which really cast luster on them, not they on it.

So always it is. There is no man but what derives all his blessing, if he be wise, through God's word from God Himself. Sir Isaac Newton, for instance, did not degrade the science of which he was one of the most illustrious ornaments by denying God or dishonoring His word. Not that the prince of natural philosophers understood the word of God well—I do not think he did. It was not given to him to sound the depths of scripture to any remarkable extent. He can scarcely be deemed correct as to his views of creation; for his idea was that God in the first place created crude masses of matter. Very likely such is the notion among many to this day; if so, it is a serious error, which derives no countenance from the word of God. What scripture says is that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Do these latter terms mean masses of matter? Heaven is not masses of matter, nor earth either. When scripture says God created the heaven and the earth, it means what it says. God did not create a mass of undigested materials. We may presume Sir Isaac got this from Ovid, certainly not from the Bible. Most school-boys have imbibed the same idea; for even the greatest of men may sometimes be affected by that which influences the child at school. Few of us sift our sources of thought enough to discern how much we are tinctured, especially by heathen poets and philosophers. There is no man necessarily above such an influence. It would be only flattering ourselves to fancy that any man here could pretend to such an immunity. I should be sorry, indeed, to give the slightest ground to suppose it to be a question of man against man. My present task is to vindicate God's word, no matter who the person is that ventures to oppose it. Let his reputation be what it may, God is above him, and His word is infinitely wiser than that which any man has written without inspiration. Scripture never knows what it is to correct itself; it corrects all others and their words, let them be the greatest philosophers or who they may.

God's word then asserts, that in the beginning He created the heaven and the earth. I admit that it was not the heavens in the sense in which we afterward read of them, in the course of the second day (Gen. 1:6-8). It was not the earth in the state in which, when the waters were finally gathered into seas, man was to live on the dry land. Nor is there any reference to man or even to any other animal in this primary mention of the earth (Gen. 1:1.) All is left strikingly open. If science has made discoveries here, let her humbly seek to prove them. Let her remember the cosmogonies of olden time and not be too hasty. Above all, let her not be in a hurry to contradict the Bible. She will be wiser if she curbs her spirit and seeks a docile mind; otherwise she will find out her humiliating mistake before long. When things get settled down into their places, and the various discoveries acquire shape, and are generalized into laws that carry conviction everywhere, like the principle of gravitation; when geology arrives (if it ever should) at such a place as its far more exact sister, astronomy, I do not doubt that her obeisance to the Bible will be more complete than it is now. Not that I expect such progress; yet it is not for anyone to predict what may be in reserve. But this is certain, that scripture asserts the grand truth that God gave being to the heaven and the earth, without connecting this with time as measured by man, still less of course by history.

Consequently the common idea of putting the creation of the world some six thousand years ago is a mere blunder. The Bible is in no way responsible for it. Where does scripture say so, or anything approaching to it? It is only the annotator at the beginning of the Authorized Version who joins B. C. 4004 with Gen. 1:1. I do not doubt that the margin was thus supplied by men, excellent, learned, and with pious intentions. But it is only man, not God, who dates creation from Tisri, or September 1St. And this is the blessedness of the Bible, that we have in itself that which corrects the best of men who labored on it with the best means and desires. Is this a loss? To my mind an immense boon, especially to those who boast of no wisdom except that which the Bible gives them. The Bible—and this is its boast and ours—is the book for all, be they the simplest or most ignorant. The Bible—and where is there the appearance of such another book—can correct the best wisdom that man has ever laid up, not merely outside, but from the Bible itself. The Bible, then, nowhere puts creation in connection with Adam,—expressly not; nor is it in connection with animated being, with beasts, or birds, or fishes, or reptiles, nor even with the grass and fruits of the earth. It simply affirms what man never knew as a certainty without the Bible, that "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

(Continued and To be continued.)

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:29-31

The closing notice remains, the economy of the primeval creation, and the divine estimate of it all.

" And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb producing seed that [is] upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which [is] the fruit of a tree producing seed: to you it shall be for food; and to every animal of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, in which [is] a living soul, every green herb for food. And it was so. And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, [it was] very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day" (ver. 29-31).

Man has still his distinctive place in God's commission and plan; but it is in the state of innocence. After the fall came in corruption and violence. Animal life was not permitted to man till after the deluge. Herbs and fruit were given at first to man, and to the subject creation every green herb. Death was not in the Adamic earth till sin. Granted that Rom. 5:12-21 does not go beyond the human race as fallen under

death through sin; but Rom. 8:19-22 looks at “all the creation” as ruined through the fall of its head. Neither scripture raises any question about states of the earth anterior to Adam. We have seen in Gen. 1:1-2, the general principle of a previous condition called into being and destroyed; which, as far as it goes, leaves room for death by one means or another among the animals then. In no previous conditions was there man existing, still less the great moral trial of Adam the first head, and the varied dispensations of God, till through the last, the risen Adam, God gives those who believe the victory. Whatever gradual approach may have been made before, the six days describe the foundation of that platform where man would be tested in every way according to divine wisdom, and God was in due time to bring in Christ, His Son, become man to glorify Him, not only in obedience but redemption, and a wholly new and everlasting creation only as yet come in the person of its glorious Head on high. The words of God here spoken are in view of man and earth yet unfallen.

Here experience is necessarily at fault. For only the Bible could give us the truth as to the primitive phase of man and the creatures around him. But it at once approves itself, when revealed, as being the sole conceivable state in which the Creator could have placed creation and its head suitably to His own goodness. Hence the force and moral beauty of His final survey in the last verse. “And God saw everything that He had made (i.e., in the Adamic earth), and behold, it was very good.” So with the one exception of day second had He called each thing “good;” now as a whole it was superlatively so in His eyes.

Yet the unbeliever, scientific or not, is misled. by his abuse of experience about a time where he cannot have a tittle of evidence to contradict scripture, and imputes to God, if he allow there is One, such a world as would be the production of a fiend, not of the Only True God. Even on his own ground it is the grossest assumption to assume that at the beginning (and science is now compelled to own there must have been a beginning) things were as they now are. It is illogical, as well as infidel, to take for granted that the present state is a normal one, or that God made men sinful, vain, proud, selfish, to say nothing of more abominable outbreaks; that He left men indifferent, so as to become heathen or Jews, Mahometans or Christians, of any religion or of none, without guidance or proof. It is evident that the state of the world is offensive to God; and that it has been so since man left records more or less credible. This is a fact, Bible or no Bible. But the Bible alone gives us the simplest, clearest, and fullest explanation, in a few words, how it came to pass. God made man upright, surrounded by everything “very good” yet under trial of obedience, as we shall soon hear definitely; but he departed from God through the wiles of the enemy in the face of solemn warning. He sinned and thus introduced death for himself and his posterity, and “subjected to vanity” the creation put under him. But God, when tracing the evil to its source, has proved His goodness by holding out the assurance of a Conqueror over the enemy, even while suffering Himself, to be born of woman too. And to this word all believers from the fall clung till He came Who made it good in His death on the cross and in His resurrection.

Thus does God from the first proclaim mercy rejoicing over judgment, though sin bore its sorrowful fruits in an outcast race and a blighted world, where no creature is as God made it. It is science, not scripture, here as elsewhere, which brings in difficulties even for believers.

Thus Sir J. W. Dawson in his Archaia, 217-222, raises questions which are certainly not solved, though brought by himself, a very competent geologist, “into the light of our modern knowledge of nature.” He pictures Eden either cleared of its previous inhabitants or not yet invaded by animals from other centers! He supposes man created then with a group adapted to his happiness (Gen. 2:19, &c., treating of. them only), and these latest species of animals and plants extending themselves within the spheres of older districts, so as to replace the ferocious beasts of older epochs and other regions! He fancies that on the fall the curse that befell the earth would thus consist in the predaceous animals with thorns and briars invading his Eden. Most of my readers will have heard more than they wish of notions as irreconcilable with scripture as derogatory to it. How can the excellent Principal of Mc Gill College have indulged in such speculations? Evidently, because being sure, too sure, of his geological scheme, he accommodates scripture to it: a position not very wise scientifically where so much is continually shifting and so little is absolutely ascertained—a position most antagonistic to a Christian's faith in God's word. He is not entitled geologically to assume a mixture of the conditions of the Tertiary with those of the human period in the Quaternary. His theory of day-ages exposes him to these consequences, along with the recently adopted fashion of opposition to A. D'Orbigny's careful and exhaustive proof in his “Prodrome de Stratigraphique Palæontologie,"1 that not a species of plants or animals survived the Tertiary, and that a distinct break preceded man's time as often before.

And what is the alleged ground in scripture? “Man was to rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the b'hemah or herbivorous animals. The carnivorous creatures are not mentioned, and possibly were not included in man's dominion”! But this is distinctly refuted by ver. 30, which expressly assigns every green herb to “every beast” or animal of the earth. The same text proves that at this time “every animal in the earth was herbivorous,” though it is boldly laid down that this cannot be meant. Nor should any believer question the past fact, if assured by inspired prophecy that the day is coming, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard lie down with the kid, when the cow and the bear shall feed, their young lying down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. Here undoubtedly science will decry and scoff; but he who believes (as Dawson does) the unfallen state of Adam and his Eden, if not his earth, is inconsistent in curtailing his rule to a petty domain. The apostle, we have seen, interprets his headship of creation in general, whatever modern geology may pronounce to the contrary.

Philologically too, it is quite an error that b'hemah, though expressing “cattle,” is limited as is here imagined. Any good Hebrew Concordance will show the most unlearned that it is frequently employed in the largest sense and rightly rendered “beast” in both the A. and the Rev. Versions. Compare Gen. 6:7; 7:2 twice, 8; Gen. 8:20; 34:23; 36:6; Ex. 8:17-18;
Ex. 9:9-10, 19, 22, 25; 11:5, 7; 13:2, 12, 15; 19:13; 20:10; 22:10, 19. It occurs at least 25 times in this sense in Lev. 8 times in Numbers, and 7 times in Deuteronomy; so often in the historical books, in the Psalms and in the Prophets, where the sense of “cattle” is in fact rare.

This then is God's account of His creation, and in detail of the Adamic earth. No wise man will wonder that we are conducted silently over the vast and successive platforms of dead plants and animals, to say nothing of the debris of rocks, under water and heat. Here we have a system of life rising up, not by any necessity but by divine power, wisdom, and goodness, to beings constituted chief of creation and made in His image after His likeness, before sin brought in death and every woe on the guilty and all subject to them: a system where our feeble eyes cannot fail, save blinded by willful evil, to see it everywhere, above, around, below, filled with contrivances that disclose the omniscient designs and the inexhaustible benevolence of the omnipotent Designer, yet in no case absolutely, but with a view to moral government, the effects of which afford a handle of objection to those who refuse that divine word which reveals good then and still higher purposes of grace in Christ for all who believe. Even in the lowest point of view, well may we at this place exclaim with the psalmist, “These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season: That Thou givest them, they gather. Thou openest Thine hand; they are filled with good.”

Thus we have seen Man, the race, created in God's image. No doubt, that this should be true, it was and must be after God's likeness in the absence of all moral evil. But it was emphatically a creation in God's image. Man was the last and chief creature here below, the only one in the heavens or the earth, whom scripture designates as made in God's image: a wondrously high distinction, with the grave responsibility of representing Him aright before others, as His delegated ruler. Not even the highest angel possesses such a place before the universe. Angels serve on account of those that shall inherit salvation.

But here, as we may easily stray, we need simple and entire subjection to the written word; and that we are most unlikely to have or court unless we have unwavering faith in it, as we certainly ought if we believe it inspired of God. This the apostle predicates, not merely of scripture generally as a known body of holy writings, but of everything coming under that designation, some of which had yet to be written. What can be conceived more precious and withal comprehensive, than , “every scripture,” in 2 Tim. 3:16? He declares it to be, not only useful for the various purposes of divine blessing to man, but before all God-inspired. All admit the human instruments; but if scripture be God-inspired in every part, it is certain that God is not a man that He should lie. And He has magnified His word above all His name.

Now there is a two-fold danger of misapprehending Adam's state and place while unfallen. We may exalt it beyond the truth by confounding it with what grace gives in Christ; or we may lower it by making it a question of such reasoning and conscience as man acquired by the fall. In his original state Adam stood in relationship with God. in thankful use of all He gave, but liable to death on disobedience. It was in no way heaven held out if he obeyed, as will appear more fully by-and-by. The danger was of losing his first estate by transgression. But God imposed no such moral government as the law; nor had Adam the knowledge of good and evil till the fall. Man was not holy but innocent, and tested solely by prohibition as the simple test of obedience on God's part. It was a blessed creature's responsibility to obey with the threat of death on transgression. By the fall man got the knowledge of good and evil, that is, the intrinsic perception of right and wrong apart from prescription; or as Jehovah Elohim said (Gen. 3:22), “Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil!” In Adam fresh from God's hand the knowledge of good and evil would have been a defect, a moral inconsistency, and therefore an impossibility. Before the fall he had conscience solely in the sense of responsibility to obey, not at all in the way of accusing or else excusing self. Only when he sinned, and thus lost his innocence, did he gain the moral power of knowing good and evil of himself, henceforth his sad, painful, but most useful monitor. Before that he was naturally enjoying divine goodness in its creative effects, under the test, not of resisting things intrinsically evil, but of a single restriction from God which made eating the forbidden fruit wrong: a state wholly different from ours. The fall changed for evil the whole ground of standing. Propitiation with life in Christ is a still deeper and higher change for good, even though in fact the old man yet abides and is altogether evil in itself. Christianity is no mere restoration of man, but eternal life in Christ and eternal redemption.

But unfallen Adam was in no way free in the sense of independence of God. He had indisputable title to act in what God subjected to him, but in nothing else. Obedience and dependence were due to God. All was good around him to enjoy: one thing was forbidden, and wrong because God. forbade it as a test of subjection to Himself. To act independently was to set self up as God, and thus in effect to set aside the true God. But this is sin, yea, apostasy from God, instead of walking as created in His image, after His likeness, the total opposite of Him, Who being God, became man, the image of the invisible God, come to do His will on earth where all else had failed.

And here it is that science, however interesting in its sphere and useful also, comes in so mischievously. At best it ignores man as God created him, because it only knows man as he is, fallen from His original relationship with God in nature; as it equally ignores man born anew, born of water and of the Spirit, because the new birth is supernatural. This ignorance falsifies scientific ideas and reasonings. For instance that knowledge of good and evil of which scripture speaks as a consequence of the fall, or a moral sense as men call it, is assumed to be the highest ethical constitution that has survived the fall! But there was this immense difference that, while of course God knew good and evil, it was as One unassailable by evil and supreme above it in His own nature: man only acquired it by sin and in subjection to the power of evil, and thus having it now in himself. The Lord Jesus on the contrary was the Word made flesh, born not innocent only but holy, rejecting evil always even when tempted as Adam and his sons never were, and at the end as a sacrifice dying for sins and to sin, that we who believe might live in Him risen, the life-giving Spirit, the Second Man and Last Adam.

Now faith only, not science, recognizes either the fall of the first man as affecting all mankind and the entire scene put under him, or the victory which God gives all who believe in Christ risen from the dead. Science accepts fallen man's estate as the only one, because it alone is the subject-matter of ordinary experience. It is therefore involved in difficulties necessarily insoluble, because it knows neither the sinless and happy state in which God originally set man, nor the righteous deliverance which the Lord Jesus gives to faith in God's love; still less the glory, power, and incorruption to be made good even for the dead and for the mortal body when He comes. Philosophy is either openly infidel or vainly essays to conciliate, with a God of power and goodness, a world of sin, suffering, misery, and death. Were creation truly believed and the fall honestly confessed, the main difficulty vanishes; absolutely so, when God's love is read in the gift of His Son incarnate and suffering for the sinful world which crucified Him in its unbelief of His glory and rejection of His grace and truth. But science as such starts with the world and man as they are, ignoring his moral disorder and the effect of this on what was subjected to him; and cannot rise above the facts it discovers in the perceived course of nature, but may deduce its laws so called. God only could reveal creation. His word alone tells how man fell from innocence in first estate into sin and death, and dragged down with him all the inferior creation. Science in its very nature is incapable of rising to this knowledge infinitely more important as it is than all it can make known or even discover, however ample the field in nature may be. For revelation speaks of three broadly distinct conditions: creation unfallen; creation as it is in guilt, and misery, whatever the resources of sovereign grace held out to faith; creation as it will be when all things are made new. Science occupying itself solely with the intermediate is in great danger of denying in dishonest pride what it cannot know scientifically, to the destruction of all who trust it, instead of the God Who gave His Son in love to save sinners who repent and believe the gospel.

But to return, we read, “And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over fish of the sea and bird of the heavens, and over every living thing that creepeth on the earth” (ver. 28). Man, as Prof. Owen said, is the sole species of his genus, and the sole representative of his species.

This is the second benediction of creation. The first was when God made the creatures that peopled the waters and the air of Adam's world, the earliest to enjoy animal life in that state of things. God has pleasure in blessing His creatures that have a life even of a lowly kind to appreciate the fruits of His goodness, and especially in view of their reproduction and multiplying within their sphere. Here, a second time, He blessed mankind, male and female, of whom alone it is said, though the detailed difference is reserved for a subsequent and more fitting occasion. In verse 22 we have only “saying,” but here “God said to them, Be fruitful,” &c. Man was the depositary of God's revelation, as he ought to be His priest, and, as we have seen, His viceroy. This is more than the interpreter of nature, as one of our sages styled him. He had intercourse with God at once.

Language thus was in no way the slow invention of man's wit, but an immediate endowment of our first parents by God from creation. Here His word assures us of its reality from the first day of man's creation; and everything confirms in the chapters that follow. To imagine otherwise is to disbelieve the Bible and prefer one's own thoughts or the dreams of other men, as if we or they could know anything about the matter. He Who alone knows all has been pleased to tell us the truth through Moses. His word was valid for the unintelligent creation: how comforting for the human pair to hear Him say, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it! Even though man comes in as a creature with the rest, still he is introduced exceptionally as the crown of creation; and the higher creatures are pronounced good separately from man, who is blessed, male and female, in an address to them as at the head of all the rest.

Then comes the proclamation of the rule assigned them by God. Not only were they like others to multiply and fill the earth, they were to subdue, or bring it into subjection. Next He adds as before, “and have dominion over fish of the sea and over bird of the heavens, and over every living thing that creepeth on the earth.” Thus from the outset was man, even when enumerated as a being fresh from God, set apart essentially. None other was to subdue the earth. He alone had the God-given capacity. He alone was called to have dominion. Development in the Darwinian sense is not only an illusion, but at plain issue with the word of God. A striking and practical proof of the reality of this dominion as far as every beast and every bird was given to Adam (Gen. 2:19) when Jehovah Elohim brought them to see what their lord would call them, and whatever he called each living soul (or creature), that was its name: a fact full of interest otherwise on which some remark will fall in its season. He was owned by God in that place of authority which entitled him to give each subject creature its name.

For the present however we do not notice more than the singular evidence here afforded of real intelligible language communicated from the very first to the head of the race. Adam had it in perfection like the other properties of full growth the day he was created. Doubtless in this he differed from all that sprang from him in due time and to this day who have to learn. But here God created worthily of Himself; and even infidels own that there must have been primeval causes for all that exists, of which science can give no account. It can at most only say “must be,” not “is.” For its fixed laws are only gathered from the constant course of things; and such a course supposes the “things that appear” to have gone on long enough for men to observe the order of nature which they thus designate. An originating first cause is no less certain; also the phenomena need time for that regular course that they describe by “laws of nature.” Eternal self-existence belongs only to God, not to the creature; and none so negligent or perhaps rebellious as geologists, if they forget how often God intervened to create as well as to destroy in a way irreconcilable either with chance or with fate. But these are the characteristic main-springs of Epicureanism on the one hand and of Stoicism on the other, the two chief opposing systems of ancient philosophy (Acts 17:18) as of modern under new names. Without creation and the fall man can account for nothing aright; but for knowing either we need faith and these from revelation, which some in their infatuation pronounce impossible. These men confessedly can make known their evil ideas to their fellows; but God, they argue, cannot communicate His good word. What is possible with men seems to their unbelief impossible with God! Could folly sink lower? Creation must be a miracle; and miracles must not be. Has not the nineteenth century settled it forever?

Here also natural religion betrays its inherent insufficiency and falseness. For it never truly feels or acknowledges the fall, even if it borrow creation as a tradition from the Bible. If it estimated the ruin aright, it would own the necessity of divine revelation and of salvation by grace, yea of a Savior able to meet God in righteousness, no less than man in grace. But it takes the ground of making out a righteousness of its own, supplemented by God's mercy to cover all faults and deficiencies. Impossible for any soul to find satisfaction thus. For on one side he acknowledges a Creator God of power and goodness infinite; on the other he faces a world and race of sin, evil, wretchedness, and death, to say nothing of a judgment he could not but dread. The strongest and clearest mind is lost in this labyrinth; and human efforts on the religious side of superstition are as vain to clear it up and present the truth and purge the conscience as the profane speculations and self-contradictory antinomies of philosophy. Human religion only hardens men in their naturally false thoughts of God as either austere or easy-going. Philosophy (in its struggles to escape the inconsistencies inevitable to a fallen estate which is not confessed to God with a broken heart) only darkens more deeply what is already dark, and ends too often by the mental endeavor to deny the God Whom sin and unbelief have made unknown, save in the qualms of conscience.

No! man was made to look up, not physically alone but morally, in dependence on God the source and giver of all goodness. He sought independence by sin, and gained a conscience already bad, which made him look down, while his pride still pretended to everything. He had lost God and departed from Him, and (being wholly insufficient to abide self-sustained) set his mind on the creature below himself so as at length even to deify it. The Son of God emptied Himself by taking the form of a bondman, being made in the likeness of men, and humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto the death of the cross, where God was glorified as to sin by propitiation for it, and the ground laid for the righteous salvation of all who, believe. A man-god was Satan's bait and man's ruin. The God-man dying in obedience and for redemption is the triumph of truth and grace.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:26-27

In day three we saw the distinct twofold energy of the Creator: not only the waters gathered into seas, and the dry land appearing, and this seen to be good; but the earth caused by his word to put forth grass, herb seeding seed after its kind, and tree yielding fruit, with its seed in itself after its kind, upon the earth, and this seen to be good. On the sixth day there is also a double action, and the second still more strikingly distinguished, as human life is brought into being, the highest of earthly natures (not as before vegetable life, the lowest of organized creatures) here below. The spheres had been fitted in divine wisdom and in the unfolding ways of God for the living beings that were to clothe and fill them with beauty, food, and fruit, to be followed duly by higher beings to profit by all that His provident goodness had prepared, all endowed with powers of constant reproduction whether vegetable or animal. In a general way God had in the vast ages of which

geology takes cognizance so wrought in creative energy, but without man as the center of systems which successively appeared and fell. The days we have seen have special reference to man who on the sixth follows and crowns the highest animals set under his rule.

“ And God said, Let Us make men in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over fish of the sea, and over bird of the heavens, and over cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created Man1 in His image, in God's image created He him; male and female created He them” (ver. 26, 27.).

Not only is man introduced with marked separateness from the previous creation of animals, even from those of the earth made on the same day, each “after its kind,” and all seen as “good,” but for the first time God enters into counsel with Himself for this great and absolutely new work. It is no longer “Let there be,” or “Let the earth (or “the waters") bring forth,” though man's body is in its due place expressly said to have been formed of the dust of the ground. Here the language rises into appropriate grandeur and solemnity, “Let Us make men.” Not a word about kinds of men, for there was but one; whatever people may have subsequently dreamed in their pride or in the selfish advantage they desired to take of their degraded follows. Not a little was suffered afterward in view of their hard-heartedness; but from the beginning it had not been so. We shall hear yet more when we come to a fresh revelation, not of man's creation as its head simply, but of the moral relations in which he is shown to have been set; but here there is ample evidence of the dignity conferred on the race. “Let Us make men in Our image, after Our likeness.” Nothing is more opposed to the Bible than the anthropomorphism of Greek and Roman mythology, which degraded their deities to fallen mules and females with like passions and lusts, and gave the sanction of religion to the basest immorality. And what philosophers of Greece or Rome ever ventured to claim so noble a prototype? Here Moses was inspired to give it as the holy declaration of the Creator. How far from the brute at length evolving man, a theory suggested by Satan to brutalize the race! It is the simple yet wondrous truth: not God brought down to the human level, but men alone created after a divine pattern.

A frequent question is raised as to the force of the terms and their precise shade of difference; for those are not to be heard who hide their ignorance under the assumption that both mean the same thing. The usage throughout the O. and N. Testaments seems to indicate, that “image” represents, and “likeness” resembles. Thus the “image” of the world-power in Nebuchadnezzar's dream represented the succession of Gentile empires from first to last: likeness could not be the point. So it is “image” in the plain of Dura, (Dan. 3), the proportions of which exclude a human figure, or time resemblance of any living creature. Whatever it might not be like, it definitely represented what the monarch commanded to be an object of worship. Again, in the N. T. the denarius our Lord asked for had on its face the image and superscription of Cæsar. It might have been a faulty likeness, but was an indisputable image of the Roman imperator. It expressed his authority and represented his claim over the Jew because of their departure from God, ill as they liked to own either.

So men (ver. 26) are said to have been made in God's image, after His likeness, as the former is emphatically repeated in ver. 27: not, in His likeness, after His image. In God's image is the truth insisted on, though here also man is declared to be made after or according to His likeness. To man only was it given to represent God here below. Angels are never called to such a place. They excel in might. They fulfill God's word, they hearken unto the voice of His word. Yet no angel rules in His name, nor does he represent Him, as a center of a system subjected to him, and looking up to him. But man was made to represent God in the midst of a lower creation dependent on him; though in order to he created in God's image, he was also made “after His likeness,” without evil and upright. But even when through sin the likeness existed no more, he abode His image; however inadequate to represent God aright, he was still responsible to represent Him. Hence in Gen. 5:1-2, we read that God made man in His likeness; male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day of their creation. But it is significantly added in ver. 3, that Adam begat in his likeness. Seth resembled his father, now fallen, as well as represented him. Again, when after the deluge animals were given for the food of man, blood was interdicted and the most jealous care of human life insisted on, for in the image of God made He man. To kill him was rebellion against God's image, though a man was now anything but like God.

The N. T. fully sustains the same distinction far beyond Caesar's case already referred to. Thus the man in 1 Cor. 11 is distinctively called God's image and glory, as publicly representing Him; and Christ, the incarnate Son, is styled “image of the invisible God.” His not being called “likeness” only confirms the truth. If so entitled, it would deny His deity. He was God, instead of being only like God. Compare for the Christian now Col. 3:10, as well as 2 Cor. 3:18; and for the glorious result Rom. 8:29, and 1 Cor. 15:49.

On the other hand we must not confound the state of Adam unfallen with the new man which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. This is descriptive of the new creation, not of the first Adam state where all was mere innocence, but the knowledge of good and evil along with the power by grace which abhors evil and cleaves to good that is implied in righteousness and holiness of the truth. This is not nature, but supernatural in believers, who become partakers of a divine nature. 2 Peter 1:4.

Nevertheless, though Adam's state was far from that of which Christ is the risen head, he evidently was made to have a portion though a creature, above all the creation that surrounded him, “in God's image, after His likeness.” How utterly false in presence of the Bible are the speculations of evolution, an hypothesis logically at issue with those fixed laws of nature, which the same philosophers cry up to the exclusion of God. For how reconcile invariable law with change of species? The truth is that real science depends upon the uniformity of results, and consists of discovering and classifying them. This does not hinder variation through circumstances, failing which the original type returns. Again, as natural science is based on the reality and continuance of species, so it can give no account of origins. If honest, it admits there must be a cause, and an adequate one; but here, as science, it is and must he wholly ignorant. God's word alone reveals truth; and of all reveries, none viler than the ignorance, which refuses to learn and dares to defy divine revelation, by conceiving man a developed ape, fish, seaweed, or aught else. The truth is that primordial causes are beyond science, which, instead of honestly owning its ignorance, pretends to deny the creation which scripture clearly reveals. God alone could create; and He declares that He has done so, and in what order. Science would gladly learn if not skeptical; for its province lies in investigating effects, and cannot reach up to primordial causes, which it is of all moment to know: we can only know them from. God's testimony, which is simple if we were.

How worthy of God and cheering to man, turning from these freaks of spurious science, to weigh once more His words! “Let us make men in Our image after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over fish of the sea and over bird of the heavens [the work of day five] and over cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth [sixth day's work]. And God created Man in His image, in God's image created He him; male and female created He them.” How emphatically, it will be noticed, Moses says that God created the race. It was enough to say so once of the vast universe in ver. 1, when it was brought originally into being. Again it was said to mark the introduction of animated nature, or at least of the aquatic mammals, into the Adamic world in ver. 21. But here of man it is repeated again

and again to enforce the attention of all who tremble at God's word. Not only was man an unprecedented creature, but he had a place in God's mind altogether peculiar, not merely in time on earth, but for all eternity. For the unfolding of this we must await other declarations of God's mind. What is said here points to his creature place as originally set on earth by God. Even for the details of this we need chapter 2 with its all-important supplement on the relations of Adam, where we have the key to the fact that the man was created “male and female,” as we are told here: a single pair, and even so, formed as none other ever was, that man might be differentiated from every creature in earth or heaven. For immense consequences turn on that fact, which God took care to make good, and only He in the nature of things could reveal.

What can science as such say on a matter so profoundly interesting, and morally so important? Is it logical to deny whatever it does not know? For science to confess ignorance is no doubt humiliating. But is it reverent to despise what God does know and has revealed? Alas science knows nothing of faith any more than of piety or reverence. Were it content to assert only what it knows, and confess its ignorance of all beyond its own limits, it would do less mischief and speak more becomingly. Hewers of wood and drawers of water have a place useful if not dignified. Boasting is not seemly, save only in the Lord for all who trust Him.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:24-25

It needs few words to prove that in the fifth day's work we vainly look for an exact correspondence with the Secondary or Mesozoic period. Fishes, even vertebrated fishes, had been created in abundance in Palæozoic time, and so before the Carboniferous age; also the earlier reptiles, chiefly Amphibian, preceded the age when they arrived at gigantic proportions and in every sphere, earth having its species no less than sea and air. Does this agree with the record which distinguishes its denizens, as of sea and air, from those that were only called into being on the following day—which declares that every reptile of the earth belongs to the sixth, and not the fifth? Dinosaurs (including Megalosaurs, Iguanodons, Hylmosaurs) being land reptiles stand opposed. Nor is this all. The absurdity of the periodic interpretation is that we are compelled to leave out the fishes proper, such as Adam knew and we, in order to make it fulfilled in Labyrinthodonts, Ichthyosaurs, Pterodactyls, &c. Birds had in no way their culmination, any more than Teliost Fishes, or even the higher insects, and mammals, till the Quaternary of man. The Cetacea (“the great whales”) again resist this expository violence. Expressly specified in the text as created on the fifth day, being water creatures, they according to geology ought to belong to a far later epoch, as being of a high mammalian rank, and in no way to be classed with even the small marsupials, &c., of an earlier day, though this again is not according to the record. The truth we have seen, in accordance with that of the four previous days, is that the fifth day's work contemplates the entire population of sea and air for man's world, and nothing else. Here as in every other case the ages of geology prove untenable when fairly examined. Apply the six days to Adam's time, and the balance is restored.

Exactly analogous for the land's inhabitants is the work of the sixth day. Does it really correspond with Kænozoic time before man, or the Tertiary age? The scripture gives manifestly and solely the land creatures made for man and on the same day as man; geology is obliged to confess that “all the Fishes, Reptiles, Birds, and Mammals of the Tertiary are extinct species” (Dana, 518). Take the equine tribe alone: there was the Orohippus of the Eocene, the Anchitherium of the Meiocene, and the Hipparion of the Pleiocene. All passed away before the Quaternary, when the Equus Caballus exists for man's service. Even those who contend most keenly for nothing but secondary causes operating all through cannot deny the general extermination of species that closed Mesozoic time, any more than the great disturbances that wrought repeatedly and similarly in the Tertiary age. Indeed geologists of eminence, who had nothing to do with theology and alleged prejudice, are constrained to allow that the elevation of the great mountain chains of Europe and Asia, as well as of America, only attained their full height about the close of that period, as well as the larger part of igneous eruption, with the usual destruction of systems of life in being previous to God's introducing a new one adapted to the fresh conditions. “Chaos” is not a word any Christian need favor; but there was assuredly a fearful state of disorder that intervened, however brief the interval might have been. Do not geologists seem rash to deny that of which they are and perhaps must be ignorant? But all this was antecedent to the six days. The believer absolutely subject to God's word can calmly accept every ascertained fact, assured that every work of God agrees with His word. But hypotheses are another thing and open to criticism, especially where we see plain symptoms of infidelity open or underlying.

“ And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creature (lit. soul) after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the field, after its kind. And it was so. And God made beast of the earth after its kind, and the cattle after its kind, and every creeping thing of the ground after its kind. And God saw that [it was] good” (ver. 24, 25).

Where is the analogy even here with the age of Mammals, as the Tertiary has been well designated? If we add according to scripture the creation of man on that same day, the system is not only different but even in contrast. The simple truth intended is that we have in these verses the land population of all kinds for the period of the human race; as before we had that of the waters and of the air, after the vegetable provision, with the due establishment not of light only but of the heavenly phenomena.

To introduce the herbivores, the reptiles, and the carnivores into the text is to strain after a scientific gloss, besides failing to represent the sense in some respects if not in all. Compare Deut. 28:26 for the very first class. Reptiles again are too narrow, and so are the “carnivora,” where “ferae” would express the truth more exactly. Nor is there real anachronism in giving “cattle” as the first named in verse 24, the domesticable if not yet domesticated animals, appropriate to the use of man. “Creeping thing” follows in its more literal application, whereas “moving” expressed more fully the action of the creatures that peopled the waters, so as to embrace not only serpents, &c., but insect life. Animal of earth” designates the wild beast.

All of them are terms in constant usage where man lives and reigns; they do not distinctively define the age of Mammals where he was not, such as Anoplotheres, Chæropotami, Dinotheres, Paltnotheres, Lophiodons, Xiphodons, &c. Pachyderms are no doubt included, but by no means so determined as to warrant a reference to the age in which they abounded. Indeed at that time confessedly there was the almost total absence of the tribe of ruminants, which rose to prominence when man was made.

The language of the text does not really call up the period “when the brute species existed in their greatest magnificence, and brutal ferocity had full play,” but the day crowned by the creation of man where material force fell into the shade before higher powers. In man's presence the greater birds and beasts that co-existed even become extinct; as notably the Moa, of New Zealand, the Dodo of the Mauritius, and the Aepyornis of Madagascar; and again the Urus (or Bos primigenius) described in Cæsar's Comm. de Bell. Gall. vi. 26, the great Irish Elk (or

Megaceros), the Megatherium, the Mastodon, and the Mammoth. For the evidence points to their co-existence with man, some for but a little while, others till recent time. The tendency has been to push man's age back on the assumption that only so could he have been coeval with them. But the facts are plain and sure enough, not only as to the first but even the last named also, that they existed with man for no inconsiderable time, and this if we accept the lowest reckoning of Biblical chronology. It seems the fashion just now to exaggerate as to time, placing the glacial season or seasons at an incredibly remote distance, and thus the gigantic creatures that perished then, and man also, judging from remains which indicate his hand. There is on the contrary strong and varied evidence, in the estimate of sober geologists, not committed to hypothesis, to show the recent date of the glacial period both in Europe and in America, and the sudden close of what is called “the drift,” and the extinction of mammoths, &c.

The second part of the sixth day's work is too momentous to be touched here. This only may be remarked, how fitting it is that for Adam's time all animal and vegetable creation should arrive at the highest organization, that the heavenly luminaries should do their regulative work in view of the race, that the seas and the land should be as a whole adequately settled, that the atmospheric conditions in supplies of water, vapor, dew, &c., should stand most favorably, with the bountiful and regular vicissitudes of night and day, for life more varied than ever before here below. Thus, if the geologic ages brought in by divine power and wisdom a constantly rising state of the earth, and of creatures suited to each new state, so the six days connected with Adam and his world express rapidly succeeding divine fiats culminating in him, and in their combination of respective goodness characterizing that period in which the human race were called not only into being but into responsibility before God. Other ages might be distinctively azoic, or the system of life might be ushered in with sea-plants, then with marine life of low type, then with fishes when the Vertebrates were made. Next, when dry land was fitted, such plants grew as would flourish and adapt it for higher ones, and, again for living creatures that live on herbage, as well as prey one on another. So in geologic ages we can talk of the age of Acrogens, of Invertebrates, of Fishes, of Reptiles, and of Mammals. But the human period is characteristically that of all, not in their utmost profusion or in their greatest physical magnitude, but as the rule in their highest forms and also together in their respective places under their appointed ruler, God's vicegerent here below. For example the Cereals attach to the human period, and depend pre-eminently on cultivation. Compare Isa. 28:23-29.

In each case we have God's word, the manifest and immediate result, and its excellence in His sight declared. Thus if the six days gave an immediate relation to Adam, the immense ages antecedent were on a vast scale preparatory; and geology, as one of its ablest exponents owns, “leaves wholly unexplained the creation of matter, life, and spirit, and that spiritual element which pervades the whole history like a prophecy, becoming more and more clearly pronounced with the progressing ages, and having its culmination and fulfillment in man.”

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:20-23

We are now come to a fresh activity of divine power, when the Holy Spirit employs again the term “created” (ver. 21): not merely organisms, for these we have seen for the new vegetable kingdom on day three, but the first animal life for the Adamic world, to people the waters below and the heavens above. They are familiarly known to be the opposed but mutually dependent realms of life, far above inorganic nature, not only in growth and structural development, but in germs for the continuance of the species, both of which materialism vainly strives to explain or evade. For plants take in nourishment without an interior cavity or sac, and without digestive fluid, which animals have and as plants imbibe carbon and give out oxygen, animals exhale carbon and use up oxygen: a provision worthy of divine wisdom for the well-being of the earth. Nor is this hard to appreciate; for plants are nourished by inorganic food which they convert into organic for animals, as they store up for their use condensed force from the sun's influence, starch, glutine, &c. for animal development with increasing power, and locomotive faculty, as well as a will. That their germs are chemically like, not only in elements but in their proportions, only brings out the total difference which results from their respective character of life. To originate animal life especially, even in its least form, justly calls for the term “created.”

Thus God is not content with employing chemical powers to disintegrate and to reconstruct, as well as mechanical means chiefly by water, frost and gravitation, not only to enlarge the surface but to increase its fertility. The provision and satisfying of life, is a part of His admirable plan even for a fallen world, the very volcano playing no. small part, whatever its temporary terrors, in His beneficent hand. But all else would have been ineffectual without that great reality, of which science is as ignorant as those whom it most despises in its unbecoming scorn—that reality which would bring God face to face with every rational being, were men not hard in conscience and blinded by sin—that reality which meets every soul as the surest fact, yet the most inscrutable for any man; life, not vegetable only but animal, even if we regard it in its simplest range. It is life that directs the chemistry of plants or animals; it is life which produces the organization appropriate according to its kind. Men may speak of protoplasm, and analyze into carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen; but these are the mere materials which God employs according to the limits He has imposed on species under the agency of life. When life is given, the activity of change goes on in the creature and its reproduction; when life is withdrawn, there is a dissolution into the common stock for the fresh replenishment of the earth and its organized beings. Men may shrink from the Causa causans, and take refuge in “the laws of nature “; but after all they only succeed, if they do succeed, in retreating a step back from the Giver of life, and the Sovereign sustainer of nature. But this retreat is to lose God altogether.

Gen. 1 knows nothing of a primordial gas, or the nebula hypothesis, of an original spore, or of a monad. That God created the universe, is its proclamation, with details of Adam's world. A nisus formativus is here unheard, and left only to the unbelieving fanatics of science. Men would have had wings ere this better than those of Dædalus if desires and efforts availed; nor would the peacock be left alone to expand his feathered glories in the golden light of the sun. The power and wisdom of God has made these countless creatures, plants or animals, out of a few elements; and these, as geology is compelled to own, repeatedly exterminated on the earth, and as often renewed, in systems ever perfectly suited to each, and as uniformly rising on the whole, when He was pleased to form a higher one, till He created man. Yea at last He deigned to send His Son, the eternal Word, to be made flesh, accomplish redemption, and unite to Jesus those that are His for heavenly glory; as He will send Him again to bless Israel and all nations, to reign from heaven over a reconciled creation (for He is Heir of all things), but none the less to judge those who reject Him the Lord and Savior to their own everlasting ruin.

Further, as God created, so He perpetuates life within variations brought about by circumstances and especially by man's will, which, ceasing to act, leave plant or animal to revert to primitive type; when hybrids are forced, sterility also ensues. His will gave birth to the creatures that

people the waters and the sky; and He abides to give constant effect to His will. We can see therefore the wisdom of His revelation of the day before us; for how many sages have dreamed and thought that the sun was the prolific source of life? The vegetable kingdom was formed when the sun was not yet set to do its all-important office for the earth of man. The humbler departments of the animal kingdom were called into being by God the day after. And how manifestly is contingency excluded no less than necessity? It is all the result of the Creator's will, Who upholds all that He has called into being. “For Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were and they were created” (Rev. 4:11). Dualism, pantheism, eternal matter, and evolution are mere but wicked delusions.

“ And God said, Let the waters swarm a swarm of living creatures (lit. souls), and let birds fly above the earth on the face of the expanse of the heavens. And God created the great whales (or sea-monsters) and every living creature that moveth with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind. And God saw that nit was; good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day” (ver. 20-23).

Here it is to be observed that “sea-monsters1“ is given by many modern translators, the Revisers among them; so as to include the huge creatures of large rivers, crocodiles, &e., as well as marine. Indeed “whales” may be here in view specifically by the accompanying epithet “great “; seeing that they exceed in size all other animals not only of the Adamic period, but even of previous ages when characterized by creatures of enormous magnitude as compared with analogous ones in man's day. If the whale be here singled out, the description is justified beyond dispute; and all the more because the fossils, as the rule, disclose specimens larger of their kind than any now living, whether Protozoans, Crustaceans, or the Vertebrates in general. Even the birds then must have been gigantic, if we accept their supposed footmarks on the new red sandstone of Connecticut. Their fossils were much later.

In ver. 20 then God spoke into being the creatures that people the waters and those that people the air in terms the most general. In ver. 21 The result is stated with more precision, the great whales or sea-monsters being distinguished from every living creature that moveth (whether Protozoans, Radiates, Mollusks, Articulates, or Vertebrates) which the waters swarmed, after their kind. Again we hear of “every bird of wing” after its kind. A correct version here, as the reader may see, explodes the error which commentators, Jewish and Christian, have tried to explain; for the sense is not that the waters produced the birds, but that God made them fly in the open expanse of the heavens. Compare Gen. 2:19, which distinctly teaches that they were formed out of the ground, no less than was the beast of the field.

But the important fact announced is that for Adam's world the waters were now peopled and the air likewise) It is in no true sense the Reptilian age, though no doubt such reptiles as belonged to the waters then were included; for land reptiles are distinctively of the sixth day, as is certain from vers. 24, 25, 26, 28. Hence the effort to make the fifth day's work correspond with the Mesozoic time of geology is an utter fallacy. During it, especially in the Cretaceous period, reptiles abounded, and many were enormous, Dinosaurs, Enaliosaurs, Icthyosaurs, Mosasaurs, Plesiosaurs, or Pterosaurs; for in contrast with the fifth day the earth had then its species, as well as the sea and the air. Jurassic Britain had its vast and numerous varieties, as their absence is the more conspicuous since Adam's day. But all that the cautious Dr. Dana says as to birds is, that they probably began in the Triassic, especially as the inferior tribe of Marsupials were then found; that in the Jurassic some if not all birds exhibited the long vertebrated tail which with other peculiarities allied them to reptiles; but that in the Cretaceous they were numerous, and most of modern type, though some were of the older form. To suppose all that now people the waters and air existed then is as baseless as that these verses really describe the Reptilian age. For the great sea-monsters and many birds had yet to be.

Now it is on the face of the record that the entire population of the waters and of the air, as Adam knew both, is meant; not that extraordinary era of the secondary formation, with its prodigious denizens of earth and sea and air. Indeed it is notorious geologically that Protozoans, Radiates, Mollusks, and Articulates had been even in the Lower Silurian; and in the Upper S. fishes appear if only Sharks and Ganoids. Again, who does not know that the Devonian is habitually designated the age of Fishes? How then can it be fairly alleged that the day-period interpretation holds good? If the third day means the Carboniferous age, though this has been proved erroneous, how comes the age of Fishes to be before it? The record declares that the fish and fowl of Adam's world were only and alike on the fifth day.

Is it not then extreme prejudice that has beguiled able and excellent persons into the thought that the record here speaks of the Reptilian age of geology? Hence one zealous advocate limits the swarm of the waters in ver. 23 to “the reptile” and for the same reason changes “that moveth” into that “creepeth” in ver. 21. The fact is that, though the former word often means “reptile,” the context here proves it to be of far larger bearing and in fact of cognate signification with the verb; so that to “swarm swarms” seems the literal force, and to “bring forth abundantly the moving” thing is a fair representation as in the A. and R. Vv. Again, in ver. 21 The right way is to interpret the Hebrew as “moving” in water and “creeping” on land; so any one may see who can intelligently use a Hebrew Concordance. In both respects Sir J. W. Dawson is more correct than the late Mr. D. McCausland.: but he errs in making ver. 21 Say “great reptiles.” It is either all the large creatures of the deep, or not improbably “the whales,” for the reason already and appropriately implied in “the great.” Perhaps we may fairly add that the Cetacea call for a special place as being the representative of Mammals, and hence are made to stand apart from the general population of the deep. Certainly they were of the waters.

The effect too of the periodic construction of the days is here quite plainly as unfounded as elsewhere. The fishes with which Adam and his race were familiar are thereby almost wholly left out of God's account of His creation. All they are told, on that hypothesis, is of fossil Saurians, the most anomalous in appearance of all the creatures whose remains have come to view, of which Moses knew as little as the children of Israel, however interesting to geologists in our day. Is it credible that the Holy Spirit inspired the law-giver to speak of wonders only intelligible in the nineteenth century, and to pass by without a word what they needed to know of the teeming creatures in the watery world?

As usual the hypothesis when considered seriously betrays its inherent unreality. The huge Saurians of the Mesozoic were not marine only, as they ought to be if the record spoke of them; many of them were Pterosaurs of the land, some species even winged, though we cannot count Pterodactyles as birds. The inspired text therefore conclusively puts them all out of consideration. Here we read solely of the creatures with which the waters swarmed, of every living creature that moved there, each according to its species, as well as of those justly designated “the great” among the multitudes of smaller sea-creatures; as also of “every winged bird” after its kind. The natural force and true aim of the revelation was to make known God's work in that lower part of the animal kingdom, which is none the less the object of His care; and if one portion be of vast bulk, none the less was it His creature. The Adam family were called to own His hand and goodness in the whole.

The evident intention was to impress on all that heed the written word that the fifth day's work embraced the entire circle of aquatic animals as well as all bird life known to mankind; not at all to acquaint them with a bygone system of animated. nature, which sustained at the close

of the Cretaceous period one of the most complete exterminations of species confessed by geologists. In fact too it is only in the Quaternary that Teliost fishes as well as Birds find their culmination; of all allusion to which, though nearly affecting man, the misinterpretation entirely deprives us. If on the contrary the inspired writer speak of what concerns man practically, with this agrees the expressed blessing of God, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” It also derives impressive confirmation from vers. 26, 28, where dominion over the fish of the sea is given to man, no less than over birds of the air, and beast and cattle and all that creep on the earth. The only detail in fact is in setting forth the origin of what was actually put under man's rule; which certainly does not apply to Paheozoic, or Mesozoic, or Tertiary times.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:14-19

The evidence which the record furnishes of the third day is express. It is dry land and seas in view of man: in no way the varying phases of either in the geologic ages, but solely the result, after the last disturbance when the waters prevailed everywhere. Indeed a good deal of unfounded hypothesis is now exploded (especially since the recent deep-sea soundings) as to the alternation of the ocean beds and the vast mountain ranges east or west. For though the strata and fossils, marine, lacustrine or fluviatile, and terrestrial, point to repeated submergence and emergence of considerable regions, the continents have abode from Archæan time, the Atlantic flowing on one side, the Pacific on another. During the ages that followed, allow all that can be proved of change by upheaval, oscillation, dislocation, and rock formation, fragmental or crystalline, eruptive or stratified, by means organic mechanical, or chemical, by atmosphere, water, fire or aught else, there were elements of life vegetable and animal brought into being in the waters and on the land, and successively extinguished and new ones created with the changed state of the globe, each period having its appropriate species in the new environment.

But none of these alternations, vast and important as they were physically, enters the scope of the six days. No geologist denies that the mountains, to take this one sample, were elevated substantially as they are, long before the human race; and on mountains depend the springs and rivers and even the due fall of rains, and striking equalization of temperature between the extremist climes, so necessary to man and beast and herb. Very much more indeed had been done by God in that immense preparation, not only in the partially hidden supplies (coal, marble, lime, precious stones, metals, etc.) for man's use, but in enriching the soil and beautifying the surface of the earth in countless ways, working, as He still does, now for instance by sudden volcanic action, and again for example by the slow process of innumerable polyps, yea and mysteriously by their combined action (though one be organic and the other not) in the accomplishment of His creative designs from a time when there was no life here below, till every organized form was there short of man. Now it is exclusively of the human era and its belongings that the six days speak; and none more clearly than the third day, when the vegetable kingdom began, but solely in reference to Adam and those subject to him. The application to geologic time is impossible as proved by the record itself, and the mutual contradictions of all who essay it.

The evidence is no less plain and conclusive as to the fourth day, of which the more prudent advocates for the long-period days say little. But even here, though it be a question of the heavenly orbs, the record looks at them simply in view of man and this earth. “And God said, Let there be light-bearers in [the] expanse of the heavens to divide between the day and between the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for light-bearers in [the] expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth. And it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light for ruling the day, and the lesser light for ruling the night (the stars also). And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide between the light and the darkness. And God saw that [it was] good. And there was evening, and there was morning, a fourth day” (ver. 14-19).

It is a mistake to suppose that during the long ages of vegetable and animal life up to the highest forms, one excepted, there had not been the shining of sun, moon and stars, as well as sea and land and atmosphere though not always quite the same as ours. If geology can trace the proofs of life, and its progress in a typical system, which reveals unity of plan as distinctly as deep and comprehensive wisdom, be it so; but they enjoyed sunlight, heat, air, and water throughout. But here we have everything successively ordered for man, after those immense eras of change were closed, when the last disturbance needed God's interference for a new system. Light was caused to act. The atmosphere as it is followed. Next, the seas were gathered to their own place, and dry land appeared, and the vegetable realm, the work of mountain-making and valley-scooping, shaping as well as storing, having been already and it may be in long successive ages effected. In each case of these days the result seems instantaneous. “He spoke, and it was done.” The work stated here is quite distinct. “The evening and the morning” are the expression of God's considerate goodness to man, responsible to learn of Him and to do His will on the earth, as Christ did perfectly.

It is assuredly not the creation of the sun, etc. This the inspired historian does not say, but only that God now constituted the heavenly luminaries, after the plants and before the animals for the Adamic earth. Light had shone otherwise since the first day of the great week. Now He set the light-bearers of the heavens to do their assigned work, but it is for the earth, and indeed for man. Their creation was implied in ver. 1; for God did not create either empty; and what would heaven be without its host? And we saw that verse 2 implies that the earth even had not been so, though so it became with other marks of disorder. What had hindered the functions of sun and moon was now rectified. Light independently had been proved to be under God's control. On the fourth day He gave the luminaries of heaven their unhindered relation to divide the day from the night. Now we can readily understand the plants (and these were for the use of man and his congeners) caused to spring forth on the day before without the sun-beam; but assuredly not so a geological age of grass, corn, and fruit. Yet we see the fitness of the due ordering of light and heat, as we have it, the next day, if the plants were to flourish, as well as for the animal life that begins after that according to His word.

This is entirely confirmed if we inspect the context more closely. For where would be the sense of the light-bearers “for signs and for seasons, and for days and years” if it had been an age (thousands, myriads, millions of years) before Adam? If on the contrary God was not creating them, but, after that which had intercepted, only “setting” them to their ordained task in immediate view of man, all is clear and consistent. And to whom could this be of such interest as to Israel, the people of His choice, in whose history we have them acting as “signs” on critical occasions for His sovereign will? Without dwelling on His wonders in Egypt where light was in Israel's dwellings, darkness thick in all the rest of the land, or later at Sinai, we see what a sign it was to Israel when Joshua said in their sight, Sun, stand still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon: or in far other days when Jehovah spoke to sick Hezekiah and gave him a sign in the shadow that went back ten steps on

the dial of Ahaz. And what a sign again where all was lost, as far as man is concerned, in the cross of Messiah when darkness for three hours covered all the land A mere eclipse was then impossible. Nor will whole clusters of signs be wanting when He comes in power and glory on the clouds of heaven. “For seasons” is needed no comment: man alone on earth understands and appreciates these fit and recurring times. As the same Hebrew word means “the congregation” and “the solemn feast,” as well as the season or appointed time at which they kept it, “seasons” may have a sacred aspect; but the more ordinary sense seems confirmed by what follows. Very little astronomy is requisite to know how “days and years” are defined by them, but only for man. In the ages before him this were all irrelevant. In view of man and Israel especially it is as affecting as full of interest. The constant design is reiterated in “Let them be for light-bearers in the expanse of the heavens.” It was their effeet, not their structure, that is intimated. “And it was so.”

Then we are told that “God made”, not created, “the two great lights.” The language is never varied without purpose. Rosenmüller the younger was an admirable Hebraist, and certainly free enough in his handling of scripture; yet he has no hesitation in his discussion of this question formally, but insists that the genuine force of the construction is not “fiant luminaria” (i.e. let lights be made), but “inserviant in expanso coelorum” (i.e. serve in the expanse of the heavens). He compares the sing. with the plur. of the Hebrew verb for being, and deduces the inference that the language can only express the determination of the luminaries to some fixed uses for the world, and not to their production. Further, it is solely relation to man on earth that demonstrates the strict phraseological propriety of “the two great lights”. He who created all and inspired Moses knew better than Newton or Laplace the sizes of every orb of heaven; but for man's and for Israel's help on earth, to say nothing of every subject creature, what were all the rest for light-giving by day and night compared to the sun and moon?

This again as definitely excludes scientific preoccupation, as it confirms the reference throughout. The stars only come in parenthetically. God made them too, if blind man deified them. But God gave sun and moon to rule over the day and over the night. They were His creatures and gifts for man's use, dividing between the light and the darkness. “And God saw that [it was] good,” not as if they were just created, but the assigned work He gave to be done by them. “And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.” Here it cannot be fairly denied by any, that from the necessary effect of that day's work we have the ordinary vicissitude of night and day; and that a similar diurnal revolution followed for the fifth and sixth days, as for every day since, including the seventh. But this being so, surely consistency requires it for the three previous days. That light was supplied otherwise before the fourth day is no impediment. The daily course of the earth on its axis depends on gravitation, not on illumination, and would have gone on equally, had the sun been only and always opaque, or had its previous and its present action in light-bearing never existed.

And here it may be noticed that those who contend for nothing but the same agencies at work from the first as act now before our eyes, and who go so far as to swell the time into incalculable ages by embracing the fond hypothesis of evolution, so that 300,000,000 years span an inconsiderable period of geological imagination, have now to confront an unexpected and veritable coup de grace from Sir W. Thomson. For he has proved that if the earth existed at all only 100,000,000 years ago, it must have been on scientific grounds a red-hot molten globe altogether incompatible with life animal or vegetable. The geologists in their loose and one-sided way reasoned from the deposition of the enormously deep strata at the present rate of formation. But Thomson founded his far more rigorous calculations on the acknowledged facts of the earth's tidal retardation, as well as of its gradually cooling state. Hence the recent disposition among the less prejudiced men to re-arrange the order and time of formations by the probable contemporaneity of unlike strata. They essay thus to reduce their egregious demands by the supposition that the Cambrian for instance may coalesce chronologically with the Silurian, the former lacustrine, the latter marine; and similarly the Permian with the Jurassic, etc. The groups thus associated would each owe their different phenomena to their respective conditions of deposit.

But those who accept the plain and simple interpretation of the record here offered will observe that, if all these shifting and precarious hypotheses are due to the dim twilight of the science, scripture is responsible for no error. What it asserts remains not only unshaken but indisputably true.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:9-13

This journal is scarcely the suited place, nor does the writer pretend, to draw out adequately the wondrous and beneficent functions of the separated waters or seas and of the dry land, any more than of the light and of the atmospheric heavens, on which a little has been said. But a few words here may confirm what was remarked as to the first and the second days, that the record speaks with immediate propriety of God's constituting the earth for the human race. By no means does it intimate particulars of the long periods before man when those successive changes are observable, which laid down vast stores for his future use and fitted the earth's progressively built-up crust, the rich field of geological research. One can admire the wisdom which did not encumber the Bible with the details of natural science. Rocks crystalline and stratified are before men's eyes, who can reason on the fossils they embalm. Scripture alone avoids the universal heathen idea of a primitive chaos, and the philosophic error of an eternal universe or even eternal matter. Scripture, on the contrary, has carefully enunciated God's creation at an undefined moment, “in the beginning”, not merely of crude materials but of the heavens and the earth, without a word about their denizens. It also makes known the fact that, the earth was subjected to revolution so complete that before the Adamic state of things divine power was needed to cause light to act in a diurnal way, as well as to order the atmosphere, and from a previous and universal overspread of waters the appearance of dry land, on which God began the plants or vegetable kingdom for man.

Thus the work of these days wholly leaves out, because chronologically it follows, the vast operations both of slow construction and of destruction which give special interest to the geologist. Original creation and subsequent dislocation (which swept away in due time whole species and genera of organized beings, followed by fresh and different ones, and this repeatedly) it asserts distinctly; and both, before the days which prepared all for his life and probation under divine government who was created ere the week closed. The document itself furnishes the warrant to the believer for taking the first verse indefinitely before the six days, and also for affirming the state, possibly final state, of confusion into which the earth passed before it became the world as it now is.

There may indeed be some analogy between the days that concern the earth of the human race and those immense ages of ripening advance which preceded, so as to furnish a slight ground of resemblance on which not a few men of ingenuity and the best intentions have reared their various schemes for accommodating the days to the geological ages. Yet this hypothesis, even when guarded by the most cautious and

competent aid of science, does not square with scripture. It is unjustifiable in every point of view to confound the disturbed state of ver. 2 with the creation of the earth described in. ver. 1, which it really follows, disorder after order; is it not even absurd to identify ver. 3 with either? Each follows consecutively; and the long tracts of time, if filled up in a way that scripture does not essay, would come in after ver. 1, and before ver. 3, which wholly differing from what precedes, introduces a new condition where alone details are given to mark God's direct dealings with man.

Hence the days, from ver. 3 and onward, are wholly misapplied to the geologic ages. Where for this scheme have we the formation of the plutonic, volcanic, and metamorphic rocks? Where the upheaval of the mountain ranges and the tracing of the river systems? Where the succession of organic remains, marine and terrestrial, vegetable and animal, new ones following those extinguished, and mutually distinct, from the Laurentian beds to the Post-Pliocene or Quaternary? The six days set forth the peculiar constitution God was pleased to establish for the existing or human world. What the geologic periods embrace is successive remodeling of the earth, where sea and land have changed place, mountains were raised and valleys scooped perhaps again and again, not only a sweeping away of old organic creation, but an introduction of new plants and animals, each assemblage confessed even by Lyell to admirably fit the new states of the globe; with singular varieties all pointing by harmony of parts and beauty of contrivance to One Divine Maker. These days only begin, when God, having closed the long undefined periods of progressive character, with repeated extermination of their correspondingly changed flora and fauna, forms, within the brief span of human labor, that system, inorganic and organic, of which man is the appointed head, but enriched by all He had slowly deposited and rendered available to man's industry and profit by that dislocation which laid bare treasures so remote and manifold, so interesting and important.

The divine operations of the third day call for more detail than that which was last before us. They form a double class, as does the work of the sixth day.

“ And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together to one place, and let the dry [land] appear. And it was so. And God called the dry [land] Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that [it was] good. And God said, Let the earth sprout grass, herb producing seed, fruit-trees yielding fruit after their kind, the seed of which [is] in them, on the earth. And it was so. And the earth sprouted grass, herb producing seed after its kind, and trees yielding fruit, the seed of which [is] in them after their kind. And God saw that [it was] good. And there was evening, and there was morning, a third day” (ver. 9-13).

We have seen light (involving heat) caused to act for the Adamic earth, and that atmosphere which sustains an enormous body of waters above those that lie below: both of them results of essential importance for what was coming, and of course adapted by divine power and wisdom to the system in which the human race were to exist. It was needless and foreign for a divine revelation to explain how these and other works of God were effected. The important truth for His people, and for every soul of man, to know, is that He is both the originator and the maker of all. No student of geology doubts mechanical any more than chemical agency on the largest scale in forming the crust of the earth. Heat, water, and air have played their part under His hand in change, and waste, and progressive formation. But it is only the petty and pedantic unbelief of some who cry up such gradual secondary causes as are now seen, shutting out the evidence which geology itself affords to candid minds of repeated and enormous transformations and all but entire revolution of organic life, in both extinction and new creation, with the corresponding change of the globe and its temperature which this implies, and each of these not for a brief space, but for ages before the earth of man. Facts plainly enough point to these conclusions for those who occupy themselves with the natural antiquities of the earth. Nor can it be doubted that each successive tale inscribed on the fossiliferous rocky tablets of the earth shows on the whole distinct progress, in no way as mere development of the antecedent condition, but the fresh fruit of creative acts, even if some species seem renewed for the subsequent phase, and all with evident relation to the earth as it was to be for Adam, and as it will be when the Second Man takes it with the universe itself for His inheritance. Unity of plan marks all from first to last.

But all this bygone succession of physical change is only left room for in the revealed word which dwells on man and Immanuel. Geological detail in scripture would have been as much out of place as any other science; but how can the room left for all, in what is said, be accounted for save as implying the knowledge of all by Him Who revealed His word? An original creation of the heavens and the earth without details, and unlimited even by myriads of years, “in the beginning,” perfectly falls in with every ascertained fact; and a violent dislocation of the earth, of the highest importance for the race in its disarrangements, altogether different from and more thorough than any diluvial or merely superficial action, is also made known; followed by that “making” of heaven and earth which is historically described in Gen. 1:3-31 and referred to solemnly in Ex. 20:11.

It is pertinent to observe that the effort to interpret the days of the immense ages before man separates Adam from his historic time as well as the creation placed under him as its head. For according to the long periods of geology what would the fossil-plants of the third day have to do with those that grew on the Adamic earth? And so with the animals on the fifth day, if not the sixth. On the contrary “the six days” were plainly meant to convey a realm of creation immediately connected with Adam, the various forms of organic nature being subjected and given to him. The sixth day is thus made geologic as well as historical. Surely this does not hang together; any more than our having a detailed account of fossil creation, and none at all of that which seems the express object of the several days—the creation in view of the incoming race. Now in a divine revelation it is easy to understand passing over all particulars of the fossilized stages of the earth; but inconceivable that there should be no account of heaven and earth and sea and all that in them is, in dependent relation to Adam and his sons: especially as out of the thousands of organized species in the secondary rocks, not a single species, says Prof. Hitchcock, corresponds with any now living; and even out of the thousands in the tertiary, but few seem identical with living species. The natural and only reasonable conclusion is that, whatever the analogy with the divine action in past geologic time, the days speak solely of what God made in immediate view of Adam; not of fossils, animal or vegetable, but of the organic beings placed under Adam and his race, with their surrounding and suited system. To suppose both is nothing but confusion.

Returning to the day before us we see a fresh operation of God for man's world, the waters under the heavens collected to one place, and dry land consequently appearing. Not that such a separation had not existed before, but that the disruption, wise and benevolent for the earth of man, made it a necessary act now, as indeed in a general way everything had to be made afresh for Adam: a disruption wholly distinct from the vague and useless chaos which the heathen imagined.

Now God formed the earth and seas in the condition which substantially abides to our days. How momentous an act for the race needs few words to explain. That both earth and seas had existed previously no geologist disputes, any more than the various phases of both according

to the plants and animals that prevailed from one geologic age to another. Doubtless also, save for dead-level Uniformitarians if there be such, the epochs of change that destroyed the older creatures and beheld new races modified greatly both the earth and the seas; for each period had its own proper system, with changes in inorganic matter, water, atmosphere, temperature, and the like, corresponding to each new set of organized beings.

The earth then was to have that form for the most part which God saw best fitted for His new purpose: vast continents and vaster oceans, islands large and small, lakes salt and fresh, swamps and torrents, mountains and rivers, plains greater or less, and valleys not merely effected by gradual erosion but often by deep and sudden dislocation. It is common knowledge what a part is played in the physical economy of the world by the “seas”, (which in Hebrew idiom embrace all large collections of waters, oceans, seas, lakes, and even rivers,) as well as by the varied disposition of the land, high or low. To this the disarrangement of Gen. 1:2 had directly contributed; as now in the separation of earth and seas after having been commingled for a time. Rapid extraordinary operations wrought, and of course slow and existing causes in bringing about what was then done for man; but here we learn that God laid down the great landmarks which abide to this day.
Genesis 2:11-14 is enough to indicate that men attribute to the deluge or other changes more than can be proved.

God gave names too, as to the objects of His work on the previous days.

But there is a second part of His work to notice: vegetable nature for the earth that now is, that kingdom which mediates between minerals and animals. God commanded the earth to bring forth grass (or, sprout sprouts1), herb seeding seed, fruit-trees yielding fruit after its kind, which has its seed in itself after its kind, as is said here most emphatically. This is the true origin of vegetable species for the Adamic earth. And as God pronounced good the dry land and the seas, so now the beautiful clothing of the dry land, and the abundant supplies for man and beast—at first indeed the exclusive food even for man.

How does the protracted scheme of the days as geologic periods agree with the vegetable kingdom on the third day, and the animal even in its lowest forms on the fifth? Is it really so with the evidence of fossils? The coal measures indicate vast brackens, ferns, etc.; but what of fruit-trees bearing fruit according to each several kind? Certainly it would seem that Zoophytes are as early as any vegetable remains, long before the carboniferous era so paraded as the fulfillment of the third day, after a great abundance of marine animals far beyond plants, of which direct evidence appears in the rocks. If the days are taken simply in reference to Adam, there is no difficulty on any such score, as the provision for the world that now is appeared with no interval such as geology can appreciate.

How absurd, taking the third day before us as our example, for us to identify it with the carboniferous. age, or that which laid the basis for the coal measures! What real analogy between coal-plants chiefly acrogens, and the grass, herb, tree, so manifestly for the food of animals, above all of man? What with herb in general producing seed, and what with fruit-trees yielding fruit, after their kind, the seed of which is in them? This is evidently not provision for coal, but for the food and refreshment of man and cattle, of bird and beast. The analogy vanishes when looked into. For geologic era; it is a failure; for man's world it is the simple and suited truth. It was plant-life for Adam's earth. The carboniferous era, when people have been content with facts, was the age, botanically of cryptogams and gymnosperms, in the animal realm of the earlier reptiles, Batrachian or Amphibian. Now does this truly correspond with the third day? With the formation of seas and the emergence of dry land? And this clothed with verdure, herbs, and fruit-trees, each propagating after its kind? Beyond just doubt Moses meant herbs not of the carboniferous age, but solely of the earth for man, animal life for it not existing till the fifth day. Compare ver. 29.

But the geologic evidence points to plants and animals even in Archman time; for as the simplest animal forms (Rhizopods) have been detected in the Laurentian rocks, so the enormous quantity of graphite, being carbon, implies abundant vegetation, sea-weeds and lichens. The metamorphism of the rocks may account for the rare indications of organic life even in the Huronian beds which were subsequent; but, according to what is generally averred, Pahæozoic time goes farther back than even the Silurian age, Upper and Lower, the era of fucoids on the one hand and of marine invertebrate animals on the other (Protozoans, Radiates, Mollusks, and Articulates). Then comes the Devonian, or age of fishes (chiefly Selachian and Ganoid), and some insects, in addition to previous invertebrates; and besides sea-weeds, Calamites, Conifers, Ferns, and Lycopods. Surely long ages with organic life, not only vegetable but animal, before the carboniferous period, as all geologists accept, disprove beyond controversy the effort to make out the third day therein fulfilled. Hence Principal Dawson (Arch. 168) is obliged to own that the coal flora (consisting mainly of cryptogams allied to ferns and clubmosses, and of gymnosperms allied to the pines and cycads) cannot coalesce with the higher orders of plants called into being in our verses 11, 12. “For these reasons,” says he, “we are shut up to the conclusion that this flora of the third day must have its place before the Palæozoic period of Geology,” i.e., when vegetation was incomparably lower than that of the coal measures! The true conclusion on the contrary is that the third day's work implies a flora for man and the creatures under him, long after the coal measures.

By the way Dawson remarks that “the sacred writer specifies three descriptions of plants as included in it “: the first he will have to be not “grass”, but the cryptogamia, as fungi, mosses, lichens, ferns, &e.; then seed-bearing herbs, and fruit-bearing trees. The cryptogams may well be doubted: if tenable, it might be pleaded even more fairly, that the phænogams, endogenous and exogenous, follow. However it would seem that no scientific classification is intended, but a general division which all could observe into grass, herbs, and fruit-trees, each species none the less expressly and permanently reproductive. In point of fact it is not till the Cretaceous period of Mesozoic time that we find the first traces of Angiosperms (Oak, Plane, Fig, etc.); so that the reference to an age before the Palæozoic time is still less reasonable than the hypothesis of the carboniferous era.

Doubtless geologists would if they could make vers. 11, 12, subsequent to the great operations of the fourth day; for who can question the all-importance not of light only but of the sunbeam for herbage of all kinds, for fruit-bearing, and for timber? This is no difficulty for one who takes the days as “the evening and the morning “; but is it not insuperable for all who regard them as representing ages of untold duration? The Archæan rocks, we must bear in mind, are believed to be near five miles thick; the Silurian system considerably thicker, especially if we add the Devonian. Then come the Carboniferous and Permian formations of not far from four miles; and after the Triassic and Jurassic the Cretaceous, when it would seem that Angiosperms or Dicotyledons began to appear (Rose, Apple, Elm, &c.). In fact it was only just before the Tertiary or Cænozoic, if we include in it as most do the Nummulitic beds. Who can reckon the times of these formations?

There is another observation of importance to make. What scripture reveals of the third day's work points in no way to Archæan or Pahæozoic times, but simply and naturally to the formation of the Adamic earth. Geology tells us that the continents while still beneath the waters began to take shape; then, as the seas deepened, that the first dry land appeared, low, barren, and lifeless; next that, under intestine and external

action, the dry land expanded, strata formed, and mountains rose, each in its appointed place, till finally heights and continents reached their fullest development. Now the flora described by the inspired writer does not fit the geologic first appearance of dry land, when of the character above described, till the mountains rose ages afterward and river-systems followed. To say the least, marked advance of state is involved in the flora described by Moses. How then identify it with the earliest geologic time when sea-weeds alone existed in the waters along with lichens on the land, and even then the Eozoon Rhizopod?

Moses describes just such a vegetable kingdom in its main features as Adam had, and we have now. It was vegetation as he knew it; and God led him so to describe it, being the truth. Is there then contradiction between the more or less satisfactory conclusions of Geology and unerring scripture? In no way. Distinguish the times, and clashing disappears. The third day speaks solely of the earth's last emergence from the waters by which it was submerged long ages after the original “outlining of the land and water determining the earth's general configuration.” Dr. Dana on reconsideration should acknowledge that the idea of life expressed in the lowest plants and afterward, if not contemporaneously, in the lowest or systemless animals, the Protozoans, is doubly and hopelessly incongruous with the Mosaic record. Take it as of the Adamic week and all is plain to the believer, if a few difficulties remain for the geologist. Why should any wonder, since it is confessed by the same competent authority that “a broken record the geological undoubtedly is, especially for terrestrial life” (Dana's Manual of Geology, 601, third edition, 1875)? Not so with the Bible, which, being divine, is and must be true: plain for the wayfaring man, profound for the most informed and best cultured:

Happily the second day's work admits of a notice so much the more brief because of the rather full remarks on the preceding verses. In these were discussed the original creation “in the beginning “; then the superinduced state of confusion; lastly the work of the “first day” that brings in the week of the earth's preparation for the human race.

The evident immediateness of the first day's work applies throughout the other days. Whatever grounds there may be for scientific men to infer processes occupying vast tracts of time before the “days”, there is no real reason to doubt, but plain and positive scripture to believe, that the work done on the several six days was not of long ages, but really within the compass of the literal evening and morning. How unnatural to suppose an age for light to act on the first day! And why suppose otherwise on the second day or any other? A long succession of ages may be true after “the beginning” and before “the days,” which taken in their natural import have a striking moral harmony with man, the last work of God's creation-week.

In this way there is no contest between long periods of progressive character and successive acts of marked brevity. On the one hand the record is so written as to leave ample space for the researches of scientific discovery before man existed; on the other details under the shape of divine fiats in the six days appear only when man is about to be created. There is thus truth in both views. The mistake is in setting them in opposition. One can understand, if God so willed it, immense times of physical action, with secondary causes in operation before man, not without the evidence of convulsion far beyond volcanoes or the deluge within the human period, which great geologists at home and abroad admit, contrary to the recent speculations of others. But there are those that feel the beautiful (not belittling) condescension of God in deigning to work for six days and rest on the seventh, only when getting ready that earth where, not only the first man was to come under his moral government, but the Second Man was to glorify God to the uttermost, give to such as believe eternal life, and prove the worthlessness of all who reject His grace and repent not of their sins: the true and intelligible and blessed reason why this earth, so insignificant in bulk when compared with the vast universe of God, has a position in His favor so transcending all other planets, suns, or systems, put together. If man was much to differentiate the earth, Christ is infinitely more: and lie has yet to show what the earth and man on it are to be under His glorious kingdom, to say nothing of the heavens according to His grace and the counsels of God.

But a little must be said of the second day. These are the terms— “And God said, Let an expanse be in the midst of the waters, and dividing be between waters and waters. And God made the expanse, and divided between the waters that [are] under the expanse and the waters that [are] above the expanse: and it was so. And God called the expanse Heavens. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day” (vers. 6-8).

There is no more ground for conceiving this to be the first creation of atmospheric heavens than we saw in the case of light on the first day. The absolute language of creating is avoided in both cases. As there had been light in the long ages of geology when not only plants but animals marine and terrestrial abounded, suited to the systems that contained them, so an atmosphere was requisite and no doubt was furnished of God with every provision for their sustenance till a new condition succeeded by God's power. That which now girdles the earth may not have been altogether alike for the varying states of vegetable and animated being long before man existed, to say nothing of the azoic periods before either. They had each an environment adapted by the Creator of all. The remains in successive strata indicate an admirable suitability for the then flora and fauna, quite different from the Adamic earth and its inhabitants, in some of which it may be doubted if man could have lived, as he did not in fact.

The great difficulty for geologists, especially of late from the growth of infidel thought, is to allow such a revolution as verse 2 intimates. Even Christians among them are afraid to be governed by its express declarations, and shrink from the ignorant mockery of those who boldly deny there ever was a breach of continuity between the original creation and the days of man on the earth. But on the one hand it is certain that the record maintains such a breach to have occurred (and this not on a circumscribed part of the earth, which some like Dr. Pye Smith have imagined in a spirit of compromise,1 but for the earth wholly) as to require an entire re-ordering of it as well as man's creation, God's vicegerent then first made to have dominion over all here below. On the other hand it is intolerable to assume that no convulsions could have effected such changes as the non-action of light, or the destruction of atmospheric conditions, &c. This is mere and narrow unbelief. “Ye do err, knowing not the scriptures nor the power of God.” How little science can explain even of existing life and of its surroundings! And how unbecoming of geology to dogmatize!—one of the youngest of sciences, with so much to explore and adequately weigh, and so far from the precision of chemistry for instance, though there too how much is unknown.

At a fit moment the question of the mammoth &c. co-existing with the musk-ox and other surviving quadrupeds may be briefly examined. But on the face of the argument it is plain that there is no more difficulty in conceiving God might renew some previously existing plants and

animals for Adam's earth than in causing light again to act on the first day and the atmosphere on the second. The work of the first day, perfectly if not exclusively consistent with an instantaneous exertion of the divine will, illustrates and confirms that of the second day. Scripture places the description of v. 2 at some time before these days commence. Light acted first after that disorder, and according to the earth's revolution on its axis. Next day the atmospheric heavens, so essential to light, sound, and electricity, to vegetation and animal life, were called or rather recalled to their functions after that confusion which destroyed them in ways beyond our ken.

Assuredly this renewal was no matter of a long age of gradual process, but a work to which God assigned a separate day, though to Him abstractedly a moment had sufficed. As it is, man's attention was impressively drawn to His considerate and almighty goodness Who then separated “waters from waters”, which otherwise had filled space above the earth with continual vapor and without that due mixture of gases which constitutes the air essential to all life on the globe. To its machinery with other causes by divine constitution we owe the formation of clouds and the fall of rain as well as evaporation; to its refractive and reflective powers, that modification of light which adds incalculably to beauty no less than the utility of the creation: a black sky had otherwise cast its constant pall over the earth. Even had dry land by another fiat been disengaged from the waters, without this encompassing elastic fluid vapors would not have been absorbed nor have fallen as now; dew had ceased; fountains and rivers if formed had wasted away; water had enormously prevailed; and if dry land had survived anywhere, it must have been a dry arid mass with neither animal life nor a blade of grass. But enough; these are not the pages in which to seek the physical methods of creative beneficence.

It is now generally known, as it had long been laid down by the most competent Hebraists before modern science existed, that “expanse” is the real force of the original word, instead of “firmament” which came to us through the Latin Vulgate, as it seems due to the Greek Septuagint. Possibly these Jewish translators in the days of Ptolemy Philadelphus may have succumbed here as elsewhere to Gentile ideas or at least phrases. And a great Rabbinical scholar, a Christian teacher, has given his opinion that the Greek version employs the word () in the sense of an ethereal or third subtle orb, and in no way of a solid permanent vault as rationalists love to assume, basing it on etymology and figurative usage. The aim is obvious, the wish father to the thought. Excluding God from the written word, as from creation, deifying nature and exalting fallen man (more especially of the nineteenth century), they gladly depreciate the text by citing “windows” and “doors", “pillars” and “foundations” as if meant literally. Now the usage of the word even in the chapter itself (vers. 15, 17, 20, 28) sufficiently proves that the word conveys the idea of the open transparent sky, whatever may have been the misunderstanding of the reader at any given time. Hence the A. and R. English versions give “the air” as the equivalent of “the heavens” in ver. 28 as elsewhere. It is really the expanse, including the atmospheric heavens in the lower part of which birds fly. A solid vault is out of the question. The true derivation seems rather from a word expressing elevation, like the source of our own “heaven “; but even if drawn from the idea of beating or hammering out, who knows not that words may and do acquire a force etherealized according to the object designated, wholly above their material origin? The scriptures really present the heavens as spread out, and the earth hung upon nothing, nowhere giving countenance to the grossness of the stars fastened like brass nails on a metallic vault. Skeptical ill-will likes that it should seem so; but it is unworthy slander. Even Dathe who was free enough gives “spatium extensum", as did learned Jews generally long before and since.

“ The waters above” consist of that enormous supply of vapor which fills the clouds and falls as rain, hail, or snow. “The waters below” covered the earth as yet, but were shortly to form seas, when the dry land appeared next day. It is ignorance therefore to say, in the face of a crowd of scriptures, that the waters above imply a permanent solid vault like a shower-bath. The Hebrews could see the movements of many heavenly bodies instead of regarding all as fixtures. But even had they been as dull as rationalism is invidious, our concern is with the divine record, the accuracy of which irritates hostile minds who would hail the least flaw with satisfaction. Scripture abides; science changes and corrects itself from age to age. As to figures, “bottles” are used no less than “pillars,” and a “tent” or “curtain” as well as “windows” and “doors.” They are all strikingly expressive. Only the stupid or malicious could take any of them in the letter.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:3-5

Now comes the first point of direct contact with the habitable earth and its surroundings. We have had (ver. 1) the creation of the heavens and the earth, apart from date or definite time; we have had also (ver. 2) a superinduced condition of confusion, but the Spirit of God brooding upon the face of the waters. Neither one nor other has to do with man's earth, though earth there had been under both those differing and successive conditions. Nor can it be doubtful to him who knows God, that even the latter had its worthy and wise aim as well as more obviously the former. But neither phase is connected immediately with man, though all was done to God's glory with man in prospect, and above all the Second man, as we can add unhesitatingly from the N. T. It is to the facts stated in these preliminary verses that geological observations and inferences would mainly refer. As the words are few and general, there is ample space for research. The believer knows beforehand that theoretic conclusions wherever sound must fall in with the sentence of inspiration. The work of the six days has little if anything to do with geology. There may be a measure of analogy between the work of the third, fifth, and sixth days, and certain of the alleged antecedent geologic periods which the Bible really passes over silently as being outside its range and object, while room is left for them all in vers. 1 and 2. But the effort to force the days, whether those three or all six, into a scriptural authority for the successive ages of geology is mere illusion. If it be a harmless use of geology, it is anything but reverence for God's word or intelligence in it. That there are discrepancies between the record and any facts certainly ascertained, neither geology proves, nor any of the sciences still more sure and mature. But he who is assured of revealed truth can afford to hear all that experts assert even when based on a partial induction of facts, as is not seldom the case. If outside scripture, there is nothing a believer has to contend for; if scripture speaks, he believes, no matter what science declares to the contrary; if science confirms it, so much the better for science. Assuredly God's word needs no imprimatur from men.

If one appealed to any branch of physical science as to the first day, he could get no clear answer. Geology has nothing to say, confessedly. What can astronomy or optics do more? Science, as such, leaves out God—science, not scientific men, many of the greatest of whom have been true-hearted believers. Science, in itself, knows nothing of the power that originated, ignores the First Cause, and shirks, ordinarily, even the final causes which might summon heed to a first cause. It occupies itself with art established order in the world and with secondary causes, especially those at work before men's eyes or probably deducible from experience. The peril for the unwary is obvious, and real, and notorious. It would be much less if science were honest enough to acknowledge its ignorance of what is beyond its sphere. But often its interpreter says “There is not", where logically and morally he is entitled only to say, “I know not". This is not merely audacity without warrant, but sin of the worst kind. The fool hath said in his heart, “there is no God.” It is exactly where science finds itself confessedly stopped

by a blind wall that scripture proclaims the truth from God. As He knows, so He revealed as far as in His wisdom and goodness He saw fit. “And God said, Light be: and light was. And God saw the light that [it was] good; and God divided between the light and the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening, and there was morning, one (or, first) day” (vers. 3-5).

Now who but an inspired man would have so written? The more you depreciate Israel as an unlettered if not rude and barbarous people, the greater the wonder. Did Egypt so teach, or Babylon, did Greece or Rome? How came Moses to declare that the fact was as he writes? I do not speak of the sublime which Longinus so justly extolled, but of that which human experience never could have suggested; for living man, had he judged from universally known phenomena, had ever regarded the sun as the great source of light; so that if the writing had been his, he must naturally have spoken first of that bright orb: In other words, the work of the fourth day would more reasonably have taken the place of the first. That the philosophers taught for ages afterward. But not so the truth; and, whatever the seeming and striking difficulty, especially then, Moses was given to write the truth. As the apostle says some fifteen centuries after, God spoke light to shine out of darkness (2 Cor. 4:6). The darkness is not said to have been everywhere, but “on the face of the deep”, and now that an earth for the human race was in question, there it was that God commanded light to shine. That it was “created” now is not said; that it had existed before during the geologic ages for varying phases of the earth and for a very long while for the vegetable and animal kingdoms, there is abundant reason to conclude. But this is science, not faith, though the scriptural account is the sole cosmogony that leaves room for it.

But what is affirmed is that (after utter confusion reigned for the earth and darkness on the face of the deep, yet the Spirit of God brooding on the face of the waters) God interposed and said, Light be; and light was. As far as the Adamic earth was concerned, the light-hearers were not yet set in their functions as now: this was the fourth-day work. The word was, “Light be “; and light was: language evidently consistent with that view of light which prevails in comparatively modern times against Sir I. Newton's theory of emanation from the sun. If the phenomena of light are allowed in general to be a result of molecular action, and dependent on fundamental qualities of matter as it is now constituted, so that it was not the creation of an element admitting of independent existence, as science now owns, is it not remarkable that the words of Moses avoid all error, without forestalling scientific discovery, and express nothing but truth in the clearest terms? At the word of God appeared instant activity of light at that time inert.

But science easily over-shoots itself in hasty generalization. For it contradicts the inspired record when it ventures to say that the fiat as to light on the first day must have preceded the existence of water and of earth, of liquid or solid or gaseous compounds of every kind. Granted that light is manifested in the making of such compounds. But verses 1 and 2 give the surest testimony that “earth” and “water” did exist, not indeed before light, but before that particular fiat of God which called it into action for the earth that now is, after the confusion and darkness which had just before prevailed.

It is all a mistake then, and distinctly at issue with the context to assume, that there was no “light” in the state of things intimated by ver. 1. And it is allowed that even the “earth” and “water” of ver. 2, whatever the then state of ruin and darkness could not have been without “light” previously if but to form them. Verse 3 was therefore really the signal of creation begun, but of God acting afresh and in detail, ages after the universe was created, with its systems, and within them its suns, planets, and satellites. On the plain face of the record, after the mighty work of the universe, and after a disruption that befell the earth with most marked consequences, God puts forth His word to form the Adamic earth with its due accompaniments. Hence we may notice anticipatively that on the fourth day not a hint is given of creating the physical masses of the sun, moon, and stars. It is there and then no more than setting them in their declared and existing relations to the earth. Their creation belongs in time to Gen. 1:1; but of the rest more fully in its place. That on the first day light dissipated the then prevailing darkness is true, and of deep interest as God's first word and act for the earth of man. But this says nothing about the original creation of the heavens and earth. Nor is it quite comprehensible why “the waters” of ver. 2 should be not literal waters, because utter darkness veiled the deep or abyss. These are the inconsistencies that necessarily flow from the false start which confounds “in the beginning” of verse 1 with the “first day” of verses 3-5 and those that follow; as this again involves the extraordinary error of taking verse 2 to be the original state of the earth in verse 1, when it originally came into being from God.

The hypothesis that the earth when creation began was a frigid chaos or frozen globe, strange as it seems, is hard to escape for such as deny successive states since creation according to God's will, or, which goes along with it, for such as affirm the “creation” of the sun, etc. only on the fourth day. The argument is that, if so, it must have been almost cloudless, well lighted, and well warmed—in short, an impossibility. But reasoning from things as they are to a condition so contrasted in the record itself with what God formed for man subsequently is fallacious. It is simply a question of what God tells us of the abnormal state supposed in verse 2. Not a word implies frigidity, save that darkness was on the face of the deep, which may rather have been the effect of heat acting on the earth and the waters, a transient state after previous order, and before it was made for Adam.1 The record in no way identifies the disorder with the earth when its creation was effected in verse 1; but it assuredly distinguishes the dark dislocation of verse 2 from the work of the fourth day when the earth and sun and stars became one in system as in their present constitution. In short, the dilemma appears to be quite baseless. The true scope of verse 2 is not at all that the original creation was a scene of darkness, even for the earth, but that when the earth, not the heavens, was thrown into confusion ever so long after, darkness was on the, face of the deep. Light is not an element calling for annihilation (which would indeed be absurd), but a state flowing from molecular activity which God could and did here arrest as far as “the deep” was concerned. It acted all the same elsewhere; as it had over the earth till then during the formation of what some geologists call the Tertiary, Secondary, and Primary beds, to say nothing of what preceded: details for men to discover and interpret as they can scientifically, but as foreign to scripture as the detailed wonders and movements of the starry heavens.

Hence “creation” of light, first or second, in the universe is only the slip of philosophers. Scripture is more accurate than its most modern expounder, even when striving to show the accordance of science with the Bible. In the gloom that overhung the earth thrown into desolation God caused light to act, as the characteristic act of the “first day” of the week, the brief cycle that was to close with man its new master and representative of God here below. “And God saw the light that it [was] good; and God divided the light from the darkness; and God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.” It presents to us God pondering and speaking in gracious consideration of the race He was about to create thereon, with a mind dwelling on realities about to open out for man far more solemn than the light or the darkness, day or night, literally. Yet the light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart, says the Preacher (Prov. 15:30), and truly is sweet (Eccl. 11:7), as God pronounced it “good”. “And it was evening, and it was morning, first (or, one) day.” Only we must guard against taking the previous darkness as the evening. It would appear rather that light shone; and then its waning into night, and brightening into day, constituted the first day. That the earth would revolve on its axis, before the light-bearing of the sun afterward, and so have the phenomena of evening and morning, is easy to

apprehend. The fact is certain; the “how” was no difficulty to Him Who spoke and it was done. Our place is to honor Him in believing His word, without which faith nothing is as it should be. Another first day was to behold a better light: there too, still more conspicuously, if that True Light shone when all was profounder darkness, He too had been before the darkness.

If the preceding exposition be just, the day of the first week is plainly one of twenty-four hours. No one can fairly deny that scripture, like other speech, uses “day” where required in a general or figurative sense, which may cover a period of considerable length. But this need never produce embarrassment to a careful reader: as ever, the context gives the clue. In this chapter and the next we have the word variously applied according to the exigency of the case; in none ought it to be doubtful. Here “the evening” and “the morning” should exclude just question. It can only mean, thus defined, a day of twenty-four hours. Before (not “there was a sun”), but before the sun was set to rule the day (of twelve hours) as now makes no difference as to the length meant. The same phrase is carefully used before and after. Nor would any prolonged sense have been tolerated for this carefully specified week but for the error which muddles “the beginning” with the first and following days, makes the heavens and the earth at first to be a chaos, and in so doing effaces in fact the creation of both the one and the other. For where is either really “created” on such a scheme?

This will appear still more convincingly when we come to close quarters with the six days viewed as embracing the immense ages of geology. It might not be so glaring when taken in a dreamy poetic way as a vision in the hands of the late Hugh Miller. But when the simple dignity of the true father of history is vindicated for the matchless prose of Moses, the effort to make the days, or some of them, answer to the ages of geologic formation in building up the crust of the globe proves itself so much the more glaring and violent failure. Take the first day as our first test: are we told to imagine such a notion as that the outshining of the light in dispelling the immediately antecedent darkness occupied an age? And if not for the first day, or the second, or the fourth, how harshly inconsistent to claim it for the third, fifth, and sixth? Especially as the seventh day, or sabbath, should honestly put to the rout any such application. In every case the figurative sense is here irrelevant and unsuitable. We shall see in due time from scripture that the stretching out of the sabbath into an æon is altogether unfounded.

An ingenious attempt is made in “Sermons in Stones” to show that the brooding of the Spirit in verse 2 means the creation of submarine animals (Zoophytes and Bivalve Mollusks without visual organs) before light; then of a higher class furnished with organs of sight after light on the second day; and lastly of Vertebrate Fishes on the third. All this is error opposed by the record, which admits of animated nature for man's world only after the fourth day. For this confusion we are indebted to the misinterpreting “days” here into ages. The truth is, according to the record, that the Spirit's brooding upon the face of the waters is quite general and admits of no such precision, as it was also before the first day. And if the days were simply days of the week in which Adam was created, geology can neither affirm nor contradict. Its main office is to investigate the evidence of the successive ages of the earth's crust before the human race. It is freely granted that the language employed by inspiration is that of phenomena; but this does not warrant the hypothesis of the medium of a vision. It was a divine communication to and by Moses; but how given we know not and should not speculate, lest we err. A vision in fact might have shown him the submarine animals, being beyond natural conditions; but the hypothesis is invented to foist in the creation of animals not seen or specified in the record.

Further, we must banish the notion that the black pall of an unbroken night was the original condition—a heathen, not a biblical, idea. It was not so before verse 2, which describes a subsequent and transient state. The first verse supposes an order of the universe; the second, an interruption of no small moment for man; then in verse 3 the week begins in which the earth was prepared for his abode who was made before that week ended. The geologic ages had passed before the human measures of time commenced. If the record had been duly read, the Inquisition might have avoided its unwise and suicidal judgment of Galileo; for the first day, compared with the fourth, favors the Copernican theory as decidedly as it condemns the old philosophy of Ptolemy. It exactly agrees with the revolution of the earth round its axis for evening and morning, independently of the function of the sun soon after formed. Only we must take note that the profound darkness dispelled was neither primeval nor universal, as many men of science have hastily assumed. It had nothing to do with the heavens, any more than had the disorder which befell the earth, after ever so long lapse of time.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:2

Creation then in verse 1 is the great primary fact of revelation. It is all the stronger, because the Hebrew text has no article, any more than the Greek in John 1:1. It is therefore undefined. Compare Proverbs 8:23. From the context, however, it is plain that the fourth Gospel rises beyond the first book of Moses; for it goes back to divine and eternal being (not but), and not merely divine origination, which in fact appears later (in John 1:3), and this in a form all-embracing and exclusive. “All things were made (came into being) through Him, and without Him was not anything made which hath been made.”

“ In the beginning” is not a known fixed point of time, but indefinite according to the subject matter; it here intimates that “Of old,” or “In former duration” (expressly undefined), God created the universe, Undoubtedly there is no disclosure of the immense eons of which geologists speak so freely; but the language of verse 1 leaves the door open for all that can be proved by research, or even for the longest demand of the most extravagant Uniformitarian.

But the words do affirm a “beginning” of the universe, and by God's word, as in both Old and New Testament. (See, Psalm 33:64, and Hebrews 11:3). This was everything to accomplish His design, and His design was to create the heavens and the earth, where there had been nothing. Whatever Atheists or Pantheists feign science at length” confesses there was a “beginning;” so that “created” stands here in its proper and fullest sense, as, the context requires:

“There was a beginning, says geology; to Man; and farther back, to mammals, to birds, and, to reptiles, to fishes and all the lower animals, and to plants; a beginning to life: a beginning, it says also, to mountain ranges and valleys, to lands and seas, to rocks. Hence science takes another step back, and admits or claims a beginning to the earth, a beginning to all planets and suns, and a beginning to the universe. Science and the record in Genesis are thus one. This is not reconciliation; it is accordance.” So writes Dr. J. D. Dana, the eminent American Professor, in the Old and New Testament Student of July 1890.

The record declares that God created not a “formless earth,” but “the heavens” (where at no time do we hear of disorder) “and the earth.” But even as to “the earth,” which was to be a scene of change, we are expressly told by an authority no less inspired, and therefore of equal

authority with Moses, that such disorder was not the original state. “For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; He is God; that formed the earth and made it; He established it, He created it not a waste, He formed it to be inhabited” (Isaiah 45:18). The Revised V. is purposely cited, as confessedly the most correct reflection of the prophet. Here is therefore the surest warrant to separate verse 2 from verse 1 (save of course that it is a subsequent fact), severed, it may be, by a succession of geologic ages, and characterized by a catastrophe, at least as far as regards the earth. Indeed it would be strange to hear of an ordered heavens along with a “formless earth” as the first-fruits of God's creative activity. But we are not told of any such anomaly. The universe, fresh from God's will and power, consisted of “the heavens and the earth.” Silence is kept as to its condition then and up to the cataclysm of verse 2; and most suitably, unless God's purpose in the Bible were altogether different from that moral end which pervades it from first to last. What had the history of those preliminary physical changes to do with His people and their relations to Himself? But it ought not to be doubted that each state which God made was a system perfect for its aim. Yet it was not materials only, but heaven and earth.

And the earth was [or became] waste1 and empty, and darkness [was] upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God [was] brooding upon the face of the waters” (ver. 2).

The well-known and flexible particle of connection in the Hebrew text introduces the verse. Its meaning, usually and simply copulative, is often modified, as almost all words in every language must he, by contextual considerations. Hence the learned Dathe, in 1781, renders it here “posthaec vero,” expressly to distinguish the state of thing in ver. 2 from that referred to in ver. 1, and sends us to such instances as Numbers 5:23; Deuteronomy 1:19. Now there is no doubt that the Hebrew conjunction admits of an interval as often as facts demand it; but there is no need of departing from its primary force, “clad” (though our conjunction is not so pliant); or it may readily have a somewhat adversative force as we see in the 70. The true determination lies in what follows. For the usage of the past verb when thus employed is to express a state subsequent to and not connected with what goes before, but previous to what follows. Hebrew idiom does not use that verb simply as a copula, as may be seen twice in this verse, and almost everywhere; or it puts the verb before the noun. The right conclusion therefore is that Moses was led to indicate the desolation into which the earth was thrown at some epoch not made known, after creation, but prior to the “days” in which it was made the habitation for Adam and the race.

With this agrees the occurrence of the remarkable phraseology “waste and empty” elsewhere. There are but two other occasions—Isa. 33:11, “the line of confusion [or waste] and the stones of emptiness;” and Jeremiah 4:23, “I beheld the earth; and lo! it was waste and emptiness.” In both it is a desolation inflicted, not the primary condition. So it is in Genesis 1:2. It is the more to be noted, as in Jeremiah it is said of the heavens at this time that “they had no light.” Thus is confirmed, by each of the other occurrences, the conviction that our text describes a state which befell the earth, possibly long after its original creation as in the verse before. It is to this interval that the successive ages of geology apply. There are undeniable facts, full of interest, and implying creation made existent and extinguished. One's confidence in the hypotheses reared on all this may be otiose or enthusiastic; but the exact meaning of Moses' words in this verse leaves all the room that could be desired for those vast processes which may be gathered from the observed phenomena of the earth's crust. There is nothing, in scripture to exclude a succession of creatures rising to higher organization from lower, as the rule with a striking exception here and there, from the Eozoon in the Laurentian rocks of Canada to the Mammalia which most nearly resembles those of the earth as it is. But all the brilliant ingenuity of Sir C. Lyell, with others of kindred view, fails to explain or evade the proofs of change at this very period, immense as it may have been, incomparably vaster and more, rapid than since man appeared. No doubt the deluge had the deepest moral significance, and is thus unique, because the human race, save those in the ark, was then swept away. But physically its traces were superficial compared with those far more ancient convulsions so apparent, except to those who worship Time and —Uniformitarianism.

“We simply assert” (says the cautious Sir R. I. Murchison),” on the countless evidences of fracture, dislocation, metamorphism, and inversion of the strata, and also that of vast and clean-swept denudations, that these agencies were from time to time infinitely more energetic than in existing nature—in other words, that the metamorphisms and oscillations of the terrestrial crust, including the uprise of sea-bottoms, and the sweeping out of debris, were paroxysmal in comparison with the movements of our own era. We further maintain that no amount of time (of which no true geologist was ever parsimonious when recording the history of bygone accumulations of sediment, or of the different animals they contain) will enable us to account for the signs of many great breaks and convulsions which are visible in every mountain-chain, and which the miner encounters in all underground workings.... The case therefore stands thus. The shelly and pebbly terraces, which exist, are signs of sudden elevation at different periods; whilst the theory of modern gradual elevation and depression is still wanting in any valid proof that such operations have taken place except within very limited areas. Much longer and more persistent observations must indeed be made before any definite conclusion can be reached respecting the rate of gradual elevation or depression which has been going on in the last thousand years, though we may confidently assert that such changes in the relation of land to water in the historical period have been infinitesimally small when compared with the many antecedent geological operations” (Siluria, 490-1, fifth ed., 1872).

On the one hand the facts point to changes in earth and sea, and these repeatedly varied too with fresh water; rocks igneous and stratified and metamorphosed, and (during the periods thus implied, and with a corresponding environment of temperature and constitution) to organized natures, vegetable and animal, from lower orders to high, short of man and those animals which accompany his appearance on the earth; whole groups of these organisms in vast abundance coming to an end, and others quite distinct succeeding and extinguished in their turn. Would it not be a harsh supposition that God, in the fossils of the rocks, made a mere appearance of what once lived? that these petrified creatures never had animate existence here below? On the other hand, the principle and the fact of creation we see not more plainly revealed in verse 1 Than of disruption in verse 2; and both before the actual preparation of the earth for Adam as described in the six days.

As the creation, announced in a few words of noble simplicity, is the first and most momentous of God's productive interventions, so the catastrophe here briefly described seems to be the last and greatest disturbance of the globe, the twenty-seventh or sub-Appenine stage, if we are to accept the elaborate conclusions of M. Alcide D'Orbigny (Paleontologie Strat. Tome ii. 800-824), a most competent naturalist, when the Alps and Chilian Andes received their actual elevation, of itself, though with many other changes of enormous consequence, quite sufficient to account for universal confusion, with destruction of life on the earth, the deep supervening everywhere, and utter darkness pervading all. However vast, this state may have been for but a little while. The animals imbedded ages before in the rocks had eyes; presumably therefore light then prevailed. Indeed some of the earliest organic remains had vision with the most striking adaptation to their circumstances, as the Trilobites of the Silurian and other beds, with their compound structure, each eye in one computed to have 6000 facets (Owen's Pal. 48, 49, 2nd ed.) The language of verse 2 is perfectly consistent with this, when compared with verse 1, and in fact naturally supposes the darkness to be the effect of the disorder. To confound the two verses is as contrary to the only sound interpretation of the

record, as it is to the facts which science undertakes to arrange and expound. Nor can anything be more certain than the manner in which scripture steers clear of all error and consistently with all that is irrefragably ascertained, whilst never quitting its own spiritual ground to occupy the reader with physics. To reduce these gigantic operations of the geologic ages, in destruction and reconstruction with new living genera and species, to the slow course of nature and providence in the Adamic earth, the fashionable craze of the modern school, is “making a world after a pattern of our own,” quite as really as uninformed prejudice used to do. It was absurd to deny that the petrifactions of the strata were once real animals and plants, and to attribute them to a plastic force in the earth or to the influence of the heavens; but so it is to overlook the evidence of extremely violent and rapid convulsions before man was made, closing one geological period and inaugurating another with its flora and fauna successively suited to it in the wisdom and power and goodness of God.

Neither verse 1 nor verse 2 is a summary of the Adamic earth, which only begins to be got ready from verse 3. There are, accordingly, three states with the most marked distinction: original creation of the universe; the earth passed into a state of waste and emptiness; and the renovation of the earth, &c. for man its new inhabitant and ruler. Science is dumb, because wholly ignorant, how each of these three events, stupendous even the least of them, came to pass; it can only speak, often hesitatingly, about the effects of each, and, with least boldness, about creation in the genuine sense, though some, I cheerfully acknowledge, with outspoken and ungrudging cordiality. How different and surpassing the language of scripture, which has revealed all these things to babes, if they are hid from or dubious to the wise and the prudent! From the Bible they are or ought to be known on infallible authority, and this in the first written words God gave to man, when Rome and Athens had not emerged from barbarism if they existed as such at all.

Our verse 2 Then brings to view a confused state of the earth, as different from the order of primary creation as from the earth of Adam and his sons, in regard to which state the Spirit of God is said to have been “brooding upon the face of the waters.” By His Spirit the heavens are beautified; and as to creatures generally it is written, “Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created, and Thou renewest the face of the ground.” Here it was to be for man's earth. This is the link of transition. All was to be by God's word. Wisdom rejoices in the “habitable” earth, and has delights with the sons of men. A mighty wind might rage over the abyss. The Spirit of God, not the wind, could be said with propriety to “brood.” What new wonders were at hand!

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 1:1

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

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

Nor can there be conceived a more simple, sublime, and comprehensive opening of divine revelativa than these few words: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” It is the absolute commencement of creation, and in the most pointed contradistinction from the seven days. The question is solely about the true unforced meaning of the written word of God, not about Rabbis any more than the chosen people. What does the inspired record contain and convey? it may be of interest to examine what Philo or Josephus understood, as well as how the Seventy translated it into Greek long before Christ. One may weigh either Masora, the Jerusalem Targum, and the comments of Jarchi, Aben Ezra, both Kimchis, Levi Ben Gerson, Saadies Haggaon, Abarbanel, or any other learned Jew, to say nothing of others. But there is God's word given to be read and understood, though not without the faith of Christ, nor without His guidance Who communicated it originally. It was not given to teach science, and it is wholly independent of philosophy for its intelligence. Geologists, Botanists, Zoologists, Astronomers, Historians, &c., have His brief and clear account before them. Man's comprehension of what is communicated may be affected by the amount of, his knowledge, and far more by his faith. This however is a question of our understanding and expounding it; but we must never forget that God is the Author, and the writers only the instruments. The Bible is a moral book, only the more striking in its unity because it consists of so many compositions of so many writers, stretching over a thousand years of the most varied circumstances if we limit ourselves to the O.T. The reader may be right or wrong at any given time in the idea he attaches to what we call “firmament,” “plant,” or the like; but the truth remains unadulterated and unchanging in scripture, for us to read again and again, and to learn more perfectly.

This indeed constitutes its characteristic and permanent value. It is not only a full and sure source of instruction in consonance with its moral and yet higher designs to God's glory; it is the sole standard of the truth, by which we are bound to test all else which professes to be divine. Let us ever search afresh in faith, and ever grow into a deepening knowledge of the revealed mind of God.

The philosophies, as well as the religions, of antiquity were wholly ignorant of creation. Of God, of the “beginning,” they knew nothing. Dreams of evolution were the earliest folly, and among the Ionic school, Anaximander and Anaximenes followed Thales, each differing, all blind. Anaxagoras let in with mere matter the idea of mind, but no creator. It is useless to name others: even Plato and Aristotle, rivals too, had no real light. They, more or less openly, all held eternal matter at bottom; and though the philosophers boasted, as they still do, of their knowledge and logic, they failed to see that they could not prove it, or even that it is to mere mind unthinkable. To the believer it is the simple yet deep truth, that a beginning was given to everything that exists: if God says it, he perceives that nothing else can be true. For it is impossible to admit an effect without a cause; but reasoning never can rise at best beyond, There must be a First Cause; it can never say, There is. This God alone can and does affirm: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” God brought the whole ordered

system into being. The form, nature, and aim, are not here explained: such a detail had no proper place here. That He created all is a primary and momentous truth.

But there is not a word in scripture to warrant the strange and hasty assumption that the universe was brought into being in the six days of Genesis 1:3-31, so often referred to throughout the Bible. Construe the six days as men will, it is out of the power of any on just principles of interpretation to deny that the first day begins with light, and that the first two verses are marked off in their nature, as well as by their expression, from the work of the six days. Nothing indeed but prepossession can account for the mistake, which the record itself corrects. “In the beginning” has its own proper significance, and is in no way connected with “the days,” save as the revealed start of divine creation, and in due time (however probably immense the interval) leading to that measure of time only when the constitution of things was made for Adam, for the race.

The antiquity of the earth may be as great as the shifting schemes of the most enthusiastic geologist has ever conceived: there is absolutely neither here nor in any other part of scripture the least intimation that opposes vast ages before man was created, or that affirms man to be nearly contemporary with the original creation. It is ignorance of scripture that Moses assigns an epoch to the earth's first formation such as fathers or commentators (not without worthier remarks) have imagined and made current in Christendom. The philosophers who have spent their time in the study of geology and kindred sciences will act wisely in reading with unwonted care the beginning of Genesis 1. They will thence learn that they have been precipitate in the conclusion that the inspired writing is at all committed to the blunders of its interpreters, theological or scientific. However vast the periods they claim, even for the strata nearest the surface, scripture is the sole record which, while revealing God as the Creator of all things, leaves room for all that has been wrought before the Adamic earth. “The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary: there is no searching of His understanding” (Isa. 40:28). While geology waits for its Newton, subjection to scripture meanwhile would be untold gain to its devotees as to all other men.

There was an epoch then in the infinite course of eternity when God created the universe. This is here stated with the utmost accuracy— “in the beginning.” It is in view of man, primarily indeed of Israel, that the Pentateuch was written, the Second Man, the last Adam, being the, as yet, hidden object (and the church one with Him) of God's counsels. Angels are not spoken of, though we know from another ancient book of inspiration that they expressed their joy when earth's foundations were made to sink (Job 38:6, 7). “In the beginning,” accordingly, is severed from all the measures of time with which man's existence is conversant. How admirably previous duration, unlimited by ordinary notation, suits the immense changes of which geology takes cognizance, needs no further remark here.

“ God” in our version answers to the Hebrew Elohim, which however has the peculiarity of a plural substantive with a singular verb. Christianity alone in its own time cleared up the enigma, which still remains impenetrably dark to the Jews, as well as to other men, who know not in Christ the True Light.

Again, there ought to be no doubt among scholars that the word “created” in our tongue corresponds better than any other with the original. With us, as with Israel, the word admits of application to signal callings into existence out of actual material as in Genesis 1:21, 27 but only with a special ground and emphasis. And never is it used of any other maker than God. But if the aim were to speak of creation in the ultimate, highest, and strictest sense, the Hebrews, like ourselves, had no other word so appropriated. Here the context is decisive. “God created the heavens and the earth,” where nothing of the kind existed previously. They were created out of nothing as men speak, perhaps loosely, but not unintelligibly. The heathen might worship the heavens, as all did, or even the earth; the Jew sinned against the written word if he was ensnared of Satan after their dark example. The first words of God's law told him that those were but creatures; Israel was to hear if others were deaf, and bound to own, serve, and worship the one God, the Creator. The chosen people was quite as ready as any other to worship the creature, as all their history to the Babylonish captivity proves; but there can be no doubt what the Bible supposed, declared, and claimed from its very first verse. God created the universe.

Further, it is not matter created, crude matter, to be afterward fashioned into the shapely and bea'itiful universe of the heavens and the earth. It is not chaos first, as Greek and Latin poets feigned, in accordance with heathen tradition never wholly right, though often mixing up what was not wrong. It is not a nebula, as La Place conceived, a mere modification of the same rationalism however refined it be. Lord Rosse, by his observations with his great reflector, has fairly disposed of this unbelieving hypothesis. For he has proved that many nebulae, considered even by the Herschels irresolvable objects, actually consist of agglomerations of stars. Surely therefore the only just presumption is that all nebulua are nothing more, and only need more powerful means to make manifest their true nature. God only has given the truth plainly, briefly, and after a way transparently divine in its simple and unparalleled majesty. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

How is it, ye savants, that this great truth is found here only in its pristine splendor, towering above your Hesiods and Homers, your Ovids and Virgils, your Egyptian and Mexican remains, your Hindoo and Chinese fables? How is it that to our day the Lyells and Darwins, to say nothing of profaner men, are stumbling in the dark over a morass of hypothesis, (to say the least) unproved and dubious? It is because God's word is not believed as He wrote it; and this, because men like not the true God Who judges sin and saves only through His Son, the Lord Jesus. So of old when men knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither gave thanks, but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. It is the more guilty now, because, the Son of God being come and having accomplished redemption, the darkness quite passes away and the true light already shines. Alas! anything is welcome but a living God, and least of all the whole universe created by and through and for His Son Who is before all things and by Whom all things consist. “By faith we understand [apprehend] that the worlds have been framed by God's word, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear” (Heb. 11:3). Ed.

Abraham, the Friend of God, Abraham: Genesis 18:1-15

(Gen. 18:1-15.)

THE portion read now is founded a good deal upon the previous chapter, and the general train runs on to the end of chapter 21. We can see at a glance that chapter 22 introduces a series of truths altogether new. The distinctive mark already mentioned, “After these things,” makes a decided break, a fresh start in thought; and you will observe how completely this is the fact, because there it is not only an altogether new

train of communications from God, but also of a different character. The death and resurrection of the promised son are brought before us in a figure, and all the other dealings of God that are founded on this grave fact; as, for instance, the passing away for the time of the covenant of grace with Israel in Sarah, and the call of the bride in chapter 24. Of course, I do not mean to enter on these subjects just now; but I make the remark in order to help persons to read the scriptures for themselves, that they may have a clearer understanding of the order of these things, and have more fixed in their souls the consciousness that it is the word of God, and not the thoughts of ingenious men, really a matter of divine truth, and altogether independent of anybody's fancies. This I hold to be a capital point for the children of God, particularly in these days; that they may have a distinct ground to go upon, not only for their own souls, but also in case of being challenged by others. For there are those who, not knowing the truth, are the more ready to doubt the reality of the blessing that they do not themselves enjoy. They have the miserable desire to spoil the happiness to which they are themselves strangers. Hence we cannot be too simple. Besides this, we do well to seek to be thoroughly established in the truths that we receive—to see how it is all bound up with the personal work of Christ, as well as revealed in the word of God, foreshadowed in the Old Testament, and clearly out in the New.

In this case, then, the communication is in a measure founded on chapter 17, which we saw introduced an unfolding of God's name in a way that was an advance on all before. But in this case it was not as with Jacob, where he sought to know the name of God, who withheld His name. Indeed the difference is remarkable. With Abraham there was more ease, and God begins to speak out plainly. Not but Jacob was afterward brought to hear God unfolding the very same name of “the Almighty God;” but to Abraham it was brought out at once. There was no such thing as the desire—still less was there any “wrestling.” Abraham, on the other hand, intercedes with Him; and indeed “wrestling” is not exactly the word that would be suitable to the character of Abraham's intercourse with God. It was both more peaceful and of a higher character. In Jacob's case there was immense activity of nature. I do not mean sin, of course, but nature in its best sense, that is, domestic affection. The love of family was exceedingly strong in Jacob's case. No one of the patriarchs seems more marked by it than Jacob. It is not meant, of course, that either lacked in this way, for they did not. Witness in Isaac a character remarkable for his home attachment, with a life more equable than Jacob's.

Abraham, however, had this distinguishing feature, that he was a man who very simply went to God about everything as it rose. Consequently God could act more freely and immediately in His dealingsmwith him, There was not so much that required first to be broken down, as we find in Jacob's case: how often he must be made nothing of before God could be revealed! Therefore it was comparatively late in the history of Jacob before God made His name known to him. To Abraham, as we saw, Jehovah appeared, and opened out His name, unasked, as the “Almighty God;” and there followed the making of the covenant, which supposed the death of the flesh, the express figure of that which we now know in its truth and power in Christ; would that so wondrous a weapon of deliverance from all on that score were well wielded by all saints! What a source of trial, difficulty, and perplexity, do the great mass of God's children find through not knowing it! For, as many know, it is not in their case a question so much of the faith that overcomes the world, as it is really doubt about their own personal clearance before God. He that is dead is justified from sin, but this they do not perceive. They are as yet under law. But we have seen that here circumcision is not at all connected with the law, but, on the contrary, with that covenant God made in grace long before it. It is the sign of the blessing God was to give in Christ Himself. Circumcision is viewed as the type of the complete setting aside of the flesh before God. This is what we have had in Gen. 17. Now we enter on a further activity of God, and its consequences, which are carried on to chapter 21.

Here again the Lord appears, though we may notice this special feature about it now, that He leaves it to Abraham to find out who was visiting him. There is no outward token of the majesty of His presence—no special intimation betrays who was there. It is also to be noticed that on this occasion the Lord personally came, attended by two others, who, no doubt, were outwardly much like Himself. He deigned to take the appearance of a man; as it is said, “He (Abraham) lift up his eyes, and looked, and lo, three men stood by him.” We have no reason to suppose that it was in such a manner that God was pleased to appear to His servant on former occasions. It was dealing with Abraham, founded on what went immediately before in chapter 17, but, having its own distinct character. This is preserved throughout.

“When he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door.” He was one of those who, like Lot in the next chapter, had an ungrudging hospitality, which had its reward in this, that, ready as they were to receive those who looked but strangers, they were really entertaining “angels unawares.” Nay, more: this present occasion was the most remarkable entertainment ever enjoyed by any on the earth until Jesus came. Some might count it even more wonderful than that; because the Lord Jesus, being pleased to become a man, by being born of a woman, and to tabernacle amongst us, came down habitually into human circumstances, as a man with men. I do not doubt, however, that in all these manifestations of the Lord in the Old Testament, we are to understand the Son of God was the one manifested. Not only was He pleased to come in the appearance of a man, which may have been the case on other occasions also, as seen in the history of Noah, Gideon, and others; but here it is said there were three men, meaning by this, of course, what they seemed to the eyes of men. The peculiar privilege here was that God Himself deigned to be the guest of Abraham: yea, and more than that, for He treats him as His intimate, stamping on the patriarch forever that remarkable designation, “the friend of God,” which is founded on this very chapter. Assuredly the circumstances are such, that we do well to look into them with care.

Abraham then “bowed himself toward the ground” —as far as we are told, at first not knowing who the three were. But God is gracious to His people, and leads on step by step. We can see at a glance whose grace it was that put into the heart of Abram the habit of what we might call indiscriminate generosity and kindness; and this readiness is the more to be observed as it was the part of one called out to be separate to the Lord. A grave and important lesson it is for us in this respect, that the man who was most of all separate is the same whose heart went most of all out towards others, and that strangers.

There is nothing in the most complete separateness to the Lord to hinder the largest and most active kindness, not merely to the people of God, but to all men. Abraham did not know at this time who or what his visitors might be; he merely saw three men, and his heart was at once towards them. Not strained nor scanty was the flow of divine goodness; there was a heart ready at once to meet and even seek others, desirous of their blessing. Is it not in the highest sense so with the Lord? Does He not constantly pour blessing into the heart of, the man that was intent on the blessing of others? In this case, too, there was a greater honor in store, though the object of it knew it not.

Though we must not suppose that at first Abraham knew the divine dignity of one of “the three men,” there is the remarkable fact that he addresses himself to one, and I can hardly doubt to which of the three. However that may be, he says, “My lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee from thy servant; let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet.” He does not confine himself to the one to whom he had at first addressed himself. He is thinking of that which was needful, not only in courtesy but in love. “Rest yourselves under the tree, and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts.” We can scarce doubt, I think, that he is treating

them according to the appearance in which they stood, though we shall find that it is not long before he learns more. “After that ye shall pass on, for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do as thou hast said.”

Abraham accordingly hastens, making Sarah the partner of his kindly toil, and soon after stands by them under the tree as they eat. Then comes their turn before us. They said to him, “Where is Sarah thy wife?” Perhaps it was then that the first word, intimating the divine power of Him who deigned to be there, fell on the attentive ear of Abraham. “I will certainly return unto thee.” It does not become man to talk of certainly returning. Was this lost on Abraham? Assuredly not; more particularly when his long-cherished hope is about now to enjoy the promise of a specified, and, I may say, dated accomplishment. “I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son.” If it appeared vague before, it was henceforth distinct and defined. But the one who was immediately concerned had not the same sense as Abraham of the presence of God. There was not the same preparedness of heart for it. Sarah, no doubt, was an honored woman, but her state was spiritually different from that of Abraham. We hear of her during this conversation behind the door. I dare say she ought not to have been there, but there she was; and if she was where she ought not to have been, need we wonder that she indulges in feelings that little became her? She laughed in her doubt of the word. Could any of us imagine Abraham behind a door? Was there not a simple dignity in Abraham incapable of hiding and listening behind a door? We can understand easily an Eastern wife's temptation to conceal herself in more modern times, when woman was more of a prisoner, and otherwise degraded; but it is evident that in those early days no such reason operated, and no excuse could thence be for anything of the kind, For we find Rebekah, and others far later, going to the well, without any idea of impropriety. Sarah must no doubt have enjoyed no less degree of freedom, but would have from her circumstances much more. She, the matron, by no means young now, was under no conceivable custom of keeping out of sight. Wherever such manners as those before us are resorted to, never expect anything good or worthy. It is no light mercy to be brought out of all the darkness and all the pettiness of nature, and to be brought to walk in the light as God is in it. It is sweet to think of it as the Christian's place, but it is what we all want to learn more of. What else enables one to stand so simply in the presence of Man? Not that we begin with man, and then know how to stand before God, but just the other way. God gives us the root of the matter first, and this is where we are brought in virtue of our Lord Jesus Christ. He could not do more, nor would He do less. He has brought us by and in Himself near to God. This is what in its spirit was true of Abraham; and he was one who enjoyed much of the conscious presence of God; and it is this that I am persuaded had its reward now. He had a conviction of who it was that was addressing him in words which could not fail. There was a sort of instinctive feeling, a growing conviction, in Abraham's soul who the guest must be he was entertaining.

It is remarkable, however, that he hears these words quietly. No astonishment is expressed. How happy when the soul is thus kept calm before God! We are not then taken by surprise: we expect good, and not evil. Instead, therefore, of stooping to the ways which let out how mean the flesh is, the sense of His presence preserves, and true dignity is associated with the utmost, simplicity. It is not in this case self-possession, nor the pride of being anything, nor the vanity of desiring what we have not; but all is founded on the deep sense that it is God with whom we have to do, and whose voice we hear and obey.

Abraham, then, as I have said, stands in marked contrast with Sarah hiding behind the door, and laughing within herself. But when charged with it, she is ashamed to own the truth, which she felt an ignominy to herself. But He that was on the other side of the door soon shews that such an obstacle could not keep Him from seeing and knowing what passed in the heart of Sarah, as well as where she was. “The Lord said to Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?” How surprising it must have been to her, and how sharp the rebuke, though conveyed without a harsh word! “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” How blessed to accustom ourselves, beloved brethren, to this one answer to all difficulties! For this we are called to walk by faith, not by sight. God never had a thought of a Christian, or of His church, being exempted from difficulties. To hinder this is the main effort of man after the flesh. Directly they look at the church as a human institution, they want to smooth its way, to put it on the ground of natural rules and arrangements, and thus reduce the Christian to a walk of mere prudence and common sense. They forget it is God's habitation through the Spirit, and cease to walk in dependence on the. Lord. No doubt morality is quite according to the law of God. I quite admit it. But all that is entirely distinct. Supposing a person were to walk within the letter of the ten commandments every day, he never would behave in a single particular as a Christian ought. The doing of all the commandments would not meet the will of God about the Christian. It would be very proper for a man, and excellent in a Jew; but far from being Jews, now that we are in Christ, we are no longer sons of Adam but according to His grace, His children by faith. We are born of God, and brought into a new place by redemption, and are blamed if we are walking as men. This is the very complaint of the Apostle Paul against the saints at Corinth. He reproaches them because they “walked as men,” not as bad men, but “as men.” It was unworthy of grace that they should be on mere human ground. If a brother offended another, is one to have him up before the law-court? We can understand that the Christian might easily reason about it, and say, “For my part I cannot but feel that a Christian is a great deal worse than a man of the world if he is guilty of a wrong, and therefore I must have him tried and punished by the magistrate.” The premise is true; the conclusion false. For it is not at all a question of wrong or right, but of Christ. I perfectly grant that a Christian may do wrong, and that the assembly, should judge it; but to do right is not enough for a Christian. He is sanctified to the obedience of Christ, to obey God as the Lord did. It is a question, not of doing the law, bit of obeying like Christ. This is what is written on us, as the law was on the tables of stone. Israel ought to have represented the law graven upon stones. We have Christ on high, and are called to walk and witness accordingly. This is the point of the apostle's words in the chapter referred to. The Christian is the epistle of Christ,” and, nothing short of a manifestation of Christ can satisfy the mind of God as to him.

Here we see Jehovah as man in a beautiful way: So it was, I believe, in this case, although not of course as yet the Word made flesh, yet the nearest approach to it; and just as we shall see in the series that follows (chap. 22.), the resurrection of the Son of God in type, and the dealings of God founded on that great fact; so here we have, as far as it could be, the coming down of God to be among men, and the grace that accompanied His presence here below. So I read this very scene; and that is the reason why here, and here alone, the Lord takes the place of a man.

How beautiful to look back, and see how suitable it is that, before the series that introduced the work, there should be the series that introduced the person, in as near an approximation to His taking flesh as was possible to be beforehand. If there be one thing that marks a man with others, it is sitting at the same table in social intercourse. This is what the Lord does here. It in one of the very things in which an unbeliever finds an enormous difficulty: but what is poison to an infidel in the food and joy of faith. Accordingly, where faith receives it, we rejoice in so blessed a thing as God thus deigning to be at Abraham's table, and partaking of his hospitality, with His angels round Him; but this in the guise of men.

After He has thus put Himself along with His servant on familiar terms, He speaks of that which was nearest to the heart of Abraham. He knew that he was surely to have a son; but he had waited long, and wanted to know when the son would come. Now it is fixed; there is a distinct time allotted, and for the first time. God here too shows Himself considerate of Abraham's feelings. As we saw, Sarah was not up to the mark yet; she needed a rebuke. The communication that God makes brought out what was not according to the proprieties of the presence of God. She was not used to it, like her husband, in spirit, day by day; and when the Lord did come, she did not know how to behave herself; but Abraham did, and there is nothing more remarkable than the ease, and calm, and comeliness of Abraham in all this scene.. He was in no way thrown off his balance when it begins to dawn upon him who it was that deigned to talk and eat with him; the wonderful fact that he stood before the true God, the Lord of heaven and earth—the pledge of the incarnation, when He should take flesh and dwell among us.

The Lord brings all out plainly now. “Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.” But Sarah laughed in her incredulity, and thou, convicted, she denied it, saying, “I laughed not” —denied it for the same reason that some of us may have had to reproach ourselves for no less. “She was afraid!” How often these sad departures from the truth arise from nothing but the want of moral courage! What would train up the soul in unflinching and most scrupulous truthfulness is exactly what Abraham cultivated, and what Sarah failed in habitual acquaintance with the presence of God.

There is no safeguard so efficacious, even supposing we be ever so disposed to exaggerate, uncareful, quick to speak, slow to consider and weigh what is said. There is nothing that would keep and form the soul more simply in truthfulness than this very thing, the constant sense of the presence of God. This it is that characterized Abraham more than most; not that we may not find failure, for Abraham was not Christ. In this particular, too, under solemn circumstances, Abraham broke down, and, sad to say, twice about the same thing—once in the earlier part of his career, and once later. For God would give the terrible lesson, that flesh in no way over improves, and that Abraham needed the presence of God to keep him towards the close of his career, just as much as at the beginning.

Now we see that as the Lord convicts Sarah for her own good, so He blesses Abraham more and more. But though it is sad that a saint of God should fail in truthfulness, it is no small mercy that God should make that untruthfulness felt where the soul has been guilty. I do not know anything worse for anyone who has fallen into untruthfulness than that such a one should go without the discovery of it, and without its being painfully brought home to the soul by God Himself: Here we have it. The Lord does not do in this case as in so many others in the Bible; for one of the remarkable features elsewhere plain is that we have cases of untruthfulness, and other things equally bad, found in God's people, but they are left, either without conviction, or with the fact simply stated. Here it was brought home for Sarah's profit, and we know that she gained it. But we must turn to the Lord's way with Abraham.

This is the very thing that perplexes unbelievers. It is not so to faith. God disciplines and exercises the hearts of His people in judging these things from their acquaintance with His own character, and with His word in general. In this particular case there was a lesson to be taught, and therefore God does not pass it by. He does not permit that Sarah should simply say, “I did not laugh;” so He says, “Nay, but thou didst laugh.” The sin is brought home by the unmistakable voice of God. Oh, what a thought for Sarah afterward, and how humiliating, not only that she lied, but that she ventured on a lie to God Himself, and that, as her last word with Him, poor Sarah should have told a lie. It was the last word that passed between her and God Himself.

This, no doubt, is a serious thing for our own souls, worthy of reflection, yet full of comfort also. For what a God we have to do with! What patience, long-suffering, goodness! and this with not a human being merely, but a child of His! And His way is to let a word from Him act on her conscience. Never do we hear of any repetition of the evil on Sarah's part. It was a lesson not to be forgotten, yet how gracious!

Abraham, the Friend of God, Abraham: Genesis 18:16-33

We read next that “the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom.” Here we enter on another part of the Lord's action at this time. We have had Him coming down in richest grace, and dealing with the utmost possible tenderness, even with such a failure as that of Sarah. But now we have to see the manner in which all this operated spiritually on the heart of Abraham. “And the men rose up, and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them, to bring them on the way.” Here is another beautiful feature in Abraham, which also had its reward. His was not a mere hospitality that receives like a patron without going farther. There was nothing of what we may call the condescension of a great man in Abraham, which is scarcely to be called true, or at least Christian, hospitality. He in whom that is found will, on the contrary, be found filled with the importance of himself, his family, and his position; he scorns to act below the idea he has, and would impress on others, of his own dignity. Who that reflects could call this grace? “This did not Abraham.” Genuine humility was there, and yet withal an unmistakeable stamp of dignity in his character, yet none the less of true kindness, of lowly and persevering love. Thus he hangs upon their steps; and no wonder. At this time it was not merely the ready heart for a stranger, but a sense of the glory of his visitors, and among them of One especially. Who can be surprised that Abraham was loath to see them depart, and accompanied their way? But again, let me say that scripture speaks of such a reception of strangers as though it were no unwonted thing for this generous man. I do not suppose that it was the first time for him to bring such forward on their journey, after a godly sort, any more than to receive them into his tent, and treat them as he did.

“And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah, to do justice and judgment; that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” What a character! But I would ask myself, as well as you, beloved brethren, is that what the Lord can say of you and me? Does He really know this of us? I do not mean that He said it to Abraham, but in His word about Him. Now He has written it for us; and for what purpose? That we should merely know what He felt towards Abraham? Nay, but that we should search ourselves, and see whether there are grounds for the Lord to speak so about ourselves and our households. For you generally find that a saint's ways are shown, not merely in his own personal conduct, but even more in the relation of his family all round to the Lord, as the fruit of his faith or the lack of it. This is the reason why (in the New Testament), no matter what gift a man had, no matter how much he might be personally excellent, if his household were unruly, if not in subjection, such an one could not be an elder or bishop. How could a person rule the church of God, if he could not rule his own home? Because, where moral power would be shown most is, not in a discourse, or in company, or in a visit, but where a man unbends, where he is

no longer the teacher or preacher, where he can either familiarly bring in God or habitually leave Him out, where he can have a free and constant circulation of that name, with all its fruitful consequences, in the family, or he proves that his heart is in ease. Show or money for them is really for himself.

The Lord assuredly looks for a reflex in the household of the ways of God with the head of it; because there it is that God should manifestly be owned, and habitually govern; and there it is that the one who stands at the head is responsible to God for showing what his mind and heart value. It may be done with great simplicity, one need not say, with tender attention and care and interest in what goes on with each member of the family. And I do not mean merely the children, though the children have the nearer place; but servants also, supposing there are such in the house. Servants, it is true, are not mentioned in 1 Timothy expressly, possibly because some of the elders might be among the poorest, and perhaps servants themselves. Therefore God puts the matter in a general way; but where there are such domestics, just the same thing should be found. For that which sheds blessing among the children secures blessing among the servants. At any rate there should be godly order, even if the children or servants be not yet brought to the knowledge of God. So it most assuredly was at this time, and ordinarily, trim of Abraham's house.

“For I know him:” was it ever so said about Lot? It would have had a sorrowful meaning in Lot's case; it has a blessed one in Abraham's. For this is the knowledge of approval, of divine complacency; it is the knowledge that prepared the way for his being the depositary of the secrets of Jehovah—the one to whom He could communicate that which no angel knew, save those who had their orders from Him and were just about to be the executioners of His judgment. But the angels in general, I venture to presume, knew little or nothing of it. It was enough for them to learn it when the thing had taken place. Thus it is that they learn about the church, and the wonders that God has shown to us. The church of God is His living lesson-book for the angels (Eph. 3); it is by the dealings that He carries on with individual Christians, and with the assembly above all, that He is instructing them in His ways; as He did already by our Lord Jesus Christ in the highest degree, when He was here and exalted on high. He was not pleased to tell them of Christ beforehand; whereas one of the most remarkable privileges saints of old had was the revelation, as far as it went, of the sufferings of Christ and the glories after these. And now we know things to come, as well as the things of Christ above. “Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before.” This is, or ought to be, one of the cherished privileges of the Christian. For every child of God now really has, not only a priestly place in the grace of Christ, but what may be called a prophetic one. He is not, of course, a prophet, in the sense of giving out inspired communications from God. This the prophets did, as part of the foundation of the church, and it might be in what is called prophesying. But all ought to enjoy the reality of seeing, and testifying the things that are not as though they were, according to divine revelation, giving us to enter into the mind of God before His word comes to pass. The whole of the New Testament supposes that a part of what the Holy Ghost is come down here to do is, not only to “take of the things of Christ, and show them to us,” but to show us “things to come.” John 16

In this chapter, and in the fresh scene that I am dwelling upon, we have the very pattern of Christ when He was present here; I do not say when the sacrifice of Christ was offered in sign, which comes before us in chapter 22. But here there is a remarkable anticipation of the presence of the Lord—of God's presence in Christ, when He tabernacled as a man among men. Hence the wonderful opening out of that which was in His own heart; just as the Lord did in John 15, which may be viewed as the counterpart of what we find here., He had, as we know, been with, the disciples in the tenderest love. There, it is true, it is not courteous furnishing of water for His feet, but (wondrous way!) His washing theirs. Supper-time was come for Him and them: and He would stoop down and wash their feet, as a witness of His work of love when He should leave them; but before He goes, He would tell them what was in His mind. He is treating them as friends; so He lets them know what the Holy Ghost is about to do when He Himself is absent on high. “It is expedient for you that I go away, else the Comforter will not come.” But He went, and the Holy Ghost came and more than made up for His absence. So we find in measure with Abraham. The angels proceed; the Lord remains behind with Abraham, who enters into a phase of communion with Him far beyond what he had enjoyed before.

“And Jehovah said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.” He is speaking here just after the manner of men. Jehovah adopts the familiar language of common life, and deigns to adapt Himself to that which every one could understand in a man. It is wholly above our comprehension how God knows all things at once, without inquiry or investigation. He condescends here to speak so that Abraham might be thoroughly free in His presence.

“And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah. And Abraham drew near, and said.” How precious is this access to Him who had thus come down! Abraham shows no shrinking behind the door. He has confidence in God. “Abraham drew near.” The Christian can understand it all, now that redemption has been accomplished, and sin has been judged, and we have been left, according to the word of God and the work of Christ, without a single spot or stain to arrest the eye of the Judge. Such is the efficacy of the blood in which we have been washed from our sins, even as we ourselves are a new creation in Christ before Him. But is there always in us, as here in Abraham, a real readiness to draw near to speak to our God? Are we happy in making due use of the privileges we possess? This is a serious question for our souls. We see how it was with the patriarch.

“He drew near,” and says, “Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?” Now mark, it is no longer a question about himself, or about the son. The son was soon to come. All this was settled. He rests upon it, his heart is perfectly free. He has no longer a single want for himself—not one suit remains to be spread before Jehovah. His heart is drawn out in a spirit of grace, which answers to the grace of the Lord towards himself. He entreats Jehovah about others. He does not yet mention the one that no doubt lay heavily on his heart. His nephew was in Sodom. Lot was there. Who was there living that knew the faults of Lot better than Abraham? but Abraham entered, in his measure, into the feelings of God. For if faults, if blots, could have turned away the love of God, where should we be? Lot had done Abraham no little harm; he had been the source of considerable trouble. It was a case of risking life itself on one occasion never to be forgotten.

All this however made little or no difference to Abraham. But now he could only think in sorrow of Lot as in the very midst of the doomed city. We need not suppose that he had only mourned over Lot for the first time. Could it be an entirely new thought to Abraham that Sodom and Gomorrah were nests of wickedness, and utterly unfit for the sojourn of that righteous man, Lot? Why should he “vex his soul” there? It was certainly not God who had called him into it. Was the old man hankering after wealth or honor in town, as once for the well-watered plains of Jordan near it? He had not learned his lesson, and now a far more serious chastening was at hand. Now he was only going to be saved so as by fire. Soon must he abandon that seat of honor in the gate of Sodom he too dearly loved. Lot must now taste the bitterness of what he had chosen. Whatever is our wrong must in the long run be our chastening.

But look at Abraham. “Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?” All his heart is moved, now that he has a glimpse of the destruction so swiftly coming on the plains which had beguiled his kinsman. “Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, wilt thou also destroy, and not spare, the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?” Such is his plea with Jehovah. He pleads as one whose heart felt deeply; and when our hearts are engaged, the work is not done badly. That is the real secret of it. We may do things simply—and we cannot be too simple—but we see the mark clearly where the heart feels aright. It was so with Abraham. He intercedes earnestly and with perseverance, giving expression to that sentiment which the New Testament brings forward under the hand of the Apostle Paul— “Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?” Of course He will, and here we have the answer of grace: “Jehovah said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.”

Then Abraham ventures to take a little more courage, and brings his request down to forty-five, to forty, and to twenty. (Vers. 27-31.) At last he says, “Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once. Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.” Why “this once?” Alas! our faith never reaches up to the grace of God. We weary and fail, not He. We get enough, through His grace, for our blessing, but rarely do we venture into its depths. Sound as we may, we certainly never get to the bottom. It was to be proved so here; for although the Lord answered to the full all that Abraham's faith and confidence in His grace essayed, His grace far exceeded, for it descended after all to that one person who lay on the heart of Abraham, though he had not the boldness to say so. But the Lord knew it; and while He surely did not spare that wicked place (and it was according to His righteous government that it should be made an example of divine judgment), none the less did He rescue that righteous soul, spite of his faults.

But I refer to this now in order to note the gracious effect on Abraham's spirit of being brought into the knowledge of God's mind about the future. For it issues not merely in prayer, but in intercession for others. It may be well to ask, beloved brethren, whether we are given to similar intercession, who know that the Lord is soon coming to judge the habitable earth? There are few persons in this room who do not know a great deal more of what is coming to pass on the earth than those who have the credit for learning and theology in this day of ours. We know how great are our shortcomings, and how little we know; but still, as a matter of undeniable fact, it is certain that we are accustomed to look into the future, that we are used in spirit, where God has removed the veil, to enter into that to which He points us. We have no doubt what is coming on the world, and on the different parts of the world, as clearly as if we saw it on a map—one painted blue, and another black. We know perfectly well that there is a land where the eyes of the Lord rest, and He will surely magnify His name. On the other hand, we know of other lands that shall be given up to desolation. The future is thus a matter of settled knowledge to us, though of course in different degrees.

But I ask again, what is the present effect of all on our souls? Does it draw us out in intercession? Are we pleading with the Lord? Ought it not to be, if we really believe what is coming to pass on the flower of Christendom? Has it engaged our hearts in intercession? Are we sufficiently alive to the way in which God's children are at this moment dishonoring Him by unworthy, mistaken, unbelieving thoughts? or to the great danger from this to their souls? Can any of these things be without loss or peril to them? They are deeply injurious, these false expectations. This trifling with the word of God, this blotting out from the future of God's warning, have present consequences of the most serious kind; but do they stir our hearts in desire for the saints of God? We know of course, that nothing can stay the judgments that are coming on the ungodly, and that God will shelter the righteous in that day; but are our hearts going out to Him about His people? We see how Abraham interceded. The Lord give us to be like him! It supposes hearts at rest in His grace as to all that concern ourselves before Him. But that very grace gives us confidence in Him for others dear to Him; and their failures, or dangers, should draw out intercession; yet beyond all that we ask or think.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:31-32

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

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

In order to the sure understanding of the case, we do well to avail ourselves of the light afforded in Acts 7:2-4, where Stephen interprets that which otherwise might easily be misunderstood. “The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Charan, and said to him, Go out of thy land and kindred, and come into the land which I will show thee. Then he came out of the Chaldeans' land, and dwelt in Charan. And thence, after his father died, he removed him into this land in which ye now dwell.” The verses with which chap. 11 close give simply the historical fact. Chap. 12:1-4 give the clue to the failure in carrying out Jehovah's mind. So we saw in chap. 11:1-9 the hidden reason why the nations were formed and distributed after their families and tongues over the earth, of which we find only the fact in chap. 10.

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

But as yet a serious obstacle stood in the way. Abram obeyed only in part. Far from going from his father's house, his father who was not within the terms of the call took the lead, as indeed was but natural if he came with Abram. So we read not even that Abram took Terah, but that “Terah took Abram,” thus making the word of God of none effect. Faith is no compromise; it receives and obeys the divine word. Abram was called to break from all that seemed naturally, yea from all that was naturally, dear to him. His first duty was subjection to Jehovah's call,

Who would assuredly show him the land according to His promise. And so it ever must be for faith. The call of grace is paramount; and faith confides in God, It is no calculation of interest or ambition, but as Heb. 11 puts it, at length “he went out, not knowing whither he went,” assured of God's love, wisdom, and power.

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

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

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The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:29-30

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

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

God takes a beneficent interest not only in the persons who have to do with Him but in their relations, especially in that which, of all natural ties, is the most important for a human being. It may have been that those here in question on either side did not yet know Him; but He at least knew the end from the beginning and guided in His providence those who were to play an influential part in the future dealings of His grace. He registers it in that word of His which endures forever. He would thus impress its gravity on all that fear Him for their own steps here below. He would have them above all to seek His guidance, now in particular since the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For there His word assures a character of deeper intimacy than with a people chosen to be the theater of His direct government, or even with the fathers resting on His promises. Nor is it only that His word is thus adapted to our calling; for He has now also given us the Holy Spirit in the power of personal indwelling, to speak of nothing else, which could not be till sin was judged in the cross, and the Savior took His new place in heaven before God. Therefore if any one be in Christ, it is a new creation: the old things are past; behold, all things are made new. And all things are of God Who reconciled us to Himself by Christ.

Nor is this all. For the true and sound knowledge which grace gives us of God enables the Christian to vindicate Him as to the things of the old creation, instead of yielding to the teachings of demons which would put a slight on marriage or meats, as we read in 1 Tim. 4. Thus Satan may, to dishonor the Creator, affect a spurious holiness. But the truth delivers us from such reveries and insists that every creature of God is good, and that nothing is to be refused if received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. Now we know every barrier gone in Christ's death: not divine compassion only come down where and as we were, but ourselves free to draw near to God in His victorious love, proved to the full, efficacious and everlasting. Unbelief may mock Christ and His work; it must another day take the bitter consequence in the face of the amplest possible evidence to convince and satisfy. But faith is entitled even now to enjoy divine goodness, both in the heavenly sphere where Christ sits, and in the scene where He was rejected, and we still are in our weakness, waiting for the appearing of His glory. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, of whom in due time we are told so much comparatively; and this not only in the O.T. history, but in the profoundly instructive comment of the great apostle in N.T. doctrine. Of Milcah we hear but little. She was Haran's daughter and Nahor's wife, and as Gen. 22 and 24 inform us, mother of Bethuel and seven other sons. Bethuel was father of Laban and Rebekah, of whom so much is said there or afterward. No more of Iscah is known than that she too was Haran's daughter. But it is said here that Sarai was barren; she had no child. And this remained a painful fact for many years. Yet was she destined, after long patience of faith, checkered by some impatience of unbelief to bear Abram's heir, the child of promise. In Isaac should his seed be called, type of the “Child born” and of the “Son given” in Whose name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, yea, a type of Him even received from the dead in figure. Another woman in after years was to be His immediate mother (Luke 1) and she not barren, though a virgin of David's house when David's tabernacle was fallen down. Of her it was promised centuries before that Emmanuel should be born as He was, Who will assuredly raise up that ruin with every other that is for Jehovah's glory. Highly favored was that maiden, blessed among women in good sooth. But, as He said (and His words are spirit and life) to a woman who lifted up her voice in blessing the mother, “yea rather, blessed [are] they that bear the word of God and keep it” (Luke 11:27, 28).

Those who affirm, or introduce anything, are bound to furnish proof. The onus probandi lies entirely on such. A single scripture would suffice. Those who deny are entitled to do so till that authority be produced which to faith is an end of controversy.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:27-28

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

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

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

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

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

Wholly distinct was Abram, but it was the sovereign call of God that made him so. “Look unto Abraham your father (says the prophet), and unto Sarah that bare you; God called him alone, and blessed him and increased him.” Terah was of no account in this, nor even Lot though designated a “righteous man” in his day. But Abram was called “alone,” whoever might accompany him, or share less or more the blessing which was his rich portion.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:10-26: 4. Ages

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

Now we are told in ver. 32 That Terah lived two hundred and five years. As the birth of his eldest occurred when he was seventy, it could not have been Abram; for he was but seventy five years of age as we are told in Gen. 12:4, when he left Charan, after Terah's death. He was not begotten therefore till sixty years after the firstborn. It would seem from the history that Haran was the eldest son, born when his father was seventy. Thereby we can understand how Nahor married Haran's daughter Milcah, his niece, and (if the Jewish tradition were reliable that Iscah and Sarah are the same) Abram did also. We also apprehend more clearly how the granddaughter of Nahor became the wife of Isaac, Abraham's son. Nor is it hard to explain why Sarah should be spoken of as his sister, seeing that Lot is spoken of as his brother, though strictly his brother's son.

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

Abram then, though the youngest son, took precedence in God's mind and word through the grace that was shown him. “The last was made first": a principle applied frequently in Scripture, and in the N. T. even more distinctly than in the Old, though there we see it every now and then from the earliest book to the latest. Nor need any wonder that Abram should be thus honored. We have seen ample grounds for it already, and may observe more. In him God began a new headship, not like fallen Adam of mankind universally as they are, but of the faithful. He is the one of whom it is written that “he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness” (Gen. 15). It is not insinuated that Abel, Enoch, Noah, or others did not believe God before; but in him the privilege of faith was first publicly established, being brought out in a striking manner, as exercised on a definite promise.

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

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:10-26: 3. The Crisis

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

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

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

But the enemy at this point is shown to have taken a new step of daring moment. He establishes himself as God in the worship of mankind; and so successful were his wiles that, when first told of the fact, we hear of its prevalence in the fathers of Israel. Blessed, said Noah, be Jehovah the God of Shem; but now we find the sons of Shem, and in the most favored stem, serving other gods. Had Ham been thus apostate, or Canaan, Shem's bondman, it were not so astounding. But no; it was not even haughty Japheth enlarging his border and in his earthly energy forgetting the only true God. It was Shem's descendant Terah, father of Abraham and father of Nahor; it was they that “served other gods.” This too was the fitting moment to show how grace had shone on Abraham, when he and his brother and his father were walking thus evilly, separating him to be a witness of the true God. So the sons of Israel knew that they themselves were called to be His people and witnesses since Moses led them out of Egypt. But it is precisely therein lay their danger of returning to what they were called out of. This Satan ever seeks as the enemy of God and man: how successfully when God is forgotten! And Joshua appreciated the danger.

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

Let us consider the unclean thing as scripture treats it. The deluge left mankind with the strongest impression of the living God's hand. But they soon ceased to glorify Him as God and were unthankful. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and, changing the truth of God into falsehood, they worshipped the creature more than the Creator Who is blessed forever. Amen. When idolatry began, or by whom is not said, but that Terah and his sons were involved in it. Now in 1 Cor. 10:20 the apostle, citing Deut. 32:17, pronounces on what it really is, though the form may differ. The worship of the heavens and all its host, of the earth and the sea and their denizens, the serpent especially, or again of heroes and departed ancestors, or of fabulous beings and their images, soon laid hold of men's imagination, not only to shut out God but to debase their votaries to the uttermost. And no wonder. For both O.T. and New, as we have seen, declare that what they sacrificed they sacrificed to demons, not to God. Demons were in effect behind the idols. If the idols were nothing in themselves, the demons were an awful reality of subtle and malignant evil to the ruin of such as paid the idols reverence.

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

How humbling that the lesson is lost on philosophizing linguists like Max Muller! In the second series of Lectures on the Science of Language (419425) he mildly deprecates the strong language of the Bible just cited, and misconstrues God's word in Acts 14:16 and especially in Acts 17:22-31. He admits a great amount of incontestable truth in “hard words such as idolatry and devil worship;” yet he “cannot help thinking that full justice has never been done to the ancient religions of the world (!) not even to those of the Greeks and Romans (! I) who in so many other respects are acknowledged by us as our teachers and models.” It is to be feared that a classical taste has not been acquired without the moral degradation which accompanies idolatry, and not least that of Greeks and Romans. Alas! it has ever been apt to dispose the youth of Christendom toward the not less real but more guilty idolatries of Popery and her Greek and Oriental rivals. Augustine was right in believing the inspired warning that demons exercise real mischief in connection with idol worship; he was deplorably wrong in thinking that it was better for professing Christians, as they would get drunk on feast days, thus to indulge in honor of martyrs rather than at the altars of Jove or Bacchus.

So Prof. M. contrasts the language in Acts with that in 1 Cor. 10:20, saying that the former “are truly Christian words” and that “this is the truly Christian spirit in which we ought to study the ancient religions of the world: not as independent of God, not as the work of an evil spirit, as mere idolatry and devil-worship, not even as mere human fancy, but as a preparation, as a necessary part in the education of the human race—as a race ‘seeking the Lord if haply they might feel after him.'“ Can infatuation or perversion be more complete? Fallen man has a conscience, which refers even in a pagan to God, and vainly sought satisfaction by sacrifices to the gods of its own imagining. Of this the apostle at Athens availed himself, by an altar “to God unknown,” to proclaim the true and only God. It is too plain that this learned man failed to see the perfect consistency of seeking to win the heathen by preaching the grace and truth of Him Whom they knew not, while sternly reproving the profane levity of the Corinthians in partaking of the table and of the cup at a Gentile temple, on the plea that the idol was nothing. The same apostle declares that to do so is communion with demons, and that he did not wish them to be in communion with demons. Think of Paul wishing them or any other Christians “to study the ancient religions of the world!” and to study them “as a preparation, as a necessary part of the education of the human race!” Such is the wisdom of this age, totally insensible to what God revealed to us through the Spirit, as it is to what the cross of Christ means.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:10-26: 2. The Generations

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

No believer in God's plenary inspiration of the scriptures is under the least necessity of denying the incorporation of human documents, any more than of speeches or conversations of men who may have been godless or hostile. Thus in Acts 23 we have the letter from the chiliarch Claudius Lysias to Felix the governor; and in Acts 24 follows the speech of the rhetorician Tertullus accusing Paul. The speech was public, the letter private; but there this is, evidently just as it was written, as the Holy Spirit designed that we should know it. Yet there is no reason to imagine that the contents transpired through officers at Jerusalem or at Cæsarea friendly to Paul. He who inspired Luke to give the private document as unerringly as the open speech is in no way limited to any such means; and it is unwarrantable, when we read of such things in scripture, to cast about for some conceivable way of a natural kind to account for them. The great fact is that in a world of evil, falsehood, and vanity, scripture gives us the truth, and this in relation to God as well as to man. Thus only can we have the certainty of His mind revealed to us, though we still need the guidance of His Spirit in its apprehension and application.

If then God led Moses, in writing the book of Genesis, to make use of documents written (say) by Noah, Shem, the Patriarchs, Joseph and any others, there could be no valid objection on that score. But the unity of style and plan, which pervades each part in the face of all that petty criticism has ever alleged to the contrary, does stand adverse to any such theory. The essential condition is that God should inspire His chosen vehicle to convey to us the truth as He intended it for His own. It cannot be denied on solid ground that the alphabet even of Greece and Rome points to a Shemitic source, though it may have reached them according to the common tradition through a Phoenician or an Egyptian channel. In the days of Moses, at least in the wilderness, the Bible bears testimony that reading and writing prevailed among the Israelites, not merely in a sacred or learned class, but even largely among the rest (Deut. 9:9; 11:20; 24:1, 3). Thus from the earliest date of inspiration there was no difficulty of finding writers or readers.

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

The first occurs in chap. 2:4: “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah Elohim made earth and heavens.” Now it is plain that this opening verse of a new section of the book, characterized by a very special employment of the divine names1 in the rest of chap. 2 and in chap. 3, also sums up the salient facts of chap. 1. What went before gave creation completely. The new section does not speak of the creation of the heavens and earth. It is not a second, still less a different or discordant account, but the added revelation of man set in moral responsibility, tried by Jehovah Elohim; as he, and he only, is said here to become a living soul by His

immediate communication of the breath of life. Hence here we have the park or garden planted by Jehovah Elohim; here the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; here a simple test of obedience suited to innocence. Here too the relation of the man and the woman is given, and Adam's exercised authority over the lower creation, in contrast with his associate taken out of himself, his one meet companion, whose name he gave to mark the difference. Then in chap. 3 under the same name of the Creator in moral relationship, the Temptation and the Fall, the present result in death and ruin, but with the revelation of the Deliverer in the woman's Seed: a wholly new presentation of the truth on the moral side, and grace too rising above sin, not the platform of creation as in what preceded (ch. 1-2:3).

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

Next in chap. 5 we have and here only, and most appropriately, “the book “2 of Adam's generations. It says Elohim throughout, save in Lamech's prophecy where His government comes in, and therefore we hear of Jehovah. It is a summary of the ante-diluvian world. Who could have drawn it up but Himself?

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

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

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

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

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

It is freely granted then that these genealogies are wholly different from those of human pride, and their style in harmony with God's book of beginnings, which adumbrate His ways even to the end of the age and of that to come. The misconception is that God deigns to write history any more than to teach science. But He has written the scriptures to make known Himself and His ways, as well as to let man learn himself as can be nowhere else save in His Son, the center, substance, and display of all truth. To Him all scripture testifies from Genesis to Revelation. Even these genealogies, which seem strange to literary men and furnish materials for all sorts of speculation to such as lack the key of Christ for all the word, in the midst of much variety of form, testify to one and the same writer, even Moses, and bear the stamp of future purpose as on God's part. Surely it is most important, that we should not fail to recognize His wise and holy mind, but grow in grace and faith and the knowledge of Him Who is our all, but the Judge of all that believe not to their utter and everlasting condemnation. “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me” (John 5:46).

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:10-26: 1. The Genealogy

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

But there are notable differences to be noticed also. The sorrowful chime is heard throughout the earlier one, “and he died.” Not once does this sound in the later one, though as a fact all spoken of in chap. xi. did die; whereas there was in chap. v. the conspicuous exception of Enoch, “who walked with God and was not, for God took him.” Human life was so prolonged in those days, that it was all the more affecting to

say of each with that exception, “and he died.” In the latter half of chap. xi. we read of the line of blessing, and we are told of each succession down to Abram, the time when the promise was made, and the years were lived; but nothing is said of death. Let who will count either accidental, the believer can hardly avoid seeing a distinct purpose in each, which may well awaken serious but happy reflections.

Again, neither is drawn in the style of formal, legal, or historical documents. Each is suited to its own place where it is placed by inspiration, and either would be strange in any book but God's. Yet are they invested with such precise information over the earliest ages, before the Deluge and after it, without a gap, that no genealogical line for that period outside of scripture can be compared with it. But over and above reliable information as to every link in the chain, a special design on God's part governs in each case. This even now earthly learning fails to see, and it has no interest for those intent on literary questions. Yet how great a thing for those whose ears are opened to the voice and teaching of God! But a divine purpose is as far as possible from casual documents or floating traditions from ancient sources, nobody knows whence, pieced together at a later date. The fact of a deep and distinct moral design pervading these lists respectively refutes the notion of any such trivial accident.

“These are the generations of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood; and Shem lived after he had begotten Arphaxad five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. And Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Shelah; and Arphaxad lived after he had begotten Shelah four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. And Shelah lived thirty years, and begot Eber; and Shelah lived after he had begotten Eber four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. And Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg; and Eber lived after he had begotten Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters. And Peleg lived thirty years and begot Reu; and Peleg lived after he had begotten Reu two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters. And Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug; and Reu lived after he had begotten Serug two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters. And Serug lived thirty years and begot Nahor; and Serug lived after he had begotten Nahor two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. And Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah; and Nahor lived after he had begotten Terah a hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters. And Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran” (vers. 10-26).

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

Certainly the divine wisdom of the record is not at all questioned; but it is not man's fashion. Divine design is stamped on this case, as in the other lists. There is neither repetition nor oversight, still less the clashing of differing documents or writers. Not the slightest evidence of solid worth has ever been alleged to shake the fact that Moses wrote every one of them; but the truth still more precious to the believer, and most solemn for every other, is that God is the author of all. And we can perceive that the design in chap. x. was not to pursue Arphaxad's line there beyond his grandson, Eber's son Peleg, to state the deeply interesting fact of his name's reference to the division of the earth his days. Thence it branches off to his brother Joktan, and his sons who settled in the south of Arabia west and east.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:8-9

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

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

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

It is sorrowful to find the lack of simple faith even in minds not at all unfriendly to revelation. But men suffer, partly through undue heed to tradition, partly through indulging in dreams of their own. Thus Jacob Bryant, in his New System, or Analysis of Ancient Mythology (vol. iv. 34-45, 3rd edition, 1807), strives to give a very different turn to the confusion of tongues. As his learned work may weigh with some, it seems well to notice briefly what he alleges for denying the general bearing of the event, which he would limit to the Cushite, and pare down in itself to a labial failure, so that the people affected could not articulate and thus failed to understand each other.

“This I take to be the true purport of the history: from whence we may infer that the confusion of language was, a partial event; and that the whole of mankind is by no means to be included in the dispersion from Babel. It related chiefly to the sons of Cush, whose intention was to have founded a great, if not an universal, empire; but by this judgment their purpose was defeated” (37). Hence he distinguishes the scattering here as partial, from the earth divided to the nations the days of Peleg as a general event in which all were concerned. “We must therefore, instead of the language of all the earth, substitute the language of the whole country “; also “a failure and incapacity in labial utterance. By this their speech was confounded, but not altered; for as soon as they separated, they recovered their true tenor of pronunciation; and the language of the earth continued for some ages nearly the same.” For evidence Mr. Bryant sends us to M. A. Court de Gebelin's Monde Primitif Analyze et compare avec le Monde Moderne, in nine vols. 4to (17741784): an ambitious effort of no solid value, any more than this speculation of our own countryman before us.

Now not a word in scripture belittles the fact or God's dealing as is here done. In chap. x. 8-10 we have the pride of power which a son of Cush betrayed early; but a wholly different phase is here, not individual usurpation, nor a kingdom or empire, but a sort of universal republic, as we have already remarked. In that chapter which is not chronological but descriptive we have simply the families of Noah's sons after their families and tongues, in their lands and nations. Here in chap. xi. we have the moral cause, why Jehovah scattered them contrary to their perverse resolve to hold together in the land of Shinar. We have not a word about Nimrod or any other individual here. The force lies in its universality. Attention is expressly called to the whole earth being of one lip and of words alike also. Not a hint is dropped of one land in particular. There would be nothing to surprise in one country pervaded by one tongue; but we are reminded of the state that thus characterized all the earth, in order the better to appreciate the judgment which compelled men suddenly to speak diversely, and so not to understand one another's speech.

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

But it was no mere temporary fit of labial failure as Bryant imagined, again without a scrap of divine evidence. It was Jehovah confounding their language, so that men should be no longer one, but be divided into nations henceforth, though mercy took care that the tongues should not dislocate their families. It was Jehovah's doing, not nature nor circumstances, nor development, but a manifestly judicial and a lasting dealing of divine power. And the account is exactly suited to the inspired and only reliable Book of Origins; where man's history fails, and tradition is as puerile and misleading as pretentious philosophy, spinning cobwebs from within.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:5-7: 2.

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

“There is reason to believe that the confusion which is recorded as having occurred at Babel1 afterward called Babylon,2 and which caused the dispersion of mankind into various countries, was in reality a dispute among them as to their worship of some god or gods. This at least is certain, that the scheme mentioned in Gen. 11 was something displeasing to God, and therefore could not have been merely the building of a tower. And it is plain also from the Bible history, that some ages after the flood mankind had very generally fallen into gross idolatry, though we are not told expressly when and how it was introduced. As for the Tower of Babel, it is said indeed in our version that a number of persons joined together to build ‘a tower whose top should reach to heaven’ (our translators meant an exceeding high tower), in order that they might ‘not be scattered over the face of the whole earth'; and that God sent on them a confusion of language, which ‘caused them to cease building the tower, and scattered them.' But it is to be observed that the word ‘reach ' is supplied by our translators, there being nothing answering to it in the original, which merely says, ‘whose top to the heavens.' And the meaning doubtless is, that the top of the tower should be dedicated to the heavens—that is, that a temple should be built on it to Bel, Belus, Zeus, or Jupiter; under which title the ancient Pagans worshipped the heavens. For we find the historian Herodotus (I. cxxxi.) who many ages later visited Babylon, expressly declaring that there was there in his time a very high tower, on the top of which was a temple to Belus; who, he says, was the same with the Zeus of the Greeks. The ancient Pagans, it is well known, were accustomed to erect altars to the Heavens, or to the Sun, on 'high places' (Num. 33:52), on the loftiest mountains. And as the land of Shinar is a very fertile plain of vast extent and quite level, it seems to have been designed to make a sort of artificial mountain on it—that is, a very high tower—and to build a temple on the top of this, to their god Belus, and so establish a great empire of people worshipping at this temple. The 'confusion' which God sent among them, and which caused the tower to be less lofty than originally designed, and dispersed many of the people into other lands, was most likely not a confusion of languages, but a dissension about religious worship. The word in the original literally signifies lip. And it is more likely that it was used to signify worship than language. A dissension as to that which was the very object of the building would much more effectually defeat the scheme than a confusion of languages. For laborers engaged in any work, and speaking different languages, would in a few days learn by the help of signs to understand one another sufficiently to enable them to go on with their work. But if they disagreed as to the very object proposed, this would effectually break up the community. As for the different languages now spoken in the world, there is no need of explaining that by any miraculous interference. For tribes who have not the use of letters, and have but little mutual intercourse, vary so much from each other in the language after even a few generations, as not to be able at all to understand each other” (165, 466).

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

But there was far more here. They sought only their own glory. They willfully hid from themselves His judgment of the ante-diluvian world, and His merciful preservation of a few, their own progenitors still living. They set their heart unitedly on a city, and a lofty tower which built on the

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

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

It was however sad and evil enough, that, while the witnesses of a divine and universal judgment still lived to glorify God for his saving themselves through the deluge, the progeny could forsake the fountain of living water, and set themselves up, cisterns, broken cisterns, that could hold no water. The language of Jehovah confirms all this as the truth; not a word here points to strange gods or idols. “Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them—all which they purpose doing.” It was irreligious combination, not false worship. “Once hath God spoken, twice have I heard this, that strength [belongeth] unto God.” They had heeded not but forgotten Him. Their own union would be their strength, and a name of renown on earth. At the end punitive judgment must fall on the full results. But meanwhile Jehovah would bring their pride to naught, and would disperse them by a means as simple as effectual. He would there confound their language, that they should not understand one another's speech; and they would be compelled to scatter as they feared. But what mercy in their dispersion! Not a hair of their heads was lost.

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

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:5-7: 1.

THESE verses are a striking example of the childlike simplicity which, as it characterized the ways of God with man in these early days, is reflected in the divine record, and nowhere more so than in the book of Genesis. There it was in the account of creation in itself (1), and in its varied relations (2). Nor was it only with Adam and Eve, innocent or fallen (3), but with wicked Cain (4) and with righteous Noah (6-9). A similar feature prevails throughout the book, as the expression on the one hand of tender interest and on the other hand of His heart grieved by perverseness and rebellion in those that were the object of His great and countless favors. We see it even with such as Pharaoh (chap. 12) and Abimelech (21), not only with Abraham (12-22), Isaac (26) and Jacob (28), but with Sarah (18:15) and Laban too (31), Hagar also (16; 7-13), and Rebekah (25:23). The same simplicity characterizes the ways as the words of God, and produced like effects on the faithful.

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

He Who is not the Creator only but the moral governor, Jehovah, came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of Man builded. No designation suited the occasion but this. For He it is Who concerned Himself with all who stood in moral relation with Him, as He had breathed into the nostrils of their first father the breath of life. In the style of the account He would also impress His people with His calm and full judicial survey of men's ways, though all was known to Him from the beginning (ver. 5). God was in none of their thoughts. They never thought of a temple to His honor being a center for themselves. They built no altar to Jehovah, as Noah did on emerging from the ark. They called not on His name, neither sought they His will. On the contrary, “let us make us a name” was their purpose; “let us build us a city and a tower, whose top [is] unto heaven,” their plan, “lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.”

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

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

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

What a contrast with God's work in the church! Therein grace gathered from every nation under heaven. There in honor of Him, the righteous Servant of Jehovah (Who suffered for our sins to the uttermost, died, rose, and ascended). His name was the God-given center; and in virtue of one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all given to drink of one Spirit. Thus was He Whom all in heaven adore made the object of worship and service for all that believe on earth: a worthy and divine center; else it would have been an idolatrous rival and a derogation from the true God. But on the contrary it is His revealed word that we honor Christ as we honor the Father, Who is only known and possessed by such as thus confess the Son. And in witness of the gracious power of God in Christ, while the government of man was left as it had been, and the effect of divine judgment in divers tongues still subsists, His love wrought in unlettered Jews, become Christians, to proclaim the wonderful works of God in all the tongues of Gentiles.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:2-4

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

So too did the Son of God, both in the days of His flesh and after He rose from the dead, attest Moses, not only as the channel but as the writer of the Law or Five Books (John 5, Luke 20 and xxiv.). But if in presence of supernatural power sons of Israel “were not afraid to speak against” him living, we need not wonder that, in fallen yet haughty and unbelieving Christendom, professing Christians take their place with infidel Jews, in denying that he wrote aught but the merest shreds. These shreds some of these men do rather pretend (for there is no ground, but their self-sufficiency) to identify among the legends of an Elohist, and a Jehovist, with as many more imaginary hands in the patch-work as the pseudo-criticism may invent to hide its empty and naked impotence. Not that any prophet failed to give the word of God; but Moses, besides the divine authority which attached to what he wrote as well as spoke from Jehovah, had a divine intimacy peculiar to himself, the fruit of which is in no part of the Law more conspicuous or of richer consequence than in the book of Genesis.

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

Things were no longer as before God's judgment in the deluge, when men were left, outside paradise, to their own ways without covenant or government. The law which tested innocent Adam in the garden did not apply to himself when an outcast or to his sons who were never there. As fallen men, however, they had conscience, that invaluable monitor universally possessed, which does not fail inwardly to pronounce on right and wrong, or, as scripture says, “to know good and evil.” Nor were they without revelation to and through their first father, brief indeed but of unspeakable moment to fallen man. Other divine intimations also followed, even to Cain, as well as Enoch, Lamech, and Noah: each of deep importance; all together not beyond what the fear of God in every one was bound to weigh, and fairly remember, and might fully profit by.

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

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

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

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

Nothing was farther from their thoughts or from common sense than to rear a pile to save them from another deluge, as some have fancied for them. God had solemnly assured Noah that this was never to be again. If they had nevertheless dreaded it, the highest of lands might have been chosen with that foolish design; certainly not the low-lying plain they settled on. It was a deep-laid human scheme, ignoring God altogether, and in rebellious self-will; it was for “ourselves” throughout. It was not merely a city to live in (which had been from early days), but to “build ourselves a city and a tower,” and with high-flown pretensions. But worse still, “let us make ourselves a name.” What! poor sinners, saved by divine mercy, from the flood that swept all else away! Noah, they well knew, built an altar and offered Burnt offerings. The earth as a whole now changes all that. They sought to themselves a conspicuous center for every eye; they would make themselves a name, though this belongs only to God, or to a head with an authority delegated of Him. What is man to be accounted, whose breath is in his nostrils?

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 11:1

The last chapter gave us with minute detail the new fact on the earth of the sons of Noah after their generations, in their nations, after their tongues, and in their lands. Here were traits and arrangements, unknown to the world before the deluge, and in no degree seen for some time after. Gen. 10 casts invaluable light, found nowhere else, on the rise of those families distributed on the earth, every one after his tongue. It is only in chap. 11 That we find the originating cause and occasion. The previous chapter comes in, not flowing according to historic time, but as a descriptive parenthesis between chaps. 9 and 11. It was of very great importance to give us inspired certainty where men had no adequate record, and no reliable tradition; where pride hastened to disguise or forget a divine judgment which effectually rebuked it. East or west, men set up claims to be indigenous from the first, sprung from their own soil; and if they believed that man was an outcast from Paradise, though in forms disguised by pride, setting up to speak the original language of our primeval parents.

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

There had been ample space before the deluge for the development of many languages. Soon after the murder of Abel had furious Cain gone forth, an unrepentant despairing man, who failed to profit by Jehovah's patience, and dwelt in the land of Nod, away from the scene which even he could not face at ease or unabashed. There is no real ground to accept either von Bohlen's identification with India, or Knobel's with China. Enough for us to know that the land of his “Wandering,” as it means, was toward or in front of the east of Eden. Still less can we identify the city Cain built and called “Enoch” after the name of his son. But the Holy Spirit plainly intimates the rise in his line (not of a rudiment of a different tongue nor of a distinct nationality which we in our ignorance might have thought only natural, but) of science and art, and even the fine arts. The holy wisdom of God took care to apprise His people of the true origin of civic life as well as of nomad, the latter not previous but posterior, of music and its practice in stringed and wind instruments, of the working in copper and iron, of polygamy, and self-occupied verse, the first recorded song of man. It is a picture of man's skill and energy, civilization, letters, and luxury. The Pagans long after attributed these to their spurious gods but real demons. Here we have them shown to be the inventions of men far from God, vainly striving to make the earth of their exile a paradise of their own.

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

Such was the judgment of A. von Humboldt in treating of the prolific varieties of aboriginal American speech in his contribution to the “Asia Polyglotta,” p. 6 (Paris, 1823). Such too was the conviction of Julius Klaproth in that erudite survey itself of the Asiatic tongues. It is the more striking because the latter's incredulity is daring and undisguised. Nor was any wish more remote from his heart than testifying in result to the

truth of inspired history. Yet he declared that, in his comparative tables &c., “the universal affinity of languages is placed in so strong a light that it must be considered by all as completely demonstrated. This does not appear explicable on any other hypothesis than that of admitting fragments of a primary language yet to exist through all the languages of the old and new worlds” (Vorr. § ix.).

But the believer stands on an impregnable and unchanging vantage ground. He receives the fact on the word of God, and therefore in simple faith common to all who are led of the Holy Spirit, apart from all linguistic lore, apart from all historic investigation where so much is difficult and obscure, apart from philosophical discussion where vanity revels in opposing old hypotheses and inventing new ones of the day and the man. He knows the only true God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, His sent One; living of that life eternal he delights to honor that word which is open to Jew or Greek, bond or free. But he is not displeased to note how the adversaries of revelation are compelled to bow to the force of proofs which divine mercy leaves to convince inquirers, even though pursuing their own paths without a care for His truth or glory, perhaps not afraid to gainsay Him now and then, as they are estranged from the life of God by reason of the hardness of their hearts.

Is it objected that these were investigators early in the century? Though one distrusts the childish assumption that recent men have better knowledge or judgment, for such experts are rare, let them learn that in this field no living man has greater claim to be heard than Max Muller; that he is morbidly afraid of mixing up theological arguments with his “Science of Language;” and that his real object was not at all to assert revealed truth, but to show how rash it was to speak of different independent beginnings in the history of human speech, before a single argument had been brought forward to establish the necessity of such an admission. On the contrary he endeavored to show how even the most distant members of the Turanian family (the one spoken in the north, the other in the south of Asia) have preserved in their grammatical organization traces of a former unity. So later he says, in the enthusiasm of his theme, though in terms which a believer could not endorse, “the Science of Language thus leads us up to that summit from whence we see into the very dawn of man's life on earth; and where the words which we have heard so often since the days of our childhood ‘and the whole earth was of one language and of one speech’—assume a meaning more natural, more intelligible, more convincing than they had before.” This is so doubtless to himself and others like him on natural ground; but to him who sets to his seal that God is true, no evidences or reasonings of man can compare with the certainty, simplicity, or sweetness of God's testimony. If the child accepts it without question, the mature Christian finds in it truth which lifts him far above the summits of philology, and jarring or jealous disputes of philosophers, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth: possibility, probability, necessity are their respective idols, one as vain and unreliable as another.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:32

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

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

It is not only that mankind sprang from a single pair created innocent as Adam and Eve were. A fresh start for the race began after the deluge which judged the guilty mass. From Noah and his three sons preserved from destruction, conditions began which subsist to-day and will for their descendants till, with the clouds of heaven, the Son of man come to Whom shall be given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. So recent comparatively is the history of man, and his tripartite separation of land and tongue, family and nation. For instead of beginning with a single line, we have three heads with their wives, three great families to renew the history of man on earth with the experience derived from the antediluvian earth.

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

It would seem in fact that it was after not only the deluge but the dispersion of the various families, that the more distant and isolated tribes degenerated into a savage condition. To this deserts and forests, marshes and mountains, would expose men, when they found themselves severed from others by distinct tongues, and the national barriers drew in their train opposing interests, and the difficulties of subsistence increasing with population. Hunting soon led to encroachment on human liberty, as our chapter has shown. There was corruption and violence before the flood, a great reason for it though by no means the only one; but there is no evidence of idolatry till after. We know it had set in even through Abraham's progenitors before his call. But idolatry, once introduced, spread like fire, and added enormously to the debasement of its victims.

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

Much more detail is assigned to Ham, who occupies verses 6 to 20. And with that holy boldness and candor which characterizes the truth, this chapter hides not but sets before us plainly the early rise of kingly power in that race. The beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar; Nimrod was of Cush, Ham's eldest son. He and he alone is here described in terms so strong, even if we conceive that Asshur went out from that land, though of Shem's stock, and emulated Nimrod's ambitious example by building Nineveh and three cities more in Assyria. The sons of Cush include much beyond Ethiopia, but are distinct from Mizraim and Phut as well as Canaan, minutely enumerated, though none so much as that race accursed of God which Israel was responsible to blot out.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:31

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

In vain has the skeptical Gibbon (Decline and Fall, chaps. 46. and 50.) strained his ingenuity to get rid of their standing independence, felt alike by strangers and by natives. There it is to this day, as it has been through all history. Of whom else can it be pretended similarly? The overruling power of God, as always, has guarded His word. Ishmael, though in no way the line of covenant any more than Esau, has lived before Him. Other peoples, and conspicuously in their neighborhood, have dwindled and disappeared, I do not say they are extinguished. Ishmael He made fruitful and a great nation. In this world as it is, no sane person denies checks or exceptions during the course of ages, when God was ignored or misrepresented. But oven the infidel historian had to acknowledge that these exceptions were “temporary or local.” “The body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies: the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia. The present sovereign of the Turks may exercise a shadow of jurisdiction, but his pride is reduced to solicit the friendship of a people, whom it is dangerous to provoke and fruitless to attack.”

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

The second of Ishmael's sons was Kedar (from whom Mohammed proclaimed his descent through the tribe of Koreish), the Cedrei of Pliny, Cadraitae or Kadranitae from time immemorial living in the Hedjaz; as the B'nei Kenaz dwelt and still dwell in the interior N.E. who are called in modern times the Aenezes, descendants of Esau, the largest (as Burckhardt says) of all the Bedouin tribes of Arabia, at constant feud with the Joktanites south of them, as their progeny are to this day. Some of the other sons of Ishmael may be more or less obscure; but this cannot be said of Dumah (who had also the characteristic title of B'nei Kalb, as the Kedarites were correspondingly styled B'nei Karb), and Tema, written large and deep in the northern part of the Negd, as the interior highlands of Arabia are called among themselves.

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

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

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

The notion of such as Ronan (Hist. Generale des Langues Semit.), that the Shemitic races were to be in purpose or in fact monotheistic is a delusion. As the Adamic condition of innocence yielded to sin, so did the post-diluvian government of the world break down, and God's judgment of the earth with which it was preceded was soon darkened and perverted to serving other gods. Ham may lead the way, as beyond doubt the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel; but Asshur soon followed in the same path, not of ambition only but of idolatry; and the very family of him that was chosen to be the father of the faithful were thus corrupted when the call of God called him out to bless him and make him a blessing to all families of the earth (Josh. 24:2). Thus no flesh can glory in itself or its ways. Let him that glorieth glory in Jehovah.

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

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

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

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

When the Anointed came, He tested this “enthusiastic devotion to the worship of Jehovah,” and proved as Isaiah had testified long before, that in vain the people worshipped Him, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men. For had they learned of the Father they would have come to Christ, but they knew neither the Son nor the Father Who sent Him. “Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son hath not the Father either; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also” (1 John 2:22, 23).

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:30

THE verse we are now to consider demands close investigation, as it is not without importance and difficulty also. “And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest to Sephar, a mountain of the east” (ver. 30). It is beyond question a general description of the limits within which dwelt the many sons of Joktan. We have already identified in detail their local habitation throughout Arabia, with the slight exception of those who crossed to the western shore of the narrow strait that severs their father's land from Africa. There is therefore the best reason to reject the idea that they left their original seats for dwellings between “Mount Masius in the south part of Mesopotamia and an imaginary” mount adjoining Siphare, a city in Asia, as Dr. E. Wells conjectured in his Help to the Holy Scriptures i. 77 (Oxford, 1728). In fact Mount Masius forms the northern boundary of Mesopotamia; but this is a slight misapprehension to which the of the LXX. may have led, in comparison with the chief error, as the Persian Siphare (city or mount) is still more untenable. And so must one think of Dr. C. Wordsworth's idea of Mesha as an island of the Tigris and of a Sephar on the Persian Gulf. Such limits do not include the dwellings of Joktan's sons.

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

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

It becomes therefore a nice point to decide which is here intended. For there are, as C. Niebuhr and E. S. Poole say, no less than four places bearing the same name, besides several others bearing names that are merely variations from the same root. Now Niebuhr (Descr. iii. 206, 207) speaks both of the ruins of DhafAr near Yemen, and of Sumara or Nak'l SumAra as the greatest and the highest mountain he had ascended in Yemen, and very probably the same that the Greek geographers called Climax (of C. Ptol, vi. 7). This is near the Dhagr which Bochart identifies with the of Ptolemy, capital of the (vi. 6, § 25), and with the Sephar in our text. Dhafar seems the same city a little disguised, which the author of the Periplils and Diodorus Sic. called Aphar, as others call it Tafar?

If then Sephar be traced to the Dhafar on the border of Yemen and Hadramaut in the S.W. of Arabia, this goes far to determine the site of Mesha as in the N. E. of the peninsula. This satisfies best the compendious summary of the Joktanite settlements, answering to the similar allusion to the Canaanite border, N. and S. in ver. 19, which follows the details of their several families. Now there is a mountain chain in the Nedjd, which was the boundary of the sons of Joktan in that very region, on the north of which wandered their adversaries, the sure indication of a distinct race.1 The Beni Shaman or Samman, the sons of Mishma or Masma, son of Ishmael, being no other than the MaEcrattiavEig of Ptol. (vi. 7, § 21), jealously guarded mount Zames or Zametas (as the Alexandrian Geographer calls the mountain) against intrusion from the south, where lay the or Joktanite races. Equally hostile were the Aenezes, or sons of Kenaz. Hence Chesney's suggestion of Mekkah for Mesha is untenable; for the tribe of Harb, the Cerbae, Darrae, &c., descendants of Kedar and enemies of the Joktanites, was paramount in the Hedjaz. The Kenezites, or sons of Kenaz, were of Edomite extraction and dwelt north of the Salapeni, or sons of Sheleph, a Joktanite.

It may be added that it was to Yemen the Greek and Latin geographers applied the epithet , or Felix (Happy), which was at a later time extended more widely, as when one of our own poets speaks of “Araby the Blest.” There was no little exaggeration in allowing the justice of such a claim, even allowing for the mystery in which the Arabian traders indulged with their western and even eastern customers, in attributing to their own country some precious imports from lands more distant still. For mendacity has long infected the Arab people like others of the east. Yet it is not improbable, as Oriental scholars suggest, that the designation may have been an accidental misnomer. Thus Felix was a mistranslation of El-Yemen, or the right hand, the fortunate side in usage of the Greeks, whom the Roman poets mostly followed, Notoriously, as the face was directed to the east, so the peninsula lay as compared with Syria, EshSham, the left hand. Hence was Arabia said to be “fortunate” or “blessed” through a word of good omen, which was afterward by a mistake construed of extraordinary wealth and fertility.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:29

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

The local habitation of “Ophir” has been contested most notably; but no sufficient ground appears to look for it outside the peninsula. Josephus (Ant. viii. 6-4) referred it to India, as did Vitringa (Geog. Sac. 114), and Reland in his dissertation on the question, and of late Lassen, Ritter, Bertheau; again, Sir W. Raleigh to the Molucca, Islands; and Pererius, Sir J. E. Tennent, Thenius, Ewald and Gen. Chesney (Euphrates ii. 126) to Malacca and the adjoining tracts. On the other hand, Huet, Bruce, Robertson the historian, Heeren, and Quatremore placed Ophir in Africa; and Plessis and A. Montanus contended for Peru, arguing from the word “Parvaim I” But Michaelis (Spicil. ii. 184), Karsten Niebuhr (Decor. de l'Arabie), Gosselin (Lech. sur la Geog. des Anciens, ii. 99), Vincent (Comm. and Nay. ii. 265-270), Crawford (Desc. Diet.), Forster (Geog. of Arabia i. 161-175), Thirst, Kalisch, Knobel (Volk. 190), and Winer (Realw.), assign it to Arabia. The learned I3ochart (Phaleg ii. 27) was inclined to two Ophirs, one in Arabia, the other in Ceylon; as D'Anville admitted two, one in Arabia, the other in Africa. Gesenius, both in his Thes. and elsewhere, thought that the balance of evidence between Arabia and India was so even that he declined giving a decisive judgment.

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

One of the chief arguments against Arabia by those who looked elsewhere is the absence of gold as a known product of the country for many years. But Dean Vincent had anticipated the objection by his remark that silver is not now found at Carthagena in Spain, where the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and Romans, obtained it in great abundance. Niebuhr (iii. 256) says of this very province Oman, “there is no want there of lead and copper mines"; and Mr. Wellsted (Travels in Arabia, i. 315) states that the notion is untrue that Arabia is wholly destitute of the precious metals. “In this province we meet with silver, associated as usual with lead. Copper is also found: at a small hamlet, on the road from Seined to Neswah, there is a mine which the Arabs at present work; but the others are wholly neglected. Even in the vicinity of Maskat the hills are very metalliferous.” In ancient times the testimony is distinct that Arabia was a gold-producing land. Thus Agatharchides the geographer who lived in the second century before Christ testifies to it (Hudson's Geog. Min. i. 60); a little later wrote Artemidorus, whose account Strabo reproduces (xiv. 18); Diodorus Sic. is no less plain in his Eibliotheca (ii. 50, iii. 44); and Pliny the elder as we have seen; to whom from Eusebius' Praep. Evang. ix. 30 we may add the testimony of Eupolemus before the Christian era: only that he affirms Ophir to be an island with gold mines in the Erythrean sea, i.e., the sea that compassed Arabia, west, south, and east. At the least Ophir was the emporium whence not gold only but algum trees, red sandalwood or whatever else is meant, and precious stones, were brought.

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

The family of “Havilah” have left their mark in the country in a distinct manner, though the name is as usual somewhat disguised by the difference of pronunciation which prevailed when there was little of known pervading literature to fix it. Only we have to take into account that there was a Cushite Havilah which extended itself in its branches over the peninsula from the N.E. to the S.W. These we have to discriminate from the Joktanite tribe which found their place, it would seem, chiefly among their kindred. But as the names of their respective patriarchs were identical, so the same changes of form prevailed over the descendants of each, and the places which derived their designation from them. Thus Khaulan or Haultim evidently sprang from Havilah, harder or softer, as also Hevila and Flail, and Strabo's Chaalla, as we may see in Niebuhr. So Dr. Wells long ago from Bochart noticed the Chaulothaei of Eratosthenes, the Chaulosii of Festus Avienus, the Chablasii of Dionysius Periegetes, and the Chavilei of Pliny. Mr. Forster puts the case yet more strongly that, when in Ptolemy we read Huaela or Huaila, and in Niebuhr Huala, or more correctly Hauiiah, we have before us literally the Havilah of the Hebrew Scripture, Aval or Alial being a dialectic softening which prevails on the Persian Gulf. In Yemen, and north of it, it can hardly be doubted that the Joktanite section of Havilah prevailed.

Nor is there any serious question as to the descendants of “Jobab” in the clan of Jobaritae. They are mentioned by C, Ptolemy as dwelling in the south and near the Sachalitae, who gave their name to the well known hay. Besides, we hear of the Beni Jobub or Jubbar of Niebuhr, as the existing name of a tribe S.E. of Beishe or Baisath Joktan, halfway between lizal (Sand) and Sabata (the modern Zehid). Thus there seems

no sufficient reason to doubt the identification. The variations of form at most found in this case in no way hinder the recognition of the ancient designation; while the measure of change is no more than time brings about in the immovable east, even in a land so shut out from intercourse with mankind in general. It is truly remarkable that, for every member of Joktan's numerous sons, living representatives should be traceable, attesting in a simple but striking way the inestimable value of God's word, long before human records, even then few and failing, till long after.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:28

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

Obal (“bare, or script of leaves”) is represented as “Ebal” (in the LXX , in 1 Chron. 1:22). Arabic pronunciation still more closely approximates the name to the Abalites of Pliny, who are evidently the same as G. Ptolemy's Avalites with a bay and emporium of the same name. Indeed Bochart pronounces them to be no other than the name of the eighth son of Joktan. It is true that the settlement which thus recalls the founder was on the African side of the Red sea, not in Arabia; but this is no insuperable difficulty. We may not be able to trace such as abode with the great mass in Arabia; while it is of interest to identify such as crossed the strait to Africa. Nothing binds us to confine all the progeny of Joktan, save as a general rule, to Arabia. And the coast which affords the apparent traces of Obal was severed only by the narrow strait, called by the Greeks , as was the promontory adjacent, and by the Arabs Bab-el-Mandeb. It is a strait made still easier, if not for commerce or passengers, for immigrants into Africa by intervening islands, Cytis, &c. In fact, though on the western side of the Strait, they were but a few miles distant from the coast of Yemen where their kindred abounded pre-eminently. The Gebanites with whom Knobel would identify them were no doubt in a general way their kinsmen; but where is any real evidence to show that they were the offspring of Obal? What has been above given suffices to prove that their mark was left south of Berenice Epidires, a town built by the Ptolemies at a much later day, north of the indentation which was called Avalites Sinus, on the south of which bay dwelt the Avalitae.

Abimael (“father of Mael,” taken as an appellative, “fatness”) is to be found, it would seem, on the east of Yembo (Jambia) and even of the town Ausura (C. Ptolemy) or El-Szafra of Burckhardt. Their town is called both Malai and Kheyf, and appears in Theophrastus (Hist. Plant. ix. 4), along with three others celebrated of old for its spices, under the form MaL. The Alexandrian geographer speaks of Malichae in the neighborhood of Yathreb or Iathrippah, in after history famous as ElMedineh, “the city” in the eyes of Mussulmans, about ten days' journey north of Mecca. The people of Mali or Malai seem no other than the Malichae. To this day the district has a high reputation for its balsam; the sale of which is even now an active trade, and highly remunerative. But of old it was very much more so, when Egypt and the West, Rome especially, used aromatics largely and luxuriously; whereas at present Persia appears to be the chief consumer. But Bochart's identification of Abimael with this people on the edge of the great Arabian desert appears to be well founded.

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

But we may also distinguish Seba's posterity, Cush's eldest son, the Sebaim of eastern Arabia, to which they seem to have migrated from Chuzestan on the eastern side of the Persian gulf. They were dark-colored, and very tall (Isa. 45:14), the Dowser or Danasir Arabs of modern times. C. Ptolemy draws the line between these, the oldest, or amongst the oldest, settlers, and the Sabeans in the province of Sabie (who appear to be descended of Sheba, Raamah's son), and calls them Sabai as distinct from those in the east coast of Omdn, whom he names Sabi (or Asobi, the common Arabic prefix). Of the Jokshanite Sheba the less need be said, as they had their seat far north and were more obviously distinct.

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

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:27

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

The fifth son appears to have settled farther east in that part of the peninsula which has long been designated Oman, and gives its name to the lower waters of the Persian gulf, opening into the Indian ocean. The south-eastern headland of that deep bay is called Ras-el-Had, which must be carefully distinguished from Ras-Fartask or Fartaques, “the wild boar's snout,” answering to its Greek designation of (Ptol vi. 7, §11). It is the more necessary to be on one's guard, as of old we learn from the Alexandrian geographer that the position of the latter was

misconceived by his predecessor, Marinus; and in this Marcianus (Hudson's Geog. Gr. Min. i. 24) agrees with the correction. In modern times D'Anville, followed by many (as e.g. Long's Classical Atlas) confounded Syagros with Ras-el-Had. Dean Vincent in his earlier writings had been thus misled; but he corrected himself in his elaborate work on the so called Periplus of Arrian (ii. 331-351). The classical title of the headland we are occupied with is really KopoJayov ibcpov, as the learned Bochart long ago conjectured from the name of the forefather therein disguised, i.e. from Hadoramum. So convinced is Mr. Forster of its soundness that he does not hesitate to say, the fact, unnoticed by Bochart, “is simply this, that the promontory now actually bears the name of Hadoram, under an ordinary abbreviation of the Arabic, in its modern appellation of Ras-el-HAD” (i. 140, 141).

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

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

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

Of Diklah, the eighth name, there is little to say. From signifying “palm-trees” some have looked to the city of in the northwest of Arabia Felix; but Gesenius after Bochart for a similar reason inclines to find his descendants in the widely spread people classically called Minaei. But Mr. Forster strenuously contends that they were of the stock of Jerah, and that the great region of Kerje or Karje is none other than an anagrammatic inversion (so common in Arab names) of the patriarch Jerah himself. Into this discussion we do not enter; but any one can discern in the Dulkelaitae, of whom Golius speaks in his Lexicon, a name that answers to the son of Joktan we are now tracing, from whom descended a people of Yemen between Sant and Mareb. Pococke also refers to them as Dhu l'Chalaah. Yet Mr. Poole is unaware of any trace of Diklah in Arabic works, except the mention of a place called Dakalah in El-Yemameb, mentioned by Kamoos, where grew many palm-trees. Enough then appears to this day, even as to the least conspicuous. Of these early tribes a Arabia, not only to testify to the Mosaic account, but to demonstrate the gracious interest of God in the otherwise obscure and undistinguished races of mankind. We shall have occasion to speak of some not of the Shemitic stock who seem to have been the first that entered the peninsula as they also penetrated elsewhere the earliest after the dispersion. Also we have to take note of the repeated influx of the Abrahamic seed, outside those chosen and called, who settled in its wide domain and gave special form to a characteristic portion of its denizens. But this must suffice for the earlier names of Joktan's sons.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:26

The name of Eber's second son was, as we have seen, Joktan, “small,” as distinguished from Peleg whose name, “division,” marked as an epoch the more peaceful dividing of the earth, after the judgment of God necessitated the dispersion of mankind. There is no substantial reason to limit the “division” to the family of Eber himself, when the younger branch migrated into southern Arabia, the elder remaining in Mesopotamia. Had this mere family split been referred to, the younger son would more naturally have borne its name, not the elder who abode where he was. Besides, how can an event so ordinary meet the large terms employed— “in his days was the earth divided?” The Chaldee paraphrase on 1 Chron. 1:19 suggests that Joktan derived his name from the diminution of human life at that time. Certain it is that then longevity sunk one half, judging by the recorded years of Peleg (xi. 18, 19) and of those that succeeded, diminishing by degrees to its ordinary range.

Joktan appears on abundant evidence of varied kinds to answer to the Arabic Kachttin. “Of them [the Beni Sad], and of the Kahtan Arabs,...., Masoudy says in his work entitled ‘The Golden Meadows,' that they are the only remnants of the primitive tribes of Arabia. Most of the other tribes, etc. But the two tribes above mentioned, the Beni Sad and Kahtan, are famed in the most remote antiquity, when Arabian history, for the greater part, is covered with complete darkness” (Burckhardt's Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys, 2. 47, 48, London, 1831). We shall see that the traces of his thirteen sons are almost all plain enough also. This had been doubted by some who conceived it to be a Jewish tradition adopted later by Mohammedan writers. Why should any one doubt that the of Cl. Ptolemy (Geog. 6:7) are the Beni Kachtan, or Kahtanys? In Pliny (6:28) and Strabo (16.) they seem spoken of as Catabani, and , by an inversion not uncommon among Greeks and Latins. Dionysius Perieg. speaks of the same tribe under a name very slightly changed, of which no account appears in Smith's Dict. of G. and R. Geography. Modern research however has not only vindicated the fact, but explained probably why the change of the name was effected. Of his numerous sons we glance at the four named in the verse before us.

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

The first enumerated corresponds with Mudád, or, as the word admits the article, El-Mudád. Bochart in his Phaleg (2:16) long ago connected the name with the of Cl. Ptolemy (6:7, § 24) who held a central position in Yemen or Arabia Felix. There seems no sufficient ground to heed Gesenius' idea that the name is a variant from Almoram, so as to trace it in the tribe called Morad living in a mountainous region of the same country near Zabid.

Next comes Sheleph or Shaleph. This name has been without reasonable doubt identified with the district of Sulaf or Salif in southern Arabia. The elder Niebuhr gives it as Sitlfie (in his map Selfia) (Descr. 215). More recently Dr. Osiander gives an account of the tribe Shelif or Shulaf, as Yakoot in the Moajam and other Arabic authorities which complete the geographical traces. Indeed Ptolemy (6:7) had of old told us of the or as the Greeks called the people. Here is therefore proof in this case still clearer than in some. Mr. C. Forster (Geog. of Arabia) in both his vols. labors to identify the modern Meteyr tribe with the Salapeni or sons of as their chief is called by the 70. They were close allies of the Beni Kachtan against the Kedarite BeniCharb or Carbani.

Hazarmaveth plainly answers to the district east of the modern Yemen, called by the Arabs Hadramawt (court of death), also in the south of Arabia, situated on the Indian Sea, and, if unhealthy, no less famous for its rich spices. One of its ports was Zafari, the Sephar of which we read later in this chapter. Here again there is satisfactory evidence that the third in the list of Joktan's sons furnished the name, rendered by the 70 and Asarmoeh in the Vulgate.

Jerah or Yerach “the moon” is the fourth, which Michaelis in his Spicileg. ii. 60 finds in the “low land of the moon,” or in the “mount of the moon,” both of which were near Hadramitwt. It is needless and against all probability to follow Bchart's notion of the Alilaei dwelling near the Red Sea. Mr. E. S. Poole (Smith's Diet. of the Bible, 1. 264) traces the name in a fortress (and probably an old town) mentioned as belonging to the district of the Nijjad, which is in Mareb at the extremity of the Yemen. Indeed Arab tradition, as we may see in Golius (sub voce) is in nothing ancient more unanimous than in styling this son of Joktan “Father of Yemen” (Abu Yemen). His name appears in the LXX. as , and as Jare in the Vulgate. The Arab name may be represented by Jesbit or Serha, giving the “h” its guttural pronunciation of “ch.” C. Ptol. speaks of the on the Arabian gulf, and of the on a river near the Persian gulf, which appear to point to the same family, wide as they might be apart. Mr. Forster brings many other names under the same reference modified by slight changes of name and sound; just as Ptolemy's river Lar on the east coast seems no other than the Zar of the present day, which the Latin geographers confirm who translate it Flumen Canis—Dog, which the Arabic means. The great region of Karje, he argues, derives its name from Jerah according to an anagram quite common in their proper names.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:25

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

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

In verse 21 a notable mark was set upon Eber, when his forefather was introduced in the unusual terms of “father of all the children, or sons, of Eber,” though several generations after, not Arphaxad's, nor Salah's, but Eber's. So contrariwise, though not so strikingly perhaps, Ham had to bear the shame of being designated “father of Canaan” (chap. ix. 18). Thus does God call us on the one hand to heed him who inherited the curse and was the instrument of the enemy in striving to hinder Israel in due time taking possession of the promised land; and on the other to learn the interest He took in giving us to look onward to those who stood in the first line of the heirs of Shem's blessing; for “blessed be Jehovah the God of Shem.” One cannot safely run on so fast as the excellent Matthew Henry, in saying “Eber himself, we may suppose, was a man eminent for religion in a time of general apostasy, and a great example of piety to his family; and the holy tongue being commonly called from him the Hebrew, it is probable that he retained it in his family, in the confusion of Babel, as a special token of God's favor to him; and from him the professors of religion were called the children of Eber. Now, when the inspired penman would give them an honorable title, he calls him (Shem) the father of the Hebrews; though, when Moses wrote this, they were a poor despised people, bond-slaves in Egypt, yet being God's people it was an honor to a man to be akin to them.” It is wise to say less, and surer to believe what is written than to suppose with ancients or moderns. Goodness, he adds, is true greatness; but in the case before us we may be content with ascribing both in the highest degree to the Blesser without being too confident sponsors for the blessed. The Lord teaches us to be jealous on that head for God, rather than for man as weak and poor as he is aspiring.

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

Of Joktan we leave the details till we consider the verses that follow.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:24

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

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

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

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

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

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

Of Eber a little more may be said when verse 25 is examined. It is the more necessary to distinguish the true form, because in Luke 3:35 it is confounded with the different name of “Heber,” which is shared by no less than half-a-dozen persons wholly distinct (14n). The latter reappears in the name of Hebron, the well-known city of Judah, as ancient as Damascus and rather older than Zoan, or Tanis as the Greeks called it, in Egypt. Scripture expressly intimates this (Num. 13:22).

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:23

ARAM is the last of the sons of Shem. His name was generally given to the high table-land northeast of Palestine, though applied also more widely in combination with other terms, as will presently be pointed out. In the A.V., following the Septuagint and the Vulgate, “Syria” represents that general use. In the largest sense it comprehended not only the watershed of the Jordan and the country north, west, and east, but that which stretched to the Tigris, with Armenia on the north down to Arabia on the south. In the S.E. quarter it is designated Aram-Naharaim, that is, Syria of the two rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris, translated “Mesopotamia” in Gen. 24:10, Deut. 23:4, Judg. 3:8, 10. After 1 Chron. 19:6, we have no longer that name, as the country so named passed under the dominion first of Assyria, and last of Babylon where it attained its supreme place. In early days it was the country where Nahor and his family had a city after leaving Ur (the modern Musheir) of the Chaldees or Kasdim, a Cushite race.

The classic name of Syria was probably a mere abbreviation of Assyria, or Asshur, another name really, though akin, being alike Shemitic. But even Homer (Il. ii. 783) and Hesiod (Theog. 304) know only the name , unless also refers to the same (d. iv. 84); so does Pindar in the fragment cited by BOckh (iii. 618) who corrects Fv to Eli, as in Homer. As Virgil (Aen. ix. 716) speaks of Inarime Jovis imperiis imposita Typhöeo, the scholars are anxious to relieve the learned Latin, to say nothing of Ovid, Lucan, Sil. Ital., &c., from the imputation of a blunder in the words and transferring the scene from Asia to the volcanic regions of Italy and Sicily. But it is sure enough that Ovid does err in distinguishing Inarime from Pithacusae which were the same island, of late called Ischia. Heyne has written a learned note on the matter in his second Exc. on Aen. ix. (iii. 374-6, Lond. 1793).

At least five districts of Aram are referred to in scripture. (1) Aram-Dammesek or the Syria of Damascus appears in 2 Sam. 8:5, 6; 1 Chron. 18:5, 6. (2) Aram-Zobah, or Zobah only, to the N.E. of Damascus we find in 1 Sam. 14:47; 2 Sam. 8:3; 10:6, 8; 1 Chron. 18 xix. (3) Arambeth-Rehob, or Rehob only, occurs in 2 Sam. 10:6, 8. (4) Aram-Maachah, or Maachah only is mentioned in 2 Sam. 10:6; 1 Chron. 19:6. And Geshur in Syria or Aram we hear of in 2 Sam. 15:8, bordering with Maachah on Argob (Dent. 3:14, Josh. 13:11, &c.). These small kingdoms of Aram seem gradually to have merged in that which is first named; as Damascus grew itself in importance. But (5) Aram-Naharaim, or Padan—more correctly Paddan-Aram (called also Padan in Gen. 28:7), the plowed land of Aram became the most celebrated by far, familiar to us from the days of Jacob. To this Hosea alludes as the field or open country of Syria (12:12) almost wholly an immense plain, nearly 700 miles long and from 20 to 250 miles broad.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mash would seem, as Bochart supposes (Phaleg ii. 11) to be represented geographically by the classical Mons Masius, the mountainous range which runs north of Mesopotamia between the great rivers, Euphrates and Hiddekel or Tigris. In 1 Chron. 1:17 Mesech is the name, but not the one joined with Kedar, which was Japhetic. In the same genealogy these four sons of Aram are classed directly with the sons of Shem, including Aram, a compendious style not uncommon in such lists, for which verse 4 prepares the reader. The discrepancy is merely apparent.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:22

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

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

Elam, the first apparently in natural order, gave his name to that part of Khusistan, which the Greeks and Romans called Elymais, which had of old Shushan for its capital, of which we hear so much in the book of Esther (1:2, 5; 2:3, 5, 8; 15; 4:16; 8:14, 15; 9:11, 15, 18; as also in Neh. 1:1). There has been no little debate among men of learning on the precise locality, some contending (as Dean Vincent, Anc. Comm. i. 439) for Shuster on the Pasitigris or Kuran, others for Susan a good deal to the east of Shuster. But Mr. Loftus, following Sir W. F. Williams, appears to have set the question at rest in favor of Shush (to the northwest of Shuster), where only an immense mound of ruins remains of the once magnificent fortress and palace of the Persian monarchs, possessed before that by the king of Babylon, as Dan. 8:2 attests. There it was that the prophet saw the vision of the Persian ram, and the Greek or Macedonian he-goat, though some will have it that the prophet was only there in vision. It is known that Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, seized the land of Elam or Susiana, which succumbed afterward to Cyrus; and Susa or Shushan became the regular residence of the Persian monarch for a part of the year. There is no reason to doubt that the excavations made in our day lay bare the plan, with certain remains of "the palaces," indicating a structure, with its dependent buildings, which occupied a square of 1,000. feet each way, in a massive style of architecture with fluted columns, and those in the outer groups with bases like an inverted lily (which Shushan means).

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

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

On Asshur there is the less motive for dilating, as every reader of scriptural history knows how splendid a part their race played in the comparatively early history of the world, when the struggle for predominance seemed to lie between Assyria and Egypt. Of this we find authentic accounts in the O. T. especially when both came into collision, the Assyrian especially, with the chosen people in its decay through idolatry, sweeping away the kingdom of Israel, and menacing that of Judah. But the awful check given to Sennacherib in the height of his scornful pride soon proved no real opportunity to Egypt; for Babylon that joined in destroying Nineveh was destined of God to be the head of

power, as all know according to God's word. Here again shall mercy triumph over judgment; and Isa. 19 is express that in the day of Messianic power and glory Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth. We need not speak of Israel, but may say that this was never the case with Egypt and with Assyria in the past. Both wrought innumerable evils for man; both sinned shamelessly against God. But what cannot, will not, mercy work on God's part, even for the enemies of His guilty and chastised people? What a monument will not the trio be “in that day”!

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

Lud is the next son of Shem; and there is the more need of care, as there was another race of similar name which had its seat in Africa, the first named of the Mizraim or Egyptian peoples, of whom we have spoken (Gen. 10:13). There was thus Ludim of Ham, as well as of Shun. Josephus (Ant. i. § 4) was justified in stating that the latter race settled in Asia Minor, the Lydians. Herodotus (i. 7) says indeed that the Maeones or early dwellers in the far from definite land called Lydia, for its extent changed greatly from time to time, afterward adopted the name of Lydians, being in fact as he thought the same people. But this was a mistake. Even Strabo (xii. xiv.) recognizes on ancient testimony, that they were distinct races, as Niebuhr (Hist. of Rome, i. 32) and others in modern times are convinced. The Maeones were the early Japhetic settlers whom the Shemitic Lydians conquered. Indeed that careful historian, Dionysius (i. 30), notices that the Lydians had nothing in common with their Pelasgian predecessors. It can hardly be doubted that Jer. 46:9 and Ezek. 27:10; 30:5, refer to the African race, perhaps Isa. 66:19, though this be not so certain. But they join in the great catastrophe of “that day.” Of Aram we shall speak in considering ver. 23.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:21

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

Undoubtedly the manner of Shem's introduction is so peculiar as to arrest attention. He had descendants like the other chiefs derived from Noah. But he is specified, on the one hand as the father of all the sons of Eber, and on the other as the brother of Japheth the elder (or, great one). Of the latter enough has been said; but we may compare chap. xiv. 13, “Abram the Hebrew,” in order to understand better what seems meant. And here the LXX give , “the passer,” as Aquila has . This at least gives a distinctive stamp, where as only tradition does it to Eber personally.

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

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

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

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:18-20

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

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

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

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

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

What an illustration is their history of the words of the apostle on the first man as contrasted with the last Adam! “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual.” The book of nature man never did read aright, though he ought; and conscience, the monitor of fallen man, shows him his sins, but of itself never leads to repentance: only God's goodness does, above all revealed in Christ. But the Hamite races were the leaders of the departure from God, and none so flagitiously as the Canaanite.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:15-18

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

This is a revelation of the highest importance for God's government of the world. Men willingly forget that the times of the Gentiles are in this quite abnormal. For He has no direct government of the earth, only providential, during their course. The only time when He governed immediately was when Israel afforded its theater. To this end He chose the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as His people, and gave them the land of promise from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates. To Israel He made Himself known as Jehovah, the one living and true God, as He had to their pilgrim fathers as the Almighty God. But through the self-confidence of unbelief they forgot their redemption from Egypt and their preservation in the wilderness up to Sinai, all of grace; and then accepted law as their condition at Sinai, instead of pleading the promise. Hence their history became a history of sin and ruin, checkered by wondrous interventions of mercy, as well as solemn chastisements of their rebellious iniquity, till at length even the house of David led the last remaining tribe of Judah into abominable idolatry, and God delivered them as captives to Babylon, the first of the four “beasts,” or Gentile imperial powers. Finally under the last of these bestial empires (the Roman), the Jewish remnant, which was permitted to return to the land for a fresh trial, rejected their own Messiah and even the gospel founded on His death, which was first sent to them, and wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

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

All this was, however, only a witness in the hands of a people prone to evil and departure from Him. But God has in no way abandoned His purpose for the earth. He is using the interval, since His rejection of the Jews because of their rejection of Christ, to call a people out of both Jews and Gentiles, who put on Christ in Whom there is neither, to form a heavenly family in union with Christ, the body of the ascended Head, God's habitation in the Spirit. When this is complete, the Lord Jesus will come and receive us unto Himself and present us in the Father's house. He will also in due time appear executing judgment, not only on the fourth Beast revived and the Antichrist in the land, but on all hostile powers and peoples, delivering a remnant of Jews then righteous, the nucleus of the nation, believing and expectant, blessed and established forever as a blessing to all the families of the earth. Such will Israel be under Messiah and the new covenant, and mercy endure

forever, as they will then sing in truth of heart. And the Gentiles will in that day cast away their idols of silver and gold, and everything high and lifted up, and lofty looks and haughtiness of heart, cordially bowing to the kingdom with Zion as its center, and the mountain of Jehovah's house established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills. For Messiah will reign, the only perfect judge between the nations, who shall not lift sword nor learn war any more.

Now the races of Canaan occupied that land which Jehovah intended for Israel. Nor was this all. They were conspicuously vile, most of all the cities of the plain, whose wickedness was not to be named. They were therefore cut off by a sudden and manifestly divine infliction. But when the cup of the Amorites was full, and the land became so unclean that Jehovah must visit its iniquity, He was pleased to make Israel the executioner of His vengeance. What could be more righteous in itself? What wiser for His people, its destined heirs? All unnatural evils as well as idolatries (their very religion ever binding on them these abominations) had become their “customs,” from which Israel must be kept. It was no question of cruelty; and it was Israel's fault not to exterminate as completely as Jehovah enjoined; so that the spared did not fail to ensnare and corrupt the chosen people into like infamy.

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

The Hittites were of Heth or Cheth. Their daughters troubled Isaac and Rebecca, though we hear of Abraham friendly with them and others. They like the Jebusites and the Amorites betook themselves to the mountains from the south, and afterward were outside in the valley of the Orontes. So in 1 Kings 10:29 their kings are spoken of with “the Kings of Aram” or Syria; they seem without doubt to be the Khatti of the Egyptian inscriptions, on the western side of the Euphrates. They had however shared in the efforts against Joshua (9, 11.) and suffered accordingly. In Ezek. 16:3, 45, “thy mother was a Hittite” is no more meant literally than “thy father was an Amorite.” They are the prophet's figures of moral reproach.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:13-14

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

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

We next hear of the Anamim, of whom nothing more is said in the Bible than in the two genealogical lists. It may perhaps be gathered, from comparison with the names which follow, that they were a race that settled in the Delta of Egypt. But it must be allowed that no reliable trace is known either in the ancient Geographers, or in the monuments hitherto deciphered. Here we have the unfailing record of God, Who alone saw the end from the beginning and has been pleased to communicate to us the truth otherwise unnoticed. The judgment of the habitable earth in a day which approaches will prove that the races are not extinct.

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

What plainer proof can there be to the believer that these races are yet abiding and to take their part in the great catastrophe of the latter day? The reign of Antiochus Epiphanies, directly or indirectly, did not extend beyond Dan. 11:31, 32. That which we have pointed out is after the great break of ver. 35, and expressly supposes the renewal of the two powers of the north and the south, when “the king,” the lawless one, is in “the land” between them “at the time of the end.” Thus that time is as clearly future as sure. Compare Isa. 11:14, which not only confirms the fact of the old cognate but hostile races on the borders of the land, but declares their final subjection to Israel under Messiah “in that day.”

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

There remain the “Casluhim (out of whom or whence came the Philistines) and the Caphtorim.” These races can hardly be doubted to have occupied the Delta before the Philistine migration to the Shephelah. Some suggest here a transposition; as Deut. 2:23, Jer. 47:4, Amos 9:7, expressly connect the Philistine immigrants with the Caphtorim. Pusey, commenting on the last of these scriptures, inclines to the conclusion, that there were different immigrations of the same tribe into Palestine (as of Danes and Saxons into England, where they all merged into one common name). The first may have been from the Casluhim; the second in time but chief in importance from the Caplitorim; and a third of Kerethim (probably from Crete) in the era of the Judges added but a little to their strength (1 Sam. 30:14-16). Of these last, Cherethites and Pelethites figure as lifeguards of King David, foreigners like the Gittites.

It is plain and certain that the architecture, whether of temples or of palaces, the sculpture and painting, and the various other monuments of Egypt for living or dead bear, like its original language, the marks of extreme antiquity and of high civilization. Idolatry flaunts us everywhere, but as Herren remarks (African Nations, ii. 271, Oxford, Talboys, 1832), “The first idea which presents itself from a view of these monuments must be that Thebes [the No, or No-Amon, of Scripture] was once the capital of a mighty empire, whose boundaries extended far beyond Egypt, which at some distant period comprised a great part of Africa, and an equally large portion of Asia. Her kings are represented as victors and conquerors; and the scene of their glory is not confined to Egypt, but often carried to remote regions. Prisoners of distant nations bow the knee before the conquerors, and count themselves happy if they can obtain their pardon.... This is further confirmed by the many examples which evince the refinement of domestic life, and the degree of luxury to which the people had arrived. The narrow valley of the Nile could not supply all the articles, such as costly garments, perfumes, &c., which we find here represented. An extensive commerce was requisite, not only to obtain all this, but also to produce that opulence, and that interchange of ideas, which constitute its foundation.” Denon (Voy. dans la basse et haute Egypte, 1802), the great French Government work (Description de 1' Egypte, 1811, 1815), Hamilton (Remarks &c. 1809), Belzoni (Narrative &c. 1822), Minutoli (Travels, 1824), and both series of Sir G. Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, are the chief modern authorities.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:11-12

The important fact imparted to us, in the verses immediately preceding, we have seen to be the first establishment of royal power in the Cushite Nimrod; and this by force and fraud, transferred from hunting wild beasts to acquiring dominion over mankind for personal aggrandizement. His city building in Babylonia we have also seen, the earliest development of the kind since the deluge. Nor is any architecture more characteristic of race, as Mr. Ferguson has shown, than the massive monumental style of the sons of Ham.

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

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

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

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

Rehoboth-Ir appears to be so specified to distinguish it from Rehoboth the Nahar— “of the river.” This latter (Gen. 36:37; 1 Chron. 1:48) was unmistakably on the river Euphrates; and in fact the name is still found given to two places on the river, one on the western bank, eight miles below the junction of the Khabiir (Rahabeth, Chesney's Euphr. i. 119, ii. 610), the other with an added name (Rahabeth-Malik), which Gen. Chesney does not notice, but it is given in Mr. Layard's Nineveh, a few miles lower on the eastern bank. Rehoboth-Ir was in Assyria proper. Kaplan, the Jewish geographer, identifies Rehoboth of the river with Rahabeth-Malik, but distinguishes it from Rehoboth-Ir, which he believes to have disappeared (see Smith's Diet. of the Bible, iii. 1026, col. 1). As no trace of this city has as yet commended itself to any explorer, it may be worth naming that Jerome, not only in the Vulgate but in his works (Quaest. ad Genesim), gives it as his opinion that it was part of what became Nineveh, meaning “the streets of the city” (i.e. plateas civitatis). This is a mere conjecture, which may be cleared up by better knowledge.

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

Resen has been by some identified with the of Steph. Byz and Ptol. (Geog. v. 18); this, however, was not in Assyria, but far west. Bochart (Geog. Sac. iv. 28) suggested the Larissa of Xenophon (Anab. iii. 4, §7) which can hardly be doubted to correspond with the remarkable ruins now called Nimrild. Mr. Rawlinson leans to the view that these ruins answer to Calah, and that Resen, therefore, lay between that city and Nineveh, and that its ruins are near the Selaimyeh of modern times; and cuneiform inscriptions at Nimrud give Culach as the Assyrian name of the place. This tends to support the claim of Calah rather than of Resen.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:8-10

FROM the manner in which Nimrod is introduced, it would appear that he was a descendant of Cush rather than son in the strict sense. Why else should he be named after not only the five sons of Cush, but his two grandsons through Raamah?

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

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

But there is nothing mythical in the little that scripture says. Nimrod "began to be a mighty one in the earth." Not so had it been with Abel or Seth, with Enoch or Noah. What they enjoyed was God's gift. They looked for Him Who is coming; Nimrod sought great things for himself like Cain who was the first builder of a city in primeval days, as Nimrod was the first after the deluge, and on a large and repeated scale. Present power was his aim; and God allowed it apparent success.

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

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

It was among the Hamitic sons then that a kingdom was first set up among men. God was not in any of Nimrod's thoughts; He was not sought, nor did He give the least direction, in the case. Nimrod conceived the design through his own ambition, and executed it through the force of his will, and the address and skill he had acquired in his hunting. How different the way of Jehovah at a later day! For, when Israel would have a king in imitation of the nations and chose one who served himself, and brought no deliverance even from Philistines within their border who slew him and his sons, He took His servant David from the pasture, from following the sheep, and made him prince over His people, over Israel, to feed them, and assured him that his house and his kingdom should be made firm forever before him—his throne established forever.

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

His kingdom Nimrod began with Babel. This is most characteristic. What recked he, if it had begun in impious self will to centralize mankind in direct opposition to the divine design and command of replenishing the earth? or if it had been abandoned by the builders under a divine judgment which compelled them to scatter abroad upon the face of all the earth? The abandoned city and tower exactly suited his project of a kingdom for himself, not a universal commonwealth. So "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel." And success in his project encouraged him to go forward; "and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar" followed. As there is no doubt about Babylon, there need be as little that Warka (Irka, or Irak), some forty-three miles east of Babylon, answers to Erech, certainly not Gesenius' identification with Aracca on the

Tigris, any more than Jerome's notion of Edessa (or Urfah). More weight is due to Jerome's report of Jewish judgment, that Accad was represented by Nisibis, the ancient name of which was Acar (Rosenmuller 29). The Talmud identifies Calneh with Niffer, about sixty miles south-east of Babylon. Here Arab tradition revels abundantly; but their flights of fancy are not worth recounting.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:7

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

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

But its fame was long after the first ages of the Pharaohs; and the derivation (Diodorus Sic., Josephus, &c.), of Meroe from a sister of Cambyses who died during his expedition, is very doubtful. It is rather an adoption from the native designation Meru, which in ancient Egyptian means island, as shown in Smith's Diet. B. iii. 1189. Our Auth. and Rev. Vv. have “Sabeans,” in Isa. 45:14, where it should surely be Sebeans (Sebaim), as the country is named with Cush or Ethiopia in 43:3. In Job 1:15 the error occurs of calling the men of Sheba “Sabeans.” Both Sheba and Seba are brought together in Psa. 72:10; and we shall find a Cushite Sheba presently, as well as a Joktanite and a Jokshanite of the Shemitic line later on, both—of whom found their settlements in Arabia, not in Africa.

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

The next son of Cush, Sabtah, is generally thought traceable among the Adramitae on the Red Sea coast of Aden, where we have the modern name of Hadramaut. Cl. Ptolemy and Arrian speak of them, and Pliny the elder (N. H. vi. 32) notices a city, Sabatha, which seems to recall their forefather. It is mentioned by Knöbel (in his book on these peoples) that there is a dark race in that quarter though not confined to it, quite different from the ordinary Arab, and pointing to a Hamitic stock.

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

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

Of Sheba and Dedan, sons of Raamah, we may say more when we come to compare them with the same names in the Shemitic line. This only may be noticed that in Ezek. 27 Sheba occurs twice; first, with Raamah in ver. 22, which fixes him as the Cushite in the same part of Arabia; secondly, with Asshur, &c., in ver. 23, which points to the Shemitic line, confirmed by the distinct merchandise of each. In like manner the men of Dedan in Ezek. 27:15 appear to be Cushites on the Persian gulf (where the isle of Dedan perpetuates the name) and with imports and exports accordingly; whereas we have Dedan distinguished in ver. 20, who seem to be Shemitic through Keturah. Compare ch. 25:13.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:6

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

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

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

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

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

But it is equally sure, according to scripture, that the arts of civilization began and were developed in that family which rejected God's revelation for nature; which resented His disapproval and vented hatred on the believing brother, as righteous as Cain was not; and which in despair and defiance betook themselves out of a bad conscience and its fears to civic life in its cradle, and sought to make, if not a paradise, a substitute for it in the elegant arts and letters that embellish society. This is surely civilization in the germ; and we see it in Cain's line from the earliest age ever expanding, and recounted for our serious thought in the same chapter 4. of Genesis. To impute its rise or progress to revelation is what none could do who reads believingly.

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

Of Ham's sons Cush has the first place. According to scripture that stock settled in lands the most remote. There is without doubt an Asiatic as well as an African Cush. Gen. 2:13 presents its difficulty, but it would seem to be anticipative like Havilah and Assyria; for it is certain that till the flood there was no actual settlement of lands in their nations. But we know from our chapter that a notable departure was first taken by one of the Cushite descent to possess himself of power by usurpation, and this not in Africa but in the plain of Shinar, of which there are details to follow. It was certainly not after their arrival in Africa that this ambitious movement took place, but early in that day of change; and in fact not a few traces exist, philological and historical, of early connection between Ethiopia, Southern Arabia, and the cities on the lower Euphrates, as may be seen in Rawlinson's Herod. i. 442, 443. No one doubts that in general Cush as a country lies beyond higher Egypt; but as a race they settled far more widely, as already pointed out. And this explains more than one passage, which is commonly and altogether misunderstood from not taking the facts into account no less than from holding fast the strict wording of scripture. Thus, Isaiah (18:1) says, “Ho! land shadowing with wings, which art beyond the rivers of Cush.” It is absurd to infer that this means either Egypt or Ethiopia, any more than Babylonia. The object of the phrase is on the contrary to distinguish the land in question from either those lands or from any within those limits, which had in the past interfered with Israel. It is the prediction, not yet accomplished, of a land beyond the Nile in the south and the Euphrates in the north, which are the rivers of Cush. That unnamed land, described in striking terms as distinctly outside the Gentile powers which had hitherto acted on the chosen people, is to espouse their cause at a future day; but to no good effect, for the nations will oppose, jealous and hostile as of old, just before Jehovah takes up the matter and restores Israel to the place of His name, to Mount Zion. So in Zeph. 3:10 we read, “From beyond the river of Cush my suppliants, the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring my oblation.” Egypt or Ethiopia might be described as on one side of Cush, and Babylonia on the other; but Jehovah shall bring His dispersed from lands expressly beyond both.

There is no question as to the identification of Mizraim, and the great magnificence of its civilization as of the Asiatic Cush in the remotest antiquity. The form of the word in Hebrew is the dual, which some would refer to higher and lower Egypt. However this may be, the context decides that both Cush and Mizraim mean men, and sons of Ham. Ephraim, born in Egypt, has also the dual form, but is none the less surely the name of a man.

Phut or Put exemplifies the more degraded stock of Ham's descendants in Africa, contiguous to Egypt and Ethiopia, and named with one or other at times. But Phut can hardly be the Libyan as A.V. makes out of Jer. 46:9, or Libya as from Ezek. 30:5, and 33:5 where it should be Phut

as in chap. xxvii. 10. The Lubim as in Nah. 3:9 point rather to the Lybians. The very obscurity which covers this African branch of Ham's sons serves to show how low they had fallen.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:5

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

Of the seven sons of Japheth, we have the descendants of but two, Gomer and Javan; from Gomer, three, and from Javan, four; seven only specified of the second generation, as of the first. That Magog and Madai had sons cannot be doubted, for we hear of their posterity to the latest times as well as of Tubal and Meshech; and as little can we doubt of Tiras. But it did not here fall within the design to give details of more. The prophets speak of others who sprung from these early forefathers to figure in the latter day. It is clear also that the order of time is not in question here; for in the following chapter difference of tongues is shown to have been imposed suddenly by a divine act of judgment, only after the project of building a city and tower, and thus making themselves a name. Our chapter therefore anticipates what is historically set out in what follows, and so speaks of the sons of Japhet distributing their seats of settlement, as it does of the Hamite race and the Shemitic in their respective places. On the other hand the “dividing” of the earth in the days of Peleg (chap. 10: 25) should be distinguished.

Dispersion preceded: a different term is employed in the Hebrew, as there ought to be in the translation. The isles are said here to be “separated,” as the earth there is “divided.” The orderly partition followed the confused dispersion.

Hence in Deut. 32:8 we read,

When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance,

When He separated the sons of Adam,

He set the bounds of the peoples

According to the number of the sons of Israel.

Israel is thus declared to be His earthly center, though as yet we see not His glorious plan, which the prophets fully disclose. Hitherto no more appears than a passing but instructive shadow under David and Solomon, even these bringing in seeds of ruin, with occasional glimpses of better things in such as Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, but as a whole gradual yet sure downfall till “there was no remedy,” and the chosen people were by reason of their apostasy branded as Lo-ammi, Not-My-people. And so they are from the Babylonish captivity to this day. A remnant of Judah was according to prophecy restored to the land by Cyrus; and a further test of the first man followed, no longer under the failing sons of David, but in the presentation to them of Messiah Himself, the Righteous Servant. But those who had wholly broken down in violating God's law and even in persistent departure after false gods to their shame by the renunciation of one Jehovah, their only true God, proved themselves yet more inexcusably His enemies and the slaves of Satan by rejecting His anointed, though according to flesh of Israel—of Judah—He was, Who is over all, God blessed forever, Amen. But Him they crucified in blind hostile unbelief by the hand of lawless men, and therefore are they dispersed to the ends of the earth. Beauty and Bands are severally both cut asunder.

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

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

The word usually rendered “isles” not only admits of an application to coast-lands also (as to the Greek, Italian, Spanish, and Scandinavian peninsulas), but to settlements or habitations wider still, as Gesenius contends with ample consent of the more learned modern Jews; and

such is the version of de Sola, Lindenthal, and Raphall in this verse. Again, the division is marked by four particulars: their lands, the tongue spoken, their family descents, and the resulting nation.

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

Yet contrary to this common purpose each country was allotted to its respective race, and in all this startlingly new fact of lands partitioned by families constituting nations, and distinguished by its tongue appears, as we have seen, the line of Japhet, which mainly and in due time settled in Europe. The remembrance of the deluge would not dispose men to separate. But God meant it to be, and so it was: one race of Adam, but with all the variety into which the several stocks were to divide and replenish the earth. And the immediate occasion was the opposing determination of man, and the practical end for which they united, as the history relates afterward, along with the simple and effectual way in which God confounded their vain and selfish purpose and accomplished His own.

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

Thus also the principle of government, which God laid on Noah and his sons, was to prove its great practical value, as its control could now be brought to bear far more readily when men were distinguished in their nations. If it was a fresh start for the race, it was not under one man, Adam. The post-diluvian earth began with three sons of Noah, and their three wives, besides Noah and his wife, all of them inheriting whatever was known and learned in the long era before the deluge. Agriculture and live stocking were long familiar, city as well as tent life had begun, forging of copper and iron for instruments of every sort, with musical instruments for wind and hand, and metrical composition, from very early days. Since the flood God had entrusted to man's hand the responsibility of the civil sword (Gen. 9: 6), the root of government in restraint of human violence which includes the lesser rights in the greatest; and this well suited to the national bond of each independent nation which was now commencing. Families of course had been before in the midst of an undivided race. Henceforth in the new state of things they take their place in their lands by the lesser relation of their nations, each welded together by that tongue which severed him from others of different descent and locality, with their own associations and their independent interests and aims.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:4

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

It has been already shown briefly on ver. 2 That Javan represents Greece. Ionia however, or Ionia, answers most nearly to the Hebrew name, a narrow district in Asia Minor, of which Greek colonies are said to have possessed themselves more than a thousand years B.C., some time after the Dorian conquest of Peloponnesus, and even after their advance toward Attica (Muller's Dorians, ii. 511, Tufnell and Lewis' Tr. 1830). Not only was Ionia remarkable for its commercial prosperity, but for excellence in art and poetry, in history and philosophy, before the mother-country attained any eminence in these pursuits (Smith's Diet. of Gr. and R. Geography, 61, col. 1). Ezek. 27:13 speaks of Javan among the traffickers with Tire: only we must distinguish from it Javan of Uzal in ver. 19, which seems to mean the capital town of Yemen or Arabia Felix. But those who migrated here and elsewhere were the race who long before were in Attica and in part of the Peloponnesus. Of course none can wonder at varied forms of mythical genealogy; but the fact is certain of the early predominance of the Ionian name, as Moses here gives it, for a general description of Greece (Thirlwall's Hist. i. 134). In fact Greece is so designated from Gen. 10 to Zech. 9 Homer in xiii. 685, Aeschylus, in Pers. 176, 568, 948 and Suppl. 72, employ a word that approximates to the Hebrew term.

“And the sons of Javan, Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim” (ver. 4)1

As Javan unquestionably answers to the Greeks in general and is represented in the Ionian race particularly, it is acknowledged that Elishah also belongs to that people. Ezek. 27:7 helps us to the conclusion that the isles or maritime parts pertained to his lot. Josephus applied the name to the Aeolians, as others to Hellas (which was adopted by J. D. Michaelis, Spicil. i. 79). But Bochart preferred the Peloponnesus as an extension of Elis. The commerce with Tire points to the islands as well as to the Morea.2

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

or Ceylon. Tarsus in Cilicia, which Josephus conjectured, in no way meets what is said in the references of scripture.

There is no difficulty as to Kittim, which is a term beyond controversy applied to two of the peninsulas of Europe, first Greece [or Macedon], then Rome or Italy. So the writer of Maccabees speaks of Greece (chaps. 1: 1, 8: 5); as Dan. 11:30 is decisive as to Rome. So in the prophecy of Balaam (Num. 24:24) we learn of a fleet from the west afflicting Asshur, when all man's power comes to destruction. In Jer. 3:10 and Ezek. 28:6 we hear of the “isles” or sea-coasts of Kittim; which can hardly mean Cyprus, as understood Josephus and many since his day, though Gesenius approved. He allows however that a wider signification is called for as in not a few Scriptures here cited.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:3

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

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

Jeremiah (chap. 51: 27) introduces Ashkenaz as one of three kingdoms set apart and called together with Ararat and Minni against Babylon, when the kings of the Medes also played their decisive part. There seems no sound reason to doubt that as Ararat and Minni were parts of Armenia, here as elsewhere falling under Togarmah, so Ashkenaz and Riphath occupied the peninsula of Asia Minor at that time and took their place with Cyrus the leader of these races during that notable struggle. But this in no way weakens the general fact that Gomer pushed westward and into Europe, allowing that at least Togarmah settled in Armenia.1 For this is as sure as any fact of history; and scripture is decisive as to it, not only in the past, but for the future.

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

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

This new and mighty work of divine grace for Israel is clearly seen to be confirmed symbolically in the next chap. 32., where we see the valley of dry bones caused to live and stand up, an exceeding great army; then, under the two sticks made one in Jehovah's hand, the old rent of the divided tribes completely healed, and one nation made on the mountains of Israel with one king to them, as has never been since the days of Rehoboam. “And they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. And they shall not any more defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; and I will save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd; and they shall walk in my ordinances, and keep my statutes and do them.” It is a bright and blessed prediction awaiting its fulfillment. In these circumstances will Gog lead his vassal hordes to perish signally on the mountains of Israel, and a fire shall also be sent on Magog and those that dwell at ease in the isles; and they shall know Who it is that thus judges them in the day that all Israel shall be gathered out of the nations into their own land, none to be left any more there.

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

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:2

IT will be noticed that the order of Noah's sons is now changed. Japheth has the first place, when we come to genealogic survey; and this is even explained when we arrive at the line of Shem (ver. 21), who for spiritual reasons had been uniformly set in that place of honor hitherto, even Ham being otherwise put before Japheth. That many Jews, followed by others, should overlook the spirit of scripture, in their zeal for the progenitor of the chosen people, is easily understood; but some weighed the word with more care and less prejudice. So Nachmanides remarks that the enumeration begins with Yapheth, because he is the firstborn. It proceeds with Ham, although the youngest, and reserves Shem to the last, because the narrator wishes to enlarge on the history of his descendants. Rashi also, though admitting the doubtfulness of the phrase, decides similarly from comparing other scriptures— “From the words of the text I do not clearly know whether the elder applies to Shem or Japheth. But as subsequently we are informed that Shem was one hundred years old and begat Arpachshad two years after the deluge (chap. 11: 10), it follows that Yapheth was the elder. For Noah was five hundred years old when he began to have children, and the deluge took place in the six hundredth year of his age. His eldest son must consequently have been one hundred years old at the time of the deluge; whereas we are expressly informed that Shem did not arrive at that age till two years after the deluge.”

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

Here is presented the distinct statement of what scholars have regarded as the greatest triumph of modern research in comparative philology. The Asiatic Society instituted in 1784 at Calcutta gave the great impulse, Sir W. Jones declaring that “no philologer could examine the Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps no longer exists. There is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothic and Celtic had the same origin with the Sanskrit. The old Persian may be added to the same family.” Long after this scholars were still incredulous, clinging to the heathen notion of aboriginal races with their respective tongues, modified by the thought of a Hebrew primaeval source. Hence, in his prejudice for the honor of Greek and Latin, so cultivated and able a person as the late Professor Dugald Stewart (Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, 3: 100-137) denied the reality of Sanskrit as a tongue of the past! and imputed its forgery! to unprincipled Brahmans whom he supposed to have founded it on the model of the old classic languages to deceive the world. F. Schlegel however, though more a genius than a scholar, had scanned the secret early in the century when he gave the name Indo-Germanic to the Aryan tongues of ancient Persia (the Zend), Greece, Italy, and Germany. He might have included quite as surely Celtic, Scandinavian, and Sclavonian under the wider generalization of Indo-European. They were the tongues of the Japhetic or, as moderns speak, the Aryan families.

It was the task of Franz Bopp to set the matter on a sound basis of proof, not only in his essay of 1816 and others, but in his Comparative Grammar of 1833-1852. Others, as Eugene Burnouf in France and Max. Muller in this country, have contributed not a little since.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The learning of the Greek was at fault at least as much as the tradition of the Jew. Scripture had not been weighed or trusted by either. And when the discovery of Sanskrit came, the issue was so startling that the erudite at first recoiled from that which not only brought in larger views, but shook to its foundations much they had been building up. The method of derivation alone had been trusted; whereas the newly ascertained facts pointed to parallel descents from a common parent in at least six great lines with their modern offspring. But this so revolutionized the entire groundwork as to show that erudition had been on a false scent, especially as to the inflexions and the conjugations of tongues ever so distant locally, which indicate affinity far more surely and thoroughly than isolated words. K. O. Müller was one of the first seriously to own the old position embarrassing; and G. Hermann before him had written sarcastically of those who sought light from “a sort of aurora borealis, reflecting the gleams of eastern illumination, and who, betaking themselves to the Brahmans and Ulphilas, endeavored to explain Greek and Latin by the help of languages which they only half understood.” K. A. Lobeck carried on the war in his celebrated works,

Aglaophamus (1829), Paralipomena (1837) and Pathologic (1843), as Ellendt did in the Preface to his Lex. Sophocl. (1835). Yet the truth remains that God marks certain families of language in the great dispersion, and that with their specified differences they give sure evidence of a common kindred. The same grammatical framework belongs to them; and it differs totally too from that of the Shemitic tongues; as the varied Turanian group differs in this from them both.

The Jews, as is known, assign to Cush (translated Ethiopia ordinarily) not only his African seat but the opposite coast of Arabia and the southern shore of Asia generally into India. And this is well founded. But Arabia received also a large Shemitic population which gave character to their language; and this as we shall see not only from Joktan, Eber's son, but from Jokshan, Abraham's son by Keturah, and from Ishmael's twelve sons, with some of Esau's decendants. Even Homer (Od. 2: 23, 24) speaks of Ethiopians as divided into two parts, the most distant of men, some at the setting sun, and some at the rising. It was a Turanian race, which included the Turks, but not the Armenians who were rightly given to Japheth. But the Jews seem never to have realized the fact that the ancient Persian tongue (Zend) and that of northern and central India (Sanskrit) yield the fullest indication of Japhetic origin.

The Early Chapters of Genesis, Genesis 10:1

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

After the flood God had introduced the principle of government, committing the charge into the hands of men. As the next fact of the widest moment for the earth, the origin of the nations which were about to play their part is made known to us; and this with a special view to His choice of a people for Himself, and separated to Himself. Even it is seen first tried and failing through sin, as Adam had been in the world before the flood. Of this the O. T. is the ample witness and the awful proof, before His grace intervenes in the Second man and the Messiah of Israel to deliver both man and Israel, as He will the church and the universe, on the ground of divine righteousness and ever enduring mercy to the praise of Himself and the Lamb.

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

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

The first chapter of Genesis presents the origin of the world, especially of the earth, sea and land, and its inhabitants, above all of man himself its head and God's representative; then in chap. 2. the special relations of man with God, with the lower creaturehood, and with woman his counterpart, which necessitates for completeness and accuracy the special divine name of “Jehovah” Elohim. The slighting of these revelations exposes to Atheism or a powerless Theism. Science cannot penetrate the secrets of the beginnings by the confession even of one so self-confident and skeptical as J. S. Mill (in his Logic). The domain of science is either purely abstract or applied to what is already created; but how it came to be is outside its ken. Here in chap. 10. we are given to survey a fact of immense importance to the government of the earth. The first rise of families into separate nations and tongues, history has utterly failed to indicate, as science fails, in the material realm.

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

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

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

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