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PART I.

THE CHURCH DURING THE OLD
TESTAMENT DISPENSATION.

THE HISTORY
OF THE
CHURCH OF GOD

DURING THE PERIOD OF REVELATION.

BY
REV. CHARLES COLCOCK JONES, D. D.

"The Lord is great in Zion."—Ps. xcix. 2.

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NOTE.

IN presenting to the Public the accompanying "HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD DURING THE PERIOD OF REVELATION," I am executing a wish expressed more than once by my honored father during the last days of his life. This work was prepared by him with a trembling hand, and amid great feebleness and physical depression. It was composed during moments of comparative freedom from pain, in the quiet of his own retired home, and for years occupied his serious thought, careful study, and prayerful consideration.

His great object was a clear and succinct exposition of the true History of the Church of God, its principles, constitution, ordinances, dispensations, officers, and cardinal doctrines as contained in that highest and holiest record of all religious knowledge,—the "Word of God." The Bible was his constant companion, his text-book, his acknowledged teacher, his guide, his supreme authority.

In the inscrutable providence of the Almighty he was not spared fully to complete his labors, and the accompanying volumes are offered without those modifications which his accurate revision would have suggested and accomplished.

He purposed a careful revision of these pages for publication; but his rapidly failing health, and his lamented demise on the 16th of March, 1863, prevented the execution of this cherished plan.

Although I am well aware, had the strength and opportunity been granted, that the Author would probably have introduced changes in style and composition, so fully convinced am I that the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, his conceptions of truth in all questions of vital importance, and the full details of the authentic History of the Church, are everywhere clearly, determinately, and forcibly presented, I have refrained from any alteration or modification of the MS.

For more than ten years my father was incapacitated by wasting disease from the active discharge of those duties which had so long engaged his conscientious and devoted attention as an Evangelist, and as a Theological teacher.

During this period, in much bodily infirmity and amid frequent interruptions, the evening of his days was consecrated to the preparation of this History, in the earnest hope, and with fervent prayers, that these his last labors in the Church might be specially blessed to the edification of the saints, and the instruction of all inquirers after truth, and prove, under God, instrumental in the further dissemination of the saving principles of Christianity.

The specific objects and extent of the work are briefly explained in the *Author's Preface*.

The second and concluding volume will, D. V., shortly be issued. It will be accompanied by a General Index.

CHARLES C. JONES, JR.

NEW YORK CITY, *April*, 1867.

PREFACE.

NEARLY all the matter embraced in the following History—although in a somewhat different and more extended form, and without interfering with other departments—was delivered some years since in a course of Lectures to the classes coming under my instruction as Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Polity in the Theological Seminary of the Synods of South Carolina and Georgia, in Columbia. Before the course was completed, our dwelling in that town was consumed at night by fire. We saved nothing but our lives, through the tender mercy of our God. The manuscripts of twenty years, and the Lectures with them, then perished. Looking over the ruins of the study the next day, I picked up a part of a volume of John Howe's works. It was compact, but charred to a coal; and there lay upon its face, distinctly legible, his sermon on "The Vanity of Man as Mortal!"

The three succeeding years I passed in Philadelphia as Corresponding Secretary of the General Assembly's Board of Domestic Missions. A faithful discharge of the duties of that office left no time for professional studies. Health failed under confinement and labor, and I resigned my office. Thrown out of active and regular employment in the ministry, I turned my thoughts to a favorite purpose—the recovery of the History of the Church, trusting that it would please God to strengthen me for the effort, and render it of some benefit to His people. In executing this purpose I would be furnished with employment, which so many years of activity rendered essential to my happiness. I was also comforted with the hope that I would still be usefully employed in the Kingdom of our Lord.

Through the kind providence of God, in much weakness, and amid many and sometimes long interruptions, I have lived to complete the first volume. Its preparation has been a source of constant enjoyment. I have had God's Holy Word always open before me, and have sought the illuminating and sanctifying influ-

ence of the Holy Spirit, that its inspired and heavenly pages might be full of wondrous and instructive things to my mind and heart. Aid has also been sought from human helps—the best authors within my reach—that I might be instructed by them, and led to a better understanding of the Divine Word, wherein lay the History of that Church for which Christ shed His precious blood.

I have been encouraged by the favorable opinion expressed both by ministers and private members of the Church to whom the character of the work has been explained. These last—for whom I have specially written—have been pleased to say, that if successfully executed, it would prove such a History as would be particularly profitable to them. It would indeed be doing good service to prepare an acceptable and useful History of the Church for the mass of the people of God; and he who is enabled to accomplish that work should esteem it a high honor graciously conferred upon him.

Our Ecclesiastical Historians are read only to a very limited extent by our Church members; consequently but a few are familiar with the details of Church History. The importance of such knowledge to them no one can for a moment question. But it is looked upon as a department above their line of reading and study, and more properly belonging to learned Doctors of Divinity, and to accomplished scholars. We may go farther and say without offence, that many ministers, even, pay but little attention to this great subject. The venerable Dr. Miller, of Princeton, used to observe to our class, that “a minister who was a good Church Historian, would never be at a loss for a Sermon or a Lecture.” When certain controversies arise in the Church, for the time being the Historians are much sought after: but when the battle is over, the armor is returned, and the books are closed like old arsenals.

Now to have a Church History for the families of the Lord's people,—a History which parents and children can use intelligently and profitably,—is certainly a thing to be desired. Such a History would serve as a reference book in the family. For example: should they desire to know when and how the Church of God originated, they could turn to the History and find out. Or should they wish information on various points, such as, what are the covenants of Works and of Grace?—when did God give His

Church a visible and distinct organization?—who are the regularly constituted members of that Church?—is the Church under the Old and New Dispensations one and the same?—who is the only true Head of the Church?—who are the officers of the Church?—has the Church any temporal Head?—what are its Sacraments, its law of the Sabbath, its law of marriage?—what of type and shadow passed away when Christ came, and what of substance remained?—what is a miracle?—what is prophecy?—what books does the Church receive as canonical?—what are the doctrines of the Church (for what is a History of a Church without its doctrines)?—does the Church hold to the doctrine of the Trinity, of the Divinity, Humanity, and person of Christ?—the atonement, election, regeneration, final perseverance and eternal punishment?—in all these inquiries the History would aid them. It would also assist them in all matters pertaining to Church government and discipline, and in all points of pure history. *

It would be presumption to suppose that every fact in history, every date in chronology, every place in geography, every doctrine in Theology, every question in Church government and discipline, and every difficulty of every kind could be accurately and finally determined in such a History. Human imperfection and weakness forbid the idea. The literary and theological world is much divided. Opposite views of the same subjects are strenuously maintained by different schools and denominations. Since the beginning of the world men have not been able to think alike. Ordinarily, if men please their own party or creed, it is as much as they aspire unto, or hope to attain. I make no pretensions to the production of so desirable a History of the Church, in this work; and yet it is my hope that the people of God may, in the way indicated, derive some benefit from it. My effort has been to give what I conscientiously believe to be the mind and will of God as expressed in His Holy Word, on all subjects falling within the scope of the History. With reference to the correctness of our interpretations and conclusions, every reader must decide for himself. He has the Word of God before him, and we have had nothing more. One important point will be gained in the case of those who differ from us. They will see the Scripture proof—the “thus saith the Lord”—relied on for the support of views which they have been accustomed to reject; and may be led to examine afresh their own opposing views by the light of the Law

and the Testimony; in which good work I am sure I will wish them most sincerely the teachings and guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order that they may be led infallibly to the truth. Let me not utter a discourteous sentiment, or make an unkind remark against any who hold the fundamental and saving truths of God's Word, and with whom we differ in non-essentials only; but, with the same breath let me add, that it is not required of the purest charity to speak favorably of those who embrace and propagate soul-destroying errors, and who do not fellowship with the Lord and with His true disciples.

The difficulty encountered in preparing the work has been to condense it. There have been many temptations lying all along the course, to introduce collateral matter,—to discuss various incidental but interesting questions, to extend expositions of Scripture, to explain prophecies, and settle objections, and relieve doubts: in a word, the difficulty has been to confine the attention to the one subject and to the one object, and to deal with that, and with that only to the extent necessary to its perfect elucidation. How far I have succeeded, those who favor the book with a reading must be the judges. If they are disappointed in finding many things put in, which they would desire left out; and many things left out which they would desire put in, my answer must be, that I have followed my best judgment; and in doing so, both in introducing and in excluding matter, I have not always succeeded in satisfying myself.

It becomes me to advertise the reader that the work is not what is commonly called "A Bible History," nor is it a connection of Sacred and Profane History, nor is it a History of the Antiquities of the Jews, nor a History of that people as a nation. Their History is necessarily given, but as the visible Church of God. Nor is it a work on Chronology, or Prophecy. It is strictly what it purports to be:—a History of the Church of God; and nothing is introduced but what we have thought essential to the proper composition of such a History.

The present volume closes with the Old Testament. The remaining volume will follow so soon as it can be got ready for the press, if the Lord will, whose blessing is humbly invoked upon the work as far as it is completed.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Holy Scriptures are the only, and the all-sufficient, and the finally authentic and authoritative source of the History of the Church of God.

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to make a special and written revelation of Himself to the children of men. The fact that He has made such a revelation, aside from other most weighty considerations, proves its necessity. Emanating from God, the product of His infinite power, wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth, its authority is infinite and undisputed, and extends throughout the entire circle of subjects and objects upon which God has therein directly and designedly declared His will.

We, by this short but conclusive train of reasoning, in all matters of religious faith and practice, elevate the Holy Scriptures to supreme authority; for, to the voice of God all creatures in heaven and in earth must reverently and implicitly bow.

The Lord God has propounded His revelation as of supreme authority, and men have deviated from it, or mutilated or rejected it, at the peril of His everlasting displeasure. Consequently, the true servants of God in all ages have acknowledged and submitted to this supreme authority. But whenever His professed servants have declined from, or not known, the inward and spiritual experience of the truth and living power and grace of the Holy Scriptures, they have been open to the reception of other rules and standards for the determination of their faith and practice; and not unfrequently

they have terminated their career in deism and infidelity. "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying: I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John viii. 12. Immediately as we cease to follow Him who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person, we walk in darkness. Heb. i. 3; John i. 18; iii. 13.

But it has occurred in the history of the Church in ancient and comparatively modern times, that professed believers, while adhering to the Holy Scriptures as of supreme and ultimate authority, have set limits to their subject-matter, and consequently to their authority. They are perfect and authoritative, say they, as far as they go, but do not cover the entire matter of revelation and of instruction to men. They have therefore to supply this lack, foisted in traditions or an oral revelation from God, which they advance to a like authority with written revelation itself. Such was the conduct of the Pharisees of old, and of the Roman Catholics of later times, with this addition in the case of the latter, that they have introduced, as part of the canon of Scripture, apocryphal books, spurious and uninspired works, with the obvious design of giving support to some of their most offensive and antichristian dogmas.

The insufficiency of Scripture for the settlement of our faith and practice, in respect to the constitution and government of the visible church, is an opinion that has its advocates. They say much is left to be settled by reason, and propriety, and expediency, and especially by the customs and usages of the earliest ages after the death of the Apostles. Hence to determine the authority of a rite, or an office, they run their inquiry along the line of ecclesiastical history backward and upward, strengthening their opinion as they proceed, until it becomes in their judgment clearly established as they reach the times of the Apostles. Nothing now remains but that they enter the Scriptures with their conclusions, and by a little effort they are enabled to make them give a verdict in their favor, and the point is made out and their work accomplished. We prefer the just method, and the method more honorable

to God and more satisfactory in its results to ingenuous minds, namely, that of arguing out of and from the Scriptures downwards. Pursuing this method, it will appear that the fundamental doctrines and correspondent duties, and the institutions and ordinances and offices of the Church, and the general principles regulating discipline and government, are "either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture." Fundamental truth, truth essential to the basis of the Church, must be deduced immediately from Scripture; truth, non-essential, which may, for example, concern the conduct of divine worship, the manner of administering ordinances, or the particular form of government, may be "ordered" by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to general rules and facts bearing on the points in "the Word" itself. Customs and usages for which their advocates boast an origin coeval with Apostolic times carry no other argument in favor of their divine original than a presumptive one. If the Scriptures are silent, either in direct testimony or in clear and necessary inference, the argument is of little value.

Embracing the doctrine of sound Protestants,—which has indeed always been the doctrine of God's true people, and upon which they have rested their eternal interests, and for which they have contended, and suffered, and laid down their very lives,—that the Holy Scriptures are the only and all-sufficient and finally authentic and authoritative source of the history of the Church of God, we ask the question, What is the Church but the creation of God? What know we of the Church other than as God has revealed it to us? The Scriptures, then, are the first and the last book of ecclesiastical history. Therein God has revealed his Church upon earth in its origin, covenants, constitution, doctrines, ordinances, members, officers, government, and discipline. No mortal of his own wisdom or power dare attempt the furnishing of any one portion, however insignificant, of this building of God. Aside from the Scriptures, he knows nothing of it. Begin our inquiries and our controversies with what and when we may, we are forced to ascend and drink, that we may be satisfied from this true

and only source. The writings of men, in so far as they contain anything valuable in relation to the Church, do but draw forth and exhibit that which they have first learned out of God's lively oracles. And it follows undeniably, that as the Scriptures are the only authoritative, all-sufficient source of the history of the Church, so they are the all-sufficient source interpreted in the manner already indicated.

The Scriptures have not always existed in their present complete form, but have been composed in separate and consecutive parts, and from first to last extend over a long tract of time. This fact does not, however, at all militate against their all-sufficiency. For, as far as they were at any time composed, so far were they an all-sufficient source of the history of the Church. If inspired records existed before the flood, they were sufficient for the time; if they existed between the flood and the call of Moses, they were sufficient for the time. The Pentateuch alone was sufficient until the birth of our Lord. Additions were made from Moses to Malachi, but not so much in the way of new material as in the way of expansion, illustration, and application. The Old Testament was all-sufficient for the Church under the Old Dispensation. The addition of the New Testament makes God's Word sufficient for the Church to the end of time.

Uninspired writings are sources of information respecting the Church as it exists and advances on earth, and possess the authenticity and authority of such writings; but they rise not above a mere testimony. They cannot, of themselves, add anything to the constitution, doctrines, order, and government of the Church. Their opinions and conclusions are human, and may be wise, and just, and good, and deserving of veneration; yet, to be conclusive, they must accord with the standard. Hence, we may quote Heathen and Christian writers, even the best of the Fathers; but they are witnesses only, and we pass by them for the settlement of our faith, and "search the Scriptures." Upon inspired ground, and with inspired testimony, we fight all our battles and win all our victories in the history of the Church of God.

We shall not attempt in the outset to define what the

Church of God is, but in our progress we shall hope to make some discoveries of the body itself; and then it will be seen to be what it really is—or, in other words, it will speak for and define itself.

But where should the history begin? Properly and only with its first existence. Perfect histories take their origin with the origin of the individuals, the nations, or the subjects of which they treat. History naturally descends the stream, from the gushing fountain to the ocean. It begins with the birth, and ends with the death. It first lays the foundation, and then proceeds to rear the superstructure. To compose history backwards, is to invert the order of nature. To begin history in the middle, without some truthful and well-digested sketch or clue to all that occurred before, is to labor without precision, and to leave the minds of learners in much darkness and perplexity; and, in fine, to oblige them to undertake for their own satisfaction that which the historian neglected to do for them, namely, to go back and begin at the beginning.

History written in this correct method, while it is more interesting, cannot fail to be more satisfactory and instructive. Where doubt arises touching any matter embraced in it, the doubt arises either from the imperfection of the testimony on the point, or from differing interpretations of the testimony itself. In such a case the historian presents his views upon his own responsibility. His readers, having all the available facts before them, agree or disagree with him, as they consider and decide for themselves.

History is a connected and truthful record of facts and events. Its soul, its substance, is the truthful record, and nothing less nor more. History may be written in two modes. The first, which is the natural and only mode, is to collect and chronologically connect the facts and events which compose its matter and staple, and then, by careful consideration and comparison, advance to our conclusions and add to our stock of wisdom. This may be termed the inductive method. The second is: first, to elaborate our theories, and then so to collect, and arrange, and color our facts and events, as to unite them into the support of our theories. It may, indeed, happen that

our theories are correct; but we have taken a wrong method to demonstrate that they are so. If incorrect, how pernicious our influence over our inconsiderate and trustful readers! What is called the philosophy of history is too frequently groundless speculation. True philosophy reposes upon facts; upon acknowledged truths, whether physical or spiritual. The moment philosophy steps from this sure foundation, it passes into speculation. We are not wanting in ecclesiastical historians of this theoretical and speculative cast. They reason out philosophically, and reason up to facts, instead of originally searching out and establishing the facts, and then reasoning from them. Such historians are not of much value beyond their discovery and accumulation of veritable material for the use of judicious minds.

With scarcely a notable exception, our leading ecclesiastical historians, ancient and modern, begin the history of the Church of God in the middle, if the expression may be allowed. Where, and at what period? At the birth of our Lord. And, without giving even a sketch of the history of the Church prior to that event, they proceed to lay the foundations and to build thereupon, chiefly out of the New Testament alone, uniting thereto Apostolic Fathers, and fathers, and councils, and canons, and usages, without number. Nay, more: all prior to the birth of our Lord is sometimes summarily disposed of as shadows, and little else, no recognition being made of the original foundation, and constitutions, and doctrines of the Church, and no distinction drawn between that which, prior to the birth of Christ, was real and essential to the very nature and existence of the Church, and therefore necessarily abiding, and that which was merely typical and prophetic, and which, coming to fulfilment, necessarily passed away, yet leaving us in clear possession of the substance, which previously we held and enjoyed under the shadow. The truth of the matter is, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God "slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. xiii. 8. The covenant of grace was as real and efficacious in operation before, as it was after, His incarnation; and His spiritual body, the Church, enfolded in this covenant, was called out and

separated from the world, from generation to generation, and had as real and as organized an existence before as after that wonderful event. No new Church, distinct from the old, was set up by our Lord at His coming. The child that attains his majority at the time appointed of his father, and is no longer under tutors and governors, but is lord of all, is not a new man altogether. He is the same, but advanced to higher dignity, and privileges, and powers, and enjoyments. The sun partially obscured in mist and clouds, yet giving light over all the earth, and emerging visibly and effulgently into the clear blue expanse of the heavens, is the same sun still. So the Church, passing out of the Old into the New Dispensation, is the same Church still; and to sunder the Church under the one dispensation from the Church under the other, is not only an error, but a presumptuous dealing with the mind and will of God. We are to attend to the things written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning the Church, as well as to the things written in the New Testament. The Church is founded on the Apostles and Prophets both, "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." Eph. ii. 19-22.

The student, consulting the historians, or sitting at the feet of professors who write and lecture of the Church in the manner now adverted to, if he be a man of reflection, and one that searches into the foundations of things, will, sometimes at least, feel himself unsettled in respect to the truth or falsehood of many important facts and principles; and, when in after-life, with heavy responsibilities resting upon him, he is brought into contact with the conflicting dogmas of contending sects, not having been thoroughly instructed and grounded in the truth, he is liable to be driven about by every wind of doctrine; and finally, perhaps, in order that he may find some rest, takes refuge in an authority impudently usurped and blasphemously asserted and exercised, and not in convictions the result of patient and thorough inquiries after truth; or, with a happier result, driven by the blast of controversy, or led on by the earnest love of truth, and feeling the necessity of an ultimate and authoritative appeal, he may betake himself to the

history which God Himself has written of His Church, and there have all his doubts resolved, and his inquiries answered, and his faith established, and there discover arguments furnished him by the Holy Spirit Himself, sufficient for the overthrow of all errors with which he may be called upon to contend. His mind and his conscience enjoy a peaceful rest, so soon as he discovers that the true history of the Church lies within the inspired pages of the Old and New Testaments. If, contending with the Jews, he desires to prove that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, he must necessarily show the fulfilment of the types, shadows, and prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Dispensation, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth in the New. He must also demonstrate to the Jews, that the "Olive Tree," the Church under the New Dispensation, is identical with the "Olive Tree," the Church under the Old, now enlarged by the calling of the Gentiles, according to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, into which the rejected Jews will hereafter be gathered.

If he searches for the origin of the covenants of works, and of grace, which lie at the foundation of the Church, he runs from the New Testament backward and upward even to the creation and fall of our first parents. If he searches for the organization of the visible Church, or for the original and unrevoked constitution of this Church in respect to its members, he must go backward and upward from the New Testament until his inquiries run out and find a solution in the call of Abraham. If he desires conviction in respect to the character and orders of the ministry of God, he must pass out of the pages of uninspired historians and divines, and leave the courts of patriarchs and metropolitans and the chambers of ecumenical councils, and betake himself to the direct teachings of the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, diligently comparing the same with the previous communication of His will in the Old Testament. If he would understand what are the doctrines of God given to the Church for her edification and glory, he must discard, as of final authority, all canons and decrees of councils, and all traditions of men, and all creeds and confessions of faith, in themselves con-

sidered, and rely wholly upon the teachings of the Scriptures, not the New Testament alone, but the New and Old together.

History embraces both dispensations.

So far as our acquaintance with ecclesiastical history extends, and we pretend to no extensive learning in the matter, there is no work in any language that we have seen or heard of, which directly and fully covers this ground. It is not pretended that this idea of the true history of the Church is anything new: far from it. It is older than all the thoughts of men and all the writings of men on the subject. It is an original revelation itself. It is found in Moses, and in David, and in Isaiah, and in all the Prophets, when they speak of the Church and write her history, and prophesy her progress in after ages. Distinguished divines have suggested and affirmed it, and have founded able arguments for particular ends upon it; the Protestant confessions of faith affirm it; and one eminent historian, Frederick Spanheim, after his own manner, has carried it through.

Our design is, in humble reliance upon Divine aid, to carry out this idea by beginning with the earliest existence of the Church, and thence, proceeding by regular steps downward through the entire Scriptures to their close, cover the period of revelation only; and we shall endeavor to determine the Origin, the Covenants, the Doctrines, the Rites, Ceremonies, Ordinances, Members and Officers, Order and Discipline of the Church; and, briefly, the principal events of her progress, and especially her passage out of the Old into the New Dispensation, and show what of the Old found accomplishment as type, or shadow, or prophecy, and passed away in the New, and what remained afterward that pertained to the necessary existence and constitution of the Church; and what was the final and perfect state in which our Lord and His Apostles left the Church when the canon of Scripture closed.

It has been customary with writers to cast the four thousand years from the creation to the birth of our Lord, and then the hundred years from his birth to the close of the New Testament, into ages, or epochs, or periods of time, reaching from

one important or leading event to another, according to their fancy, some making a greater number and some a less. These divisions are convenient, and are a help to composition, and a help to memory. But as they do not suit my design, I shall make no use of them, but adopt a threefold division, natural to the plan of the History: namely, the first, reaching from the foundation of the Church after the fall to the call of Abraham—a period in which the Church existed without any clearly revealed and defined external organization; the second, from the call of Abraham to the coming of our Lord—a period in which the Church had a visible and organized form; the third, from the coming of our Lord to the close of the New Testament—a period when the Church, in her visibility and unity, passed out of all types and shadows into the substance, and assumed her final and perfect state.

For a simple and general division of Church history, the ground which we propose to cover would be the first, or inspired and authoritative part of Church history; while that which stretches from the close of the New Testament canon to the present time, would be the second or uninspired part of Church history. The first is indeed inconceivably the more important of the two. The second delivers to us the progress of the Church, successive ages after her perfection, and establishes nothing which enters into the being, and faith, and order of the Church. Its evidences and proofs are not primary but subsidiary. We follow down the tide of history, and mark the Church, in some periods rejoicing in her purity and glory, and in others oppressed by corruptions which invaded her bounds and impeded her progress, and even destroyed portions of her altogether. Possessing a true knowledge of the Church in the first part, we are enabled to navigate safely that sea of ecclesiastical history of the second part, which has been facetiously termed by one of our English historians, Dr. Jortin, “a sea without a bottom or a shore.”

As it greatly facilitates our conception and comprehension of any fact, or doctrine, or rite, or office in the Church, to be able to lay our finger upon the time, the place, and the circumstances of its first appearance or existence, we shall endeavor in the

History to do this, so far as it may be possible, and to give the entire testimony of the Scriptures on the point; and when a subject is thus once treated, it will not be referred to again. Once settled, it remains so. The reader will consequently be able to trace truth and error to the precise time and place of their appearance in the Church, and be armed for the support of the one and for the overthrow of the other. And it will be sometimes seen that, far away in the depths of the earlier history of the Church, serious and long-established errors and exhausting controversies are met and settled with a few but effective blows of the sword of the Spirit.

The chronology adopted is Archbishop Usher's, none other than that which has been introduced into our English Bibles, and with which English readers are most familiar, and which is sufficient for all practical purposes. It is a pleasing reflection, that the difficulty of settling the precise date of the leading events of history does not impair the truth of those events. They demonstrate their own existence. We may dispute the correctness of the year of the advent of our Lord; and yet who could deny that He did come? A thousand years hence the date of the Independence of the United States may be involved in confusion; yet what doubt could arise in respect to the fact?

Archbishop Usher wrote his *Annals of the Old and New Testaments* two hundred years ago. There were chronologists in the world before him. Many have written since his day, but he holds his footing; and the commendation passed upon him over a hundred years since by that most solid and learned man, Dean Prideaux, may with much reason be repeated. Saith he, "Several have, in Latin, written by way of annals of the times of which I treat, as Gorneillus, Salianus, Capellus, and others. But above all of this kind are Archbishop Usher's *Annals of the Old and New Testaments*, which is the exactest and most perfect work of chronology that hath been published, to which I acknowledge I have been much beholden; and, although I have not always concurred with him, yet I have, for the most part, especially in the ordering and settling the years to which I refer the actions that are

related; for I look upon what he hath done before me herein to be the surest and safest clue I could conduct myself by through all the intricate labyrinths of ancient times; and therefore I have generally followed him in fixing of the years, excepting only where I saw very good reason to do otherwise. But as to the other annalists I have mentioned, I have found it mostly end in loss of time to consult them." Conn. 1, pref. p. 19.

THE HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE CREATION AND PRIMITIVE STATE OF MAN.

THE Holy Scriptures do not open with an appeal to reason, but to the faith of men. They do not implore, but command reception. Their voice is that of authority. They do not offer to men an argument to prove that there is a personal God, independent of the material universe, and distinct and separate from every creature, to prepare and induce them to receive with due submission and obedience His commands. Nor do they offer an argument to prove that the heavens and the earth are not eternal, but on the contrary are the product of a great First Cause, and therefore are justly subject to His will. Both facts are directly asserted. "In the beginning"—when as yet there was none of them—"God"—the eternal, self-existent, almighty, and sovereign God—"created the heaven and the earth." Gen. i. 1. "He calleth those things which be not as though they were." Rom. iv. 17. The heavens and the earth owe their existence to His will. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth: He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9.

We receive the existence of God, and the creation of all things by Him out of nothing, by faith. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is: and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him;" and, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which

do appear." Heb. xi. 6, 3. And as God and Creator, we yield unreservedly to His sovereign government and all-wise and righteous disposal of all things.

To these truths revealed to faith our reason and our conscience give unqualified assent. We are compelled to debase ourselves and to do violence to our natures, in order either to pervert or to deny them. The seeds of them are never wholly obliterated from the mind of man. Rom. i. 18-32. Ps. xiv. 1. Rom. ii. 14-15. Our race began its existence on earth under revelation, for God immediately and directly revealed Himself, His works, and His will, to our first parents upon their creation.

The great end for which God created all things is His own glory: that is to say, by the manifestation of His power, wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth, in the creation, preservation, government, and end of all things. He might not only reveal Himself as infinitely excellent, glorious, and lovely, in the eyes of his intelligent creatures, but in His own eyes also, and be satisfied in Himself in His infinite perfections for ever and ever. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. iv. 11. Of God it is said, "The Lord hath made all things for Himself," Prov. xvi. 4; "and by whom are all things, for whom are all things," Heb. ii. 10; and, to embrace all in one line, "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things." Rom. xi. 36.

The Church, as part of the creation of God, has for its last end the manifestation of His glory. It is of God, and through God, and to God; and the revelation of His glory in His Church will occupy not only all time, but eternity also.

Of whom is this Church of God on earth composed? Of the entire race of mankind, or of a part only? Of a part only. There must therefore have been a period when a separation was made between the people of God and the men of the world; and in commencing the history of the Church, the events which led to this separation, or, in other words, which immediately preceded the existence of the Church, and indeed gave birth to that existence, demand most careful considera-

tion. They do indeed lie at the foundation, and are never lost sight of, but give color and form and direction to the history that follows; and to be either altogether ignorant of these events, or to misunderstand their true nature and relations, would be disastrous to the inquirer after truth. We may therefore comprehend to some good extent why the Holy Spirit has placed them in the very first pages of the Book of God.

The events to which we refer may be cast under the following heads: The Creation and Primitive State of Man. The Institution of Marriage. The Covenant of Works under which Man was placed for Trial. The Institution of the Sabbath. The Existence and Agency of Angels. The Fall and Consequences. The Covenant of Grace. The Institution of Sacrifices and Administration of the Covenants. Having disposed of these events, the Reason and Necessity of the Existence of the Church will appear, and her Everlasting Foundations be laid in the Glorious Covenant of Grace—Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner-stone thereof.

To proceed in the prescribed order, we enter first upon the Creation and Primitive State of Man.

Upon the sixth and last day of the creation of the heavens and earth, and crowning that glorious work, God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Gen. i. 26. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Gen. ii. 7. And when "the Lord God brought every beast of the field and every fowl of the air to Adam," then "Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him." Gen. ii. 18-20. "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him." Gen. ii. 18. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and

closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh ; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." Gen. ii. 21-24. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it ; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Gen. i. 27-28. "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Gen. i. 31. "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." Gen. ii. 25. Such was the creation of our first parents.

The Holy Spirit, however, in recording their creation, reveals the manner in which they were created, and so introduces us to a knowledge of their primitive state as the children of God.

Their creation is announced with a solemnity and deliberation indicative of its importance. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ;" and then is it added with emphasis that the Divine purpose had been carried into effect. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them." Gen. i. 26-27. They alone, of all this lower world, were created in the image of God. Here are dignity, worth, and glory !

Wherein did that image of God consist ? How was man made like God ?

Not in body, for God is without a body. "God is a spirit." The body of man, wonderfully and curiously wrought, is not surpassed by any other work of God. It stands at the head of all, and is the sum and crown and glory of all. Its uprightness, perfection, and beauty, indicate its true and lordly superiority. But this body is distinct and separable from his soul

or spiritual nature. The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, from preëxisting matter. In this he was and is literally "of the earth;" but his spirit, like that of the angels, was an immediate creation of God; for, this body being formed, the Lord God then "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." This "breath of life" was not merely a quickening principle, a vital force, enabling man as a mere animal to move and perform every act of life; but it included more, even a rational and an immortal and accountable spirit, now mysteriously united to his animal nature, over which it is to preside and rule. The body, with all its powers and members, is but the instrument of the soul, a tabernacle in which it dwells while conversant with this lower world. Gen. ii. 7; iii. 19; Eccl. xii. 7; Acts vii. 59; Matt. x. 28.

And it was in this, his soul, or spiritual nature, that man was made like God. "God is a spirit," and man is a spirit. Heb. xii. 9, 23. Yet that soul is not an emanation or efflux from God himself; it is not a part of the divine nature or essence, but is a created dependent spirit, distinct from God, yet partaking of His likeness as a spirit, in its measure. Numb. xvi. 22; xxvii. 16; Prov. xvi. 2; Matt. x. 28.

Now this likeness is evinced by an induction of particulars:

In that very spiritual nature itself: God is a spirit, incorporeal, infinite, independent, invisible, and eternal; "The father of spirits" and "the God of the spirits of all flesh." The spirit of man is not material, but created, finite, dependent, and invisible to himself, at least in this life, and also to his fellow-men; yet immortal, not through any indestructible essence of which it is created, but wholly through the sovereign will and sustaining power of God. In this spirituality of nature man is like God, most exalted and precious, crowned with glory and honor, and set over the works of his hands.

In knowledge: God is a God of knowledge and of infinite understanding. So He has endowed man with understanding, a faculty of mind whereby he is enabled to perceive and to comprehend the existence, properties, relations, and ends of all things brought before it, itself among the rest, and God

the infinite and glorious Creator, above all. And this understanding He called into exercise immediately after his creation, and also inspired him with an amount of knowledge, which at that time he could have obtained in no other manner. For example, He revealed Himself to man, and inspired him with a knowledge of Himself as his God and Creator. He inspired him with a knowledge of all the beasts of the field, and every green thing suitable for food, and of times and seasons, and the methods of cultivating, dressing, and keeping the garden of Eden; of the origin of Eve, of the nature, the tender devotion and perpetuity of the marriage relation, and its precedence over any other relation which might exist among men. But what is of special interest to us, his knowledge extended to all his relations to God and to his companion, and consequently to all his duties growing out of those relations. In a word, he had the law of God written in his heart, which, in the absence of a written revealed law, is denominated the law of nature; and such was the extent of his knowledge in respect to God and his duties, and such the correctness of the operations of his understanding and the purity of his conscience, that he needed no other teacher beyond himself. He was a law unto himself. He knew how to regulate his heart and life that he might be acceptable to God. He was not created and thrown an infant upon the world, but a full-grown man in the perfect maturity of his powers, both of mind and body, and that mind enlightened and expanded, free from every defect, and set in healthful motion by the inspiration of the Almighty, and by his immediate presence and communion. Col. iii. 10.

In righteousness: God is infinite rectitude in His nature, in His law, and in all His acts. 1 John i. 5. So is man in his measure. His affections will run in harmony with the mind and will of God, in the observance of every duty devolving upon him. He loved God supremely, and his neighbor as himself: and therefore fulfilled the law, and merited the appellation of righteous. Eph. iv. 24; 2 Cor. iii. 18.

In true holiness: God is holy, and, as man came from His hand, he was holy. His entire nature was free from every

moral defect; it had no taint of sin, no bias, no inclination towards evil of any kind. His thoughts, feelings, and actions, were spontaneously holy, while his communion with God was direct and unrestrained.

In Happiness: God is the ever-blessed God, and infinitely happy in Himself. So man is like Him in this respect also; for, as a result of the purity and perfection of his nature, and the just and holy exercise of all his powers, both of body and mind, he was happy. Yet not happy in and of himself, as God is; for he is but a creature, and his turning and consecration must be to God, who alone could be his satisfying and exhaustless portion. His chief end therefore was to glorify and enjoy Him, and while he attained that end he was happy. Col. i. 16; Rom. i. 20; Gen. i. 31; Rom. xi. 36.

And it may further be added that the image of God is seen in *Dominion*. Man images forth the power and authority of God, in being clothed with dominion over all this lower world. Ps. viii. 1-9; 1 Cor. xi. 7; Gen. i. 28.

Our first parents being created in this image, or likeness of God, were, in this their primitive state, perfect. God Himself pronounced them "very good." Gen. i. 31. "He made man upright," Eccl. vii. 29, "and rejoiced in the work of His hands; for His delights were (now) with the sons of men." Eccl. viii. 31; Job xxxviii. 7.

That our first parents were in their primitive state perfect and upright before God, is not only thus evident from the history of their creation itself, but also from the subsequent fall and ruin; and from the fact that in his salvation by a Redeemer, as a requisite for the favor of God and for communion with Him, and for an introduction to His presence in Heaven, the lost image of God must be restored in the soul of man. He must be newly created by the Holy Spirit of God and made like to Himself, as he came originally from the hands of God. Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10; John iii. 1-6.

CHAPTER II.

THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE.

HAVING in this manner created man in His image and after His own likeness, "male and female," then did the Lord God "bring the woman which he had made unto the man," for his "help meet" and "wife," in order that he himself might join them together, Matt. xix. 4-6, and that they might be "one flesh." Gen. ii. 21-24.

In pursuance of our design, which is to unfold the institutions and doctrines and ordinances of the Church as they are revealed throughout the entire Scriptures, at the precise time that they first appear in the History, we must here treat of this divine institution.

The Lord formed man with various instincts and propensities, both mental and physical, which lay a foundation and create a necessity in his very nature for marriage. For this reason He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him," Gen. ii. 18-24; and made "the woman for the man," 1 Cor. xi. 9; and joined them together, Matt. xix. 4-6; and ever after, throughout His Holy Word, He carefully watches over this relation and preserves it from defilement. Gen. xx. 1-18; xii. 11-20; xxvi. 6-11. It is recognized and reordained and strengthened in the Decalogue. Exod. xx. 12, 14, 17. God forbids and punishes transgressions of it, Levit. xviii. 20; Prov. ii. 15-18; vi. 23-35; vii. 1-27; Rom. vii. 2, 3; Matt. v. 27, 28; Mark x. 11, 12; Eph. v. 3-6; Levit. xx. 10; Jer. v. 7-9; Mal. iii. 5; Heb. xiii. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Rev. xxi. 8; xxii. 15. He defends it

from perversion and corruption, Mal. ii. 14–17; Matt. xix. 1–12, &c.; Exod. xx. 14; and, when departed from by the practice of polygamy, He subjects polygamists to stringent regulations which were designed to prevent its growth and abuse, and to lead men back to the institution as it was in the beginning. See all the laws instituted by Moses for the government of the Church in relation thereto. Mark x. 1–12; Deut. xxiv. 1–4; xxii. 19, 29, &c. He calls marriage, in respect to the wife, “the covenant of her God,” Prov. ii. 17; that is, a covenant ordained of God. And in respect to her husband she is called “the wife of thy (his) covenant.” Mal. ii. 14. And in the last days the Lord Jesus Christ, by his infinite authority, restores marriage to its original form, and so is it to be observed in the Church until the end of the world. Matt. xix. 1–12; Luke xvi. 18; Matt. x. 1–12; Rom. vii. 3; 1 Cor. vi. 9; Heb. xiii. 14; Gal. v. 19; Luke xviii. 20; John viii. 3; 1 Tim. iii. 2; Titus i. 6.

The providence of God is in harmony with His word, since, in a most wonderful manner, He keeps up, in the natural increase of the race, the equality of the sexes at marriageable ages, and that over the whole earth, and ever since its foundation; and then continually stretches out His hand against transgressors, who by multiplying wives would disturb this great law; and He subjects them to sure evils, in the form of family divisions and strifes, bitter wrath, and cruel revenge, diseases, sudden and shameful deaths, ungoverned and wicked offspring, decayed fortunes, and various other judgments. Gen. iv. 23, 24; xvi. 1–16; xxx. 1–27; xxxvii. 1–36; xix. 1–38; and chapters 6 and 7, &c.

Finally, nature itself speaks in favor of marriage, Gen. vi. 6–11; for in all nations, civilized and savage, however much it may in many respects be abused and perverted, the laws ordained, and the customs that obtain in respect to the institution, evidence that men attach a peculiar value and sacredness to it.

Thus ordained of God, marriage stands first in order of time and of importance in the social relations of men. It precedes and lays the foundation for all societies and governments, and,

according to its own purity or impurity, determines their character for good or evil. It is the first government men know and feel, and in which they are taught love, veneration, and respect for superiors, subordination and obedience to law, and a due regard to the rights and interests of others.

It partakes also of the nature of a civil institution, as is evident from the laws and regulations concerning it given by God to His Church, at the time that Church was erected into a civil society, or state, for a given time and for specific purposes. Exod. xx. 14; Deut. xxii. 13, 27; xx. 7; xxiv. 1-5; xxi. 14; Exod. xxi. 7-12; Levit. 18th, 19th and 20th chapters; Gen. xxxviii. 24; Levit. xxi. 9; Exod. xxii. 16, 17; Deut. xxiii. 2-17; Numb. v. 12-31. And these laws and regulations have been adopted, to a greater or less extent, into the laws, at least of all civilized and Christianized nations, and are perpetually binding upon men to the end of time, Gen. i. 27, 28; ii. 24; are honorable in all, Heb. xiii. 4; and may not be prohibited by any human authority; for the constitution of our nature adapting and inclining us to marriage, and the law of God commanding it for the increase of the race, and for the comfort and happiness of man, are not to be assailed by the authority of man. The attempt to do so, under whatever pretexts, and limited to whatever classes of society, is a direct assault upon the very nature of man itself, a blow levelled at his social peace and prosperity, an attack upon the order and purity of society, and an infidel trampling under foot of the law of God, which will meet with rebuke and sore punishment at His hands. Heb. xiii. 4; Prov. v. 1-23; 1 Cor. vii. 2; ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 2, 12; v. 14; 1 Cor. vi. 15-20. "Forbidding to marry" is set down as a "departure from the faith" "in the latter times," and classed with "doctrines of devils," and "speaking lies in hypocrisy." 1 Tim. iv. 1-3. It is a yoke upon men's consciences and instincts, both cruel and wicked, and leads to many infamous and unnatural crimes, of which we have abundant examples in the societies and orders of men and women who have undertaken to live as celibates; and in no sects of religionists do the evils appear more glaring than in that of the Roman Catholics, throughout all the differ-

ent communities of monks, and nuns, and orders of their ministry, from the highest dignitary to the lowest, from the time celibacy began to be practiced by them; especially from the decree of Gregory VII., in the last quarter of the seventh century, when the whole priesthood were forced into it.

Marriage consists in the union of one man with one woman, the original marriage of our first parents being the pattern of all that should follow. Gen. ii. 18; Matt xix. 1-8; Mal. ii. 15; 1 Cor. vii. 2; Mark x. 5-9.

Of this union the husband is the head, because created first. Gen. ii 7; 1 Tim. ii. 13; 1 Cor. xi. 3; 1 Pet. iii. 6. And the woman, created out of the man (Gen. ii. 21-24; 1 Cor. xi. 7, 8); and for the man (1 Cor. xi. 9); is the weaker vessel, (1 Tim. ii. 14; 1 Pet. iii. 7; Eph. v. 23,) and by express commandment subjected to her husband (Gen. iii. 16; 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35; Numb. xxx. 1-16; 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12; Eph. v. 22-24; Col. iii. 18; 1 Pet. iii. 1-6; Titus ii. 5); to whom her milder labors of life are assigned. (1 Tim. v. 14; Gen. xviii. 6-9; Prov. xxxi. 10-31; Titus ii. 3-5.)

It is the most tender, perfect, and intimate union formed among mortals, which appears from the peculiar manner of Eve's creation, which, it seems, was designed to enforce this conception of it (Gen. ii. 21-24); from Adam's reception of Eve from the hand of God, and His pronouncing them one flesh (Eph. v. 28, 29); from the union being voluntary, and founded upon a mutual esteem and affection, far superior to that entertained for any other individual on earth besides; resulting in an inalienable right in, and possession of each other's persons, and of each other's services and property, for mutual enjoyment, comfort, and support, while spared together in life; Gen. xxiv. 58, 67; ii. 22-24; Eph. v. 25, 28; Col. iii. 19; 1 Pet. iii. 7; 1 Cor. vii. 3-5; Prov. v. 15-23; Eccl. ix. 9; Mal. ii. 14; Sol. Song viii. 6, 7; 1 Tim. v. 8; Prov. xxxi. 10-31; and, above all, from the union being likened unto the mysterious, the wonderful, the tender, the merciful and gracious union which our Lord Jesus Christ maintains with His Church. Eph. v. 22, 23; Isa. liv. 5, 6; Jer. iii. 14; Ezek. xvi. 8-13; Hos. ii. 19.

Marriage endures for life. By the very nature of the union itself, being that of affection, devotion, consecration to each other; 1 Cor. vii. 3, 4; Gen. ii. 22-24; and by the assertions of the Holy Scriptures, 1 Cor. vii. 39; Rom. vii. 2; and by all the endearing consequences of children, and the responsibilities of their support and education and settlement in life, 1 Tim. v. 8; Gen. xxx. 30; 2 Cor. xii. 14; Gen. xxiv. 35, 36; xxxi. 15, 16; Prov. xiii. 22; xix. 14; 1 Thess. ii. 11; Eph. vi. 4; it admits of no dissolution, except by the hand of God in death, or the transgression of the covenant on the part of either the husband or wife, by overt acts of infidelity, or by voluntary, obstinate, and hopeless abandonment one of the other, which is considered as identical with infidelity. Gen. xxiii. 1-3; xxv. 1; Matt. v. 31, 32; xix. 9; Rom. vii. 2, 3; 1 Cor. vii. 10-15, 39. Once formed however, aside from these just causes of dissolution, no powers vested in or assumed by men, either in Church or State, can put asunder those whom "God has joined." Nor can any reason which may be urged from difference of age, or standing, or from contrariety of temper, or intemperance, or feebleness of health, or loss of reason, or for unbelief, or heresy, or schism, or diversity of faith, ever be admitted to effect a dissolution. Matt. xix. 6; 1 Cor. vii. 12, 13.

Yet is marriage obligatory on none but those to whom it is given, and who would not remain in a single state. Matt. xix. 11, 12; v. 28; 1 Cor. vii. 2-9, 17; vi. 15-20; ix. 5; Prov. v. 15-23; xviii. 22; xix. 14; Eph. v. 22-33; 1 Tim. v. 14; 1 Thess. iv. 3-5.

It is supposed by some that the Apostle Paul discourages marriage in the seventh chapter of 1 Corinthians, vss. 25-40. But it is an error. The 26th verse is the key to his meaning throughout the passage. "I suppose therefore, that this is good for the present distress; I say, that it is good for a man so to be." The necessities and afflictions then present with Christians rendered the married state one of care and distress and distraction, and therefore that state might not be entered into, or might be postponed during such times. Yet, to marry under such circumstances, he says, is "no sin," vs. 28, and is even "doing well," vs. 38. He argues not against marriage, of

which God is the author, and which elsewhere he pronounces "honorable in all," Heb. xiii. 4; but is desirous of sparing the brethren who marry in distressing times, "trouble in the flesh." Vs. 28.

And the relation should be entered into considerately, respect being had to the wishes of parents, the laws of God, and of the State; Numb. xxx. 3-6; comp. 1 Cor. vii. 36, 37; Exod. xx. 12; Eph. vi. 1-4; Col. iii. 20; Gen. xxiv. 50-58; xxvii. 46; xxvi. 34, 35; xxviii. 6-9; and within the allowed degrees of consanguinity and affinity.

The marriages of men, immediately after the creation and the flood, were necessarily with the members of their own immediate families; but it may well be supposed that, as population increased, these family marriages would, measurably at least, cease with the necessity which created them; nor is there any law of God revealed in Scripture, regulating the degrees of consanguinity and affinity within which marriages might be contracted, previous to that promulgated at Mount Sinai through Moses, found in the 18th and 20th chapters of Leviticus. The only regulation concerning marriage, prior to this law, was ordained after the visible Church was set up in Abraham, and required a man to marry his deceased brother's wife, and so "to raise up seed to his brother;" to the end, as it was afterwards expressed, that his name be not put out of Israel. Deut. xxv. 5-10; Gen. xxxviii. 1-11. This regulation extended beyond the husband's brother to the nearest kinsman, having the right of redemption. Ruth iii. 12, 13; iv. 5-10. The reason and design of it were to preserve distinct the families of the descendants of Abraham, and so render perfect and clear the genealogy of our Lord, and the fulfilment of the promise that He should be of the seed of Abraham.

In the law regulating marriages, given to the Church of God in Levit. 18th and 20th chapters, two lines of connection are indicated; the first by consanguinity, and the second by affinity. We are not permitted to adopt the line of consanguinity and to reject that of affinity. Both must go together. The lines of consanguinity and affinity run parallel throughout, and establish the rule that a man may not marry any of his wife's

relations, nearer of kin than he may of his own; and the same rule applies also to the wife. The only exception allowed is that of the marriage of a brother's widow: a custom existing before Moses, as we have already shown, and for a specific purpose, and for no other, "that he raise up seed to his brother." The Messiah having come, and the genealogical records having accomplished their end, there is no longer any necessity for this exception. The unlawfulness of marrying a brother's widow, or, which involves a breach of the same law, of marrying a deceased wife's sister, remains; and this law regulating marriages forms no part of the ceremonial laws instituted by Moses, but is wholly moral in its origin and design, which were to preserve the people of God from the corrupt practices of the heathen, as expressly stated in Levit. xviii. 24-30 and xx. 22, 23; and to furnish the Church in all ages with a law regulating a matter of so great importance, which otherwise would have been left in confusion and perplexity. In this light is the law interpreted and applied in the New Testament, and is thereby acknowledged and established as the law of the Church under the New as well as the Old Dispensation. The reference made is by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. v. 1. He brands the connection, the marriage of a son with a step-mother, as incest, and says it is such incest "as is not so much as named among the Gentiles," and condemns the transgressor to excommunication! verses 2-5. By what law? The law of nature? Nay, verily, but by the law of God, given to His Church ages before. The prohibition of this very connection is found in Levit. xviii. 8, and xx. 11; and moreover this very case is singled out and cursed in the curses afterwards to be uttered from Mount Ebal. Deut. xxvii. 20. If the law in Leviticus is not the law of God's Church, then has the Church no law at all upon so important a matter! And who can give a reason why the Lord should give a law regulating marriage to His Church of old, and of authority for centuries, and a law to distinguish His people from the heathen, and to preserve them from their pollutions, and now, in these latter days of brighter glory and perfection in that Church, that that law should be set aside! The propriety and necessity of the law are as strong

as ever. The Church under the Old and the New Dispensation is one and the same, and this law once given has never been repealed, but confirmed by an Apostle, and consequently remains in force.

The design of marriage is to promote the comfort and happiness of mankind, the legitimate propagation of our species, the perpetuation of a pure, holy, and honorable seed in the Church, and purity of life and manners on the earth. Deut. xxxii. 2; Gen. ii. 18; 1 Cor. vii. 14; Gen. xvii. 1-27; Mal. ii. 15; Matt. xix. 14; Ps. cxxvii. and cxxviii; Gen. vi. 1-13; xix. 1-26; Jude vii.; Numb. xxv. 1-8; Levit. xviii. 1-5, 24, 30; xx. 22, 23; xv. 1-18; Ezra ix. and xl.; Neh. xiii. 24-27; Rom. i. 21-32; 1 Cor. vi. 9-20; v. 9-11; Gal. v. 19-21; Eph. v. 3-6, 1 Tim. i. 9, 10; Heb. xii. 15-17; xiii. 4; Rev. xxi. 8; xxii. 15; Jer. v. 7-9.

Nor is marriage a sacrament, as is asserted by the Roman Catholics. "A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ in His Church, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers," and consequently consists of two parts: the one, the outward sensible signs; and the other, the inward spiritual things represented, sealed, and applied thereby. According to the Scriptures, the reply of Protestants is, that in no conceivable sense is matrimony a sacrament; for, although a divine institution, that does not make it a sacrament any more than the Sabbath being a divine institution makes it a sacrament.

A sacrament is instituted within and for the Church alone, and distinguishes the Church from the world; but matrimony is common to all men, to believers and unbelievers. A sacrament necessarily has an outward visible sign of some inward grace promised. Matrimony has neither the one nor the other.

A sacrament is a spiritual ordinance wherein Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers; and this is the design of a sacrament. Matrimony is not in this sense a spiritual ordinance. It represents nothing of Christ or the new covenant, and it is expressly designed for the increase, purity, and happiness of the human

race. In Eph. v. 22, 23, the Apostle institutes a comparison between the union of husband and wife, and the union between Christ and the Church, and argues from the one to the other in enforcing the obligations and duties mutually devolving upon husbands and wives. But Christ does not make marriage a sacrament, any more than he makes a vine a sacrament, when He affirms, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," &c. John xv. 1-6; or a door, when He affirms, "I am the door;" and the like may be said of other comparisons and similitudes. Whatever represents a sacred thing is not therefore a sacrament. And when the Apostle says, "This is a great mystery," he explains himself: "but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." The mystery, so wonderful and gracious, is not in marriage, but in Christ spiritually taking believers into a union so intimate that they may be said to be partakers of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, and so become one flesh with Him.

A sacrament is such an ordinance as is applicable unto, and may be partaken of, by all men. But marriage is not; and the errorists, after making it a sacrament, "absurdly exclude their priests from it," and "stigmatize it with the character of impurity, pollution, and carnal defilement." A sacrament is defined in all its parts, and uses, and ends, which men are neither to add unto nor to take from, and which may be administered at all times and seasons, whenever called for by the people of God. But the errorists, having made matrimony a sacrament, affirming that it never was a sacrament under the Old Dispensation, but only under the New, have taken it iniquitously under their control as purely a spiritual matter with which secular power has nothing to do; for which they have made laws regulating what are, and what are not lawful marriages, altering the degrees within which marriage may be contracted as set down in the Scriptures, and granting the solemnization of marriage only at certain seasons of the year, except by dispensation, and affirming that persons lawfully divorced cannot marry again, and that priests and persons in sacred orders shall not marry at all, and enjoining many other burdens upon those who would enter into that state.

CHAPTER III.

EDEN, AND THE COVENANT OF WORKS.

To Adam and Eve, and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, (Gen. i. 29, 30,) was the grant made of the fruits, grains, and green herbs of the earth, for food; and into a garden of abundance, of beauty, and delight, the Lord God introduced the perfect and happy pair—a garden typical of that Heaven to which they were to aspire—situated east of the Promised Land, but whose particular locality is more a matter of curiosity than value, and may never be accurately determined. Luke xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. xii. 2-4; Rev. ii. 7; xxii. 1-5. Here the Lord assigns Adam his occupation and his trial. His occupation was to dress and keep the garden; and his trial was, “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Yea, he was forbidden even to do so much as to “touch it.” Gen. iii. 2, 3. By the very conditions of his origin and existence, he was under obligations of supreme love and obedience to God his creator, preserver, and benefactor. And in His sovereign pleasure, God put him upon the trial, whether he would fulfil these obligations or not, and this prohibitory command covered over the love and obedience which he owed to God in all things and forever.

“The tree of the knowledge of good and of evil,” was the sign of God’s sovereignty over man, and of man’s subjection

and obligation to a perfect and unending obedience; that his happiness was laid up in God, and could flow to him in sweet streams only through His favor; and that his state was now imperfect and incomplete, and would continue so to be, until his trial should have been successfully endured. Of all this he was reminded as oft as he looked upon the tree, and the remembrance would act as an incentive to duty. Should he renounce his God, disobey, and eat, then would he experience the evil threatened, which was "death." Should he cleave in holy love and obedience to God, and eat not, then would he experience "good." As punishment is threatened for disobedience, so by implication reward is promised to obedience. The punishment being "death," the reward must be "life." The Lord God set before our first parents life and death, happiness and misery. What had been already done in a way of trial with the angels in Heaven, is now done with man on earth.

The tree of life, of which he was permitted freely to eat while he was in a state of innocency, was a sign and seal of the promised reward of eternal life, which should be given him when his trial should be over, in Heaven, the paradise above. Rev. ii. 7; xxii. 2, 14. And for this reason it was called the "tree of life," and not because it contained in itself any power of perpetuating life in man. The passage (Gen. iii. 22): "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," &c., is not so to be understood. But, on the contrary, it is to be understood as a prohibition against his remaining longer in the garden, and eating of that tree, the sign and seal of that eternal life which he had forfeited by his transgression. He had no further any right to eat of it, and "therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden."

Brought into the world, man is not turned loose to follow the instincts of his animal nature, like the brutes that perish; but (Job xxxv. 10, 11) is endowed with another, a higher, even a spiritual nature, and is created for higher purposes, and a more glorious destiny. Job xxxii. 8. His chief end is "to

glorify God and to enjoy Him forever ;” and no sooner does he begin his existence, than he is set forward in a course for the attainment of this end by his Heavenly Father.

This special dealing of God with man in Eden deserves special consideration ; for it lies at the foundation of his spiritual history, and runs through the entire history of the Church.

The following facts are evident : God having a right to do what He would with His own, in His infinite wisdom and goodness, and for His own glory, placed our first parents upon trial under a positive command, and required no formal assent to it on their part, for the will of the creator is the law of the creature, and their upright natures taught them so. Psalms 95, 96, and 97. The trial under one commandment was really a trial under all. Obedience to one included obedience to all, for the duties of our first parents began with their existence and embraced both tables of the law, so that, prior to God’s giving them the positive command, they were bound to keep the whole law written upon their hearts.

To this command a threatening or penalty was attached, and a promise of reward implied, according to the rule of interpreting Scripture, when threatenings are expressed, promises are implied, and where promises are expressed, threatenings are implied, and so read Rom. ii. 6-9, and Gal. iii. 10, 11 ; and a condition required on the part of man for insuring the reward, which was perfect obedience. This trial was for a given time only, although the precise length of it is not stated, and the final reward or punishment was to be in eternity, which we infer from what has taken place since man’s fall. Man fell, and he now goes out of this world into another for his final and full measure of punishment. Had he stood, he would have gone out of this world for his full and final measure of reward. This is confirmed also by the fact, that Paradise was a type of Heaven ; and again by the fact that the happiness of the creature is to be with God, where He is, and that is not in this world.

These are the facts : and now what is this “ death ”—the penalty threatened ? The term is a general one, and in Scrip-

ture embraces everything of the nature of punishment for sin, which is to be executed upon the whole man, body and soul; and to reach him in all his existence, and in all places where he may be found.

Man did transgress, and by following his history we learn that this "death"—the wages of sin—was temporal death, and eternal life parted from that body so fearfully and wonderfully made. Ps. cxxxix. 14. The body became mortal. The seeds of death were implanted in it, and from that moment of transgression it began its march to the grave, although it was nine hundred years before it reached it, in order to return to the inanimate and formless dust from whence it was taken. Gen. iii. 19. Death was visited upon all Adam's posterity: "for in Adam all die," 1 Cor. xv. 22; Job iv. 19; xvii. 13-16; xix. 26; xxi. 20; xxxiv. 15; Gen. xxiii. 4; Prov. iii. 20; xii. 7; Rom. v. 12-21; 1 Cor. xv. 42-58.

And it was also spiritual death—not the death of the spirit or soul of man: for by the will of God that is immortal; but its utter moral and spiritual ruin, and the permanent corruption of its whole nature. Its life, which consisted in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, and happy communion with God, is totally lost. John iii. 6; Gen. vi. 5; Ps. xiv. 2-3; Rom. 1st and 2d chapters; Job xiv. 4; xv. 14-16; Ps. li. 1-12; Rom. viii. 5-8, 13; vii. 5-25; 1 Cor. ii. 14; Gal. v. 16-26; Eph. ii. 1-3; Jer. xvii. 9; Matt. xv. 17-20. The understanding, in its original strength, clearness, purity, and rectitude, became weakened and vitiated, blind and darkened in respect to God, and wholly incapable of any spiritual discernment of spiritual things. Rom. i. 21-25; 1 Cor. ii. 14; Eph. i. 18; Acts xxvi. 17-18; 1 Cor. ii. 9-10; 2 Cor. iv. 6; Ps. xiv. 2; xix. 12; Luke xxiv. 45; John viii. 43; Prov. iii. 5; Col. i. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 7.

The heart became earthly, sensual, devilish, and altogether estranged from God, and hatefully rebellious against Him; and no true and acceptable love to God or man remained within it. 1 Cor. vi. 9-10; Gal. v. 19-21; Col. iii. 1-10; Matt. vi. 19-34; 1 John ii. 15-17; Matt. xv. 19; John v. 42; Jer. xvii. 9-10.

The conscience became defiled, seared, and weakened. 1

Tim. iv. 2; Eph. iv. 18-19; Titus i. 15; Acts xxvi. 9-11; John xvi. 2; Exod. xxxvii. 23-25; Matt. xxvii. 3-8.

And the will, perverse, obstinate, and fully set to do evil. Eccl. viii. 15; Acts vii. 51; Exod. xxxii. 9; Isa. xlvi. 4; Exod. v. 2-9; 34, 35; Ps. lxxviii. 8; xev. 8; Matt. xxiii. 37; John v. 40; iii. 19-20; Matt. xxii. 1-3; Jer. v. 3; xvii. 23; Neh. ix. 29; Zach. vii. 11-12. This spiritual death is so universal in the soul that it pervades every faculty; and so entire, that nothing remains either in nature, or in thought, or in feeling, or action, that is truly agreeable to the will of God. He who knows what is in man so testifies of his spiritual death, and with His testimony the experience of Christians, and the character and conduct of men in all ages and in all nations of the world, have faithfully harmonized. Gen. vi. 11-12; Ps. xiv. 1-3; Isa. lix. 3-4; Micah. vii. 2-4; Rom. 1st, 2d and 3d chapters; Titus iii. 3.

And it was eternal death. Not that soul and body die eternally, but they are condemned to a punishment for sin which God has made eternal in duration. Matt. xxv. 31-46; iii. 12; 2 Pet. iii. 8-12; Rev. xx. 11-15; Rom. vi. 21-23. In the world to come, and at the time appointed, and the place prepared, God will inflict this eternal punishment upon the transgressors. Jude vs. 6-7; Jas. iv. 12; Rev. xxi. 8-27. So soon as Adam sinned, he was legally dead and obnoxious to this wrath, and only waited its infliction according to the good pleasure of God. The Scriptures everywhere interpret death in the sense now given. Ezek. iii. 18-20; xviii., 4, 32; xxxiii. 8-14; Rom. i. 32; vi. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 56; Gal. iii. 16; Eph. ii. 1-6.

The reward of life promised was the opposite of death, and consequently included the life of the body;—for, had our first parents maintained their integrity, they would never have known disease, or death, but perfect health and physical happiness would have been their reward: and, at the appointed hour of their departure out of the world to enter upon the glory and rewards of the paradise of heaven, their bodies of flesh and blood, without pain or distress, would have undergone a change most glorious in its nature, and which would have

fitted them for a new and spiritual state of existence. 1 Cor. xv. 50; Matt. xxii. 30; Gen. v. 24; Heb. xi. 5.

This reward also included the life of the soul, in possession of a pure and holy nature, and of a free, happy exercise of all its faculties in the love of God and of man, together with a constant advance in knowledge, holiness, and happiness: and, finally, a removal from happiness on earth to glory unspeakable in Heaven. This was the final reward which God in His goodness was pleased to annex to the obedience of man: in a word, the fruition of God. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." Ps. xvi. 11; Rom. x. 4-10; i. 16, 17; Gal. iii. 8-14.

And what is the obedience required of man to ensure this reward? Not only special obedience to the one command, but universal obedience to all the commands of God, Gal. iii. 12. Comp. Gen. ii. 17; Gal. iii. 14-19, 21, 22; Matt. xxii. 36-40; Rom. ii. 12-15; Gen. iii. 15; Rom. vii. 10; viii. 3; v. 12-14; 1 Pet. iii. 4; Rom. vi. 23; Jas. ii. 10, 11; and an obedience perfect and perpetual to the end of his trial: even the obedience for justification under the law, as described in the Word of God. Lev. xviii. 5; Rom. x. 4, 5; Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10-12; Neh. ix. 29; Luke x. 25-28; Matt. xxii. 37-40; Mark xii. 23-34. This obedience Adam was able to render: he was able to stand, yet free to fall, so that his further destiny was put in his own power. Let it here be noted, however, that as the creature can never lay the infinite Creator under obligations, so the eternal life promised Adam was not of the nature of a reward of his merit, but of the nature of an inestimable gift—a superadded blessing flowing from the good pleasure and bounty of the Lord. The Lord made Himself a debtor to Adam, so that in case of obedience he could claim the reward as a right, a debt due to him under God's own gracious promise. Rom. iv. 4 and xi. 34-36; Luke xvii. 10.

But a question vital to the history of the Church remains, namely: What position did our progenitor occupy under his trial? Did he stand for himself alone, or, as the first and head of his race, for all who should naturally descend from him?

He stood, or, in other words, was constituted by his Creator the federal head and representative of his race. The proof of this is clear. In the first place, God dealt with him in all other respects as the head of his race. He was the father of all, for all flesh derived existence from him. The institutions of marriage and of the Sabbath were given him as the head of the race; so also was his dominion over the world. Analogy also speaks: for birds, beasts, and fishes, all plants and trees, in their original creation, were heads and representatives of their respective races and species. In the second place, the treatment Adam experienced after the fall proves it. The curse upon the woman fell upon her as the representative of the race, and has descended upon all her daughters, without an exception. The curse of labor has fallen upon all Adam's sons. The curse on the serpent abides unbroken. The enmity between him and the seed of the woman continues as it was in the beginning. The expulsion from Eden was the shutting out of the whole race from the presence and favor of God, and it has never been revised. In the third place, the actual and permanent effects of his fall upon Adam's posterity, prove it. They followed his fortunes, and inherited his depraved nature, and all the bitter consequences of sin. They have labor, sorrows, and death temporal, spiritual, and eternal! In the fourth place, Adam is declared by God Himself in this transaction to be the head and representative of his race. Rom. v. 12-19; 1 Cor. xv. 21-22; 45-50. And in the fifth place, the whole work of Christ, and plan of redemption, proceed upon the federal headship of Adam. Rom. v. 12-19; Gen. iii. 15; Rom. xi. 32; Gal. iii. 21, 22.

Thus was Adam placed on trial as the head and representative of his posterity. They being included in his loins, his obedience would be reckoned their obedience, his sin their sin. If he lived they would live; if he died they would die. Hence the effects or consequences of Adam's obedience or disobedience would be implied unto, and be permanent upon his posterity. The whole arrangement resolves itself into the sovereign will of God; and the wisdom, justice, and benevolence of it admit of no question, since God's way is

perfect, and "the Judge of all the earth will do right." He peacefully reposes upon the infinite rectitude of his character. Matt. xi. 26 ; Job. xi. 7-9 ; Deut. xxix. 29 ; Rom. iii. 4, vii. 12 ; xi. 32-36 ; ix. 1-24.

Revolve the matter as long and deeply as we may, it is impossible to conceive how Adam could have been placed in a better condition, or under more favorable circumstances, or under better influences for enduring the trial. He was fresh from the hand of God: in nature, pure and holy, Eccl. vii. 29 ; Eph. iv. 24, and able to obey. The command was simple and direct. The two trees were ever before him as signs and seals of duty and reward ; and he was in communion with the ever-blessed God from day to day, and was aware also, through knowledge derived from God, of the relation in which he stood to his posterity, and of all the amazing interests committed to his hand. What trial could have been more fair and perfect ? As he fell, we may reasonably conclude that the result would not have been different, had each one of his posterity been placed in precisely the same situation, and stood for himself. And it may be added that the common sense and conscience of mankind assent to the trial and headship of Adam, inasmuch as, if Adam had stood, no objections would ever have been urged against either.

This dealing of God with our first parents in their state of innocency, for easy remembrance and comprehension, has been called "the Covenant of Works," in contradistinction to God's dealing with them after the fall, in their state of sin, called "the Covenant of Grace." It would appear that we have warrant in Scripture for applying the term covenant to this transaction, for Hosea says, vi. 7 : "But they, like men (like Adam), have transgressed the covenant." Comp. Job. xxxi. 34 ; Ps. lxxxii. 7. And the Apostle Paul in Gal. iv. 21-31 speaks of the two covenants—the covenant of works, which includes all men in bondage, and the covenant of grace, which secures freedom and salvation to all who are the children of promise.

But this covenant is not precisely of the nature of a covenant as entered into by men between themselves ; for a proper

covenant among men is a voluntary contract or agreement entered into between two or more parties, in which they solemnly bind themselves to each other for the performance of certain things for their mutual benefit, under specified penalties in case of failure, and the covenant is established by signs and seals. In such a covenant it is implied that the parties are upon some ground of equality, that they are independent of and may be beneficial to each other, and have the power not only to perform the obligations of the covenant, but also to inflict the penalty in case of failure. A covenant of this sort cannot exist between God and man, since an infinite distance separates the creature from the Creator. Man can neither be independent of God nor beneficial to Him, nor can he lay God under any obligations or penalties.

When therefore we speak of this covenant of works, we are to conceive of it as emanating from God in the form of a positive command to His creature, to which are annexed a threatening of just punishment in case of transgression, and also a gracious promise of reward in case of obedience, and the whole accompanied with signs and seals. With this understanding, all the constituents of a divine covenant appear.

1. The contracting parties—God and man.
2. The conditions, on the part of God, to be in all respects a God to man, and, on the part of man, as His creature, to render a perfect obedience to God. Matt. xxii. 37-40; Mark xii. 29-33.
3. The promise of eternal life.
4. The penalty, or threatening of eternal death.
5. The signs and seals of the covenant,—“the tree of life,” and “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

The great end of this covenant was the same as in all God's works—His own glory. The matter of it was the securing to man, in the infinite benevolence of God, eternal happiness. The peculiarities of the covenant are: 1. Its emanation from God. 2. His dealing with man immediately and personally, without the intervention of any third person or mediator. 3. The condition upon which he was to secure eternal life, his own works or individual righteousness. 4. The appointment of Adam to stand as the head and representative

of his race—their covenant or federal head. 5. The one trial was to answer for the whole race. Should Adam prove successful, the whole race would be confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness ; and, solely upon the ground of his obedience, they would be considered as having stood when he stood, as having obeyed when he obeyed : in other words, his obedience would be imputed to them ; all its blessings and consequences made over to them, as though the obedience had been their own. On the contrary, should he fall, the race would be confirmed in a state of sin and misery ; and, solely upon the ground of his disobedience, they would be considered as having sinned when he sinned : in other words, his disobedience would be imputed to them ; all its consequences and miseries made over to them, as though his disobedience had been their own. Rom. v. 12–21. 6. The perfection and justice of the trial. Upon its close, whether successful or otherwise, the race would be left in a condition requiring no further action on the part of God. He could be required to do no more than let His perfect work have its free course and issue. Matt. v. 48 ; 1 John i. 5 ; Rev. xv. 3 ; 2 Chron. xix. 7 ; Job. xxxiv. 12 ; Gen. xviii. 25 ; 2 Sam. xxii. 31. Such is the covenant of works made by the Lord God with our first parents in their state of innocency in the Garden of Eden.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INSTITUTION OF THE SABBATH.

IN six days the heavens and the earth were finished, and our first parents located in Eden under the covenant of works; "and God rested on the seventh day, and blessed and sanctified it, because that in it He rested from all His work which God created and made." Gen. ii. 1-3. The Sabbath having been created for the worship of God, it is reasonable that man should appropriate a portion of time specially to it; but the amount of time, and the interval of its recurrence, God ordains, not trusting so important an institution to the wisdom of man even in his state of holiness; for had he arranged it rightly, he would have lacked authority to enforce it. The law of the Sabbath, as a positive institution, is not inserted here in anticipation of an after enactment. It is the first, the original law, as the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue intimates; and its first words, "Remember the Sabbath-day," determine it to be an ancient and well-known institution, Exod. xx. 11; and while it is a positive institution, it is founded upon the obligation of man to worship God, and to appropriate a portion of his time for that purpose; and consequently, as its uses and all show, is moral in character also, and forms part of the moral law summarily contained in the Ten Commandments, and is of perpetual obligation, as are all the rest.

The Lord claims the day as His own, Deut. v. 14; Exod. xx. 10; xxxi. 13; Levit. xxvi. 2; Ezek. xx. 12-20; commands its observance, Exod. xx. 8-11; xxxi. 14-17; xvi. 5-23; guards it against desecration, Exod. xxxi. 14-16; Numb.

xv. 32-36; Jer. xvii. 21-27; Neh. xiii. 15-18; Exod. xxxv. 2-3; Levit. xxiii. 3; Exod. xxxiv. 21; xvi. 27-30; Isa. lvi. 2-7; lviii. 13-14; Luke iv. 16-31; xiii. 10; Mark vi. 2; Acts xiii. 14-44; xv. 21; xvii. 2; xviii. 4; visits transgressors with severe judgments, Exod. xxxiv. 14, 15; xxxv. 2; Numb. xv. 32-36; Ezek. xx. 15-24; xxii. 8-31; xxiii. 38-46; Neh. xiii. 18; and crowns the observance of it with the greatest blessings, Isa. i. 2-7; lviii. 13-14; Jer. xvii. 24-25. The observance of the Sabbath is binding upon individuals, families, communities, and nations, all the laws and ordinances of man to the contrary notwithstanding.

The name teaches its nature. The Hebrew word Sabbath signifies rest; the Sabbath-day is rest-day—one-seventh part of our time, one revolution of the earth upon its axis, a civil day of twenty-four hours. The revolution of the earth upon its axis, bringing different parts sooner to the sun than others, renders it impossible for men to keep the Sabbath at one and the same moment the world over. This is not necessary, "known unto God are all His works" from the beginning. We observe the day when it returns, wherever we happen to be.

As the Lord's rest was twofold—a ceasing from His work, and a taking delight in it as the manifestation of His glory, Exod. xxxi. 17; Ps. civ. 13—so is man's. First, it is a temporal rest, in obedience to God's precept and example; and, in gratitude for the liberal provision of time allowed him for his own works, man abstains from all his ordinary labors on that day, and causes that rest to pervade his family and household. Gen. ii. 1-3; Exod. ii. 8-11; xxxi. 14-17; xvi. 5-30; xxxiv. 24; xxxv. 1-3; Numb. xv. 32-36; Deut. v. 12-14; xii. 15; xv. 15-16; Neh. x. 31; ch. 13.

In His providential government the Lord makes provision for the rest from labor on the Sabbath. The loss which would otherwise accrue, is made up by His blessing the labors of the six days with not only a bountiful supply for those days, but also with a sufficiency for the seventh day. The necessity of such a provision will appear by considering what a vast supply of food and other necessaries of life is needed by the world for one day, and how much more for a whole month,

and for a whole year! During the year He gives support to the world for above one month and a half, in which time nothing is done in the way of labor; and, in every seven years, the support amounts to that of one whole year of rest! This harmonious action of His word and providence is beautifully illustrated in the gift of the manna in the wilderness. "See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." Exod. xvi. 24-29.

His providence harmonizes with His word in another remarkable feature. He adds no health and strength to the world above what He gives for six laboring days, to enable the world to continue labor on the seventh day also. He has created man and beast for six days' labor and for one of rest, and, consequently, a necessity for the observance of the Sabbath is laid in their very natures; and the experience and observations of men have demonstrated that the labor of seven days continuously, no other rest being taken but that which is possible on working days, will, in the end, result in the serious injury, if not total destruction of health and strength of mind and body, on the part of man; and of spirit and power, on the part of beast. He, therefore, who despises the command of God, will be disappointed and overthrown by His providence. "Hath He said it and will He not make it good?"

While all ordinary work is prohibited, works of necessity and mercy are allowed to be done on the Sabbath, in the doing of which we obey the immediate voice of the Lord of the Sabbath, the Sabbath being made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Exod. xxxv. 1-3; Jer. xvii. 21, 22; Exod. xxxiv. 21; xvi. 27-30; Neh. xiii. 15-18; Matt. xii. 1-13; Mark. ii. 23-28; iii. 1-5; Luke vi. 1-10; xiii. 10-17; xiv. 3-5; John v. 1-17; ix. 1-34; Levit. xxiv. 8; vi. 8-13; Numb. xxviii. 3-10; John vii. 22-24; Matt. xii. 5; 2 Chron. xxiii. 4-8; 2 Kings xi. 5-9; Acts i. 12; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; Acts xvi. 13; xvii. 1, 2; xviii. 4; Matt. xii. 1-9.

There is, secondly, a spiritual rest. The Lord "hallowed" or made the day holy, not that He imparted to or infused into

the day any quality of holiness above other days: but He honored it by resting Himself on that day, and set it apart from a common to a sacred and holy use, and this is the special blessing which God put upon it. The body is at rest from labor, but the soul is at rest from sin, and consecrates itself all the day to the worship and service of God, as it is taught both by precept and example in His Holy Word. The Sabbath is to be "remembered" and prepared for, and its sacred hours spent in private devotion, in family and public worship, and in works of benevolence and mercy, and all abuses of it conscientiously avoided; Acts xv. 21; Eccl. v. 1; 2 Kings iv. 23; Levit. xix. 30; Ps. cxxii. 1; Ps. xlii. and xliii.; Isa. ii. 3; lviii. 13, 14; Ps. xcii.; Amos. viii. 5, and the day made an emblem and foretaste of heaven. Heb. iv. 1-11.

The design of the Sabbath is to confirm and commemorate the fact of the creation of the world out of nothing by God, and that in the space of six days; and, since its change from the seventh to the first day of the week, to confirm and commemorate the fact of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and the completion of the work of redemption, and also to direct mankind unto and to preserve the knowledge of the one only living and true God; Exod. xx. 8-11; xxxi. 12-17 comp.; Exod. xxxv. 2; Numb. xv. 32-36: to establish and perpetuate His worship, private, social, and public; and to afford men of all conditions and capacities ample opportunity and time for the same, and so finally to promote the order, peace, health, knowledge, virtue, and the present and eternal happiness of man.

The perpetuity of the Sabbath is briefly argued from the perpetuity of the world and the race of man upon it, for whose benefit it was instituted: from its recurrence being the measure of time to the giving of the law, and has been so ever since: Gen. vii. 4-10; viii. 10-12; xxix. 27, 28; Exod. xvi. 22-30; Gen. viii. 22; Job ii. 13; Judges xiv. 12-17: from its introduction into the decalogue of perpetual authority: Exod. xx. 8-11; Deut. v. 17: and from its having been ordained for a perpetual covenant and a sign between God and His Church, Exod. xxxi. 13-18; Isa. lvi. 6; Ezek. xx. 12-20; Deut.

v. 15 : and so regarded and observed by His Church until the coming of Christ Jesus our Lord, Isa. lviii. 10-13 ; Jer. xvii. 19-27 ; xiii. 15-22 ; Ezek. xx. 12-21 ; xlvi. 1 ; Amos. viii. 11 ; and finally, from its being received and acknowledged by our Lord and His Apostles, and by them continued in the Church : and so was it prophesied that it should be. Matt. xix. 16-19 ; Luke xviii. 18-20 ; Matt. xxii. 35-40 ; Luke iv., xvi. 22-31 ; xiii. 10-17 ; vi. 1-5 ; xiv. 1-6 ; Mark vi. 1-16 ; Matt. xii. 9-21 ; John v. 5 ; vii. 21 ; ix. 1 ; Mark ii. 28 ; x. 19 ; Acts xiii. 14-42-44 ; xvi. 13 ; xvii. 1, 2 ; xviii. 4 ; Rom. vii. 7 ; Eph. vi. 1-3 ; Jas. ii. 10-11 ; Rom. xiii. 8-9 ; Luke xxiii. 56 ; Rev. i. 10 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2 ; Isa. lvi. 1-9 comp. Ps. cxviii. 19-26.

The Lord may, in His sovereignty and wisdom, transfer the ordained rest of the seventh day to any other day of the week ; and He has done this, and with so much clearness as to leave no doubt of it in the mind of the considerate, and for reasons which they are able gratefully to appreciate. From the creation of the world to the resurrection of our Saviour, the seventh day was ordained to be the Sabbath : and from the resurrection of our Saviour to the end of the world, the first day was ordained to be the Sabbath.

The reasons for this change are these : Our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, Matt. xxviii. 1 ; Mark xvi. 2 ; Luke xxiv. 1 ; John xx. 1, and " was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 4. This amazing event demonstrated finally and forever His Divinity and Messiahship, and completed and sealed the work of the salvation of the Church of God. 1 Cor. xv. 14-17, 19-58 ; Isa. lxx. 17-18. On this day our Lord rested from His work of redemption, as He originally rested on the seventh day from His work of creation. And this is the fundamental reason for the change of the Sabbath ; and there are beauty and harmony in the change, since the memories of the seventh day are mingled with those of the first day, for the offices of the Creator and Redeemer are united in the same glorious person in the Godhead. No man can fully understand and rejoice in God as his Creator, until he sees

and acknowledges Him as his Redeemer; and thus by the change an endearing and cumulative evidence is furnished to all generations, of the truth of the salvation provided of God for a ruined world. And another reason—that the true Israel of God may be distinguished from the unbelieving, who denied their own Messiah, and observed and still observe the seventh day; for, to observe the first day is to acknowledge Christ: and hence the distinctive appellations—the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sabbath; the first observed on the seventh day by unbelieving Israel; the second observed on the first day by believing Israel.

The evidences of the change are: 1. Our Lord practically honored the day. He appeared to His disciples on the evening of His resurrection, Luke xxiv. 32–43, and commissioned and qualified them for their office and work by breathing upon and imparting unto them the Holy Ghost in all His influences of light, and guidance, and inspiration. John xx. 19–23. He appeared to them on the next First-day after, when they were assembled together, and caused Thomas to acknowledge His Godhead and Messiahship, John xx. 24–29, and poured out the Holy Spirit in all His miraculous influences upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, which was the first day of the week; and when they put the trumpet to their mouths and began to preach a crucified and risen Saviour, He poured out the same Spirit in His convicting, regenerating power, and three thousand were added to the Lord. Acts ii.; Levit. xxiii. 15–21. 2. The Apostles, to whom the Holy Spirit was given to guide them into all truth as the due successors of our Lord in authority in the Church, till all things should be ordained according to His will, began immediately to observe the First-day as a day of assembly and religious service, Luke xxiv. 32–43; John xx. 19–23, 24–29; Acts xx. 7, and made it a day for laying by their contributions for benevolent purposes, 1 Cor. xvi. 1–3, which practice continued ever after; and their practice demonstrates what their precept or commands were in respect to the day. 3. But in this connection the name given by the Apostles to the day, fixes its character. The Apostle John calls it “the Lord’s

Day ;” that is, the day of His resurrection—the day commemorative thereof and consecrated to Him. For the same reason the sacrament is called “the Lord’s Supper.” Rev. i. 10. No other day was known by this name but the First-day ; and it was so called in contradistinction to the Seventh-day or Sabbath, under the Old Dispensation. In their ministry to their “brethren, according to the flesh,” the Apostles were accustomed to meet with them in their Synagogues (not, however, neglecting their own worship on the First-day) for the opportunity of reasoning with and speaking the Gospel to them ; but they gradually withdrew and maintained their own distinct worship on the Lord’s Day. Acts xiii. 42–44 ; xvi. 13 ; xvii. 1–2 ; xviii. 4, &c. 4. The passages Col. ii. 16 and Gal. iv. 10 imply the change. The Apostle, in releasing Christians from the observance of the abrogated ceremonial laws, to which unbelieving Israel pertinaciously held, seems to include under the word “Sabbaths,” not only feast and other holy days, but the Seventh-day Sabbath also ; for no man could continue to observe that day in the ancient form under the law and be esteemed a disciple of Christ. 5. The Lord of the Sabbath, the great Head of the Church, from the day of Pentecost down to our times, has always honored the First-day—blessing by His presence and Spirit the assemblies of His saints in private and in public ; blessing the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of His ordinances to their edification, and to the salvation of unnumbered multitudes ; and 6. He not only thus blesses the day in the observance of it, but defends it from desecration by judgments upon those who profane it, of one sort or another ; and He has wholly given up to blindness and hardness those who hold to the Seventh-day Sabbath, whereby we may be assured it is no longer the day He would have observed in His Church ; and, finally, the change of the Sabbath brings no relaxation of the holy and strict observance of it enjoined on the Church of old. The Gospel does not make void the law. It establishes it.

CHAPTER V.

THE EXISTENCE AND AGENCY OF ANGELS.

THE first entire day of man's existence was the holy Sabbath. Upon that day God "rested from all His work which He had made," and man rested in Him; and in innocency, and in happiness, and in such sweet communion with his Maker, he had a foretaste of that glorious and eternal rest above, of which the rest below was but an emblem.

The holy day is gone, and our first parents enter upon the duties and cares of life, fresh, vigorous, and joyful in each other and in God, whose voice they daily heard as He walked with them in the garden. They enter also upon their momentous trial. They touch not the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil," but freely eat of the trees of the garden and of the precious "tree of life."

How long they continued in their holiness and happiness undisturbed, is not revealed; but certainly not very long. The great enemy of God, and their great enemy, enters the garden and assails the woman with a temptation by which she is finally overcome, and the race is ruined!

The existence and agency of accountable beings in the creation of God, other than man, are thus early in the history brought to view. They appear and act a conspicuous part throughout the entire history of the Church. Reason might suggest the existence of such beings; but the Holy Scriptures establish the fact; for God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, created the angels also, Eph. iii. 9; John i. 1-3;

Col. i. 15-17; Gen. i. 1; Exod. xx. 11; Mark xiii. 19; and for his own glory and service, Rev. iv. 11; Rom. xi. 36; Prov. xvi. 4; Ps. ciii. 20-21; civ. 4; cxlviii. 2; Matt. vi. 10; Luke i. 19; in nature superior to men, pure "spirits" without bodies of "flesh and bones," Luke xxiv. 39 and Col. i. 16; Mark xii. 25; Luke viii. 30-33; Acts xvi. 16; viii. 7; xi. 38; Ps. viii. 5; Job iv. 18-19; and in a spiritual and heavenly world to which they were adapted. Heb. xii. 22; Isa. vi. 1-3; Dan. vii. 9-10; Rev. v. 11-12; Heb. i. 14.

Like man, the angels were placed upon trial, as we legitimately conclude—a conclusion from the declaration that they "kept not their first estate," their original excellency and dignity of nature and station. Jude vi. Of the precise nature of their trial we know nothing, except that they were under law to God, and had this their "first estate" given them to "keep." It is a legitimate conclusion from their election and their reprobation. The Apostle Paul charges Timothy "before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels." They would be the witnesses of his fidelity. These are "the holy angels," Mark viii. 38; Matt. xxv. 31, concerning whom Christ Jesus thus speaks, Luke ix. 26: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels;" and the same thing he repeats in another form in Rev. iii. 5: These "elect angels" are distinguished from the angels which "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitations," Jude vi., and "sinned." The habitation of the elect angels is still and ever will be that which God has made "their own," even heaven itself. Matt. xviii. 10; xxiv. 36; xxvi. 53; 2 Thess. i. 7; Gen. xxviii. 12; Luke xv. 10, &c. But "the angels that sinned, God spared not, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," as Peter affirms. 2 Peter ii. 4. Jude uses almost the same language: "He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day," ver. 6. Hell, the place of "everlasting fire" and punishment, "is prepared for them." They shall be adjudged and cast down to it as their final end

and portion, Matt. xxv. 41; Rev. xx. 10; but meanwhile they are reserved in chains under darkness, excluded from the glory of God and all hope of His favor, fast held in His power in all the darkness of sin and fruitless hate, and rebellion and remorse, and despair and misery.

The fact that a portion of the angels "kept their first estate," is therefore owing to the election of God. They were able to stand, yet free to fall; and being in their nature as creatures fallible, it pleased God to sustain by His special power a certain portion of them, who were thereby kept from falling, and enabled to preserve their integrity until the time appointed for the continuance of their trial should be past. In this manner were they chosen elect of God to eternal truth, and holiness and happiness. They were upheld and confirmed in their state of holiness and happiness. They, therefore, owe their heaven to God; and to Him they give the glory of it for evermore!

The Scriptures do not determine when the sin and fall of the angels in heaven took place. From the manner in which our Lord speaks of the sin of Satan, John viii. 44, and also the Apostle John, 1 John iii. 8, it is concluded that the angels sinned not very long after their creation. Their sin and fall took place before that of men, for Satan already fallen was the tempter of our first parents. Gen. iii. 1-7, &c. The Apostle Paul, in 1 Tim. iii. 6, intimates that their sin was pride. The cause, of course, is to be looked for in the fallible creatures, but the occasion, the object, the end and manner of the exhibition of this wicked pride, we know not. It was, however, a fearful transgression, that involved them in eternal ruin. For them God in His sovereignty provided no Redeemer. He was under no obligation of justice to do so. They were left to depravity, despair, and punishment! Heb. ii. 16; Rev. xx. 10.

The angels are consequently divided into two classes: the good and the evil; and both classes are largely involved in the history of the Church of God.

Of the good angels, it may be said, that they stand in the presence of God, and are continually employed in praising

God and doing His will ; Ps. ciii. 20, 21, and form a most glorious and blessed society : Isa. vi. 1-3 ; Job xxxviii. 7 ; Zach. ii. 3, 4 ; Rev. v. 1-13 ; but what concerns us more nearly, they are employed by the Lord Jesus Christ in the work of redemption, while they are servants and ministers of His will as their God and Creator : they are more especially committed to His hand, with all power in heaven and in earth, as the Redeemer of men : and He employs them in His Church and for the benefit and glory thereof. Eph. i. 20-23 ; Phil. ii. 9, 10 ; Col. ii. 9, 10 ; 1 Pet. iii. 23 ; Heb. i. 5-14 ; " Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation ? " Holy, intelligent, active and powerful, they do not undertake an unwilling service, Ps. civ. 4 ; for they are interested spectators of the wonderful plan of redemption, and adore the glories of the Godhead therein made known, 1 Pet. i. 12, and through the Church attain to their own joy, a more profound knowledge of " the manifold wisdom of God." Eph. iii. 10 ; Luke xv. 10 ; Rev. v. 11-12 ; Dan. ix. 20-23 ; Luke ii. 8-14.

Marshalled in their hosts, and clothed with majesty and power, they are employed in producing great events in heaven above, and in the earth beneath ; and reveal the present or future will of God expressed either in words or in events. Evidences of this agency abound both in the Old and the New Testament. Gen., chapters 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 28, 32, and xxiv. 7 ; Judges xiii. 19 ; Dan. ix. 21-27, and 10, 11, and 12th chapters, Zech. i. ix. 21, and 2d, 3d, and 4th chaps. Ezekiel ; Matt. i. 20-25 ; ii. 13 ; Luke i. 11-20, 26-38 ; ii. 8-14 ; Matt. xxviii. 1-7 ; Acts x. 7-22 ; xii. 8-15 ; viii. 26 ; xxvii. 23, and Rev. They assist, comfort, defend, and preserve the people of God in dangers, distresses, wants, afflictions, persecutions, and deaths. Hagar is relieved, Gen. xvi. 7-13 ; xxi. 17-19 ; Lot and his two daughters are delivered, Gen. xix. 9, 10 ; 15-17 ; Jacob strengthened, Gen. xxxii. and xxxiii. ; Elijah fed, 1 Kings xix. 1-8 ; Elisha preserved, 2 Kings vi. 17 ; the kingdom of Judah saved from the Assyrians, 2 Kings xix. 35 comp. Ps. xxxiv. 7 ; xci. 11, and Daniel from the mouth of the lions, vi. 22. The Apostles are delivered from prison, Acts v. 19, and

Peter rescued from the sword of Herod, xii. 7-11. Angels minister to Christ after His temptation, and strengthen Him in His agony in the garden, and roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre at His resurrection, Matt. iv. 11; Luke xxii. 43; Matt. xxviii. 1, 2. His disciples are objects of angelic care, Matt. xviii. 10, and their souls, when freed from the body at death, are borne by them to the upper world, Luke xvi. 22, and finally, they minister unto the end, and accompany the Judge in the great day, and reap the world, gathering the wheat into his garner and the tares into fire unquenchable. Matt. xiii. 38-43; xxv. 31; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8; Heb. i. 14; xii. 22. When employed in special and extraordinary missions in the Old and New Testaments—the period of inspiration and of miracles—they were manifested in visions and in bodily shapes, and were heard speaking in audible voices. But these extraordinary ministrations are over. Their ministrations now are invisible and inaudible. How they exist as pure spirits, and how they move from heaven to earth, and how they communicate with each other, and have access to the spirits of men and impress and influence their minds, we have no knowledge beyond the revealed facts, that they accomplish these things, and that their ministrations are made of God to be of great value to His people: Ps. xxxiv. 7; xci. 11. According to His good pleasure they convey His mercies and execute His judgments. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16; 2 Chron. xxxii. 21; Acts xii. 22-23.

Glorious, and exalted, and beneficial as the good Angels are, they are but the limited and dependent creatures of God, and are not to be clothed with divine prerogatives and attributes. To offer them religious worship, or to appeal to them as our intercessors with God in any form or manner whatever, is rank and ruinous idolatry, expressly forbidden of God: and the holy Angels themselves utterly eschew everything of the kind. Col. ii. 18; 1 Cor. viii. 5; Rev. xxii. 8-10; xix. 10; 1 Tim. iv. 1; Mark xii. 20-21; Matt. iv. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. vii. 25.

The evil angels are the angels that “kept not their first estate,” Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4, and are no longer “morning stars,” nor “Sons of God;” but are “evil,” unclean spirits,

and "devils," 1 Sam. xvi. xiv. 23; Luke vii. 21; viii. 2; Acts xix. 12-16; Matt. xii. 43; Mark i. 23-26; v. 2-8; Luke ix. 42; Matt. iv. 24; viii. 31; Mark xvi. 17; Luke viii. 2; ix. 1; x. 17; xiii. 32; 1 Cor. x. 20, 21, &c. Their number is evidently very great, Mark v. 8, 9; from the general testimony of Scripture, and from their diffusion over the earth, and the liability of every man to be tempted by them, and that continually, 1 Pet. v. 8, 9. They were seduced from their allegiance to God by the same angel who seduced our first parents; and was himself the first transgressor; and "abode not in the truth," John viii. 44; and because he prevailed over angels and men to their loss of eternal life, he is called by our Lord "a murderer from the beginning," and "the father of lies." He holds station and authority over the fallen angels, and is their "Prince," and they are reckoned "his," Matt. ix. 34; Eph. ii. 2; Matt. xxv. 41. The various names by which he is called, indicate his character and employments. "The old serpent," "The Devil," and "Satan"—Rev. xx. 2; Matt. xii. 26; iv. 5; "Angel of the bottomless pit," "Abaddon," "Apolylon," Rev. ix. 11; "Accuser," Rev. xii. 10; "Beelzebub," "Prince of the Devils," Matt. xii. 24-26; "Prince of this world," John xii. 31; xiv. 30; "Prince of the power of the air," Eph. ii. 2; "The tempter," 1 Thess. iii. 5; Matt. iv. 3; and "The god of this world," 2 Cor. iv. 4. Evil angels are hopelessly depraved, and enemies of all righteousness, Acts xiii. 10, and lie under the wrath and curse of God, 2 Pet. ii. 4, and in the judgment of the great day will be cast into the everlasting fire prepared for them. Matt. xxv. 41. They believe in the coming woes of their damnation and "tremble," James ii. 19; Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24; v. 7; and yet, since their apostacy, they have not ceased to employ themselves in rebellion against God, who, in His unsearchable but all-wise counsels, has permitted them to visit this world; and they, in their wickedness, have become the tempters and destroyers of the souls of men. Although their influence is mighty, yet it is persuasive only: they are tempters, and therefore resistible; and saints may make them flee. Jas. iv. 7; v. 9; Eph. iv. 27; vi. 10-16; ii. 2; vi. 16; 2 Cor. iv. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 26;

Mark iv. 15; Acts xxvi. 18; 2 Cor. xi. 14; Rev. ii. 24; Luke xxii. 3; John xiv. 30; Luke xxii. 53; Acts v. 3. They assaulted even the Holy Redeemer, and their hand was in his betrayal and crucifixion. And while He ministered on earth, for the special display of His divine majesty and mediatorial glory, and for the comfort of His Church, Satan was permitted to exert his power even over the bodies of men; and he entered into them and subjected them to diverse torments, affecting indeed both body and mind! These were real Satanic possessions, and not mere mental and bodily diseases, as the plain narratives of the Scriptures abundantly prove; nor can the teachings and conduct of our Saviour be understood and justified on any other supposition. Matt. iv. 24; x. 7, 8; Mark v. 1-17; Luke iv. 36; xi. 20; xiii. 16; x. 17-20; Acts x. 38; xvi. 16-18. The power of casting out these possessions, He conferred upon His Apostles, who always spake of them and treated them as real, Heb. ii. 14; 1 John iii. 8.

This apostacy, like that of men, will in the end be overruled to the praise and glory of God. The Lord Jesus will destroy the works of the Devil and deliver His elect out of his hands, and bruise him under their feet, and in the great day He will show His wrath and make His power known upon Satan and his angels, the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. Matt. xxv. 4.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FALL OF OUR FIRST PARENTS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

THE temptation is no sacred fable, or allegory, or an address to the soul through the imagination, a mere spiritual vision, but a reality described by the Holy Ghost in the simplicity and particularity of historical narrative, and as such is treated of throughout the Word of God. John viii. 44; 2 Cor. xi. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 14; Rev. xii. 9; Rom. v. 12-19; xvi. 20.

The tempter was Satan, inspired by hatred of God and of His creatures—the instrument, the serpent, “more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made,” and therefore well adapted to his end, Matt. x. 16, called “the serpent,” 1 Cor. xi. 3; “the old serpent,” “the great dragon,” Rev. xii. 9; xx. 2, “which deceiveth the whole world.”

The temptation was directed in the first instance against Eve, the weaker vessel, 1 Pet. iii. 7, when alone and separated from her husband, suddenly and adroitly by an inquiry, Gen. iii. 1-5, “And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” The woman, without question, discerned that an intelligent being was making use of the serpent as a medium of communication with her, and answered, “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 unto the woman: “Ye shall not surely die; for God doth

know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Pride, discontent, unbelief, ambition of knowledge and higher attainments, and self-gratification, usurped the place of humility, contentment, filial reverence, confidence, and love; and she was "beguiled by his subtlety." "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." How was it possible for beings, created holy and upright, with no inclination to evil, thus to entertain the temptation and fall into sin? The fact that they sinned proved the possibility; holy and upright, yet were they mutable; and God, for the accomplishment of His infinitely wise purposes, left them to the freedom of their own will; in other words, to act for themselves, and in their own strength. He gave them power to stand, yet left them free to fall; and not being in justice bound to do so, He did not supply them with that help in the hour of trial which they needed to keep them from falling. Our first parents suffered themselves to be deceived by Satan, and of their own free will entered into the temptation. This is the explanation of the fall given by the Holy Spirit: "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Eccl. vii. 29; Rom. v. 12. "By one man sin entered into the world;" ver. 19, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."

This first sin was a great sin, since Adam not only violated the express command, "Thou shalt not eat of it," but the entire moral law of God written in his heart, of which this one was an epitome. By this one act he threw off the whole authority of God, James ii. 10; and that under the most forbidding circumstances. He was enriched with knowledge and holiness, fresh from the hand of his Creator, with whom he held intimate and daily communion; placed in a most delightful abode with every want supplied in richest profusion, and the tree that reminded him of his dependence upon God and of his covenant relations and of his glorious reward, if he

should persevere in his obedience unto the end of his trial, stood ever before him !

Although Eve sinned first and influenced Adam to sin, yet is the sin called the sin of the "man," Gen. iii. 17 ; Rom. v. 12, &c. ; and for the reason that he was the head of his wife, and the covenant was made with him as the head and representative of his race.

The consequences of Adam's sin and fall have respect to the covenant of works, to our first parents, to their posterity, and to God. The covenant of works was utterly broken and forever set aside as a covenant under which man should seek justification before God through his own personal and perfect righteousness. The opportunity of thus meriting life, both for himself and his posterity in him, was by his transgression lost, and lost beyond recovery.

No provisions appear in the covenant, whereby, after transgression, Adam and his posterity might escape the penalty and regain the lost favor of God ; nor is there the shadow of a promise on the part of God, that in case of transgression He would interpose for Adam's redemption. All that the Lord said to him was, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die ;" but while neither promises nor provisions are expressed or implied, there is nothing in the covenant itself exclusive of either, if such should be the will of God.

The transgression of Adam, while it breaks the covenant and brings him hopelessly under its curse, does not set the covenant aside in its binding authority and condemning power over him, and over all his posterity, for whom he stood. Although God abates not one jot or tittle of His law embraced in His covenant of works, because of our apostacy, His right to the love and obedience of His creatures is not forfeited by their rebellion and corruption. Were He to dispense in any degree with the requirements of His law, because they had sinned and become impotent to all good, He would virtually dethrone Himself ; on the contrary, He declares it to be holy, and "the commandment holy, just, and good," Rom. vii. 12, and promulgates that law as the rule of duty to all mankind, by which all their thoughts and actions are to be regulated, and

by which they will be strictly judged in the great day of final account. It abides forever a rule of duty, but not of justification. Exod. xx. 17; Matt. v. 19; xxii. 40; Mark x. 19; 1 Cor. vii. 19; 1 John ii. 4; Rev. xxii. 14; Jas. ii. 10-12.

Our first parents lost the image of God, in which they had been created, and fell from their original righteousness. The apostacy was total; the corruption, in all the parts and faculties of soul and body, entire. They lost all holy and happy communion with God, from whom they withdrew, and He from them: neither could they behold Him any more in any other light than that of an offended judge, to execute wrath upon transgressions!

They incurred the penalty of death annexed to the covenant, and felt in themselves the bitter effects of sin: for, conscious of guilt, and full of fear and shame, they shrunk away in dread and hatred from God, vainly striving to cover the shame of their nakedness, Gen. iii. 7, 8, feeble, dying, condemned creatures, Rom. viii. 5-8, awaiting the summons to judgment and damnation.

And their trial under the covenant of works was now ended for themselves personally, and for their posterity representatively. They could never more look to it to give them life, nor could they satisfy its demands against them for punishment, nor upon them for righteousness.

Adam's posterity were yet in his loins when he sinned, and all the consequences of his sin became theirs, as perfectly and surely, according to God's ordination, as though each one had committed the sin for himself. All were charged with the guilt of Adam's first sin! As he failed of perfect obedience and broke the covenant, so did they. As he thereby lost his original righteousness and communion with God, and became corrupt, and incurred the penalty of death, so did they. When his trial ended, their trial ended. When he died, they died. "They sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression," and it was this first transgression that sealed the condemnation of all men, so far as their spiritual state and relations to God under the covenant are concerned. They have no connection with any other sin of Adam. His after sins were

personal, not representative. His first sin was representative and ruined all. Gen. iii. 7-24; Rom. v. 12-19.

And how does all this take place? By imputation—a doctrine revealed in the very origin of our race, and one to be preserved and defended by the Church of God—a doctrine which first buries the race of man in death, everlasting death, and then raises it to life, everlasting life! Nor is there any possibility of constructing or comprehending the history of the Church, without admitting it in all its length, and breadth, and depth, and height.

It first reveals itself under the covenant of works: the sin of Adam, the federal head, being imputed to all his posterity proceeding from him by ordinary generations. To impute, is to reckon or set over anything to a man's account, Philemon vs. 17, 18; Isa. liii. 4-6; and the imputation of sin in Scripture is twofold: first, of our own moral actions to ourselves; in other words, causing us to receive reward or punishment according to our deserts, 2 Sam. xix. 18-20; Rom. iv. 8; 2 Cor. v. 19; and second, of the moral actions of others to us, as though they were our own, and we had committed them; in other words, rewarding or punishing us, as having actually done what was done for us and in our stead by another. This sort of imputation necessarily requires a union of the closest sort between the parties, naturally and justly constituted, so that the one party may be a head or representative for the other. There cannot of course be any transfer of moral acts, which is an impossibility in nature itself; for the actual obedience or disobedience of one moral and accountable agent, can never become the actual obedience or disobedience of another. The acts of moral and accountable agents are personal; and inhere, and adhere, and are their own and cannot be another's. But while there cannot be any transfer of moral acts of others to ourselves, there may be an imputation to us of all the consequences of these acts, as perfect, real, and practical, as though we had committed the very acts ourselves. And this is the sense in which the sin of Adam is imputed to his posterity.

There are three ways, as all men know, whereby we may

be made sinners by the sin of another. First, by adopting his sin as our own, we thus sin by consent and approbation. Again, by imitation, yielding freely unto and following his evil examples ; and lastly, by imputation, he being our constituted representative to act for us, and all the consequences of his sin being visited upon us, as though we had committed the sin ourselves.

We do indeed adopt the sin of our first parents, and sin by consent and approbation, but this will not account for the universality of sin and punishment, inasmuch as we sin long before we come to a knowledge of Adam's sin, and also, in numerous instances, suffer pains and death before we have arrived at the age of accountability.

The same objection is urged with equal force against our sin and suffering being the consequence of our yielding to evil examples ; and it may well be asked, if the whole matter is to be disposed of through the force of example, how comes it to pass that examples of sin are literally universal ? Never has there occurred one instance of a perfectly holy man on earth, save that of the man Christ Jesus our Lord.

That the sin of Adam is imputed, in the sense explained, to all posterity, is evinced from the universal sinfulness and condemnation of the race being ascribed to Adam's first sin. Taking the Word of God, we ascend through one generation of sinners after another, until we reach Adam, the father of all. Before he sinned he was holy and happy ; after he sinned the scene changes. He becomes a sinner, and his posterity follow his fortunes. Particular passages prove it. The notable one of Rom. v. 12-19 asserts the imputation of Adam's sin to all who descend from him by ordinary generations, five times, vs. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 : "Through the offence of one many," *i. e.*, all his natural posterity, "are dead." The one offence kills them temporally, spiritually, and eternally. "The judgment was by one," *i. e.*, offence, "to condemnation." The sentence of God which condemned Adam for his one offence, passed upon the whole race. "By one man's offence death reigned by one." The one man's offence caused death to reign over all. "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to

condemnation." The Lord judged all men to condemnation for the offence of one. "By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners." On account of his disobedience they were constituted sinners—so made, so treated, as though the disobedience of Adam was their own. The Apostle had proved in the first, second, and third chapters of Romans, that the whole race, Jew and Gentile, lies under sin and death, and in this passage gives the reason why it is so, v. 12, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All come to be sinners, because one man sinned; and death passes upon all, "because all have sinned," not indeed actually and personally for themselves; for, when sin entered into the world, and death, the wages of sin, passed in the condemnation of God upon all men, the "all men" had no existence; they were not yet in being; consequently, they were considered as sinners in Adam, their federal head.

The main design of the Apostle in the passage proves the same thing, for he institutes a comparison between Adam and Christ our Lord in the matter of condemnation and justification. He proves the one by the other. As the offence of Adam is imputed to all men for condemnation, so the righteousness of Christ is imputed to all men for justification; "for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," so made by the imputation to them of the disobedience of Adam, "so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," so made by the imputation of Christ's obedience to them. Imputation is proved further in the 14th verse, where death is said to reign even over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, *i. e.*, in an intelligent manner, against known and declared precepts of God, which can refer to infants only; and their sufferings and death, prior to the age of personal accountability, prove the imputation of Adam's sin to them.

A remark may be permitted here—namely, that the extent of the imputation of Adam's disobedience is not the measure of the imputation of Christ's obedience; for the imputation of Adam's sin is upon all his natural posterity, for whom he

stood, and consequently reaches to every man; but the imputation of Christ's righteousness is upon all his spiritual seed, for whom He stood in the covenant of grace as their representative and surety, and consequently reaches only to as many as the Father hath given Him to be saved. The passage therefore gives no support to the doctrine of universal salvation—a doctrine which is not only opposed to the rest of the Epistle, but to all the Word of God beside.

And the Apostle Paul furnishes another passage in proof, 1 Cor. xv. 21–22, “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Without entering into a full explanation of the passage, it is enough to remark that Adam brought death to his race. In Adam all die. This is sufficient. The sin of Adam was imputed to all his posterity; but the principle of imputation of sin is not isolated in the case of Adam under the covenant of works, but runs through the Word of God; and there are not only frequent avowals, but many examples of it. How clear the avowal in the Second Commandment, Exod. xx. 5! Saith God, “For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me, &c.” Compare Exod. xxxiv. 5–7; Numbs. xiv. 18; Job xxi. 19; Jer. xxxii. 18. Our Saviour makes a similar avowal in Matt. xxiii. 35. And observe the examples in the case of Achan, Joshua, vii. 24–25; of the Amalekites, 1 Sam. xv. 2–3; of the sons of Saul, 2 Sam. xxi; of Jeroboam, 1 Kings xiv. 9–10; and of Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 21–22; and others.

And, to add no more, imputation of sin appears in God's providential government of the world. Mankind do suffer, and often sorely, for the sins of their representatives, either natural or appointed—subjects, for the sins of their rulers; children, for the sins of their parents; servants, for the sins of their masters, &c.

The Lord claims the imputation of sin as His prerogative alone, and forbids it to earthly rulers of every kind. Deut. xxiv. 16. Nor is the passage in Ezek. xviii. 20,—“The soul

that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son,"—any contradiction to the principle when properly understood; for the Lord is answering the objections of the people against His inflictions, by pleading that they suffer for their fathers' sins, v. 2: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." On the contrary, He says He is punishing them for their own sins. The Lord will not contradict His own words.

The sin of our first parents left them wholly at the mercy of God; for, in strict justice, He was under no more obligation to interpose in any way to avert from them and their posterity the penalty of His violated law, than He was in the case of the Apostate Angels.

The issue of the covenant of works in the fall was foreordained; because the covenant of grace, or the provision of salvation by a Redeemer, which necessarily presupposed the covenant of works and the fall of man, was foreordained before the foundation of the world. 1 Pet. i. 19-20; Rev. xiii. 8; xvii. 8; Eph. i. 3-4; Matt. xxv. 34; John xvii. 21; Acts xv. 18; Rom. xi. 33, 38.

The great lesson taught, both by the fall of man and the angels, is the weakness and frailty of God's accountable creatures, and their absolute dependence upon His power and sovereignty for support in all things.

The reason of the permission of the fall, and thereby the introduction of the dreadful evil of sin into the world, is one of those "secret things which belong unto the Lord," Deut. xxix. 29—one of His "unsearchable judgments" and "ways past finding out." Rom. xi. 32-36. When we ask the reason for the permission of sin, which is indeed but a part of God's great work of the creation, government, and salvation of the world, we might, with equal propriety and with equal prospect of success, ask for the reason of the whole, which would be to require of God an account of His matters, which He giveth to none. Job. xxxiii. 13; xl. 2; Isa. xlvi. 9-10; Dan. iv. 35. Were His infinite and eternal counsels made known to us, could we with our finite minds comprehend them?

Alas! no. Faith in God as God prompts to implicit confidence, and makes us feel that, although "clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne," Ps. xcvii. 2; and the wisdom, honor, justice, goodness, and mercy, wondrously revealed in the fall and redemption of man, awaken our profoundest admiration and gratitude; and we adoringly exclaim with the Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." Rom. xi. 32-36.

Nor are we to admit, from the fact of God's permission of sin, that He is the culpable author of sin. However men may reason themselves into that belief (and for the purpose generally of casting reproach upon the Most High, and relieving themselves of the distressing guilt of sin), after all, there is a distrust of the solidness of their conclusions, and an instinctive drawing back from it. It is horrible in the creature to charge God with folly. When the matter comes fully before the mind, we prefer to acknowledge and to defend the infinite purity of our Creator. While He, in His sovereignty, in a most truly wise and powerful manner, governs all His creatures and all their actions, whether in heaven, in earth, or in hell, His sovereignty neither interferes with, nor destroys their free agency and accountability. How this harmonious co-working of God and His creatures is carried on in the accomplishment of His purposes, whether of wrath or of mercy; where the lines of human and divine agency meet, and not only coëxist but also consist the one with the other, lies beyond our comprehension; and yet, to the fact that they must and do so coëxist and consist, our reason and our consciousness, and our moral judgments, all give their assent, especially when we hear God Himself emphatically denying that He is the culpable author of sin, and all His inspired Prophets and Apostles repelling the idea with holy indignation, Deut. xxxii. 4; Job xl. 8; Gen. xviii. 25; Rom. iii. 4-8; 1 Cor. i. 18; Titus i. 2; Heb. vi. 18; 1 John i. 5; Jas. i. 13;

Acts iv. 27-28 ; iii. 10-19 ; ii. 22-23 ; Matt. xi. 25. We conclude that for infinitely wise and just purposes the introduction of sin has been allowed. A holy God will overrule it to His own glory, and the ultimate good of the universe. Other than this we dare not say.

CHAPTER VII.

SALVATION PROVIDED.

THE trial of our first parents is over—they have fallen, and the whole world lies guilty before God. “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 amongst the trees of the garden.” Jer. xxiii. 34; Amos ix. 2-3; Heb. iv. 12-13. They are called; their guilt is charged upon them; Adam would lay the blame upon the woman, and the woman upon the serpent. Prov. xv. 3; Job xxxi. 33; Ps. cxix. 120; 1 John iii. 20. They have awaited the sentence of “death.” The transgressors are dealt with in order. “And the Lord God said unto the serpent, ‘Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.’” Mark xvi. 18; Luke x. 19; Acts xxviii. 1-6. Satan, the efficient cause of the fall, was cursed through the instrument which he made use of; and the miserable condition of the serpent among the cattle and beasts of the field, a visible representative indeed to men of Satan himself, was to be his condition among the intelligent and accountable creatures of God—the lowest, vilest, and most despised and warned against, of them all! He bears in his own person the guilt of the ruin of the legions of fallen angels, and of the race of men! and for him the everlasting fire is prepared. Matt. xxv. 41. And the Lord continues his address to Satan, “And I will put enmity be-

tween thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Satan departs in dismay ; for he that had the power of death should be destroyed, Heb. ii. 14-15, and man delivered from his bondage and crowned with glory ! Upon "them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." "Through the tender mercy of our God," "the Sun of righteousness" sheds his beams upon a lost world ! Mal. iv. 2 ; Luke ii. 78-79. Herein have we the first proclamation of the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, made by the Lord Jehovah himself ! both promise and prophecy—a promise of salvation, and a prophecy of the opposition which it is to meet with in the world, and of its final triumph and glory. Herein is Christ Jesus, "the first and the last," "the author and the finisher of our faith," "the corner-stone," "the rock" upon which the Church is built ; and here the foundation of the Church is laid, and here its existence begins, and its history takes its rise in this world.

This remarkable passage has three members : 1. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." 2. "And between thy seed and her seed." 3. "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The design of Satan was to ruin the work of God and the happiness of man, by drawing him away from God, and forming a union of friendship and rebellion. That design the Lord frustrates, and that union He defeats, by putting "enmity" between Satan and the woman ; the woman here standing as the representative of her race, and being mentioned because it was with her Satan began and consummated his temptation. In consequence of God's putting "enmity" between them, on the one hand, although Satan has a friendship for and a union of feeling and purpose with his angels, yet he has no friendship for man—him he pursues with hatred even, if possible, to his eternal death ! So, on the other hand, although depraved, man yields himself a willing captive to Satan ; yet, when he views him as he is, a being of unmitigated evil, his subtle deceiver, the murderer of his soul and of his body, his worst and bitterest enemy, he hates him.

Hence to accuse a man of leaguings with the Devil, is to prefer the vilest and blackest charge against him. Matt. xii. 24.

“Seed,” in Scripture, is that which is produced by a parent stock, and which in turn will produce and propagate a like kind—as the seed of plants, and the seed of animals; or, it is that which is intimately allied in nature, and partakes of the character of some head or stock, and follows its lead and government—as believers are called “the seed of Abraham;” and this latter is the sense of seed in the passage. The fallen angels are the seed of Satan, because (to use the expression) they are begotten by him in iniquity, and do partake of his character, and submit to his rule and government. And fallen men, who continue in their iniquity, for the same reason are the seed of Satan. “Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do,” saith our Lord. John viii. 44; xii. 31; xvi. 11; xiv. 30; Matt. iii. 7; xii. 34; xiii. 38; xxiii. 33; Acts xiii. 10; Rom. iii. 13; Eph. ii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 26; 1 John iii. 8–10. These angels, and these men do partake of the wicked nature, and exhibit the wicked character of Satan, and are under his rule and government: and are truly “his seed,” and a seed bearing “enmity”—an enmity like to his own: implacable, and perpetual.

“The seed of the woman” is one, and includes also all who partake of His nature and character, and submit to His rule and government. The Lord saith, “Between thy seed and her seed.” The language is peculiar and emphatic. It is not the seed of the man and of the woman; but it is “her seed”—a seed to proceed from her and her alone, and not another, and necessarily partakes of her humanity: a seed born out of that regular order and course of nature which was ordained by the Lord at the creation. Gen. i. 27–28 and ii. 21–24. Consequently, the production of this seed must be superhuman, even by the extraordinary power of the Most High; and it must be designed for the accomplishment of extraordinary purposes.

That no strain is put upon the words, and no forced interpretation given, is evident from the reference made to this seed in the third member of the sentence: “It shall bruise

thy head." The singular pronoun fixes the sense: the seed is one; and that one seed is a son; for, although the Hebrew personal pronoun of the third person is, in the books of Moses, in different passages, of common gender, standing for she as well as he, yet here it is to be taken in its true masculine form, and designates a son. And of this interpretation the Holy Spirit is the infallible author. Thus He explained the passage in all the Scriptures given by His own inspiration. The following citations are in proof: Isa. vii. 14; ix. 6-7; Jer. xxxi. 22; Micah. v. 2-3; Matt. i. 13-25; Luke i. 26-37; ii. 1-19; John i. 14; iii. 16-36; Rom. viii. 32; Gal. iv. 4; iii. 16; 1 John iv. 10-14, &c. And this is the sense in which it was understood by our first parents; for the merciful God shut not up in darkness the words which He ordained to be their life.

To proceed with the interpretation: Satan is brought forward as the head or representative of all his seed, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." The special contest is to lie between Satan and her seed. The woman is not to bruise his head, but her seed is. This seed is to come and break the power of Satan, and deliver fallen men; and of all he delivers, he must needs be the head and representative. The seed of the woman therefore is one, and all are included in Him, who partake of His holy nature and character, and submit to His rule and government. Hence, not all the natural seed of our first parents are saved, but that part only who are delivered by the seed of the woman, and are included in Him.

This enmity between the seed of Satan and the seed of the woman, grows out of the very nature of holiness and sin, the two being opposites and irreconcilable. Satan and his seed being sinful, will forever hate and rebel against a Holy God; and God being immutably holy, can never tolerate, but will forever express His hatred against their sin. Satan and his seed give expression to their enmity in every form of opposition and ill-will which their ingenious wickedness can devise and their circumstances permit; and there is no work against the glory or happiness, or even the existence of God and His

people, which, if unrestrained, they would not exert themselves to accomplish!

We now reach the third member of the sentence: "It (or He) shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The enmity upon either side comes into collision, and the progress and final end of the warfare are declared. On the one side Satan shall bruise the heel of the seed of the woman.

The contrast lies between "the heel of the seed," and "the head of Satan." The power of Satan will be only to annoy; the power of the seed will be to overwhelm; the bruise on the one part will be slight; but on the other, fatal. "Bruising the heel" intimates the despicable malignity and cowardly assaults of Satan—a treacherous serpent in the grass,—to beset the footsteps of the seed of the woman, and give him pain and suffering, and so impede his way and his work, 2 Cor. iv. 3-4; Eph. vi. 12; John xiii. 2, 27; but he shall not be able to touch his life, nor ultimately defeat his purposes, nor resist his power, Gen. xlix. 17; Matt. iv. 1-11; Luke xxii. 52-53; John xiv. 30; Heb. ii. 14.

But the seed of the woman shall bruise his head—the chief member of the body—the seat of life, of wisdom, and power and glory of the creature. To bruise the head is not only to treat with indignity, Matt. xxvii. 30, but also to vanquish all wisdom and power, and to destroy life itself, Ps. lxxviii. 21; Amos ix. 1-4. The head of Satan shall be low and exposed, and unprotected in the combat; and he shall be spoiled of his prey, Acts xxvi. 18; Col. i. 13; John xii. 31, and stripped of his sovereignty, and crushed under the feet of his mighty enemy, Job xl. 12; Isa. lxiii. 3; Mal. iv. 3; Luke x. 19; xxi. 12-15, and never be able to rise, but be destroyed evermore, Rom. xvi. 20; Eph. iv. 8; Col. ii. 15; Heb. ii. 14-15; 1 John iii. 5-8; v. 5; Rev. xii. 7-11; xx. 1-3, 10; Matt. xxv. 41; Jude vi.; 2 Pet. ii. 4.

This promise and prediction revealed glad tidings of great joy to our fallen and afflicted first parents. They now learned that sentence of death should not instantly be executed upon them, but that they should be placed under a dispensation of grace and salvation; that Satan, who had led them by

transgression into death, would be destroyed; that their salvation was to be effected by the seed of the woman, provided and appointed of God for that purpose, to whom would be the glory; that the seed although now only promised, and hereafter to be revealed, yet would be even from the beginning their present and loving Saviour. His salvation was for them and all the race; and, consequently, He was to be embraced by faith. Hence repentance towards God and faith in the Redeemer has been the way of life to lost sinners since the foundation of the world. Ps. cxxx. 1-4; 1 John iv. 19.

This pregnant and precious passage has been considered obscure, and as conveying ideas of salvation to our first parents of the most vague and general character—indeed, so much so, that they could only grope their way into life by the light of it. We take different ground.

That our first parents and their immediate posterity derived from this promise, and from the institution of sacrifices occurring in immediate connection with and in explanation of it, satisfactory views of the plan of redemption, is undeniable; for the Holy Spirit refers to it as one understood by all those to whom it was addressed, which He sealed to God's people, working in them by it an intelligent saving faith, which reached forward and laid hold of the person and justifying righteousness of the great Redeemer to come, and which purified the heart and overcame the world. Such, for example, was the faith of Abel, and the faith of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, Heb. xi. 1-6; and, when we consult the prophecy of Enoch, we learn that in these early ages the knowledge which the people of God possessed of this "seed of the woman," was both particular and extensive. Enoch enthrones Him as the Lord—the future Judge of all the earth—clothes Him with omniscience and omnipotence, with infinite holiness and justice, and arms Him with vengeance against the wicked rejecters of His grace and salvation. Jude, vs. 14-15. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying: Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their un-

godly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." He was "a sign" even then "spoken against." Luke ii. 34.

And can it be overlooked that this promise was designed for the comfort of perishing sinners, and that for very many ages? Can it be presumed, without a most wicked reflection upon the goodness of our Heavenly Father, that He would do otherwise than make that way of salvation plain? How otherwise could sinners understand and embrace it?

Let it be further considered that the plan of redemption presents a connected series of particular truths and promises which make their appeal to the character and condition of such as are objects and subjects of redemption; and that they must, in and for themselves (by divine grace), acknowledge these truths, and embrace these promises: otherwise, they can have no connection with redemption, nor any experience of its reality and power. Allowing this to be so, look at the condition of our first parents, at the time this promise of salvation was made in their hearing. They had sinned, and consequently forfeited forever the favor of God, and were exposed to the penalty of "death." They possessed neither ability nor inclination of will to return to God: and not only were destitute of all righteousness for justification, but could in no way whatever take the first step towards the finding of any method of communion and reconciliation with God. All this was a matter of fact and of experience to them. This their deplorable condition called for relief: they needed some form of redemption that would precisely meet it. Redemption could originate and proceed from a sovereign God alone, and be the fruit of His own free and unsearchable love and mercy: and so in this passage God does originate and propose redemption; and their redemption from the curse of God's law could not possibly be accomplished by themselves, nor for them by any other mere creatures, either in heaven or in earth; for the highest and holiest of creatures can never do more than their own duty for their acceptance with God. There must, therefore, of necessity, be one provided, every way

mighty, to do all for their salvation which was necessary to be done—one who could and who had a right, if he chose, to become a curse for them, and also deliver their souls from the power and corruption of sin. God appointed such an one in “the seed of the woman.” And how “the seed of the woman” was to become their Redeemer, was discovered in the institution of sacrifices, which immediately followed the promise of Him. He was to effect their redemption on the principle of substitution. The bleeding and the burning sacrifice typified the great sacrifice of “the seed of the woman.” It was impossible for the blood of the sacrificed animals to take away sin; but the believing worshipper looked through the shadow to the substance, and rested upon the superior efficacy of the blood to be shed in due time for him, by “the seed of the woman.” It was a sacrifice prepared by God Himself, and therefore perfect and accepted with Him, and, in like manner, should be deemed perfect, and should be relied on by the sinner. As a necessary inference, this “seed of the woman,” however mysterious his person might be, nevertheless must be sinless, of exalted nature, in intimate fellowship with God; and, as the work which He was to perform required divine attributes, the Redeemer of their souls could be to them none other than an object of divine confidence and worship; and, as He was provided of God for them in this office, the honor rendered Him must be honor rendered to God also, and redound to His glory. The infinite love and compassion of God here beam effulgently; and the rebels are melted, and subdued, and saved. While the peculiar and mysterious constitution of the person of the Redeemer, and where and when He should become incarnate, and appear; how He should labor, suffer, and die as a sacrifice for sin, and rise from the dead and ascend to heaven,—while all these things, and others relating to Him were not revealed as they were in after ages, yet He was, in all His personality, and power, and grace, sufficiently revealed, to be the great object of faith and salvation to His people from the beginning, even before our first parents were driven out of Paradise.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TEMPORAL JUDGMENTS ON THE TRANSGRESSORS.—ADAM AND EVE THE PARENTS OF THE WHOLE HUMAN FAMILY.—THE ORIGIN AND INSTITUTION OF SACRIFICES.

SALVATION having been provided, certain permanent temporal judgments, suited to their sex, condition, and labors in life, were imposed upon Adam and Eve as representatives of their race—memorials of God's displeasure, and of their fallen, condemned, and suffering state!

The woman being first in transgression, is first in judgment, with a twofold affliction—in the sorrows of a mother, and the sorrows of a wife.

At best, a burden is the desire of her inmost soul; but how frequently attended with excitement, and fears, and faintings and painfulness, and watchings and sickness! and sometimes life goes for life!—Isa. xxvi. 17; Gen. xxxv. 16–19; 1 Sam. iv. 19–22—a period of tenderness, when unkindness or exposure, and sufferings and hardships, are most difficult to be borne. Matt. xxiv. 19; 2 Kings viii. 12; xv. 16. The multiplying of men, which, in a state of innocency, would have been light, and but the multiplying of joy, is, in consequence of sin, turned into sorrow.

Let her husband as a man be what he may; let him be to her what he will, she is bound by bars of steel. Her desire is to him, and because he is her husband; and there is a weighty meaning in the words, "And he shall rule over thee." The mild and affectionate rule of the husband, in a state of inno-

ency, is, in a state of sin, too frequently exchanged (especially where the restraining and reforming influences of the Gospel are unknown) for a rule of harshness, and injustice, and unfeeling tyranny.

On the man falls a threefold affliction. First, a rebellious soil. Before his sin, the earth owned her Lord, and joyfully yielded her increase in abundance; but afterwards she refuses to respond to his toil, and casts up thorns and thistles to choke his seed and blast his hopes. Secondly, sorrowful and perpetual labor for a support even unto death. The world of mankind in their labors to live, demonstrates the existence of this judgment. And, lastly, awful death! including all that precedes—sicknesses, diseases, calamities; and all that follows—separations, distresses, the lonely grave and its affecting corruption.

When the Lord God had ceased to speak, "Adam called his wife's name Eve," the meaning of which is "Life;" "because she was the mother of all living," the one ordained to give life to all of her "kind," or race. The naming of Eve directly after the fall, and the promise of salvation, and the infliction of the temporal judgments, cannot be without its significancy; and, if we have rightly discerned the mind of the Spirit, is designed to affirm, that Adam and Eve are the parents of all mankind—a most important fact which the Word of God establishes throughout, both in its natural and spiritual history of the race.

The Word of God gives the natural history of man in his creation, and subsequent progress in the world, in express affirmations, and in recognition of varieties in the race, but the race remaining ever the same.

In the beginning, all living creatures inhabiting the air, the land, or the waters, were created in an endless variety of distinct kinds, or species, able to propagate their own species; and by an immutable law, the species remain distinct, and can never mingle so as to produce of two distinct species a third, to propagate and preserve itself as well as an original species—a law which is essential to the order and well-being of the whole world. Gen. i. 20–25. Man was created "after his kind" also, and made lord of the world, with a com-

mand to be fruitful, to multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and a name was given him to designate his race or kind—namely, Adam. “The Lord God called his name Adam, in the day when they were created;” so all men are the “sons of Adam.” Gen. i. 28; Deut. xxxii. 8; Ps. xxxiii. 13; Prov. viii. 31; Isa. lii. 14; Mark iii. 28; Eph. iii. 5; Matt. viii. 20; ix. 6; Luke iii. 23–38.

The Scriptures trace the progress of the race, all descending from the original pair, down to the flood. At that catastrophe, only eight of their posterity are saved; to them the Lord renews the grant of the world, and His original command to Adam, that they should be fruitful, and replenish the earth; and gives them the sign of the rainbow, that He would never more destroy their race with a flood; and by the sons of Noah “was the whole earth overspread.” Noah also, by inspiration, enters a prophecy concerning his sons, Gen. ix. 20–27, and gives an epitome of the history of mankind descending from them; which prophecy, taken in connection with the 10th Chapter of Genesis, apportioned “the whole earth,” which they overspread, as follows:—to Japheth, Europe, and the Isles of the Sea; to Ham, portions of Asia and all Africa; to Shem, all Asia. This 10th chapter sets down the tribes and nations into which they grew, and the countries into which they were dispersed, and which they held as possessions. The time when, and the place where, and the cause why, the descendants of Noah were dispersed one from another, as related in this chapter, are detailed in the chapter following—the 11th: “These are the families of the sons of Noah after their generations, and in their nations, and by these were the nations divided after the flood,” x. 32, vss. 5, 20, 31; ix. 19. After the dispersion, a portion of the posterity of Shem is singled out from the rest of mankind, and becomes the people of sacred history down to the appearance of the promised Saviour: and for the reason that they form the visible Church on earth, out of which the Lord of salvation should come. The distinction is now made, and onwards, between the people of God and the rest of mankind—the Gentile or Heathen world; and while in process of time the people of God become more

visible and fixed by organization and settlement in one particular land, the Gentiles increasing and occupying the rest of the world; yet is the whole race one, descended from the same original pair—all “brethren according to the flesh.” And it is worthy of notice, that the histories of nations, and the traditions of their origins, fix the first creation of the human family in the western part of Asia, and so corroborate the true history of the Bible on the subject.

The positive affirmations of Scripture on the point, are such as those already noted—namely, the creation of one original pair, to whom the world is given in possession, and who are commanded to fill it with their children; the Lord calling the race by a distinct name; Adam’s giving his wife the name of Eve; the renewed grant of the world after the flood to the only surviving descendants of Adam, by whom the whole earth was overspread; and to these, other affirmations may be added, as follows: the Apostle Paul, an Israelite of the chosen portion of Shem, reasoning with the Gentiles to turn them from their idols unto the living and true God, affirms: “God that made the world and all things therein, hath made of one blood,” (of one original stock, or pair), “all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth,” (as in the beginning He ordained, “Multiply and fill the earth,)” “and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations,” when He scattered and divided them into nations. Gen. xi. ; Acts xvii. 24-28. And so reads the Prophet Malachi: “Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us?” Mal. ii. 10, and are we not “His offspring?” The Apostle Paul settles the unity of the race in Rom. v. 12-19. Having proved, both Jew and Gentile, the whole world guilty before God, he traces their sin and ruin directly to the first man, and so makes the physical and moral unity of the race identical. To admit the one and deny the other, is to put asunder what God has joined together. In 1 Cor. xv. 22, he makes the physical and moral unity of the race identical again: Adam is of the earth, earthy; “in Adam all die;” all bear the image of the earthy, vss. 47-49; and to look higher than Paul, our Saviour

when treating of marriage as the union of one man and one woman, refers to the marriage of Adam and Eve as the original and perfect example of all, and so determines beyond cavil that the whole race has descended from this one pair. Mark x. 6-7; Matt. xix. 1-9. And the Apostle follows his Master in the same reference, and leads us to the same conclusion. 1 Tim. ii. 11-15; ii. Cor. xi. 3.

The Word of God recognizes varieties in the race of man : yet the race is one and the same.

The Canaanites, in comparison with the Hebrews, were a people of greater stature, Numb. xiii. 32; Josh. xv. 14; 2 Sam. xxi. 20; the Chaldeans cultivated the plains; the Arabians wandered over the deserts and dwelt in tents; the Egyptians were nourished by the overflowings of the Nile, and the Ethiopian of Africa retained his unchangeable skin. Jer. xiii. 23. These nations, differing from each other in features, manners, customs, language, and religion, and complexion, are all descendants of the same original pair. At what period, and precisely by what agencies, the varieties which appear in the physical conformation and color of the human family were produced, Scripture is silent; and our philosophy and observation give no light. They emerge from the obscurity of remote ages; the memory of man runneth not contrary thereto; and reason and theorize as we may, the best solution is to refer all to the immediate hand of God. He who, in His wise sovereignty, has caused individuals to differ in features, form, complexion, and mental endowments, in the same family, in the exercise of the same sovereignty, has caused whole nations in time to differ, and made their differences characteristic and indelible. Original observers affirm, that ranging the varieties of the race side by side (in greater or less number, according to the classification adopted), the differences appear in a regular gradation, merging into each other, like a line commencing in light, and shading gradually into darkness; and that whenever the varieties unite, their peculiarities in form and color undergo great modifications, thereby demonstrating that differences in form and color do not affect identity of species. The irrational creatures furnish

proof of this; for, how much greater are the varieties in races of different animals and birds, particularly such as have been the immediate associates and servants of man from time immemorial, and yet the races are one!

And all the permanent, physical characteristics of man, as given in the Scriptures, obtain through all and in all of the varieties of the race; such, for example, as his erect posture, Neh. ix. 5; viii. 5; Acts x. 26; xiv. 10; i. 11; Gen. xviii. 2, 23; xxiii. 3-7; John viii. 5; Gen. xiii. 17, &c.; his hairy scalp, Gen. xlii. 38; Ps. xl. 12; lx. 21; Neh. xiii. 25; Isa. iii. 24; John xi. 2; Matt. x. 30; the features of his face, Ps. cxv. 4-7; xciv. 9; Gen. xviii. 13; Eccl. iii. 4; Gen. xl. 6; Matt. vi. 16; his power of speech, Gen. ii. 18-24; iii. 9-13; xi. 1-7; Acts ii. 6; Dan. iii. 4; the members of his body, Ps. cxv. 4-7; 1 Cor. xii. 14-25; Matt. xv. 17; 1 Cor. vi. 13; the custom of women, Ezek. xvi. 7; Deut. xx. 18; Gen. xxxi. 35; xviii. 11; Ps. cxxxix. 13-16; the period of gestation, Gen. xviii. 10, 14; 2 Kings iv. 16; 1 Sam. i. 20; Luke i. 36; ii. 6; the ordinary length of life, Gen. v. 1-32; xi. 11-23; xxiii. 1; xxv. 7; Deut. xxxiv. 7; Ps. xc. 10; and, finally, the capability and disposition to enter into the marriage state, and the production of prolific offspring—a fact of itself sufficient to demonstrate the unity of the race.

To this positive evidence in favor of the unity of the race, drawn from its natural history in the Word of God, some negative may be added from the same source, as, for example, no mention is made of any other creation of man on the earth, saving that of Adam and Eve. Having the veritable and inspired history of the race, we cannot admit the naked assertions to the contrary of geologists and physiologists, that men have been distributed over the earth by distinct creations, after the manner of brute-animals, and plants; neither is there any proof in the Bible, or out of it, of any races of men that have not sprung from Adam and Eve. It is said Cain found a race distinct from his own, when he went into the land of Nod, for he married there a wife. Unfortunately, the Scripture does not read so, Gen. iv. 16-18: "He went out into the land of Nod, on the east of Eden: and knew his wife,

—and she bare Enoch.” It appears he was a married man, and carried his wife with him. Nor is it true that the Bible gives the history of the Israelites only as a single, race and passes over all others. The sacred history, as already shown, gives the history of all men on the earth but as descendants from one original pair. Heathen nations that have laid claim to an origin distinct from that of other nations, have never established their claims upon credible testimony of any kind; and for the obvious reason that no such testimony was to be had.

Turn to the spiritual history of man in the Bible, and it proves the unity of the race: for God addresses His Word not to any particular nation or nations, but to all mankind without distinction; all being His accountable creatures, and possessing the same mental constitution, subject to one and the same condemnation, and needing one and the same salvation. And again, among the various nations noticed in Scripture, there is a universal prevalence of some kind of religious worship, bearing a resemblance so strong to the true worship of God as to induce the conviction, that the false and corrupt was originally derived from the true, and, of course, in no other manner than by imitation and tradition—the true communicated in the first instance to Adam and Eve, and transmitted by them to succeeding generations. An examination also, of the religious systems of nations not noticed in the Scriptures, deepens the conviction that they have all filled their vessels, though of different structure and of unequal capacity, at the same fountain. How extensively diffused are the traditions of the creation of the original pair, of their happy abode in Paradise, of their miserable fall, of the universal deluge, of the ark, of the salvation therein of a small remnant of the race, and of the re-peopling of the world by them! How easily traced, in sacred times and seasons, and in the divisions of time, is the institution of the Sabbath! and how universally received and practiced the institution of sacrifices! In short, the religious knowledge of the world is a reflection from the Word of God, and runs upward and backward so far in the history of our race, as to leave no doubt

behind, that we have all had one common origin—one father in Adam, and one mother in Eve.

But let the repetition of facts be allowed, and mark the direct testimony in this spiritual history. Was not Adam constituted moral (as well as natural) head of the race of mankind in the covenant of works? and were not the consequences of his fall visited upon the whole race, as their condition universally proves? Did not the promise of a Redeemer have respect to the whole race as fallen? Was not that Redeemer to be of the seed of the woman? and is not His genealogy traced up to Adam, Luke iii. 38, “Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the Son of God?” And as His genealogy is traced backward and upward, we discover that Christ is not the Saviour of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also; for the blood of the Gentiles, as well as Jews, flows in His veins, Matt. i. 1–5–16; Luke iii. 23–28; and is He not sent and proclaimed as the Redeemer for the whole world of mankind—the one ruined race? God gave Him in His great love, to be “the Saviour of the world,” John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9–10; John iv. 42; Acts iv. 12; and Christ Himself calls upon all the ends of the earth to look to him and be saved, Luke ii. 9–11; xxix. 32; Isa. xlv. 32, and to feed upon Him as the bread which came down from heaven to give life unto the world, John vi. 38; xii. 32; and He commanded His Gospel to be preached to every creature, and to be carried into all nations. He is to gather His elect from the four corners of the earth. And the remarkable fact stares us in the face, that wherever the Gospel is preached, to whatever nations of men, its reception, its influence, its effects, are identically the same. All are dead in Adam, and all are made alive in Christ Jesus. And the crowning acts of His reign respect the whole, and but the one race. In the awful and final day, He raises the dead, He changes the living, gathers before His throne all nations that ever existed, (Acts xvii. 30–31; Matt. xxv. 31–46,) burns up the world, and then in judgment separates the righteous from the wicked, and fixes them respectively in their eternal states of blessedness and woe!

Thus the natural and spiritual history of our race, in the Word of God, establishes the fact that "Eve is the mother of all living." Human philosophers and science may offer objections, or, more correctly speaking, suggest difficulties arising from our want of experience and information; but God has spoken, and God is true. It is one of the revelations of God, and a doctrine essential to the history of the Church, which, in her rise and progress, her doctrines and ordinances, her members, her labors and cares, her joys and sorrows, and her ultimate triumph, has to do with man springing from one original pair, and one only, which increasing into one vast family, shall ultimately fill the earth. To deny the doctrine, is to deny the Bible, and so overturn religion and the Church along with it.

After Adam had called his wife's name Eve, "unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them," Gen. iii. 21, who before were but scantily covered with their "aprons of fig-leaves." This is an immediate and singular act of God. What does it import? The skins were, of course, of slain animals—slain by whom? Not by Adam, for the grant of flesh as food had not yet been given, Gen. i. 29–30, but by authority of the Lord. For what purpose? For the skins for clothing? What use then was made of the bodies of the animals? Were they cast out to offend the senses, and waste upon the ground? It is not probable. He who had all power and all materials at command, and who cares for cattle and for the life of the least of his creatures, might have clothed them without pain to any. Jonah iv. 11; Ps. cxlvii. 8–9; Matt. vi. 26; Job xxxviii. 41; Matt. x. 29. There was a design in the death of these beasts besides that of securing material for clothing—a design of using their bodies in sacrifice to God; and it is here in Eden, immediately after the fall and the promise of a Saviour, that sacrifices are instituted for the more perfect revelation of the way of salvation by this Redeemer to the understanding and faith of men. God, who alone is the author of salvation, through the one great sacrifice of His well-beloved Son, is also the author, and He alone could be the author of those

sacrifices which prefigured and were prophetic of it. Now, did He teach Adam and Eve the rite, the design, and meaning of sacrifices? what beasts to slay, and when and how to slay and offer them? and what humility, repentance, faith, and thanksgiving, should accompany the rite?

The reasons for fixing the origin of sacrifices at this time, are obvious. In the first place, the clothing with skins follows close upon the promise of a Redeemer, and before the expulsion from Eden. The grant of flesh for food had not yet been given, and the animals could have been slain only by authority of God. Their bodies must have been disposed of in sacrifice; and afterwards it is seen that the skins of animals slain in sacrifice, were used for the clothing of men. Levit. vii. 8; xiii. 59; xxxi. 20; Heb. xi. 37. Such garments would be as garments of salvation to Adam and Eve, reminding them of the great sacrifice, in whose righteousness they must be clothed, and not in their own. In the second place, sacrifices were offered in the family of Adam, by Cain and Abel as a customary rite, well understood, and received, and acknowledged by the Lord as agreeable to His will. They could not therefore, have been acts of will-worship. Matt. xv. 9. The Lord instructed Adam, and he instructed his children. Gen. iv. 1-7. In the third place, if sacrifices were not instituted at this time, then there is no account in Scripture of their origin, which, considering their character and importance, can by no means be admitted. In the fourth place, neither Adam nor his sons could have originated them any more than they could have originated the plan of salvation by the sacrifice of a Divine Redeemer. But this we know to be a revelation from God. John iii. 10-16; Matt. xi. 27. He who ordained the type, ordained also the antitype. The two are perfectly adjusted the one to the other, and inseparable as the shadow from the substance. The flowing blood of the animal is the visible revelation—the sign of redemption by the blood of the great sacrifice to come; and further, by what process of reasoning, upon what principle in nature, could Adam or his sons reach the conclusion that they must offer the fruits of the earth, and slay and burn animals before God in worshipping

Him? The slaughtering of animals in the worship of God is revolting to nature, except as ordained by Him, and even then is attended with pain. In the fifth place, the consent of Scripture points to Eden as the place where sacrifices were divinely instituted. Is not our Lord styled "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"? Rev. xiii. 8. If the Lord taught Adam the slaying of the lamb immediately after the promise, then is the sacrifice coeval with the promise. The Epistle to the Hebrews teaches, ix. 9-14; x. 1-12, that all sacrifices are types and shadows of the one great sacrifice, and consequently stand in immediate connection with the first promise of that sacrifice, and owe their existence to it, and to nothing else; and hence, all through the Scriptures the Lord appears the author of sacrifices. He claims them in His worship, commands them, regulates them, explains them, accepts them. He did so when Cain and Abel offered; He did so in Eden; for in Eden the line of sacrifices runs out; they begin there, Josh. xiii. 14; 2 Kings xvii. 35; Deut. xv. 21; Levit. x. 13; Isa. i. 11; xli. 23-24; Isa. lvi. 7; Exod. xxii. 20; xxx. 15; xx. 24; Levit. i. 2; iii. 2; ix. 13; 1 Sam. ii. 29, &c., &c.

And then, what is the meaning of a sacrifice? wherein lies its efficacy? and how many kinds of sacrifices are there?

Two Latin words form the word sacrifice, and sufficiently help us to the meaning: the first signifying, in a religious sense, something set apart from its common and ordinary use to a sacred use—something devoted to God; the second signifying to make, or to offer. A sacrifice is that which is set apart from a common to a holy use, offered to God (of course with proper form and ceremony) in expiation of, or atonement for transgressions, and the obtaining of the divine forgiveness and favor. In this sacrifice for expiation (which is here intended) there is a transfer or imputation of the sins of the transgressor to the victim, significantly expressed by his laying his hand upon its head, with confession of the same. The wrath of God falls upon the victim or substitute, and the real transgressor is forgiven, and goes free.

The efficacy of the sacrifice in taking away sin, lies not in

the sacrifice itself, since it is not possible that the blood of lambs, or bulls, or goats, should take away sin ; but the sacrifice is typical, and the sins of the transgressor are truly expiated and forgiven, and he justified, when by faith he looks beyond and through the type, and lays hold upon the antitype, the promised Saviour, the Lamb of God, whose blood alone cleanses from all sins. The typical sacrifices in the church could procure ceremonial cleanness and acceptableness, but not spiritual. Levit. i. 4 ; xix. 20-22 ; xvi. 21-22.

The sacrifice must be a lawful one ; that is, it must correspond in kind and quality, and in the mode of its being offered, with the laws of God which regulate it ; for men are not permitted to offer what, and when, and where, and how they please. Mal. i. 6-14 ; Levit. xxii. 1-33 ; Deut. xv. 21 ; Matt. xv. 8.

Though lawful, its acceptableness depends upon the state of the heart of the sacrificer and worshipper, Isa. i. 10-20 ; Amos v. 20-27 ; Luke xi. 42 ; Isa. xxix. 13 ; Rom. ii. 28-29 ; Ps. li. 16-19 ; l. 7-23 ; and if that be right, the sacrifice is accepted ; and under particular circumstances God will even accept sacrifices which may not have been prepared in all respects agreeably to the regularly prescribed rules, 2 Chron. xxix. 34 ; xxx. 15-20, the worshippers not having been able to prepare either themselves or their sacrifices, Num. ix. 10-13.

For a general division :

Sacrifices are of two kinds—animal and vegetable, or bloody and bloodless,—and when offered are devoted to God without reservation or recall, unless permission is given to that effect, which indeed obtains in certain sacrifices, which are divided between the Lord, the priest, and the worshipper ; yet, what is allowed to the priest and the worshipper, is still the Lord's sacrifice, and, as such, is consumed by both with suitable exercises of mind.

All the sacrifices (including the offerings) in Scripture, may be thrown into three classes—the sacrifices of expiation, of purification, and of thanksgiving, having reference on the one hand, to the justice, holiness, and goodness of God, and, on the other, to the guilt, pollution, and obligations of the

sinner. By God's justice is the sinner condemned. under guilt, he offers his sacrifice of expiation. By God's holiness is he repelled: in his pollution he offers his sacrifice for purification; and indeed, in the sacrifice for expiation, the blood that atones, also is sprinkled upon him to cleanse and purify; for in Christ we find both our justification and sanctification. By God's goodness every blessing, temporal and spiritual, is bestowed upon him: and therefore, he offers his sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise.

The Lord gave Adam a knowledge of different kinds of sacrifices—bloody and bloodless—burnt-offerings and sacrifices, the latter including peace-offerings; and consequently, all these were instituted prior to the giving of the Law of Moses. Gen. iv. 1-9; comp. Exod. x. 25; xviii. 12. The knowledge of Adam of the way of life, through the promise and the institution of sacrifices in direct connection with it, was ample for worship and salvation. The exalted faith and piety of the people of God, from Adam to Moses, demonstrate this. Our Lord and His Apostles held them up as shining examples to the Church in all ages. Luke xiii. 28; John viii. 56; Heb. xi. 1-22; James v. 11.

The sacrifices given to Adam were all types of the one great sacrifice to come—ordained memorials of the fall and redemption of man—to be partaken of by God's people, sacramentally, even until the substance should come; and then the shadows would flee away, expiring by the statute of their own limitation. Since the fall, there is no access to God but by sacrifice. The words of our Lord are true from the beginning to the end of time: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." John xiv. 6.

A knowledge of sacrifices was transmitted by Adam and his sons to Noah and his sons, and by them to all their posterity, and hence they have overspread the world; but the original kinds and forms, and their true nature and end, in the lapse of centuries, and by the depravity of man, were perverted and lost. The heathen nations mentioned in the Bible (and so with all since) offered their sacrifices to idols, and set the value in the sacrifices themselves; and perhaps, every heathen

nation, at some time of its existence, has propitiated its deities by human sacrifices. Levit. xviii. 21 ; xx. 2, 23 ; Deut. xii. 31 ; Ps. cvi. 37 ; Isa. lxvi. 3 ; Jer. xxiii. 37. We can teach them the true nature of sacrifices, and the way of life revealed in them, in no other manner than by sending them the Gospel.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

THE dark clouds which hung over paradise were scattered by the rising of "the Sun of righteousness." Mal. iv. 2. The tender accents of mercy and the sweet light of life fell upon Adam and Eve, and through them upon all their posterity, in the promise, and in the sacrifices which illustrated and confirmed it to their faith.

Their connection with the covenant of works, as "a law that could give life," Gal. iii. 21, was forever dissolved; and it ministered death, and death only, to them, Gal. iii. 10-11; but it pleased a merciful God to place them under another, which could give life—the covenant of grace.

The original promise of salvation, "It shall bruise thy head," in Gen. iii. 15, was the first intimation to them of the existence of such a covenant, and the first revelation of it in time. It could, of course, be made known only so soon as the necessity of man called for it. And here and now it lifts the veil, and permits us to look far back into the depths of the everlasting counsels of God, and to learn something of their comprehensiveness and vastness, and to behold the design and end of the creation and existence of the world. The design is a grand scheme of mercy, and the end—as in all the works of God—His own glory. He purposed in Himself from eternity the exercise of His love towards His creatures in a way of mercy; hence the scheme of human redemption, through the stupendous sacrifice of the Son of God, which should be

throughout all ages to the praise of the glory of His grace, Eph. i. 3-12; Rom. ix. 22-23, and in a manner seen in no other work in the universe, Exod. xxxiii. 18-23; xxxiv. 5-8; Ps. cxxxviii. 2; 1 Pet. i. 12; Eph. iii. 9-11.

Such a manifestation could be made only to creatures, under just such circumstances as would admit of it; and the covenant of grace shows the whole counsel of God in the matter; which covenant calls for, and presupposes for its own operation, the creation of this material world, the creation of man in his uprightness, his perfect trial under the first covenant, his fall, and consequent condemnation and ruin; and thus would he be in a condition to receive mercy from a sovereign God, should He see fit to exercise it towards him.

God communes with man since his fall only through the covenant of grace, which is the foundation and cause of all the true religion that ever has existed, or that ever will exist upon earth. It opens to the sinner a way of access to a throne of grace, through an all-sufficient Redeemer, Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12; Heb. x. 20; reveals all the doctrines of the religion of Christ—the things to be believed: and all the duties—the things to be done; and establishes the forms, ceremonies, and institutions of that religion. In its rich provisions the sinner has his necessities anticipated, wisdom for his ignorance, righteousness for his guilt, sanctification for his pollution, salvation from every enemy and every woe, and the final fruition of God in glory. 1 Cor. i. 30; John x. 27-30. It is only within this covenant we have the true knowledge of God; and it is only in a personal participation of its gracious provisions, that salvation is obtained. Without the pale of this covenant there can possibly be no salvation; for it is here that God has not only provided salvation, but also infallibly designated those who should be the happy partakers of it; for God, “according to His purpose and grace,” chose, in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, those whom He would save unto Himself out of our ruined race, Eph. i. 3-5, &c.; 2 Tim. i. 9; 1 Pet. i. 2, promising them eternal life, Titus i. 1-3; 1 Pet. i. 20; Matt. xxv. 34; John xvii. 24; Acts xv. 18, and making it sure to them in time, Eph. i. 5; 1 Pet. i. 2; ii. 9; Rom.

viii. 29-30 ; x. 30-36. Evident therefore is it, that the true Church of God is pointed out and enfolded in the bosom of this covenant of grace. It carries the Church of God in its merciful embrace, as the ark carried Noah and his family. The Church flows out of the covenant as its source, and exists in it and under it as its life, until its final and glorious presentation before the throne of God, "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." Eph. v. 27. Nor is there any possibility of rightly conceiving of the true nature, constitution, doctrines, and order of the Church ; nor of rightly framing, and comprehending after it is framed, the history of the Church, without a correct understanding of the covenant of grace. Church history takes its rise from, and has its progress and its end in this covenant.

That there is such a covenant, in contradistinction to the covenant of works, the Apostle Paul teaches in Galatians iii 1-29, where he argues that salvation is found in "the covenant (that is, of grace), confirmed before God in Christ," and not in the law or covenant of works. The error of his brethren according to the flesh, lay in seeking to establish their own righteousness under the law. Had they used the law lawfully, they would have found the whole law, moral and ceremonial, "a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ." Driven to self-despair by the curses of the moral law, or the covenant of works, these convicted sinners would have made the discovery of mercy and forgiveness, offered to them through Him revealed to their faith in the ceremonial law ; or, in other words, in the covenant of grace. This exposition dissolves the mystery which hangs over the reasoning of the Apostle in various places with the unbelieving Israelites. They used the whole law, moral and ceremonial, for justification, on the ground of the merit of their own obedience thereto, as though they were still under a covenant of works. The Apostle would disabuse of their folly, and bring them under the provisions of the covenant of grace. Gal. iv. 1-5 ; 21-31 ; comp. Heb. vii. 1-28, &c. ; chapters 8 and 9, and Rom. 1, 2, 3 ; Luke xxii. 19-20 ; Matt. xxvi. 28 ; Heb. xii. 24.

The covenant of grace is termed a new covenant ; not

indeed on account of its age, for it is eternal, Eph. i. 1-4, &c., but because it succeeds, in time and order of operation, the first or old covenant of works, and is in itself more precious and sure, being founded upon and ministered by Jesus Christ—the Divine Mediator—and is eternal, and never to be abrogated, and again termed new in reference to its administration. Under the Old Dispensation it was administered under types and shadows, sacrifices and offerings; but under the New, Christ, the substance of all the shadows and sacrifices, being come, it is administered in its reality, freshness, and power, Heb. viii. 1-13; ix. 1, &c.

And because this covenant is ratified, sealed, and made forever sure to all believers by the blood of Christ, it is also termed a “Testament,” or Will. The Apostle Paul speaks of it as a Testament, or Will, and of Christ as the Testator; and He must needs die before His heirs can come to His inheritance, which he purchased and bequeathed to them at and by His death. Heb. ix. 13-28; Luke xxii. 20; Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24; 1 Cor. xi. 23-26; 2 Cor. iii. 6, 14; Gal. iii. 15; Heb. ix. 15; xii. 24; xiii. 20.

If a definition of the covenant of grace be required, the following may suffice: “It is God’s gracious plan of bestowing grace and glory upon sinful men through His Son Jesus Christ.” Or, we may adopt the language of Scripture itself: It is God’s “choice” and, “predestination” “of whom He will” of lost men, “unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace.” Eph. i. 4-6.

We have said it is an eternal covenant. In the natural order of existence it precedes the covenant of works; but in the order, operation, and revelation, it succeeds that covenant, made in eternity, with One who is eternal, and for His people who were to be saved by Him in time. Prov. viii. 22-31; John i. 1-5; Micah. v. 2; Ps. cii. 25-27; Heb. i. 10-12 and vss. 8-9; Isa. ix. 6-7; John xvii. 5, 24; 1 Pet. i. 19-20; Titus i. 1-3; 2 Tim. i. 9-10; Rom. viii. 29-30; xi. 33-36; Eph. i. 1-6; iii. 8-11; Matt. xxv. 34; Rev. xiii. 8; Gen. iii. 15; 1 Pet. i. 1-12.

The author of this covenant is God, for none other could be, having absolute power and right to create, to govern, and to dispose of all things according to the counsel of His own will; and being infinitely wise, just, and powerful, He could never originate anything but that which is free from error, unrighteousness, and disappointment. Jer. x. 10-11; Isa. xlv. 6-8; Rom. xi. 33-36; 1 Chron. xxix. 11; Matt. vi. 13; Ps. lxxxix. 14; xcvii. 2; Gen. xviii. 25; Dan. iv. 35; Isa. xlvi. 10; Matt. xi. 25-26; Isa. xxxvii. 16; xl. 12-31; Exod. xv. 11; Prov. xvi. 4; Rev. iv. 11.

The covenant is purely an act of sovereignty from beginning to end. The Lord was self-moved thereto: for no reasons can exist for any of the works of God without Himself. He was not moved to it by any merit in man: for, strictly speaking, He had none before and certainly none after the fall: nor by the misery of man; for, if the misery of creatures moved Him, why, then, did He pass by fallen angels? and why in the covenant itself did He not include every child of Adam? When God formed and entered into this covenant with Christ, men had no existence; and it is therefore all an act of sovereignty, Heb. ii. 16; Rom. ix. 18, but an act of sovereignty springing from His love. He loves all His intelligent creatures with a love of benevolence as their Creator, manifested in His kind care of and bountiful provision for them; but in the covenant, the exceeding greatness of His love is manifested towards His chosen ones in a way of mercy, and extended to them at the infinite sacrifice of His only begotten and well-beloved Son. John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 8-10; Rom. v. 6-8; Eph. iii. 17-21.

And all the persons in the Godhead are engaged unitedly in this covenant.

With reverence and humility, remembering that we are but dust and ashes, may we speak. "Let us make man" was the language of the Holy Trinity. "Let us save man" is also the language of the Holy Trinity. The covenant of grace issues from the eternal counsels of the Godhead; all the persons are equally interested in, and are equally the authors of it; but in the revelation and administration of it, the

Father, as the representative of the holiness, justice, and mercy of the Godhead, is the author, the Son the executor, and the Holy Ghost the witness and applier. Gen. i. 26 ; iii. 15 ; vi. 3 ; Exod. xxiii. 20-23 ; Numb. vi. 23-27 ; Isa. lxiii. 8-10 ; Acts vii. 51 ; Eph. ii. 18 ; Matt. iii. 16-17 ; xxviii. 18-20 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

And the final end of the covenant is the glory of the ever-blessed God. Eph. i. 1-23 ; Rom. viii. 28-39 ; xi. 32-36 ; 1 Cor. xv. 27-28 ; Eph. iii. 10-21 ; Phil. ii. 9-11 ; Rev. v. 9-14.

The parties to the covenant are properly two : God the Father, the representative of the offended Godhead, and God the Son, the representative of offending man.

The parties to the first covenant—the covenant of works—were two only : God, and the first Adam, the representative of his natural seed. 1 Cor. xv. 21-22, 45-49 ; Rom. v. 12-19.

The parties to the second covenant, like those of the first, are properly two : God the Father and Christ, the second Adam, the head and representative of His spiritual seed, even those given to Him by the Father to be saved. This second Adam “is the Lord from heaven.” 1 Cor. xv. 45-49. God the Father graciously appoints this Surety and Mediator, and enters into covenant with Him as the head and representative of the elect : they are included in Him, and God holds Him responsible for them. He assumes everything and does everything for them ; and as he stands, so shall they stand. Gen. iii. 15 ; Ps. ii. 40, 45, 110 ; Acts iv. 25-26 ; Heb. x. 7 ; Acts ii. 34-36 ; Isa. vi. 6-7 ; John vi. 37-40 ; x. 1-30 ; xv. 1-6 ; xvii. 1-26 ; Rom. v. 12-19 ; viii. 29-39 ; Eph. i. 22-23 ; Gal. ii. 19-20 ; Heb. ix., &c.

In respect to the nature of this covenant, it is freely entered into by each of the contracting parties. Reverently may we represent it thus : “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked : whom shall I send ? who will become a daysman betwixt us ?” Then answers the eternal Son : “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.” God the Father makes known His will, states the conditions to be complied with on the part of God the Son, recounts the promises,

but attaches no penalties. The conditions were, briefly, that our Lord should become the Surety and Redeemer of the elect, by assuming their nature, and taking their place under the law which they had broken, and whose penalty they had incurred; that, as their true substitute, their iniquities should be laid upon Him and charged to His account; that He should obey the precepts and suffer the penalty of the law at the hands of divine justice, in their stead, and on their account, and for their benefit; that He should in reality make Himself a propitiatory and atoning sacrifice for their sins, dying the just for the unjust; and so, by the infinite merit of His obedience and sufferings, accepted of the Father, he might work out and secure to all the elect a complete righteousness for justification unto life eternal. Isa. liii. 1-12; Matt. xxvi. 26-29; John i. 1-18, 29; iii. 14-18, 36; x. 1-30; xvii. 1-26; Galatians i. 2 and 3; Heb. 1 to 10, and Eph. iv. 32; v. 1-2. Consequently, the righteousness for justification, which was the end of the law under the first covenant, and which man by transgression forever lost, Christ restores: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. x. 1-13; Gal. iii. 1-25; Col. ii. 10-17, &c. And our Lord not only brings in a righteousness for justification of His purchased people, but also merits and secures to them the indispensable gift and agency of the Holy Ghost, and all other necessary means for their sanctification and meetness for heaven. We are complete in Him: "for He is made of God" our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

The Father promises in the covenant to be a God to the Son in the execution of His work: "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son," Heb. i. 5; Ps. lxxxix. 19-37; lxxv. 1-7; lxxii. 1-2; Matt. iii. 17; Eph. i. 3-17; John, 17th chapter, and xx. 17; 2 Cor. i. 3; to exalt Him to the mediatorial throne from the beginning, to commit all things in heaven and in earth into His hands, and to make Him the great Revealer of God to the universe in His works of creation, providence, and grace, Gen. iii. 8; xv. 1; xviii. 1; xxxv. 1; Exod. iii. 1-2; xxiii. 20-21; Isa. lxiii. 9; Prov.

viii. 22-36 ; John i. 1-5 ; Ps. xlv. 6-7 ; Heb. i. 8 ; Ps. cii. 25-27 ; Heb. i. 10-12 ; Isa. ix. 6-7 ; Col. i. 15-20 ; Heb. i. 1-3 ; John i. 18 ; iii. 13 ; viii. 12 ; xiv. 9 ; xvii. 6, 8, 26 ; Matt. xi. 27-30 ; 1 John iv. 7-10 ; v. 20 ; John iii. 34 ; Ps. ex. and ii. ; Acts ii. 33 ; v. 31 ; Phil. ii. 5-11 ; Heb. x. 12-14 ; Rev. iv. 21 ; to furnish, preserve, sustain, and finally accept Him in the works which He had given Him to do, whereof He would give assurance unto all in that He would raise Him from the dead, Ps. xvi. 1-5 ; xlii. 1-7 ; Isa. xlix. 1-8, &c. ; Ps. ii., viii., xvi., xxii., xlv., lxxii., cx. ; Col. i. 19 ; ii. 3, 9 ; Matt. xxviii. 18 ; Luke ii. 49 ; John viii. 29 ; John ix. 4 ; xiv. 10-11 ; xvi. 32 ; xvii. 1-5 ; xii. 27-30 ; Luke xxiii. 46 ; Acts ii. 22-36 ; 1 Cor. vi. 14 ; Eph. i. 19-23 ; 1 Thess. i. 10 ; Heb. xiii. 20 ; Isa. l. 1-9 ; Luke xxii. 41-43 ; Matt. xxvi. 53 ; Acts xvii. 31 ; Matt. xxviii. 1-6 ; x. 12-13 ; 1 Cor. xv. ; 1 Pet. i. 21 ; Eph. v. 2.

The Father promises the Son that He should reign until He should effectually subdue all the enemies of God under His feet, and confine them under punishment in their own proper place, to disturb His kingdom no more, Heb. x. 12-14 ; Ps. cx. ; 1 Cor. xv. 25-26 ; Matt. xxv. 31-46 ; 2 Thess. i. 7-10 ; Jude, vss. 14-15 ; Rev. xx. 11-15 ; that He should reap the joy set before Him, the blessed fruit of the travail of His soul, even the redemption of a multitude of souls whom no man can number, and present them without spot or blemish before His Father's throne in heaven, to go no more out forever. Isa. liii. 10-12 ; Ps. xlv. ; Rev. v. 8-14 ; Heb. xii. 22-24 ; Eph. v. 25-27 ; Rev. xxi. and xxii. And when His work should be accomplished, then should He deliver up His mediatorial kingdom—the dominion with which He was invested—to the Father who appointed Him ; and God, the Triune God, reign supreme, and be all in all to their eternal praise and glory. 1 Cor. xv. 24-28 ; Rev. xxi. 22-23 ; xxii. 1-5.

There are properly no threatenings, no penalties, attached to this covenant of grace, since He who undertakes to fulfil its conditions, is in His divine nature coequal with the Father, in whom the Father is well pleased, who possesses every

qualification and perfection in an infinite degree, and with whom failure is impossible.

The other party who freely engages in the covenant, undertakes to fulfil the conditions, and embraces the promises, is the second person in the adorable Trinity—the eternal Son of God; and, when we consider Him as the Redeemer of God's elect, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," and yet "a child born unto us and a son given." Isa. ix. 6. Divinity and humanity constitute His person.

In His original nature He is God. His name—Son of God—imports divinity: "the same in substance, equal in power and glory," with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He is called God in the highest sense: God over all; the true, the great God, Jehovah; Jehovah of Hosts. Isa. vi. 1-3; John xii. 41; Heb. i. 10-12; Ps. cii. 22-27; Heb. i. 8-9; Ps. xlv. 6-7; Isa. ix. 6-7; xlv. 21-25; Jer. xxiii. 5-6; John i. 1-5; x. 30-39; xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Titus ii. 13; 2 Pet. i. 1; 1 John v. 20; Rev. i. 8.

All the attributes of God are ascribed to Him: He is everlasting and unchangeable, Heb. i. 12; Ps. cii. 27; Isa. ix. 6; Micah. v. 2; Rev. i. 8; xxii. 13; Isa. xlv. 6; John i. 1-2; viii. 57-58; Col. i. 15-17; omniscient and omnipresent, Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 18-20; John xxi. 17; xvi. 30; Acts i. 24; Jer. xvii. 9-10; John i. 18; ii. 24-25; vi. 64; Matt. ix. 4; 1 Sam. xvi. 7; 1 Cor. iv. 4-5; Matt. xi. 27; Col. ii. 3-9; the Creator and Preserver of the universe, Col. i. 15-17; Heb. i. 3, 10-12; Gen. i. 1-3; Ps. xxxiii. 6-9; Acts xiv. 15; Phil. iii. 21; Jer. x. 10-16; Ps. xcv. 1-7; xcvi. 5; Ps. cii. 25-27; the Forgiver of sins, Matt. ix. 1-6; Mark ii. 5-7; Exod. xxiii. 20-21; Col. iii. 13; Luke vii. 47-50; the final Judge of all, Jude vs. 14-15; 2 Cor. v. 10; Rom. xiv. 10-12; John v. 22; Acts x. 42; xvii. 31; Matt. xxv. 31-46; Rev. xx. 11-15; the true object of divine worship, John v. 23; Acts i. 24; vii. 59-60; ix. 13, 14, 21; Rom. i. 7; x. 9-14; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. xii. 8-9; 1 Thess. iii. 11, 12; 2 Thess. ii. 16-17; Rev. i. 5-6; v. 9-14; Phil. ii. 9-11; Heb. i. 6; John v. 23; 1 John v.

20-21 ; and united in supreme divinity with the Father and the Holy Spirit, Matt. xxviii. 19-20 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

As the covenant of grace was from eternity, our Lord held the office of Redeemer before the creation ; for, in view of His fulfilling this office, and as a part of its work, the creation of other worlds, as well as of our own and all that it contains, was assigned to Him by the Father. John i. 1-4 ; Col. i. 15-20. He, therefore, existed before He appeared in the world ; yea, He sat upon the mediatorial throne and executed His office from the beginning of time.

Divinity is essential to His office as Redeemer. His divinity lays the foundation, and qualifies Him for the assumption and discharge of the duties of His office. As divine, He owes no obedience to that violated law under which sinners are condemned ; on Him, personally, as the Son of God, that law has no claims whatever. As divine, He has a perfect right to undertake the office and work of Redeemer, if He shall so choose to do. As divine, He possesses every attribute of wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, in an infinite degree, to enable Him, without the shadow of failure, to meet every demand, and perform every duty required of Him on behalf of God and man ; and, finally, His divinity adds an infinite dignity and value to His person, and to all His obedience, sufferings, and death.

He is able to stand before the Eternal and Holy God, and meet and bear all His just demands against His offending creatures, and, by a righteousness of His own imputed to them, reconcile God to them. He is able also to stand before men as "their Lord and their God," to deliver them from their enmity by His Holy Spirit, to raise them up from spiritual corruption and misery, and reconcile them to God. Help is therefore laid upon one not only willing, but able to save.

In His assumed nature He is man. He came not to assist angels, but men ; therefore, was He "the seed of the woman," "partaker of flesh and blood," and one "made under the law ;" otherwise, He could never have obeyed, suffered, and died, nor been our example, and faithful, sympathizing High-Priest : "wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made

like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. ii. 5-18. Two distinct natures, human and divine, are, in a manner incomprehensible to us, united, and form one person forever!—"Immanuel, God with us." 1 Tim. iii. 16. Everything belonging to God is ascribed unto and belongs to Him; and everything belonging to man is ascribed unto and belongs to Him, sin excepted!

The great Redeemer, called and chosen of God, has fulfilled and is now fulfilling, and will finally complete all the conditions required of Him in the covenant. He bestows from eternity, as though His work were done, all the promises and rewards in behalf of His people. Seated upon the mediatorial throne He has finished the work of creation, and rules the universe. He entered upon the work given Him from eternity by His Heavenly Father; and, in the appointed time, He became incarnate, suffered, died, and was buried. God accepted His sacrifice as all-sufficient for the sins of His people, and of eternal efficacy in His sight; and, therefore, a prisoner of justice He could never be held. The bars of death were burst asunder, God raised Him triumphant from the dead, and set Him in glory at His own right hand, "where he was before," John vi. 62, a Prince and a Saviour! He has finished the revelation of the will of God to men in the Holy Scriptures and poured out the Spirit. The key of the government of the Church of God is now on His shoulder; and of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end. His enemies shall be made his footstool; His people shall be brought home to glory, and He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied forever.

A few additional remarks of an explanatory nature will close the chapter; and, first, in relation to the elect in the covenant. We have said that the parties to the covenant of grace are properly two—the Father and the Son. The Father enters into covenant with the Son, as the head and representative of the elect: they are included in Him and are one with Him. Adam, as the head and representative of his

race, under the first covenant, did everything; his posterity did nothing; indeed they were then not in being. So Christ, the second Adam, the head and representative of all His spiritual seed, under the covenant of grace does everything, and they do nothing. When Christ became a party to this covenant, those whom He represented and acted for had no existence; and for Him to undertake and be accepted of the Father was one and the same thing; so that there was a virtual completion of the whole work from the beginning.

And so the parallel holds: As in the first covenant, Adam's posterity were covenanted with in him, and became partakers of all the consequences of his acts under that covenant, so in the second covenant, the elect—all Christ's spiritual seed—are covenanted with in Him, and become partakers of the consequences of His acts. Hence the covenant made with Christ, the representative of the elect, partakes of the nature of a testament to them, as the Apostle writes. All the conditions of the covenant are fulfilled by Christ; and He merits and makes over to them, by His obedience and death, (which have both a retrospective and prospective efficacy,) everlasting righteousness. They are elected from eternity in Him unto life eternal, and His death secures that life to them, so that their salvation is certain, and can never fail; which proves that there are no conditions of the nature of merit unto salvation, under the covenant, which are required of the elect. All such conditions are performed for them by Christ, their head and surety. But, in order that they may become interested in and partake of the benefits of the covenant, there are certain requirements or qualifications which must be and abound in them, even repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. These, however, are not of the nature of personal merit unto justification, but are the consequences of their election; they are included in and are parts of the decree of that election; they are the gifts of God, and will surely be wrought in them by the Holy Spirit of God freely bestowed upon them to that end, through the merits and intercession of Christ,—which brings us to say, that all the promises of God made to Christ are made to the elect in Him, are to them "sure mercies;"

and, being made from eternity, they are fulfilled to them in time and in due order, thus : the Lord beholds His chosen people with infinite complacency from eternity. He calls them into being on the earth ; protects, preserves, and leads them by a way they know not ; brings them into connection with the covenant of grace in its administration, through the ministry, the word, and the ordinances of the house of God, and in His own time and manner visits them with His Holy Spirit ; effectually calls and justifies them in Christ : adopts them into His family, and in faithfulness carries on their sanctification, never leaving nor forsaking them until death, after which they are received into Heaven and are glorified with Christ forever.

This is the proper place to notice and briefly explain some of the expressions frequently made use of respecting the covenants of works and of grace, according to the connection in which they are spoken or written of. For example : “ The Old and New Testaments,” “ The Old and New Dispensations,” “ The Legal Dispensation and the Gospel Dispensation,” “ The Jewish Church and the Christian Church,” “ The Law and the Gospel,” “ Type and Antitype,” “ Shadow and Substance,” “ The Abrahamic Covenant,” and the Mosaic or Sinaitic Covenant. And we read in the Word of God of “ The Two Covenants ”—one gendering to bondage, the other bestowing liberty ; one waxing old, unprofitable, and ready to vanish away : and the other, new, stable, and abiding forever. The inquirer only needs the real clue put into his possession to be guided safely through the Scriptures ; that is, when he discovers the covenant of grace running through the whole Word of God, from beginning to end, and the Church flowing out of and ever being in it, all these apparently contradictory expressions are reconciled, and become harmonious throughout.

What are the Old and New Testaments but one and the same harmonious revelation of God, of one and the same plan of salvation in one and the same covenant of grace—the New looking back and building itself up upon and out of the Old, and the Old looking forward to and finding its completion in

the New ? What are the Old or Legal, and the New or Gospel Dispensations but different modes answering to different ages, before and after Christ, of revealing the same covenant, and of dispensing the salvation which it provides ? What are the Jewish and the Christian Churches but the one and the same Church of God found in that same covenant, although ordered somewhat differently before and after Christ ? What are the law and the gospel ? The one is not opposed to the other : the law (both the moral and the ceremonial) was a school-master to bring us to Christ ; the gospel does the same. The law preaches Christ under types and shadows yet to come ; the gospel preaches Christ already come, all the types and shadows finding their fulfilment in Him. What is the Abrahamic covenant but the reiteration and continuation of the covenant of grace first made with Adam, and to which other matter was then added, giving the covenant more visibility and fixedness in the world ? What is the Mosaic covenant ? Indeed nothing more than a gathering up of all God's previous revelations of the covenant of grace, and His arrangements concerning it, with many things added for its still clearer manifestation.

The two covenants referred to by the Apostle in Gal. iv. 24-31, are this Mosaic covenant, republishing both the original covenant of works in the moral law, and the original covenant of grace in the promises and ceremonial law, which revealed a Redeemer to come. Why did this covenant gender to bondage ? Because it was perverted by the Jews, who sought justification by works under it, and blindly and obstinately rejected justification by faith therein revealed. The second, the real covenant, brought out the substance of which the first was the type and shadow ; the one, the shadow, according to its nature and design, necessarily, waxes old, and gives place to the other, which is its substance and glory, and endures forever : ever the same in substance and glory.

The covenant of grace thus runs through all Scripture and the history of the Church, but administered differently before and after the coming of Christ : before the coming of Christ, administered by promises and prophecies ; by sacrifices, cir-

cumcision, the Paschal Lamb, and other types and ordinances ; by Prophets and Priests, in Tabernacle and Temple, in Synagogues, and by the reading and preaching of the Word of God. After His coming, the promises and prophecies passed into fulfilment ; the priests and sacrifices, the types and shadows lost themselves in the substance—Christ Jesus ; baptism and the Lord's Supper became the only two sacraments ; the temple was taken down after that Jesus had entered into Heaven itself and laid open the way into the holy of holies above ; and Apostles and elders went everywhere with the Scriptures, and extended the blessings of the covenant to all mankind.

CHAPTER X.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO COVENANTS.—OUR FIRST PARENTS DRIVEN OUT OF EDEN.—THE CHURCH BEGUN ON EARTH IN ADAM'S FAMILY.—THE FIRST MARTYR ABEL.—POLYGAMY.

THE two covenants agree in all essential particulars as covenants. Each has God for its author, and His glory for its end ; each has its two contracting parties, with prescribed conditions and promises : and both are made by God, with federal heads, or public persons, who represent their own peculiar seed ; and, in both covenants, the consequences of the acts of the federal heads are visited upon those whom they represent : and their rewards are eternal !

But there are marked differences : In the covenant of works God appears as our Creator, administering justice ; in the covenant of grace He appears as our Heavenly Father, bestowing mercy. In the first, He has respect to man as upright and holy ; in the second, as fallen and sinful. The first covenant He makes with the first Adam, immediately acting for himself and his seed ; the second, He makes with the second Adam, immediately acting for the seed given Him by the Father. In the first, Adam was the federal head of all his posterity descending from him by ordinary generations ; in the second, Christ is the federal head of all His spiritual seed—those whom God determined to save.

It seems never to have been the design of God to confer life upon men save through a representative or public person. Men were not to stand, each for himself, under the covenants ;

but Adam was to stand, under the one, for his seed : and Christ, under the other, for His seed. Hence, Adam gave death, and Christ gave life to their seeds, respectively. The condemnation was, by the imputation of the sin of Adam, upon all mankind ; and the justification was, by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, upon a part only. In the first, the condition of obtaining life was by works, or personal righteousness ; in the second, the condition was by faith, or through the righteousness of another. Under the first, man is in a state of nature, relying upon his own strength ; under the second, he is in a state of grace, relying upon the strength of another. Under the first covenant man is lost, but has hope under the second ; under the second, he is saved, but, if salvation be rejected, he perishes forever ! Under the first, he is left to the freedom of his own will ; under the second, he is brought under the almighty influences of the Holy Spirit. Under the first covenant broken, the throne of God is a throne of wrath, and men dare not approach it ; under the second, it is a throne of mercy, and men are drawn to it in love. The first wrought despair ; the second, hope. The first threw open hell ; the second, heaven.

Having revealed to our first parents salvation from the ruins of the fall, in pursuance of His counsels in respect to the accomplishment in all its parts of the covenant of grace, the Lord drove them out of the garden of Eden—now no longer the type and foretaste of that heaven which had been offered as the reward of their obedience—and placed Cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life—thereby signifying that divine justice was aimed against them ; nor could they hope for deliverance from the curse which had fallen upon them, save through the seed of the woman, who was to quench in His own blood the flaming sword, and by His merits win their way back to the Paradise which they had lost.

Greatly changed were the character and circumstances of our first parents between the day of their entering in and the day of their being driven out of Paradise ! They went in under the law to be justified by their own righteousness ;

they were driven out for their sin : they went in to be justified by their own merits ; they were driven out to find merit for justification in another : they went in to stand before God without a mediator ; they were driven out to seek one : they went in holy with power to stand ; they were driven out depraved and utterly fallen : they went in happy with heaven promised ; they were driven out miserable with hell deserved : they went in communing with God ; they were driven out separated from Him : they went in to give eternal life to all their posterity ; they were driven out to entail eternal death upon them : they went in with hope, and found despair ; they were driven out in despair, that they might find hope : they went in under justice ; they were driven out under mercy : they went in under the covenant of works ; they were driven out under the covenant of grace.

The events which immediately preceded and gave existence to the Church, have now been reviewed—namely, the creation and primitive state of man, the institution of marriage, the covenant of works, the institution of the Sabbath, the existence and agency of angels, the fall of our first parents and its consequences, the salvation provided for, and the temporal judgments inflicted upon the transgressors, Adam and Eve, the parents of all mankind, the origin and institution of sacrifices, the covenant of grace, and our first parents driven out of Eden under that covenant ; and we have now arrived at the beginning of the Church of God in the world.

The Church has its origin in the purposes of the ever-blessed Trinity, to show forth their unsearchable love to their creatures in a way of mercy, which purposes are contained in and make up the covenant of grace. The covenant of grace, therefore, enfolds the Church of God—Jesus Christ, the Mediator, being the rock, “the chief corner-stone thereof, elect, precious.” The fall destroyed the covenant of works, and was the occasion of the commencement of the Church under the covenant of grace.

Our Lord immediately began the exercise of His mediatorial office : His office as Prophet, by His Word and Spirit to reveal the will of God to our fallen parents for their

salvation—His office as Priest to atone and intercede for them, and His office as King in Heaven and in earth to rule over and defend and preserve them unto life eternal ; and, as we believe, (upon the general drift of Scripture,) the first trophies of His redeeming love and power were our first parents themselves ; the firstfruits of the harvest of the world ; the first lively stones set upon the true foundation, which, by the addition of countless multitudes, should grow into the holy temple of God ; the first souls gathered, wherewith to begin that general Assembly and Church of the firstborn whose names are written in Heaven.

And thus commences the Church of God after the fall, under her Divine Head, and with these two members only ; and the pleasing task now before us shall be to trace the history of this Church as rendered by holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The conception and birth of children only after the fall, reveals the purpose of God, that Adam should have no children until after his trial ; that event being past, his posterity would follow his fortunes ; he would beget a son in his own likeness, Gen. v. 3, and flesh would be born of flesh ever after ; John iii. 6 ; and all “ be by nature children of wrath,” Eph. ii. 3.

No longer supplied by the trees of the garden, Adam began to be a husbandman. “ There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding,” Job xxxii. 8, and so without question he was inspired with a knowledge of fruits and herbs, and grains, and the proper methods of their cultivation : and also with a knowledge of such animals as would contribute to his comfort and support, and of the art of subjugating and domesticating them. A merciful God taught His children “ more than the beasts of the earth, and made them wiser than the fowls of heaven.” Job xxxv. 11. The knowledge, thus communicated and reduced to practice, and improved by experience and observation, was handed down to after generations, and perfected from age to age.

Passing safely through her sorrows, Eve beheld the face of her firstborn, and, with a mother’s joy and a mother’s grati-

tude, exclaimed, "I have gotten a man from the Lord! Through His mercy I have obtained this precious possession." And she called his name Cain, signifying something obtained—a possession.

Her second son was Abel, a keeper of sheep; Cain was a tiller of the ground. Brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, in process of time they worship God by sacrifice. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord"—a bloodless sacrifice—and for acceptance it should have been offered through faith in the great sacrifice. That there were other kinds of sacrifice, besides those of beasts, made known to Adam, and required of him by the Lord, this offering of Cain proves conclusively. Moses afterwards, among the various kinds of sacrifices, describes "the fruit of the ground," "the firstfruits" of husbandry, Numb. xviii. 12-13, whether of "oil or wine or wheat," or "whatsoever was first ripe," Levit. ii. 12-13; Exod. xxiii. 19; Neh. x. 35; Exod. xxii. 29; xxxiv. 26; Deut. xxvi. 1-10, "thou shalt set it (the firstfruits) before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God;" and if the fruit of the ground was fine flour, with oil and frankincense, then it was a meat-offering, to be "brought to the altar," and "offered by fire"—"a sweet savor unto the Lord," Levit. ii. 1-11.

"And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering" (the acceptance of the person precedes the acceptance of the offering); "but unto Cain, and to his offering, He had not respect." In what manner God testified His respect to the one and not to the other, we do not know. It is of more importance for us to understand the reason why He made a difference between the brothers. "Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," because he offered it "by faith." He approached God through the promised Redeemer, and was a true believer, and was in a state of grace before God. Cain was not: he had a professed faith in God, but no saving faith; he had not repented, nor sought pardon and acceptance with God through the promised Saviour; and, therefore, God had respect neither

unto his person, nor to his offering. It was not the difference in the kind of sacrifices or offerings brought by Cain and Abel, but the difference in the spirit, in the state of the heart, with which they presented them, that led to the rejection of the one, and to the acceptance of the other. This is the view of the Apostle Paul in Heb. xi. 4, and the Apostle John agrees with him, who remarks of Cain that he was "of that wicked one." "His works," of course, "were evil;" on the contrary, the works of Abel were "righteous." 1 John iii. 12. And here, in the earliest worship in the Church, the Lord makes known the truth, "that He is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth:" and gives an example for all coming ages, that no man can come unto the Father but by the Son. The person and services are both accepted because washed in the blood of the great atoning sacrifice.

Cain was wroth, and his countenance fell, and the Lord God reasons with him: "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" There is ground that thou shouldst not be accepted, since thou art unbelieving. "Sin lieth at the door." The remainder of the verse is obscure and variously interpreted: "And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." The difficulty lies in determining what or who is the antecedent of the pronoun "his" and "him." The only parallel expression is in Gen. iii. 16; and, following the interpretation given to that passage, the antecedent would be a person; and, if so, no other person could be intended than Abel. The Lord would appease the anger of Cain against his brother, which he saw rising to a dreadful height, by assuring him that Abel's desire or strong attachment would continue to him, and that he, as the elder brother, should rule over him. Their friendly relations and relative positions in the family would not be affected by the favor shown to the younger. Cain could have no just ground of wrath, since Abel had done and would do him no evil.

The expostulation proved fruitless. "And Cain talked (peaceably) with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when

they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him! And wherefore slew he him?" It was the first stroke of persecution. It was the outbursting of the enmity of the carnal mind against God. He slew him, "because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." He hated and slew him because of his piety. He was of that wicked one whose wish it is to oppose the seed of the woman, and to bruise his heel! Abel died in faith and for his faith: is the first martyr in the Church of God! the first of that long and glorious cloud of witnesses which would follow in the footsteps of his faith, and endure persecutions and deaths for Christ's sake. Heb. xi. 1-40.

The two brothers respectively represent the two great classes into which the world has ever since been divided: Abel represents the righteous, and illustrates the character and power of the religion of the Saviour; and, in the treatment which he receives from his brother, foreshadows what the followers of the Saviour might expect from the world. Cain represents the world, and illustrates the character and power of depravity; and, in his treatment of his brother, shows the deadly opposition which the world will manifest against the Church; and here, and thus early, the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the Evil One openly commences. Gen. iii. 15.

For reasons unrevealed the Lord forbore to shed the blood of Cain for his brother's blood, which cried for vengeance from the ground, but excommunicated him from the assembly of the righteous, where His presence was manifested in love, and drove him off to be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, cursed with double barrenness whenever he should till it. That death was the penalty of the crime of murder in this earliest period of the world's history, is not only implied in the answer of Cain to God, "It shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me," but also in the remark of Lamech, the son of Cain, to one of his wives, when he himself had slain a man, Gen. iv. 23-24. That penalty was affixed to the crime of murder by God Himself, and renewed after the flood, Gen. ix. 5-6. In His sovereignty He

waived the execution of it in the case of Cain, and allayed his fears that it would be visited upon him afterwards, by setting a mark upon Cain, or, rather, giving him a sign, the nature of which is not declared, that none finding him should kill him.

The Holy Spirit allots but a brief space to the history of Cain and his descendants, and closes with a notice of his son of the fifth generation as a polygamist, and as having killed a man who had inflicted some injury upon him. Gen. iv. 16-24. Cain's race appears to have been wholly of the world, and all perished with the ungodly in the flood. This man Lamech, the fifth from Cain, must have been born between five and six hundred years after the creation, by which time men had begun to multiply greatly upon the earth, and also to become corrupt, especially in their departure from the original institution of marriage. Gen. vi. 1-2. Polygamy may have been practised in his time, though not as extensively as in ages after, nearer the flood. He is the first polygamist mentioned; and the practice, as it stands connected with the Church, according to our plan, will in this place be disposed of.

The degeneracy of the old world, which finally brought on the flood, was laid in the unrestrained practice of polygamy among the professed people of God; and, to aggravate the evil, their wives, a proportion of them at least, were chosen from irreligious women. Gen. vi. 1-7. Here dates the first appearance of polygamy in the Church, but precisely how long after the creation it is impossible to say: for the Holy Ghost has it rendered, generally: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God," &c.

No mention is made of the practice, and no examples given after the flood, until the time of Abraham. Gen. xvi. 1-16. He took Hagar "to be his wife," at the instance of Sarah. While the act was followed with much family disturbance, it is not condemned by the sacred writer, nor by any who afterwards spake of Abraham, nor by the Lord Himself. Chapters xvii., xviii., and xxi. He is commended as conducting himself well in his household and ordering it

aright, so as to bring down God's blessing upon him. Gen. xviii. 17-19.

Next follows in his footsteps, Esau, his grandson ; and the distress of Isaac and Rebecca seems to have flowed, not from the number, but the character of his wives, Gen. xxvi. 34-35 ; xxvii. 46 ; for, perceiving afterwards that his wives, "the daughters of Canaan, pleased not Isaac his father," he went and married a descendant of Ishmael, xxviii. 6-9. His brother Jacob, the heir of the promises, was also a polygamist, having four wives, all of whom are reckoned in Scripture as his true and lawful wives ; and all his twelve sons, "the twelve Patriarchs," born of them, his true and legitimate children. These were all included in the visible Church. Gen., chapters 29, 30, 31, 32, 33-50.

There is no evidence that these twelve Patriarchs were polygamists ; nor have we any instance again of polygamy among the people of God before the giving of the law by Moses ; but that polygamy was practised and tolerated at the giving of the law, is evident from Exod. xxi. 10 : for Moses requires of a husband who takes another wife, faithfully to perform the entire duty of a husband to the first—of provision, protection, affection, and intercourse ; and also from Deut. xxi. 15, where the Lawgiver regulates the conduct of a father having "two wives"—one beloved and another hated"—and having children by both. He forbids his setting the son of the beloved wife before the firstborn son by the hated wife, vs. 16-17. So, again, in Deut. xvii. 17, the king, while allowed a plurality of wives, was forbidden to have a multitude of them. Their kings had a plurality of wives ; but Solomon took to him a multitude, and they turned his heart away from God. 1 Kings xi. 1-8.

The passage in Levit. xviii. 18—"Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other, in her lifetime"—is not a command against polygamy, as some suppose—and to make it such, they explain it thus : "Thou shalt not take one wife to her sister ; that is, one wife to another in her lifetime ;"—but, on the contrary, it is a command forbidding, literally, the marrying

of two sisters, in the practice of polygamy (as, for example, Jacob did). Moses, in the previous prohibitions, had marked out distinctly the degrees of consanguinity and affinity: Thou shalt not marry "thy sister," v. 11; "thine aunt," vs. 12, 14; "thy daughter-in-law," v. 15; "thy brother's wife," v. 16, &c.; and here: thou shalt not marry two sisters. It is indeed prohibited in v. 16—"Thou shalt not marry thy brother's wife"—by consequence and analogy; but here, in v. 18, it is prohibited expressly. And, if a woman may not marry two brothers, the converse holds true—a man may not marry two sisters. The words "in her lifetime" are to be connected with "to vex her;" that is, while she lives. The meaning is not, that if the one sister be dead, the widower may marry the other, for this is the very connection forbidden in v. 16; and, if the marrying of two sisters was lawful at all, as polygamy was allowed, there was no need of introducing any such prohibition as this in v. 18, which we are considering. The sum is the marrying of two sisters is unlawful, and therefore thou shalt not do it, when thou becomest a polygamist. The possession of one husband by two sisters would, besides its unlawfulness, be a source of ceaseless vexation. Leah and Rachel proved it so.

The practice prevailed in the times of the Judges: Gideon had "many wives," Judges viii. 30-31; comp. x. 4; xii. 14. Elkanah, the father of Samuel, had "two wives." 1 Sam. i. 1-2. Also, in the time of the Kings: David had numerous wives, 1 Sam. xxv. 41-43; 2 Sam. iii. 3-5; v. 13; 1 Chron. iii. 1, &c.; also Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 3-4, and Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xi. 21-23; comp. 2 Chron. xiii. 21; 2 Kings x. 1. The High-Priest Jehoida took for the young king Joash "two wives." 2 Chron. xxiv. 1-3. After the captivity, Ezra and Nehemiah caused the Jews to put away their strange or heathen wives, but no case is mentioned of polygamy until after the latter period of the reign of the Maccabean Princes.

No case is discovered of polygamy in the Church in the New Testament times. The Apostles and private members who are mentioned as married men, had each but one wife. And

the Apostle Paul lays down the rule, that no man could be a bishop, who had more wives than one. Matt. viii. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 1-2. Indeed, it was a practice not very general in the Church, after the flood, at any time; for it is exceedingly prejudicial to the proper care and education of children, and is attended with such unquenchable jealousies, such confusion, unhappiness, and expense in families, that but few men are able or willing to indulge in it, and they of the richer and more brutish sort.

Noah and his sons had but one wife each. Job, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, and the Apostles, were husbands of but one wife. The High-Priest was suffered to have but one wife; at her death he might marry again. Levit. xxi. 10-14. Polygamy was common among all nations. It must have been so in Abraham's time. It was custom, and a custom that became legalized. All we can say of it, in connection with the people of God, is, that falling in with the practice, it pleased God to tolerate it for the time then present, and that by express allowance in His law, as we have seen; and under that permission, polygamy, as practised by His people, was not sinful. We discover Abraham, the father of the faithful, a polygamist without condemnation; also, Jacob, Gideon, Elkanah, David, Solomon, and others, who are reckoned among the saints of God. Heb. xi. The Lord for the time then present dispensed with the original law of marriage, so that they who were polygamists were not guilty of adultery, while confining themselves to their own acknowledged and affianced wives. To suppose the contrary would involve the consequence, abhorrent to every right conception of God, that He would lightly esteem so great a sin as adultery, and approve those living all their lives in it, among His chosen saints and most beloved ones! Under this dispensation of God, therefore, a plurality of wives was no adultery. Adultery consisted then (as it now does) in familiarity with the wife of another man, whether he had but one, or more.

While polygamy was allowed, Moses restrained its abuses by permitting divorces only in a lawful form. Deut. xxiv. 1. And if a man married the wife of another, who could show

no writing of divorcement, he and she were both guilty of adultery.

But the permission of polygamy in the Kingdom of God was taken away forever by our Lord Jesus Christ, at His coming, in Matt. xix. 1-12 and Mark x. 1-12. He restored the original law of marriage, and His Apostles established the same.

The excommunication of Cain justifies the inference that a distinction was made between the consistent, professing people of God, and those who were openly wicked; that at this early day mankind were divided into two classes—the people of God, and the people of the world; of the latter class, Cain and his descendants seem to have continued; but it should not be affirmed that, through the family of Cain, all the other descendants of Adam were corrupted, for there is no Scripture to prove it; for all were born depraved, and their corruptions could proceed from themselves without the wicked examples or temptations of Cain and his children to influence them.

Some considerable time elapsed after Adam and Eve left Paradise before Cain slew Abel, for he was a married man when he went out from the presence of the Lord, chapters 4, 16, 17; and it was one hundred and thirty years after the creation that Seth was born, whose name signifies “appointed” or “put,” and which his mother gave him, as a son to be put in the place of Abel, particularly in the line of spiritual descent—the one who was to be the next progenitor of the coming Redeemer.

Seth begat Enos two hundred and thirty years after the creation; Adam meanwhile had begotten many sons and daughters, and they in turn many others; and the population of the world was multiplying rapidly. On the birth of Enos “men began to call upon the name of the Lord.” Gen. iv. 26. Not that now, for the first time, men began to separate themselves from the ungodly, and unite in a religious society, and have God’s name named among them, and to meet for public worship; for, of necessity, from the very nature of holiness and sin, this separation, and this union, and this worship,

must have existed long before, and of which the excommunication of Cain gives us assurance. And it is folly to assert, that public worship was now first set up and reduced to order, and that liturgies, or something like these, began to be used! The passage is obscure, but, taken in its immediate connection, and in its most natural construction, it refers to Seth himself. The verb "began" in the original Hebrew is singular; nor is there any word corresponding to "men" in our translation. The literal rendering is, "And to Seth, also to him, there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then he began to call upon the name of the Lord;" that is, Seth himself began to worship God after the birth of his son; previously he had not done so. If, however, the verb "began" be rendered impersonally, as in our translation, then we may supply the word men: "Men began to call upon the name of the Lord: implying greater calling upon God than usual: a time of greater spirituality: nay, more, something like a revival of religion." The facts from this history are, that Adam trained up his children in the knowledge and worship of God; that worship was by sacrifice, and the true worshipper exercised faith in the great sacrifice to come; that these sacrifices were of different kinds, but all looking to the same end; that the division among men was made; that the corruption of polygamy argued great declension; and that God watched over and communicated with His people, and interposed in their affairs.

With the exception of the notice of Cain's descendants from the birth of Seth to the birth of Noah—a period verging on to a thousand years—no other record is preserved but that of the line of spiritual descent of the Patriarchs, and the prophecy (Jude, vs. 14-15) and translation of Enoch. But how much has infinite wisdom comprehended in this brief record? All that is necessary to be preserved and known: Christ predicted; Christ preached; Christ prophesied of; Enoch translated, and the longevity of the Patriarchs turned to good account.

Christ is predicted in the genealogy of the sons of Adam. Gen. v. 1-32. How is He predicted therein? All these

names are the divinely selected progenitors of our Lord, appointed to stand in the line of spiritual descent, in the line of promise—coming down the lapse of ages, always drawing nearer and pointing to the seed of the woman. Each of these progenitors in turn came before the Church and the world as a witness of the faithfulness of God to His promise of a coming Redeemer; and in this manner was He always predicted, and held up to the eye and the faith of His people. The names in the genealogy are not to be considered the firstborn in the respective families; such an order not being always observed in the genealogy of our Lord. Gen. iv. 1, 25; v. 3-6; Gen. xlix. 1-10, &c.

How Moses obtained this genealogy, whether from authentic tradition, or from written documents, or from direct revelation, is not material. It is inserted by inspiration of God, adopted entire by Luke (iii. 23-36), and, after it ends in Noah, Luke continues the line as furnished him again by Moses in Gen. xi. 10-32, reaching from Noah to Abraham; and from Abraham, Luke continues it down, according to the Scripture, to David, and, finally, from David to our Lord.

The existence of these genealogies from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham, proves that it was the ordination of God, from the beginning of His Church in the world, that the genealogies of the families of His people should be preserved distinct from each other. The case of Judah and Tamar is an illustration in point, Gen. xxxiii. 1-30, and all with the grand design of preserving the genealogy of our Lord clear and unbroken. When the Church was brought out of Egypt and subjected to laws and regulations under Moses, this arrangement was continued and perfected. The tribes were separated in territorial unity and by local government, (though united in one general government, both civil and ecclesiastical,) and the different families in each of the tribes were obliged to keep a regular table of descent from age to age, every precaution having been taken to prevent alienation of property or extinction of family. Consequently, the genealogies of the family of David, which God promised to make sure, as well as all others, were carefully prescribed; and, when Christ was

born, there was no room for cavil that He was not born of "the house and lineage of David," Luke ii. 1-4. His reputed father, Joseph, was of the family of David, and legally He was a son of David, as Matthew shows in his genealogy, ch. i. 13-16. His natural mother, the virgin Mary, was of the family of David, as Luke shows in his genealogy, ch. iii. 23-36. So that legally and naturally, in every way, He was the Son of David, the legal line in Matthew running up to David, through Solomon; and the natural line in Luke, through Nathan to David. Luke carries it up to Adam, and with him is Eve, whose seed Christ should be.

Thus, Christ is predicted in this genealogy as Adam's son in the line of promise; and, in connection with the sacrifice which typified His one great sacrifice, He was always present—the great object of faith and salvation to His people; and, further, in this line of promise are to be recognized the spiritual succession of the elect of God and the continued existence of the Church.

Christ is preached by patriarchs, by word and in worship, to their families, and to the generations that rose around them; and is also prophesied of. Enoch's prophecy of Him is preserved by the Apostle Jude, vs. 14, 15. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." This prophecy is valuable for its discovery of the extensive knowledge of divine faith enjoyed by the Church, of the fidelity with which it was preached, and of the rough reception which our Lord and His salvation met with in these ages. Enoch preaches the seed of the woman as the Lord—divine in heaven as the Supreme Judge, coming with His holy ones to judge the world, destroying the ungodly and saving the righteous—as the Lord sinned and spoken against, and rejected by the wicked; yet the Lord, long-suffering, warning them of His coming, and giving them space for repentance. Enoch's preaching is the

preaching of God's true prophets and ministers in all ages ; it is characterized with the love of Christ and of the perishing souls of men.

Enoch was a burning and a shining light in the world ; the example of his age for his walk with God. He had this testimony, that he pleased God ; and for the eminence of his faith God conferred on him the honor of translation. " By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death ; and was not found, for God had translated him, Heb. xi. 5. He suffered him not to go through the pains of death and the corruption of the grave ; in the twinkling of an eye his mortal underwent the necessary change, putting on immortality and passing into the joy of his Lord. This translation, and the reason for it, were known at the time, and strengthened and comforted believers. It most impressively confirmed the doctrines of the soul's immortality ; of a state of future rewards and punishment ; of justification by faith in the coming Lord of glory ; of the happiness of believers, and, by consequence, the misery of unbelievers immediately after death ; the necessary union of soul and body in the world to come, and, by consequence, the resurrection of the bodies of all men who die, and the change of the bodies of all who are alive at the Judgment-day ; and the tender love which the Lord has towards His people.

Although no reasons are stated in the Sacred Word for the extraordinary longevity of those patriarchs of the Church, yet there are reasons which naturally suggest the wisdom and goodness of God in it—for that longevity, in the beginning of the world, promoted the sure and steady increase of the race, the lives of parents being of unspeakable importance to the welfare of families. It brought to a higher state of improvement all useful and necessary arts of life, such as agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and architecture ; and to more solidity and perfection human laws and governments. It secured the preservation and direct and easy transmission of religion—of the whole knowledge of God from one age to another. In the absence of all written documents, (if there were none,) the ease with which the religion of the coming

Redeemer could be handed down, even from Adam to Noah, for 1656 years, is demonstrated by the fact, that between Adam and Noah there was but a single step, Lamech, the father of Noah, having been cotemporary with Adam for fifty-six years. To make the knowledge of Noah, which he was to transmit to the world after the flood, more perfect and reliable if possible, he was himself cotemporary with all the patriarchs, except two, Adam and Seth.

These holy men, progenitors of our Lord, united in the same faith, and, endeared to each other, would have a common and ardent interest in preserving religion and transmitting it pure to coming generations.

CHAPTER XI.

WICKEDNESS OF THE WORLD.—EXISTENCE, AGENCY, AND OFFICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.—THE FLOOD.—THE CHURCH PRESERVED AND RE-ESTABLISHED.—THE WORLD RESERVED UNTO FIRE.—FLESH GRANTED.—BLOOD FORBIDDEN.—LAW OF MURDER.—GOVERNMENTS.—ALTARS.—DESIGN OF THE FLOOD.—NOAH TRANSMITS THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD TO THE NEW WORLD.—HIS SIN.—PROPHECIES.—DISPERSION OF HIS POSTERITY.

WITH the increase of men came an increase of wickedness and a general declension of religion, which steadily advanced until this apostacy swept all before it, save Noah and his family. As Elisha was translated in a time of great spiritual declension in Israel, the same might have been true in respect to Enoch's translation, for his prophecy indicates an increase of daring and open ungodliness in his day. The declension was the growth of centuries, and was hurried on and consummated by "the sons of God"—the professors of religion—contracting marriages with the ungodly—"the daughters of men;" and also by departing from the original law of marriage and becoming polygamists. The foundations of sound religion and morality, of order and peace in families and communities, of purity and discipline in the Church, were assailed and overthrown. "There were giants in the earth in these days." The children of the marriages between "the sons of God" and "the daughters of men" were not a godly seed. They became "mighty men," and filled the world with the renown of their exploits. When "God looked upon the earth, behold it was corrupt, and filled with violence; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

The patriarchs, however, remained firm in the faith. Enoch walked with God and prophesied, rebuking wickedness and corrupt professors of religion—"ungodly men," who had "crept" into the Church "unawares," "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God," Jude vs. 4-16. In his righteous life and testimony he was followed by his son Methuselah, and his grandson Lamech, until his great-grandson Noah remained alone righteous on the earth. The patriarchs being now all dead, Noah received the first intimation that the longsuffering of God was drawing to a close, in these memorable words, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." This is the same Spirit of God which moved upon the face of the waters in the creation. He is the Third Person in the Godhead; the same in substance, equal in power and glory with the Father and the Son. He is called God in the highest sense, Acts v. 3-4; 2 Tim. iii. 16; comp. 2 Pet. i. 21; Acts xx. 28; Heb. v. 4.

All the attributes of God are ascribed to Him. He is omniscient, searching all things, yea, the deep things of God, understanding and revealing all His counsels from eternity, and all His will to man for salvation. 1 Cor. ii. 10; comp. John xiv. 26; xv. 26; xvi. 13-14; Isa. xlix. 9-10; 2 Pet. i. 21; Tim. iii. 6.

He is omnipresent—in all parts of the world at the same time. Naked and open to Him are all the hearts of men: John iii. 3-6; xvi. 7-8; 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; 1 Pet. i. 2.

He is almighty—associated in the creation and providential government of the world and of the universe, Gen. i. 2; Job xxvi. 13; Ps. civ. 30; to whom is committed the almighty work of performing the amazing and various miracles by which the Revelation of God to man is established, and the regeneration and sanctification of the souls of men in all places and in all ages, the appointing and supporting the ministers of the Church, and the care of the Church itself: 1 Cor. xii. 8-11; Heb. ii. 4; Acts ii. 1-23; John iii. 1-8; 1 Cor. ii. 9-14; Rom. viii. 9-16. He is the proper object of divine

worship, into whose divine name all are to be baptized, whose communion is invoked upon all, whose influences none are to quench, and against whom alone the unpardonable sin is committed—Matt. xxviii. 19 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 14 ; Eph. iv. 30 ; Mark iii. 22–30—a Person distinct from the Father and the Son, Matt. iii. 16–17 ; John i. 32–33 ; xv. 26 ; xiv. 16–17, 26 ; Acts ii. 33 ; Eph. ii. 18, yet united in the Holy Trinity, Matt. xxviii. 19 ; 2 Cor. 13–14.

This Holy Spirit—the great agent of the Godhead, sent forth of the Father and the Son, pervading the vast natural and spiritual creation of God, by His own almighty power bringing into being and preserving in action all the counsels of God, whose special office and work it was in the covenant of grace to apply the salvation of God by Jesus Christ to the souls of men, and without whose presence, power, and grace, no soul would ever be led to Christ or enter Heaven—this Holy Spirit began His gracious work when the covenant of grace went into operation after the fall. So He was with the Church and the world before the flood. It was this Holy Spirit sent down that strove with the men of that period ; and by them was He grieved, until there was no remedy. As in after ages, He strove with the Church through Joseph, Moses, David, and all the prophets—through mercies and judgments many, and through the Lord of Glory Himself, Acts vii. 1–53, so now the Holy Spirit strove through Adam, Seth, Enos, and all the patriarchs—through the prophesying and preaching of Enoch and Noah, and through the ordinances and Word of God, until the Lord set a limit to His longsuffering, and gave the world one hundred and twenty years for repentance, that He might not destroy the world with a flood, 1 Pet. iii. 20. Meanwhile, Noah, warned of God and moved with fear, prepared the ark in the face of the unbelieving world, to the saving of his house, Heb. xi. 7. A preacher of righteousness, 2 Pet. ii. 5, he preached both by precept and example, while the ark was preparing, in which he was doubtless assisted by his father Lamech and his grandfather Methuselah, for they were both alive when God threatened the world with a flood, and commanded the ark to be built, 1 Pet. iii. 19–20.

But the world continued eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, insensible both to the promises and threatenings of God, until the day that Noah and his family and all the living things entered into the ark: Luke xvii. 26-27; Matt. xxiv. 37-38. Then the windows of heaven were opened, and the foundations of the great deep broken up, and God in awful majesty, justice, and power, brought in the flood, and destroyed them all! 2 Pet. iii. 5-6; Job xii. 15; Ps. civ. 5-7.

As the flood was a miracle, so was the preservation of Noah and the living beings with him in the ark; and after a confinement of twelve months and ten days, (Gen. vii. 11-13; viii. 13-19,) He who had shut them up commanded them to go forth. The patriarch's first act was to build an altar and offer sacrifice to God "of every clean beast and of every clean fowl," accompanying the sacrifices with the exercises of faith, love, gratitude, and renewed devotion. He was accepted, and "the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done: for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Should God contend with him in this sort for his sins, the spirits of all flesh would fail and be cut off from before Him forever! But He determined to "keep the heavens and the earth in store," to reserve them unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, 2 Pet. iii. 5-12, having made an everlasting covenant with Noah and his seed after him, and with every living thing on the earth, that He would never again cut them off by the water of a flood, and sealed this covenant with the token of the rainbow which He set in the cloud.

The Old World has perished! Before us now, on Ararat, is the vacant ark, and the living things are spreading themselves again through the air, and over the earth. There is the venerable patriarch, with his wife and his three sons and their wives. Save the spot on which they stand worshipping, the whole earth is one vast solitude, attesting the justice and power of God!

Soon after the creation, at the fall, the Church began with

two members. In the second peopling of the world, at the flood, sixteen hundred and fifty-six years later, the Church began with eight members, and these were all that remained of the race.

The commands and blessings originally given to Adam are renewed to Noah and his sons : Gen. i. 27-30 ; ix. 1-3, but to the grant of every fruit-tree and green herb bearing seed, for food, now is added "every moving thing that liveth," which is the first recorded grant of flesh to man for food. It being the fact in after times that portions of the sacrifices were eaten by the worshippers, it is not improbable that the same law of sacrifices, and the liberty of eating portions of the sacrifices, were allowed from the beginning (unless all the sacrifices were whole burnt offerings), and that to Noah the grant of flesh is only enlarged, he being allowed to eat not only portions of the animals slain in sacrifice, but all other animals of suitable kind which he might fancy. Be this as it may, in the grant of flesh Noah is strictly forbidden to eat the blood, which is the life thereof ; and this prohibition is binding on the race, Gen. ix. 4. It precedes the ceremonial and ritual law of Moses by some hundreds of years. It is not here given to Israelites, for as yet they had no existence, but to all mankind in their present representatives, Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. It is therefore unlawful for any human being ever to eat the blood of animals. This is the doctrine of the Word of God, from Noah to Moses, from Moses to Christ, Levit. iii. 17 ; vii. 26-27 ; Deut. xii. 16-23 ; Levit. xvii. 10-14. It is the doctrine after the coming of Christ, for it is repeated by the Apostles, and enjoined by them upon all the churches as a "decree," Acts xvi. 20, 29, and xvii. 4. In that decree the eating of blood is not classed with ceremonial transgressions, but with such great transgressions of the moral law as idolatry and fornication. Nor was the decree addressed to churches composed of Jews only, but of Gentiles also. It indeed had a special reference to them ; and was issued after the passing away of all sacrifices and ritual observances. The observation of the Apostle Paul, that "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving ; for

it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer," 1 Tim. iv. 4-5, applies not to the eating of blood as one of the creatures of God (for it is not in his view here), but to the doctrine of false teachers, who were setting aside the plain commandments of God, introducing distinctions in food, and forbidding the use of meats, which God allowed. He was himself one of the very Apostles who had united in the decree, and it cannot be supposed that he would contradict himself, Acts xv. 1-41; xvi. 1-4. And, moreover, the reasons assigned for the prohibition always exist, and are consequently always of force.

First: to eat the blood is to eat the life; "for the life of the flesh is the blood," and God forbids us to eat that which He only gives, and suffers to be taken away. Life—mysterious life—we are to reverence even in animals, and acknowledge whence it comes, and to let the blood out upon the ground and cover it with dust. It is to be eaten neither in the flesh, nor when separated from it, for it is the life of all flesh—"the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof," Levit. xvii. 10-14. To whatever results the researches of men after the principle of life may bring them, it is here said by the Holy Spirit, that the life is in the blood: "the blood is the life." The vital force is in that fluid, so mysteriously elaborated in the animal system, and so wonderfully constituted. Will you not be satisfied with the whole body of the animal granted you for food? Will you savagely covet, catch brutally, and eat its very life,—not suffering it to be poured out quietly upon the earth before God who gave it?

The second reason is no less enduring, and addresses itself with peculiar tenderness and power to every guilty child of Adam. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," Levit. xvii. 10-14. The blood—the life of the sacrificed animal—makes atonement for sin, and points unto and is typical of that blood—that life of the "Seed of the woman"—which should be the true atonement for sin. This reason,

given long after the days of Noah, without doubt was known even by Adam himself, whom God taught how and why to offer sacrifices. The death of Christ (the most amazing and important event in the history of the world, and, we may add, of the universe), must be held in remembrance, in veneration and gratitude by men; therefore, whenever they should shed blood—whether before or after His coming—the sight of it should bring such remembrances of Christ into their minds as would fill them with awe and humility, totally indisposing them to eat it as ordinary food.

If God regards the less, will He not regard the greater? After this prohibition in respect to the life of animals, He throws around man's life, his most valuable possession, the greatest protection, for the strongest reason possible. "Surely, your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it; and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man," Gen. ix. 5-6. God alone has a sovereign right over the life of man. He alone gives it, and He alone has the right to take it away. He throws around the most valuable possession the greatest protection possible. If any man murder his brother, his life is the forfeit; life goes for life. What is dearer than life? "Skin for skin,—yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life." No other penalty is commensurate with the crime, no other can afford the same protection from cupidity, lust, or revenge. Whenever infidelity has attempted a substitute, it has proved a failure. We cannot be wiser nor better than God. By His authority we put the wilful murderer to death, and for the strongest reason possible: "for in the image of God made He man." It is God who created man above the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and stamped His image upon him. It is His prerogative to give life, and His alone to take it away. Whosoever, then, dares to invade this prerogative, and blast in death this child of God, him shall God destroy.

This law is not new; it dates from the earliest times of the establishment of government on earth. It existed when Cain

slew Abel, and when Lamech slew the young man ; it reaches to Noah, and is re-enacted for all time to come.

The existence of this law is an evidence of the existence of human government, and that such government is ordered of God. All intelligent creatures (with whom we have to do), from their weakness and dependence, must be under government : first, and immediately, and forever, under the government of God ; and second, and mediately, under such government as He ordains. The first government was that of the family. Adam, by divine constitution and ordination, was the head and ruler of his family ; all the power rested in him alone—he made the laws, he administered, and he enforced them. As his posterity increased, and families multiplied, this patriarchal form of government would undergo many modifications and changes, as the supreme power should be shared by other patriarchs, or moulded by the will of the people. The various forms of civil governments are reducible to three : first, despotism, the powers of government being vested in one man ; second, aristocracy, the powers being vested in more than one man ; and third, democracy, when they are primarily vested in the people, who elect their rulers, and govern themselves representatively—a pure democracy being an impossibility. What the forms of government were before the flood cannot be ascertained ; they proved powerless to restrain the violence that filled the earth.

The law of murder, given to Adam before Cain killed Abel, and of which Cain was so afraid, comprehends all the rights and duties of men, covers the whole ground of government, and is so interpreted, on the principle that the greater contains the less. When protection is given to man's most valued possession, life, that protection in justice should extend to every other possession, to every other right he has in life. When God vests the protection of man's life in his fellow-man, He thereby ordains that men associate for protection and preservation, adopting a form of government, and assuming all the necessary powers therefor ; for there is no power but of God. "The powers that be are ordained of God." Under all forms of human government the Church can live, and to all

governments it submits, so long as they exist, Rom. xiii. 1-7; 1 Pet. ii. 13-17; Prov. xxiv. 21.

On Noah's coming out of the ark, the use of "the altar" in sacrifice is mentioned for the first time, but in such a familiar manner that we are constrained to believe that the altar is coeval with the sacrifice; and the same God who ordained the one ordained the other. Mention is made also for the first time of "clean beast" and of "clean fowl," in distinction from the unclean, which assures us that the laws regulating the sacrifices were full and particular, and must have been so from the beginning.

Noah is third upon the list of "the elders" who, by their extraordinary faith, "obtained a good report," Heb. xi. 1-7. Because he was a "just man and perfect in his generation, and walked with God," Gen. vi. 9; vii. 1; v. 28-29, therefore was he chosen and appointed of God, as the last remnant of His Church, to transmit that Church, the knowledge of salvation, and the race itself, to the new world. Centuries after his death, the Lord (Ezekiel xiv. 14) ranks him first among three of the most eminently pious men that have ever lived: "Noah, Daniel, and Job." The Apostle places him in that cloud of witnesses which encompass the saints running the race that is set before them, Heb. xii. 1.

The design of the flood was to glorify the justice of God in the irresistible overthrow of an apostate Church and a depraved world. It was not because God had no power of grace, and could give no efficiency to means to stay the progress of universal corruption, that He was compelled to avenge Himself upon His enemies by an exercise of omnipotent power. To assert this would be blasphemy. But it was, as the fact revealed it to be, one of His unsearchable counsels, to suffer the world to go on and work out its own inherent corruption, and to convince his people that no revealed plan of redemption—no amount of pure truth—no perfection of the means of grace—no long line of patriarchs and witnesses of God—no mighty prophets and preachers of righteousness—no covenant of love and mercy—could preserve the Church without His constant upholding power and grace.

The flood also glorified the faithfulness and mercy of God : for "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished," 2 Pet. i. 1-9 ; i. 4-5.

Having pursued our way over this long period of 1656 years, and seen the small remnant of God's people delivered in safety from the ark, it is advisable briefly to sum up the knowledge of God and the way of salvation which was possessed by the Church before the flood, and which Noah was now, as a preacher of righteousness, to transmit to those who should come after him.

1. What was Noah's knowledge of God ? That He was a Spirit, infinite, eternal, almighty, holy, wise, just, and merciful : the creator, preserver, and governor of the universe, and the saviour and judge of the world, Gen. i. 1-31 ; ii. 1-3, 7-17, 18-24 ; iii. 2-3, 8-24 ; iv. 3-16 ; chs. vi., vii., viii., ix. 1-17. What was his knowledge of "the Seed of the woman ?" That He existed at the time of the promise in a higher nature than that of man, which He was in due time to assume ; the Lord in heaven, filling the exalted office, and performing the divine work of the Redeemer ; distinct in person and office from God ; shown in the sacrifice that He was to be a suffering substitute and surety for His people ; opposed and spoken against and denied by the ungodly ; yet to come with ten thousands of His saints in the last day, and judge the world, Jude vs. 14-15 ; Gen. iii. 15-21 ; iv. 4 ; viii. 20-21 ; 2 Pet. ii. 5 ; Heb. xi. 7, 13, 39. The knowledge of the Spirit was, that He appeared associated with God in the day of the creation, moving upon the face of the waters, and bestowing life and order through the shapeless mass, Gen. i. 2 ; that He strove with the rebellious world and the apostate Church, Gen. vi. 3—by whom Enoch was inspired and prophesied, and by whom Noah foretold the coming flood, preaching that men should repent and escape the coming wrath, 1 Pet. iii. 18-20 ; dwelling in the hearts of the pious, and witnessing with their spirits, that they were indeed the sons of God, Gal. v. 22-25.

If Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are not as clearly revealed before the flood as in after ages, they are sufficiently so for the

faith and comfort of the Church. The Son of God and the Spirit of God did exercise their offices as well before the flood as since that event; otherwise, salvation would not have been possible. That their existence would have been revealed is what was to have been expected; nor are we disappointed, for they are both spoken of, and in so distinct a manner as to fix the attention and faith of the elect, Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12.

2. What was Noah's knowledge of man? That he was created with a true body and reasonable soul: in the image of God, consisting in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, and immortal, Gen. i. 26-27—that God, uniting our first parents in marriage, constituted Adam the federal head of his race, and placed him in his state of innocency under the covenant of works, giving him the ordinance of the holy Sabbath, Gen. i. 1-25—that he fell, and his posterity fell with him, into total depravity of nature and hopeless ruin, under the wrath and curse of God: Gen. iii. 1-24; iv. 1-26—and that God interposed in mercy, and brought in the promise of redemption through the imputed righteousness of the sufferings of the "Seed of the woman," as the sacrifice taught to the eye of faith—that men became interested in this salvation by repentance towards God and faith in the Redeemer to come, which saving faith was necessarily operative and purifying, exhibiting itself in good works, as in the noted examples of Abel, Enoch, and Noah; and manifesting the sons of God to be different in character and conduct from the men of the world. Gen. iii. 15, 21; viii. 20; iii. 4; v. 24; vi. 8-9, 22.

3. What was Noah's knowledge of a future state? That there was a future state of rewards and punishments—that men are happy or miserable immediately after death—that there would be a resurrection, for the body and the soul would form the perfect man in eternity—and that there would be a final judgment. The translation as well as the prophecy of Enoch taught all this, without reference to other proofs, Gen. v. 24; Jude, vs. 14-15.

4. What was Noah's knowledge of the angels? From the temptation and fall he learned, and from the prophecy of

Enoch, that there were good and evil angels, Gen. iii. 1-15; Jude, vs. 14-15.

5. Of the Church? That it was set up in Adam's family after the fall, and included all the professed sons of God, believing in the coming Redeemer, and constituted one body, Gen. iv. 1-16; vi. 1-12;—that it owed its origin to the unmerited favor of God, through the promised Seed of the woman, upon whom the Church was founded, and to whom it looked as its Lord and Head, Gen. iii. 15; Jude, vs. 14-15;—that it had its appointed season for worship, the sabbath-day, Gen. ii. 1-3;—its ordinances of sacrifice of clean beasts, birds, and fruits of the earth, offered upon altars, the blood making atonement for sin, and not to be eaten as an article of food—its officers, heads of families, patriarchs officiating as priests, prophets, and preachers of righteousness, Gen. iii. 21; iv. 1-4; viii. 20; ix. 3-6; v. 1-32; vi. 1-3; 2 Pet. ii. 5;—that discipline was exercised, as the expulsion of Cain intimates, iv. 11-16;—that it was a body in profession and conduct distinct from the world, Gen. v. 24; vi. 1-6, and that its glory and perpetuity depended upon its faith and holiness, vi. 1-7.

6. Of the world? That it was depraved, and distinct from the Church, Gen. iv. 1-16; vi. 1-7; opposed to the righteous laws of God, and salvation by a Redeemer, and, left without the grace of God, it would wax worse and worse, and perish, Jude vs. 14-15—that alliances with it would corrupt and ruin the Church, Gen. vi. 1-7—that, corrupt as the world and the Church had been, yet there was no idolatry known before the flood—and that there were civil governments existing, first, in the family, then enlarging to the tribe, and then to cities and kingdoms. This is inferred from the law of murder, and also from the governments in families; from the lawlessness and violence on the earth, implying rebellion against earthly as well as divine authority.

Such is a summary of the knowledge of God and of the way of salvation which Noah possessed, and which he, as the second progenitor of the world and head of the Church, transmitted to succeeding generations. The covenant of grace con-

tinues, the Church continues; the world, after the flood, enjoys the light, and begins right again.

But, some time after this saint of God left the ark, he planted a vineyard, and fell into the sin of drunkenness. The Scriptures, written with perfect truth and candor, accurately delineate the characters of the righteous and the wicked, as they have ever appeared in the Church and the world. This transgression of Noah (as well as the transgressions of God's servants afterwards recorded) is designed to teach the lesson that no perfection, nor triumph of faith, nor advance in grace, can insure victory to the child of God in time to come, without constant watchfulness, prayerfulness, and the sustaining grace of God. Again, that the existence of sin in the heart, and its appearance in the life, do not prove a man destitute of grace: "there is not a just man that liveth and sinneth not." But it is the feeling with which he regards sin, both in heart and life, and the efforts that he makes to be free from it, that determine his character, Ps. li. ; Job xlii. 6 ; 2 Cor. vii. 11 ; Rom. vii. 9-25 ; vi. 1-23. The justification of the believer is instantaneous and final, Rom. v. 1-10 ; but his sanctification is progressive unto perfection—certain through all difficulties, Rom. viii. 1-39 ; John x. 27-30 ; 1 Cor. i. 8-9 ; Phil. i. 6, although he falls, (not from grace, but from the exercise of it,) he shall rise again, Eph. ii. 8-9. "Saved by grace, not of works." So it was with Noah.

The filial reverence, affection, and charity of Shem and Japheth are beautiful and affecting, casting into deeper vileness and blackness the conduct of Ham, who told the humiliating fact of his father's drunkenness and exposure, without sorrow, and without respect either to his person or character.

This occurrence is the occasion of Noah's prophecies concerning his three sons, uttered, not in vindictive wrath against his offending son, but with deliberation, in his sober and considerate moments, and under the inspiration of God ; for God has set His seal to them in their fulfilment. Whatever be the difficulties in the text, and the interpretation of this prophetic passage, we shall follow the Hebrew, and suggest that interpretation which appears to be most free from objections, with-

out entering into minute expositions. The prophecies are a curse upon Ham, and they are blessings upon Shem and Japheth. Ham is called Noah's "younger son," Gen. ix. 24. The word "little" being used comparatively, as elsewhere. This agrees with the fact, that Ham's name always occurs second among the brothers, Gen. v. 32; vi. 10; vii. 13; ix. 18; x. 1. In ch. x. 21, Japheth is said to be the "elder" brother of Shem; in the original, "the brother of Japheth the great," that is, comparatively greater in age, elder born. A like use of the word may be seen in 1 Sam. xvii. 13-14; 1 Kings ii. 22. The order of age, therefore, of the sons is, Japheth, Ham, Shem, and in this order their generations are recorded in Gen. x. 1-32 and 1 Chron. i. 4-17. The reason why Shem, the youngest, is always placed first is, that he is preferred before his brethren by the Lord in the line of spiritual descent—in the line of promise descending to the Messiah, and occupies a more conspicuous and honorable station.

The sacred historian designates Ham as the father of Canaan, when he comes out of the ark, with the design, perhaps, of fixing the attention of the Israelites (for whom he was then preparing this record, and who were then on their march through the wilderness to take possession of the land of the Canaanites,) upon the fact that the people whom they were about to engage and extirpate, were the descendants of Ham, and were cursed of God anciently to be servants to them, and therefore they should not be dismayed, but take courage and fight manfully. Be this as it may, Noah uttered his prophecies not long after the flood, and before Ham had any children; at least, before Canaan was born, for he is placed fourth in the list of his sons. Gen. x. 6. Noah addresses Shem and Japheth personally and individually, and we believe he addresses Ham in the same manner. His three sons were then before him to hear the word of the Lord from his mouth. True, they may be cursed through the miserable lot given to a future son, but this interpretation makes the address to Ham peculiar and different from that to Shem and Japheth. Besides, the curse and the blessings were not to be realized in the persons of the brothers, but in their posterity. The blessings

of Shem and Japheth covered all their posterity—to be parallel, the curse of Ham should cover all; otherwise, a large portion of his posterity is neither cursed nor blessed. Again, the fulfilment ought to determine the extent of the prophecies, and they have been most remarkably fulfilled in the entire posterity of all the brothers. These considerations deserve some weight in determining the meaning of the words, “Cursed be Canaan!” The reading is also peculiar: “And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him, and he said, Cursed be Canaan!” So he cursed his younger son, the father of Canaan, under the name of Canaan. And our conclusion is, that the name of the son is put for that of the father—in other words, Ham is cursed to be a servant of servants, and to be the servant of Shem and Japheth under the name of Canaan. The phraseology of Scripture, “a servant of servants,” means the lowest and most perfect of servants. The prophecy has been fulfilled in the destruction and final subjugation and enslavement of the Canaanites, by the descendants of Shem, the children of Israel; in the subjugation and enslavement of the Phœnicians and Carthagenians by the Greeks and Romans, the descendants of Japheth; in the subjugation of the Egyptians and Ethiopians; in the enslavement of Africans in almost all ages of the world, even down to the present day, and their miserable enslavement of each other. The prophecy lays the curse upon Ham, and leaves it there. There appears to be no day to this night.

The innocency or guilt of the posterity of Shem and Japheth, who from age to age have been “gathered together, for to do whatsoever God’s hand and God’s counsel determined before to be done,” against their brethren of Ham, must be measured by the revealed law of God which defines our duties towards each other, and that law applied in all cases, with a due consideration of the circumstances.

“Blessed be the Lord God of Shem.” To have Jehovah for his God implies a plenitude of blessings upon the head of Shem; therefore, let the God of Shem be blessed. This prophecy was fulfilled in the appointment of Shem to be, after Noah, the next in the line of promise, the progenitor of our

Lord. From him sprang the children of Eber, out of whom God called and constituted his visible Church; and thus the spiritual blessings of God were for many centuries confined to Shem, and, finally, after the advent of Christ, flowed through him to all the Gentile nations, the rest of his own descendants, and those of his brethren. "And Canaan shall be his servant."

"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem," was fulfilled in spreading himself north and west, over Europe, Asia, and the isles of the sea; and in his dwelling in the tents of Shem, by holding friendly and intimate relations with him, receiving from him the spiritual mercies of God, becoming one in brotherhood, and dwelling in love in the same tents. He came with his Gentile nations to the brightness of the rising of Shem. "And Canaan shall be his servant."

These are the last words of Noah. His history ends like that of Jacob, in predictions concerning his sons. He lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. The head of the new world, the pastor and preacher of the Church of God, he died aged nine hundred and fifty years.

The Lord commanded Noah and his sons to "be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth," Gen. ix. 10, for "the earth hath He given to the children of men," Ps. cxv. 16; Jer. xxvii. 5. But in direct rebellion, being of one language, speech, and descent, they came to the resolution to build a city, and a tower whose top might reach to heaven, and fix permanently the seat of their empire, that they might not be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, Gen. xi. 1-9. They measure their strength with God; but with infinite ease, and in a manner most merciful to the transgressors, He compelled them to execute His purpose, by simply confounding their language. The original tongue brought from the old world was obliterated from the minds of the multitude, except such of them as God designed should retain it, while the rest were given to speak new languages, and diverse the one from the other; harmonious communication was stopped; their strength in union was broken, and their purpose fell to the ground. The

location of these different languages, which afterwards characterized nations, or the division of the world among them, was the act of God.

According to Deut. xxxii. 7-8, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Moses assures the people of God of His perpetual favor, and strengthens their confidence by affirming that when He originally divided to the nations their inheritance, even then, in that distant age, He looked forward, and set bounds which should afterwards be occupied by, and be sufficient for His chosen people, the people of Israel. In a like sense we understand Gen. xi. 9. Therefore, is the name of it called Babel, or confusion, "because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." He scattered them in their unresisting feebleness by His almighty power, yet with design, into those territories foreordained for them. Comp. Jer. xxvii. 5; Acts xvii. 26; Ps. cxv. 16; Gen. xv. 16-21; Dan. iv. 17, 32.

This remarkable event took place one hundred years after the flood, during the life of Peleg, the son of Eber, Gen. xi. 16; for, in the genealogy of Gen. x. 1-25, it is said, "and unto Eber were born two sons; the name of the one was Peleg," which signifies "division," "because in his days the earth was divided." This occurs again in 1 Chron. i. 1-19, etc.

The tenth chapter of Genesis anticipates, in order of time, the eleventh. The eleventh acquaints us with the purpose of the descendants of Noah to remain together, and to build their city and tower; then by what power their purpose was defeated, and themselves scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth. The tenth shows where they were scattered.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GIFT OF TONGUES; HEBREW AS OLD AS ANY.—LOSS OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, THE CONSEQUENCE OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY.—THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD FROM ORIGINAL REVELATION.—HISTORY NOW RUNS IN THE LINE OF SHEM.—RISE OF IDOLATRY.—THE PLAGUE OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD TO BE DESTROYED.—HUMAN LIFE SHORTENED.—JOB A PROPHET; AGE IN WHICH HE LIVED.—HIS BOOK, ITS VALUE, ITS MORAL DOCTRINES.—JOB'S RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.—EXISTENCE OF IDOLATRY, AND ART OF WRITING IN HIS DAY.

THE confounding of the language of all the earth and the gift of other languages were a miracle. All original languages are the gift of God. Men do not create languages; they are taught them. Even dialects and mixed languages are not of men, but are the result of a commingling of originally distinct tongues which have come in contact. As men borrow manners and histories, so they borrow languages from each other. When God dispersed the posterity of Noah to fill the earth, He poured out upon them the gift of tongues; and when, ages after, His great salvation was to be carried unto all these dispersed nations, He commissioned His apostles and ministers, and poured out upon them the gift of tongues for this purpose—not new tongues, but tongues already in the world, but heretofore unknown to them.

The number of languages given at Babel is unknown. Learned men, in these latter days, have reduced the various languages of earth to a comparatively few families of languages, and these so strikingly resemble each other, and have so much in common; that the conclusion is reached that they

are all sisters, and spring from one mother tongue, and were separated by some irresistible and supernatural stroke—a conclusion confirming the truth of the Word of God, that at Babel the language of all the earth was confounded, and thence the Lord scattered abroad the people.

The question, which of the languages of Babel, or how many of them Noah and his sons brought from the old world, is more curious than useful. We suppose they brought several. Sufficient is it for the Church to know, that the Hebrew language, in which it has pleased God to convey His inspired truth in the Old Testament, and which consequently must remain to the end of the world one of the two sacred and inspired languages, passes up through many generations to Eber, the father of “Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided;” and if the language does not date beyond the confusion of tongues, it was certainly given at that time, and is therefore as old as any other language that we know of.

The loss of the true knowledge of God and the way of salvation, which Noah and his sons transmitted to their posterity, and which became in after ages so universal, and which is equally so in our day, is to be attributed to human depravity, as the Apostle Paul affirms, writing of the moral state of the Gentiles, “when they knew not God, they glorified Him not as God,” but substituted idols in His room; and, as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them up in just judgment to a reprobate mind, and the vilest affections. When, therefore, we shall hereafter see the visible Church chosen out, set up, and confined for centuries to one people, we are not to consider that God is dealing unjustly with the rest of mankind, but rather that they who are living estranged from Him are justly receiving in themselves the rewards of their own works; and that while He confines His special mercy, for the time being, to so small a portion, we are to acknowledge it as an act of His sovereignty, which, however beyond our comprehension, can be but wise and good, redounding to His glory. “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.” Matt. xi. 26; Rom. xi. 30–36.

The world owes what knowledge of God and of religion it

possesses, be it much or little, pure or adulterated, to the original revelation, communicated in the first instance to our first parents, and afterwards, "at sundry times and in divers manners," to God's people. By them, as the light of the world, it has been diffused among all nations, and they in turn have transmitted it from father to son. The original ideas of God, of His worship, of sacred times and institutions, once communicated, remain fixed in the mind and flow down from age to age. No nation has ever reasoned out, independently of written revelation, or of traditionary knowledge, its own religion; for no nation has ever been placed in circumstances to make the attempt, and never will be.

The works and ways of God do clearly make known His eternal power and Godhead; but the fact that there is a God, and that He is to be worshipped, comes to the mind of man before he is capable of reasoning; he drinks it in with his mother's milk. To the question, what regard is to be paid to the religious traditions of the heathen, it may be replied, that they are to be received or rejected as they agree or disagree with the standard of all religious truth—the Holy Word of God.

According to the Hebrew computation, the dispersion took place one hundred years after the flood, A. M. 1757. From this event onward, Ham, Japheth, and a majority of Shem's descendants are dropped from the Bible, and are noticed from time to time afterwards only as they become connected with so much of the posterity of Shem as constitute the true people of God—the Church of God—whose history is carefully carried on, and which we are now to follow.

The next line of spiritual succession flows from Shem, through Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, down to Abram, Gen. xi. 10–26; Luke iii. 34–36; Matt. i. 1, and keeps our Lord in the eye and faith of the Church, reaching down three hundred and forty-two years after the flood to A. M., 2008, the year in which Abraham was born. Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. Terah, Abram's father, was contemporary with Noah; so that there was but one step between Abram and Noah;

and with ease and certainty could all Noah's knowledge of God and religion be transmitted to Abraham, admitting there were no written documents for the purpose, Gen. xi. 32; xii. 1-4; Acts vii. 4. Very few but remarkable are the events of these three centuries and a half; the reëstablishment of the Church, and the repeopling of the world; the prophecies of Noah, which epitomize its history in all after time; the dispersion and gift of languages; the continuance of the Church, seen in the succession of the progenitors of our Lord; and another dreadful declension, evidently the rise of idolatry,—these are the events; few, but all-comprehensive, suggestive, far-reaching, all-sufficient; the record of God.

That idolatry took its rise some two hundred years after the flood, during the lifetime of Serug, who was contemporary with Noah and his sons, both Joshua and Job testify. Says Joshua, in his farewell address to Israel, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood," (the river Euphrates, so called by way of eminence,) "in old times, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and" (Serug) "the father of Nahor, and they served other gods." But they were afterwards converted to the living and true God, Gen. xxxi. 53. Job, who was contemporary with Serug, also mentions idolaters in his book, xxxi. 26-28. After the introduction of idolatry, in a few brief centuries it overspreads the world. When Abraham appears, all the surrounding nations seem to be given up to it.

Idolatry is the consecration and obedient submission of the soul to other objects than God, and in opposition to Him, manifesting itself outwardly as a religion in the worship of created objects, animate and inanimate—of graven images or likenesses of feigned gods, Exod. xx. 1-6; Eph. v. 3-5; Col. iii. 5. It is to no useful purpose that men invent fanciful theories, which they dignify with the name of philosophy, to account for the origin of idolatry. It is the offspring of human depravity, and if any one wishes to understand the process, from the first act of rebellion against God to the final consummation, let him devote himself to the study of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

Flowing in the channel of depraved nature, it has in its

progress subsidized the imagination, the taste, the intellect, the passions, the hopes, the fears, the interests of mankind, and allied itself to antiquity and custom, to ignorance and fraud, to violence, oppression, superstition, and power. From its first introduction it has been the plague of the Church. Abraham was surrounded by idolaters; Rachel stole and bore off the idols of her father Laban, Gen. xxi. 19-32. Idols were worshipped in Israel's household, Gen. xxxv. 1-4, and by the people of God while in bondage in Egypt. They even carried them with them through the wilderness, under the pillar of cloud and of fire, and before the face of Sinai itself! Amos v. 25-26; Acts vii. 39, 43. Idols were a snare to Israel during the period of the Judges; and what declension took place under Samuel and the Kings! Ten tribes almost wholly apostatized into idolatry. The terrible captivity of Assyria and of Babylon were the final judgments of God for the idolatries and accompanying transgressions of His people, that they might be purged of that leaven. Yet the Church contended with this plague after the captivity, and successfully resisted its introduction under the Maccabees, in one of the most brilliant struggles against power and persecution that the world ever witnessed. So soon as the apostles gathered churches among the heathen, their wisdom and authority were called in requisition to prevent the encroachments of idolatry. Even in their day the mystery of iniquity began to work, and after their departure it came on apace—first, in the idolatrous veneration of sacred places and relics; then, in rendering some sort of worship to apostles, martyrs, and saints and angels. Finally, the churches were adorned with pictures and statuary of our Lord, the apostles, the virgin Mary, and others, which gave rise to violent and long-continued contentions in the then acknowledged Christian world, and which settled down in the allowed use of pictures in the Eastern or Greek Church, and of both pictures and statuary in the Western or Latin Church, making both communions the resting-places of idolatry.

The true people of God have always protested against idolatry, and its accompanying abominations of doctrines and discipline. In the reformation of the sixteenth century, God

called them out, and delivered them from the chains of superstition, ignorance, and idolatry, in which the nominally Christian world lay bound, establishing them in the truth as it is in Jesus, which they still maintain, under which they flourish, and before which the apostate idol churches are waning, although slowly and with determined resistance. Yet "shall the Lord consume them with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy them with the brightness of His coming," 2 Thess. ii. 8.

In the first and second commandments, the Lord proclaims Himself the only supreme God, and condemns with eternal vengeance idolatry in every form. All the Scriptures testify against the impiety, and God, who is jealous, and will not give His glory to another, communicates the condition of the millions who worship idols. He has promised Christ Jesus that "He shall have the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession." Just as He was about to ascend, our Lord commissioned His Church to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Therefore "many run to and fro," "for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," Dan. xii. 4; Heb. ii. 14.

Noah and his three sons were the last of the aged patriarchs. From Arphaxad, the son of Shem, to Peleg, human life was shortened one half, from nine hundred years to four hundred and over. From Peleg to Terah it was again shortened one half, from four hundred to two hundred. From Abraham to David it gradually diminished to seventy years, with rare exceptions of its reaching and going beyond one hundred, Gen. xi. 10-32. This shortening of human life must be resolved into the sovereign will of God; all attempts to account for it in any other manner are mere imaginations, and without value.

In this period, between the flood and Abraham, lived a patriarch, not registered in the line of spiritual descent in Gen. xi. 10-26—the patriarch Job. His book lives in the sacred canon, and is of inestimable value in the history of the Church. It is considered, perhaps, the oldest of the inspired writings, and seems to have been composed and preserved with the ex-

press design of unfolding to all succeeding ages what was the amount of religious knowledge—what was the perfection of religious character—and what was the private and public walk of the sons of God—what was the association which they held with each other, and with the people of the world, in these early times, covered with the mists of far-distant ages. It sets the men of God before us, living, moving, and having their being in the Church and the world, just as they do now. The world of the patriarchs is made bare to our eye. Christians appear in life in all the New Testament, and then in the Old, running back from Ezra and Nehemiah, through prophets, priests, and kings, up to the judges, to Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam—to the twelve patriarchs—to Jacob, Isaac, Abram, and finally to Noah, and Job, and Enoch: thus making known the same God, the same Saviour, the same Spirit, the same faith, the same practice—the same blessed covenant of grace, working its mercies in the Church and in the world even from the beginning.

The character of Job is, beyond all the patriarchs previous to the time of Abraham, drawn out in the greatest minuteness and force, and serves as an example and illustration of all the rest. He who reads Job reads of all the early saints of God in him. With what delight then do we open this ancient book—this book that speaks to us of those early ages, otherwise needing light and illustration drawn from the men that lived in them! Well has the book of Job been called a “depository of patriarchal religion.” Not that the religion of the patriarchs differed in faith and substance from the religion of prophets and apostles, for it was the same, but because this book shows us that it *was* the same, and makes the Word of God one harmonious whole: one continuous revelation and development of the covenant of grace.

Job was an inspired prophet of God: reckoned by God worthy of a place with Noah and Daniel, Ezek. xiv. 14-20; and to be named as an example of patience to the Church, James v. 11. So far as the testimony of the Word of God goes, there is no reason to suppose that his book was written by any other than *Job himself*: the few words recording his

death were added of course by some other hand. No book admitted into the Bible is written by any but inspired men.

He was an inhabitant of the land of *Uz*: that portion of country no doubt first occupied by Uz, the son of Aram, Gen. x. 23. We have no record to guide us in fixing the position of the land of Uz but the Bible. And in three places only is the land of Uz spoken of. Here in the book of Job, i. 1; again in Jer. xxv. 20, in immediate connection with Egypt on the one hand and Philistia on the other. It must have been of some extent, as Jeremiah says, "And all the kings of the land of Uz," and, again, Jeremiah in Lam. iv. 21, "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwelleth in the land of Uz." Uz originally included Edom. How far eastward into Arabia it extended, is not said. None of the boundaries of the land are given. It lay southward of and inclusive of Edom, extending eastward. Hence Job is called one of "the sons of the East." How far east it extended, and how near Chaldea, we do not know.

Job lived after his afflictions one hundred and forty years, and then died old and full of days, xlii. 16-17. How old he was when they fell upon him, is not revealed; but from the fact that he was the father of seven sons and three daughters—that he was in his possessions "the greatest of all the sons of the East"—and was a man highly honored, and of note and fame—he could not have been less than seventy years of age. This would make him at the time of his death two hundred and ten years old; which age throws him fully up to the time of Abraham, who lived but one hundred and seventy-five years, Gen. xxv. 7-8, and it is said "*he* died in a good old age—an old man and full of years:" nay, it throws Job beyond Abraham, and beyond Nahor, Abraham's grandfather, who lived only one hundred and forty-eight years, even to the times of *Serug*, the father of Nahor, who lived two hundred and thirty years, Gen. xi. 22-25. The age of Job is an important consideration in fixing the period in which he lived. He was at least contemporary with Abraham; most probably before him, as he makes no mention of Abraham, nor any of the circumstances of his life, nor of the destruction of Sodom

and Gomorrah. He lived before the Church of God went into captivity in Egypt, and before its deliverance and settlement in Canaan; for in all the book of Job there is no conclusive mention of any of these facts, nor of God's wonders in Egypt, and in the desert, and in the Promised Land, and no reference to any of the institutions, rites, ceremonies, or officers of the Church. His book belongs to a period anterior to this.

We have indulged in these remarks upon this interesting book for the purpose of directing attention to its antiquity, which makes it, aside from many other considerations, of so great value in the history of the Church.

Although so old a book, (and the great body of it is *poetry*,) it is not exceeded by any in the Scriptures in the purity of its language, in the simplicity, the force, and point of its style; in the closeness of its reasonings; the variety and magnificence of its imagery; the grandeur of its conceptions and descriptions; nor in its depth of pathos and fervor of piety. It forever shames into silence the presumptuous folly of men, who, with a boast of learning, and full of an overweening self-sufficiency, pretend to speak of the ages in which the patriarchs lived as the infancy of the Church and of the world, who are forever prating of progress and development, and fastening upon the Scriptures their heartless, Christless, and Godless theories of religion and of the Church.

The moral of the book—aside from its being a depository of patriarchal religion, and filling up a chasm otherwise left open—is to teach, that God sometimes permits the best of men, the most upright and perfect of His children, to be led into afflictions, temptations, and trials, for the manifestation of their characters, and for the illustration of the power of His grace, and of His own unfailing faithfulness—that this world is one of trial, and not a world in which perfect retributions are meted out to the evil and the good: nor are the reasons of the afflictions of God always immediately or certainly known—that all God's dispensations and the mysteries of His government will be fully explained to His glory in the world to come; and, therefore, we are to judge nothing before the time; but, steadfast in the faith, exercise submission and patience, looking for-

ward to final redemption and glory through Him who is the promised Redeemer of His people.

The main objects of inquiry are, first, *the doctrines of religion* contained in the book of Job ; *his own religious character*, and *the light* which is thereby *thrown on the religious intelligence and piety of the times in which he lived*.

Of the doctrines, we observe that Job teaches of *God* that He is a Spirit, invisible, ix. 11 ; xxiii. 8-9—the only true God, and proper object of all religious homage and worship, xxviii. 12-28—omniscient and omnipresent, the searcher of hearts, ix. 13-18 ; xiii. 19 ; xxi. 22 ; xxvi. 6 ; xxxiv. 21-22—the Almighty, doing wonders, executing His will in heaven above and in the earth beneath, ix. 1-19 ; xi. 10 ; xxvi. 6-14 ; xxxiv. 29—the Great Ruler and Governor of the Universe, which He has made, xxxvii. 1-22, and exercising a special and controlling providence over all angels and men and creatures, both animate and inanimate, i. 6-22 ; ii. 1-10 ; xii. 9-25 ; see the whole book—just, ix. 1-2 ; x. 14-15 ; xiii. 8 ; xxxiv. 19, 28, rendering to every man according to his works—independent, xxxiii. 13 ; xxxv. 5-11—immense, unsearchable, xi. 1-9—self-existent, unchangeable, xxiii. 13 ; xxxvi. 22 ; xxxvii. 23—most Holy, xxv. 4-6 ; xxxiv. 10-12—that God is a prayer-hearing and sin-pardoning God, through the merits of the Redeemer to come, i. 5 ; xlii. 8-10 ; xix. 25-27. The descriptions of God and of His works, and of His providence are not exceeded for awful majesty, sublimity, and glory in any other portion of the Word of God. Chapters xxxviii.-xli.

He teaches that *the Redeemer of men* ever liveth their hope and confidence, and will appear at the last day for the final redemption of soul and body. Herein we recognize the teachings of Enoch on this subject, Jude vs. 14-15.

He also makes us acquainted with the existence and agency of *the Holy Spirit*, xxvi. 13 ; xxxiii. 4, working efficiently, and giving life and power to the works of God. He thus reveals the persons in the Godhead.

Of Angels, he affirms the existence and agency of both those which are evil and those which are good, i. 6-19 ; ii. 1-8 ; xxxviii. 7. We have in Job for the first time the name

of Satan, the prince of the fallen angels, the Devil, called by way of eminence, the Adversary—Satan. Comp. Job i. 6; ii. 1, with Zech. iii. 1-2, and Rev. xii. 10. The idea that Satan, in Job i. 6 and ii. 1, is one of the good angels, waiting around the throne of God, who proposes the trial of Job, is, to say the least, ridiculous. Satan is brought to view as “going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it,” by the permission of God, “considering” the characters of men, and putting them to the proof by his temptations and trials.

Of man, Job teaches that our first father, Adam, sinned and endeavored to hide his transgressions, xxxi. 33—that man is formed out of clay, and returns at death to dust, xxxiii. 6; xxxiv. 1-5; xix. 26—that he is born in sin, xxv. 1-4; xiv.; iv. 15; 14-16—altogether depraved and defiled before a holy God: destitute of all righteousness for justification, ix. 20-21. His most perfect works and best endeavors are all defective and defiled, and neither to be boasted of nor trusted in, ix. 30-31; x. 15, and man needs only to have right views of the majesty, holiness, and justice of God, to be overwhelmed with a sense of his weakness and vileness, and to abhor himself and repent in dust and ashes, xl. 1-5; xlii. 1-6.

He teaches that true wisdom or religion is “the one thing needful” to man: of priceless value, above gold, the gold of Ophir: above silver, and above the precious stones and jewels. It is not to be found by human effort either in the land or in the sea, it is not perceived by the eyes of living men. God alone prepares it and bestows it upon men, xxviii. 12-28. “Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding,” v. 28—that repentance is commanded of God, xxxvi. 10—that it precedes forgiveness, xi. 14-20; xxii. 21-23; xxxiii. 27-28,—and forgiveness comes through faith, i. 5; xlii. 8-10, in that atoning blood to be shed by the coming Redeemer, xix. 22. We are consequently accepted, forgiven, justified, through faith. Impenitency is ruin, xxxiv. 24-28. It was the unbelief and wicked impenitency and rebellion of mankind that drew upon the world the awful judgment of the flood, xxii. 15-18. The wicked shall be destroyed, xxi. 1-34; ch. xxiv., etc.

He teaches that those who are righteous before God, His true worshippers, shall never fall from their high profession; but their sanctification being a progressive work in them, shall be carried on unto perfection, xvii. 9—that the child of God walks by faith—that an habitual reliance upon, and a looking forward to the glorious appearing of the Lord from Heaven, sustains him in all duty, and under every trial, xix. 25–27—that there is to be in the last day, when the heavens shall be removed out of their place, a resurrection of the dead, xiv. 10–15; xix. 25–27, of the same bodies, destroyed by worms, and returned back to dust, but changed to behold God in glory—and that resurrection followed by a judgment; and that judgment by the blessedness of the righteous, which shall consist in the full vision and fruition of God: while the contrary is involved, the destruction of the wicked and their banishment from the presence of God! xix. 25–27. Job understood, and, by the grace of God, embraced all these fundamental and saving doctrines.

What now, may we inquire, was *the religious character of Job*? The Holy Searcher of Hearts calls him “My servant Job: there is none like him in the earth—a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil,” i. 8; ii. 3; xxviii. 28. His religious character is identified with that of all the true saints of God in all ages: although in greater perfection than is to be met with in multitudes. He was born of the Spirit, through the word, and all the fruits of the Spirit appeared in his heart and life. His piety was that of the covenant of grace.

Briefly, then, he was a believer. By faith he embraced the great Redeemer of Sinners, promised of God from the beginning—typified in sacrifices—preached by patriarchs before him, and commended by their own examples of faith in Him, i. 5; xlii. 8–9; xix. 25–27. The fruits of this faith appeared in his prayerful, i. 5, watchful, xxxi. 1–40, holy life, Ezek. xiv. 14–20. He faithfully discharged his duty in his family—towards his wife, ii. 9–10, his children, i. 5, his servants, xxxi. 13–15,—towards his brethren in the Lord, xlii. 8–9, and towards all men with whom he stood in any way connected;

he was upright and just, xxix. 14 ; ch. xxxi. ; charitable, xxix. 15-16 ; ch. xxxi. ; merciful, xxx. 25 ; xxxi. 29-31 ; hospitable, xxxi. 32 ; the friend and benefactor of the poor, xxix. 12 ; ch. xxxi.—visiting and protecting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, xxix. 12-13 ; ch. xxxi. ; the defender of the weak and oppressed, xxix. 17 ; of perfect morality in all the relations of life ; sincere and upright in his profession, xxxi. 1-23 ; he served God, not from selfish and worldly considerations, but out of supreme affection, i. 9-22 ; ii. 4-10. In the days of his greatest prosperity he never made gold his trust, but abhorred covetousness, i. 21 ; ch. xxxi., and turned in horror from idolatry, xxxi. 24-28. He ever felt his own dependence and sinfulness and unworthiness before God, xiii. 23, etc., and used the world as though he used it not, ch. xxxi. He loved the law of God more than his necessary food, xxiii. 12, and submitted with patient resignation to his darkest and deepest afflictions, reposing an unshaken trust in God, i. 21-22 ; ii. 9-10 ; xiii. 15, strengthening himself in his living Redeemer, and looking beyond his present sorrow to the resurrection and to final happiness with God, xix. 25-27.

Under his overwhelming afflictions he gave way to his grief, and lamented that ever he was born ; yea, he cursed the day of his birth, and contended with his friends that he could charge himself with no particular transgressions for which he was justly suffering, and felt willing to appeal to God for his justification. Yet when God revealed His sovereignty, holiness, and glory, he humbled himself beneath His mighty hand, and owned His righteous judgments : yea, he abhorred himself in his sinfulness and repented in dust and ashes, xl. 1-5 ; xlii. 1-6. He forgave his friends their unkindness, and sacrificed and made prevalent intercessions for them, xlii. 8-9. In a like manner when it pleased God to remove His hand from him, and to turn the hearts of his relations and friends (who had forsaken him in his days of sorrow), in affectionate sympathy towards him, and incline them to contribute to his comfort, and the repair of his fortunes, Job received them back to his embraces without reproaches, and accepted gratefully the assistance which they offered him (xlii. 10, 11). And the

Lord brought his afflictions to a happy end ; He was very pitiful and of tender mercy to His servant, who had, when tried, so well endured, James v. 11. He added unto him double his former wealth : the same number of sons and of daughters which he had before, and a further life of one hundred and forty years, and finally, when old and full of days, he peacefully died, and was gathered to his fathers.

The book of Job casts *great light upon the faith and piety of the people of God in the ages immediately succeeding the flood*—the same that they have been ever since—the faith and piety peculiar to the covenant of grace (the Word of God recognizes none other) : faith in Christ—“the Seed of the woman”—to come—the same living principle then, that it is now : its transforming, powerful, permanent effects, the same then as now. The same clear view and conception of the whole person and work of the Redeemer, was not so fully enjoyed then as now : but enough was known and understood, to draw the souls of men to Him, and the same spirit that now seals Christ and all His benefits to believers sealed them then. There was but one true religion then on earth as now : the religion of the covenant of grace. The people of God were known and read of all men, and were as distinct from the world then as now. They sympathized and consorted with, and aided each other then as now, and worshipped and sacrificed and prayed together. The world was much the same then as now, and had its distinct nations—its kings and nobles—and subjects. They understood, and practised themselves in the art of war, xxxix. 19–25. There were masters and servants ; rich and poor ; the oppressors and the oppressed ; the proud and the lowly ; the husbandman and the artist ; the righteous and the wicked ; the idolater and the worshipper of the true God ; the hypocrite and the sound believer, ch. viii. 13–18 ; xiii. 16 ; xxvii. 8–10. And there were judges in the land, set for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that did well, xxxi. 26–28 ; xxxi. 9–12. And in this moving world, the men of God did walk by faith, letting their light shine to the glory of God and the good of men ; they had then, as now, to contend with “the world, the flesh, and

the devil." The same covenant-keeping God was over them then as now, and taught them by His Spirit, and divided unto them their days of prosperity and adversity, causing all things to work together for their good, xxxiv. 31-82; xxvi. 8-9. The righteous held on his way, and he that had clean hands grew stronger and stronger, xvii. 19.

We close this view of the book of Job, with an observation of two facts. First, *the existence of idolatry*—which Job characterizes as "a denial of the God who is above," and the idolatry of which he speaks, is that of the worship of the heavenly bodies: of the sun and the moon, called Sabianism, xxxi. 26-28. Idolatry first appears in the time of Serug, Josh. xxiv. 1-2. With Serug, we suppose that Job was contemporary. It is probable that there were other gods worshipped besides the heavenly bodies. Of idolatry, Job says, "This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge." The same remark he makes of adultery, "It is an iniquity to be punished by the judges," xxxi. 10-12. The inference is, that idolatry was viewed as an offence against the well-being of society, as was adultery, and, like that heinous wickedness, called for judicial investigation and punishment. If ever kept in check by punishment, it could not have been of long duration. After the visible Church was placed under a civil constitution, it was viewed as treason against God, and, in the purer times of the Church, punished accordingly.

Second, *the existence of writing*.—Job, in several places, speaks of writing and of books. "For thou writest bitter things against me," ch. xiii. 26. "Oh! that my words were now written! oh, that they were printed in a book! (or graven)—that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever!" xix. 23-24. "Oh, that mine adversary had written a book," xxxi. 25. What were the materials, and with what instrument writing was committed to them, we shall not inquire. The art of writing was known, and there were records or books; and, from the manner in which Job speaks, writing was common, and resorted to on important occasions. This fact may throw some light on the following passage: "My feet have held His steps; His way have I kept, and not de-

clined. Neither have I gone back from the commandments of His lips. I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food," xxiii. 11-12. Here is plain reference to the word or law of the Lord, which Job loved, and made the rule of his duty—"a lamp unto his feet, and a light unto his path"—a law to which, it would seem, he had constant reference; to which he could come for support and direction. The very terms which he uses are those which we afterwards find applied to the *written* law—the *written Revelation* of God.

There is nothing improbable—nay, many things render it the contrary—that the revelations of God, and His wonderful dealings toward men, and all the history of the creation and fall, of the flood, and re-peopleing of the world, and the genealogy of Christ, the promised seed of the woman, the lines of spiritual and promised descent—were all committed to writing, and formed the Bible, the Word of God to His Church, in these early days. And to which we may add the ten commandments, if not set down in the order observed at Sinai, then embraced in substance. Job refers to the creation and to Adam's sin, and the circumstances of it; he refers to the flood, and the causes which brought it about; the ceremonial law of sacrifices; and also to the moral law. Job condemns idolatry, which comes under the first and second commandments; and adultery, which comes under the seventh. The penalty of death is visited upon the murderer, which comes under the sixth; in short, there is not one of the commandments which does not appear exerting a controlling influence over Job, in his life and character, a sketch of which he gives us in different places, but very particularly in the thirty-first chapter.

It is by no means denied, that all these things might have safely and surely been transmitted by tradition to Noah, to Job, to Abraham, and to Moses, and that by Moses all were committed to writing, and that infallibly, by the inspiration of God. Nor is it denied, that in the absence of all reliable tradition, Moses might, by the immediate inspiration of God, have written all we have in the Bible, from the creation to his day. But, inasmuch as Job asserts the existence of the art of

writing, and refers to the law of God as something known and fixed, it is not an improbable supposition that sacred writings existed in the earliest ages of the world; *that God has never left His people without a written revelation*; and that Moses has added the revelations of God to His Church, made through himself, to those which had existed before his time.

That this appears more than probable, is evident from Exod. xviii. 14-27. Moses, as the appointed deliverer, was also the lawgiver and judge of Israel. In the capacity of judge he was acting, when Jethro, his father-in-law, visited him in Horeb, *before* the giving of the law; and he explained to Jethro the reason why he sat, from morning to night, with the people standing by him: "Because the people come unto me to inquire of God. When they have a matter, they come unto me: and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know, (or instruct, cause them to understand,) the statutes of God, and His laws." What statutes and laws of God were these? Doubtless, all the divine communications of God with His people, from Adam to Noah, and from Noah down to Abraham, and to Moses himself: all which had respect to the faith and practice of men, as well in reference to God, and the things of eternity, as to men and the things of time. These "statutes and laws," from the creation to Moses, were numerous. Were they written, or unwritten? They could, indeed, have been transmitted orally, by tradition; but the remark of Moses to Jethro resembles that of a judge who expounds and explains statutes and laws which were *in some settled and fixed form*, to which he could refer, and to which, as the accredited word of the Lord, he could appeal, and say to the people in his decisions: "Thus is it *written*, and thus saith *the Lord*."

CHAPTER XIII.

CALL OF ABRAHAM.—HISTORY OF CHURCH CONDENSED.—ORGANIZATION BECOMES DISTINCT, BUT NO NEW CHURCH SET UP IN ABRAHAM.—HIS CALL OF THE ELECTION OF GOD, EFFECTUAL AND OFFICIAL.—CHARACTER: FATHER OF THE FAITHFUL.—DEATH.—ERROR OF LOT.—ABRAHAM A MASTER.—SLAVERY IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH CONSIDERED.

ABRAHAM was born 352 years after the flood, in the year of the world 2008, almost precisely midway between the creation, and the birth of Christ. Stephen (Acts vii. 2) fixes his call at the time that he was dwelling in his own country, Ur of the Chaldees, in Mesopotamia, Gen. xv. 7; Acts vii. 1-4, among his kindred and in his own father's house; with whom Joshua, xxiv. 1-3, and Moses, Gen. xi. 31-32, agree. Terah accompanied his son as far as Haran, where he died after they had dwelt there some time. Gen. xi. 31-32. After his father's death, Abraham resumed his journey, being now seventy-five years of age, and came into the land of Canaan, A. M., 2083, and B. C. 1921. It will be sufficiently accurate if we fix his call at this time, although he was called in Ur some time before.

The Bible would have attained an inconvenient size, had the Holy Spirit recorded the history of the Church during this long period of 2083 years, with the minuteness which characterizes the subsequent history. It was unnecessary: the great links in the chain, although few, are preserved and are sufficient. For all this long period we recognize the Church, a visible body, enjoying her Sabbaths, her sacrifices,

the ministry of the Word through patriarchs, prophets, and preachers of righteousness; confined to no particular tribe or nation, but gathering her members from every quarter, and under the watchful care of her divine head. And yet while existing, as we are constrained to believe, in an organized form, which is essential to visibility, unity, and efficiency, that particular form is not preserved in the record. For example, it is not known what was the original constitution of this visible body in respect to those who should be considered members of it, nor in what manner the officers, patriarchs, prophets, and preachers of righteousness, were called, qualified, and set apart to their office; nor how government was administered; nor what was the rite or manner of the admission of members; nor how the Word of God was committed to the Church, whether in a traditionary or written form; nor how public worship was conducted; nor how the Church stood in relation to the State. All these and many other interesting matters can never be known, all plausible conjecture, well-digested theories, and dogmatical assertions to the contrary notwithstanding.

Upon the call of Abraham, a change occurs in respect to the organization of the Church, and she becomes perfectly distinct in her visibility, progress, and development. We enter upon a new era in her history.

No new Church is founded in Abraham. On the contrary, he is drawn out of the ancient Church, he constitutes a part and is a continuation of the same. It is now the will of God, for the more perfect unfolding and completion of His promise of the Redeemer, and of His wondrous plan of Salvation, that His Church should be restricted for a season to one people, generally but not absolutely so (for permission is made for all other people to enter into it who will). Abraham and his descendants in the line of promise are that people.

At this period it is proper to give a comprehensive view of the Church in history. From Adam to Abraham, 2083 years, the Church existed, confined to no particular people, in a visible and organized form, but that organized form is not preserved. From Abraham to the resurrection of our

Lord, 1955 years, it existed in an organized form, and was confined (generally) to one people, the Israelites. After the ascension of our Lord, the partition walls being broken down, it was opened to the reception of the whole world, and has continued ever since made up of all in every nation who believe in Him.

The call of Abraham was of the sovereign and gratuitous election of God. He was unregenerate, and of a family of idolaters previous to their conversion, Gen. xxxi. 53; Isa. ii. 1-2; Gen. xxxi. 19-20; xxxv. 1-4; Josh xxiv. 1-4; few in numbers, and weak in power, Deut. vii. 7; x. 22; Gen. xiii. 14; xxxiv. 30; Ps. cv. 12. He was, first, effectually called through the word and by the Spirit of God, Gen. xv. 6; Rom. iv. 1-3; 1 Thess. i. 9; James ii. 20-26; and, second, officially called to high station and service in the Church—this official call involving the following particulars: a going out from his own country; a separation from his kindred and father's house, and all other people, and a location in a land pointed out and made sure to him by the promise of God, where he should be the progenitor of Christ, and become a great nation and a blessing to all the families of the earth, having God in covenant to him and to his seed after him forever, Gen. xii. 1-7; xv. 1-21; xvii. 1-27; Heb. xi. 8-9.

This distinguished man was called "the friend of God," and nine times did God appear unto and communicate with him: in Ur of the Chaldees, Acts vii. 1-4; after he arrived in Canaan, when He made promise to him of that land, Gen. xii. 7; when Abraham separated from Lot, xiii. 14-18; when God promised him seed in general, xv. 1-21, and changed his name from Abram to Abraham, entering into covenant with him, xvii. 1-27; when He gave him the special promise of a son, and Abraham interceded for Sodom, xviii. 1-33; when God commanded him to send Hagar and Ishmael away, xxi. 12-13; to sacrifice Isaac, xxii. 1-8; and finally He appeared to him at the sacrifice of Isaac, to stay his hand and to bless him, xxii. 9-19.

He possessed meekness, forgiveness, and affection, Gen. xiii. 1-18; the valor and decision of a warrior, generosity,

independence, and veneration for the priesthood, Gen. xiv. 1-24; ardent love for the saints of God and for the souls of men, Gen. xviii. 1-33; xix. 1-38. He led a life of prayer and faith, commanding his children and his household after him, that they might keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, Gen. xiii. 18; xviii. 17-19; xxi. 22-34. His faith and obedience were implicit, Gen. xvii. 19; xxi. 1-21; and his crowning act of faith was the offering up of Isaac, the son of promise, Gen. xxii. 1-19; Rom. iv. 11-22; Heb. xi. 17-19. Yet twice, through the fear of man, he denied his own wife, Gen. xii. 10-20; xx. 1-18, and, upon the delay of the promised seed, yielded to the wishes of his wife, and became a polygamist, Gen. xvi. 1-16.

He was called "the father of all them that believe," Rom. iv. 11-16, not in the sense that he was the first of believers, for many thousands had preceded him, but in the sense that he was, in the genuineness and greatness of his faith, a most distinguished example to all believers, besides being the head and beginning of the great body of believers, now set up in him. After the death of Sarah, of like strength of religious character and faith with himself, Gen. xxiii. 1-20; Heb. xi. 11, he obtained a suitable wife for his son Isaac, xxiv. 1-67, then married Keturah, by whom he had six sons; to these he gave portions and settled them off in the east country, but to Isaac he willed the bulk of his property. Having sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country for one hundred years, a pilgrim on the earth, seeking a better country, that is a heavenly, he died in full faith of salvation in the promised Redeemer, whom he saw afar off, and rejoiced in, at the age of one hundred threescore and fifteen years, an old man and full of days. His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah with his wife Sarah, Gen. xxv. 1-10; Heb. xi. 11-16; John viii. 56.

The error of Lot, who left Ur to share in the fortunes of his uncle, appears to have been his separation from Abraham for the sake of earthly advantage, making his home in Sodom. From that home he was not weaned, either by the vexing of his righteous soul from day to day, by seeing and hearing the

unlawful deeds of those heaven-daring sinners, nor by the judgment of war and of captivity which came upon the city, nor by his rescue by Abraham; but from that home he was forcibly drawn by the angels, "the Lord being merciful to him," with the loss of all his possessions, and a large part of his family, who partook of the unbelief of Sodom (and among them his own wife). Two of his daughters only were saved with him, and they lived to curse him with drunkenness and incest, Gen. xix. 30-38. That he repented of these great sins we know from the fact that he was delivered from the overthrow of Sodom by the Lord, as "a righteous man," Gen. xviii. 23-33, and he is recognized in the New Testament long after as such, 2 Pet. ii. 7-9; Gen. xix. 29; Luke xvii. 28-32.

Job had spoken of his servants, Job xix. 16; xxxi. 13, and Abraham, "the father of the faithful," is also a master, Gen. xii. 5; xvii. 27; xx. 14, having servants born in his house, and bought with his money, and given to him by Abimelech, king of Gerar. The institution of Slavery, here for the first time, makes its appearance in the history of the Church.

Slavery, in the Holy Scriptures, is a man's being owned as a man by his fellow-man, Job xxxi. 13-15; Gen. xviii. 17-19; Col. iv. 1; Eph. vi. 9; Gen. xvii. 11-13; xxiii. 24-27; and in the sense that his person is under the control, and his services at the command and for the benefit of the owner, Gen. xiv. 14-24; ii. 35; Levit. xxv. 44-46; Job xix. 16; Exod. xx. 17; Deut. xv. 18; Matt. viii. 9; Luke xvii. 7-9; Eph. vi. 5-8; Col. iii. 22-25; 1 Tim. vi. 1-2; Titus ii. 9-12. Such control of his person for service may be transferred to another, Gen. xx. 14-24; xxxiv. 36; xxv. 5, and xxvi. 12-14; Levit. xxv. 44-46. The owner has also authority not only to punish the servant for transgressions, but also to compel his obedience and service, Gen. xvi. 6; Exod. xxi. 20-21; Prov. xxix. 19; Luke xii. 47; 1 Sam. xxv. 10; 1 Kings ii. 39-40; Gen. xvi. 8-9; Philemon vs. 1-25; Ps. cxxiii. 2; 1 Pet. ii. 20; Rom. xiii. 1-5.

The right of ownership was created in various ways, as follows:—By conquest. Prisoners taken in war, instead of being destroyed, might be reduced to slavery; they were

divided among the conquerors, who, at their pleasure, either retained them for their own use, or sold them into servitude to others, Gen. xiv. 21; Deut. xx. 11-14; xxi. 10-14; 1 Kings ix. 20-21; Deut. xxviii. 68; Levit. xxv. 44-46; Josh. ix. 1-27.—By purchase; an equivalent in money, or anything else being given to the owner for his slave, Gen. xvii. 12-13; xxiii. 27; Exod. xii. 44; Gen. xxxvii. 26-36; xxxix. 1; Exod. xxi. 2; Matt. xviii. 25; Levit. xxv. 44-46; Deut. xv. 12; Levit. xxii. 11. Or the poor, unable to support himself, sold himself or part of his family for a support, into slavery, Levit. xxv. 38-54; Neh. v. 5. (The price—Exod. xxi. 32; Levit. xxvii. 1-8; Ezek. xxvii. 13.)—By debt; the creditor seizing the person of the debtor, and holding him in bondage for the debt, 2 Kings iv. 1; or selling the debtor for the debt, Matt. xviii. 25.—By crime. The thief, when unable to make restitution, was sold for his theft, Exod. xxii. 3.—By birth. The children of slaves followed the condition of their parents; or if born of a free-man and of a slave mother, they followed the condition of the mother, Gen. xiv. 14; xv. 3; xvii. 12-13, 27; Levit. xxv. 44-46; Exod. xxi. 1-6; Eccl. ii. 7.—By gift; an owner making a present of bond-men and bond-women to another, Gen. xx. 14. Comp. xii. 16.—By inheritance; bond-men and bond-women being willed away with other property by parents to children, Gen. xxv. 5; xxiv. 35-36.—And by voluntary act, the Hebrew servant refusing to go out free when legally entitled so to do, Exod. xxi. 1-8; Deut. xv. 12-17.

The right of ownership in the slave being created in either one of the forms now stated, was as perfect and valid in law as the right to any other sort of property whatever. In the inventories of property they are reckoned as property, Gen. xxiv. 35; xii. 16; xx. 14; Exod. xx. 10, 17. They are also called an "inheritance," a "possession," and "money," Levit. xxv. 44-46; Exod. xxi. 21; Eccl. ii. 4-7. When lost, the slave could be sought after, and claimed, and recovered, as any other property. The angel who found Hagar in the wilderness escaped from her mistress, directed her to return, and to submit herself to her mistress, Gen. xvi. 6-9. When a

servant ran away from his master, within the territories of the twelve tribes or countries subject to them, the master might pursue after and recover him, 1 Kings ii. 39-40, and 1 Sam. xxv. 10. And this right of property is recognized by the apostle Paul, by his sending back the runaway slave Onesimus to his lawful master, Philemon. Epistle to Philemon.

Slaves were protected in law, as property, from abuse and oppression on the part of their own masters, who, when guilty of either one or the other, rendered themselves liable to punishment before the judges, Exod. xxi. 20-21, 26-27; Gen. ix. 6; Numb. xxxv. 30-33; and in cases of maiming, to the loss of their slaves altogether: and masters, as the representatives of their servants, could seek redress for them in all cases of injury from others, Exod. xxi. 32. Nor did the law allow slaves to be gotten and held, except in such a manner as the law itself prescribed. No Hebrew was permitted to acquire a slave, either by violence or fraud: otherwise, he should be put to death. It constituted the crime of "man-stealing," whether the man stolen were a Hebrew or a foreigner, Exod. xxi. 16; comp. Gen. xl. 15; Deut. xxiv. 7; 1 Tim. i. 10.

While the law thus protected the master in the possession of his servants within the commonwealth of Israel, a law was enacted for the protection of slaves escaping into Judea from foreign countries. In such cases, the fugitives were not to be delivered up again to their masters (Deut. xxiii. 15-16; comp. 1 Sam. xxx. 15), which law has become the law of nations on the point. No reference is had in this law (as a proper interpretation of Deut. xxiii. 15-16, taken in connection with all the laws relating to the institution of slavery in Israel, will show) to slaves within the territories of Israel, escaping from one tribe or city to another. If such were not to be given up, there would have been an end speedily put to servitude among the people of God. If the foreign slave were a criminal fleeing from justice, in that case, we presume, he would be given up: and upon the principle embraced in the laws requiring no protection to be given to criminals, Exod. xxi. 14; Deut. xix. 11-13; 1 Kings ii. 29-34. And to conclude under this head, so far from permitting the right of the

ownership of slaves to be invaded, in any way or form ; so far from permitting slaves to be injured or decoyed or stolen away, or in any manner rendered unprofitable to masters, all men were and are by the command of God in the Decalogue forbidden so much as to “*covet* their neighbor’s man-servant, or his maid-servant,” Exod. xx. 17.

The right of ownership in the slave, according to the Scriptures, respects *the service* of the slave. The control of his person, being necessary in order to secure his service, is lodged with the master in the first instance, and, when he is unable to exercise it efficiently, with the civil power in the second, which comes in to his aid. The exercise of this power of control is necessarily left to the discretion of the master, as to the time, the means, and the extent : but he is required to act benevolently and humanely, not only for interest and for conscience’ sake, but also for fear of the civil power, which casts its arms of protection around the slave, as part of the body politic.

This right of ownership, we may further remark, according to the Scriptures, is in man *as man*. While the slave is reckoned as property, yet, by the manner in which he is spoken of, and by all the laws regulating his religious instruction and training, and his treatment, he is not viewed in the light of a mere dumb animal, or a mere chattel : but he is a man ; a fellow-being ; having the attributes, the connections, the hopes, the fears, the joys and sorrows common to humanity, although in a subordinate condition in society, and not upon a social or civil equality with his master. In his station and circumstances, he is to be respected and treated as a man ; and have accorded to him all the rights, privileges, protection, and enjoyments, which are compatible with that station, and with those circumstances. The authority of the master over him is perfect within his appropriate sphere as a master. He cannot command, nor in any manner require his servant either to do or to suffer that which would be criminal before God and man ; or injurious to him in mind, body, family, or estate. He is under obligation to do to him as he would wish to be done by, were he in the like condition and

circumstances. On the other hand, the obligations and duties of the slave are pressed upon him as a man. The Scriptures do not sit in judgment upon the justice of the origin or nature of the governments under which men live; nor upon the righteousness or unrighteousness of their administration: but they uniformly recognize "the powers that be as ordained of God," and therefore, because of Divine ordination and authority, they are to be obeyed under penalty of Divine displeasure. Servants are rational and accountable creatures of God, and are to render obedience to those who are set in authority over them: not only that they may approve themselves to God, and to the consciences of men, but that they may also escape wrath. Herein are they regarded by God, although in a servile and dependent condition, as "the possession," "the money," of their masters, yet not as the brutes that perish, nor as mere senseless goods and chattels, but as men. Whatever changes and vicissitudes they may pass through as "the possession" or "money" of men, they are "bond-men" and "bond-women," and are so considered and treated all the Bible through.

Slavery among the people of God was both *temporary* and *perpetual*, according to the national character of the slaves themselves.

The temporary slaves were of *Hebrew* origin; and made slaves by poverty, crime, or voluntary act. They could be held in servitude by their brethren but six years only; in the seventh year they were to be set free, and with special rewards and gifts, on the score not only of brotherhood, according to the flesh, but also of justice, since the labor of a slave was more profitable to the master than that of a hired servant, for the master paid him no wages for his work, Deut. xv. 12-18. If the slave was unmarried, he should be set free unmarried; if married, and his wife had shared his servitude with him, then he should go out with his wife and family. But if, during the period of his servitude, he married a perpetual slave, belonging to his master, he alone should go out free, and his family would remain as they were, the perpetual possession of their master. In this case, however, should the

Hebrew husband and father, from affection to his master and his wife and children, refuse his right of going out free, and prefer remaining in his condition, his master should bring him before the judges, and, the fact of his voluntary subjection being established, in lasting evidence of it he should bore his ear through with an awl; and he should then serve him forever, and have no more right to go out free at the end of every six years, Exod. xxi. 1-6. And this law applied equally to female slaves in like circumstances, Deut. xv. 17. "Unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise."

But a servant of this sort, it appears after all, should, together with his family, be set free at the year of jubilee; and for the reason that a Hebrew should never be viewed in the light of a "bond-man" or "bond-servant," but as a "hired servant," a sojourner, a temporary slave, by his brethren, Levit. xxv. 39-43.

The Lord says, "They are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, they shall not be sold as bond-men," or with the sale of a bond-man, Levit. xxv. 1-46; that is, to be held in perpetual bondage, as the Lord immediately explains: "But thy bond-men and thy bond-maids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen round about you: of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession: they shall be your bond-men forever; but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor," Levit. xxv. 44-46. In this passage, a distinction is drawn between Hebrew and foreign slaves; and between the terms on which they severally could be held to service: the Hebrews for six years only at a time, and under no circumstances beyond the year of jubilee; while slaves of foreign nations might be held as a possession in perpetual bondage, and become the inheritance of parents and children from generation to generation. The year of jubilee had, in its provisions

of liberty to the enslaved, no reference whatever to them. They never went out free.

In accordance with this law, that Israelites should not be held in perpetual bondage, provision is made of a right of redemption to any Hebrew who had waxed poor and sold himself to a stranger or a foreigner dwelling in Judea. If unable to redeem himself, any one near of kin might redeem him, and at any time previous to the year of jubilee: and if not redeemed before then, at the jubilee he should have his freedom: and for the reason that he is the servant of God, redeemed out of Egypt, and therefore must never be ruled over with rigor, and held in perpetual bondage, Levit. xxv. 47-55; and because the children of Israel disregarded the law regulating the enslavement of their brethren, and would not release them at the times appointed, but endeavored to keep them in perpetual bondage, the anger of the Lord was kindled against them in the days of Jeremiah the prophet, xxxiv. 8-17; and for this great sin, among many others, He visited them with the sword, with pestilence and famine, and removed them out of their good land, and made them captives in all kingdoms of the earth.

The perpetual slaves were of foreign origin, obtained from the heathen nations round about. These, according to Levit. xxv. 44, 46, already referred to, might be, and were held in perpetual servitude from father to son, and descended in families, like any other property, from generation to generation. They were bought, sold, given, and willed away like any other property. They were the possession, the money of their owners, as were their silver and gold, and flocks and herds. The idea that the Scriptures make a difference between servants and other property, and that they were not accounted property, is puerile, and in the face of positive declarations to the contrary. Exod. xii. 5, 16; xx. 14; xxiv. 35; xxvi. 13, 14; xxxii. 1-5; xxxvi. 6-7; Job i. 1-13; xxxi. 13-15. The increase of servants born in the house and bought with money is reckoned among the special blessings of God upon the possessions of men, Gen. xxiii. 35; Job. i. 1-3; Gen. xxxii. 1-5; xxxiii. 10-11; xxvi. 12-14. The foreign slaves, in all religi-

ously trained households in Israel, were circumcised and brought up in the knowledge and worship of God, but their profession of religion and membership with the church had no effect upon their civil condition. They remained in perpetual servitude. This fact obtained also with slaves in the time of our Lord and his Apostles.

The Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament—the oldest records in the world—furnish no information of *the precise period* in the history of our race *in which the institution of slavery took its rise*. Slavery is first mentioned as a curse: a curse to be visited in the lapse of time upon Ham and his descendants, Gen. ix. 20–29.

The institution sprang up between the uttering of this curse and the age of Job. It existed in the age of Job, i. 1–3; iii. 19; xix. 16; xxxi. 13–15. We believe Job to have been cotemporary with Serug, and Serug was born 193 years after the flood. If we are right in our chronology, then slavery was introduced about 200 years after the flood. The precise manner is as much unknown as the precise time of its introduction. It owed its origin, no doubt, to the weaknesses and necessities of men, which placed them either voluntarily or involuntarily in the power, and finally in the absolute possession of those more mighty and more independent than themselves. It was extensively prevalent in the days of Abraham; indeed, it is a form of government which has prevailed almost in all nations, and in every quarter of the world, from his time to the present. Once introduced, it spread on every hand. Such is the testimony of history.

Since the days of Job, the Church of God has had connection with this institution. It has never known an hour in its existence that it did not embrace in its membership masters and servants. The visible Church of God, set up in the family and household of Abraham, held slaves in its communion down to the coming of the Lord. They appear in that same visible Church after Christ ascended to Heaven; in the churches gathered by the Apostles wherever they went preaching the Gospel to every creature. They met the system in all climes. It prevailed over the Roman Empire. It survived

the division of that Empire, and when both the Eastern and Western Empires were broken into many kingdoms, it survived in them all, and finally passed away by slow and almost imperceptible degrees from all the kingdoms of Europe except Russia and Turkey. It exists in Asia. Africa is a house of bondage. Not long after the discovery of America in 1492, it was introduced both into North and South America, and while it has ceased in many portions of South America, it still covers vast areas of territory in both North and South America. Christianity has met with the institution wherever it has gone, and in her progress must continue to meet it. She has carried her message of salvation alike to servant and master, and of both classes has the great Head of the Church gathered multitudes into his kingdom, to be with him in glory forever.

The institution of slavery is *sanctioned in both the Old and the New Testament.*

For in neither the one nor the other is it in any manner condemned by God. Had the institution been in itself sinful, the condemnation of the Holy One would have fallen, and with distinctness, upon it, as upon all sin; and, on the just principle that all sin should be abandoned, He would have required his people, as much as in them lay, immediately or prospectively, to put an end to the institution, or rid themselves of all connection with it. If the relation of master and servant is in itself sinful, it is incredible that the Holy One, who hates sin in every form, should in no single instance in all His Word declare it to be so. It is incredible that our Lord, who made known the way of God in truth, and cared for no man, should never condemn it; no, nor His holy Apostles and ministers, who partook of His bold and fearless spirit, and even laid down their lives for the truth.

On the contrary, the institution is recognized as existing among men, and the Lord sanctioned it both in its temporal and perpetual form. He regulated the temporary servitude of his own people, and not only permitted, but commanded his people, if they desired slave property, to purchase slaves from foreign nations, and to hold them for a perpetual possession for themselves and their children after them. The insti-

tution is recognized in the fourth, and again in the tenth commandment, and the Lord secures the lawful possession and use of the slave to his master by forbidding, upon penalty of his displeasure, even the "coveting" of that slave by his neighbor. If marriage is recognized in those commands, and the relation of husband and wife, parent and child, as lawful, so are slavery and the relation of master and servant recognized as lawful. We repeat it, that if slavery be in itself sinful, it is incredible that the Holy and Just One should give His unreserved sanction to and perpetuation of it, both in the common law given to his people, and in the ten commandments, which are binding for all time upon the whole race of men.

There is, moreover, no condemnation of any one child of God, or man of the world, for holding the relation either of master or servant. No one is condemned, or abused, or threatened, or unchurched, for being connected with the institution. Some of the most eminent saints were slaveholders. They were accounted the friends of God, the patterns of faith and holiness, and the lights of the world. Such men were Job, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the people of God in the Church down to the coming of our Lord. The churches which held in their communion masters and servants, and which were gathered by the Apostles, are most highly commended for "their faith in Jesus Christ and love to all the saints." Col. i. 3-5; iii. 22; iv. 1; and Eph. i. 15-23; vi. 5, 9. They were those who had experienced "the grace of God which is given us by Jesus Christ:" they were "enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge:" they "came behind" other churches "in no gift," 1. Cor. i. 3-7; vii. 21; and would be "the rejoicing" of the Apostles "in the day of the Lord Jesus," 2 Cor. i. 13-16. They were brethren beloved, "the elect of God," 1 Pet. i. 2; ii. 18. And of Philemon, the master and owner of Onesimus, what commendation have we? The Apostle Paul calls him, in the ardor of his affection, "our dearly beloved and fellow-laborer." He "thanked God" for him and "mentioned him always in his prayers," "hearing of his love and faith which he had

toward the Lord Jesus and toward all saints." He was one of the Apostle's own converts, Philemon v. 19. It is probable that at his master's house Onesimus became acquainted with the Apostle, and when he ran away and went to Rome he searched Paul out and renewed the acquaintance, and became a convert to Christ under his faithful preaching and admonitions. Philemon, although he had an unprofitable servant, was a truly Christian master, and had a "church in his house," whose "love refreshed the saints," and in whom the Apostle had every "confidence," receiving "great joy and consolation in his faith," Philemon vs. 21, 1-25.

Masters and servants were admitted to full and lasting membership with the Church of God in all ages. In fact, the original members of the visible Church as organized and set up in the family and household of Abraham, were the bond and the free, masters and servants. The mere fact of holding slaves never excluded any man from the church. No question of this sort was ever mooted. Not a word is said to masters of the injustice and sinfulness of holding men in bondage, nor to servants of their right to freedom, and to break away from servitude whenever they might be able to do so. No complaints are made of the system as injurious to the graces of Christians; or as subversive of religion, and consequently detrimental to the spirituality and purity of churches. As already observed, the churches which embraced in their communion masters and servants, are approved and commended by the Apostles, 1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27-28; Col. iii. 10-11; Eph. vi. 5-9. Even the very priests themselves, the sacred ministers of God, who served at the altar in all holy things, owned slaves, who were both "bought with their money," and "born in their house," Levit. xxii. 11; Judges xix. 3-9; 1 Sam. ii. 13.

The relations of master and servant are recognized as are those of husband and wife, parent and child, king and subject; and members of the church are exhorted and commanded, upon evangelical motives, faithfully and truly to perform towards each other the duties growing out of those relations, if they would approve themselves the true disciples

of Christ, Eph. vi. 1-9; Col. iii. 22-25; iv. 1; 1 Tim. vi. 1-5; Titus ii. 9-15; 1 Pet. ii. 18-25.

We may add that our Lord himself met with the institution of slavery in his ministry on earth, and has left no condemnation of it as in itself unjust towards men and sinful towards God. The Centurion is praised for his remarkable humility and faith: the Saviour heals his sick servant and gives him all the comfort and advantage of his services, once more restored to health and strength, Matt. viii. 6-13; Luke vii. 1-10. In his preaching and teaching he at certain times had the relation of master and servant in his eye, and some of his most impressive illustrations are drawn from it, Matt. xviii. 21-35; Luke xii. 47; xvii. 7-9; John xiii. 16; xv. 15.

The Apostle Paul, encountering the institution in his ministry, has trodden in the footsteps of the Master. In a part of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, vii. 17-24, he exhorts every Christian to glorify God in that particular condition in which he is placed by His providence. "Art thou called," that is, to the gracious state and exalted privileges of the Christian, "being a servant," or slave? What then? Does Christianity oblige your master to free you? No. Does it absolve you from your civil obligations to your master? No. Your condition is unchanged: you are a servant still. What then? "Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it." Let not this humble and dependent state disturb you. All I say in relation to it is this: "If thou mayest be free, use it rather." Be free if you lawfully can and desire to be so; but if not, then care not for it. Your servitude is temporary only: it will not prevent your saving your soul in it. "The time" allotted for us here on earth "is short." "The fashion of this world passeth away," 1 Cor. vii. 29-31. Bond or free, you are Christ's, and all the benefits of his salvation are yours. "For he that is called in the Lord, being his servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise he that is called being free is Christ's servant." "Ye are bought with a price." Christ has purchased you with a price—even his precious blood. He, now and forever, is your Lord and Master in Heaven. "Be not the servants" or slaves

“of men;” that is to say, in your condition discharge not your duties as the slaves of men simply, looking no higher for approbation and reward than the hand of the master. “Ye are bought with a price.” Ye are Christ’s freemen, therefore with good-will do your service as unto the Lord, and not unto men only, Col. iii. 22–25; Eph. vi. 5–8. And ye shall, for the good that ye do, receive a reward of the Lord. How does the Apostle conclude? “Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.” How could he exhort servants to abide in servitude, serving God therein, if that condition was unjust and sinful? Was not this the time and the place for him to have given other views and other counsels of a perfectly opposite character to the church and the world, if he had believed slavery to be in itself sinful? He has not done it.

He comes in contact—direct contact—with the system again in the case of the runaway slave Onesimus already mentioned. Does he condemn the system as unlawful? and pronounce Philemon a guilty man because a master? No. By the laws of God given to his people anciently, and by the Roman laws under which Philemon lived, he could pursue Onesimus and recover him wherever he should find him within the boundaries of the Empire: and it was the duty of all authorities to give him aid in his apprehension and recovery. Does Paul deny the justice of these laws? Does he refuse to deliver up Onesimus? Does he advise him never to return to his master, and aid and abet his final escape? No. He acknowledges the right of Philemon, as a master, to the control of the person, and to the benefit of the labors of Onesimus his slave, and he sends him back to his master with a letter of kind intercession and commendation.

Thus have we the institution, which existed in the family of Abraham, sanctioned both in the Old and in the New Testaments.

The duties growing out of the relation of master and servant are clearly defined and enjoined in the Word of God.

In the constitution of His visible church in Abraham, the Lord included the servants, as well as the children of believing

parents. The sign of the covenant was made in their flesh, and all the privileges and blessings of that covenant were opened to them. They were to be trained up within the pale of the church in the knowledge and fear of God. "He that is born in the house, or bought with the money of the stranger, which is not of thy seed, must needs be circumcised," Gen. xvii. 12-23. Abraham "in the selfsame day circumcised his son Ishmael and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money." He apprehended the will of God as expressed toward children and servants in the covenant, and performed it well. He received the approbation of God: "for I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him," Gen. xviii. 19. Abraham is the example of all masters of families in all ages.

The rest of the Sabbath was secured in the fourth commandment to servants: to the "man-servant" and the "maid-servant:" and, by consequence, all the spiritual privileges and instruction of a private and of a public nature. They were to meet around the family altar of sacrifice, and prayer and praise, and they were to attend the synagogue, and when possible the temple service, Exod. xx. 8-11.

They were required to be present at the sacred feasts and festivals of the church with the rest of the family. For example, at the Passover. The command of God to his people was, "Every man-servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, shall eat of it," Exod. xii. 44. And again at the "Feast of Weeks" or "Pentecost," Deut. xvi. 9-12. And at the "Feast of Tabernacles," Deut. xvi. 13-16. "Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant," Deut. xvi. 11-14. Moreover, servants were to accompany their owners to public worship whenever they went up to worship God in the appointed place, to present and eat before the Lord, "the tithe of thy corn and of thy wine and of thy oil; or the firstlings of thy herds or of thy

flocks ; thy free-will offerings or heave-offerings of thine hand. Thou shalt eat them before the Lord, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant," Deut. xii. 13-18.

At the renewing of the covenant just before Israel crossed the Jordan and took possession of the promised land, the whole congregation was present, as well the stranger as the hewer of wood and the drawer of water, Deut. xxix. 1-13 ; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30-31. And in those vast and solemn assemblies, convened every seven years at the Feast of Tabernacles to hear the whole law of the Lord read and explained and enforced, servants were present with the families to which they belonged, Deut. xxxi. 10-13.

According to these statements of the Old Testament, servants were reckoned a part of the household and a part of the church : they were the immortal and accountable creatures of God. And one of the first duties of masters was that they should recognize and feel towards them as such. They were "brethren in the flesh, and also in the Lord," Philemon vs. 16 ; alike "partakers of the benefit" of grace and eternal life, 1 Tim. vi. 1-2. The same God is the Creator, Saviour, and Judge of both masters and servants, and there is no respect of persons with Him, Job xxxi. 13-15. Masters should, therefore, faithfully, in their households, command their servants ; bring them authoritatively under religious instruction and the law of God, that they may learn and keep the way of the Lord, and understand also and do their duty to men in their station with all justice and fidelity, Gen. xviii. 19. The unbroken rest of the Sabbath should be allowed them, and free access to every means of grace ; no obstacles should be thrown in the way of their spiritual instruction and improvement ; and no commands be laid upon them, or duties required of them inconsistent with the law of the Lord.

Servants are recognized also as a part of the household and of civil society, and therefore claiming at the hands of their masters, in all temporal affairs, protection from all oppression and abuse, and injury in person or family, or in property (masters are their representatives and guardians) ; also pro-

vision in dwellings, raiment, food ; opportunities and means of making something of their own for their comfort and enjoyment ; and provision in seasons of sickness and distress, and in time of old age. They claim from their masters also considerate, and kind, and forbearing treatment ; that the labors exacted of them be not oppressive, nor consuming to the spirits, nor destructive to life, but such as are just and easily and safely performed ; that their intercourse with them be not distant, disdainful, and morose, but condescending and kind ; that they forbear threatening, and frequent and cruel punishments, and temper their justice with mercy ; that they take a true interest in the families of their servants, and preserve them from invasion of wicked men ; and from being separated as husbands and wives, parents and children, and finally, see that all servants of the household dwell together virtuously, temperately, justly, and peaceably.

All these duties of masters are distinctly, or by implication and direct inference, repeated in the New Testament. Therein are servants reckoned as members of the household, of the church, and of civil society : and therein are duties required of masters, according to these different lights in which their servants are viewed, Gal. iii. 26-28 ; Eph. vi. 8 ; Col. iii. 10-11 ; Eph. vi. 9 ; Col. iv. 1 ; Luke xvii. 7-9 ; xiii. 47-48 ; vii. 2-10.

The duties of servants to their masters are defined with equal precision in both Testaments. And those duties are reverential fear and honor, as to a ruler, lawgiver, and judge, Mal. i. 6 ; Eccl. vii. 21 ; 1 Tim. vi. 1-2 ; 1 Pet. ii. 18 ; affection, as to a father and friend, Exod. xxi. 5 ; cheerful obedience, Gen. xvi. 9 ; xxiv. 1-65 ; Job xix. 16 ; Matt. viii. 9 ; Eph. vi. 5-8 ; Col. iii. 22-25 ; Titus ii. 9 ; fidelity, Gen. xxiv. 1-65 ; xxxix. 1-6 ; Eph. vi. 6 ; Col. iii. 22 ; 1 Tim. vi. 2 ; Titus. ii. 10 ; 1 Pet. ii. 39 ; Philemon ; and honesty, 2 Kings v. 20-27 ; Titus ii. 10.

The inculcation of these duties upon masters and servants is made the business of the ministers of God. And the fulfilment of these duties is essential to the Christian character of masters and servants. The Apostle Paul affirms that to teach

servants their duties is “consenting to wholesome words; the words of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to the doctrine which is according to godliness.” And “if any man teach otherwise”—deny and absolve servants from their duties—the Apostle brands him as “proud, knowing nothing; but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness:” and he commands Timothy, and through him, all godly ministers and persons, “From such withdraw thyself.” 1 Tim. vi. 1-5.

The Church of God has been in connection with the institution of slavery from the days of Abraham to the days of the Apostles, over 2000 years, and has had since the Apostles, and still has, in some parts of the world, a connection with it. It is therefore very proper for us to learn from the word of God itself, which we have now been carefully examining, what are *the duties of the Church towards the institution and towards those involved in it.*

It is the duty of the Church, then, according to the teachings of God’s holy Word:

To maintain the lawfulness of the institution of slavery as one of the forms of civil government, ordained of God in His Providential government over the world.

To abstain from pronouncing that institution to be sinful which God has everywhere sustained; and from making a renunciation of all connection with it a term of Church membership and a test of Christian character to mankind, which God has nowhere done.

To abstain from all denial of, or interference in the right of the property of masters in their servants, which is perfect, both under the divine and civil law; and from inciting servants to acts of infidelity, dishonesty, or rebellion, or enticing them from service, and in any way or form preventing their return to their duty, and thereby robbing masters of their property.

To obey all the laws and regulations of the State, enacted in relation to the institution.

To maintain the perfect compatibility of the relation of master and servant with true religion, and with a credible profession of Christianity.

To receive, upon a credible profession, both the bond and the free into the communion of the Church, as brethren beloved in Christ Jesus, and equally entitled to all the privileges of His people.

To make a just and necessary distinction between the abuses of the institution and the institution itself: between the abuses of the relation of master and servant, and the relation itself, as we are compelled to do in all other civil institutions and relations of life.

To insist upon the faithful discharge of the mutual duties of master and servant in order to the maintenance of a good standing in the Church; and, in cases of delinquency, to administer discipline without respect of persons.

To have the Gospel freely and fully preached to them, their ignorance removed by sound instruction, their spiritual wants searched out and supplied, their access to the Holy Scriptures granted and secured, and, finally, to have them included with their masters in a common pastoral charge.

In performing these duties, the Church fulfils her mission, which is to take care of the higher, the eternal interests of men, and to carry the glad tidings of salvation to every creature under Heaven.

The Holy Scriptures, as we have seen, 1 Cor. vii. 21, pronounced a state of freedom to be preferable to a state of slavery. Slavery, as one of the many forms of civil government ordained of God, Rom. xiii. 1-7, is not as desirable as some others; yet, while it exists, it must be honored and supported by all who live under it: the Church is required so to do whenever she comes in contact with it. Her chief concern is with the religious, and not the civil condition of men. "Fear God, honor the king," 1 Pet. ii. 17, is the command of the Apostle. The command of our Lord, whom he follows, is "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's," Matt. xxii. 21. And the instance is yet to be adduced from the

Holy Scriptures wherein the Church has arrayed herself in hostile attitude against any form of civil government whatever, as a form of civil government. She has never received any command of God, neither has she been self-moved by either her own wisdom or philosophy at any time, so to do. She founds religion, not empires. She dethrones iniquity, not kings. She comes not with observation to establish her dominion with fire and sword; but she comes in meekness and in love, and with the unseen and irresistible leaven of grace: and thus she leavens and purifies the corrupt masses of mankind, and the fruit is righteousness and peace. "Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world." John xviii. 36.

The government in slavery, on the part of the master, partakes of what is ordinarily called "the patriarchal form." The head of the household occupies the place of a father, master, minister, lawgiver, and judge. A great amount of power, absolute and discretionary, is lodged in his hands, and consequently he is able to make that power felt either for-good or for evil: for good, when the master is a son of Abraham, Gen. xviii. 19; and for evil, when the master is Nabal and a son of Belial, 1 Sam. xxv. 14-25. The happiness of the slave is bound up in the character of the master. Herein he resembles the child whose happiness is bound up in the character of its parent. And on the other hand, the character of the slave, and of the child, has much to do with the happiness of the master and the father.

Slavery, therefore, is liable to abuse, as are all other civil institutions which concentrate power in a high degree in the hands of rulers. But masters themselves are under law. They are not irresponsible for their treatment of their servants.

Their servants also are under law, and are not left to become a prey to violence, injustice, and cruel oppression. They are recognized as persons—as an important class in the body politic, to whom rights, privileges, and protection are guaranteed by law.

The institution has been abused through the lust of wealth, the lust of power, and through the love of ease and of pleasure on the part of owners; and also through the idleness, the

rebellion, and immorality of servants, who have provoked and drawn down upon themselves "buffetings for their faults," 1 Pet. ii. 20, and many sorrows. But, as already remarked, a distinction must be made between the institution and its abuses. While the Holy Scriptures uphold the institution as lawful, they warn men against its abuses, and inculcate the duties of masters and servants in the plainest manner, condemning every unjust exercise of power on the one hand, and every evasion of duty on the other.

The song of the angels proclaims the object of the advent of the Son of God: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ originates those principles of benevolence and justice in the breasts of masters and servants, which legitimately tend to a higher standard of perfection in their character and life, and to a greater measure of happiness in the relations which they sustain towards each other. As servants become improved by Christianity, and by that pure civilization which flows from it, and so are fitted for the reception and proper use of higher privileges, the spirit of Christianity in the masters, and of enlightened policy and legislation in civil government, will award those privileges to them. Progress may be upward, and onward, and peaceful. *Modifications*, and even *changes* in the system, which justice and merey may require, may be happily effected by the tranquil yet powerful and conservative influences of the Gospel. The Gospel will certainly improve this, as it will every other defective form of government in the world. The work of the Church, as she stands connected with this and every other form of government, is to "preach the Gospel to every creature," and "to render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's." In the performance of this duty, blessed be God! the Church will ever find her happiness, her prosperity, and her peace.

CHAPTER XIV.

ABRAHAM ENGAGED IN WAR.—WAR OF THREE KINDS.—THE PRIESTHOOD AND TITHES; BOTH OF DIVINE ORIGIN.—WHO MELCHISEDEK WAS.—THE PROMISES MADE TO ABRAHAM AT HIS CALL RIPEN INTO A COVENANT.—THE COVENANT A REAL ONE.—A CARRYING OUT OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE; ITS DISTINGUISHING PECULIARITY.

ABRAHAM was engaged in war. The conquest and subjugation of the five kings of the cities of the plain were without right on the part of Chedorlaomer. He “made war” —aggressive war—upon them, Gen. xiv. 1-2, and, consequently, as soon as the five kings were able, they rebelled and asserted their independence. Abraham (it does not appear to the contrary) was in no alliance as a prince with either of the five kings, and therefore was not personally interested in the war; yet he identified himself with his nephew Lot, and espoused his cause as one of just resistance to oppressive power. Assembling his “confederates,” and “arming his three hundred and eighteen trained servants, born in his own house,” he pursued Chedorlaomer on his march homeward, as far as Dan, and, by a well-planned attack at night, defeated and pursued him a considerable distance to Hobah, and recovered Lot, his family, all the people, and all their goods, and returned from “the slaughter of the kings,” Heb. vii. 1, in triumph and safety. For his magnanimous and courageous conduct he received the divine approval, for he was met on his return by Melchisedek, priest of the most high God, who brought forth refreshments of bread and wine for him and his confederates. Melchisedek

blessed him in the name of the most high God, and also blessed the most high God because he had prospered Abraham, delivering his enemies into his hand. "And Abraham gave Melchisedek tithes of all" "the spoils," Gen. xiv. 18-20; Heb. vii. 4. This is the first war in sacred history—the first recorded in the world, and the Lord's people are active combatants in it. We thus not only learn what war in itself is, but also that it is justifiable or otherwise, according to the justice or injustice of the motives and ends which govern those who engage in it.

War is a state of open, active, and deadly hostility between two or more independent cities, tribes, states, or nations, Gen. xiv. 1-15; Matt. xxiv. 6-10; 2 Chron. xv. 6; Isa. xiii. 4; Joel. iii. 9; 1 Sam. xiv. 47, and is of three kinds (all of which appear in Gen. xiv.), namely, offensive, defensive, and judicial.

1. Offensive or aggressive war;—when one nation invades and assaults another without just cause, for the gratification of ambition, avarice, revenge, or lust. Such was the war of Chedorlaomer, and many other wars narrated in the Scriptures. Such indeed has been the character of the far greater portion of the wars which have devastated the earth, 2 Kings xiv. 8-12; Isa. xxxvi., xxxvii., xiii., and xiv. Wars of this kind are unjust and offensive to "the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords."

2. Defensive war;—when a nation, for the preservation of its independence, its revenues, its territory, its people, its religion, its privileges, or its laws, resists its invaders and oppressors. Such a war is one of self-defence and is therefore justifiable. Self-defence is an instinct of nature; and, according to Scripture, individuals may exercise the right in the absence of all help, especially from the civil power. In such a case a man becomes a law unto himself. For example: a thief breaks into a house at night, the owner of the house may defend his property, even to the death of the thief. If the thief breaks in by daylight, he may defend his property, but may not put the thief to death, seeing that he may afterwards recognize and bring him to justice, or may obtain

assistance and apprehend him, Exod. xxii. 2-3. In like manner, a man may defend his person, or his family, when assaulted. He may defend the weak and helpless from the strong hand of the civil oppressor. A Christian man may do all these things with a clear conscience. The right of self-defence belongs equally to nations; for a nation is but an aggregate of individuals. Hence, the people of God may obey the powers that be, and enter armies to fight the battles of their country in defensive war, and do nothing displeasing to God. We have many instances in the Bible of defensive war waged by the people of God with His command and approbation. The unresisting endurance of evil, and abstinence from all acts of retaliation and revenge enjoined by our Lord and His Apostles, Matt. v. 38-48; Rom. xii. 14-21, have no bearing upon the matter in hand. Private Christians are instructed in points of duty growing out of far different circumstances from those which call for and justify self-defence, both on the part of individuals and of nations. A nation may also engage in war for the defence and salvation of another nation that appeals for protection against one more powerful, which without right seeks its overthrow, Josh. x. 6-11.

It is on the right of self-defence that rebellion and revolution are, under proper circumstances, justifiable. Rebellion is the resistance of the people in greater or less numbers against the established laws and powers of government; and may be right or wrong, according as the laws and powers resisted are right or wrong in themselves: and according as the prospect of ultimate and greater good is certain or otherwise. Ordinarily, when the people of God cannot conscientiously obey the laws and submit to the powers of the government under which, in the providence of God, they are called to live, their course is not rebellion, not resistance, but submission—submission under protest to the penalty of fine, imprisonment, or whatever else it may be, and a quiet reference of their cause to God. When a just rebellion or resistance pervades the masses, and aims at fundamental changes in the structure of the government, then is it a just revolution, and the right of

it is recognized in the word of God, 1 Kings xii. 1-19 ; Judges ii. 18, etc. ; Numb. x. 9.

3. Judicial war, which may be indicated either by the command or manifest providence of God, and is of the nature of an affliction, judgment, or punishment of the nations against which it is waged. The overthrow of the four kings by Abraham and his confederates, was of the nature of a divine judgment ; for, allowing that Abraham had no command of God for what he did, His providence laid the duty upon him above every other man, and, after its vigorous performance, he received divine approbation, not only by the extraordinary success granted, but also by the expression of that approbation through Melchisedek.

The Lawgiver and Judge of all the earth, has an undisputed right to visit nations for their sins, and to employ whatever instruments He pleases for that purpose, rational or irrational, animate or inanimate. He deals with nations as with individuals. The birds of the air, the beasts of the forests, flying insects, and creeping things, earthquakes, fires and floods, blasting and mildew, pestilences and famines, and men themselves, all execute the wrath of God upon guilty nations. There are examples of men of lust, violence, and blood, who have been justly wounded, discomfited, and slain by the hands of their fellow-men in personal rencontre, which, by no possibility, could they avoid ; and of lawless nations with their cup of iniquity full, which have been desolated and destroyed by contiguous nations.

The wars of extermination against the Canaanitish nations were carried on by God's own people and under His command and guidance ; nor could they go back from an implicit obedience. In thus executing vengeance as His appointed agents, in the fear of God and for God, they were wholly innocent of crime. All the wars in Scripture commanded of God for judgment upon iniquity, were just wars, Gen. xv. 16 ; 1 Kings xxi. 26, etc. ; Joshua and Judges.

Judicial wars are not only commanded of God, but are brought about also by His Providence. He employs nations against nations, by permitting the ambition, or avarice, or

passions of kings and people to be acted out; by permitting grounds of dispute and contention to ripen into open ruptures, and then so controlling the spirit and movements of armies as to give the victory and defeat as seemeth good in His sight. Thus He is said to stir up one king against another king, to call one nation against another nation, and to deliver it into its hand. Such were the wars which Egypt, Babylonia, Syria, and other nations waged against the people of God for the punishment of their sins age after age; such were the wars which in succession, and at different periods, desolated and destroyed these nations by other nations in return, Isa. x. 1-27; xiv. 1-27, etc.

And, further, under this head, it may also be the duty of nations to wage war for the subjugation, or even the effectual destruction in a national capacity of other nations, who make themselves the public enemies of their fellow-men, whom they rob, destroy, and oppress, whenever they get them into their power. Such lawless nations are as justly subjects of retributive justice, as are lawless individuals in communities, Judges xx. 1-18.

As, from the corruptions of human nature, offences between individuals have come, and will continue to come, so offences between nations have come and will continue to come, until the glorious promise is fulfilled through the universal diffusion of the Gospel of peace, when "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," Isa. ii. 4; Mich. iv. 13; Matt. xviii. 7. Meanwhile, it is proper for nations to learn the art of war, to fortify their territories, and to maintain land and naval forces in sufficient strength, not only for defence at home, in case of invasion or attack, but also for the protection of the persons and property of their citizens and subjects abroad. All nations, like individuals, have the right of self-defence and self-protection; in other words, of self-preservation, and all means necessary to the end are justifiable.

The avowed purpose in war is defeat and overthrow; the opposing parties are deadly enemies, and neither pledge nor

keep faith with each other, beyond the observance of the customary usages of war, or of such engagements as they may enter into by mutual consent, and for special objects. Neither party has any right to demand or to expect, under any circumstances whatever, from the other, any answers, any disclosures, any confessions, or any services, which may be prejudicial in the slightest degree to its own interests. An enemy cannot be required to destroy himself. Hence all means and measures designed to effect the defeat of the enemy, and nothing beyond—in other words, all means and measures for our own perfect self-defence and protection, are justifiable. Wisdom is pitched against wisdom, skill against skill, cunning against cunning, as well as force against force, in war; and Scripture saith, “Wisdom is better than strength,” Eccl. ix. 13–18; “Wisdom is better than weapons of war,” Eccl. vii. 19; Prov. xxi. 22; xxiv. 5–6; Luke xiv. 31–32. All spies, informers, stratagems, feints, ambuscades, and deceptions of every kind, are allowable for the defeat of the enemy, as the following passages demonstrate, Judges i. 23–26; xviii. 1–17; Josh. ii. 1–24; vii. 2; Numb. xiii. 1, etc.; xxi. 32; 1 Sam. xxvi. 14; Judges i. 23–26; viii. 13–17; 1 Sam. xxx. 10–16; Josh. viii. 1–30; Judges xx. 29–34; 2 Chron. xiii. 13; xx. 22; Josh. vi. 17–25; 2 Sam. xv. 27–37; xvii. 1–21.

The Scriptures lay down general principles of justice and of mercy to be observed in war: such, for example, as that every effort should be made to avoid war and to effect an honorable, just, and lasting peace: that opportunities be given for these before hostilities are begun: that quarter be allowed to conquered and submitting enemies: that women, children, and aged men, be spared and protected: that there be a readiness to make peace whenever the enemy is disposed so to do, Deut. xx. 10–15; 2 Sam. xx. 19–22; Josh. xxii. 11–34; Judges xx. 11–14. Finally, the Scriptures inculcate doctrines and duties which, in the measure that they are believed and performed, will banish war from the earth. The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ promotes “peace on earth, good-will toward men,” and He, the great theme and sum of that

Gospel, is "the Prince of Peace." His Church is to disseminate the Gospel, and to follow the things which make for peace among all nations, until they shall learn war no more, Isa. ii. 1-4.

On Abraham's return from this war, for the first time distinct mention is made of the priesthood in the person of Melchisedek, and of tithes, which Abraham paid to him. The priesthood of Melchisedek was of divine origin, since he is called "Priest of the most high God," deriving his office from, and ministering unto the most high God. So is he considered in Ps. cx., and is a type of Christ, not only in the perpetuity of his priesthood, but in his divine appointment thereto, for the Apostle establishes the rule of God's house in the appointment of the priesthood: "and no man taketh this honor upon himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron;" then, of our Lord he says, "so also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but He that said unto him, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek," called of God, an high priest after the order of Melchisedek," Ps. cx., 1-4; Heb. v. 1-10; and, as the appointed priest of the most high God, he is superior to Abraham. If he had not been so appointed, he would not have been.

From the fact that Melchisedek's priesthood was of divine appointment, and for the reason assigned by the Apostle, that the office is of God only, it is clear that the priesthood existing in the Church prior to his day was also of divine appointment; as we well know it was subsequent to his day, even down to the advent of Christ. Our Lord carried out the same order, and divinely appointed all the ordinary and extraordinary officers that were to minister in the Church after His advent, and so continues divinely to call and qualify His ordinary ministers to the present day. He who is king in Zion, and upon whose shoulder is the government, has always appointed the officers of His church.

His Church enjoyed the ministration of the priesthood as soon as it began to exist. The Church has never been without officers. If there be an altar, there must be a sacrifice, and if there be both sacrifice and altar, then there must be a

sacrificer—a priest to offer: the three are coeval and inseparable. He who appointed one, appointed all.

Adam was, of necessity, the appointed priest of his family. The patriarchs officiated also; and, as men multiplied, the priesthood multiplied. Noah sacrificed and was priest to his family, and to the new world. Job sacrificed and was priest to his household, Job i. 1-5, and also to the men of his times, Job xlii. 7-9. Abraham sacrificed and was priest to his family and household, Gen. xii. 7-8; xiii. 4, 18, and was a prophet and intercessor with God for others, Gen. xx. 7, 17. Cotemporary with Abraham is Melchisedek, called “priest of the most high God,” and of authority beyond the bounds of his own city, among the people of God. Isaac and Jacob also ministered at the altar, Gen. xxvi. 25; xxxiii. 20; xxxv. 1-7; xlvii. 7. There were priests among God’s people in Egypt, who came out with them into the wilderness, Exod. xix. 22. Moses and others—young men—officiated, Exod. xxiv. 1-8, before Aaron and his sons were set apart; and there was also Jethro, priest of Midian, who offered sacrifices when he came to the camp to see Moses, Exod. ii. 16; xviii. 9-12; xxviii. 1, etc.

The priesthood was an order of Church officers, exercising authority in sacrifices, teaching, commanding their households after them, and some, like Noah, were “preachers of righteousness,” Gen. xviii. 19; 3 Pet. ii. 2-5. Melchisedek was of this order, Gen. xiv. 19. The manner of their call and ordination to their office, and their numbers in the ages before and after the flood, are not known. They were promiscuously taken from among men without regard to country or station—were priests for life, and, when the necessities of the Church demanded it, were wholly given to their calling. The grace of God, ruling in the hearts of His people, would make them as anxious for the blessing of a stated ministry as they are now, and as solicitous to multiply that ministry, so that it might meet the wants of all; nor would they fail in prayer to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His vineyard. The religion of Christ is one, and its nature and manifestations are the same in all ages.

A priesthood exclusively devoted to their calling, needed some provision for their temporal support, and that provision is seen in the system of tithes. Jacob vowed to God at Bethel, "and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee," Gen. xxviii. 22. Pray, where did Jacob learn that, of all which God should give him, one-tenth should be consecrated to His service?—From Abraham, who paid tithes to Melchisedek as a customary due to the priests of God. Whence did Abraham receive his knowledge of the duty? Undoubtedly from God, either immediately or mediately, through saints who preceded him. Whatever may be said of the teachings of the light of nature, and of the reasonableness and justice of the duty, we can conceive of its being taught (and authoritatively taught) to the Church by revelation from God, and in no other manner whatever. He who ordained the priesthood, ordained their temporal support to be drawn from the people for whom they officiated. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," and "the laborer is worthy of his hire," are principles of justice as old as the priesthood itself, Heb. vii. 5. Tithes must have been divinely commanded as soon as needed. The rules regulating the assessment, collection, and payment of tithes first appear in the laws of Moses. Melchisedek received them, and this settles the point that all other priests were entitled to do the same.

But we have a priest in Melchisedek superior to Abraham. His superiority consisted not only in earthly office and dignity, for he was a king, and Abraham only a prince; but also in spiritual office and dignity, as both Moses and the Apostles teach. In the first place, Melchisedek blesses Abraham, Gen. xiv. 19. "And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better," or greater, Heb. vii. 6–7. And in the second place, Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedek, Gen. xiv. 20; Heb. vii. 4–5. Abraham was in fact a priest himself, but Melchisedek was of an order superior to his.

Melchisedek's priesthood, the Apostle says, was made like unto that of the Son of God, formed after the fashion of it, and therefore became to the Church a type of it, Heb. vii. 3,

16-17, 24. And as our Lord was a high priest, Heb. vii. 26, etc., and such "a high priest after the order of Melchisedek," Heb. v. 10, may we not conclude that Melchisedek himself was a high priest? Moses was a type of Christ as a prophet; Melchisedek, a type of Him as a priest; and David, a type of Him as a king. Aaron, as high priest, was of an order superior to the ordinary priests. Might not Melchisedek have been a high priest, and of an order superior to the ordinary priests of his day? Was the office of high priest created first at Sinai? or was it created centuries before? There is nothing improper or improbable in the latter supposition. Melchisedek may have had his predecessors. So much for the priesthood, as it existed in the Church from the earliest times to those of Abraham and Melchisedek.

The person of Melchisedek involves no mystery. The opinions broached, that he was "The Holy Ghost," "the Son of God," "God the Father," "Shem," and such like, are all pure imaginations. He was just what Moses (Gen. xiv. 18-20) and the Apostle Paul (Heb. vii. 1-10) represent him to be, neither more nor less. He was a man living in the promised land, cotemporary with Abraham, king of Salem, afterwards Jerusalem, and priest of the Most High God. The Apostle affirms that his name expressed his character: first, Melchisedek is composed of two Hebrew words, signifying *king* and *righteousness*, so he was a righteous king; then, king of Salem. Salem means *peace*, so he was king of peace—a righteous and peaceful king. He was also priest of the Most High God, but not obtaining his priesthood by descent from his father before him, according to the order of Aaronic priesthood. He was appointed priest directly by God, and was in his order typical of the order of Christ, who sprang not from the Aaronic priesthood; therefore no priestly pedigree, no genealogy is given of him; and, in this sense, the Apostle says, he is "without father, without mother, without descent." Again, as he was priest for life, constituted a perpetual priest, like unto the Son of God, in this sense he "has neither beginning of days, nor end of life." As Moses and David, mortal men, and types of Christ, served their

generation and "fell on sleep," so did Melchisedek, Neh. vii. 63-64; xiii. 28-29; Ezra x. 18-19; ii. 61-63; Numb. iii. 1-51.

The promises of God to Abraham at his call, although several times repeated, finally, after twenty-four years, ripen into a covenant.

The promises made in Ur are briefly given by Stephen, Acts vii. 1-3; Gen. xi. 31-32; xii. 1, and more fully stated in Gen. xii. There are four: First, that Abraham should have a land, "Get thee unto a land that I will shew thee;" second, that he should there become a great nation, "and I will make thee a great nation," Isa. lx. 22; third, that God would take Abraham and his nation in him into peculiar and near relation to Himself, "I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing, and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee;" fourth, that Abraham and his nation in him should convey blessings to all the families of the earth, "And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The Lord appeared to him a second time, after he had entered Canaan, in the plain of Moreh, and pointed out the land He had promised him in Ur. "Unto thy seed will I give this land," Gen. xii. 4-18. On His third appearance to Abraham, the Lord renewed the promise of the land and of a numerous seed, in the strongest terms: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee." Gen. xiii. 12-17. On His fourth appearance, the Lord renews the same promise of a seed and of the land, with some additions. "And He brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. And He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give

thee this land to inherit it." Abraham now prayed that God would give him assurances of the fulfilment of these promises. The Lord graciously did so, and, according to the manner of entering into a covenant, He ordered a heifer, a she goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon, to be slain and prepared, the beasts to be divided in the midst and laid each piece one over against another; but the birds not to be divided. When the sun was going down, a deep sleep and great darkness fell upon Abraham, and God spake to him and said: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a strange land that is not theirs, and shall serve therein, and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." After these words a smoking furnace and a lamp of fire, the symbol of the presence of the Lord, passed between the pieces, so ratifying the covenant with Abraham, to give him a seed and the land. The boundaries of the land were also described. "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying: unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates, etc.," Gen. xv. 1-21; and both the promises of a seed and of the land are more particularly unfolded: for, from the maturing of the promises, that is, from the call of Abraham, (Gen. xi. 31-32,) to their fulfilment, should be four generations of one hundred years each. During these four hundred years, Abraham's seed should be strangers in a land not theirs, and part of the time be reduced to servitude, and serve a people in a strange country, being afflicted in their servitude, but God would interpose and deliver them with great substance, to take possession of the promised land, and at the time when the iniquities of the Amorites, the inhabitants of the land, should be full, and they ripe for judgment. Meanwhile, Abraham should go to his fathers in peace, and be buried in a good old age.

In these repeated appearances and reassertions of his loving-kindness, the Lord adds nothing to the original promises. He only repeats and renders them in some particulars more distinct.

To give a summary of the whole : Abraham is called out and constituted a public person, the representative of a "great nation" which should descend from him ; and this great nation is separated from the rest of mankind, and constituted in one body and one locality, to be a public, visible body, the depository of great blessings to the world, and ever to be under the merciful care of the Almighty. All these are new revelations of the counsels of God, and portend something extraordinary at hand. We have seen nothing like it before in the history of the Church.

One step further brings us to the fifth appearance of the Lord, in which these original promises ripen into a covenant. —"And when Abram was ninety and nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God : walk before me and be perfect." A solemn address was preparatory to the covenant, "And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

A sign and seal are affixed to the covenant. "And God said unto Abraham, thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant," or the sign and seal of my covenant, "which ye

shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee. Every man-child among you shall be circumcised: and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you: and he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations: he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised, and my covenant"—or the sign of my covenant—"shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." A penalty was attached, "And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." Two classes of transgressors are obnoxious to this penalty: the first very rare, namely, those who had no one in infancy to present them for circumcision, their parents being dead, and who, on coming to years of discretion, and learning that they were born of parents in covenant with God, and therefore entitled to the sign and seal, yet do not apply for it; and second, those parents who, although in covenant themselves, refuse to circumcise their children, and consequently renounce it both for themselves and their children—such should be excommunicated from God's people, for they break His covenant. So we understand this Scripture, and in this way only could the uncircumcised man-child be cut off, first for his own act, and second, in and with his parents'.

This is a real covenant, having all the attributes of a covenant. First, parties: the Almighty God of the first part, and Abraham, His servant and representative of his seed, of the second part. Second, conditions: God graciously undertakes to be a God to Abraham and to his seed after him, and Abraham receives, and faithfully and obediently embraces God as his God, and the God of his seed after him. Third, rewards: blessings, temporal and spiritual, with God's eternal favor upon the believing and the obedient. Fourth, penalties: those who obstinately and finally reject the covenant should be excluded from sharing in its mercies. Fifth, a sign and seal: that of circumcision, indelibly made in the flesh.

Sixth, duration: in all its spiritual nature and provisions it is an everlasting covenant. "And I will establish my covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."

It is not a renewal of the covenant of works, for that covenant, made with Adam, the federal head of the race, was broken in his fall, involving the world in sin and spiritual ruin, and could nevermore be renewed with men. Nor is it of the nature of a covenant of works, for it begins, continues, and ends in faith. Abraham obeys his call "by faith," Heb. xi. 8, and embraces the promises of the covenant by faith, Heb. xi. 8-9; Rom. iv. 13-25; inherits them by faith, Gal. iii. 9-18; is accounted righteous through faith, Gen. xv. 6; Gal. iii. 6; Rom. iv. 1-3, and throughout the covenant appears the great example and father of believers, being justified and saved by faith. Nor is it a renewal of the covenant of grace. The eternal covenant, revealed immediately after the fall, was made by God the Father, as the representative of the Godhead, with His Son, the head and representative of His people, and admits of no renewal. It remains ever the same, ever operative, ordered in all things and sure. Abraham himself was a child of this covenant of grace, and as such, the Lord entered into covenant with him. The grand spiritual promise of the covenant, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee," is neither more nor less in fact than the promise which God made with His believing people in Christ Jesus under the covenant of grace, from the beginning of the world, although never before proclaimed under the like circumstances. And there is reason for the assertion, for God has been a God to His believing people in Christ Jesus in all ages, Ps. xc. 1; Eph. i. 3-6; John xvii. 24. They were no dearer to Him after Abraham than they were before. His love toward the elect is eternal, all perfect, and unchangeable. Again, this very promise is acted out by God in all the previous histories of the Church. He was a God to Adam, and to his seed after him,—that seed which He appointed in the line of spiritual and promised succession in Seth. He was in like manner a God to Seth and to his seed after him, namely, in Enos, and so on from

Enos to Cainan, from Cainan to Noah, from Noah to Shem, and from Shem to Abraham.

The covenant which the Lord made with Abraham, is a carrying out of the covenant of grace—a further and fuller unfolding and establishing of its promises, provisions, and blessings; and that feature which gives it peculiarity, and distinguishes it from every other, is its being made with and confined unto Abraham, and his seed, called out and separated by the Lord from all the rest of mankind, and constituted His peculiar people—His regularly organized visible Church.

CHAPTER XV.

PROMISES OF THE COVENANT, TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL.—CHURCH ERECTED INTO A STATE, FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES, AND FOR A GIVEN TIME.—THE GOVERNMENT A THEOCRACY.—DESIGN OF THIS CIVIL STATE.—THE COVENANT EVERLASTING.—ITS SIGN AND SEAL, CIRCUMCISION; NATURE OF IT.—THE VISIBLE BODY, SET UP IN ABRAHAM UNDER THE COVENANT.—THE VISIBLE AND ORGANIZED CHURCH OF GOD, ONE AND THE SAME UNDER BOTH DISPENSATIONS, PROVED.

The promises embraced in the covenant are twofold in nature, temporal and spiritual; the temporal subsidiary to the spiritual, and typical of spiritual things; the spiritual constituting the soul and substance of the covenant.

The first temporal promise is that of the land of Canaan, the glory of all lands for beauty, fertility, health, and convenience, and located in the heart of the world. The blessings pronounced upon it were the early and latter rain, gushing springs, and streams running among the hills and watering the plains; metals from the bowels of the earth, varied fruits in their seasons, the richest harvests, countless flocks and herds, an abounding population, and peace like a river,—indeed, a type of the better country—of heaven itself, *Deut. viii. 6-10; xi. 8-12; vii. 12-15; Ezek. xx. 6; Heb. iv. 1-9; xi. 8-16.*

The land was promised for an everlasting possession—everlasting, not in the sense for all time, but, as the word is used in other places of Scripture, in the sense for a very long time. Fulfilled prophecy so determines. It was predicted that when Shiloh should come, “the sceptre should depart from Judah,” *Gen. xlix. 10.* All the ordained objects for

which the possession of the land was necessary, having been attained, Judah would lay down the possession to another. So it came to pass. The Romans broke up the civil state of the seed of Abraham, root and branch, seized the whole inheritance, and their land has been alienated from them ever since, Dan. ix. 27; Matt. ch. xxiv. Besides, the vast compass of promise determines the sense of the word in the same way; for the land was not promised exclusively to those who should descend from Abraham by ordinary generations, but to all who should be, under the covenant, his true seed; and they embrace "many nations," even the Gentiles as well as the Jews. To understand the possession to be literally everlasting, would involve the necessity of collecting all the true seed from all quarters of the world, and for all time, into this one locality. Could the small land bear all the millions of its inhabitants? Impossible. The idea runs contrary to the current of Scripture, which gives to the true seed of Abraham the inheritance of the whole earth, Matt. xxviii. 19-20; Ps. ii. 1-8; Hab. ii. 14, etc. That the Israelites (who are only a part of his natural seed) shall return to Canaan to possess it, we are inclined to decide in the negative: First, because the predictions of the Old Testament of such a return agree well, both with their return from the several captivities to which they were subjected, and with their spiritual return to God. Second, because neither our Lord nor His apostles in any manner hold out such an idea, but the contrary. Third, because the return is not necessary to any purpose of glory to Christ's kingdom, beyond what may be accomplished by their remaining where they are. Fourth, unless the Israelites are miraculously and forever kept a very small remnant of people, Canaan could never contain them. It would not contain their present numbers in the world, and what shall be done with their future increase?

The promise of Canaan and its continued possession, until the coming and cutting off of Messiah, involved the necessity of a civil government for the seed of Abraham. Surrounded by many and powerful nations, they would require a civil constitution for the purpose of an independent national existence, and He who is King in Zion gave it to them. But the

order laid down by the Lord in this matter deserves to be particularly understood. The religious constitution of the people precedes the civil; in other words, the Church comes before the State. The Church does not exist for the State, but the State for the Church. The Church does not exist in the State, but the State in the Church. In short, the Church set up in Abraham has a civil constitution and government for specific purposes, and for a definite time, holding the relation to surrounding nations, first, of a tribe, and then of a nation. It governs its own people civilly, carries on trade and commerce, makes peace, and declares war, etc. This civil constitution began in Abraham, for Abraham during his lifetime was the prince, the civil head of his people. Isaac succeeded him, and Jacob, Isaac, and the twelve patriarchs succeeded Jacob. While in Egypt the people retained their own civil government so far as it was practicable, and were governed after the death of the patriarchs by "elders of the people." When brought out from the house of bondage, Moses, by divine instruction and authority, settled more definitely and perfectly their form of government, and all laws necessary thereto; the form of government being the only one of its kind that ever was, or that ever shall be again in the world—a theocracy—no other form being suitable unto or possible for the character and circumstances of the peculiar people for which it was designed. The closing words of the promise of the land discovers this: saith the Lord, "and I will be their God," their reigning, ruling God in that land, their King. This theocratic form of government began from the promise, from Abraham, not from Moses, and continued downward and onward, 1 Chron. xvi. 20–22; Ps. cv. 1–15. The one body of people, existing both in an ecclesiastical and civil state, has but one head. The glorious Redeemer is both Lord and King.

The purpose of this civil constitution and location in a particular land was twofold. In the first place, for a perfect and satisfactory revelation to the Church and the world of the promised Redeemer. He was to be the "seed of the woman," to descend through a long line of particular individuals, to be of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David, to be born of a

virgin, in the territory of Judah, in the town of David, and at an appointed time; to pass his life in his own country, work great miracles in proof of His Messiahship, to be rejected of His own people, and crucified by Jew and Gentile in Jerusalem, to be buried and rise from the dead the third day. His gospel was to be sent out from Jerusalem into all parts of the world, and all the types and shadows of Him in sacrifices, temple, priesthood, and ordinances, receiving their accomplishment in Him, were to pass away. Now that our Lord should in all these and many other particulars, minutely and prophetically announced of Him for many ages, be satisfactorily revealed to the Church and the world, it was necessary that that people from whom He was to descend, and upon whom all these particulars rested, should be preserved distinct from all others. This could be done, as we conceive, in no other way than that ordained by infinite wisdom, namely, by constituting them a state, and locating and preserving them in a land made sure to them until the fulness of time should come, when the promised Seed should appear in the flesh, and suffer and die, "and be declared the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. i. 4. In the second place, the purpose was, for an exhibition of the faithfulness of God in His care and preservation of His Church. He keepeth covenant forever. He planted His Church in a position central to the inhabited parts of the world, and it became a depository of truth and salvation, a light amid the surrounding darkness. He appeared the God and King of His people, delivering them from their enemies, instructing, correcting, preserving, reviving, and blessing them. His loving-kindness and faithfulness He never withdrew. His covenant He always kept, and, at the appointed time, brought His only-begotten Son into the world, bearing witness unto Him, glorifying and exalting Him to His own right hand, and saying unto Him, "Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool," Ps. cx. 1; and so shall it come to pass.

The second temporal promise is, that Abraham should have a numerous seed. It was fulfilled, for his natural seed in

the line of promise by Sarah, (without reckoning his seed according to the flesh by Hagar and by Keturah,) became a great nation. Three millions of Israelites are estimated as having come out of Egypt with Moses. They largely increased in the land of Canaan, particularly in the days of David and Solomon, and they have always been a most prolific race.

There are spiritual promises also in the covenant, and this one of a numerous seed is to be interpreted spiritually; for it embraced not only his natural descendants, but all who should partake of his "faith." Abraham should have a numerous spiritual seed, and be "a father of many nations." The Apostle, in Gal. iii. 16-17, refers the promise particularly to Christ as the seed of Abraham. He was to be the progenitor of Christ, in whom all nations should be blessed; and again, the promise, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee,"—than which there can be none more affluent of spiritual blessings—covers every thing.

The covenant was for an everlasting covenant. All in it that was of a strictly temporal nature expired by the statute of its own limitation, but all in it that was of a spiritual nature was everlasting. In evidence that it was so, let it be observed that this covenant was but a visible expression, a continuation and carrying out of the covenant of grace, which is an everlasting covenant—that this covenant existed from Abraham to Christ, and was in force while our Lord lived on earth; nor did He in any manner or degree modify or abrogate it. It was appealed to and confirmed by His successors, the Apostles, as an everlasting covenant, Rom. iv. 13-17; Gal. iii. 7-29. Finally, the subjects of this covenant—those with whom it is made—are none other than the true spiritual seed of Abraham, the elect of God, who are to continue in their generations until the day of judgment, and to whom Paul addressed such comforting words, 1 Thess. iv. 13-18.

The sign and seal of this everlasting covenant was circumcision. There is no reliable evidence to prove that circumcision was practised before it was divinely enjoined upon Abraham. Why could not the Egyptians borrow it from the Israelites, as well as the Israelites from the Egyptians? But,

in respect to the Israelites, there is no borrowing in the matter. No record of circumcision is found before Moses in any writings on the earth. It is of God, who ordains all the rites and ordinances of His Church. He borrows from none. From the Israelites other nations learned the practice. What is the meaning of the rite? It was a sign, outward and visible in the flesh, testifying to the individual who received it, and to all others, that he was a subject of the covenant, a member of the visible body of God's covenant people, whether he received it in infancy, or after attaining to mature age, at the time he voluntarily applied for admission into that body. It was the rite of initiation, the door of entrance to the Church. It was a seal, testifying that all the gracious promises and provisions of the covenant were actually conveyed and made over, in their saving efficacy and comfort, to all who by faith received it; as in a testament or will, the seal affixed not only assures us of the genuineness and truth of the instrument, but conveys to those named in it whatever was bequeathed to them by the testator. All therefore who receive circumcision, not spiritually and truly, but only externally and professionally, failed of experiencing the blessings of eternal life in the covenant. The rite was an outward sign of an inward grace. The sign might be made in the flesh, and no grace reign in the heart. The grace of regeneration by the Holy Spirit was neither necessarily, nor by any promise of God connected with its administration. The cutting off of the flesh, of itself never renewed the depraved heart, or saved a lost soul: "All are not Israel, who are of Israel." Abraham was the father of many who were of the circumcision only, and walked not in the steps of his faith," Rom. iv. 12; ix. 6-7. Multitudes born in the covenant, or who were proselyted to it from another people, received the sign, and enjoyed the blessings and privileges, yet perished in sin and unbelief. "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God," Rom. ii. 28-29; Phil. iii. 1-3; Rom. iii. 1-8; 1 Cor. vii. 17-19; Gal.

v. 6 ; vi. 1-5 ; Col. iii. 2-11 ; iii. 11 ; Matt. xxiii. 37-39 ; Acts vii. 51-53 ; Rom. xi. 1-36.

This sign or seal was temporal in character, in that it was outward and visible, set in the flesh of the seed of Abraham, designating them as the true people of God, and from whom the Messiah was to descend. It looked towards Christ, and was prophetic of Him, giving assurance to all in the covenant that He would come at the appointed time, and be of the seed of Abraham and the Saviour of the world.

When our Lord came and fulfilled all things written in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning Himself, and His Church was no longer to be confined particularly to the natural seed of Abraham, when all the purposes were accomplished for which it had been kept in that state, and it was now to be enlarged, so as to take in all nations ; circumcision, having fulfilled its end, gave way to baptism, a milder sign and seal of the covenant, more universal in its application, and precisely in its spiritual nature of the same significance, Col. ii. 8-12.

This is the reason why, after the ascension of our Lord, the Apostles forbade a continuance of the rite of circumcision in the Church, for it encouraged the pernicious doctrine of justification by the works of the law, then rife among the Jews, and virtually denied that Messiah had come. The Israelites who embraced Christ were no more to use that sign and seal which looked forward to Christ as yet to come, but that sign and seal which looked back to Him as already come. Those who cleaved to circumcision were unbelievers, the open and avowed rejecters of their own Messiah, and in this state the great body of God's ancient people continue to this day. So soon as the veil is taken away from their hearts, they will believe on the Lord Jesus, lay aside circumcision, and thereafter be baptized in His name, the sign and seal of the covenant being changed in form, but not in nature, Acts xv. 1-24 ; Gal. v. 1-11 ; vi. 12-13 ; ii. 1-5 ; Acts xxi. 21.

The rite is also spiritual in character, being the sign and seal of a spiritual covenant, full to overflowing with precious spiritual promises and blessings. It pointed to the great Author of all being and salvation, clothed with infinite glory and

authority, entitled unto and demanding the perfect and eternal love and obedience of His creatures. Those who were circumcised, were circumcised into Him, avouched Him to be their God and Saviour, and submitted humbly and believingly to His government and way of salvation. Thus they became the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and He became their God. They were circumcised also into Christ, the coming Messiah, whom they embraced by faith, as their justifying righteousness and complete Redeemer; and so they avouched Him to be their Saviour, and He became altogether such to them, Phil. iii. 1-3; Rom. iv. 9-12; Gal. v. 6; vi. 15-16; Dent. x. 16; xxx. 6; Jer. iv. 4; Rom. ii. 28-29; Col. ii. 11-12.

Its spiritual character still further appears, in that it is a memorial of fundamental doctrines and duties: of the depravity of man; "the uncircumcised in heart and ears" are the stiff-necked enemies of God, and the resisters of the Holy Ghost, Acts vii. 51, and are, in their fleshly and carnal state, lost and ruined by the fall, Jer. iv. 4; vi. 10; Dent. x. 16; Col. ii. 11-13; Rom. v. 12-19: of regeneration by the Spirit, and of its necessity to all who would enter the kingdom of God; to be truly circumcised is to be born again, having a new heart and being a new creature, Dent. xxx. 6; Jer. iv. 4; 3; Rom. ii. 28-29; Col. ii. 11-13; Gal. v. 6; vi. 15; Phil. iii. Ps. li. 10-12: and of justification by faith in the Redeemer to come, and not by works. Of this justification by faith, Abraham, who first received circumcision, is brought forward by the Apostle Paul as the distinguished example of all believers after him. He had nothing to boast of a personal righteousness for justification before God in his natural state, for he was an idolatrous sinner, resting like all mankind in their natural state, under the curse of the broken law, and lost. There could be no remission of his sins, no pardon, nor restoration to God's favor, unless a proper satisfaction should be rendered to the dishonored law and justice of God. Such a satisfaction was beyond his power, and the power of all created intelligences in the universe. But the Lord, in His sovereignty and mercy, provided it for Abraham, and all lost sinners, in Jesus

Christ, His Son. He became incarnate, and put Himself under the law—the surety and substitute of Abraham and of all who were under the curse of the law. Their sins were imputed to Him, and He obeyed all the precepts and suffered all the penalty of the law in their stead, rendering complete satisfaction to God's justice for them, and so brought in, by the greatness of His strength and infinite mercy, an everlasting and sufficient righteousness for all who believe in Him. This is called in Scripture “the righteousness of God,” that is, the righteousness which God provides through the gift of His Son, and accepts in the place of the righteousness of sinners, to whom it is imputed when they believe. God, therefore, is just. His law is upheld and honored, while He justifies him who believes in Jesus. Justice and mercy have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other at the cross.

How did Abraham become a partaker of this righteousness for justification? In His electing love it pleased God, by His Spirit, to reveal this righteousness laid up for him in the coming Redeemer. Then the convicted, despairing Abraham was filled with hope; then “he rejoiced to see Christ's day; he saw it, and was glad,” John viii. 56. Renouncing his own righteousness for ever, and repenting and confessing his sins to a God of mercy, he believed in the Redeemer freely given and offered to him by the Lord, and his faith was reckoned to him for righteousness. Then was the righteousness of Christ, in whom he believed, imputed to him, and he stood alive from the dead, clean escaped from the wrath of God in a justified state. All the benefits of that imputed righteousness,—pardon, reconciliation, and final and everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven,—were sure mercies to him. Christ's excellency shines in him. Christ's glory covers him. He is conscious that God accepts him, as though he had never sinned, or had one stain of sin in his soul, but all for Christ's sake. Being now justified by faith, he is in a state of grace, and the Saviour, by His blood and Spirit, will carry on his personal sanctification, through instituted means, all the days of his sojourning, and crown all with glory. He sees God to be the only author of his justification, for He provided the

Saviour for him. He sees the matter and meritorious ground of his justification to be the righteousness of the Redeemer, and nothing else. He sees the instrument, whereby he was enabled to lay hold on this righteousness, to be faith,—not meritorious, since it cannot satisfy the law, and is itself the gift of God,—but necessary and meet in him always to the receiving and resting on Christ. He sees the evidences that he is a justified child of God, in his renewed heart and life; no longer walking after the flesh, but after the spirit, and looking for a better, that is, a heavenly country.

For many long years did Abraham walk in this justifying faith with God, until the day came when God entered into covenant with him and gave him circumcision. “Then he received the sign of circumcision,” (and to him, a true believer,) “a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised,” Rom. iii. 21–31. and chs. iv., v., vi., vii., viii.; Heb. xi. 13; Gal. chs. ii., iii., iv.; James ii. 14–26; 1 Pet. i. 1–12; Gen. xv. 6; Ps. xxxii. 1–2; Hab. ii. 4.

Circumcision was a memorial also of an open profession of God, and of consecration to Him, whereby all who received it were bound to entire newness of life, to worship God in the spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have “no confidence in the flesh,” Gal. v. 6; vi. 15; Phil. iii. 3; 1 Cor. vii. 19; Jer. iv. 1–4; Deut. x. 12–16.

This rite truly was a memorial—an epitome of the gospel in its fundamental doctrines and duties. Its spiritual nature was well understood by patriarchs and prophets, by priests and people, and by all who forsook their false gods to come and trust under the wings of the God of Israel, Ruth i. 15–17. The question, “Sir, what must I do to be saved?” was answered in the Church before Christ came, by the command, Believe in the promised Redeemer and be circumcised. It is answered in the Church since His coming by the same com-

mand in another form, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be baptized.

The subject next in order, is the people of the covenant : who and what are they ? Concerning them let the following undeniable facts, lying upon the face of Scripture, and confirmed by the testimony of profane history, be considered, namely : that the Lord God, in His sovereign wisdom and pleasure, did call out and separate Abraham and his family from the rest of mankind, and regularly organize them as a body or society of men living under a covenant with Him. He maintaining relations with them such as He maintains with no other people on earth : that from the time of this call, the Holy Scriptures, dropping the rest of the human race, are principally, nay, almost exclusively occupied with the history and the affairs of this people, discovering God all the while dealing with them and them alone as His peculiar people : that to them pertained the adoption, the glory, the covenant, the giving of the law, and all the revelation from heaven, “the service of God, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.” Rom. ix. 4-5 : that they were always under the direct government and protection of God in Palestine, in Egypt, whence they were brought out by mighty signs and wonders, and settled in Canaan, their own land, where they dwelt for centuries, passing through every vicissitude of prosperity, adversity, captivity, and restoration, remaining a distinct people in origin, institutions, and religion, till their own long-promised and long-looked for Messiah, the Prince of Peace, came in the flesh : that among them He suffered ; by their own hands was crucified and slain ; and among them He rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven whence He came : that some forty years after this ascension, this peculiar people were overthrown in war, and their great city, Jerusalem, was broken up, totally demolished, and burned by the Romans, together with the holy temple of God : that their priests and people were driven away and scattered, and their worship and ordinances of religion perished from that hour : that they no more

possess their own promised land, but are still a distinct people, dispersed in almost all countries on the globe: that out of the body of this people, after Christ's ascension, was gathered a remnant acknowledging their own Messiah, to whom Gentile nations became united, and who held fast the Holy Word of God, His institutions, ordinances, and way of salvation, and claimed to be the true Israel of God, the true seed of Abraham: that from these the great mass of the Jews broke off, and so the two bodies have been distinct ever since; and, finally, that this body, which flowed out of this ancient people, and to which the Gentiles have been united, have preserved the religion of God, and form a visible body of believers in all nations whither they have gone; and that when they first came out from the ancient people, after the ascension of our Lord, God owned and acknowledged them as His true people, witnessing to their preaching "both with signs and wonders and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His will," Heb. ii. 1-4, and from that day has not ceased to be their Preserver and Redeemer, while they remain distinct in character, profession, and practice, from all other people. What and who are these wonderful people? None other than the visible people of God, constituting his visible Church, one and the same body, under both the Old and New Dispensations, and so to continue one body to the end of the world. In proof of which let it be considered:

First, that the covenant which God made (Gen. xvii.) with Abraham and his seed, is everlasting in its provisions and duration, continuing through both dispensations. As already observed, it is none other than the everlasting covenant of grace in its continuation and further manifestation (Eph. i. 4); and, as so continued and manifested, it existed for some 2,000 years from Abraham to our Lord, who was born and died under and in this covenant, which also He came to fulfil and not to destroy, Matt. v. 17; Rom. xv. 8. Had He abrogated it in any essential feature, or altogether, or had it terminated at His death, there would have been some direct intimations, nay, more, some direct commands from Himself and His Apostles to that effect; but there is nothing of the

kind. When the Jews rejected the Lord and were by divine judgment cast off, the covenant with Abraham and his seed was not then and thereby destroyed, for the Apostle pleads its existence still in earnest language, saying that the Jews are still beloved for their father's sake, the gifts and calling of God being without repentance; neither will He annul His covenant and cast off His people whom He foreknew. They have indeed cast themselves off from its mercies, through wilful and obstinate unbelief; nevertheless, the covenant lives, and hereafter they shall believe, and again become partakers of its salvation, Rom. xi. 1-36. In this same chapter Paul argues that although the mass of the people were cut off on account of unbelief, yet a remnant remained according to the election of grace. He contends that the existence of this covenant with Abraham was not contrary to the law of Moses, but agreeable thereto, in full force and effect, and to continue in Gospel times.

And now, since the covenant is everlasting, the people of the covenant must be so too. The existence of the one calls for the existence of the other. Nor are we disappointed, for it is a plain historical fact that the seed of Abraham exists under both the Old and New Dispensations—designated under the Old as the people of God. "I will take you to me for a people and be to you a God," Exod. vi. 7; Deut. iv. 20; xx. 24-26; xxix. 13; "the people He hath chosen for His inheritance," Ps. xxxiii. 12; "the Lord's portion," Deut. xxxii. 9; "His peculiar treasure," Ps. cxxxv. 4; Exod. xix. 5; "His peculiar, special people," Deut. xiv. 2; xxvi. 18; vii. 6; "the seed of Abraham," Ps. cv. 6; Isa. xli. 8; Neh. ix. 7; "the children of Jacob;" "Israel whom He has chosen," 1 Chron. xvi. 13; Ps. cv. 6; cvi. 5; Isa. xliii. 20, 44; Deut. iv. 7; and emphatically in distinction and separation from all other people; "the congregation which the Lord has purchased," Ps. lxxiv. 2; "the congregation," Deut. viii. 3; Josh. viii. 35, etc.; Levit. iv. 15; "the congregation of Israel," Exod. xii. 3; xvi. 1, 2, 9; Josh. xxii. 20, etc.; Deut. xxxi. 30, and "the congregation of the Lord, Jehovah," Numb. xxvii. 17; xvi. 3; Josh. xxii. 17, etc. They are designated under the

New Dispensation as the same people of God. Our Lord according to the flesh, was of this people, and in His office, their king; in His mission of salvation, their minister, "a minister of the circumcision." "He came unto His own," and ever treated them as the chosen of God—the kingdom, the congregation of the Lord—of which He was to be the glory. He was received by the few and rejected by the many. John, His forerunner, came to prepare "His people" for Him. The pious rejoiced in His coming, "for God had visited His people," Luke i. 17, 68-77. And yet again the Apostle recognized the Jews as the ancient people of God, Acts vii. ; xiii. 7—then, as from the beginning, a peculiar people, separated unto God from Samaritans and Gentiles, possessing the true religion, and practicing the true worship of God. Finally, this body of the seed of Abraham is called by two different words in the Hebrew Scriptures, but each signifying "congregation," "assembly." That body is the congregation, the assembly of the Lord, and these two Hebrew words are uniformly translated in the Septuagint, and the New Testament, by a Greek word of similar import—a word signifying a congregation, an assembly called out—and is always used by the inspired writers of the New Testament to designate the congregation of God's people. When it refers to them, it is always rendered in our English Bible by the word "Church." Moses was with this "Church in the wilderness," which came down from Abraham, and which he brought out of Egypt, to which Christ came, to which His Apostles ministered, and into which the Gentiles were gathered.

Second: of this body, existing under an everlasting covenant and under both the Old and New Dispensations, Christ is the head. The body cannot exist without the head, nor the head without the body. The one head has ever the same body.

The headship of Christ in His Church, dates from eternity. To this exalted station, when the covenant of grace was entered into, was He appointed by the Father, and He put on the glory and assumed the power and authority before the world was, John xvii. 1-20; Eph. i. 19-23; Phil. ii. 5-10.

If the multitude of the elect be a host, He is their leader, and commander, the captain of their salvation. If they be a people, a kingdom, He is their ruler and king. If they be a family, the sons of God, He is their elder brother, the first-born and chief among them. If they be the body, He is their head, having in all things the preëminence. Over this body Christ is to reign until He subdues all enemies under His feet, and presents it in the upper world a "glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," Eph. v. 27; Ps. cx. 1-3; 1 Cor. xv. 1-58.

Christ reigned over the Church from its first foundation on earth—over "the sons of God," from Adam to Abraham, and over Abraham and his seed. The Messiah was the angel of God's presence who appeared to Abraham, covenanted with him, kept him, led his seed down into Egypt, delivered them thence, and settled them in their own land, there ruling over them until He appeared incarnate, their Lord and their God. When they rejected and crucified Him, they did not dethrone Him. A portion of His visible people believed in Him. His true Church continued. He appeared to this portion after His resurrection, and gave them officers, ordinances, and laws. After His ascension, He endued them with power from on high to go into the four corners of the earth and gather His elect out of every nation into this one fold, so that there should be one fold and one shepherd, saying: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 28-29; Mark. xvi. 15-20; Acts i. ii. etc.; Eph. iv. 1-16; 1 Pet. ii. 4-9.

Third: the enlargement of the Church under the Old Dispensation, by the calling and introduction of the Gentiles, proves the Church under both Dispensations to be one and the same. The confinement of the visible Church to the natural seed of Abraham, was to be temporary only. "A father of many nations," saith the Lord, "have I made thee," Gen. xvii. 5. Jacob apprehending this truth, in his prophecy fixes the time when the Gentiles, "the many nations," should be grafted in, namely, when Shiloh should come and the sceptre depart. The civil state of the people of God would

then be broken up, and "unto Shiloh should the gathering of the people be," Gen. xlix. 10; Dan. ix. 25-27. David, in Ps. lxxxii., and in many others, predicts the glory of Christ's kingdom, and the gathering in under His sceptre of the Gentile nations. Isaiah follows in the same strain. The Gentiles hear the glad sound, and flow unto Zion, and experience the glorious rest of Christ, Isa. ii. 2; xi. 1-10; xlii. 1-4; xlix. 6-23; lv. 1-5; lx. 1-22; lxii. 1-12. Jeremiah and Haggai anticipate the same enlargement, Jer. xxiii. 5-6; Hag. ii. 7. Simeon takes the infant Saviour in his arms and rejoices in Him as "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel," Luke ii. 29-31. Our Lord Himself announces to the Jews the ingathering of the Gentiles: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd," John x. 16. In accordance with the original design of God, with the teaching of the prophets, and of the Lord Himself, the Apostle Paul was made an Apostle to the Gentiles, and he went into all quarters to preach Christ, assuring them that God in mercy had "made them fellow-heirs and of the same body" with His ancient people, Eph. iii. 6, and that God would, out of twain, that is, of Jew and Gentile, make "one new man." The Church should have a new composition as to members, but be the same body still, Eph. ii. 15-22. In like manner preached other Apostles. When our Lord came, the old Church was not broken up, (save in its civil constitution,) nor was anything wholly new set up in its place, even upon its ruins. On the contrary, the same Church of God was continued, and, according to God's purposes and predictions, the Gentiles were engrafted into it; and so it continues the same forever.

But, Fourth: many express declarations of Scripture may be adduced to the same effect. We have already referred to the original words of the covenant: "I have made thee a father of many nations;" from which the Apostle argues, Rom. iv. 16-17, that all who believe are the seed of Abraham and of the same body, whoever they may be, Gal. iii. 29. We have referred also to the words of our Lord in John. xii. 32;

the Gentiles shall be brought in and there shall be "one fold and one shepherd." The Apostle to the Gentiles tells them that they were once without Christ, being "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"—out of the communion of the Church of God, "and strangers from the covenants of promise"—but now "they were made nigh by the blood of Christ:" He hath made peace between Jews and Gentiles, and made both one; that is, one people, for He has broken down the middle wall of partition between them, that of the two He might make one new man, reconciling both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body. "Now, therefore," says he, "ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-heirs with the saints and of the household of God." How so? By being incorporated with the ancient people of God in that household. Jew and Gentile, fitly framed together, form a building, a temple of God, Eph. ii. 11–22. Again he says Eph. iii. 6, "The Gentiles should ("by the purpose of God") be fellow-heirs and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel." The Jews stood at the door of the Church, and said they should not come in and be of the same body with them. But our Lord and His prophets and Apostles say, "Yes, they shall come in and be incorporated with you, and form one body and one Church of God." In Rom. xi. 1–36, the same Apostle to the Gentiles discourses of the casting away of God's people, not wholly, but partially; for, says he, I am a witness of it—even I who am a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus—"I am an Israelite." "God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew." He may cast off many for their unbelief, but not all. Elijah in his day pleaded against Israel as totally apostate, and thought that he alone was left true to God. But the Lord assured him that it was not so, for He had reserved to Himself seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. This, argues the Apostle, is an illustration of the state of Israel now: "Even so, then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." The elect among the Israelites obtain salvation by Jesus Christ; and the rest, the unbelieving mass, are left in the midst of

many mercies (Rom. xi. 8-9) to blindness of mind and hardness of heart, Matt. xi. 25-26; John xii. 37-41; Isa. vi. 9-10.

But are they cast off and delivered unto unbelief forever? No. Their casting away is temporary, "I say then, have they stumbled" (at the stone of stumbling, 1 Pet. ii. 7-8, etc.) "that they should fall" forever? "God forbid." Their fall is overruled for good. Through their rejection of the Lord Jesus, the Gospel flows out more abundantly to the Gentiles. Their loss will be another's gain; their fall the riches of the world. And if their casting away be the occasion of sending out the Gospel for the reconciling of the world unto God, what will the effect upon the world be when God shall turn them again from their unbelief, receiving them as His own covenant people, and bringing them in their multitudes and fulness into His Church again? The glorious effect of this return of God's ancient people will be such a testimony to the truth of the Gospel and the faithfulness of God, as to overwhelm mankind with conviction; and, however much Christianity may have prevailed and been glorious, now the prevalence and glory will be beyond all former bounds, and be as "life from the dead," Rom. xi. 11-15. The Apostle here opens one of the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

The Israelites are not to be cast away forever. No. "If the first fruit be holy"—set apart and consecrated to God—"the lump is also holy. And if the root be holy, so are the branches." The Israelites are the root, the stem, the branches—they are "the good olive tree" planted by the Lord—and it is with the believing remnant of this people that the Gentiles are incorporated. They are taken from the wild olive tree (formerly not the people of God) and, some of the natural branches of the good olive tree being broken off, the Gentiles are grafted in among them, are put in their place, and so partake of the root and fatness of the good olive tree. The same tree that grew under the Old Dispensation, continues to grow under the New, with this difference, that, under the New, having some, not all of its branches broken off, it has had grafted into their place branches from a wild

olive tree. But it is the same tree still, bearing upon its stem all the branches, and nourishing all from the fatness of its own roots. And what is still more wonderful, proving it to be the same tree still, hereafter its own natural branches, broken off for a season, shall be gathered up and grafted again into their own good olive tree: yea, God is able to graft them in again. Here is the same tree living through all time, bearing its own natural branches, and branches wild by nature, all feeding together upon the same root and fatness. To lay aside the figure: here are the Israelites—the congregation of the Lord—the visible Church of God, coming out of the Old Dispensation into the New. Great numbers are broken off and separated through unbelief, but leave behind a body of believers who continue the Church of God, possessing the word, ordinances, ministry, and the presence and Spirit of God, and into which body the Gentiles are called. So it shall continue, composed mainly of Gentiles, but in all ages embracing also a remnant of Jews according to the election of grace, until the time when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in; then all Israel shall be turned to the Lord, grafted in again, and be saved. Comp. Deut. xviii. 15–19; Acts iii. 22–24; Matt. viii. 10–12; xxi. 33–43.

Fifth: facts agree with these declarations of Scripture. If we begin with the fall and search for the origin of the visible church, we discover the sons, the people of God, existing visibly both before and after the flood, but in no revealed organized form until the call of Abraham. From that event they exist in a visible, organized form down to the age of the Apostles, past the times of the Messiah. Reverse the process, and run from the age of the Apostles backward and upward, and the line and history of God's visible, organized Church runs up to Abraham, and runs out in him. Beyond Abraham we cannot go. If that Church, under the Old and New Dispensations be not one and the same, when did the Church under the Old Dispensation end? And when did the Church under the New Dispensation begin? The end cannot be shown of the one, nor the beginning be shown of the other. The destruction of Jerusalem, and dispersion of the Israelites

did not end the Church under the Old Dispensation ; nor give a beginning to the Church under the New. That awful judgment destroyed the civil constitution and state of the Church, as was designed and foretold of God. But the visible, organized, spiritual, believing body, holding under the covenant the same faith, the same religion as in the beginning, lived on under its glorious head, and, throwing open the doors, admitted the Gentile. Here is no break, no end ; here is no new beginning, no new body. The Lord Jesus is set by God upon His holy hill of Zion, Ps. ii. 6. He sits upon the throne of David, his father, upon his kingdom, to order it ; Isa. ix. 6-7, and He does so, making no changes essential to the being or unity of His Church, but only removing the shadows, revealing the substance, breaking down the wall of partition, and bringing the Gentile world into it. In this enlarged form, it shall consume all other kingdoms and stand forever, Dan. ii. 44-45.

The sum of the proof that the Church under both dispensations is one and the same, is, that the covenant which God made with Abraham and his seed is everlasting, and consequently Abraham and his seed continue throughout all time : that Christ is the head of His Church from the beginning, and never has had but the one body : that the Church under the Old Dispensation was to be continued and enlarged under the New by the introduction of the Gentiles, according to God's purpose made known in many prophecies : that the Scriptures in many passages assert the unity of the Church under both dispensations ; and, finally, all the facts of the history do agree with these passages.

The unity now established of the Church under both dispensations is of singular value in enabling us to understand the constitution of the Church ; its ordinances, members, and officers ; its rule of faith and form of government ; the nature of its rites and ceremonies, and the spiritual character of its worship. It moreover stamps a beautiful simplicity and unity upon the entire history of the Church, and is the golden chain that binds in perfect harmony the Old and New Testaments—the entire word of God, from Genesis to Revelation.

CHAPTER XVI.

SUBJECTS OF THE COVENANT MADE WITH ABRAHAM : ADULTS AND CHILDREN ; BELIEVERS, TOGETHER WITH THEIR INFANT CHILDREN.—THIS CONSTITUTION OF MEMBERSHIP WITH THE VISIBLE CHURCH PERMANENT.—FEMALES INCLUDED IN MALES.

THE covenant made with Abraham has not unaptly been styled a family covenant, being made with parents who represent their children, and whose fortunes, in God's providence and grace, their children usually follow. But while the covenant appeals primarily to the family, it throws wide its comprehensive arms and embraces all families of believers in one great family and household of faith, of which God is the Father and Christ Jesus the first-born among many brethren—a kingdom of Heaven in which "little children" are found, Matt. xix. 14—a flock which the great Shepherd feeds, and whose lambs he gathers with his arms and carries in his bosom, Isa. xl. 11.

Who are the persons with whom God enters into covenant? Or who are they whom God has constituted the members of His visible Church? The answer, without possibility of contradiction, is, adults and children. Saith God, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee. Every man-child among you shall be circumcised : it shall be a token of

the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations, he that is born in the house or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy seed: he that is born in thy house and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised, and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." Gen. xvii. 7-14. Here are the chapter and verse for the original constitution of God's visible Church in respect to its members. It is the original and only constitution in this respect ever given to His church in all the Bible. Here is the only place where we learn who are to be the members of the visible church, and the mode of their admission, visibly and orderly. Hence we derive the authority so to recognize and to admit them. What was the constitution of the Church in respect to its members before Abraham, as has already been remarked, we know not from any revelation of Scripture, and cannot determine whether the infant seed of believers were recognized as belonging to the visible people of God from the beginning, or not; or by what rite, if any, were members received into the Church. But now in Abraham, for the first time in Scripture, the constitution in respect to members is definitely fixed by the great Head of the Church Himself, and we have nothing to do but to assent and submit to it. They are believing parents (or adults) together with their infant children. This constitution remained in full force until our Redeemer came. He was born under it an infant member of the visible Church, and received the sign and seal of the fact by circumcision, according to God's command, when He was eight days old; nor did He, or His Apostles after Him, alter or annul this constitution in any respect whatever, and it remains, in perpetual force, the true and only constitution of His Church in respect to its members. He has united in membership parents and children; what, therefore, God has joined together let not man put asunder.

There are two classes of members: first, adults. Originally these were Abraham and Sarah, and such servants of their household as were of adult age—believers upon their own

profession, partakers of the covenant of grace, and entitled to all its blessings through faith—a faith which Abraham had being yet uncircumcised, Gen. xv. 6; Rom. iv. 9–12. God entered into covenant with him as a believer, “and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith he had being yet uncircumcised.” It is His believing people that God takes into covenant with Himself, and with such He set up His visible Church. The qualification for membership on the part of this class of Church members, namely, adults, is faith; they must give evidence of being believers in God, ere they can receive the sign of the covenant, the initiatory rite, and be incorporated with the body of the visible Church. All adults entering the Church from the world must do so on profession of their faith. Had none been brought into the Church but the seed of Abraham, then there never would have been a personal faith required of any before circumcision; since all seed of believers, being born in the covenant and members of the visible Church, would have been circumcised; but the Church from time to time, admitted proselytes, or converts from the heathen world, and they came in on profession of their faith, and being circumcised had all their children circumcised too. Great was the company of such converts in the latter day glory of the Church. Second, children. The only child Abraham had at the time was Ishmael, a lad of thirteen years, subject unto his father and circumcised by him. It is more than probable there were other children in the very numerous household of Abraham; and if so they were circumcised along with their parents, Gen. xiv. 14; xvii. 23–27. Children by the covenant were to be circumcised when “eight days old;” but, in cases of necessity, and apparently of criminal delay (as in the case of Moses’ children, Exod. iv. 24–26), they might be circumcised much older. Ishmael was thirteen years old; no doubt other children in the household of Abraham were over eight days old. Joshua circumcised all the children born in the wilderness, at Gilgal, great numbers of whom had not only attained mature age, but must have been fathers of families. The reason of the delay is satisfactorily stated, Josh. v. 1–8.

The covenant is made with Abraham and his seed, represented by him both in his family and in his loins—made as really with the seed as though they were every one alive, in all their generations, and present before God at the making of the covenant, and the setting up of the Church. The seed being included are consequently born in the covenant—born members of the visible Church, and on this account entitled to circumcision. Circumcision does not bring them into the covenant, nor make them members of the Church; they are in the covenant and members of the Church already, by virtue of descent from believing parents; they are born the covenanted seed of believers, and therefore entitled to circumcision. The qualification for membership in adults and children is different. In adults who come out of the world, as just now stated, it is faith; their own professed faith in God and His salvation entitles them to circumcision. But, in respect to children of believers already in the Church, their only required qualification (bestowed upon them in the sovereign mercy of God), is that of birth. They are born the seed of believers, and therefore entitled to receive the sign of circumcision. For example: all children born in the wilderness during a space of forty years were not circumcised, and yet God dealt with them all that time as His people, and so they were—the true Israel, because the covenanted descendants of Abraham. They were born members of His visible Church; and when Joshua circumcised them, their circumcision did not make them members; it was only a sign and seal to them and all others of the fact of their being already so, and consequently entitled to circumcision. If it had been otherwise he never would have circumcised them. If children are not born members of the visible Church, and are made so only by circumcision, what becomes of the membership of females who are incapable of the rite?

Children of believing parents left orphans before circumcision, might, by surviving relatives or friends—themselves believers—be presented for circumcision and brought up by them in the nurture of the Lord. In like manner the children of heathen parents, coming under the control, or into the

absolute possession of God's people, might be circumcised. Of this we have instances in captives taken in war, and in servants procured of the neighboring heathen. Indeed express provision is made in this covenant for the introduction of the heathen servants and their families into God's visible church, Gen. xvii. 12-13.

The children of one believing parent—the other being an unbeliever—are born in the Church, a holy seed, and so must needs be circumcised, Exod. iv. 24-26; 1 Cor. vii. 12-14; Acts. xvi. 1-3.

By this ordination of God, circumcision could be and was administered to males only; but females were represented in the males, and were considered as circumcised, Gal. ii. 7-9; Jer. ix. 25; Rom. iv. 9; Acts x. 45; xi. 2. The whole people of God, male and female, were called "the circumcision," in distinction from the heathen, who were called "the uncircumcision," Rom. ii. 25-27; iii. 30. Israelitish females and daughters of the circumcised were of the circumcised, and therefore could not contract marriage with heathen men who were uncircumcised, Gen. xxxiv. 14; 1 Sam. xvii. 26. They were, equally with males, members of the Church of God—born so. So also heathen females were of the uncircumcised, and therefore Israelitish men should not contract marriage with them, Judg. xiv. 3; 2 Sam. i. 20; yet they might be proselyted, converted, and received into the Church of God on profession of their faith, Josh. ii. 1-21; vi. 22-25; Ruth i. 16-18; ii. 11-12, and so become of the communion, and their male children be entitled to the rite.

This constitution of the visible Church in respect to its members, remains in force, never having been abrogated, or in any manner altered by the Lord. If we say adults only, on profession of their faith, are to be admitted members of the Church, and exclude their infant seed, do we not presumptuously put asunder what God has joined together? Do we not annul His own ordination? If we allow the seed of believers covenant and visible connection with the people of God under the Old Dispensation, and deny it to them under the New, do we not destroy the unity of the Church, and introduce another

constitution in respect to membership? The Old and New Dispensations are not antagonistic, but essentially one and the same; and, in determining who are the members of the visible Church, the whole Bible (not a part only) is to be our guide. The fundamental error of those who deny the membership of the infant seed of believers, is a denial of the unity of the visible church under both Dispensations. In reply, two questions only need to be propounded: First, Is the visible, organized Church, under both the Old and the New Dispensations, one and the same? and second, Has the original constitution, in respect to its members, ever been repealed, or in any manner altered so as to exclude infants? The first being decided in the affirmative, and the second in the negative, all controversy is at an end. The original constitution in respect to members remains in full force.

The unity of the Church has been established. The second question, Has the original constitution in respect to its members ever been repealed, or in any manner altered so as to exclude infants? can be answered only in the negative. No repeal or alteration was made under the Old Dispensation, nor can it be found under the New; for the New Testament recognizes throughout the infant seed of believers as members of the visible church, as the following induction of particulars will show:

1. It makes that recognition by asserting and establishing the perpetuity of the covenant with Abraham, and the unity of the Church, making in connection therewith no alteration whatsoever in either. If the covenant with believers and their seed, or the constitution of the Church in respect to its members, was to be abrogated or altered in gospel times, to such an extent as to cast out the whole infant membership, (which had existed for over nineteen hundred years,) it is incredible that no prophet ever spake of it; that neither our Lord nor any of His Apostles ever left any command, or the shadow of an example to that effect. We have chapter and verse for the constitution, but none for its abrogation or alteration.

2. Our Lord, the Head of the Church, recognizes infant

membership in the New Testament. In His own person, when He became flesh, He took on Him the seed of Abraham, Heb. ii. 16, and was born under the covenant—born a member of the Church, and when eight days old, was circumcised in evidence thereof, Luke ii. 1-21. In this Church was He brought up, upon her ministry He waited, her Sabbaths He observed, her Scriptures He embraced, her synagogues and temple He attended, her feasts He celebrated; He was an acknowledged member, and to her discipline He submitted. All other members were "His brethren," and in His church relations He was made like to them, as well as in all other things, sin excepted, Heb. ii. 17. He belonged to no other Church; to this Church He came, in this Church He labored. Saith He, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee," Heb. ii. 12; Ps. xxii. 22; and for this Church He shed His most precious blood, Eph. v. 23-27.

Again, in Christ's fellowship with the Church; His fore-runner John the Baptist, (who like Himself was circumcised when eight days old,) He acknowledged and fellowshiped with as a member of the Church of God, and a great prophet in that church. He fellowshiped with Nathaniel, whom He declared to be an Israelite in whom was no guile; with His own Apostles and disciples, whom He called His brethren, and ever with the Jews, as children of the kingdom—the people and church of God. They were all born members.

And again, in Christ's instructions and practice: for when there were brought unto Him "little children," "infants," Luke xviii. 15, that He should put His hands on them and pray, and the disciples rebuked them, "Jesus said, Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xix. 13-15; Mark x. 13-16; Luke xviii. 15-17. The children were "little," such as had to be "brought." He "took them up in his arms, and laid His hands upon them, and blessed them." "Of such," "little children," (not such as have the disposition of little children,) "is the kingdom of God." The point at issue between Christ and His disciples was suffering little children,

the children of Israelites, to come to Him. They forbade them. Christ said, "much displeased," "Suffer them to come to me." Then He gives the reason: of such "little children" is the kingdom of God; they compose a part of and belong to the kingdom of God, therefore let them be brought to receive my blessing. By the kingdom of God, or of heaven, He intends that kingdom into which men may "enter"—the Church itself—of which they may be members here on earth, and hereafter in a glorified state in heaven. The logical and grammatical construction of this remarkable passage requires this interpretation, and admits of no other. After blessing the children, Christ improved the occasion, and enjoined upon all the cultivation of a childlike spirit as a necessary qualification for a worthy entrance into the kingdom of heaven. The reason why the children should be brought unto Him, and the improvement which He makes of the occasion, are distinct, and are not to be confounded. He makes a similar improvement at another time, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, Matt. xviii. 1-4. The conduct and language of our Lord are in perfect agreement with the relations which children had always sustained to the Church since the days of Abraham, and are no other than what would naturally be looked for in Him. He acknowledges the lambs of His own flock as infant members of His Church.

3. His Apostles did the same. In their own persons they belonged to the Church, and claimed membership, because so born. In their fellowship one with another, and with all Israel around them, they were in fellowship in every way with the household of faith, and all were members by birth.

In the Apostles' preaching, infants are regarded as members of the Church. Our Lord's last command was, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations" (according to the original Greek, "disciple," "make disciples of all nations"). How could the Apostles understand it? As it had been understood in all previous ages of the Church. When persons of other nations were proselyted, "made disciples of," they were received into the Church, and their families along with them, by circum-

cision. The children of believers always went into the Church with their parents. The Apostles understood the command in this way, as their preaching proves. "Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for the promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," Acts ii. 38-39. It is not material whether the promise referred to by Peter, be the promise of the Holy Ghost, or of Christ, through whom the Spirit comes, or of the covenant, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." It includes the children of his Israelitish hearers, persons in the covenant; and also the children of the far-off Gentiles, as many as the Lord shall call. Hear Peter on another occasion: "Ye are children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities," Acts iii. 25-26. Peter, the "minister of the circumcision," recognizes the Israelites to be still under the original covenant with Abraham, and of course their children with them. And why should Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, say to the jailer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," Acts xvi. 31, if the salvation of his house, or family, was not connected with his faith? The man and his family go together. Here is the covenant in the mind and preaching of the Apostle: "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." So flows the current of Scripture.

In the Apostles' instructions, infant members of the Church are recognized. Paul, in treating of marriage, 1 Cor. vii., affirms the doctrine that Christianity does not require separation because either of the parties is an unbeliever. "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him," 1 Cor. vii.

12-13. They are husband and wife living in allowed and lawful wedlock. But is not the fact that one is an unbeliever a sufficient ground for annulling the relation? "No," says the Apostle, "the believer is not, in consequence of such a union, cut off from union with God, and all the privileges of faith. Belief is exalted above unbelief. In the eye of God, the belief of the one party rules the unbelief of the other, and in a manner sanctifies it. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband." But to what extent does this sanctification of the unbeliever by the believer go? Does it bring the unbeliever into the Church? No; for being an adult he must come in on his own profession of faith. What then does it accomplish in respect to him? The sanctification reaches his children, and overrules his unbelief, and, being born of a believing mother, they are in the covenant, and entitled to all its privileges and mercies. So reasons the Apostle. "Else," says he, "were your children unclean, but now are they holy." The holiness of the children stands in immediate connection with the belief of the one parent. In what sense, then, are they holy? In the sense that they are legitimate? The question of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the children is not before the Apostle at all. The children are necessarily legitimate, because the parties are already lawfully married. They are husband and wife, 1 Cor. vii. 12-16. The children are holy in the sense of being set apart, consecrated to God. In this sense the word "holy" is frequently used in Scripture, Exod. xiii. 2, 12-13; xxii. 29; xxxiv. 19; Numb. iii. 13; viii. 16-17; Ezra. ix. 2; Deut. xxvi. 19; xxviii. 19; Levit. xxi. 6; Numb. vi. 5. By virtue of descent from a believing parent, the children are the seed of the covenant, holy, set apart, consecrated to God, and entitled to the sign and seal of their covenant relations. Of great comfort is this doctrine to the believing parent who is married to an unbeliever; for such was the doctrine in the Church of old, Acts xvi. 1-3.

Finally, the Apostles recognize infant membership in their practice. It was their practice to baptize whole families, or households. At Philippi the Apostle Paul baptized two

families. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia; no mention is made of any other in her house being converted but herself. Nevertheless, when she was baptized her household was baptized at the same time, Acts xvi. 14-15. The members of the household went with its head. Paul and Silas "spake the word to the jailer and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his straightway;" that is, all his family, or household. Their baptism is connected with and follows his; and it is said "he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house," that is, he, believing in God, rejoiced with all his house. Again, Peter was to tell Cornelius "words whereby he and all his house should be saved," Acts x. 1-48; xi. 13-14. Here the family goes again with the head. The Apostle Paul baptized Crispus at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 14-16. "He believed on the Lord with all his house," Acts xviii. 8. He baptized in Corinth "Gaius his host," Rom. xvi. 23. He was a man of family, and without doubt his family was baptized with him. He baptized also, in the same city, "the household of Stephanus," 1 Cor. xvi. 15. In accordance with this practice, the Apostles speak of churches being in certain families, or households. Paul sends greetings to Priscilla and Aquilla, and to "the church that is in their house," Rom. xvi. 3-5; comp. 1 Cor. 16-19. He salutes "Nymphas and the church which is in his house," Col. iv. 15, comp. Rom. xvi. 10-11; Phil. iv. 22; 2 Tim. iv. 19. These were believing, Christian families, parents and children. The original word which we translate "house," means "families." If it be inquired whether any children were in these baptized families, and in these churches in the families, we answer that while children are not expressly named, it was not necessary that they should be. It would be difficult to select at random five or six families, from as many distinct cities, and in every case fail to find children in them. We as naturally and as necessarily conclude that children were in these baptized families, as that they were in the families of men who were bishops in the Church. The bishop was required "to rule his own house, or family, well, having his children in subjec-

tion with all gravity," 1 Tim. iii. 1-5. The epistles also of the Apostles, addressed to the different churches, throw light on their practice; since they make their appeals and communicate their instructions to parents and children, masters and servants. The apostolic churches were constituted of families and households, parents and children, masters and servants, Eph. vi. 1-9; 2 John vs. 1; Col. iii. 18-25; iv. 1.

4. Nor has the New Testament made any change in the sign and seal of the covenant, under the New Dispensation, in the rite of admission to the Church, so as to render infants incapable of receiving it; but, on the contrary, it makes baptism, although differing in form, identical with circumcision in nature, and equally applicable to the same subjects, substituting the one for the other.

Circumcision and baptism are identical in nature. Was circumcision the divinely instituted rite of admission to the Church, and a sign and seal to the covenant of grace, under the Old Dispensation? Such, in each particular, is baptism under the New, Gen. xvii. 1-27; Acts vii. 8; Rom. iv. 11; Luke i. 59; ii. 21; Phil. iii. 5; John vii. 22-23; Gen. xxxiv. 14-24; Exod. xii. 48; 1 Cor. xii. 13; Acts ii. 38-41; viii. 12-38; ix. 18; x. 48; xvi. 15, 33; xviii. 8; Mark xvi. 16; Gal. iii. 26-27; Col. ii. 11-12; Matt. xxviii. 19-20. Does circumcision signify the native depravity of the human heart, and its need of regeneration, and is the rite the outward sign of the inward grace of regeneration? Deut. x. 16; xxx. 6; Jer. iv. 4; ix. 26; Ezek. xi. 19-20; xxxvi. 25-28; Levit. xxvi. 40-42; Acts vii. 51; Col. ii. 13; Rom. ii. 28-29; Phil. iii. 3. Baptism signifies precisely the same, John iii. 3-6; Titus iii. 1-6; 1 Pet. iii. 21; Col. ii. 11-14; Rom. vi. 1-11; Acts xvi. 15; viii. 13, 18-24. Does circumcision signify the condemnation of the sinner under the law of God, and his need of faith in the Redeemer for justification unto life eternal? Acts vii. 51-53; Jer. ix. 25-26; Col. ii. 13; Rom. iv. 9-12; Gal. iii. 24-29; John viii. 56; Heb. xi. 13. Baptism signifies precisely the same, Acts ii. 38; viii. 36-38; x. 47-48; xvi. 27-34; Gal. iii. 24-27; Mark. xvi. 16. Is circumcision prophetic, and does it look forward to Christ?

Baptism looks backward to Him, He is the great object in which they both centre, Rom. iv. 9-12; Mark xvi. 16. Now, if our Lord, in ordaining the rite of admission to the Church after His coming, had so changed its nature as to make it not only altogether different from the rite of admission ordained before His coming, but wholly inapplicable to the same objects, then indeed there might be sure ground to suppose, (even without any express command to that effect, which we deem most necessary in so important a matter,) that He did intend to set aside the original constitution of His Church in respect to its members, and to restrict the rite of admission to one class, to the exclusion of the other. But He has made no such change in the nature and signification of the rite of admission; consequently, circumcision and baptism, being identical in nature, are applicable and belong to the same subjects. The Lord, so far as we can discover His will from the nature of the rite of admission under the New Dispensation, has made no change in relation to the members of His Church as previously determined by Him under the Old. He has merely given the rite a milder form and a wider application, for it may be administered alike to male and female. Baptism has come in the place of circumcision; the one has been substituted for the other. The prophetic design involved in the rite of circumcision called for some change or modification of the rite itself, when that design should in due course of time be fulfilled. Circumcision was "not of Moses," but, long before him, "of the fathers." It not only implied a profession of faith in Christ, but also a firm expectation of His coming in the flesh, of the seed of Abraham. It, therefore, looked forward to Christ, and was prophetic of His coming. When He came, the prophetic character that was in circumcision was fulfilled, and the rite expired by the statute of its own limitation. To continue it after Christ came, would be to deny that He had come. This is what the unbelieving Jews did, and do even to this day. They deny Jesus of Nazareth, and circumcise unto a Messiah to come. For this reason, the Apostles would not suffer the Jews who believed, to circumcise their children, and bind themselves to conform

to all the moral and ceremonial laws, as though Christ had not come, Acts xxi. 21, for from all these things He had delivered them. Nor would they allow professed converts from among the Jews, who adhered to these notions, to compel the Gentiles to be circumcised, Acts xv. Much of the Epistle to the Galatians is taken up in repelling these notions, Gal. ii., iii., iv., vi. 12-18; comp. Rom. ix. 30-33; x. 1-12; Phil. iii. 1-11. The fact that Paul circumcised Timothy, proves nothing to the contrary, for he gives the reason—an innocent conformity to the prejudices of the Jews. As he expresses it, “to the Jews I became as a Jew.” His design was, “to gain the Jews;” to send Timothy a preacher of the Gospel among them, who being not only a descendant of a Jew, but a circumcised Jew himself, would gain freer access to and greater influence over them, Acts xvi. 1-3. The former rite being laid aside, what other rite was substituted in its stead? That other rite was the rite of baptism.

Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ after His resurrection, and immediately before His ascension—the rite of admission into the visible Church, and the sign and seal of the covenant of grace, to be continued in His Church to the end of the world. “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,” Matt. xxviii. 19-20; Mark xvi. 15-20. The two sacraments of the New Testament have Christ as their author. He instituted the Lord’s supper on the night He was betrayed; then, forty days after, baptism. The Apostles, who partook of the Lord’s supper at its institution, were unbaptized; and, so far as there is any evidence to the contrary, were never baptized at all with the baptism instituted by Christ. As successors to our Lord, and as Apostles, they were the first persons appointed and authorized to administer the rite, Matt. xxvi. 20-29; 1 Cor. xi. 23, comp. Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Acts i. 1-9.

It is called the baptism of Christ, because it is ordained

of Christ as its author, and has, in a peculiar manner, Christ as its end. The whole form of it is reduced to the abbreviation, "Baptism in the name of Jesus," Acts ii. 38; viii. 16, 34-40; x. 47-48; xix. 5; Rom. vi. 13; Gal. iii. 27. It is so called also to distinguish it from the baptism of John, Matt. xxi. 25; Luke vii. 29; Acts xviii. 25; xix. 1-5, which was of divine authority, for God sent John a forerunner of Christ, and gave him commandment to baptize, Matt. xxi. 25; John i. 33. Yet his baptism was wholly a different ordinance, and was not in any sense Christian baptism, as is shown by the New Testament in the following particulars: First, John's baptism is different from Christ's baptism in its origin. He did not get his authority from Christ; for, at the time he came baptizing, he did not know the Lord as the Christ at all. John's authority was from Him who sent him to be a forerunner and to baptize, even God the Father, John i. 31-34; Mal. iv. 4-6. As to the nature and design of John's baptism, he was sent to "prepare the way of the Lord," Luke iii. 1-6; "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord," Luke i. 17. Therefore, he came preaching "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt iii. 2. "The long-promised Messiah is among you ready to be revealed; break off your sins by repentance, that they may be blotted out; be baptized on profession of your repentance, and so prepare yourselves to receive and believe on Him when He appears." His baptism was purely what the New Testament calls it, "a baptism of repentance," and of preparation to receive Christ. The only profession was that of repentance, and a determination to receive Christ when He should appear, Acts xix. 1-5; xiii. 24. In the form of administration, John's baptism is, "I baptize thee unto repentance, and preparation for the coming Messiah." Christ's baptism is, "I baptize thee in the name of the Lord," the Messiah who has come; and, in full form, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19-20; Acts viii. 16; x. 48; xix. 1-5. John's baptism died with him; after his death we hear no more of it, except as having passed away, and as not being true Christian baptism. John instituted no

new rite of admission into the Church ; he made no changes. It was not his business. He labored in the Church of the Old Dispensation as it then was. The Church relations of all whom he baptized remained the same. They continued to worship in the temple, and to circumcise their children, and to look for Christ. When Christ came he retired. He knew his place. He was not the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom. Said he, "He must increase, but I must decrease." After Christ appeared and he knew Him, he directed all his disciples to look to Him, John iii. 23-36. When Christ was about to ascend, then the New Dispensation began ; then He instituted on His own authority His own rite of baptism, and made it permanent in the Church, the ancient rite of admission giving way to it. Finally and conclusively, the Apostle Paul contrasts John's baptism with Christian baptism, shows the difference, sets aside John's baptism, and baptizes twelve of his disciples, whom he found at Ephesus, in the name of the Lord Jesus, bestowing on them an ordinary accompaniment of the baptism of Christ—the Holy Ghost in His miraculous influences, Acts xix. 1-5. No power of reason, and no ingenuity of criticism, can set aside this fact.

The baptism of Christ's disciples during His ministry, (for our Lord baptized no one,) was precisely that of John—preparatory and introductory to the full revelation of Christ to His Church, and passed away with the times and circumstances which called it into existence, John iii. 24-26 ; iv. 1-3 ; Matt. x. 7 ; iii. 2 ; iv. 17 ; Luke x. 9.

That baptism, as instituted by our Lord, came into the place of circumcision, is a matter of fact and of positive assertion. The fact that the inspired Apostles would not suffer circumcision to be continued, has been already shown ; and it is also in evidence that they required all Israelites and Gentiles, who would profess Christ and be numbered among His followers, to be baptized, Acts ii. 38-41 ; ix. 18 ; x. 47-48 ; xvi. 15, 33 ; viii. 8 ; xix. 5 ; xxii. 16 ; Rom. vi. 3 ; Eph. iv. 5 ; Col. ii. 12 ; 1 Cor. i. 14-16 ; Gal. iii. 27. And all the ministry of God after the Apostles followed in their footsteps, Acts viii. 12, 13, 16, 36-38. They assert not only

the identity of baptism and circumcision, but the substitution of the one in the place of the other, Col. ii. 8-12. "In whom," i. e., in Christ, "also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." That inward grace of regeneration signified by the outward sign of circumcision, the Colossians had experienced—they had been circumcised into Christ. How? By a literal circumcision? No. But by baptism; being "buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised Him from the dead." Circumcision into Christ under the Old Dispensation is baptism into Christ under the New.

To the foregoing positive evidence that the original constitution of the Church in respect to membership has been neither abrogated nor altered in any manner, so as to exclude infant members, and remains the same, including believers with their infant children, there is added subsidiary or collateral evidence to the same effect.

1. The Israelites never objected against Christ and His Apostles, that they cast their children out of the Church, and cut them off from the privileges and blessings of the covenant with Abraham. The Apostle James and the elders of the Church in Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 18-25, apprised Paul that there were many thousands of believing Jews who were zealous of the law, and "are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." No doubt, judging from Acts xv., his epistle to the Galatians, and various remarks in his writings, the Apostle taught these very things, but not in destruction of the covenant with Abraham, for that he affirms to be in existence and to be everlasting with God's people; nor to deprive children of all their rights and privileges under that covenant, for his preaching and practice were the opposite of this, as we have seen; but he taught these things to rebuke a legal and self-righteous spirit, which still possessed many of the believing Jews, and which placed in jeopardy their salva-

tion by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone, and indeed seriously affected their faith in Christ; for, by retaining rites and ceremonies which were fulfilled in Him, and so ceased to be binding, they gave countenance to the opinion of the unbelieving Jews, that our Lord was an impostor, and that the true Messiah had not yet come. The views and teachings of Paul were those of all the Apostles, and were embraced by all true believers among the Jews. Save the unwarrantable objection of these legalists, we hear nothing, in all the churches founded by the Apostles, of complaint in respect to the exclusion of children from their Church and covenant relations. No disputes, no difficulties, were raised on this point. The ancient covenant was dear to the ancient people of God, and the recognition of their children in that covenant was likewise dear to them; and the strong presumption is, that had the Lord or His Apostles altered the original constitution of the Church in respect to its members, there would not only have been evidence to that effect in the New Testament Scriptures, but some traces of opposition or inquiry in the early converts among the Jews; but there is nothing of the kind.

2. Infant membership agrees with the natural and established order of God's dealings with men in His providence; namely, that children follow the fortunes of their parents. They inherit, in general, their mental, moral, and physical constitution; their condition, fortune, honor, or shame; their religion, politics, and citizenship.

3. Infant membership agrees with God's dealings with men in all His covenants: His covenant of life with Adam, His covenant with Noah, and with other covenants made at different times with His people, Josh. viii. 35; Deut. xxix. 1-29. Also with His declarations concerning Himself, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel," Jer. xxxi. 1; with His commands, which are given to parents, and through them to children's children, Deut. x. 1-20; Eph. vi. 1-4; with His promises, "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children," Ps. ciii. 17; Exod. xx. 5-6; and with His threatenings, "For I the Lord thy God

am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me," Exod. xx. 5—all naturally agreeing with His covenant, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee."

4. Infant membership harmonizes with the natural and spiritual affections of parents. God not only enters into covenant with parents who put their trust in Him, but with their children also, and He regards and treats them differently from the children of unbelievers. The hearts of parents rejoice in the relation which their children sustain towards God, and in all the precious promises and provisions of the covenant.

5. The moral effect of infant membership is good upon the parents. It fills their hearts with gratitude to God for His merciful remembrance of their children, strengthens their faith and hope, encourages them in their labors and cares for their salvation, comforts them with the sympathy, aid, instruction, prayers, and watchful care of the Church, and fills their mouth with strong arguments when they would press the claims of religion upon their children.

The moral effect of such membership is good as to the children themselves. Early taught the nature of that covenant which God has graciously entered into with their believing parents and with themselves as their children, and that the sign and seal of their membership with God's visible Church has been put upon them, their minds will be more open to serious impressions, and more obedient to the voice of their parents, to that of the Church, and of God.

The Church is also benefited. Pastors will remember the injunctions of the Great Shepherd, "Feed my lambs," and be encouraged to bring the little children to Him for a blessing. Officers and members will be prompted to institute means of religious instruction and training for the children and youth, and offer continually fervent prayers for their salvation. In fine, the whole effect is to bring forward the rising generation as the hope of the Church and the world, and to set on foot every available means for their instruction in righteousness, and education for usefulness and happiness.

6. Facts also prove that whenever and wherever the Church has faithfully performed her duty to the children of the covenant, God's special blessing has descended from generation to generation.

The sum of the evidence, both direct and indirect, of the Church membership of the infants of believers is, that in the original constitution of His visible Church in respect to its members, God ordained them such: that this visible Church set up in Abraham is one and the same under both Dispensations: that the original constitution as to members, never having been revoked or altered, remains in full force: that the infant seed of believers are recognized as members of the Church in the New Testament, by our Lord and His Apostles: that circumcision—the initiatory rite under the Old Dispensation—and baptism—the initiatory rite under the New—differ in form, but are identical in nature: that baptism has come into the place of circumcision, and is applicable to the same subjects: that in preaching, the Apostles recognize children as interested in the Gospel and covenant of God: that in their practice they baptized whole families and households, and addressed their epistles to churches composed of families and households, masters and servants, parents and children. And, further, that the believing Jews never objected against our Lord and His Apostles that they cast their children out of the Church, and cut them off from the privileges and blessings of the covenant: that infant membership agrees with the natural and established order of God's dealings with men, both in His providence and in His Word: that it harmonizes with the natural and spiritual affections of parents: that the moral effect of this constitution of His Church is good, and that God crowns it with His blessing.

A few particulars remain to be noticed in relation to the membership of the seed of believers with the visible Church of God:

First: their membership under the covenant does not of itself—irrespective of proper qualifications in them—entitle them to a full participation in all the ordinances of the Church; for, in the early years of childhood, they are inca-

pable, from lack of sufficient intellectual development (whatever may be the sanctified state of their affections), of understanding, and, consequently, of appreciating all the ordinances of the Church to which adults and more advanced members have access. The rule of their participation under the Old Dispensation was none other than their ability to discern the true nature of the ordinances—the passover, for example. The ability would be earlier in some than in others, according, on the one hand, to the pains taken in their training to make them intelligent and true worshippers; and, on the other, to the degree of their mental and moral development. Hence, some might be brought forward much earlier than others; thus, no rule fixing the precise time could be laid down. It was at twelve years of age that our Divine Master appears going up with His parents to the passover in Jerusalem, Luke ii. 41–52. Whatever the age might be, like all other partakers, they were required to be at least ceremonially clean, and free from all outward objections; of spiritual inward purity, God, who alone knows the heart, would be the judge.

When we turn to the New Dispensation, the same preparation is required. The Apostle Paul (1 Cor. xi. 17–34) condemns the Corinthians for an unworthy and wicked approach to the Lord's supper, and lays it down as a rule that they only should partake who were able to discern the Lord's body. Worthy communicants needed an intellectual and moral preparation, and freedom from all obstacles arising from offences against the rules and discipline of the Church. So long then as one is unable to discern the Lord's body, he can have no right, nor should he be permitted to eat and drink at the Lord's table. We reach therefore, this statement, that the qualification for Church membership in an infant, is simply his being born of believing parents already in covenant with God. The qualification for this participation in the Lord's supper, is his being able to discern the Lord's body. The two are distinct. An individual may possess the one and not the other.

Second: it is the will of God that this original constitution of His Church in respect to membership should be preserved:

for a penalty is attached to its violation, Gen. xvii. 14, "And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant." An explanation of this passage was attempted in a previous chapter. The penalty is not only designed to influence parents to have their children circumcised, (otherwise they could not be received into the communion of God's people,) but to affect the Church standing of parents themselves; for, by not circumcising their children, they would, of and for themselves, renounce the covenant; and, according to the command, be cut off from God's people. In this way only could the unconscionable man child break the covenant of God and be cut off. The same rule remains unchanged. Parents who refuse to have the sign and seal of membership applied to their children, do by that act deny this constitution of the Church in respect to its members, and cut themselves off and their children from the covenant. Laboring under this error, which is not soul-destroying, they may be permitted to commune with the Church, but not to continue members in full faith and standing, for the obvious reason that in these things they are not one with the other members. Should they be considered such, they would not only be a disturbing element in the Church, but its constitution, in a respect so important and precious, might not only be endangered through their growing numbers and influence, but be ultimately overthrown, which is not the will of God.

Third: the infants of all parents who adhere to the covenant, and in their lives are free from gross and scandalous vices, should receive the sign and seal of the covenant. Our warrant for this statement is the practice of the Church under the Old Dispensation, and the absence of any alteration or direction to the contrary under the New. If it be urged that none but regenerated parents can truly embrace the covenant for themselves and their children, and therefore present them for the sign and seal, then it would follow that actual regeneration is essential to any connection with the covenant at all, which would exclude all infants from it until able to give credible evidence of a change of heart, and oblige all who are

conscious of none to withdraw from it. Then, the command of God to apply the seal, and the promise of God, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee," would both fall to the ground. Rather let it be affirmed that the sign, (whether circumcision or baptism,) was that of connection with the visible Church, and brought the individual under its watch and training, and was also an outward sign and seal of the inward grace of faith and union with Christ, which might be possessed by the individual at the time, or which he might subsequently come into possession of. The promise of God to be a God to him, might be made sure afterwards. Although unregenerated, and not a member of His invisible Church, he would be in covenant with God, and a member of His visible Church. While in this state, free from gross and scandalous vices, believing intelligently in the covenant, and desirous that his children should be recognized and brought under its blessings, could they not receive the initiatory rite, and be through Him members of the visible Church also? Such was the practice of old, and it becomes our guide, since no case like the present is found on the pages of the New Testament. No door will be opened to formality and superstition; for such instances in engaged churches under the covenant are exceedingly rare, and are prevented by the faithfulness of God in effectually calling either one or both the parents—themselves the seed of believing parents—into saving union with Himself and His invisible Church.

Fourth: objections have been urged against this original and only constitution of God's visible Church in respect to its members; and by some the membership of the seed of believers has been set aside. It should be remembered that every doctrine of Holy Scripture, through human ignorance and infirmity, may be encumbered with difficulties, and have what are termed "objections" urged against it. But there is a wide difference between an objection and a difficulty. An objection, to be real and valid, must be directed against and overthrow the evidence upon which a doctrine rests; a difficulty respects our comprehension of the doctrine in the mode of its existence, either in whole, or in part, or in some of its relations

to other doctrines. A doctrine consequently may be true, and yet not free from difficulties ; in such a case, we receive the doctrine and wait for light to remove the difficulties.

The objections advanced against the evidence of the church membership of the infant seed of believers, are :

First : the Church under the Old and New Dispensations is not one and the same. If this objection were true, it would not overthrow infant membership, but only remove the constitution of the Church before the coming of Christ, in respect to its membership, out of that period, and confine the controversy to the constitution of the Church after the coming of Christ. But we have already shown that the New Testament sustains the membership of the seed of believers. The denial of the unity of the Church is the fundamental error of the objectors. But the unity has been demonstrated, as well as the fact that no alteration has been made in the original constitution of members ; and it necessarily continues in force.

Second : the covenant made with Abraham is not spiritual and everlasting, but national and temporal, and expired with the Jewish state. This objection is based on a denial of the unity of the Church, and, involved with the first, falls with it. The contrary has been proved, and nothing in this place need be added further than to affirm that the Church existed before the state, or nation, and became that state for specific purposes and for a definite time. The state form, and all the promises and threatenings of the covenant relating thereto, being temporary, passed away, but left the Church and all the spiritual part of the covenant unchanged and established forever. The covenant and the Church go together.

Third : circumcision is neither a spiritual ordinance, nor the rite of admission to the Church, but is a mere national sign to distinguish the Jews from other nations. It is in nature neither identical with baptism, nor does it come in the place of it. This objection also rests upon the denial of the unity of the Church. The direct contrary has been established.

Fourth : there is no positive command in the New Testament to baptize children, and all positive ordinances require positive commands. This also is based on the same error.

Both the assumption, and the principle involved in the objection are incorrect. 1st. The assumption, that the New Testament, independent of the Old, is the only rule of faith and practice to the people of God. But the New Testament is built out of and upon the Old, and cannot be fully explained and comprehended without it. It is impossible to separate the two. Both together form the whole Word of God; and, in determining either faith or practice, we take the whole Word, and not a part only. 2d. The principle, that positive ordinances of the Church require positive commands in the New Testament. What then becomes of the Sabbath, or of female communion? There is no positive command in so many words for either in the New Testament. If recourse be had to previous institution, or to implication, or inference, then the principle is abandoned.

We go beyond and back of the initiatory rite to the original constitution, which ordained that believers, together with their infant seed, should be members of the visible Church, and therefore the infant seed are entitled to receive the initiatory rite. This is the fundamental law, always acted upon and never repealed. Nothing more was necessary than that this law should be recognized in the New Testament, if indeed so much was necessary. It was so recognized both by our Lord and His Apostles, and the matter is settled. The positive command given at the establishment of the visible Church needed no repetition.

The objections arising from a misapprehension of the doctrine of infant membership, are :

First: repentance and faith are necessary conditions of baptism. Infants are incapable of both, and therefore ought not to be baptized. The major proposition is true in respect to adults, who have not been previously baptized, and to them are the commands "repent" and "believe" addressed. But the proposition is erroneous in respect to infants, whose only qualification for receiving the initiatory rite is, that they be born of believing parents in regular connection with the Church of God. They come in through the door of their faith. So has God ordained. The minor proposition is

unsound, since it implies that we are entitled to only such privileges and mercies as we can appreciate and enjoy. To how many privileges and mercies, through God's goodness, are we born in social and civil life, the benefits of which we do actually receive and enjoy for years, ere we are capable of understanding and appreciating them? Such is the fact with infants in their Church relations. The objection however lies directly against the ordination of God Himself, and proves too much—even the damnation of infants. In His wisdom, goodness, and power, the Lord ordained that infants should be circumcised; of which rite repentance and faith were as necessary conditions as they are of baptism: "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him?" Isa. xl. 13-14. The objection proves infant damnation: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," "He that believeth not shall be damned." Repentance and faith are conditions of life. Infants are incapable of both; therefore, infants shall not see life.

Second: the consequences of infant membership are absurd. If infants are admitted to baptism, they must also be admitted to communion. The contrary has been shown, in that the two ordinances require distinct qualifications in the infant; he may be admitted to one and not to the other.

Third: infant membership is of no benefit, for children of Christian parents who are not admitted members under the covenant with Abraham, are as much blessed and prospered of God as those that are. If the objection were true, it would not disprove the fact that God has ordained the infant seed of believers members of His visible Church; nor would it relieve parents of the duty of having the sign and seal of the covenant put upon their children. But as the objection is of the nature of an assertion, it may be met by a contrary assertion, and for the best of reasons, since it is impossible to conceive that God will not specially fulfil His promises made in covenant to His people and to their seed after them, when they through grace faithfully discharge their duty.

So much has it been necessary to say on the constitution of the visible Church in the family and household of Abraham,

on his call, the covenant which God made with him, the perpetuity of its sign and seal, the identity of the Church under both Dispensations, and the continuance of its membership as originally ordained.

CHAPTER XVII.

ISAAC AND JACOB SUCCEED ABRAHAM.—JACOB'S EVENTFUL LIFE AND MANY TRIALS.—HE REMOVES INTO EGYPT AND DIES.—JOSEPH THE HEAD OF THE PEOPLE TILL HIS DEATH.—THE CHOICE OF JACOB OVER ESAU, A STRIKING EXAMPLE OF ELECTION.—THE DOCTRINE CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO THE HISTORY.—JACOB'S PROPHECY OF SHILOH.

THE promise of God to Abraham was, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." He was the next after the setting up of the visible Church, in the line of spiritual succession and inheritance: "And it came to pass, after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac," and having renewed with him the covenant of his father, he became in his stead the head of the Church, Gen. xviii. 1-15; xxi. 1-12; Heb. xi. 11-19; Gen. xxv. 1-12; xxvi. 1-6, 24. Of his twin sons, Jacob, the younger, was preferred before Esau, the elder, to succeed him, Gen. xxv. 19-34; upon whom he bestowed the superior blessing, Gen. xxvii. 1-40. When Jacob shortly after took his journey to Padan-aram, to tarry there until his brother's wrath should be turned away from him, the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and standing above the ladder that reached to heaven from earth, renewed the covenant with him.

This heir of the promises and head of the household of faith was absent from Canaan twenty years, fourteen of which he served for his two wives, Leah and Rachel, and six for his wages. Unable longer to endure the injustice and oppression of his father-in-law, Laban, by divine command and under divine protection, he effected his escape, and safely returned,

with a large family and household and great possessions. On the way, through fervent prayer to God, with whom he wrestled and prevailed, and by the wise use of means, and the exhibition of a generous and peaceful spirit, he disarmed the wrath of his brother: "Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept," Gen. xxvii. 41-45; xxviii., xxix.-xxxiii. Soon after entering Canaan he came to Shalem, a city called Shechem, "and bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money; and he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel," Gen. xxxiii. 17-20; John iv. 1-6. Here, for the dishonor done his daughter Dinah by Shechem, the son of Hamor, the Hivite, her two own brothers, Simeon and Levi, taking advantage of a feigned alliance, without consulting their father, boldly slew Hamor, Shechem, and all the males of the city, rescuing their sister, and carrying away the spoil of the city and the fields, and all the women and children captives, who were incorporated into the household of Jacob and contributed to swell its numbers. The Lord directed him to remove to Bethel, build an altar and dwell there, that He might again meet with and bless him. As a preparation, He required Jacob's household, and all that were with him, to put away the strange gods among them, to be clean, and change their garments, and then arise and go up to Bethel. Rachel had stolen and brought away the strange gods of her father Laban; and there were, in all likelihood, strange gods among his numerous servants and the Hivites. The strange gods and the ear-rings he hid under an oak in Shechem, and came to Bethel, where the Lord appeared to him a second time, renewing with him the covenant of Abraham and his father Isaac, and changing his name from Jacob to Israel, a prince of God, in token of the greatness of his faith and the prevalency of his prayers: "Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed," Gen. xxxii. 24-28; xxxv. 1-16; xxxiv. To this

Patriarch belongs the honor of giving his name to the people of God: "the Israelites," "the children of Israel," "the sons of Jacob," "Jacob."

This Patriarch had an eventful life and one full of trials. There was the painful controversy with Esau his brother; his flight and long exile from his father's house; his severe disappointments and unkind and oppressive treatment in the family of Laban, his father-in-law; the jealousy and contentions of his wives; the barrenness for a long season of his beloved Rachel; his flight and danger from Laban; his terror at the wrath of Esau; the afflicting humiliation of his daughter; the bloody vengeance of his sons upon the Shechemites; his fear of assaults from the inhabitants of the land; the distress of the practice of idolatry in his household; the death of valued members of his family; the affecting and sudden death of his wife Rachel, soon followed by the incest of his firstborn son Reuben; and this again by the death of his honored and venerable father, Gen. xxxv. His trials went on increasing. His sons were generally reprobate in character. A deadly hatred sprang up in the breasts of all against the pious and dutiful Joseph, with whom God communicated by dreams, and announced his future elevation to supremacy over the whole family. In process of time, this beloved Joseph was seized by his brethren, cast into a pit to die, finally sold to a company of merchant Midianites, and his coat dipped in blood and returned to his father as evidence of his destruction. Jacob's grief was overwhelming: "He refused to be comforted!" Gen. xxxvii. New afflictions arose in the sudden death, by direct visitation of God, of his wicked grandsons, Er and Onan, and in the shameful conduct of his son Judah, Gen. xxxviii. Next followed the grievous famine, his distress and perplexity at the detention of Simeon in Egypt, and the harsh treatment which his sons received when they went into that country to buy corn. Then came his painful parting with Benjamin, which led him to cry out "all these things are against me," Gen. xlii. Meanwhile, the wonderful providences of God were unfolding. The beloved and lost Joseph, enduring sad changes and tempta-

tions, yet true to his high profession in all, was governor over the land of Egypt, Gen. xxxix-xl. ; "sent" by the Lord "before his father and brethren, to preserve them a posterity in the earth, and to save their lives by a great deliverance," xlv. 1-8. On the return of his brethren with Benjamin, Joseph made himself known to them. His design to remove his father and all his family and household into Egypt is cordially seconded by Pharaoh, and Jacob came down by God's command into Egypt, and settled in the land of Goshen. "And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel, his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him ; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive." "And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen, and they had possessions therein, and grew and multiplied exceedingly," Gen. xxxix-xlvii. He survived his removal seventeen years, and shortly before his death exacted an oath of Joseph to bury him in the promised land, in the burying-place of his fathers, Gen. xlvii. 28, 31. Joseph brought his sons Ephraim and Manasseh to receive his blessing. By inspiration he blessed them, preferring Ephraim, the younger, to Manasseh the firstborn ; assuring Joseph that God would be with him and his posterity, and bring them again to the land of their fathers. The closing scene of the life of this Patriarch is morally sublime. Under divine inspiration, his heart overflowing with affection for the children of his loins, his faith triumphing over the decay of age, and the fear of death, beholding afar off the progress of the Church, the fulfilment of the promises, and the coming of the Messiah, he called the twelve patriarchs around his bed, "and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days," Gen. xlix., and addressed them successively, in words descriptive of their respective tribes, and prophetic of their future character and life. "All these are the twelve tribes of Israel : and this is it that their father spake unto them and blessed them ; every one according to his blessing he blessed them," xlix. 28. Reuben, the first-

born, was deposed from his dignity, and Judah put in his room and made the royal tribe and the tribe from which Christ should descend. "And when he had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded the ghost, and was gathered unto his people, being one hundred and forty-seven years old." His body being embalmed, and the days of mourning ended, Joseph, accompanied by distinguished Egyptians, the elders of his house, the elders of the land of Egypt, the house of Joseph, his brethren and his father's house, bore out of Egypt the remains of Jacob, buried them in the cave of Machpelah and returned to Egypt. Few of the people of God have ever been so greatly honored in death. Gen. l. 7-13. Joseph, now becoming the head of Israel, loved, carefully nourished, and protected them. Upon his death-bed, "He said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which He sware to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."

The choice of Jacob in preference to Esau was of the election of God, and the sacred writers refer to it as a striking illustration of that great doctrine. As it is the foundation and upbuilding—the stability and safety of the Church, and the working out of the riches of the covenant of grace, it cannot be omitted in the history.

The doctrine is based on the sovereignty and independence of God—attributes which are essential to the very being of God, and which He always claims to Himself. He is the First Cause, and Creator of the universe of matter and mind. The purpose, the plan, the design, the execution of the whole work, came out of His own infinite mind from eternity. Nothing existed without Himself to influence Him in any way; He was self-moved. Necessarily, the universe as a creation is dependent upon and subject to God; it is incapable of self-preservation, self-control, or self-direction. As

the great Architect, God is also the great Lawgiver and Governor, ordering all things according to the counsel of His own will. As the Supreme and Infinite Good, God can have no final object in creation but His own glory. None can know what that glory is—none can order and direct the universe so as to secure that glory, save Himself.

From these indisputable truths respecting God, it is evident, that He works out of Himself, and by Himself, and for Himself. "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen," Rom. xi. 36. He hath from eternity decreed or purposed according to His own counsels (conceived in infinite wisdom and goodness) whatsoever comes to pass; and His infinite power executes all. Therefore, saith Isaiah, xlvi. 9-10, "For I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do my pleasure." James i. 18; Acts xv. 18, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." All things come to pass "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;" and when angels, men, or devils, gather together and execute their own will, they only "do whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done," Acts ii. 23; iv. 27-28. "He doeth according to His own will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou?" Dan. iv. 35. With the infinite and omniscient God there is neither past, present, nor future; and the terms "foreordination," "predestination," and "foreknowledge," are used in accommodation to our finite conceptions of the decrees of God in respect to events future to us, and the different connections in which we view them. When God's foreknowledge is spoken of, it is equivalent to His foreordination; for He does not foreordain because He foreknows, but He foreknows because He foreordains.

Election is but a part of the eternal foreordination of God of whatsoever comes to pass in time, with reference to angels

and men. The complement of the decree of election is the decree of reprobation. Some angels He foreordained to glory, and some men to eternal life—these are elected; other angels and men He foreordained to dishonor and eternal death—these are reprobated.

The existence, progress, and end of the human race were foreordained; and God determined to show His love to His creatures in a way of mercy through the fall and the salvation of a part of mankind, by a Redeemer, with whom He entered into a covenant for that purpose, electing from the mass of mankind every individual of the part He designed to save to the glory of His grace. These elect, given to Christ,—the reward of the travail of His soul—constitute the true Church, and they are gathered in Him, as the generations of men succeed each other. Thus the decree of election is but the working out of the covenant of grace, and is the foundation, upbuilding, stability, and safety of the Church. Without election, there can be neither Church nor salvation, John x. 14, 26–30; xvii. 1–26; Acts ii. 47; Rom. viii. 28–39; Eph. i. 1–14; ii. 1–22; v. 23–27; 1 Thess. v. 9–10; 2 Tim. ii. 19.

The reason why it pleases God to save a part, and not the whole of mankind, and to elect certain individuals in preference to others, is known only to Himself. He acts as He pleases, according to His own will; and this is the extent of our knowledge. This is all the reason He gave to Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 19, “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.” It is all that Paul had, “Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth,” Rom. ix. 18. It is all our Saviour gave, and it satisfied Him, because it was the will of His Heavenly Father, which can never be wrong; and in it he acquiesced, saying, “Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight,” Matt. xi. 25–26. It is agreeable to all Scripture to say that He hath elected men in Christ unto everlasting glory, and out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes, moving Him thereunto,

and all "to the praise of His glorious grace," Rom. ix. 1-29; Eph. i. 1-14; ii. 1-10; Col. i. 12-14; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 2 Tim. i. 9; Jer. i. 5; Luke x. 20; 1 Tim. i. 12-14; 1 Cor. xv. 8-10; vi. 9-11; Titus iii. 3-7.

If God has decreed the salvation of men, He has decreed all the means essential thereto. The decree of election includes the means as well as the end. It so lies in the covenant of grace. Did He elect men to eternal life? Then did He elect His Son to obtain eternal life for them. Did He elect them to eternal life through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth as it is in Jesus? Then did He elect the Holy Spirit to indite His Holy Word, and to testify of Christ unto men; then did He elect preachers and send them, that men might hear and learn of Christ through the word; then did He apply Christ to them by His Spirit, that His elect might repent, believe, and obey; then did He ordain the Church for their ingathering, and all her sabbaths and ordinances for their comfort and growth in grace; then did He cause all things respecting them to work for their good unto salvation, and to work also in them of His own good pleasure, so that they would "work out their salvation with fear and trembling." Men are not stocks and stones, but intelligent and accountable creatures. Means are provided for salvation, and they are to use them. The Lord assured Paul that He had elected all on the ship with him to be saved alive out of the dreadful storm, after all hope that they should be saved had been taken away. Some days after, when the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, "Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved," Acts xxvii. The end was ordained, but the means to that end were ordained also; and the law is universal throughout all God's works of creation, providence, and grace. The golden chain connecting means and end in salvation, is linked together for us by the Apostle in the sublime close of the eighth chapter of Romans. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son,

that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified, etc.," Isa. xlii. 1-16; Eph. i. 1-14; Gen. vi. 3; John iii. 1-6; xiv. 26; xv. 26-27; xvi. 7-11; Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Acts xxvi. 12-18; Rom. x. 11-15; Acts ii. 38; xvi. 14-15; 27-34; 1 Cor. xi. 23-34; 1 Pet. i. 1-23, etc.; 1 Thess. v. 1-28; 2 Thess. ii. 13-17; Titus ii. 11-14, etc.

As all the means are ordained unto the end, and are included in the decree of election, and God Himself worketh all and in all, the salvation of the elect is certain. The Lord Jesus will give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given Him: nor can any pluck them out of His hands, or out of His Father's hands, for they are one, and united in the plenitude of the Godhead for their salvation, John x. 27-30; xvii. 1-3, 12; vi. 39; Rom. viii. 30-39; 1 Pet. i. 1-5, etc. There is no fall from this state of grace into which God brings His elect, Rom. v. 1-11. Apostates are from profession, not from faith; from the professing Israel, not from the true Israel. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us," 1 John ii. 19; 2 Pet. ii. 19-22; John vi. 66; Heb. x. 38-39.

The opposite or complement of the decree of election is that of reprobation. "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness," Mal. i. 1-3. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Saith the Lord, "The elder shall serve the younger; Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated," Rom. ix. 10-13. As men are elected unto eternal life to the praise of God's glorious grace, so men are ordained unto dishonor and wrath to the praise of His glorious justice and power. The end of the decree on either side is the glory of God; so writes the Apostle Paul: "Hath not the potter power over

the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory," Rom. ix. 21-23.

There are examples of reprobation. Pharaoh is one. "And thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth," Exod. ix. 15-16; iv. 21; vii. 3-4; xi. 9; viii. 32; ix. 34-35. The sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were reprobated, 1 Sam. ii. 25; comp. 2 Sam. vii. 14; Isa. vi. 9-11; 2 Thess. ii. 11-12. Judas, chosen to the apostleship, but not to salvation, was a "son of perdition;" his existence, perfidy, and end, were foreordained from eternity, John vi. 70; xvii. 12; Ps. cix. 1-20; Acts i. 20; Matt. xxvi. 23-25; xxvii. 3-5. There are declarations of the fact of reprobation: the Apostle Paul speaks of "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction;" Jude, of "certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men," etc., Jude vs. 4. Peter says that Christ is "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed," 1 Pet. ii. 8; 2 Pet. ii. 3-12; Rev. xvii. 8; Prov. xvi. 4; Rev. xiii. 8. Our Lord addresses the Jews: "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep," John vi. 65; x. 26. Paul assigns the reason why only a part of Israel had obtained salvation: "the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," Rom. xi. 7. We read of the means of grace being powerless, the gospel being "hid to them that are lost;" of men delivered to blindness of mind and hardness of heart, 2 Cor. iv. 3; Isa. vi. 9-10; lxvi. 4; Ezek. xx. 24-26; 2 Thess. ii. 11-12. "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth," Rom. ix. 17-18.

Election runs through the entire Bible. All prophecy is

of God's foreordination; to reject foreordination is to reject prophecy. The thousands and millions of agents concerned in bringing about predicted events were from eternity elected to their several and necessary parts, constituting a vast and infinitely minute network of causes and effects in the world of matter and of mind, each individual agent acting and being acted upon by others, and contributing an appointed portion, till in the lapse of ages the counsel of God is perfected.

Take, for example, the prediction of "the seed of the woman" to be the Saviour of the world. Of the seventy-five progenitors recorded in Luke's genealogy of Him, a line of succession of four thousand years, every one came into that line by the election of God. Of the forty-one in Matthew's genealogy, every one came into it by the election of God, that election making two lines—one the natural, the other the legal. The hand of a Sovereign God appears at every step. Seth is chosen in preference to all Adam's other sons. Shem, in preference to Ham and Japheth; a portion of Shem's posterity, in preference to all his other posterity, and to the posterity of Ham and Japheth; Abraham, in preference to his brothers Nahor and Haran; Isaae, to Ishmael; Jacob, to Esau; Judah, to Simeon; David, to his seven brothers; Solomon, to all the other sons of David, and so on to the end. Then, behold how the choice runs on in the maternal line. Why should Messiah come of Sarah, when He might have come of another? Why of Rebecca? Why of Leah? of Tamar? of Ruth, the Moabitess? of Bathsheba? of Mary of Nazareth? And then mark the foreordination and election of God in innumerable particulars concerning Him. He made choice of the time when, and the town where He should be born, the city He should be brought up in, the work He should do, the treatment He should receive—elected the very man who should betray Him, the kind of death He should die, and the very people who should inflict it upon Him—wrote the very words they should speak at His cross, described the very wounds given Him, (and none others,) the parting of His garments, His own bitter cries, the rich man who should bury Him, and the time He should lie in the grave.

What is true of Christ the Head, is true of all the members. As He was elected, and all things concerning Him were foreordained and came to pass, so they are each and every one elected, and all things concerning them are foreordained, and will come to pass. They are chosen saints, "God's elect," Rom. i. 6-7; 2 Tim. ii. 10; Titus i. 1. Although their names, with few exceptions, are not given before their birth, or their lives, unless in some few instances, predicted with minuteness unto the end, yet are their names and their lives called and foreordained from eternity, and are all brought to pass in time, as was their Lord's. It was so with the Patriarchs, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; with Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, the Judges and Samuel, and the Prophets, Kings, and Apostles. Some were chosen and named before they were born, as Josiah and John the Baptist. Jeremiah and Paul were separated to their offices from their birth. And what is true of distinguished officers and saints is true of all saints.

Mark also the predictions respecting the great body of the Lord's people—the Church—after its establishment in Abraham. It should be a numerous body; should go into captivity in Egypt; be delivered, and settled in Canaan; seven nations be destroyed before it; the government be changed into a monarchy; the state be divided into two kingdoms, each going into captivity, from which the people should return and repossess their land kept open for them; pass under the power of several kingdoms that were to overthrow and succeed each other as the governing powers of the world, and, under the fourth and last, the civil state of the Church should be entirely and forever broken up, the great city and temple destroyed, and the unbelieving part of the Church cut off and dispersed over the world, remaining a distinct people; the Gentiles should be called into the Church, which should finally overspread the earth, and God's ancient people be brought in again; and numerous other particulars uttered by the Lord at various intervals before their accomplishment, varying from a few years to over two thousand. Portions of them, over three thousand years old, are now being fulfilled before our eyes;

and they are to go on fulfilling to the end of time—all conceived—all arranged—all foreordained of God from all eternity. And in all, as they have moved under the hand of God, what elections of individual men, as prophets, deliverers, kings, raised up to act their part both in and out of the Church! What lifting up of thrones, and what casting them down again! What election of nations to execute His purposes one upon another! Cyrus was elected to overthrow Babylon and permit the captive Church to return; and Isaiah called him by name at least one hundred years before he was born! Isa. xlv. 26-28. What is true of God's foreordaining all things which have come to pass in respect to His Church as a collective body of men, in respect to the nation with which the Church has been connected, and of His electing not the great and noble, but each and every individual to the part assigned him in the execution of His counsels, is true of all nations that have ever existed and ever will exist on earth.

The doctrine underlies and runs through the whole Word of God. The statements and illustrations of it both in the Old and New Testaments, by prophets speaking in God's name, and by our Lord, who was God manifest in the flesh, and by the Apostles taught by Him and led by His Spirit, are too numerous to be all written down in order.

The "stone of stumbling" in the doctrine of election is man's inability to comprehend its consistency with his free agency and accountability. "The rock of offence" is, that he will not have a sovereign God to rule over him and to do with him as He pleases. Therefore is it that he objects against and resists the doctrine, and will not recognize its precious uses and consolations. The Holy Scriptures have anticipated and provided for all this.

The fundamental error in those who reject, or endeavor to reject the doctrine, is the denial that the free agency and accountability of the creature are consistent with the sovereignty of God. "How," say they, "is it possible for angels and men to be free agents, and accountable to God for all they think and say and do, while He preserves and governs them and all their actions, so that they do and can but accomplish His

will? Or how is it possible for a sovereign God to have free and accountable agents in His universe?"

So satisfied are men, from their own consciousness, and their universal impression and treatment of each other, and from the manner in which God deals with them in His providence and in His Word, that they are free agents, that there is not one in a million who believes that he is a mere piece of machinery, unaccountable for his motions. Indeed, his belief is a mere profession, for in his consciousness and practice he denies it; and it is such a faith as the world will not permit to live. So far from our free agency being interfered with by God's working all and in all according to the good pleasure of His will, we are unable to determine from our consciousness whether He does or not. We can then safely assure ourselves of two things: first, that we are in nature and practice free and accountable beings; and, second, that whatever be the sovereign control of God over us and all our actions, it in no way affects our freedom and accountability. On the other hand, men are equally satisfied that God is a sovereign: that He and He only is the creator, governor, and disposer of all things: that, infinitely intelligent, He cannot act without a plan: infinitely wise, His plan must be the best: infinitely powerful, His plan must be accomplished; and infinitely just and holy, He can do no creature wrong. To deny God this sovereignty is to deny that there is any God at all. Not one man in a million dare do it. We may assure ourselves, then, that God is sovereign and is working all and in all according to the counsel of His own will.

Here then are two facts: God is a sovereign, and man is free and accountable, each being substantiated by its own independent evidence. The necessary inference is, that neither is destructive of the other: that as they coexist, they must consist. Such is the ordination of God, and it can never be otherwise. If now it is asked, Can you explain this? the answer is direct. How is it possible to explain what is incomprehensible? To show where the lines of Divine sovereignty and human accountability meet, and mingle, and flow together harmoniously, exceeds the powers of mortals—yea, of angels.

That it should be so is nothing unusual and particularly marvellous. We have before us only one of the deep things of God out of an infinite number. "Who by searching can find out God?" The nature and movements of things are known to God only. What man comprehends those of his own soul? How then can he hope to comprehend the nature and actings of the God who made him?

The grand objection, therefore, to the doctrine of God's sovereignty over men in election, that it destroys accountability, (and which the Apostle Paul notices in his celebrated chapter on the subject, the ninth of Romans,) falls to the ground, and upon that all other objections fall with it. After establishing the doctrine of particular election by striking examples and express declarations, Paul draws the conclusion, "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." Thereupon appears the objector: "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?" "By your doctrine you have destroyed the accountability of the creature, and it follows that you make God the author of sin, and deprive Him of the power of punishing it. Yea, you make Him a respecter of persons in the favors He bestows—insincere in his offers of mercy to the non-elect; and you take away all motive from men to exert themselves for their salvation!" It having been proved that the doctrine does not destroy human accountability, the objections all fall together: God is not in such a sense the author of sin as to deprive Him of the just power of punishing it. He is no respecter of persons. He is not insincere in His offers of mercy to the non-elect, nor are motives taken away from such as would be saved.

But let the Apostle answer, "Nay but, O man! who art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" He falls back upon the infinite rectitude of God, and reproves the presumption of the creature sitting in judgment upon the works of his Creator and convicting Him of sin! He does not attempt to explain the consistency of sovereignty on the part of God, and accountability on the part of the creature; he

assumes both to be true. No creature can prove their inconsistency, and therefore cannot impeach the character of God in His dealings with men. "The Judge of all the earth will do right." Men being accountable, must be rewarded according to their deeds.

Nay, further: the infinite rectitude of God protects Him from the imputation of the objector, that He is the Author of sin and cannot therefore find fault. For although, for infinitely wise and holy ends which lie beyond our conception, it has pleased the Great Creator and Sovereign Disposer of all things to permit the introduction of sin into the universe, it has been in the way of permission, so as that the creature is left to himself, and God withholds effectual restraints, which justly He might do. The creature freely sins, and does that which God in His nature allows, and by His commands forbids, and so the sinner destroys himself. To use the old and oft-repeated illustration, the falling of the sun below the horizon is followed by darkness and cold. No one affirms that darkness and cold flow from the sun, as their cause. They find no lodgment in that body, which is the cause of light and heat, and these only. So sin finds no lodgment in a Holy God. He delights not in it: He cannot be the efficient author of it in His creatures. He withdraws from them and they fall. Therefore, may He "find fault."

Nor is God a respecter of persons in electing one while He reprobates another, since all are upon the same footing of sinfulness and unworthiness before Him. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Sin is the meritorious and immediate cause of the reprobation of men. "What if God, willing to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," is God unjust in doing so? Does He treat them worse than they deserve? The righteousness of Christ is the meritorious cause of the salvation of the elect; and this God could bestow, being His own, upon whom He would. "What if God, that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, whom He had

afore prepared unto glory," should do so? Could he be charged with respect of persons?

But again: Do not those whom He foreknows will be, or whom He has foreordained to be destroyed, fulfil His will, when they do not accept the offers of salvation? Is He not insincere in the offer to such persons? The answer is in the negative, and for the following reasons: first, He has made the offer and asserts His sincerity in it. We must believe in the infinite rectitude of God, that He never will deceive, or practice a lie upon His creatures. "Let God be true but every man a liar." Whatever difficulties therefore may exist in the case, they have their origin and foundation in ourselves, our limited faculties, and knowledge, and not at all in God. His revealed will is therefore to be the rule of our duty. Second: the foreordination of men to destruction is for their sin. Their sin is the transgression of the law of God, which is addressed to them with infinite authority, accompanied with threatenings of fearful wrath to deter them from its violation. In Gospel lands their sin is increased greatly by the rejection of Christ, who opens a way of salvation for them, and through Whom promises are made of the greatest blessings to them. It is not agreeable to God's holy nature that men should sin. He hates sin; nor does He take delight in the death of the sinner in itself considered. He expresses these things to the sinner, offers His Son to him, and is grieved at his obduracy and mourns over his coming destruction: yet, for infinitely wise and holy reasons, as the governor of the universe, He may determine to leave the sinner to himself and let him perish. One example out of many shows the fact to be so. Our Lord wept over Jerusalem, after oft-repeated efforts to gather under His wings the multitude of its inhabitants already doomed to destruction. Should it be replied, If then sin is so hateful to God, and the death of the sinner so much a grief to Him, why did He ever so dispose all things as to permit the coming of sin into the world, with all its woe? We answer, no created intelligence can assign any other reason, than the will of God that it should be so; which will is wisest, and best, and to be humbly and reveren-

tially acquiesced in by all His creatures, who, after their highest efforts, never can comprehend it. Another objection connected with the preceding is, that election takes away all motive to effort on the part of impenitent men who would be saved, and encourages the elect to continue in sin. The fallacy of this objection lies in the assumption that the decree of election dispenses with the agency of man, and his use of means. But it is not so. If he is reprobated, it is because he obstinately rejects the offers of life, refuses to use the means of grace, and neglects to take the necessary steps towards peace with God. He acts freely and accountably, and no decree of reprobation keeps him out of heaven. If he is elected, God works in him "both to will and to do," and so he "works out" his own salvation. He is not elected to be saved in inaction and in sin. Men do exert themselves to the utmost in their earthly callings, not knowing what the result will be, although God has ordained that result from eternity. They never dream of obtaining benefits without effort. Let them be equally wise in spiritual things. The fact that God has elected some, yea, many unto life eternal, should, on the contrary, operate as an encouragement to all sinners to hear and embrace the Gospel call; for we can know our election or our reprobation only by the manner in which we receive that gracious call, even by the evidences of belief or unbelief which appear in our hearts and lives.

The doctrine, rightly apprehended, is full of precious uses and consolations. It exalts God, giving Him the glory due unto His holy name, and humbles the creature. It levels with the ground the self-sufficiency and pride of wicked man; strips away and tramples under foot his righteousness as filthy rags; casts his eyes downward, makes him smite upon his breast, and cry out, "God be merciful unto me a sinner!" and plants his unstable feet upon the Rock of Ages. It awakens songs of unspeakable joy and gratitude in the hearts of millions, for the experience of the love and mercy of God extended to the guilty and the lost, at the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. So far from fostering in the people of God pride, sloth, or sinful living, on the contrary, it puts within

them undying principles of faith, love, and holy fear; clothes them with humility, and arouses them to a godly, righteous, and sober life. It furnishes the true ground of encouragement for all God's people and ministers, in their several places and stations, to labor for the enlargement and perpetuity of the Church in the salvation of immortal souls. For if there be no election, there can be no Church. God has His elect people to save out of the world. Therefore His address to His ministers is, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." It encourages lost sinners to come and throw themselves upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus; and it gives the consolation of an assured hope to believers, since they may know their election of God, by discerning in themselves the graces of God's spirit, which belong to the elect.

Jacob, the elect of God, in his last interview with his sons on his dying bed, uttered the remarkable prophecy concerning Shiloh: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be," Gen. xlix. 8-12. The prophecy embraces two particulars, that kingly power should lodge in Judah, and be taken away when Shiloh came; that Shiloh should descend from Judah, and happy would be the consequences of his coming in the gathering of the people unto Him. The first had its accomplishment.

Jacob had already clothed Judah with authority over his brethren, Gen. xlix. 8-9, and made him the lion of the tribes. In the prophecy, he tells how long he shall rule. The word "sceptre," is a sign put for the thing signified, namely, sovereignty, or the kingly power—"lawgiver" corresponds with it, signifying a ruler or sovereign prince; so that the two phrases, "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah," "nor a lawgiver from between his feet," are synonymous, and mean that the kingly power or self-government shall not depart, or be lost from Judah, until Shiloh come. In other words, the people of God should continue in their civil state, enjoying their peculiar laws, and governed by their own rulers and kings,

until Shiloh should come. After His coming the sceptre should be taken away.

Moses, fulfilling prophecy, made Judah the leading tribe, assigning to it the first position in the encampment of the tribes, and constituting it the leader of the van in their march through the wilderness: Numb. ii. 3; and, after entering Canaan, the Lord appointed Judah to go up first of the tribes, in furthering the conquest and driving out the heathen, Judges i. 1-2, and again to go up first in the war against Benjamin, Judges xx. 18. On the division of the tribes it stood alone with Benjamin in opposition to the other ten, and the kingly power was confirmed to it in the person and house of David, concerning which David says: "He hath chosen Judah to be ruler; and of the house of Judah the house of my father, and among the sons of my father, He liked me to make me king over all Israel," 1 Chron. xxviii. 4.

The ten tribes revolted about 975 years before Christ, which revolt gave rise to two kingdoms: that of Judah, composed of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin; and that of Israel, composed of the remaining ten. At the end of 253 years the kingdom of Israel was carried into captivity into Assyria by Shalmanezzer, B. C. 721. The kingdom of Judah, reigned over by the kings of the house of David, existed 134 years longer, to B. C. 587, and was carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar the Great. Babylon was taken, and the empire overthrown by Cyrus and annexed to the Persian Empire 538 years before Christ; and, on the death of his uncle Darius, the Mede, Cyrus became king. In the first year of his reign, and in the seventieth of Judah's captivity, B. C. 536, he issued a decree allowing the Jews to return to their own country and rebuild Jerusalem. The first caravan was led by Zerubbabel, grandson of the last king, Jehoiachin, of the tribe of Judah. The ten tribes had now been in captivity over 200 years. While a representation of all the tribes returned, Judah furnished the largest number, and gave the name of Jews to the people. Indeed they bore the name of this leading tribe in Babylonia. (Book of Esther.) The Jews passed successively under the dominion of the Persian, the

Macedo-Grecian, the Egyptian, and Syrian empires. They revolted against Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, under the Maccabæan princes, and obtained their independence in the year 143, B. C., continuing independent until subdued by the Romans under Pompey the Great, B. C. 63, when Judea was annexed to the province of Syria. In all these changes the Jews were, by permission of their conquerors, governed by their own princes, under their own laws, and so continued to be until the reign of Archelaus, who succeeded Herod the Great on the throne of Judea proper. For maladministration he was deposed by Tiberius, and banished to Gaul. His principality was converted into a Roman province, and Coponius appointed Procurator. At that time the power of life and death was taken away from the Jews. Subjects of Rome, they were ruled by foreign princes, and governed by foreign laws. Shiloh had come. Our Lord at this time was a child at Nazareth. Coponius was succeeded by Valerius Gratus, and he by Pontius Pilate, by whom our Lord was condemned to be crucified; the Jews acknowledging when they sought His condemnation at his hands, "that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death," John xviii. 31. Other prophecies, determining the time of the coming of Shiloh, agree with this of Jacob. The seventy weeks of Daniel, (usually reckoned from the going forth of the decree by Artaxerxes to Ezra, to the death of Messiah,) end at the passing away of the sceptre from Judah, Dan. ix. 24-27. So also Haggai, ii. 6-9, prophecies that the desire of all nations should come while the second temple was standing. His coming made the second temple more glorious than the first, although as a building it was inferior. Titus, son of Vespasian, destroyed the second temple, A. D. 70. But our Lord came while it was standing, and the sceptre had departed, Mal. iii. 4. At the coming of Shiloh there was to be an end of the civil state and constitution of the Church. The great ends for which the Church was created into a state having been accomplished, that peculiar constitution was no longer needed. The Jews, however, failing to receive their own Messiah, and having crucified Him, still most tenaciously held on to their

civil state. Then it was that the Son of Man came in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory, and, by the Romans, utterly overthrew His ancient people, casting them away for a season and destroying the holy city, Matt. xxiv.

The second particular of the prophecy has in part been accomplished, and will continue in process of accomplishment till the end of the world. Judah was the progenitor of Shiloh, through the house of David, according to all the genealogies and declarations of both the Old and New Testaments. The babe of Bethlehem was of the town and lineage of David. "And unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." The restriction of Shiloh's kingdom to one people should come to an end at His advent, for the doors should be thrown open to the Gentile world. So ran the promise made before to Abraham. "A father of many nations have I made thee," Gen. xvii. 5; Rom. iv. 17. Thus early was the Church taught to look forward to this blessed expansion, and in after ages the prophets dwelt with delight upon the approaching glory. Since the command of our Lord to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," the Gospel has been preached to all nations; the Holy Spirit has sealed it to the hearts of men; and the gathering of the people has been and shall continue to be to Christ. Our Lord was designated in the original promise as, "the seed of the woman." Jacob gives him a name, Shiloh, which indicates his character and work. It signifies rest, peace—the very character and work ascribed to Him in all the word of God, Isa. ix. 6-7; xi. 1-10; liii. 5; Ps. lxxii. 1-20; Dan. ix. 24-26; Luke ii. 14; Acts x. 36; Col. i. 20, etc. His people in all ages and countries have looked unto Him as the giver of rest and peace to their guilty and troubled souls, through His own precious blood shed for them, and His Spirit poured out upon them. Rest and peace with God none but Jesus can give, Matt. xi. 28-30; John xiv. 27. To this Prince of Peace the dying Patriarch Jacob committed his soul, and that is the precious privilege of all who believe in Him. "Into thy hands I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth," Ps. xxxi. 5.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE VISIBLE CHURCH IN EGYPT.—NUMBER THAT WENT DOWN.—PERIOD OF SOJOURNING, AND OF BONDAGE IN EGYPT.—CAUSE OF THE BONDAGE; REMOVED BY REPENTANCE.—INCREASE OF CHURCH IN EGYPT.—NUMBER THAT CAME OUT.—THEIR CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN EGYPT.—STATE OF RELIGION.—MOSES THE AGENT OF DELIVERANCE.—OBSTACLES TO THE SUCCESS OF HIS MISSION.—MEANS OF CONVICTION AND DELIVERANCE.—MIRACLES AND PROPHECY, Pillars OF DIVINE REVELATION.—BOTH CONSIDERED.—DIVINE LEGATION OF MOSES ESTABLISHED.

THE removal of the visible Church into Egypt was by the providence and command of God, with a promise that He would there make them a great nation and surely bring them up again into their own promised land. Gen. xlv. 27-28. So spake He to Jacob in the visions of the night at Beer-sheba, the first stage in his journey, xlv. 1-4, and herein was He fulfilling what He had long before expressed to Abraham, Gen. xv. 13-14. "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve therein, and they shall afflict them four hundred years: and also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge, and afterward shall they come out with great substance."

The number of the most conspicuous and influential members who went down into Egypt is given—the mustard seed from which the great tree sprang. The removal was of "Jacob and all his seed," clean and perfect; nothing was left behind belonging to them, either of persons or of property, Gen. xlv. 1-27. In the family of Leah, first in order, there were thirty-three individuals, if we throw out Er and Onan, who died in the land of Canaan, and count in the Patriarch Jacob and his

daughter Dinah. Zilpah's family numbers sixteen, counting in her daughter Serah; Rachel's family, all sons, fourteen; and Billhah's family, all sons, seven—making a total of seventy persons—that is, sixty-six came with Jacob, Gen. xlvi. 26. Add the Patriarch, Joseph, and his two sons, already in Egypt, (four more,) and we have seventy, Gen. xlvi. 27, and Deut. x. 22. The martyr Stephen, Acts vii. 14, adds five to this number. There is no better way of reconciling the two accounts than by supposing some five male children, born in Egypt about the time of the arrival there, who are added to Moses' number by Stephen. The wives of the twelve Patriarchs, and their daughters, cannot be counted, for they would make too many, and are not reckoned at all, Gen. xlvi. 7. Only Jacob, his twelve sons and two daughters, Gen. xlvi. 15, 17, his sons' sons and their grandsons, Gen. xlvi. 17, are reckoned.

This number seventy-five would be largely increased by the addition of his sons' wives, and the wives of his sons' sons, and his sons' daughters, Gen. xlvi. 7. If we include the Shechemites conquered and incorporated with the Israelites, and all servants attached to their households, (and, judging by the numbers owned by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, there must have been very many,) the whole company would amount to several hundreds, and perhaps fall little short of a thousand. Under the fostering hand of Joseph, and of the rulers of Egypt after his death—who gratefully remembered his services—and the special blessing of God, “the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them,” Exod. i. 1-7.

The time of the sojourning of the Church in Canaan, and in Egypt, that is, from the call of Abraham to the exodus, is given, first, to Abraham in round centuries, four hundred years, Gen. xv. 13-14; Acts vii. 6-7; and, next, to Moses in the number of years, four hundred and thirty, Exod. xii. 40-41; Gal. iii. 17.

Half this period was passed in Canaan and half in Egypt, as the following calculations show: it was twenty-five years

from Abraham's entrance into Canaan to the birth of Isaac ; then, to the birth of Jacob, sixty ; then, to Jacob's going into Egypt, one hundred and thirty, making two hundred and fifteen for the sojourn in Canaan, Gen. xii. 1-4 ; xvii. 17-21 ; xxi. 1-7 ; xxv. 26 ; xlvii. 7-10. Joseph was thirty years old when made ruler over Egypt, and thirty-nine when his father came down to him, (for seven years of plenty and two of famine had passed, Gen. xlv. 6-11,) and died seventy-one years after his father's coming, (born B. C. 1745, and died B. C. 1635,) aged one hundred and ten years, Gen. i. 26. Moses was born (B. C. 1571) sixty-four years after Joseph's death, and he was eighty years old when the exodus occurred, making two hundred and fifteen for the sojourn in Egypt.

But the children of Israel were not in bondage during their two hundred and fifteen years' stay in Egypt, because they enjoyed freedom, protection, and prosperity, under Joseph, for seventy-one years and for some time after, Exod. i. 7, until they became so numerous, "that the land was filled with them," and they could but be a valuable addition to the wealth and power of the country. The statement of the "new king," who acknowledged not the benefit conferred on Egypt by Joseph, or the kind consideration in which his countrymen should be held on his account, as well as their own, (for they were peaceable and good subjects,) namely, that "the children of Israel are more and mightier than we," was not altogether a blind to cover imperial and national cupidity and injustice ; for it is said in Ps. cv. 23-24, "Israel also came into Egypt ; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. And He increased His people greatly ; and made them stronger than their enemies." The people were viewed with distrust, and the design of the new king was to crush their increase and power, reducing them permanently to the condition of slaves. Said he "Come on, let us deal wisely," (in a politic manner,) "with them." Let us put them under circumstances to prevent their dangerous increase, and the possibility, in any future war, of their joining our enemies, recovering their freedom, and getting them up out of the land, Exod. i. 1-10.

If we allow thirty years for the consummation of this

wickedness (a period short enough), then the Israelites would have lived in Egypt in freedom one hundred years. The bondage occurred about thirty-five years before Moses was born; it continued until he was eighty years old. Putting the years of bondage together (thirty-five and eighty), we have the whole period of bondage, one hundred and fifteen years.

But what was the cause of this remarkably severe and long bondage of the people of God to a heathen nation? Their idolatry and sin. It happened to Israel as it did in after-times, "They were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols, which were a snare unto them," Ps. cvi. 35-36. They "dwelt in the land of Egypt;" they "saw their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold," Deut. xxix. 16-17. Moses intimates, when teaching them afterwards at Mount Sinai the kind and manner of the sacrifices of the Lord, that they had previously offered their sacrifices "to devils, after whom they had gone a-whoring," Levit. xvii. 6-7. Joshua charges the sin upon Israel: "Put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood" (the river Euphrates), "and in Egypt," Josh. xxiv. 14; Acts vii. 42-43. The Prophet Ezekiel does the same. Reproving Judah and Israel for the worship of idols, he traces back their idolatries to their earliest history. "They committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredom in their youth," etc. They "played the harlot in the land of Egypt," Ezek. xxiii. 1-21. In Ezek. xx. 1-10, he gives in full the cause of the afflictions in Egypt. Certain elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord, and sat before Ezekiel. The Lord answers them, "As I live I will not be inquired of by you." "Wilt thou judge," (or plead for,) "them, son of man? Cause them to know the abominations of their fathers. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; in the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up my hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up my hand unto them, saying, I am the Lord your God; in the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth from

the land of Egypt, into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands: then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes; neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt." Here is the perfect discovery: when the Lord would have brought Israel out of Egypt into the promised land, He discerned their spiritual declension, their worship of the idols of Egypt, and called upon them, as in His former dealings, by prophets and preachers raised up among them, to repent, cast away their idols, return to the Lord, renew their covenant, and prepare to enter Canaan. But they rebelled, and hearkened not unto God, continuing their worship of the idols of Egypt, and despising the promised land. Wherefore the Lord poured out His fury and accomplished His anger, in subjecting them to cruel bondage in Egypt. Their great sin He visited with great judgment.

The bondage was brought about through the policy and cupidity of the king of Egypt, after the manner of human affairs; but it was all foreordained, and came to pass through "God's most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions," and for the wisest and best purposes, Gen. xv. 13-14, 18-21. The affliction was not removed until, by the grace of God, it was made to accomplish the end for which it was designed; namely, the repentance of the people and their cry for deliverance. They were however long afflicted ere the precious fruit appeared. Seventy years rolled away, and they repented not, nor had their hearts in any degree relented; for Moses, at forty years of age, "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, mighty in words and deeds," and moved by the Spirit of God, undertook the deliverance of his brethren. "He went out unto his brethren and looked on their burdens: and seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was

oppressed, and smote the Egyptian." The daring act was placed in such a light, that "he supposed his brethren would have understood him that God by his hand would deliver them: but they wilfully understood not." They rejected this merciful visitation, and refused his conduct; for, the next day, exercising the authority granted him by God, he essayed to act as judge in the case of two Hebrews who strove together; and he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?" Instead of putting themselves under his leadership, they made no secret of his first act towards their redemption, and, by the publicity which they gave it, exposed him to the wrath of the king; for the king seems to have comprehended the end which Moses contemplated, and therefore Moses was obliged to flee for his life, Acts vii. 1-35; Exod. ii. 1-25. "Moses they refused." Forty years more passed away, and then the end of the affliction came. The children of Israel uttered their cry of repentance and their prayer to God for pardon and deliverance, Acts vii. 34; Ps. cxlv. 19; Exod. xxii. 23; Ps. cvii. 10-15. The Lord heard and answered, and a second time commissioned and sent Moses to deliver them, Exod. iii. 1-22; iv. 1-31. When Moses and Aaron came, "they gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that He had looked upon their afflictions, then they bowed their heads and worshipped." "They cried unto the Lord in their trouble," and "He saved them out of their distresses."

This subjugation of the people to the heathen for their sins, and especially for that of idolatry, was frequently repeated in their subsequent history. They suffered the affliction of partial captivity during the reigns of the Judges, and of the kings of Judah and Israel, ending finally in the great captivity of Assyria and Babylonia. After their return to their own land, they passed from one heathen sceptre to another, with a brief

season of independence under the Maccabees, until their existence as a state terminated at the destruction of Jerusalem. The whole is beautifully and pathetically expressed in Psalm cvi. vs. 35-45. They "were mingled with the heathen, and learned their works, and served their idols, which were a snare unto them"—thus were they defiled. "Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance; and He gave them into the hand of the heathen, and they that hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand. Many times did He deliver them; but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless, He regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry, and He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies." The salvation of the Church is wholly and at all times of grace.

The bondage was universal and methodized, for Egyptian taskmasters assigned them their labors; and under these were appointed officers from among the Hebrews themselves. It was excessive: "all their service wherein they made them serve was with rigor," Exod. i. 1-22.

But, faithful to His promises, the Lord made Jacob a great nation in Egypt. The efforts of the Egyptians to repress their fruitfulness by hard bondage availed nothing; "the more they afflicted them, the more they grew;" and even the cruel decree for the destruction of the male children availed nothing, for "the people multiplied and waxed very mighty," Exod. i. 7, 12, 21. No power of the Egyptians could "stay the hand" and purpose of God, to preserve and multiply His people in Egypt, until they should be sufficiently numerous to go up and take possession of their own promised land. The calculations made by learned men, of the possibility of so large an increase from so small a beginning, are curious, and not at all necessary for the satisfaction of the pious mind; for the astonishing increase, while wholly according to the laws of nature, was nevertheless a manifestation of the special intervention and blessing of God.

The number of men "able to go forth to war" that left Egypt, was 600,000, besides the women and children, Numb. i., xxvi. Preparations for the removal were made beforehand, so that the vast multitude was not led out in confusion, but in an appointed order, "by their armies," Exod. xii. 37-38, 51. In addition to the men, women, and children, "a mixed multitude went up also with them," consisting, it is probable, of their own servants of other nations, and of heathen of different classes who had been proselyted, or who had connected themselves in some other way with the Israelites. Allowing for every male, "twenty years old and upward," four other persons, (women, children, and servants,) the whole number in the exodus may be estimated at 3,000,000. The visible Church is increased from a little flock to a "great nation." "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." This bondage and deliverance of the Church are typical of the spiritual bondage under sin, Satan, and the world, and of her glorious deliverance into the liberty of the children of God, through the abounding grace and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, who "delivers those who through fear of death are all their life-time subject to bondage."

The Israelites were distinct from the Egyptians in origin, occupation, religion, and laws. While subjected in general to the Egyptian sway, they exercised liberty of conscience, maintained the faith and form of their own worship, and a civil government over and among themselves. The precise form of civil government denominated "patriarchal" is not ascertained from Scripture, beyond the general notion that the patriarch exercised the powers and prerogatives of a supreme ruler of his own household and tribe. When his tribe became large, and there existed a necessity for assistants in government, such assistants were appointed; but in what way and in what tribunals justice was administered, we know not. The only piece of civil history recorded of the Israelites in Egypt, until they became enslaved, is that of the slaying of some of the sons of Ephraim during his lifetime, by the men of Gath, when they came down to take away their cattle. The sons of Ephraim were slain in defence of their property, which threw

Ephraim into great distress for many days, and his brethren came to comfort him, 1 Chron. vii. 20–23.

But we may be assured that so great a body of people not only required an efficient form of government, but actually possessed one, springing out of the patriarchal, and adapting itself to the wants of the people; for they were ruled by rulers styled “elders,” “elders of Israel,” whom Moses and Aaron, by God’s command, that they might proceed in due order, “gathered together,” Exod. iii. 16; before whom they delivered their commission, and performed “the signs” of their appointment, to deliver the people, Exod. iv. 30–31; and whom Moses was to take with him in a body, and approach the throne of Pharaoh and desire deliverance, Exod. iii. 18. How many there were, how appointed, with what powers invested in civil and ecclesiastical affairs, or whether there were any other civil officers beside, we know not, Numb. xi. 10–17.

The laws by which the people were governed, were founded upon the moral law of God, well understood both before and after the flood. The great principles of justice between man and man, and the crimes worthy of punishment in the tribe or nation, were well understood in the age of Job, as his book abundantly shows; and, from the individual histories of the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we have no reason to believe that they were less understood by them. Atheism or idolatry, disobedience to authority, fraud, violence, oppression, murder, robbery, adultery, cruelty, false witness, were crimes to be punished by the judge.

If the civil history of the Church is briefly passed over, the same is true of the religious history. All the previously revealed doctrines, constituting the faith of the Church, the holy sabbath, divine worship, the rite of sacrifice, and laws appertaining thereto, the order of the priesthood, tithes, prophets, the rite of circumcision, the covenant of Abraham, with its provisions and promises, were all in existence, preserved and cherished by the people. Their idolatry, for which the Lord warned and reproved them, and finally punished them, demonstrates the previous state of the Church to have been in general one of purity and intelligence. God acted as the King

and Head, and watched over and governed His people in Egypt by His wonted methods and agents, as He had done before they entered into Egypt, and as He ever did after they went out from that land.

The state of religion was marked with prosperity in the beginning, with declension in the middle, and with a revival in the end. Jacob, an eminent saint, is always mentioned with high honor, and associated with Abraham and Isaac. Joseph was partaker of the like faith, and was one of the brightest examples of every grace. While he lived, the people maintained their integrity; but when he died, and the men of his generation were no more, they declined, and provoked the Lord by idolatry. Long did He withdraw the light of His countenance, and grievously chastise them, till finally, when they repented, He sanctified His chastisements, forgiving and delivering them.

However, in this darkness there were those who shone as lights, remaining true to God and His covenant, and who did not bow the knee to idols. Of such were midwives, "who feared God," and kept themselves from iniquity, although commanded by the king; of such were the parents of Moses, "who was hid three months by them—they were not afraid of the king's commandment;" and Moses himself, "who, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward. By faith" (rejected by his own brethren) "he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible," Heb. xi. 21-27.

The cup of the iniquities of the Canaanites was full; the time of the sojourning and captivity had expired, and in the year B. C. 1490, the children of Israel departed from Egypt.

The extraordinary man by whom the Lord accomplished this wonderful deliverance, was Moses, a child of grace, a son of the Church, a gift of God for the purpose. "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the

face of the earth," Numb. xii. 3, of the tribe of Levi, of the family of Kohath, and of the house of Amram; his father was Amram and his mother was Jochebed, also a daughter of Levi, Exod. vi. 16-20. Born in an evil time, when he could no longer be hid by his parents, his pious mother put him, but three months old, "in an ark of bulrushes, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink, and his sister stood afar off to wit what would be done to him." He was discovered by Pharaoh's daughter, and hence his name, Moses, significant of his salvation. She adopted him as her son, and committed him to his own pious mother to be nursed for her. Without doubt, he was instructed in a knowledge of his own parents and people, and of his God. He was afterwards brought into the court of Pharaoh, and there educated until he became "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and a man of note and prominence, mighty in words and deeds," Acts vii. 20-38. When full forty years of age, divinely moved, he undertook the deliverance of his people; but being rejected, he fled into Midian, and there married Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, or Hobab, priest of Midian and of the true God. By Zipporah he had two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, Exod. xviii. 1-4. Forty years he spent in Midian, in the quiet and retired occupation of a shepherd. While pasturing his flocks on Horeb, the Lord appeared in a burning bush, and, graciously overruling all his objections, commissioned him to return to Egypt and bring out His people. The greatness and difficulty of the work were vividly represented, and the Lord intimated to him that His people would only be delivered by such an exhibition of His own almighty power as had never before been seen on earth; for the Lord would harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let them go; he would smite Egypt "with all His wonders," and finally, in coming out, the "Israelites should borrow of the Egyptians jewels of gold, and jewels of silver, and raiment, and so should they spoil the Egyptians," Exod. iii., iv.

When Moses inquired by what name he should declare God to His people, the Lord said, "I am that I am: say unto them I am hath sent me unto you"—a new name, expressive of God's self-existence and unchangeableness—to His people

the same God of mercy and faithfulness, yesterday, to-day, and forever, Exod. vi. 1-3. The mission of Moses, originating in infinite compassion and love, carried in it God's forgiveness and reconciliation, filling His people with consolation and joy. Indeed, the address which Moses was ordered to make to Pharaoh was designed to comfort them, and to awaken the serious attention of the king. "Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first-born. And I say unto thee, Let my son go that he may serve me; and if thou refuse to let him go, behold I will slay thy son, even thy first-born."

A remarkable incident occurred on his journey. "And it came to pass, by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him"—to kill Moses, the saint of the Lord, now on his way to execute the greatest trust which had ever been committed to mortal man! What was his offence? He had neglected the command of God, and, omitting the seal, had slighted his covenant—one of his sons remained uncircumcised; Zipporah, in anger, performed the rite with a sharp stone. It was a lesson to Moses of the sacredness of the covenant; of his responsibility, in a peculiar manner, as the appointed deliverer of the people, to observe himself all the ordinances of that covenant, and to cause them to be observed by others. Although he had been exalted to high office and command, he was but a servant in the house of God, and God must be supremely obeyed, Exod. iv. 24-26; Gen. xvii. 14.

The obstacles to his mission were formidable. On the part of the Egyptians he would have to contend with their love of power and pride of station, for they had subdued the people; with their love of ease and wealth, for the people were valuable sources of private and public profit; and with the bigotry, unbelief, and cruelty of heathenism. They knew not God. On the part of the children of Israel, he would have to contend with unbelief in the success of his mission, as often as he should seem to fail; with their subdued and broken spirit, which it would be difficult to awaken to high purposes and noble daring; with the dull and sensual contentment of many, who, used to servitude and its regular supplies, desired no change;

and with the principle of fear, so powerful in the heart of man, for they would dread, on account of Moses' efforts, increased oppression and suffering at the hands of their masters. But the promise of God, "certainly I will be with thee," was fulfilled, and he triumphed in the use of those means for conviction and success which God had put at his command—wonderful miracles being the chief. The Lord is said to have hardened Pharaoh's heart against these, and to have raised him up for the special purpose of showing by means of him His "great power," and thereby declaring His glory throughout all the earth," Exod. vii. 13, 23; viii. 15; ix. 12-16, etc. Pharaoh is frequently said also to have "hardened his own heart." He was an instrument raised up by God for the display of His wisdom, faithfulness, goodness, and power, on behalf of His Church; of His justice and wrath towards His enemies, to the end that God's name might be known and glorified through His wonders in Egypt. The Lord was not the cause, in any such sense, of hardening the heart of Pharaoh so as to destroy his accountability; but He was rather the occasion of Pharaoh's hardening his heart, in that He raised him to the throne of Egypt, put him in circumstances where, left to himself, he would act out his own depravity, and harden his own heart, and perish. Predestination does not destroy accountability, Ps. lxxvi. 10.

Observing the order of the occurrence of these miracles, there are the introductory ones for the confirmation of the mission of Moses, both with the children of Israel and the Egyptians, Exod. iv. 1-9, 28-31; vii. 1-13, etc.; namely, the rod turned into a serpent, and the serpent into the rod again; the hand made leprous, and made whole again; and the water turned into blood when poured on the ground. These producing no effect on Pharaoh, then followed the miracles of judgment on the Egyptians: 1. The waters of Egypt and the river of Egypt turned into blood; and the destruction of the fish; 2. The plague of frogs; 3. The plague of lice. These three judgments appear to have been on both the Egyptians and the Israelites. The Lord afterwards severed the land of Goshen from the rest of Egypt, and so spared His people,

Exod. viii. 20-23; ix. 4; x. 23; xi. 6-7; xii. 13. 4. The plague of flies, Exod. vii. 14-25; viii. 1-32. 5. The plague of the murrain of beasts. 6. The plague of boils and blains. 7. The plague of hail, Exod. ix. 1-35. 8. The plague of locusts. 9. The plague of darkness, x. 1-29. 10. The plague of the death of the first-born, xi. 1-10; xii. 1-51. This last awful judgment completed the work. Pharaoh and his people were, for the time, subdued.

“The Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.” Yea, “Pharaoh rose up in the night—and he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.” Thus the people were in a manner “thrust out.” Yet they had prepared for the event beforehand, going out with deliberation and in perfect order; for the Lord had forewarned Moses, and through him the people, of the coming of this last judgment, and of the last night they would spend in Egypt, by the feast of the passover. From the first intimation to the night of the deliverance there were fourteen days, during which time they were to make every necessary preparation for leaving, and also to borrow from the Egyptians “jewels of gold and jewels of silver and raiment;” and they had plenty of time to do it in, Exod. xi. 1-4; xii. 35-36. Upon the very night they were to be awake, with all their families and households, to partake of the paschal supper with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staves in their hands, and to eat in haste. While eating, the Lord would be passing over their doors, sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, and smiting the first-born of Egypt. When, therefore, the great cry of Egypt broke upon their ears, and the Egyptians came, and Moses and Aaron also from the presence of the king, and said, Go out! rise up! go forth from among us! they were ready. They gathered their substance, and, agreeably to previous arrangements, the land of Goshen was broken up, and the vast multitudes moved away “by their

armies." This was the forecasting and work of Moses, the deliverer, Exod. vi. 26 ; xii. 51. It seems also that they were numbered about this time, and in view of their removal ; for the exact number of men of arms is given, 600,000—an enumeration made perhaps for a twofold purpose ; to ascertain the precise number delivered, and so to mark the fulfilment of the promise of God that He would make of them in Egypt " a great nation," as well as to separate the tribes and arrange them for removal. Without previous arrangement it would have been difficult to have led out either comfortably or successfully such a multitude. But it was done perfectly and gloriously, as it had been long before foreordained of God. " Now the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations." " Not an hoof was left behind," Exod. x. 26 ; xii. 40-42 ; xv. 13-14 ; vi. 6 ; vii. 4 ; xii. 35-36. The Lord remunerated them for past labors, and provided for them in their coming journey, by the spoil of the Egyptians. Said He, " borrow of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, (Exod. xii. 35-36,) and the Lord gave them favor in the eyes of the Egyptians, and they lent them such things as they required." It is of little consequence whether we translate the original word " demand," " ask," " borrow," " lend," or " give." The transaction was well understood on both sides. The Israelites were going out, never to come back, and could not return what the Egyptians lent or gave them. They never expected or intended to do it. The Egyptians knew just the same thing, and were glad to be rid of them at any price. What they lent or gave, they expected no more to receive. They were subdued as enemies of Israel by the God of Israel. Their treasures were given and taken as spoil ; they were of the nature of compensation for service rendered, and there was no deception on either side.

The Lord delivered His people by miracle, and in fulfilment of His own prediction. And, first, what is a miracle? Turn for an illustration to the three which Moses wrought for the conviction of both Israelites and Egyptians. The rod was instantly turned into a living, active serpent. By what means? By the power of Moses? No; he was simply an agent. He threw down the rod; that was all he did. The Lord did the rest, and wrought the wonder. By an instantaneous exercise of almighty power, He removed out of the way the wooden rod, and it became, by substitution, or mysterious change, a living serpent, with all its peculiar structure and nature. Then Moses put forth his hand, and took it by the tail, and it became a rod, the identical one it was before. Moses saw and felt the rod; he saw and felt the serpent—all was real; he was not deceived. It was the immediate exercise of the power of God, and that in an extraordinary way altogether different from His ordinary actings. Serpents are not formed out of rods, nor rods out of serpents, according to the natural laws for the production of these things which God has established, and which He uniformly observes. In like manner Moses was a mere agent in thrusting his hand into his bosom, and in pouring water upon the ground. With the instantaneous production of the disease of leprosy on his hand, and the instantaneous change of the water into blood, he had nothing to do;—they were the workings of the power of God, and in a manner different from the established order of things. Leprosy is not ordinarily, or universally produced in a moment of time, and upon one member of the body only, all the rest being perfectly sound; nor is it cured in a moment of time. Nor is it any law in nature that blood is made out of water. Yet the hand was Moses' own hand. He saw, he felt the leprosy; he saw, he felt the cure. So also he saw the blood; he could not be deceived. And these miracles were performed openly, in the light of day, in the presence of friends and enemies, believers and unbelievers—men of all classes and conditions. They saw them with their own eyes and felt them with their own hands. Their senses were perfect; they were not, and could not be deceived. Nor were these miracles in themselves trifling and

nonsensical. They were remarkable in their character, simple, and direct in performance, and attesting conclusively the immediate presence and power of God. Nor were they performed for the aggrandizement of Moses, or for the amusement and wonder of the people, but for the declared, invaluable, and benevolent purpose of convincing them of his divine mission, and of God's intended and merciful deliverance of them ; and also for the purpose of convincing the Egyptians of the interference of the almighty God on behalf of His people, thus inclining the Egyptians to release them without hesitation.

We may now determine what a miracle is. It is such an act as God only can perform—an immediate exercise of His almighty power in a manner diverse from the established constitution and laws by which He upholds and governs all things—open to the observation—palpable to the senses of men—and for wise and benevolent ends. Of such a character are all the miracles which are recorded in the Word of God. Try them by the definition, and they will not be found wanting.

The design of miracles, as acts of God's interposition in the government and conduct of His Church, is to convince men not only of His eternal power and Godhead, *Exod. vii. 5*, and infinite authority over all creatures, but also of the truth of the communications He makes them, whether directly by Himself, or through persons chosen by Him for the purpose. The result aimed at by conviction, is to awaken in the hearts of men sentiments of reverence, confidence, affection, and unre-served obedience. Miracles go with revelation, confirming it, and sealing the mission of the servants of God. "These are the communications of the ever-living God to you, O ye children of Israel and ye men of Egypt," saith Moses. "Show us a proof of God's speaking to us by you," they reply, "and we will believe and obey." "Behold the proof," says Moses, and the rod becomes the serpent, the hand becomes leprous, and the water, blood ! The people believe, bow their heads, and worship. Thus Moses was accredited of God, and so were Joshua, and Samuel, and Elijah, and Elisha, and all the Prophets and Apostles. In like manner did our Lord seal His own glorious mission, *Matt. xi. 1-6*. The necessity for miracles in attestation

of divine missions and communications has been well understood in all ages in the Church. The Jews said to our Lord, "What sign shewest thou, that we may see and believe? What dost thou work?" "Prove your mission, as Moses did, by some great miracle." "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from Heaven to eat," John vi. 30-31. Again: "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly. Jesus answered them I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name they bear witness of me," John x. 24-25. "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him," vs. 37-38; xiv. 10-11; v. 36. "The same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin," xv. 24. Our Lord appealed to His miracles as one great proof of His divine mission, Matt. xi. 1-6; Luke vii. 19-23; comp. Mark xvi. 20; Acts ii. 22; xiv. 3; Rom. xv. 18-19; 2 Cor. xii. 12.

The miracles of the Word of God, so many and so various, may be thrown into several general classes: for example, miracles for confirmation of the truth, both of the commission of the individual performing them, and of his communications to the Church and the world. Of such a class were the three miracles of Moses just referred to; the dividing of Jordan by Joshua, the burning of the sacrifice by Elijah, and the miracles of our Lord and His Apostles. Next, miracles of judgment, such as the Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt, the overthrow of Jericho, the swallowing up of Korah, and the slaying of Sennacherib's army, Isa. xxxvii. 33-37. Lastly, miracles of mercy and deliverance: such as the translations of Enoch and Elijah, the dividing of the Red Sea, the giving of manna from Heaven, and water from the rock, the salvation of Rahab, of the widow of Sarepta, of Daniel in the lion's den, of the three children in the fiery furnace, and of Peter and Paul and Silas from prison. Yet the design of all is one—the confirmation of the eternal power and

Godhead of the Lord, and of the truth of His communications to the Church and the world.

Touching the use and continuance of miracles in the Church, they appear in connection with prophecy in her earliest days, and never cease but with the period of revelation itself. The cherubims at the gate of Eden were miraculous appearances of angelic beings; the translation of Enoch was a miracle. While the animals and birds preserved in the ark might have been collected by the skill of Noah and his associates, the impression cannot be resisted that it was miraculously done. The Flood, the preservation of the ark and all it contained, the confusion of tongues at Babel, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Ad and Zeboim, the appearances of the Lord and of angels to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were all miraculous. Moses is the first clear instance of a divinely commissioned worker of miracles, and from his time onward there is a succession of workers of miracles in the church; yet not in a succession continuous, but broken by intervals of time, some longer and some shorter; and the miracles appear to be wrought when particularly needed in the history of the Church. For example: all the important revelations of God to His Church, the deliverance from Egypt, the settling of the civil and ecclesiastical constitution and laws in a fixed and permanent form, the passage through the wilderness, the entry into the promised land, its subjugation and partition, and the final and permanent settlement of the Church therein,—all these wonderful providences seemed to require divine and manifold and manifest attestations, in order that they might command the unhesitating belief of mankind; hence it was a period most prolific of miracles. Moses came first and was followed by Joshua. At intervals, during the reigns of the Judges, when God punished his backsliding people with captivities, He established, in some miraculous manner, the call of those by whom He would mercifully deliver them. By Samson he wrought several very remarkable miracles. After another interval, He aroused the people by the ministry of Samuel, which He confirmed by miracles. In the great declension of both Judah and Israel, He clothed

the Prophets Elijah and Elisha, with extraordinary miraculous powers. Little is seen of miracles after their day until the captivity. Then the Lord wrought specially for the consolation and assurance of His people, in the salvation of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, from the furnace of fire; of Daniel from the mouths of the lions, and in the writing with the finger of a man's hand upon the wall of the king's banqueting room. No miracles appear after the return from captivity to the close of the Old Testament, and none for four hundred years from the close of the Old Testament to the coming of Messiah.

His coming, upon which all the past and all the future of the Church depended, required special confirmation that its truth might endure forever. That confirmation it received. The miraculous birth of His Forerunner, and of our Divine Redeemer, ushered in a series of miracles performed first by our Lord and then by His Apostles, to which we find in all respects no parallel in the previous history of the Church. His mission from the Father; His fulfilment of all that was written in the law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, respecting Him; His revelations of God; His crucifixion and atoning death; His burial, resurrection, and subsequent appearances to His disciples, and His final ascension, were all established by miracles of the most impressive and amazing character. For the short space of fifty days, (from His ascension to Pentecost,) there was a cessation; and His disciples, who wrought miracles while He was with them, ceased to do so, awaiting the promised outpouring and baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit descended and endowed them with miraculous powers, in confirmation of their commission to "go into all the world and be witnesses of Christ, to preach the Gospel to every creature" and to set in order the things of His kingdom, finishing and sealing up the revelation of the mind and will of God to man. They executed their commission, and attested it with signs and wonders. Upon the twelve Apostles and Paul (and upon them alone), the Lord Jesus conferred the power of bestowing upon others that gift of the Holy Ghost whereby they might,

in Christ's name and for His glory, work miracles also ; but these could not transmit that power ; so that when the Apostles, and those upon whom they had bestowed the gift of miracles, were dead, miracles ceased in the Church forever, being no longer needed.

But miracles have been counterfeited, not only to destroy the truth of God's existence and revelation, but also to establish the truth of systems of religion of the most idolatrous and infamous kind. The practice of divination, magic arts, witchcraft, and fortune-telling were common among the heathen while the Church was in Egypt, and formed one of the great sins for which God punished and extirpated the heathen, Deut. xviii. 9-14. Egypt had her "wise men, her sorcerers, and magicians," and when Pharaoh said to Moses, "shew a miracle for you ;" "give me some proof of your mission and authority from your God," and Moses performed the miracles, Pharaoh called for his "wise men and sorcerers." They took their time and set to work, performing the like with their enchantments, their magical arts, and cunning slight of hand, imitating the miracles of the serpent, the leprous hand, and the blood, (Exod. iv. 1-9 comp. v. 21 and vii. 6-25,) and also of the frogs. But when it came to the lice, they failed. "And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not." "Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God," viii. 1-19. Moses is no longer viewed as an extraordinary man of their own class, a magician like themselves ; they confess that he performs his miracles with divine power, and not again did they essay to compete with him. The same conclusion ought to have reached their minds some time before, when, at the miracle of the rod, "Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods," vii. 12. The leaders of these magicians were perhaps "Jannes and Jambres." "They withstood Moses to turn away the king's heart from the truth," and succeeded for a time, but "their folly" was "made manifest to all," 2 Tim. iii. 8-9. The lice came upon them and the boils as upon others. "The magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils ; for the boil was upon the magicians and upon all the

Egyptians." The boils ended their battle with the man of God, Ex. ix. 8-11.

The idea that they wrought real miracles, whether by power given them immediately by God, or by the power and help of evil spirits, or by their knowledge of and power over the hidden forces and mysteries of nature, is not simply ridiculous; it is of a more serious nature—it is blasphemous. Does it not contradict the testimony of the Holy Spirit? Does He not say "they did so with their enchantments?"—that Jannes and Jambres resisted the truth, as men of corrupt and reprobate minds?—that God wrought not with them at all, and that in what they did, they acted in perfect "folly," which was made "manifest to all?" Moreover, can it be endured by any sober and pious mind, that God would oppose His own gracious designs? that He would covertly, and by wicked heathen magicians overthrow the mission of Moses by the very miracles by which He had determined to sustain it? Let no man suppose it. The result of the contest proves the idea to be false. The magicians could not stand before Moses; and they, as well as all other Egyptians, knew, by the stretching out of God's hand, that He "was the Lord" Exod. vii. 5. The Lord warns His people against this class of wicked pretenders; and, while the Church had her civil constitution, He enacted severe statutes against them, and against all who should follow their pernicious ways, Deut. xviii. 9-15; Levit. xx. 27; Jer. xiv. 14; Ezek. xiii. 6-7, 23; Exod. xxii. 18. He executed judgments also upon kings and people for yielding themselves to this heaven-daring sin, 1 Sam. xv. 22-23; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1-11. The witch of Endor sought to perform the miracle of raising up Samuel for Saul; the prophets of Baal attempted to call down fire from heaven, as did Elijah; Daniel encountered the magicians in Babylon: Dan. ii. 1-28; iv. 1-37; v. 1-31. Nor did these pretensions to miraculous powers cease to trouble the Church in after ages.

In the time of our Lord the Jews attempted to cast out devils, Matt. xii. 27; Acts xix. 13; and after His ascension "false Christs and false prophets arose, who shewed great signs and wonders, insomuch that, (if it were possible,) they

would have deceived the very elect," Matt. xxiv. 24. These were persons who essayed to work miracles after the manner of the Apostles, Acts xix. 13-17, who in their missions encountered Jew and Gentile sorcerers, magicians, diviners, and wonder-workers, Acts xvi. 16-18; xiii. 6-8; viii. 9; xix. 18-20. Such impostors exist to the present day in all heathen lands.

More than this, the Apostle Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 7-12, prophesies of the appearance in the Church (and he says the mystery of iniquity was at work in his days) of "that wicked" one "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." One great mark of "that wicked one" would be a pretention to miraculous powers, and those of the highest kind. The Apostle John, Rev. xiii. 11-15, saw "another beast coming up out of the earth, and he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down out of heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do" etc. The Apostle speaks, Rev. xviii. 23, of "Babylon the great," by whose sorceries were all nations deceived; and, again, Rev. xix. 20, of "the false prophet that wrought miracles." Wherefore, it would seem that this pretention to miraculous power is to dwell a long time in some connection with the Church, for her deception and injury. So has it come to pass. For many years after the death of the Apostles, there were men among the professed people of God who laid claim to miraculous power, so that ecclesiastical writers say it is difficult to tell when the age of miracles ceased in the Church. How extensively and ruinously the apostate Church of Rome has palmed off her spurious miracles upon an ignorant and vicious world embraced in her pale, is known and read of all men. This she endeavors still to do in all countries, where the ignorance and wretchedness of the people give her hope of successful imposture.

There have been in modern times also, obscure sects of religionists, not belonging to the Church of Rome, that have for a brief period attempted the exercise of miraculous powers.

Now, the signs of a true miracle are,—that it be such an act, or work, as none but God can perform: that it be performed in attestation of some one or more truths emanating from God and worthy of God: that it be plain, intelligible, open to observation, and performed for benevolent ends. These signs do not meet in spurious miracles. Since miracles have ceased in the Church, no more to be revived, to pretend to work them is a mark of apostacy.

The Lord also delivered His people out of Egypt in exact fulfilment of His own promises or predictions. A promise, prediction, or prophecy, is simply an eternal purpose of God, made known to men some time before its execution. The matter of it may be good or evil; the subjects of it may be the Church, or the world generally, or some portion of the one or the other particularly; the time of it may be longer or shorter; the number of agents employed, and the complication of events, may be definite or indefinite. These are all circumstances included in, but which in no way affect the nature of the prediction.

It was the divine purpose that Abraham and his seed should be sojourners for 430 years, and afterwards be settled in their own land. Abraham reposed in faith upon it, and Jacob and Joseph encouraged both themselves and the people with the assurance of its truth, Gen. xv. 13–16; xlviii. 21; xlix. 29–33; l. 24–26. When the Lord called Moses the second time to go and deliver his people, He referred him for support to this prediction, Exod. iii. 6–19. “The time appointed to deliver my people has arrived. I appoint you to execute my purpose; therefore go and do as I command thee; only believe, thou and the people, and thou shalt surely deliver them,” Exod. vi. 1–8. The purpose was accomplished by an uninterrupted succession of remarkable events, all happening naturally, in perfect consistency with the free agency and accountability of the persons concerned, and yet God was working all in all—finally and directly with His own hand in great miracles. The marriages of families; the births of children; the enmities of brethren; the cupidity, lust, and oppressions of men; the annual seasons; the dreams of the

night ; the presence of famine ; fraternal and filial love ; the gratitude, ambition, avarice, and violence of kings ; idolatry and servitude ; the lapse of centuries, and marvellous wonders, —all harmoniously flow towards and meet in the consummation. Surely the promises, predictions, prophecies of God (call them what you will) demonstrate His eternal decrees, and are moving, everlasting miracles of themselves. This prophecy now fulfilled, reveals the design of all prophecy, which perhaps in almost all respects is identical with that of miracles. Genuine prophecy, like genuine miracles, can emanate from God only, who, because He has from eternity foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, knows, and therefore is able to predict what shall come to pass. The Lord challenges to Himself all true prophecy, making it an evidence of His being the only true God, and that there is no God beside Him. For the fulfilment, He pledges His own existence, sovereignty, wisdom, power, justice, goodness and truth ; and the fulfilment establishes all these. Again, prophecies are not for an ostentatious display of the being and attributes of God, or for the gratification of the curiosity of men, but rather are interwoven with the revelation and progress of the covenant of redemption, and are of practical moment. Their fulfilment serves, as do miracles, to avouch the truth of the mission from God of those who lay claim to the spirit of prophecy. “Knowing this, first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation : for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man.” It neither emanated from, nor is interpreted by him, “but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” To prophesy requires omniscience. It is therefore impossible to men or angels. “The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God,” and it is that “Spirit which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,” that reveals the future, 2 Pet. i. 20–21 ; 1 Cor. ii. 9–11. But the fulfilment of prophecy not only establishes the truth that the prophet is of God, but it also seals to the Church and the world the inspiration and authority of all his communications. He is able to say with the worker of miracles : “Thus saith the Lord ;” and he who despises either the one or the other, or

both, despises the Lord who sent them. Most of the prophets wrought miracles also.

The gift of miracles and that of prophecy ceased together with the necessity which required their continuance, 1 Cor. xiii. 1-31 ; Acts ii. 16-21. Though miracles, since the Apostolic age, have never been performed, and necessarily were fixed to times and places, their evidence in support of divine revelation becomes stronger and stronger with the lapse of time. And although the spirit of prophecy has ceased also, and fulfilled prophecy in like manner grows stronger and stronger with age, the evidence is cumulative in that all is not fulfilled ; for while much is now fulfilling, much remains to be fulfilled through all the ages which will intervene between the present and the end of the world. Time is not a universal destroyer. He is a votary of truth. His busy hands are ever employed in adding to the strength and beauty of the pillars which support the precious Word of God.

The prophecies may be divided into the fulfilled, the fulfilling, and the to-be-fulfilled ; and they are found in the sacred pages from Genesis to Revelation. Forming a part of the decrees of God, whereby for His own glory He hath from all eternity foreordained whatever comes to pass, they are but the working out of the covenant of grace in time. They all have some connection with and revolve around the "Sun of Righteousness," for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, Rev. xix. 10 ; 1 Pet. i. 10-12 ; Acts x. 43. He came, and all the prophecies relating in numerous particulars to His coming, were fulfilled. By His coming He consequently sealed the divine inspiration and authority of the Old Testament in every part. A prophet Himself, He delivered prophecies already fulfilled, and which are now being fulfilled. Thus has He sealed the truth of His own mission as well as the divine inspiration and authority of the New Testament. The prophecies will ever remain to confirm the faith of the Church, to afford comfort in dark hours of trial and affliction, and encouragement to every good word and work, and to every effort to carry the knowledge of the Redeemer to the ends of the earth.

This evidence of prophecy has indeed been counterfeited. False prophets have not only appeared in the heathen world, but among the professed people of God, and at intervals have plagued the Church, under both the Old and New Dispensations, even down to our own times.

Moses teaches the people how to discern a true from a false prophet, Deut. xiii. 1-4; xviii. 20-22, and classes false prophets with diviners, dreamers, enchanters, and sorcerers who were to be put to death. The Lord says, Jer. xxii. 9, "The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spoke unto them; they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own heart," Jer. xiv. 14-15. "They cause the people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; they shall not profit this people at all," Jer. xxiii. 25-34. For their presumption, blasphemy, and enormous sins against God and His people, the Lord condemns such false prophets to confusion, and punishment, as well as all who follow their pernicious ways, Jer. xxvii. 10-16; xxviii. 1-17; xxix. 1-32; Isa. ix. 15; Zech. xiii. 1-4; Jer. xxiii. 14-16; Isa. xxx. 8-14; Ezek. xiii. 1-23; 1 Kings xviii. 20-40; xxii. 9-28. They appeared also under the New Dispensation, Matt. xxiv. 11, 24; Acts xiii. 6.

Thus, the people of God came out of Egypt by miracle and prophecy, and the divine legation of Moses was established. Nothing was left for them to do but "to fear the Lord"—to believe the Lord and His servant Moses, Exod. xiv. 31. Their subsequent acts of discontent and rebellion were without reason and without excuse; they merited as they received the displeasure and punishment of God.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PASSOVER TYPICAL OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.—CONSECRATION OF THE FIRST-BORN FOR THE PRIESTHOOD.—PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE.—PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.—THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH LEADS HIS CHURCH.—ALL REVELATION OF GOD THROUGH AND BY HIM.—JOURNEYS OF THE PEOPLE.—MANNA FROM HEAVEN, AND WATER FROM THE ROCK.—ENCAMPMENT BEFORE HOREB.—JETHRO'S ADVICE.

THE Passover, the first in order of institution of the three great feasts of the Church under the Old Dispensation, was celebrated in the evening of the fourteenth day of the month Abib, or Nisan, which month was ordained to be the beginning of the year, in memorial of the deliverance which occurred the same night the passover was eaten, Exod. xii. 1-29; Levit. xxiii. 5-8; Numb. ix. 3; xxviii. 16; Ezek. xlv. 21; Deut. xvi. 1.

Yet, for good reasons, the celebration might be deferred to the fourteenth day of the second month, Numb. ix. 6-15; 2 Chron. xxx. 1-15. A male lamb or kid of the goats, of the first year, and without blemish, was to be taken on the tenth, kept up, and slain on the fourteenth day after the usual manner of sacrifices, by the head of the household—a lamb or kid for each household, or, if too small to eat the whole of the sacrifice, two households should unite. Nothing of the sacrifice should be carried abroad, and whatever was left over, should be burned with fire, Exod. xii. 42-51; Deut. xvi. 4; Luke xxii. 7-11; 2 Chron. xxx. 13-22; xxxv. 1-11. Not a bone was to be broken; it was to be "roasted with fire," not

eaten "raw, nor sodden at all with water"—eaten "with unleavened bread," "the bread of affliction," (Deut. xvi. 3,) and bitter herbs, Exod. xii. 22. "Thus shall ye eat it: with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and ye shall eat it in haste." It was partaken of by none but by members of the visible Church, of suitable age to discern the nature of the feast, and who were at least ceremonially clean and without reproach, Numb. ix. 6-14; 2 Chron. xxx. 15-20; xxxiv. 6; Ezra vi. 20-21; John xi. 55. If any refused to keep the passover he should be cut off from the people, Numb. ix. 13. All leaven was carefully put away out of the houses for the seven days of the feast, and from this circumstance it is called also, "the feast of unleavened bread," this act signifying spiritually the putting away of sin in every form from the heart, life, person, family, and congregation, and the keeping of the feast with all purity and sincerity unto God their Saviour, 1 Cor. v. 7-9. No wine is named in the original institution, Exod. xii. Yet wine was allowed at the sacrifices, Deut. xiv. 22-26; and when our Lord celebrated the passover, He used wine as a customary thing, Luke xxii. 17-18, etc. The feast continued from the fourteenth to the twenty-first of the month; the first and last being days of holy convocations. The entire week was spent in religious services, the people abstaining from their ordinary work (but preparing their customary meals, as no fasting was allowed), and offering the daily sacrifices, as afterwards prescribed in the law, Numb. xxviii. 15-25; Ezra vi. 22; 2 Chron. xxxv. 1-18; xxx. 21. So the people killed the passover, and sprinkled the blood with a bunch of hyssop on the lintel and two side-posts of their doors. When the destroyer saw the blood, he passed over and entered not in to destroy them.

The paschal lamb was typical of the true "Lamb of God," "slain from the foundation of the world." The true Israelite, putting away, by a sincere repentance, the leaven of his unrighteousness, sprinkled his house with the blood, and looked through the shadow to the substance. He believed that as the Lord, according to His promise, would pass over and save him from bondage and death, and give him a glorious redemption

out of Egypt, being sprinkled with the blood of the paschal lamb, so God in his great mercy would pass over his sins, and save him from the bondage of sin and death, and grant him a glorious salvation in the day when He should come to take vengeance on His enemies, his soul being sprinkled with the true blood of the Lamb of God. In this way was the passover kept "by faith," Heb. xi. 28; and in no other manner could it have been truly kept—kept by all Israel together, the lamb having been slain, prepared, and eaten by each household on the same day, at the same time of the day, and entirely consumed by the worshippers, as though it were but one sacrifice for all—the one body of saints sprinkled with the one blood of sacrifice, and rejoicing together in the one glorious redemption.

This passover has its fulfilment in the ordinance of the Lord's supper.

The Apostle John is a witness that the paschal lamb was typical of our Lord Jesus Christ, xix. 33–36. The legs of the two thieves were broken to hasten their death upon the day of their crucifixion: "but when the soldiers came to Jesus, and saw that He was already dead, they brake not His legs—for these things were done that the Scripture (Exod. xii. 46; Numb. ix. 12) should be fulfilled, 'A bone of Him shall not be broken.'" Paul also testifies the same, 1 Cor. v. 1–8, in his command to the Corinthian church to excommunicate the incestuous members, in order that such men should not remain in the Church to leaven it with their wickedness: "Your glorying is not good. Know yet not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Peter (1 Pet i. 19) seems to refer to Christ as the paschal lamb, when he says, "We are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Our Lord said, the same night in which He was betrayed, while eating the passover with His disciples,

Luke xxii. 7-15; 1 Cor. xi. 23, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I say unto you I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." "And He took the cup," (of wine drank at that feast,) "and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come," that is, in its fulfilment, perfectly come. How was the passover now to end, and to be fulfilled in the kingdom of God, and that kingdom to be fully come? In no other manner than by the sacrifice of Himself, the true Lamb, and type of the paschal lamb for the redemption of His people. So He immediately taught in the institution of the Lord's supper. "And as they did eat" (Mark xiv. 22; Matt. xxvi. 26; while they were eating the passover and towards the close of the feast), "Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks," (here was the point of time when the passover ceased, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper began, the first flowing into, and finding its fulfilment in the second,) "He brake it, and gave unto them, and said, Take, eat. This is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me," Luke xxii. 19-20; 1 Cor. xi. 23-26. "After the same manner also, He took the cup after supper, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." Matt. xxvi. 27, 28; 1 Cor. xi. 25. The passover is fulfilled in the Lord's supper, and passes away. The Lord's supper is a perpetual ordinance in the Church: a memorial unto all generations of the death of Christ, and of our salvation through His broken body and shed blood. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." His people would have Him no more present in person on earth to sit with them at that table; but hereafter they should sit down with Him, and He would commune with them in a new and spiritual and perfect manner in the world above. "I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new

with you in my Father's kingdom," Matt. xxvi. 29; Mark xiv. 25.

The Lord's supper, like the passover, is to be partaken of with due preparation by all the visible Church who are able to discern the Lord's body, and by the Church then present as one body, in the act holding communion and fellowship with Christ, their Head, and with one another. The emblematical nature of the passover is preserved in the Lord's supper. The body of the paschal lamb was emblematical of and stood for the body of the Lamb of God, hereafter to be offered for His people. The blood of the paschal lamb was emblematical of and stood for the blood of the same Lamb of God, hereafter to be shed for their sins. The paschal lamb was roasted and eaten by the people as it was, the very body, the very flesh, the very lamb itself, and the blood sprinkled remained the very blood of the lamb still. The unleavened bread, the wine, and the bitter herbs, remained unleavened bread, wine, and bitter herbs still. No change was wrought in the substances of any of these things, nor were they converted, or transubstantiated into any other substances whatever. All were representative emblems only. The communicant looked through the emblem to the reality, and "by faith" received the great sacrifice. In like manner the bread and wine in the Lord's supper, exchanged for the body and blood of the paschal lamb, are but representative emblems: the bread, of Christ's body broken; the wine, of His blood shed for the sins of His people. There is no change wrought in these elements in any way, shape, or form. The bread as He brake it, and the wine, as He poured it out, remained bread and wine. When the Apostles ate and drank, they ate and drank the bread and wine handed to them by the Lord, and nothing else. His body, of flesh and blood, stood living before their eyes. When He gave the bread broken, and said, "Take, eat, this is my body," they saw, handled, ate, and tasted bread only, looking by faith upon that living, holy body which stood before them, soon to be broken like the bread for their sins. When He poured the wine into the cup, and said, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood shed for many for the remission of

sins," they saw the wine, drank, and tasted wine only, looking by faith upon the present and living Redeemer, whose blood was soon to be shed for their sins. They received the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of their Lord, the great passover sacrifice, and reposed their souls by faith upon Him, for justification unto life eternal. The passover looked forward to Christ; the Lord's supper looked backward to Him. The elements used in these ordinances, in themselves contain no eternal life, and convey no grace of salvation to the soul. Multitudes may partake of them, ministered by all and every kind of professed ministers of God, as multitudes have done, and yet perish eternally. And why? Because they discern not through these emblems the body of our Lord—the true sacrifice for sin—and do not by faith embrace Him as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, Ps. l. 7-23. But more of this subject in another place.

Besides the commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt, and of God's proprietorship in His people, the passover commemorates also the consecration of the first-born of man and of beast unto the Lord. Said He to Moses on the day of their coming out, "Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast; it is mine." Accordingly, "Moses said unto the people, Remember this day in which ye came out of Egypt out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place." "And it shall be, when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as He sware unto thee, and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee, that thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix; and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast, the males shall be the Lord's. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break its neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem, for the money of five shekels after the shekel of the sanctuary, Levit. xxvii. 1-8; Numb. xviii. 15-18. "And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us

out of Egypt, from the house of bondage. And it came to pass when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast, therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the first-born of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt," Exod. xiii. 2, 11-16.

Some suppose that from Adam to the giving of the law, the first-born in every family succeeded to the office of priest, as well as to other dignities held by his father; but it is nowhere so stated in the Holy Word, and the supposition is incapable of positive proof. Generally it may have been so. Now that the visible Church is organized and separated from the world, and to continue so for many ages, it pleases God to alter the order heretofore pursued, whatever it was, in relation to the priesthood; and He makes the deliverance the fitting occasion for so doing. He devoted to destruction the first-born of man and beast among the Egyptians, and thereby delivered His people. In gratitude for this deliverance, and in memorial of His proprietorship in them, He demands the consecration on their part to Him, for His special service, of the first-born of man and beast among them. To what service is the first-born of man to be devoted? To the priesthood: and to what service the first-born of beast? To sacrifice, a part to be eaten by the priest, and a part by the offerer. When the whole order of the Church was definitely settled at Sinai, then, in ordaining a priesthood, he substituted one entire tribe, that of Levi for the first-born of all the tribes. At this time, the first-born of all the tribes were numbered, and also the males of the tribe of Levi. The excess was two hundred and seventy-three in favor of the tribes, and these were redeemed by paying to the tribe of Levi five shekels a piece. This redemption money was afterward paid to Levi for the first-born, and contributed to the support of the priesthood. At the same time the beasts also of the Levites were taken in the place of the first-born of the beasts of the other tribes, and, in being

devoted to the support of the Levites, were sanctified to the Lord. The first-born of beasts were ever afterward offered in sacrifice to God, and partly eaten both by the priests and the offerer, Exod. xxii. 29-30; xxxiv. 19-20; Levit. xvii. 1-27; Numb. iii. 1-51; xviii. 15-18; Deut. iv. 19-23. It was in obedience to this "law of the Lord" that the holy child Jesus was brought by His parents to Jerusalem, and presented to the Lord, Luke ii. 21-39. The consideration of this subject is reserved for a following chapter, and we dismiss it here, with the remark suggested by it, that all the institutions of the Church are so connected and interwoven with its history, that it is impossible to receive any part of it, or any one of those institutions, without receiving the whole.

The dawn of the morning of that awful night found the children of Israel on their glorious march. "They departed from Ramases in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month. On the morrow after the passover, the children of Israel went out with a high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians." "Egypt was glad when they departed," Ps. cv. 38; Numb. xxxiii. 1-3. Then appeared the symbol of the presence and protection of God, Exod. xiv. 24; Dent. i. 32-33. marvellous in the eyes of Egypt and of Israel—even the pillar of cloud leading the way of the armies of Israel, Exod. xiii. 21-22. It moved in sublime majesty, and in the evening rested on Succoth. There they pitched their tents for the first night, and the cloud changed with approaching darkness into a pillar of fire, giving them light, Ps. lxxviii. 14; cv. 39; Numb. ix. 15-23. "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people," Exod. xiii. 21-22. When the tabernacle was reared in the wilderness, the cloud took up its position over the tabernacle. "And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony;" "and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle: and Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode

thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning. So it was always. The cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night: and when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, (whether by day or by night,) then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode upon the tabernacle, whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, there the children of Israel pitched their tents, and journeyed not. At the commandment of the Lord they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the Lord they journeyed: they kept the charge of the Lord, at the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses," Exod. xl. 34-38; Numb. ix. 15-23. When the cloud lifted for their removal and the ark of the covenant set forward, "Moses said, Rise, up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel," Numb. x. 33-36.

The fame of this cloud was noised abroad among the nations, who both saw and heard that the Lord was among the people; that He was seen face to face; that He went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night, Numb. xiv. 14. Although the people often rebelled and sinned grievously against the Lord, yet, in His " manifold mercies, He forsook them not in the wilderness; the pillar of cloud departed not from them by day to lead them in the way, neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go," Neh. ix. 12-19; Ps. lxxviii. 14; Deut. i. 32-33, until that day when their wanderings ceased on the banks of the Jordan, and they passed over dry-shod under Joshua into the promised land.

Moses carried up the bones of Joseph in his " coffin," as Joseph had charged the children of Israel to do, Gen. i. 25-26; Acts vii. 15-16. " And God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea, and not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." There was

also another end in view in this arrangement, which was the overthrow of Pharaoh and all his hosts in the Red Sea. From Succoth they departed and pitched in Ethan : and from Ethan they turned and encamped before Pi-hahiroth between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon. For the Lord said to Moses, when this is done, "Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them : and I will be honored upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host ; that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord," Exod. xiv. 1-4. As God had foreordained so it came to pass. Pharaoh "pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen and his army ; and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-zephon." The fear and distress of the people at this formidable host, were quieted by Moses. "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew you to-day : for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more forever." "Lift up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea," said God to Moses, "and divide it : and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them, and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen ; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten me honor upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen." The pillar of cloud removed and stood between the Egyptians and the children of Israel. "It was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these : so that the one came not near the other all the night." Moses stretched out his hand. The strong east wind of the mighty God blew, and the waters were divided. "The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground : and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left." The pillar of fire cast its great light over the multitude pressing through this wondrous vale to the bright shores beyond. The pursuing Egyptians went in after them ;

the Lord looked through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host: and took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily." They were convinced that an unseen and irresistible power was pressing them down, and retarding their progress; and "the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians." Then, at the command of God, Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled against it: and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. There remained not so much as one of them. "The sea covered them. They sank as lead in the mighty waters," Exod. xv. 10. "By faith they passed through the Red Sea, which the Egyptians essaying to do were drowned," Heb. xi. 29. "Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore: and that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and His servant Moses," Exod. xiv. 1-31; Ps. cvi. 7-13. The passage of the Red Sea was the eleventh and final miracle for the salvation of Israel; and the overthrow of Pharaoh the final blow of judgment against the Egyptians!

It is not known at what place the Lord divided the Red Sea, and led over His people; because all accurate traces of their encampments, on their march from Egypt and at the sea, are lost. It is a matter of very little consequence, for all that we need to be assured of is, that they did cross the sea upon "dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left." This stupendous miracle was celebrated by triumphal songs, composed by Moses, and sang by the children of Israel on the shores of the Red Sea, to which Miriam and the women responded "with timbrels and with dances." It was noised abroad in all lands, and struck terror into the heart of nations ordained to overthrow by Israel, Exod. xv. 1-21; Josh. xii. 9-11. It is referred to frequently in subsequent history as evidence of the almighty power of God; of the ease and readiness with which He can deliver His people from their most powerful foes, and in the most imminent dangers. He comforts His redeemed with

these words: "I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: the Lord of Hosts is His name," Isa. li. 11-15. So when with His glorious arm He divided the sea, "He made Himself an everlasting name," as the Lord and Redeemer of His people, and therefore will we trust in Him, Isa. lxiii. 12, comp. Neh. ix. 11; Ps. lxvi. 66; lxxiv. 13; lxxviii. 13; cvi. 7-10; cxiv. 3-5; cxxxvi. 13.

Who led the Church out of Egypt, through the wilderness, in the pillar of cloud and of fire, to the promised land? It was "the Angel of God's Presence," "the Angel of the Covenant," "the Angel Jehovah." "Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ was as a son over His own house," Heb. iii. 1-6. The eternal Son has ever been the "image of the invisible God"—the only revealer of God in His vast works of creation and redemption, John i. 1-3; Col. i. 15-17; Heb. i. 1-3; Prov. viii. 22-31; Rev. i. 19-20. For the purpose of the revelation of God in the work of redemption, He has been made head over all things, and head of the Church to whom that revelation is committed. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him," John i. 18; vi. 46; xvii. 1-26; Matt. xxviii. 18; Eph. i. 18-23; iv. 15-16; v. 23; Isa. vi. 1-3; ix. 6-7; Col. i. 15-19; ii. 10-19; Phil. ii. 5-11; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Heb. i. 1-3. In the presence of the Angel of the covenant in the pillar of cloud and of fire, we may consider the fact that all the revelations of God to His Church are made through and by Him.

Adam hears the voice of the Lord God, which afterwards "spake to him, walking in the garden," Gen. iii. 1-9. What is this walking, speaking "voice" of God? The same that "was in the beginning with God"—"the Word"—the Son of God, John i. 1-6. Adam and his posterity received revelations from Him; Enoch styles Him "Lord," and predicts His coming to judge the world. He appears after the flood at "the Angel of Jehovah;" delegated, sent of the Father for the salvation of the Church, and to perform all works necessary thereto; He speaks to Hagar as her omniscient, omnipresent God, and as such is acknowledged by her, Gen. xvi. 7-13. Ac-

accompanied by two angels, He addresses Abraham and assures him of the fulfilment of His promise of Isaac. To Him the thoughts of Sarah's heart were known, to Him nothing was too hard, and with Him Abraham intercedes for Sodom,—the Hearer of prayer—the Judge of all the earth—in Whose presence men are but dust and ashes. This same Jehovah went His way after communing with Abraham, and the next day “rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire out of heaven.” The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son,” Gen. xviii., xix., John v. 22–27. When God tempted Abraham to offer up Isaac, and he was about to do it, this same “Angel of Jehovah” called unto him out of heaven, “Abraham! Abraham! Lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know that thou fearest God: seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.” Renewing His promise which He had made to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, “And said, By myself have I sworn, that in blessing I will bless thee, etc.” Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh; he had a vision of God, and it was of the Angel of Jehovah. “And there wrestled a man with Jacob (at the ford of Jabbok), until the breaking of the day. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” He did bless Jacob, and changed his name to Israel, for, said He, “as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” Jacob called the place, “Peniel,” that is, “the face of God;” “for, said he, “I have seen God face to face,” Gen. xxxii. 24–32. The Prophet Hosea, xii. 1–5, writing of this occurrence in Israel's life, says, “He had power over the Angel and prevailed; he wept and made supplication unto him.” The same Angel “found Jacob in Bethel,” and the Lord, standing above the ladder that reached from earth to heaven, proclaimed Himself to Jacob the Lord God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, renewing to him the promises He had made to them. Jacob awoke and vowed to take this God to be his God, Gen. xxviii. 10–22. Hosea affirms that He is “even the Lord God of Hosts; the Lord is his memorial,” Gen. xxxv. 1–15. Jacob many years after refers to this vision

when blessing the sons of Joseph, Gen. xlviii. 15-16. "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my Fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long until this day—the Angel which redeemed me from all evil—bless the lads, etc." The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the Angel Jehovah, from and through whom they received their revelations.

Following the course of Scripture, next comes the vision of Moses in Horeb. "The angel of the Lord (Jehovah), appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, (Exod. iii. 1-22,) and He said, I am the God of thy Father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." He announced to Moses that He had come down to deliver His people out of Egypt, by his hand. Moses answered, "When the children of Israel shall ask me thy name, what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I am that I am. Say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Years after, Moses designates the God of Israel by the title of "Him that dwelt in the bush;" and invokes His blessing on Joseph, Deut. xxxiii. 13-16; Acts vii. 30-38. This Angel of Jehovah is sent by the Lord, Exod. xxiii. 20-23: "Behold," (saith the Lord God to the children of Israel in the wilderness), "I send an Angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place that I have prepared. Beware of Him and obey His voice, provoke Him not, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him. But if thou shalt indeed obey His voice, and do all I speak, then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries; for mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off." Sent of God to lead, defend, and bring the people to the promised land, God's name, nature, and authority were in Him; and therefore were they to receive His revelations, and fear His wrath, for He could by no means clear the guilty, Col. ii. 9; John v. 19, 23; x. 30-38; xiv. 10; xvii. 21.

After the sin of worshipping the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 30-35, the Lord commanded Moses to carry up the people, and promised, "Mine angel shall go before thee;" and again, Exod. xxxiii. 1-3, "I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the Canaanites, etc., for I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee in the way." This promised angel is a created angel and not the Angel Jehovah, Exod. xxxiii. 20-23; for, when the Angel Jehovah went with them, God went with them, and all was well. But now God refuses to go with them; the angel of His presence being withdrawn, they are to be put under the conduct of another, in whom the name of God is not. The camp of Israel and Moses were thrown into distress; the people humbled themselves, Moses prayed, the Lord was entreated, and He said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses answered, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." Peace was restored, the Angel of God's presence resumed His appointed place—"the radiance of His glory and the express image of His person"—becoming again the leader and commander of the people, comp. Isa. lxiii. 8-9. "For He said, surely they are my people, so he was their Saviour."

The Angel of Jehovah continued His revelation of God through His servant Moses, at Sinai, in the wilderness, and to the borders of the promised land; through Joshua and his successors, the Judges; through Samuel and all the Prophets, "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," until the close of the Old Testament; then He ceased for four hundred years, and becoming incarnate He continued, and, after His ascension, completed, through His Apostles, the Word of God, henceforth neither to be added unto nor taken from. To pretend to new revelations is to deny the completeness and sufficiency of Scripture, and to be guilty of great sin against the Head of the Church.

Triumphantly crossing the Red Sea, the children of Israel went three days' journey into the wilderness of Etham, and encamped in Marah, so called from the bitterness of the waters, which were miraenlously sweetened. Here the Lord

entered into a covenant with Israel to afflict them with none of the diseases with which He had afflicted the Egyptians, on condition that they would diligently and heartily obey His commandments and statutes. Removing from Marah they encamped in Elim; then, by the Red Sea; then, in the wilderness of Sin, Exod. xv. 22-27; Numb. xxxiii. 1-11. between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month, precisely one month after leaving Egypt.

The supplies brought out of Egypt failed; famine stared the people in the face, and they murmured. In the evening, quails miraculously came and covered the camp; and in the morning, "when the dew was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoarfrost on the ground," like coriander seed, in color as bdellium, and the taste like wafers made with honey; but, when ground in mills, or beaten in a mortar, and baked as cakes in a pan, "the taste was as the taste of fresh oil," Numb. xi. 1-9. When the children of Israel saw it, in their surprise they said to one another, "Man hoo?" that is, "What is this," or "What is it?" for they knew not what it was. "Moses said, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat;" and they called it, in memory of their exclamation on first seeing it "Man:" our version writes it "Manna." It fell abundantly, was gathered and distributed (an omer to a man), morning by morning, save that on the sixth day the food of two days was gathered, as none fell for the sabbath; on that day they rested, according to the commandment. What remained after all were supplied, melted as the sun waxed warm. An omer of it was afterwards laid up in the ark, which kept pure, for a memorial to all generations of the power and mercy of God. If kept over for the following day, except for the Sabbath, "it stank and bred worms." It fell for forty years, and for a short time after Israel had crossed the Jordan and pitched in Gilgal. There Joshua circumcised all who had not been circumcised in the way and kept the passover. On the morrow after the passover they ate the old corn of the land, and on that day, there being no longer any need of it, the manna ceased. "Neither had the children of

Israel manna any more, but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year," Exod. xvi. 1-36; Josh. v. 1-12.

The manna was a miracle—the immediate creation of God—never before seen by the Israelites nor by their fathers, as Moses tells them, Deut. viii. 3-16. It has never been seen since. The Apostle calls it "spiritual," that is supernatural "meat," 1 Cor. x. 3; and the Psalmist says, "man did eat angels' food," or the food of the mighty, that fit for princes, and the great ones of the earth, Ps. lxxviii. 24-25. It was also typical of Christ Jesus, the true bread which came down from heaven. Saith He, "verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven, for the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. I am the bread of life which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." We feed daily by faith upon the Son of God, and have in Him eternal life, and "He will raise us up at the last day," John. vi. 30-56; Rev. ii. 17.

The people removed from the wilderness of Sin to Daphkah, to Alush, and to Rephidim, where they tempted God by murmuring for water, and rebuked Moses: for the one offence he called the place "Massah" (temptation); and for the other, "Meribah" (chiding). By God's command, and with His rod, he smote the rock in Horeb, some distance from Rephidim, and supplied the people with drink. From the remark of the Apostle Paul, (1 Cor. x. 4, "And did all drink the same spiritual drink," that is, water supernaturally supplied; "for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ,") it is not to be understood that the rock in Horeb followed them to supply them with water in their journeys, but that Christ was the rock that followed them. He was the true source and fountain of their salvation—the living water that supplied them—and so the rock in Horeb was typical of Christ.

In Rephidim, Amalek attacked the hindmost of Israel, the feeble, faint, and weary, but was discomfited in the vale,

while Moses, praying to God, stood on the hill in the sight of the army, and Aaron and Hur held up his hands. Moses commemorated the victory by building an altar and calling it Jehovah-nissi (the Lord my banner). For this cruel conduct the Lord doomed Amalek to utter destruction, which was accomplished through Saul and David, and finally through Hezekiah, Exod. xvii. 1-16; Deut. xxv. 17-19; Numb. xxiv. 20; 1 Sam. xv. 1-35; xxvii. 1-12; xxx. 1-20; 1 Chron. iv. 4-43.

Departing from Rephidim, the children of Israel came in the third month from Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai, and encamped before the mount of God, Exod. xix. 1-2; Numb. xxxiii. 15, where the Lord had appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and said unto him, "Certainly I will be with thee, and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain," Exod. iii. 1-12. Before that mountain, Horeb, in the range of the mountains of Sinai, he was encamped with the people, and there they worshipped God.

Moses was not far from the home of his father-in-law, whose flocks he formerly fed on this mountain; and to whom he had returned his wife and children after he had taken them at first down to Egypt, Exod. iv. 18-26. Jethro, hearing of the wonderful deliverance and the safe arrival of the people at Horeb, came to see Moses, and brought to him his wife Zipporah and his two sons, Gershom and Eliezer.

Jethro blessed God for His goodness to Israel, and Moses and the elders united with him in burnt offerings and sacrifices, and in eating bread, for he was a priest of God himself, and one of the last mentioned of the sacred order which remained without the body of God's chosen people. The whole conduct and government of the people, under their present peculiar circumstances, fell on Moses. He styles himself, "King in Jeshurun," Deut. xxxiii. 4-5, and he sat upon his judgment-seat from morning to evening. Jethro, observing his exhausting labors said, "The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou,

and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee. Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work they must do. Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: and let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so it shall be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace." This judicious advice was followed by Moses, and he "let his father-in-law depart, and he went his way unto his own land," Exod. xviii. 1-27.

CHAPTER XX.

LAW GIVEN TO THE CHURCH THROUGH MOSES ARRANGED.—DIVIDED INTO THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND CIVIL LAW.—THE ECCLESIASTICAL, INTO THE MORAL, CEREMONIAL, CONSTITUTIONAL, AND DISCIPLINARY, FOR MORE SATISFACTORY CONCEPTION.—THE CIVIL LAW: EMBRACING FORM OF GOVERNMENT—A THEOCRACY.—THE PEOPLE; OFFICERS, EXTRAORDINARY AND ORDINARY.—THE GREAT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL, THE SEVENTY.—PENALTIES AND REWARDS.—A COMMONWEALTH COMPOSED OF STATES.—SABBATICAL YEAR, AND YEAR OF JUBILEE.—NO LAWGIVER TO BE COMPARED WITH MOSES.

WE have now “come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words,” Heb. xii. 18–19, and shall attempt such an arrangement of the law given to the Church by Moses, as shall exhibit it to be what it really is—a most harmonious and glorious development and confirmation of the covenant of grace.

First: the law was given by the Great Head of the Church, the source of all the revelations of God. It was He who spake to Moses in the mount, whose advent was announced with thunderings and lightnings, whose pavilion was thick darkness and clouds, and at whose touch the whole mount quaked and burned with fire. The smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, Exod. xx. 1–2, 18; Isa. vi. 1–4; Heb. iii. 1–6; John xii. 41; Rev. xv. 8. Part of the law was delivered from the mount, and part afterwards from the tabernacle. Second: The law was given by the hands of a media-

tor, who was Moses, "with whom God spake face to face as a man speaketh with his friend," and upon whose countenance He impressed somewhat of the effulgence of His own glory, Acts vii. 35-40; Gal. iii. 19; Ex. xxxiv. 29-35. Third: by the ministrations of angels, (whatever that ministration was,) by speech, by the voice of the trumpet, through the lightnings and thunder, the fire and earthquake, the cloud and the thick darkness, Deut. xxxiii. 2; Ps. lxxviii. 17; Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19; Heb. ii. 2; comp. Ex. xxiv. 1-10; Ezek. i. 1-27. Fourth: the law given includes the five books of Moses, (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy,) and all that they contain. Fifth: it was given to the Church as it then existed, and for centuries after, a civil as well as a religious body.

The law therefore admits of two grand divisions: the ecclesiastical, relating to the Church; and the civil, relating to the Church as a commonwealth, or state; the latter incidental, but not essential to the being of the Church—temporary, and in the hour appointed to pass away.

The ecclesiastical and civil laws were necessarily much interwoven in their administration, some offences being levelled against both Church and state. For example: idolatry, which was an open denial of God, and resulted in excommunication from the Church, was also treason against the king, and resulted in death by the state. So all violations of the moral law, whether against God or man, which were cognizable by the state, involved also the church standing of the transgressor, and he must needs be excommunicated, or offer sacrifices for his cleansing and reconciliation. If a man denied a trust to his neighbor's injury, or defrauded a partner, or embezzled a lost article, he was indictable under the civil law, and chargeable also with guilt under the ecclesiastical law; he was commanded to bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord, the priest should make atonement for him before the Lord, and his sins be forgiven him, Levit. vi. 1-7, etc. The same principle obtains now in the discipline of the Church. Her members are required to discharge in a blameless manner their duties to the state, and when they fail to do so, their good standing is

forfeited in both Church and state, and they must needs be reconciled to one and the other. This inweaving of the ecclesiastical and civil law, demonstrates that the children of Israel were the Church of God. The more perfect the member of the Church, the more perfect the citizen of the state, and *vice versa*.

The ecclesiastical law, the first in order, may be cast into four divisions: the moral, the ceremonial, the constitutional, and the disciplinary law.

1. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments, delivered amidst awful displays of divine majesty and glory. It was originally, under the covenant of works, both the rule of man's duty and of his justification; but under the covenant of grace, the rule of his duty only—divided by our Lord into two commandments: the first including the first four, and covering our duty to God; and the second, the remaining six, covering our duty to man—familiarily styled, “the first and second tables of the law.” “On these two commandments,” saith our Lord, “hang all the law and the prophets;” that is, all the duties required in the Holy Scriptures towards God and man, are embraced in the ten commandments, which are given in a negative form, the sin forbidden including all of its kind, and the opposite duty implied, including all of its kind. Infinite wisdom compressed in these “ten words,” which may be taught to a little child, the religion and morality of the universe, Matt. xxii. 36–40. It was not more the awful displays of divine majesty at the delivery of this law, than the conviction of sin, and of deserved wrath, that made the people tremble and remove afar off.

2. The ceremonial law embraced in its number, variety, and minuteness, all the ordinances and ceremonies to be observed in the public and private worship and service of God. It was significant of essential truths and duties; of peculiar moral impression and benefit, of which the true member of the Church was fully aware in his observation of them: “A shadow of good things to come.” The ceremonial law acknowledged the existence of the one only living and true God, the Redeemer of Israel, in contradistinction to all false

deities, and in His infinite holiness, justice, mercy, and faithfulness, the only proper object of religious worship; and it prescribed the manner of that worship. It taught man's utter ruin and dependence as a sinner; the necessity of an atonement, in order to his reconciliation with, and justification before God, and the necessity also of his sanctification, that he might be meet for God's glory and service.

The great central truth around which the whole ceremonial law revolved, and which it was designed to establish and illustrate in every possible and practical form, was, "that without shedding of blood is no remission," Heb. ix. 22; in other words, Christ and Him crucified, made of God unto the sinner "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 30. God could be approached, worshipped, and propitiated only by sacrifice. The sacrifices were in themselves wholly inefficacious to take away sin by any satisfaction which they could render to divine justice: "for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins," Heb. x. 4. Such sacrifices could only sanctify to the purifying of the flesh; to the rendering acceptable an outward act of service which preserved the worshipper in good and regular standing in the Church, but nothing more, Heb. ix. 13, etc. Beyond this the God of Israel never designed that sacrifices should go. Their efficacy and value consisted not in their being in themselves real and acceptable sacrifices for sin, but in being types of the one great sacrifice upon which the faith of the worshipper fixed itself—even the "Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world." They all illustrated, pointed to, and centred in this sacrifice, which was to be once offered in the end of the world, forever taking away sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness to the believer.

Hence, the ceremonial law holds in its bosom the Gospel. In and by this law, Christ Jesus was revealed and preached. It is here especially that we see Moses writing of Christ, speaking of Christ, and preaching Christ, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation more fully indeed, but not more really, than they had been from the day of the fall.

This law defined the form, dimensions, material, and con-

struction of the tabernacle, (and afterwards of the temple of Solomon, which came in its place,) its furniture, walls, gates, and courts, the manner of its consecration, preservation, and purity. It determined the order and service of those who should minister within and before this sanctuary, their family stock, their unblemished persons, their various vestments, the precious stones to be worn, their purifications, and their portions. It determined the form, the materials, and structure of the altars, their ascent, their fire, their purification and sanctity, and the different kinds of service vessels; the nature and number of the sacred times and seasons, and also of the sacrifices, the sin-offerings, the trespass-offerings, burnt-offerings, peace or thank-offerings, meat-offerings, and the rites and ceremonies peculiar to each; the kind of animals to be sacrificed, their age and condition, the clean and the unclean, and offerings of every sort. It determined also who were the true worshippers; what constituted ceremonial cleanness and uncleanness; for how long a time, and in what manner, and for what, purifications should be made; how the priests should sacrifice; where, and how frequently; and in what parts of the courts of the tabernacle and temple they and the people should worship, and what things would exclude them from these holy precincts, or even excommunicate them altogether. The law reached not only to every thing connected with the immediate worship and service of God at the tabernacle and temple, but it had control over the people in many other things, which were all designed to impress them with the purity and holiness of God, the necessity for their own constant purity and holiness: and of their separation from all other nations as the peculiar people of the Lord. The ceremonial law regulated the food, in respect to clean and unclean; the dress, in respect to kind and composition; the planting of seeds; the ploughing of the ground; the gathering of the harvest and vintage; the marriage relation; the ceremonies and purifications attendant upon births and deaths, and the intercourse to be had with the heathen world. Precepts of the ceremonial law which appear singular and inexplicable at first sight, upon due consideration are discerned to be wisely and usefully framed, for the purpose of preserving

the people from dangerous and idolatrous practices, and of keeping them distinct from the world. The Israelite who conscientiously observed the ceremonial law, experienced the peace and comfort of the salvation provided for him in the coming Redeemer; he was constantly reminded of his consecration to God, of the necessity for watchfulness and prayer, of constant warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and of the vanity of all forms unaccompanied by the spirit of God.

3. The constitutional law respects the organization and order of the Church: the officers, members, places, times, seasons, and modes of worship.

Prior to the time of Moses, the officers were patriarchs, who were priests in fact, priests of an established order, and prophets, who were also preachers of righteousness, chosen of God from no particular tribe or nation. Under Moses, the patriarchs disappear, and the officers of the Church are both extraordinary and ordinary: the extraordinary being prophets, and chosen by the Lord indiscriminately from any one of the tribes of Israel. The ordinary were:

First: priests, no longer chosen indiscriminately from any nation, but now confined to one nation, to but one tribe of that nation, to but one family of that tribe, and to but one house of that family: the nation, Israel; the tribe, Levi; the family, Kohath; the house, Amram, Ex. vi. 14-27.

The high-priest, who presided over the whole Church, and who alone was permitted to enter into the Holy of Holies once a year, to carry to the mercy-seat the blood of atonement, was Aaron, the first-born of Amram; and ever after the first-born in succession from Aaron. In case of the death of the first-born, the high-priesthood fell to the next oldest son in the family in the direct line of descent, 1 Chron. xxiv. 2. The rest of the sons of Aaron were priests. Moses, by the call of God, was both priest and prophet, but his sons, not being of the family of Aaron, were Levites only.

The functions of the ordinary priests in every particular might be performed by the high-priest, but the functions peculiar to his office no one but himself could perform. The great-

er contained the less, but the less did not contain the greater. It was the high-priest, in his office and functions, who was the special and illustrious type of the great High-Priest, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

This order of the priesthood, serving in the shadow of good things to come, continued in the Church without any change, (save immaterial changes relating to the manner of service, introduced by David,) until Shiloh came, 1 Chron. xxiv. 1-31; 2 Chron. xxiii. 1-8; Ezra ii. 36-39; Neh. vii. 39-42; Luke i. 5. It then found its fulfillment in Christ, the substance, and expired by the statute of its own limitation.

Second: the Levites, inferior to the priests, who embraced all the other descendants of Levi by his sons Gershom and Merari, and the sons of Moses who were of the stock of Kohath. The priests might perform the duties of the Levites, but the Levites could not perform the duties of the priests. Here also the greater contained the less, but the less did not contain the greater. The transportation and care of the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the care of the temple after it was erected; the preparation of the sacrifices, the cleansing of the altars and courts, and a variety of other labors falling upon a small number of priests, in addition to their intercession for and instruction of the people in the law, would have been too great a burden; therefore the Lord gave the Levites to the priests to be their co-laborers and assistants. The priests only could offer the sacrifices; the Levites prepared them. The priests ministered at the altar; the Levites around the altar.

Priests and Levites constituted two orders in the ordinary officers of the Church. The high-priest was not of an order distinct from the priests, but a priest to whom was committed some special services of the priesthood above the rest; and in addition he was made the medium of communication between God and the people, whenever circumstances required it of Church or state, he alone being permitted to go into the presence of God, and propound the questions and receive replies. Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the priest's office at the same time by Moses, and in the same manner, and with the same ceremonies and sacrifices, with this difference, that some of

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the garments of Aaron were unlike those of his sons, and in setting Aaron apart Moses poured the anointing oil upon his head. At the conclusion of the whole, "Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him: and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him," Levit. viii. 1-30. This consecration of the priests was never repeated, but ever afterward, when they arrived at the prescribed age, whatever it was, they entered upon their duties without further ceremony. Not so, however, with the high-priest; for as often as a new high-priest came to the succession, he was duly inducted into office, by being clothed with the holy garments of Aaron, and by anointing with oil, and by sacrifices for seven days, as prescribed. He is always spoken of as being "anointed" to his office, Ex. xxix. 29-46; Levit. xxi. 10; Numb. xxv. 25.

The Levites also at first were set apart by special services of consecration, Numb. viii. 1-26, but afterwards arriving at the prescribed age, they quietly entered upon their duties. The age was first fixed at thirty, then twenty-five, and in David's time, at twenty, 1 Chron. xxiii. 1-3, 24, 32. A release was allowed them from the more onerous duties at fifty, but they continued in sacred employments to the end of life, Numb. iv. 1-3; viii. 23-26; Luke i. 18. No period of life was fixed for the priests (of course such a thing was impossible in the case of the high-priest) either to enter upon or to retire from office. They had office for their natural lives, beginning no doubt at the age the Levites did, the usual time that men undertake the business of life.

The labors of the Levites were very considerable at the tabernacle, in the wilderness, and after it was located at Shiloh, and then at the temple in Jerusalem. Joshua granted them assistance, when he condemned the Gibeonites to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and to them were added in subsequent times the Nethinims, Josh ix. 1-27; Ex. viii. 17-20; vii. 7-24; 1 Ki. ix. 20-21; Ez. ii. 43-58; Neh. iii. 26; vii. 60, etc.

Both these orders of officers were religious teachers—ministers of the Word of God in the Church—to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine, leading men to repentance, faith, and godly living. “The priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts,” and when the priests were faithful, “they did turn many away from iniquity,” Mal. ii. 1–7. Of Levi, Moses saith, “they shall teach Jacob thy judgments and Israel thy law,” Deut. xxxiii. 8–11. Jehoshaphat sent priests and Levites throughout his kingdom, with the book of the law to teach the people, 2 Chron. xvii. 8–10. Hezekiah “spake comfortably to all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord,” 2 Chron. xxx. 21–22. The Levites united with the priests in conducting the public worship of the people, in singing, praying, and preaching. So were they united in the revival under Nehemiah. The priests and the Levites, “caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place: so they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading,” Neh. viii. 1–8; comp. Eze. xlv. 23–24; Hos. iv. 6. They instructed the people assembled for worship on the week days, and on the sabbath, at the tabernacle, in the temple, in the synagogues, and in their local places for social and public worship, which were built in all the villages. Not only was it for the convenience of giving support to the priests and Levites by the people, but also for the convenience of affording instruction to the people, that the forty-eight Levitical cities were dispersed throughout the tribes. At these central points they could give instruction, and from them they went into the regions round about. Then the three great festivals occurring every year, which all the people were required to attend, were special occasions for preaching and instruction; and once in seven years, at the feast of tabernacles in the sabbatical year, the Lord ordained that the whole law should be read in the hearing of the people, Deut. xxxviii. 10–13; Matt. xxiii. 1–3.

In addition to the regular ministry, which, in numbers, ability, and opportunity, was abundant for the religious train-

ing and instruction of the people, the Church enjoyed in succession for ages the instruction and preaching of holy men whom God ordained to be prophets, leaders; and commanders of the people, such as Moses, Joshua, the Judges, Samuel, David, Solomon, and all the prophets. The extraordinary labors of Elijah and Elisha are recorded, and the books of the several prophets attest their fidelity and power.

There may be added also to this ample provision and regular public religious instruction of the Church, that private training which God commanded in reference to children. Parents were enjoined to be in the first place the servants of God, well instructed themselves, and then to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, not only teaching them the Word itself, but causing them to understand the sacred covenant of God with them, all the sacred monuments, feasts, customs, and rites of the Church, (Ps. lxxxvii. 1-8; Dent. vi. 1-9; xi. 18-21; Eph. vi. 4,) "that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments."

No alteration was made in the constitution of the Church in respect to members; they remained the same, believers together with their infant children. The door continued open for the admission also of proselytes or converts from all nations. Ministers did not preach the glad tidings of salvation to all the world, as they were commanded to do after the coming of Christ, the time set for it not being come. Yet the Gentiles were not excluded, for "thus saith the Lord, The sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants: every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar: for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people," Isa. lvi. 1-7. None that came were cast out. Foreigners captured in war, or bought with money, were incorporated into the body of Israel. Holy men of old, as of later times, loved the souls of men, and longed and prayed for the

extension of the kingdom of heaven, and the conversion of the world, Ps. ii. 8-12; lxxvi. 1-4; lxxviii. 31-32; Ps. xcvi.-xcviii., c., cxvii., cxlviii., cl. The prophets were filled with this spirit.

The constitutional law regulated also the places, times, and seasons of divine worship. From Adam to Moses the Church sacrificed and worshipped in any place suitable and convenient for the purpose. But at Mount Sinai, it pleased God to set up the tabernacle, which was the abode of God, their King, among His saints and subjects, Ex. xxv. 8; xxix. 42-46; Levit. xxvi. 11-12. The symbol of His presence was the glorious Shekinah, illuminating the Holy of Holies, and resting between the cherubims on the mercy-seat over the ark of the covenant, as upon a throne. Before the presence of God, and in the courts of this tabernacle alone, were the people permitted to offer sacrifices. The law was peremptory, for it was only on extraordinary occasions and by inspired prophets, that sacrifices were allowed to be offered in other places, 1 Sam. xv. 31; xvi. 1-5; 1 Ki. xviii. 20-38. It was the sin of the people that, for their own convenience, in after times, they set aside this law, and presumed to build altars, to sacrifice and worship God in their own selected "high places." They did not wish to go as far as Shiloh or Jerusalem to worship. These "high places" were sometimes prostituted to idols.

In the inner apartment of the tabernacle, the Holy of Holies, there was placed the ark of the covenant, on which was the mercy-seat, containing the two tables of the law, the golden pot that contained the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded and blossomed. In the outer apartment, the holy place, entered daily by the priests in their ministrations, were the table with the shew-bread, the altar of incense, and the golden candlestick. Before the tabernacle, in the priests' court, were the great altar for sacrifice, whereon all sacrifices were offered, and the brazen laver and furniture for sacrifice, Ex. xxx. 18-28; comp. 1 Kings vii. 1-43. On the altar, the sacred fire, given by God at the setting up of the tabernacle, was kept constantly burning and never suffered to go out. Every morning and evening a lamb was offered, called the daily

sacrifice. The tabernacle was kept open day by day, and the priests were always in attendance, so that the people could come from any place and at any time, to offer their sacrifice and worship God. By this arrangement many were accommodated without inconvenience and without delay. Multitudes of worshippers were always entering in and coming out of the tabernacle and the temple.

The tabernacle was superseded by the temple of Solomon in Jerusalem; that being destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the second temple was built by Ezra, on the return of the Jews from captivity, which was afterwards thoroughly repaired and beautified by Herod the Great, and finally destroyed by the Romans under Titus.

While the tabernacle, and afterwards the temple, was the ordained place of worship by sacrifice, there were throughout the land "proseuchai," or places for prayer, and houses for social and public worship on the sabbath and other days called synagogues, ("assembly places,") in which the people heard the word of God read and explained, and where they offered prayer and praise in the plain and spiritual manner in which public worship is conducted by the people of God in our day. No images or pictures of any sort appeared in the synagogue. The precise period in which synagogues took their rise and became common, is involved in uncertainty, but it is our belief that their antiquity is very great, and their existence grew out of the desire and necessity which the people of God felt for spiritual communion one with another and with God, Ps. vii. 8; Acts xv. 21.

The times appointed for worship were, as already stated, every day, and, above all days, the sabbath; then the three great yearly feasts, each of many days' continuance, at which all the males, together with their families and households, so far as it was practicable, were to appear before the Lord at the tabernacle, and afterwards at the temple. The first was the feast of unleavened bread or the passover, observed in our month of March, and in commemoration of the deliverance out of Egypt; the second, pentecost, or the feast of weeks, fifty days after the passover, observed in our month of May,

and commemorative of the harvest, hence also called "the feast of harvest;" the third, the feast of tabernacles, observed in the latter part of our September and first of October, commemorative of God's dwelling within a tabernacle, and of their dwelling in tabernacles in the wilderness, called also "the feast of ingathering at the end of the year," when all their harvests were completed, *Exod.* xxiii. 14-17. Added to these, there were other important feasts: for example, the new moons, or first days of every month, observed at the tabernacle and temple with appointed sacrifices and services, and thus each month was sanctified; the feast of trumpets, occurring on the first days of the civil year, on the first day of the seventh month, for the sanctification of the year with appropriate sacrifices—a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation, *Levit.* xxiii. 24-25. Finally, the annual feast of expiation, the great day of atonement, observed in our October, (the 10th of the seventh month,) with its attendant and most impressive sacrifices and services; typical of the great High-Priest and Sacrifice, the Lord Jesus Christ, *Levit.* xxiii. 1-44; xvi. 1-34.

Lastly, the disciplinary law, for the infliction of penalties by the officers of the Church, for transgressions of the moral, ceremonial, or constitutional law. The penalties were suspension from Church privileges in whole or in part, and for a longer or a shorter time, and also excommunication, *John* ix. 18-34; *Gen.* xvii. 14; *Ezra* x. 7-8. The officers also were liable to discipline. This law guarded also the qualifications and admission of members, *Gen.* xvii. 11-13. The power of the keys was committed to the Church from the beginning.

The ecclesiastical law now disposed of has been cast under these four heads, the moral, the ceremonial, the constitutional, and the disciplinary, not that they are summed up (with the exception of the moral law) in distinct chapters (for they lie without any formal arrangement in the inspired Word), but that under these heads our conception of the whole might be more satisfactory.

Second: the civil law. The visible Church existed as a state from Abraham to Moses, under the government of

patriarchs and elders, and received a civil constitution at Sinai, which continued in its essential features to the time of the overthrow of the state, although undergoing some modifications upon the introduction of kingly power, and the frequent rule of heathen nations.

Under this constitution, as before it, God was by His own gracious assumption, absolute king. The Church and state formed but one body, of which He was both God and king—king not by hereditary descent, nor by gift and appointment of another—not by election of the people, nor by conquest—but by right of creation, preservation, election, and grace—by a right divine. The people were not consulted, either collectively or representatively, in respect to constitution or laws; but He gave them both as He in His infinite wisdom, goodness, and authority, saw best, and to them He required unreserved and unresisting submission, Exod. xix. 4–8. They heard His voice in Horeb, “speaking out of the midst of the fire.” What He spoke out He delivered by Moses. The laws were perfect, and carefully committed to writing; and the Lord dwelt among the people, always accessible on the occurrence of any difficulty, either in understanding or executing the laws, or in any emergencies in the state, where the rulers and the people knew not how to act. On such occasions the high priest put on the robes and breastplate, with Urim and Thummim, entered into the holy place before God and propounded the questions, and received replies. If any were necessarily absent from the tabernacle, he could put on the Urim and Thummim and consult God and be answered. No nation was ever so exalted and honored, by the dwelling of God among them, and by the possession of laws framed by His own infinite wisdom, wherein all the great principles of justice were so plainly stated as to render their application easy to the various cases as they came up for judgment. The end which God had in view in giving righteous statutes and judgments, above what any people on earth possessed, was, as Moses expressed it to the Israelites, “to make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor: and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the

Lord thy God, as He hath spoken," Exod. xix.-xx. ; Deut. iv. 1-49 ; v.-vii., etc. ; Deut. xvii. 8-13 ; Judges i. 1-2 ; xx. 18-28 ; 1 Sam. iv. 4 ; xxii. 10 ; xxiii. 1-12 ; 2 Sam. xvi. 23 ; 1 Kings vi. 16 ; viii. 6 ; 2 Chron. iv. 20 ; Ps. ix. 11 ; xxviii. 2 : cxxxv. 21 ; clxvii. 19-20 ; Deut. xxvi. 18-19.

Every person in the commonwealth was subject to the civil, as was every one to the ecclesiastical law, from the king upon his throne to the slave that waited upon his master. There were no privileged persons, orders, or professions ; all free citizens were upon an equality and eligible to any civil office, with a right of suffrage in all.

The officers were extraordinary and ordinary ; the extraordinary, such as God raised up and appointed to special services, and in whose hands a supreme power was lodged over the whole body. Such were Moses, Joshua, the Judges. Samuel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel. When the kingly power was introduced by the people, the Lord permitted it, regulated it, and made the king supreme, yet subject to a written constitution and to God Himself, the king in Zion ; for the theocracy continued as before, 1 Sam. viii. 1-20.

The ordinary officers were elders of the people, such as existed in Egypt, whose functions were not definitely understood. Exod. iv. 29 ; iii. 16 ; and such as were appointed by Moses, at the suggestion of Jethro, and by divine approval, but through the people, to whom their election was committed by Moses. After they had chosen the men, "rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens," having severally prescribed jurisdiction, and formed successive courts of appeal, Moses set them apart and gave them a charge, saying, "Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment, but ye shall hear the small as well as the great : ye shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's : and the cause which is too hard for you bring it unto me and I will hear it," Exod. xviii. 1-27 ; Deut. i. 9-18 ; Numb. ix. 7-8 ; xxvii. 4-5 ; xv. 32-34 ; Levit. xxiv. 10-23.

These elders and officers acted in their respective tribes.

“Gather unto me,” saith Moses, “all the elders of your tribes and officers,” etc., Deut. xxxi. 28; collectively called also “elders of Israel,” Deut. xxvii. 1; xxxi. 9; Josh. vii. 6; 1 Chron. xi. 3, and “elders of the people,” Numb. xi. 16, 24; Ruth iv. 4; Deut. xvi. 18—their chosen rulers and representatives, acting in their name and for their benefit, who deliberated on their affairs, and received communications from God and the supreme governor, Levit. iv. 14; Deut. xxxi. 8; 1 Kings xx. 8. These officers were located in all the cities of Israel, (hence the frequent mention of “elders of the city,”) and ruled over their respective cities, with power even to inflict capital punishment, Deut. xix. 1–13; xxi. 18–23; xxvi. 1–10. In certain cases they acted in concert with the elders of the neighboring cities, Deut. xxi. 1–9; Ezra x. 13–4. Such were “the judges and officers” which the people were “commanded to make. “Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment,” Deut. xvi. 18–20.

Trials of causes of every sort were conducted before the elders, or officers, “in the gate”—the place of concourse—openly, publicly, and according to law, with this peculiarity, that they acted as a jury also. The witnesses were to be of sufficient number and of reputable character, Deut. xvii. 1–7; xix. 15–21; and their testimony, if false, was at the risk of incurring the judgment sought to be obtained against their neighbor. Provision was made against the infliction of judgment under the excitement produced by the crime; for the criminal was allowed to flee to the city of refuge, and time was secured for calm and patient investigation.

Appeals in difficult cases coming up through the lower courts, were at first brought before Moses, but afterwards before a supreme court established in his time and perpetuated. So Moses ordains: “If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose,” (that is, the

place where He shall dwell in tabernacle or temple,) “and thou shalt come unto the priests, the Levites, and unto the judge,” (or judges, Deut. xix. 17,) “that shall be in those days, and inquire: and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment. And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee: according to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand, or to the left. And the man that will do presumptuously and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God,” (that is, the high-priest,) “or unto the judge” (or judges), “even that man shall die; and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously,” Deut. xvii. 8-13. The appeal in civil cases was to the judge or judges—to the civil court; in spiritual cases, to the high-priest, priests, and Levites—to the spiritual court. When the judges or priests were unable to decide, they were then to inquire of the Lord, (who was king in Zion,) through the high-priest, and receive a solution of the case. From a careful study of this passage and also 2 Chron. xix. 1-11, it appears that the minister of religion had nothing to do with civil cases, beyond inquiring through the high-priest for the supreme judge or judges, whenever it should be necessary so to do.

Independently of the elders and officers in all the gates of Israel, there was this court of final appeal and control above them, which also acted in concert with him who was in command of the people, whether judge or king. It was defined and established during the lifetime of Moses on the following occasion, Numb. xi. 1-30. The fire of the Lord had burnt among the people for their complainings; the mixed multitude fell a-lusting, and the people wept and complained again throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent, and the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly. Moses was weary of his charge, complained to the Lord of the

affliction and burden of the people, and said, "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness. And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them" (that is, a spirit of authority, wisdom, and willingness to rule: the spirit of the high station to which God would appoint them); "and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone." Moses went out, and "gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle. And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders." In this solemn, august, and public manner these officers of the people were inaugurated assistants to Moses in the highest exercises of power. "And it came to pass when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied and did not cease." These were not the same "seventy elders" who, at God's command, went up at Sinai to see the God of glory with Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, *Exod. xxiv. 1*, etc. They were different men, called out and set apart to a different service altogether. They were a selection, either by Moses or the people, out of those who had already been chosen elders and officers in Israel. They assisted Moses in the supreme administration, and bore the burden of the government of the whole people with him. Thus afterwards Moses is observed associating them with himself in the government, *Deut. xxvii. 1*. "And Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day;" and he goes on to tell them what they shall do when they pass over Jordan.

This assembly of elders was certainly as much needed by

all the successors of Moses as by Moses himself, and, in the absence of a supreme ruler or king, acted alone. We think they are referred to as existing and acting with Joshua: xxiv. 31. "And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and of the elders that overlived Joshua," that is, of the elders who had served with Moses and himself, in the government. While they lived they possessed a controlling power and influence over the people. There was no successor appointed upon the death of Joshua; and during the interregnum the people declined in character. "In those days there was no king"—no supreme ruler in Israel, to lay restraint upon the people—so "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," Judges xxi. 25, comp. xix.—xx. This supreme council of elders appears acting with authority, and deciding the manner in which the remnant of the Benjaminites should be provided with wives. "Then the elders of the congregation" determined the manner, "and commanded the children of Benjamin, saying," etc., Judges xxi. 16; xx. 24. In the days of Samuel, his sons proved miserable and vile judges. "Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel unto Ramah:" requesting him to make them a king to rule them like all the nations. They acted as representatives and authoritatively, and are spoken of and to, as "the people" in this transaction, 1 Sam. viii. 1–22. Ahab, when threatened by Ben-hadad, king of Syria, gathered all the elders of Israel together and took council with them what to do, 1 Kings xx. 1–8. The elders are mentioned from time to time, in counsel with the kings, 2 Sam. v. 3; 1 Kings viii. 3; 2 Chron. v. 4; 1 Chron. xxi. 16. Finally, after the return of the people from captivity, Ezra speaks of the elders as in authority, and acting as a supreme counsel at Jerusalem in settling the matter of the strange wives, Ezra v. 5; vi. 14; x. 8–17, comp. Ezek. xliv. 23–24. These references favor the conclusion that this high council of elders, ordained by the Lord under Moses, was a perpetual institution, and formed in the nation the supreme court of appeal and control, Dent. xvii. 8–13. Let it be added that when Jehoshaphat reformed the kingdom of Judah, "he set judges in the land in all the

fenced cities of Judah," and restored also this supreme court of appeal and control, referring to the law of Moses, which he partially quotes for authority in so doing, 2 Chron. xix. 1-11.

The place where this council held its meetings was always where God himself dwelt—in the tabernacle, wherever it was—and afterward in the temple built at Jerusalem.

There was a council of elders and chief priests at Jerusalem during the life of our Lord, which, acting in an ecclesiastical capacity, condemned Him to death upon the charge of blasphemy. But the power of life and death having been taken from them, they were compelled to secure a sentence of death from Pilate, the Roman governor, by preferring, in addition to the charge of blasphemy, that of treason, Matt. xxvi. 59-68; xxvii. 1-25; John xviii. 28-40. This council also persecuted the Apostles, and extended its jurisdiction in ecclesiastical affairs even to strange cities, Acts vi. 8-15; vii. 1, etc., viii. 1, etc., ix. 1-2, etc., xxiii. 12-15.

In this council of seventy elders now traced out, we discover the original of the Sanhedrim—the Sanhedrim itself. Kings became ordinary officers after their appointment, and something of a nobility followed in their train, 1 Sam. viii. 1-22.

Penalties adopted by all nations since, were attached to the violation of the laws—such as fines, imprisonment, corporal punishments, forfeitures of liberty, property, privileges, and, finally, of death in several forms. In addition, it pleased the Lord to threaten, and at times to execute severe and various temporal and necessarily spiritual judgments upon the people at large, whenever they should decline from their allegiance to their God and King—judgments more fearful and weighty in consideration of the greater light resisted, and mercies abused. For a summary and minute detail of the various threatened judgments, we refer to Levit. xxvi.; Deut. xxviii. All of which were literally visited upon God's backsliding and rebellious people in after ages; and under some of which the Israelites, since the rejection of their own Messiah, are now suffering. They are living witnesses in all countries where they are scattered, of the truth of the Word of God, Deut. xviii. 18; Acts iii. 32; Hos. ii. 23; Isa. x. 22-23; Rom. xi.

Further, it pleased a gracious King and God to add exceedingly great and precious promises of His presence, protection, and manifold blessings to the people if they should prove obedient, (a summary of which is given in the same chapters of Leviticus and Deuteronomy,) and they were enjoyed by the people in the days wherein they proved themselves willing and obedient.

The penalties and rewards addressed to the people, as constituting Church and state, were both temporal and spiritual. If we would fully comprehend the typical and spiritual nature of the temporal rewards and penalties, we must consult the prophetic writings of the Psalms. To assert that God governed His ancient people by temporal penalties and rewards only, is criminal folly. The plain truth is, that existing as a spiritual and temporal kingdom, rewards and punishments were meted out to them in each capacity. By the neglect of this key, men err in unlocking and comprehending the true nature of God's government over His ancient people. Their spiritual relations were always placed above their temporal relations, and the latter made subsidiary to the former.

While the Israelites were in the body politic one people, or nation, they were divided into distinct tribes, with distinct territorial limits—separate states forming one commonwealth—exercising a government within themselves, yet all under one general constitution and code of laws as ordained of God—meeting in general council by their representatives whenever the public good required it, Josh. xxii. 12–30. In war, each state furnished its own equivalents in men and provisions. The council of seventy chosen from all the tribes, might therefore be considered the senate of the nation.

Two institutions remain to be noticed, both of a religious and civil nature, but partaking more of the latter than of the former: the sabbatical year and the year of jubilee. Every seventh year was the sabbatical year. The land was not cultivated at all, but left to enjoy a sabbath rest, Exod. xxiii. 11; Levit. xxv. 4. Its spontaneous productions were freely eaten by the people, especially by the poor; and the cattle came in for a share, Levit. xxv. 6; Exod. xxiii. 11; Levit.

xxv. 7. Debts between Israelites alone, were cancelled, Deut. xv. 2-11. At the feast of the tabernacles in this year, the law was read in the hearing of all the people, Deut. xxxi. 10-13. This institution tended to unite the people as one people, and to beget universal kindness and a spirit of entire dependence upon God, who gave them the food of two years in one, Levit. xxv. 20-22.

Every fiftieth year was the year of jubilee, Levit. xxv. 9-10; ushered in by the blowing of trumpets, and commencing on the great day of atonement. Immediately followed the sabbatical year; and, as in the sabbatical year, so in the year of jubilee, the land was not planted, and its spontaneous fruits were common to all. Hence the Lord, on the occurrence of the jubilee, gave them the food of three years in one, 2 Kings xix. 29; Isa. xxxvii. 30. All lands and houses now reverted to their original owners—houses in walled towns excepted—Levit. xxv. 14-24, 25-28, unless belonging originally to Levites, Levit. xxv. 32-33. All Hebrew slaves were set at liberty, Levit. xxv. 47-53; but not the slaves from the heathen round about. This, like the sabbatical year, taught but in stronger language the unity and equality of the people, and their dependence upon and obligations to God. It came as a relief to poverty and suffering, and a restorer of peace and liberty, equalizing as much as might be the positions and possessions of the people, and binding them together not only as just and benevolent fellow-citizens of the commonwealth, but as brethren beloved of the Church of God.

No ancient lawgivers, as Solon, Lycurgus, and Numa, are to be compared with Moses. They formed their own codes guided by the imperfect light around and within them, were wrong in some of their fundamental principles of justice, government, and political economy, and totally ignorant of the true God and true religion. Moses delivered nothing of himself. He pretended to no inspiration; he possessed it. He delivered only what he heard from the mouth of God, and what he was immediately taught by Him. He enunciated principles of justice, and doctrines of religion, which are perfectly immutable and divine. The productions of men

cannot be compared with those of God. The codes of heathen lawgivers were framed for their own nations, and have waxed old and passed away. The Lord legislated through His Church for the world, and the laws of Moses will shed their light and bless mankind to the end of time.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GIVING OF THE LAW AT DIFFERENT TIMES.—THE SIN OF THE GOLDEN CALF.—THE MAKING AND ERECTION OF THE TABERNACLE.—THE ORDINATION OF AARON AND HIS SONS.—NUMBER AND STATION OF THE TRIBES.—NUMBER, STATION, AND CONSECRATION OF THE LEVITES.—OFFERINGS OF THE PRINCES.

THE Church lay encamped before Sinai eleven months and twenty days, receiving the law as already described, and completing her constitution and order. The whole was conducted with scrupulous care and regularity from beginning to end, Ex. xix. 1; Numb. x. 11. First come the giving and receiving of the law, and the attending circumstances, which occupied above three months; for Moses was twice forty days alone with God in the mount, and he ascended in all six several times. He was first called up shortly after the encampment, and bore a message from the Lord to His people. "Tell the children of Israel, Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation," Gen. xv. 1-21; Exod. i.-iv. The covenant to which the Lord refers is His covenant made with His people in Abraham, Gen. xvii. 1-27, and under which they now were. To this covenant as well as to all His further commandments, He requires their renewed assent and promise of obedience. Moses

came down, delivered the message, and then ascended a second time with the answer of the people: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." The Lord intimated to him that He would descend in glory in the sight of the people, so that they should hear Him speak with Moses, and believe him forever; that is, that Moses was the servant of God, and that the messages delivered were from Him. The Lord commanded him to go down and sanctify the people, and be ready for communications on the third day. On that day Moses was called up the third time, and sent down again to charge both priests and people "not to break through the bounds, nor touch the mountain, and so, many of them perish." When the thunders and the voice of the trumpets had ceased, and silence reigned on the mountain yet burning with fire, and the smoke ascending as the smoke of a furnace, God spake out of the thick darkness, and delivered the ten commandments. "So Moses went down unto the people and spake unto them," Exod. xx. 1-20; comp. Deut. v. 1-5, 23-27. At the conclusion, Moses the fourth time—ascended and "drew near unto the thick darkness where God was," and received other numerous laws, xx. 21-22; Deut. v. 28-31; Ex. xx. 21-26; xxi. 1-36; xxii. 1-31; xxiii. 1-33, ending with the promise of the Angel Jehovah to go before them, and of their certain establishment in the promised land. He was dismissed to the people with directions in what manner he should return, "and all the people answered with one voice and said, All the words which the Lord hath said, we will do," Exod. xxiv. 1-3. Moses wrote "all the words of the Lord" in a book, which he called "the book of the covenant," the book containing God's covenant of old with His people, and all the commandments, ordinances, and promises in illustration and confirmation thereof, which God had just delivered to him in the mount. Afterwards he caused the people to renew the covenant with appropriate sacrifices and religious worship. "And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar," and "read the book of the covenant in the audience of the people, and they said, All that the Lord hath said we will do, and be obedient."

Then he "took the blood" (the other half) "and sprinkled it on the people"—he "sprinkled both the book and all the people," Heb. ix. 19—and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." This blood was the blood of atonement and reconciliation, according to the testimony of the Apostle Paul; "he took the blood and sprinkled both the book and the people; and almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission," Heb. ix. 18-22. After the renewal of the covenant, Moses ascended the mount for the fifth time, taking with him Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders. They saw the God of Israel in His glory, and ate and drank of sacrifices before Him, but drew not near into the higher part of the mount where God was. But "the Lord said unto Moses, Come up unto me into the mount, and be there, and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law and commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and was in the mount forty days and forty nights," Exod. xxiv. 9-18. He received the pattern of the tabernacle and all things pertaining thereto; the commandments concerning the priesthood of Aaron and his sons, and their garments; and concerning Bezaleel and Aholiab, appointed and inspired of God to make all these things. The sabbath was also commanded anew. "And God gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God," Exod. xxv.-xxxi.; Dent. ix. 10-21; and in the same moment made known to him the sin of the golden calf: "Go get thee down; for the people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves, they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," Exod. xxxii. 1-8; Ps. cvi. 19-21—a sin committed with the wonders of Egypt and of the wilderness fresh in their memories, with the pillar of cloud and of fire over them, the glory of the Lord

like devouring flames on the top of the mountain before them, out of which only a few weeks before, they had heard the voice of God, and to whose commands then delivered they had renewed their vows of universal obedience! This stiff-necked people the Lord proposed to consume, and to make of Moses and his house a great nation in their stead: but the meek and holy man intercedes for and saves the people, *Exod. xxxii. 1-14*; *2 Chron. xxxii. 31*; *Deut. viii. 1-6*; *Luke xxii. 31-32*; *1 Pet. i. 1-5*. Descending he surprises them in their transgression, breaks the tables of the law before their eyes, melts the calf, grinds it to powder, strews it upon the water, and makes them drink their god! He prays for Aaron, "for the Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him," *Deut. ix. 20*; and finally inflicts punishment upon the people. It was upon this occasion that the tribe of Levi responded to the call of Moses, "Who is on the Lord's side?" and in the fear with which they feared God, and in their zeal to vindicate His glory, "they did not acknowledge their brethren, nor know their own children." They put every man his sword by his side, going out from gate to gate of the camp; and there fell that day of the guilty Israelites found abroad, about three thousand men. By this act of devotion in the midst of general defection, the Levites consecrated themselves to the Lord, and received the blessing from God, "of a covenant of life and peace" in the ministry of His Church, *Deut. xxxii. 8-10*, *Mal. ii. 4-6*. On the morrow Moses renews his supplications, and in his desires for the salvation of Israel offers himself, if it were possible, a sacrifice in their stead: "Oh! this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold: yet now if Thou wilt forgive their sin: and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." In which desire he is imitated fifteen hundred years after, by the Apostle Paul, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites," *Rom. ix. 1-4*. The self-sacrifice which brought the great Redeemer from heaven to earth, here exhibits itself in His ministers. Christ is one, and His people

are one forever. The Lord answered Moses: "whosoever hath sinned against me him will I blot out of my book;" and, although the people have been punished, "nevertheless in the day when I visit," (*i. e.*, again,) "I will visit their sin upon them," which also came to pass, Exod. xxxii. 1-35.

Moses removed his tabernacle of judgment without the camp, and went into it in the sight of the people. The cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses: for "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend," and at Moses' prayer the Lord withdrew His threatening, that He would not go again with the people, and also promised Moses to show him His glory, Exod. xxxiii. 1-23. Moses ascended the mount for the sixth and last time with the new tables of stone, like the first, prepared by God's command. The Lord put him in a cleft of the rock, covered him with His hand while He passed by, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. When His face had passed by, He withdrew His hand, and Moses looked after God, and saw His glory, and made haste and bowed his head and worshipped. Other forty days and forty nights, he spent with God in the mount in supplications and prayers for the people (Deut. ix. 18), and in receiving further communications, more fully made known afterwards from the tabernacle when the Lord had entered into it. A second time the Lord wrote with His finger the commandments upon the two tables of stone, and gave them to Moses. The Lord impressed somewhat of His glory upon the face of Moses, "for the skin of Moses' face shone, though he wist not of it," and Aaron and the people were afraid to come nigh him. Therefore, he ever after covered his face with a veil when he spake to them; but when he went into the tabernacle into the presence of God, he took off the veil, Exod. xxxiv. 1-35.

Second in time and order come the making and erection of the tabernacle, and all pertaining thereto, and the priests' garments according to the pattern given in the mount. When he came down, Moses made known what materials were wanted, and called for free-will offerings, which the people freely and abundantly contributed. Bezaleel, Aholiab, and all the

wise-hearted men raised up by God to aid them, went diligently forward and completed the work in every part, Exod. xxv.—xxxix. When completed, at God's command, the tabernacle was set up in order. "So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud," (the pillar of cloud and of fire,) "covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." This was the hour that the Lord, leaving the mount, descended, and took possession of this "worldly sanctuary," made with hands—the figure of a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands—even "heaven itself," Heb. ix. 1–28. He entered the Holy of Holies, and enthroned Himself upon the mercy-seat; then shone within the veil the Shekinah, the symbol of His presence, "and the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys," Exod. xl. 1–38. The word "Shekinah" does not occur in Scripture, but is used to express the dwelling, or abiding presence of God with His people. This symbol of God's presence continued while the tabernacle lasted, and when Solomon built the temple, (fashioned after the tabernacle, and according to special directions divinely communicated to David,) it took up its abode in the Holy of Holies, and did not finally depart until Nebuchadnezzar utterly destroyed that temple and carried all its furniture away to Babylon. It never shone in the Holy of Holies in the second temple.

From the holy place the Lord continued the communication of His law to Moses, enlarging also what had previously been briefly delivered upon the mount. As the tabernacle was in readiness for divine service, He prescribed particularly the various kinds of sacrifices and offerings to be brought, the manner thereof, and what share the priests should have in all. Compare Exod. xxxiv. 1–35; Levit. i. 1–2; and i.–vi., vii. 37–38. Nothing was now wanting that the sacrifices of God's house should begin, but the consecration of the priesthood and the discharge of their duties. Accordingly, third in time and

order comes the consecration of Aaron and his sons, which Moses accomplished in the presence of the people at the tabernacle, with all the sacrifices and ceremonies thereto appertaining. Aaron and his sons, after the seven days of their consecration were over, entered the eighth day on their duties. When Aaron had offered his first offerings for himself and the people, as the Lord appointed, and he and Moses came out of the tabernacle and blessed the people, the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. There came fire out from before the Lord and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat, which when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces," Levit. viii.-ix. This was the sacred fire, which was never to be allowed to go out, and with which all the offerings of the Lord should be made.

But this glorious beginning of priestly service was shortly and sadly interrupted by the death of Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, who presumptuously offered incense with strange fire, not commanded of the Lord. "And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord"—a warning to priests and people that none presume to approach God but in His own prescribed way, as Moses explained the judgment to Aaron, "This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace," Levit. x. 1-11. On this occasion "the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations." And why? In order that they be not incapacitated, by intoxication or undue excitement, for the sober, intelligent, and appropriate discharge of their holy and official duties. "And that ye may put a difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean: and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses." This command following immediately after the death of Nadab and Abihu, gives foundation for the supposition that they had indulged too freely in wine, and the supposition is further sus-

tained by the threatening, "lest ye die," that is, for your presumptuous sin, as did your sons and brethren, Levit. x. 1-20. Drunkenness is an odious and soul-destroying vice, and most of all so, when found in the ministry of God. Comp. Ezek. xliv. 21; Prov. xx. 1; xxii. 30-31; Isa. xxviii. 7; lvi. 10-12; 1 Tim. iii. 1-3, 8; v. 23; Titus i. 7.

Numerous laws were now delivered from the tabernacle to Moses and Aaron, partly ecclesiastical, partly civil, relating to the food, the diseases, the purifications, the marriages, the crimes, the customs, the sacred places, times, and seasons, the vows, etc., of the people, closing with an enumeration of the blessings and curses which the Lord would bring upon the obedient and disobedient. See Levit. xi.-xxvii.

Fourth in time and order come the final arrangements and commands preparatory to leaving Sinai. First, the numbering of the people: "every male from twenty years old and upward: all that are able to go forth to war in Israel;" and none others. Women, children, minors, old men unable to go to war, and the whole tribe of Levi, were excluded. The census of the twelve tribes, of men of war, amounted to 603,550, Numb. i. 1-54. The design of the census seems to have been to bring about a perfect separation of the tribes, ascertain their relative strength, and assign them their positions in the encampment: "And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard throughout their hosts. But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony." Accordingly, the twelve tribes were formed into a hollow square—the tabernacle occupying the centre—with four divisions of three tribes each, each tribe being under the command of its own captains, appointed by the Lord, and each division under a prominent tribe. The station of the first division was east of the tabernacle, and consisted of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. The station of the second division was on the south, and consisted of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. The station of the third was west, consisting of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin;

and the station of the fourth was north, consisting of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali. "Every tribe had its own standard, with the ensign of their father's house," Numb. ii. 1-34. The numbering and station of the twelve tribes being completed, in the second place, followed the setting apart of the tribe of Levi to the services of the sanctuary, the reasons for which, in addition to that already assigned, Deut. xxxii. 8-10; Mal. ii. 1-6, are thus given by the Lord to Moses: "And I, behold I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel, instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel; therefore the Levites shall be mine, because all the first-born are mine: for on the day that I smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the first-born in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the Lord. Bring the tribe of Levi near and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him. And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation, before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle. And they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle. And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel. And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons and they shall wait on their priests' office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death, Numb. iii. 1-51; Exod. xii. 13-16.

To carry this order into effect, the males of the tribe of Levi from "a month old and upward were numbered, according to the three houses, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. The priests were of the house of Kohath, and of the family of Aaron alone; the rest of the families of Kohath were Levites. There were 7,500 Gershonites, 8,600 Kohathites, and 6,200 Merarites, all under their respective chiefs appointed by the Lord, and making a total of 22,300. In Numb. iii. 39, the whole number of Levites is stated to be 22,000, that is, 300 less than the addition of the census of each of the houses; and 22,000 is the exact number: for when directly after, the first-born of the children of Israel were numbered, they amounted

to 22,273, and this overplus of 273 the Lord ordered to be redeemed by the children of Israel, being due to the Lord, at five shekels apiece, and the money paid to Aaron and his sons. The discrepancy between the two totals is removed by the supposition of an error in the enumeration, either of the Kohathites, (Numb. iii. 28,) or of the Gershonites, (vs. 22,) one Hebrew numeral letter being mistaken in the text for another very much of the same form, but differing in power by the exact number 300. The cattle also of the Levites were taken instead of the firstlings of the cattle of the children of Israel.

The enumeration and substitution being effected, the Levites and priests have their stations assigned them, within the hollow square, and around the tabernacle, in different divisions: the Gershonites behind the tabernacle westward; the Kohathites southward; the Merarites northward; and Moses and Aaron, with his sons the priests, before the tabernacle eastward. The command of the three divisions of the Levites was given to priests: Eleazar the son of Aaron, commanded the Kohathites; and Ithamar, the Gershonites and the Merarites, Numb. iii. 32; iv. 4, 28, 33. The services of the several divisions were also assigned. When the cloud lifted, and the camp was to set forward, Aaron and his sons the priests moved out and covered the furniture of the tabernacle, that of the holy place and that of the most holy, the ark, the veil, the table of shew-bread, the candlesticks, the altar of incense, and the instruments of ministry belonging to them; and the tabernacle was left empty. In like manner, they prepared the altar of sacrifice and laver in the court before the tabernacle, and the instruments of service. When everything was in readiness, the Kohathites came in and took up the most holy things of the tabernacle and the court, and bore them forward under the command of Eleazar. They were not to enter in, to see, or touch anything until made ready by the priests, under pain of death, Numb. iii. 27-32; iv. 1-20. The tabernacle and court being emptied of the holy furniture, then came the Gershonites under Ithamar, who took down the coverings and hangings, both of the tabernacle and the court, their cords, and the instruments of their service, which being properly pre-

pared for carriage, were borne by them, Numb. iii. 21-26 ; iv. 21-28. Nothing was now left but the bare wood-work—the bars, boards, sockets, and pillars of the tabernacle—“the pillars of the court round about, their sockets, pins, their cords with their instruments, and their service.” Lastly, came the Merarites, (also under Ithamar,) and taking all these down in order, bore them away, Numb. iii. 33-37 ; iv. 29-33. The family of Merari was the smallest of the three, but, having the greatest number of working men, it had the heaviest part of the service assigned to it. Wagons were afterwards allowed to the Gershonites and Merarites to aid in transporting the heavy materials of the tabernacle and court, but double the number to the Merarites, Levit. vii. 2-9. The whole number of the Levites was 22,000 ; of these, 8,580 were over thirty and under fifty, men of service, and 13,420 too young or too old. This 8,580 was a large, but not too large a number to be occupied directly in attending upon the worship and service of the tabernacle, and in promoting the spiritual interests of the people. To this number must be added the priests, who were at this time very few—three only (no others are mentioned)—Aaron the high-priest, and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, sufficient however to preside over and conduct the worship and service of the tabernacle.

These arrangements concerning the Levites being completed, nothing remains but to consecrate them to their office in the manner ordained of God, Numb. viii. 1-26. First, their cleansing : “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them : sprinkle the water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.” Second, their substitution : then “let them take two bullocks, a sin-offering and a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering of flour and oil ; and bring them before the tabernacle of the congregation, and gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together.” The assembly is gathered. The Levites advance, and are presented before the Lord ; and the children of Israel, by their representatives—a certain number of elders—put their hands upon the Levites,

who by this act are separated from the children of Israel and given unto God in place of the first-born, that they may execute the service of the Lord. Third, their consecration: Aaron with his sons offered the Levites before the Lord a wave-offering of the children of Israel, living sacrifices to the Lord, to whose service they were now to be wholly dedicated in place of the first-born, Rom. xii. 1. Fourth, the atonement made for them: the Levites laid their hands upon the heads of the bullocks, and Aaron and his sons offered one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering unto the Lord, to make atonement for the Levites. It was impossible for the great body of the Levites to approach the bullocks and lay their hands upon their heads, confessing their sins and consecrating themselves to God; it must therefore have been done representatively, a certain number laying on their hands for the whole. The purification, the substitution, the consecration, and the atonement by sacrifice, being all performed, the consecrated tribe entered upon its duties; the Levites went in to do their service in the tabernacle of the congregation before Aaron and his sons.

The beginning of the term of service of the Levites was now altered from thirty to twenty-five years of age, Numb. viii. 23-26; iv. 3; and again, in the time of David, to twenty years, 1 Chron. xxiii. 1-3, 24-32.

Moses had received and delivered the law, set up the tabernacle, consecrated Aaron and his sons to the priesthood, and celebrated the passover, Exod. xl. 17, etc.; Levit. viii. 1-36; ix. 1-24. He had also numbered the people and assigned them their stations by tribes and divisions. In like manner he had numbered the Levites, assigned them their stations and service, consecrated them to the ministry of God in His tabernacle, and set them on their work. The Church and commonwealth were organized and compacted together, and there was need of no longer delay in setting forward to the possession of the promised land.

This long encampment before Sinai, and all these wonderful communications and arrangements were worthily closed by the solemn worship of God, and with appropriate offerings and

sacrifices, which continued for the space of twelve days. The twelve princes of the tribes of Israel, heads of the houses of their fathers, acting for their respective tribes, and "for the dedicating of the altar," each in his day, presented at the tabernacle the same number and kind of sacrifices and offerings, and in the regular order of divisions and tribes, beginning with those on the east and ending with those on the north. There were thirty-six bullocks and two hundred and twenty-eight sheep and goats sacrificed in the twelve days. The whole service may be regarded as an acknowledgment of God as the God of the tribes of Israel, and as a consecration of themselves to Him, Levit. vii. 1-38.

The encampment occupied a large tract of country, with ample spaces between each division, both of the tribes and of the priests and Levites, so that all confusion was prevented. The estimate of twelve miles square for the area does not appear to be too great. The removal of three millions of people from Egypt to Canaan, consuming forty years, with their government meanwhile, was a vast undertaking. As a commander and leader of the people, Moses is without an equal. It is the only successful exodus of so great a number in the history of the world.

On the twentieth day of the second month in the second year, the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony, and the voice of the Lord was heard, saying to Moses, "Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount: turn you and take your journey—go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them," Deut i. 6-8; Numb. x. 1-13.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ERECTION AND SUPPORT OF HOUSES FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.—THE SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY.

WHILE the cloud is lifting and the encampment breaking up, we may dispose of two subjects which for the first time make their appearance in the history: first, the erection and support of houses for public worship; and second, the support of the ministry in the Church.

First: the erection and support of houses for public worship. Just so soon as men increased and settled permanently in cities, villages, and country places, houses of worship became matters of convenience and necessity, and without doubt were erected. There were places for worship by sacrifices in the family of Adam, whither Cain and Abel resorted; in that of Noah after the flood; in that of Job, where he made intercession for his family and friends; in the household of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; in that of Jethro in Midian; in the open air, by altars of earth or unhewn stone. Melchisedek might have had a house of worship in Salem. But the first structure on record for public worship in the Church, was "the tabernacle of the congregation," before Sinai, in the year of the world 2514, and before Christ 1490, which lasted 486 years. Then the first temple was built by Solomon, and lasted 416 years, or to B. C. 588, when it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and lay in ruins some seventy years. The second temple was built by Ezra and his companions, B. C. 515. It was destroyed by the Romans under Titus, 70 years after Christ, having stood 585 years. From

the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness to the destruction of the second temple, (omitting the 70 years of desolation,) that is, for 1487 years the visible Church possessed but one great central tabernacle and temple for the public worship of the whole people. Yet, neither tabernacle nor temple was designed, like modern houses of worship, to hold under cover the thousands and tens of thousands, and, on the great feasts, the hundreds of thousands of worshippers. The priests only entered the holy place and the Holy of Holies. The courts around the tabernacle and temple were large. There the multitudes assembled and worshipped; and all were in turn accommodated, for the gates of Zion stood open every day from one year's end to another, and God's worship never ceased.

Besides this house for all the Church, the spiritual affection and necessities of the Lord's people, in their own land and in all lands where they dwelt, called them together, and obliged the erection of places for prayer, and houses for social and public worship: "prosenchai" and synagogues, already referred to. Thus the Lord was publicly honored, and worshipped throughout His visible Church.

How were the tabernacle, the first and second temples, and the synagogues, built and supported by the Church?

The tabernacle, built at the command of God, was supported and kept in repair at the charge of the people. It is the will and command of God that His people should assemble and worship Him publicly, erect houses for their accommodation, and sustain them out of the abundance which He gives them; it is all "an offering unto the Lord." The tabernacle was built, first, by "free-will offerings," by voluntary contributions of money, materials, or labor; such only the Lord called for: "and they came every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, both men and women, and brought the Lord's offering in the work of the tabernacle of the congregation," Exod. xxxv. Second, by the poll-tax of half a shekel for every man from twenty years old and over, which the Lord commanded Moses to levy as "an atonement for their souls, an offering unto the Lord for

the service of the tabernacle of the congregation," Exod. xxviii. 25-28. Third, by the most valuable spoils, after the wars of judgment with the heathen began; and this source failed not while the Church was called to war. Said the Lord to Joshua: "All the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron" (of the spoils of the conquered nations), "are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord," Josh. vi. 19; 1 Kings. vii. 51.

The first temple was built and sustained precisely as the tabernacle had been. David collected the money and materials, and Solomon, who built the temple, disbursed the one and used the other. There were the spoils of enemies and the presents of other nations, 1 Chron. xviii. 1-11; 1 Kings vii. 15-21; 1 Chron. xxvi. 24-27; 1 Sam. viii. 1-14; 1 Chron. xxii. 1-6; xxix. 1-5. There were the free-will offerings both of David and Solomon; of the princes, rulers, captains, and the people generally, 1 Chron. xxviii. 1-21; xxix. 1-9, and there was the poll-tax, the standing income of the house of God. There was no evidence that any man's person or property was taxed, either by Church or state, beyond this divinely ordered poll-tax. The only act savoring of compulsion was Solomon's levy upon the strangers in the kingdom to perform the heavier and more menial part of the work for the temple, which however was justifiable on the ground that, as a conquered people and dwelling by sufferance in the land, the king might call upon them to furnish the necessary number of laborers. Moreover, the levy was not an oppression, since there were relays of workmen, and all were abundantly supplied with provisions, and remunerated for their time and labor.

Time, which consumes all material things, made its inroads upon this temple; neglect and injuries from the hand of man contributed to its decay, and there were two special occasions upon which it was repaired, and the expenses of the repairs on both occasions were paid precisely in the same way: the first in the reign of Joash, 2 Kings xii. 1-16; 2 Chron. xxiv. 1-14, and the second in the reign of Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 1-7; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1-13. The expenses were defrayed, first, out

of the regular poll-tax income, *Exod.* xxx. 11–16: and second, out of the free-will offerings, “the money that cometh into any man’s heart to bring into the House of the Lord.”

The second temple was built and supported as were the tabernacle and the first temple, but with large assistance from the Heathen, as follows: First, from free-will offerings; by the kings of Babylon, Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, out of the royal treasury, out of the kings’ goods, the tribute beyond the river, *Ezra* vi. 14; i. 1–11; v. 1–17; vi. 1–13; vii. 11–28; and by the kings and their counsellors, and lords, out of their own private property, *Ezra* i. 7–11; vi. 5; vii. 15; viii. 25. In this kindness they were perhaps followed by their subjects, the Babylonians and Persians, for permission was given by Artaxerxes to make collections, *Ezra* vii. 16. By the Israelites who remained in Babylonia, offerings were made at the desire of king Cyrus, *Ezra* i. 3–4: and by all the Israelites, “chiefs of the fathers,” “priests and people,” *Ezra* i. 4; ii. 68–69; *Neh.* vii. 16, 70–73; viii. 25; *Hez.* i. 1–15; *Zech.* i. 16–17; ii.–viii. Second, by the poll-tax raised on their return to Jerusalem. Men of the world may contribute, and be solicited to contribute to the building and support of houses of worship for the living and true God, and for the support of the worship itself. Their gold and silver are the Lord’s no less than the gold and silver of His covenant people, and they are under obligation to give it whenever needed for His service. This second temple, during the struggle of the noble Maccabæan princes for the salvation of their religion and the liberty of their people, was pillaged and desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes, “the Jews’ enemy.” It was so deserted and neglected, that the grass grew in its courts, and upon its walls. But victory crowning the piety and patriotism of Judas Maccabeus and his brothers, he drove the Syrians from Jerusalem, repaired, refurnished, and fortified the temple, 1 *Macc.* iv. 38–60; 2 *Macc.* vi. 1–5; i. 18; x. 3; 1 *Macc.* vi. 7; xiii. 53. When the Romans under Pompey assaulted Jerusalem, they stormed the temple, slaughtering numbers in its courts, and then entered into the Holy of Holies. *Josephus Antiq.* xiv. 4, B. C. 63. Herod the Great stormed it again, B. C. 37; and

after so long a time, and having passed through such vicissitudes, it needed repair, which Herod undertook, going to great expense, removing a considerable portion of the old materials, which he replaced with new, but preserving the general integrity and identity of the temple. Though called "the temple of Herod," it continued to be and was the second temple to which Messiah should come. These repairs Herod met by the revenues of his kingdom, and we presume by the free-will offerings of his people, and by using the money in the treasury of the temple so far as it was possible. The repairs were carried on from first to last for a number of years, John ii. 20.

There is one other question under this head: How were the general expenses of the stated service of the tabernacle and the temple defrayed? for the lambs for the morning and evening sacrifice; the lambs, kids, heifers, and bullocks, for the general sacrifices of the new moons, and the great day of atonement and the feasts; for the wood used on the altar, and the priests' garments and other things? By income from the poll-tax of four shekels, by firstlings of animals, the free-will offerings, and dedicated things cast into the treasury of the temple by persons of all classes. This treasury existed in the days of our Lord, Matt. xxvii. 6; Mark xii. 41; Luke xxi. 1; John viii. 20. He himself paid the capitation tax, Matt. xvii. 24-27. It owed its abundance or its leanness to the degree of interest which the people of God felt in His service and glory. Ordinarily, it was well supplied. On several occasions, when the treasury of the state fell short, the reigning kings laid hands upon the treasury of the temple. By so doing, Asa purchased the assistance of Ben-hadad in his war against Israel, 1 Kings xv. 16-22; Jehoash purchased deliverance from the invasion of Hazael, king of Syria, 2 Kings xii. 17-18, and Ahaz secured the alliance of Tiglath-pilezer, king of Assyria, against Rezin, king of Syria, 2 Kings xvi. 5-9. Hezekiah paid the sum imposed upon him by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, 2 Kings xviii. 13-16, but so straitened was he that he even "cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah, king of Judah, had

overlaid." The temple was used also (as temples anciently were) as a bank, or place of deposit for the money and valuables of individuals, all being inviolable there. The treasures of various kinds lodged in the temple, excited the cupidity of the kings who at different times assaulted and conquered Jerusalem. Shishak, king of Egypt, 1 Kings. xiv. 13-14, and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—both rifled the temple, 2 Kings xxiv. 10-14; xxv. 9-17.

The building of but one synagogue is of record in all the Scripture: and that was built by the private munificence of a Roman centurion, Luke vii. 1-10. Synagogues without doubt were built and paid for by those who statedly worshipped in them, as houses of worship are in our day. So much for the building and support of houses of public worship in the Church before the coming of Christ.

After His coming, the visible Church—enlarged by the accession of the Gentiles—withdrew from the unbelieving Jews, and the temple, and their synagogues, and furnished her own houses of worship. No order for their erection, or provision for their support, is found in the New Testament. None was needed. The duty had been enjoined upon and acknowledged in the Church for nearly fifteen hundred years, and in her altered circumstances it was to be performed as heretofore. The temple, and all appertaining thereto, passed away. This central place of worship for the believing world was no longer necessary. "The hour had come when neither at the mountain of Samaria, nor yet at Jerusalem, should men worship the Father," but in every place where believers dwelt they were to build and maintain their own houses of worship, after the manner of building and maintaining the synagogues of old. This the Church did. All the contributions spoken of in the New Testament are free-will offerings—altogether voluntary—for the Church as a purely spiritual body, can exercise a spiritual authority only. She has no power to impose taxes of any kind upon her members, and must ever rely upon their piety and principle to provide for and maintain houses of public worship; and yet she should not refuse the coöperation

of men of the world who are willing of their liberality to contribute to so good and necessary an object.

Second: how was the ministry of the Church supported?

The same allwise and merciful God who ordained a priesthood and ministry, ordained also its temporal support. The ancient law of tithes was enacted to that end, Gen. xiv. 20; xxviii. 22. It cannot admit of a reasonable doubt that priests from the beginning "partook of the altar;" that is, of the sacrifices offered thereon, so particularly described by Moses in his laws. Consequently, the law issued at Sinai for the temporal support of the ministry, introduces no new principle and no new practice. It is but the reënactment of the old law and practice of the Church, under new circumstances, and more amplified and systematized.

1. The ministry of the Church was supported by tithes. "The tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land," (grains of every kind,) "or of the fruit of the tree: the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil," Deut. xiv. 23; "it is holy unto the Lord," Levit. xxvii. 30-33, "year by year," Deut. xiv. 22-27. The self-righteous Pharisees tithed mint and rue, anise and cumin, and all manner of herbs, which our Lord says ought to have been done, Matt. xxiii. 23; Luke xi. 42. The law ran thus: "Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed," (whatsoever it be,) "that the field bringeth forth, year by year," Deut. xiv. 22-27; 2 Chron. xxxi. 5; Neh. x. 37; xiii. 12. Also the tithe of animals: "of the herd or of the flock," Levit. xxvii. 32; 2 Chron. xxxi. 6; comp. Deut. xiv. 23. Every third year, the tithes were brought and laid up within the gates of the cities, and were free not only to "the Levites," but to "the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow." This year the people were not required to carry their tithes exclusively to the Levites as in other years, Deut. xiv. 28-29; xxvi. 12-13. The tithes were paid to the Levites and not to the priests; but the Levites were to pay out to the priests "a tenth part of the tithe" paid unto them, and it was reckoned "a heave-offering unto the Lord" on the part of the Levites, "as though it was the corn of the threshing floor, and as the fulness of the wine-press."

This priestly tenth was to be the fat (the best) of the tithe, Numb. xviii. 20-32. The tithes, being the maintenance of the priests and Levites, could be eaten anywhere. "And ye shall eat of it in every place, ye and your households: for it is your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation.

The great body of the people being agriculturalists, (as they necessarily are in all countries,) those productions and possessions which are peculiar to that occupation, are specified in the law of tithes. But this does not exempt any of the Lord's people who might be engaged in other pursuits from tithing whatever they possessed. All were to honor the Lord with their substance, whatever it might be, and render in the tithe of their increase.

2. The ministry was supported by sacrifices and offerings of the people. Since "the priests and the Levites and all the tribes of Levi shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel, they shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire and His inheritance. The Lord is their inheritance, as He hath said unto them," Deut xviii. 1. They shall be maintained by "sacrifice, whether it be of ox, or sheep, receiving the shoulder, the two cheeks and the maw," Deut. xviii. 3; by the heave-offerings, wave-offerings, and their assigned portions of the meat-offerings, trespass-offerings, and the peace-offerings," Levit. vii. 29-58; Numb. vi. 19-20; xviii. 8-11, 19; by the skins of all burnt-offerings, offered by individuals, Levit. vii. 8, and a fifth part of the estimate of trespass committed through ignorance in holy things of the Lord, Levit. v. 15-16; by the first-fruits of oil, wine, and wheat, the fruits of all manner of trees, of the increase of the field, Levit. xix. 23-24; Numb. xviii. 12-13; Deut. xviii. 4; Neh. x. 37; the first-fruits of the fleece of the sheep, Ezek. xlv. 30; 2 Chron. xxxi. 5-7, and everything devoted (to the Lord) in Israel, Numb. xviii. 14; Levit. xxvii. 28-29; by the firstlings of beasts, and the redemption money (five shekels a head) of the first-born of men, and the redemption money of the firstlings of unclean beasts, Numb. xviii. 15-18; Deut. xv. 19, comp. Numb. viii. 17; Exod. xiii. 12-13; xxxiv. 19-20.

3. The Church in its ministry was supported by real estate granted out of the land of Canaan. This consisted of forty-eight cities, with ample suburbs for their cattle, goods, and all beasts, fields, and vineyards, given by lot out of every tribe, according to the inheritance of each: "From them that have many (cities) ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few," Numb. xxxv. 1-34. The division of the cities between the priests and Levites, and their apportionment out of the different tribes, were as follows: to the priests, thirteen cities—out of Judah and Simeon, nine; out of Benjamin, four. The Lord gave them cities near to Jerusalem, the place of their special service. To the Levites were apportioned thirty-five cities: to the remainder of the sons of Kohath, (not priests,) ten cities—out of Ephraim, four; Dan, four; and the half tribe of Manasseh, two: to the sons of Gershon, thirteen cities—out of Issachar, four; Asher, four; Naphtali, three; and the half tribe of Manasseh, two: to the sons of Merari, twelve cities—out of Reuben, four; Gad, four; and Zebulon, four, Josh. xxi. 1-45. Of the forty-eight, six were cities of refuge; three on each side of Jordan. On the west side were Kadesh in Naphtali, Shechem in Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba (or Hebron) in Judah; on the east, Bezer in Reuben, Ramoth-in-Gilead in Gad; and Golan in Bashan, in the half tribe of Manasseh. Only one of these cities belonged to the priests, namely, Hebron in Judah, Josh. xx. 1-9; 1 Chron. vi. 54-81.

The possession of these cities and suburbs was inalienable. The priests and Levites might, from necessity, sell their houses, but subject to redemption at any time. At the year of Jubilee they came back to them. Their lands could never be sold at all, Levit. xxv. 32-34. The Lord secured to His ministers and their families a permanent home, and put them beyond the reach of violence and oppression. Their homes served them as retreats and places for support when the people failed to provide for them their just and commanded supplies. The times of Nehemiah furnish an example (Neh. xiii. 10): says he, "And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers that did

the work, were fled every one to his field." They could not labor without support, and finding it necessary to do something for themselves and their families, surely they were not to be blamed.

In their cities the priests and the Levites settled, reared and educated their families, and had their servants, "bought with their money," and their cattle and beasts for service. They received and instructed all the people who resorted to them, and they went forth into the other cities and villages of the tribes in which their lot was cast, and taught the people the law of the Lord.

The provision of cities and lands gave ample room, and was adequate to the increase of the Levites. Sometimes, by neglect and apostasy, the people failed in contributing for their support, Judges xvii. 1-13; Neh. xiii. 10; 2 Chron. xi. 13-14; xxxi. 4-10, although the command was positive: "Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth," Deut. xii. 19, "for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee," Deut. xiv. 27. His support is from his office alone; therefore, render it to him, Neh. x. 34-39; 1. Cor. ix. 1-27.

4. The maintenance of the ministry was derived probably from the annual capitation tax, which was designed for the sanctuary. Among other items it may have covered in part the maintenance of ministers, but of this we are not certain.

The law of the apportionment of all the contributions to the priests and Levites is not given, but certainly the apportionment was equitably made, some receiving more and others less, according to their respective wants. Of this we have some intimation in 2 Chron. xxxi. 5-19, and Neh. xii. 44-45.

From these various sources, an ample temporal support for the ministry was ordained of God, and the whole matter left to the honor, honesty, interest, and piety of the Church; for no laws are in the statutes for enforcing the payment of the tithes, offerings, and capitation tax. The neglect was viewed as an offence, Matt. xvii. 24-27, and the Lord signified His displeasure by visiting the people with just judgments according to His will. In the noted passage of Malachi (iii. 6-18),

the Lord accuses the people of having "robbed Him in tithes and offerings." Hence He cursed them with a curse grievously. The fruits of their ground had been destroyed, the vine had cast her fruit before the time, and God had departed from them. They are exhorted to return unto the Lord, and to testify their repentance by reformation: to bring all the tithes into the storehouse, and the Lord would open the windows of heaven and pour them out an abundant blessing, comp. Amos iv. 1-13; Prov. iii. 9-10; Hag. ii. 10-23.

This law and manner of ministerial support continued in the Church until the advent of our Lord. By Him the same law was confirmed and reënacted, but the former manner of raising the support by tithes, sacrifices, offerings, landed property, and capitation tax, was done away with, and the voluntary contributions, the "free-will offerings of the people" were substituted. When our Lord came, who was the fulfilment and substance of the Aaronic priesthood and all sacrifices offered by it, both priesthood and sacrifice passed away. The civil state of the Church, having accomplished its ends, in like manner passed away, and with it all the houses and lands of the ministry. As our Lord's kingdom was to have no more a connection with earthly possessions, the only source of support left was that drawn from His people. On one occasion He "called unto Him His twelve disciples," and on another, "other seventy also," and commanded them, "Go preach my Gospel." "But, Lord, by whom are we and our families to be supported?" "Not by yourselves." "Provide neither gold nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves." "By whom then, Lord?" "By the people to whom you minister." "Eat and drink such things as they give." "They are to support you and yours so long as you minister to them;" "for the laborer is worthy of his hire, the workman is worthy of his meat." Sometime after these missions were ended, said He to them, "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing," Matt. x. 1-10; Mark vi. 7-9; Luke ix. 1-6; x. 1-9; xxii. 35. Following the instructions of the Lord and inspired by His spirit,

the Apostle Paul confirms and reënacts the ancient laws: “Do you not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so”—the same law continues—“even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel,” 1 Cor. ix. 1-27.

This law—of authority under both Dispensations—entitles the ministers of God to a support, and they can claim it as a right from the people to whom they minister. Says the Apostle to the Corinthians, “Have we not power to eat and to drink?”—“a right to a support at your hands? Nay more, have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other Apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas?—a right to a personal, and, if married, to a family support also?” Under the Old Dispensation, ministers with their families received a support; in like manner, ministers and their families must receive a support under the New Dispensation. A minister may, if he chooses, relinquish his right of support from the people to whom he ministers, but they can never claim his services as a gratuity. To the extent of their abilities, they are under obligations to support him. Paul declined using this right when he preached to the Corinthians, but felt himself at liberty to assert it whenever he chose to do so: and the Corinthians were in reason, honor, honesty, and religion, bound to admit his right, not theoretically, but practically, 1 Cor. x. 15-19.

He was wont at times in his missionary tours to draw his support from churches other than those he was founding and laboring in, and, when his supplies failed, to support himself by his own exertions, as at Corinth, working at his craft of tent-making, with Priscilla and Aquila; and again at Thessalonica and Ephesus, 2 Cor. xi. 7-10; xii. 13-19; 1 Thess. ii. 5-9; Phil. iv. 10-19; Acts xviii 1-3; 2 Thess. iii. 8-9; Acts xx. 33-35. All this he did for the Gospel’s sake, that it might not be hindered; and his being thus compelled to “labor working with his own hands” he set down among the “afflictions” which he had to endure as an Apostle, 1 Cor. iii. 9-13; comp.

1 Tim. iv. 9. It was so much precious time irretrievably taken from his work in the ministry. He commands the churches to support their ministers, "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things," Gal. vi. 6. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward," 1 Tim. v. 17-18; comp. Deut. xii. 19; xiv. 27.

The great Head of the Church could have so arranged the duties of His ministers, as to have allowed them time to provide for their own temporal support, and thus relieved the people of it altogether, but such has not been His pleasure. On the contrary, He has required an entire devotion of time and talents to the work, for it is so momentous and extensive as to require nothing less. Consequently, ministers have time neither to reap nor sow, nor gather into barns, nor to buy and sell and get gain. They are cut off from the ordinary employments and callings of men, whereby they are enabled by God's blessing to support themselves and their families. As in the state, "the powers that be are ordained of God"—and while they rule and devote themselves to the welfare of the people, the people for their own benefit and for the fear of God are to render them honor and support—so in the Church, the "powers that be" are to be honored and supported by the members for whose benefit they teach and rule.

While the right of the ministry to an ample temporal support is divine, it has its foundation in necessity, and justice; in the interests and piety of men. In necessity, because essential to the perfection and well-being of the Church; for to deny the ministry an adequate support is to reject it, and to bring on its decline and eventual destruction. In justice, though ignorance and infidelity would have us believe that ministers are an unproductive class, and therefore useless in society. On the same principle all professions that do not engage personally and directly in material labors are so too. The same blow that prostrates divinity, prostrates law, medicine, and education. What a degrading view of man! What becomes

of his nobler, godlike nature, his immortal mind, which will live after the world is no more, and live on eternally? Are they drones, or idlers, or consumers only in society, whose energies are devoted to the intellectual and moral improvement of their fellow-men, in order that they may the better understand and appreciate the relations, and perform the duties of this life as well as of the life to come? Remuneration in the way of temporal support can never compare in value with the intellectual and spiritual blessings which, under God, ministers convey to mankind. They are compensated for their time only, which otherwise they would be obliged to devote to the procurement of a living for themselves and families. They are not objects of charity—they ask no favors. The minister who would make gain the end of his godliness, and the people who would have godliness without affording its minister a just support, are both alike abominable to God. The contract of labor and reward is one of simple justice. The laborer, saith our Lord, “is worthy of his hire;” and the Apostle argues, “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock? If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?” 1 Cor. ix. 7; 11. The right of ministerial support has its foundation in the interests of men. As the benefits of the ministry are both of a spiritual and temporal nature, all who desire their own holiness and preparation for heaven, the peace, order, and virtue, which render communities stable and happy, will find it to their interest to employ and to sustain an able ministry in the Church. The piety of the Church asserts this right; for the people of God do love the Lord and His kingdom, His Word and the ordinances of His house. They accept His ministers—the ambassadors of Christ—with joy, and esteem it not only their duty, but their privilege to maintain them—to maintain them, moreover, in all countries whither they are sent to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONDENSED VIEW OF MOSES AND HIS DISPENSATION.—WHAT HE FOUND READY TO HIS HAND WITH THE PEOPLE, AS A CHURCH AND AS A STATE.—HIS MISSION.—CHURCH AND STATE PERFECTED UNDER HIM.—HIS DISPENSATION A CONTINUATION OF THE CHURCH UNDER THE COVENANT OF GRACE: NOT LEGAL, BUT BOTH LAW AND GOSPEL.—ERROR OF ISRAELITES IN RELATION THERETO.—THE LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE ALLOWED UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH.—A PURE THEOCRACY.—CONSTITUTION WRITTEN IN SCRIPTURES.—GENERAL PRINCIPLE.—EXAMPLES OF CRIMINAL ACTS: NOT TO BE COMMITTED UNDER PLEA OF LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.—WHAT THAT LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE WAS.—NO PERSECUTION UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH.—THE TRUE VISIBLE CHURCH NEVER PERSECUTING.—COMMONWEALTH DID NOT PRESERVE LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.—EFFECTS.—SECTS AFTER CAPTIVITY.—PERSECUTION OF OUR LORD, AND HIS DISCIPLES, FROM DEPRAVITY, NOT LAW.—COMMONWEALTH PASSED AWAY.—OUR LORD NO PERSECUTOR, NOR HIS DISCIPLES.—WHAT LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE SHOULD BE ALLOWED UNDER CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENTS.—SUBJECT CONSIDERED.

WE now conclude our stay at Sinai with a condensed view of Moses and his dispensation, and of the liberty of conscience allowed under the commonwealth.

First: Moses was sent of God to reveal to His Church no new doctrines, to institute no new rites, or ordinances, or covenants, or to alter the constitution of the Church, either in its officers or members; nor did he deliver any moral or ceremonial law which, in substance, was not previously known; nor was his dispensation, in any sense, so purely legal and condemnatory as to exclude both the exhibition and offer

of salvation in the Gospel. His work was the collection, arrangement, enlargement, and perfection of all relating to the Church that went before, beginning with the fall and ending with his mission. He used the matter already existing and prepared to his hand, and only added new material thereto in the process of arranging, enlarging, and perfecting it until Christ should come. We have therefore to inquire what he found ready to his hand, and what in the fulfilment of his mission he added thereto? When he came, the people of God were separated from the world, and were existing as *one body, both ecclesiastically and civilly; a Church, and a nation.*

What did he find ready to his hand with the people of God as a *Church*? They were separated from the world, and constituted a Church in Abraham—and that four hundred and thirty years before Moses and the giving of the law—in covenant with God; and that covenant not a new one in substance, but the original covenant entered into with Adam; even the covenant of grace, renewed with Abraham, and now again with Moses, and having, in addition to it, promises relating to the temporal state of the Church, with a fixed constitution of membership, consisting of believers, together with their infant children; and with the initiatory rite and seal, which was circumcision; with officers both ordinary and extraordinary, priests and prophets; with ordinances of worship, by sacrifices and offerings, and altars; with an appointed and holy day for the worship of God; with tithes for the support of the ministry, and with the moral law—the ten commandments—if not written in distinct order, yet in fact recognized as the rule of duty to God's people in all previous ages, as reference to the passages quoted in the margin will abundantly prove.* He also found the Church, under the Divine

* For the first commandment—Gen. chaps. i., ii., iii.; chaps. xv. 1; xvii. 1; Book of Job. The second commandment—Gen. xxxv. 1-4. Josh. xxiv. 1-2. Job xxxi. 24-28. Third—Gen. xiv. 22-24; xxii. 15-18. Heb. vi. 13-14. Gen. xxiv. 1-3; xxxi. 53. Fourth—Gen. ii. 1-3; viii. 10-12; vii. 4, 10; xxix. 27-28; xxvii. 41-46; chaps. xxxi., xxxvii., xlv., xlvi., xlix., 1; Exod. iv. 18. Fifth—Gen. xviii. 19; xxii. 7-9; xxiv. 1-3,

Head and promised Redeemer, revealing and proclaiming salvation through His imputed righteousness, in the institution of sacrifices and offerings, and through the lives and preaching of holy men, both patriarchs and prophets. Moreover, the people of God, as a Church, he found in possession of the fundamental doctrines of revealed religion; for example: of the Divine existence and unity, in opposition to the notion of there being more Gods than one, and in opposition to all idolatry (see Genesis and Job); of the existence in the one Divine nature of three persons—what is affirmed and predicated of them, obliging us to consider them the same in substance, equal in power and glory (Numb. vi. 23–27)—of the creation of the world, and its necessary dependence, and God's sovereignty over it; of the creation and primitive state of man; his first sin and fall under the covenant of works, and the consequent depravity and ruin of himself, and of all his posterity; of the existence and agency both of good and of evil angels; of God's covenant of grace and salvation by a Redeemer existing from eternity, which included those only whom God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, determined to save; of the divinity as well as humanity of the Redeemer, and of salvation alone by faith in Him; of the existence, agency, and divinity of the Spirit of God, and of the necessity of regeneration by Him; of the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, and future rewards and punishments; and, finally, of the coming of the promised Messiah, the future increase and glory of His kingdom, and the gathering of all nations into it. These doctrines we have briefly stated, without adding the copious proofs to be found in the books of Moses and the book of Job.

And what did he find ready to his hand with the people of

62–67; xxvi. 34–35. Job xxxi. 29–31. Sixth—Gen. iv. 1–24; ix. 4–6; xiii. 7–9; xxvii. 41–45; xxxvii. 19–36; vi. 1–2. Job xxxi. 9–12. Seventh—Gen. ii. 18–25; iv. 19–24; vi. 1–2: chaps. xxxiv., xxxviii., xxxix., xlix. 4. Job xxxi. 9–12. Eighth—Gen. xxxi. 41, 19, 32: chaps. xliv., xxxix. 8. Job xxxi. 16–22, 38–40. Ninth—Gen. xxxi. 26–28: chap. xxxix. Tenth—Gen. xxx. 1–2; xxxi. 1–42; chaps. xxxiv., xxxix; xlix. 4.

God as a *State*? That they were living distinct from all people under their own civil constitution. Before Abraham, we know not if the Church had any civil constitution at all; after Abraham, we know it had, for he was, himself, the temporal head and ruler, under God, of his family and household, exercising that sort of government over them which is termed patriarchal, and in which he was succeeded by his sons, Isaac and Jacob, and they afterwards in Egypt by chief men and elders. When Moses, by God's command, assumed the reins of government, it was over a state or nation made ready to his hand; of which God Himself had, from the beginning, been the king, and the government a theocracy. They had civil officers and laws; were already divided into tribes, with institutions for preserving them distinct; and had promise of a land for their possession till the Desire of all Nations should come. Into that land the Lord was to lead them, and there they were to exist as a regularly constituted and governed nation. So much did Moses find *prepared to his hand in Church and in state.*

And now, what was his mission, and in fulfilment of it what did he add either to Church or state?

His mission was to deliver the people of God out of bondage in Egypt, and to lead them through the wilderness, and settle them in the promised land, in fulfilment of the promises of God made to them four hundred and thirty years before. For this remarkable mission he was abundantly qualified by Him who appointed him, and he was enabled to accomplish it to the praise of the glory of God. While taking his people through the wilderness, it pleased God, through Moses, to give them, ecclesiastically and civilly, more arrangement, order, enlargement, and perfection, than they had previously enjoyed.

1. *Ecclesiastically.* In relation to His revealed truth, the rule of duty and the way of life, all previous revelations, whether handed down authentically by tradition, or committed to writing, were carefully collected and arranged, and written out by Moses under the direction and inspiration of God. To these were added the revelations made by the Lord to him in-

mediately ; all which we have contained in the five books of Moses and the book of Job. These are in a comprehensive sense, "the law of God." To them nothing material whether of doctrine or order, either for edification or salvation, was added till our Saviour appeared. The historical books, the Prophets, and the Psalms, are all based upon, and grow out of the six books now mentioned. Here, then, Moses gathered up, arranged, and committed to writing the Word of God, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice for His Church. Again : Moses arranged, systematically and permanently, the officers of the Church, confining them to one tribe, making the whole priesthood hereditary, and regulating their service and support, and everything appertaining to their duties, ecclesiastically, civilly, and socially. Again : he arranged the various sacrifices, together with their forms and ceremonies, and the significancy of the whole : the ceremonial observances in the worship, and service and holiness of God's people ; and the times, seasons, and manner of clean and unclean ; and the manner of vows and dedications of persons and things. Again : he reared the tabernacle of the congregation—the house of God—with its peculiar structure, furniture, ministry, and service. He instituted the feasts and solemn assemblies to be observed in commemoration of great events occurring in God's dealing with His people, which they were to observe most sincerely and sacredly. Again : he drew out the law of God in its application to the various circumstances and relations of God's people, for their warning and instruction, and ordained the degrees of relationship for the proper solemnization of marriages, and laws to be observed to preserve them from the contaminations of heathenism. Thus he collected, arranged, and perfected the constitution and order of the Church.

2. *Civilly.* Moses enlarged and perfected the mode of civil government by officers and judges, keeping the tribes distinct, yet uniting them in a court or council of general representation, and in meetings of the elders or rulers upon emergencies. He drew up laws for the government of all classes in the body politic, and for the government of the nation in its

relations with other nations, giving them institutions to keep them forever a distinct people, and enthroning the Lord as their God and King; interweaving the laws, civil and religious, into one code, and exacting obedience to all, as an act of obedience and allegiance to Him who was both God and King. The whole law was spiritual, and the required obedience was spiritual. The member of the Church was the member of the state. The obedience of one was that of the other; and so were they "a peculiar people, a royal priesthood, and an holy nation." He also regulated their settlement in, and possession of the promised land, and anticipated a kingly government, giving commandment concerning the same. He enjoined, also, observances in respect to plauting and reaping, sabbatical years and years of jubilee, and gave laws regulating buying and selling; all which tended to keep them a believing and holy nation. Thus he collected, arranged and perfected the constitution and order of the state.

Such being the mission and work of Moses, the true nature of his dispensation readily appears. It was but a gathering up and arranging, and amplifying and perfecting all that went before of God's revelations to His people, of the doctrines, order, discipline, constitution, and end of His Church on earth. In a word, it was but the continuation of the Church, and a continuation and enlargement of that covenant of grace in which the Church lives, moves, and has its being. The covenant which the Lord made, through Moses, with His people at Sinai immediately after the delivery of the ten commandments, was not, we repeat it, a covenant of works such as He entered into in the beginning with our federal head, Adam; for by his transgression of that covenant, he and all his race were irretrievably ruined and lost, were involved under the curse, and could never more look to that covenant for life. It was instantly set aside by the Lord after the fall. The race was put under the covenant of grace, and the salvation of the Lord's people effected and secured by a Redeemer—through His righteousness, imputed to them for justification, and not by any righteousness of their own. This covenant of grace had been in operation from Adam to Moses, and had opened the gates

of heaven to multitudes. Moses himself was a child of that covenant. Nor was the covenant made at Sinai any new covenant, different from both the covenants of works and of grace. It was really the covenant of grace, and nothing else; the same which God had made with Abraham, which He had made long before with Adam, and which He now renewed with His people, under new, solemn, and most impressive circumstances.

Moses' dispensation was not a legal dispensation, in the sense that life was promised and obtained by personal and perfect obedience to the law; Moses nowhere teaches this independent of the Gospel. "The law which came by Moses" embraces *all that he revealed from God to His Church*. It does not mean the ten commandments only, for they did not come by Moses alone; they had come long before by patriarchs and prophets. It means *both the moral and ceremonial laws—both law and Gospel*—the covenant of works broken and condemning, and the covenant of grace fulfilled and justifying; the covenant of grace, pre-supposing and requiring for its action the covenant of works; and the whole law a republication, if we may use such an expression, of the covenant of works, and of the covenant of grace. For "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." That is to say, the sinner under the moral law is convicted, condemned, without hope, and in self-despair, but the ceremonial law comes to his relief. He learns that its sacrifices are typical, and he looks through and beyond them to the coming of that great and promised Redeemer, who, by one offering of Himself, shall forever take away sin; and he believes and is saved.

Our Lord said to the Jews, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me," John v. 39-47. Moses wrote of Him, not only in the promises concerning His person, His work and salvation, but in all the sacrifices, types and shadows, which pointed to Him as the great object of faith and salvation. Again, our Lord reasons with his countrymen: "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust; for had ye

believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" Christ is everywhere in Moses. All the prophets who come after do but repeat and renew his prophecies of our Lord, and declare, after Moses, His salvation; and the sweet Psalmist of Israel prolongs the joy. Our Lord describes the end of His advent, "Think not that I come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled," Matt. v. 17-18. "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me, Luke xxiv. 44. With like meaning the Apostle John says: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John i. 17. The law finds its "truth,"—its substance and fulfilment—and the "grace" of life in Jesus Christ. Christ is not opposed to the law; on the contrary, "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." That righteousness for justification unto life eternal, which the holy law of God requires, and which the promises and the ceremonial law point out as laid up in Christ alone, verily Christ procures for His people.

The fundamental error of the Jews, (and it is the error of all unrenewed men and misguided religionists,) was a looking to the law of Moses, both the moral and ceremonial, as a rule of justification. By a rigid obedience to both, "they went about to establish their own righteousness, and did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God," even that very righteousness provided for *them in the law*, of which they were ignorant, for the law was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. The Apostle corrects their notion of a personal righteousness thus, by assuring them that, according to Moses, to be acceptable and justifying, it must be perfect. "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law; that the man which doeth these things shall live by them," Rom. x. 1-4; Levit. xviii. 5. Such a righteousness they could not

attain unto. However, the Apostle proceeds to show, by another quotation from their own Moses, that this was not the righteousness he preached for justification, but the very contrary; not a righteousness which comes by perfectly doing the law, but which comes by sincerely believing the promise; a righteousness not of works, but of faith, namely, in the great Redeemer, Rom. x. 6-11; Deut. xxx. 11-14. The powerful and conclusive arguments of the Apostle in his Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians, in which he utterly demolishes this fatal error, are drawn mainly and directly from the books of Moses. What is his Epistle to the Hebrews but an elucidation of the Gospel, according to Moses, in the first instance; and in the second, according to all the prophets who came after him, and taught as Moses taught? When this same Apostle, in 2 Cor. iii. 6-14, calls this ministry of Moses the ministration of death, and the ministration of condemnation, he includes but a special part of that ministration, namely: "that which was written and engraven on stones;" his ministry of the ten commandments, the moral law, the ancient covenant of works, under which the race lies in condemnation and death.

One passage from the third chapter of Galatians will present the Apostle's views on this vital point. He argues that the law and the promises do not teach totally opposite modes of justification; for justification by faith was the justification of Abraham and of all his spiritual seed who followed in the footsteps of his faith—a justification confirmed in Christ, in God's covenant with Abraham, which came down from Adam, and which should continue forever. "And this I say, that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was five hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul; that it should make the promise (that is of life through Christ) of none effect." The Gospel was preached unto Abraham, and he inherited the promises of God as a believer, and not as one justified under law by works. To the question, "Wherefore, then, serveth the law," if it is no rule of justification? the Apostle answers, "It was added because of transgression," Rom. v. 20. The grand end of the whole law, moral and ceremonial, which Moses received of God in

enlargement and confirmation of the covenant of grace, was the fuller manifestation of the heinous nature and vast amount of transgression, and also of the way of deliverance from it; and it was to continue in force "till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." "Is the law, then, against the promises of God?" Does this law provide for a justification contrary to that provided in the promises of God, that is, through Christ? "God forbid! for if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." But this was impossible. The moral law pronounces death upon all transgressors. The ceremonial law, in none of its rites and sacrifices could, of itself, atone for sin, and effect the justification of those who resorted to it for that purpose. It being so, "the Scripture hath included all under sin, that the promise" (of justification, or of life), "by faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe." "But before" Christ, the great object of our "faith" for justification, "came" into the world, "we were kept under the law," serving God therein agreeably to His will, not expecting justification therefrom, "but shut up unto the" blessed object of our "faith," looking to Him "which should afterwards be revealed;" "wherefore," hear the conclusion of the whole matter: "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith; but after that faith"—that is Christ, the object of faith—"is come, ye are no longer under a schoolmaster, for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

The ceremonial law—the schoolmaster from which we are specially delivered—being no longer necessary, has, with its rites and sacrifices, priesthood and tabernacle, passed away since Christ, the substance and fulfilment, has come, which the Apostle, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, largely and clearly demonstrates. Under the Gospel we are freed from the yoke and service of that law; although, as we still read and meditate upon it in God's Word, it serves to exhibit to our faith and love, the excellency, fulness, glory, and grace of Christ. But the moral law, immutable in its nature and authority, ever abides to convict and drive the sinner out of himself, and to

school him that he may go to Christ. Yet, when by the grace of God we are made his children by faith in Jesus Christ, we are delivered from this just and terrible schoolmaster; we no longer fear its wrath and curse; "for Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," Gal. iv. 1-8. The stripes have all fallen upon our blessed substitute, and we are healed; we walk, therefore, at liberty: new men, created unto good works, with that freedom wherewith Christ Jesus makes His people free.

The dispensation of Moses is not, therefore, a legal dispensation in any such sense as to propound a method of justification different from that of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; nor is it in any sense opposed to the Gospel. On the contrary, it is but a continuation and further revelation of the covenant of grace, and embosoms the Gospel.

When the law of Moses is spoken of in the Scripture as "unprofitable;" "a yoke," and "to wax old and pass away," reference is had directly to so much of it, and to that part only, which was "but the shadow of good things to come, not the good things themselves;" and could not, in its sacrifices and services, which were onerous, take away sin. The Lord never had any such design in its institution. It was profitable, in the highest degree, for the times then present. It taught countless multitudes of lost sinners the way to Heaven, who are now at rest in that glorious abode, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets of God. And lo! what a list of the greatest worthies is given in the Epistle to the Hebrews, attesting the greatness of its power, and the riches of its grace! If such was the power of the grace of the Sun of Righteousness shining through shadows, what shall be the effect of His unobstructed effulgence? If such was the effect of the "hearing of Moses and the Prophets," what shall be the effect of the hearing of Christ and his Apostles?

Second: what liberty of conscience was allowed under the commonwealth of Israel?

The government of the children of Israel was a pure theocracy. Their Sovereign gave them a written constitution, as a

Church of which He was God, and as a commonwealth of which He was King—a constitution intended to establish His fear as God and His honor as king, and adopted by the people for themselves and their posterity. The Holy Scriptures contained this constitution, freely circulated, open to all, from the king upon the throne to the servant behind the mill, read and explained in the audience of all Israel once in seven years, and constantly inculcated by priests and prophets. Priests accompanied the armies of the commonwealth in war, and sometimes the ark itself, the symbol of the presence of the Great King. In the opening and conduct of national assemblies, the direction and blessing of God were invoked; all oaths were administered in God's name; His sabbath observed by all classes of people; and idolatry, sorcery, and pollutions of incest, bestiality, and sodomy, forbidden. The commonwealth recognized the religion of the people, and gave it protection. The religion of the people permeated the commonwealth, and gave it support. Law and religion leaned upon each other. The people's king was their God, and their God was their king. Hence every act upon their part which tended directly or indirectly to dethrone their king, or to deny their God (which amounted to the same thing), was a crime in law. For example, if a man practiced idolatry and sought to corrupt the people, it was a denial of the true God, an act of rebellion against His kingly rule, treasonable in nature and punishable with death. In the same category were the offences of blasphemy of God in name, attributes, works, word, or worship; violations of the sabbath (for the blow that prostrated the sabbath, prostrated the God of the sabbath); rebellion against, or indignities offered unto judges, kings, prophets, or priests, who ruled or spake by commission from the great King; the assumption of power or authority in church or state, without regard to the order or appointment of the great King, as in the case of usurpers of kingly or priestly power; the assumption, and the attempted exercise of divine attributes and acts, as in the case of astrologers, magicians, and sorcerers; and the practice of unnatural vices destructive of public morals, religion, and law, and so subversive of government itself. All these

were offences against the commonwealth; and neither native-born citizens nor foreigners were allowed to commit them under plea of liberty of conscience, that they had a natural right to believe and practice whatever religion they chose, and that no government had any right to interfere with them. This would be acting not as citizens and subjects, but as sovereigns, lawless and irresponsible. The commonwealth framed laws for its own government and welfare, under which there was liberty of conscience, but with such limitations as estopped licentiousness, and preserved the commonwealth from injury and ruin.

What was that liberty of conscience? 1. A native-born citizen might renounce the faith of the commonwealth, become "uncircumcised," embrace idolatry, cease to observe the sabbath religiously, and neglect to frequent the temple. He might train his family in the same way, and stay in the country, or move out of it. No one would molest his person, or property, or family, or dispossess him of any civil right, or protection of law whatever, as a citizen, except that he would necessarily be excommunicated from the church. 2. A stranger, or a foreigner, might move into the commonwealth, and live and die there as an idolater, so long as he abstained from overt acts of idolatry, and from such sins as have been referred to. He would be recognized in Israel, and be treated and protected as a heathen man and a stranger; for the laws made provision for such. He might marry and give in marriage, buy and sell, hold property, plead, and be impleaded, go and come, frequent the court of the Gentiles in the temple, and avail himself of instruction in the true religion laid open to him. All these things, in common with all other citizens, he might do or not do according to his pleasure. In the settlement of his faith he was left to his own conscience. He came into the commonwealth, knowing its constitution and laws, of his own free-will. That free-will might take him out again, and none would hinder. He could neither expect nor justly desire that the people among whom he had come to dwell, and who secured him in many and great blessings and privileges, should, upon his own motion, or that of a thousand like him, set aside a sacredly believed, ordained, and cherished constitution, for the introduction of his

own faith and practice, directly antagonistic to and destructive of that constitution, and of course subversive of public peace and order. It is a right inherent in all commonwealths to uphold their own constitution and laws, and to protect themselves from whatever they deem injurious and destructive.

There was, then, let it be said, no persecution for conscience' sake ordained in or practised under the commonwealth of Israel. What is persecution? It is an assault by force upon the lives, persons, property, or just rights and privileges of men, on account of their religious belief, with the intent of compelling them to renounce that belief, and acknowledge another, or flee the country. Persecution differs from prohibition or restraint. Men may be prohibited or restrained in the propagation and practice of religious tenets contrary to the general faith, and the laws founded on it, and yet be entirely protected in person and property, and in all rights and privileges common to all citizens. If they cannot submit to the prohibition, they must make up their minds either to endure it; or remove out of the country. The citizens of a commonwealth say to them, "We have our constitution and laws; we do not compel you to adopt them—to believe as we believe. We have nothing to do with your faith; that is your own affair. We only say you cannot practice it in our territories; we consider it injurious to the state, and a crime against our peace and order. Stay if you will, and retain your faith, but practice it you cannot." Such was the state of things among the Israelites. The constitution and laws given them of God, were defensive and preservative; not offensive and destructive. As King in Zion our Lord never propagated religion by force. There were no inquisitions, no tortures, no dungeons in Palestine. He repudiated fire and sword as well before as after His coming, Luke ix. 52-56; Matt. xxvi. 51-54. His kingdom never was of this world, and therefore He never in any age sent out His servants to destroy heretics, or to conquer countries for Him; nor did He allow them to take it upon themselves to do so, John xviii. 33-38. The Israelites in all their history were never a persecuting people. When they took up their abode in foreign countries, they demeaned them-

selves as good citizens, and only asked toleration in the exercise of their religion. If it was denied them, they removed; if they were subjected to persecution, they endured it. Although opposed to idolatry and never practising it, (that is, the true Israelites,) or its attendant abominations, and consequently hated by the heathen as an unsocial, morose, and sanctimonious sect, they obtained, with little interruption, liberty in all the heathen countries where they sojourned, to exercise their religion and observe their own peculiar customs—a liberty allowed them by all the heathen nations that ruled over them in their own country, with the exception of Antiochus Epiphanes, for a brief period of his reign in Syria. Their superior intelligence, probity, and virtue, commended them to their heathen rulers. The wars of extermination carried on by the Israelites against the inhabitants of Canaan were not religious wars, but wars of divine judgment, of which they were the appointed executors.

Such was the liberty of conscience ordained under the commonwealth; but it was not strictly maintained. The people at times revolted, with their rulers, against the statutes of the state, and apostatized from the religion of the Church, denying their God and King, and thus were suffered to desecrate the sabbath, to introduce idolatry, and immerse themselves in forbidden iniquities. He finally, after much long-suffering, vindicated His majesty and authority, sent the people into captivity, and, by its fires, purged away idolatry. After their return to Judea, sects arose, and they were tolerated the one by the other, since their disagreements arose from conflicting scriptural interpretations—the fruit of philosophy or tradition—but no one sought to set aside the Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice, or to abolish the sabbath, or to introduce idolatry, or indulge in unnatural vices, or in a public manner to change the laws and customs of Moses. All, externally at least, conformed to them. The sect which withdrew farthest from established order was the Essenes. They were left to their mysticism and retirement. The contentions, which at times became violent between the two leading sects, the Pharisees and Sadducees, sprang more from the lust of power than

from the love of God. The persecutions of our Lord and His disciples by the Israelites, (although carried on under color of their "law,") for the crimes of blasphemy and treason, had no support in that law; their hostility was simply the acting out of the carnal mind in the unregenerate portion of the visible Church—a mind at enmity with God, and which always resists the Holy Ghost. It had persecuted the prophets of God, and shed righteous blood from Abel to Zacharias, and from the blood of Zacharias to that of the Holy and Just One and His disciples.

The commonwealth of Israel fell and passed away forever, at the advent of Christ. In giving commandments to His Apostles, and speaking of things pertaining to the Kingdom, He never intimated that it should be restored to Israel; and, when charged before Pilate with such a purpose, (which indeed many expected and wished Him to execute,) He told Pilate that the charge was not true: "My kingdom is not of this world," but is a kingdom spiritual in nature, made up of the faithful and true, John xviii. 35-38; Luke xxiii. 1-15. This spiritual kingdom He came to enlarge and perpetuate. He persecuted no one. His enemies were neither to be consumed with fire, nor slain with the sword. Said He to James and John, who wished Him to call down fire upon the inhospitable Samaritans, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them," Luke ix. 52-56. He said to Peter, after he had cut off Malchus' ear, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Matt. xxvi. 51-54. If He wished to destroy His enemies, He had infinite power to do it, and needed not to set His disciples to butcher them. Nor did He ever intend that they should use carnal weapons. When He sent them to extend and establish His kingdom He armed them not with swords and spears, but with the Word of the Gospel, giving them the freedom of the world, and assuring them of His presence and protection. "Go ye into all the world and preach

the Gospel to every creature: teach all nations: when they persecute you in one city flee ye into another. Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. x., xxviii.; v. 38-48; 1 Pet. ii. 21-23; Isa. liii. 7. They were to imitate His own spirit and life, and the power which He committed to them was spiritual only. He gave no power to persecute men, to afflict their persons, or to despoil them of liberty, property, or civil rights. Even in excommunication the offending member was to be treated not as an enemy, but as a brother, and every effort was to be employed to win him back to his Saviour, John xx. 22-23; Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 15-18; 1 Cor. v. 1-13; 2 Cor. ii. 6-8; Gal. vi. 1-2; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14-15. Although tempted and solicited to do it, He scrupulously avoided the exercise of any authority in the civil affairs of the people, and resisted all overtures of temporal power, Matt. xxii. 17-22; John viii. 1-11; Luke xii. 13-14; John vi. 14-15.

The Apostles followed His instructions and example. The civil state of the Church being broken up, the people of God were no longer to be confined to Palestine, and they went everywhere preaching the Gospel. Neither Peter, nor Paul, nor any of the Apostles attempted to set up an ecclesiastical state with civil powers, nor a civil state with ecclesiastical powers. They sought no alliance with the state, but preserved the Church distinct from it and demeaned themselves under all governments as peaceful citizens, praying for all in authority, obeying the laws themselves and inculcating obedience thereto. What they sought was freedom to worship God according to His Word, and to propagate that Word. If denied that freedom, they raised no rebellion against the government. If persecuted for their faith, they committed themselves to God, and, if necessary, suffered and died; or, when possible, fled into other lands, 1 Cor. v. 1-13; Rom. xiii. 1-7; Titus iii. 1; Acts. Jews and Gentiles persecuted them, and sought the aid of the civil power; but the disciples of Christ persecuted neither the one nor the other, and sought no aid from the state to do so. They appealed to the civil power, as citizens only, to establish their innocence from false charges, and to deliver them from the violence of lawless men. This

protection they were entitled to as citizens,—Acts xii. 1–17; viii. 1–13, 50–52; xiv. 20; xvi. 35–40; xxii. 24–29; xxv. 9–12; xxvi. 32. For power to make Christianity triumphant they looked to God, not to man.

So far all is plain. But suppose Christians should be in such circumstances as to be able to frame a government of their own, what liberty of conscience should they allow, and where should they look for direction? Would the ancient commonwealth of Israel be a suitable pattern to follow? It would as far as the altered nature of circumstances allowed; for God is no longer the personal and absolute king of any nation, but indirectly so of all nations, through powers ordained in His providence. This much ought a Christian people to do, namely, acknowledge the God of Revelation to be the only living and true God, require all oaths of government to be administered in His name—He alone being the Judge of all the earth, and able to reward every man according to his works—and acknowledge Him as the God of the nation, by invoking His blessing in all national councils and legislatures. His Holy Scriptures should be regarded as the only and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, their free circulation encouraged among all classes, and their introduction permitted into schools of public instruction for the children and youth of the land. Religious biblical instruction should be furnished to all citizens employed in the public service; the Sabbath preserved as a day of rest from ordinary labor, and a day of sacred worship; the marriage relation regulated; and the manner of legalizing the same; adultery, polygamy, incest, sodomy, and bestiality should be punished; and the establishment of idolatry prevented, with its loose morals and abominations. All these great principles of religion and morality owe their clearness and authority to Revelation, and demand an acknowledgment in Christian governments.

All laws and institutions of government should have their foundation in some standard of right and wrong, whether that standard be the light of nature, or the light of Revelation. Heathen governments adopt the former, and Christian governments the latter. Governments are accounted in God's sight as

individuals; they have characters of good or evil. He rewards them according to their works. They are subject alike to His judgments and mercies, as they acknowledge or reject Him. It is an error to affirm that governments are without responsibility to God, and have nothing to do with the religion of the people, either in the way of recognition, or of protection; for whence are laws protecting the exercise of religion itself, and laws forbidding crimes, (and, by consequence, though not expressed, enjoining the contrary virtues,) ostensibly derived, if not from the religion of the people? "Government is for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well." It is the ministry of God. Outward acts esteemed criminal in religion are ordinarily accounted so in the state. The religion of a people determines the character of their laws. It has been so from the earliest existence of nations. So intimate has been the connection between religion and law, that the universal custom of the world has been to associate the king and the priest—the civil and the ecclesiastical power—using them conjointly in government. It was so in Egypt, in Persia, Media, Babylonia, Syria, Greece, and Rome; it was so among all the barbaric and idolatrous nations of antiquity: it is so with them now, and with nearly all the kingdoms in Europe even at this day, civilized and enlightened as they assume to be. The connection however has not been so close in all ages as to bind up the consciences of the people to one and only one system of doctrines and worship. Liberty of conscience was allowed with restrictions even among the heathen nations. Their acknowledged religion was idolatry; and liberty of conscience was allowed in the number and character of the idols worshipped, as well as in the doctrines concerning the gods, but with restrictions. The worshippers of different gods were not allowed to persecute or oppress each other. None were allowed to introduce new gods without the consent of the state. The Athenians put Socrates to death on the charge (false however) of violating these laws. No king might force his own particular religious tenets upon his subjects. Antiochus Epiphanes, whatever might have been his secret motives, lost his life in attempting to bring the Syrian Empire

to adopt the worship of his own Jupiter ; and he is a singular example of a heathen persecutor of the heathen. Rome adopted idolatry and tolerated every kind of god ; but one form of idolatry Rome would not tolerate. The Egyptian priests, with their abominable rites, were expelled the country. The Greek and Latin writers took great liberties, and without fine or imprisonment, in discussing the merits of the gods, and in ridiculing the folly of idolatry. The early persecutions of Christians were based upon the denial of the acknowledged gods of the nations, and the tendency of their faith to overthrow the legalized religion of the times. Manifold other charges and calumnies further aggravated the heathen against them.

The governments of the world, with a few and transient exceptions, have been arbitrary, and not popular—originated, sustained, and carried on not by the concurrent and spontaneous action of the people, but by mere power lodged, no matter by what means, in the hands of a monarch or an aristocracy, and a coalition of priests. The union of the ecclesiastical with the civil power, has made them irresistible for good or for evil. When the heathen nations of Europe became christianized (nominally at least), the same arbitrary forms of government in the main continued, and for the most part continue now. True liberty of conscience lies at the mercy of “the powers that be.” How much it has been repressed and afflicted, the history of Europe for many centuries is ample witness ; and the ignorance and degradation of the neglected masses have favored spiritual despotism and persecution. The most intolerant governments are Roman Catholic, and the worst among them all is that of the Pope himself. He and his followers prescribe one faith, a heathenized christianity, and proscribe all other faiths differing from it. The people who oppose them, whom they have not power to imprison, torture, and slay with fire and sword, they curse spiritually and eternally !

The Word of God gradually shed light on the question of the liberty of conscience, until it generated the Reformation, when Luther made every man his own Pope ; that is, established the

right of private judgment in interpreting the Scriptures and determining therefrom his faith and practice. Such honor is ascribed to him and his coadjutors. What suffering witnesses for the truth had contended for in fire and blood long before them, they established in the day of God's power, and His Church's redemption. But the progress of the light has been much impeded. Church and state are still linked together. Mankind have been slow to relinquish power, wealth, and immemorial customs, to adopt the teachings of God in the commonwealth of Israel respecting liberty of conscience, as well as the teachings of our Saviour in His severance of Church and state, granting to every man the right of private judgment according to the true and only standard, the Holy Scriptures.

To conclude: while the great principles of religion and morality now suggested, and derived from the commonwealth of Israel, should be part and parcel of the laws of a truly Christian government, it should proceed no further with the conscience of the people, but lay the Scriptures open to private judgment—God being the only Lord of the conscience—and let every man determine for himself its doctrines and duties, his creed and worship, with liberty of preaching and discussion. In the case of those who would openly oppose the principles referred to and enacted in the laws, let them be restrained, but not persecuted or oppressed. Grant them liberty of conscience, but with the prescribed limitations. If men are suffered to become citizens, and to introduce, under plea of liberty of conscience, their differing systems of faith and practice, the result must be anarchy. What one would build, another would destroy; one would have no God and no oaths; another, no Scriptures and no day of rest and religious service; and another, no law of Christian marriage. Piety, justice, mercy, purity, and truth, would be trampled down in the streets. The constitution and laws based upon the standard of God's Word should rule in a Christian commonwealth, and it requires great care, in framing and in executing the laws, to suppress licentiousness on the one hand, and avoid persecution on the other.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CHURCH LEAVES SINAI.—HOBAB GOES WITH MOSES.—JOURNEYS AND SOJOURN IN THE WILDERNESS FOR FORTY YEARS.—CONDUCT OF THE PEOPLE AND THEIR JUDGMENTS.—OBLIGED TO ENTER THE PROMISED LAND FROM THE EAST OF JORDAN.—THE AMORITES DESTROYED.—BALAAM'S PROPHECIES.—ISRAEL NUMBERED A SECOND TIME, AND THE DESIGN OF IT.—JOSHUA, MOSES' SUCCESSOR.—ORDINATION.—MOSES' FAREWELL DISCOURSE, SONG, AND BLESSINGS.—HIS DEATH.—HIS PROPHECIES.—TYPICAL NATURE OF BONDAGE AND DELIVERY OF THE CHURCH.—STATE OF RELIGION UNDER MOSES.

The great encampment is broken up, and the Church departs from the mount of the Lord, "the ark of the covenant of the Lord," going before to search out a resting-place. When it set forward, Moses said, "Rise, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee! And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel." After three days' journey they pitched in Kibroth-hattaavah, Numb. x. 33-36; xi. 34-35; Numb. xxxiii. 16.

Reuel, (Exod. ii. 16-21,) or Raguel, (Numb. x. 29, the same word in the original,) or Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had visited him at Sinai, (Exod. xviii. 1-27,) and had returned to his own home; but Hobab, Jethro's son, was at Sinai when the removal took place, and Moses invited him to go with them and share in the promised mercies of the Lord, and to render them assistance in their encampments in the wilderness by his counsels and experience. From the subsequent history, Hobab complied, for the children of Moses' father-in-law at-

tached themselves to the tribe of Judah upon entering the promised land, Judges i. 16. Afterwards, "Jacl, the wife of Heber the Kenite, son of Hobab, slew Sisera with a nail of the tent," and assisted in delivering Israel from Jabin, king of Canaan, Judges iv. 11-24. In this passage Hobab is called Moses' father-in-law; but, as the original word signifies also a son-in-law, or a near kinsman, it should be taken to signify Moses' brother-in-law, which he is said to have been, Numb. x. 29.

The Kenites were spared by Saul when he went to destroy the Amalekites, (1 Sam. xv. 6,) on account of the kindness they showed the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt. From the Kenites descended the Rechabites, 2 Ki. x. 15; 1 Chron. ii. 55, of whom honorable mention is made by Jeremiah, xxxv. 1-19, for their obedience to their father Jonadab; and the Lord pronounced a blessing upon them: "Therefore, saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me forever." The Rechabites have been discovered in the East in our day, after more than twenty-four hundred years, still adhering to the commands of their father, and not wanting a man to stand before the Lord. The promise made by Moses to Hobab, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel," has been remarkably fulfilled in Hobab's posterity.

Moses preserved, Numb. xxxii., an accurate record of the journeys of the children of Israel from Rameses in Egypt to Shittim in Moab—their last resting-place before crossing the Jordan: "These are the journeys of the children of Israel which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys, by the commandment of the Lord: and these are their journeys according to their goings out." They took their departure from their grand rendezvous in Egypt, Rameses: their twelfth encampment brought them into the wilderness, before Mount Sinai; and their forty-second, to Shittim, in the plains of Moab by Jordan, near Jericho.

They were forty years in the wilderness, and made forty-

two principal and distinct encampments, including Rameses and Shittim, the first and the last. The time they tarried at each, was varied, and always determined by the Lord. There is no record of these encampments, but that of Moses; nor does he give any description, except of a very few, whereby their locality might be identified. He defines the route travelled, so that it might be traced from beginning to end. No attempts were made to identify either the place or the route for two thousand years after Moses. The Israelites merely encamped. They built no cities and left no monuments in the desert; consequently, all vestiges of their passage must have been soon obliterated, and the names of their encampments, in such a lapse of time, changed or forgotten, or superseded by others. The labors and learned efforts of distinguished travellers and scholars who have devoted themselves to the solution of these matters, have shed some light and been of great value in several respects, yet they have not succeeded in perfectly satisfying their own minds, or in agreeing with one another, in respect to even some of the more remarkable marches and prominent places of encampment. The precise spot where the children of Israel crossed the western arm of the Red Sea; the position of the encampment before Sinai, and the course they took after leaving Sinai, together with their various wanderings for thirty years in the wilderness, are all obscured by doubts and conflicting opinions, and may never be accurately determined. The march from Egypt to Canaan was accomplished over three thousand years ago, and nothing important depends upon the accurate determination of its stages or its course. It is enough to know that all necessary particulars of the deliverance, and of the march, are narrated in the inspired Word of God; that the inspired narrative was in possession of the very people who were delivered, and who passed through the wilderness; that it was received by them as authentic, and as such was transmitted to their children and children's children to a thousand generations. Moreover, the grand features of the country, the names of prominent localities, and their relative positions, remain unchanged, showing the foundations of that sacred narrative to be true. We have

Egypt now as it was then, the Red Sea, the mountains of Sinai, the terrible wilderness, the mountains of Edom, the Dead Sea, Moab, the Jordan, Jericho, and Canaan.

The children of Israel had not gone three days' journey from Sinai—that mountain of wonders, judgments, and mercies—ere they complained against God, and He sent fire and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp; but He graciously quenched the fire upon the cry of the people, and the prayer of Moses. The name of the place was called Taberah, or burning. This fire had scarcely ceased, before the mixed multitude that came out of Egypt, Exod. xii. 38, fell a-lusting, and were joined by the children of Israel, who wept and sighed after the good things of Egypt, saying, “Who shall give us flesh to eat?” The Lord (as He had done a year before, Exod. xvi. 13) sent quails to suffice them for a month; but while the flesh was in their impenitent mouths, He smote them with a very great plague, slaying the fattest of them, and smiting down the chosen men of Israel. The place was named Kibroth-hattaavah (the graves of lust); for there they buried the people that lusted, Numb. xi. 1–35; Ps. lxxviii. 26–31; cvi. 13–15. It was on this occasion that Moses, worn out with the waywardness of the people, prayed God to release him by death from his charge, if it were always to be attended with such trials. The Lord gave him seventy elders to bear the burden of the people with him. At the next stage, Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron asserted their equality with Moses, and spake against him as governor and leader of the people. Moses was justified; Miriam and Aaron condemned. Miriam was afflicted with leprosy, but both were pardoned at the prayer of Moses, Numb. xii. 1–16. The next remove was to Rithmah, Numb. xxxiii. 18, and thence, stage by stage, they went through all that great and terrible wilderness which they saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites. In eleven days they came, Deut. i. 2, to Kadesh-barnea, in the wilderness of Paran, Deut. i. 19; Numb. xiii. 26, on the borders of Canaan, south and west of Jordan. Moses addressed the people in the assurance of a speedy entry into and occupation of the promised land. “Ye are come unto the

mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee: fear not, neither be discouraged." They proposed to send men to search out the land, and bring them word by what way they should go up, and to what cities they should come—a prudent measure, which "pleased Moses well." He took twelve rulers, one of a tribe, and giving them instructions, sent them to spy out the land. They traversed it from south to north, and returned after an absence of forty days. Ten brought back an evil report of the land as a country to be inhabited, and asserted its conquest an impossibility. Two, Joshua and Caleb, gave an adverse report, saying, "It is a good land which the Lord our God doth give us. Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it." But the people believed the majority of the spies, rebelled against the commandment, distrusted the promises of the Lord, and, yielding to their fears, resolved to make a captain, and return to Egypt, despite the faith, eloquence, and influence of Moses, Aaron, Caleb, and Joshua. Yea, more, they gave commandment to stone these faithful men, and were arrested in their murderous intent only by the instant appearance of the glory of the Lord in the tabernacle of the congregation. The Lord proposed to smite them with the pestilence, to disinherit them, and to make of Moses a greater nation and mightier than they; but Moses interceded for the people, and prevailed. It was the tenth time they had tempted God, and would not obey His voice; so He swore in His wrath that not one of the men of that evil generation that had provoked Him, from twenty years old and upward, should enter into that good land; their carcasses should fall in the wilderness. "But my servants Caleb and Joshua, because they had another spirit with them, and have followed me fully, them will I bring into the land wherinto they went: and their seed shall possess it. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised, and they shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in

the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years: and ye shall know my breach of promise"—that is, the altering of the divine purpose, since they had broken God's covenant and forfeited His favor. "I the Lord have said, I will surely do it unto this evil congregation that are gathered against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die." The judgment at once began—the ten spies died by the plague before the Lord.

The message and judgment of God awed the people, and "they mourned greatly:" and the next morning, confessing their sin, they resolved to go up in force and possess the land. Moses remonstrated, but "it was too late, for God had forbidden it. Should they presumptuously go, they would be smitten before their enemies; the Lord would not be with them." They presumed to go, while Moses and the ark remained in the camp, and they were discomfited and driven back! Numb. xiv. 1-45; Deut. i. 1-46.

The children of Israel abode in Kadesh many days, then at God's command turned back into the wilderness by way of the Red Sea, and "compassed Mount Seir many days." In and about these mountains they spent nearly eight and thirty years. During this long time nothing of their history reaches us, save the rebellion of Korah against the regency of Moses and the priesthood of Aaron, the delivery of sundry laws, Numb. xv. to xix, and the catalogue of their encampments. At the end of these years, the Lord said to Moses, "Ye have compassed the mountain long enough, turn you northward," Deut. ii. 1-7. They came a second time to Kadesh-barnea, and this was in the first month of the fortieth year after they left Egypt, Numb. xx. 1. While in Kadesh, Miriam, that distinguished mother in Israel, died and was buried. Here also it was that the people murmured for water, and provoked the spirit of Moses, Ps. cvi. 32-33, and both he and Aaron "rebelled against the commandment of the Lord;" they did not execute it in the spirit and manner enjoined, Numb. xx. 1-12; xxvii. 14; nor did they repose their trust in God at this juncture,

and openly sanctify and exalt Him in the eyes of the people. They spake "unadvisedly with their lips," and assumed a sovereign power to themselves, saying, "Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock?" Moses in his anger smote the rock with his rod "twice." For this sin of rebellion, unbelief, and presumption, the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, "Ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." Nor would the Lord alter the word which had gone out of His mouth, though Moses prayed earnestly for it, Deut. iii. 23-27.

From this city, in the uttermost border of Edom, Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom, requesting a peaceful passage through his dominions; but the king refused, and came out in great force to repel them. So failed this second attempt to enter Canaan from the south, and on the west of Jordan. No alternative remained but for Israel to return southward, go round the Dead Sea, and effect an entrance on the east of Jordan. Wherefore Israel turned away from the king of Edom, journeyed from Kadesh, and came to Mount Hor, which is rendered memorable by the extraordinary death of Aaron. At God's command, in perfect health, he went up into the mount with Moses and Eleazer his son, in the sight of all Israel. There, with his brother and his son, his priestly garments were taken from him, and put upon his son and successor. His work being ended in the Church, this eminent saint of the Lord calmly died, and was gathered unto the rest which remains to the people of God; and all the house of Israel mourned for Aaron thirty days, Numb. xx. 1-29; Deut. ii. 8.

At this time the children of Israel utterly destroyed Arad, a king of the Canaanites, and his people, Numb. xxi. 1-3.

From Mount Hor they journeyed by the way of the Red Sea to compass the land of Edom, and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way, and they spake against God and against Moses. The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and many of them died. They were finally delivered by Moses lifting up the brazen serpent, (a type of the great Redeemer, John iii. 1-16,)

and this brazen serpent was preserved above seven hundred years, to the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, who destroyed it because the people worshipped it; and he called it, Nehush-tan, ("a piece of brass,") and therefore no God, Numb. xxi. 4-9; 2 Ki. xviii. 1-4.

Reaching Ezion-gaber on the eastern branch or gulf of the Red Sea, the people turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab, east of the Dead Sea, crossing the brook Zared, and entered the land of Moab, Numb. xxi. 10-12. Upon the passage of this brook, Moses remarks, "And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea," *i. e.*, the space of time from their first leaving Kadesh-barnea on the return of the spies, (Numb. xiii.; Deut. i. 46,) "until we were come over the brook Zared, was thirty and eight years: until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the Lord sware unto them. For indeed the hand of the Lord was against them, to destroy them from among the host until they were consumed," Deut. ii. 9-15. They passed quietly through the territories of Moab, and disturbed not the Ammonites, whose country lay to the right and east of Moab: for to Moab and Ammon, the children of Lot, the Lord had given their lands for a perpetual inheritance, Deut. ii. 9-23. The river Arnon was the northern boundary of Moab, beyond which lay the kingdom of the Amorites, one of the devoted nations, Gen. xv. 21. Their territories extended east and west on both sides the Jordan, Josh. x. 1-10. Five kings reigning on the west, and two on the east of Jordan, namely, Sihon, who dwelt at Heshbon; and Og, who dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, Josh. xii. 1-5; Deut. i. 1-4. The Amorites under Sihon and Og, and the Canaanites under king Arad, were the only portions of the devoted nations that Moses himself overthrew and subdued before Israel, Deut. i. 1-14; Numb. xxi. 1-3.

Crossing the Arnon several stages, Moses sent messengers to Sihon requesting a peaceful passage through his territories, which he refused, and marched out against Israel: "for the Lord God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that He might deliver him into the hand of Israel." They

“smote him, and his sons, and his people, and took all his cities, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, and left none to remain; the cattle and the spoil of the cities were taken for a prey,” Numb. xxi. 13–32; Deut. ii. 24–37. Then Moses turned his arms against Og, king of Bashan, and defeated him in battle at Edrei, subduing his entire kingdom, utterly destroying men, women, and children of every city, and taking the cattle and spoil of the cities for a prey, even as was done unto Sihon and his kingdom, Numb. xxi. 33–35; Deut. iii. 1–16. “Then pitched the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan, near Jericho, and abode in Shittim,” Numb. xxii. 1; xxv. 1; xxxiv. 48–49; Joshi. ii. 1. Many notable events occurred while they lay in this their last encampment before crossing the Jordan.

Balak, king of Moab, beholding the destruction of the Amorites, and fearing lest Israel should “lick up all that was round about them, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field,” sent and brought Balaam the prophet out of Pethor of Mesopotamia, “out of the mountains of the east,” to curse Israel, so that Israel might wither and perish, or be so weakened that Balak himself perhaps might drive them out of the land, Numb. xxii. 1–6; xxiii. 7; xxxi. 1–8. Who was this mighty man Balaam, known in countries distant from his own, and held in fear and great reputation? for said Balak: “Curse me this people; for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.” Joshua, chap. xiii. 22, calls him, “Balaam the soothsayer” or diviner. Balak, a heathen man, conceived him to be such a one, for his messengers departed for Balaam “with the rewards of divination in their hand,” Numb. xxii. 7. The Apostle Peter calls him a “prophet,” 2 Pet. ii. 15–16, in the exercise of his office setting an example of covetousness and folly which was followed by the false teachers of his day. He says Balaam “loved the wages of unrighteousness,” and that his dumb ass rebuked his iniquity in disobeying God, and going after he had been forbidden, and with the hope, peradventure, that he might divine or prophesy to please Balak and obtain his re-

wards. Of such prophets Micah writes, (iii. 11,) “the prophets thereof divine for money:” “they pervert their office through covetousness;” “they all look to their own way: every one for his gain from his own quarter,” Isa. lxvi. 11. According to Jude, this was “the error of Balaam.” But he proceeded a step further and deeper in his iniquitous desire for reward. He infamously counselled Balak to seduce the Israelites, through the women of his country, into the abominations of uncleanness and idolatry, in order that the Lord—a God of holiness and jealous of His glory—might be turned against them, and destroy them before Moab, thereby obtaining the honor and rewards which Balak had in store for him. Surely he had “eyes full of adultery, and that could not cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls: a heart exercised with covetous practices, and one of the cursed children,” 2 Pet. ii. 14–16; Numb. xxxi. 14–16; Rev. ii. 14. The righteous Lord plagued the people for falling into the snare of Balaam and Balak, Numb. xxv. 1–9; xxxi. 16; Deut. iii. 3, three thousand dying in one day, 1 Chron. x. 7–8; and one thousand at another time being hung and slain with the sword as public examples by command of the Lord, Numb. xxv. 1–5; yet He hearkened not to Balaam, but turned his curse into a blessing, for He would not take away His loving-kindness from His people. To this mercy shown them on this occasion, beautiful allusion is made many years after in Micah. “O my people! remember now what Balak, king of Moab, consulted, and what Balaam, the son of Beor, answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord,” Mic. vi. 5.

Balaam was officially a true prophet, for he communicated with and sought the will of God in the ordinary way of prophets, and the Lord spake directly to him, and inspired him to utter prophecies concerning Israel and the coming and glory of the Messiah, Numb. xxii.–xxiv. But, judging from his conduct and the views expressed of him in the Scriptures, he was doubtless an unconverted man—officially but not effectually called. The Lord expresses His anger against him in his conduct with Balak: he is mentioned with condemnation, and

was in the end slain among the enemies of God with the sword of judgment, Numb. xxxi. 8. He was true in prophecy, but false in character. The Lord in His wisdom has permitted it to be so. There are hay and stubble in the Church, as well as gold, silver, and precious stones. Judas was a true Apostle, but no Christian, John vi. 70; Phil. iii. 17-21.

The prophecies of Balaam are four, delivered at brief intervals, and each containing some new matter. First: Numb. xxiii. 1-10. 1. That Israel should be a people under God's special protection and blessing, against whom no curse could be uttered, vs. 8. 2. That they should dwell alone, distinct from, and not reckoned among the nations, vs. 9; Deut. xxxiii. 27-29. 3. That they should be a numerous people, vs. 10. This prophecy of the happy lot of God's people he concludes by looking forward to their blessedness beyond the grave, and exclaiming, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" vs. 10, which breathes of the immortality of the soul, and the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, as in Deut. xxxii. 29; Job xix. 25-27; Ps. xxxvii. 37; Prov. xiv. 32. Second: Numb. xxiii. 11-26. 1. That God's unchangeable love is set upon Israel, whom He had redeemed unto Himself out of Egypt; that He is King in Israel, and His purposes of good towards Israel can never be altered, vs. 18-23. 2. That Israel shall abide in strength and overcome all their enemies, vs. 24. Third: Numb. xxiv. 1-9. 1. Balaam predicts the peace which God's redeemed people should enjoy, and their exaltation to be chief of the nations, vs. 5-8. 2. The destruction of the nations that should be their enemies (the Canaanites are primarily referred to). They only should be blessed who blessed Israel, vs. 8-9. Fourth: Numb. xxiv. 10-25. 1. He predicts the destruction of the Moabites, the children of Seth, and the Edomites, by a star that should come out of Jacob, and a sceptre that should rise out of Israel; that is, by a ruler or king of great glory and power, who in prophetic vision he saw should come, not now but in future times; which prophecy was fulfilled in David many years after—the type of the true star and sceptre of Israel, the Messiah who should come out of Jacob, and have

preëminently the dominion of subduing every enemy, vs. 15-19; 2 Sam. viii. 2-14; Matt. ii. 1-9; Luke i. 78; 1 Pet. i. 19; Rev. xxii. 16; Gen. xlix. 10; Ps. xlv. 1-7; lxxviii. 70-72; ex. 1-7; lxxii. 1-20; Isa. ix. 67; Luke i. 32-33. 2. He predicts the overthrow of the Amalekites and the Kenites, Num. xxiv. vs. 20-21. 3. The inroads and captivities of Asshur or the Assyrians, vs. 22, which would be very dreadful: "Alas! who shall live when God doeth this?" 4. The affliction of Asshur and Eber, the Assyrians and Hebrews, by nations coming in ships from Chittim, the western nations, namely, the Macedonians and Romans; and 5. The destruction of these powers in turn forever, vs. 24,—prophecies which strengthened the hearts and nerved the hands of the people of God at the time of their delivery, and contain an epitome of their history to the coming of Christ, and for a long time after.

The affair of Balaam and the plague of judgment being over, Numb. xxv. 1-18, Moses and Eleazar were commanded to number the people from twenty years old and upward. The first enumeration, or census, was taken at Mount Sinai on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they came out of the land of Egypt, Numb. i. 1-54. In both censuses eleven tribes were numbered, but the division of the tribe of Joseph into two, Ephraim and Manasseh, made the number twelve. The priestly tribe of Levi was not numbered.

At the exodus, Moses reckoned the men able for every duty at 600,000, Exod. xii. 37. The first census at Sinai, thirteen months after, gave 603,550, an increase of 3,550; and the second census, thirty-eight years after, gave 601,730, a decrease of 1,820. The five tribes, Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Ephraim, and Naphtali, decreased in the aggregate 61,020: and the seven tribes, Judah, Issachar, Zebulon, Manasseh, Benjamin, Dan, and Asher, increased in the aggregate 59,200. For the first thirteen months no heavy judgments befell the people to reduce their numbers, and the ordinary proportion of births and deaths was maintained. But for thirty-eight years after, they wandered in the wilderness, bearing the iniquity of their oft-repeated sins, and especially the sin of unbelief and rebellion in refusing to enter and take possession of the promised

land; for this every male over twenty years was condemned to die in the wilderness. And so it came to pass, for, in the second census, Moses remarks, "These are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab, by Jordan, near Jericho. But among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb, the son of Jephthnah, and Joshua, the son of Nun," Numb. xxvi. 63-65. The increase of the tribe of Levi was very trifling: at the first census all the males from a month old and upward were 22,000, Numb. iii. 39; at the second census, 23,000, Numb. xxvi. 62—an increase in thirty-eight years of 1,000 only!

The second census was not taken until the plague for the sin of Moab had done its work. The ordinary annual mortality of mankind is from two to three per cent. When the mortality balances the increase, it becomes very considerable; but when it exceeds the increase, then extraordinary causes are in operation to produce so disastrous an effect. The wilderness in which the children of Israel wandered could not be considered an unhealthy country; they were not crowded, so as to gender disease, for ample space was allowed for each encampment, and between the several encampments; every precaution was taken to prevent the accumulation of matter for the production of diseases; they could not die from scarcity of food or water, for the Lord supplied them amply and daily; they were not wasted by external or internal wars; nor were the people of a feeble or sickly race. Yet their number was almost stationary; for, if we reckon in the Levites, and subtract their increase of 1,000 from the decrease of all the tribes, viz., 1,820, the result is a decrease of 820. The cause of this must be ascribed principally to the judgments of God for their sins. Some of these judgments are particularly mentioned: for example, the fire of the Lord consumed the people in the uttermost parts of the camp at Taberah, Numb. xi. 1; a great

plague fell upon them at Kibroth-hattaavah, Numb. xi. 33; the Amalekites slew some of them, Numb. xiv. 40-45; the earth swallowed up Korah and his company, Numb. xvi. 25-35; and, for murmuring against Moses and Aaron for this judgment, 14,700 were swept off by a plague, Numb. xvi. 41-50. Many died by the fiery serpents, Numb. xxi. 4-9; and for the sins of Moab the plague destroyed 24,000. All these judgments fell upon the Israelites in the second and in the fortieth year of their wanderings. For thirty-eight years there is scarcely any history of them at all, but they were consuming under the sentence, "they shall not enter into my rest." The affecting prayer of Moses in the Ninetieth Psalm is not only a description of, but also a commentary on these years of sorrow. "God set their iniquities before Him, and their secret sins in the light of His countenance, and they were consumed by His anger, and by His wrath were they troubled."

The second census proved the fulfilment of God's threatening against the unbelieving generation, Numb. xxvi. 63-65, and also His faithfulness in preserving His people. It also prepared them for a just division of the promised land. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Unto these the land shall be divided for an inheritance, according to the number of the names. To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to the few thou shalt give the less inheritance: notwithstanding, the land shall be divided by lot, according to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few," Numb. xxvi. 51-56. The land being surveyed and unequally divided in extent into the requisite number of shares by men divinely appointed for that purpose, the possession of each tribe was then determined by lot, or, in other words, by the Lord Himself, so that every possible ground of dissatisfaction or complaint was forever taken away.

Moses, warned of his death, earnestly entreated God to appoint a successor, "that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd." The Lord appointed Joshua, and in the presence of the high-priest Eleazer and all the people, he was solemnly ordained to his office by the imposition of the hands of Moses, who also gave him a charge in

their sight; Numb. xxvii. 12-23, which introduces the first instance on record of the imposition of hands, in the act of designating and setting apart one person to a sacred office by another preceding him in that office. It is a ceremony ordained of the Lord, and signifies His choice of the individual to the office, and his solemn investiture with all the authority, dignities, and duties of that office. The individual, on his part, accepts the office from the Lord and engages himself to a due discharge of the same. When ordained over a particular people, they receive him as the minister of God, and as such promise him all due reverence and obedience. This is the substance of the act of ordination by the imposition of hands. The right to ordination on the part of the individual desiring it, is founded upon what the Church deems an explicit call of God of the individual to the office, and God's bestowal upon him of the necessary qualifications thereto; for it is the prerogative of the great Head of the Church to ordain the offices and call and qualify men for them. Hence the act of ordination is declarative of the mind and will of God, that such an individual is called by Him to such an office; and is designed for the maintenance of order and discipline, that no man take office of his own motion, and introduce folly and confusion into His Church.

The persons ordaining, in and of themselves, give no call and impart no grace of office whatever; their act is ministerial and declarative. God makes the officer; they recognize His making, and, acting for God by the laying on of their hands, they set apart the candidate to the exercise of that office, openly and orderly receiving him into the Church. Moses neither called nor qualified Joshua for his office. He did not convey any grace to him, but merely set him apart before the people as the man divinely chosen to be his successor, and whom they were to receive and obey, because thus called, qualified, and appointed of God, Acts vi. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 14; v. 22.

The divine call however to office in the Church was not invariably attended with the imposition of the hands of men. No hands were ever laid upon Moses; none upon the high

priest—Moses poured the oil of consecration upon his head. Who poured the oil upon the heads of his successors is not of record. No hands were ever laid upon the first sons of Aaron, who were consecrated to the priesthood by peculiar sacrifices and ceremonies. There was no imposition of hands upon their successors, nor were they consecrated by any sacrifices and ceremonies—the one consecration of their fathers sufficed for all. The imposition of the hands of the people upon the Levites, was expressive of substitution, since they were accepted in the ministry in the place of the first-born. The ceremony did not descend to their successors. No one in this way ordained Samuel to be a prophet, nor is there evidence that any of the long line of prophets were so set apart. Elijah cast his mantle upon Elisha, and anointed him to be a prophet in his room, as the Lord appointed him. No laying on of hands is spoken of in reference to the schools of the prophets. The Lord called the prophets, and gave them their credentials—inspiration, and power to work miracles. He laid hands neither upon the twelve Apostles, nor upon the seventy disciples, whom He sent out to preach. Their qualifications proved their call and authority. Extraordinary officers came immediately appointed from the Lord. After His ascension, the ordinary and permanent officers were ordained by imposition of hands. The early ordinations were from the hands of the Apostles only, or the Apostles in connection with ordinary ministers, 2 Tim. i. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 14; comp. Acts xv. 40; xvi. 1-3, or by ministers who had received ordination from the Apostles; so the rule was laid down that ministers, when called of God, must be ordained by imposition of the hands of those who were before them in office, 1 Tim. v. 17, 22; 2 Tim. ii. 1-2; Titus i. 5-9; Acts vi. 1-6; xiv. 23; xx. 17-38. Hands were laid by “prophets and teachers” even upon an Apostle (Paul), not in a way of ordination to office, but of designation and appointment to a particular work to which the Holy Ghost had called him and Barnabas, Acts xiii. 1-3. Should the regular succession of ministers among the Lord’s people fail, from whatever cause, the office would not thereby and necessarily become extinct. The Lord in that case might

call and qualify an individual and seal him as a true minister, without previous ordination of man. The true succession lies not in an unbroken chain of ordainers, who may become corrupt, and be repudiated both by the Lord and His people, but in the divine call and qualification of individuals for the office—these constitute God's seal, and where that is, there is His ministry. It has, however, been the will and work of God to have always in His Church the true succession, spiritually and ecclesiastically, notwithstanding it is sometimes sorely damaged by persecutions, corruptions, and apostasies.

The events succeeding the ordination of Joshua were briefly, the destruction of the Midianites, without the loss of a single man; the slaying of Balaam, Numb. xxxi. 1-54; the granting to Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, their inheritance eastward of Jordan, Numb. xxxii. 1-42; the bounding of the land of Canaan west of Jordan, to be divided between the nine tribes and the half; the appointing by name of a prince from each of these tribes to effect the division, Numb. xxxiv. 1-29; and the preservation, (out of all the inheritance of the twelve tribes, east and west of Jordan,) of forty-eight cities with their suburbs, including the cities of refuge, for the priests and Levites, Numb. xxxv. 1-34.

The work of Moses was at an end. Nothing remained for him to do but to assemble the people, to deliver his last words, and his last prophecies, to bestow his blessing, and then die and enter into rest. Therefore in the fortieth year, and in the eleventh month, upon the first day of the month, he assembled all Israel, and spake unto them "according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them," introducing his farewell discourse with a brief and affecting review of their history from the day they departed from Sinai, until that hour when they stood in view of the promised and long-sought land, Deut. i.-iii. He repeated the law of God which he had already delivered, interspersed with explanations and exhortations, promises and threatenings, Deut. iv.-xxvi., and commanded that the law should be written on plastered stones when they entered Canaan, in mount Ebal; that the tribes be divided into two companies and set over against each other, the one

company on mount Gerézim, the other on mount Ebal: from the first, the Levites to speak with a loud voice the blessings: and from the second, the curses of the law, to which all the people should say, Amen, Deut. xxvii.—xxviii. He caused the people to renew their covenant with the Lord (ch. xxix—xxx.), alluded to his advanced age and approaching end, and encouraged them to go over and take possession of the land in the strength of the Lord. Calling Joshua, he charged him again, in the sight of all Israel, to be strong and of good courage, and lead the people into their promised inheritance. In conclusion, he formally delivered the law, written in full, to the priests and elders of Israel, to be kept in the tabernacle, with the command that it be read every seventh year at the feast of tabernacles, to all the people—men, women, children, and strangers—that they might learn and fear the Lord and do all the words of the law, Deut xxx.—xxxii.

The Lord warned Moses, “Behold the days approach that thou must die: call Joshua and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge.” Moses did so, and the Lord appeared in the tabernacle; the pillar of cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord Himself now gave Joshua, Moses’ successor, a charge, “Be strong and of a good courage: for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swore unto them: and I will be with thee.” The Lord also opened to Moses the future backslidings and rebellions of the people, and the judgments He would visit upon them. He put a song into his mouth which he should write down, append to, and have laid up with the law in the ark of the covenant, and also deliver himself to the assembled people, that it might be a warning unto and a witness against them in time to come. On the day Moses delivered the song, (of unsurpassed power and beauty,) the Lord gave him his last command, “Get thee up into mount Nebo, one of the mountains of Abarim, and behold the land of Canaan, and die in the mount and be gathered unto thy people!” Before a final separation from his beloved Israel, he gave them his prophetic blessing, a blessing upon every tribe, except that of Simeon, which, for some unknown reason,

was either never delivered, or, if delivered, never recorded. In the sealing of the tribes in Revelation, vii. 1-8, Dan is omitted. Moses ends his blessing in this exalted strain: "There is none like the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say, Destroy them. Israel! thou shalt dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine: also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel! who is like unto thee, O people! saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency: and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee: and thou shalt tread upon their high places," Dent. xxxiii. 1-29. Moses was now ready to be offered; the time of his departure was at hand. He had fought "a good fight; he had finished his course; he had kept the faith." The crown of righteousness and the day of rest were before him. "And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the South, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord: and He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. So the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face: in all the signs and wonders which

the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land : and in all that mighty hand and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel," Deut. xxxiv. 1-12.

A notice of the prophecies of Moses, the typical nature of the bondage and delivery, and the state of religion during the administration of Moses, will close this portion of the Church's history.

Moses' prophecies of Christ are particular, and of the Church general.

Particular Prophecies of Christ.—Of Him Moses continually wrote in prophetic types—in the paschal lamb, the various sacrifices, the tabernacle, the priesthood, the manna, the rock, and the brazen serpent. The children of Israel, terrified by the voice of God from Sinai, and the displays of His majesty, prayed that He would not again speak to them face to face, but only through a mediator. The Lord answered Moses, "They have well spoken that which they have spoken," which, in connection with what follows, we understand thus : "They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will speak to them only through a mediator and prophet ; through thee now, with whom I speak 'mouth to mouth :' my 'similitude' hast thou beheld, Numb. xii. 7-9, and thou art 'faithful in all my house.'" After thee, "I will raise them up a prophet among their brethren like unto thee ; and I will put my words in His mouth, and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him : and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which He shall speak in my name, I will require it of him," Exod. xx. 19 ; Deut. xviii. 15-19 ; Acts iii. 22-23 ; vii. 37. Parallels are drawn between Moses and Christ—the type and the antitype—in many minute particulars in their characters, history, office, and labors ; but the special similarity is, that our Lord was to be, like Moses, a mediator between God and His people—their lawgiver and judge—Deut. v. 5 ; "not as a servant," as Moses was, but infinitely higher—"a son in his own house," Heb. iii. 1-6. In the fulness of time, God raised Him up from among his brethren of the seed of Abraham, Heb. ii. 16, and He came

from the bosom of the Father in majesty, in supreme power and authority, Heb. i. 1-2; iii. 1-7; Col. i. 18; the great teacher, John iii. 2; the one Mediator, 1 Tim. ii. 5, and Head and Ruler of His people Israel, Luke i. 31-33. He spake as one having authority, Matt. vii. 29; He declared and did the will of God, as He received commandment, John v. 17-47, fulfilling all that went before in Moses, Matt. v. 17-18; Luke xxiv. 44-45, performing that which was lacking, Heb. vii. 19; ix., x., and setting in order all things pertaining to His Church until the end of all things, John xiv. 16-17, 26; Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Acts i. 1-8; 1 Cor. xiii. 3-31. The voice of the Lord to His Church is, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him," Matt. xvii. 5; "this is that prophet which was to come into the world like unto Moses," John vii. 40; vi. 14. If Moses was to be obeyed at the peril of divine displeasure, much more He who was greater than Moses, Heb. ii. 1-4; x. 28-31; xii. 24-26; Ps. ii. 10-12. This is the God-man, the Mediator, the Chief Shepherd, whose voice the sheep hear, and who is mercifully and faithfully leading His flock through the wilderness of this world to the rest of Canaan above, Acts iii. 19-23; vii. 37, 52; John x. 27-30.

General Prophecies of the Church.—They are found chiefly in Levit. xxvi.; Deut. xxvii.-xxxii. Moses briefly predicts the establishment of a kingly government over the people, Deut. xvii. 14-20; comp. 1 Sam. viii.-xii.; their entrance into and possession of the promised land, Deut. xxvii.; their declensions after his death, and the various fortunes of different tribes, Deut. xxxi. 24-30; xxxiii. 1-29; the captivities under the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Romans, and restoration upon repentance, Levit. xxvi. 40-45; Deut. xxx. 1-8; the fearful siege and overthrow of Jerusalem and final desolation of the civic state; and the sale and dispersion of the miserable captives, Deut. xxviii. 32-68; Levit. xxvi. 23-39;—the great prophecies, like those of Jacob and Balaam, reaching unto and beyond the coming of our Lord. The succeeding prophets saw many of these predictions fulfilled, and in their own names repeated and enlarged those that remained to be fulfilled. Jacob,

Balaam, and Moses, drew the outlines ; the succeeding prophets filled up the picture of the history of the Church of God.

The government of God over His Church is a great deep. Why did He remove the Church into Egypt, subject it there to cruel bondage, deliver it in the wonderful manner, and by the instruments He did, cause it to wander in the waste howling wilderness for forty years, and, finally, through afflictions and wars, to enter in and possess the promised rest? The Apostle Paul answers: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples," (literally, "types,") "and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come," 1 Cor. x. 1-2. What is the bondage under a cruel and oppressive king but a type of the spiritual bondage of the Lord's people under the world, the flesh, and the devil? What are the flesh-pots of Egypt, and the various pleasures which the Israelites enjoyed in their bondage, and often remembered in the desert, but types of the pleasures of sin, to which God's people were once addicted, by which they are, in their partially sanctified state, often tempted, and after which they would go, especially in seasons of trials and afflictions, when their faith is weak and wavering? What the deliverance from hopeless bondage, by the grace and power of God, through a Redeemer raised up for the special purpose, but the type of the salvation of God's lost but elect ones, through the riches of His grace and power in Christ Jesus? What the march and sojourn in the terrible wilderness, with its trials, and what the unbelief, the murmurings, the rebellions of the people—and what the mercies, the long-sufferings, the judgments, and chastisements of God, whereby they were tried, reprov'd, corrected, purified, and prepared for the promised land, but the types of the lives of the saints in this unfriendly world—never designed for their rest—and of the various dealings of a faithful and covenant-keeping God towards them, in order to prove, humble, and prepare them for the better country above? What the tabernacle in the wilderness, its officers and ordinances, its perpetual service and constantly preached word,—and what the perpetual glory within the veil, and the ever-present and guiding pillar of cloud and fire, but types of the

worship and word of God, of His officers and ordinances being made sure unto and always to be found among His people, and of His perpetual presence in and headship over Zion, which no power can ever withstand? What the enemies who resisted their progress, harassed their march, and corrupted them by their blandishments, idolatries, and vices, but types of the men of the world, who in various ways oppose and impede the progress of the people of God towards their promised rest? What the overthrow and destruction of these enemies, but the type of the final ruin by the Lord of those who will not have Him to reign over them? And, finally, what is the passage of Jordan and the entrance into and possession, after many wars, of the earthly Canaan, but the type of the final triumph of the Church—her warfare being accomplished—and of her entrance into heaven itself?

The history thus ordained and recorded, becomes the storehouse of instruction and sanctification to the Church in all ages to come.

What was the spiritual state of the Church during the government of Moses, that is, from his going down into Egypt until his death?

The idolatries and sins of God's people in Egypt drew on them a severe and protracted bondage, which, by His grace, resulted in their repentance, preparing them for the reception of Moses, whom forty years previously they had scornfully rejected, 1 Sam. xii. 6-8; Exod. iv. 28-31. Although, shortly after his arrival they were somewhat disaffected, because of the increased oppressions of Pharaoh, Exod. v. 20-21, in the mass they adhered to Moses; "by faith, kept the passover," and forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, though they were in a defenceless condition, without arms, unused to war, encumbered with wives, children, baggage, flocks, and herds, and with no supplies for their journey commensurate with their wants. Fearing Pharaoh, they trembled in unbelief at the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. 11-12; Ps. cvi. 6-7; nevertheless at God's command they went forward, and "by faith passed through the sea, as on dry land, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," 1 Cor. x.

1-2; Heb. xi. 29. Pharaoh and his hosts sank like lead in the mighty waters, "and Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord and believed the Lord and His servant Moses," Exod. xiv. 22-23.

Notwithstanding the wondrous deliverance of the Israelites from bondage; the miraculous provisions for their journey through the wilderness; the presence of God in the pillar of cloud and of fire; His awful appearance and delivery of the law at Sinai; the establishment of His tabernacle, in which His glory dwelt; His service, and all God's long-suffering and tender mercy; the generation who came out of Egypt walked not in the ways of the Lord, Ps. cv.-cvi. They frequently murmured and openly rebelled, seeking to stone Moses and wishing to return to Egypt. They practiced idolatry, and fell into great transgressions, tempting God and vexing His Holy Spirit, so that for forty years long was He grieved with that generation, Ps. xcv. 7-11; Heb. iii. 15-19; Isa. lxiii. 7-14. In the second year after their exodus, He swore in His wrath that the generation over twenty years, that came out of Egypt, should not enter into the promised land; and the carcasses of every one fell by judgments in the wilderness, save Joshua and Caleb! Numb. xiv. 1-45.

While there were eminent examples of ardent piety and devotion to God in the persons of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, Joshua, Caleb, and Phinehas the priest, and in the tribe of Levi, the mass of the people enjoyed but occasional and very partial revivals of religion, living in great deadness and backsliding, formality, and unbelief. The Lord Himself termed them an "evil generation," Deut. i. 34-36. It may be wrong however to conclude that all who died in the wilderness under the curse of exclusion from Canaan, died under a curse of exclusion from heaven. They all had space for repentance allowed them, shorter in the case of some and longer in that of others, for the curse was protracted for some thirty-eight years. While the Lord delayed His judgment, they had the means of grace, and were warned, exhorted, and chastened. We may hope therefore that the slow execution of the judg-

ment was a provision of mercy, which ultimately proved the salvation of some, if not of many. It is sometimes the case that when God does most for His Church, the Church does not render the fullest returns, Isa. v. 1-4; Luke xiii. 34-35; Matt. xi. 21-24.

Our history has advanced 2552 years, reckoned in the following manner: the book of Genesis, commencing with the creation and ending with the death of Joseph, 2369 years; the book of Exodus, from the death of Joseph to the erection of the tabernacle 145 years (Exod. xl. 1-17); the book of Leviticus, one month (Levit. i. 1; Numb. i. 1); the book of Numbers, 38 years (Numb. i. 1; Deut. i. 3), and the book of Deuteronomy, two months (Deut. xxxiv. 5)—the aggregate, 2552 years, coming down to the year 1452 before Christ.

CHAPTER XXV.

JOSHUA LEADS THE CHURCH ACROSS JORDAN INTO THE PROMISED LAND.—
 CELEBRATION OF THE PASSOVER.—THE CLOUD AND MANNA DISAPPEAR.
 —CIRCUMCISION OF THE GENERATION BORN IN THE WILDERNESS.—
 SUBJUGATION OF THE LAND.—RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT AT EBAL
 AND GEREZIM.—THE TABERNACLE SET UP AT SHILOH; ITS HISTORY.—
 THE LAND ALL FINALLY DIVIDED.—ARMY FROM EAST OF JORDAN
 RETURNS HOME.—JOSHUA'S LAST ACTS, AND DEATH.—JOSEPH'S BONES.
 —THE GIBEONITES.—PIETY OF JOSHUA'S GENERATION.—CHURCH PER-
 MANENTLY SETTLED TILL THE COMING OF CHRIST.—NO SUCCESSOR TO
 JOSHUA.—THE TRIBES FAIL TO DRIVE OUT THE HEATHEN.—DECLEN-
 SION.—JUDGMENTS.—THE JUDGES.—ESTABLISHMENT OF KINGLY POWER.
 —RUTH.—STATE OF RELIGION.—CHANGE IN SUCCESSION OF THE HIGH
 PRIESTHOOD.—CAPTIVITY OF THE ARK; ITS HISTORY.

THE thirty days of mourning for Moses being ended, at God's command Joshua prepared to lead the people over Jordan; but first sent two spies "to view the land, even Jericho." By faith the harlot Rahab received, preserved, and dismissed them with peace, and they returned to Joshua, saying, "The Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land, for all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us," Heb. xi. 31; Josh. i.-ii.

It was the month of April, and the Jordan was swollen to its outer bank by the melted snows from Lebanon and Hermon. Joshua announced that as the Lord God had dried up the waters of the Red Sea, so would he dry up the waters of Jordan until the people should be gone over. Hereby would they know that the living God was among them, and would drive out the nations before them, "that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty:

and that ye might fear the Lord your God forever." It was a day of wonders ; for "when the feet of the priests that bore the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, "Jordan was driven back," Ps. cxiv. 3-5 ; the waters which came down from above "stood and rose up upon an heap;" those that came down toward the sea of the plain, the salt sea, "failed and were cut off;" they flowed away, leaving the passage free, and the multitudes, in their divisions and tribes, with their flocks, herds, and furniture, "hasted and passed over." Twelve stones were set up in the midst of Jordan, where the priests' feet stood ; and twelve were taken out of the river and set up in Gilgal, in commemoration of the passage. The Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel ; and the heart of the kings and people on the west side of Jordan melted, "neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel," Josh. iii.-iv.

The passage was effected "on the tenth day of the first month," of the forty-first year from their leaving Egypt, Josh. iv. 19. The first act of Joshua was to observe the passover ; for that very night, Josh. iv 19 ; v. 10, by the law of the passover, every man according to his house took a lamb, Exod. xii. 1-20, and it was kept up until the fourteenth day at even, then slain ; and, for seven days, until the twenty-first, no leaven was found in the houses of the Israelites. Their circumstances added to the solemnity and interest of the feast. Egypt was no more ; the wilderness was passed ; the Jordan had fled before them ; they had entered the promised land ! It was an earnest of final redemption by the sprinkling of the true Lamb of the Passover, and of entrance into the better country, 1 Cor. v. 7-8. On the morning after the passover was killed and eaten, the old corn of the land was eaten—unleavened cakes and parched corn—and also that of the new harvest. The manna, which had followed them across the Jordan and fallen four days in the promised land, being no longer needed, and having now fallen for the space of forty years, ceased forever. God works for His people abundantly and perfectly, but not superfluously. No mention is made of the pillar of cloud and of fire at the passage of the Jordan, and our suppo-

sition is, that, leading the people to their last encampment in the plains of Moab, it departed, being no longer necessary, perhaps about or at the death of Moses, Josh. iii 1-17; v. 10-12.

The circumcision of the males born in the wilderness followed the celebration of the passover. Every male that came out of Egypt, from eight days old and upward, was circumcised. Those under twenty years did not die in the wilderness under the curse of exclusion for rebellion, but the men of war only, that is, those from twenty years and upward. But all born in the wilderness were not circumcised for two reasons: first, because the children of Israel "walked"—were "on the move"—in the wilderness; second, as a mark of God's displeasure against the evil generation of their fathers. The rite was deferred, not abrogated. All born in the wilderness were children of the covenant and entitled to the sign and seal. The number was very great, "six hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and thirty, over twenty years and upward," exclusive of all under twenty, to which were added twenty-three thousand males of the tribe of Levi, from a month old and upward, Numb. xxvi. 1-65. "This day," said the Lord to Joshua, "have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you"—the reproach of servitude and of judgment, of the sins and idolatries they contracted there. They were a redeemed people and consecrated anew, Josh. v. 1-9.

Joshua entered upon the subjugation of the land, and laid siege to Jericho. The captain of the Lord's host—the Angel of the covenant—appeared to him and gave him the method of the siege and assault. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down," and "by faith the harlot Rahab perished not in the overthrow with them that believed not," Heb. xi. 30-31.

In the same spirit of faith, after the detection and punishment of the son of Achan, Joshua destroyed Ai, and precipitately made a league with the Gibeonites. In a pitched battle he slew five kings, (who had confederated against Gibeon,) overran their territories, and exterminated the inhabitants, reserving only the lawful spoil.

At the battle of Gibeon, "God fought for Israel," casting

down great hailstones from heaven upon the enemy; and, in the midst of the terrible slaughter, the mighty warrior "commanded the sun and the moon to stand still." "The Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man," "and the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies," Hab. iii. 11-15. In this campaign, he subdued a considerable portion of the south of the promised land, across to Philistia, "and utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded," and then returned with his victorious army to his headquarters at Gilgal, Josh. v. 13-15; vi.-x.

A second confederation of kings drew into the field a multitude as the sand of the seashore, which Joshua defeated at the waters of Merom, and, invading their respective territories, made long war until he effectually defeated them; "for it was of the Lord to harden their hearts that they should come out against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly."

Yet many Canaanites fled—some to Greece, and others to different parts of Asia and Africa. Joshua cut off the Anakims, and broke the power of the inhabitants of the land, the Lord aiding by sending the hornet before him, Exod. xxiii. 28-30; Deut. vii. 20; Josh. xxiv. 12. No force remained which the children of Israel, relying upon God, might not subdue. Moses destroyed two kings east of Jordan; two kings the Lord drove out with hornets while Joshua lived; thirty-two on the west of Jordan Joshua destroyed, "and the land rested from war, Josh. x.-xii.

At the conclusion of these wars (as we interpret the sacred history), the Israelites virtually possessed and might traverse the land without fear. Joshua gathered all Israel in Shechem, at mount Ebal, and renewed their covenant with God, which Moses during his life had twice commanded to be done, Deut. xi. 29-30; xxvii. 1-26. The ancient town of Shechem was situated in the narrow and beautiful valley between mount Ebal and mount Gerezim, forty miles north northwest from Jericho, on the plains of which Joshua had at first encamped all Israel. Joshua, following the order of Moses, set up great stones, and plastered them with plaster, and builded an altar

unto the Lord in mount Ebal. He offered thereon burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and the people rejoiced before the Lord. Then he wrote on the plastered stones a copy of the law of Moses, and caused six tribes, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin, to stand over against mount Gerezim to bless; and six tribes, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulon, Dan, and Naphtali, over against mount Ebal, to curse the people. The law being read in their hearing, the Levites pronounced the blessings on the side of the tribes to bless, and the curses on the side of the tribes to curse, to which the people answered "Amen" to the blessing after the blessing, and "Amen" to the curse after the curse, Deut. xi. 29-30; xxvii. 1-26; Josh. viii. 31-35. Here the covenant between God and His people was solemnly reaffirmed, upon His putting them in possession of the land. Here the Church renewed her vows and her consecration, for "the Lord had brought His vine out of Egypt, and cast out the heathen and planted it, and prepared room before it, that He might cause it to take deep root and fill the land," Ps. lxxx. 1-19.

While the Israelites lay encamped upon the plains of Moab, the Lord described to Moses the boundaries of the land west of the river, and commanded it to be divided between the nine tribes and a half. He appointed by name Eleazer the priest, and Joshua, the son of Nun, and ten princes (one for every tribe and one for the half tribe), to whom the division was committed when Joshua should establish them in possession of the land, Numb. xxxiv. 1-29. In the sixth year after crossing Jordan, Joshua proceeded so far as to assign lots to Judah, Ephraim, and the half tribe of Manasseh, Josh. xiv. 6-14; xv.-xvii; he then suspended the business, and assembled the whole congregation to set up the tabernacle permanently, Josh. xviii. 1. The land had rest, and it was time that it should have. A central place was required, that it might be as convenient to all the tribes as possible. Shiloh was selected, situated on the east side of the road leading north from Jerusalem to Shechem, fifteen miles distant from the former and ten or twelve from the latter city, within the limits of the tribe of Ephraim and near the borders of Ben-

jamin, Judges xxi. 19. The tabernacle was set up with appropriate acts of worship, and Shiloh became the sacred city of the land—the dwelling-place of Jehovah. While it stood, it was in the eyes of the saints of the Lord like Jerusalem in after-times, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, and dear to the Lord, for He designated it, “My place”—“Shiloh, where I set my name at the first,” Jer. vii. 12; Ps. lxxxiv. 1–12; cxxii. 1–9; xlviii. 1–14; Exod. xxiii. 14–17; Josh. xviii. 31; xxii. 21–29; 1 Sam. i. 1–28; ii. 11–14; iv. 3–5. The tabernacle continued undisturbed in Shiloh throughout the reign of all the judges, down to Eli; at which time the ark of the covenant was removed to the army of Israel, and, taken captive by the Philistines, was never returned to it, 1 Saml. iv. 1–18. This captivity of the ark was a mark of God’s displeasure against Israel, which He had intimated beforehand to Eli, 1 Saml. ii. 27–36, and is beautifully referred to in Ps. lxxviii. 55–62. “He cast out the heathen also before them and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents. Yet they tempted and provoked the Most High God, and kept not His testimonies, but turned back and dealt unfaithfully, like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow. For they provoked Him to anger with their high places, and moved Him to jealousy with their graven images. When God heard this He was wroth and greatly abhorred Israel, so that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men, and delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy’s hand.” He made the tabernacle of Shiloh emptiness, and at last the city itself a desolation!

The absence of the ark however from the tabernacle, did not suspend the regular worship of the Church in Shiloh, nor in the different cities to which the tabernacle was subsequently carried. The worship clave to the tabernacle until it was superseded by the temple; for it was at the tabernacle that the high-priest and officiating priests resided, and ministered in the Holy of Holies, in the holy places and in the courts at the altars. Hither repaired the people for instruction and sacrificial worship, and for the celebration of the solemn feasts.

It was at the tabernacle that the high-priest inquired of the Lord for the people.

After the removal of the ark, the tabernacle continued at Shiloh until the reign of Saul, when it was found pitched at Nob, a city of priests. Here Abimelech ministered, and gave David of the "shew-bread," which always stood on the table in the holy place. There also was the sword of Goliath, "wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod," 1 Saml. xxi. 1-9; xxii. 9-15. Saul cruelly massacred the men, women, and children of Nob, not sparing oxen, asses, and sheep! In the reign of David, the tabernacle is found in Gibeon, the ancient city of the Gibeonites, and a Levitical city, lying in the tribe of Benjamin, three or four miles from Kirjath-jearim, and some five miles northwest of Jerusalem, Josh. ix. 17; x. 2; xviii. 25; xxi. 17; for, on the same occasion that David appointed a service and priests before the ark, he also appointed "Zadok and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the Lord in the high place that was at Gibeon, to offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually, morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the Lord which He commanded Israel." This was the identical tabernacle made by Moses in the wilderness, but it had been no doubt frequently repaired, 1 Chron. xvi. 39-43; 2 Chron. i. 1-14. When David saw the angel of judgment with a drawn sword in his hand, standing over Jerusalem, he humbled himself, and received mercy, and offered sacrifices in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And why there? Because, "the tabernacle of the Lord which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon. But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for he was afraid, because of the sword of the angel of the Lord," 1 Chron. xxi. 26-30. To the tabernacle in Gibeon Solomon repaired, and inquired before the Lord; and there the Lord appeared to him, 1 Kings iii. 1-15; 2 Chron. i. 1-13. At what particular time, and by whose order the tabernacle was removed from Shiloh to Nob, and from Nob to Gibeon, is not recorded. Upon the completion of Solomon's temple, the ark was removed from its tent in Jerusalem into the temple—

“the tabernacle of the congregation” (in Gibeon)—“and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and Levites bring up,” 1 Kings viii. 1-4. The whole were reverently disposed of in the temple, and it became the house, and Jerusalem the place, for the worship of God by sacrifice, until the Saviour came. The ark abode in the tabernacle of Moses in Shiloh, from B. C. 1444 to 1116, that is, 328 years. During this long period Shiloh was the dwelling-place of God in Israel, and how long after is not known; but from the time the ark was taken away, the Lord began, for the sins of the people, to bring desolation upon Shiloh. From the setting up of the tabernacle at Sinai, B. C. 1490, it continued the place of worship for the Church until B. C., 1003, when it was finally taken down to give way to the temple—a period of 487 years.

After the rearing of the tabernacle in Shiloh, a delay of some six years occurred in dividing the land among the remaining seven tribes, and Joshua aroused the Israelites to the neglected duty. “How long are ye slack to go to possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?” Three men were appointed “to go through the land and describe it according to the inheritance of them.” “And the men went and passed through the land and described it by cities, into seven parts in a book, and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh. And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions”—to Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulon, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan, Gen. xlix.; Deut. xxxiii.

As a final disposition of the possession of the land, Joshua, according to the word of the Lord, received the inheritance he asked, the city of Timnath-serah in mount Ephraim, and he built the city and dwelt there. The cities of refuge,—three on the east and three on the west of Jordan,—were appointed, and forty-two more out of the twelve tribes, making forty-eight for the priests and Levites. So they made an end of dividing the land,” Josh. xviii.-xx. Considering the many changes and desolations which have passed over Palestine, it is impossible

at this distance of time, to mark out any reliable boundaries of the lots of the twelve tribes. Our geographies and maps are modern affairs, and are approximations only.

So "the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which He swore to give unto their fathers: and they possessed it and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that He swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them: the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass," Josh. xx.-xxi.

The army of the two tribes and the half tribe, settled east of Jordan, (whom Moses had commanded to accompany the remaining tribes and continue with them until they also should obtain their inheritance,) Joshua now dismissed, commending them for their constancy and fidelity, and charging them to cleave unto the Lord with all their heart. Blessing them, he commanded them to return to their families laden with their share of the spoil of their enemies. "Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver and with gold, and with brass and with iron, and with very much raiment; divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren," *i. e.*, their own tribes.

The pious and patriotic warriors erected a large altar, after the fashion of the altar of sacrifice, before the tabernacle, on the borders of Jordan, where the Israelites had crossed. This altar was for a witness and lasting evidence of the union of the tribes, on both sides of the river, as one people and congregation of the Lord. The western tribes interpreted the act as a casting off of God, and of their alliance with them, and prepared for war, but prudently sent Phinehas the priest, and ten princes, to inquire into the matter, and when they returned with the happy explanation, "the thing pleased the children of Israel, and they blessed God."

Joshua was old and well stricken in years, and prepared for his departure. He assembled the elders, the heads, the judges and officers of the people, and charged them to complete faithfully the work he had in great part successfully ac-

complished ; to execute the judgment of God upon the guilty inhabitants of the land ; and to form no civil, social, or religious connections whatever with them, upon pain of the displeasure of God, and their own ruin and expulsion from the land. In a second assembly of the tribes at Shechem, (which assembly closed its meeting in Shiloh, before "the sanctuary of the Lord,") Joshua rehearsed the mercies and wonders of God to His people, from the call of Abraham to that hour, and exhorted them to put away all strange gods, and renew their covenant with their Jehovah, closing with the impressive words, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve ; but, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The people responded, "We also will serve the Lord, for He is our God. The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey."

So Joshua made a covenant that day with the people, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem, and consummated the whole before the Lord in Shiloh. "Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone and set it up there under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold this stone shall be a witness unto us : for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which He spake unto us : it shall therefore be a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. And Joshua let the people depart every man unto his inheritance."

Such was Joshua's graceful close of a long life of service in the Church of God. He was one among the most honored and most perfect of "the elders," and "died (B. C. 1443) an hundred and ten years old. He was buried in Timnath-serah, which is in Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash," Josh. vii. 7-8 ; ix. 14-15.

"And the bones of Joseph which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, and which Jacob gave to his son Joseph," John iv. 5 ; Gen. xxxiii. 19 ; xlviii. 22. The like protracted and reverent care had never been taken before, nor has it been taken since, of the body of any saint. Its removal and pres-

ervation were of faith: "By faith Joseph when he died made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment" (under "an oath of the children of Israel," Gen. 1. 25) "concerning his bones," Heb. xi. 22. By faith they took their departure, and bore along his body in all their wanderings, a present witness of the faithfulness of God, and an assurance of their future possession of the promised land. Though dead he yet spoke to them out of his coffin.

About eighteen years, it is supposed, after the death of Joshua, Eleazar died, Numb. xx. 23-29. He had succeeded his father Aaron in the high-priesthood, and was associated in the administration of affairs with his uncle Moses in the last year of his life, as well as with Joshua until his death, Josh. xxiii.-xxiv.

Joshua made an addition to the service of the sanctuary, in aid of the priests and Levites, by depriving the Gibeonites of the rights and privileges of citizenship, and condemning them to all the menial offices; they were to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, in the place which He should choose," Josh. ix. 1-27; and their condition was one of privilege as well as of usefulness. The last mention of them is in the reign of David, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. For the cruelty of Saul in putting many of them to death, the Lord sent three years' famine on the land, and David surrendered seven of Saul's sons to death as an expiation of the crime. It is probable that in the later history of the Church they were included under the title of Nethinims—persons given up to the service of the Lord. Joshua gave these strangers to the service of the sanctuary, and David and other princes followed his example in giving other strangers also, Ezra viii. 17, 20. Solomon made strangers hewers of wood and bearers of burdens, 2 Chron. ii. 17-18. The Nethinims are perhaps always mentioned in connection with the priests and Levites, 1 Chron. ix. 2. A considerable number returned after the captivity with Ezra and Nehemiah, and contentedly resumed their station and duties, which argues in favor of their conversion to true religion, Ezra ii. 36, 40, 43, 58; vii. 7, 24; Neh. xi. 3, 20-21; x. 28; iii. 26;

vii. 60, 73. At what time this class of servants ceased to be employed about the temple, is not known.

The piety of the generation born in the wilderness contemporary with Joshua and who outlived him, was far in advance of that which characterized those who came out of Egypt, according to the testimony of the Holy Spirit. "The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that He did for Israel." It was not until all that generation had been gathered unto their fathers that spiritual declension appeared, Josh. xxiv. 31; Judges ii. 6-10. They manifested their piety in obedience to Joshua; in a renewed consecration of themselves in circumcision at Gilgal; in their courage and faithfulness through the dreadful war of judgment upon the Canaanites; in their united and hearty renewal of their covenant with the Lord, first at Ebal, and last at Shechem, and Shiloh; in the fidelity of the army from the tribes east of Jordan; in the peace and harmony which prevailed among all classes of the people; in their solemn establishment of the tabernacle and worship of God in Shiloh; in their zeal in the matter of the altar erected by the retiring army of their brethren, and in their freedom from idolatry and alliances with the heathen. The Lord therefore regarded them with favor, and the Psalmist terms them: "the vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted, and the branch which Thou madest strong for Thyself," Ps. lxxx. 15. "I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed," Jer. ii. 21. There were among them eminent saints, Joshua, Caleb, Eleazer, Rahab, and the elders, leaders and examples in the Church; yet we find on one occasion an Achan in the camp. With all the good there was some admixture of evil. At no previous time was the state of religion better in the Church than the present; and to these true Israelites the rest which Joshua gave them, was an earnest of that rest which remaineth for the people of God, to which the true Joshua—Jesus Himself—would lead them, Heb. iv. 1-9.

The visible Church is now permanently settled, in fulfilment of the purpose of God, in the land of Canaan, until Christ

should come. The settlement was temporarily interrupted by the captivity, but the Lord preserved the land free of inhabitants, and restored it to His Church again. Here for long ages, till Christ should come, the Church stood the light of the world, which lay in the gross darkness of heathenism and idolatry. The numbers of God's true worshippers outside the territories of the Church were few, and by this time were perhaps nearly extinct. The position of the Church was central. She held communication with three quarters of the globe—Africa on the south, Europe on the west, and Asia on the north and east. Touching her boundaries lay for centuries the most civilized, powerful, and influential nations of each of these continents, and her renown went forth among the heathen for the comeliness which God had given her, Ezek. xvi. 14; Deut. iv. 4-8. Said the Lord, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations;" and again, "Thus saith the Lord. This is Jerusalem, I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her," Ezek. v. 6; "all nations shall flow into it, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," Isa. ii. 1-4; Micah iv. 1-3.

When Joshua dismissed the multitudes at Shechem and Shiloh, "the children of Israel went every man to his inheritance to possess the land." They had served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and continued to serve Him all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua; yet they did not carry out his last commands, to complete the subjugation of the land, and the extermination of the heathen inhabitants; but, spending the remainder of their days in peaceful rest, left that work to be accomplished by their children. Their children, however, acknowledged "not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel." They intermarried and made leagues with the inhabitants of the land, doing evil, forgetting the Lord their God, and serving Baal and Ashtaroath, Judges ii. 13; vi. 7. For which cause the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He sent His angel with a message of condemnation, saying, "Ye have not obeyed my voice. Why have ye done this? Wherefore I will not drive out the inhabitants of the

land from before you, which Joshua left when he died ; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you, that through them I may prove Israel whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it or not," Judg. ii. 1-5, 20-23 ; iii. 1-7. This message produced a temporary effect, but was followed by no true reformation, (ii. 4-5,) for when they finally undertook to drive out the nations and asked the Lord in what order the tribes should go up, He gave them the order but went not with them, as He had done aforetime with their fathers. They were no longer to be led, taught, and enabled to fight by the captain of the Lord's hosts, but they were to learn the art of war as other nations did, and to war as they warred, Judg. iii. 1-2. Tribe after tribe attempted to exterminate the Canaanites from their territories, but not one of them succeeded—not even Judah, although the Lord said, "Judah shall go up" first ; "behold, I have delivered the land into his hand." The tribes contented themselves generally with subduing the heathen and making them tributaries. They did not, and could not drive the idolatrous nations out, because they lacked faith, courage, and will ; and therefore their justly-offended God would not work with them, Deut. vii. 1-26 ; viii. 1-20 ; ix. 1-7, etc. Issachar is the only tribe not mentioned as having gone up to conquer his lot. The supposition is, that he went up, but succeeded no better than the rest, Josh. i. 1-36.

No successor was appointed to rule "king in Jerusalem" after Joshua, Deut. xxxiii. 5 ; for the circumstances of the visible Church were materially altered. Under Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Church, wandering from place to place, needed a head such as they were. Joseph succeeded Jacob in Egypt, and after his death elders from the different tribes governed the people until the day of their redemption by Moses. Settled in their own land, they wander no more, and the divinely ordained government goes into operation. Each tribe has its own elders and officers, and is adequate to its own government. There is the council of seventy—the senate of the nation—having cognizance and authority in affairs of national character and importance ; in which the tribes are repre-

sented, and everything determined according to a written constitution. The government is of the nature of a confederacy of tribes, or states, having this peculiarity, that supreme and absolute power was lodged in the hands of God their King, enthroned among them in Shiloh, and to whom access might be had at all times. There being therefore no necessity for the appointment of a successor to Joshua, none was appointed. The government was not carried out fully, for rulers and people corrupted themselves together. There was neither virtue nor resolution in the people to obey the laws, nor in the rulers to have them executed when broken. "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes," Judg. xvii. 6; xviii. 1; xix. 1; xxvi. 25. We do not understand that literally there was no king in Israel, for the Lord God of Israel was there; but that there was no chief ruler, as Moses, or Joshua, to take notice of offenders and punish them, and to keep the elders and judges to their duty.

That this declension occurred with the generation succeeding that which Joshua governed, is proved from the Scripture itself, Judg. ii. 6-12; and from the fact that instances in evidence occurred while the tribes were warring for their several inheritances, Judg. xviii. 1, and while Phinehas, the successor of Eleazer, was high-priest, Judg. xx. 18, 27-28. The first instance is the idolatry of Micah of Mount Ephraim, (xvii. 1-13,) in connection with the violence and idolatry of a portion of the tribe of Dan, who set up the graven image of Micah in the city of Dan, and had a succession of apostate priests serving before it all the time the house of God was in Shiloh, until the ark was taken by the Philistines, and the whole land shared in captivity with it, Judg. xviii. 1-28. The second instance is the infamously brutal treatment and murder of the Levite's wife, by the men of Gibeah of Benjamin, long after referred to by Hosea, ix. 9. Her poor body abused unto death, cut into twelve pieces, and sent by her husband into the coasts, with the story of her dreadful end, aroused all Israel as one man, though they had departed far from the Lord. The tribe of Benjamin protected their guilty brethren, assuming the respon-

sibility of their crime, and were exterminated, save six hundred, by the other tribes, but at a fearful loss to them of over forty thousand men ! Judg. xx. 21, 25, 31. The sword of judgment was so turned by the hand of the Lord as to reach and humble all Israel. The dark chapter is closed by the destruction of Jabesh-gilead for not uniting with the tribes in the war ; by peace with the six hundred Benjamites ; by the gift to them of four hundred young women for wives ; and by the seizure of two hundred more at one of the feasts in Shiloh for the remaining two hundred men, Judg. xix.—xxii.

There being no repentance and return to the Lord after these events, as He had promised with an oath many years before, so now He proceeded to inflict heavy judgments upon Israel, and few indeed can be heavier than that of “the rod of the wicked resting upon the lot of the righteous,” Ps. cxxv. 3. Now fell the first strokes of the sword of cruel war, and of the captivities of the tribes to the heathen. “The Lord delivered them into the hands of the spoilers that spoiled them, and He sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies,” Judg. ii. 13–15. “Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, and they were greatly distressed,” Levit. xxviii. 15, etc. ; Deut. iv. 25–28 ; xxviii. 15, etc. ; Josh. xxiii. 15–16 ; Judg. ii. 13–15.

In merey the captivities were but partial, embracing sometimes the tribes, or a part of them, on the east, and sometimes a part of the tribes on the west of Jordan. Limited in extent, the captivities were also limited in duration, and the people had long intervals of freedom and peace. We do not read of either the length of the captivities, or of the periods of rest ; but, judging by the record of each, the intervals of rest in the aggregate were double or treble the aggregate of the periods of captivity. Three rests of forty years each, and one of eighty are on record. When any tribe or tribes were invaded, the other tribes did not generally make common cause with their suffering brethren, but allowed them to be subdued. On some occasions, even after the deliverer arose, and called for assistance, there were tribes that did not respond—facts which dem-

onstrated the low state both of piety and patriotism, Judg. v. 14-18, 23; viii 1-3; xii. 1-6.

When the design of these afflictions was secured and the people cried for pardon, the Lord raised up deliverers, who are styled "Judges," not so much of law, as supreme civil and military rulers, vicegerents of the great King, who during their government were of authority throughout all Israel. On one occasion the men of Israel wished to make the office hereditary, namely, in the family of Gideon, but the noble reply of that pious and patriotic prince, was, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you. The Lord shall rule over you," Judg. viii. 22-23. "And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge," Judg. ii. 1-23. The judges were an extraordinary order of rulers, raised up in emergencies, and not contemplated or provided for in the constitution of the state.

They did not always immediately succeed each other. There were fifteen in all, (including Abimelech the usurper,) from Othniel, Caleb's brother, to Samuel, who was both judge and prophet: viz. Othniel, (Judg. iii. 1-11,) Ehud, (iii. 12-20,) Shamgar, (iii. 31,) Deborah, (iv.-v.) Gideon, (vi.-viii.) Abimelech, (ix. 1-57,) Tola, (x. 1-2,) Jair, (x. 3-5,) Jephthah, (x. 6-8; xi. 1-40; xii. 1-7,) Ibzan, (xii. 8-10,) Elon, (xii. 11-12,) Abdon, (xii. 13-15,) Samson, (chaps. xiii. to xvi.,) Eli, (1 Sam. iv. 18,) and Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 1-17; viii. 1-7).

That was the order; and, since the people were afflicted when they declined in piety, and when they cried the judge delivered them, it is supposed that the number of captivities was equal to the number of judges, if we except Abimelech, the usurper, who endeavored to make the judgeship in his tribe hereditary, and, after a brief reign of three years, came to an untimely end, having been a scourge to the people.

Called and qualified by the great King to their office, (with the exception of Abimelech,) the judges were men of excellent character, although in some cases not free from serious blemishes. Gideon made an ephod in commemoration of his great victory, which afterwards proved a snare of idolatry to Israel

and to his own house (Judg. viii. 24-27). Jephthah, whose administration is fixed just three hundred years after Moses, (xi. 26,) offered up his own daughter in sacrifice to God, through a mistaken impression that his rash vow was binding; and the noble daughter acquiesced in his decision (xi. 30-40). He was a man of extraordinary resolution and promptitude, and slew of the tribe of Ephraim, for an insurrection against his authority, forty-two thousand men, Judg. xii. 1-6. The last census gave Ephraim, (Numb. xxvi. 37,) but thirty-two thousand five hundred men, and the number in the text is considered too large. Ephraim, however, may have had others confederated with him.

Though there are exceptional passages in the life of Samson, he is associated with Gideon, Barak, Jephthah, and Samuel, as among the distinguished worthies of the Church, Heb. xi. 32.

The last two judges were of the tribe of Levi: Eli, who judged Israel forty years, 1 Sam. iv. 18, and Samuel, who judged Israel all the days of his life, 1 Sam. vii. 1-17; xii. 10-11, the last of the judges and the first of the long line of prophets which ended in Malachi. Repudiating his wicked sons as his associates and successors in his old age, the people demanded of him a king, and the Lord directed him to grant their request. At the second coronation of Saul, in the presence of all Israel, he reviewed his own government, and called upon them to witness against him if he had been guilty of any maladministration whatever. He recounted the divine mercies manifested to them, and their ingratitude in rejecting the Lord as their King, and exhorted them to cleave to the Lord, and obey the king whom He had set over them. Finally he yielded up his office in favor of the king, although he continued to judge Israel to the day of his death.

It was during "the days when the judges ruled," and "there was a famine in the land," that Elimelech and his wife Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion went into the country of Moab to continue there until the Lord should again "visit His people in giving them bread." Nor is it possible to determine either the judge's reign in which the departure

of this interesting family took place, or that in which the widowed mother and daughter-in-law returned. They dwelt in Moab about ten years. The book of Ruth—so beautiful in its composition, and indispensable to the canon of Scripture, and the history of the Church—is occupied with this family. The narrative is a beam of sunlight falling upon the land of Israel, bringing into view its hills and plains, its villages and fields waving with rich harvests, and the teeming population of rich and poor going in and coming out, all busied with the labors of life. We behold their manners and customs, their recognition of God and regard for His laws; and over all, the God of Israel dispensing prosperity and affliction, producing affecting and wondrous changes in the condition of families and individuals, according to the counsel of His own will, carrying forward the affairs of His Church, and giving development and shape to the promises of the coming Messiah.

Why this book should find a place in the Word of God—why the family of Elimelech should be so remembered and honored—is not understood until we reach the closing periods: “So Boaz took Ruth and she was his wife, and the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son. And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the Lord which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him. And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women her neighbors gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi: and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, and Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat Nashon, and Nashon begat Salmon, and Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David,” Ruth iv. 13–22. The book is a continuation of the history of the family of our Lord, and shows the progress of His coming in the long-before-appointed tribe of Judah. Here is the link in His genealogy which con-

nects Him with that tribe. The genealogy looks forward also. Many years before it is directly revealed that He should be of the house of David; here is David enrolled His progenitor! Matt. i. 1-6; Luke iii. 31-33. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." He only who is the author of the covenant of grace, and who sees the end from the beginning, could be the author of this Scripture.

There is a brief and comprehensive account of the state of religion during the period of the judges in the second chapter of Ruth, and the sum of it all is, that the wheel of mercy was kept continually turning in the Church. There were declensions followed by chastisement; chastisement, by repentance; repentance, by forgiveness; and forgiveness by revivals, over and over again. The declensions, however, like the captivities, were not general, but partial, and there were long intervals when the people served the Lord.

Among the eminent saints in public life may be mentioned all the judges, save Abimelech, of whom the most conspicuous were Deborah, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, and Sammel—the last is ranked with Moses, Jer. xv. 1—in private life, Manoah and his wife, Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, Elkanah, and Hannah. The Angel of the covenant, as the Preserver and Redeemer of Israel, appeared to Gideon, (vi. 11,) and to Manoah and his wife, (xiii. 1-21,) as He had often done before to patriarchs, to Moses, and Joshua.

While the judges govern, a change occurs in the succession of the high-priesthood. It has been regular from Aaron, through the line of his elder son Eleazer, (after the death of Nadab and Abihu,) down to Uzzi, as follows: Aaron, Eleazer, Phinchas, Abiezer, or Abishua, Bukki, and Uzzi. After Uzzi it is broken, and the high-priesthood is transferred from the house of Eleazer, Aaron's elder son, to the house of Ithamar, his younger son—for what reason we are left to conjecture. Eli, of the house of Ithamar, succeeds Uzzi. His sons, who ministered in the priest's office under him in Shiloh, "were sons of Belial"—infamously and grossly immoral men. "They knew not the Lord." They were sacrilegious, profane, and impious. "The sin of the young men was very great before

the Lord." "Eli heard all that his sons did unto all Israel." He contented himself with reproofs, but restrained them not, leaving them to practise their iniquity in the courts of the Lord. Therefore the Lord sent a message to him by "a man of God,"—which was also repeated to him by Samuel, 1 Sam. i., iii.,—namely, that he should see great calamities in the habitation of God; that "there should not be an old man in his house forever;" that the power of his posterity should be broken; the living should be a source of grief, and die in the flower of their age, being cut off from the altar, and the succession of the high-priesthood transferred again to the house of Eleazer; and that those who remained of his stock should be miserable and servilely dependent. These calamities were ushered in by the captivity of the ark; the death, on account of their sins, of his two sons "in one day," Hophni and Phinehas, by the sword of the Philistines; and the sudden death of the blind old man, ninety and eight years of age: for when he heard the tidings, "he fell from off the seat backwards by the side of the gate: and his neck brake and he died!" This series of sorrows was closed for the time by the affecting death of his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife. "This is the thing which God promised to do in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle."

The succession, however, in the house of Ithamar did not terminate until the reign of Solomon, some eighty years after, when he deposed Abiathar for supporting Adonijah's rebellion, and appointed Zadok of the house of Eleazer in his stead. 1 Ki. ii. 26–27, 35; comp. Numb. xxv. 1–13. The reason for taking away the high-priesthood from Ithamar is given: "Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed" (that is, to Eli,) "that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me forever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me," (the condition of faithfulness on the part of Eli's house not being fulfilled,) "for them that honor me I will honor: and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed," 1 Sam. ii. 30. We may conjecture that, for the same reason, the transfer of the high-priesthood was made in the first instance from Eleazer to Ithamar. The sacred writer, in record-

ing the succession of high-priests in 1 Chron. vi. 1-15, 50-54, takes no notice of the break occasioned by the temporary transfer of the office to the house of Ithamar, but pursues the line of Eleazer throughout.

Defeated in battle by the Philistines, the elders in the camp of Israel, without consultation with Eli, or inquiry of the Lord, sent to Shiloh and fetched from the tabernacle, by the hands of Hophni and Phinehas, the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, "When it cometh among us it may save us out of the hand of our enemies." The God of Israel dwelt in the tabernacle in visible glory, between the cherubims over the mercy-seat that covered the ark which had led Israel many years, and delivered them in sore distresses and in obstinate battles. The backslidden people, from whom God had withdrawn, confided in the mere symbol of His presence, and were defeated, and the ark was taken. After seven months' captivity, the Philistines, compelled by the judgments of God, restored it to Israel; and it was miraculously brought by the milch-kine to Bethshemesh, a city of the priests, situated in Judah, Josh. xv. 10; xxi. 16, about sixteen miles southwest of Jerusalem, 1 Sam. vi. 1-21; 1 Chron. vi. 59. On its arrival, the men of Bethshemesh, moved with vain curiosity, and neglectful of the commands of God that none but the appointed priests should look upon and handle the ark, looked into it; Numb. iv. 15, 20; 1 Chron. xiii. 9-10; and the Lord smote of the people 50,070 men! an unusually large number for an ordinary priestly city, but the Hebrew text may admit of emendation, since the precise reading is unusual, "threescore and ten men, fifty thousand," which, in the Syriac and Arabic versions reads 5,070 men, and in Josephus only 70. The same number was found in two ancient manuscripts collated by Dr. Kennett.

The Bethshemites, filled with dread, sent to the neighboring town of Kirjath-jearim, nine miles northeast, and requested the priests "to come down and fetch it (the ark) to them." The ark remained twenty years in Kirjath-jearim, "in the house of Abinadab on the hill; at the end of which time the people again returned with repentance to the Lord, and were

delivered by Samuel from the power of the Philistines, 1 Sam. vii. 1-17; but neither did Samuel nor the people remove the ark from its resting-place. Saul brought it into his camp at Gibeah, 1 Sam. xiv. 18, by which it would seem that sometimes, at least, he carried it with him in his wars. It is also strongly intimated that it was with the army of David in his war with Ammon, 2 Sam. xi. 11; but whenever removed on such occasions, it was always returned to Kirjath-jearim; it never went back to Shiloh. In the earlier part of his reign, after the ark had been from seventy to seventy-five years in Kirjath-jearim, David attempted to remove it to Jerusalem, the capital of his kingdom, where he had carefully prepared a tabernacle for it. Uzzah being slain for irreverence in the progress, David paused, turned aside, and placed the ark in the house of Obed-edom, where it remained three months; 2 Sam. vi. 1-17; 1 Chron. xiii. 1-14; after which, with greater reverence and solemnity, he removed it to Jerusalem; and then, saith the Scripture, "the ark had rest," 1 Chron. xv. 1-29; vi. 31; xvi. 1. When David fled from Absalom, the priests took up the ark to carry it with him, but he ordered them to return with it into the city, 2 Sam. xv. 24-26. Here it remained in the tabernacle over forty years, when Solomon placed it in the Holy of Holies of the temple which he had built. There was now nothing in it but the two tables of stone, 1 Ki. viii. 1-9; 2 Chron. vi. 41. It was temporarily taken out of the temple by the priests, to prevent, no doubt, its profanation in the degenerate and closing period of the kingdom of Judah. Josiah directed them to put it back into the temple, 2 Chron. xxxv. 1-3, and it continued there from the dedication of the temple, B. C. 1003, to its destruction, B. C. 588, that is, for four hundred and fifteen years. Moses made the ark B. C. 1490, and it perished in Solomon's temple B. C. 588, having been in existence nine hundred and two years! Is not this a miraculous preservation? The second temple had no ark.

"Eleazar the son of Aminadab was sanctified to keep the ark," 1 Sam. vii. 1, in Kirjath-jearim, but whether any religious services were performed before it, is not known. David appointed a regular ministration by certain of the Levites be-

fore it, in his tabernacle in Jerusalem, "to record, to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel." He left there, before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, Asaph and his brethren "to minister before the ark continually as every day's work required," 1 Chron. xvi. 1-6, 37-38. When Solomon had offered sacrifices at Gibeon, where the Lord appeared to him, he returned "to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt-offerings and offered peace-offerings, and made a feast to all his servants," 1 Ki. iii. 1-15. But the worship of the Church was at the tabernacle that Moses pitched.

This brief chapter advances us from the crossing of Jordan to the establishment of kingly power, according to the Apostle Paul, a period of above four hundred and fifty years; and the sacred history of these eventful centuries is comprised in three short books, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and a few pages in the first book of Samuel,—all which may be carefully read in three or four hours! And why is it made so short? The Holy Spirit who inspired the record could have indefinitely enlarged it, and given information on a variety of interesting topics, bringing minutely into view the civil history of Israel, and indeed of the contemporary kingdoms of the world. But such is not the wisdom of God. The history is a history of results, not of detail. It is a condensed spiritual history; and only so much is introduced as is necessary to give the progress of the Church. The same remark holds true of all the remaining historical books of Scripture.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROPHETICAL AND KINGLY OFFICES IN ISRAEL.—
 THREE LINES OF PROPHETS IN THE CHURCH, FROM ENOCH TO MOSES,
 FROM SAMUEL TO MALACHI, FROM THE ADVENT OF CHRIST TO JOHN.—
 SAUL THE FIRST KING.—NO CHANGE OF THE THEOCRACY.—ROYAL
 POWER.—DAVID THE SECOND KING.—EXTENSION OF HIS KINGDOM TO
 THE PROMISED LIMITS.—SOLOMON THE THIRD KING.—SUCCESSION HE-
 REDITARY.—BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.—CESSATION OF MIRACLES IN
 THE CHURCH IN THESE REIGNS ALMOST ENTIRE.—INCREASE OF PRO-
 PHECY AND REVELATION OF CHRIST.—DAVID THE GREAT PROPHET OF
 THE TIMES, AND TYPE OF CHRIST.—SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE CHURCH
 FROM SAMUEL TO THE DEATH OF SOLOMON.—PROGRESS OF OLD TESTA-
 MENT CANON.

Two important events occur in the Church at the close of the period of the Judges: the first, the establishment of the prophetical; and the second, the establishment of the kingly office.

The spirit of prophecy had been bestowed upon various individuals in the Church from the very earliest times, and so closely do they follow each other, that a line of succession may be traced from Enoch to Moses; for it has been the will of God that the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ should never lack the evidence of prophecy to its truth, nor His people the comfort of the promises of the coming Redeemer, and the assurance that He reigns and controls all things, for the benefit of His kingdom and its ultimate triumph.

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of the coming of Christ, and of the judgment of the world, Gen. v. 21-24; Jude vs. 14-15. Noah prophesied of the destruction of the

world by the flood, Gen. vi. 1-22; Heb. xi. 7, and of the future condition of his three sons, Gen. ix. 18-29. Job, of the coming of Christ and of the resurrection, Job. xiv. 10-14; xix. 25-27. Abraham revealed the promises respecting Christ, made to him by the Lord; set in his flesh, and in the flesh of his house, the prophetic sign and seal of His future appearing, and made known the destiny of his sons Ishmael and Isaac, Gen. xii. xv.-xvii., xxii., and the possession of the land of Canaan, after the sojourning and bondage of his seed in a land not theirs, John viii. 56. Isaac, his heir, repeated these promises, Gen. xxvi. 1-6, and predicted the future of the two nations that were to proceed from his sons, Jacob and Esau, Gen. xxv. 21-23; xxvii. 1-40. Jacob, the heir likewise of the same promises, on his death-bed opened the future history of his sons, the twelve Patriarchs, fixed the royal power in Judah, declared Shiloh should be born of his stock, and, in anticipation of the departure of the children of Israel out of the house of bondage, ordered his dead body to be borne away and placed in the sepulchre of his fathers in the promised land, Gen. xlviii-xlix. Joseph predicted his own supremacy over his father's house, the return of the people to Canaan, and the approach of the mercies and judgments of God upon Egypt, Gen. xxxvii., xl., xli, xliv.-l. Moses, that eminent prophet "whom the Lord knew face to face," and appointed "a servant" in Christ's "own house," "for a testimony of these things which should be spoken after," Heb. iii. 4-6, in all he wrote, and all he did, but spake of Christ, John v. 45-47, and portrayed the history of the Church for ages to come, Levit. xxvi.; Deut. xviii., xxviii.-xxxiv.; and Balaam, contemporary with Moses, predicted the glory and future state of the Church, and the appearance of the Lord, Numb. xxii.-xxiv. From the death of Moses, for 450 years (while the judges ruled), to the call of Samuel, there was almost an entire withdrawal of the spirit of prophecy. It spake briefly in Deborah, Judges iv. 4, and in the nameless prophet, sent by the Lord to the children of Israel with a message, Judges vi. 8. This long cessation accounts for the lively interest of the people when it came to be understood that Samuel was called of God not only to be

an inspired preacher, but also an inspired prophet, 1 Saml. iii. 19-21. The child of faith and of prayer, he was dedicated by his pious mother to the service of God before his conception, carried to the tabernacle in Shiloh after he was weaned, "and there ministered unto the Lord before Eli, the priest, girded with a linen ephod." While yet a youth, "the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord; and the Lord was with him and did let none of his words fall to the ground: and all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord," 1 Saml. i.-iii.

This holy and distinguished man stands at the head of that long line of prophets, Acts iii. 24, inspired not only to reveal and enforce the will of God, but also to foretell future events—a line extending some years beyond the return of the Church from the seventy years' captivity in Babylonia. Some of this second line appear on the stage, deliver their messages, and retire without a record of their names; others are chiefly in the courts of kings; others again are chiefly among the people. Some leave no collection of their prophecies in books; others, sixteen in all, have done so, namely, the four greater and the twelve lesser prophets of the Old Testament. Not unfrequently the prophets were contemporary with each other.

The prophetic office was an extraordinary one: essential, and adapted to the times of the existing Church, wherein God was ruling His people immediately, delivering His will as His wisdom saw most fitting, declaring His counsels of mercy, or of judgment, present or to come, as well to the heathen kingdoms, as to His own Israel, unfolding more or less minutely the coming and glory of the Messiah, and adding material to the first volume of inspiration, until He closes it in its perfection by the hand of Malachi. The prophets were called of God, not from any one particular class or order of men, but from any and all, and possessed that one and the self-same spirit, "dividing to every man severally as He will," 1 Cor. xii. 11. They spake with the seal and authority of God; and kings, priests and people were subject unto them, Jer. i.

The signs and seals of a true prophet, to himself and to the

people, were first, inspiration, of which the prophet was made conscious by the Spirit of God, 2 Saml. vii. 1-17; Isa. xxxviii. 1-8. All inspired persons were not necessarily prophets, but all prophets were necessarily inspired persons. Second, the power of working miracles. The prophet that wrought spurious "signs and wonders," should be put to death. Third, that revelations and teachings should be in correspondence with, and in support of all the law and testimony of God, Deut. xiii. 1-5; Isa. viii. 19-20; Acts xx. 27. Fourth, that his predictions should come to pass, Deut. xviii. 9-22. The absence however of one or two of the signs—for example, the possession of power to work miracles, or the immediate fulfilment of predictions—would not necessarily destroy the authority and truth of the prophet who possessed in full measure the other signs; if it were otherwise, then so far as the Scriptures testify, there is no evidence that some of the prophets whose books are in the canon did work miracles. Personal piety was not absolutely necessary in a true prophet. Balaam was a true prophet, but he was no true child of God. Inspiration may exist independent of regeneration; yet, we believe the regular succession in both lines of prophets, the first, from Enoch to Moses, and the second, from Samuel to Malachi, were all pious men.

Their commission ran in the form of Jeremiah's: "Behold," said the Lord unto him, "I have put my words into thy mouth: I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant," Jer. i. 1-19. Their spirit, in the discharge of their office, was that of Micaiah, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me that will I speak," 1 Kings xxii. 14; Numb. xxii. 38; xxiv. 13; Jer. xxxiii. 21-40. The manner in which the Lord communicated His will was varied: by appearing to his servants, by inward revelations, in dreams, visions, voices, and by angels. The Apostle says, "God in divers manners spake by the prophets," Heb. i. 1; and the effects upon the bodies and spirits of the prophets were sometimes remarkable, Gen. xv. 12; Dan. viii. 10-18; x. 1-21; Habak. iii. 16; Rev. i.

12-17; Ezek. i. 28. False prophets at intervals arose in the Church and occasioned great trouble.

Schools for the training of prophets were established, but the date of their rise and end is not precisely known. Of the first company or school mentioned, Samuel was the head "appointed over them," and in all probability it was the first ever known in Israel, 1 Saml. x. 5; xix. 20. Those trained in the schools were termed "sons of the prophets," or simply "prophets of the Lord," and existed in considerable numbers. In the days of Ahab, king of Israel, the good Obadiah hid in two caves one hundred of them from the wrath of Jezebel, 1 Kings xviii. 1-4. Elijah and Elisha were also heads of schools, 2 Kings ii. 15; iv. 38; vi. 1-2. The schools were located in particular places, as in Ramah, 1 Saml. xix. 18-24, Bethel, Jericho, and Gilgal, 2 Kings ii. 1-5; iv. 38; xxii. 14. The sons of the prophets were known by their appearance, 2 Kings ix. 1-10; xx. 35-42. Some were married, 2 Kings iv. 1-7. All were esteemed for their office; and from them, perhaps, the Lord ordinarily called men to special service in the prophetic office; but not so always, for Amos intimates that he was an exception to the general rule, Amos vii. 14-15. "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son: but I was an herdman and gatherer of sycamore fruit." Elisha was an exception also, 1 Kings xix. 15-21. It is certain that the "sons of the prophets" could not all have been called to the prophetic office, in its highest form, as Samuel, Isaiah, and others were; for then the number would have been very great, and some more particular notice of them would have been taken in the Scriptures.

What time they passed in the schools, upon what terms they were admitted, what courses of study they pursued, and in what form they were instructed by the presiding prophets are all matters of conjecture. As they were to be prophets of the Word, the study of the Holy Scriptures must have been the chief study; and as Christ is the great theme of revelation, and the sum of all preaching, His person and work would engage their special attention, as well as all the prophecies which speak of Him, of His coming, and the future glory of the Church.

Into these things, the Apostle Peter says, "the prophets inquired and searched diligently," 1 Pet. i. 10-11; Acts x. 43; iii. 18-24.

The order of prophets, revived in Samuel, continued over seven hundred and fifty years, terminating in Malachi, who, sealing up the vision and the testimony, closes the canon of the Old Testament by referring the Church to the law of Moses—the whole Old Testament—as the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice till Messiah should come, Mal. iv. 4-6.

For four hundred years the voice of prophecy was silent, but Israel possessed and "heard Moses and the prophets." At the advent of Christ begins a third line of prophets. The spirit of prophecy was poured out afresh on His mother Mary, on Elizabeth, Zechariah, Simeon, John the Baptist, all the apostles and many others. It continued in the Church for near one hundred years, when it expired in the Apostle John. The prophecies reaching from the coming of Christ to the end of the world, being all delivered and recorded, and God's revelation finally completed by the closing of the New Testament, the spirit of inspiration and prophecy, no longer necessary, was withdrawn from the Church no more to return.

With this fact before our minds, how sublimely and impressively does our Lord Jesus Christ—the sum, substance, and glory of all prophecy—conclude His revelation to His Church, and complete the perfect Word of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments! "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and the morning-star. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth

these things saith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen," Rev. xxii. 16-21.

The kingly power was established towards the close of the life of Samuel, on the account of his age and consequent inactivity, as well as the unworthiness of his sons as judges; but the real cause was the infidelity of the people. They were dissatisfied with the government of God, and desired a king after the manner of other nations. The thing displeased Samuel; but the Lord said to him, "they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them: hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet solemnly protest unto them and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them" (the evil manner, the evils that would follow the change). Samuel did so: "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel: and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations: and that our king may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles," 1 Saml. viii. The people referred the selection of a king to Samuel, and he carried the matter to the Lord. "He gave them a king in His anger," yet forsook not His ungrateful and rebellious people, Hos. xiii. 9-11, but in His pity sent Saul the son of Kish, a Benjamite, to Samuel to be anointed captain over them, to deliver them out of the hand of the Philistines, "because," saith God, "their cry is come unto me," 1 Saml. ix. 15-16.

This change of the government was foreordained, and the people forewarned of it, Deut. xvii. 14-20; for Moses left statutes to regulate it when it should take place, namely, that they should set him only to be king whom the Lord their God should choose, and none but an Israelite; that the king should not multiply horses, or in other words essay to create a military kingdom, reposing on his own power and not on the power of God by whom he reigned, and from whom he derived his sovereignty; that he never more return the people under the power of Egypt; that he should not addict himself to sensual pleasure, by the multiplication of wives to the turning of his heart away from righteousness and God; and that he should not be avaricious, selfishly accumulating silver and gold,

and making riches his pride and trust. On the contrary, in all things he should be subject to God ; providing himself with a copy of the law of God for his own use, study, and direction, and for the proper conduct of himself and the administration of the kingdom, in order that he might not be lifted up with the pride of station above the people, who were his brethren, and who were to be treated and governed by him as such. So ruling in the fear of God, length of days and prosperity should be granted to him and his children, Deut. xvii. 14-20 ; Gen. xvii. 6 ; xxxv. 11, etc., 2 Kings xi. 12.

This order touching the kingly power and its after history, proves that it did not overturn the previously existing theocracy. The king was God's own appointed vicegerent, subject to his control, and to be established or dethroned according to His will.

The power of the king was very great. He acted as civil judge over the people in appeal cases, and as commander-in-chief of all the forces raised for the defence of the state. He had in his gift the offices of honor, profit and trust ; he fixed the revenues of the kingdom ; made peace and declared war, and exercised as king (not as priest, 2 Chron. xxvi. 19 ; 1 Saml. xiii. 8-12), a supervision over the spiritual affairs and state of the people, so as to encourage piety, correct abuses, reprove unworthy officers of the Church, and suppress irreligion and idolatry. All this power, however, was to be wielded not according to his own wisdom and will, but according to the law of God which gave not only definite statutes, but established principles for wise and just government, Deut. xvii. 14-20 ; Numb. xxvii. 18-21.

The royal power, consequently, was not absolute, but regulated and controlled by a written constitution, and the king was approved or condemned, as he upheld or disregarded that constitution. In process of time, the Lord forewarned the people that the kingly power was abused grossly to their injury. Saul, the first king, for unfaithfulness and presumptuous sins in office, was rejected from the throne with all his house. David was appointed in his stead, 1 Sam. xiii.-xvi, in whose family it pleased God to make the kingly power hereditary.

For the sins of his son Solomon, the tribes were divided into two kingdoms. The kingdom of Judah, embracing the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, was made sure to the house of David. The kingdom of Israel, embracing the remaining ten tribes (of which Ephraim was the leading tribe), was made sure, in the first instance, to the house of Jeroboam, but, for his rebellion against the Lord, it was transferred to another house. After ward, for the same cause the kingdom was transferred from one house to another, until, for its almost universal apostasy, it was finally delivered by God into the hands of Shalmaneser, and allowed to be carried captive into Assyria. The kingdom of Judah continued under the house of David until that kingdom also for its sins was carried away captive into Babylonia, by Nebuchadnezzar. The seed royal of the house of David, preserved in the captivity, returned with the people, and was afterwards employed in the administration of the affairs of the nation ; but to what extent, and for how long a time, and with what interruptions, (while for centuries the people were subjected by turns to the Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans,) it is impossible to determine. The prediction of Jacob, however, was fulfilled ; for the power of self-government was never wholly taken from the people (and they enjoyed it fully during their independence under the Asmonean princes) until Shiloh came. Then Judah lost the power of life and death, and was finally overthrown and destroyed in its civil state and constitution, under the Emperor Vespasian, and continues so until this day.

Saul came to the throne B. C. 1095, and reigned forty years. While he was reigning, Samuel, by God's command, anointed David, of the tribe of Judah, to succeed him, because Saul had shown himself unworthy of his crown. In the battle of Gilboa, this unhappy king—defeated by the Philistines—his three valiant sons slain—himself “ sore wounded of the archers,” and seeing that the day had gone against him with terrible loss—“ took a sword and fell upon it,” (for he could not persuade his armor-bearer to thrust him through and kill him,) that he might not fall alive into the hands of the

uncircumcised Philistines, 1 Sam. i.-xxxii., comp. 1 Chron. x. 13-14.

Although aware of David's appointment, Saul long and earnestly sought to kill him, and thereby frustrate the will of God; but through a series of divine interpositions David was preserved, and, a short time after the battle of Gilboa, by the counsel of God, he went to Hebron and was there anointed and crowned king by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who remained true to the succession as ordained of God, B. C. 1055. David reigned in Hebron seven years. Abner, captain of the host of Saul, carried Ishbosheth, Saul's son, to Mahanaim, and proclaimed him king over the remaining ten tribes. A war of seven years between the rival crowns ensued, in which the house of David waxed stronger and stronger, and that of Saul, weaker and weaker, until the defection of Abner and the murder of Ishbosheth. The house of Saul lost all power, and the ten tribes giving in their adhesion to David, he was a third time anointed king over all Israel, B. C. 1048. The year following he made Jerusalem the capital, and reigned there three and thirty years. Shortly after, with due state and solemnity, he removed the ark from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem, and purposed to build a house for God—a design approved and accepted of God; but as he had been a man of war, and had shed much blood, the work was committed to his son Solomon.

For fifteen years after he began to reign in Jerusalem, (1048 to 1033) he was much engaged in wars, and succeeded in subduing the old enemies of Israel, the Philistines, the Edomites, the Amalekites, the Moabites, the Ammonites and the Syrians, so that he extended his kingdom to the limits originally defined by the Lord in his promises to Abraham and to his seed, Gen. xv. 18-21; Dent. xi. 23-24; Josh. i. 1-4, comp. 1 Kings iv. 21-24; 2 Chron. ix. 26. David and Solomon only, of all the kings (and they but for a short period each), reigned over all the territory which the Lord had given to His people; and this brief period was the golden age of the temporal grandeur of the Church.

At the moment that David was accomplishing the over-

throw of some of his last enemies, the Amorites, entering upon the undisturbed possession of his heaven-appointed kingdom, and reaching the highest pinnacle of royal prosperity and glory, he arose one evening from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house. True servant of God, and God's anointed king as he was, he fell into a succession of crimes of the deepest dye, perpetrated under the most forbidding circumstances, 2 Sam. xi. ; 1 Chron. xx. The thing that David did was evil in the sight of the Lord. The prophet Nathan was commissioned to reprove, and to declare against him the judgments of God. "Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thine house," 2 Sam. xi., xii. Divine chastisements fell upon him openly and successively, "before all Israel and before the sun," clouding the last years of the aged king with many sorrows! First, came the death of his infant son by Uriah's wife, 2 Sam. xi. ; second, the incest of his eldest son Amnon with his sister Tamar, 2 Sam. xiii. ; third, the murder of Amnon by his son Absalom, Tamar's brother, 2 Sam. xiii. 23-33 ; fourth, Absalom's flight into Syria and exile for three years, 2 Sam. xiii. 38-39 ; fifth, Absalom's rebellion, in which ten tribes revolted, and forced him to flee from Jerusalem for his life, 2 Sam. xv-xvii. ; sixth, the curses of Shimei, and the abominations of Absalom upon the top of the house, "in the sight of all Israel," 2 Sam. xvi. ; seventh, the slaying of Absalom by Joab, 2 Sam. xviii. ; eighth, the revolt continued under Sheba, 2 Sam. xix. ; ninth, the numbering of the people in his pride and self-sufficiency, and consequent loss of seventy thousand of his subjects by pestilence, 2 Sam. xxiv. ; 2 Chron. xxi. ; and tenth, the rebellion of his son Adonijah in David's old age, 1 Kings i.

Prospectively, he made arrangements for the building of the house of God, God giving him a complete and written pattern of it, as He had before given Moses a complete and written pattern of the tabernacle. By the same inspiration he ordained the arrangements of the courses of the priests and Levites for the ordinary service, and for conducting the songs of the Lord with voices, psalteries, cymbals, and harps ; for porters to keep the courts and temple, and for officers over the

sacred treasures, 1 Chron. xxiii.–xxviii. ; and according to the pattern and the arrangement so did Solomon all things. David also made large collections of all required materials, and contributed much of his own proper substance for the building, interesting the officers of his court, and the priests, Levites, and principal men of the people in the enterprise, 1 Chron. xxii., xxix. His last public act was the assembling of all Israel, princes and people, making them an impressive address, appointing a second time and crowning Solomon his son and successor in the throne, delivering him a charge of office in the presence of God and his people, and commending to the newly-crowned king and people the building of the temple, 1 Chron. xxviii., xxix.

Solomon succeeded his father B. C. 1014, in a time of profound peace, and equalled him in the length of his reign—forty years. His early and most commendable act was to repair to the tabernacle, then in Gibeon, to acknowledge and worship the Lord, the Sovereign King, in suitable sacrifices. There the Lord graciously appeared to him as His appointed king, and said, “Ask what I shall give thee.” Solomon piously answered, “Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad : for who is able” (that is, without the help of God), “to judge this Thy so great people ?” He asked not “long life,” nor “riches,” nor “the life of his enemies ;” but “understanding, to discern judgment.” Therefore, “Behold,” saith God, “I have done according to thy words : lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee ; neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days,” 1 Ki. i. to iii.

The state criminals left by his father he properly executed, and thus confirmed his throne. In the second month of the fourth year of his reign, B. C. 1012, he began to build the

house of the Lord, and finished it in seven years, on the eighth month of the eleventh year of his reign; (or in seven years and a half, according to 1 Ki. vi., 1st verse compared with the 38th;) and in the year following, B. C. 1004, he dedicated it with great magnificence in a holy convocation of all Israel. Sacrifices of sheep and oxen, which could not be numbered for multitude, were offered before the ark; and when the priests carried the ark into the Holy of Holies, and came out, "the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord." Then King Solomon kneeled, with his hands spread up to heaven, and offered the prayer of dedication, blessing the people; and, at the conclusion of the great occasion, dismissed them to their homes joyful and glad of heart, 1 Ki. viii. 1-66. The Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, assuring him that He had heard his prayer, and had blessed the temple to put His name there forever, promising, if he walked in integrity, to establish his throne over Israel; but should he turn from the Lord and serve other gods, He would cut off Israel out of the land, and cast the house which He had hallowed out of His sight!

Solomon was now "in all his glory," and "God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding, exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore; he was wiser than all men; he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." He reigned over the promised boundaries; "over all the kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt;" "there was neither adversary nor evil occurrent." His army was numerous, and in a state of perfect equipment; his cities were fortified: agriculture caused his kingdom to blossom as the rose; commerce by land and by sea poured the treasures of all nations into it, and "Judah and

Israel were many as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry." His revenues were ample, and his capital adorned with the temple and royal palaces. "He exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom;" and, to crown the whole, "Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places," 1 Ki. i.-x. The early years of his reign constituted the golden age of the civil state of the Church.

But Solomon violated the commands of God both as an Israelite and a king; for he made affinity with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, by marrying his daughter, and multiplied wives—a thing forbidden to the king—taking them in great numbers from the heathen nations—a thing forbidden to all Israelites. He indulged his strange wives in the practice of idolatry of the most infamous kind. He built their high places and their altars, where they sacrificed, and he himself went after some of their gods; "and the Lord was angry with Solomon," because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice." His spiritual decline laid the foundation of his temporal decline, for the Lord soon testified his displeasure by announcing that ten tribes should be rent from his kingdom in his son's days, and given to his servant Jeroboam. Instead of repentance and submission, he vainly and wickedly attempted to kill Jeroboam, and thereby frustrate the will of God. The Lord also raised up other adversaries against him—Hadad the Ammonite, and Rezon, who reigned in Damascus, 1 Ki. xi. Solomon died B. C. 975, and was succeeded by his son, Rehoboam, 1 Ki. xii.

We witness almost an entire suspension of miracles in the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon, for one hundred and twenty years. Just before the anointing of Saul, while Samuel judged Israel, "the Lord thundered with a great thunder," on a day of battle with the Philistines, and discomfited them, 1 Sam. vii. 8-13. After the anointing, to convince the people of their sin in asking a king, Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, during wheat harvest—a time when rain seldom or never fell, 1 Sam. xii. 13-25.

In the reign of Saul, Jonathan and his armor-bearer, by power from God assaulted the garrison of the Philistines, and God sent a great earthquake to increase the terror, 1 Sam. xiv. 6-23. There was also the raising of Samuel by the witch of Endor, the Lord performing that miracle, which the witch of Endor designed to counterfeit, 1 Sam. xxviii. 1-25. No miracles are recorded in the reign of David, (unless we call his slaying the lion, the bear, and Goliath, miracles,) nor in that of Solomon; nevertheless the Lord revealed Himself by Urim and Thummim, through His prophets, also in visions, as with Solomon, and by visible manifestations, as at the dedication of the temple when the cloud and the glory descended and filled it.

There is, however, a large advance in the predictions and revelations of the coming Redeemer, and the future glory of His Church. The prophet Nathan delivered a message to David of promises and predictions which were fulfilled in himself and in his son Solomon, but spiritually and perfectly in Messiah, of whom they were both types, 2 Sam. vii. 1-17; 1 Chron. xvii.; Heb. i. 5. David was the most eminent type of Christ in all the Scriptures, both in his person and office. He was the beloved and anointed of the Lord—a king ruling with equity and glory over all the territories promised to the Church. To this exalted state he attained through weary years of persecution, suffering, and conflict. Solomon succeeded to his dominions and glory, 1 Ki. viii. 20; ii. 12; but it was reserved to his Son, the true David “according to the flesh,” to receive of the Lord the throne of David His father, and to reign over the house of Jacob forever, of whose kingdom there should be no end. To the throne He was ordained, and to it He came through persecution, suffering, and victory over all His enemies. Of Him, saith God, “He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever, and I will be His Father and He shall be my Son,” Ps. lxxii.; Ezek. xxxiv. 23-24; Luke i. 32-33; Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15; Rev. xxi. 16. The house of David is designated as that in Judah from which Messiah should descend.

David was the prophet of these times. Of the one hundred and fifty Psalms, he contributed seventy-three, according to their titles; and if the last verse of the seventy-second is admitted to belong to the Psalm itself, then he is the author of seventy-four, besides others without titles which are ascribed to him. Of his Psalms, the 2d, 8th, 16th, 22d, 40th, 45th, 68th, 69th, 72d, 102d, and 110th, are minutely prophetic of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His person, office, work, and character. They declare His divinity and His humanity—David's Lord, and, according to the flesh, his son, Ps. v., lxxviii., cii., cx.—the eternal God and creator of the heavens and the earth, who, in obedience to the Father's will, for man's redemption, became incarnate, Ps. xl. 6-9; Ps. lxii.—the real sacrifice for sin of which all the sacrifices of the law were shadows—the substitute and surety of His people, Ps. xl. 6-12—persecuted and betrayed by one of His disciples—a suffering and crucified Redeemer, upon whom His enemies poured reproach and scorn, pierced His hands and His feet, cast lots upon His vesture, and gave Him vinegar and gall to drink, Ps. xxii., xlix., lxix. They declare that He died and was buried, saw no corruption, was raised to life again, and exalted to God's right hand in heaven, Pss. xvi. 9-11; lxxviii. 18; cx. 1; that He was manifested to be the Son of God and King in Zion, Ps. ii. 6-7; that He had consecrated Himself to His mediatorial work, Pss. xvi. 1-11; xl. 6-10; lxix. 1-9, and sits as God-mediator upon His eternal throne, ruling in righteousness, having universal dominion, Pss. ii. 8-12; viii. 1-9; Pss. lxxviii., lxxii., cx., xlv. 6-7; glorious in person and character, Ps. xlv. 8; lxxii. 1-20; the great Shepherd of His sheep, Ps. xxiii.; the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, Ps. lxxviii. 1-35; the Spouse of the Church, Ps. xlv. 9-17, to whom the Church is subject, and from whom she receives gifts, Ps. cx.; a perpetual priest upon His throne, after the order of Melchizedek, Ps. cx.; the object of universal reverence and worship, Ps. ii. 9-12; Ps. lxxii. 1-20, the Saviour of all who trust in Him, Ps. ii. 12, etc.; the Lord, to reign until all His enemies should be made His footstool, and His dominion be from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. David mag-

nified Christ as prophet, priest, and king, and saw the glory which should follow His sufferings; predicted the calling of the Gentiles and the future enlargement of the Church, Ps. xxii. 22-31; xlvi. 1-7; lxviii. 31-32; lxxii. 8-17; lxxxvi. 9; was filled with joy at the prospect, and longed for the salvation of the heathen, and for the approach of the day when "all nations should call Him blessed," and "the whole earth be filled with His glory," Ps. lxxii.

The heart of the true believer is the same in all ages. The spirit of the prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as in Heaven," has always been in the heart of the true believer. The spirit of missions was in the Church before our Saviour came; the work of missions was committed to it after He came.

Solomon also made known Christ under the title of Wisdom, existing with God before the creation, rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, delighting in the sons of men, conversing with and calling them to come to Him and live, Prov. viii. 1-36. In his Song of Songs, he exhibits the intimate union of Christ and His Church, the bridegroom and the bride, and speaks of the bridegroom under his own name, he being a type of Christ.

Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, and the temple therein, became the type of heaven, and of the upper temple, into which Christ entered, and presented His own blood, obtaining eternal redemption for us, Heb. ix. 1-28; xii. 22-24; Rev. xxi. 1-27.

The spiritual state of the Church in the reign of Saul was not propitious. The people were much interested in the outward change in their government, and were frequently at war with their old and inveterate enemies, the Philistines. Saul, although receiving from the Lord a new spirit, that is, a spirit inclining him to accept the office, and to discharge the duties of a king, his heart remaining unchanged, shortly after his elevation to the throne, failed to execute the great trusts committed to him, being in nature impatient, presumptuous, self-willed, time-serving, and rebellious. After he was rejected of the Lord, he became jealous, tyrannical, and cruel. He how-

ever showed a zeal for God, but not at all times according to knowledge; for he undertook to slay the Gibeonites, descendants of the old and doomed inhabitants of the land, whom God had spared and turned into the service of the sanctuary. He executed the laws against wizards, and destroyed them out of the land, so far as he had knowledge of them. He outwardly honored the Lord in offering sacrifices, was temperate in his appetites, and there is mention of but two wives in his family. But he was subject to great reverses in temper and conduct; for his confessions in wrong-doing were not followed by radical improvement. David could not trust him. He was a brave man and a successful warrior, ambitious of power and fame, and devoted to the service of his country. Well did he and his son Jonathan deserve the graphic and beautiful eulogy pronounced by David on his death. "Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions," 2 Sam. i. 17-27. When David rose in popularity in the kingdom, and was anointed his successor, Saul became his implacable persecutor, sought his life in every way that envy and hate, unrestrained either by the fear of God, or the favor of men could suggest, and arrayed himself against the decree of God. On one occasion he cruelly butchered a whole city of unoffending priests, who were falsely accused of favoring the cause of David; and, on another, attempted the life of his favorite and noble son Jonathan for the same reason. Finally, pressed by his enemies and driven to desperation by his own wicked passions, turning his back impiously upon God, he consulted the witch of Endor, and, next day, defeated and sore wounded in battle, he fell upon his sword and died by his own hand!

The character and conduct of the king must have seriously affected the people: and while the ordinary means of grace were enjoyed, the piety in the Church could not have been flourishing, especially after the death of Samuel.

An improvement occurs in the reign of David, who is styled "the man after God's own heart"—a commendation of him especially as a king who faithfully executed the will of

God, under whom he reigned; nor did he depart from the Lord save in the matter of Uriah's wife. An accomplished and talented man, a great statesman and warrior, he was ever a worshipper of God, ever associating with the godly prophets, priests, and people. In his zeal he removed the ark to Jerusalem, designed the building of the temple, interested his whole kingdom in its erection, contributed and made collections for the purpose, executed justice, promoted piety, regulated the service of the sanctuary, introduced singing largely into divine worship, and was the sweet "Psalmist of Israel," composing his Psalms to be sung in the solemn assemblies and in the daily worship, 2 Chron. xxix. 30; Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; 2 Chron. xxiii. 18; and, in all the varied scenes of his eventful life, especially in the persecutions which he endured, he approved himself one of the most eminent saints of the Lord. The Holy Spirit has enrolled his name among the elders who "by faith obtained a good report," Heb. xi. 32.

For exalted views of God, of His works and His Word; for the measurement of the height, depth, length, and breadth of the experience of the child of God; for the exhibition of his graces in every event of his life; for clear revelations of the Redeemer; for heavenliness of mind; for faith, hope, and joy in God; for exalted praises; interest in Zion, and in the salvation of men, the sweet Psalmist of Israel will ever hold his place among the most holy, most honored, and most useful among the inspired penmen of the Word of God. His Psalms ever have been, since their composition, and ever will be, the delight, comfort, and support of believers, and are perhaps as much read as any other portion of the Word of God. His sins, from his first entrance on the stage—a stripling shepherd of the wilderness—to the last scene of decrepit old age in his royal bed, considering his numerous trials, afflictions, and reverses, are few indeed. Yet one is on record of appalling heinousness and magnitude, which singles him out as having sinned as no child of God ever sinned before!—a sin illustrating the amount and depth of depravity that may remain in the soul of the believer even after long profession and faithful service of God—a sin too which Infinite Wisdom has had

recorded for the humiliation and warning, as well as for the comfort and support of His people in all ages; and which He has overruled for good through the composition and insertion into the sacred canon, of the fifty-first Psalm, of which the royal transgressor is himself the author—a Psalm containing the fullest, most perfect, and affecting expression of the grace of true repentance anywhere to be found in the Holy Scriptures, and unto which all true penitents do continually resort, and make it their own. His fall from the exercise of grace, (but not from that state of grace in which as a justified and accepted believer in Christ he stood,) “gave great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme;” therefore did he suffer open rebuke and chastisement from the Lord, John x. 27-30; Rom v., viii.

David multiplied his wives, but they turned not his heart away from the Lord, although he failed in the due government and training of his children, as the moral state of some of them gave ample proof. Religion flourished in the Church until his great transgression, which brought on him troubles and afflictions in which his people largely participated; and consequently religion itself suffered.

Solomon, soon after his accession, set his heart to the service of God and to the wise and equitable government of his people, built and dedicated the temple, “exceeding magnificent,” and set in order its services. The temporal and spiritual prosperity of the Church went for a while hand in hand. He composed his book of Proverbs for the edification of God’s people of every age and condition, especially in the practice of holiness according to the law of God and the graces of the Spirit. In that book, as already observed, he makes known the Redeemer under the title of Wisdom, existing from eternity, and delighting in the instruction and salvation of men, Prov. viii. 1-36. In his Song of Songs, under the figure of marriage, he exhibits Christ and His Church, and unfolds (doubtless from his own spiritual experience) the joys and sorrows, hopes and fears of the true believer, arising from his communion and union with, or his separation from Him whom his soul loveth—“the chiefest among ten thousand,” “alto-

gether lovely." But this exalted man fell from his integrity, especially in the multiplication of his wives, who turned away his heart from God. He lost his first love; his graces declined; and he not only tolerated, but even aided and united with his outlandish women in their idolatries. By his example and permission he rooted idolatry so deeply in the land, that it never was eradicated until the whole people were sent into captivity! Religion declined in the latter part of his reign.

Was Solomon a converted man? The fact is established by the promise of God to David concerning him. "He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son: if he commit iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee," 2 Sam. vii 12-15. The promise implies more than ordinary regard for Solomon as a king; he was to be a son, a child of God, in the highest and best sense, and a type of Christ. He did commit iniquity and the Lord chastised him, but took not His mercy away from him, as may be inferred from his being the author of three books, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, (no books of the sacred canon ever having been written except by converted men,) and from the honorable mention of him by our Lord, Matt. xii. 42. The book of Ecclesiastes is a record of his works and his experience in the worldly enjoyments which he proposed to himself, and of his return, after all his wanderings, unto the Lord as his true portion: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man: for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil," Eccle. xii. 13-14.

At his death, in respect of time, above three-fourths of the history of the Old Testament were written; in respect of matter a little over one-half; and in respect of the number of books, about fourteen out of the thirty-nine, namely, Genesis,

Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First and Second Samuel, one half of the first book of Kings, and of the book of Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, his Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DIVISION OF THE KINGDOMS, NOT DESIGNED TO BE PERPETUAL, DID NOT DESTROY THE THEOCRACY.—HISTORY OF KINGDOM OF ISRAEL, DEGENERATE, CARRIED INTO CAPTIVITY.—GENERAL APOSTACY FROM GOD FROM ITS BEGINNING.—A REMNANT ACCORDING TO THE ELECTION OF GRACE.—DEALINGS OF GOD IN JUDGMENTS AND MERCIES TO SAVE THE KINGDOM.—HIS PROMISE OF RESTORATION FROM CAPTIVITY.—NO NOTICE OF THE CAPTIVES FOR ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THREE YEARS.—TERRITORIES OF ISRAEL COLONIZED FROM ASSYRIA.—THE SAMARITANS, THEIR HISTORY.

THE ten tribes revolted three times against the throne of David: first, under Abner and Ish-botheth after the death of Saul, for seven years; second, under Absalom, and at his death under Sheba, of short continuance; and third, immediately after the death of Solomon, under Jeroboam. They were never again united with the other two tribes under one sceptre, and in their own country, until their return from captivity. The ten tribes forming the kingdom of Israel, revolted under Jeroboam, B. C. 975, and were finally and totally carried into captivity by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, B. C. 721, having existed independent of the throne of David, 254 years. The kingdom of Judah, embracing Judah and Benjamin, and Levi, for the most part, continued 115 years longer, to B. C. 606, when Nebuchadnezzar first took Jerusalem, and from which date the 70 years of Judah's captivity take their rise. If to the 254 years of the existence of the kingdom of Israel we add 115, reaching to the end of the kingdom of Judah, and to this some 70 more for the captivity of Judah, then, from the separation of the tribes into independent kingdoms to their union

again after the captivity, there is the long separation of 439 years (from 975 to 536 B. C.). But meanwhile they were not without much intercourse and connection, for they never forgot their unity in origin, in history, in religion, and in destiny. They were mingled among the nations, but were never lost to each other; they were one people still.

The political separation was a judgment upon the house of David for the sins of Solomon; and however mysterious and pregnant with evil, we know that infinite wisdom and goodness arranged it all. Yet this judgment was not designed to rest upon the throne of David forever, as God expressly told Jeroboam when He appointed him the future king of Israel, 1 Kings xi. 39. The division should in after ages be healed, and the tribes should once more be united and be ruled by the house of David, which also came to pass. Jeroboam was divinely appointed through the prophet Ahijah, God's vicegerent and king over Israel, and with a promise identical with that which had been given to the house of David. "I will give ten tribes to thee; thou shalt be king over Israel; and it shall be if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments as David my servant did, that I will be with thee and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee," with the reservation, however, "and I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not forever," 1 Kings xi. 29-39. When Jeroboam presumptuously sinned, the Lord cut him off and gave the throne to another, 1 Kings xiv. 1-20. And to the end of the kingdom He set up and removed kings at His pleasure, each and every one holding the throne by His appointment and permission. He continued also to send His prophets, rising up early, and sending them to visit the people for their sins; finally sending them into captivity, and bringing them back to their own land as His people.

The kingdom of Israel embraced five times as many tribes as that of Judah, and covered a greater extent of territory; yet the difference in population between the two kingdoms was not very great. Without attempting to reconcile the

returns made by Joab of the numbering of the people in the reign of David, 2 Saml. xxiv. ; and 1 Chron. xxi. 1-6 ; xxvii. 23-24 but adopting 2 Saml. xxiv. 1-9, the ten tribes returned "800,000 valiant men that drew the sword," and the tribe of Judah, 500,000. Levi and Benjamin were not numbered, "for the king's command was abominable in Joab's eyes," and the numbering was stayed by the falling of God's wrath. Including Benjamin, with Judah and Levi, (for, without doubt, the major part of this tribe continued with the house of David,) the population of the kingdom of Judah would be much increased, yet not so much as to bring the two kingdoms upon a perfect equality in population.

The kingdom of Israel lasted 254 years, and was ruled over by nineteen kings, from Jeroboam the first, to Hoshea the last, in nine distinct dynasties, or houses, as follows: 1. Jeroboam ; 2. Baasha ; 3. Zimri ; 4. Omri ; 5. Jehu ; 6. Shallum ; 7. Menahem ; 8. Pekah, and 9. Hoshea.

The personal and official character and history of these nineteen kings is a sad one. Seven were murdered by conspirators, namely, Nadab, Elah, Jehoram, Zachariah, Shallum, Pekahiah, and Pekah ; and each of these murderers extinguished a royal house, and made way for another in his own person, so that seven kings, the first that ruled in their own houses, were themselves regicides. One king, Zimri, after a brief reign, to avoid falling into the hands of his competitor for the throne, burnt himself up in the king's palace. Another, Ahab, died ingloriously in battle, "and whose blood the dogs licked." Another, Ahaziah, died in consequence of a fall through a lattice in his house ; and the last king, Hoshea, was dethroned and carried a captive into Assyria. Eight only died quietly in their beds, namely, Jeroboam, Baasha, Omri, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jeroboam II., and Menahem. Of the entire nineteen there was not one a pious man ! All were idolaters, and some of them exceedingly wicked, "walking in the ways of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." Two interregnums occurred, the first, between the death of Jeroboam II., in the sixteenth year of Amaziah, king of Judah (2 Kings xiv. 23), and the accession of his son Zechariah, in the thirty-eighth year

of Uzziah (2 Kings xv. 8)—a period of twenty-two years; the second, between the slaying of Pekah by Hoshea (in the third year of the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah), and his accession to the throne in the twelfth year of Ahaz—a period of ten years, 2 Kings xv. 30; xvi. 1; xvii. 1; xviii. 10.

The kingdom was scourged with wars. It was always in a state of hostility, and often of open war with Judah, from the reign of Jeroboam to that of Ahaz, some sixty years. The peace then effected by the wise and pious Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, lasted eighty years. War succeeded for several years, and that was followed by peace for some seventy or eighty. Perhaps the time of hostility and war during the contemporary existence of the two kingdoms, was one third of the whole. Their wars generally never raged cruelly, while their successes were pretty evenly balanced. Pekah, the last king of Israel but one, inflicted the heaviest blows upon Judah, and did an unprecedented act. He slew 120,000 men in one day, and “carried away captive of their brethren 200,000 women, sons, and daughters, and much spoil.” The Lord, by the prophet Oded, commanded the captives to be restored, which was immediately done, 2 Chron. xxviii. 4–19.

But the dreadful enemies and scourges of Israel were the Syrians, and Assyrians. Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, in the reign of Pekah, B. C. 740, subdued and carried into captivity the two tribes, Reuben and Gad, the half tribe of Manasseh east of Jordan, Naphtali and portions of Galilee on the west, 1 Kings xv. 20; 1 Chron. v; 2 Kings xv. The remaining tribes in the reign of Hoshea, B. C. 721, were carried away captive by Shalmaneser, who settled them in the same countries whither Tiglath-pileser had previously transplanted the two tribes and half tribe. Ten tribes were thus all brought together in the land of their captivity, 1 Chron. v. 26, their captivity being a punishment from God, “because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed His covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and would not hear them nor do them,” 2 Kings xvii. xviii.

Touching the state of religion in the kingdom while it

lasted, it must be observed that Jeroboam laid the foundation for the almost universal apostasy of ten tribes. Unmindful of his obligations to God, who had elevated him to the throne, and condescended to make him the most encouraging and happy promises, he rejected His authority and despised His glory, renounced His protection, and essayed to establish his kingdom and perpetuate his dynasty by his own wisdom and power.

Fearing that the union and the communion of Israel with Judah—in the worship of the one God and Saviour of all His chosen people, in the one sacred city, the capital of Judah, in the one holy temple, under the one consecrated ministry, and in all the ordained sacrifices and festivals—would alienate his subjects, and draw them back to the throne of David, Jeroboam with subtle policy and unwavering decision, at a stroke made his kingdom as independent of Judah religiously as it was civilly; and such was the enfeebled tone of piety among the people that he succeeded. Once torn away from the sanctuary of God, separated from its ordinances, deprived of a regular and divinely ordained ministry, carried over to open idolatry and the adoption of a religious service the mere shadow of the true, the delusion became general, and waxed worse and worse in the revolution of years. The spiritual ruin of Israel is traced to this one man, to “Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.”

“And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David; if this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam, king of Judah; and they shall kill me and go again to Rehoboam, king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold, thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel and the other put he in Dan”—in the extremes of his kingdom—for the better accommodation of the people, 1 Kings xii. 25–33. He had lived in Egypt between the time of his persecution by Solomon, and his being called to

the throne of Israel at Solomon's death. Here it is most probable he became interested in the worship of a supreme being under the image of a calf, and he might have had in remembrance also the golden calf made by Aaron. It was no new God that he intended to introduce, but the worship of the God of Israel under the image of a calf!

Setting up his gods, he proceeded to frame his service. He must needs have a holy place; hence "he made an house of high places." He must needs have priests; hence "he made priests of the lowest (or the mass) of the people which were not of the sons of Levi;" "for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priests' office unto the Lord: and he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made, 2 Chron. xi. 14-15. He must needs have sacred seasons and festivals; hence "he ordained a feast in the eighth month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, the fifteenth day of the month, which he had devised of his own heart, unto the children of Israel." He must needs have altars and sacrifices; and so he built altars and sacrificed upon them. Thus "Jeroboam sinned: and he made Israel sin by his provocation wherewith he provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger," 1 Kings xv. 30. Yea, he "druve Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin," 2 Kings xvii. 21.

Of every individual king that occupied the throne after him, with but one exception—and that was Shallum, who reigned but one month—it is said, "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." Finally, the captivity is ascribed to him, for he "druve Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin; for the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did: they departed not from them, until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets," 2 Kings xvii. 20-23; 1 Kings xiv. 7-16.

The corruption of the true religion, and the idolatry introduced by Jeroboam, were enormous sins; but to add thereto and to precipitate the people into deeper transgressions, pre-

paring them more fully for divine judgments, Ahab became king about twenty-one years after Jeroboam's death. "And he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him." "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove, and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him," 1 Kings xvi. 28-33. Although on one occasion, by the energy of Elijah the Prophet, and of Jehu the king, the worship of Baal was almost overthrown, it was never wholly rooted out, 2 Kings xiii. 6. It was attended with cruel rites, the use of divination and enchantments, and the worship of all the hosts of heaven, and a walking after the heathen round about! 2 Kings xvii. 13-23.

What contributed to the decline of religion in Israel, was the departure out of the kingdom of the priests and Levites, the ministers and public instructors of the people in the law and ordinances of God. Unsupported by the regular and ordained contributions of the people, thrust out by Jeroboam and his sons, and not permitted to share in his new arrangements for worship, they left their cities and retired into the kingdom of Judah. Abijah reproached Jeroboam with this infidel conduct, 2 Chron. xiii. 1-12; and this exodus of the ministers of God was not without its effect upon many of the more pious in Israel: for "after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers," 2 Chron. xi. 13-17. The kingdom of Judah was strengthened spiritually, and the kingdom of Israel weakened. The pious ministers and people forsook their homes and connections, and a land polluted by idolatry, to take shelter with their brethren under the shadow of the Almighty.

The fallen state of religion in the ten tribes impressed their brethren of Judah, whenever they enjoyed the outpourings of the Spirit of God; for in the reign of the pious Asa, when he

had corrected abuses and removed idols, "he gathered all Judah, and Benjamin, and strangers with them out of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with him," and they offered sacrifices and entered into covenant with the Lord their God. There never was any hindrance to the coming up of the ten tribes to the courts of the Lord, and to an association with their brethren of Judah in the worship and ordinances of His house. The ways of Zion were always open, and whensoever they would they could come and were welcome.

Again, in the reign of Hezekiah, when the kingdom of Israel was on the verge of ruin, B. C. 726, that pious king, desirous of a return of both kingdoms with all their heart to the Lord—peradventure it might be a lengthening out of their existence and tranquillity—sent out posts throughout all Israel from Beer-sheba even unto Dan (throughout both kingdoms), "that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem." The posts carried the letters of invitation and of earnest exhortation from the king. "They passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulon: but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. Nevertheless divers of Asher, and Manasseh, and of Zebulon, humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem." There were "many also of Ephraim and Issachar." When the passover was ended, the congregation present "went out, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars, out of all Judah, and Benjamin, and Ephraim, and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all." They were those out of Israel who, at the king's commandment, brought in contributions to the service of the Lord in Jerusalem, and "the tithe of all things," 2 Chron. xxx. 1-27; xxxi. 1-7. Here, within four years of the final captivity of the ten tribes, is "a remnant according to the election of grace" among them. A very considerable number from the five tribes, Asher, Manasseh, Zebulon, Ephraim, and Issachar, came at the call of Hezekiah, and with sincere devotion and fervent zeal united in observing the

passover, in destroying the worship of idols, and in contributing to the service of the sanctuary. Fourteen years before this, Tiglath-pileser had carried away captive Naphtali, Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh ; consequently, five out of the seven and a half tribes then remaining in Israel, were represented in this passover.

No other instances are recorded of the going up of the people of Israel to worship in Jerusalem. The more pious part remaining in the kingdom no doubt did so from time to time, in a private manner, attended the regular feasts, and went up at other times to perform vows and offer sacrifices ; but no king of Israel ever visited the holy city, except Jehoshaphat or Joash, and he only in war, and as a conqueror ; for it was he who defeated Amariah and took him prisoner, went up to Jerusalem, broke down four hundred cubits of the wall, and plundered the temple and the royal palace.

Faithful in his mercy, the Lord did not wholly abandon His chosen people, but watched over them, interposed restraints, and sent His prophets to instruct, reprove, and reform them. They succeeded each other regularly, and labored with zeal and energy, performing astonishing miracles in confirmation of their mission. Prophets not only lived and labored in the kingdom of Israel, but prophets in Judah exerted themselves also, on certain occasions, on behalf of Israel. Moreover, there were schools of prophets in Israel under Elijah and Elisha, 2 Kings ii. 3 ; iv. 38, and the number of prophets was by no means inconsiderable, 1 Kings xviii. 1-4. The Lord says to Israel, by Amos, ii. 11, "And I raised up of your sons prophets : and of your young men for Nazarites." He "testified against Israel and against Judah by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes ; notwithstanding they would not hear," 2 Kings xvii. 1-14, etc. "The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he had compassion on his people and on His dwelling-place ; but they mocked the messengers of God and despised His words, and misused his prophets until the wrath of God arose against His people, till there was no

remedy," 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15-17. Of the nineteen kings, fourteen had direct intercourse with, and admonitions and warnings from the prophets; and the remainder, some of whom reigned but for a brief period, could not have been passed over. To particularize: no sooner had Jeroboam instituted his idolatrous worship, then there came a man of God and reproved him for his sins. In testimony of the curse of God, his altar was rent, and the ashes poured out, and his own hand, stretched against the man of God, was instantly dried up stiff and useless. Ahijah, the prophet, made known to him God's determination to cut off his house from the throne, 1 Kings xiii., xiv.; and in due time the Lord "struck him and he died:" 2 Chron. xiii. 20. His son Nadab was accordingly cut off by Baasha, 1 Kings xv. The prophet Jehu condemned Baasha and his house to overthrow for his sins, and Elah his son was cut off by Zimri, 1 Kings xvi: 1-7. Zimri came to his death by his own act, which was the judgment of God for his sins, 1 Kings xvi. 15-22. The wicked Ahab had the fearless, zealous, and faithful Elijah for his prophet all his days, Micaiah, and other prophets also, 1 Kings xvii.-xxii.; ii. 18. His son Ahaziah had Elijah, and his son Jehoram had both Elijah and Elisha. Jehu was commissioned through Elisha to avenge the prophets and people of God both on Jezebel and the house of Ahab. Jehu's sons to the fourth generation, were to sit on the throne of Israel. 2 Kings x. 30. Jehoabas, Jehoash, Jeroboam II., and Zechariah, were all under the ministry of the prophets. Elisha died in the reign of Jehoash, 2 Kings xiii. 10-21. In the reign of Jeroboam II., Jonah prophesied, 2 Kings xiv. 25-27, and so did Hosea and Amos. These two last preached against the sins of Israel and Judah, and predicted the ruin and captivity of Israel. They prophesied through the reigns of Shallum, Menahem, Pckahiah, and Pekah. In the reign of Pekah, Micah joined them, and Isaiah, Oded, and Obadiah. In the last reign, that of Hoshea, they are all continued with the addition of Nahum. These were all "holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and it is in their writings that we learn the widespread and deep corruption of the people, calling for the judg-

ments of God. In their writings we behold His long-suffering and tender mercy, and listen to His moving appeals and calls to repentance, and promises of forgiveness and life. They are the great preachers of the Church in those days, preaching by example, by lifting up their voices like a trumpet, and by their discourses and prophecies committed to writing, circulated and laid up for memorials before God and His people. They stood before kings and princes as well as before the common people, and failed not to declare the whole counsel of God with threatening and promise. Condemning transgressors under the law to the wrath of God, they preached unto them a suffering, an atoning and triumphant Redeemer, shadowed in every sacrifice. They sketched Him with a bold hand as Prophet, Priest, and King. "They saw His glory and spake of Him," Isa. vi. 1-3; John xii. 41; for "to Him gave all the prophets witness, that through His name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins," Acts x. 43. They dealt with Israel and Judah as divided temporarily and civilly, but forming one kingdom spiritually—the one Church of God under its Divine Head—having its better, its heavenly country, whither all its true pilgrims were tending. Their mission was confirmed by the signs of a prophet, for their predictions came to pass. They upheld the true doctrines and wrought the miracles of God.

Miracles were again revived, especially in the kingdom of Israel, to arrest the apostasy, and incline the people to adhere to God, in the absence of His priests and temple worship, exposed as they were to the influence of wickedness in high places, and to all the corruptions of idolatry. Jonah was three days and nights in the belly of the fish, and this was a sign of his mission, not only to the Ninevites, but also to Israel. The repentance of the men of Nineveh under his preaching condemned the impenitence of his own countrymen in Israel. Elijah and Elisha, whose united ministry extends over eighty years, are the two prophets who wrought miracles in the greatest abundance, and of the most wonderful kind. Elijah was fed by ravens; he multiplied the widow's meal and oil, and afterwards raised her son to life; he called fire from

heaven to consume the sacrifice on Mount Carmel; outran Ahab in his chariot, driving rapidly to Jezreel; fasted forty days and forty nights; drew down fire twice from heaven and consumed the companies sent by king Ahaziah to apprehend him; divided Jordan with his mantle, and ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire! Elisha healed the waters of Jericho; multiplied the widow's oil for the redemption of her sons; raised the Shunammite's son to life; healed the deadly pottage; fed a hundred men with twenty loaves of barley; cured Naaman of his leprosy; smote Gehazi his servant with the same; made iron to swim; revealed the counsels of the king of Syria; smote with blindness his forces sent to apprehend him, and restored their sight again; and his bones revived a dead man let down into his sepulchre!

Judgments accompanied the ministry of the word in Israel; for the Lord brought upon the kingdom a drought, at the prayer of Elijah, for three years and a half, followed by famine, 1 Ki. xvii.; and in the days of Elisha, another famine of seven years' duration. Amos predicted drought and famine, blasting and mildew, and earthquake, Amos i. 1; iv. 1-13. The judgments of grasshoppers and of fire were stayed at his prayer, vii. 1-9; and yet above these he predicted a famine of the Word of God, i. 1; iv. 1-13; vii. 1-9; viii. 11-14. The Lord added frequent civil and foreign wars, and the rebellion of tributary states, 2 Ki. vi.-xiii.; Amos ii.-iii., and destroyed the kings one after another—some by surprising judgments, 1 Ki. xxi; 2 Ki. i., ix.-x., etc.; Amos vii. 10, etc. Twice He signally overthrew the worshippers of Baal, both priests and people, and the king and queen, who above all had consecrated themselves to idolatry, 1 Ki. xviii.; 2 Ki. x.; and held in terror over the people the threatened captivity under the heathen. Yet with all His threatenings and judgments, He mingled precious promises and tender mercies, giving rain and fruitful seasons, checking the advance of enemies, restoring boundaries and cities, and strengthening Israel, 2 Ki. xiv. 25-27; xiii. 1-5; iii., vi., vii.; 1 Ki. xx., etc. All these means failed to accomplish a redemption of the kingdom from overthrow, yet were they sanctified to "a remnant according to the election of grace."

For some seventy years after the division of the kingdoms, Elijah besought the Lord that he might die. Said he, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away." To the eye of the prophet the cause of God was ruined. He knew not if any held fast their integrity. The merciful and omniscient God said, "Go—return" (to your labors). "I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him," 1 Ki. xix. They were sustained and strengthened by the ministry of Elijah and Elisha, and at least a temporary return of the kingdom to the Lord took place, when Elijah first, and Jehu afterwards destroyed the priests and worshippers of Baal in such numbers. In the reign of Asa, king of Judah, many of Israel turned to the Lord; and at the very close of the kingdom, as already noted, numbers went up and united with Hezekiah at Jerusalem in celebrating the passover, over one hundred years after the death of Elisha (B. C. 838; captivity, B. C. 720).

The closing chapters of Hosea (vii.—xiv.) are full of exhibitions of the sins of the people, of appeals for repentance, and of threatenings of the captivity. They were the last strivings of God. "The days of visitation are come: the days of recompense are come. Israel shall know it." "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zebaim? My heart is turned within me: my repentings are kindled together." When the inspired historian reaches the captivity, the Holy Spirit makes him write down the cause, even the great, aggravated, and long-continued sins of the people, as if the Shepherd of Israel would plead His own justification for so terrible an infliction. "There was no remedy," 2 Ki. xviii. 9-12; xvii. 1-23. In His last exhortation, just before the event, He throws in the sustaining promise that Israel in her captivity should repent; that He would heal her backslidings, and restore her in due time to

His favor and to her pleasant land, Hos. xiii. 15-16; xiv. 1-9—a promise which the prophet commends to the people; “who is wise, and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.” They carried this promise into their dreary captivity, and the wise and the prudent understood and fed upon it, until it was accomplished! More than one-half the members of the visible Church were borne away, and Judah left alone.

The ten tribes remained under the Assyrians until they were conquered by the Babylonians; and, in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, their brethren of Judah were brought and united in captivity with them.

Of the civil and religious condition of the ten tribes for one hundred and thirty-three years—from their captivity, B. C. 720, to the final captivity of Judah, B. C. 587—there is not the slightest record in the Word of God. The apocryphal book of Tobit, who was one of the captains of Israel, furnishes little. We here take leave of them, settled in the dark regions of heathenism, and under the afflicting but preserving hand of a faithful, covenant-keeping God. He has promised, and He will make it good. “They that dwell under His shadow shall return: they shall revive as the corn and grow as the vine. The scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say what have I to do any more with idols?” Hos. xiv. 4-8.

The land of Israel was not left to desolation. The king of Assyria brought from different tribes and provinces of his empire, men, women, and children, settling them in Samaria, and in the cities of Israel, to secure the conquered kingdom, while he strengthened and enriched the heart of his empire by the bringing in of the Israelites. With this colony of Assyrians the poor, feeble, and scattered remnant of Israelites left behind united, and the land of Israel became a province of Assyria, “beyond the river.”

The heathen were not suffered to pollute the land with impunity. “They feared not the Lord, therefore the Lord sent

lions among them which slew some of them." The presence and the manner of the preying of these terrible beasts, convinced them that there was something supernatural in the visitation, and they ascribed it to the God of Israel. In their complaint to the king of Assyria they confessed that "they knew not the manner of the God of the land," nor how He should be propitiated. The king sent them (as we suppose) a priest of the corrupted order ordained by Jeroboam to minister before the calves in Bethel and in Dan, who had fixed his residence in Bethel, one of the chief seats of Jeroboam's idolatry, "and taught them how they should fear the Lord." Howbeit, the Assyrians did not abandon their own gods, but made and set them in the high places before used by the Israelites, and associated the worship of the God of the land—the true God—with the worship of their own idols. "So" (in this manner) "they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the Lord and served their own gods after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence." That is to say, they imitated the conduct of the Israelites whom they had led away captive, who had mingled the worship of idols with the worship of the true God, 2 Ki. xvii. 24–41. The next notice of this mongrel race, is of the breaking down of some of their high places and images by the pious and zealous Josiah, king of Judah, who essayed to carry his reform throughout their territories. "The altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place, he brake down, and burned the high place," "and sent and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord, which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words," 1 Ki. xiii. 1–6: "And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger," namely, "in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali," 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1–8. Josiah took away and did to them accord-

ing to all the acts that he had done in Bethel. He slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them," "cut down all the idols, throughout all the land of Israel," "and returned to Jerusalem," 2 Ki. xxiii. 1-20. This zealous invasion of the territories of Israel, for the purpose of suppressing idolatry, and once more establishing the true worship of God, took place B. C. 628, ninety-three years after the captivity of the ten tribes. The people inhabiting the country, (now for the first time designated Samaria, from the chief city, built by Omri, and called after the name of the former owner of the hill, 1 Ki. xvi. 24,) made no resistance—no blood being shed but that of the idolatrous priests, and that was shed according to the law of God. To what extent, and for how long a time the zeal of Josiah was successful in suppressing idolatry in the colony, is not of record. It is however more than intimated that persons were present out of Israel at Jerusalem when Josiah, in a regularly called and public assembly, renewed the covenant with God, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29-33: and such were present also at the celebration of the passover not long after, 2 Chron. xxxv. 1-18, for the pious king gathered the people of God on this occasion from both Israel and Judah.

A further notice of the Samaritans dates ninety-two years from this time, namely, in the year B. C. 536, when, under the decree of Cyrus, Ezra with his countrymen returned from the seventy years' captivity, took possession of the land of Judah, and laid the foundations of the second temple. The Samaritans made a formal application "to Zerubbabel and to the chief of the fathers" to unite with them in building the temple on the ground of a common religion: "Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do: and we do sacrifice unto Him since the days of Esar-haddon, king of Asshur, who brought us up hither." "What concord hath Christ with Belial? What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" 2 Cor. vi. 15. An alliance could not be tolerated of the worshippers of the true God with the worshippers of idols, and their application was promptly repelled. "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God: but we our-

selves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us." They then became "adversaries" of "the children of the captivity," and, by representations to the king of Persia, succeeded in putting a stop to the building of the temple for fourteen years—until the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia, (from B. C. 534 to B. C. 520,) when the Israelites were stirred up by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to resume the work. "Tatnai, governor on this side the river," and his companions, attempted to interrupt it again, but without success; for the work went on until a decree came from Darius, in reply to the letter of Tatnai, reaffirming the decree of Cyrus, and commanding him and his associates to assist the Jews, and to contribute out of the king's revenue "beyond the river" towards the expenses of the building, and also animals for the sacrifices, and wheat, salt, wine, and oil, day by day, Ezra iii. 8-13; iv. 1-5; v. 1-17; vi. 1-13. So the children of Israel built, finished, and dedicated the second temple, B. C. 516, Ezra vi. 14-22.

Seventy-one years after the dedication of the second temple, B. C. 445, Nehemiah received his commission from Artaxerxes to visit Jerusalem and to build the wall. The Samaritans, for the third time, opposed the Jews, and united with themselves the Arabians, Ammonites, and Ashdodites, who dwelt with them. Sanballat was wroth and stirred up his brethren and the army of the Samaritans, but all in vain; for the wise, energetic, believing, and courageous Nehemiah "finished the wall," and "the heathen round about were much cast down in their own eyes," Neh. i.-vi., B. C. 445. When Nehemiah, B. C. 428, seventeen years after, in his reformation of abuses, caused the people to put away their heathen wives, the zealous reformer spared none of the transgressors, whatever their station might be, for one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib, the high-priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite. This transgressor, himself allied to the highest families, and even of the priesthood, Nehemiah "chased from him." Josephus says his name was Manasseh, and he officiated as priest in the temple afterwards built on Mount Gerizim. The Israelites would form no matrimonial

alliances with the Samaritans, but treated them as they did the heathen, Neh. xiii. 23-31.

The Samaritans continued to occupy a portion of the kingdom of Israel during the long subjection of the Church to foreign powers, they themselves being alike subject to the same powers, namely, to the Medo-Persians, (to 332 B. C.,) to the Macedo-Grecians, (to 301 B. C.,) to the Egyptians, (to 180 B. C.,) and to the Syrians (to 143 B. C.). The Asmonean princes revolted from Syria, achieved the independence of their nation, and fought against the Samaritans as against the common enemy. John Hyrcanus (B. C. 109) besieged and took the city of Samaria and razed it to its foundations. Pompey the Great in his eastern wars annexed Palestine to the Roman empire, B. C. 63, and Gabianus, proconsul of Syria, rebuilt Samaria about forty-eight years after its destruction by Hyrcanus. The emperor Augustus bestowed Samaria upon Herod the Great, who in turn rebuilt the city with great magnificence, (attested by its present ruins,) and called it Sebaste, in honor of Augustus. "Josephus Antiq.," chs. xiii. to xv. ; and "De Bello," chs. i. and xv.

The Samaritans occupied their district, and Sebaste was the capital when our Lord appeared, and they shared in the blessings of His personal ministry, and that of His Apostles. But they and the Jews were still irreconcilable enemies: "The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans." It was the bitter and contemptuous curse of a Jew to call a man a Samaritan, and so was our Lord reviled, John iii. 48. The religion which they professed in His time, (although they had modified it greatly, had renounced idolatry, and, in common with the Jews, held to the five books of Moses and looked for the Messiah,) He esteemed of no saving efficacy; for, in His conversation with the woman of Samaria at the well of Jacob, He said, "Ye" (Samaritans) "worship ye know not what; we" (Jews) "know what we worship." "The saving truth is with us, for salvation is of the Jews." It pleased Him to recognize this degenerate and apostate seed of Israel once at least, in deviating from His ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, spending two days with His Apostles in preaching the

glad tidings of the kingdom, and performing miracles in Samaria, which resulted in the conversion of many souls, John iv. 1-43. This act proves that He did not share in the hatred of the Jews; and so does His refusal, at the request of James and John, to call down fire from heaven to consume the Samaritan village which declined to give Him entertainment, because His face was set towards Jerusalem, Luke ix. 51-56. Who can forget the tender, impressive, and beautiful parable of our Lord, which, from the chief character in it, we entitle "The Parable of the Good Samaritan," Luke x. 25-37? Yet it pleased Him to include the Samaritans with the Gentiles, and to exclude them from the personal ministry of His Apostles at the time He sent them forth two and two to preach the Gospel: "These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matt. x. 5-6.

After our Lord's ascension, obedient to the commission "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," Matt. xvi. 16, His Apostles and ministers did not pass them by. The Evangelist Philip preached and wrought miracles in the name of Christ among them with great success, and "when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost. And they, when they had testified and preached the Word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem and preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans," Acts viii. 1-25. This prompt assistance rendered, Philip shows that after all the Jews had a greater fellow-feeling for the Samaritans than for the Gentiles, for no exception was taken to Philip's laboring among them, or to Peter and John's going down to help him; but when Peter went to Cornelius, and preached, and companied with the Gentiles, so soon as he came up to Jerusalem, "they of the circumcision contended with him" for so doing, Acts xi. 1-18.

The Samaritans were dispersed in various parts of the Roman empire, were restless under persecutions, endured

many calamities, and participated in all the political changes of Palestine which occurred both before and after the destruction of Jerusalem, even down to our day. A small number still survive on the ancient grounds.

Early in their history the Samaritans possessed themselves of a copy of the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, and had also the books of Joshua and Judges in a corrupted form. But the five books of Moses constitute their Bible—their rule of faith and practice—and they receive no other portions of the Old Testament.

Their copy of the Pentateuch is very ancient, and, in the absence of positive and reliable testimony, it is difficult, if not impossible, to fix its date. It may intervene between their settlement in Israel and the captivity of Judah, or be placed after the captivity in the days of Nehemiah, when he chased Manassch from Jerusalem. It is inferior to the Hebrew, differing from the Hebrew in the chronology, (which seems to be designedly altered,) and in other particulars also. It is written in the ancient Hebrew or Phœnician character. A version of later date is found in the Samaritan language and character.

Of all nations in past time that have dwelt in proximity to, and have had intercourse with the visible Church, the Samaritans only have received and preserved any connected and considerable portion of the Holy Scriptures as their inspired and authoritative rule of faith and practice, and have measurably conformed themselves to the ordinances and forms of worship therein prescribed. They are the only off-shoot of the Church from Adam to Apostolic days! They cannot be considered schismatics, for a schism does not destroy fundamental truths, and consequently the essence of true religion. They are, rather, heretics of the Old Dispensation, for they corrupted the knowledge and worship of God by mingling therewith idolatrous tenets and practices. When first instructed by the priest from Assyria, and in subsequent history, they have readily for the time conformed their religion to the powers that ruled them. Since their renunciation of idolatry, they have been called a sect of the Jews; but it is a mistake to do so, for our Lord did

not acknowledge them to be such ; neither did the Church in His day, nor the Apostles after Him.

What has preserved this people ? Conquering nations have swept over them like waves of the sea, but the Samaritans live, still hold their Pentateuch, worship on old Mount Gerizim, and are looking for Messiah ! Shall the answer be that they have been preserved by the Jewish element in them, which in the progress of time preponderated over the heathen ; that the blood of the covenant seed of Abraham still lingers in their veins, and therefore they can never die ? They are now reduced to but a few hundred souls. Our missionaries visit them, and tell them that Messiah has come. Will their almost dead stock be quickened and receive Him, and spring up and yet bear fruit unto God ?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH FORBIDDEN TO GO TO WAR WITH ISRAEL.—DECLENSION OF RELIGION UNDER REHOBOAM.—THE FIRST WAR BETWEEN THE KINGDOMS.—REVIVAL UNDER AHAS; LARGELY INCREASED UNDER JEHOHAPHAT.—DECLINE UNDER JEHORAM.—ATHALIAH, THE USURPER, EXECUTED.—JEHOIADA THE HIGH-PRIEST.—ZECHARIAH THE PRIEST, THE FIRST MARTYR IN THE PRIESTHOOD.—REIGNS OF JEHOASH, UZZIAH, JOTHAM, AND AHAS; RELIGION DECLINES CONSTANTLY.—THE GREAT REVIVAL UNDER HEZEKIAH: WICKEDNESS AND REFORMATION OF MANASSEH.—THE SHORT AND WICKED REIGN OF AMON.—THE LAST REVIVAL UNDER THE PIOUS JOSIAH.—RAPID INCREASE OF IMPIETY AFTER HIS DEATH.—LABORS OF THE PROPHETS, OF JEREMIAH PARTICULARLY.—NEBUCHADNEZZAR TAKES JERUSALEM, B. C. 606.—BEGINNING OF THE SEVENTY YEARS' CAPTIVITY.—THE BURNING OF THE FIRST TEMPLE, AND FINAL DESOLATION OF THE LAND.—CHURCH IN BABYLONIA; A REMNANT IN EGYPT.—INFLUENCE OF KINGS AND PROPHETS IN THE CHURCH.—BOOKS ADDED TO THE CANON AT THE CAPTIVITY.

REHOBOAM was forbidden to attempt the subjugation of the ten tribes after their revolt, it being the divine will that the two kingdoms should dwell in peace, under the government of their one God and King, until the time for their reunion should be fulfilled; consequently, a war originating on either side would be a rebellion, nay, more—an act of treason against Him. So Abijah interpreted the matter in his address to Jeroboam and his army, in the opening of the first war, and he was right, 2 Chron. xv. 1–12. Twice before the division the tribes had separated and shed each other's blood, namely, in the war between the houses of Saul and David, and in the rebellion of Absalom and Sheba. The kingdoms were in a state of hostile

ity all the days of Rehoboam. Things went well in Judah the first three years of his reign, the king ruling wisely and efficiently, fortifying his territories, and he and his people walking in the way of David and of Solomon, (in his better days,) after the law of the Lord. They were encouraged and strengthened by the accession of numbers of priests, Levites, and people from Israel, who removed into Judah away from idolatry and oppression.

“A proud look goeth before a fall.” No sooner did Rehoboam consider himself secure in his throne, than he “forsook the law of the Lord and all Israel with him!” In one year the kingdom was plunged into idolatries, sodomy, and all the abominations of the nations whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel: “and they did evil in the sight of the Lord and provoked Him to jealousy with their sins which they committed above all that their fathers had done.” The smothered fires of wickedness stirred into life by royal favor, burst into flames, and judgment lingered not. In the fifth year of Rehoboam’s reign, and second of the backslidings, Shishak, king of Egypt, invaded Judah, took the fenced cities and approached Jerusalem. At the preaching of Shemaiah the prophet, Rehoboam and the princes humbled themselves, saying, “The Lord is righteous;” wherefore the Lord turned away His wrath and would not destroy the kingdom altogether; and for the further reason that “also in Judah things went well.” There was strong opposition to the wickedness of the times, and the kingdom was spared for the righteous ones in it. Nevertheless, Shishak took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king’s house, and Solomon’s shields of gold, and departed. The king and his followers in evil were awed and restrained, but not altogether reformed; yet for the remaining twelve years of his reign, the kingdom very generally adhered to the Lord, 2 Chron. xi. 5-23; xii. 1-16; 1 Ki. xiv. 22-24.

War broke out between the two kingdoms in the reign of Abijah; the king of Israel being the aggressor. On the eve of the great battle, Abijah charged upon Jeroboam and Israel their apostacy from God and their many iniquities, saying,

“We keep the charge of the Lord our God, but ye have forsaken Him.” Relying upon the Lord, he went into battle with an odds of two to one against him, and slew, ere its close, five hundred thousand men—one hundred thousand more than he had in his army. He waxed mighty, and, after a short reign of three years, left his kingdom in strength; but the idolatries of his father remained, and the state of religion was not materially improved, 2 Chron. ch. xiii. ; 1 Ki. xv.

But under Abijah's wise and pious son Asa, there was an extensive reformation, which continued during the first ten or eleven years of his reign. He overthrew the altars of the strange gods and the high places; broke down the images; cut down the groves; banished the Sodomites out of the land; brought the reformation into the royal household; took away the idols his father had made; removed his mother from being queen, because she was an idolater, and publicly burnt her idol at the brook Kedron; accumulated dedicated vessels, silver, and gold in the temple; and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Many high places, however, consecrated to idolatry, remained in the land. He was interrupted by war in his twelfth year. Trusting in God, he defeated a huge host of Ethiopians and Lubims; and, on his return, being encouraged and strengthened in his zeal for God by the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, and by the prophecy also of Oded himself, he recommenced his efforts, and carried on his reformation more thoroughly over his whole kingdom, putting away the abominable idols out of all Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which his father had taken from Israel in Mount Ephraim, and renewing the altar of the Lord which was before the porch of the temple.

This glorious revival extended into Israel. There also was the Spirit poured out, for they fell to him out of that kingdom in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him. He gathered a vast congregation of the people, Judah, Benjamin, the strangers out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon, at Jerusalem, in the fifteenth year of his reign. With sacrifices and offerings, and due solemnity, they entered

into covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul, to execute the law, (Deut. xvii. 2,) and to put to death, without respect of persons, any in Judah who should practise idolatry and not seek the Lord. This they did right joyfully, with all their heart, and sought the Lord with their whole desire, and He was found of them. (1 Ki. xv. 1-24; 2 Chron. xiv. 1-15; xv. 1-19; xvi. 1-14.) "For twenty years the Lord gave His people rest round about. They were edified, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost," and so were multiplied and established. Asa also put his kingdom in a more perfect state of defence. His father had an army of four hundred thousand men. He increased it to five hundred and eighty thousand; and his bow abode in strength. Somewhat is alleged against this pious and good king. In the thirty-fifth year of his reign, in his war with Baasha, king of Israel, he purchased the aid of Ben-hadad, king of Syria; and when Hanani the seer reproved him for relying on the aid of the king of Syria, and not upon the Lord, as he had done in the case of the Ethiopians, he was exceeding wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house. At the same time he was guilty of oppression towards some of his people, and in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, in his old age, two years before his death, he was diseased in his feet, yet in his disease he sought not the Lord, but the physicians. He died greatly lamented, and they laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odors and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecary's art. His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him, than whom no king, superior in wisdom, patriotism, energy, and success, ever reigned over Judah. He was the chief of them all, and the kingdom saw its best and most flourishing days under his sceptre. He neglected no part of his royal duty. Every interest of his people received his earnest attention. One of his first acts was to conclude a peace with Israel—the kingdoms having been in a state of hostility for sixty years, from B. C. 975 to 915. He prepared his own heart to seek the Lord; became an eminent example of piety; carried out the reformation so happily begun and continued by his father; searched

out iniquity, and removed out of Judah the remnant of the Sodomites, and the idolatrous high places and groves. The Lord established the kingdom in his hand. He waxed exceedingly mighty, having an army prepared for war of one million one hundred and sixty thousand men, of which Judah furnished seven hundred and eighty thousand, and Benjamin three hundred and eighty thousand. His territories were densely populated, and in the highest state of prosperity.

In the third year of his reign, Jehoshaphat resorted to extraordinary means to remove the spiritual ignorance of the people and enlighten them in the knowledge of the Lord. Under royal commission, he sent five princes, accompanied by nine Levites and two priests, to teach in the cities of Judah: "and they taught in Judah and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people."

Yielding without due consideration to the impulses of a pious and peaceful heart, Jehoshaphat formed what proved to be the great error of his reign—an alliance with Ahab, king of Israel, and successively with his son Abaziah, and his grandson Joram—an alliance which did not benefit Israel, but inflicted lasting evils upon Judah, and laid anew the foundation for declension from God greater than ever before. Persuaded by Ahab to unite with him in an expedition against the Syrians, their combined armies were defeated in battle at Ramoth-gilead, and Jehoshaphat came near losing his life. Jehu, the son of the prophet Hanani, met him on his return to Jerusalem, and reprovved him for the alliance: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from the Lord." Nevertheless, for the good things found in him he was not chastised of God, but only reprovved and warned. But he went to war a second time, with Israel under Joram, against the Moabites, and their whole army was saved from perishing with thirst by a miraculous supply of water sent at the intercession of Elisha the prophet, and particularly on Jehoshaphat's account.

This king was a nursing father to the Church. In order that he might promote the prosperity of the people, it was his

custom to visit, from time to time, his entire territories. After his return from Ramoth-gilead to Jerusalem, "he went out again," that is, he returned and went out (a thing he was accustomed to do), "through the people from Beer-sheba," the most southern extremity, "to Mount Ephraim," the most northern, "and brought them back unto the Lord God of their fathers:" exhorting the judges whom he set in all the fenced cities of Judah to discharge their duties in the fear of the Lord. The supreme court established in Jerusalem to determine appeals "for all matters of the Lord," and "for all the king's matters," he directed to act "in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart."

His own and his people's piety shone wonderfully in the manner in which they met the invasion of the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir. He proclaimed a fast throughout his dominions, and when the great assembly convened in Jerusalem, "all Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, their wives, and their children." The king stood in the congregation, in the house of the Lord, and prayed in the audience of the people for deliverance. His prayer was instantly answered by the Spirit of the Lord upon Jehaziel a Levite: "To-morrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you: ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still and see the salvation of the Lord with you!"

The king's address to his army the next day, as he was about to march, and his approach to the battle, were both significant of his faith in this answer of God to his prayer: "Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established: believe in His prophets, so shall ye prosper." He then placed singers in front of his army, and they advanced singing, "Praise the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever." Like the overthrow of Jericho, it was a fight of faith. The Lord confounded the schemes of their enemies, who fell upon each other, and destroyed one another. Judah had little else to do but gather the spoil. The fourth day after, they assembled in the valley of Berachah and returned thanks unto the Lord!

Extensive and powerful as this revival of religion was in the Church under Asa and Jehoshaphat, it was not entirely perfect, since it is added, “the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.” The high places here intended, were not those consecrated to the worship of idols—for these it is said, 2 Chron. xvii. 6, he had taken away—but high places where the people worshipped and sacrificed to the living and true God—their own Lord and Saviour—not conforming to the law which required that all sacrifices should be offered before the temple and nowhere else—a “will worship” of their own devising, to save themselves the trouble, time, and expense of going up to the one altar, and to the one temple at Jerusalem, 1 Kings xxii. ; 2 Chron. xvii., xix.–xx.

The evil of Jehoshaphat’s alliance with Israel revealed itself in the short reign of his son Jehoram, who married the daughter of Ahab, and embraced the religion and imitated the character of that abominable house. He murdered in cold blood his own brothers of the seed royal, and divers princes, restored the idolatrous high places on the mountains of Judah, and used his influence and power to compel the people to the practice of idolatry with its vile impurities.

In the full tide of Jehoram’s apostasy, his attention was arrested by a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, who died in his father’s reign, and foreseeing the wicked reign of Jehoram left this writing to be delivered to him. The prophet had foretold what Jehoram’s course would be when he should be king, and he saw that he had fulfilled the prophecy to the letter. “He had not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat his father, nor in the ways of Asa, king of Judah: but had walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a-whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab: and had slain his brethren of his father’s house which were better than he.” All this he had done! And what was to follow? Heavy and miserable judgments, unless he should repent and Judah with him. “Thus saith the Lord, because thou hast so done” “behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people and thy

children, and thy wives and all thy goods: and thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day!" Both king and people despised this message of God. The judgments followed fast. The Edomites revolted from under his hand. The Philistines and Arabians invaded his territories, entered Jerusalem, sacked his palace, carried away his wives, and all his sons, save one, "and after all this the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease: and after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases, without being desired (execrated), after a reign of eight years: his people made no burning for him and gave him no burial in the sepulchre of the kings." He left his kingdom in a weakened, backslidden, and fallen condition—lower than it ever had been, 2 Kings viii; 2 Chron. xxi.

His wicked son Ahaziah, called also Azariah and Jehoahaz, walked in his footsteps, and added to his corruptions; marrying also into the house of Ahab, and following the counsels of that house and of his mother Athaliah. He went to war, with Joram, king of Israel, against Hazael, king of Syria. They were defeated. Joram lay sick of his wounds in Jezreel; there Jehu, while inflicting vengeance upon the house of Ahab, found Ahaziah on a visit to Joram. He fled and hid himself in Samaria, where he was caught and brought to Jehu, who slew him in the first year of his reign and gave him burial, because he was the grandson of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xxii.; 2 Kings ix.

Her son being dead, Athaliah, following the example of her bloody husband Jehoram, put to death all the seed royal of the house of Judah, save one that escaped, and then usurped the throne. The triumph of the wicked appeared complete. The house of the Lord had been invaded. Ahaziah and his brethren, the sons of Athaliah, had disfigured and made breaches in it irreverently and contemptuously. The valuable dedicated things for the support of the temple and its service, they had taken away and bestowed upon the worship of Baal, which had now been established in Judah, as it had been in Israel, with altars, images, and priests.

But Jehoiada the priest resolutely held the temple during the six years of Athaliah's usurpation, and conducted the service in the prescribed forms: 2 Kings xi. 1-16; 2 Chron. xxii.-xxiii. He finally succeeded in deposing Athaliah, and establishing his wife's nephew, Joash, or Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, on the throne—a child in his seventh year. He was proclaimed king in the temple, where he had been secreted since his father's death. This true patriot and resolute man, this zealous priest and servant of God, was born in the reign of Solomon, four years before the division of the kingdom, B. C. 980, and was contemporary with Rehoboam,—having attained his majority the very year of that king's death,—and also with all the succeeding kings, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah. He had participated in the events and changes of these reigns, and was full of wisdom, and of great influence in Judah. Jehoiada brought up the royal child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and for twenty-seven years, while his uncle lived, he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according as his uncle counselled him. Jehoiada's first act, after crowning the child and slaying Athaliah, was the assembling the priests and people, that with the king they might enter into covenant to be the Lord's people. Afterwards he began to restore the blessed days of Asa and Jehoshaphat. Seconding his designs, the people went in their zeal “to the house of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his altars and images in pieces, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.” Jehoiada at the same time restored the worship of the temple to its regular form and order, and brought the people back to the Lord their God, but not perfectly; “for the high places were not taken away, the people still sacrificed, and burnt incense in the high places.” The temple and its courts, after so long a time, and from actual injury and neglect, had fallen out of repair, and Jehoash, self-moved, aroused Jehoiada and the priests to the duty of securing collections from the people. He succeeded in gathering money in abundance for the repair of the house. The people gave liberally, so that silver and gold were left over to be made up into various vessels to minister in the house of the Lord. The repairs were thorough

and complete ; the masons, carpenters, and workers in iron and brass, “ set the house of God in his state and strengthened it.” “ They offered burnt-offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada.” While he lived religion flourished. Beautiful is the record of the death of this eminent high-priest and servant of God ! A kingly man in life, he was honored with kingly burial at his death. “ But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died : an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died. And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel both toward God and toward his house.”

When this holy man was dead, whose influence over the king was paramount to that of all other men, the wicked princes of Judah had access to the court and confidence of the king, and led him speedily astray. “ They left the house of the Lord God of their fathers and served groves and idols,” and the people followed their rulers. “ Yet the Lord sent prophets to bring them again unto the Lord, and they testified against them, but they would not give ear.” When the spirit of the Lord came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the Priest, and he stood above the people, and said unto them, “ Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord that ye cannot prosper ? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, He hath also forsaken you ”—they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord ! Our Lord, marks the spot—“ between the temple and the altar.” Where Zechariah stood mediating between an offended God and an offending people, there they shed his blood unto death ! Matt. xxiii. 35. This is the first recorded instance of the martyrdom of a priest of the Most High God ; martyred while ministering in the sanctuary, and by the professing people of the Lord !—a crime hereafter to be avenged, aggravated as it was in the case of the king, for he imbrued his hands in the blood of a near relative, and, with base ingratitude forgot the kindness of his uncle Jehoiada, the father of Zechariah, to whom he owed the preservation of his life and the possession of his crown ! “ Thus Jehoash the king

remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son ! ”

God executed judgment upon him by the hand of Hazael, king of Syria ; and after his departure Jehoash was afflicted with sore diseases, and his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the Priest, and slew him in his bed, 2 Kings xi., xii. ; 2 Chron. xxiii., xxiv. Amaziah was a better king than his father, yet “ not like David,” nor was he of a perfect heart. Having closed a successful war against the Edomites, for which he could muster only 300,000 men, he publicly introduced in Jerusalem the gods of Edom, as his gods : for which God executed judgment upon him by the hand of Joash, king of Israel, who defeated and took him prisoner, broke down four hundred cubits of the wall of Jerusalem, rifled the palace and temple of their treasures, and returned in triumph to Samaria. The defeated king shared the fate of his father, for he was finally murdered by conspirators, 2 Kings xiv. ; 2 Chron. xxv. While Amaziah reigned, the first prophet of the sixteen whose writings form a part of the sacred canon, was prophesying in Israel, namely, Jonah, 2 Kings xiv. 25.

His son Uzziah, called also Azariah, had a long reign of fifty-two years, in the first part of which “ he did all that was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did : ” that is, he upheld all that his father had done which was agreeable to the will of God, but went no further. He sought God in the days of the prophet Zechariah, and was prospered in war and peace. He fortified Jerusalem, and increased his army to 307,500 men. His fame extended to Egypt. Although not accused of practising idolatry himself, he permitted it among the people. Prosperity revealed his real character in his pride, for he presumptuously attempted to officiate as priest in the temple ; but Azariah, the chief priest and eighty priests withstood and thrust him out ; and while he was wroth with the priests, leprosy arose up in his forehead in the house of the Lord, beside the incense-altar, and he himself hastened to go out, because the Lord had smitten him. The king

was a leper to the day of his death, and "dwelt in a several house," 2 Chron. xxvi.

Joel prophesied during a part of his reign, and Isaiah the last year of it, while Hosea and Amos prophesied in Israel, 2 Chron. xxvi. ; 2 Kings xv.

The sixteen years of Jotham, Uzziah's son and successor, were attended with no improvement in the spiritual state of the people. "They did yet corruptly," sacrificing and burning incense in the high places. Although Jotham was a moderately good king, he followed the policy of his father, but abstained from imitating him in entering into the temple of the Lord. Towards the close of his reign the Lord began more seriously to press Judah with her old enemies, Syria and Israel, 2 Chron. xvii. ; 2 Kings xv. ; Micah i.-ii.

His son Ahaz openly espoused idolatry, "sacrificing and burning incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every great tree:" and was the first king that sacrificed human sacrifices—even his own son to the dumb idols! "Wherefore the Lord brought Israel low." From the north came the king of Syria, who beat him in battle and carried away a great multitude of Israelites captive to Damascus. Then Pekah, king of Israel, slew in Judah 120,000 valiant men, and carried away 200,000 women, sons and daughters, captives to Samaria, and much spoil. Both persons and spoil were, however, soon after sent back. From the south rose up the Edomites, who smote Judah and carried away captives; and the Philistines overran and retained possession of the south of Judah. Ahaz formed an alliance with Tiglath-pilezer, king of Assyria, which helped him not, and he went forward hardening himself both under mercies and judgments. In his distress, he trespassed yet more and more. He despised the sign offered to him by Isaiah from the Lord, in evidence that Judah should be delivered from the invasion of Syria and Israel, Isa. vii. 1-16; adopted the gods of Syria as his gods, "because," said he, "the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them that they may help me!" and sent from Damascus the pattern of an idolatrous altar to Urijah the high-priest in Jerusalem, who built one like it in the court of

the Lord's house, on which the king on his return sacrificed ! He had the brazen altar, which stood in front of the temple, Exod. xxxviii. 1 ; 2 Chron. i. 5-6, between it and his own altar, removed to the north side of his altar, and appropriated the brazen altar to his own use, saying, " it shall be for me to inquire by," and ordered Urijah to offer all the sacrifices of the Lord, of every kind, on his altar. The pliant high-priest and priests acquiesced in his profanity and sacrilege ! So much had the priests declined since the days of Uzziah. Ahaz proceeded to perpetrate yet greater impieties : he took the laver from the bases, the sea from off the brazen oxen and put it upon a pavement of stones, and consecrated a portion of the temple to the service of the kings of Assyria. Finally he " gathered together and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God " (that is, a portion of them, so that the priests might not use them in the temple service, or that he might both sell and employ them in carrying on his own idolatrous worship, comp. 2 Chron. xxix. 19), " and shut up the doors of the house of the Lord,"—doors which had stood open for 267 years (B. C. 1005-738), and which no man had dared to shut before ! The priests were turned out, and the sacrifices ceased, and the worshippers of God found no entrance ! 2 Chron. xxix. 1-7. " He made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem," converting the city of the great King into a seat of idolatry and iniquity, and essayed to establish idolatry throughout his kingdom : " for in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods." Formality characterized the services of those who adhered to the Lord, while iniquity of every kind abounded among all classes of the people, as the writings of the prophet Isaiah testify, 2 Kings xvi. ; 2 Chron. xxviii. ; Isa. vii.-x. ; i. 1-31. Saith Isaiah ; " when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isa. lix. 19) ; and it came to pass in the midst of this decline. Hezekiah, the son of the wicked Ahaz, in the royal household, was converted, and with other devout worshippers, mourned in secret over the desolations of Zion. Anticipating his succession to the throne without question, he had formed his plan for a reformation in the Church. In the

first month of the first year of his reign, and upon the first day of that month he opened the doors of the house of the Lord which had remained closed for ten or twelve years. He called together, the priests and Levites at the east gate, and after an earnest address set them to the work of cleansing and sanctifying the house and courts of the Lord, which was accomplished in sixteen days, when the priests reported to the king that the house of the Lord was prepared for worship. Early the next day he gathered the rulers of the city, went up and renewed the worship of God with a sin-offering for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and Judah. The king and the congregation laid their hands, with confessions and supplications, upon the heads of the he-goats for the sin-offering, and the priests killed them, making reconciliation with their blood upon the altar for all Israel. The offerings were accompanied with the songs of thanksgiving and praise by the Levites, with sounding of trumpets, music of cymbals, psalteries, and harps. At the conclusion, the king and all that were present bowed themselves and worshipped. These services were followed by the approach and worship, at the king's command, of the people generally—a large congregation with numerous sacrifices. It was a day of humiliation and confession, yet of thanksgiving, “so the service of the house of the Lord was set in order. And Hezekiah rejoiced and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.”

Nor did he confine his reformation to Jerusalem, but communicated the glad tidings of the reopening of the house of the Lord to all Judah and Israel, calling upon all to humble themselves and turn again to the Lord that He might be merciful and gracious to His people; and to assemble themselves and keep the passover at Jerusalem in the following, the second month. The posts went with the letters of the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah. The spirit of the Lord was copiously poured out: “for divers in the tribes of Israel humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem: also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes by the word of the Lord.” In all this Hezekiah acted by divine direction.

To this passover "a very great congregation" came. Their first act was to cleanse the city. "They arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away and cast them in the brook Kedron!" Then they killed the passover and kept the feast seven days with great gladness. So filled were they with the spirit of the Lord in His service, that the whole assembly resolved to extend their meeting for seven other days. There was great joy in Jerusalem, for no passover had been kept equal to it since the days of Solomon. The Lord was with His people, and their services closed impressively, for "the priests, the Levites, arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling-place even unto heaven."

This was the favored hour to complete the overthrow of idolatry. The feast being ended, "all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all." Hezekiah fully established the worship of God according to all the law of the Lord—even the regular courses and services both of priests and Levites, in the temple, the sacrifices, sacred feasts, and seasons. He ordained offerings and the tithes of all things: that the priests and Levites might be properly supported not only in Jerusalem, but in all their cities throughout the land; and the people abundantly seconded his work. In all things Hezekiah himself acted with all his heart; but it was otherwise with the major part of the people. Of them the holy seer Isaiah speaks, "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me; but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men, therefore will I proceed to do a marvellous work among this people," etc., Isa. xxix. 1-14, etc. Hezekiah successfully rebelled against the king of Assyria, and prospered in his war with the Philistines, 2 Ki. xviii. 1-16, but in the fourteenth year of his reign, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Judah, and he was constrained to submit himself and pay the tribute

imposed upon him. In this same year Hezekiah was miraculously healed of his sickness by the prophet Isaiah, and assured of the lengthening out of his life fifteen years, by the sign of the going back ten degrees of the shadow on his dial. He was moreover delivered out of the hand of Sennacherib, the Lord miraculously destroying his army. These prosperous events elevated Hezekiah in the sight of the nations round about him, proving a snare to himself, for "His heart was lifted up; he rendered not again according to the benefit done him." When Berodach-baladan, king of Babylon, sent ambassadors to congratulate him on his recovery from sickness, in pride and self-sufficiency, (for the Lord in this matter left him to himself, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart,) he showed them all his wealth and magnificence. For this he was reproved by Isaiah, and the judgment of the captivity was pronounced against him, his family, and kingdom. "Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah."

The son and successor of so pious and excellent a king, was the worst man and the worst king that ever sat on the throne of Judah. "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!" Eccl. x. 16; Isa. iii. 4. Manasseh was but twelve years of age when he was crowned, and those who governed in the kingdom during his youth must have had much to do with the dreadful relapse into idolatry. He overturned everything of the reformation effected by his father, and became an oppressive, cruel, and bloody tyrant, and an infamous idolater, consecrating himself to abominations, and exceeding the vileness of the heathen. He built again the high places his father had destroyed, reinstated the worship of Baal, and worshipped all the hosts of heaven. He made his son pass through the fire, observed times, used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards. He also followed the wicked example of his grandfather Ahaz, and exceeded him in that he built altars in the house of the Lord—altars for all the hosts of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord—and did what none dared to

do before him, even setting a graven image of the grove in the house of God—in the house which God had chosen, and of which he said, “In this house I will put my name forever!” He added to idolatry and sacrilege, cruel oppressions of his own people: “Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another!” He finally succeeded in seducing and carrying the people along with him “to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel!”

God’s judgment lingered for a time; but in the twentieth year of Manasseh’s reign, and the thirty-second of his life, he was taken captive by the king of Assyria and carried in chains to Babylon. This miserable sinner it pleased God to make a monument of His mercy, that in him, one of the chiefest of sinners, “Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting,” 1 Tim. i. 15–16. By the Holy Spirit his affliction was sanctified, and his heart regenerated. “When he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto Him: and He was entreated of him, and heard his supplication and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.” The remaining years of his reign he devoted to the uprooting of the idolatries he had established, and to the repair of all the injuries he had inflicted upon the Church. He purified the temple, (in part,) restored the service of the Lord, and was himself a constant and humble worshipper there. “He commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel.” The suppression of overt acts of idolatry was perfect in the kingdom: “Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only,” 2 Ki. xxi. 5; 2 Chron. xxxiii.

The wicked reign of Amon, who attempted to imitate his father in the early part of his life, was suddenly terminated by his assassination in his palace by conspirators, and he gave way to Josiah the last of the pious kings of Judah.

Crowned king at eight years of age, and at sixteen savingly converted to God, Josiah followed in the footsteps of Asa,

Jeshoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Manasseh, and in personal piety excelled them all. Saith the Holy Spirit: "And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might according to all the law of Moses: neither after him arose there any like him."

In the twentieth year of his age and twelfth of his reign, (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3-7) "he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem," first at the house of God by giving commandment to the chief priests and priests to purify the temple. The idolatrous vessels made for Baal, Asteroth, and the hosts of heaven, which had been returned there by Amon, or overlooked by Manasseh, he burned without the city at the brook Kedron. He brought out the grove from the house of the Lord, burned it in the same place, and scattered the ashes contemptuously on the graves of the people. The altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, he overthrew, and cast the dust of them into the Kedron. He next looked to the abominations around the temple, demolishing the houses of the Sodomites that were by the house of the Lord, where the women manufactured articles for idolatrous uses. He took away the houses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun at the entering in of the house of the Lord, and burned the chariots of the sun. Next he went forth into the city and destroyed the idolatrous high places at its gates; and without, in the valley of Hinnon, he defiled Topheth, and put an end to the sacrifices of children to Moloch. He ascended the mountains around Jerusalem, and the high places which Solomon had builded (so long had they remained) to the abominable idols of the Zidonians, the Moabites, and Ammonites, breaking in pieces the images, cutting down the groves, and filling their places with the bones of men. The idolatrous priests of every kind that burned incense and served in and around Jerusalem, he effectually put down. Having purged the temple, the holy city and its suburbs, he went throughout all Judah on his righteous errand, superintending the reformation himself—for

it was all done "in his presence." Yea, his zeal carried him into the kingdom of Israel now occupied by the Samaritans—into the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and he proceeded even into Naphthali. The altar and high place at Bethel, built by the arch-apostate Jeroboam, he broke down, burned and stamped to powder. He consumed the bones of dead men on that altar, thus fulfilling a prophecy pronounced against it three hundred and forty-six years before! (B. C. 974–628.) All the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria which the kings of Israel had made, he took away and destroyed, slaying all the priests that were there. When he had thus gone throughout Judah and Israel, and finished his work, he returned to Jerusalem. So Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel (that is, Judah and Israel) to serve the Lord their God; and all his days they departed not from following the Lord, the God of their fathers.

It was not until six years after the commencement of this reformation, (more thorough in the destruction of all monuments and vestiges of idolatry than any that had preceded it,) and when Josiah was in the eighteenth year of his reign, that he was at leisure to attend to the repairs of the house of God. Collections were made for the purpose throughout all Judah and Israel. While the repairs were in progress, Hilkiah found in the temple "the book of the law of the Lord given by Moses," and sent it by Shaphan the scribe to the king, Dent. xxxi. 24–26. If this was the only copy of the law extant at the time, and the only one the king had an opportunity of hearing, it not only demonstrates how sad the decline had been among the people, but also how strenuous the efforts of the infidel kings,—Manasseh above all others,—utterly to root out the worship of God and effectually to blot out the Church. The book was read before the king, and he was overwhelmed with a conviction of the sins of himself and of Israel. He rent his clothes, wept, humbled himself before the Lord, and prayed for mercy. He sent to Huldah, the prophetess in Jerusalem, to inquire of the Lord concerning the great wrath which they

and their fathers had incurred. The believing and penitent king was answered graciously, that the wrath incurred should fall upon the place and people, but, for the good that was found in him, not in his days; as for himself he should go to his grave in peace, and not see the evil. The prophecy was fulfilled in that he was wounded in battle with Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, whose march through his territories towards the Euphrates Josiah opposed. He was brought to Jerusalem, and died in peace, and his people were visited with no judgments of God.

Upon the reception of this gracious message, the king assembled the elders of Judah and Jerusalem, so many of the people as could be gathered, and the priests and Levites, into the house of the Lord, and he read in their hearing the words of the book of the law. He stood in his place and entered into a solemn covenant to walk after the Lord according to His Word, with all his heart and with all his soul, and caused the people present to stand to the covenant; and they did so.

At the regular time in the first month of the same year, the passover was kept with great solemnity and purity, and by great numbers out of Judah and Israel. On this occasion he ordered the Levites to put the ark of God into its place in the temple, and let it no longer be a burden upon their shoulders; from which we gather that the priests and Levites must have taken it out of the holy place in order to preserve it from profanation and destruction, at times when they themselves were cast out and the temple given up to idols. Of this passover it is written, "there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet, neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept." This pious king enjoyed in his kingdom the ministry of the prophets Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk; and over his untimely end Jeremiah uttered his lamentations. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for him, 2 Chron. xxxiv.—xxxv.; 2 Ki. xx.—xxiii.; Lam. iv. 20.

This revival of religion and reformation in the Church delayed a little longer the threatened wrath and captivity; but when Josiah was gathered to his fathers, the vials were poured

out. In three months, his wicked son Jehoahaz was deposed and carried a captive into Egypt by Pharaoh-Necho, where he died. Pharaoh-Necho made Eliakim, another son of Josiah, king in his stead, laid the land under tribute, and changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim, 2 Ki. xxiii. 30-35; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1-4.

Urijah prophesied against the city and the land, and when Jehoiakim and the princes sought to put him to death, he fled into Egypt, whither the king sent, had him apprehended, brought back, slain with the sword, and cast contemptuously into the graves of the common people. But it was against the faithful and fearless Jeremiah that their wrath was chiefly stirred. Worn out with the obduracy and contempt of the people, on one occasion he cursed the day of his birth. Pashur, the son of Immer the priest, (who was also governor in the house of the Lord,) put him in the stocks—in the high gate of Benjamin—by the house of the Lord! The priests, the (false) prophets, and the people, followed the example of the king and his nobles. They rose upon Jeremiah, and, while arrayed against him in the house of the Lord to put him to death, the princes of Judah hearing the tumultuous proceeding, came from the king's house and had the case brought before them. Jeremiah defended himself. The assembly was divided. The princes, people, and certain elders of the land, took part with Jeremiah against the priests and prophets, principally through the influence of one distinguished individual, Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, Jer. xxvi.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, (B. C. 606,) Jeremiah, having been prophesying for twenty-two or three years, (since B. C. 628,) predicted the seventy years' captivity of Judah. In the same year, (B. C. 606,) Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem for the first time, and the seventy years' captivity dates from the year B. C. 606. Nebuchadnezzar, at first intending to take Jehoiakim to Babylon, afterwards changed his mind, released him from his fetters, restored him to his kingdom, and made him tributary; but carried away a portion of the vessels of the house of the Lord, and put them in his temple at Babylon. He also made a selection of the best of the people and

of the seed royal, and the princes, to be educated for his service, among whom were Daniel, and his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Dan. i. 1 ; Jer. xiii.-xx.

One year after, at a feast, the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies being read by Baruch in the temple to the people, and report of it being brought to the king, he sent for the roll, and after hearing three or four leaves read, he cut it with his penknife, and burnt it in the fire, against the remonstrances of some of his powerful men, Jer. xxv.-xxxvi. ; 2 Ki. xxxiv. ; 2 Chron. xxxvi. In the third year of his restoration, Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, and was immediately attacked by forces gathered from the Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites. He died in the midst of these commotions by the judgment of God, and his body was cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem, with the burial of an ass, exposed in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frosts, Jer. xxii. 18-19 ; xxxvi. 30-31. Upon his death, the succession in the house of David terminated, and by the decree of God, Jer. xxxvi. 30 ; for although he was succeeded by his son Jehoiakim, nevertheless in three months after, Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem the second time, dethroned him, and carried him and the royal household away to Babylon, together with the officers of the court, the princes, the army, the craftsmen and smiths, and the notable men of Jerusalem and the kingdom. "None remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land." The prophet Ezekiel and Mordecai the Jew were among the captives at this time, Ezek. i. 1-2 ; Esther ii. 5-6 ; 2 Ki. xxiv. 10-16. Nebuchadnezzar also carried away "all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which king Solomon had made in the temple of the Lord," in fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, xx. 5, and made Zedekiah, or Mattaniah, uncle (brother or kinsman, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10) of Jehoiakim, king, 2 Ki. xxiv. 17 ; Jer. xxxvii. 1 ; lii. 1-3.

Zedekiah rebelled in his ninth year, and, upon the approach of Nebuchadnezzar's army, at the preaching of Jeremiah, the king and the people released all the Hebrew slaves, unjustly held in bondage, and feigned repentance for their sins, as their

subsequent conduct proved ; for when the Babylonians were actually before the city, because Jeremiah prophesied success to them, Zedekiah shut him up in prison, Jer. xxxvii. 1-4 ; xxxiv. 1-10 ; xxxii. 1-5 ; 2 Ki. xxv. 1-2 ; and immediately as Nebuchadnezzar raised the siege and marched against the king of Egypt, the king and people enslaved their former Hebrew servants again, Jer. xxxvii. 5 ; xxxiv. 11-22.

When Jeremiah attempted to flee into the country from the persecutions in the city, he was apprehended as a deserter to the Chaldeans, beaten, and put in a dungeon by Zedekiah. Afterwards he was removed into the court of the prison. Persisting in his prophecies, at the instance of several princes he was cast into a dungeon worse than the first, from which miserable place, at the intercession of an officer of the court, he was removed and kept in the court of the prison, where he remained until delivered by the officers of Nebuchadnezzar's army, on the day that the city was finally taken and destroyed. Having defeated the king of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar resumed the siege of Jerusalem, and took the city for the third and last time, fulfilling the word of the Lord which He spake by the mouths of His prophets, "I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down," 2 Ki. xxi. 10-13. The king, in attempting to escape out of Jerusalem, was captured and delivered to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, who slew Zedekiah's sons before his eyes, put out the king's eyes, bound him in fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon. He had brought to him at Riblah seventy-four distinguished men of Jerusalem, who had been engaged in the rebellion, and put them to death, making a public example of them. By his command Nebuzar-adan, his general-in-chief, sacked the temple completely, and left neither vessel, nor gold, nor silver, nor brass, remaining in it. "He burnt the house of the Lord and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house he burnt with fire." With his army he demolished the walls of Jerusalem, and rooted and burnt out the population, leaving the city a heap of rubbish and smouldering ruins. The people that were left in the city when it was taken, and those who during the war had deserted

to the king of Babylon, and the remnant of the multitude of the land Nebuzar-adan carried away. But he left the poor of the people, who had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time," 2 Ki. xxiv. 17, etc. ; xxv. 1-21. "So Judah was carried away out of their land," Jer. xxxix. 1-19 ; lii. 1-23.

No estimate of the numbers carried into Babylonia is left on Sacred Record. There were six distinct transportations under Nebuchadnezzar : first, in the first year of his reign, when he first took Jerusalem, Dan. i. 1-3 ; xxiv. 1-2. Second, in the seventh year of his reign, 2 Ki. xxiv. 1-2 ; Jer. lii. 28. Third, in the eighth year, 2 Ki. xxiv. 10-16. Fourth, in the eighteenth year, Jer. lii. 29. Fifth, in the nineteenth year, when the temple was destroyed, Jer. lii. 12 ; 2 Ki. xxv. 8. Sixth, in the three-and-twentieth year, (which was four years after the destruction of the city and the temple, and after the death of Gedaliah, and the departure of the people into Egypt,) the last remnant that remained, Nebuzar-adan passing through Judah when Nebuchadnezzar was besieging Tyre, carried away, amounting to seven hundred and forty-five persons in all, Jer. lii. 30.

The religious history of Judah, and the Lord's final judgment for the wickedness of His people, and His own justification for that judgment, the Holy Spirit has summed up in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11-21, as follows : "Zedekiah the king stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel. Moreover, all the chiefs of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord which He had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending ; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling-place ; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy. Therefore He brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden,

old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burned the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah (xxv. 9-12; xxvi. 6-7; xxix. 10), until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate, she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."

So Judah, at the end of two hundred and fifty-four years after the division, saw the Lord put away her backsliding sister Israel, giving her a bill of divorcement and sending her into captivity; yet she went on in her wicked way and turned not to the Lord with her whole heart, but feignedly (Jer. iii. 1-25). Nevertheless, in fulfilment of His covenant with David, and for the sake of those that defiled not their garments, but walked with God, her days were lengthened out one hundred and thirty-three years, until she "was carried away out of the land," having existed as an independent kingdom, three hundred and sixty-nine years, (from B. C. 975 to 606,) and then as a tributary to Babylon eighteen years longer, (from B. C. 606 to 587,) 2 Ki. xxv.; 2 Chron. xxxvi.

During these current three hundred and eighty-eight years, there were seventeen kings and one queen—a usurper. Two more kings reigned after Judah became tributary, making nineteen in all, and every one of the house of David according to the promise of God. The same number of kings ruled over Israel, but the average reign of the kings was much shorter in Israel than in Judah. Eleven of the kings of Judah, (including Queen Athaliah,) were decidedly wicked—some more so than others,—namely, Rehoboam, Abijah, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah, Ahaz, Amon, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, (or Jeconiah,) and Zedekiah, (or Mattaniah.) Four, namely, Je-

hoash, (or Joash,) Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jothan, were wicked, (generally, however, upholding religion,)—some practising idolatry. Four were decidedly pious, opposed corruption and idolatry, and promoted religion most zealously; namely, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. One, Manasseh, was for twenty years infamously wicked, and for thirty-five eminently pious. Eight died quietly in their beds, namely, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jothan, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. One, queen Athaliah, was executed as a usurper. Three were murdered by conspirators, namely, Joash, Amaziah, and Amnon. Two died by special diseases, namely, Jehoram and Uzziah. Two were killed in war, Ahaziah and Josiah. One perished by divine judgment, and had the burial of an ass, namely, Jehoiakim; and three died in captivity, namely, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. The evil kings reigned altogether (including twenty years of Manasseh's reign) two hundred and twenty-seven years; the good kings (including thirty-five years of Manasseh's reign) one hundred and sixty-one years; so that for more than one half of the time of the kingdom, religion was upheld and the Church prospered.

To return to the narrative: Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah ruler over the people of the land of Judah, and, when Jerusalem was taken, charged Nebuzar-adan concerning Jeremiah, with whose character and prophecies, favorable to his success, he was acquainted, saying, "Take him and look well to him, and do him no harm, but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee," Jer. xxxix. 11-14. Accordingly, Nebuzar-adan and the princes with him sent and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, bound him in chains, and carried him with all the captives to Ramah. There he loosed him from his chains, because he had been the prophet of God by whom the successes of Nebuchadnezzar had been predicted, and said, "Now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which were upon thy hands," etc.; and gave him his choice either to go with him to Babylon, and be well provided for there, or to remain with Gedaliah and the people, or to go wheresoever it seemed convenient for him to go. The holy and patriotic man determined to remain with and share the

fortunes of the remnant of the people. "So the captain of the guard gave him victuals, and a reward, and let him go," committing him to the care of Gedaliah the governor, Jer. xl. 1-6; xxxix. 14.

The news of the appointment of Gedaliah as governor over all the people that were left, spread through the land and the countries round about. The captains and men of Zedekiah's army who had escaped from Jerusalem and from the pursuit of the Chaldeans, and had secreted themselves in the fields, came and submitted themselves to Gedaliah, who encouraged them to dwell in the land and serve the Chaldeans. Likewise, all the Jews that were in Moab, among the Ammonites, in Edom, and in all the countries and places whither they were driven and had fled for refuge, returned and came to Gedaliah, at Mizpah, which he had made the seat of government.

The remnant thus collected began to occupy the deserted villages and fields, to gather summer fruits, and to settle themselves permanently; but their quiet and prosperity were of short duration. Baalis, king of the Ammonites,—for what reason we are left to conjecture,—securing the friendship and services of Ishmael, one of the prominent officers in Zedekiah's army, sent him to slay Gedaliah. The noble, generous, and confiding man, although warned by other officers of Ishmael's designs, could not believe him capable of such execrable and bloody perfidy; and when his friend Johanan laid before him the evils which would befall the remnant of Judah in the event of his being murdered, and offered to go himself and put the traitor and assassin to death, Gedaliah would neither permit him to do it, nor take any precautions against Ishmael; but carelessly entertaining Ishmael with ten of his men at Mizpah, Ishmael rose upon him and put him to the sword, and the Jews, and the men of war, and the Chaldeans found there with him. The next day he slew eighty more unsuspecting and innocent men who came up from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria for religious purposes; then gathering all the people together in Mizpah he departed to go over to the Ammonites, 2 Ki. xxv. 23-26; Jer. xl. 1-16; xli. 1-10, but he was speedily pursued by Johanan and the captains of the forces, and overtaken

in Gibeon. The captives welcomed Johanan with great joy, but Ishmael made his escape with eight men to the Ammonites.

Johanan and the leaders of the people, apprehensive that the assassination of Gedaliah would be avenged by the Chaldeans, removed and dwelt near Bethlehem, with the design of escaping into Egypt; and, in order to clothe their design with authority, dissembled, consulted Jeremiah, and promised to be guided by the will of God. They were forbidden to go to Egypt, under penalty of destruction by sword, pestilence, and famine; and warned that the Chaldeans, whom they feared, would conquer Egypt, and exterminate them to a very small remnant, they were promised, however, that if they remained and were obedient, the Lord would preserve and bless them. They accused the prophet of speaking falsely, and presumptuously executed their design by removing to Tahpanhes in Egypt, carrying Jeremiah along with them. Unmindful of the severe judgments through which they had passed, and despising the faithful warnings of the prophet, they went on with their idolatries and burned incense to the gods of Egypt. Both men and women justified themselves, saying, "When we worshipped the queen of heaven, we saw no evil; and when we ceased to worship her we were consumed with sword and famine."

Jeremiah died in advanced life, among them in Egypt—when, where, and how, there is no reliable information. He had exercised his prophetic office over forty years. To the last he reproved and expostulated with the people for their sins, and repeated his prophecies of coming judgments upon themselves and upon Egypt; and to the last they gainsayed and resisted him! Jer. xliii. 8-13; xlv. 1-30; xlvi. 13-28; Ezek. xxx. 1-12.

His prophecies were fulfilled. Sixteen years after (B. C. 570) the company went down into Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar, having reduced Tyre, invaded and conquered that country which the Lord gave him for the loss of his wages at Tyre, Ezek. xxix. 18-20, and the Jews perished under his hand, save a very small remnant of such as might have been in Egypt before, or who had been compelled against their will to go down

there, as Jeremiah intimates, (xliv. 11–14, 28,) and which remnant after a time found their way back to Judea.

It was indeed difficult to remove entirely the children of Israel out of their own land. Even after Johanan had carried the people into Egypt, there was a considerable number left behind that had gathered there from surrounding countries; for, four years after the destruction of the temple, as already stated, and some two years, perhaps, after the death of Gedaliah, while Nebuchadnezzar was prosecuting the siege of Tyre, Nebuzar-adan passed through Judah and gathered up the Jews still lingering in the country, amounting to seven hundred and forty-five persons, and sent them to Babylon, Jer. lii. 30.

With the death of Gedaliah and the flight of Johanan into Egypt, the very last shadow of the civil government of the people of God in their own land passed away. They came into possession of it under Joshua, in 1451 B. C. The judges ceased to rule and Saul was proclaimed king in 1096. In 975 the kingdom was divided. The kingdom of Israel went into captivity in 721, and that of Judah in 587. The visible Church had therefore existed as a state or nation in her own land eight hundred and sixty-four years.

The history proper of the Church, and to which may be added all that was written in Scripture, and which belongs to and illustrates and confirms that history—extending over this vast tract of time—the Holy Spirit in His infinite wisdom (as we have had occasion to remark before) has compressed into a very short account. Important reigns of many years are embraced in as many verses. The leading and controlling events are recorded; but their causes, progress, and consummation, in their details, are passed over. Many volumes could not have contained them. Yet, in this abridged form, the connection of the whole history from beginning to end is perfect—not a link is broken or even fractured—for it is the Omniscient Spirit who guided the many employed in its preparation. The temporal affairs of the Church are briefly passed over, and always viewed in a religious light; so making the history a religious one from beginning to end. The people are the

people of God. The history is the history of the Church of God.

It is impossible even to conjecture the proportion of the visible Church carried away by Nebuchadnezzar at different times out of Judah, who were truly pious—a remnant of believers, though small, yet according to the election of grace,—and to whom we add Jeremiah and the few chosen ones who went with him into Egypt.

Standing amidst the ruins of Jerusalem, and overlooking the desolations of the holy land, how dark the shadows which rest upon the cause of true religion in the world! All Israel scattered, in captivity among the heathen nations, and seemingly doomed to absorption and extinction! That light which burnt for so many centuries, with brighter or feebler rays—the only hope of the world—is now violently removed out of its place, and almost extinguished, borne into the very regions of the shadow of death!

The history of the two kingdoms now completed, illustrates the influence of the kings over the people, either for good or evil, according to their individual character—a result which flowed from the peculiar nature of their government, which was a theocracy, the kings being the vicegerents of the Great King. They were favored with the constitution and laws of the state written in the Scriptures, under and according to which they were to rule, with the opportunity in all cases of perplexity of an appeal immediately to God for infallible direction; and also with the aid of counsellors in the persons of the chief officers of their courts, of princes of the people, and of the ministers of religion. Nevertheless, the power lodged in their hands, for the use of which they were accountable to God in whose stead they reigned, was exceedingly great, if not absolute; so that generally the character of the king determined the character of the people. Hence we can well understand the remark of Solomon, the wisest of the kings, “Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?” Eccl. viii. 4.

The people rejected the immediate government of God; and, at their request, He gave them a king in His wrath, and

predicted the evils which they would suffer by the change, inasmuch that they would cry out on that day in their trouble and distress because of their king, Deut. xvii. 14–15 ; 1 Sam. ii. 10 ; viii. 1–20 ; xii. 1–25. However, the Lord forsook them not, but continued to be their God and King, although He permitted them to eat the bitter fruit of the change which they had rebelliously brought about. In Judah He graciously relieved their afflictions by intermingling the reigns of righteous kings with the reigns of wicked kings ; but in Israel there was no relief, the reigns were all evil, and the catastrophe was the sooner precipitated. The bringing in of the kingly power with its progress and effects, was but a part of God's eternal and all wise counsels, of His government of the Church, and of His unfolding within her bosom the character and glory of Him whom He had decreed to set King in Zion, Pss. xlv., cx.

The history illustrates also the necessity of the prophetic office to the Church in those ages. As the succession of kings from Saul was unbroken, whether right or wrong, so was the succession of the prophets from Samuel unbroken, but always true. Every king enjoyed in his reign the ministrations of a prophet, and not unfrequently of several at the same time. They were the inspired expounders of the law of God, and revealers of His will concerning the Church and the world. They revealed the person, offices, and work of the coming Messiah, thus keeping always before the Church the promise of the bright morning star which should be “ a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel ;” unto which promise in due time the twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hoped to come, Luke i. 78 ; Rev. xxii. 16 ; Acts xxvi. 6–7. They thus builded the Church upon the foundation of the prophets, (as it was also done afterwards by the Apostles,) Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, Eph. ii. 20.

The books added to the sacred canon when the Church went into captivity, were those whose matter was all complete up to that period of time ; namely, the four books of Kings and Chronicles, and the prophets in chronological order, Jonah,

Joel, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, and Jeremiah, together with his Lamentations—eleven in all, making in volume about a fourth part of the Old Testament.

CHAPTER XXIX.

TERRITORY OF JUDAH NOT COLONIZED.—THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND OF JUDAH BROUGHT TOGETHER IN THE CAPTIVITY.—ORDER OF THE EVENTS IN THE CAPTIVITY.—DANIEL AND HIS THREE FRIENDS, AND EZEKIEL AND MORDECAI.—JEREMIAH'S MINISTRY TO THE CAPTIVES TERMINATED.—EZEKIEL CALLED : SUCCEEDED BY DANIEL.—THE FIERY FURNACE.—DANIEL, NEBUCHADNEZZAR, AND HIS SUCCESSORS.—THE LION'S DEN.—CYRUS DECREES THE RETURN OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.—DANIEL DIES.—THE DISPERSION.—REMARKS ON THE CAPTIVITY.—JOY OF THE CHURCH.—ZERUBBABEL.—WORSHIP RESUMED, AND FOUNDATIONS OF THE SECOND TEMPLE LAID IN JERUSALEM : FINISHED AFTER TWENTY YEARS.—PROPHETS HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.—EZRA SUCCEEDS ZERUBBABEL IN GOVERNMENT OF JUDEA.—ESTHER.—NEHEMIAH THE THIRD GOVERNOR.—MALACHI LAST OF THE PROPHETS.—CANON OF OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES CLOSED ABOUT 400 YEARS B. C.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR did not colonize the territories of Judah after removing the inhabitants, and thereby fulfilled the decree of God, that it should enjoy its sabbaths. If we survey the territories of both Judah and Israel, lately occupied by the visible Church, we see the more northern, southern, and eastern portions lying waste ; the fields open and growing up into a wilderness of weeds, briars, and thorns ; the cities and villages without inhabitants and crumbling to ruins. Nothing relieves the sad desolation, but tribes of men wandering with their flocks from place to place in search of pasture, and the fishermen coasting the silent shores of the great sea and spreading their nets to dry upon the rocks ! The central parts of the once populous country are inhabited by Samaritans, who hereafter are to become the perpetual enemies of the Jews ; and so

God keeps open the land for the return and occupation of those to whom He has willed it.

Let us follow the Church into her captivity.

The history of the ten tribes for one hundred and thirty-three, or one hundred and thirty-four years from their captivity to the captivity of Judah, is a blank never to be filled! Their brethren of Judah were carried into the same country, and settled in the same provinces with themselves, and their separation into two kingdoms, never designed by God to be permanent, is now over and gone. The shadows of affliction draw together the sundered children of God.

The Babylonian empire attained its greatest extent and glory under Nebuchadnezzar the Great. Among the kings of succeeding empires, he was "the head of gold;" as a monarch, "the great tree, which grew and was strong, whose height reached unto the heavens, and the sight thereof to all the earth: whose leaves were fair and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of heaven had their habitation," Dan. ii., iv. Under the shadow of this great tree the Church now dwelt; the bulk of her members in particular districts (not at this distance of time and after so many changes, distinctly to be traced out), and a portion dispersed in greater or less numbers throughout them all.

Let us give the history of the captivity in the order of events as they may be gathered and arranged from the Word of God.

When Nebuchadnezzar first took Jerusalem, B. C. 606, he carried away, among other notable captives, Daniel and his three friends Hananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah. Four years after, having completed a course of instruction in the language and learning of the Chaldees, that they might be fitted "to stand before the king;" and having successfully passed their examination, and being approved by the king, they were appointed to stand before him, Dan. i. 1-21. Thus, within so short a time after the beginning of the captivity, the Lord in mercy sent these His servants before the face of His afflicted people to occupy high positions of influence, even within the

royal court itself; and where they might, as God should open the way, render essential service to them. Three or four years after their elevation, Nebuchadnezzar a second time besieged and took Jerusalem, and, among many others, brought into Babylon Ezekiel the prophet and Mordecai the Jew—individuals destined like Daniel and his companions to become distinguished in the period of the captivity, Ezek. i. 1-2; Esther ii. 6.

Two years (B. C. 597) after this second capture of Jerusalem and deportation of people, word was sent to Jeremiah of the wicked conduct of two false prophets who had risen up in Babylonia, and of their lying predictions concerning the duration of the captivity, and concerning the people left in Judea, whereby they of the captivity were perplexed and made restless. The prophet returned a letter from Jerusalem to the elders, priests, prophets, and all the people, by Elasah Hemariah, messenger of Zedekiah the king, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. In that letter Jeremiah commanded the captives quietly to submit to the hand of God; to build houses and dwell therein; to plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; to contract marriages for themselves and for their sons and daughters, that they might be increased and not diminished; to seek the peace of the city, and pray unto the Lord for it, for in the peace thereof they should have peace; to pay no attention to false prophets, for their captivity would be for seventy years, and after that the Lord would visit them in mercy and restore them in a humble and sincere state of mind to their own land; and not to expect anything from their brethren left behind in Judah, for the Lord would soon visit them with judgments, and cause them to go into captivity also. He moreover declared the doom of the two false prophets, namely, Ahab and Zedekiah—that Nebuchadnezzar would apprehend and roast them in the fire, and make them an example to all teachers of rebellion and disaffection; which came to pass!

This letter being delivered to the captives, Shemaiah, a false prophet among them, answered it in a letter to the chief priests and people in Jerusalem, commanding them in the name of the Lord to put Jeremiah in prison and in the stocks.

Jeremiah returned an answer to the captives, that the Lord would punish Shemaiah and his seed, and cut off his succession among the people, and that he should die in captivity before the good days of the restoration should come about, Jer. xxix., 1-23, 24-32.

Two years after this correspondence (B. C. 595), in the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah, Jeremiah delivered his prophecies against Babylon, and also his prophecies of the redemption of Israel, and wrote the whole in a book and delivered it to Seraiah, a prince about to accompany Zedekiah to Babylon, commanding him to read it in Babylon, not only as a warning to that kingdom, but also as an encouragement to the captive children of Israel; and when he had done so, to bind a stone to the book, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates, saying, "Thus," saith the Lord, "shall Babylon sink and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her," Jer. l.-li. With this act he ended his ministrations to the people in captivity, and in the same year Ezekiel was called of God to be a prophet to them: B. C. 595. He had been four years in Babylonia, and was thirty years of age at the time of his call, if we consider him as referring to his age in Ezek. i. 1. He had his dwelling among his people on the river Chebar, which is described as falling into the Euphrates, at Carchemish, about two hundred miles north of Babylon. Far away in the heart of the vast empire his solitary voice was heard, and the people received his communications and resorted to him for instruction, Ezek. viii., xiv., xx. He prophesied in all between twenty and twenty-two years—about eight before, and fourteen after the destruction of Jerusalem—and his prophecies relating to the destruction of Jerusalem and the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, are identical in substance with those of Jeremiah delivered at the same time; for they were moved by the Holy Spirit simultaneously to predict the same events, when widely separated and unable to hold intercourse with each other, Ezek. i.-xxiv. News of the final destruction of Jerusalem, which he had predicted, reached him on the banks of the Chebar in the twelfth year of his captivity, Ezek. xxxiii., 21.

Daniel, in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, had attained a reputation among the captive Israelites for superior holiness and wisdom; for Ezekiel knew him by character, if not personally, and spoke of him twice in his prophecies—the first time in ch. xiv. 14, after Daniel had been about fourteen years in Babylon, and then supposed to be only about thirty. Ezekiel ranks him for piety and prevalence in prayer with the greatest of saints, adducing this testimony of God concerning him, “Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it,” (i. e., in the land sinning grievously,) “they should deliver their own souls by their righteousness saith the Lord God.” He is spoken of again, Ezek. xxviii. 3, where, denouncing judgment against Tyrus, he ironically addresses the prince of Tyrus, “Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel : there is no secret that they can hide from thee.”

Ezekiel died the year before Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Tyre, B. C. 574, and his mantle fell upon Daniel. From the destruction of that famous city, Nebuchadnezzar marched into Egypt and subdued that kingdom. Returning in triumph to his capital, he ruled his wide dominions without an enemy. In this dark hour, when this idolatrous power had swallowed up almost all the kingdoms of the then known world, and the Church seemed buried in its multitudes of people, and never more to be separated and revived, (truly the “dry bones” in Ezekiel’s valley, lost and cut off from hope and life forever, Ezek. xxxvii.) God revived His people by bringing forward Daniel, already known as one eminently holy, and filled with knowledge and understanding; but, beyond all this, now the inspired prophet of the Lord and gifted with miraculous power.

No man, however exalted, or prosperous, or engaged, is free from moments of serious reflection, when the mind, conscious of its own weakness and dependence, and impressed with the emptiness and transitory nature of all earthly things, anxiously looks into the future and strives to anticipate the things that shall be hereafter, especially the things concerning itself. In the second year of his universal monarchy, Nebuchadnezzar the Great, upon his bed, thought of “what should

come to pass hereafter." The dream which followed, the vision of God which stood before him, no one of his wise men could recall and interpret but Daniel. The "great image" revealed the future: the four monarchies succeeding each other; the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Macedo-Grecian, and the Roman; the Roman divided into ten smaller kingdoms; the stone cut out of the mountain; the kingdom set up by the God of heaven, which should break in pieces and devour all the kingdoms and stand forever. Nebuchadnezzar paid Daniel extraordinary honor, acknowledging the supremacy of the God of Daniel over all gods, and making him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. At his request, he set his three friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon, but Daniel sat in the gate of the king, Dan. ii.

The exaltation of Daniel and his three friends, the dream, and its interpretation, could but animate the people of God, strengthen their faith, brighten their hopes, and bring them into favorable consideration in the eyes of the heathen. God was still in the midst of His people, and had not cast them off, neither would He forever. Well might they say, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O Zion, city of our God."

The impressions made upon Nebuchadnezzar are transient. He makes, and dedicates with solemnity in a vast concourse of the nobility and people of his empire, his image of gold, in the plain of Dura. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, being accused of not worshipping the image, confess the fact to the king and are cast bound into the burning fiery furnace. "They yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God." The heat of the furnace slays the mighty men that cast them in. Nebuchadnezzar looks into the furnace, and astonished cries out, "Lo! I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God"—a glorious, God-like being! The king believes that divinity is there with His suffering innocent worshippers. True, O king! The Head of the Church and the Saviour of

His people is with these martyrs for their present salvation. Nebuchadnezzar calls them to come out and blesses their God, the Most High God, for their deliverance: "Therefore," said he, "I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill, because there is no god that can deliver after this sort." "Then the king promoted (continued them in office, and made them to prosper) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon," Dan. iii. The grace of God, still mightily, as ever before, wrought in the heart of His elect Israel, and in the darkest hours of a declining and suffering Church, "by faith" enabled them "to quench the violence of fire." This amazing miracle and extraordinary decree exalted the captive Israelites, attracted attention to their religion, and inspired them with faith that they would not be consumed in the furnace of their affliction.

Daniel interprets a second dream of Nebuchadnezzar—the dream of the great tree; and, in view of the impending judgment, exhorts him to break off his sins by righteousness, and his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if so "it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity." For one year the long-suffering of God waited upon the proud and guilty monarch. "At the end of the months, he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon: and the king said, Is not this great Babylon which I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty? While the word (of blasphemy) was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, it is spoken, The kingdom is departed from thee." He was driven away from men. At the end of seven years God restored him to his reason and to his kingdom, and the now convicted and penitent monarch was under such impressions, that "he thought it good" to publish the dealings of God with him "to all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth." The fourth chapter of Daniel contains the royal proclamation in Chaldee, and appears to be the composition of the king himself, copied out of the archives of the empire, to

which, as an officer in high position, he had access. Its closing sentences breathe of sublimity, and verses 34 and 35, descriptive of the sovereignty and providence of God, are perhaps as frequently used in the prayers of God's people as any other portion of Holy Scripture. "And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation, and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and brightness returned unto me, and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me, and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me." The close of this proclamation differs materially in sentiment from the two preceding ones. In the first, he highly honored Daniel, and confessed, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of Gods and a Lord of Kings and a revealer of secrets," Dan. ii. In the second, he blessed the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego for delivering them out of the fire, and made a decree, binding his whole empire to speak nothing amiss against the God of these men, upon pain of being cut in pieces and their houses being made a dunghill, Dan. iii.; but, in the third, after his personal afflictions, the tone of the monarch is altered. God touched him and humbled him as low as the beasts of the field, and then mercifully restored him to his former glory and majesty. He feels it all. He makes no loud professions, and no violent decree to bind others, but acknowledges to the world that he himself has submitted to the living and true God, and has become His worshipper. "Now, I, Nebuchadnezzar," in view of all His judgments and mercies towards me, "praise and extol the God of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

Daniel, referring to this event some years after, in the pres-

ence of Belshazzar, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, declares that God deposed Nebuchadnezzar from his kingly throne, and took his glory from him, because his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride—that the judgment of God was kept upon him, “until he knew (was made to acknowledge) that the Most High God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that He appointeth over it whomsoever He would,” Dan. v. The inference is, that as the king his father had renounced idolatry and embraced the living and true God, so should Belshazzar his son have done.

Was Nebuchadnezzar, one of the chief of sinners, made a subject of renewing grace? Whichever way we decide the question, the interposition of God in behalf of His people is impressively displayed in turning the heart of the king unto Himself, and causing him to acknowledge the God of Israel in the face “of all people, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth.” Israel, with whom the king worshipped, must have been protected by him, and honored by the people. Daniel doubtless continued in power, and in Nebuchadnezzar’s favor, until the death of that monarch. He appears again on the stage in the reigns of Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus.

Jehoiachin, king of Judah, remained in prison while Nebuchadnezzar lived. His son and successor, Evil-Merodach, in the first year of his reign, and in the thirty-seventh of Jehoiachin’s captivity, released him from prison, advanced him above all the other kings then in Babylon, treated him with great kindness, and made ample provision for his support all the days of his life, Jer. lii. 31–34; 2 Kings xxv. 27–30. We cannot rely upon Jewish traditions, and therefore say that the reason of this act is unknown. It may however be suggested that Evil-Merodach, knowing the consideration in which the Jews were held by his father, and the great advantages he had derived during his reign from Daniel and his three friends, and in the end by reason of his own profession of the God of Israel, might naturally have inherited his father’s good-will, and embraced the opportunity of his accession to pardon this prisoner of state, whose punishment for rebellion his father had changed from death to imprisonment. This event certainly illustrates the

favor this monarch bore to the people of God, although there is no other mention made of them during his short reign.

The next king who figures in the history of the Church is Belshazzar, whom Daniel calls the son of Nebuchadnezzar, or rather grandson, Dan. v. 2; xviii. 22; comp. Gen. xxi. 23; Job xviii. 19. At Belshazzar's idolatrous and impious feast, the moment he defiled the gold and silver vessels of the temple, and exulted over the living and true God in the praises of his own dumb idols, "the fingers of a man's hand came forth, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.'" In the midst of the consternation that ensued, Daniel, then resident in Babylon, is called and interprets the handwriting, and for so doing is proclaimed third ruler in the kingdom. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldees slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about three score and two years old," Dan. v. Daniel, in the first and third years of the reign of this monarch, had his visions of the four beasts, the ram, and the he-goat, Dan. vii., viii., which contained matter concerning the kingdom of God of great encouragement to His people in their depressed condition.

Belshazzar was the last of the kings of the line of Nebuchadnezzar, and of the Babylonian empire. The Israelites were "to serve Nebuchadnezzar and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia; to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah; to fulfil three score and ten years." But how many sons should they serve? Jeremiah tells us (xxvii. 1-7, 12, etc.): "All nations"—including Judea—"shall serve him and his son and his son's son, until the very time (of the overthrow) of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him." The death of Belshazzar consequently took place towards the end of the seventy years of the captivity; and the end of the reign of Darius and the first year of the reign of Cyrus completed the term.

The character and fame of the venerable Daniel, now over eighty years of age, whom Darius found in the court of Belshazzar, were not unknown to him. In appointing princes

over the kingdom, of the three presidents to whom they should be accountable, he purposed to make Daniel the chief, and prime minister of the whole realm. Faithful and faultless in this high trust, the envious, ambitious, and malignant presidents and princes could find no matter of accusation against him, unless it should be in the matter of his religion. The ridiculous scheme, addressed to the vanity of the king, of obtaining a decree forbidding all persons to ask petitions of any god or man for the space of thirty days, save of the king himself, upon pain of being cast into the den of lions, (knowing for a certainty that Daniel would not regard it, and that they might thereby destroy him,) actually succeeded! "Now, when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." He was cast into the den of lions. His three friends in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, "by faith, had quenched the violence of fire," and now, "by faith, he stopped the mouths of lions," Heb. xi. 32-34. At the king's command he was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him because he believed in his God. His accusers, together with their wives and children, were cast in and destroyed. Darius issued a decree to all people, nations, and languages, "That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for He is the living God, and steadfast forever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions," Dan. ix. 1-28. And so Daniel "prospered in the reign of Darius and in that of Cyrus the Persian."

Daniel had patiently waited the rolling away of the seventy years of captivity predicted by Jeremiah; and in the first year of Darius, upon the study of that prophet, he understood that the years were drawing to a close; that it became the people of God to return unto Him by humble repentance, and with fervent supplications to beseech the Lord to fulfil His word,

and prepare them for His mercy, Jer. xxix. 10-14; Dan. ix. Said he, "I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting, and sack-cloth, and ashes: and while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplications before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God, about the time of the evening oblation, the angel Gabriel touched me and talked with me." His prayer was answered, and the prophecy concerning the return, and the coming of our Lord—the prophecy of the seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years,—was given to him; in which are the following particulars: 1. A commandment should go forth for the return of the people and for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. 2. The long-expected Messiah, the Prince, should come sixty-nine weeks from the rebuilding of the walls and settlement of Jerusalem. 3. In the seventieth week He should be cut off, but not for himself, but for His people; and, by the one offering of Himself, should make reconciliation for iniquity, bringing in everlasting righteousness, doing away with all typical sacrifices, sealing up in fulfilment vision and prophecy respecting himself, and making an end of the dispensation which looked forward to His advent. 4. Finally, after His advent and death, a people should come and destroy city, temple, and sacrifice, and break up the civil state of the Church forever. This is the first prophecy that fixes the time of our Lord's appearing, and of the end of the civil constitution of the Church of God, Dan. ix. 1-27.

Darius the Mede was succeeded by his nephew Cyrus the Persian, and Daniel prospered in his reign. Through his agency, we must believe, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus to issue his decree for the return of the Jews to their own country; for with a heart deeply interested in the welfare of Zion, Daniel could not fail to acquaint the king, whose face he saw, with the fact of the fast-expiring days of the captivity, and of the prophecy that went before concerning him—even over one hundred years before he was born—delivered by: Isaiah, wherein his name is mentioned. He appointed the servant of the Most High to cause His people to return to

their own land, and at the ordained hour. Cyrus issued his decree in the first year of his reign, B. C. 536, fifty-two years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and seventy from the beginning of the captivity, B. C. 606. He acknowledges it to be an act of obedience on his part to the command of God addressed to him. "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (He is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the free-will offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem," Ezra i. 1-4; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22-23; Jer. xxv. 12; xxix. 10; Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. 1-13; Ezra v. 1-17.

Daniel witnessed the return of the first caravan of people and heard of the laying of the foundations of the second temple. In the third year of Cyrus, he delivered his last prophecy, Dan. x., xi., xii.; and with the close of his book all information of him ceases. He was very old, (over ninety years,) and must have died in his office at court. With Daniel died the prophetic office in the land of captivity. He had no successor. To the remnant of the twelve tribes, numerous as they may have been, the Lord granted no continuance of prophets. His special interpositions in their favor in this form reached only to the time of the ceasing of the people to return to Judea. The prophets went back with the Church to her own land. Many of the Israelites that remained mingled with the heathen in various countries and disappeared. Many, adhering to the worship of God, retaining His Holy Word, communicating from time to time with Jerusalem by going up to the feasts and sacrifices, and maintaining their synagogue worship and circumcision wherever they dwelt, kept themselves distinct from the heathen, and continued down to the advent of our Lord, and long after, constituting a part of "the disper-

sion"—“the twelve tribes scattered abroad.” The dispersion was also increased and made wider by the scattering of Israelites into all lands, in consequence of the numerous wars that succeeded the return, of forcible removals out of Judea, and of voluntary emigration for purposes of peace and trade. Great numbers lived out of Palestine, Acts ii. 1–11; John vii. 35; James i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1; Acts xxi. 21.

Of the captivity now brought to a close, it may be remarked, first: that it was predicted by Moses more than eight hundred years before its occurrence, Deut. xxviii. 1–37; Levit. xxvi. 1–46; and subsequently by other prophets living nearer the event, such as Hosea, (i.–xiv.,) Amos, (v.–ix.,) Micah, (i.–ii.,) Isaiah, and Jeremiah, (various chapters,) Zephaniah, (iii.,) Habakkuk, (i.–iii.,) and by Ezekiel and Daniel,—and demonstrates the foreordination of God. Second: that all the heathen nations employed in executing this decree of the captivity and everything relating thereto, did so freely, but with pride, ambition, cruelty, and in the name of their own false gods, rendering themselves obnoxious to the wrath of God which fell upon and destroyed them one after another, (of which destruction they were warned of God,) while the Church was preserved, and survived them all. Thus the history interprets the true meaning of the Prophet Zechariah, when he says, (xii. 3,) “And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” Third: Moses declared also what would be the cause of the captivity: “It shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses” (the captivity included) “shall come upon thee and overtake thee,” Deut. xxviii.; Levit. xxvi. This warning was repeated in numerous warnings and exhortations by the succeeding prophets. Fourth: the design of the captivity was threefold: 1. To purge away the dross from the Church, even the mass of formalists, apostates, and idolaters. Thus saith the Lord, “Ye shall have no power to stand

before your enemies : and ye shall perish among the heathen ; and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in your iniquities and in the iniquities of your fathers in your enemies' land," Levit. xxvi. 37-39. 2. To purify and sanctify His elect ones, who adhered to Him, together with their seed and those connected with them. Let it not be supposed that necessity was laid upon the Lord to send His people into captivity, as the only means left whereby to preserve His Church from utter apostasy and ruin ; for such a supposition limits the power of the Most High God, the Almighty Redeemer of Israel, and overlooks the mission and omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. The Lord could have multiplied and strengthened His people, given them the victory over their foes, and kept them permanently in their own land. By pouring out His Spirit constantly and universally, as He did occasionally and partially, He might have preserved His elect in the ascendancy, effectually checked the growth and destroyed the power of sin and idolatry, and removed away the stroke of so severe a judgment. But such was not His purpose. For reasons beyond our comprehension He adopted a different course, and in the end selected the affliction of the captivity in preference to any and every other. Nor could the captivity in itself accomplish the preservation of true religion and the purification of the Church, but it was God Himself who sanctified this means of His own selection to the attainment of these blessed ends. The captivity was best because He ordained it, and it was one of His judgments, which are a great deep. "Even so Father : for so it seemed good in thy sight." The dross was purged away and the fine gold purified ; the people confessed their sins and the sins of their fathers, and returned unto the Lord ; for He poured out His Spirit upon them, and prepared them for the blessing. As Ezra expresses it : "Then rose up all whose spirit God had raised to go up," (i. 5.) As they cried unto the Lord in their bondage in Egypt, and were heard and delivered, so now they cried in their captivity in Babylon, and the Lord heard and returned them to their land again, fulfilling His own promise made before to His people by the mouth of Jeremiah, (xxix.

10-14.) "For thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word toward you in causing you to return to this place: for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord: thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you, and ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall search for me with your whole heart, and I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity," "and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive."

3. To do good to the heathen, not indeed generally and permanently, but in particular instances, and for a season. Nor can it be known how extensively a knowledge of the religion, laws, and customs of the people of God may have been disseminated, producing material modifications and changes in the religious and civil state of the heathen world, and all for the better. The Church remained for many centuries in Judea a light to surrounding nations, and in the captivity carried much of that light with her. Mark the dealings of God with the heathen through the instrumentality of His people. He prepared the way for the favorable reception of the captives by sending Jonah to Nineveh, and blessing his preachings to the reformation and salvation of that great city. The predictions of the prophets against Egypt, Edom, Moab, Tyre, Sidon, Assyria, and Babylon, when communicated to those nations, could but arrest attention, and originate respect for the people from whence they came. Daniel, through his long and consistent life in the court of the kings of Babylon, publishing his predictions, openly worshipping the true God, adhering to His Holy Word, interpreting dreams and visions, and reproving kings; the miraculous deliverance of his three friends from the furnace of fire; the falling of the threatened judgment of God upon Nebuchadnezzar, and his decree in favor of the living and true God; the handwriting upon the wall, and Daniel's interpretation; the death of Belshazzar for his impiety towards God; the salvation of Daniel out of the lion's den, and the decree of Darius; the knowledge of Cyrus

of his appointment by the Lord to restore His people, his decree, and presents to that end—to which we may add the character and influence of Ezra the scribe, the residence of Nehemiah in the court of the king, the miraculous interposition of God (we can call it nothing else) in the preservation of the life of Esther and Mordecai, the salvation of the Jews from general massacre, their favorable consideration throughout the empire, and the mingling of the Jews among the idolaters, maintaining a religion and a morality diverse and superior to their own,—all these impressive events could not fail to do good to the heathen world.

The captivity was a dreadful judgment upon the Church. Her sad condition, yet fixed trust in God, the writer of the 137th Psalm affectingly describes: “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.” Haman accused the Israelites of having “laws diverse from all people, neither keep they the king’s laws.” The latter part of the accusation is false, and the former true. In their laws, civil and ecclesiastical, they did differ from all other people. As the crafty enemy observed this, it sheds some light upon the civil and religious condition of the Israelites in their captivity, and shows that they governed themselves according to their own civil laws, so far as it could be done without interfering with the laws of the empire; and that they freely exercised their religion, so far as that was possible in their absence from their

own land, their temple and its sacrifices and services. They did not sacrifice in the captivity, and never did in "the dispersion," while the temple stood. Yet they worshipped God privately and in their families, Dan. vi. 10-11; ix. 1-3; and socially and publicly, Zech. vii. 4-7; Ezra viii. 21-23. They held fasts, circumcised and trained their children, kept the sabbath day, preserved their genealogies, Ezra ii., viii.; Neh. vii.; possessed the Word of God, and enjoyed the ministry of prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel, to whom they resorted for instruction, Ezek. viii. 1; xiv. 1; xxxiii. 30-33. They had the ministry also of the high-priest, and of many priests and Levites, Ezra i. 5; ii. 61-63; vii. 1-10; viii. 1-20; Neh. xii. But the seventy years passed away. The decree of Cyrus assured the people that the day of their redemption had come. The glorious news spread from lip to lip throughout the empire, and the writer of the 126th Psalm gives expression to the universal joy: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him." Isaiah also describes the return, and puts a song of praise into the mouth of the remnant of Israel, Isa. x. 20-23; xi. 10-16; xii. 1-6.

The movement for a return commenced without delay, and first and chiefly among the tribes last carried into captivity, Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. Their leaders were their civil and ecclesiastical rulers and guides, namely, the chief of the fathers, the priests, and Levites, to whom were joined "all whose spirit God had raised to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem." Zerubbabel, grandson of king Jehoiachin, (whose Chaldean name was Sheshbazzar,) was appointed governor of Judea, and Jeshua, the son of Jozadaek, the high-priest, was associated with him. Their brethren who

did not go up, favored the enterprise by contributing liberally to their outfit, and forwarding presents to the house of the Lord. All the people enjoyed the support of the literal fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the vessels of the house of the Lord: xxvii. 21-22. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts the God of Israel concerning the vessels that remain in the house of the Lord, and in the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem: they shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith the Lord: then will I bring them up and restore them to this place." Five thousand four hundred of these vessels of gold and silver Cyrus took out of the house of Nebuchadnezzar's gods, and delivered them to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah, to be carried up to Jerusalem! Ezra i. 1-11. The whole congregation of this first caravan was 42,360, besides their servants and their maids (7,337); amounting in all to 49,697. If (instead of including) we add "200 singing men and singing women," the total will be 49,897 persons. For the transportation of persons, property, and provisions, there were 736 horses, 245 mules, 435 camels, and 6,720 asses—a total of 8,136 beasts of burden, Ezra ii. 1-70.

This large caravan reached Judea in safety, and having sought out their own cities, and procured homes and shelter, without delay, in the seventh month of the same year, the people being called, came as one man to Jerusalem, and upon its old foundation built the altar of the Lord which had been overthrown at the destruction of the temple; and on the first day of the month set up the worship of God. From that day forth the priests lodged in the city, ministering in their office, offering the daily sacrifices, and sacrifices of every kind according to the law, and thither the people came to worship as aforetime! The assembly stood amidst the desolations of Mount Zion; and the silence of the holy city, which lay in grass-grown ruins around them, was once more broken with the voice of prayer and praise. The long-extinguished holy fires were rekindled, and the smoke of their sacrifices ascended gratefully to heaven. Nearly the whole month was spent in religious services, which were finally closed by the celebration

of the feast of tabernacles, Ezra iii. 1-6. Measures were also entered into to rebuild the temple, whose size Cyrus had defined, and said, "let the expenses be given out of the king's house," Ezra vi. 1-5, out of the revenues of the kingdom collected "on this side the river," to which more particular reference is made in the decree of Darius, which was a re-enactment of that of Cyrus, (vs. 6-13.) The royal contribution—an act of distinguished liberality and kindness—was, however, not sufficient, and the people addressed themselves to the work. "Some of the chiefs of the fathers" offered freely for the house of God to set it up in His place. "They gave of their ability," (wrote the treasurer of the work,) "threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pounds of silver, and one hundred priests' garments. The Tirshatha or governor made a magnificent donation "of a thousand drams of gold, fifty basins, and five hundred and thirty priests' garments," Neh. vii. 70-72; Ezra ii. 68-70. The people also contributed money to purchase materials for the building and to pay the workmen. As in the erection of the first temple, so in the erection of the second, they employed the Zidonians and Tyrians to procure cedar trees, and deliver them at Joppa, the port of Jerusalem, Ezra iii. 1-7; comp. Neh. vii. In their zeal the work was hastened, for in seven months after, in the second month of the second year of their return, they were again assembled at Jerusalem to lay the foundation of the second temple—the first temple having been destroyed thirty-two years before. Zerubbabel the governor, the high-priest Jeshua, and all the priests and Levites were present. When the builders laid the foundation, the priests in their apparel sounded with their trumpets, and the sons of Asaph struck their cymbals to praise the Lord: "They sang together by course, in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, because He is good, for His merey endureth forever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid." But many of the old men, of the priests, Levites, and chiefs of the fathers who had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid, wept with a loud voice at

the remembrance of the departed blessings and glory of Israel—of past transgressions and weighty judgments. They were deeply affected by the diminished and inferior materials for the building, the mournful desolations, and the sight of the feeble remnant now gathered around them. “The people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people.” Yet their joy exceeded, “for the people shouted with a loud shout and the noise was heard afar off,” Ezra iii. 8–13.

The offer of the Samaritans to unite with Israel in the work and service of God was repelled by the governor, the chief priest, and rulers of Israel: “Ye have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God: but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us.” The incensed Samaritans instantly commenced a spirited opposition, and succeeded both in Judea and in Persia in troubling the people, so that the work went slowly on, and finally ceased altogether for fourteen years, until the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia, Ezra iv. 1–24. The kings who reigned between Cyrus and Darius (Hystaspes), were Cambyses (the son of Cyrus) and Smerdis (the Magician). Hence it is supposed, if the account of the opposition recorded in Ezra iv. 1–24 is followed—and which covers the reigns of these two kings—that the Ahasuerus mentioned in the sixth verse, is Cambyses, and the Artaxerxes of the seventh verse is Smerdis. The enemies writing to Artaxerxes (xxv. 7–23) speak of the Israelites building the city and the walls; but Ezra in ch. iv. vs. 24, limits their language to the work of the house of God in particular.

During the suspension of the work, the people worshipped at Jerusalem, devoted themselves to their temporal interests, accumulated property, dwelt in their ceiled houses, and put off for more propitious times the building of the Lord’s house. The Lord cuts short their labor, and afflicts the land with drought, yet they turn not until His prophets Haggai and Zechariah reprove them and command them to renew the building of the temple, Ezra v. 1; Hag. i. 1–11. Their faith-

ful ministry was sanctified. Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and all the remnant of the people being stirred up in spirit by the Lord, came in the sixth month and second year of Darius, and did the work in the house of the Lord of Hosts their God, Ezra v. 2; Hag. i. 12-14. One month after they had returned to their duty, Haggai was sent to encourage them with the assurance, that although the present house in comparison with the glory of the first was "as nothing," yet were they the same covenant people of the Lord that He brought out of Egypt; His presence and His Spirit remained with them, and the glory of this latter house should be greater than the glory of the former house; for at the appointed time "the Desire of all Nations," the long-expected Messiah "should come" to this temple, and be the glory of it, far excelling all glory that went before, and give peace to His people. "The Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts," (Hag. ii. 1-9.) Therefore, saith God, "Be strong." Zechariah (i. 1-6) followed Haggai with warnings and exhortations, and he again, a month after, was followed by Haggai, who promises to the obedient people a deliverance from their afflictions of drought, blasting, mildew, and hail; yea, from the day they resumed their work. "From this day," saith the Lord, "will I bless you," Hag. ii. 10-22. Both Haggai and Zechariah made special promises also to Zerubbabel. God made him "as a signet," and said to him, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house: his hands shall also finish it," Zech. iv. 1-9. Zechariah further encouraged the people by his prophecy of Christ, under the name of "the Branch," coming to build the temple of the Lord: "He shall sit and rule a priest upon His throne," Zech. vi. 9-13.

The enemies of the Jews were foiled in a second attempt to

arrest the building of the temple ; for, upon application being made to Darius the king, after investigation, he discovered and renewed the decree of Cyrus, and commanded Tatnai the governor and the enemies of the Jews to cease their opposition, to aid in defraying the expenses of the building, and to supply animals and articles for sacrifice. He also commanded the Israelites to “ pray for the life of the king and of his sons,” Ezra v. 1-17 ; vi. 1-13.

The temple commenced in the second year of Cyrus, (B. C. 535,) was completed just twenty years after, in the seventh year of Darius, (B. C. 515,) and was joyfully dedicated with seven hundred sacrifices of bullocks, rams, and lambs, and a special offering “ for all Israel of twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.” The priests were set in their divisions and the Levites in their courses, “ as it is written in the law of Moses.” The second temple was built after the pattern of the first, as perfectly as the reduced circumstances of the people permitted ; but the Holy of Holies no longer contained the original ark of the covenant, having within the tables of the law, the pot of manna, and Aaron’s rod ; and above it the mercy-seat, overshadowed by the cherubims ; and the Shekinah, the visible glory of God, dwelling between the cherubims. Nor at the dedication, as in that of the first temple, did the glory of God fill the house ; nor did the fire of God fall from heaven and consume the sacrifice on the altar ; and nothing more is heard of the use of the mysterious Urim and Thummin. The dedication being over, all Israel observed the passover for seven days, and once more the temple was opened for the worship of God, which was to stand until Shiloh should come.

Josephus affirms that Xerxes the Great confirmed to the Israelites all the privileges granted them by his father Darius. He succeeded on the throne by Artaxerxes, his third son, called Longimanus, B. C. 464, who is the Artaxerxes mentioned by Ezra, vii. 1. He is also the king Ahasuerus of Esther, who, in the third year of his reign, divorced his queen Vashti at the feast which he gave to the power of Media and Persia, to the nobles and princes of the one hundred and twen-

ty-seven provinces of his empire, Esther i. 1-22 ; ii. 1-15. At the close of the sixth year of his reign, (B. C. 458,) he appointed Ezra the priest—a ready scribe in the law of Moses—governor over Judea : “granting him all his requests, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.” On the first day of the first month of the seventh year of his reign, Ezra began to assemble his company at the river Ahava ; and there proclaimed a fast, to seek of God protection and a “right way for them and their little ones and for all their substance.”

The decree of Artaxerxes was of the same liberal character with that of Cyrus ; for he permitted the children of Israel in any number, and from every part of his realm, to accompany Ezra, and to send up whatever contributions they pleased ;—himself also and his counsellors contributing largely of silver, gold, and vessels for the service of the house of God. He allowed Ezra to draw on the king’s treasury in his province, if necessary, for further supplies, and gave him an order on the treasurers beyond the river for silver, wheat, wine, salt, and oil—relieved the ministers of the sanctuary from toll, custom, and tribute—authorized Ezra to appoint judges and to execute justice in the land, and directed him to have the people taught the laws of God and the king.

Ezra left the river Ahava with his caravan on the twelfth day of the first month, and reached Jerusalem in the fifth month, Ezra vii., viii. Among the offerings on their arrival was one of “twelve bullocks for all Israel.” The whole number, according to our reckoning, was 1,776 males and 5,328 females and children, allowing one female and two children to each adult male—making a total of 7,104 persons, exclusive of servants and attendants.

Zerubbabel, the first governor, must have died some time before the appointment of Ezra ;—the time between the two appointments being seventy-eight years. Five months after Ezra reached Jerusalem, by the merciful ordination of God, Esther was taken into the royal house of king Ahasuerus, (that is, Artaxerxes,) in the tenth month of the seventh year of his reign ; and “he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti,” Esther i.-ii., B. C. 457.

Through the representations of the princes, Ezra learned that the holy seed of Israel had intermarried and mingled themselves with the surrounding heathen, and that the princes and rulers had been chiefs in the trespass. The holy man confessed the sin of the people, and besought mercy from the Lord. In an assembly gathered out of Israel, the people entered into a covenant to put away their strange wives; and in a second assembly, convened in Jerusalem by proclamation, measures were devised for carrying the covenant into effect. Ezra presided over the business. One hundred and thirteen individuals were named as having taken strange wives. It was three months before the whole affair was brought to a conclusion, and the further decline of the Church prevented.

About this time Zechariah encouraged the Church by his prophecy of the manner in which Messiah should be recognized making His approach to Jerusalem: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy King cometh unto thee: He is just and having salvation: lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass," Zech. ix. 9.

In the same year that Esther was made queen, Mordecai revealed to her the conspiracy of two of the chamberlains against the life of the king; and, upon Esther's representations, they were convicted and hanged, and the occurrence was recorded in the annals of the empire, Esther ii. 21-23; but Mordecai was unrewarded.

Aware of the weak and infamous character of Haman the Agagite, the king's great favorite and chief officer of court, Mordecai refused to do him reverence. To be revenged upon Mordecai, Haman plotted the destruction of all the Jews in the kingdom; but the night before the day upon which he hoped to obtain permission of the king to execute Mordecai upon the gallows, fifty cubits high, which he had erected for him, the sleepless king ordered the chronicles of the kingdom to be read before him, and then learned that Mordecai had never been rewarded for his fidelity in the conspiracy of the chamberlains. The next morning, when Haman came to speak to the king for his execution, he commanded Haman to conduct Mordecai,

arrayed in the royal apparel and riding upon the king's horse, through the streets of the city, and make proclamation as he went, of Mordecai's elevation and of the favor of the king now conferred upon him. That day, Esther at her banquet discovered the plot of Haman to the king, and he was hanged on the gallows he had reared for Mordecai! At her petition, the decree obtained by Haman for the massacre of the Jews on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, throughout the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, was opposed by another given under the hand of Mordecai, and with the royal seal, granting liberty to the Jews on that day to stand for their lives, and to destroy all who might rise up against them, and take their substance for a spoil. A Jew was now the prime minister of the realm, and the city of Shushan rejoiced in his elevation. The Jews were filled with gladness and inspired with courage for defence. Their fear fell upon many people of the land, and they became Jews. When the day drew on, the rulers and officers of the different provinces, through fear of Mordecai, favored the Jews; and in the city of Shushan they slew eight hundred of their enemies, and hanged the ten sons of Haman. In addition, throughout the provinces, they slew seventy-five thousand of their enemies, acting purely in self-defence; for, although the decree allowed them to do it, yet "they laid not their hands on the prey." The feast of Purim (from Pur, the lot cast by Haman) was instituted to be observed in all generations upon this day, in commemoration of their deliverance from so awful a destruction, Esther iii.-x. The cruel decree was sent into all the provinces of the Persian empire, and without doubt into Judea, Ezra v. 8. Although there is no record of any suffering in that province on account of it, yet, considering their distance from the seat of government, their feeble state, and the implacable hatred of their Samaritan enemies, it is not at all improbable that they did suffer.

The large number slain by the Jews, (seventy-five thousand in the provinces, and eight hundred in the capital,) proves that the Jews in the captivity were not only numerous, but much hated by their heathen conquerors; for, notwithstanding the counter decree of the king, and the fact that the queen and

prime-minister were Jews, and necessarily wielded a powerful influence in the affairs of the empire, the heathen did rise as enemies against the Jews, and did "hate them" and "seek their hurt." The Lord, however, mercifully interposed, and saved His people by an easy victory; for there was still a remnant according to the election of grace in the captivity, and many were yet to go up to Judea and dwell there.

Ezra continued governor of Judea for twelve years, (from B. C. 458 to B. C. 446,) and was then superseded by Nehemiah, cup-bearer to the king—a man of distinguished piety, patriotism, wisdom, and courage, who came in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, with a military escort, and clothed with full power to rebuild the city and its walls. Inspiring the people with his own zeal, liberality, and faith, all classes (priests, princes, merchants, apothecaries, and goldsmiths, and even females) put their hands to the building of the wall. Although from the threatening attitude of their Samaritan enemies they were compelled to put a portion of the people on guard to repel any sudden assault, and to require every laboring man with one hand to work and with the other to hold a weapon, in fifty-two days the wall was finished, the gates set up, and Jerusalem once more fortified and safe! "The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times," Dan. ix. 25. Nehemiah appointed his brother Hanani—"a faithful man and who feared God above many"—governor over the city, and, for his assistant, Hananiah, ruler of the palace, Neh. i.-iv., vi. 1-3.

While engaged in building the wall, this zealous and disinterested man reformed some abuses under which a portion of the poorer people labored. Their houses and lands had been mortgaged for the support of their families, and the payment of public taxes. Their sons and daughters were in consequence brought into bondage by their brethren, and their creditors had exacted usury and otherwise oppressed them. For twelve years, while he acted as governor before his return to Persia, considering the depressed state of the people, "because the bondage was heavy upon them," he was not chargeable to them, but supported himself and his household in all

their large expenses out of his own resources ; and he tells us that he did it, "because of the fear of God," Neh. v.

The walls encircled a large city with a small population, and great spaces unbuilt upon. The wise governor conceived the design of removing one-tenth of the people out of the other cities into Jerusalem, that it might be compactly built, and made populous and strong. For that purpose he took a sort of census of the province, availing himself in the first place, of the list, numbers, and genealogy of all who came up originally with Zerubbabel, (which doubtless was furnished him out of the archives of the governor's office, or by Ezra, Neh. vii. 1-72 ; comp. Ezra ii. 1-70 ;) and, in the second place, of a general assembly of all the people at Jerusalem. They gathered themselves as one man into the holy city, comp. Ezra iii. 1 and Neh. viii. 1. At the request of the people Ezra brought forth the book of the law for their instruction, and stood above the people upon a pulpit of wood made for the purpose. When he opened the book, the people stood up, and Ezra offered prayer, to which the people responded, Amen, and they bowed and worshipped God. Ezra and his assistants from morning to mid-day, "read in the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." The reading and exposition of the law moved the people to tears ; but Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Levites, dismissed them to observe the rest of the day with thanksgiving and joy. On assembling the next day, they discovered out of the law, that it was the month for the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, which they observed on the fourteenth day ; and, for the seven days of the feast, met daily for the reading of the law and for instruction, Neh. viii. "And there was very great gladness."

The day after the feast, the work of repentance and reformation was entered upon ; for although, years before, Ezra had constrained the people to put away their strange wives and to separate themselves from the people of the lands, some of them had fallen into the same sins again, and Nehemiah sought to reform this, in connection with other sins ; it was for such sins that the assembly wept. Accordingly, the day after

the feast, the twenty-fourth was observed as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer. Having separated themselves from all strangers, they stood in their places, and were instructed out of the law of God one-fourth of the day; and one-fourth they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. At the conclusion of the solemn prayer, the governor, Nehemiah, and all the people entered into a covenant, under a curse and an oath, to walk in the law of the Lord; to have no further connection with the heathen by intermarriage; to observe the sabbath, the sabbatical year, and the remission "of every debt;" to make the required offerings of money, wood, and first fruits; to consecrate their first son; to pay tithes; to support the ministry; to worship God, and never forsake His house. They wrote the covenant and sealed it, Neh. viii.-x.

Nehemiah now perfected his design of peopling Jerusalem. The rulers dwelt there, forming the first great council; and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem. Some willingly offered to do so. In this manner the city was to be speedily supplied with a population, built up, and strongly garrisoned, Neh. xi. The names of the dwellers in Jerusalem are honorably recorded.

The walls being built, and necessary reforms effected, a solemn covenant renewed with the Lord, and arrangements made for the peopling of Jerusalem, Nehemiah concluded his labors at this time by the solemn dedication of the wall of the city, which was indeed of the nature of a dedication of the whole city to the Great King. As the priests and Levites were to act a conspicuous part in this imposing ceremony, he furnished himself with a list of all that came up with Zerubbabel, and of such as were in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, Neh. xii. 1-26. "And at the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem, they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to keep the dedication with gladness, both with singing and with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps." The wall was accordingly dedicated, and the people offered "great sacrifices and rejoiced: for God had made them, the wives also and the children, to rejoice with great joy: so

that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off," Neh. xii. 27-43.

On the same occasion they appointed some to take charge of the chambers (in the temple) in which were to be deposited all the offerings of first-fruits and tithes for the priests, that they might have their daily portion and full support. And the excellent reason is given for the arrangement, namely, that it was a spontaneous act of kindness and affection towards their ministry: "for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited," Neh. xi. 44-47.

It is after these transactions that we place the return of Nehemiah to the court of Persia, B. C. 434, just twelve years after his first coming; consequently, he must have governed in Jerusalem a number of years after his reforms, seeking the good of the people, and completing the rebuilding and settlement of Jerusalem, Neh. v. 14.

Nehemiah does not state how long he was absent from his duties in Judea, and it is impossible to fix upon the year in which he "obtained leave of the king to return," Neh. xiii. 6. He went back to Persia in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes' reign, and returned to Judea before his death, which happened in the forty-first year of his reign, B. C. 424; consequently, he must have been absent between eight and nine years. This was long enough for the state of things to come about in Judea which called for reform when he returned, namely, for the people to decline from a strict observance of the covenant, for some of them to marry heathen wives, and for the children of these marriages to be considerably grown, and to speak in the different languages of their parents, Neh. xiii. 23-27.

On some occasion after Nehemiah's return to Judea, learning from the book of the law then being read in the audience of the people, that the Moabites and Ammonites should be excluded from the congregation of the Lord forever, on account of what they did to Israel on their way out of Egypt to the promised land, the people separated from themselves all the mixed multitude, Neh. xiii. 1-3. This seems to have been but the carrying out partially of a reform again set on foot by the

zealous and ever-watchful governor. The chief priest Eliashib was a leader in forming connections with the heathen. While Nehemiah was absent, he not only allied himself in the most friendly manner with Tobiah the Ammonite, (his family having intermarried with the Jews, Neh. vi. 17-18,) but proceeded to appropriate to Tobiah's use and occupation one of the great chambers in the courts of the house of the Lord, which had been devoted as a treasury for all the offerings and tithes for the priests and Levites, the singers and the porters, Neh. xii. 44-47, removing all the sanctified things to furnish accommodations for Tobiah and his household stuff. This sacrilegious act grieved Nehemiah sorely, and he made short work with the high-priest and his outlandish friend; for he unceremoniously cast all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber, and had it cleansed and restored to its original use, Neh. xiii. 4-9.

Nehemiah observed a great falling off in the support of the ministry, that the treasuries were empty, and the treasurers gone; that the Levites and singers, deprived of support, had in self-preservation fled every man to his field, and that the house of God was in a manner forsaken. All these disorders he speedily reformed. He observed the desecration of the Sabbath—that on that day wine-presses were trodden, harvests gathered, and all manner of burdens brought into Jerusalem. The people themselves, and Tyrian fishmongers and merchants, bought and sold on the sabbath day. He arrested the evil; drove away the foreign traders from approaching the walls on the sabbath, and committed the keeping of the city gates on that day to the Levites, Neh. xiii. 15-22. He observed also that the people had again married wives of the heathen, and were rearing a mongrel race of children. His righteous indignation was greatly aroused. He laid violent hands upon the transgressors and exacted an oath of them to abstain from the iniquity; and he chased away Mannasseh, as Josephus calls him, the son of Joiada the high priest, who had married a strange wife. By these vigorous acts he supported religion and restored order.

Eliashib the high-priest died during these reforms, as is conjectured, about B. C. 413, and in the eleventh year of the

reign of Darius Nothus. He was succeeded by his son Joiada, Neh. xii. 10.

The termination of Nehemiah's government over the children of Israel, and the end of his pious, useful, and distinguished life, are both hidden in obscurity. He was alive after Joiada became high-priest, according to his own assertion, Neh. xiii. 28, and may have been governor as late as B. C. 409, the fifteenth year of Darius Nothus, son of Artaxerxes. If it be allowed that Nehemiah penned the 10th, 11th, and 22d verses of the 12th chapter of his book, then he lived still longer—to an extreme old age—one hundred and twenty years or more, and was cotemporary with the famous high-priest Jaddua, B. C. 341. The supposition is, that the names of Jonathan and Jaddua in the verses referred to, were added to the genealogy of the high-priests by another hand, much later than Nehemiah, while perfecting and settling the text and canon of Holy Scripture.

Cotemporary with Nehemiah in his second administration, lived and labored Malachi, the last of the illustrious line of the prophets, who rebuked the people for the sins which Nehemiah noticed and reformed, besides others; and strengthened the faith and cheered the hope of believers with the last predictions of the Redeemer, under the titles of "the Messenger," or "Angel of the Covenant," "the Lord," whom they sought, who was to come (preceded by His forerunner) to His temple; and again, under the title of "the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in His wings," for the establishment and triumph of His Church, Mal. iii. 1-4; iv. 1-3. The Spirit of Inspiration illuminated the opening and subsequent pages of the Old Testament with the glorious light of salvation by a Redeemer to come; and, ere He departs for a season, He illumines the closing paragraphs with the same glorious light in these prophecies of Malachi. Finishing the book, He bequeaths it to the Church, a rich legacy of an all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, commanding the Church to keep in remembrance, and to feed upon this law of Moses, illustrated and confirmed by all the prophets and sacred writers, until the forerunner, coming in the spirit and power of Elijah, should announce the

advent of the Redeemer Himself. The passage may be quoted a second time, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers: lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," Mal. iv. 4-6.

It will be not much wide of the truth to place the end of the administration of Nehemiah and the prophecy of Malachi, or, in other words, the close of the Old Testament canon, in the year 400 before Christ.

CHAPTER XXX.

NUMBERS THAT RETURNED FROM THE CAPTIVITY.—A REPRESENTATION OF ALL THE TRIBES.—TEN TRIBES NOT LOST.—CLOSE OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.—CONDITION AND STATE OF RELIGION.—THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.—SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

ONE of the special promises of God to Abraham in setting up His visible Church in an organized form, was, "Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth," as "the sand upon the seashore," as "the stars of heaven," Gen. xii. 2-3; xv. 5; xvii. 5-6; xxviii. 14. Moses considered the promise fulfilled in his day, Deut. i. 10: "The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and behold ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude," and he prayed, "The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you as He hath promised you;" but the highest numbers were reached in the prosperous reigns of David and Solomon.

The increase had suffered checks at different times from Abraham to Solomon, and always in the way of rebuke and chastisement for sin. From Solomon to the captivity, the decrease by various afflictions, chiefly by war and its consequences, went steadily on in both kingdoms, with only occasional pauses—fewer indeed in Israel than in Judah, 2 Kings xiv. 23-29. Upon the division, the kingdoms were unevenly balanced. Israel had more tribes and a larger population, but in process of time became the feebler kingdom of the two. Jeroboam, the first king, mustered a larger army than any of his successors, for he attacked Judah with 800,000 men. The

kingdom of Judah was at its height under Jehoshaphat, who could call into the field an army of 1,160,000 men! The increase being conditioned upon the obedience and holiness of the people, it rose or fell with their purity or corruption, according to the words of Moses, Dent. xxviii. 1-68, "And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude: because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the Lord thy God. And it shall come to pass that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and to bring you to nought: and ye shall be plucked off the land whither thou goest to possess it." As corruption advanced, the population declined; the armies of the kingdoms diminished from hundreds of thousands to tens of thousands, and they were left few in number to what they had been when each went into captivity. There is no record of the number that went into captivity at different times from Israel; and the returns from Judah are so imperfect that all calculations are conjectures only. There were six distinct deportations from this latter kingdom in twenty-three years, under Nebuchadnezzar; and the numbers of the second, third, fourth and sixth are preserved, as follows: 3,023 (Jer. lii. 28); 18,000 (2 Kings xxiv. 10-16); 823 (Jer. lii. 39); and 745 (Jer. lii. 30)—amounting in all to 22,600. Assuming, agreeably to the Scripture mode of reckoning, that these were males, and allowing three persons (women, children, and servants) to each male, the sum would be 67,800. The number of the first deportation—when Daniel and his three friends were carried away,—and of the fifth—when the temple and city were finally destroyed, and no inhabitants left save the poor of the land,—could not fall short at the lowest estimate of 20,000 men, or 60,000 persons of all conditions. This added to the former total, would raise the entire deportations under Nebuchadnezzar to 127,800. No reckoning is made of those who secreted themselves in the land, and who escaped into adjoining countries, many of whom came back and put themselves under the protection of Gedaliah, and a majority of whom went down into Egypt, and perished there. This estimate cannot be considered large, since there were men

in Judah sufficient to garrison towns, Jerusalem in particular, and it required a considerable force from Babylonia to subdue them. The like estimate may be assumed for the kingdom of Israel, which must have been, at the period of her several captivities, at least as populous as Judah was at the period of her captivity. The grand total of all the children of Israel carried captive into Assyria and Babylonia, both the apostate and true, must have been 255,600. As the Assyrian and Babylonian monarchs designed by this transfer of population to strengthen and improve their kingdoms, it is reasonable to believe that the captives were removed leisurely and safely, and located in their new homes favorably.

But, suppose we multiply the estimate largely, and say that 500,000, or even 1,000,000 were deported, what a prodigious reduction of a people so numerous, amounting in their best days to between six and eight millions! Transgression is the overthrow of the Church. The Lord delighteth not in numbers but in holiness! How did the erring people perish at the rebuke of His countenance! How were they driven like chaff before the wind, and scattered without strength among the nations! Levit. xxvi. 1-46. What is more, the threatenings of God were adverse to their increase in the land of their captivity. "Among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see," Dent. xxviii. 64-67. "And upon them that are left alive of you, I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them: and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword: and they shall fall when none pursueth. And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen,

and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands: and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them," Levit. xxvi. 36-39.

There were two principal caravans that returned: the first under Zerrubbabel (B. C. 536), numbering, as stated in the preceding chapter, 49,897 (Ezra ii. 1-65; Neh. vii. 1-67), to which add forty-five singing men and singing women, as given by Nehemiah, and the caravan reached 49,942. The second returned under Ezra (B. C. 458), seventy-eight years after, numbering 7,104. If the same proportion of servants and attendants are added which obtained in the first caravan—say, for round calculation, one-seventh, or 1,000, the second caravan reaches 8,104, and the two together number 58,046 persons of all classes. Neither in his first coming (B. C. 446), nor in his second, (B. C. 425), did Nehemiah bring any caravan with him to Jerusalem. Yet some Israelites may have availed themselves of such good opportunities, and returned with him to their native land. As communications were frequent between the province and Persia, small bodies may have returned from time to time. A remnant, as was predicted, came up from Egypt, and from all lands, besides Assyria and Babylonia, whither they had been driven, Jer. xi. 11-16; xxvii. 13; Ezek. xxxvi. 24; xxxvii. 21; Zech. x. 9-10. Bring all these returning streams together, and a considerable population re-occupied the holy land, amounting however to a small remnant of a people once as the sand upon the sea-shore, Isa. x. 22; Rom. ix. 27.

The reasons which deterred the people from returning in greater numbers were, we conjecture: First, apostasy. Almost all Israel, and a large proportion of Judah went into captivity confirmed idolaters, and easily amalgamated with the heathen. Their posterity followed their pernicious ways, and speedily all reverence for God and the religion of their fathers became obliterated. Second, social ties and private interests. They had married wives, reared and settled children, formed influential friendships, built houses, bought lands, established trades, prosecuted lucrative businesses, and invested funds, so

that the objections to removal were too many and serious to be encountered. Third, local attachments. Israel had been in captivity one hundred and eighty-five years (B. C. 721-536), nearly six generations; and Judah from fifty to seventy years, about two generations. The original stock of Israel had long died out, and their posterity for several generations had not set foot in the holy land, and knew no other country and no other home but Assyria and Babylonia. In like manner the stock of Judah had extensively diminished; for it was only the old men that remembered the former temple and the goodly land. Fourth, freedom from intolerable oppression like that in Egypt. They were perhaps as well off as any other subjects of the empire, having part of the time strong friends at court, and therefore might remain in their captivity and do comparatively well. Finally, decline in piety, even among those who still adhered to the Lord and His covenant, and looked for Messiah. The more pious of the Church returned, according to prediction. "The remnant" of Israel and Judah, Isa. x. 20-23; xi. 11-16, the "elect seed," Isa. lxxv. 9, upon "whom God's Spirit was poured out," Ezek. xxxix. 25-29, the "pure gold," came out of the furnace of affliction, Amos ix. 9-15. The reasons why more returned from the tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin, than from the rest, were, that these tribes went last into captivity, were the more pious portion of the visible Church, and enjoyed the ministry of the prophets, and the outpouring of the Spirit of God.

A representation of all the tribes returned, so that the identity and unity of the people of God were preserved. The united body after the captivity took the name of Jews, from the leading tribe Judah, and the honored tribe of the Messiah. The men of Judah however were called Jews as far back as the reign of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 26-28; Isa. xxxvi. 11-13. Jeremiah calls them so both before and after the captivity, xxxii. 12; xxxviii. 19; lii. 28; xl. 11-12; xli. 3; xliv. 1. This was the name they bore in the captivity, according to Daniel iii. 8; Esther iii. 6, 13; iv. 13, 16; Ezra iv. 12; Neh. i. 2; iv. 2; v. 17.

The distinction of tribes, by separation and location on their

respective territories, no longer was nor could be kept up; for much of their territories was in possession of men of other nations—Gentiles and Samaritans, for example, on the east of Jordan, south of Judah, along the coast of the great sea west, and in the central and northern parts. Indeed, the distinction of the tribes was no longer necessary; it was sufficient that the families of the tribes preserved their genealogies separately and faithfully; and this was done until the advent of our Lord. Having fulfilled their design, they also shortly after passed away.

The ten tribes (or the whole kingdom of Israel) were not lost in the captivity, as has been affirmed.

The first proof is drawn from the promises of a covenant-keeping God expressed in prophecy. Hosea predicts both the captivity and the return of the ten tribes, (vii., xiv.), and (i., ii.,) unites Judah and Israel in the return: "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land." Amos (ix. 1-15) delivers a prediction of the same character. Isaiah corresponds with both, and even names Cyrus the shepherd of the Lord, whose office it should be to restore His people and rebuild His temple (xliiii.-xlv., xlvi.) "He shall build my city and let go my captives." The beautiful prophecy in ch. xi. 11-13, was literally fulfilled: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim." No contentions existed after the return from the captivity. The kingdoms were no longer separated, but united. Jeremiah is explicit: "Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee

in a book. For lo! the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it." Then follow God's declarations of His love and faithfulness towards His erring people which should never fail; for He would break the yoke from off their necks and burst their bonds, and, having corrected them in measure, He would restore health unto them, and be the God of all the families of Israel, and they should be His people. They should plant vines on the mountains of Samaria and go up to Zion. The city should be built. The Lord would sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast: and no more pluck up and break down, but build and plant them, Jer. xxx.-xxxi. Again, "Israel is a scattered sheep: the lions have driven him away: first, the king of Assyria hath devoured him: and last, this Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, hath broken his bones. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land as I have punished the king of Assyria, and I will bring Israel again to his habitation." "The children of Israel and the children of Judah were oppressed together," and they should be redeemed together, Isa. xxxiii. Ezekiel is equally clear: "The word of the Lord came unto me again saying, Moreover thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thy hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in my hand." "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen,

whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all," Ezek. xxxvii. 1-28; xxxiv.-xxxvi. These prophecies are conclusive, and were fulfilled after the decree of Cyrus. Judah could not return without Israel, nor Israel without Judah. Representatives of the twelve tribes came back all together, and the two kingdoms, once more and forever united, formed one people. When Jeremiah fixed the time of the end of the captivity of Judah, he fixed the time of the end of the captivity of Israel also, for the two were to return together.

We are certain that we understand these prophecies correctly, because they were understood precisely in the same way by those who in God's purpose fulfilled them, whose lead we follow. Daniel in his prayer, (ch. ix.,) confessed the sin of both Judah and Israel, and besought deliverance and mercy for all—the same mercy that before brought them all out of Egypt. The decree of Cyrus was in the name of the God of Israel, (Ezra i.-x.,) and addressed to all Israel in his empire. The decree of Artaxerxes (Ezra vii.) has the like address.

A second proof that the ten tribes were not lost in captivity is, that no notice is taken of that assumed fact, and no complaint made that they refused to return, by any of the distinguished actors of the times, namely, Daniel, Zerubbabel, Ezra, Habakkuk, Zechariah, Nehemiah and Malachi.

A third proof is the matter of fact itself; for an induction of particulars shows that there was an actual return of a representation of all the tribes. Zerubbabel's company, according to Ezra's numbering, ii. 1-60, consisted of 29,818 persons, but, in vs. 64-65, he puts down the whole congregation together 42,360, exclusive of male and female servants and singers. How do we account for it that he numbers some and not others? On the supposition that the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, were enrolled and numbered by their regular genealogies;—a thing which could not be done for the other tribes, because, like the priests in vs. 61-63, they could not accurately

show their genealogies. If this be a true solution, then there are 12,542 persons to be allotted to the ten tribes, exclusive of the 7,337 servants and 245 singers. Nehemiah numbers this same company at 31,089, differing with Ezra by 1,271, but agreeing with him in the grand total. In whatever way the two enumerations are reconciled, each has a large number to be distributed among the ten tribes. Support is given to this conclusion in the chapter itself, for Ezra states, (ii. 1,) "These came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one into his city." He records their names and numbers to the amount of 29,818; and, giving the sum of the whole congregation, beside the servants and singers, concludes thus, (vs. 70,) "So the priests and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities." Again, in 1 Chron. ix. 1-3, after the return from the captivity, it is said, "And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim and of Manasseh." This incorporation of the ten tribes with Judah began as far back as the division of the kingdoms, when numbers of pious persons removed from their own tribes, and settled in Judah and Benjamin, 2 Chron. xi. 16. At the dedication of the second temple, twelve he-goats were offered for a sin-offering for all Israel, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, Ezra vi. 17. The tribes were in the assembly, and were represented in the sacrifices on the altar. Again, when Ezra came up to Jerusalem with his company, they offered "twelve bullocks" for all Israel, and "twelve he-goats" for a sin-offering. The tribes were all represented in his company also, Ezra viii. 35.

A fourth proof is, that the Jews have never allowed that the ten tribes were lost. Nothing of the kind appears in any of the apocryphal books, or in Josephus, or in Philo, or in any of the rabbinical writings; to which may be added that there is not the slightest trace of any such loss in the New Testament, but all the evidence on the point is to the contrary.

If the ten tribes were lost, they were not lost to our Lord, who knew all things under the whole heaven, for He intimates no such thing. At His advent the great body of Israel-

ites dwelt in Judea, and in the provinces immediately adjoining, constituting "His own" people—"the lost sheep of the house of Israel"—to whom, as their long-expected Redeemer, He came; to whom as "a minister of the circumcision" He exclusively ministered, never once crossing the boundaries of His country; to whom He sent His twelve Apostles and the seventy disciples, charging them to go to none other. He sent them on no missions to tribes beyond. He chose twelve Apostles, one for each tribe, and said they should "sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The Jews "of the dispersion" came up from all the countries of the world, especially at the great feasts. Our Lord mingled with and preached to them, treating them and all the stock of Israel as the Israel of God; and by the Israel of God—not by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin only, but by all the rest also—He was rejected and crucified. "The men of Israel" "killed the Prince of Life," Acts iii. 15, and said, "His blood be on us and on our children, Matt. xxvii. Pilate wrote the superscription over His cross, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews;" and the Jews, wherever found on the face of the whole earth, even to this day, (save "the elect" of Israel,) cry out upon Jesus of Nazareth, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Anna, of the tribe of Asher, in the temple spake of the child Jesus to all "who looked for redemption in Jerusalem," Luke ii. 36-38. The Apostle Paul speaks of "our twelve tribes, hoping to come to the promise of their Messiah," Acts xxvi. 7. The Apostle James addresses his epistle "to the twelve tribes which are" (not lost, but) "scattered abroad." The Apostles intimate no such loss; they never sent out any to search out the lost tribes. The whole earth has been travelled over and searched, and they have not been found yet, and never will be, since they never were lost. The tribes are mingled and scattered everywhere. The natural branches have been broken off from their own olive tree, for unbelief, and the Gentiles have been grafted in. "Blindness in part," (there is now, always has been, and will be an election according to grace,) "hath happened to Israel," to continue "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so

all Israel shall be saved," Rom. xi. 1-36. The fundamental error of this strange notion lies in a total neglect or perversion of the prophecies, which unite the return of the ten tribes with that of Judah and Benjamin, the return of Israel being bound up in that of Judah. Portions of all the tribes (more or less) were left in the land of captivity, but it is not true that either one or more of the tribes were really lost.

A remnant of all returned. "How unsearchable are God's judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Now for the third time in her history is the visible Church brought low in numbers. The ark contained all that were left of her members after the flood. At the call of Abraham but a few existed out of his own family and household, and now a remnant only from a multitude once like the stars of heaven, re-peopled the holy land. We look forward for two hundred years, and a sad reduction occurs again under the persecutions which originated with Antiochus Epiphanes. Still two hundred years later, we perceive another great reduction at the advent of Christ, by prevailing iniquity, and by the destruction of the civil state of the Church. Since this last event, and the spreading of the Church into all nations, her numbers have multiplied; but, from time to time, through persecutions, prosperity, and apostasies, she has been subjected to great reverses.

The state of religion in the Church from the decree of Cyrus, B. C. 536, to the close of the last administration of Nehemiah and prophesying of Malachi, or to the close of the Old Testament, B. C. 397, or 380, (about one hundred and fifty years,) is but imperfectly known.

There were great searchings of heart and sincere turning to the Lord of very many, of whom Daniel is a distinguished example. About the period of the expiration of the seventy years of the captivity, and when Cyrus issued his decree, the Spirit of the Lord was more abundantly poured out. The people were more abundantly moved to return, to make every necessary sacrifice, and to long for deliverance from all their sins and their enemies, that they might once more serve God in singleness of mind. The wheat was sifted from the chaff, and the gold refined from the dross. Those that returned were

the best of the people, and the Lord planted His vineyard again with goodly seed.

They exhibited their piety on their arrival in Judea by immediately establishing public worship at Jerusalem; by making provision for its support and perpetuity; by contributions for the building of the temple, and by an early commencement of the work, which they carried on amidst discouragements, until forcibly stopped by public authority. For a season their zeal declined, and they said, "It is not the time in God's providence for building His house." The chastisements of God, and the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah roused them from their apostasy, and the temple was completed and dedicated.

Fifty-eight years after this event (B. C. 516 to 458) Ezra was appointed governor of Judea. At his accession, the people had relaxed in their strict obedience to the law, and had contracted forbidden marriages with the heathen, which practice he abolished. Under his pious administration, which lasted twelve years, religion revived. It was still further revived under his able and energetic successor, Nehemiah, for twelve years longer, at the expiration of which time he went back to Persia, and was absent eight or nine years. On his return, he discovered that the people had gone backward, and he zealously effected a reformation. He restored the sanctity of the sabbath, the revenues of the ministry, cleansed a part of the temple that had been defiled, and caused the people again to put away their strange wives and to renounce their connection with the heathen. In his faithful labors he was assisted by the ministry of the prophet Malachi.

Distinguished saints figured in the captivity—of whom Daniel and his three friends, Ezekiel, Mordecai, and Esther are examples,—and also after the return to Judea, of whom Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Ezra, Nehemiah, Habakkuk, Zechariah, and Malachi are examples, and these latter were supported by a devoted people.

Much did they accomplish under great discouragements, and in the endurance of great privations. They repeopled Judea, rebuilt the decayed cities of the land, the temple, and

the holy city, restored the worship and order of God's house, and the last pages of the inspired history of the Church in the Old Testament are enlivened with the regular course of her services, and the pious activity of her members, and brightened with the approving smiles of her covenant-keeping God.

The Church carried with her into captivity the oracles of God, and brought them back enriched by the addition of such Psalms as were composed during and about the time of the captivity, by the prophecies and lamentations of Jeremiah, and by the prophecies of Ezekiel. To complete the sacred canon after the captivity, there must be added Daniel, Ezra, Habakkuk, Zechariah, Nehemiah, and Malachi.

The unbroken and received tradition of the Church from the close of the Old Testament to the advent of Christ, is, that Ezra the scribe was the principal person by whom the Old Testament canon was carefully collected, arranged, and published, as we now have it in our present Hebrew text, disposed in thirty-nine books, as follows: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1st and 2d Samuel, 1st and 2d Kings, 1st and 2d Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther; Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel; Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi—all preserved and handed down with the greatest reverence and most jealous care by the Church to the coming of our Lord, who received this canon and rested upon it as the genuine, authoritative, and all-sufficient Word of God. He commanded the children of Israel to search and to obey it, saying, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." These are the Holy Scriptures quoted and referred to by all the inspired writers of the New Testament, and concerning which the Apostle Paul makes this affirmation in his epistle to Timothy: "The Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in right-

eousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"—Scriptures which the Apostles carried with them into all the world preaching the Gospel to every creature, and out of which they reasoned in order to bring all men unto the obedience of faith, John v. 39 ; x. 35 ; 2 Tim. iii. 15-17 ; Pss. xix., cxix. These thirty-nine books constituted the only and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice to the Church from the death of Malachi, until the addition unto them of the twenty-seven inspired books of the New Testament, some four hundred years after, and which then completed the volume of the revelation of God to His Church and the world—His genuine and authoritative Word, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

A brief summary of the history of the Church now passed over will bring the present volume to a conclusion.

For two thousand and eighty-three years, from the creation to the call of Abraham, the Church existed a visible body, but without a distinctly revealed organization.

The events which preceded and were introductory to its establishment, were the creation, and the primitive holy and happy state of man ; the marriage of our first parents, the pattern and example of all marriages that should come after ; their first blissful residence in the garden of Eden, which was a type of heaven ; their trial in that garden under the covenant of works, in which Adam was constituted the federal head of his race, standing not only for himself, but for all his posterity descending from him by ordinary generation ; the institution of the holy sabbath, consecrated to the worship of God, and the promotion of the spiritual and temporal interests of men, and of universal and perpetual obligation ; the temptation, which revealed the existence and agency of another and superior order of accountable creatures ; the angels divided according to their character into the evil and good ; and the success of the temptation, which resulted in the sin, fall, condemnation, depravity, and ruin of our first parents and their whole race under the covenant of works forever !

These events were introductions to the establishment of the Church ; and the last of them, namely, the fall, the immediate

occasion of it: for, upon the fall, the gracious and eternal purpose of God to deliver a portion of the race from a state of sin and condemnation, and bring them into a state of grace and salvation by a Redeemer, was announced in the promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." This seed is the foundation on which the Church is built, even Jesus Christ the chief corner-stone; and from this moment the history of that Church in time begins, which from eternity "He purchased with His blood." The covenant of grace, to which lost men were now transferred, and which presupposed and required for its own existence and operation the existence, operation, and failure of the covenant of works, now for the first time appears, and discloses the Church enfolded in its bosom, preserved, perpetuated, and finally perfected and glorified by that covenant; so that we may truly and boldly say, No covenant, no Church. Hence, the history proper of the Church is neither more nor less than the history of the development and progress of the covenant itself—a covenant which has the glorious and ever-blessed God both for its author and end, man for its subject, and the world for its stage—which begins in eternity past, is manifested in time, and consummated in eternity to come.

Sacrifices were divinely instituted in connection with the promise of a Redeemer, typical of Him—the one great sacrifice for sin which He in the fulness of time should make of Himself in the flesh—and demonstrating also the principle upon which sinners would be saved, namely, by substitution, (the just dying for the unjust,) and establishing the truth that man could no more approach God acceptably, save through the merits and mediation of a Redeemer.

This Divine Redeemer took possession of His mediatorial throne, and put the covenant of grace at once into efficient operation, which continues in all ages the same, although differently administered before and after His coming.

Adam and Eve, the original and only parents of all mankind, driven out of Eden under the curse of the covenant of works, and placed under the covenant of grace, by its saving

application to their souls became the first members and seed of the Church.

The war of the flesh against the spirit burst forth in the family of Adam; and Cain, the son born after the flesh, persecuted Abel, the son born after the spirit. Abel was the first martyr and heir of eternal life, and Cain the first excommunicate and heir of eternal death. Saints and sinners have divided the world ever since.

A line of spiritual succession and of genealogical descent from Adam to Christ, by God's ordination, now began, and, being prophetic of the Saviour, always kept Him in the remembrance and faith of the Church. That faith was daily enlightened and confirmed by the offering of sacrifices, and the teachings of the believing patriarchs—some of whom were in an especial manner prophets and preachers of righteousness. Conspicuous among them was Enoch, the seventh from Adam, who in his prophecy disclosed the extensive and clear knowledge of divine truth possessed by the Church in his days, and who for his great faith was translated that he should not see death; his translation determining the necessary union of soul and body in a state of future blessedness, and, by consequence, the resurrection of the body.

The lives of the early fathers of mankind were lengthened into centuries, for the wisest and best purposes, and, among the rest, for the better preservation and transmission of the truth and revelations of God. In those early ages, the line of separation was drawn between the Church and the world, and each bore a distinctive title: the one, that of "the sons of God," and the other, that of "the sons of men."

Wickedness increased with the increase of the race. The Church yielded to abounding iniquity, and declined in piety and numbers until it fell off to the single family of Noah. For one hundred and twenty years the long-suffering of God waited upon a guilty world, while the ark was preparing, and Noah meanwhile preaching repentance. The flood finally came and destroyed them all, save the remnant of eight souls—the remnant of a once numerous Church and populous

world ! The patriarch took possession of the earth, and began a second time to people it spiritually and naturally—a second Adam, receiving the same promises and commands—a second head of the Church and of the race—a preacher of righteousness, communicating to the new world all the truths which he had brought with him from the old. Altars are first mentioned in his family. His prophecies concerning his three sons sketch the future history of the Church and the world, and form the groundwork of all subsequent prophecies.

His posterity determining to remain together, in opposition to the command of God to multiply and fill the earth, were by His miraculous power scattered abroad from Babel, and in their dispersion gave rise to the various nations and tongues that fill the four quarters of the globe. Wherever they settled, they carried with them a knowledge of the facts and doctrines of true religion—facts and doctrines which may be traced with greater or less distinctness in the sacred traditions and religious systems of mankind even down to the present day.

After the dispersion, the Holy Scriptures became, more evidently than before, the history of the Church ; for, omitting Ham and Japheth, Shem is placed in the line of spiritual succession, and henceforward not even all his posterity, but only so much of it as falls within that line, occupies the sacred pages. We move on from the flood to the call of Abraham, at a single step of three hundred and fifty years, with no incidents save the confusion of languages, the dispersion, and the links in the chain of spiritual succession—the genealogy of our Lord. By other contemporary revelation in the book of Job, we learn the rise of idolatry, some two hundred years after the flood, about the times of Terah, the father of Abraham. This horrid offspring of human depravity, once introduced, spread rapidly and universally, swallowing up the knowledge of the true God. It has held its footing ever since, and has been the plague of the Church and the ruin of the world.

Contemporary with Terah was Job, that eminent man of God, raised up to prepare his wonderful book, that invaluable

treasury of the doctrines and duties of the religion of Christ most firmly held by the Church in his days, and most beautifully illustrated in his own life of faith.

We have reached the end of the long period of the existence of the Church as a visible body, yet without any particularly revealed organization; and a brief summary of her ordinances and doctrines, gathered from the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis and the book of Job, may in this place be very properly introduced, as follows: The Church enjoyed the watch and care of her Divine Head, who at sundry times and in divers manners communicated His mind and will for her edification and government, and executed judgments also on the earth. She enjoyed her sabbaths of rest and devotion; her institution of marriage; the worship and sacrifices; the ministrations of her officers, embracing patriarchs, prophets, and preachers of righteousness; a knowledge of the fundamental and saving doctrines of revelation concerning God, the creator, preserver, benefactor, lawgiver, and judge of all the earth; concerning angels, both good and evil; man, in his original, lapsed, and ruined state; the seed of the woman, His glorious person, human and divine; His perfect work of redemption, by the coming sacrifice of Himself for the sins of His people; concerning the existence, agency, and divinity of the Holy Spirit, and the necessity of His work upon the souls of men for regeneration and sanctification; the immortality of the soul; the future happiness of the righteous and misery of the wicked; and the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment. The Church enjoyed the lively faith and holy conversation of her members in Abel, Enoch, Noah, Job, and others. Multitudes walked with God in these two thousand and eighty-three years, and entered into rest. Jesus Christ, bringing "life and immortality to light through the Gospel," was revealed and preached in the promise at the fall; for the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his beams, and shone through the promise, the type, the shadow; and the saints of God saw His glory, believed, rejoiced, and lived.

We enter the second stage—the Church existing in a visible

and organized body, separated from the world,—and proceed with its history from the call of Abraham to the close of the Old Testament canon.

That body, which for so many ages dwelt among the nations, and was confined in membership and officers to no particular tribe or people, alters its way on the earth. The call of Abraham introduces a new era in its history. He is a Syrian, called out of Ur of the Chaldees, separated from all believers of his day, and led into Canaan, where God enters into a covenant with him and his seed, setting them apart and constituting them His visible and organized Church—a covenant, having its parties, its conditions both on the one part and the other, its rewards, penalties, sign, seal, and assigned duration—a covenant not of the nature of the covenant of works, nor a renewal of the covenant of grace, but rather a carrying out and a fuller unfolding of the precious promises and provisions of that covenant. Its peculiarity, as made with Abraham, consists in the separation of himself and his seed to be the only visible and organized body of God's people, which should be the depository of God's truth, and the heir of the promises and blessings of the covenant for all nations and all time. It covered all the wants and states of the visible Church. It was temporal in the provisions of a numerous seed, of a land to be occupied, and a civil government to be continued until Shiloh should come. It was also spiritual in its provisions of eternal life through the promised Redeemer, and in the all-comprehensive assurance of God, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." It is a covenant enduring while the Church endures.

In this covenant, upon His own infinite authority, God ordained what persons should be members of His visible Church, namely, believers together with their infant children;—an ordination in respect to membership which has never been altered or abrogated in any manner whatever. To each of these classes of members He further ordained that the sign and seal of the covenant should be applied; and the visible Church here established in Abraham continues the same under both the Old and New Dispensations. The sign and seal

under the Old Dispensation, prophetic of Christ to come, gave way to the sign and seal under the New, (of the same nature, though differing in form and of more general application,) looking back to Christ as having come. The Church under the New Dispensation, no longer confined to one people, (although provision was made in the early constitution for the introduction of all of every nation who chose to come,) was enlarged by the accession of the Gentiles.

During the civil and ecclesiastical headship of the Father of the faithful, several things make their appearance for the first time among the people of God. First, polygamy, tolerated for the times present, but abrogated by our Lord at His coming, and the original law of marriage restored. Second, the institution of slavery, one of many forms of civil government, and with which the Church has had connection to a greater or less extent ever since. Third, war, and, when defensive, justified. Fourth, a distinct notice of the divinely instituted order of the priesthood in the person of Melchizedek—a type of Christ; and fifth, the divinely instituted mode of the support of the priesthood, by a system of tithes—an ancient order and an ancient system.

The visible Church sojourned in the land of Canaan. To Abraham succeeded Isaac, and to Isaac, Jacob, who was a notable example of the sovereign election of God—an election which obtains in the case of every true member of His Church, for the true Church is composed of the elect, and no more. By the foreordination of God the Church under Jacob removes for a time into the land of Egypt, whither Joseph had been sent to prepare the way before it, after it had sojourned two hundred and fifteen years in the land of promise. The same number of years the Church sojourned in Egypt, and, on account of idolatry and sin, was subjected to the bondage of the Egyptians for one hundred and fifteen years of that time, which bondage commenced after the death of Joseph who had succeeded his father Jacob. Here the Church preserved her form of worship, order, and civil government, so far as was consistent with subjection to the Egyptians. Finally, she was delivered by the Lord, with a high hand,

under the headship of Moses, working by miracles and prophecy, (two pillars of Revelation,) which fully confirmed the divine mission of Moses, and that of all other inspired prophets and teachers.

The first great feast of the Church, the passover, was celebrated the night of the exodus. It was typical of Christ, finding its fulfilment in the Lord's supper. At the conclusion of the feast, the Church went up following the lead of her Great Head in a pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day.

The Israelites crossed the Red Sea, and, escaping forever from Egypt, entered the wilderness. Manna, typical of the true bread from heaven, fell for their sustenance; and water flowed for their thirst from the rock, typical of the Rock Christ Jesus. Before Sinai, God met with His redeemed and covenant people, and delivered to them the law by Moses. The ecclesiastical law, having reference to the Church as such, embraced under four heads the moral, ceremonial, constitutional, and disciplinary; and the civil, having reference to the Church as a state, determined the form of government a theocracy, and also the rights of persons and things, the officers ordinary and extraordinary, the independence and union of the tribes, forming them into a commonwealth to take rank among the nations—the law of Moses being indeed but a gathering up, an arranging, amplifying, and perfecting of all that went before of God's dealings with, and revelations to His people. An addition thereto was made of so much as might be necessary to meet the new circumstances in which the Church then was, and would be when finally settled in the promised land. The whole formed a continuation and enlargement of the covenant of grace. In the law given by Moses, the constitution and order of the Church, spiritually and temporally considered, were definitely settled, and were to remain without material change until Christ should come.

For thirty-eight years the Church wandered in the wilderness, until all the unbelieving generation over twenty years old that came out of Egypt perished, save Joshua and Caleb. It was forty years ere the people, under Joshua, Moses' successor, crossed the Jordan; and, after a series of difficulties, and a

considerable lapse of time, took possession of Canaan. Two tribes and a half tribe had their inheritance assigned them on the east of Jordan.

Failing to administer the commonwealth according to the written constitution in the law of the Lord, (a successor to Joshua being unnecessary,) and declining in piety, the judgments of God fell upon His people, and for four hundred and thirty years they were under the rule of the judges—an extraordinary order of men mercifully raised up for their salvation.

The rule of the judges was superseded by that of the predicted kingly office. The prophetic office arose at the same time, the kingly office continuing to the captivity, and the prophetic to the close of the Old Testament. Both were extraordinary offices, the one in the state, the other in the Church; the one, given in wrath; the other, in mercy. The two offices were sometimes united in one person, as in the instances of David and Solomon, but the theocratic form of government never changed.

Only three kings reigned over all Israel: Saul, David, and Solomon. In the reign of Solomon, when the temporal glory of the Church had reached its height, the temple was built in Jerusalem—into which the ark of God, after all its wanderings, was carried,—and also the tabernacle, first pitched in the wilderness, and afterwards in Shiloh and other places. Jerusalem—their ecclesiastical and political capital—became the place of worship for the people of God.

The kingdom, in the reign of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, was rent in twain; Two tribes adhering to the throne of David and forming the kingdom of Judah, and ten adhering to Jeroboam and forming the kingdom of Israel.

The apostasy of Israel was almost entire, and the kingdom was finally overthrown for transgression and carried into captivity by the Assyrians. The kingdom of Judah survived one hundred and thirty-three years longer, and was then also carried into captivity into the same regions, and by the same power, under a new dynasty and organization. The visible Church lay for many long and sorrowful years embosomed in

heathenism. The territories of the kingdom of Israel in part were colonized by the Samaritans; those of the kingdom of Judah never, for the land was allowed to enjoy her sabbaths.

The small remnant of the people left by Nebuchadnezzar in Judea under Gedaliah soon went down into Egypt, and, a few years after, those who had collected in their place from surrounding nations, whither they had fled, were carried by his commanding general into Babylon, and the land was thus completely stripped of inhabitants.

The Shepherd of Israel forsook not His afflicted people, but watched over and preserved them. When the appointed years of their captivity had expired, He raised up His servant Cyrus, who issued his decree permitting them to return.

Many causes operated to prevent the return of the people; nevertheless, moved by the Spirit of God, they did so at intervals by several caravans, and in considerable numbers, every tribe being represented, but the representation being largest from the tribes more recently carried into captivity, namely, Judah and Benjamin. The leading tribe Judah gave name ever after to the people. The first caravan under Zerubbabel, soon after its arrival, laid the foundations of the second temple amidst the tears and rejoicings of the people; and although the work was retarded, and for a time suspended by the violent opposition of the Samaritans and the lukewarmness of the people, nevertheless Zerubbabel lived to behold its completion and dedication,—the prophets Haggai and Zechariah contributing largely, by their faithful ministry, to the success of the enterprise. To this temple “the Desire of all Nations” was to come personally, and the glory of the latter house should in consequence exceed the glory of the former.

Ezra the scribe succeeded Zerubbabel in the government of the province, reformed abuses which had crept into the Church, and revived the fear of the Lord. Ezra was succeeded by Nehemiah, the cupbearer of the king, who, by his zeal, generosity, and prudence, rebuilt and dedicated the walls of Jerusalem, supplied the city with inhabitants, and still further promoted reforms among the people, in all which he was aided by Malachi, the last of the prophets. Finally, we have the

visible Church—purged from her dross of idolatry and iniquity by the captivity, as well as by subsequent revivals and reforms—once more settled in the Holy Land, a goodly seed; blessed with temple, and priesthood, and all the service of God, with the canon of the Old Testament completed and left in her hands—a lamp unto her feet and a light unto her path; looking for and hastening unto the coming of her great Redeemer. “The Lord is great in Zion, and He is high above all the people.” To Him be glory forever and ever!

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