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Life of Jesus Christ for the young.























THE



# LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

FOR THE YOUNG

BY THE

REV. RICHARD NEWTON, D. D.

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*ILLUSTRATED WITH FIVE HUNDRED ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL AND WOOD.*

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DIVISION I

PAGES 1 TO 482

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DEDICATION.

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TO

CHRISTIAN PARENTS, MINISTERS, TEACHERS,

AND ALL WHO

ARE STRIVING TO FOLLOW THE COMMAND

OF OUR

BLESSED LORD TO HIS APOSTLE PETER,

**“FEED MY LAMBS,”**

THIS WORK

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY THEIR FRIEND AND FELLOW LABORER

THE AUTHOR.





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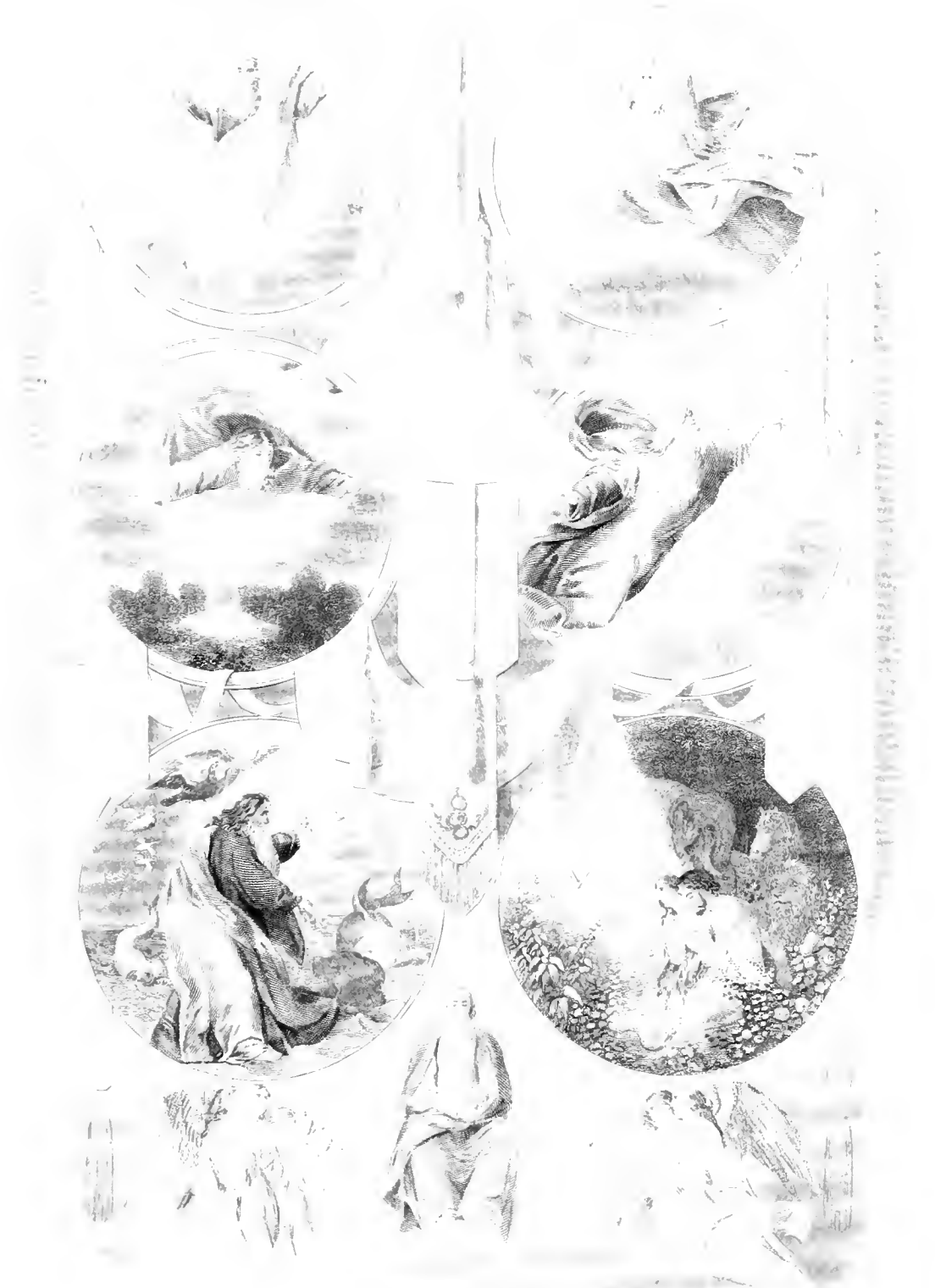
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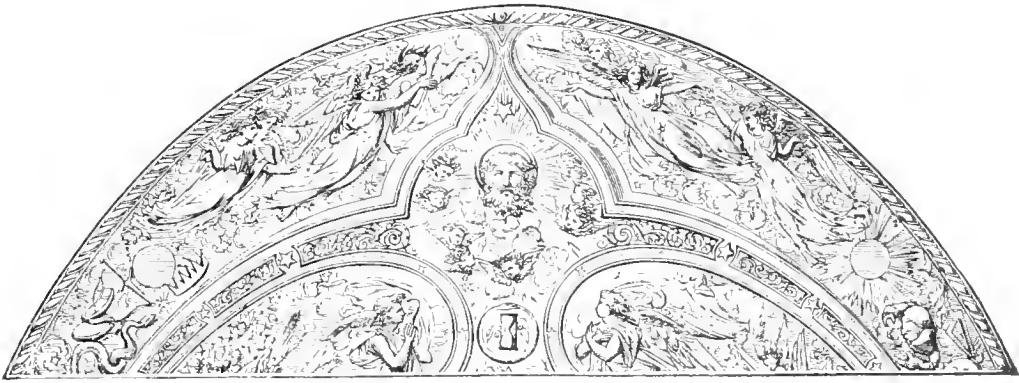
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## THE FIRST PROMISE.



**G**OD tells us in the third chapter of Genesis, and the fifteenth verse, what the first promise is; it says: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed, and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

These words were spoken about six thousand years ago. They carry us back to the Garden of Eden. That was the place where God put Adam and Eve to live after they were created. What a beautiful place it must have been! God had made to

grow there "every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food." The loveliest flowers too were blooming there. No thorns, nor briars were growing in that garden.

The birds sang sweetly among its shady groves. Nothing disagreeable,

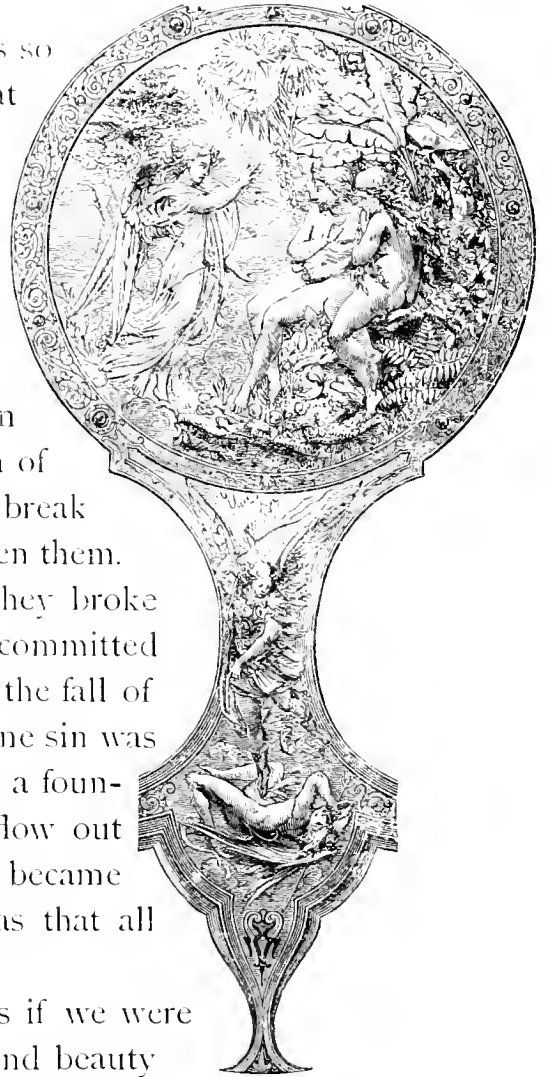
or hurtful, or poisonous was to be found there. The animals were all tame. They played lovingly with each other, as we sometimes see the young lambs playing together in the meadow. How bright and beautiful every thing must have been in that charming place! Well might it be said that "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was *very good*." Gen. i: 31.

And the reason why every thing was so bright and beautiful and happy in that garden was that there was no sin there.

We know not how long Adam and Eve continued to enjoy the happiness of that blessed place. But, we know that by and by a change came over them, and their beautiful home. For after awhile we are told that Satan stole into the garden. Taking the form of a serpent, he tempted our first parents to break the only commandment that God had given them. They yielded to Satan's temptation. They broke God's law. This was the first great sin committed in our world. This was what we call the fall of Adam—or of man. The effect of that one sin was terrible. It was like putting poison into a fountain, and making all the streams that flow out from it poisonous too. Adam and Eve became sinners, and the consequence of this was that all their children also became sinners.

As we think about this, it seems as if we were standing and looking at the brightness and beauty of that garden, and while we are looking the whole scene changes. A heavy cloud arises. It spreads all over the sky. It turns the day to night. It shuts out every ray of light, and leaves those two poor sinners trembling in the dark.

And now God comes down to speak to them about what they have done. They are terribly frightened, and try to hide themselves. But



"The angels visited them in the garden."

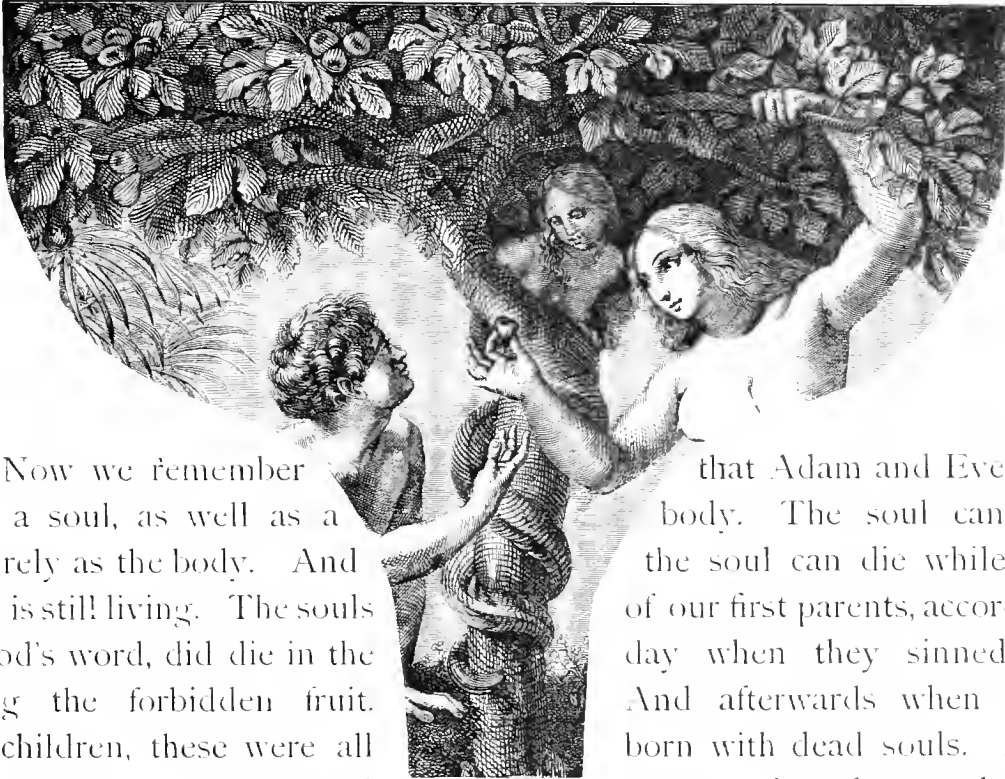




Adam and Eve in Paradise.



there is no hiding from him. No wonder Adam and Eve were afraid. They had good reason to fear. They knew they had sinned against God, and displeased Him. They could not tell what He was going to do with them. He had told them before that if they ate of the tree which He had told them not to eat of—"in the day that they did so, they should surely die." But they had never seen any one die. They did not know what death meant.



The Temptation.\*

Now we remember each a soul, as well as a body. And as surely as the body is still living. The souls to God's word, did die in the eating the forbidden fruit. had children, these were all this is what the apostle Paul people as being "dead in they are born into the world. Ephes. ii: 1. We are all born with dead souls. And so it was true in this sense as God told our first parents, that, "in the day they sinned they *did* surely die."

that Adam and Eve had body. The soul can die while the soul can die while the of our first parents, according day when they sinned by And afterwards when they born with dead souls. And means when he speaks of trespasses and sins," when

They probably expected that their bodies would die too. And so they stood trembling to hear what God would say to them, or to find out what he was going to do to them. There were three persons before God when this meeting took place in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve

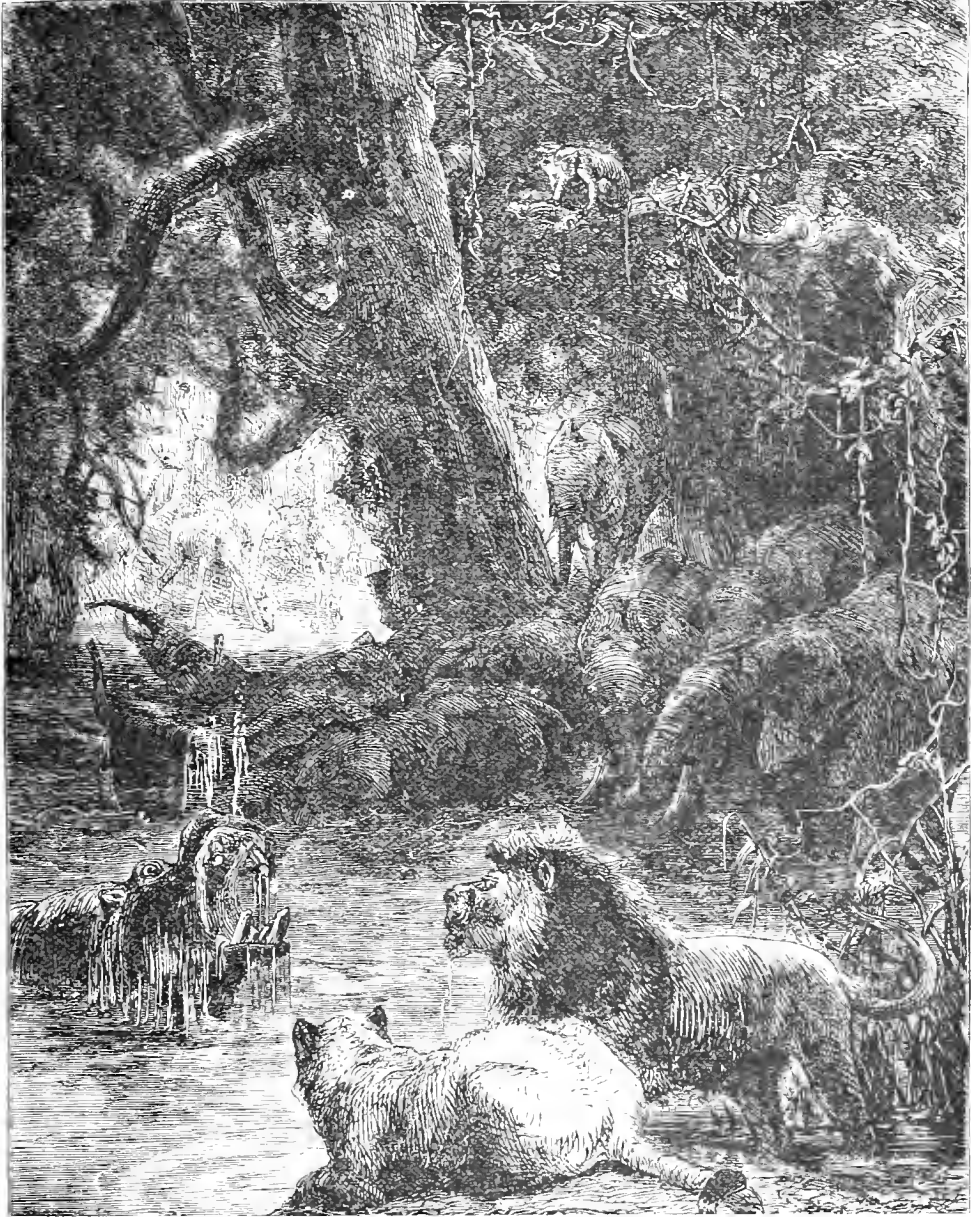
\*This picture of the Temptation is portion of a painting by Raphael, the celebrated Italian artist. He represents the serpent as having a human head. This is only the artist's notion. There is no authority for this in the Bible.

were there and Satan too, in the form of a serpent. God spoke to them separately, and told what the effect of sin would be upon each of them. What he said to the serpent we read in Gen. iii: 14. What he said to Eve we see in verse 16, and what he said to Adam we read in verses 17–19. But still, up to this point God had not told Adam and Eve what he was going to do with them, and their children. They did not know whether he was going to have mercy on them and help them, or whether he would leave them to die in their sins. But before he went away from them, on that first meeting after they had sinned, God was pleased to say something to them on this point. What this was we find in Gen. iii: 15. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed, and her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

This is called "*the first promise.*" It is the very first thing in the Bible that points us to Jesus. It showed Adam and Eve that God was not going to leave them in their sins, but that he intended in some way or other to show mercy to them and their children. This must have been a great comfort to them. It must have seemed to them just as if the dark storm-cloud which sin had brought over their sky, had opened above them, and one bright and beautiful star of hope had come shining out upon their darkness. Everything that the Bible tells us afterwards about Jesus was wrapped up in this first promise.

This is the one spring out of which the whole stream of God's mercy to us flows forth. You know what a fine large stream the river Rhine is—as it flows through certain parts of Europe. And yet far up near the top of one of the high mountains of Switzerland, there is a tiny little spring, which a man can span with his hand—I spanned it with my own hand in going over that mountain—and yet, that little spring is the source or fountain from which flows forth the great river Rhine. And so this first promise is the spring from which the river of God's mercy and salvation, for our whole world, flows forth.

We cannot tell how much Adam and Eve understood about this first promise. We know a great deal more about it than they did. For we have the whole Bible to help us understand it. And we come now to talk about this first promise in the light which the rest of the Bible throws upon it. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between



"The animals were all tame."

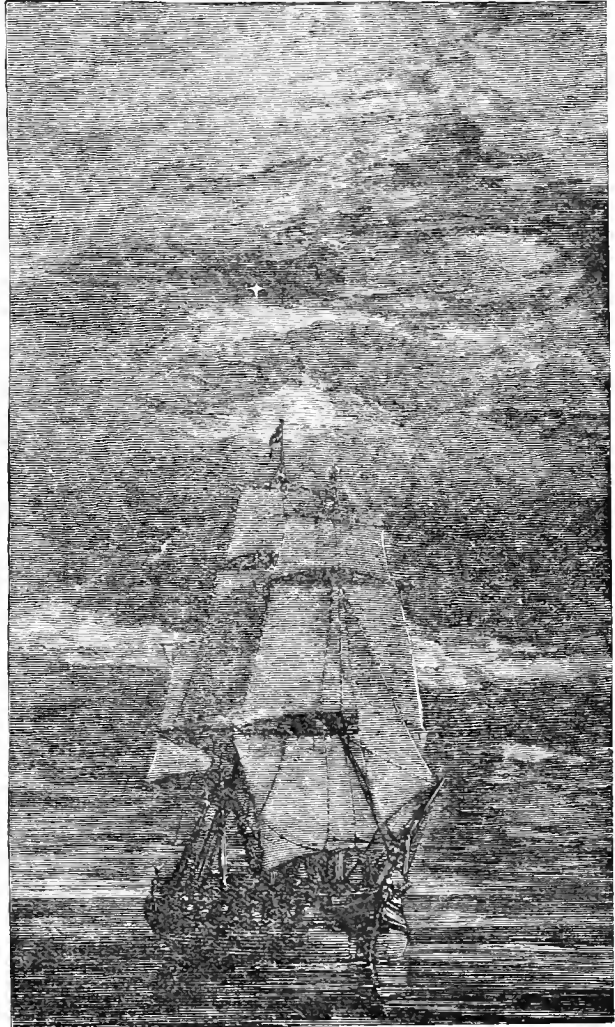


thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." And when we come to look at this verse, in the light of the Bible, we can see in it the promise of four things.

*In the first place we can see here the promise of a helper.*

The part of the verse which shows us this is that in which God says:—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman." The word "thee" here refers to Satan. And here perhaps some one may say,—“Well, but I don't see any promise of a helper here.” Perhaps you do not at first; but let us talk about it a little and I think you will soon see it. Now remember what Satan had just done with Adam and Eve. He had persuaded them to give up having God for their Lord and Master, and to take him instead of God. When they did this they gave themselves up to Satan and put themselves in his power.

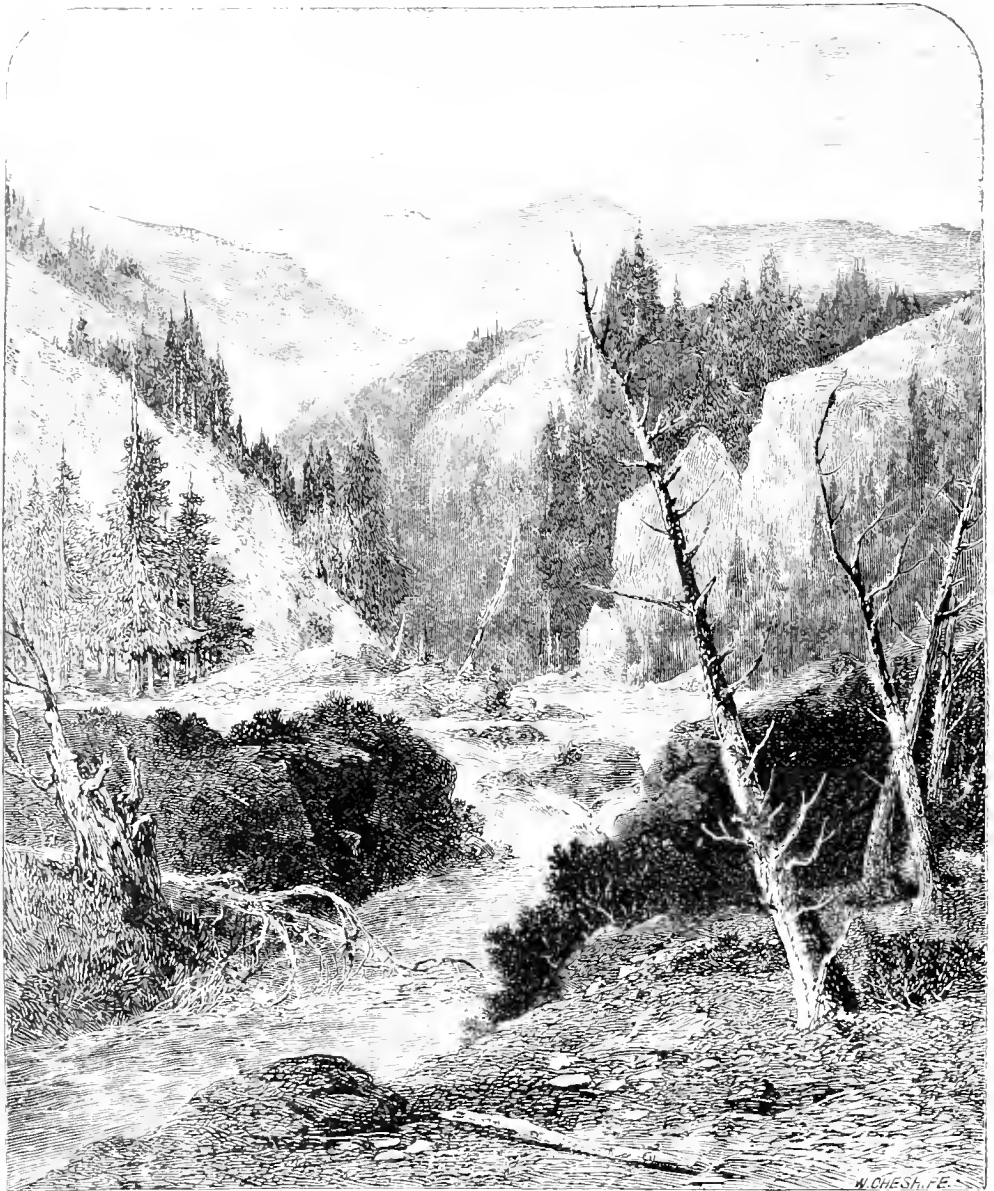
Let us take an illustration of what we are now speaking about. Suppose we compare the soul of Adam to a fort, or palace. When God created him good, and put him in the Garden of Eden, then that



“And one bright and beautiful star of hope had come shining out upon their darkness.”

fort belonged to God, with all the goods that were in it. It was God's fort, and God's flag was flying on the walls of it. Satan wanted to conquer that fort, and get possession of it for himself. He knew that God, the owner of this fort, was stronger than he was, and so he did not try to storm the fort, or take it by violence. He saw that there was only one way in which he could succeed, and that was by deceit and treachery. He

could not batter down the walls of the fort, or force open the gates. So he came to Adam and Eve, and told them lies about God, and tried to



"And yet that little spring is the source or fountain."

persuade them to open the gates of the fort, and let him in. And this was just what they did when they broke God's law, and obeyed Satan rather than God. They opened the gates of the fort to him, and let him in. He took possession of it as his own. He hauled down God's flag from



the walls of the fort, and ran up his own flag in the place of it. Then the fort was his, and he expected to remain the owner of it, and of all that belonged to it forever. He supposed that Adam and his children would always be on his side, and that there never would be any more enmity or fighting between them. And if God had not intended to send us a helper, it would have been as Satan supposed. He would have always kept the fort. His flag would always have waved over its walls, and we should all have been left forever in his power.

But God showed that it was not to be so, when he said to Satan—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman." This meant that he would not let Satan keep the fort he had taken by treachery, but that he was going to take it away from him. It was just as if God had said to Adam and Eve, and to all their children; "Satan has gained a great victory over you, but don't be discouraged. Don't give up to him, for I am going to help you." When God said he would put enmity between Satan and the woman, it was just as if he had signalled to our first parents in the language of the popular hymn, saying—

"Hold the fort, for I am coming."

They could not "hold" the whole "fort," but they might get a little corner of it, and hold on to that till they could see what God was going to do for them. And so, in this "first promise," or in these words spoken in the Garden of Eden, one thing that we find is the promise of a helper.

And then in this first promise we find *what sort of a helper this was to be*. He was to be a—HUMAN—*helper*.

We are told it was the "*the seed of the woman*" who was to be this helper. "The seed of the woman" meant some one who was to be born of the woman, or of our mother Eve. It meant one of her children, or descendants. The apostle Paul settles this point, by telling us positively that this "seed of the woman" refers to Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Gal. iii: 16.

I suppose that if God had not said that the helper he was going to send was to be one of Eve's children—a human helper—a man—it would have been most natural for Adam and Eve to have expected that this promised helper would have been an angel. No doubt the angels from heaven had often visited our first parents while they were in Paradise.

They had talked with them freely, and had told them a great many things about God,—about how he had made the world, and about other matters which they would be very glad to know. They knew how much wiser, and stronger, and better the angels were than themselves, and it would have seemed reasonable for them to have expected that the helper promised to them would be an angel. But when God said that this helper was to come as “the seed of the woman,” then he taught them that he was to be a man—a



The Death of Abel.

human helper. It is supposed by some people that when Cain was born—the first child Eve had—she thought that he was to be the promised helper: for she said to Adam then, “I have gotten a man, or *the* man from the Lord.” Gen. iv: 1. If this was so, she made a great mistake, for the helper promised here did not come till four thousand years after that. How sadly she must have felt this mistake when called to mourn in the bitterness of her sorrow over the death of Abel!

It is a great mercy to us that Jesus, our helper, is a man, and not an

angel. If he were an angel he would not know how to help us: he could not feel for us, and sympathize with us, as he does now. The angels were never born children as we were. They never grew up to be boys and girls as we did. They could not tell how boys and girls feel, and what troubles they have to bear. And this is one reason why people—even good people—have always felt afraid of angels when they have appeared to them. If Jesus, our helper, had been an angel, we who are children, could not go to him, as we do now, and speak to him, in the words of that sweet hymn, which you find on the next page.

The first thing that children do, when they get into any trouble is to run to their mother, and tell her about it. And they do this because they are sure that she will feel sorry for them, and help them. Jesus knows this, because he is a human helper. And so, in one of his precious promises, he says—“As one whom his *mother comforteth so will I comfort you.*” Is. lxvi: 13.

And the apostle Paul tells us that this was one reason why Jesus took our nature upon him, and was born of a woman. In coming to be our helper, he came as a human helper, rather than in any other way, because then he could tell all about our feelings, and would know best how to help us in our troubles. Heb. ii: 14–18.

Suppose you break your arm. When the doctor comes in to set the broken bone, and put on the splinters and bandages, it will give you a great deal of pain. And if while you are suffering this pain, a friend, who has had a broken arm, comes in, and sits down by your side, and says—“I am very sorry for you. I know just how you feel, for I remember very well, how I felt, when my arm was broken:” you would find more comfort in the sympathy of that friend, than if he had never known what it was to have a broken arm.

One of the celebrated kings of England was Henry the Eighth—the father of the queens Elizabeth and Mary. The story is told of him that he used sometimes to disguise himself, so that no one would know who he was. Then he would go about to different places in London, so that he might see what was going on, in a way that he could not do, if he should go there openly known as the king. On one of those occasions he got into some trouble, and was taken up by the police. They had no idea



"Thou, who once on mother's knee,  
 Wert a little one like me,  
 When I wake, or go to bed,  
 Lay thy hand upon my head;  
 Let me feel thee very near,  
 Jesus Christ, our Saviour dear.

Once thou wert in cradle laid,  
 Baby bright, in manger shade,  
 With the oxen, and the cows,  
 And the lambs outside the house;  
 Now thou art above the sky,  
 Thou canst hear thy children cry."

that their prisoner was the king, or else they would have released him in a moment. But he would not tell them who he was. And so the policemen put him in the common prison, and locked up there he had to spend the night. It was a cold, dark place, very different from his comfortable palace, and the unknown king suffered a good deal during that long dreary night.

The next morning they let him go, and he went off. On getting back to his palace, one of the first things he did was to send a sum of money to the keeper of the prison where he had spent the night. This money was to be used in furnishing fire and lights, for the benefit of those who might have to be locked up in that prison all night.

Now this dark world of ours must have seemed like a dreary prison to Jesus, our blessed helper, when he was living here. And as king Henry, on getting back to his palace, remembered how cold and dark the prison was, where he had been shut up all night, so Jesus our helper, in yonder glorious home where he now lives, never forgets how his people feel, and what they need to comfort them while they are living in this dark world of sin and sorrow. And so we see that when this "first promise" tells us about the helper who was to come to us through "the seed of the woman," it is a *human* helper to whom it refers.

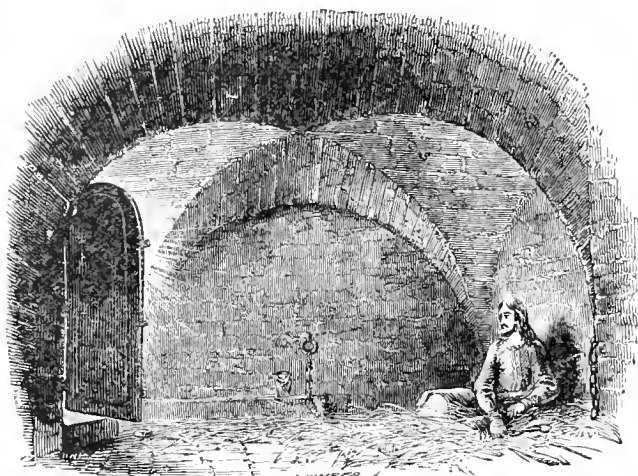
*And then the third thing about this helper of which this promise tells us is—that he was to be a—SUFFERING—helper.*

We are taught this when we find God saying to Satan, about the promised helper of men, "*thou shalt bruise his heel.*" We all know that the heel is not a very tender part of our bodies. And yet we know that if a person has to walk about, and work with a wound in his heel it may cause him a great deal of suffering. And when we are told here that Jesus, our promised helper, was to do his work for us with a bruised heel, we are taught that his work was to be done through suffering.

"*Thou shalt bruise his heel.*" If we wish to know what this means, we cannot get a better explanation of it than is found in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. There we see how it is that Jesus Christ, our promised helper, was to suffer for us, and was to do us good by his sufferings. There he is spoken of as "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." There we are told that "he bore our griefs and carried our sorrows." There it is said that "he was wounded for our transgressions, and *bruised* for our iniquities."

Here we see how the very word which God made use of in the first promise is applied to Christ. There it was said "thou shalt *bruise* his heel;" and here Isaiah says—"he was *bruised* for our iniquities."

If we look at the suffering life that our Saviour led while here on earth and then remember what a hand Satan had in causing those sufferings, we shall see how well it might be said that all through the days of Christ's ministry in our world Satan was bruising his heel. Jesus was suffering through all those forty days in which he was led up into the wilderness "*to be tempted of the devil.*" Then it might be said that Satan was "bruising his heel." Jesus was suffering when the Jews found fault with him, and called him hard names; when they said he "was a Samaritan, and had a devil," and that he did his mighty works "through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." It was Satan who stirred up the Jews to do these wicked things to Jesus, and so in this way he was bruising his heel. And in the Garden of Gethsemane we



"They put him into a common prison."

know what terrible sufferings Jesus passed through. There he said "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." There "being in an agony he fell to the earth, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." And then he was dragged before Pilate and charged with crimes he had never committed; he was mocked, and scourged, and crowned with thorns, and spitted on. He was smitten on the face; he was struck on the head with the reed. He was nailed to the cross, and lingered for long hours there in terrible suffering. And when we know that Satan was the leader, in all these trials through which Jesus had to pass, how well it might be said of him then that he "was bruising the heel" of Jesus.

I am very sure that Satan did not know what great good was to come out of the sufferings that he caused Jesus to pass through, or else he never would have brought them on him. I suppose that Adam and Eve



"A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."





understood very little of what was meant by this bruising the heel of the promised helper. But we know what Jesus suffered for. We understand why it was that his heel was bruised. You, and I, and all of us have a great interest in it. *Jesus was helping us when he let his heel be bruised.* He was suffering for us, he was bearing the punishment of our sins.



In the Garden of Gethsemane.

He was our substitute. And a substitute, you know, is one who suffers in the place of another. And here is a story to illustrate the good that follows to us from the sufferings of Christ, or the bruising of our helper's heel. It occurred in the experience of school life, and is told by the teacher, in whose school it took place. It is called—"The Little Substitute."

"Several years ago," says this person, "while I was teaching a school, one of the boys broke the rules of the school. The punishment for his

offence, according to the law of the school, was for the offending boy to stand in the corner of the room, in disgrace for a quarter of an hour, and then to receive a whipping. I called him up and told him to go to the place of punishment.

As he was going, a little boy, younger than he, came to me and asked that he might take the place of the guilty one. I wondered at this and

spoke to him about the disgrace, and the punishment he would have to bear. But still he begged that he might go. I consented, and he went and took his companion's place in the corner.

I was greatly surprised and affected, but thought I could teach the boys a good lesson from this incident.

The little boy stood out the quarter of an hour, and then bore the flogging like a hero.

When it was all over I inquired whether the other boy had asked him to take his place.

"No, sir," he replied.

"Don't you think he deserved to be punished?"

"Oh! yes," said he; "he deserved it well."

"Then why did you wish to bear the punishment in his place?"

"Sir, it is because I love him."

This filled my eyes with tears. All the school had listened with great interest to this conversation. I then called George—the boy who had been disobedient—and ordered him to go stand in the corner, and receive the punishment himself. In a moment a multitude of voices cried out at once:—

"Oh! sir, that wouldn't be right; that wouldn't be right."

"It wouldn't be just either," said one of the larger boys.

"Why wouldn't it be right?" I asked, thinking to puzzle this boy. "Hasn't George broken the rules of the school?"

"Yes, sir; but you have allowed Joseph to be punished in his place, and now you ought not, on any account, to punish George."

"Well, my dear boys," I continued, "does what has just happened recall anything to your minds?"

"Yes, sir," said several of them, "it reminds us how the Lord Jesus Christ, bore the punishment of our sins."

"What name would you give to Joseph for what he has now done?"

"The name of *substitute*," was the answer.

"And what is a substitute?"

"One who takes the place of another."

"And whose place has Jesus taken?"

"Our place, as sinners," was the answer.

And so when we read how "the heel" of Jesus was "bruised," we see that he was a *suffering helper*; and how he helped, or saved us, by his sufferings.

*The last thing that we learn from this promise about our helper is that he would be—A SUCCESSFUL—helper.*

God taught us this when he said to Satan—"it shall bruise thy head." The "it" here means "the seed of the woman," or the helper promised to us—or our Saviour Jesus. Satan was to bruise the heel of Jesus; that means he was to cause him a great deal of suffering. But then, on the other hand, Jesus was to bruise the head of Satan, or of the serpent. The head of a serpent is the most tender part of his whole body. Some animals, as the bear for instance, are so strong in the head, that it is hard to hurt them by hitting them there. But if you wish to kill a serpent you strike it on the head. But when it is said that Jesus, our promised helper, was to "bruise the head" of Satan or the serpent, it does not mean that he was to kill him.

There is a verse in the Epistle to the Hebrews which may help us to understand this part of the first promise. It is in the second chapter and the fourteenth verse, where the apostle Paul is speaking about Jesus our Saviour; and he says that "*by his death he was to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil,*" or as he is here called "the serpent."

Now there are two ways in which we may speak of a person as being destroyed. One of these is when he is killed. Another is when the power he has had to do harm is taken away. But when we are told that Jesus, our promised helper, was to "bruise the serpent's head," or to destroy him, it does not mean that he was to kill him outright, but that he was to destroy, or take away his power to tempt men, and lead them into sin.

Let us take an illustration here from the history of our own times. Some years ago you know, the famous Napoleon Bonaparte was the Emperor of France. He was a great soldier; his greatest delight was to be at the head of large armies; to lead them into battle, and to gain great victories. In his many wars he caused the death of hundreds of thousands of men. It seemed as if there could be no settled peace among the nations of Europe while he was in the midst of them. War followed war just as the waves of the sea roll in after each other. But at last the Duke

of Wellington, at the head of the English army, gained a great victory over Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo. Napoleon's army, was scattered. He himself had to flee. He was taken prisoner, and confined as a captive on the little island of St. Helena, in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean. In that battle Napoleon lost his empire. That event is always spoken of as the downfall, or the overthrow of Napoleon. And we are in the habit of saying that the Duke of Wellington *destroyed* Napoleon. If it were right to apply the language of scripture to such an event we might say that he bruised Napoleon's head when he gained that great victory over him. This does not mean that he killed him, or destroyed his life. It only means that he took away his dominion, or destroyed his power.

And this is what Jesus, our great helper, does to Satan. When the first promise said that he was to bruise Satan's head, it did not mean that he was to kill him or destroy his life; but it meant that he was to take away his dominion, or to destroy his power. And Jesus does this in two ways. One way in which Jesus "bruises the head" of Satan is *by converting souls, and delivering them from Satan's power.*

Until we are converted, and become Christians, we are the prisoners or captives of Satan. The Bible says—"we are taken captive by him at his will." II. Tim. ii: 26. Every unconverted soul is like a fort which Satan has taken possession of, and which he holds in his own power. When that soul is converted, then it is taken away from Satan. His power over it is destroyed. It is handed over to Jesus, and his dominion is established there. This is what the apostle Paul means when he speaks of those who are converted, and become Christians, and says—"they are delivered from the power of darkness, and are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." Col. i: 13. And so, every time that Jesus converts a sinner, and makes him a Christian, it may well be said that he is striking a blow at Satan. He is bruising his head, or destroying his power.

We may take the apostle Paul as our illustration here. He was a very learned man. His mind was uncommonly clear and strong. But before his conversion all his learning and ability were employed in the service of Satan. He had that great man completely in his power. Satan made him, as Paul afterwards said—"a persecutor and a blasphemer," and one who was very "injurious" to the cause of the gospel. He did all



Napoleon's Army was scattered—He, himself, had to flee.



he could to destroy the followers of Jesus. He imprisoned them, and put them to death. Paul's soul was like a strong fort on the side of Satan. It was altogether in his power.

But when Paul became a Christian, what a wonderful change took place! He began at once to preach that very gospel which before he had been laboring to destroy. He went all up and down the world telling about Jesus and his wondrous grace and love. He became the greatest preacher that ever lived. Multitudes of people were converted by him. He established churches wherever he went. He wrote thirteen out of the twenty epistles which the New Testament contains. His writings have been a blessing to the church and to the world for eighteen hundred years. And here we see how Jesus bruised Satan's head, or destroyed his power, when he converted Paul's soul. And he does the same, in some degree, every time that a soul is converted. This is one of the ways in which the first promise is fulfilled, and Jesus, "the seed of the woman, bruises the serpent's head."

But there is another way in which this promise will be fulfilled, and Jesus will bruise Satan's head, and this will be by *delivering the world* from his power. He has not done this yet; but he certainly will do it, by and by. This is what the apostle Paul means when he says—"The God of peace *shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*" Rom. xvi: 20. Satan is now called "the God of the world," II. Cor. iv: 4. and the "prince of the power of the air." Ephes. ii: 2. But the Bible tells us that the time is coming when Satan will be driven out of the world. We read (Rev. xx: 1-3,) how a mighty angel will come down from heaven, and bind Satan in chains, and lock him in the bottomless pit. Then he will be a prisoner or captive, and his power will be destroyed, just as Napoleon Bonaparte's was when he was made a captive in the lonely island of St. Helena. Then Satan will not tempt, or deceive men any more. This will be a blessed world then. There will be no wicked people in it. No body will be cross or ill-tempered. There will be no swearers or liars. Nobody will cheat then. There will be no robbers or murderers then. No prisons or penitentiaries will be needed in those happy days. "Then men will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and they will learn war no more." Then "the leopard shall lie

down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." Then "the people shall be all righteous;" "and they shall not hurt, nor destroy saith the Lord in all my holy mountain." And when this "good time comes," and all the world is as bright, as beautiful, and as happy as the Garden of Eden was before sin entered there, then this first promise will be fulfilled; and we shall see how clearly Jesus spoken of in this first promise has been *a helper—a human helper—a suffering helper—and a successful helper*. All the work that Jesus was to do for us, and for our world was wrapped up in these wonderful words—"I will put enmity between thee, and the woman; and between thy seed, and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."





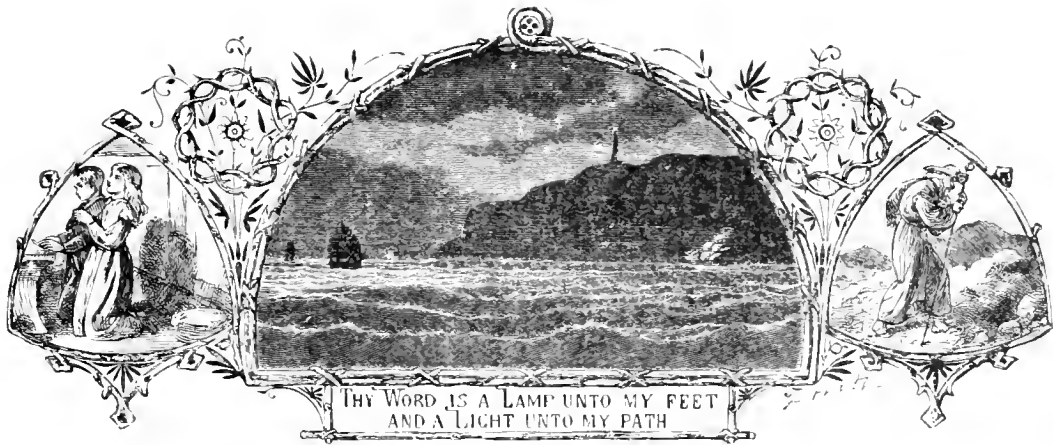




*A Scene of the Sledge.*







## NOAH'S ARK.



IF we look at a beautiful landscape in summer-time from a hill-top, we often see dark shadows moving slowly over the fields. And then if we look from the fields below to the sky above, we see where those shadows come from. Great masses of white, fleecy clouds are floating through the sky. It is those clouds which make the shadows we see moving over the fields. And if we look carefully at one of those moving shadows we can find out a good deal about the cloud that makes it. We can tell whether it is a big cloud or a little one. We can tell whether it is round in its shape, and smooth in its edges, or whether it is rough in its edges, and irregular in its shape.

In the same way, if we are walking away from the sun, when it is setting in the western sky, we can see our own shadow cast upon the road before us. If we stand still, and some one draws the outline of our

shadow on the ground that person, even if he had never seen us, would be able, from examining the shadow, to tell whether it was made by a person large or small, by a man or a woman, a boy or a girl.

Now, the Bible, God's blessed book, is like such a landscape spread out around us. And when we come to read the Old Testament, we find many things in it that appear to us very much like the shadows we often see in summer, moving over the fields as we gaze on them. The Apostle Paul tells us of these Old Testament stories that they "were written for our learning." Rom. xv: 4. And in another place he says they are "*a shadow of heavenly things.*" Heb. viii: 5. They are—"a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ." Col. ii: 17. He means by this that the principal persons whose histories we read in the Old Testament, and the leading events and incidents recorded there, were intended to teach us about the work that Jesus was to do for us, when he should come into the world to be our Saviour. And now, I ask you to come with me, and let us take a good long ramble together through the field of the Old Testament, to study some of the shadows which are there, and try to learn what important lessons they teach us about Jesus.

The first of these, selected for our present subject is—"The Ark of Noah."

This is the earliest shadow of Christ that we find in the Bible. And when we come to examine this shadow, and draw as it were its outline, we see *four* things in it which seem to point to Jesus, and teach us very important lessons concerning him. We may begin by speaking of the—*size*—of the ark.

Noah, who built the ark, lived more than four thousand years ago. That was only a little over sixteen hundred years after Adam was created, and men began to live on the earth. But, in that comparatively short time, the people in the world had become very wicked. Noah and his family were the only persons in all the world who feared God. In consequence of their wickedness God had made up his mind to destroy every living creature in the world, except Noah and his family. And he determined to do this by bringing a deluge, or flood of water, on the earth. The object God had in view in doing this was to check the growth of wickedness, and teach men the dreadful nature of sin.



Shadows on the landscape.





But, before doing this, God told Noah of his purpose. At the same time he gave him directions about an ark or vessel which he was to build, and in which he and his family were to be saved, while all the rest of the world was to be destroyed by the waters of the flood. The family of Noah consisted of eight persons. These were Noah and his wife, with his three sons and their wives. These eight persons were the only human beings, out of all the multitudes of people then living, who were to find shelter and safety in the ark. But, in addition to himself and his family, Noah was to take with him some of the birds of the air, of the cattle of the field, of the beasts of the forests, and of the creeping things of the earth, in order to keep them alive, and that they might fill the earth again when the flood was over.

What God said to Noah about this we read in Gen. vi: 19, 20. "And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every kind shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee, they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee to keep them alive." A larger number of certain kinds of birds and animals were to be taken in. For in Gen. vii: 2, 3, we read—"Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female; and of beasts that are not clean by twos, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and his female, to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth." The animals called clean here were such as were offered in sacrifice to God. The unclean birds and animals were those which were not allowed to be thus used.

We are not told, and therefore we do not know, how many different kinds of birds and beasts and insects were taken into the ark with Noah. But God knew just how many of them there would be, when he gave directions to Noah how large he was to make the ark. He never makes a mistake in doing anything. You know we have a number of oceans on our earth. There is the Atlantic Ocean, and the Pacific Ocean, and the Indian Ocean, and so on. And when God made these oceans he knew exactly how much water was to be put into each of them, for the Bible tells us that "He measured the waters in the hollow of his hand." Is. xl: 12. And so he knew how large to make the basin, or bed, which

was to hold the water of each of these oceans. And in every case he has made it of the proper size. And God is quite as careful in making little things as he is in making big things. Here is a baby; look now at the baby's eyes. Each of them is a little ball—a wonderful ball, indeed,—not quite round, but rather longer one way than it is the other. And each eye



Building the Ark.

has a little hole, or socket, as it is called, made for it, in the bony part of the baby's head. God has made millions on millions of eyes. And each of these has had a socket exactly fitted for it. The socket for each of your eyes, and each of my eyes, just fits it. It is neither too large nor too small. God does all things well. "His work is perfect." Deut. xxxii: 4. And so when God told Noah about the size of the ark—its length—its width—you may be sure that he knew exactly how large it

ought to be in order to have room enough for all who were to be sheltered in it from the coming flood.

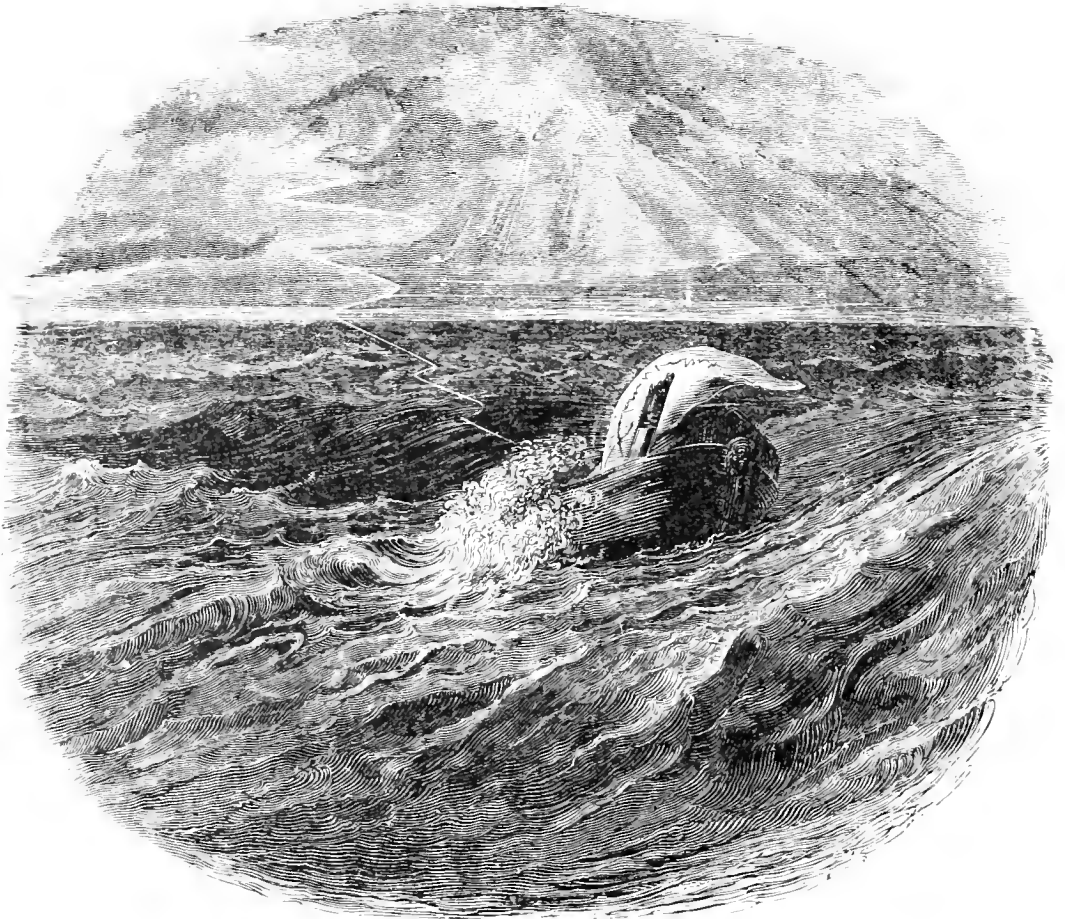
This was the measure after which it was to be made:—The length of it three hundred cubits, the breadth fifty cubits, and the height thirty cubits. We are not quite certain how much a cubit was, according to our measure. It is generally supposed that it was eighteen inches, or a foot and a half. Then, according to this measure, the length of the ark was four hundred and fifty feet, its breadth seventy-five feet, and its height forty-five feet. It was not intended for fast sailing, but for safe floating, and so it probably had not a sharpened bow and a rounded stern as our ships have. We may think of it as a great square wooden house, six times as long as it was broad. The square or block of a city street is generally about five hundred feet long, and sixty feet wide. An ordinary three-story house is about forty-five feet high. So we may think of the ark as a floating house, or vessel, nearly as long as one of our squares, half as wide again, and about as high as a three-story dwelling.

We may be sure, therefore, that it was large enough for the purpose for which it was intended. And so when Noah had finished the ark he carefully stowed away all the food for those who were to live in it for so long a time. And when every thing was ready the birds of the air came flying to the window of the ark. The cattle came,—horses, and cows, and camels, and sheep, and asses. And the wild beasts of the forest came,—the bears, and the lions, and the tigers, and the elephants. Noah did not have to seek them, neither did he muzzle or chain them, for God took away their fierceness, and even the lions were gentle as lambs. What a strange sight it must have been! See, there are those wild animals losing all their fear of man, and moving along as quietly as we sometimes see the cows walking home from the pasture, when the milking time has come. Noah put them in the places he had prepared, and found there was room for them all. The ark was large enough to take in every living thing for whom it was prepared.

And when we think of the size of the ark, we see how this shadow points us to Jesus. When he was in our world he said, "Come unto me *all* ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi: 28. Many burdened souls came to him then. And ever since

then they have been coming to him. They are coming to him still. Let them come,

“Yes! whosoever will,  
O, let him freely come;  
And freely drink the stream of life,  
’Tis Jesus bids him come.”



The waves swept over the ark.

Jesus is the true Ark, of which Noah's ark was only the type or shadow. And as *that* ark was large enough to take in all for whom it was intended, so is *this* Ark. No matter how many millions have already come to Jesus, "*yet there is room.*" In every land, in every age, for all who feel their need of him, and who are willing to come, there is a warm welcome, and an abundance of room.

We may alter one word in the hymn we often sing, and say there is,

“Room in the arms of Jesus,  
Room on his gentle breast,  
There by his love o’ershaded  
Sweetly our souls may rest.”

And so when we think of the *size* of the ark we see how this shadow points us to Jesus.

*In the next place when we think of the—SUPPLIES—with which the ark was furnished,* we see another thing about this shadow in which it points to Christ.

We have seen already that the ark was to carry large numbers of living creatures. They were all to stay in the ark for about a year. A great quantity of food would be required for them, and a great variety. In the places where those different creatures had lived they had always found the food they needed prepared for them. God is so good that he provides for the wants of all the creatures he has made. This is what David teaches us, when he looks up to God, and says,—“Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.” Ps. cxlv: 16. What a beautiful thought this is! It represents all living creatures in this world,—the birds of the air, the beasts of the field and the forest, and the creeping things of the earth, as making up a great family. God is in the midst of them as the Father of it. He holds in his almighty hand all the good things that any of his creatures may need for their life and comfort. And as he opens his bountiful hand, the wants of every member of his great family are supplied.

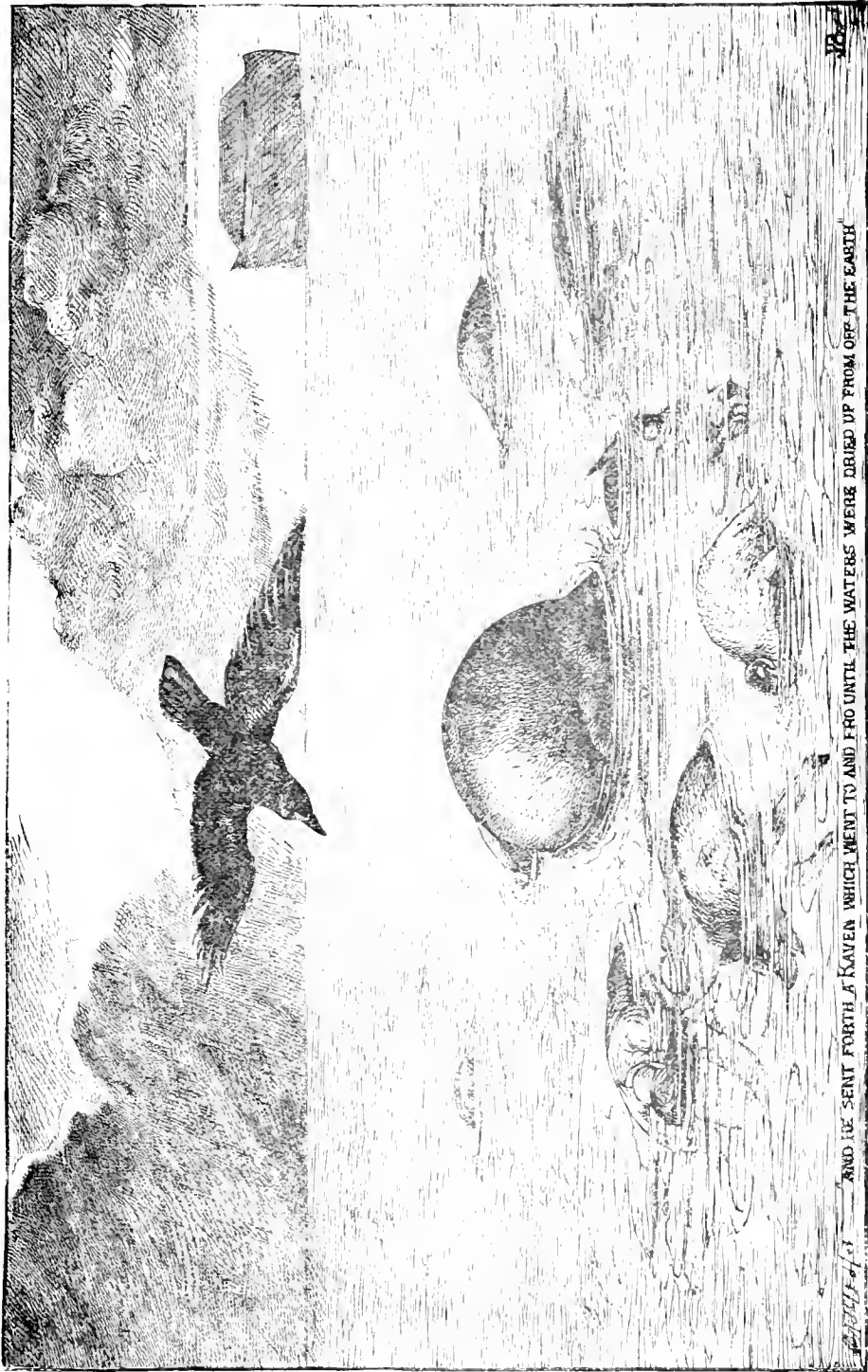
But when Noah had finished the ark there was no food for the animals who were to make their home within it for a year. God might have fed them by miracle every day. But he never works a miracle when it is not necessary. It was not necessary here. So God told Noah to take food enough into the ark for all the animals. In Gen. vi: 21 he said to him,—“Take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.” What a strange list Noah must have had to make, of the provisions that would be needed for that long voyage, not *round* the world, but *over* the world! No doubt God helped him to make that list, and told him what he was to take.

Nothing was overlooked, nothing forgotten. The ark was filled and all were in their places. The door was shut. The fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the ark went floating over a drowning world. Every living thing in the ark found the food that was needed to keep it alive and make it comfortable.

And here the ark was a shadow that points us to Jesus. It teaches us this great and precious truth, that when we come to Jesus as our friend and Saviour, we are sure to find all that we can need in him. David taught us this truth when he said,—“They that seek the Lord *shall not want any good thing.*” Ps. xxxiv: 10. Our Saviour himself taught the same thing when he said,—“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and *all these things*”—that is food, and raiment, and every thing necessary—“*shall be added unto you.*” Matt. vi: 33. And this was what St. Paul taught us when he said,—“My God shall *supply all your need* according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Phil. iv: 19. And what Jesus does for his people now, and has always been doing for them, in supplying all their wants, was beautifully taught in a shadowy kind of way by the ark, when we are told how well it was furnished with an abundance of all things that the health and comfort of its numerous passengers would require.

Now let us look at the way in which those who are loving and serving Jesus always find him ready to help them, and to do for them whatever they really need.

“Answers to Prayer.”—The Rev. Newman Hall, of Surrey Chapel, London, gives this instance of answer to prayer. It occurred in his own experience. The superintendent of his Sunday-school felt a strong desire, one Saturday evening, to call on a member of his Bible-class, to inquire if he needed anything. He had never visited him before, and could not account for the desire he felt to do so then. He found his young friend very ill. The mother and sister seemed to be in very comfortable circumstances; but still he ventured to ask them if he could help them in any way. They burst into tears, and said that the sick young man—their son and brother—had been asking for food, and they had none to give him. When the teacher knocked at the door *they were both on their knees, asking God to send them the help they so much needed.* Their difficulty was met at once, and so the promise was fulfilled in which God says,—“And it shall come

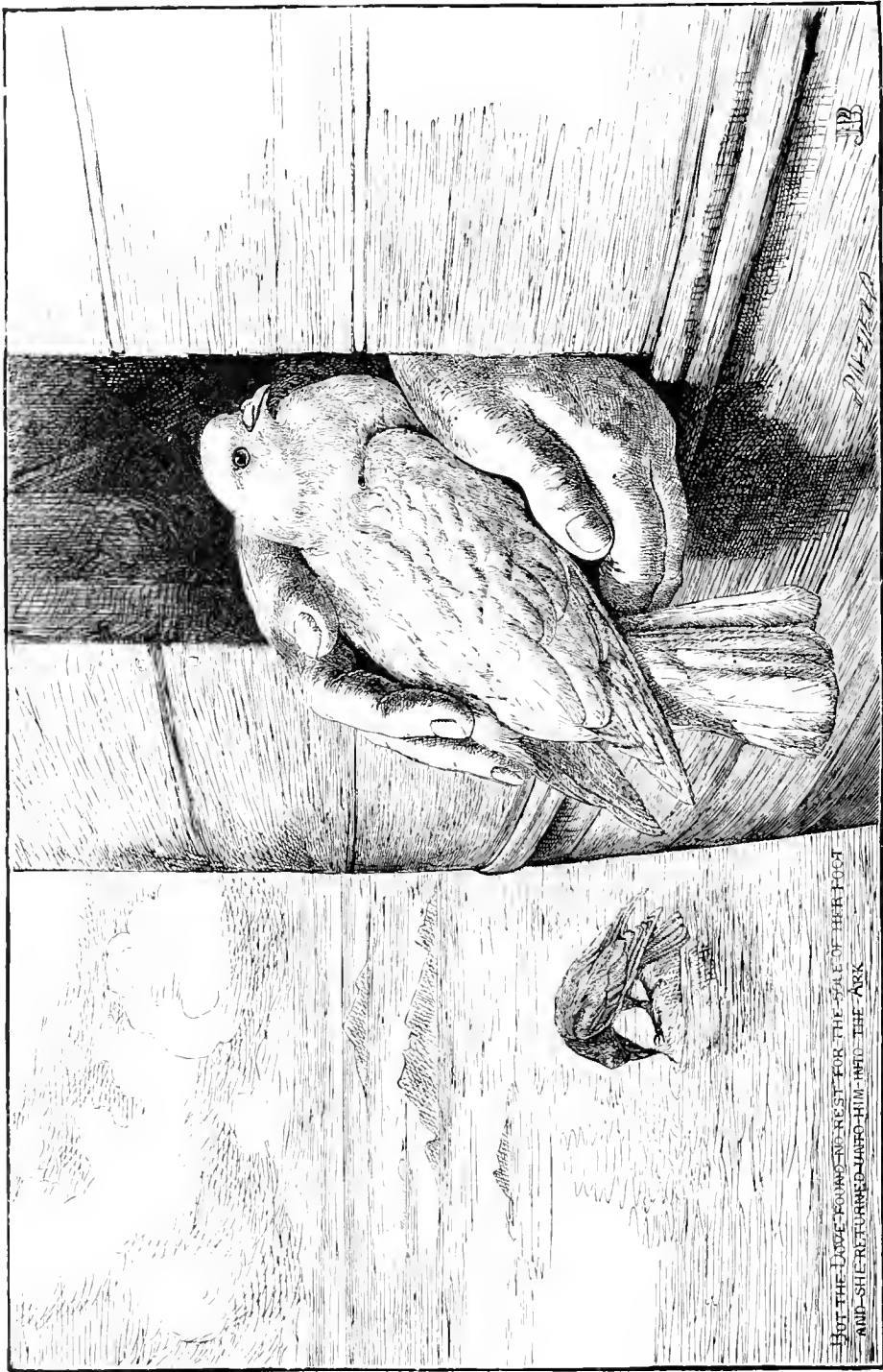


He sent forth a Kaven.









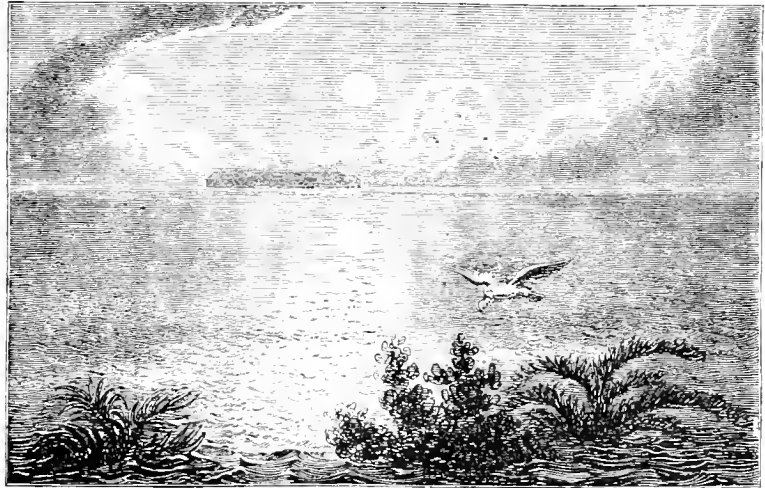
HOT THE DOVE FOUND THE NEST FOR THE CARE OF HER YOUNG  
AND SHE RETURNED INTO HIM INTO THE ARK

THE RETURN OF THE DOVE.

to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and *while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*" Isaiah lxx: 24.

Here is another illustration of the same kind:—A poor widow was very anxious about her rent, which she had no money to pay. She was sitting thinking what was to be done, when she heard a low voice coming from the next room mingled with sobs. She went to the door and listened. It was her little son George, who had lately given his heart to Jesus, and become a Christian. He was thanking God for giving him such a dear, good mother. Then he told the Lord how much his mother was distressed because she had no money to pay her rent; and then he finished his prayer in this simple way:—"O, Lord, pay mother's rent. Please do for Jesus' sake. Amen."

She said nothing, but went away. The next day a lady came, who had heard of her troubles, and gave her money enough to pay her rent.



The assuaging of the waters.

"Everything in Jesus."—A Christian lady was in the habit of visiting some poor colored people, reading the Bible to them, and trying to lead them to Jesus. Among them was a poor old woman, whose mind seemed as dark as her skin. "When I talked to her about Jesus," says the lady, "she used to say, 'It's no use, Missus, I nebber can find him. De Lord Jesus, don't want dis poor ole darkie.'"

But one day when I opened her door her face was so bright that I knew she had "found him."

"Well, auntie," I said, "you feel better to-day, don't you?"

"Oh! yes, honey, bress your heart, chile! I've found him. Jesus dun come to dis ole darkey sinner. *I doesn't want nuffin now.*" Here was a poor old creature with nothing in the world to call her own; without food

or clothing, but what was given her in charity, yet feeling that she was made "rich in Christ Jesus." "I've found Jesus, and *doesn't want nuffin now.*" She felt that she had "*everything in Jesus.*" And when we think of the ark, with its plentiful supply for the wants of all on board, we see how, in this respect, it was a shadow pointing to Jesus.



Noah's Sacrifice.

*But let us take another look at the ark, and when we see how all who entered it found—SAFETY—in it, we see another thing in which it was a shadow, or type of Christ.*

It was a long and dangerous voyage which the ark was to make. It had to go floating on its way, over a flood of water that was sent to drown a wicked world. Outside of the ark we are told that nothing was left alive. Gen. vii: 21, 22. We can easily understand what great dangers must have surrounded the ark while all this was going on. The rain came

pouring steadily down without interruption for forty days and forty nights. How heavy this rain was we may imagine when it is said, that "the windows of heaven were opened." Gen. vii: 11. How swollen the rivers must have been! and how wildly their waters must have gone sweeping over their banks and rushing over the land! And in addition to this we are told that "the fountains of the great deep were broken up." Gen. vii: 11. The meaning of this seems to be, that the waters of the great oceans broke loose from their appointed beds and went roaring and surging over the earth. What a fearful time that must have been! How wildly those rising floods must have swept all before them! And when to the sound of those mighty waters there was added the loud roaring of the terrified beasts and cattle, and the wild cries and shrieks of the drowning multitudes, we can form some faint idea of the alarming dangers that must have surrounded the ark. And yet no accident happened to it. It went floating steadily over those heaving and troubled waters, and all within it were in peace and safety. No evil came to one of its many passengers. The Lord God Almighty spread his wings over it to protect it. He kept that ark and all it contained in the hollow of his hand, and so they all found safety there. They passed through that long voyage without injury of any kind. And when the storm was over, and the waters had gone back to their place, the dry land of the renewed earth appeared. And then as the inmates of the ark came out into the bright sunshine once more, and the rainbow of God's promise was seen stretching its beautiful arch over them it seems as if every man, and woman, and beast, and bird, and creeping thing as they went forth rejoicing must have been ready to say, either by word, look or action, "we found *safety* in the ark."

And what a beautiful shadow the ark was of Jesus in this respect! All who flee to him for refuge find safety. He says himself,—“Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye *saved*.” Isaiah xlv: 22. It is surprising how much is said in the Bible about salvation, but it is always spoken of as “the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.” 2. Tim. ii: 10. He is called “the God of our salvation.” Ps. lxxv: 5,—“the *captain* of our salvation,”—Heb. ii: 10,—“the *author* of eternal salvation.” Heb. 5: 9. As the ark carried Noah and his family through the dangers of the flood, and landed them safely on the shores of the renewed earth, so Jesus—our Ark—

will carry all his people through the storms and dangers of this life, and land them safely on the shores of the heavenly world.

At the close of his life in this world, Jesus said to his Father in heaven,—“Those that Thou gavest me I have kept; and none of them is lost.” John xvii: 12. And of all his people he says,—“My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands.” John x: 28. It was not the wooden ark, but Jesus in the ark that saved Noah from the dangers of the flood. He saved Jonah when he was far down in the depths of the sea. He saved Daniel in the den of lions, and his three friends from the burning,



You put your jewel in the palm of your hand, and then shut it up.

fiery furnace. And the apostle Paul assures us that “He is able to save unto the uttermost, all that come unto God through him.” Heb. vii: 25.

It is surprising how much the Bible says about the safety of those who come to Jesus as their ark. In one place he is spoken of as “the eternal God,” who makes himself a “refuge” for his people, and puts underneath them his “everlasting arms.” And then it is said,—“The beloved of the Lord”—this is the tender and affectionate way in which Jesus speaks of his people—“The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in *safety* by him.” Deut. xxxiii: 27, 28. We all know how well the eye is protected in its

place in the head. The moment anything dangerous comes near it, the lid shuts down upon it, and it is safe. And Jesus uses this as an illustration of the safety that his people find in him. He says that he will keep them as safely as the apple of the eye is kept. Deut. xxxii: 10. In another place he says that if anybody touches one of his people he will feel it as quickly as we should, if a person attempted to touch that most tender of all parts of the body—the eye. Zech. ii: 8. Suppose you have a precious jewel, which you are afraid of losing, and which you wish to keep in perfect safety. You open your hand. You put your jewel in the palm of your hand, and then shut it up. How safe it is there! And Jesus uses *this* as an illustration of the safety which his people shall find in him. He promises to keep them in the shadow, or the hollow of his hand. Is. xlix: 2. But

even if you held that jewel in the palm of your hand, it would not be perfectly safe there. Some one stronger than you might appear and compel you to open your hand, and take your jewel from you. Or if this should not take place, by and by, you might get tired and fall asleep. Then your hand would open, and your jewel might drop out. But when Jesus holds us in his almighty hand neither of these things can happen to us. None can make him loose his hold on us. And then he never grows weary,



He found his friend very ill.

never slumbers, or sleeps; and so those whom he holds in the hollow of his hand find *perfect safety* there. And thus, when we remember how safely the ark carried all who were in it, through the dangers of the deluge, we see what a beautiful shadow it was of Jesus—the ark of his people—and of the safety they find in him.

Now let us take one more look at the ark. *Let us see HOW it was that the blessings found in the ark were SECURED.* And in this respect, too, we shall find that it was a shadow of Christ.

When the ark was finished, and furnished, God said to Noah,—“Come

thou and all thy house *into the ark.*" Gen. vii: 1. And in the 16th verse of the same chapter it is said,—"*and the Lord shut him in.*" Noah *did* what God told him to do, and *believed* what God said to him, and in this way he was saved. *This* was what secured to him a share of the blessings found in the ark. Noah would not have been saved unless he had really gone into the ark as God told him to do. It was being in the ark that saved him. And all who were drowned by the flood were drowned *because they were not in the ark.* Noah was not saved because he had spent a hundred and twenty years in working on the ark. He was not saved because the ark was finished and furnished. He was not saved because he stood without on the platform very near the door. God said to him—"*Come into the ark.*" He went in and stayed there and *that saved him.*

And it is just the same with us. We cannot be saved simply because Christ has died. We must have faith in him as our Saviour. Jesus says,—"*Come unto me—and I will give you rest.*" Matt. xi: 28. He says,—"*Look unto me, and be ye saved.*" Is. xlv: 22. This means "look unto me and ye *shall be* saved." Coming to Jesus, and believing in Jesus mean expecting to be saved because of what he did and suffered for us. The best illustration of it that we can have is Noah going into the ark when God told him. Believing in Jesus is with us exactly what going into the ark was with Noah. If we do this we shall certainly be saved. If we refuse, or neglect to do this we must certainly be lost; for it is written,—"*There is none other name, under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*" Acts iv: 12.

This is one of the most important of all things for us to know. It is very hard to make people understand it. Let us look at one or two illustrations that may help us in trying to understand it.

The first illustration is a story told about an English nobleman. His name was Lord Congleton. He was a friend of the Earl of Shaftsbury, and a very earnest Christian man. He had a large number of people on his estate who were very poor. He tried in many ways to do them good, but found it hard to get them to believe the Bible and become Christians. This caused him great sorrow. He thought over the matter a long time. He said to himself,—"*What shall I do to show these people how they may be saved, and secure for themselves a share in all the blessings of the*





"Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace."



gospel?" And this, you see, is the very point we are now considering. At last he hit upon a very singular plan, and at once carried it out. He made up his mind to give public notice that on a particular day, from nine o'clock in the morning to twelve o'clock at noon, he would be in his office, with his steward; and that if any of his tenants, or the people who lived on his grounds, were troubled by debts which they could not pay, if they would bring their bills with them, and tell how much they owed, they should have their debts paid, and get a receipt in full given them for the same. This notice was written out, signed by his lordship's own name, and posted up in different places. People read it, and talked about it, and wondered over it, but could not tell what to make of it.

At last the day appointed came. At nine o'clock precisely his lordship's carriage drove up to his office. He got out and entered the office, and sat there with his steward. A crowd of people gathered outside, and talked freely about this strange offer. "It's all a hoax," said one man. "I don't believe a word of it."

"But there's his lordship's own signature," replied another, "and *he* never tries to hoax people. He always means what he says."

"There must be a mistake about it somewhere," said another. "I'm not going to be made a fool of in this way."

And thus they talked on, but no one went in. About eleven o'clock an old man who lived with his wife in the poor-house, came along. He owed some money which he could not pay, but which he greatly desired to have paid before he died. He had heard of this offer, and made up his mind to accept it. Some of his friends tried to persuade him not to go. But he pointed to the written notice posted against the wall. "I know," said he, "that *that's* his lordship's name, and I'm sure he would never put his name to anything intended to deceive."

So he went in. "Please your lordship here's the bill for what I owe. I am living it's true in the poor-house; but I can't die happy while I'm in debt."

"And why should I pay your debts?" asked Lord Congleton. "I can't tell, please your lordship," said the old man. "But I saw the promise signed by your lordship's own name. I had faith in your promise, and so I came."

“Right,” said his lordship. “Steward, write him a check for his debts.” The man received it. He examined it. He saw it was all right, and then said: “Thank your lordship a thousand times for your kindness. Now I’ll go out and tell my friends.”



Trust to the men at the windlass to draw you out.

“No, no,” said Lord Congleton. “They’ve got the same promise that you had. If they believe my promise and come in, they shall have all that was promised. If they can’t trust my word they can have nothing.”

He waited in the office till the clock struck twelve. Then he went out. Waving overhead the check that had been given to him, he exclaimed,

"I've got all that was promised. Three cheers for Lord Congleton. Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!"

Just then his lordship came out and stepped into his carriage. Then there was a rush of men towards him, with bills in their hands, crying,—“Please your lordship here's my bill—and mine—and mine.” But he quietly waved his hand, and said,—“My friends, if you had believed my promise, and brought your bills in time they would all have been paid. But you would not trust me; and I can do nothing for you now.”

Here is one other illustration from a laboring man:—A minister of the gospel had a man belonging to his congregation who worked in a coal mine. He was a happy Christian. In talking with him one day the minister asked him why he hoped to be saved.

“You know, sir, I'm no scholar,” said the honest miner; “but I'll tell you the best way I can why I feel so happy. It's not what I do, but what Christ has done for me that I am trusting in. You've been down in the shaft of the mine. Now, for a long time I hoped to be saved, because I was trying to do what was right. But that never made me happy. I felt all the while as if I was down at the bottom of the shaft, and couldn't get out of the pit. But at last it seemed as if God said to me; ‘Stop trying to lift yourself out of the shaft. When the bucket comes down just get into it, and trust to the men at the windlass to draw you out.’ And so I don't try to lift myself out any more; but I trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and leave it all to him. I used to try to do right in order that I *might* be saved. Now I know that Jesus *has* saved me, and I try to do right because I love him.”

And so when we think of the *size* of the ark—of the *supplies* with which it was furnished—of the *safety* found in it—and of the way in which the enjoyment of these blessings was *secured*—we see what a beautiful shadow the ark was of the greater blessings that are offered to us in Jesus our glorious Saviour. And looking to him as the substance of this shadow, we may each of us say:—

“Behold! the Ark of God!  
Behold, the open door!  
Hasten to gain that dear abode,  
And rove my soul, no more!”



## CHRIST THE BLESSING OF THE WORLD.



**M**ORE than five thousand years ago, when God gave the first promise about Christ, the expected deliverer, we were taught that he was to be a man. This is what was meant when he was spoken of in that promise as "the seed of the woman." He was to be a *human* helper, or a man. But nothing was said in that promise about the nation from which he was to come. Yet it was necessary for us to know this. If this helper was to come at all he must come from some one particular nation: and as it was important there should be no room left for doubt about him when he came, it was very necessary that it should be clearly understood beforehand from which of the many nations he was to make his appearance. And this was the next thing that God made known about Christ, the promised helper. He had already been spoken of as "the seed of the woman." This taught us that he was to be a man, that is, one of





FIGURE OF A LIBERTY FROM THE SCULPTURE BY M. NOBLE







our own race. But then, nearly two thousand years after that first promise was given, God gave another promise, in which he said to Abraham,—“And in thy seed, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Genesis xxii: 18. And this taught us that the promised helper was not only to be a man—“the seed of the woman”—but that he was also to be—“the seed of Abraham”—or one of his descendants.

But Abraham was the head, or the founder of the Jewish nation. And so while the first promise taught us that our helper was to be a man, this second promise showed that he was to be one of the children of Abraham, or to be born of the Jewish nation. And we know that Jesus, our blessed Saviour, was a Jew. He was to be born in Bethlehem, a town belonging to the Jews. And there he *was* born. When the wise men from the east came to Jerusalem seeking him, they asked,—“Where is he that is born *King of the Jews?*” And when he hung upon the cross, the writing which Pilate placed over his head was—“*Jesus of Nazareth—the King of the Jews.*”

And the great thing which this second promise teaches is, that Jesus was to *bless the world*. God said to Abraham,—“In thy seed shall *all the nations of the earth be blessed.*” In another place we are told that “all the *families of the earth shall be blessed in him.*” Gen. xii: 3. Again this blessing is promised to individual men;—(Ps. lxxii: 17)—and in still another place we are told that this blessing brought by Jesus was intended for “every one of us.” Acts iii: 26. When Jesus was on earth he said,—“I am the light of the world.” John viii: 12. He might have said, just as truly, “I am the *blessing of the world.*” This we see was what was said of him long before he came into the world. And if it be true that Jesus was to bless all the *nations of the world*—all the *families of the world*—and all the men, or the people of the world, then we may well say that the blessing of the world was wrapped up in Jesus. When the promise of his coming was given us, it was a promise of blessing. When he came, he came to bless. When he began his ministry the very first thing he spoke of was the blessings he had brought to men. There he is on the top of the mountain where he preached his first sermon. Notice how that sermon begins. We read,—“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his

mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed—blessed—blessed, &c." Matt. v: 1-4. He opens that sermon with a bundle of blessings. It seems as if he were so burdened with the many blessings he had brought, that he could speak of nothing else till he had spoken of them.



The sermon on the mount.

And as Jesus began his ministry with talking about blessings, so he continued it with scattering blessings around wherever he went. What a beautiful sketch of his life the apostle Peter gives us when he says that he "*went about doing good.*" And see what an illustration we have of this in the short sketch in Matt. iv: 23, 24. Here we are told that "Jesus went

about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of diseases among the people. And they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases, and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy, and he healed them." How well it might be said of the people whom Jesus thus healed, they were "blessed in him!" And as Jesus *began* his ministry in our world in blessing, and *continued* it in blessing, so he ended it in blessing. When his work on earth was finished, and the time had come for him to return to heaven, we read—Luke xxiv: 50, 51—how he led his disciples out to Bethany, on the top of the Mount of Olives, "and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, *while he blessed them*, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." What a beautiful close this was to a life that was intended to be a life of blessing!

And Jesus did not cease blessing people when he went to heaven. The apostle Peter said to the Jews at Jerusalem,—“God having raised up his son Jesus sent him to *bless* you.” Acts iii: 26. The mission of Jesus is to bless. As he sits at the right hand of the throne of God in heaven the great business in which he is engaged is the work of blessing men.

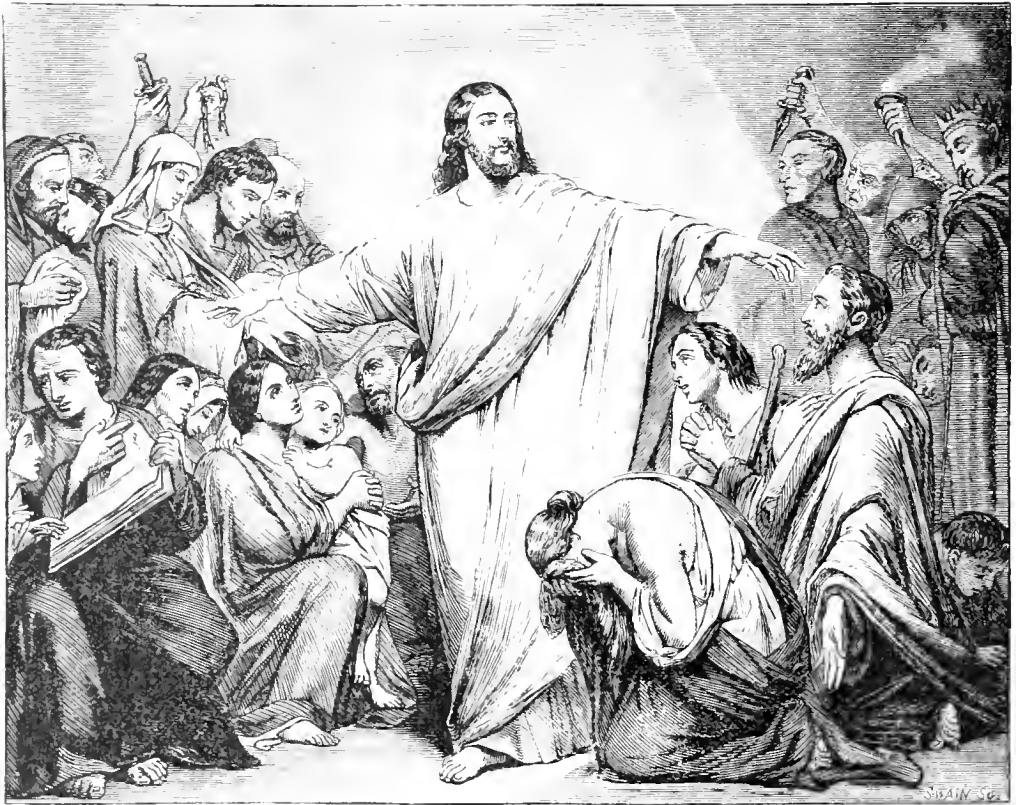
And if you ask how he does this, I know no better way in which to answer the question, than in the words spoken by the prophet Isaiah, when he was telling about Christ, more than seven hundred years before he was born into our world. We find these words in Isaiah lxi: 1. Our Saviour applied them to himself at the beginning of his ministry, when he was preaching at Nazareth. He read this passage from Isaiah, in which it is written:—

“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind.” And when he had closed the book, he said,—“This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” And when he had said this it was precisely as if he had said—“This prophecy refers to me. I am the person of whom Isaiah was speaking when he used these words.”

Here we have clearly pointed out to us the way in which Jesus was sent to bless men. He blessed them thus, by his personal ministry while

he was on earth. And since he has gone to heaven he is blessing them still, in the same way, by sending his gospel to them. And wherever people hear the gospel, and obey it, and become Christians, they find that Jesus does bless them in the way that he spoke of to the people of Nazareth. Now, if we look at these words of Jesus, we see that they refer to four ways in which he blesses people.

One of these is *by giving riches to the poor.*



Christ the consoler.

He says he was sent—"to preach the gospel to the poor." The word gospel means glad tidings, or good news. And what makes this gospel good news is, that it tells us of the grace of God that Jesus brings. This grace is what we all need more than anything else. If we really get this grace it will make us rich. It will be worth more to us than all the wealth in the world. It will do for us what no earthly treasure could do. It will secure to us the pardon of our sins. It will change our evil hearts and make them good. It will help us to love and serve God. It will open



Christ blessing as He ascended.





the door of heaven to us, and make us fit to go in, and live there in happiness for ever.

And this is the way in which Jesus himself speaks of the grace of God; for this is what he means, when he says,—“I counsel thee to buy of me *gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich.*” Rev. iii: 18. Those who have this grace are rich indeed. They are “rich towards God.” They have a treasure laid up in heaven, “where moth and rust do not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.” That is a treasure that none can take from us, and it will last forever. And when Jesus was preaching the gospel to the poor; when he was telling them about the grace of God, and urging them to seek it, it might well be said that he was giving riches to the poor. And when he sends out his ministers to preach, and his servants to teach the blessed gospel, he is still doing the same thing. This gospel tells us of the grace of God, and teaches us how to get it. However much of the riches of this world we may have, our souls must be poor if we have not the grace of God in them. And however little of this world’s wealth we have, our souls are rich if only the grace of God is ours. We may well look up to Jesus and say, as a good man once said:—

“Give what thou wilt, *without Thee* we are poor,  
But, *with Thee rich*, take what thou wilt away!”

“A Poor Rich Minister.”—I saw an account lately of a good Methodist minister who was so well satisfied with the hope of these heavenly riches that he was not willing to own any of the riches of this world. He was very poor, and his family were sometimes in want of things necessary to their comfort. A rich farmer belonging to his congregation, and who loved him greatly, made him a present of a farm containing a number of acres, and gave him the title-deed to the property. The minister thanked his kind friend for his generous gift, and went home feeling very happy. But, about three months after this, he called one day on his good friend the farmer. After talking together for awhile the minister handed to his friend a roll of parchment saying:—“Here, sir, I want to give you back the title-deed to your farm.”

“Why, what’s the matter?” asked the astonished farmer. “Is there anything wrong about it?”

“No, sir.”

“Well, isn't the land good?”

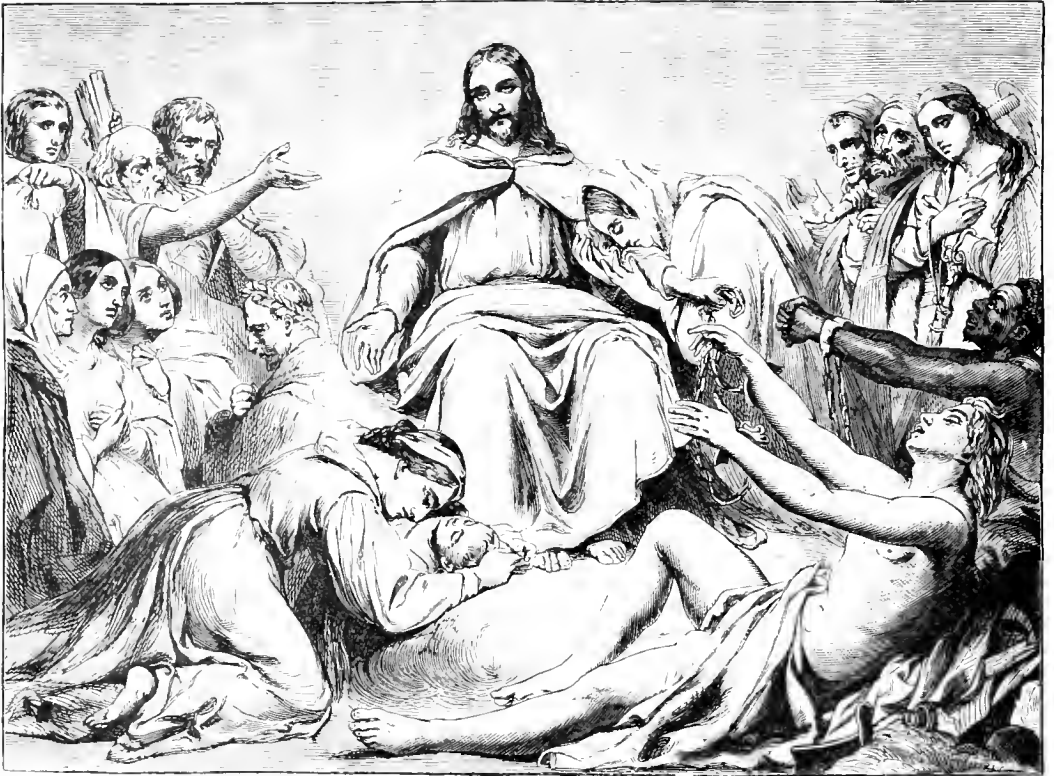
“There's none better in the State.”

“Do you think I grudge having given it to you?”

“Not at all; I know how truly generous you are.”

“Then why don't you want to keep it?”

“Well, sir,” said the minister, “you know I am very fond of singing. And there is one hymn in our book the singing of which has



Christ the healer.

been the greatest comfort of my life. But I haven't been able to sing it with my whole heart since I owned this farm. This hymn says:—

“No foot of land do I possess,  
No cottage in the wilderness,  
A poor wayfaring man.

I lodge awhile in tents below,  
Or gladly wander to and fro,  
Till I my Canaan gain.

*There is my house and portion fair,  
My treasure and my heart are there,  
And my abiding home."*

"I am very grateful, my good friend, for your kindness," said the minister, "but please take back your title-deed; for I would rather be able to sing that hymn, with all my heart, as I have been used to sing it, than own all the farms in this State."

Now, I cannot but think that this good minister was a little too particular. But one thing is very clear, *he did feel that the gospel of Jesus had made him rich*. He had a treasure in heaven, and the hope of it made him contented and happy, even though he had none of the riches of this world. The blessing of the world is in Jesus, and one of the ways in which he blesses men is by *giving riches to the poor*.

But another way in which Jesus blesses men is—BY GIVING COMFORT TO THE SORROWING.

This is what he taught when he said that he was sent to—"*heal the broken-hearted*." If you break a bowl, or a pitcher that is full of water, of course, all the water in it will run out. Now, the heart in the midst of our body is sometimes compared to a bowl or pitcher. Eccles. xii: 6. And if the point of a sword, or a bullet from a gun or pistol penetrates a man's heart he must die, because his heart is literally broken or pierced. But sometimes we speak of persons being broken-hearted, not in a literal, but a figurative sense. We only mean by it that they are in great sorrow. And in this sense to heal those who are broken-hearted, means to give them comfort in their sorrow. And so, when Jesus said that he was sent to heal the broken-hearted, he meant he was to give comfort to the sorrowing. And when we come to read in the New Testament the life of Jesus, we see how he was doing this all the time.

The widow of Nain was a sorrowing, broken-hearted woman, as she was following the dead body of her only son to the grave. But, when Jesus raised that dead young man to life again, and gave him back to his mother, we know that he was healing the broken-hearted, or giving comfort to the sorrowing.

And so it was when he raised Lazarus from the grave, and sent him back alive, and well, to his broken-hearted sisters at Bethany. And as

Jesus went up and down the land of Israel, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, making the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the blind to see, we can understand how truly it might be said of him that he was healing the broken-hearted, or giving comfort to the sorrowing.

And this is what Jesus has been doing ever since. This is what he is still doing to bless the world, wherever the Bible makes him known. Let us look at one or two illustrations of the way in which Jesus blesses men.

"The Happy Deaf Mute."—During an examination in an institution for the Deaf and Dumb one of the examiners wrote on the black-



board, this question: "Who made the world?" One of the scholars, a boy about twelve or fourteen years old, took the chalk and wrote this answer:—"In the beginning *God* created the heavens and the earth." The next question was: "Why did Jesus Christ come into the world?" A smile of grateful love lighted up the boy's face as he wrote; "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Then the gentleman wrote this question: "How is it that *you* were born deaf

and dumb, while I can both speak and hear?" This was a hard question to put to that poor boy; but without a moment's hesitation he took up the chalk again, and with a look of quiet peace and resignation on his face, he wrote these words: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight!" Ah! that dear boy had been with Jesus. He had blessed him by giving him comfort in his sorrow.

"Blue Sky Inside."—"It's too bad to see how hard it rains," said Bessie Jones, looking out of the window, with an angry scowl upon her face. "It's very provoking. It always rains when I don't want it to. It's spoiling the slides, and there wont be an inch of ice left in an hour to skate on. Now where's my fun this afternoon, I should like to know?"



Christ preaching the gospel



"Well, you can stay at home, and sew," said her aunt.

"But I don't want to sew," was Bessie's cross reply; I want to skate. I declare this rain is *too* provoking."

"The provoking is all in your own heart, Bessie," said her brother Charley, who was a little older than Bessie, and was trying to be a Christian. "If you only had blue sky inside," he went on to say, "you wouldn't mind much about the rain outside.

Hurrah! for Bessie's brother Charley! "*Blue sky inside!*" That is a beautiful thought. We have no power to prevent the rain, and the storms from coming. But if we can only find out how to make "blue sky inside," the rain, and the storms will not trouble us much. And this is just what Jesus came to help us do. This is one of the ways in which he blesses the world. And if we would all learn from him how to make "blue sky inside" what a happy world this would be! Then the promise given to Abraham would be fulfilled, when God said to him—"In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

"The Solitary Feast."—In a certain Almshouse there was an old colored woman. She had no relative in the world, and no money but what visitors sometimes gave her. But she was a true Christian. She had known many sorrows, but Jesus had blessed her by giving her comfort and strength to bear them. They called her "Aunty." She was too feeble to leave her room, and so she used to hold service by herself on Sundays; and once a month she was in the habit of taking the communion all alone. A Christian lady, who sometimes visited that almshouse, went there one Sunday morning. She generally visited "Aunty" in her room. On hearing that this was the day on which she took the communion by herself, she asked the matron to let her stand outside the open door, that she might see the good old Christian go through this service, without knowing that any one was near. And this is the account given by that lady of what she saw, and heard:—

What I saw was a picture for a painter. The door, which was opposite a raised window, was partly open. A vine had climbed up the wire grating of the window, and was filled with blossoms. The fragrance came in on the Sabbath air with the bright sunshine.

There on a bench sat the old woman, not knowing that any one was

near. Her dress was clean and neatly ironed, and the cap upon her head was as white as snow. Before her was a little pine table, covered with a clean white cotton cloth. There was nothing on the table but a white earthen plate, on which were a few small pieces of bread, and an earthen tea-cup filled with water, while at her side lay a Bible and a small hymn-book.

She began the service by singing from memory two or three verses of an old communion hymn. Then she opened the Bible and read the story of the crucifixion as given by St. Matthew.



A happy home.

At the close of her reading she reverently repeated the words: "The Lord Jesus, the same night he was betrayed took bread and blessed it;"—then holding the plate of bread in her hands upon the table, she bowed her head in silent prayer. Then she went on with the Bible words,—*"Take, eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."* As she spoke these words, she took a piece of bread from the plate, and with closed eyes, in silence and in tears she ate the bread. Again she sang a verse,—*"Nearer my God, to thee, &c."* Then she went on with the



Bible words,—“After the same manner also he took the cup, and gave thanks;” and with the tea-cup of water in her hand, she again offered prayer; but this time, though her voice was low, almost a whisper, I was able to catch her words. As I listened I lost sight of the almshouse, and felt almost as if I were in heaven.

When her prayer and thanksgiving were over, she solemnly took the cup, and, as she lifted it to her lips, repeated the words of Jesus,—“Drink ye all of this; this cup is the New Testament in my blood, for the remission of sins; do this in remembrance of me.” Then she drank from the cup, and setting it down on the table, again bowed her head in silent prayer. Then suddenly raising her head she exclaimed,—“Hallelujah! Glory to God!”—a sweet smile like that of an angel lighting up her dark face—“I sees de gates,” she said, looking up to the ceiling of the room—“I sees de door ob heben open! I hear de angels singing! Yes, I’s on de road! I’s almost home! Hallelujah!” Then she sang:—

“I’m but a traveller here,  
Heaven is my home.”

At the close of the service she turned, and saw me standing at the door. “Why chile,” she said, “I didn’t know you was here. I thought there was no one near old ‘Aunty’ but de blessed Lord, and de angels.”

Now Jesus had been with that poor old colored woman and blessed her. He had healed her broken heart, and given her comfort in her sorrow. She was alone in the almshouse, but even there Jesus had made her happy, and taught her how to make “blue sky inside.” And if he can make an almshouse seem like heaven, then we see how able he is to bless men anywhere and everywhere.

*Another way in which Jesus blesses men is by GIVING LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES.*

It is a sad sight to see men bound with chains, so that they cannot use their limbs. And if they are shut up in prison, as well as bound with chains this is still more sad. But there are chains and prisons for the souls of men, as well as for their bodies. If we give way to any sin, that sin binds our souls so that they can have no more freedom of action than our bodies would have if they were bound in chains of iron.

This is what is meant in one of the beautiful collects of our church, in which we pray that we may “be delivered from the bands of those sins which by our frailty we have committed.” And this is the



The reformed drunkard.

reason why the Bible speaks of men as being —“*taken captive by Satan* at his will.” 2. Tim. ii: xxvi. He tempts men to commit sins, and then binds them in the chains of those sins; and in this way they are made his

prisoners or captives. And when Jesus seeks a poor sinner, and converts him by his grace; when he delivers him from the power of his sins, changes his heart, and helps him to lead a new life, then it is that he is blessing that man by giving liberty to the captive.

But there are no chains that Satan makes for men so strong as those which he fastens on the soul of the poor drunkard. He is bound hand and foot. The prison in which he is made captive has walls so thick, and doors so strongly bolted and barred, that he never can get out by any efforts of his own. But Jesus is able to break the strongest chain by which any poor drunkard was ever bound, and to open the prison door in spite of all the bolts and bars that may secure it.

Here is an illustration of this statement which I know to be true:—

One day, while Mr. Moody was preaching in our city, I received a letter written by a person who signed himself "A Reformed Drunkard." He wished me to read this letter in the noonday meeting for the encouragement of those who were trying to break loose from the chains by which the drunkard is bound. And I did read it there. The writer of this letter called to see me before I read it in public, that I might be sure it was all right. I was surprised at his appearance, when I saw him. He was as fine-looking, gentlemanly a man, as I had ever seen. He was intelligent and well educated. This was his story, as briefly as I can give it:—

"My family," he said, "is one of the most respectable in Philadelphia. They belong to the Society of Friends. My mother, now in heaven, was formerly a preacher in the Society. For seven years I had been a confirmed drunkard. By this terrible evil I had lost my money, my business, my character, my health, my friends, and my self-respect. It had even separated me from my wife and family, and made me an outcast from society. I was lost to all that was good. I had tried again and again to stop drinking, but in vain. I had taken different medicines, and had signed the temperance pledge a number of times, but without any benefit. Everybody said my case was hopeless. At last when I was in a public hospital, sick, with that dreadful disease, which drunkenness causes, called "delirium tremens," and was given up to die; *then*, as I believe, in answer to the prayers of my sainted mother, I was led to look to Jesus. I called on him for help. He heard my cry, and helped me. By the power of his grace

he broke the strong chains of that dreadful sin, by which I had been bound, and which nothing but the grace of God can break. I rose from my sick bed a changed man. By the help which Jesus gave me I was able to stop drinking. And now, for months, I have been a sober man.



Christ opening the eyes of the blind.

I am restored to health, to happiness, and usefulness; to my friends and to my family, and am on the way to heaven, where I hope to meet that beloved mother through whose prayers I have been saved."

Such was this man's story. Here we see how Jesus gives deliverance to the captives. And what he did for this poor prisoner of sin and Satan,

he is able and willing to do for all who call upon him. And if he has power to help men in this way, then it may well be said that he was "sent to bless them."

But there is another way in which Jesus was sent to bless men, and that is by giving—SIGHT TO THE BLIND. When he was on earth, he met those who had been blind for years, and others who were born blind, and he opened their eyes.

We find blind people everywhere. Every city and town and village has some blind people in it. Happily the blind are few, compared to those who see. This is true when we speak about the blindness of the bodily eye. But it is very different when we speak about the blindness of the soul. We are all born blind in this sense. None of us ever see with the eyes of our souls till Jesus comes and opens them. We do not see what sinners we are: we do not see what a terrible evil sin is: we do not see the fearful danger we are in of being lost forever, and we do not see that Jesus is the only one who can save us from this great danger. But when Jesus comes and opens the eyes of our souls, then it is as if we had been brought into a new world. We see what great sinners we have been, and we feel sad and sorry for it. We see what a precious Saviour Jesus is, and we begin to love him. We see what a blessed home he is preparing for us in yonder glorious heaven, and we make up our minds that by God's help we will try and be with him there. This is just what Jesus was doing when he was on earth. This is what Jesus is doing now, and in this way he is doing good all the time, wherever the Bible is known. Here is an illustration of the way in which Jesus opens the eyes of those people whose souls are blind.

Some time ago a Christian lady was looking out of her parlor window in the city of London, when she saw a poor blind beggar in front of her house. He had a violin in a bag hanging from his neck. In his right hand he had a cane or staff to lean on, while his left hand held a string that was fastened to the collar on the neck of his dog—his only guide, as he groped his way in darkness through the crowded streets of that busy city. The poor man looked cold, hungry and sad. The lady pitied him, and sent her servant to ask him to come into the house, to get warmed, and rested, and have something to eat. The servant led the blind man and his dog

up the steps into the dining room, and gave him a nice warm place by the fireside. As he sat there, with his dog lying beside him, the blind beggar showed his thankfulness by the smile that brightened his face, while the poor dog tried to say, "Thank you! thank you!" as well as he could by wagging his tail.

While he was eating his dinner, the good lady sat by and talked with the poor man.

"How long have you been blind, my friend?"

"Fifteen years, ma'am. I had an attack of small-pox, and it took away my eyesight."

"And have you been begging all that time?"

"No, ma'am; only a few years. I had two brothers who kindly took care of me; but they both died three years ago, and now I have no one to do anything for me; so I have to go out and beg."

"Can you play any hymns, or psalms, or sacred pieces?"

"No, ma'am; I only know two pieces, and they are both songs, or ballads. An old sailor taught me both of them."

"But there are many beautiful hymns, and sweet psalm-tunes that would sound well in the streets. People would like to hear them, and you would get more pennies in your little basket for singing them."

"I do not know any hymns, ma'am; I wish I did."

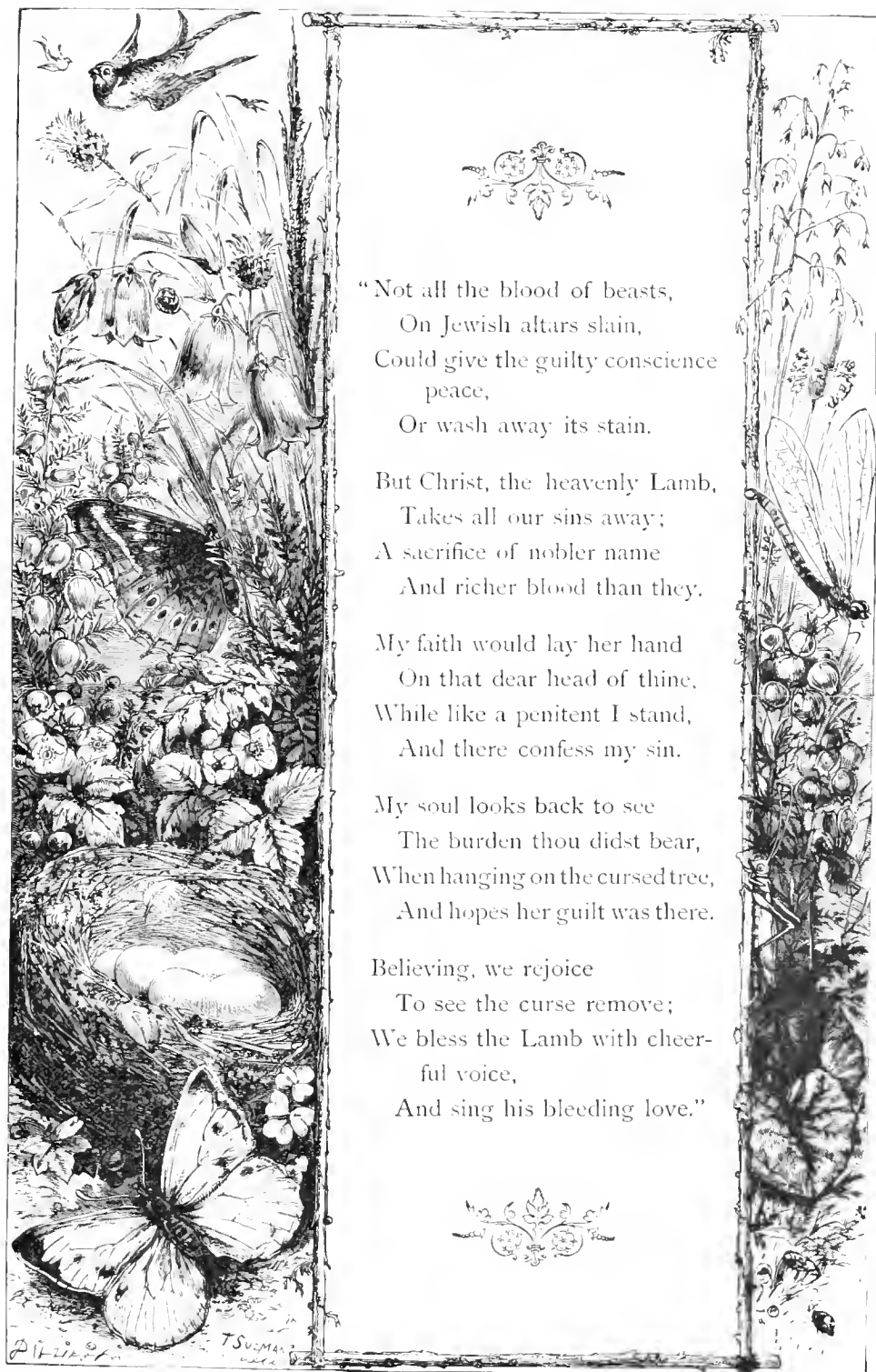
"Well, while you are getting your dinner, I will repeat one of my favorite hymns to you, and then I'll sing it; and when you have done, you must see if you can play it and sing it: will you?"

"Yes, ma'am, I will, and thank you for it."

Then the lady recited one of Dr. Watt's hymns, which you will find on the opposite page. She repeated this hymn slowly and deliberately two or three times. Then she sang it to a very sweet tune. She had a fine, full voice. The blind man stopped eating to listen. With his face upraised to the ceiling, he rolled his sightless eyeballs in evident delight. Even the dog seemed to forget his crumbs and his bones, and wagged his tail vigorously.

"Would you please sing it for me again, ma'am," said the blind man.

She sang it again and again. He seemed to take in every word of the hymn, and every note of the music. When he had finished his dinner,



he took his violin, and standing in the middle of the room, he struck up the tune the lady had been singing, and went through the whole hymn. The lady was delighted, and so was the poor blind fiddler. Then he repeated it, so as to be sure he had it right, and thanking the lady for her kindness, he went on his way.

About two months after this, the blind beggar, with his dog, called again at that lady's house. She shook hands with him and said:—

“Well, my friend, I'm glad to see you; how does the new music answer?”

“Wonderfully well, ma'am. I've just called to tell you about it; but I don't know how. The day I called here—oh! that blessed day!—and several days after, I sang pretty well; but one day I couldn't sing at all.”

“Why? had you taken cold?”

“No, ma'am; but I had a guilty conscience. It was, as that hymn says, all stained with sin. The oftener I sang those lines, the worse I felt. The verses described my case exactly. I was indeed a penitent. I remained in the house all day in great sorrow. My dog knows when I'm in trouble, and he would come and put his paws on my knee, saying, as plainly as he could, ‘What's the matter, master?’

“I thought about the verses, though I could not play them nor sing them; but the last verse led me to trust in Jesus, and now, indeed, I can

“‘Bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,  
And sing his bleeding love.’

“Before that, my soul was blind as well as my body; but now I have new eyes. Jesus has opened the eyes of my soul. I see him as my Saviour, my Lord and my God. I thank you for calling me in that day, and teaching me that precious hymn. Oh! ma'am, that was a blessed day to me. I was blind then, both in soul and in body; but Jesus has given eyesight to my soul, and now I see with *new eyes*.”

And this shows us how Jesus blesses men by giving sight to the blind; and when we put these four things together, and remember how Jesus is engaged continually in giving *riches to the poor*, and *comfort to the sorrowing*, and *liberty to the captives*, and *eyesight to the blind*, wherever the sound of the gospel is heard, we see how true the promise



is which God gave to Abraham when he said: "And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." And when, at last, this precious gospel is "truly preached, truly received, and truly followed" in every



"Jesus has opened the eyes of my soul."

land, then indeed it will be true, that "*all the world will be blessed in Jesus.*"

But there is one difficulty in this subject that should be looked at before leaving it. Some one may ask this question: Are there not multi-

tudes of people in Africa and in Asia and in the islands of the sea who have never heard of Jesus, and have never received any of the spiritual blessings of which we have been speaking? Certainly there are. Then how can it be said that "*all* the families of the earth" have been blessed in him? This is a fair, honest question. Let us see if we cannot give a fair, honest answer to it.

Now, we must remember that all the blessings of which we have been speaking, as those which Jesus gives to men, are spiritual blessings. They belong to the soul and to the life that is to come. But there is another class of blessings that we owe to Jesus. These belong to the body and to the life we have in this present world. But this life itself, with health and strength and food and clothing and all our present comforts, is embraced in this class of blessings. *We owe all these to Jesus.* They were all forfeited by sin, and bought back to us by the death of Christ.

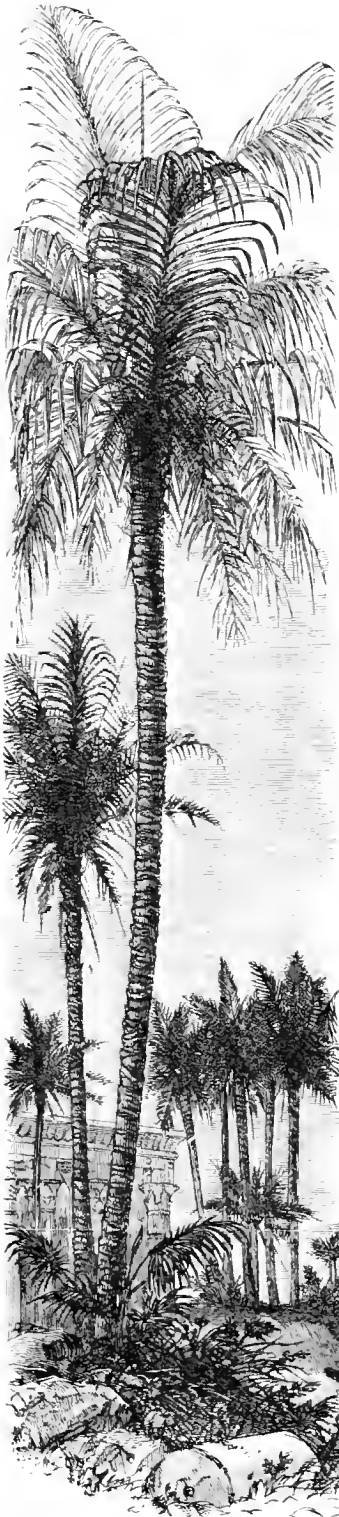
Before the missionaries of the gospel went to the islands of the South Sea, there was a heathen custom there called *taboo*, which well illustrates this part of our subject. The heathen priests in those islands, when they wanted anything for their idols, used to say that it was tabooed—that is, it belonged to their gods—and then no one dared to touch it. A tabooed thing was a forfeited thing. But when Adam and Eve sinned, they forfeited life, and breath, and air, and sunshine, and water and food. All these things were tabooed; we had lost our right to them. But when Jesus agreed to bear the punishment due to our sins, he took off the taboo; he recovered for us all that we had forfeited. And now every ray of light that brightens this world, every drop of water, and every particle of food that any enjoy, the air we breathe, the clothes we wear, our friends, our homes, and all that helps to make us comfortable and happy in this life, we owe to Jesus; and those who never heard of Jesus are indebted to him for these blessings, although they do not know it. And so we see how true it is, according to the promise made to Abraham, that "*in his seed all the families of the earth are blessed.*" In this sense they *have all* been blessed from the beginning. They are blessed every day.

*The blessing of the world is in Jesus.*





JOSEPH INTERPRETING PHARAOH'S DREAM.



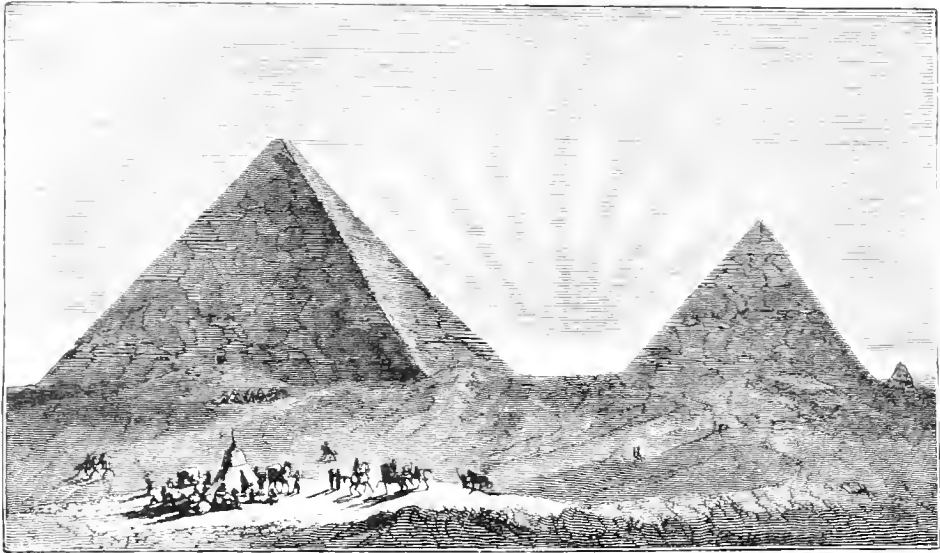
## JOSEPH AND JESUS COMPARED.

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WHENEVER we hear or read about Joseph, we think of Egypt; and what a wonderful country Egypt is! It is the country of that grand old river Nile. There, too, are the famous Pyramids. People go from the ends of the earth to visit them. They climb their steep sides; they stand on the top of them, and look out over all the country around; then they go down into that dark chamber, which is in the centre of the largest Pyramid. Near the Pyramids is the celebrated Sphinx. This is a strange-looking figure, with the head of a woman and the body of a lion, cut out of the solid rock on which the great Pyramid stands. The greater part of it is now covered up with sand; but some years ago, when the sand was removed, the body of the huge figure was found to measure a hundred and forty-three feet in length, and from its feet to the top of its head it was between sixty and seventy feet high. What

a wonderful country Egypt appears to have been to

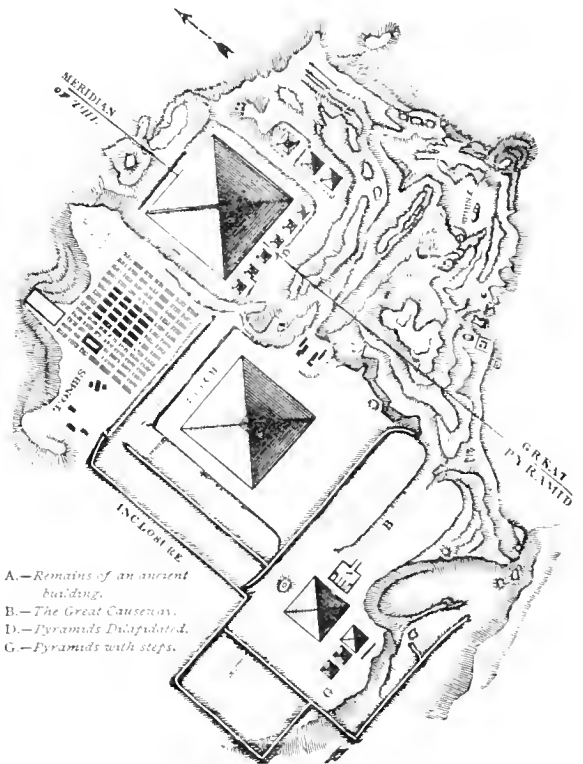
make such great works as these! Now, this was the country in which Joseph spent the greater part of his life.



The Great Pyramids.

The history of Joseph is one of the most interesting in the Old Testament. We love to hear about it when we are young; and even when we grow up to be men and women we never get tired of hearing or reading the history of Joseph; and one reason why we love this sweet story so much is not only because such strange things happened to Joseph, but because there is so much in his life that reminds us of Jesus and seems to point us to him.

If you look at the first line in the last book of the Bible, you will find that it reads thus: "*The Revelation of Jesus Christ.*" This shows



- A.—Remains of an ancient building.
- B.—The Great Causeway.
- D.—Pyramids Disaggregated.
- G.—Pyramids with steps.

Ground-plan of the Pyramids.

us what that book was written for: it was to *reveal*, or to make known to us, things about Jesus, great things and wonderful things, which it was important for us to know, but which we never could have known if God had not been pleased to tell us of them; and so we call that last book in the Bible, the book of the Revelation, or, as we generally express it, "the book of Revelations." There are many revelations in it about Jesus; and this is true of the Old Testament as well as the New. It is true of the *first* book in the Bible as well as of the *last*. Every part of the Bible was intended by God to teach us something about his blessed Son, and so to be a revelation of Jesus Christ; and this is what the apostle John teaches us when he says,—“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Rev. xix: 10. This means that all the prophets, or Old Testament writers, had something to tell of Jesus. *This* was the most important thing they had to do; and when our Saviour was on earth he taught his disciples that “the law of Moses, the Psalms and the prophets” had many things in them about him which would all come to pass. Luke xxiv: 44. And so the book of Genesis has in it many things intended to teach us about Jesus. *The story of Joseph is full of Jesus.* I wish now to speak of Joseph and Jesus compared. There are *five* things in Joseph’s history which give us beautiful illustrations of the character and work of Jesus.

*In the first place, Joseph was sent on a MISSION by his father.*

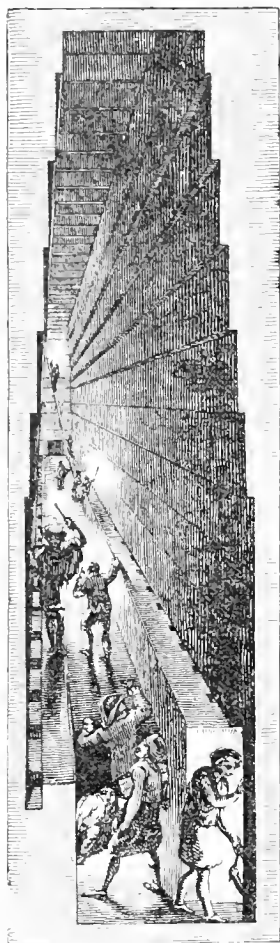
At the time when this took place, Jacob, the father of Joseph, was living in the vale of Hebron. This city of Hebron is still in existence, and it is one of the oldest cities in the world. Abraham and Isaac lived there for the greater part of their lives, and there they were buried in the cave of Machpelah. There Jacob himself was buried. He died in Egypt, but, before his death, he made Joseph solemnly promise to carry him up to the land of Canaan, and bury him in the same grave with his father Isaac, and his grandfather Abraham; and Joseph did so. Gen. xlvii: 29–31; l: 1–14.

When the Israelites came into the land of Canaan, Hebron was made one of the cities of refuge. Joshua xx: 1–7. David was made king in Hebron, and here he reigned over Judah for seven years. The city of Hebron was situated in a valley; and when Joseph was sent forth by his father, we are told that “he sent him forth out of the vale of Hebron.”

Gen. xxxvii: 14. This was a very fertile valley. Vines and fig-trees and pomegranates flourished here, and it was here that the famous grapes known as "the grapes of Eschol" grew. When the spies whom Moses sent to search the land of Canaan came back, among the fruits they brought as specimens was a bunch of these grapes. It was so large that

they had to put it on a pole which was borne by two men upon their shoulders

There were two pools in

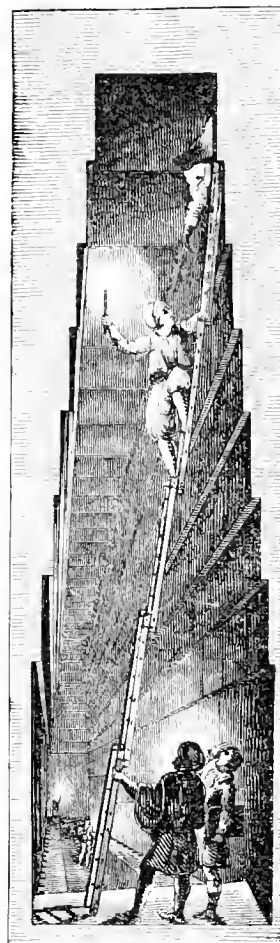


Lower landing-place of the high gallery in the Great Pyramid.



The Sphinx.

this valley, and here also grew the famous old tree known as "Abraham's Oak." How fertile and beautiful "the vale of Hebron" must have looked when Joseph went out from it, at his father's bidding to seek his



Upper landing-place of the high gallery in the Great Pyramid.

brethren! How little Joseph knew, when he went out that morning, that he was never to come back again! He thought he was only going to be absent for a few days. But *that* was the last time he was ever to look on that fine old town, and the beautiful vale around it, with its pools of water, its fertile vines, and its famous trees. When we leave home in the morning we never know what may happen before night. And Joseph was made to feel this deeply.



Joseph's brethren were shepherds. They had large flocks of sheep. They had taken these flocks to a place called Shechem. It is now called Nablus, and lies at the foot of Mount Gerizim, in a valley between that mountain and Mount Ebal. The land in this part of the country is very fertile. There is plenty of grass and water there, so that it afforded good pasture for sheep and cattle. This was the place to which Joseph was sent by his father. It was about sixty miles distant from Hebron. Joseph had to go on foot, alone, and among strangers. So it was quite a serious undertaking for a lad of seventeen years of age. And here we see how Joseph *was sent on a mission*.

And this is the first thing about Joseph in which he reminds us of Jesus. And it is a beautiful illustration of what Jesus did. He came from heaven on a mission from his father. He was "*the sent one*." He was the first missionary. When he was on earth he spoke of himself as the one "*whom the father had sanctified and sent into the world*."

When Jacob called Joseph to send him on this mission he answered at once, "here am I." He listened to his father's instructions, and went without a moment's delay. And when Jesus knew that God, his father, wished to send him into this world he was ready at once to do his father's will. He said,—"*Lo! I come to do thy will. I delight to do it. Yea, thy law is within my heart.*" Ps. xl; 7, 8. And thus, when we think how Joseph was sent on a mission by his father, and how willing he was to go, he reminds us of Jesus, in this respect: they were both sent on a mission.

But there is one thing in this part of our subject in which Joseph was very different from Jesus. When Joseph was sent out by his father from the vale of Hebron, he had no knowledge at all of what was before him. He had not the least idea of what he was to suffer. He knew nothing of the pit into which his brethren were to cast him; nor the slavery into which they would sell him; nor the gloomy prison in Egypt, where he was to be a prisoner for years. If Jacob had known anything about this, he never would have sent his darling Joseph on that mission. And if Joseph had known of it, he would, no doubt, have been unwilling to go. But Jesus—our Joseph—knew what was before him when he came on his merciful mission. He saw it all before he came. He knew about the manger in Bethlehem; the temptation in the wilderness; the poverty, and toil, and

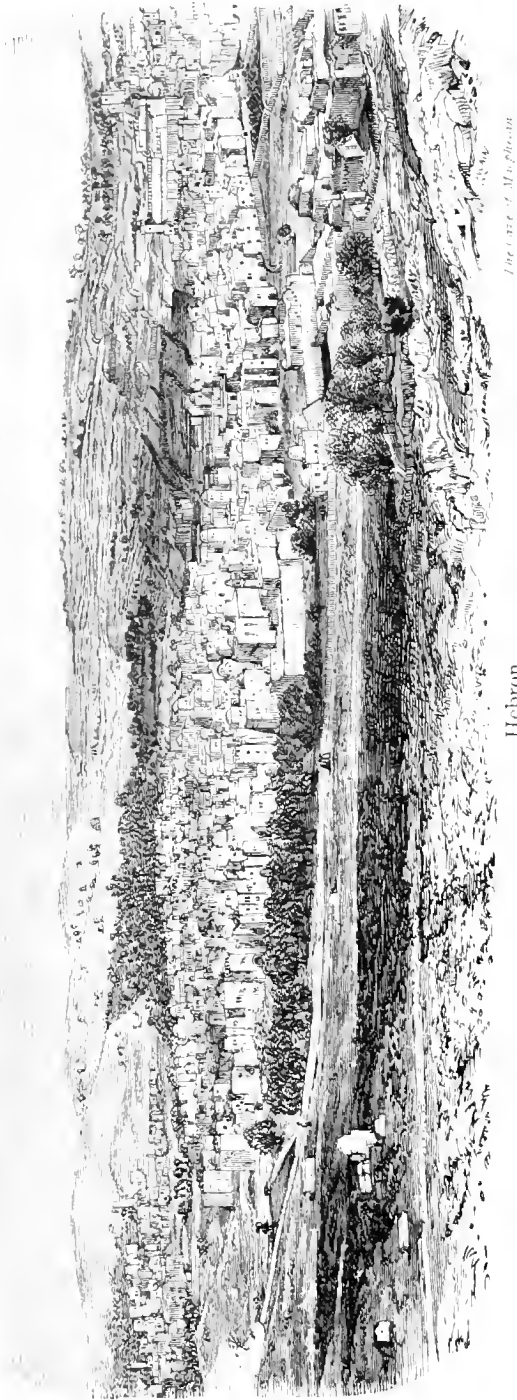
weariness; the persecution; "the agony and bloody sweat;"—the mocking,

the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the crucifixion, the death, and the burial. All this was perfectly well known to him; and yet he came. How wonderful this was? This is the first point in the comparison. Joseph was sent on a mission by his father, and so was Jesus.

*But Joseph was sent on this mission to show his father's LOVE for his children: and so it was with Jesus.* This is the second point of the comparison.

When Joseph went out of the vale of Hebron to seek his brethren, it was not for his own benefit that he went, or that of his father; for Jacob was a rich man. He had everything necessary for his comfort and that of his family. He was not seeking his own wealth or honor, or pleasure when he sent forth his darling Joseph on that long and dangerous journey. He was doing it for the good of his other sons. They had wandered far away from home with their flocks. He had not heard from them for a long time. They might be in want, or in danger. The

thought of them was a care to him. He longed to hear how they were getting on. And he wished them to know that although they had done



The city of Jerusalem

Hebron.

wrong, their father still thought of them, and loved them; and would gladly welcome them to their old home again. And how many a poor wanderer has been saved from ruin by just such a kind message from a loving father! Here is an illustration:—

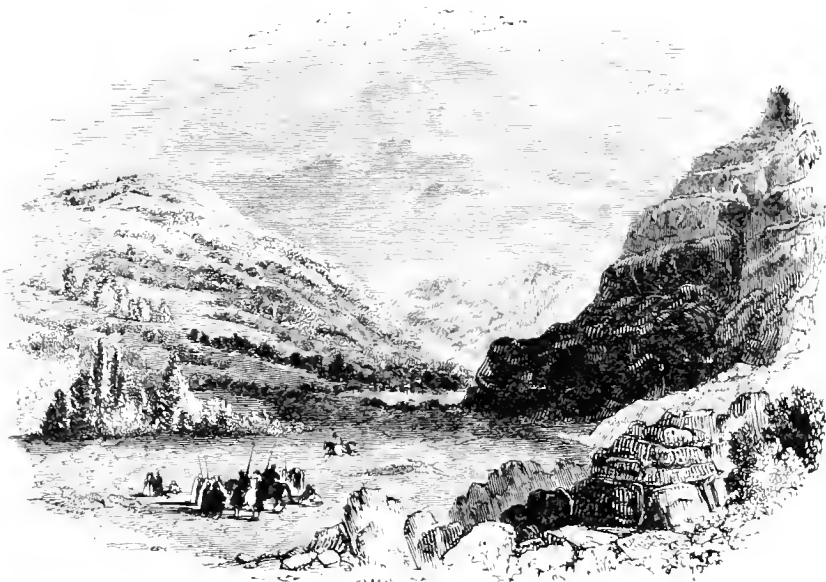
“The Wanderer Restored.”—Some time ago, a gentleman in Boston named Johnson, had a son who went to California. There he fell into bad company and became intemperate. His father wrote for him to come home; but he would not come. Years passed on, and the hearts of his parents were grieved greatly to hear from time to time of his wrong doings. One Spring a friend of Mr. Johnson was going to California on business. When bidding him good-by, Mr. Johnson said to him, “If you should happen to meet my poor George, tell him I love him still, and shall be glad to have him come home again.”

On arriving in California this gentleman inquired for George Johnson; but no one seemed to know anything about him. At last he learned where he was. One night he followed him to the wretched saloon, where he spent most of his time in drinking and gambling. He saw him put down the last dollar he had on the gambling table. He lost it. Almost crazy with drink and shame, he was about to rush out of the room, and end his miserable life by blowing out his brains. Just then “His own friend, and his father’s friend,” laid his hand gently on his shoulder, and spoke in tones of kindness to him of his better days, of his home, and his friends there. And George, he added, “the last thing your good father said to me, on parting was, ‘if you should see my poor boy, tell him I love him still, and would gladly welcome him back to his old home.’” Those loving words had a strange effect on George. He became calm and quiet. He bowed his head and wept. Then like the prodigal he said,—“I will arise and go to my father.” He did so. He met a warm and loving welcome. His whole course of life was changed, and he became a useful, happy man. The thing that saved him was that loving message from his father.

And when we think of the purpose for which Joseph was sent to his brethren, what a beautiful illustration we have of the purpose for which Jesus—our Joseph—came into this world!

When our Father in heaven sent Jesus on his mission to us, it was not because he needed us, or anything that belonged to us. He was *veri*

rich. He had enough in himself, and in heaven, to make him perfectly happy, even if we, and our world had been destroyed. But he knew how different it was with us. He knew that we had sinned. We had gone away from him, like the prodigal son, and had gotten into trouble. He knew also that we never could get back to him, or ever be happy again, without his help. And he wanted us to know, that he remembered us, and loved us still, and that he wished us to come back to him. This is what he sent Jesus into our world for. And this is what Jesus tells us in that beautiful passage—John iii: 16—when he says:—“*God so loved the world that he*



Shechem.

*gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

This is the most wonderful verse in the Bible. If I were told that the Bible was to be destroyed, and that I could only have one verse out of it, to keep in memory, as long as I lived, I think I should prefer this verse to any other. It seems as if the whole Bible had been pressed into this single verse. It teaches the precious truth that God loves us, and that Jesus was sent into the world as a proof of God's love. If any one should ask me, What is the sweetest view of God's character that the Bible gives? I would point to that little verse with only these words in it,—*God is love.* 1 John iv: 8. And then, if I were asked for the proof or illustration of

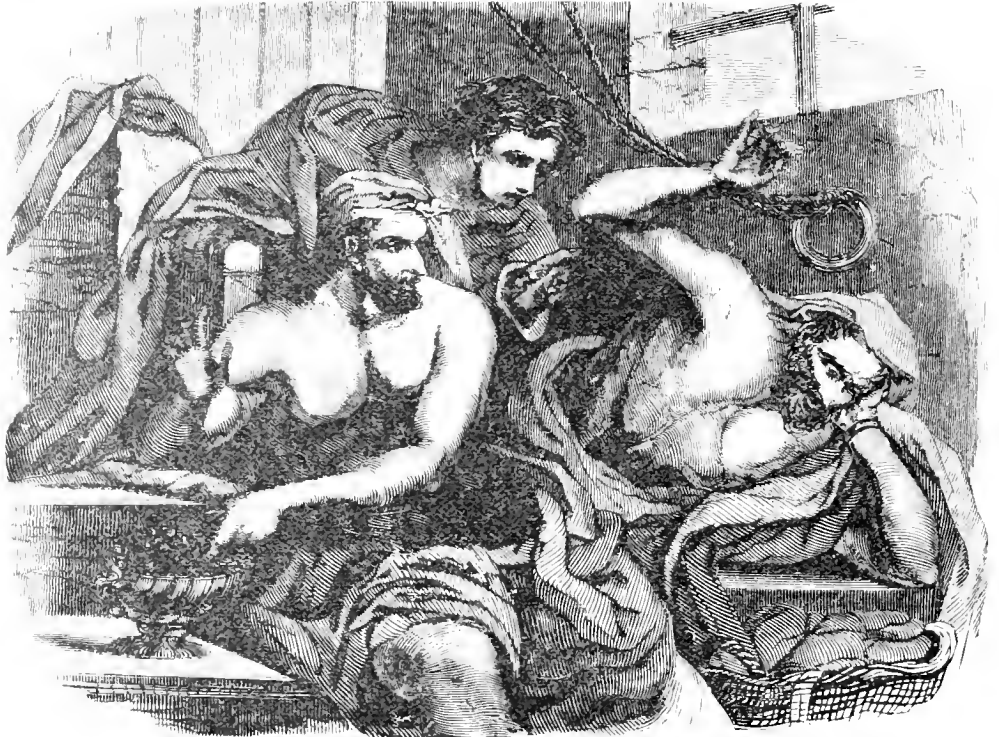
God's love, I would point to Bethlehem with its manger, and Calvary with its cross. The object of Joseph's mission to his brethren was to show his father's love to them. And Jesus was like Joseph in this respect. The object of Christ's mission into our world was to show God's love to us.

*But, in the third place, Joseph's mission to his brethren brought him into GREAT TROUBLE. And here we have another illustration of Jesus and his work.*

Joseph's trouble began as soon as he came to his brethren. He had sought them first in Shechem, but could not find them there. We read that "A certain man found him wandering in the field; and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me I pray thee where they feed their flocks. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren and found them in Dothan." Gen. xxxvii: 15-17. Dothan was about twenty miles north of Shechem. I remember looking at it with great interest, as we passed by it on our way from Samaria to Nazareth. And as I saw shepherds with their flocks there still, I thought of Joseph and his brethren. The sons of Jacob had done with their flocks just what the shepherds in that country do to-day. When the pasture failed in one part of the country, they removed to other places, wherever they could find good pasture.

Joseph came to his brethren at Dothan with his heart full of love. He thought, no doubt, how glad they would be to see him, and how happy he would be to tell them of their dear old father, and all the news about home. But, poor fellow! what a disappointment awaited him! How differently his brethren felt towards him! When they saw him coming towards them, they said,—“Behold, this *dreamer* cometh! Come now, therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into a pit; and we will say, some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams.” Gen. xxxvii: 19, 20. And when he came up they would not listen to anything he had to say about their home, or their father. But they rudely tore off his coat of many colors, and cast him into a pit. Poor Joseph, this was the beginning of his trouble! Then they sold him to the Midianites, to carry him down to Egypt as a slave. We can imagine how earnestly Joseph would plead with his brethren, for their

father's sake not to do this. But they would not listen. They were reminded of this many years after, and it caused them great sorrow. See Gen. xlii: 21. Thus Joseph was torn from the happy home where he had lived, like the son of a prince, and carried down to Egypt as a slave. The road over which he traveled in going to Egypt, brought him at one place near to Hebron. We can imagine Joseph's great sorrow when he

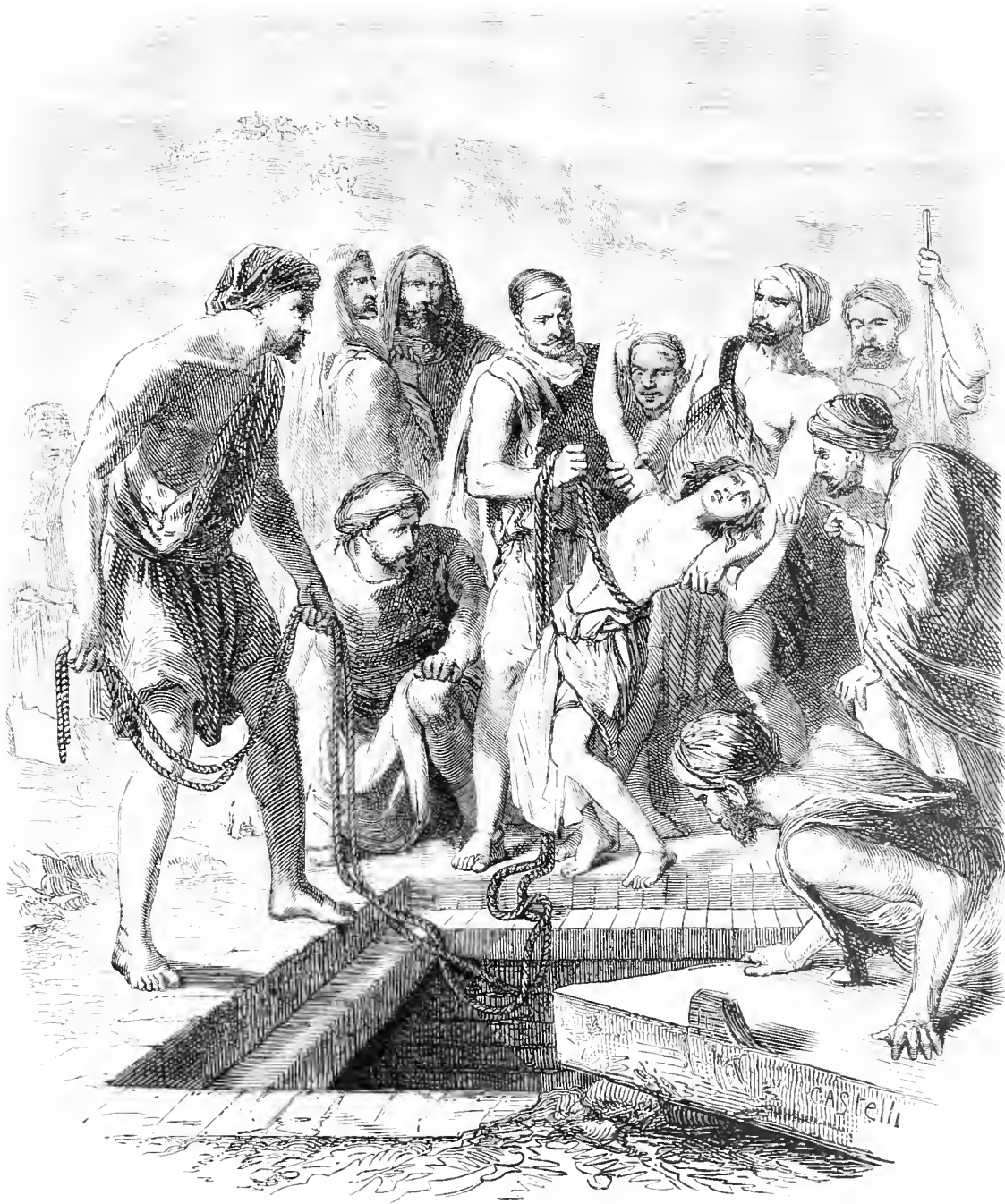


Joseph interpreting the Baker and Butler's dreams.

reached that part of the road. "Yonder, is Hebron," he would say to himself, "where my happy home is: and where my dear old father lives! O, if he only knew what has happened to me! But now I shall never see my home, and my father again!" This was part of Joseph's trouble.

And now he is in Egypt—a stranger among strangers. The language, the customs, the religion of the people are all so different from what he has been accustomed to at home! We are not told how Joseph felt at this time; but we know well how we should feel under such circumstances, and we may be sure that Joseph felt just as we should do.

We know how Joseph prospered at first in Egypt. Then, after awhile,



Joseph cast into the pit by his brethren.





we know how that wicked woman, the wife of his master, told falsehoods about him, and caused him to lose his office, and to be cast into prison, like a thief or a murderer. This must have been the darkest hour in Joseph's life. No doubt Satan came to him, while in prison and tempted him to think that there was no God, or else he would not be allowed to suffer so much, simply because he would not consent to do what he knew to be wrong. But we know that Joseph did not listen to these thoughts. He held fast to his trust in God. For even in that Egyptian prison, we are told that "The Lord was with Joseph, and gave him favor with the keeper of the prison; and that which he did the Lord made to prosper." Gen. xxxix: 21-23. And when we think of the trouble that came to Joseph from the mission on which his father sent him, we see how much there is in this part of Joseph's life to remind us of Jesus.

When Joseph came to his brethren to tell them about their home and their father they would not listen to him. And when Jesus came to the Jews, who were his brethren by birth, to tell them about the great love of their Father they would not hear him. We read, in John i: 11. "He came to his own and his own received him not." The sinful treatment which Joseph received from his brethren caused him to shed bitter tears. And when Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane, the sins of his brethren, brought such an agony upon him that "his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke xxii: 44. And in that agony the apostle Paul tells us "he offered up prayers and supplication, with strong crying and tears." Heb. v: 7.

We have seen that the habits and customs of the Egyptians, must have been a trouble to Joseph, when he found himself a stranger there. But, how much more it must have been to Jesus, when he found himself living in this sinful world of ours! This world is strange to us when we first begin to live in it. But then *we* have never lived before at all. We have no recollection of another home, for we never had any. But it was different with Jesus. He had always lived in heaven, "in the bosom of the Father," before he was born as an infant in Bethlehem. And he never could forget that heavenly home. There, everything is holy, and good, and bright, and beautiful, and happy. There the angels had always worshiped him, and waited on him. What a change it must have been

for him to come and live in this dark and sinful world! We can imagine how Joseph must have felt in Egypt when he thought of that quiet and lovely home, where he had lived with his father Jacob in "the vale of Hebron." But we cannot tell how Jesus felt, while a stranger in this world of sorrow, when he thought "of the home over there," that blessed



Joseph making himself known to his Brethren.

heavenly home where he had dwelt with his father and the holy angels. This was part of the trouble that came to him from the mission on which he was sent. We see how much there was in their sufferings in which Joseph and Jesus were alike. But there was one thing here in which they were *not* alike. Joseph did not know the meaning of his sufferings, or what they were intended to lead to. But Jesus knew what his sufferings were for. He "saw the end, from the beginning." The apostle Paul tells us, in



Joseph's Coat brought to his Father.



speaking of Jesus—"of the joy that was set before him." Heb. xii: 2. This was the joy of saving the souls of his people. He knew what he was suffering for, and this made him so willing to bear it. And so we see that Joseph and Jesus were alike in this—they both had trouble from the mission on which they came.

*But, in the next place, Joseph's trouble brought him to GREAT HONOR, and here too he reminds us of Jesus.*

One morning Joseph came out of his room in the prison and met two of his fellow-prisoners. One of these was the chief butler of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Our word butler, comes from an old English word that means a bottler, or one who has charge of bottles. And this butler of Pharaoh was one who had the charge of his wines and silver plate. The other fellow-prisoner of Joseph was the chief baker of Pharaoh. These two men had offended their master, and he had sent them both to prison. Joseph had become well acquainted with them there. When he met them on this morning he was surprised to find them looking very sad. He asked what was the matter. They said they had each dreamed a dream during the night, and they were in trouble because they could not tell the meaning of it. Joseph said that God knew the meaning of all dreams. Then he asked them to tell him their dreams. They did so: and at once he explained to them what their dreams meant. Within the next three days, what Joseph had said about those dreams came to pass. Pharaoh hanged the chief baker on a tree, but restored the chief butler to his office. We can read about this in the fortieth chapter of Genesis.

When Pharaoh sent for the butler, he came to say good-by to Joseph, before leaving the prison. Joseph asked him to remember him, his fellow-prisoner, when in prosperity, and try to get him out of prison. He promised to do so: "*yet did not he remember Joseph but forgot him.*"

Then two long and weary years of prison life passed slowly away; and it must have seemed to Joseph, as if not only the chief butler, but every one else in the world had forgotten him. But it was not so. God had not forgotten him. He never forgets his people. The time for Joseph's release came at last.

One night Pharaoh king of Egypt dreamed a dream. It was a very singular one. He dreamed it twice on the same night. When he woke

in the morning he was in great trouble about his dream. He told it to his family and friends, but they could not explain it. He sent for all the wise and learned men in Egypt to help him, but none of them could tell what that strange dream meant. The whole palace was excited about it. The



Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph.

king was in great distress. And then the chief butler remembered Joseph, and those dreams in the prison, which he had explained so correctly. He went straight to the king and told him about it. Immediately the king sent a messenger to the prison with an order for Joseph the Hebrew to come directly to the palace. He shaved off his beard, for the Egyptians never let their beards grow except as a sign of mourning: and it was not



"They cried before him, 'Bow the knee.'"





considered proper for a person wearing a beard to come into the presence of the king. Then he laid aside his prison dress, and putting on suitable raiment, appeared before the king. He told Joseph his dream. See Gen. xli: 15-36. At once God enabled him to understand its meaning and explain it to Pharaoh. He showed the king how a dreadful famine was coming upon Egypt, which would last for seven years; and how God had sent this dream that Pharaoh might know of the coming trouble, and prepare to meet it. And then, in a very modest way, Joseph ventured to suggest to Pharaoh what he had better do, so as to be ready for the years of famine when they came.

While Joseph was saying all this Pharaoh looked on him with surprise and wonder. Then he turned to his princes and said,—“Can we find such a man as this, in whom the spirit of God is?” And at once he made Joseph the prime-minister, or highest officer of the kingdom. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.” And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it on Joseph’s hand, and arrayed him in garments of fine linen, and put a chain of gold about his neck; and he made him ride in the second chariot that he had; and they cried before him, “Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.”

How wonderful this was! Here we see how Joseph’s trouble brought him to the prison, and then the prison brought him to the palace. In one day, by a single step, this great change was brought about. When the sun arose on the morning of that day, its light streamed through the iron bars of his window, and shone on Joseph, a poor forgotten prisoner; but before that same sun went down, its evening rays were shining on Joseph as he stood in the presence of Pharaoh, or as he walked up and down the halls of his splendid palace a “ruler of all the land of Egypt.”

And how beautifully this part of Joseph’s history reminds us of Jesus! The trouble he had to bear for us brought him to the grave. That was the dark prison in which our Joseph was bound. But from the grave he rose to life again. And thus he ascended into heaven, and took his seat at the right hand of God, and was made the ruler of our world, and of *all* worlds, as Joseph was made ruler over all the land of Egypt. See how the apostle Paul speaks of the matter. “He took upon him the form of a

servant—and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. ii: 7–12.



The Burial of Jacob.

Joseph rose from the prison to the palace of Pharaon, to be ruler of all the land of Egypt. Jesus rose from the grave to the palace of the Great King of heaven, and to be ruler of all the universe.

*When Joseph became rich and great he used his power for THE GOOD of his brethren, and this is the last thing in which he reminds us of Jesus.*

We cannot stop now to speak of all the interesting matters connected

with Joseph's history. How busy he was during all the seven years of plenty! Now, they are over, and the years of famine begin. The famine is not confined to Egypt. It reaches to Canaan. Jacob and his family are suffering for bread. They hear that there is corn in Egypt, and the old patriarch Jacob, sends his ten sons down there to buy corn. They appear before Joseph. He knows them, but they know not him. What a meeting that must have been! What strange thoughts of the past must have come rushing into Joseph's mind! But we cannot dwell on these things. And then how he accuses them of being spies: how he keeps Simeon as a prisoner, or a pledge for their return: how he charges them to bring their younger brother with them, when they come again: how his heart melted when he saw his brother Benjamin: his plan to keep Benjamin as a slave: the noble conduct of Judah in offering to take Benjamin's place: how Joseph could refrain no longer then, but made himself known unto his brethren: what a touching scene it was, and how bewildered and overwhelmed with astonishment they must have been when Egypt's great ruler stood up in the midst of them, and speaking no longer by an interpreter, but in their own Hebrew tongue, said: "I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt; doth my father yet live?" and how he wept and they wept, and then how lovingly he kissed his brethren, all this we must pass over.

We come now to speak of what he did for his father, and his brethren,—the wagons that he sent them, loaded with the good things of Egypt. Now he brings them all down from Canaan. He places them in the best parts of the country. He gives them freely of all the good things that Egypt brought forth. And he finds positions of honor and profit for his brethren in the service of the king. Pharaoh told Joseph to do this, and it was all for Joseph's sake. "And Pharaoh spoke unto Joseph saying, Thy father, and thy brethren are come unto thee: The land of Egypt is before thee: in the best of the land, make thy father and thy brethren to dwell." Gen. xlvii: 5, 6. And so Joseph used his high office, and the great influence he had with Pharaoh for the benefit of his brethren.

And how wonderfully Joseph's history points us to Jesus here! We are told that "God hath put all things under his feet, and made him head over all things to his church," or his people. Ephes. i: 22. He is exalted to

the right hand of God, on purpose to give to his people whatsoever they may need. Joseph had charge of all the treasures of Egypt, and when the hungry, starving people came to Pharaoh for bread "he sent them to Joseph." We read in Genesis xli: 56,—"*And Joseph opened all the storehouses unto the Egyptians.*" And in the same way, Jesus, our glorious Joseph, opens all the storehouses of heaven: and when poor, perishing souls are hungering for the bread of life, God sends them to Jesus. The apostle Paul says, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. iv: 19. And when we ask for grace, and blessing, and any good thing from God, we must ask these things—"for Jesus' sake." This is the golden key that unlocks the treasury of heaven. Jesus said to his disciples,—"*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, in my name, he will give it you.*" John xv: 16.

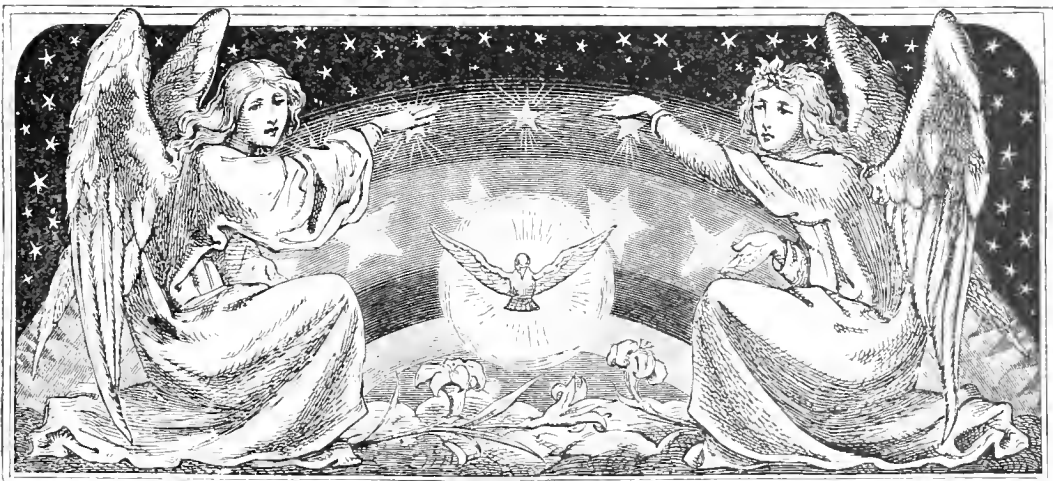
"For Charlie's Sake."—Some years ago, during the war, there was a Judge who felt great interest in the welfare of the suffering soldiers. He had a dear boy of his own in the army, and this made him feel the greatest sympathy for the soldiers. But one time he was very busy in studying out an important law case that was coming before him to be tried. And while he was thus engaged, he made up his mind not to be interrupted by any persons begging for help.

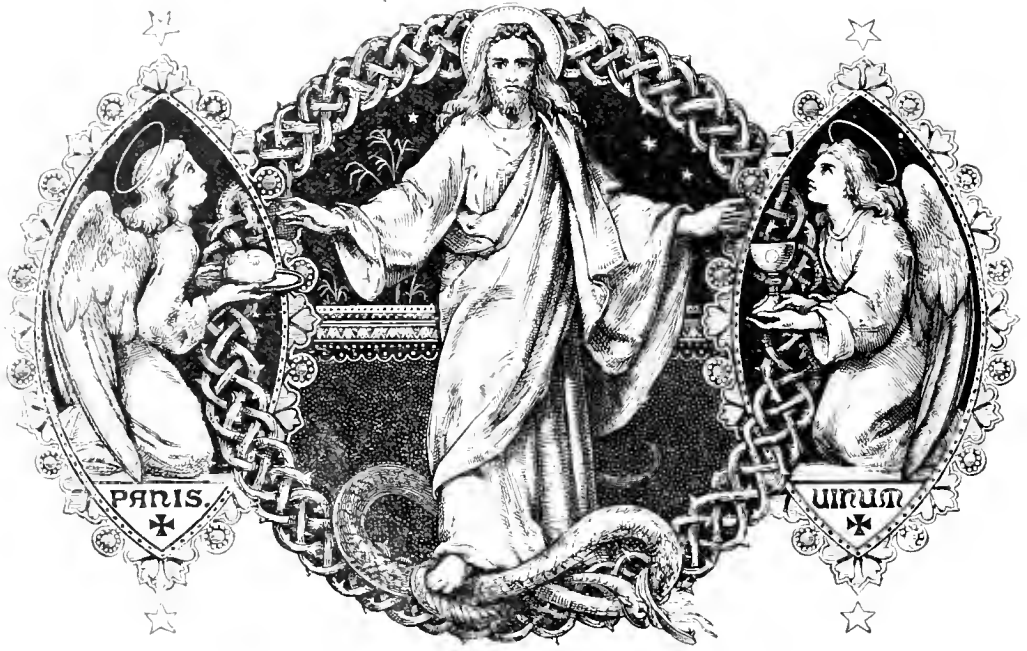
One day, during this time, a poor soldier came into his office. His clothes were torn and thin, and his face showed that he was suffering much from sickness. The Judge went on with his work, pretending not to notice him. The soldier was fumbling in his pockets for a good while, and then, seeing that he was not welcome, he said in a disappointed tone, "*I did* have a letter for you, sir." The Judge made no answer. Presently the soldier's thin, trembling hand pushed a little note along the desk. The Judge looked up, and was going to say, "I am too busy now to attend to anything of this kind." But just then his eye fell on the note, and he saw the handwriting of his own son. In a moment he picked it up and read thus:—"Dear Father: The bearer of this note is one of our brave soldier boys. He has been dismissed from the hospital, and is going home to die. Please help him, in any way you can, for Charlie's sake."

What a change those few lines made in that father's feelings towards the poor soldier! "Come into the house my friend," he said. "You are

welcome to anything we have." Then a good meal was prepared for him. He was put to sleep in Charlie's bed. He was dressed in some of Charlie's clothes, and money was given him to take him home in comfort. All this was done "for Charlie's sake." And so when we ask anything for Jesus' sake, God, our heavenly Father, will surely give it to us, if it be well for us to have it.

And thus we have Joseph and Jesus compared. Joseph was sent on a mission by his father; and so was Jesus. Joseph's mission was to show his father's love; and so it was with Jesus. Joseph's mission brought him into trouble; and so did that of Jesus. Joseph's trouble brought him to great honor; and so it was with Jesus. When Joseph became rich and great, he used his power for the good of his brethren; and this is just what Jesus is doing all the time. And so, when we read the sweet story of Joseph, let us never forget to think about Jesus, and to love and serve him for all that he has done for us.





## CHRIST THE PROPHET LIKE MOSES.



**M**OSESES told the children of Israel that God would raise up to them a prophet like unto him. Deut. xviii: 15. And Christ was the person to whom he referred when he said this. Moses was one of the greatest men of whom we read in the Old Testament. Like Joseph, he spent the greater part of his life in Egypt. The history of Moses is very different from that of Joseph in many respects. But there is one thing in which the lives of these two good and great men are much alike: they both have many things in them that remind us of Jesus. We have seen how beautifully Joseph and Jesus may be compared together. And we may do the same here. The life of Moses is full of illustrations of the character and work of Christ. Moses knew this, and he told the children of Israel so



Moses in the Ark of Pharaoh's daughter.





when he said to them,—“The Lord thy God will raise up unto you a prophet, from the midst of thy brethren, *like unto me.*” This promise, or prophecy, refers to Christ. And it gives us an interesting subject of Bible study. It leads us to think of our blessed Saviour as “the prophet like Moses.”

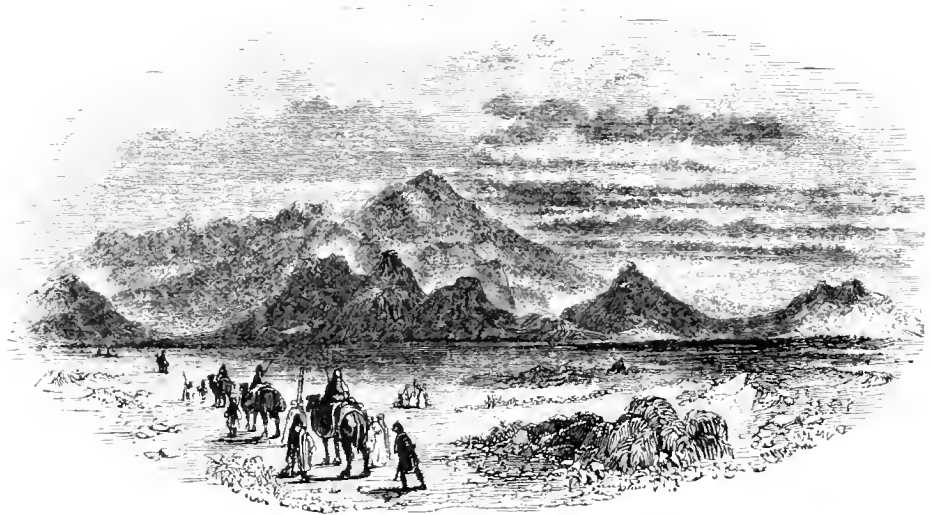
A prophet is one who speaks for another, and especially who speaks for God. And this is what Christ was sent into our world to do. He was to be a prophet. He was to come into our world on purpose to speak to us for God. And so the apostle Paul says, that, “God, who spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.” Heb. i: 1, 2.

It is true that Jesus was to be a prophet. And we are not only told this about him, but were are told also what sort of a prophet he was to be. He was to be “*a prophet like Moses.*” And the question we must try and answer now is this: What are some of the things in which Jesus was a prophet like Moses? I say *some* of them; for we cannot speak of them all. If we should try to count them, we should find that there are thirty or forty things in which Jesus was like Moses.

I will only speak of *five* of these things. Moses was exposed to great danger at the time of his birth; and it was the same with Jesus—*and so we may begin by saying that Jesus was like Moses in—*THE DANGER ATTENDING HIS BIRTH.

Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, tried to kill Moses as soon as he was born. The children of Israel were increasing so fast that he began to be afraid of them. Then he gave orders to have all the male children of the Israelites thrown into the river. And this was the law of Egypt at the time when Moses was born. Exod. i: 22. The mother of Moses hid her child for three months. What an anxious time she must have had during those months! No doubt the officers of Pharaoh, who had been appointed to execute this cruel law, were going about, all the time, hunting for young children, whom their fond mothers were trying, in one way or another, to save alive. How many a piercing shriek would be heard, in the homes of the Israelites, as some poor mother pressed her darling to her bosom, in the vain attempt to prevent it from being torn from her embrace, and cast into the river Nile! How often the heart of Jochabed, the mother of

Moses, must have sunk within her as she heard these cries! She knew well what they meant. And she knew not how soon her own time might come to utter such a cry. We can well imagine how she would be afraid to close her eyes at night, lest while she slept her babe might be snatched away from her. Every sound would alarm her. Every strange step she heard approaching her humble dwelling would fill her with fear. How could she tell but it might be one of the king's officers whose business it was to take the tender little ones from the arms of their weeping mothers and toss them into the river! How she would tremble when the child



In that school God was his teacher.

cried! and what anxious efforts she would make to hush the babe, lest the sound of its little voice might be heard by the men whom she so much dreaded! All this was kept up for three long, and weary months. And then she felt that this would not do. She saw "that she could no longer hide him." *Exod. ii: 3.* Perhaps the officers had become more strict in their searches. At any rate Jochabed was convinced that something else must be done, or else she would soon lose her child. No doubt she had had many a long, and anxious talk with her husband, about what was the best thing for them to do. And many an earnest prayer, we can well imagine, they offered together that God would guide them, and show them what to do, in order to save their darling little one from death.





*The Infant Jesus*





And then came the thought of the ark of bulrushes. We are not told who first suggested this idea. It is not said that an angel came from heaven and told Jochabed about this. And yet this thought must have come from above. We know how true it is, as one of the beautiful Collects in the Book of Common Prayer expresses it, that it is—"God from whom all holy desires, all *good counsels*, and all just works do proceed." And the hymn we sometimes sing, teaches the same thing when it leads us to look up to God, and say:—

"Thou all our works in us hast wrought,  
Our good is all divine;  
The praise of every holy thought,  
And righteous word is thine."

We are very sure it was God who put the thought of the ark into the mind of Jochabed. We are told that "she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and pitch." Exod. ii: 3. The "bulrush" was a reed that grew along the borders of the Nile in those days, though it is seldom found there now. It is called the papyrus reed. The ancients made out of this reed the material they used for writing upon. And it is from this that our word "paper" comes. This reed was much used by the Egyptians for making baskets and vessels for sailing on the river. The prophet Isaiah speaks of large vessels, even such as were used for going to sea, as being made out of the same reeds, here called bulrushes. Isaiah xviii: 2.

It is likely that the mother of Moses had a basket made of these bulrushes, which was in use about the house. She made it waterproof by covering it with bitumen, or as it says in the Bible by "daubing it with slime and pitch." Then she took her darling babe, and gently laid him in the ark, kissed it, and covered it up. We are not told about this in the history, but we may be pretty sure that she kneeled down beside that ark, before taking it out of her house, and asked God to take care of it, and to keep it from all harm. And then she carried it to the river, and laid it down among the flags and rushes that grew along the banks of the river. But she left Miriam, the sister of Moses, a short distance off, to keep watch over the ark, and see what might become of it.

What an exposed position it was for that poor child to be in! How many dangers there were that might have befallen it! But God was taking care of that helpless babe; and when he takes care of us we are always safe. It was so with that ark of bulrushes. We are not told how long Miriam had to wait and watch there. But at last she heard the sound of



God appeared to him at the Burning Bush.

approaching footsteps. A company of females is drawing nigh. When they come in sight she recognizes one of them as the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. The others are her attendants. As they come nearer, the princess sees something floating on the water. She sends one of her maids to fetch it. The ark is uncovered, and the babe weeps. The turning point in that child's history has come. The future of his history all depended on how that young princess should feel towards him. Who could tell what her feeling would be? When she saw it, and knew it to be one



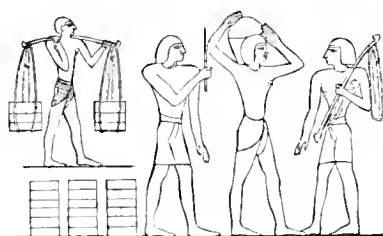
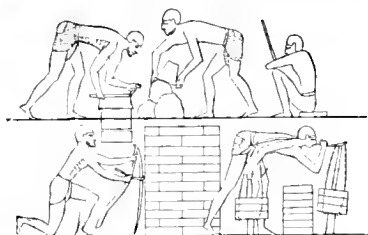
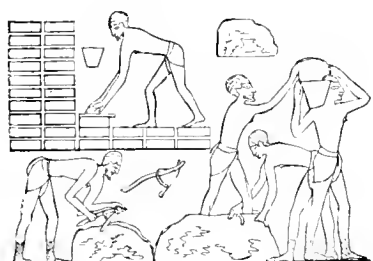
of the Hebrew's children, suppose that she had said: "My father has made a law that all the male children of these Hebrew slaves shall be put to death. This is one of them. According to that law this child must die. Take it out of the ark, and throw it into the river." She might have done this. It would have seemed most likely that she would do it. But she did not. The hearts of all people, we know, are in God's hand, and "He can turn them, as the rivers of water are turned." The heart of this young princess was in God's hand. He wished her to be kind to that helpless little one, and he turned her heart towards him in kindness. And it is interesting to notice how God did this.

When the ark was uncovered in the presence of the princess, we are told that—"the babe wept." *Exod. ii: 6.* A weeping babe is always a touching sight. To see the big tears filling its little eyes, and rolling down its innocent cheeks is enough to melt any heart. Here it melted the heart of Pharaoh's daughter, and opened it in tender love and kindness towards this helpless babe. She resolved to adopt it as her own child, and take it home to her palace. And so, we may say, that this baby's tears made its fortune.

And here Josephus, the Jewish historian, mentions a little incident, which is not told in the Bible history. He says that Pharaoh's daughter tried first to get an Egyptian nurse to take care of the child; but though she tried several, one after another, the child would not go to any of them. And then he says, Miriam came up and offered to get a Hebrew nurse. She was told to go and get one. She brought the babe's mother. He went to her in a moment. "And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, take this child, and nurse it for me and I will give thee thy wages." How happy Jochabed must have felt when she took her darling child home that day! Before she had nursed her babe with fear and trembling. Now all her fear was gone. Until then there had been the danger of death attending him ever since he was born. But now that gracious God to whose kind care she had committed him had heard her prayer. The king's daughter had become his friend, and he was not only saved from the fear of death, but a good education and everything he could need was freely provided for him. And here we see what the danger was that attended the birth of Moses. And if we turn now from Moses to Jesus, we find that there

was danger attending his birth too. And so he was like Moses in this respect.

Herod was king in Jerusalem at that time. When he heard that a child had been born who was to be "king of the Jews," he was afraid he might lose his kingdom. So he resolved to kill this child. He tried first to do it by getting the wise men to come back and tell him where he might find the young king. God would not let them do this, but "sent them



Brickmaking in Egypt.

back to their own country another way." When Herod found this out, we are told, that "he was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men." Matt. ii: 16. In this way he thought he would surely secure the death of the young child that he feared so much. And the child Jesus would certainly have been killed by this cruel order of Herod if God had not interfered to take care of him. But this was just what God did. He sent an angel to tell Joseph "to take the young child and his mother, and flee into the land of Egypt." Matt. ii: 13. Joseph did this. And so, when Herod's soldiers were making bloody work among the babes of Bethlehem, the infant Saviour of the world was far away out of their reach, safe in the hiding-place that God had

found for him in Egypt. And so we see how well Jesus might be called "the prophet like Moses" when we think of the danger that attended his birth.

*In the second place, we see how Jesus was like Moses, in his—PREPARATION FOR HIS WORK.*

There were two parts in the preparation that Moses went through: one was a *preparation of privilege*, the other a *preparation of trial*. The preparation of privilege was what Moses had when he was "called the son

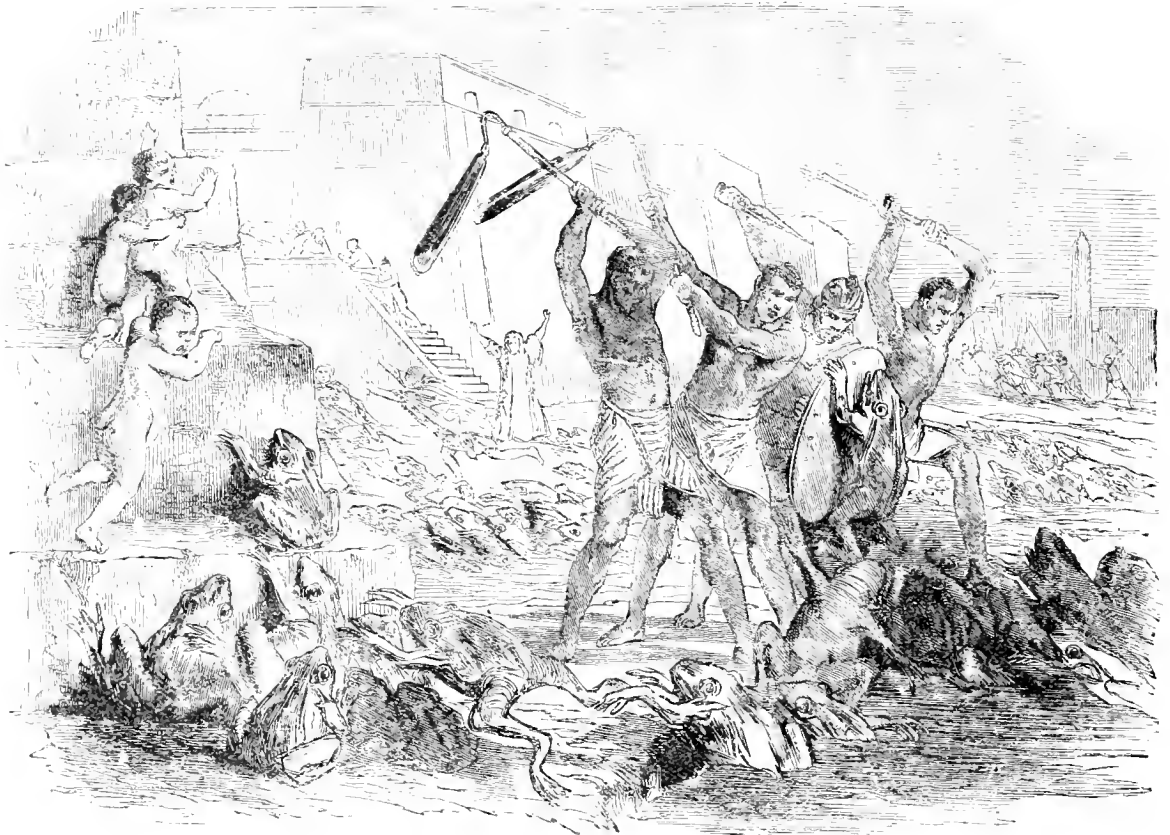
of Pharaoh's daughter." He lived in the palace of Pharaoh. He had the best education that could be had anywhere in those days. The Egyptians were the most learned people in the world at that time. People, in other parts of the world, who wished to get a good education, went to Egypt and studied there. The best schools or colleges were there. They had the best teachers or professors. It was necessary for Moses to have the very best education that could be had, in order to fit him for the great work he was to do. The Bible teaches us that God "makes all things work together for good to them that love him." Rom. viii: 28. And we have a beautiful illustration of the way in which he does this, when we see how God made use of Pharaoh's cruel law to kill the Hebrew children, and of the ark of bulrushes in which the mother of Moses placed him, in order to secure for him the privilege of living in the palaces of Egypt, and of getting all the knowledge that Egypt could give. And we know that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds." Acts vii: 22. This was the preparation of privilege that Moses had to fit him for the important work to which he was called.

And Jesus was "a prophet like Moses" in this respect. He had a preparation of privilege too. Before he came into the world to be our Saviour, it had been his privilege to live, not in such palaces as those of Egypt, but in the great palace of the King of heaven. He had been "in the bosom of the Father." John i: 18. He had had a share "in the glory of the Father before the world was." John xvii: 5. The words that he spake, and the works that he did while in our world, he tells us were only "what he had seen with his Father." John viii: 38. If Moses needed great wisdom and knowledge to fit him for the work he had to do, how much more did Jesus need? Yes, and how much more did Jesus have? He could say "all power in heaven, and on earth is given unto me." Matt. xxviii: 18. And "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. ii: 3. The work he came into the world to do was a wonderful work, and what a wonderful preparation he had for doing it!

But then, in addition to this preparation of privilege, Moses had also *a preparation of trial* to fit him for his work.

When Moses was forty years old he had finished his education in

Egypt. He knew a great deal about other things, but very little about himself. He thought he was old enough, and wise enough to do anything. Without asking God's help, or direction, he undertook to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt. But he made a great mistake. He got into trouble and had to flee from Egypt. He had much more to learn before he would be fit for the work God meant him to do. He had been



A multitude of Frogs came up from the river Nile.

to school for forty years in Egypt, with princes and great men. Then God sent him to school forty years more, in the wilderness. There he was alone with his sheep. In that school God was his teacher. He taught Moses many valuable lessons about himself and his own heart. And Moses learned these lessons well. And so after his preparation of trial was finished, God appeared to him at the burning bush. There he gave Moses his commission, and the directions that he needed about the way in which he was to deliver the children of Israel out their house of bondage in Egypt.

And Jesus was like Moses, too, in this respect. He had a preparation of trial to go through. The thirty years that he spent in Nazareth, working as a carpenter, with Joseph his supposed father, were all years of trial to him. And when those years were over, he went into the wilderness to be tried or tempted there. God was pleased to make use of Satan himself to prepare our blessed Saviour for his work. A part of the preparation of trial through which he passed was what took place when he was "led up of the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." Matt. iv: 1. And the apostle Paul shows us what a useful preparation this was, when he says, in speaking of Jesus: "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. ii: 18. And so we see how truly Jesus might be called the prophet like Moses. He was like him in his *preparation for his work*.

*But in the third place, Jesus was "the prophet like Moses," on account of the many—MIRACLES—that he did.*

Moses performed more miracles than any other person of whom we read in the Old Testament. He was commanded to carry a rod in his hand, and when he was going to work a miracle he was to wave this rod, and then God caused the miracle to take place. These miracles were not intended for show, but for use. God never does anything for show. There is always something useful in whatever he does. The first miracle that Moses did was intended to be a proof to Pharaoh that God had sent Moses to deliver the Israelites. When he appeared before Pharaoh and asked him to let the children of Israel go forth from their captivity in Egypt, it is not surprising that Pharaoh was unwilling to do what Moses asked. The Israelites were then a nation of slaves. For many years they had been brickmakers, and builders for the Egyptians. They had been doing all kinds of hard work, and doing it at very small cost. It seems that they got nothing for their labor but a bare support. This must have made their service very profitable to the Egyptians. Therefore it was not likely Pharaoh would be willing to let them go if he could help it. So when Moses came before Pharaoh, and told him that he came with a message to him from "the Lord God of the Hebrews;" and this message was that he must let the children of Israel go, Pharaoh would very naturally be ready to say, "Well, but how do I know that this is true? What proof can you

give me that you come from God?" Then the first miracle that Moses had to work came into use. When God gave him his commission, at the burning bush, he prepared him to meet this very difficulty.

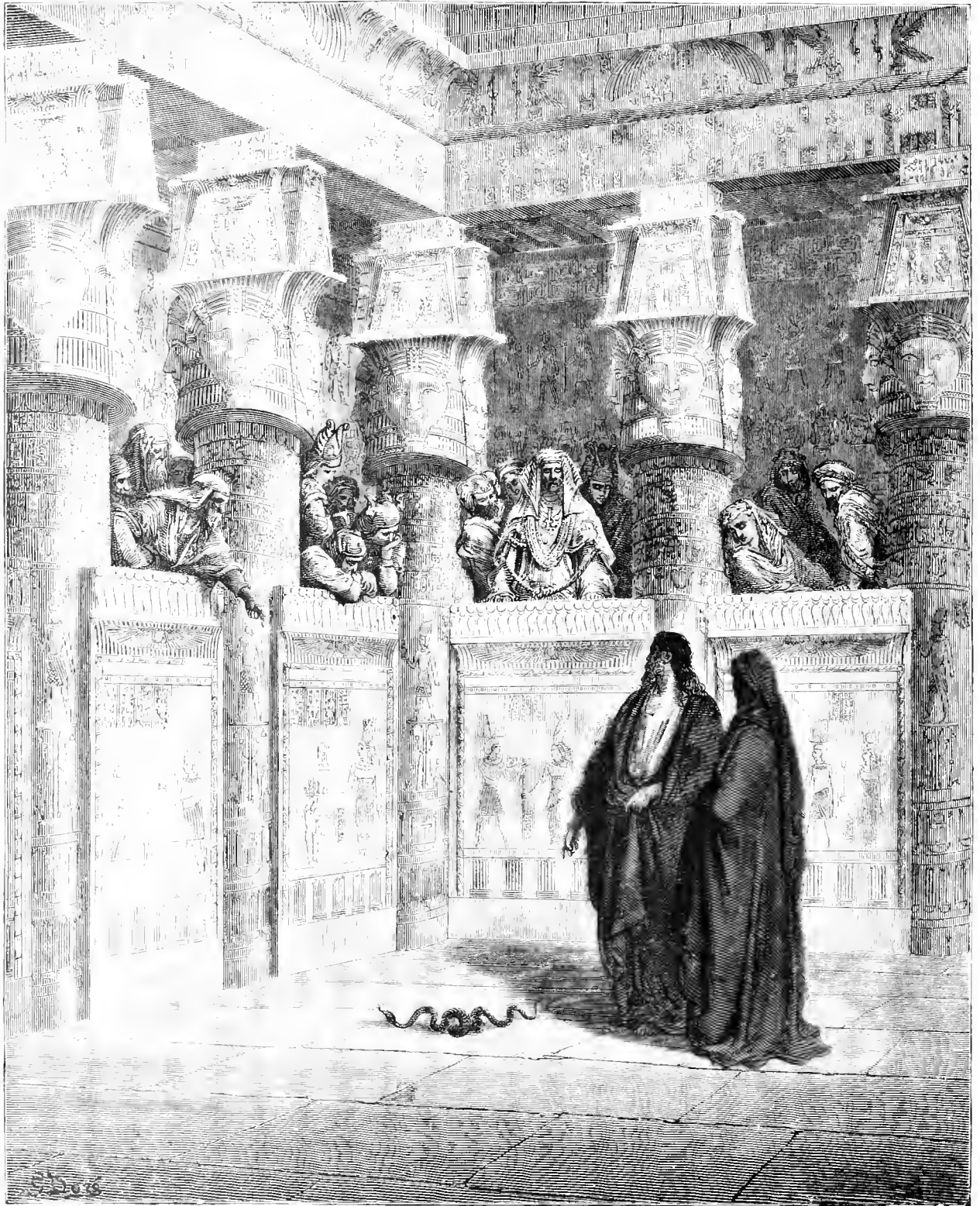
Moses had his brother Aaron with him. He carried the rod. Moses told him to throw it on the ground before Pharaoh, and it became a serpent. Pharaoh called in the magicians of Egypt to see what they could do. They with their enchantments did that which looked like the same



Again that wondrous rod is waived, and a terrible hailstorm bursts upon the land.

kind of miracle; but it was not. They could not make real serpents out of wooden rods as Moses did; but they contrived to do something that seemed to be a miracle, just as we have seen a conjuror like Signor Blitz do many things which appeared like miracles, but were not so. The serpent into which the rod of Moses was turned swallowed up the other serpents. And when he took it by the tail, and it became a rod again, the magicians had lost their rods. But Pharaoh would not believe Moses; nor do what God wanted him to do. He thought that Moses





THE TEMPLE OF THE GODS



was only an abler magician than the others. He said he would not obey God.

And the other miracles that Moses was commanded to do, were all intended to make Pharaoh obey God, and let the children of Israel go. Here we see a great contest going on. God is one of the parties in this contest, and Pharaoh is the other. God's command to Pharaoh is,—“Let my people go.” Pharaoh's answer to this command is,—“Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” Exod. v: 2.

And now we are to look on and see how this contest ends. Moses is before us with his rod. He begins by asking Pharaoh to let Israel go. Pharaoh says,—“I will not do it.” Then Moses waves his rod. Immediately all the water in the river Nile, and in the wells of Egypt is turned into blood. No one can drink it, and all the fish in the river die. Exod. vii: 19–25. The Lord told Moses that “He would execute his judgments against the gods of Egypt.” Exod. xii: 12. We may keep this in mind as we speak of the different plagues with which Moses, in God's name, punished the Egyptians. They were dependent on the annual overflowing of the river Nile for the fertility of their land. On this account they regarded that river with feelings of reverence. They worshipped it as a god. To have the water of their favorite river turned into blood therefore must have been particularly painful and distressing to them. It would cause the Egyptians to turn away with disgust and loathing from the river which they always looked upon as a sacred object. They were made to feel that here was one of their gods who had no power at all against the Lord God of the Hebrews.

By this miracle God punished the Egyptians for two sins of which they had been guilty. They had been *guilty of idolatry* in worshipping this river. They had boasted that by reason of this river they were independent of the rains of heaven. They had paid to this senseless stream the homage and worship that were due only to the God of heaven. They praised that river for the blessings which they owed only to God. We need not wonder then that in beginning his work of judgment on the Egyptians God should lay his hand of power first upon the river which they had made an idol, and should make it indeed a plague and a curse to

them. Good old Bishop Hall says, "that when we put anything in the place of God, he will surely cause us to suffer most through that very thing."

And then God punished the *cruelty*, as well as the idolatry of the Egyptians by sending this plague upon their river. They had stained the waters of that river with the blood of the Hebrew children; and now all its streams were filled with blood as if to remind them of their sin.



Modern Jewish Passover.

A second time Moses waved his rod, and a multitude of frogs came up from the river Nile. They cover the land. In the homes of the poor; in the dwellings of the rich; in the palace of the king they are found. Kitchen, and parlor, and bed-chamber, and every place is filled with their polluting presence. This must have been, in some respects, a more distressing plague than the former one. If the people found the sight of the blood in their river painful and disgusting to them, they could go away from the river to their homes, and there they would be free from this annoyance. The river could not follow them. But the frogs could, and did. They were everywhere. It was impossible to get away from them. Imagine yourself there. If you walk in the road, you cannot see the ground for the frogs. If you enter the house to sit down frogs cover the chair you



By one fearful blow of His unseen sword smites the first-born.



would sit upon. You go to the closet for something to eat; the frogs are over everything. You take a cup to get a drink of water, and there is a frog in it. You begin to kill them; but for every one you kill, a dozen more come to take its place. Worried out with the sight of them, you go to your bed for rest, and lo! the bed is full of frogs! You give up in despair. The sight, and the slime, and the stench of these vile creatures are about you wherever you go.

And the frog was another of the sacred animals of the Egyptians. To think of worshipping a frog! Yet they did. They had a frog-headed god, and a frog-headed goddess. And such was the reverence with which these creatures were regarded in some parts of Egypt, that dead frogs were embalmed, and buried, and monuments erected to them. In this plague of the frogs we see another judgment executed on the gods of Egypt.

Again the rod is waved, and the flies come in endless swarms. The people cannot breathe without taking them into their mouths and nostrils. Our English Bible speaks of this plague as consisting of "swarms of flies." In the Hebrew Bible the word "flies" is left out. It only speaks of "swarms," without saying what they were. In speaking of this David says,—“He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them.” Ps. lxxviii: 75. In Exodus viii: 24, we are told that “the land was corrupted by reason of the swarms of flies.” And as these swarms not only filled the air, but covered the ground, it is supposed that the beetle was found among them. This creature is an object of great dislike to persons generally. It is considered as a nuisance or plague wherever found. But in Egypt beetles are always numerous, and very offensive. They devour everything that comes in their way, even clothes, books, and plants. They even inflict severe bites on the inhabitants of the land. And yet the beetle was considered as a sacred creature by the Egyptians. It was held in high honor, and was also an object of worship among them. Pliny, the historian, says,—“A great portion of Egypt worship the beetle as one of the gods of the country.” One of the ways in which they honored it was by having its figure engraved on seals, or cut in stone; it was used in all kinds of ornaments, and particularly in rings and necklaces. They not only worshipped the beetle when alive, but they embalmed it when dead.

and embalmed beetles, and beetles cut in stone are often found among the ruins and in the tombs of Thebes. In the British Museum, in London, there is a colossal figure of a beetle cut in greenish colored granite. And to have these sacred beetles made their tormentors:—to see them invading their homes, and covering the public roads in such numbers that “the land was corrupted by them,” must have been a very painful thing to the Egyptians. They were obliged to crush under their feet, and to sweep away from their homes and streets, and to look with abhorrence on the very creatures they had been accustomed to worship. And when they knew that it was the great being whom the Hebrews worshipped, who was thus “executing judgment on the gods of Egypt,” they must have felt that “there was none like unto the God of Israel.”

Once more the rod is waving. And now a terrible disease called murrain, breaks out among the cattle of Egypt. Suddenly it seizes on the horses, the asses, the camels, the oxen, and the sheep. None escape the disease. No remedy for it is known. Its work is quickly done, and the end of the matter is that “all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.” Exod. ix: 1–7.

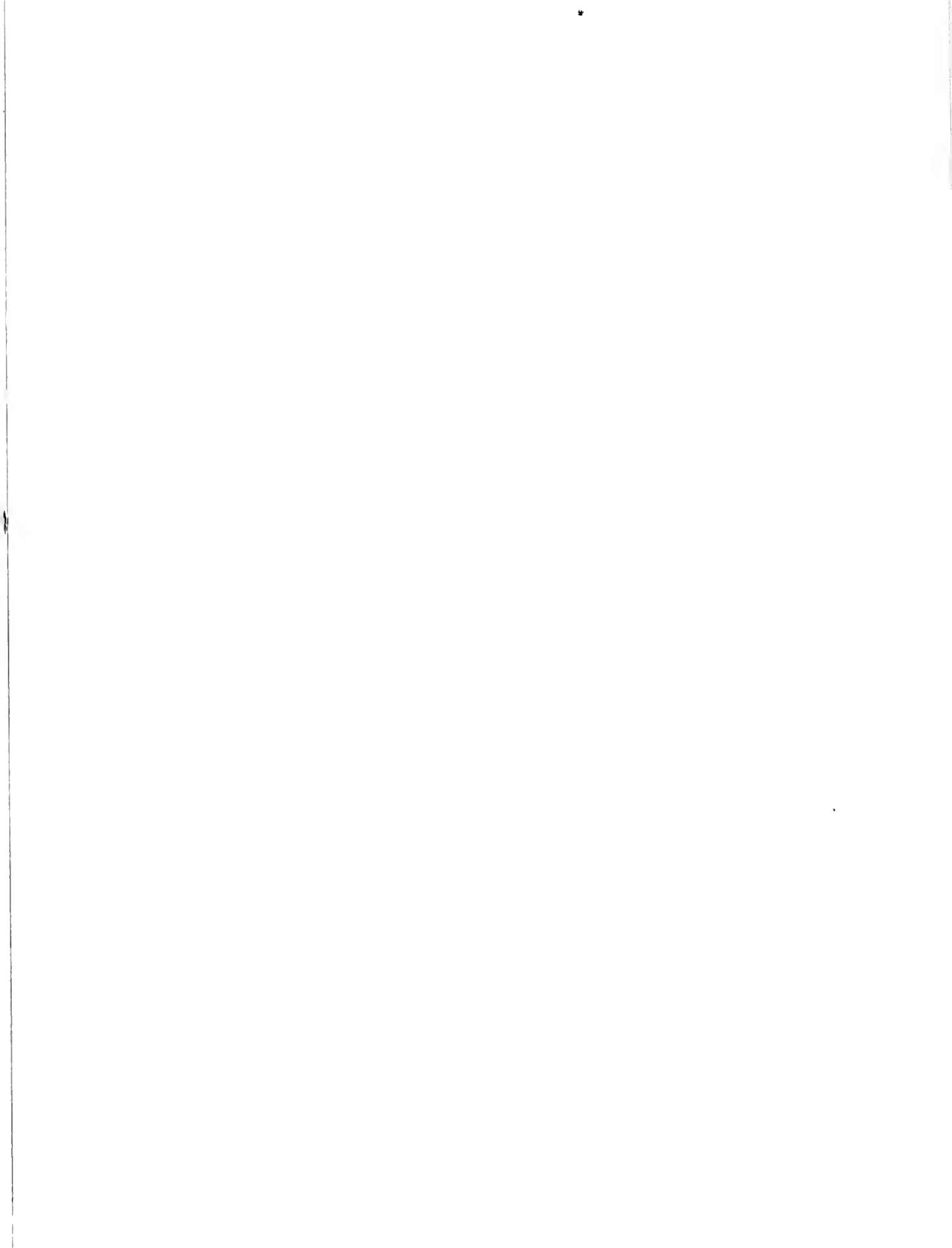
And now for once the rod is laid aside. Instead of a rod Moses takes a handful of ashes from the furnace. He stands before Pharaoh and scatters the ashes towards heaven. The effect is wonderful. At once boils, painful and burning, break out upon men, and upon beasts throughout all the land of Egypt. The beggar on his dunghill, the prince in his palace, and the king upon his throne, all are covered with boils. Who can tell the misery that Egypt had to bear from this one plague?

Again Moses stands before Pharaoh. Still the demand is, “Let my people go.” Pharaoh refuses. Again that wondrous rod is waved. And now a terrible hailstorm bursts upon the land. This is something before unknown in Egypt. The loudest thunder roars through the sky. Flash after flash of the sharpest lightning blazes out from the storm-cloud, and runs in streams of fire along the ground. The hail rattles terribly against the roofs of the dwellings. Plants are killed; trees are broken; and men and cattle found in the field are destroyed all through the land. Egypt looked like a ruined country when that tremendous hailstorm had swept over it. Exodus ix: 13–35.









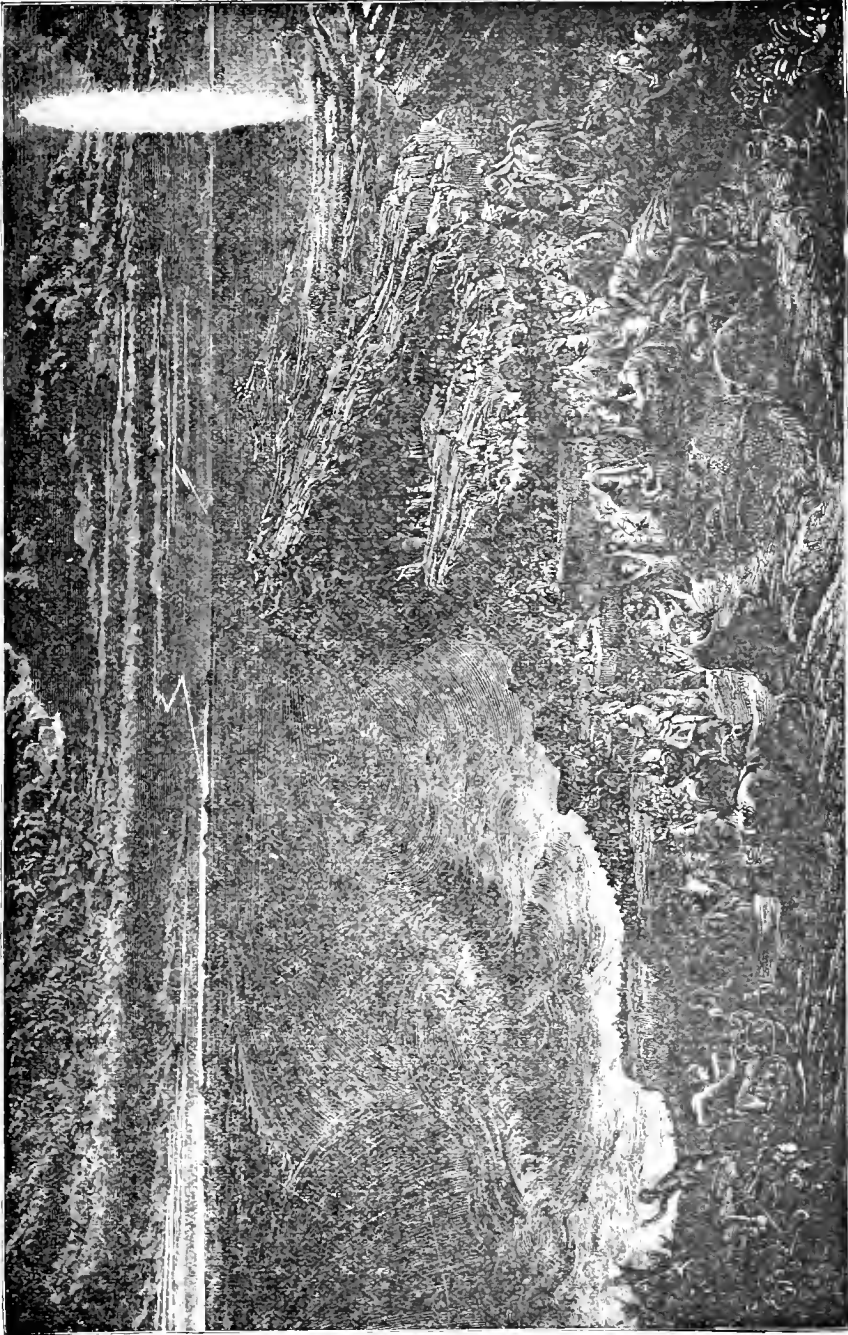




“ The Israelites began their grand march.”

Again Moses appears before Pharaoh. Again that mighty rod is raised. Slowly the man of God waves it. And see, yonder comes a cloud. It comes not like the cloud which the prophet's servant saw rising from the sea, but from the way of the wilderness. How fast it comes! How rapidly it grows broader, and deeper, and darker! And now it covers the heavens. It shuts out the light of the sun. It is a cloud of locusts. This is one of the most dreadful evils known in that part of the world. The prophet Joel gives the best description of one of these locust-plagues that ever was written. He says,—“A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great.” Joel ii: 3–12. Such an army of locusts, invaded Egypt, when Moses waved his rod. They devoured every green thing that the hail had left. The land seemed to be utterly destroyed. And yet Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Once more Moses appears before the king. He repeats God's command to let the people go. Again it is refused. Again the rod is waved, when lo, a horrible darkness settles down upon the land. It was utterly unlike the gloom of our darkest nights. There was something in it solemn and awful. We are told it was “a darkness that might *be felt*.” I suppose this means a darkness attended by thick clammy fogs, and vapors, so heavy and damp that the people could put forth their hands and feel them. Not only was the light of the moon and the stars hidden, but it is most probable that neither lamps nor fire would burn. Only such a state of things would explain what we read in Exodus x: 23, where it says that—“They



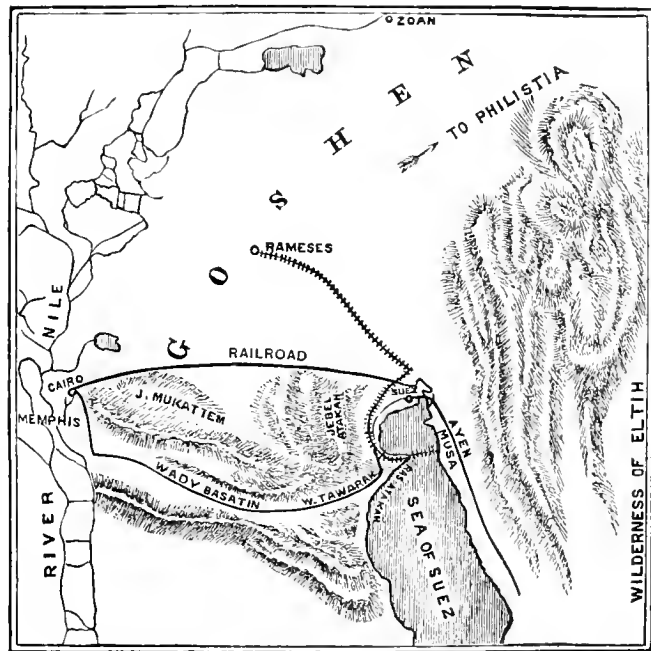
With the Angel He sent a pillar of fire.



saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days." What dreadful days those must have been! I suppose that David refers to these days of fearful darkness when he says that God "sent evil angels among them." Ps. lxxviii: 49. They would terrify the people by strange and fearful noises, that would seem ten times more alarming on account of the darkness. And when we think of all this suffering we see what a terrible thing it is to fight against God!

And now we come to the last and most wonderful work that God did in Egypt through Moses. This was the most terrible of all. It took

place on what is called the night of the Passover. The Israelites had been told to kill a lamb for every family. The blood of this lamb was sprinkled on the posts of their doors. Then, as the night went on, the people were holding a feast. It was called "the feast of the Pass-over." This was the most memorable night the children of Israel had ever passed through. It was the night of their great deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. The 12th chapter of Exodus gives

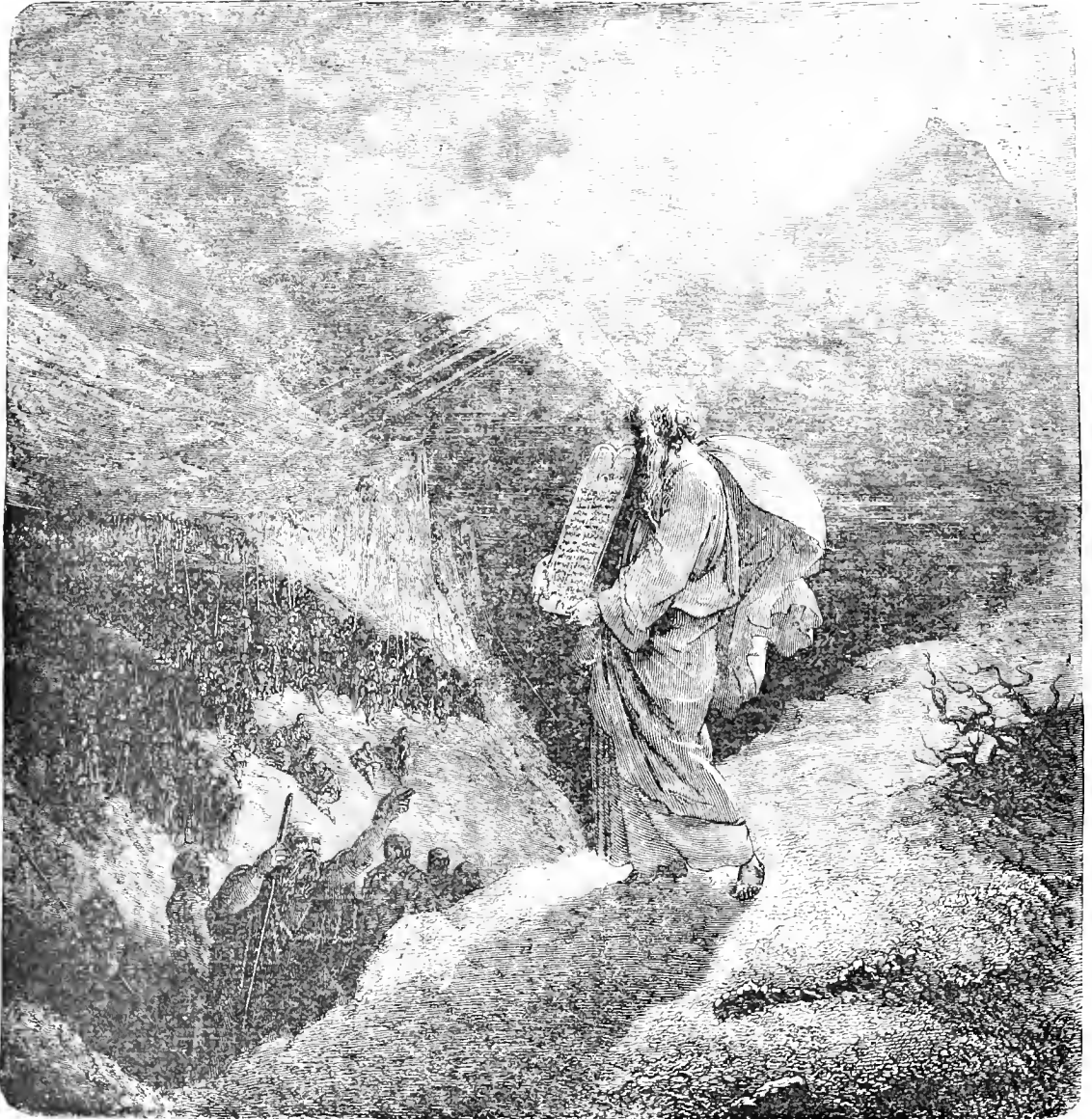


The dotted line shows the route of the march.

a full account of the way in which they were to keep the feast that was connected with their deliverance on this night. In the 24th verse of this chapter God said to them—"Ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever." And in the 42d verse, we read—"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."

There were two reasons why God commanded the Israelites to keep this "feast of the Passover" every year. One of these reasons had to do

with the *past*. It was to help them in keeping alive in their hearts a grateful memory of God's wonderful mercy in delivering them from Egypt. No nation in the world ever had such a deliverance as this. And when the



"He brought the Tables of the Law to the people."

pious Jew kept this feast, from year to year, in the way that God commanded, it would do him a great deal of good. It would remind him of the state of bondage in which his forefathers had been held. It would make him feel that God had been a great friend to him, and to all his people. It would





"That was the grandest and most awful scene that our Earth has ever witnessed."



teach him how he owed all he had in the world to the God who had been the deliverer of their nation; and how he ought to show his gratitude to Him by loving Him with all his heart, and serving Him faithfully all his days.

But then there was another reason why God commanded the Israelites to keep this feast. This had to do with the *future*. There was a sort of



“Here, for instance, is a great Oak Tree.”

prophecy in this feast, and the solemn sacrifice connected with it. It was all intended to point to Christ. It was a figure or type of Him. The lamb that was slain, at this feast, pointed to Christ, the spotless, perfect Lamb of God who was to be slain on Calvary. The protection which the Israelites had on that night, from the death of their first-born, by means of the blood sprinkled on their doors, pointed to that deliverance from everlasting death which all the people of Christ have, through faith in the

blood which He shed for them on the cross. And the land of promise—that “good land, flowing with milk and honey”—which the Israelites were to have as their possession, when the long journey was ended, on which they started that night, pointed to that better land—that heavenly Canaan—which Jesus has gone to prepare for his people, and to which He will lead all who believe in him.

When Jesus was on earth, he met his twelve disciples, on the night in which he was betrayed, in an upper chamber in Jerusalem, to celebrate for the last time, the Jewish Passover. The feast was kept in the usual way. And when it was ended, Jesus established another solemn service, which was to take the place of the Jewish Passover, and to be observed by his friends and followers to the end of the world. While they lingered round that table, we read, that—“Jesus said unto them, ‘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 bread, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ Then he took the cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; do this, as often as ye shall drink it in remembrance of Me.’”

Thus was instituted the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The solemn scene connected with it, was one of the most interesting, and important that ever took place in the history of our world. It marked the passing away of the Jewish Passover, and the religious system that was connected with it, and the introduction of the Christian Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which was to take the place of the service established in Egypt, and which had been kept up for so many hundred years. And the meaning of this solemn sacrament, and the feelings we should have when celebrating it, and the benefit we should pray to derive from it, are beautifully set forth in the following extract from the Communion service of the Episcopal Church:—

“All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made then—(by his one oblation of himself, once offered)—a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice,



“His friends instead of comforting him, only add to his misery.”

oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world: and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that, his precious death, and sacrifice, until his coming again.

“Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may ever more dwell in him, and He in us.”

And now, after this long digression, let us go back to the memorable scene we are contemplating in Egypt. The night goes on. The solemn hour of midnight comes. And now, the angel of the Lord passes over all the land of Egypt, and by one fearful blow, of His unseen sword, smites the first-born, both of man and beast, in every family. At the same moment, from the palace of the proud king to the hut of the poorest family in the land, *there is one dead in every house*. And then what a wail of woe was heard! A cry of sorrow and anguish arose in Egypt, and sounded through the land. Such a cry was never heard before or since. Then the haughty Pharaoh felt that he could contend no longer. God had conquered. The king gave up. He sent for Moses and Aaron and told them to take their people and be gone! And then what is called the Exodus, or the going out, took place, and the Israelites began their grand march from Egypt to the promised land.

Such were some of the miracles that Moses wrought in Egypt. And when we think of the miracles that Jesus did, we see how truly he was “the prophet like Moses” in this respect. Indeed his miracles were much more numerous than those of Moses. It is easy to count up the miracles of Moses; but none can tell how many the miracles of Jesus were. What numbers of them are mentioned in the gospels! And these, we are told, were only a small part of them. In the last verse of the gospel of St. John we find a statement made that may very well be brought in here. That loving disciple of Jesus had written his long, full history of the wonderful words that Jesus had spoken, and the wonderful works that Jesus had done. But then he wanted us to understand that he had not attempted to give a full report of all the gracious words that had fallen from his lips, or all the great miracles that had been performed by his hands; and so he winds up his gospel in this way:—“And there

are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself, could not contain the books that should be written."

And then the miracles of Jesus were not only more in number than those of Moses, but, we may well say that they were *better* miracles. The first miracle of Moses turned water into blood; but the first miracle of Jesus turned water into wine. John ii: 1-12. The miracles of Moses are all called plagues. They were sent on purpose to plague and punish the Egyptians. But the miracles of Jesus were all blessings to the people. They were designed only to help and comfort the people, and to do them good. He healed the sick; he opened the eyes of the blind; he unstopped the ears of the deaf; he made the lame to walk; he raised the dead to life again, and so "went about doing good," in every possible way.

And thus we see how well he might be called "the prophet like Moses," on account of the miracles that he performed.

*In the next place, Moses gave the people the—LAWS, OR COMMANDMENTS—of God, by which they were to be governed; and Jesus was "the prophet like Moses" for this reason also.*

A great part of the books of Exodus, of Numbers, and Leviticus is filled with the different laws that Moses gave to the Israelites to show them how they were to offer their sacrifices, and conduct the other parts of the worship of God.

And then Moses went up to the top of Mount Sinai, and was there forty days with God, learning all the things that he was to tell the people. A thick cloud covered the top of the mountain when God came down upon it. And while God was speaking to all the people the words of the ten commandments, from the midst of that cloud, the lightnings flashed, and the thunders roared, and the angel's trumpet sounded long and loud! That was the grandest and most awful scene that our earth has ever witnessed. Then God wrote the words of those commandments, with his finger, on two tables of stone, and gave them to Moses. He brought them in his hands to the people, when he came down from the mountain. They were put into the Ark of the Covenant, as soon as it was made, and kept there for hundreds of years, until Nebuchadnezzar came, and carried the Israelites captives to Babylon.

And Jesus spent all the years of his ministry on earth, in teaching the people the laws, or commandments by which they were to live, and be guided in all their conduct. Let us just look for a moment at two of the



“When Daniel was thrown into the den of hungry lions.”

laws, or rules that Jesus gave to his people, by which they were to regulate their conduct. In the sermon on the mount he said: *“Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”* Matt. vii: 12. This is called “the golden rule.” And well it may be so called! It is related of a great emperor, that when he first heard of this law of Christ,



he was so much pleased with it, that he caused it to be printed in letters of gold, and hung up in his palace.

And then on another occasion Jesus said to his disciples: "*A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.*" John xiii: 34. How beautiful this is! There are many wise and excellent things among the laws that Moses gave to the Israelites; but there is nothing in them to be compared to either of these golden rules that Jesus gave to his disciples. What a bright and blessed world this will be when people learn to live according to these beautiful laws of Jesus! Our earth will be like heaven then. These are the rules by which Jesus lived himself. And in doing this he has left us an example that we should follow his steps. And we must do this, if we wish to be truly the friends and followers of Jesus; for it is said, "Let this same mind be in you, that was also in Christ Jesus:" and, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his."

And so, when we think how Jesus gave his people the laws and commandments of God, by which they were to govern their lives, we see how truly he may be called—"the prophet like Moses."

*But in the last place Jesus might well be called "the prophet like Moses" because of—THE BLESSINGS—he obtained for his people.*

Moses was the means of securing a great many blessings for the people of Israel. It would take a long time to tell of them all. But chief among these are *five* that we must speak about.

The first of these was—*guidance.*

When Moses led the children of Israel up out of Egypt, the way to the promised land by which they were to go lay through "a waste howling wilderness." There were no turnpike roads through that wilderness. No finger-boards, in that desert region, pointed out the way to the land of Canaan. People can travel through that wilderness now, by the help of a compass, with its friendly finger, pointing always towards the North. But Moses had no compass. It had not been invented then. And as neither Moses, nor any one among the Israelites knew the way through that wilderness, we see, at once, how much they needed guidance. It was a blessing of the very first importance to them. Moses, with all his learning would never have been able to guide his people through the wilderness, if God had not come to his help. He promised to send an angel to be

their guide. Exod. xxiii: 20. And with this angel he sent a cloudy pillar which rested over the Tabernacle. In the day time it looked like one of those white fleecy clouds that we see floating in the sky; but at night it turned red, and looked like a flaming fire. We can read the account of this in Numb. ix: 15-23. When this cloud stood still the Israelites were to stay in their encampment. But when the cloud rose, and began to move, that was the sign for them to strike their tents, and travel on after the cloud. This cloud was like the tent in which the guiding angel had his abode, or like the chariot in which he rode, as he led the Israelites on through the wilderness.

Of course Moses did not make this cloud come; but God directed Moses to tell the people about it; and so we may speak of this guiding cloud as one of the blessings which Moses obtained for them.

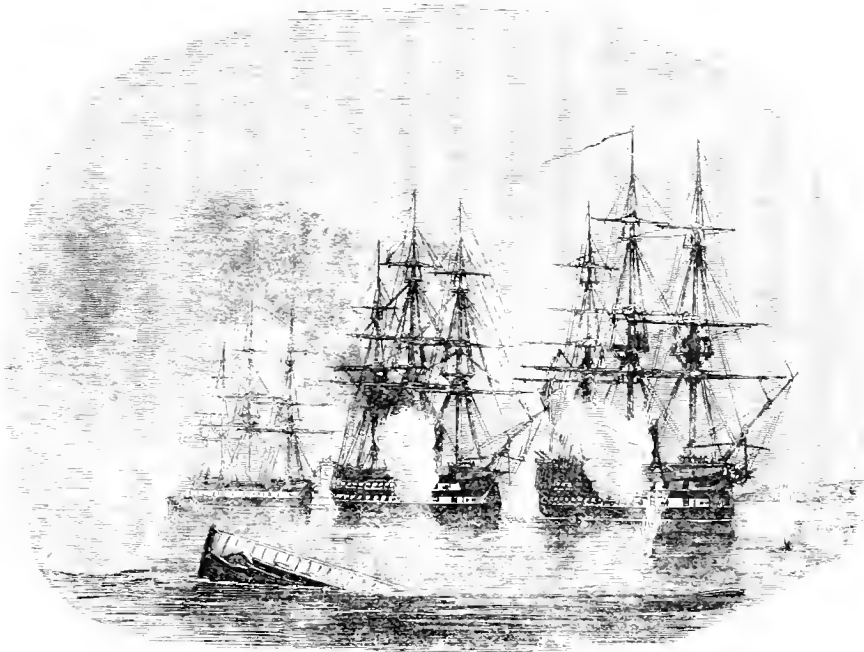
And Jesus is like Moses in this respect, because he secures the blessing of guidance for his people. This world is like a wilderness. There are many paths through it, yet among them all there is but one that will lead us to the heavenly Canaan. We need a guide to show us this path. And Jesus is the only one who can be our Guide. In one place in the Bible he promises to guide us with his eye. Ps. xxxii: 8. In another, he promises to guide us with his counsel. Ps. lxxiii: 24. We are often like a traveler when he comes to a place where the road he has been traveling branches off into two or three roads. There are no finger-boards to show where they lead to, and he cannot tell which is the right road to take. And then it is that we need guidance. There is a sweet promise in God's word for just such occasions as these. In Isaiah xxx: 21, God says, "*And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.*"

Here is an illustration of one of the ways in which God sometimes guides his people, or makes them hear the voice which is to tell them what to do.

Some years ago there was a good minister of the Gospel in England, whose name was the Rev. John Fletcher. When he was a young man he was very anxious to join the army, and go to South America. His friends had consented for him to go. They had secured an appointment for him in the army. His passage was taken; the vessel was ready to start; but

the very morning on which he was to have sailed, the servant in bringing his breakfast to him, stumbled and spilled a tea-kettle of boiling water over him. This scalded him so severely that he could not go. It was a great disappointment to him. But *that* was God's way of telling him not to go in that vessel; for the vessel was lost, and all on board perished.

There is another sweet promise in the Bible about the guidance. In Prov. iii: 6 we read, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." There is both a duty and a privilege in this passage. The



"Their ship was in the thickest of the fight."

duty is that we should acknowledge God in all our ways. This means that we should ask him to help and guide us in all that we do. It is said of the late excellent Bishop Heber, who wrote the beautiful missionary hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," that he never went on a journey, never began to write a sermon or to read a book, or do anything without first offering up a prayer for God's guidance and blessing. Thus he acknowledged God in all his ways. And this is what we are to do. This is the duty we are taught here. And then there is a privilege, as well as a duty in this passage. The privilege is that if we so acknowledge God, he will guide us, or "direct our paths." Here is an illustration of both the duty and the privilege spoken of in this passage.

An artist painted a picture of a little child in the dress of a pilgrim. He is walking slowly along a narrow path. This path has on each side of it a dreadful precipice. The edges of these precipices are hidden from view by means of beautiful flowers that are growing there. Behind the child is an angel. His face is full of tenderness and love. His hands are resting lightly on the shoulders of the child, to keep him in the centre of the path. The child has closed his eyes that the sight of the flowers may not tempt him into danger. He is walking carefully along, feeling, and following the gentle touch of the angel that is leading him. He acknowledges the angel by following his touch; and while he does this the angel "directs his paths."

We each have such an angel. Ps. xxxiv: 7. Hebs. i: 14. These angel-touches are very soft and gentle. We must watch for them carefully, and follow them faithfully, if we wish to be led in safety along the dangerous path that we have to travel. Moses obtained for the Israelites the blessing of guidance, by means of the fiery cloudy pillar. Jesus is like Moses because he secures guidance, to each of his people, by his word, and spirit, and providence.

*Another blessing that Moses obtained for the children of Israel was—*  
SHELTER.

David tells us that God—"Spread a cloud for a covering." Ps. cv: 39. The wilderness through which the Israelites journeyed for forty years was a wide waste of barren sands. The sun shines there with intense heat. The sand gets very hot, and reflects, or throws back the heat which the sun pours down upon it, so that travelers there are, as it were, between two fires. What they greatly need is shade. But there are no trees there to give them shade. God knew what the Israelites would need in their long journey through that terrible wilderness, and so "he spread a cloud for a covering." Here, for instance, is a great oak tree. See what a sturdy, solid trunk it has! And above see how its branches spread themselves out on every side! In the hot summer days what a pleasant shade those branches make! God has spread them out for a covering. And when we see the little birds lodge among those branches, and the cattle gather under the cool refreshing shadow, which the branches make, we have a good illustration of the way in which God spread out a cloud for a covering to

his people Israel, as they journeyed over the burning sands of the desert. Let us suppose that the cloud which guided the Israelites stood over the Tabernacle, in the shape of a great column, like the trunk of a tree. And then, let us suppose that the top of that column spread itself out, on every side, like the branches of a tree. We have only to think of that out-spreading cloud as reaching to the ends of their encampment, and then, in the form of that vast shadowy tree, we can see how it was that the cloud which guided them, was the same that sheltered them, during all the wanderings of their long pilgrimage.

This was a great blessing. And Jesus may well be called a prophet like Moses, because he secures to his people, as they journey through the wilderness of this world, blessings well represented by the comfort and refreshment which the Israelites found from that sheltering cloud in the wilderness.

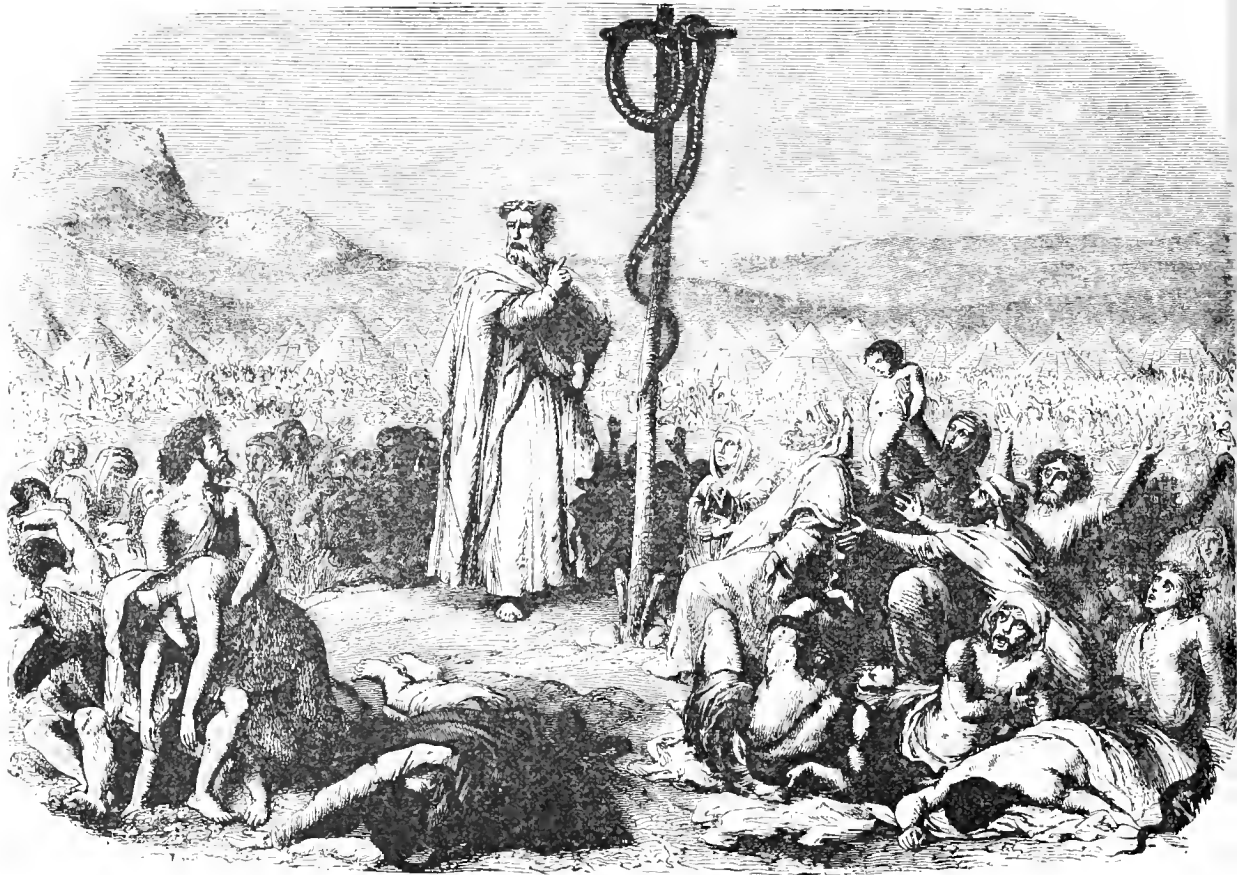
We find many illustrations of this in the Bible. There is Job in the midst of his long, dark trial. His children are all dead. His property is all lost. His health is gone. A horrible disease has broken out all over his body. His friends instead of comforting him only add to his misery by their unkind words. There is no prospect that anything but death will end his sufferings. And yet, in the midst of all this sorrow and trouble he could look up to God his Saviour, and calmly say,—“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.” What real comfort Job must have found in this shelter of which we are speaking!

David had many heavy trials to bear; and yet while bowed down beneath the burden of them he could say,—“The Lord is my refuge, and my fortress; my God; in him will I trust.” Ps. xci: 2. And so sure was he of finding comfort in this shelter that when he thought of the heaviest trials that could possibly come upon him he said,—“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod, and thy staff they comfort me.” Ps. xxiii: 4.

How much comfort the prophet Isaiah must have felt in this shelter when he could speak thus beautifully about it: “A man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Is. xxxii: 2.

Here is an illustration of this sweet passage furnished by an incident that occurred not long ago:—

A party of travelers in the desert were overtaken by one of those stormy winds that blows there, called a Simoon. The hot sands were driven fiercely along like blinding snow. Just before the wind reached its



“Even they are healed and restored to life.”

height the travelers came to a rude stone building, well protected with roof and doors. It had been built there by some charitable person on purpose to afford shelter to travelers from those terrible winds. With great joy the party rushed forward. They entered the building, closed the doors, and were safe. And so when the storms of sorrow, and trouble, burst upon us in this world, if we are the friends of Jesus we shall find how true the words of Solomon are when he says,—“The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.” Prov.

xviii: 10. And then there is another sweet passage in which Jesus speaks of himself as the refuge of his people, and invites them to come and find shelter in him. In Isaiah xxvi: 20, he says,—“Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation (or trouble) be overpast.”

When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego walked up and down amidst the burning fiery furnace, we are told that there appeared one with them “like unto the Son of God.” This was Jesus. And it was the shelter he gave them which kept the fire from hurting them.

And when Daniel was thrown into the den of hungry lions, it was the shelter Jesus gave by his angel that shut the lions' mouths so that they did not hurt him.

And this shelter can protect those who seek it as well now as it did then. Here is an illustration:—On board a British man-of-war there was but one Bible among seven hundred men. This belonged to a pious sailor who had made a good use of it. He had read it to his comrades, and, by God's blessing on his labors, a little band of praying men was formed that numbered thirteen. One day this ship was going into battle. Just before the fight began, these thirteen men met together to spend a few moments in prayer. They committed themselves to God's care, not expecting to meet again in this world. Their ship was in the thickest of the fight. All around them men were stricken down by death. Two of these men were stationed with three others in charge of one of the guns. The other three men were killed by a single cannon ball. But there in safety stood the two praying men. They had agreed that when the battle was over, those who might still be alive should meet if possible. They met soon after, and what was their joy to find the whole thirteen were there. Not one of them had even been wounded. What a blessed shelter it was that protected those men of prayer!

Jesus is the prophet like Moses, because he secures to his people the blessing of shelter.

*But HEALING was another blessing that God gave to the Israelites through Moses, and on this account, too, Jesus may well be called “the prophet like Moses.”*

We read that as the Israelites were journeying through the wilderness

at one place, when they were disobedient and rebellious, the Lord sent fiery serpents among them. These serpents bit the people. Their bite was poisonous. The wounds caused by them were very painful. A burning heat attended them which caused much suffering to those who were bitten. The physicians could not cure the bite of these serpents, and so great numbers of the people were dying from this cause. Then God told Moses to make a serpent of brass, and put it on a pole, and set up the pole in the midst of the encampment where everybody could see it. Then he was directed to tell the people to look at that serpent, and to assure them that every one who believed what God said, and looked to the serpent on the pole should live.

Moses does what God tells him. He makes the brazen serpent. He puts it on a pole. He sets the pole where it can easily be seen. And then he sends word to the bitten, suffering, dying people to look at this serpent and they shall be healed. And now, all through the encampment, how many eyes are looking towards that serpent! Some who have just been bitten look to the serpent, and are healed. Some who are so sick that that they cannot leave their beds are carried out of the tent, so that they can see the serpent. They look, and are healed. Others are so far gone that they are just about to die. They are not able to move. But kind friends gently turn their heads upon their pillows. Their dying gaze is directed to that wondrous serpent. Death is obliged to loose his hold upon them. Even *they* are healed, and restored to life.

This was the blessing of healing which Moses secured for the Israelites. And we know how beautifully Jesus made use of this incident to show that he was "the prophet like unto Moses." In John iii: 14, 15, Jesus says,—"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." This is God's own illustration of Christ's healing power, and it is the best we can have. It shows us how souls bitten by the serpent, sin, are healed, and saved, by believing in Jesus, just as the bitten Israelites were saved by looking to the brazen serpent.

The Bible has a great deal to say about the wonderful healing power of Jesus. One of his special, peculiar names is made up in this way. He says of himself,—*"I am the Lord that healeth thee."* Exod. xv: 26. He



tells us that this is the very work he was sent to do. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath sent me to *heal* the broken-hearted." Luke iv: 18. How ready Jesus was to heal the sick when he was on earth. When the Centurion applied to Jesus to come and heal his servant who was sick of the palsy, his quick and loving answer was,—“I will come and heal him.” Matt. viii: 7. Moses healed the Israelites of only one disease, and that was the poison of the fiery serpents. But how different it was with Jesus! When he was on earth we are told, that—“they brought unto



“They had nothing to do but go out and gather it.”

him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases, and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; *and he healed them.*” Matt. iv: 24. And his power to heal is the same now that it was then. Every earthly physician, does at times have some poor sufferer come to him for healing, to whom, after examining his symptoms, he is obliged to say as he shakes his head, “My poor friend, I am sorry to tell you that I can do nothing for you.” But Jesus, the heavenly healer, never says this. He can *heal*, just as he can save, “*unto the uttermost.*” Here is an illustration of what I mean:—

“Some time ago,” says a minister in London, “a person called at my

house, and requested me to come and see a little girl, only seven years old, who was very ill. I went with the messenger who took me to the room where the sick child was. I sat down by her bedside, and said,—“What do you want of me, my child?”

“Well, sir,” she said, “I wanted to tell you something before I die.”

“And are you dying, my dear?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And wouldn't you like to get well again?”

“No, sir, please God.”

“And why not?”

“Why, sir, you see,” she said,—and remember she was only seven years old,—“ever since I became a Christian, I have been trying to get father to go to church; and he wont go. I do so want him to hear the precious gospel! And so if I die you will bury me, wont you, sir?” I said, “Yes, my darling.” “Well, I've been thinking if I die, father must go to the funeral; and then you can preach the gospel to him; and oh! sir, I would be willing to die *six times over* that father might hear the gospel once!” What wonderful love was in that dear child's heart!

Well, the little darling died; but just as she was to be buried I was taken very ill, and could not go to the funeral. This grieved me very much. But God can always do his own work without our help, as he did in this case. For, not long after a rough fellow called on me. He held out his hand, and said,—“You don't know me, sir, do you?”

“No, sir, I do not.”

“Well, sir, I am little Mary's father. I heard as how she said she would die for me six times, if I could only hear the gospel once. It nearly broke my heart. And now, sir, will you tell me about this gospel, and what I must do to be saved?”

“I told him about Jesus, and prayed with him. He soon became a Christian, and is now a useful member of the church. Jesus made use of the wonderful love of that dying child to heal, and save her wicked father. It is all true as that sweet hymn says:—

“Come ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish  
Come, at the feet of Christ fervently kneel;  
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish,  
*Earth has no sorrow but Jesus can heal.*”

*Another blessing that Moses procured for the Israelites in the wilderness was daily BREAD, and for this reason, too, Jesus is properly called "the prophet like Moses."*

There was no bread to be had in that desert wilderness through which the Israelites were journeying. They numbered between two and three millions of people. They were to be forty years on their journey. Of course they were not traveling all that time; but they had to spend that time in the wilderness. To carry provision with them for such a multitude, during so many years was simply impossible. It was absolutely necessary that they should be fed, yet they could only be fed by miracle.

And this was just the way in which God told Moses that he intended to feed them, as long as they were in the wilderness. He caused their bread to fall round about their tents every night, as gently as the dew falls on the grass. In the morning they looked out of their tents, and there lay the manna, as it was called, covering all the ground, as we sometimes see the hoar-frost on a fine winter's morning. They had nothing to do, but go out and gather it before the sun rose. The Jewish measure called an omer, containing about three quarts, was the quantity allowed for each person in every family. The manna was a hard substance, in the form of small seeds, of a greyish-white color. It was ground, or pounded in a mortar, and then used, as we use meal, by baking it in cakes. The taste of it was like wafer cakes made with honey. All that was gathered in the morning had to be used before night. If they kept it till the next morning it bred worms and spoiled. They were not allowed to gather any on the Sabbath-day; and so, on the morning of every sixth day they were to gather a double quantity to last them over the Sabbath, and yet this never spoiled. God performed a special miracle every week, to show how much he regarded the Sabbath-day, and to teach them to regard it too. We can read about this in Exod. xvi: 14-36, and Numb. xi: 4-9. This manna is what David speaks of in one place as "bread from heaven," Ps. cv: 40, and in another place as "angels' food." Ps. lxxviii: 25. Thus we see that bread, or food for the people, was one of the blessings that Moses obtained for them.

And this points us to Jesus. He may well be called "the prophet like Moses" on this account. When he was on earth, he was talking to the

Jews, one day about this manna which God gave their fathers through Moses, and he said,—“Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.” John vi: 49, 51. “For the



“This smitten rock, with its outgushing water, is a figure of Christ.”

bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” John vi: 33. He may well be called “the bread of life,” because he gives us all the bread we have, both for our souls and bodies. He is “The Lord” of whom David says that he—“giveth food to the hungry.” Ps. cxlvi: 7. It is he who “giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” Acts xvii: 25. It is he who “openeth his hand and satisfieth

the desire of every living thing." Ps. cxlv: 16. It is he who gives us this sweet promise,—“I will satisfy her poor with bread.” Ps. cxxxii: 15. he does this in a common, or general way by sending rain and sunshine to make things grow in plenty, for our use. And then he sometimes does this in a special, particular way by sending bread to the needy when they call upon him for it. Here is an illustration of what I mean:—

Some time ago, a good Christian man was living among the hills of Scotland. He was very poor, but so good that every one who knew him, loved, and honored him. One winter there was a violent snow-storm. The wind was high, and drifting snow blocked up the roads, and quite covered the humble dwelling of poor Caleb, as this good man was called. For three days he had been unable to go out and get food for himself and family. They were in great need, and had prayed earnestly for relief. A gentleman living in that neighborhood, who knew Caleb well, awoke suddenly one night. It seemed as if a voice was calling to him which said—“*Send provisions to Caleb.*” He thought little of it, but turned on his pillow and went to sleep again. Again the voice seemed to sound in his ears—“*Send provisions to Caleb.*” Again he slept. A third time the call came. Then he arose hastily, dressed himself, called up his servant, and told him to harness the horse, while he filled a basket with provisions of all kinds. “Take this basket to Caleb,” said he, “and if he asks who sent it, tell him *it comes from God.*” The servant did as he was bidden. A path was made through the snow. The basket of food was left at Caleb’s cottage; and he and his family received it with hearty rejoicings. They felt sure that it was food from heaven, just as truly as the manna was in the wilderness, on which the Israelites lived. Moses secured the blessing of bread for the Israelites in the wilderness, and Jesus is “the prophet like Moses” because he secures this blessing both for the bodies and the souls of his people.

*The only other blessing of which I will speak, that Moses secured for the Israelites was WATER, and Jesus is like Moses in this respect, too.*

Bread is a necessary thing; but unless we have water also it will be of little use. However much bread we may have, still we should soon die unless we can get a good supply of water. The manna which God sent in such a wonderful way to his people in the wilderness, could have done

them no good, unless he had been pleased to send them water also. God knew this. When Jesus was on earth he said to his disciples,—“*Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*” Matt. vi: 8. And so God told Moses to take in his hand the rod so often used, and smite a great rock in Horeb, and that he would cause water enough to come forth from the smitten rock, to supply and satisfy the thirsty and suffering people. Moses obeys God. He takes the rod. He stands before the rock and smites it, while the people look wonderingly on. As the rod strikes the rock, it opens; and out gushes a torrent of clear, cool, sparkling water. What a blessing this was to them! What music there was in the sound of the rushing waters! How loud the shout of joy they raised! And then, how eagerly they stooped down to bathe their heated brows in the flowing stream, and to comfort themselves with good, long draughts of its refreshing waters!

And very beautifully all this points us to Jesus. This smitten rock with its outgushing water is a figure of Christ. When the apostle Paul is speaking of this to the Corinthian Christians he says that the Israelites “all drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and *that Rock was Christ.*” 1. Cor. x: 4. What he means to say is that this rock, with its outflowing stream of water was intended to be a type, or shadow of Christ and his work. The blessings of that salvation which Jesus brings are often in the Bible compared to water. Look for a moment at some of these passages. It is Jesus who is speaking, by the prophet, when he says,—“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.” Isaiah xlv: 3. It is he who gives this sweet promise:—“I will give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.” Is. xliii: 20. And it is he who sends out this precious invitation,—“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.” Is. lv: 1. Here is the New Testament form in which Jesus puts this Old Testament invitation: “If any man thirst, let him come *unto me*, and drink.” John vii: 37.

Jesus gives the water of salvation to his people for two purposes: one for *cleansing*, the other for *comfort*.

The prophet Zachariah was speaking of Jesus when he said, “In that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness.” Zech. xiii:

1. This fountain was opened when from the wounded side of Jesus, as he hung upon the cross,—“There came out blood and water.” John xix: 34. And it is this “blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses us from all sin.” 1. John i: 7. God compares this blood to water, on account of its cleansing power, when he says,—“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye



“Moses Praying for Israel.”

shall be clean from all your filthiness: and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.” Ezek. xxxvi: 25.

A poor soldier, wounded in one of the battles of the Crimean war, threw himself on the ground to die. “Oh! for a drop of water!” he exclaimed. “There’s not a drop in my canteen,” said one of his comrades. “What can I do for you.” “Bill,” said the wounded man, “open my knapsack, and get my Bible, and let me have a drop of water from the well of salvation.”

His comrade did so. He was led to open at the first chapter of the first epistle of St. John, which contains that sweet passage about the cleansing blood of Christ. As he stopped reading, his friend said,—“Ah! Bill, that’s it. What could poor sinners like you and me do without that cleansing blood? I shall never get back to old England, but thank God, I shall go to a better country, through the cleansing blood of Christ. O, surely if ever the Bible was written for any man, it was written for the poor soldier!”

But Jesus gives the water of salvation to *comfort* his people, as well as to cleanse them. When he was on earth, he said,—“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John iv: 14. What a comfort to have a well of water like this springing up in our own hearts! People think it a great comfort to have a well of water on their place, or near their door; and verily it is so. But this is nothing compared to the well of water which Jesus opens in the hearts of his people. There is enough in this to make any one happy. God meant it to make us happy; and happiness follows wherever this water of salvation flows.

Here is an illustration of what I mean:—

A Prussian nobleman who did not believe in God, nor in the Bible, once overheard a little girl singing one of her sweet hymns. He was much moved by the gentle tones of her voice. As he came near he saw tears upon her cheeks, as though she had been weeping. “Why are you crying as you sing?” he kindly asked. “Oh! it is because I’m so happy,” said the little girl.

“But why do you weep if you are happy?” “I love Jesus so,” she said, “that I was crying with joy.”

“But where is Jesus?” asked the nobleman.

“In heaven.”

“How can he do anything for you, if he is in heaven? He cannot give you clothes, and playthings, as your parents and friends do.”

“Oh! yes! he can do a great deal for me. He comes into my heart, and makes me happy.”

“Nonsense!” said the nobleman. “This is all nonsense.”











“Oh! no, no, sir; indeed it is not nonsense,” said the little Christian. “Nonsense wouldn’t make any body as happy as I am. But I know it’s true what the Bible tells me about Jesus. I believe it, *and it makes me glad.*”

The nobleman turned away. He felt that this child had a great blessing which he had not. And that was true. Jesus had opened this well of water in her heart, and it gave her comfort to which he was a stranger. He was led to seek that little girl’s Saviour. And soon the well of water was opened in his heart that made him happy too.

We have written of five blessings which God gave to the Israelites through Moses. He gave them *guidance*, and *shelter*, and *healing*, and *bread*, and *water*. And Jesus is the prophet like Moses, because he gives such blessings to his people.

And we have seen that there were five things in the history of Moses on account of which he might truly say, when referring to Christ, “a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you *like unto me.*”

These were *the danger attending his birth; his preparation for his work; the miracles he did; the laws he gave them; and the blessings he secured for them.* Five words contain it all—*birth—preparation—miracles—laws, and blessings.*





THE  
JEWISH TABERNACLE A FIGURE OF CHRIST.

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ONE observes that when a great temple, or an important building of any kind is to be put up, before the laborers begin their work, the architect, or chief builder, makes a plan of it. This plan is drawn with great care. It shows what the length, and breadth, and height of the building are to be. The doors, and the windows, and the different parts of the building are particularly described in this plan.

The Tabernacle which Moses built for the Israelites, while they were encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai, was one of the most interesting and important buildings ever erected. And one thing about it that helped to make it such was that God was the architect, or chief builder of it. He drew the plan of it. Before Moses began to build this Tabernacle, God called him up to the top of Mount Sinai. He was there for forty days with God. During those days God showed him the plan, or model of the Tabernacle which he was to build, and told him how every part of it was to be made. After showing him all this, before Moses came down from the Mount, God said to him: "See thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the

Mount." Heb. viii: 5. Exod. xxv: 40. And if God felt such an interest in this Tabernacle, and took so much pains about it, certainly it is worth while for us to study it carefully, and try to find out what it was intended to teach.

The Apostle Paul tells us that this Tabernacle was a figure, or type of Christ. He means by this, that God intended it to be an illustration of the character and work of Christ. He drew the plan of it, and had it built in such a way as would be best adapted to show, both to Jews and to Gentiles what Christ was to be, and what he was to do for his people.

And in studying what we find written in the Bible about the Jewish Tabernacle, there are two things that it is very important for us to understand; one of these is,—*What the Tabernacle was*; the other is,—*What the Tabernacle taught*.

Now let us try and see if we can get a clear idea of *What the Tabernacle was*.

A plain and simple description of it is what I will now try to give, and in connection with what is here said, look at the picture of the Tabernacle on page 153.

As you look at that picture, what you see is a large space of ground, enclosed or shut in by a kind of fence. At the further end of this enclosure is a building covered over with curtains. *That* is the Tabernacle with its enclosure. Now, let us suppose that you and I, with a company of half a dozen friends, were living at the time when Moses built the Tabernacle in the wilderness. We have heard about that strange building. We feel a great desire to see it. We have a week's vacation, and conclude to spend this time in visiting the encampment of the Israelites in the wilderness, and getting a good look at the Tabernacle. And here some wise boy will be ready to ask,—“Ah! but how are you going to get there? I should like to know.” Never mind about that. When people go off on fancy journeys, mountains and oceans to be crossed, and other difficulties are nothing to them. Let us suppose that we have arrived at the edge of the great encampment of the Israelites. There it is spread out for miles before us. We can tell where the Tabernacle is by yonder white, fleecy cloud that hangs over it. We make our way through the encampment. We inquire for Moses, the great leader of this host. We pay our respects to the venerable

man, and ask permission from him to visit and examine the wonderful structure built under his direction. He receives us very cordially, and tells us we are welcome to go through the Tabernacle and look at every part of it. It is against the law, indeed, to let strangers enter this Tabernacle, but he will make an exception in our case. Moses very kindly calls one of the Levites, and puts us in his charge, with directions to explain every thing to us. We make our grateful acknowledgments to the great Law-giver, and begin our examination of the Tabernacle.

We may suppose that it is one of the sons of Levi, who is to be our guide. He is an amiable, obliging, intelligent young man, whom we may call Shelumiel. Our starting point is from the tent of Moses. This was always pitched directly in front of the entrance to the court of the Tabernacle, on the east side of the enclosure.

Before starting, our friend Shelumiel calls our attention to the broad open space lying between the Tabernacle enclosure, and the encampment of the Israelites.

"Notice this wide space," he says,— "It is two thousand cubits, or three thousand feet, or rather more than half a mile wide. If you go to the corner of the enclosure, and look along the right hand, or north side of it, you will see the same space there. If you walk round to the back of the enclosure, or the west side of it, you will find the same space there; and if you continue your walk along the south side, coming back to the point from which you started, you will find that there is the same broad space all round the enclosure, on every side. As we go on journeying through the wilderness," says Shelumiel, "every time the Tabernacle is set up again we are commanded to have this same broad space around it on every side."

"Shelumiel," says one of our company, "will you please tell us what this is for? Why is there always to be this wide distance kept up between the enclosure of the Tabernacle, and the encampment of the people?"

"It is," says he, "because Jehovah, the God of Israel, dwells in the Tabernacle. He is a great and holy God. The angels of heaven veil their faces, when they bow down before him. And when his people come near to worship him, he would have them do it with reverence and godly fear. And this broad space all round the place where he dwells is to teach the people reverence."

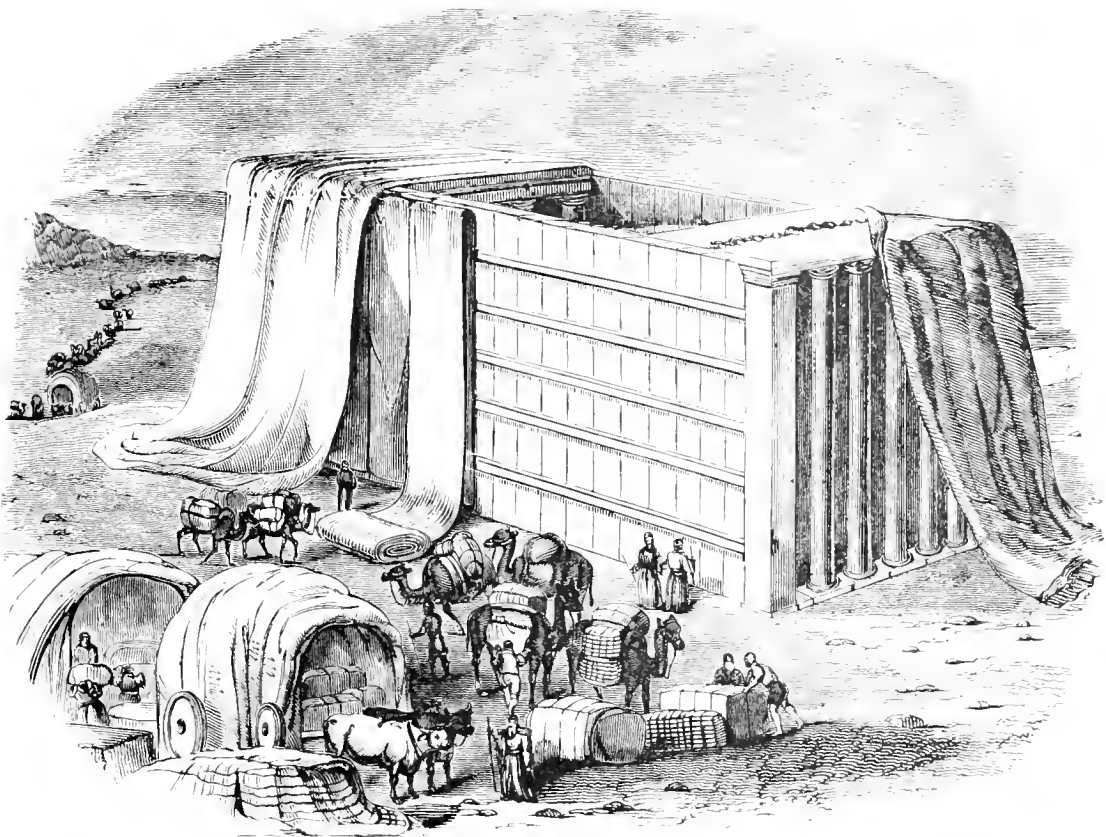




The Encampment in the Wilderness



“And now, come, my friends,” says Shelumiel, “and let us enter the court of the Tabernacle. There is only one way of entrance. This is directly behind the tents of Moses and Aaron, our great leaders. Look at the three central pillars, in the front of the enclosure. The curtains between them are not fastened, like all the rest of the curtains which make the fence of the enclosure, but are so arranged that they can be drawn aside. Let



The Tabernacle Enclosure.

us draw these curtains to one side, and enter the enclosure. Now we are within the sacred place. Here let us stand a moment and look around. This enclosure is what is called ‘the Court of the Tabernacle.’ It is in the form, you see, of an oblong square. This means a square that is longer in one direction than in the other. The length of this court, from front to back, or from east to west is one hundred and seventy-five feet. Its breadth from north to south is eighty-seven feet and a half, and its height eight feet and a half. And just see how this enclosure is made. The fence

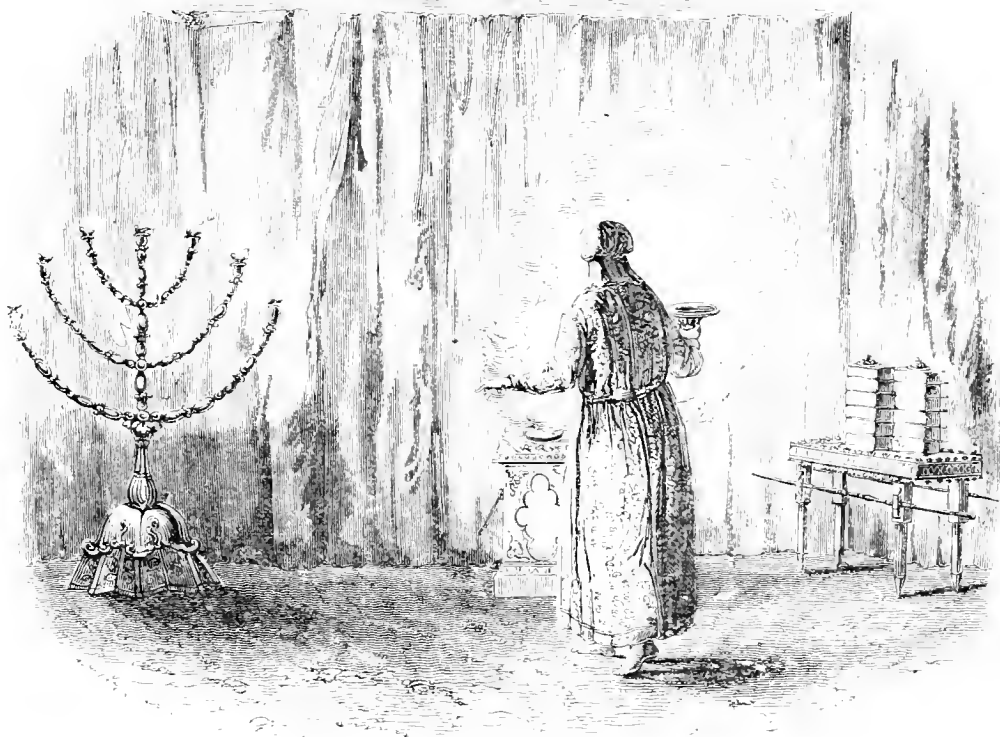
that encloses it, or separates it from the space outside, is formed by curtains of fine linen, hung on pillars. These pillars are not round, but flat. They are made of a hard kind of wood, like box-wood, and known as acacia wood. Every board or pillar is overlaid with brass, and furnished at the bottom with fillets, or tags, or thick points like a finger. These are made to fit into sockets of brass, placed on the ground. Each board or pillar, when set up, is strengthened by stays or ropes on both sides of it. These ropes reach from the top of the board, and are fastened to stakes driven into the ground. There are twenty of these boards, or pillars, along each side of the enclosure, with ten in the front and ten at the further end. Between these boards, or pillars, are hung linen curtains, which form the walls of the enclosure, or 'the Court of the Tabernacle.'

"And now," continues our friend Shelumiel, "as I have told you how this enclosure is formed, please take a good look at it, and notice what there is in it. Observe that there are three things in this enclosure. The first of these, or the one nearest to us, is that square thing, made of brass. It looks like a great box, with a pole or staff on each side of it. That is the brazen altar. There the morning and evening sacrifice is offered up every day. Beyond this you see a large round thing, something like a great basin. That is called the brazen laver. It is kept filled with water all the time, for the priests to wash their hands and feet in, as they engage in the service of God in the Tabernacle. And the building you see, beyond the brazen laver, is the Tabernacle itself, the holy place where God dwells, and from which he speaks to us from time to time through his servant Moses.

"Look at the appearance it presents from the outside, before we enter to see what there is within. Notice that it is of the same general shape as the enclosure in which it stands. Its length is forty-five feet, its breadth and height each fifteen feet. It is always made to stand facing the east. The two sides, and the west end of the Tabernacle are composed of boards, of acacia wood, covered all over with pure gold. There are twenty of these boards on each side, and eight at the west end. There are no boards at the front of the Tabernacle. That end is all covered by curtains. The only entrance to it is by drawing aside one of those curtains. Each board has two tenons, or pieces of the board about as thick as a finger, made to fit into sockets. Each board has also five rings or staples through which

bars are put for the purpose of steadying the whole building. There is no roof to the Tabernacle, as you see. Its only covering consists of four different curtains which are spread over it for the protection of the building, and the furniture it contains.

“And now,” continues our friend, “we are ready to enter this sacred building. I will draw aside the curtain, and very reverently we will enter.



The Holy Place.

Here we are now within the most sacred building in the world. The Tabernacle is divided into two rooms. The one we are now looking at is the larger of the two. This is what is called the *Holy Place*. If you look up, you see overhead the first of the four curtains of which I have just spoken. It is covered all over with figures of angels, or cherubim, as they are called. They are worked, or embroidered on the curtain in blue, and purple, and scarlet. How beautiful it looks!

“Now, notice what there is in this holy place. Nearest to us, on the left, stands a golden candlestick. It has seven branches, and there is a light burning in each of them. On the opposite side you see a table with two rows of good sized loaves of bread upon it. This table is covered all over with gold, and it is called the table of shew-bread. Beyond this, and just in front of the curtain, which hangs down at the other end of the room, is a small altar. That is called the golden altar of incense. Here the priest burns incense, and its fragrance fills the Tabernacle. There is no light here but what shines from that candlestick, with its seven branches; and as you look around, you see how the golden sides of the Tabernacle glitter, and sparkle, as the rays from that sacred candlestick fall on them.

“Beyond that curtain, at the other end of this room,” continues Shelumiel, “no one is allowed to enter, except the high-priest; and even he can only enter once a year. The law of this Tabernacle is that no stranger shall be allowed to enter it. But as our great law-giver, Moses, has made an exception in your case, my friends, I suppose I may be allowed to draw this curtain aside, and let you take a look at what is on the other side of it. There now, the curtain is removed. This part of the Tabernacle is called ‘the Holy of Holies,’ or ‘the most Holy Place.’ There is nothing here but the Ark of the Covenant all covered with gold. On each end of the ark, you see is a golden angel, whose outstretched wings meet and form a sort of arch above. There, the cloud of God’s presence rests; and from there, when he speaks to Moses, or the high-priest, his glory shines forth like the sun. As we stand here, and gaze on this solemn, sacred scene, how well we may take up the words which our father Jacob used at Bethel, when he had seen the vision of the ladder reaching up to heaven, and say: ‘How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!’”

Then our friend Shelumiel leads us out from the sacred place, to the spot where we first met him, and bids us “good-bye.” We thank him heartily, for this great kindness, and then go back to our imaginary homes.

And now, I hope, we have a clear idea of the first thing of which we were to speak, *What the Tabernacle was.*

And this prepares us for the other point of which we were to speak; namely,—*What the Tabernacle taught.* It was a figure of Christ, and was

intended to teach us some important lessons respecting him. We have in the Tabernacle a beautiful illustration of one of the precious names of Jesus our Saviour. Just before he came into our world, the angel Gabriel was sent to Joseph, his reputed father, to tell him about that wonderful child that was to be born unto Mary his wife. And this is what the angel said: "They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God, with us." Math. i: 23. This name is wonderful. It is full of



The Brazen Laver.

meaning. But many find it difficult to understand its meaning. And so God ordered the Tabernacle to be built in the wilderness, that in it he might dwell among the people, and thus be a figure, or illustration to them of the way in which Jesus now dwells in the hearts of his people by faith. The Tabernacle was a definition of this name—Emmanuel. As God was present with the Israelites in the wilderness, in the Tabernacle, so Jesus is present with his people in this world. And as we study the different parts of this Tabernacle we are taught much that is interesting, and profitable concerning the presence of Jesus with his people. The Tabernacle taught four things about the presence of Christ in the hearts of his people.

*In the first place it taught that there was to be—PARDON—connected with this presence.*

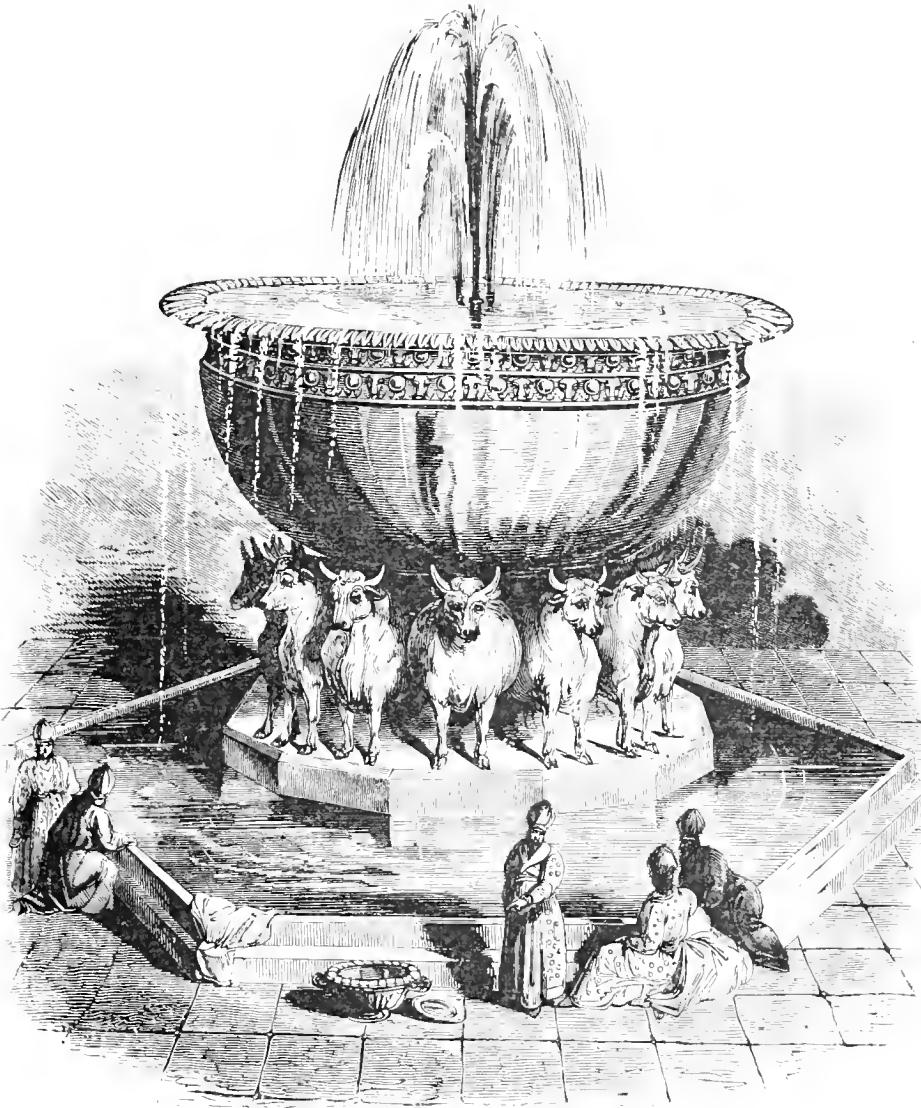
The brazen altar, or the altar of burnt sacrifice, was the part of the Tabernacle that taught this lesson. That was the first thing one would see on entering the Court of the Tabernacle. Here the daily sacrifice was offered. Here the blood of the slain animals was shed, that it might be sprinkled both on the priests and on the people. No one was allowed to enter the Tabernacle, or to worship God there till he had first been to this brazen altar, and had the blood of the sacrifice sprinkled upon him. And the great blessing represented by the shedding and sprinkling of the blood—was *the pardon of sin*. There was no power in the blood of those animals to put away sin, or to procure pardon. But it pointed to the blood of Christ, through which alone all pardon comes. And this is what the Apostle Paul teaches us, when he says that—“without the shedding of blood, there is no remission,”—(Heb. ix: 22), or no pardon. If Jesus had not shed his precious blood there never would have been any pardon for sin. But that blood *was* shed. And now there is pardon for all who repent and believe in him. His presence with his people is a pardoning presence. “He has power on earth to forgive sins.” Math. ix: 6. There is nothing that we need more than pardon. We are born in sin. We sin every day, and we are always needing pardon. And it is a blessed thing to know that we can have this pardon, at any time by seeking it in the right way. Jesus is—“*ready to forgive*.” Ps. lxxxvi: 5. His promise is that—“He will *abundantly* pardon.” Is. lv: 7.

Here is an illustration of the pardoning power of Jesus. It was told by a sailor who witnessed it, who was made a Christian by it, and afterwards became a chaplain.

“Our vessel lay at anchor,” said he,—“off the coast of Africa. The yellow fever had broken out on board, and several of the men had died. It was my duty every morning to go through that part of the vessel used as a hospital, and see if any of the men had died during the night. One morning as I was passing through this sick ward, a poor fellow lying there, took hold of me with his cold, clammy hand. I knew him very well. He was an old shipmate, and one of the wickedest men on board. I saw in a moment that he had not long to live.



“Oh! Jim,” he said, “for God’s sake, let some one come and read the Bible to me before I die.”



The Brazen Sea.

None of the sailors had a Bible; but at last I found that there was one on board belonging to the cabin-boy. I told him to get his Bible, and bring it into the sick-ward, and went back there myself. Presently the boy came with a small Bible in his hand. In the meantime a number of the Kroomen, or native Africans, who were working on board, gathered

round the sick man, not to see him die, but, as one of them said—‘to see what de good book do for poor massa Richie.’

“I told the boy to read a chapter. He sat down by the sick man, and opening at the third chapter of St. John, he began to read. The poor fellow fixed his eyes on the reader, and listened most earnestly to every word he spoke. Presently the boy came to the beautiful words in the sixteenth verse: ‘God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life!’ I watched the face of the dying man as these words were read. I never saw such earnestness and anxiety in any face as were in his. The boy was going on with the next verse, when the sick man exclaimed—‘Stop! my boy, stop. Read that verse again, and read it slowly.’ The boy repeated the verse, and then was going on again. But he was interrupted a second, and a third time, with the earnest cry, ‘Stop, my boy, stop. Read that verse again.’ And when he had done so a number of times, the dying man said: ‘Don’t read any more. That’s enough.’ And then, as he grew fainter and fainter, we heard him, in a low voice repeating to himself those wonderful words, and making his own remarks on them:—‘*Whosoever*—that means any body. That means me. *Whosoever believeth*. I do believe this. Well, what then? *Whosoever believeth shall not perish*.—No, not perish, but have everlasting life. Not perish—not perish—but have everlasting life.’ These were his last words. With these upon his lips, he passed away, and entered into heaven—‘one pardoned sinner more,’ saved through the precious blood of Christ.”

The presence of Jesus which the Tabernacle illustrates is—a pardoning presence.

The next thing that the Tabernacle taught about the presence of Christ with his people was, *that it would be a—PURIFYING—presence*.

This was taught by the brazen laver, which was next to the altar of burnt offering, in the Court of the Tabernacle. This laver was kept full of water for the use of the priests and Levites as they were engaged in the service of God. Their hands or feet must not be soiled while they were so engaged. The laver stood near them, and they could go and wash there, whenever it was necessary. If that brazen laver could have spoken, it would have been repeating, constantly the words which God afterwards

spoke by the prophet Isaiah, when he said—“*Be ye clean*, that bear the vessels of the Lord.” Isaiah lii: 11. God is a holy God. He dwells in the high and holy place. And if we wish to be his servants now, and to live with him forever hereafter, we must try to be like him in this respect. His command to all his people is—“*Be ye holy*, for I am holy.” Levit. xx: 7. When the king of a country has a reception of the princes, and nobles,



The Brazen Altar.

and great people of the kingdom, every one who appears before the king is expected to wear a particular kind of dress, which is called the court-dress. No one would be allowed to enter there without such a dress. And there is a court-dress for us to wear if we expect to be admitted to the presence of the King of heaven. This dress is a holy dress. “Without holiness,” the Apostle Paul tells us—“no man shall see the Lord.” Heb. xii: 14.

At one of the ragged-schools in Ireland, a clergyman was talking to the scholars on this very point. In the course of his talk he asked the

question—"What is holiness?" A poor Irish boy, in dirty tattered rags, jumped up, and said—"Please yer Riverence, it's to be *clane inside*."

No better answer than this could be given. And one reason why Jesus dwells with his people now, is to make them clean inside. And the laver in the Tabernacle was a good illustration of the way in which he does this. When the hands of one of the priests were soiled, he would go there, and wash, and be made clean. And so when our hearts or thoughts are soiled by sin, Jesus has a laver for us to wash in. The Apostle Paul shows how this is done, when he tells us that Jesus "sanctifies or cleanses his people by the *washing of water by the word*." Ephes. v: 26. This means that just as we make use of water to wash our bodies, and cleanse them when soiled; so Jesus makes use of the truths which he teaches in his word to "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts," and to make our souls pure and holy. And thus we see that one thing which the Tabernacle taught us, was that the presence of Jesus with his people was intended to be a cleansing, or purifying presence.

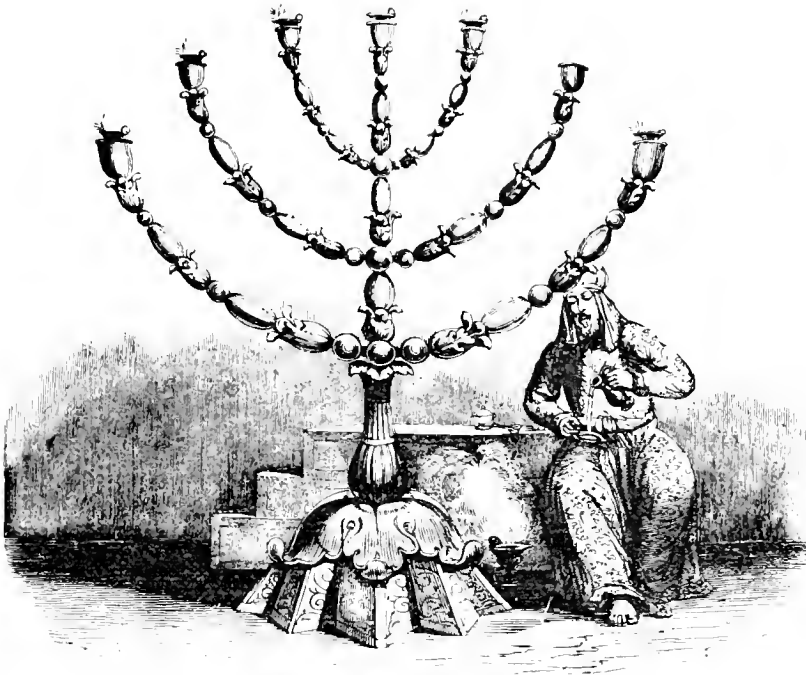
Another thing about the presence of Jesus, taught by the Tabernacle was, *that it was to be an—ENLIGHTENING—presence*.

There was no window in the Jewish Tabernacle. The light of the sun, or the moon, or the stars never shone there. The only light ever known within the walls of that sacred building was that which shone from the golden candlestick. If that candlestick had not been lighted it would have been impossible to see anything connected with the inside of the Tabernacle. There were the beautiful figures of the angels embroidered on the curtain which formed the ceiling of the holy place. There was the polished gold on the walls; with the table of shew-bread, and the altar of incense, and the way into the most holy place, through the veil that hung down before it; but darkness, like that of Egypt, would have covered all these things. No one would ever have been able to see them if the light from that golden candlestick had not been shining there. It was only this light which made it possible to see any of these important things.

And this candlestick was a figure or type of Jesus, our Saviour. He said of himself—"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. And all that we know about God, and heaven, and the way to get there, we learn

from Jesus. And when the light which Jesus gives begins to shine upon us, it is not like the light of a lamp, or a candle, or of the sun. These lights are the same at one time as at another. But the light that Jesus gives is a steadily increasing light. "It shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. iv: 18.

An aged Christian once said: "I've travelled this road for forty years, and it grows brighter all the way."



The Golden Candlestick.

When we learn to know Jesus, and walk in the light which his blessed presence gives, we shall be ready to take up the lines of Bonar's sweet hymn, and say:—

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
    'I am this dark world's light;  
Look unto me, thy morn shall rise,  
    And all thy day be bright.'  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
    In him my star, my sun;  
And in that light of life I'll walk,  
    Till traveling days are done."

Here is the experience of a little blind boy, which shows what a blessed light the presence of Jesus gives.

This boy had had an attack of scarlet fever, which left him perfectly blind. One day his minister called to see him. In talking about this affliction, he said:—

“Well, my dear boy, this is hard for you, isn’t it?”

He did not answer for a moment; then he said, “I don’t know that I ought to say *hard*; God knows best;” but his lips quivered, and a little tear stole down his cheek.

“Yes, my child; you have a kind Saviour who loves you, and feels for you even more than your mother does.”

“I know it, sir,” said the little boy, “and it comforts me.”

“I wish Jesus was here to *cure* Frank,” said his little sister.

“Well,” said I, “he will open the eyes of little Frank’s soul to see what a dear loving Saviour he is. He will show him that a blind heart is worse than blind eyes; and he will help him to see and enjoy heavenly things in all their beauty, and this will make him a thousand times happier than many children who have the use of their bodily eyes.”

“Still I can’t help wishing he could see,” said Lizzie.

“I dare say; but I hope you don’t try to make Frank discontented.”

“Frank isn’t discontented,” said Lizzie, earnestly; “he loves God. And love makes its own sunshine; doesn’t it, Frank?”

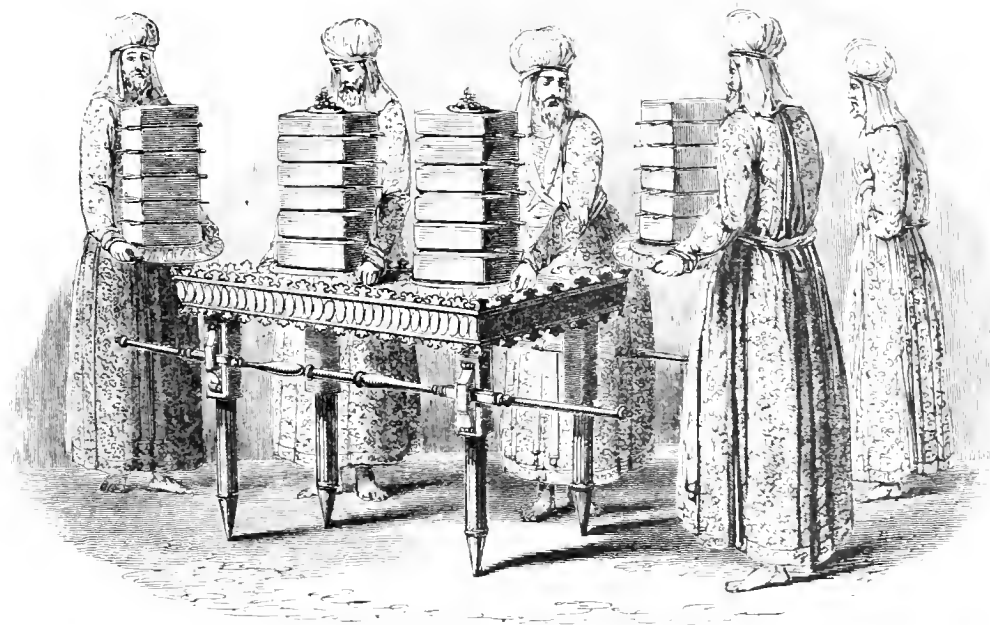
“I don’t feel cross about it now,” said the poor blind boy meekly. “I pray, and think about the sweet hymns I learned in Sabbath school, and I sing, and sing, and then I think that Jesus is with me, and it feels light, and—and—I forget that I’m blind at all;” and a sweet light played over his pale features as he spoke. *That* was the light which the presence of Jesus gives. The Tabernacle taught us that his presence with his people was intended to be an enlightening presence.

The only other thing to speak of now, that the Tabernacle taught, in reference to Christ’s presence with his people, was that it will be a—COMFORTING—*presence*.

There was the table of shew-bread. This was a table covered over with gold, and on which twelve fresh loaves of bread were placed every Sabbath day. It was intended to teach the Jews what God teaches us in

that sweet promise which says:—"Bread shall be given him, and his water shall be sure." Isaiah xxxiii: 16. This table of shew-bread pointed to Jesus. He is "the living bread that came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever." John vi: 51. And we know how bread strengthens, or comforts mens' hearts.

And then the golden altar of incense taught the same thing. As the priest burnt the incense on this altar, the perfume rose in clouds of fragrant



The Table of Shew-Bread.

smoke that filled the Tabernacle. This fragrance was most pleasing and refreshing. And the meaning of it was, that when we love, and serve Jesus, the prayers that we offer to God, and the work that we do for him are just as pleasant to him, as the fragrance of this incense is to us. How much comfort there is in this thought!

And then all the things in the Tabernacle,—the brazen altar of burnt-offering, the laver, the candlestick, the table of shew-bread, and the golden altar of incense were intended to lead the thoughts of those who worshipped there to what was on the other side of the veil that hung down in the holy

place. There, beyond that veil, was the most holy place. In it was the ark, with the glory of God shining brightly upon it. That place represented heaven. And so, when we see the Tabernacle showing us how Jesus was to be with his people, to pardon them, and to purify them, and to enlighten them, and strengthen them, we see it teaching us how *all* that Jesus does for his people now, is to make them ready for heaven. And if this is so, we may well say that the presence of Jesus with his people is a comforting presence.

We have just had an illustration of one point of our subject from a little blind boy. We have another illustration here from an old blind woman.

She lived in North Wales, and was known all through that part of the country as "Blind Mary." Wales is a grand old country. Mountains, and rocks, and lakes, and waterfalls in every variety of form are found there. Mary's cottage was in one of the wildest parts of this country. Great rocks lay scattered around on every side. Ferns and wild flowers peeped out from under them. There was no more charming view in all that country, than was to be seen in front of Mary's cottage. One beautiful summer evening she was sitting there, with her large Bible on her knee. She was spelling out its meaning as her fingers went slowly over the raised letters. Just then a traveller who had been climbing the mountain came near. With the usual quickness of the blind, Mary heard his footsteps, and asked him to take a seat. As he did so, she pointed out to him the most interesting views in the landscape before them. He looked at her with surprise, and said: "They told me that *blind* Mary lived up here; but I can hardly believe that you are blind. You seem to see the mountains and lakes as well as I do."

"I used to look at them with so much pleasure when I could see, that I know all about them, although I have been blind for years."

"Doesn't it make you unhappy Mary to think that you can never look at them again?"

The blind woman's eyes filled with tears, as she answered: "Don't ask me that, sir. At first I felt almost angry with God for afflicting me so; but now, I can bless his holy name. I see something better sir, than rocks and mountains. I see Jesus my Saviour, and the thought that he



loves me, makes me happy. Forgive an old woman's boldness sir. You tell me you have good eyesight, and that you can see yonder lakes, and the blue mountains beyond; but, oh! sir, did you ever see that wonderful sight, Jesus Christ laying down his life for you?"

The traveller looked at blind Mary with great interest, and said:—"Mary I am afraid I have not thought about these things as I ought; but



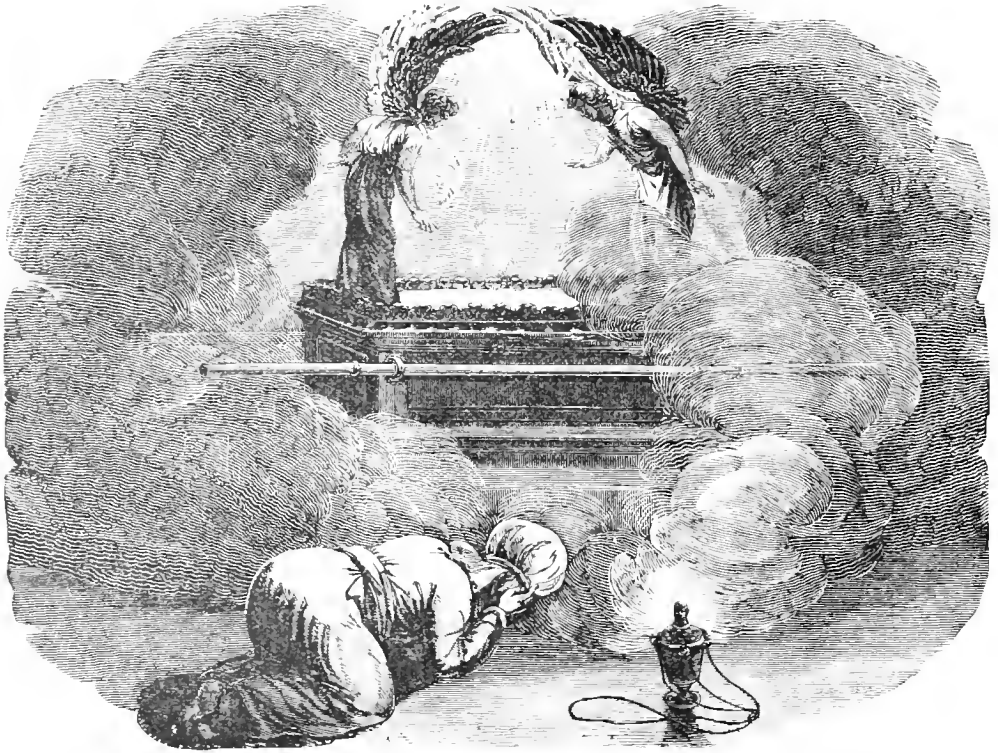
The Altar of Incense.

I promise you that I will do so; I shall never forget my evening's climb up these mountains, and what you have said to me."

"God bless you sir! But what should I, a poor old blind woman do without my Saviour! I'm never alone, for he is with me. I'm not afraid to die, either, because he has washed away my sins in his blood; and when I leave these mountains, and lakes, I shall go, I know, to a better country. 'Mine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off.' And I believe I shall meet you there, because I shall ask my Saviour to open your eyes, that you may see yourself first as a sinner, and then see Jesus as your redeemer."

Certainly the presence of Jesus was a comforting presence to poor blind Mary.

And so, we have seen *what the Tabernacle was*, and *what the Tabernacle taught*. It taught how the presence of Christ was to be with his people, as a *pardoning* presence—a *purifying* presence—an *enlightening* presence, and a *comforting* presence. May we all know what it is to have his presence with us, in all these blessed ways!













## CHRIST A PRIEST LIKE MELCHIZEDEK.

**H**OW it was foretold of our blessed Saviour that he was to be —“a prophet like Moses,” we have seen in the chapter— “*Jesus a Prophet like Moses.*” But David gives us another illustration of his character and work, when he tells us that he was to be “a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.” Ps. cx: 4. This is the next thing for us to consider

And before we go any further, some one may be ready to ask;—Well, but who was Melchizedek; and what is meant when we are told that Jesus Christ was to be a priest like him? I will try and answer these questions, before saying anything else.

The first time that Melchizedek is mentioned in the Bible is in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. And this mention of him is connected with an interesting incident in the life of Abraham.

There was a great battle fought in his neighborhood when he lived in Hebron. We read about this in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. We cannot say that this was the first battle ever fought, but it was certainly the first of which we have any knowledge. There was a famous king in those days, who had a long name of five syllables. It was spelled

thus—Che-dor-la-o-mer. This man raised a large army and fought with the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. He beat these kings and gained a great victory over them. He robbed their cities, and took away gold and silver, and valuable things to an immense extent. Besides this he took a great number of prisoners, and carried them away with him as



Melchizedek Blessing Abraham.

captives. Now it happened that Abraham's nephew, Lot, with his family, was living in Sodom at this time; and they were among the number of those who were taken captives by this famous king. Some one went and told Abraham about it. He was not a soldier. Fighting was not his business. But he was a brave man. As soon as he heard then, that his nephew and his family had been taken prisoners, he made up his mind to try and rescue them. Abraham was like one of the great Arab Sheiks, who



are found in that country at the present day. He had a large number of hired servants connected with his home, and the work that was done there. He gathered these together, and armed them the best way he could. They made a small army of over three hundred men. Abraham put himself at the head of them, and marched after the victorious army of the king with a big name. He overtook them before they had reached their homes. They had no idea of being attacked, and felt secure from all danger. No guards or sentinels were appointed to keep watch. They were spending the night in eating and drinking and making merry. In the midst of this merriment Abraham overtakes them. He divides his little army into three companies. Approaching cautiously from different points, at a given signal they raise a great shout, and burst upon that careless host, as the lion leaps upon his prey. Terror seizes upon them. They are scattered in a moment, like a flock of trembling sheep. Abraham is not anxious to shed blood, and does not care to pursue them. But he seizes all the spoils they had gathered, with the prisoners they had taken away, and marches back to his home with his brave little army, and the captives they had recovered.



"He was teaching all the time."

And it is just here that we first meet with Melchizedek. We read—Gen. xiv: 18–20—that as Abraham was returning, Melchizedek, who was king of a city in Palestine, called Salem, and who was also "priest of the most high God," came out to meet him. He had prepared bread and wine for the refreshment of Abraham and his army, and he blessed Abraham. This is all that is told us about Melchizedek in this part of the Bible. David speaks of him in Ps. cx: 4, and says that Christ was to be "a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." And here we may well ask the

question—What was “the order of Melchizedek?” or what kind of a priest was he? and what does it mean when we are told that our Lord Jesus Christ was to be “a priest like Melchizedek?” The Apostle Paul tells us all that we know about this matter. What he says on this point we find written in Heb. vii: 1–3. And the meaning of what he here says is, that in his office as a priest, Melchizedek had no one to go before him, and no one to follow after him. When Aaron, the Jewish high-priest died, his son, Eleazar was made priest in his place. And when Eleazar died, he had his son to succeed him in his priestly office. The eldest son always followed his father in his office as priest. And so there was a succession of priests in the order to which Aaron belonged. But it was different with Melchizedek. He had no one to be priest before him, and no one to be priest after him. There was no succession in the order of his priesthood. And so it was with the blessed Saviour of whom we are writing. In his office as priest there was no one who went before him, and no one who followed after him. In this respect he was to be “a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” No one was to take his place. No one *could* take it. And it is a very sweet thing to know that whatever Jesus, as our priest, does for us *now*, he will continue to do forever and ever.

And when we think of a priest of God, in his high and holy office, there are four things he is appointed to do for his people, and in each of these things the Jewish priest was a type or figure of Christ.

*The first thing that a priest had to do was, to—TEACH.*

We read in Malachi ii: 7, these words,—“The priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.” Here we have God’s own account of the first thing that he wished his priests to do. And when we are told that “the priest’s lips should *keep* knowledge,” the meaning is, *not* that he was to keep knowledge *from* the people, but that he was to keep it *for* them.

When our Saviour was on earth, he said that the priests and the Pharisees were keeping knowledge from the people. Luke xi: 52. And other priests since then, have done the same thing. But this is not what God intended. His wish was that the priests whom he appointed should be as his messengers, always ready to show people the right way in which to worship and serve God, when they desired to know it.

And this is what Jesus came into our world to do. He is the great teacher. There is none who can teach like him. All the knowledge that



"The Robbers had been taken prisoners."

we have of God in this world comes from him. This is what he taught us himself, when he said:—"No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." Math. xi: 27. "No man hath seen God

at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." John i: 18. And the things that Jesus taught, when on earth, he said, were only the things which he had seen with his Father, and which the Father sent him into the world to tell us. He was teaching all the time he was on earth. And he did not stop teaching when he went back to heaven. By his word, by his spirit, by his ministers, by his people, and in other ways he is teaching all the time. Everything that we know about God, or heaven, or the way to get there, we owe to Jesus.

And sometimes he teaches in ways that are very wonderful. Here is an illustration of the marvellous power of Jesus to teach even when the case seemed most hopeless. We may call it—*The Robber Taught*; or, *The Power of the Bible*.

This incident occurred many years ago in the heart of the Black Forest in Germany. It was at the dead of night. The place was lighted by torches, which cast a ghastly glare through the surrounding gloom. Savage looking men, fully armed, were sitting round in a circle. One of their number was holding up something in his hand. These men were robbers. That evening they had robbed a stage-coach. According to their custom they were now engaged in selling by auction among themselves, the articles that had been stolen. Travelling bags, different articles of clothing, and various other things had been disposed of in this way. Last of all a New Testament was held up. The man who acted as auctioneer introduced this "article" with some wicked remark which threw the company into a roar of laughter. One of the company suggested as a joke, that the auctioneer should open the book and read a chapter, as he said, "for their edification." This motion was seconded, and carried unanimously. Opening the book at random, he began to read with an air of mock solemnity. As he went on reading, laughs and jokes were heard all round.

While this was going on, one man in the company, the oldest member of the gang, and who had been their ringleader in all that was evil, became silent. He sat with his hands clasped on his knees, lost in deep thought. It happened that the passage the auctioneer had just read, was the very one he had heard read thirty years before, at family prayer, in his father's house, on the morning of the day when he left that home, for the



"AND ABRAHAM SAID—MY SON GOD WILL PROVIDE HIMSELF A LAMB FOR A BURNT OFFERING."

Abraham Offering Isaac.



last time. In a moment all that scene came back to his memory. He thought of his father and mother, and brothers and sisters, and all that had made that home so sweet and happy to him then. Since leaving home he had never opened a Bible, never offered a prayer, and never had a thought of God, or of eternity. But now, in a moment, his soul seemed to wake from that long sleep of thirty years. He thought of God; he thought of his wicked life, and was filled with sorrow, and shame, and fear. He was so occupied with these thoughts and feelings, that he took no notice of what was going on around him, till one of his comrades slapped him rudely on the shoulder, and said,—“Now, old dreamer, what will you give for that book? you need it most of all, for you have been the biggest sinner among us.”

“That’s true,” said the startled robber. “Give me that book, I’ll pay the full price for it.”

The next day the robbers scattered, and went into the neighboring towns and villages to sell what they had got by robbing. The man with the Testament also went away. But he did not wish to sell any thing. He sought a quiet, lonely place. There he remained for several days, reading that wonderful book of God, shedding bitter tears over his sins, and earnestly praying for God’s pardoning grace. God heard his prayer. He found pardon and peace in believing, and became a new man.

After awhile he went into one of the nearest towns to see a minister of the gospel. There he heard that the gang of robbers to which he had belonged had all been taken prisoners. He told the minister, whom he went to see, all about his previous life, and the change he had experienced. Then he gave himself up to the officers of justice. The rest of the gang were all put to death. But his free confession and evident repentance saved his life. He was put in prison, indeed; but, as he continued to behave like a truly penitent man, he was soon pardoned, and released, and taken into the employment of one of the princes in that neighborhood, and he proved a blessing to those about him all his days.

This was wonderful teaching indeed! And the first thing that Jesus does as our priest, is to—*teach*.

*The second thing that a priest had to do, was to—ATONE.*

And here you may be ready to ask what does it mean to atone? or to make an atonement? Let us try to get a clear idea of this matter. Now

suppose, that in some way, you should greatly offend a person who had been your best friend. The thought of it distresses you. What shall I do, you ask yourself, to remove the anger of my friend, and have him reconciled to me again? You hear that your friend is very anxious to get a jewel of a particular kind. It is very costly. You know where such a jewel can be had. You have to part with all you have in the world to get it. But you do this gladly. You get the jewel. You send it to your friend, telling him, at the same time how sorry you are for having offended him, and asking him to forgive you. He accepts your gift. His anger is turned away, and he is reconciled to you again. Now, in getting that jewel, and giving it to your friend, you would be making an atonement for what you had done to offend him.

This illustrates what we are now speaking of. God is our best friend. We have offended him by our sins. He never could be reconciled to us unless our sins were put away. But we had no power to do this. All the angels in heaven never could have done it for us. Jesus was the only one who was able to do it. And he was willing to do it. And the Apostle Paul shows us the way in which he did this, when he tells us that Christ —“*came to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself.*” Heb. ix: 26. And this is what is meant when we are told that he “made peace through the blood of his cross.” Col. i: 20. By his sufferings in the garden of Gethsemane, and by his death upon the cross he atoned for our sins, or put them away. Thus it became possible that our quarrel with God should be made up; and that there should be, as the angels said in their song over the birth of Christ, “peace on earth, and good will towards men.”

But Jesus, our priest, did not come into the world to make atonement for our sins till four thousand years had passed away. Yet, people needed pardon, and peace during all those years, as much as we do now. And how were they to know the way in which these great blessings were to be obtained? God appointed sacrifices to be offered in order to help the people to understand this. The chief duty of the Jewish priest, was to stand by the brazen altar, and offer there a lamb for a sacrifice, every morning, and every evening. The blood of those animals could not atone for sin, or put it away. But they pointed to Jesus who was coming to do this. All the sacrifices that we read about in the Old Testament did this. There



was Able's sacrifice, the first that we read of. This pointed to Jesus. And there was Abraham, binding his son Isaac, laying him on the altar, and taking the knife to slay him. Abraham was pointing to Jesus when he did this.

And when the pious Jew brought his lamb to the altar to be sacrificed for him, as the blood of that lamb was shed, and his life taken away God



The Passover Sacrifice.

was leading the man who offered that sacrifice, to look away from the service in which he was engaged, and to "behold," Jesus, "the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." John i: 29. And this is what is meant when Jesus is spoken of as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. xiii: 8. Every lamb slain by the Jewish priests was a type, or figure of Christ, and so, it may be said that he was slain in them.

All that Jesus did, and suffered, when he was on earth, he did and suffered for you, and me. And when we believe on him, God looks upon

us, as he would do if we, ourselves had done, and suffered all that Jesus did and suffered for us.

“He died for me.”—During the late war between France and Germany, an incident occurred which well illustrates this part of our subject. A young man was drafted into the army. He was the only son of his mother. She was a widow, and dependent on him for her support. They were both in great distress about it. A friend of this young man saw his distress. He said to him, “Louis, you stay at home, and take care of your mother. There’s no one depending on me. Let me be your substitute, and go in your place.”

Louis objected for awhile, but finally yielded. His generous friend went to the war in his place. In the first battle that was fought he was killed. The friend whose place he had taken, mourned sincerely over his death.

But the war went on. The drafting was continued. By some mistake Louis was counted in again, and ordered to join the army. He went to the recruiting office, and asked if it was true that his name was on the list of drafted men.

“It is,” replied the officer.

“But dead men cannot serve,” said he, “and I am a dead man.”

The officer looked at him with surprise, and said: “Well, my friend, I never saw a dead man speak, and act as you are doing. You seem lively enough, and are just the sort of man we want. Pray tell me what you mean by saying you are a dead man.”

“Well, sir,” said Louis, “I was drafted before, and was preparing to go. But a generous friend offered himself as my substitute. He went for me. He fought for me. He laid down his life on the field of battle. And as he stood in my place, and died in my stead, it is as if I no longer lived. The life that I now live was purchased by the life of my friend. *He died for me! he died for me!* and I must go free.”

“That’s all right,” said the officer, “you are free.”

And so what Jesus did, and suffered while he was on earth, he did and suffered for you, and me, if we believe in him. He made atonement for our sins. They are all “blotted out,” or “put away.” God is reconciled to us. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Rom. v: 1.

The second thing that Jesus does as our priest, is to atone.

*The third thing that a priest had to do for the people, was to—INTERCEDE—for them.*

This word intercede is made up of two Latin words, the meaning of which is to *walk between*. For instance, if you see two persons quarreling,



The Daily Sacrifice.

and step in between them to separate them, then you are interceding, or walking between them. This is the first meaning of the word.

But there is another sense in which this word is used. When we pray for other persons, and ask God to guard them from danger, or to bestow his blessing upon them, then we are said to be *interceding* for them. In this sense, to intercede for a person, is to pray for him. We have an interesting illustration of this in the eighteenth chapter of Genesis.

Here we read that God appeared before Abraham, in the form of a man, or an angel. He tells him that he is going to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, for their great wickedness. As soon as Abraham

hears this, he feels anxious about his nephew, Lot, who is living there with his family. Immediately, Abraham begins to pray for those wicked cities, which were in such danger of being destroyed. He asks God if he will not spare them, in case he should find fifty good or righteous people living there. He said he would. But not satisfied with that, Abraham wants to make the prospect of their safety greater still. With very great reverence, he asks God if he will spare those cities in case there are forty righteous people in them. The answer is—yes. But suppose there are but thirty? I will spare them for the sake of thirty. Suppose there are only twenty? I will spare them for the sake of twenty. Suppose there are but ten? I will not destroy them, if there are even ten good people there. And then Abraham stopped praying. He thought it was safe to do this. He felt sure there would be at least ten good people found there. But he was mistaken. Lot was the only good man there; and he was none too good, or else he would not have been willing to stay in that horribly wicked place, when he was not obliged to do so.

Now, when Abraham was offering these prayers for Sodom and Gomorrah, he was *interceding* for them. He was walking between God and them, and trying to do them good.

And this was one important part of the duty which the Jewish priest had to perform for the people. It was especially the duty of the high-priest. Every year, on what was called—"the great day of atonement," the high-priest would put on his beautiful garments, of blue, and scarlet, and purple. And then he would put on the breast-plate. This was a square plate about eight inches wide, and eight deep. The front of it was covered with gold. In this gold were set twelve beautiful jewels, or precious stones. On these were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, one on each stone. There were ribbons of blue, at the lower corners of this plate, and cords of gold at the upper corners. By these it was fastened to the shoulders of the high-priest. And then, bearing the names of all the tribes upon his bosom, he went into the most holy place, to stand before God, and intercede, or pray for the people. And as he did this, he was illustrating in a beautiful way, what Jesus, our great high-priest, is doing for us.

In the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, we have an example of Jesus praying for his people. That whole chapter is filled with

the prayer which he offered in the night in which he was betrayed. It is the most wonderful prayer that was ever uttered. Jesus begins with praying for himself. Then he prays for his apostles. After this, in verse twenty,



The High-Priest Blessing.

he says: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." This takes you and me in, if we believe in Jesus. How sweet it is to think that Jesus really stands before the throne of God in heaven, and prays for each one of us! Yet this is what the Apostle Paul means, when he says, in speaking of Jesus, that—

"*he ever liveth to make intercession for us.*" Heb. vii: 25. And when our prayers are answered, this is what brings the answer to us. Jesus has prayed for us. God has heard his prayers. The proof of this we have in the answers that come down in blessings upon us.

"I feel it pull." A little boy was flying his kite. It had gone up till it was out of sight. But there he stood holding on to the string which was fastened to it. A gentleman in passing, said to him, "What are you holding on to that string for, my boy?"

"Because there is a kite at the other end of it."

"I don't see any kite," said the gentleman.

"Ah! but I know it's there," was the reply, "*for I feel it pull.*"

And so it is with what we are now speaking of. We cannot look through an open door into heaven, as the Apostle John did. Rev. iv: 1. We cannot with our bodily eyes see Jesus in heaven interceding, or praying for us. But *we know he is there.* And every prayer answered is a proof of this. And then, like the boy just spoken of, though we cannot see the kite, we know it is there because we feel it pull.

"What stopped that train?" Not long ago an engineer brought his train to a stand at a little village in Massachusetts. There it waited five minutes for lunch. A lady came along the platform to the engineer. She said to him:—

"My friend, the conductor tells me that the train at the junction in P., leaves fifteen minutes before we arrive there. It is Saturday night, and that is the last train. I have a very sick child in the car, and am extremely anxious to catch that train. I have no money to pay for going to a hotel, nor to hire a carriage to take me home from that point. What shall I do?"

"Well," said the engineer, "I wish I could tell you."

"Wouldn't it be possible for you to hurry up a little?" asked the tearful and anxious mother.

"No, madam, I have the time-table, and the rules say I must run by it."

She turned away sorrowfully, leaving the bronzed face of the engineer wet with tears. Presently she returned, and said to the engineer, "Are you a Christian, sir?"

"I trust I am," was the reply.

"Well, then, wont you pray with me that the Lord may, in some way, delay the train at the junction?"



Aaron between the Living and the Dead.

"Why, yes, I'll pray with you, but I haven't much faith."

Just then the conductor cried—"All aboard." The poor woman hurried back to her sick child, and away went the train.

"Somehow," said the engineer, "every thing seemed to work to a charm. As I prayed for the anxious mother, I *couldn't help letting my engine go a*

*little faster.* We were not delayed a moment at any of the stopping places. When the last stopping place was passed, and we were over the hill, as I knew the road was all clear and there was no danger, I put on more steam. We went flying through the air like an arrow; and presently we dashed up to the junction six minutes ahead of time.

To my great surprise, there stood the other train, and the conductor with his lantern on his arm. "Well," said he; "here I am, nine minutes behind time. I never did such a thing before. I can't for the life of me, tell what I have been waiting for. But somehow or other it seemed as if I couldn't go till this train came in."

The conductor of that train didn't know what he was waiting for. But the engineer of the other train knew. And that poor, grateful mother knew, as she was enabled, with her sick child to reach home in comfort that night. She could say with the boy and his kite, "*I feel it pull.*" She knew who was in heaven praying for her.

The third thing that the priest did for the people, was to intercede for them. And this is what Jesus, our "Priest like Melchizedek," does for us.

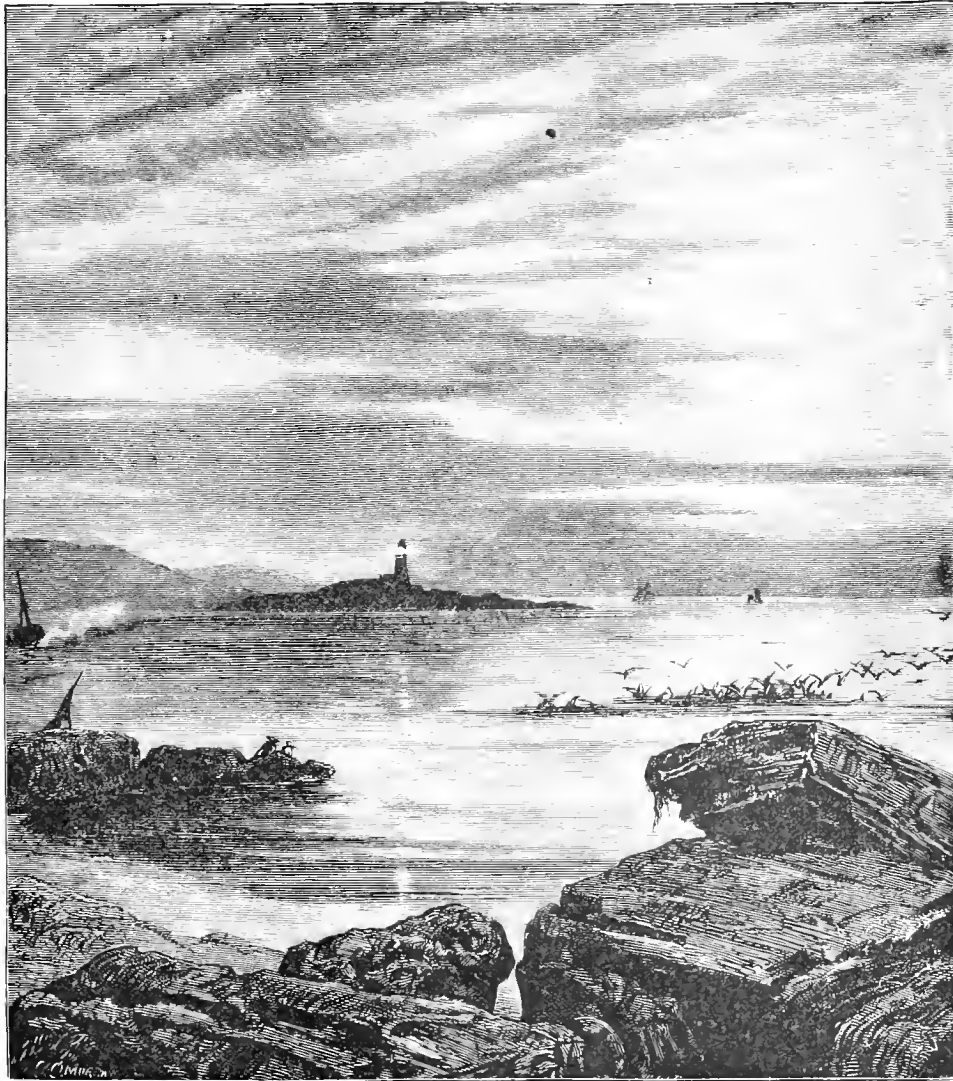
*But there was one other thing which the Jewish priests were required to do for their people, and that was, to—BLESS—them.*

We have seen before (Gen. xiv: 18) how Melchizedek met Abraham returning from his victory, and blessed him. And Jewish priests were required to give the blessing, or, as we say, "pronounce the benediction," at the close of their religious meetings, as the ministers of the gospel do now. And this was especially done at the close of the solemn service held among the Jews every year, on what was called—"the great day of atonement." Then the high-priest, dressed in his beautiful robes, came out of the Tabernacle, where he had been sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice, and offering prayer for the people. He stood in the midst of them, and lifted up his hands and blessed them. We know what the words were, which the priests used on these occasions. We find them in Numbers, sixth chapter, twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth verses. They are these:—

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."



These words are very beautiful. But then, the Jewish priests could only use them as a kind of prayer. They could ask God to give these



“Or look at yonder Ocean.”

blessings to the people; and they could tell the people how to seek these blessings. But they had no power to give the people these blessings.

And here we see the great difference between all other priests, and Jesus, our heavenly priest. He not only speaks the words of blessing, but he really gives the blessings those words represent. This was what he

meant when he said to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." John xiv: 27. The world, or the people in the world, can only wish, or pray that we may have peace. But Jesus can *give* peace. Yes, and not only peace, but pardon, and hope, and joy, and grace, and every blessing that we need Jesus is able to give. He came to bless the world. He *did* bless it while he was in it. He "went about doing good." He was scattering blessings wherever he went. And he is doing the same still. He loves to bless. And the store of blessings he has to draw upon is so large and full that it never can fail.

Look at yonder sun. For thousands of years it has been shining away all the time. And yet the sun has as much light to give to day, as it had in the day when God first made it. Or, look at yonder ocean. It has been giving up its water to supply the springs and fountains of the earth ever since it was made. And yet there is as much water in the ocean to day as there was thousands of years ago. And so it is with Jesus. For thousands of years he has been giving away blessings continually. And yet he has as many to give to day, as though he had never given one before. He *came* to bless the world. He *has* blessed it, and he *is* blessing it still. He is blessing nations, and families, and individuals, in such a way as nothing else can bless them. When we learn to know him, and love him, and trust him, the thought of what he has done for us already, and what he is going to do for us by and by, is enough to make us happy at all times, and under all circumstances. It is, as Jesus said, like "a well of water in our hearts, springing up unto everlasting life." John iv: 14. Here is an incident which shows how true it is that simple trust in Jesus will prove a blessing under all the trials of life.

"John White's Hymn." A minister of the gospel was travelling through the wilds of Nebraska. Late one winter evening he lost his way. In the midst of a pelting storm he sought shelter in the cabin of a lonely Irish settler. He was warmly welcomed, and they spent a pleasant evening talking together. At the close of the evening his Irish friend said to him, "Now, sir, will you please sing something before we go to rest? Can you sing John White's hymn?"

"John White's hymn? No, I never heard of that. What is it?"

“It’s this, sir:—

Away with our sorrow and fear,  
We soon shall reach our home;  
The city of saints shall appear,  
The day of eternity come.”



Jesus instituting the Sacramental Supper.

“O, yes! I’ve sung that good old hymn many a time. But why do you call it John White’s hymn?”

“I’ll tell you, sir. When we were young people in old Ireland—my wife and I—we attended a meeting, where we learned to love Jesus. The

minister was a young man named John White. He spent all his time among the people, telling them of the love of Jesus, and trying to persuade them to love and serve him. He was often persecuted on account of his religion, but he never answered those who troubled him, except by singing some of the verses of this blessed hymn. My wife and I learned to sing it together, and it has been the greatest comfort to us. We have had many sorrows to bear, but when we sang this sweet hymn, and thought of the dear, loving Saviour, it always lightened our burdens, and made us happy.

“A few years after we settled here, our little boy, our only child, lay dying. That was a heavy blow. The mother stood on one side of the cradle, and I on the other. We watched the death-drops gather on that patient little face. Then my wife looked up to me and said, ‘O, Pat, sing John White’s hymn.’ So, softly, and with a choking voice, I sang:—

Away with our sorrow and fear,  
We soon shall reach our home.

“And we closed the little eyes, that were never more to look into ours, until that glad ‘day of eternity come.’

“A few months after this, sir, came the greatest trial of my life. My dear wife, who had always been such a comfort to me, was taken very ill. The doctor said she could not live. As I sat by her bedside, overwhelmed with sorrow, she put her arm round my neck, and drawing my face down close to hers, she gently whispered, ‘Good bye, Pat, dear. I’m going home. Sing John White’s hymn for me, once more before I go. So, with her cold hand clasped in mine, I tried to sing:—

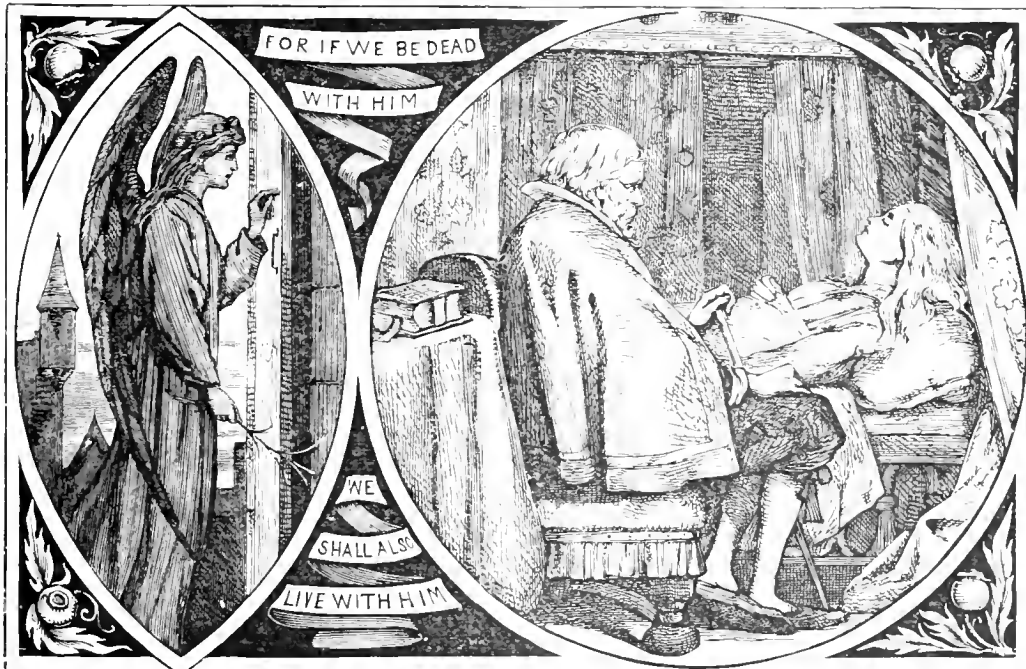
Away with our sorrow and fear,  
We soon shall reach our home.

“And the Lord took away my sorrow and fear. My dear patient wife was quite happy till she fell asleep in Jesus.”

Then the Irish settler wiped away the tears from his eyes, and while the storm was howling without, he and the minister, as they sat by the blazing fire sang once more John White’s hymn:—

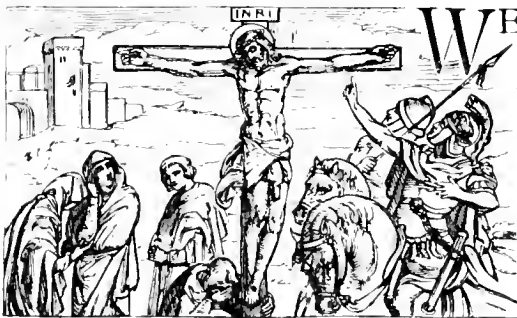
“Away with our sorrow and fear,  
 We soon shall reach our home;  
 The city of saints shall appear,  
 The day of eternity come.”

Surely Jesus did bless that poor Irish settler and his wife in all their troubles! And when we remember that what the Jewish priest had to do, was to *teach*—to *atone*—to *intercede* for, and to *bless* the people, we see how truly it might be said of Jesus, that he was to—“be a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.”





## CHRIST THE KING LIKE DAVID AND SOLOMON.



**WE** have spoken before of Christ, as “a Prophet like Moses,” and “a Priest like Melchizedek.” We come now to speak of him as a King. There are many passages in the Old Testament that speak of him as a king. We need only refer to one of these. In Jeremiah xxiii: 5, we find it written, —“Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.” It is perfectly clear that Jesus, our blessed Saviour is the one here spoken of, for, in the very next verse, the prophet goes on to say, “In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Jesus is the only one to whom this name belongs.”











And when we come to look at the New Testament, we find him spoken of in the same way. He was to be a king. When the angel Gabriel was sent from God, to the city of Nazareth, to tell of the birth of Jesus, to Mary, his mother, he said to her:—"Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and the wise men came from the East to Jerusalem seeking for him, their inquiry was—"Where is he that is born *King of the Jews?* for we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." Matth. ii: 1, 2. And when he hung upon the cross, dying in agony and blood, the title which Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, fastened to his cross, was:—

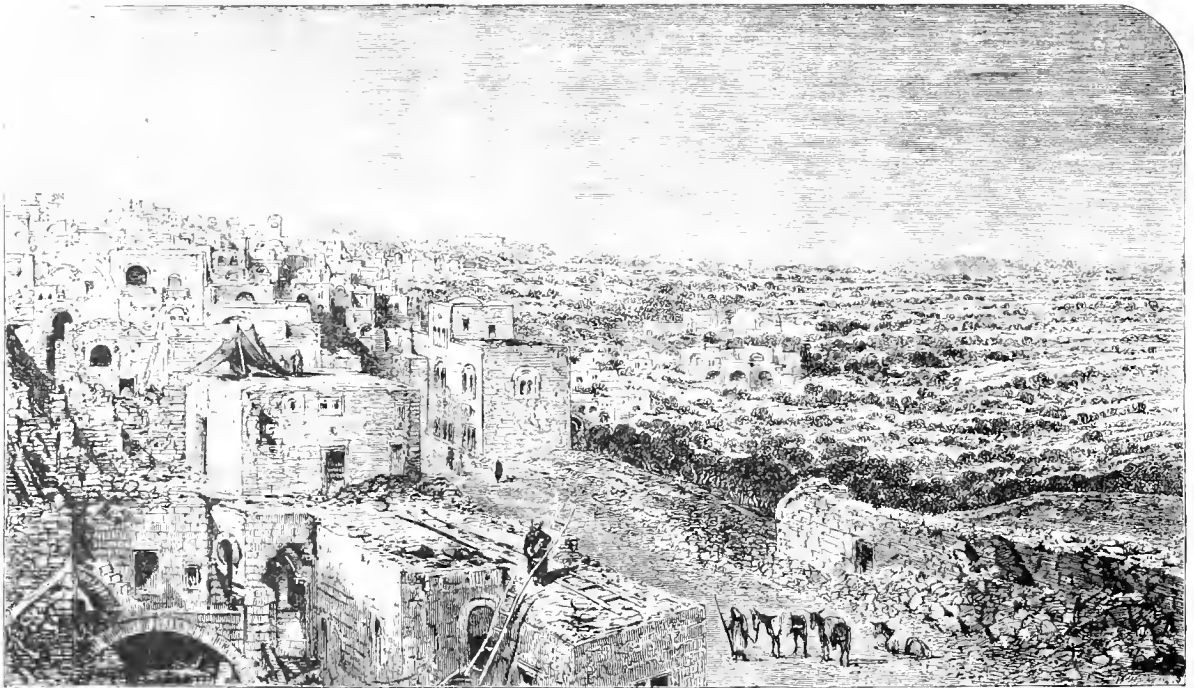
"THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

When Jesus was foretold as a prophet, it was said distinctly what sort of a prophet he was to be. And when he was foretold as a priest, it is again distinctly said what sort of a priest he was to be. But when he was foretold as a king, it was not said, in so many words, that he was to be a king like David, or Solomon. We are only told that he was to be the son of David, and he was to occupy the throne of David. But when we are told of the Old Testament history, that "whatsoever things were written aforetime," therein, "were written for our learning,"—Rom. xv: 4,—we are authorized to look for illustrations of his character and work as our king, in the history given us of the principal kings mentioned in the scriptures.

When Jesus is revealed to us as our *prophet*, we are taught to look for illustrations of what sort of a prophet he was to be in the character of Moses, the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. When he is revealed to us as our *priest*, we are taught to look for illustrations of what he was to do for us as a priest, in the life and character of Melchizedek, who was in some respects, the most remarkable priest of whom we read in the Old Testament. And when we find him spoken of as our king, and we wish to know what sort of a king he was to be, it is altogether right and proper that we should try and find our illustrations in the lives and histories of

the best and greatest kings, of whose characters we read in the Old Testament. Of these, David and Solomon were the chief. And then, if the question is asked—What sort of a king was Jesus to be? The answer to that question will take this shape; he was to be a king like David and Solomon. And so the subject before us now, may be stated in this way:—

“JESUS A KING LIKE DAVID AND SOLOMON.”



Bethlehem.

We find three illustrations of the kingly character of Christ in David's life, and two in the life of Solomon. And taking these together we have *five* things that will help us in answering the question,—*What sort of a king was Jesus our Saviour to be?*

*In the first place then we are taught that he was to be a—CHOSEN—king.*

Some men have been kings because they wanted to be kings. They made up their minds that they *would* be kings, without any care about the cost, or the consequence. They raised armies, and fought to be kings. They killed all who opposed them, and, as we say, in a figurative sense,



Retribution—The Sword of Justice.



they waded, through rivers of blood, to the thrones on which they sat. But we all know very well that this was not the case with David. He did not want to be a king. I suppose that when he was keeping his father's flocks in the fields of Bethlehem, he had no more idea of being king than you or I have to-day. He did not make himself king; but he was chosen of God to be the king of Israel.



Samuel anointing David.

When Saul, the first king of Israel, refused to obey God, he lost his kingdom by his disobedience. God said he would take away the kingdom from him, and give it to another person. And then we know how he sent Samuel, the prophet, to the city of Bethlehem, and to the house of Jesse, to anoint as king, in the place of Saul, one of Jesse's sons, whom he had chosen. God did not mention by name, to Samuel, which one of the sons of Jesse it was that he had chosen to be king. He gave him to understand that he would let him know this when he got there. I have always thought that it must have been a very interesting scene which took place in the

house of Jesse, when Samuel arrived there. Of course, he told Jesse, in confidence, what he had come for. We may imagine Jesse and his family all assembled in the court-yard. You know that in those eastern countries houses are built in the shape of a hollow-square. In the centre is a garden, and if the family are well off, they have a fountain playing in the midst of the garden. Jesse was a rich man. He had, no doubt, a beautiful garden with a fountain in it. He had a large family of eight sons. His two oldest boys were soldiers in Saul's army. They were at home now. Well, the father and mother, and the seven elder sons all meet in the garden, to see which of the sons of Jesse, God had chosen to be king. I think it was hard on little David that they did not let him come home on such an occasion. They might have let one of the servants go and mind the sheep for an hour or two, till Samuel was gone. But they did not. It must have been a solemn meeting. We should begin such a meeting with reading a portion of scripture and prayer. Samuel began it with offering a sacrifice. No doubt there was a family altar in one part of the garden. When this service was over, Samuel told Jesse to call up his oldest son. Jesse called him. His name was Eliab. He stepped out, and stood before Samuel. He was a fine, tall, soldierly-looking man. Samuel was pleased with his appearance. He said to himself,—“This must be the one. What a handsome looking king he'll make. I'll anoint him.”

But God said to him,—“This is not the one I have chosen.” “Pass on young man,” said Samuel. “Call the next.” Abinadab steps forward. “This is not the one.” “Call the next.” Then comes Shammah. “This is not the one.” And so, one after another, the seven elder sons of Jesse are called, but none of them is chosen.

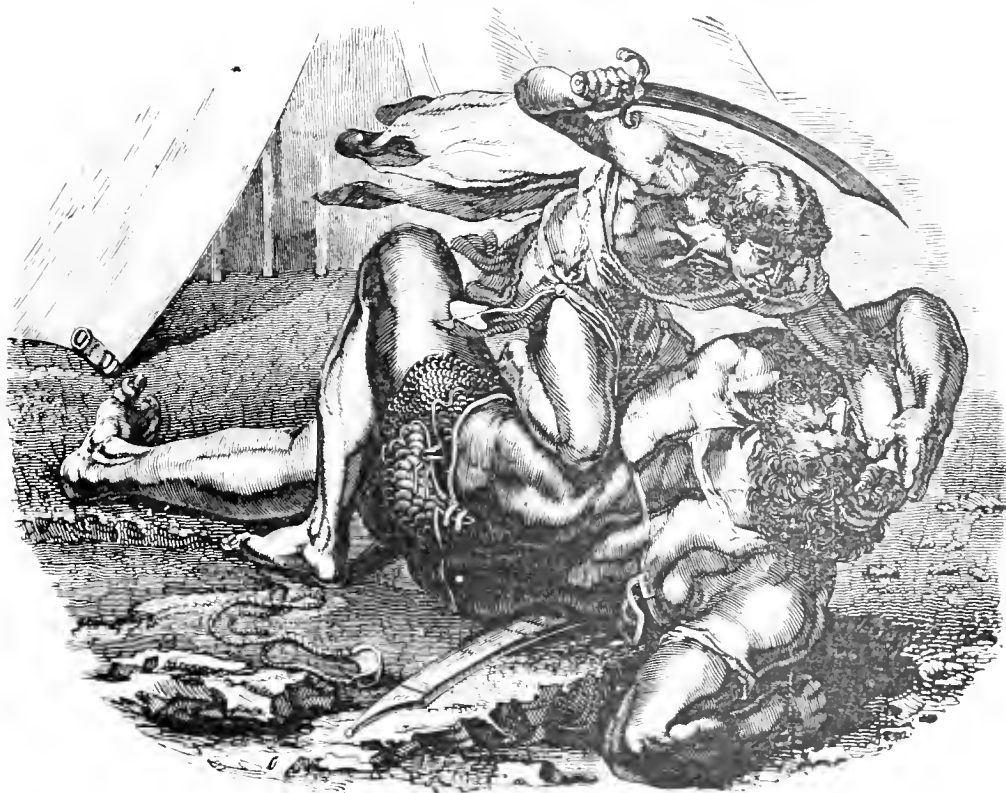
“Are these all your sons,” asks Samuel. “No,” says Jesse. “There is one more, but he is only a lad, and is minding the sheep.” “Send for him,” says Samuel. He is sent for. Presently in comes the shepherd boy, with his ruddy face, and his staff in his hand. He was, says the Bible, “of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to.” God whispers to Samuel,—“Arise, anoint him; for this is he. And he anointed him in the midst of his brethren.” I. Samuel xvi: 12, 13.

Thus David was chosen by God to be king. And Jesus was like David in this respect. God says of him,—“I have laid help on one that



is mighty; I have exalted one *chosen* out of the people." Ps. lxxxix: 19. In another place when speaking of Christ, he calls him "my servant—my *chosen*, in whom my soul delighteth." Is. xlii: 1; xliii: 10. But there is a difference between this word *chosen* as applied to David, and to Christ.

When David was chosen, there were many other persons among the Israelites who would have made good kings. No doubt any one of David's



David beheading Goliath.

brothers would have done very well for the king. And there was Jonathan, Saul's eldest son; he would have made a splendid king. Yet God chose David in preference to all the rest.

But it was different with Jesus when he was chosen to be our king. There was none who could have been king in his place. Among all the men in the world there was none. Among all the angels in heaven there was none. In all the other worlds that God has made there was none. When we are told that God hath *chosen* Christ to be our king, the meaning

is that he hath chosen the plan of saving and blessing the people through the sufferings and death of his Son, Jesus Christ, in preference to any other plan. And so the first thing in which Jesus is a king like David, is that he is—a *chosen* king.

*In the second place when told that Jesus is a king like David, we are taught that he was to be a—PREPARED—king.*

Whatever business we expect to engage in, as our life-work, it is necessary that we should make some preparation for it. If a boy determines to be a carpenter, or a mason, or a printer, or a merchant, he must make up his mind to learn that trade or business. Suppose you know a boy named John Smith. He gets through with going to school at the close of December, in one year, and in the first week of January, in the very next year, he has his sign painted and hung out over his door—JOHN SMITH, CARPENTER. He sets up to be a carpenter before he has learned the trade. Would he succeed as a carpenter? No. If you wanted a house built, would you trust *that* John Smith to build it for you? Never. Before setting up to be a carpenter, John Smith ought to spend several years working with some good carpenter, as an apprentice, in order that he might learn the trade. And it is the same with a lawyer, or doctor, or minister, or any other business. No matter how much learning we may have about other things, there must be a special preparation for the particular trade, or business that we expect to engage in.

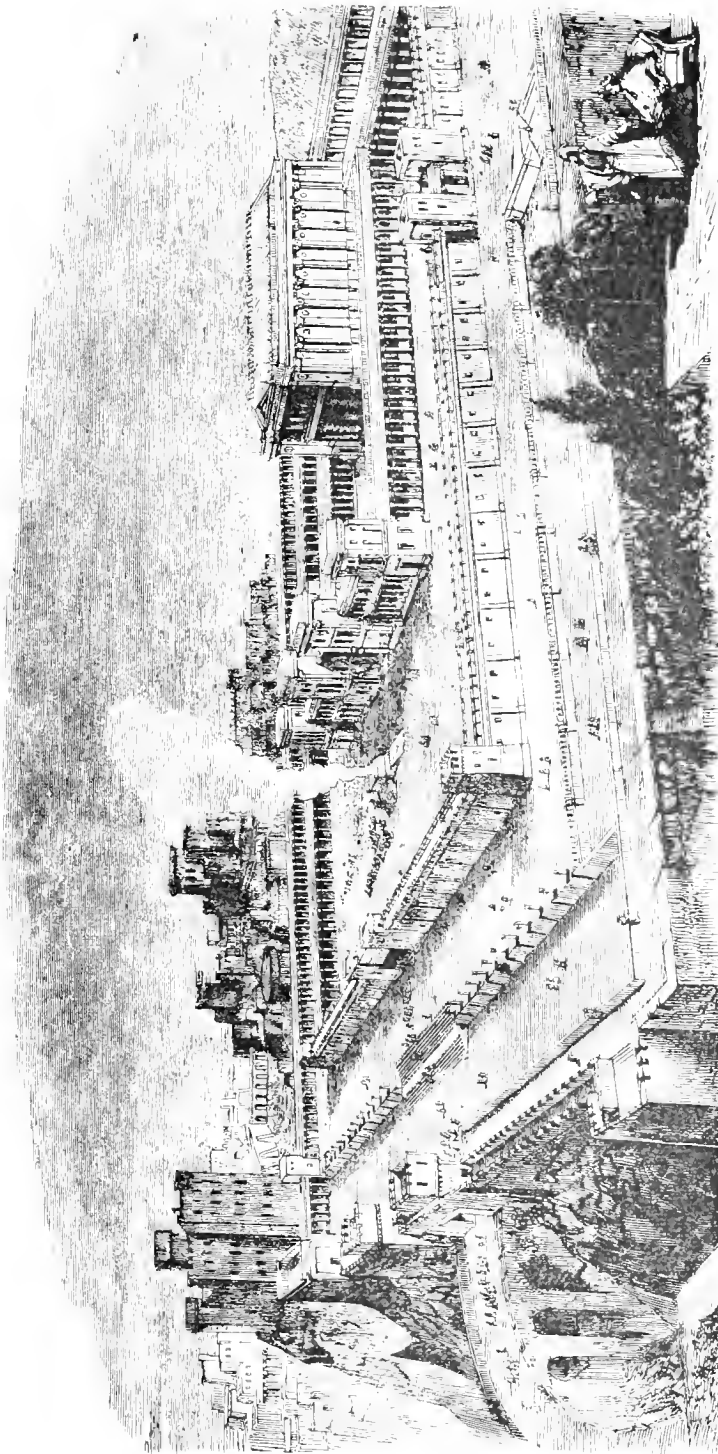
Look at Moses as an illustration. God raised him up to be the ruler, and law-giver, and as it were the king of Israel. Moses was educated in Egypt, as "the son of Pharaoh's daughter." He graduated in their best college. The Egyptians were the most learned people in the world, at that time; and Moses had learned all that they could teach him. And yet, when he was forty years old, with all his learning he was not prepared for the work he had to do. A special preparation was necessary to fit him for this work. And so God sent him into the wilderness. There, as a shepherd, he spent forty years more in quiet meditation and prayer, learning to know himself, and to govern his own heart. And *this* was the way in which God prepared him to be the governor and leader of his people.

And here we have David as another illustration. God first *chose* him to be king, and then *prepared* him to be king. David spent his boyhood



David Spares the life of Saul.





Solomon's Temple.

as a shepherd. This was very useful work for a boy, but minding sheep would not prepare him to be a king. So David had to serve an apprentice-

ship, and so learn the business of being a king. He enlisted in Saul's army, and became a soldier. In a little while, Saul became jealous of him. Then he got angry with him, and tried to kill him. David had to leave his home, and his family, and go wandering about for seven or eight years, in the wilderness, on the mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, while Saul was pursuing, and persecuting him all over the land. It is surprising how many narrow and hair-breadth escapes David had during those trying years. Almost every day brought some new danger to him. On two occasions Saul pursued him so closely that, without knowing it, he slept in different parts of the same great cave, where David and his men were hid. He could easily have killed Saul then if he had wished to do so. But this was not his desire. Yet on each of these occasions, at the still hour of midnight, David came cautiously up to the place where Saul lay sleeping. His men wanted to kill him, but David would not let them. At one time he took away the spear of Saul from his bolster; and at another, he cut off the hem of his robe, that the king might know how near David had been to him without hurting him. And the lessons that God was teaching David all this time were lessons of patience, and lessons of trust that he was to practice towards God; and lessons of tenderness and sympathy that he was to practice towards his people. He could not have been a good king unless he had learned these lessons well. And as we read about this part of David's life, and think of the painful trials through which he had to pass, we can understand the meaning of it. We see that this was the way in which God was educating him for the high and honorable office he was afterwards to fill. And when, at last, he came to be king over the nation of Israel, he was a *prepared* king.

And David was a figure of Christ in this respect. In a somewhat similar way, Jesus, our Great Saviour, was *prepared* for his office as king. We might think, indeed, that Jesus, as the Son of God, was so strong, so wise, so kind, so loving, as not to need any preparation to fit him for the great office he holds as our king and Saviour. But it is of no consequence what *we think* about such a matter as this. The only thing of any importance is to find out what *God says*. And God tells us that this preparation was needed. It was necessary for Jesus, when he became our king to

know, by his own personal experience what temptation, and sorrow, and trouble are.

And there are two passages in the New Testament, which teach us what the truth is on this point. In one of these, when the Apostle Paul is speaking of Jesus, he says:—*Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience*



Solomon's Judgment.

*by the things that he suffered.*" Heb. v: 8. We spoke a little while ago of Jesus as our priest. And one of the things he was to do as our priest, was to *teach*. And one of the most important things that Jesus had to teach us, was—*obedience*—how to obey God. And the way in which Jesus teaches us this lesson is by his example. "*He left us an example that we should follow his steps.*" 1. Rev. ii: 21. He learned obedience himself, that he might be able to teach us this most important lesson.

And the same apostle tells us again, when speaking of Jesus as "the captain of our salvation," that he "was made *perfect through sufferings*." Heb. ii: 10. And when we are told here that Jesus was "made perfect," it does not mean that he was ever imperfect as we are, on account of our sins. Jesus "knew no sin." Not the least shadow of sin ever belonged to him. The sufferings of Jesus made him "perfect" by preparing him to know, in his own experience what it is to bear temptations, and sorrows, and trials. And in this way as our friend, and Saviour, he was *prepared* to be our king, loving us, and sympathizing with us when we are bearing sufferings of any kind

*In the third place, when told that Jesus was to be a king like David, we are taught that he was to be—A VICTORIOUS—king.*

When David was only a boy, he was victorious over his earliest enemies, the lion and the bear that stole away the lambs from his flock. He went after them, without fear. He slew them, and saved his lambs from their devouring jaws. And it was the same when he went to the army, to visit his brothers who were soldiers. There he saw that great giant, Goliath, of Gath, come out from the camp. This proud Philistine shook his fist at the army of Israel, and dared any one to come out, and fight him. The bravest soldiers in Saul's army trembled at the sound of his voice. They were all afraid to go. But David was not afraid. He offered to go and fight the Philistine. His offer was accepted. He went without a sword, or a shield, or a spear. To the boasting Philistine, he said:—"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." 1. Samuel xvii: 45. He had nothing with him but his simple sling and a few smooth pebble-stones, taken out of the brook. He fought the giant with his sling alone. He sent one of those stones whizzing through the air. It smote him in the forehead, and brought him headlong to the ground. Then David drew the giant's sword, and smote him, and slew him with it, and took off his head.

And then, in the many battles that he afterwards fought, he was always victorious. He never lost a battle.

And Jesus was like David in this respect. In all that he has undertaken to do, he has proved himself victorious. When his enemies took



him prisoner, and nailed him to the cross, they thought they had conquered him for ever. But how greatly they were mistaken! Just then, and there he conquered them. The greatest victory Jesus ever gained, was gained



Visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon

as he hung bleeding and dying on the cross. Death and the grave were our great enemies. But while nailed to the tree on Calvary, in the words of the prophet Hosea, Jesus seemed to be saying to them,—“O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction!” Hos. xiii: 14. Then he conquered Satan, and all the powers of darkness. And ever since then he has gone on conquering. He has never lost a battle. He is always

victorious. He succeeds in everything he undertakes to do. His great work in the world is converting and saving souls. And he is wonderfully victorious in carrying on this work. No matter how hard or desperate any case seems, when he takes hold of it, he always succeeds. Look at some illustrations of the victorious working of Jesus.

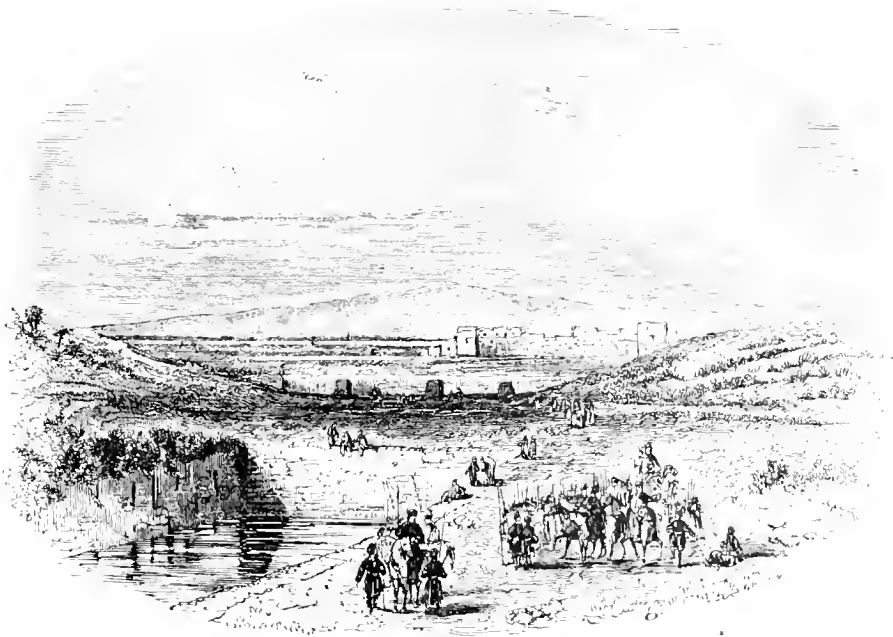
“The Infidel Converted by a Flower.” A gentleman living in Texas was an unbeliever. One day he was walking in his garden reading a book. He read this sentence,—“God works according to the rules of Geometry.” He closed the book, and began to think. “I always thought,” said he to himself, “that things were made by chance. Is there a rule about every thing?”

Just then he saw close by a sweet little flower, known as the “Texas Star.” He picked it up, and began to examine it. He counted the petals. He found there were five. He counted the stamens, there were five of them. He counted the divisions at the base of the flower, there were five of them. Then he examined another flower. It was the same with that. Another and another were examined. It was the same with all. There were five petals, and five stamens, and so on, in every case. “How is this?” he said to himself. “If these flowers were made by chance, some of them would have three petals, and some two, and some none. But now they all have five; never more, and never less. Here is work done by rule. If it is done in this way, there must be some one to do it. And who can that be? O, I see.” And then he picked up the little flower, and kissed it, and said:—“Bloom on, little flower; sing on little birds; you have a God, and I have a God; the God that made these little flowers made me.”

Here is another illustration of the victorious power of Jesus in winning souls to himself. We may call it:—

“An Infidel Converted by a Bird.” Some years ago a gentleman in New York, met a young friend of his, who had just returned from South America. The young man’s father had left him very rich. His money had led him into all sorts of wickedness, and before going to South America, he had become an open and avowed infidel. Now, he was an humble, earnest Christian. His friend was delighted to find what a blessed change had taken place in his views and feelings, since they had last met, and he asked him what it was that had led to this great change.

“I’ll tell you, gladly,” said the young man. “You know, I’m very fond of hunting; and while in South America, I spent much of my time in that way. One beautiful Sabbath morning I went into the woods in search of game. After awhile, feeling weary with roaming about, I sat down on a log to rest. While seated there, my attention was drawn to a neighboring tree by the cries of a bird, which was fluttering over her nest, apparently in great distress.



The Pools of Solomon,

“On looking round I soon found the cause of this trouble. I saw a venomous snake creeping along towards the tree, with his eye fixed on the bird and her nest. Presently I saw the male bird fly quickly away, as if anxious to get something. In a little while he returned with a twig, covered with leaves, in his mouth. Perching near the nest, he laid the twig very carefully over his mate, and her young, entirely covering them, and then, taking his place on one of the topmost branches of the tree, he awaited the arrival of the enemy.

“By this time the snake had reached the spot: twisting himself around the trunk, he climbed up the tree. Then gliding along the branch till he came near the nest, he lifted his head as if he were going to dart upon the

poor bird. He looked at the nest for a moment, and then, suddenly throwing back his head, as if he had been shot, he made his way down the tree as fast as he could, and went off.

"I felt very curious to find out the explanation of this strange conduct on the part of the snake; and so, climbing up the tree, and examining the leaves of the twig, which had been such a shield and defence to that helpless bird, I found that it had been broken off from a bush which is poisonous to the snake, and which it is never known to touch.

"In a moment the question arose in my mind—Who taught this bird its only weapon of defence in such an hour of danger? And quick as thought came the answer,—None, but God Almighty, that great Being whose very existence I have denied, but in whose pardoning mercy through Jesus Christ, I now find peace, and hope, and joy."

It is this victorious King, who is represented as seated on a white horse, "going forth conquering, and to conquer." Rev. xix: 11; vi: 2. And he will go on conquering, until, as St. Paul tells us, "at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii: 10, 16.

Well then may Jesus be spoken of, as a *victorious king*.

And now, passing on from David to Solomon, there are *two* things about his reign which remind us of Jesus.

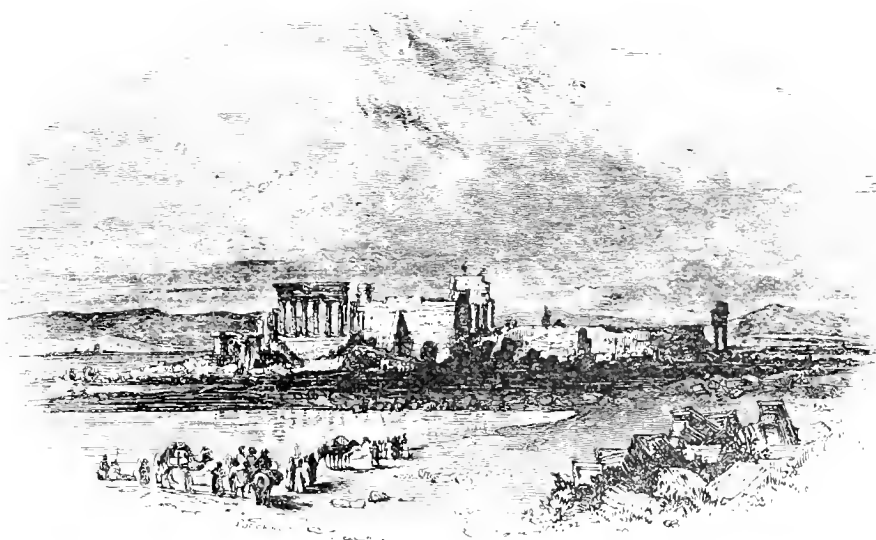
*When we think of Jesus as a king like Solomon, we are taught that he was to be—A WISE—king.*

We are told that God came to Solomon one night, soon after he had been made king. He told him to ask for anything he would like to have, and it should be given him. Most kings would have asked for great riches, or great honor, or great victories over their enemies. Solomon asked for nothing of this kind, but only for wisdom, that he might be able to govern his people well. This certainly showed that he was a wise king already, or else he would not have asked for such a gift as this.

God was pleased with his prayer, and answered it. He gave him wisdom, greater than any other king ever had. One proof of Solomon's wisdom has come down to us, in the books of the Bible that he wrote. These are the book of Proverbs, the book of Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. His wisdom was so great, that while he was reigning in

Jerusalem, the report of him went out through all the world. Our Saviour when on earth, spoke of—"the Queen of the South"—or of Sheba—who "came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon." We have an account of this visit in 2 Chron. ix: 1-9.

And Solomon reminds us of Jesus in this respect. He is indeed a wise king. There never was any one so wise as he is. St. Paul tells us that—"in him are hid *all the treasures* of wisdom and knowledge." Col. ii: 3. He knows all about everybody and everything. We have an illus-



The Dominions of Solomon—The Ruins of Tadmor.

tration of his wisdom in the wonderful way in which he converts people, and makes them his subjects.

"The Prisoner Converted by a Child."—Sometime ago a gentleman was standing on the platform of a railway station in New York. He had a little girl with him about seven years old. As they stood there some policemen came along. They had charge of a prisoner, whose wrists were chained together. He was a fierce, hard-featured, desperate looking fellow, who had committed a great crime. The officers were taking him to the penitentiary, where he was to be kept as a prisoner all the rest of his life.

The gentleman told his little daughter Alice about the man. She felt very much interested in him, and could not keep from looking at him, with her little eyes full of pity. It seemed to annoy the man to be looked at.

Alice saw this, and fearing that she had hurt his feelings, she slipped away from her father, and going near the prisoner, she whispered in his ear:—

“I didn’t mean to plague you, poor man; only I’m sorry for you. And Jesus is sorry for you, too.”

No one heard these whispered words except the prisoner, and God who hears all things. But they took strong hold of that hardened man’s feelings. He could not get rid of them. And the picture of that dear child’s face, with her grieved look of tender pity, went with him through all the long ride of that day; and when he passed into his lonely cell, those words, and that picture passed in with him. And they remained with him, producing a strange effect.

He had been in that prison before. The keeper knew him well. He was the most troublesome prisoner they ever had. And now, when he had come back for life, he expected to have nothing but trouble in trying to manage him.

But, to the surprise and wonder of the keeper, from that time on, the prisoner he had dreaded so much, gave him no more trouble. And as time passed on, he grew gentler and more pleasant every day. But the wonder was explained, when as months passed by, and the change continued, the Chaplain asked him one day, how it was that he had turned out so different a man from what they had expected?

“It is easily explained,” said the man. “A child was sorry for me. She told me that Jesus was sorry for me; and her pity and his broke my heart.”

Those simple words of that loving child, with the tidings of a Saviour’s love, led that hardened sinner to repentance. He became a Christian. Jesus is a wise king, seeing he can convert men in a way so wonderful, and make them his servants.

And then we see what a wise king he is in the way in which he governs those who become his servants. A great many things happen to them, which they do not understand at the time; but after waiting awhile, they find that it was all for the best. The Bible tells us that Jesus is “*making all things to work together for good to those who love him.*” Rom. viii: 28. Here is an illustration of the way in which this wise king rules, or governs for the good of his people:—

“All for the Best.”—An aged servant of God was traveling in the East. He rode on a donkey, as is the custom in that country. At the close of the day he came to a town where he intended to spend the night. The gates were closed and he could not get in. Hungry and thirsty, he was obliged to pass the night in the open air. Instead of fretting about it, he said,—“What God orders is best,” and laid himself down to sleep. Near him was his faithful donkey. The old man had a lighted lantern which he hung up on the tree, under whose spreading branches he was to rest. Before long a storm arose, and put out the light in his lantern. Then a lion, that was prowling near, sprung upon his donkey, and devoured it. He awoke, and found himself alone, and in the dark. “What God does is best,” was still his saying, as quietly he waited for the day.

As soon as the morning came, he arose and went to the town. The gates were open, for during the night it had been robbed and plundered. A band of robbers had attacked it. They had killed the inhabitants, or taken them away prisoners. And now the good man saw the meaning of what had happened to him during the night. It was well that the storm had put out the light in his lantern, or it would have drawn the robbers to him. And it was well that the lion had killed his donkey, for by its loud braying, it might have caused the death of its master. And so with a grateful heart, he said to himself,—“How true it is that what God does is best!”

Like Solomon, Jesus is a *wise* king.

*And lastly, when we think of Jesus as a king like Solomon, we see that he was to be—A PEACEFUL—king.*

Solomon had no bear or lion to go after, and no giant to fight, as was the case with his father. David fought many battles, but Solomon never fought one. His reign was a prosperous and peaceful one. When he was comparing his own reign with that of his father's, he said,—“David, my father had wars about him on every side; but God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary, nor evil occurrent.” 1. Kings v: 3, 4. And when we think of Solomon, in his peaceful reign, it reminds us of Jesus. He is indeed a *peaceful* king. He is called—“*The Prince of Peace.*” When the angels appeared to the shepherds of Bethlehem, to

sing their glad song over the birth of Jesus, "*Peace on Earth*" was what they loved to sing about. The gospel of Jesus is "the gospel of peace." The kingdom of Jesus, when established in our world, will be—a kingdom of peace.

Everything connected with this kingdom will be so peaceful that the Prophet Isaiah tells us, even the wild animals will lose their fierceness, and live in peace with each other. In describing that peaceful kingdom, these are the words that he uses:—"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow, and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw,"—or hay—"like the ox." Isaiah xi: 6, 7.

And the followers of Jesus are expected to be like him. They must have the same mind or spirit that was in him. They must be peace-loving, and peace-making people. The rule by which they must live and walk is that given in Rom. xii: 18:—"If it be possible, as much as lieth in *you*, live peaceably with all men." What a blessed thing it will be for our world when all the people who live in it shall, as the apostle says,—“follow after the things which make for peace.” Rom. xiv: 19. Here is a striking illustration, from a converted heathen, to show how far the grace of God will go in overcoming the strongest passions of men, and teaching them to follow out the peace-loving spirit of the gospel of Jesus. We may call it—

“Revenge Overcome; or, Grace Conquering.”—An English missionary in New Zealand was about to leave his work there, for awhile, and make a visit to England. On the Sunday before leaving, he held a service, at which were present all who had been brought to a knowledge of Christ through his ministry. The church was filled with hundreds of the New Zealanders. After the sermon was over the Lord's Supper was administered. The first rail was filled, when the missionary, Mr. Taylor, saw a man who was kneeling at one end of the chancel, suddenly get up—before receiving the bread and wine—walk down the whole length of the church and take his seat. While the missionary was wondering what this meant, and before he had recovered from his surprise, the man returned, knelt down in the same place, and received the communion.



The man's manner in doing this was so strange, that, after the service was over, Mr. Taylor spoke to him about it, and asked him why he had disturbed the whole congregation in that way.

This was his answer:—"Mr. Taylor, when I went up to receive the communion, I did not know at whose side I should be kneeling. Judge of my surprise and horror, when I found that the man kneeling next to me was the very man, who, a few years before, had murdered my father, and drank his blood. You know how very strong the feeling of blood revenge is among the New Zealanders. I was a heathen then, and I swore, by my gods, that I would murder that man the first time I saw him. I had never seen him since then, till we met at the chancel rail. You may imagine how I felt when I found him kneeling by my side. I could not stand it. It overpowered me. I rose and walked away from the chancel. While doing this I seemed to see that upper room in Jerusalem where this supper was instituted. I seemed to hear a voice say,—“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” But I was not willing to go back. I sat down in my seat. Then another scene seemed to pass before my mind. I thought I saw my Saviour hanging on the cross. His head was bowed. The blood was dropping from his wounds. I seemed to hear his prayer for his murderers,—‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ Then I went back, and kneeled down beside the man whose hands had once been red with the blood of my father. But my revenge was overcome. The grace of God had turned my enmity into love.” This man was a true servant of Jesus, the peaceful King. Let us all seek to have the same spirit. Then we shall be children of peace

Thus we have spoken of Jesus as the king like David and Solomon. This sets him before us as a *chosen* king—a *prepared* king—a *victorious* king—a *wise* king—a *peaceful* king.





## JONAH AND JESUS CONTRASTED AND COMPARED.



THE history of Jonah is very interesting and instructive. It shows us clearly, as St. Paul says, that "whatsoever things were written afore-time," in the Old Testament, "were written for our learning." Rom. xv: 4. The histories written there, both of the persons who lived then and of the things they did, were all intended to give us instructions about the character and work of the *Great Saviour*, who was to appear in the fulness of time, that he might die for our sins, and "open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

But we should never have thought of looking for any figure or type of Christ in the history of Jonah, if our blessed Lord himself, had not taught us to do so. He has done this, however. He has spoken so clearly and









plainly of Jonah, and of certain things in his history, as intended to teach us about himself, that we need not hesitate a moment to make this use of them. The things written in the history of Jonah, were intended to teach us valuable lessons respecting Christ. Here is another of those Old Testament *shadows*, that are thrown across our path, on purpose to point us to Jesus.

There is no part of the Old Testament history to which so much objection has been made, and with which so much fault has been found, as this of Jonah. Some people think that the story of Jonah and the great fish is so strange that it cannot be true. But our Saviour knew whether it was true, or not, when he was on earth. If it had not been true, he would not have spoken of it as he did. The way in which he spoke of it, proves that it *is* true. If we believe what the Bible tells us about Jesus, we must believe what the Bible tells us about Jonah. *Jesus endorsed Jonah.* We are just as sure therefore, that the history of Jonah is a true history, as we are sure that two and two make four, or as we are sure that the sun rises in the East, and sets in the West. And so, while we are speaking of the types and figures of the Old Testament we must not leave Jonah out. We find a shadow here that points us to Jesus.

There are some things in Jonah's history and character, very unlike anything we find in the history and character of Jesus. But there are some things in Jonah in which he was like Jesus. Now, when we set the points of difference between two things opposite to each other, we call it a *contrast*. And when we speak of the points in which two things are alike, we call it a *comparison*. We have to do both of these things in this case. And so, our present subject may be thus stated:—

### “JONAH AND JESUS CONTRASTED AND COMPARED.”

The contrast between Jonah and Jesus, takes in *three* things; and the comparison between them, takes in *two* things.

*When we think of Jonah as a preacher, the first point of contrast between him and Jesus is that he was an—UNWILLING—preacher.*

Jonah lived about eight hundred or eight hundred and fifty years before Christ. He was one of the earlier of the Old Testament prophets. We find the book that bears his name near the middle of what are called

the twelve minor prophets. If it were placed in our Bibles just where it belongs in the order of time, then it would appear before the prophecies of Isaiah. Jonah lived about the same time that Elijah and Elisha did. The Jews say that he was the son of that good widow woman at Zarephath, with whom Elijah made his home during the latter part of the great famine sent upon the land in the days of King Ahab. If this were so, then Jonah owed his life to the prayers of Elijah, the man of God.

We know little about this prophet, except what we read of him in the book that bears his name. This book begins without any introduction, by telling us of a particular work that God wished Jonah to do. He was commanded to go to Nineveh, and preach to the people there about their sins.

This city was one of the oldest in the world. The first time we find it mentioned in the Bible is in Gen. x: 9-12. Nimrod, "the mighty hunter," spoken of in that chapter, is supposed to have been the founder of it. It was beautifully situated on the banks of the river Tigris, in the land of Assyria. At the time when Jonah was sent to Nineveh to preach, it was more than a thousand years old. What a grand old city it must have been! And it is in connection with this famous city that we find out what an *unwilling* prophet Jonah was. Nineveh was a very wicked city. The people who lived in it were all idolaters. It would seem as if, in some way or other, they had become more wicked than usual about this time. They had provoked God to anger by their sins. He told Jonah to go there and preach to the people about their wickedness. But, strange as it appears, Jonah was not willing to go.

We are not told what was the reason of this unwillingness. It might have been that he thought they would not listen to him; or it might have been that he was afraid they would be angry with him and kill him; or it might have been because they were Gentiles, and he was a Jew. The Jews were, what we should call, very narrow-minded, on this subject. They thought that God did not love, or care, for the people of any other nation than theirs. They could not bear to hear any one express an opinion different from this. When our Saviour was on earth, he was preaching one day in the synagogue to the people of the city of Nazareth, where he had been brought up. In the course of his sermon he mentioned one or two



instances in which God had shown kindness to some people who were not of their nation. But they would not hear him. It made them so angry that they broke up the meeting, and even tried to kill him. You can see the account of it in Luke iv: 16-30. And the same thing happened to St. Paul. He was making a speech to his countrymen, the Jews in the city of Jerusalem. He told them all about his wonderful conversion; and they listened very attentively to what he was saying, till he mentioned that God



Joppa.

had told him to go and preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Then they would listen to him no longer, but cried out,—“Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live.” Acts, xxiii: 22. And this may have been the reason why Jonah was unwilling to go and preach to the men of Nineveh. But, whatever the reason was certain it is that Jonah was unwilling to go. In the first chapter of Jonah, and the third verse, we are told that, “he arose and fled to Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord.” He went down to Joppa, now called Jaffa, which was a city on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, about thirty miles from Jerusalem

Here he found a ship going to Tarshish, and took his passage on board of her.

We do not know exactly where Tarshish was. Some suppose it was the city of Tartessus in Spain: others think it was the city of Tarsus, on the coast of Asia Minor, which was the birth-place of St. Paul. How strange it was that one of God's prophets should have supposed that by taking a sea-voyage, he could get away from "the presence of the Lord!" Did he not know that God was in every place? Had he never read what David said in Psalm cxxxix: 7-12?

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

Here, then we see Jonah as an *unwilling* prophet or preacher.

And how unlike Jesus he was in this respect! What a contrast between Jonah and Jesus we have here! When God wanted Jesus to come down from heaven and preach to men about their sins, he was perfectly willing to come. We have the very words that he spoke about it, in the fortieth Psalm, verses seven and eight. "Lo! I come to do thy will, O, my God. I *delight* to do it." Jonah would have had nothing to suffer if he had gone to Nineveh to do what God told him; but still he was unwilling to go. Jesus had much to suffer when he came to do God's will. He knew all about this suffering before he came; and yet he was willing to come. Here was a great contrast between Jonah and Jesus.

*But the next point in this contrast is seen when we remember that Jonah was—A SUCCESSFUL—preacher.*

What happened to Jonah during the voyage that he took from Joppa we shall see by and by. God taught him a lesson before that voyage was

ended, which he never forgot. He learned that lesson well, and it had a good effect upon him. It took away all his unwillingness to obey God. And when he had taught him this lesson, God said to Jonah again,—“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it, the preaching that I bid thee.” *Jonah iii: 2.* And he went. And here we are told that, “Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days’ journey.” This means that it would take a person three days to walk round it. A day’s journey,



Iarsus.

for a person traveling on foot is about twenty miles. And, at this rate, Nineveh must have been about twenty miles in length or breadth, and about sixty miles in circumference. We are told that there were in Nineveh, at this time, “six score thousand persons who could not discern between their right hand and their left.” *Ch. iv: 11.* This means that there were a hundred and twenty thousand children in it, who were not more than three or four years old. Now, in a large city, for every child of this age, it is safe to reckon that there are at least five persons who are older. And if we multiply a hundred and twenty thousand by five, it

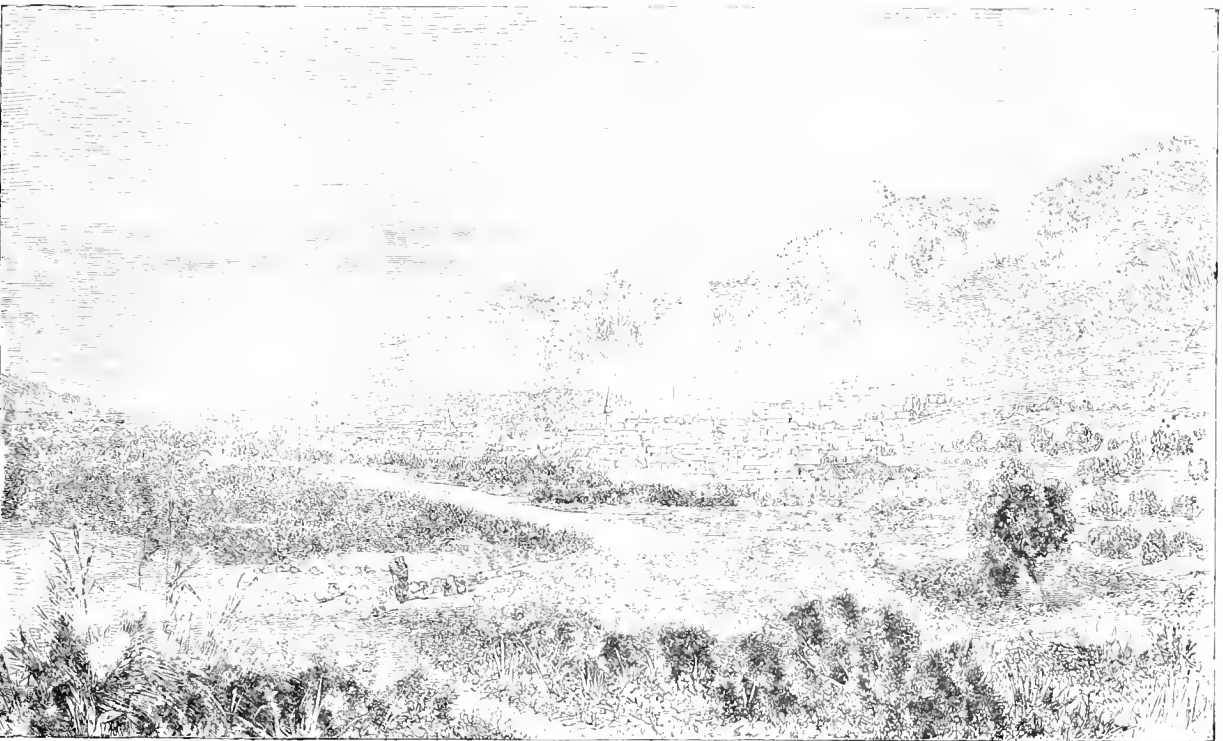
gives us six hundred thousand as the number of the inhabitants of Nineveh, at the time of Jonah's visit there.

A modern city of six hundred thousand inhabitants would not cover as much ground as Nineveh covered. London, the largest city in the world, has a population more than five times as great as that of Nineveh, and yet it does not cover near as much ground as that ancient city did. But it is easy enough to account for this difference. For the houses in Nineveh were not so crowded together as they are in London and New York, and most of our modern cities. In those eastern cities they had beautiful gardens and large cultivated fields between many of the houses, and in this way the great space here spoken of, would easily be filled up.

But Nineveh was not only a great city as to its size, it was great also as to its *beauty*. We have no description of the appearance it presented when Jonah saw it. But lately a great deal has been found out about this old city, so that we can form a very good idea of how it looked at that time.

About two hundred years after Jonah's death, Nineveh was taken and destroyed. This destruction was most thorough and complete. The inhabitants were all either destroyed or taken away. Neither man, nor woman, nor child was left to live there. The great temples and splendid palaces of Nineveh were entirely overthrown. And in foretelling the destruction of this famous city, the prophet Nahum makes use of two very remarkable expressions: one was that "her palaces should be *dissolved*." Ch. ii: 6. The other is in Ch. i: 14, where God says of this city,—"*I will make thy grave, for thou art vile.*" Now we might talk about *destroying* our public buildings, but we never should talk of *dissolving* them. There is our capitol at Washington, made of white marble. We can easily understand how it might be destroyed, but we cannot understand how it could be *dissolved*. But it is very easy to see how this could happen to Nineveh. Her temples and palaces had their foundations and lower stories built of stone, at least they were covered or faced with slabs of stone. But the upper parts of all those buildings were made of sun-dried bricks. When these were thrown down, and exposed to the influence of the weather, they would crumble, or turn to dust or clay. As the prophet said they would "*be dissolved.*" And so the upper parts of those great buildings

would crumble, and bury up the lower portions of them that were made of stone. The prophet said that Nineveh should be buried. And this was just what happened to it. And so completely was it buried, and covered up by its own ruins, that for long centuries no trace of Nineveh had ever been seen. Nobody knew just where the city had stood. Indeed, some men who professed not to believe the Bible, went so far as to say that there



An Eastern City.

never had been such a city as Nineveh, and that what the Bible said about it was not true.

But no one can say this any longer; for within a few years past the ruins of Nineveh have been discovered. By digging down into the great heaps and mounds spread over the plains, near the river Tigris, very wonderful things have been found out. The remains of splendid temples, and palaces, and other buildings, have been uncovered. These are spread out over miles and miles of the surrounding country. The walls of many of these buildings are lined with great slabs of stone. These slabs are filled with sculptured figures. Here are found huge winged lions and bulls.

There are also representations of sieges and battle-scenes. The names and figures of kings mentioned in the Bible are found here. The name of Hezekiah, king of Judah has been found among these ruins. And not only the name, but the figure of Sennacherib, the Assyrian king, mentioned in the Bible has also been found. It is cut in stone, larger than life, and represents him as sitting on his throne, and holding a sceptre in his hand.

Great numbers of these stone slabs have been dug out from the ruins, carried over to England, and put in the British Museum in London. After examining the foundations of one of these ruined palaces, an English architect has made a drawing of what he supposes was the appearance which it presented at the time when Jonah visited Nineveh. As Jonah drew nigh, he saw the walls of the city rising up a hundred feet high. Along on the walls were fifteen hundred towers, each rising to the height of two hundred feet. And then, as he looked through the gates he would see those splendid buildings. How grand it must have appeared!

And now Jonah enters the gate of the city. He is a total stranger to the men of Nineveh. He makes his way along the broad avenues that lead through the city. Here and there, in front of its great palaces—in the market places, and wherever the people meet together—he pauses, and delivers his solemn message:—“*Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed.*” Through all the length and breadth of the great city those startling words are ringing. The people are wonderfully aroused. They meet in crowds, and talk about the strange preacher, and his message. A wonderful spell seems to come over them. They listen with awe. No one mocks or trifles. The report of the Jewish prophet and his message spreads through the city. The king hears of it in his palace. It has the same effect on him. He proclaims a fast. All the people, from the highest to the lowest, spend three days in fasting and prayer. They entreat God to pardon their sins, and turn from his anger. Their prayers were heard, and answered, and Nineveh was spared.

And here we see how wonderfully successful Jonah was as a prophet, or preacher. There never was anything like it. Why, even our blessed Lord himself, was not so successful in preaching as Jonah was. He felt this, and spoke of it when he was on earth. He said to the Jews, one day,

—“The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold a greater than Jonah is here.” Matth. xii: 41. Here Jesus makes this very point of contrast that we are making between himself and Jonah. “A greater than Jonah,” indeed he was, and yet, in preaching, Jonah was more successful than he. Think of the *person* of Jesus. How full of



An Oriental Garden.

perfection he was! Then think of the person of Jonah. How full of *im-*perfection he was. Yet Jonah was more successful than Jesus in preaching. Think of the *words* of Jesus. They were gracious words, full of wisdom, and love, and tenderness. Then think of the words of Jonah. They told of nothing but the anger of God. Yet Jonah was more successful than Jesus in preaching. Think of the *works* of Jesus. How many miracles he performed! Jonah did not perform one miracle. And yet

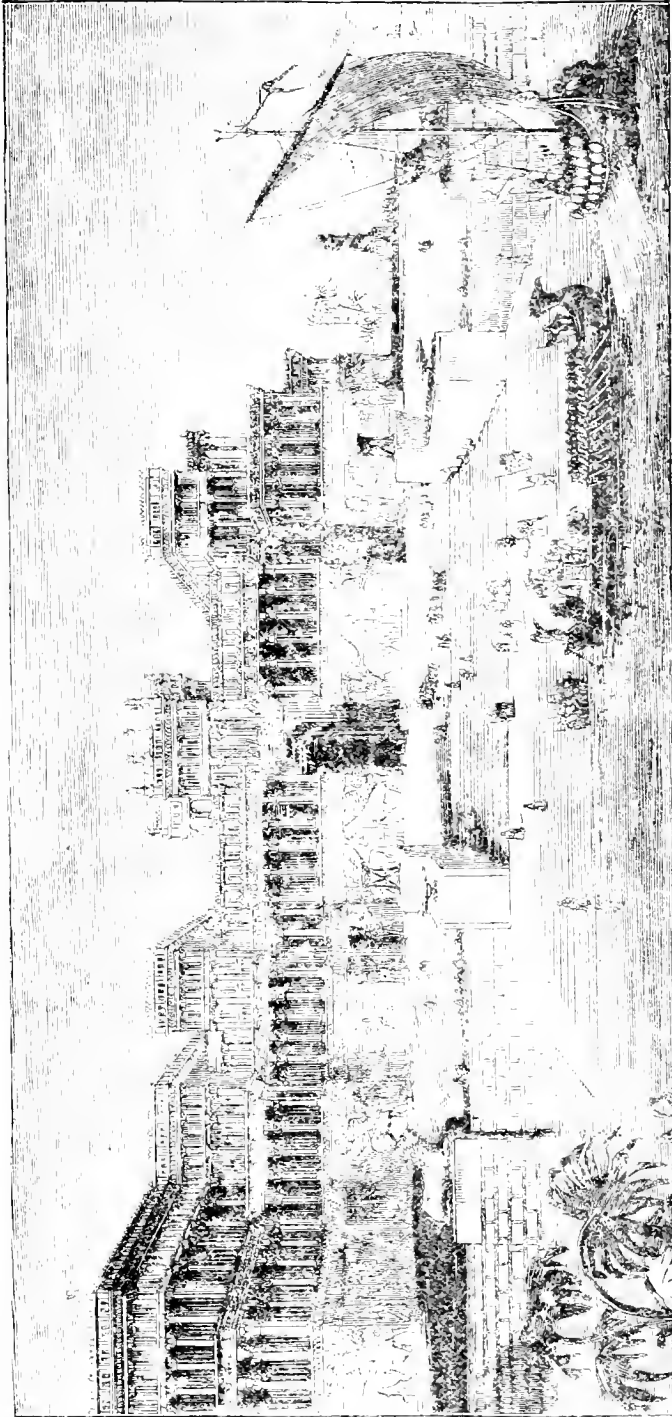
this point of contrast remains. Notwithstanding all these things, Jonah was more successful as a preacher than Jesus was.

*But there is another point of contrast between Jonah and Jesus, and this is that Jonah was—A SELFISH—preacher.*

When Jonah had finished his preaching at Nineveh, he waited awhile under the shade of the gourd, which God had caused to grow for him, to see if God was going to destroy the city, as he had threatened to do. But when he found that, on account of the repentance of the people of Nineveh, God had pardoned their sins, and was not going to destroy them, he was very much displeased, and wanted to die. How strange it was that a good man should have given way to such wrong feelings! Yet, *this* is just what Jonah did.

We have often heard of ministers who were distressed and troubled because they were *not* successful in leading men to repentance through their preaching. But in Jonah we have an example—the only one ever known—of a preacher distressed, and troubled because he *was* successful in leading men to repentance by his preaching. You may ask how we can account for this? Why, it seems Jonah was afraid that if Nineveh was not destroyed, as he had said it would be, people would think he was not a true prophet. This is the most natural explanation of Jonah's feelings about this matter that can be given. And if this was the real secret of his trouble, then, we see clearly that he cared more for *his own* honor and glory than he did for the honor and glory of God. This shows us how selfish Jonah was. And what a contrast there was between Jonah and Jesus here! Think of Jonah fretting, and worrying, and wishing to die, because the people of Nineveh had repented under his preaching, and been forgiven, and so had been saved from destruction. And then think of Jesus weeping over the people of Jerusalem, because they *would not* repent and be saved. Think of his tender, touching lamentation, as "he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, *Oh, Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*" Jonah thought only about his own glory; but Jesus thought only about the glory of his Father. It was this feeling which led him to offer the prayer—"Father, glorify thy name." John xii: 28. *This* was always the strongest feeling with him. *This* was





Palace at Nineveh.

what he always desired, and longed for above everything else. Jonah was a selfish prophet, but, in Jesus there was no selfishness.

Thus we have looked at the *contrast* between Jonah and Jesus, or the things in which they *differed* from each other. Now let us look at the *comparison* between them, or the things in which they were alike.

*Jonah was*—READY TO DIE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS,—*and in this he was like Jesus.*

A terrible storm overtook the ship in which Jonah sailed from Joppa. It was so severe as to threaten the destruction of the ship. The sailors called on their heathen gods, but the storm grew worse. They threw some of the cargo overboard to lighten the ship, yet all the while the storm increased. When they found it growing more and more furious, they made up their minds that it must have been sent on account of the wickedness committed by some one on board. They cast lots to find whether it was one of the crew, or the passenger, Jonah, who was guilty. The lot fell on Jonah. They asked him what he had done. He told them frankly who he was, and what he had done. Then they were more afraid than ever. They asked Jonah what they should do. He told them to throw him overboard, as he knew the storm had been sent on his account. And this brings out the point that we are now speaking of. It shows that Jonah was *ready to die for the sake of others*. He might have refused to let them throw him into the sea. He might have said:—"You shall not throw me overboard. I have as much right to live as anybody. I shall cling to the ship, just as long as she remains afloat." But he did not say any such thing. He knew the storm had come on his account. He expected it would cease at once, when he was out of the way. And so he was ready to die for the sake of others. We do not see many good things in Jonah's character; but this was one, and we are glad to speak of it.

Jonah was a figure of Christ in his readiness to die for others. True, he was but a feeble figure of Christ in this respect. The comparison is not very striking here. Christ's readiness to die for us was much greater than the readiness of Jonah to die for the sake of his shipmates. Jonah was ready to die when he could not very well help it. It seemed as if he was compelled to die. But Jesus was willing to die when he was not obliged to do so. He offered freely to die in our stead.

And then again the persons for whom Jonah was ready to die, were his companions, his shipmates, his friends; but Christ died for "the un-

godly"—Rom. v: 6—for his "enemies"—Rom. v: 8. This was wonderful indeed. Nothing that ever happened, in all the world was half so wonderful as this. We see how true it is, as Jesus said that—"*a greater than Jonah is here.*" In his readiness to die for others, he was greater than Jonah. In his love for his enemies he was greater than Jonah. One thing in which Jonah was like Jesus was in his readiness to die for others.

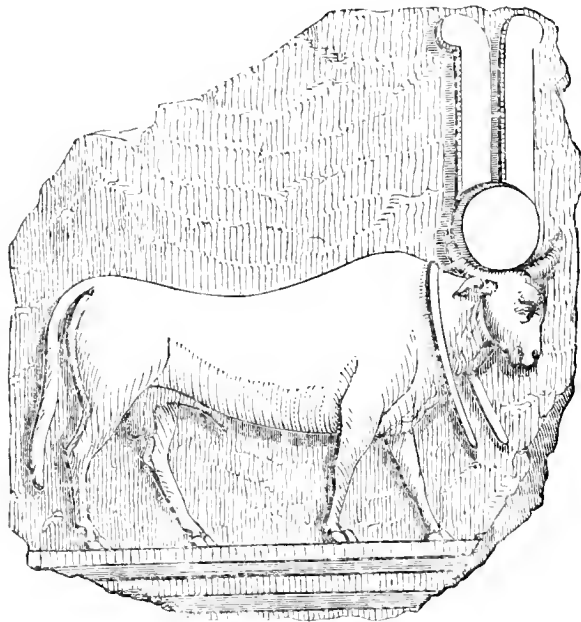
*And then there was another thing in which Jonah was like Jesus, this was—THE LENGTH OF TIME THAT HE WAS BURIED.*

This was the point of comparison between Jonah and himself, that our Saviour especially referred to. He said, when he was on earth, that—"as Jonah was three days and three nights in the fish's belly, so the Son of man should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matth. xii: 40. This is the part of Jonah's history that has been the most found fault with. Yet Jesus takes particular pains to assure us that this part is true. *If we do not believe what the Bible tells us about Jonah, we cannot believe what it tells us about Jesus.*

What we read in the history of Jonah is this:—Ch. i: 14-17—that the sailors tried for a long time to save the ship, without throwing him into the sea; but they found it was impossible. They must either do this, or they would all be lost. Then they prayed to God, and asked him to pardon them for what they were going to do; after this they threw Jonah into the foaming waters. Immediately the storm ceased; and the sea became calm again. But what became of Jonah? We are told that "the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." Here you see, it does not say "a whale," but "a great fish." We do find the word whale in our English New Testament, when it tells us what Jesus said about Jonah. But then, remember that Jesus did not speak in English, but in Greek; and the Greek word that Jesus used here does not mean a whale, but a great fish. It was "a great fish" which "God had prepared" for this occasion. It would have been very easy for God to have made a great fish, on purpose to be the living grave of Jonah for the time here spoken of. But it was not necessary for him to do so. There were fish enough in the sea that could have swallowed a man without hurting him, and then have thrown him up alive.

There is a large white shark in the Mediterranean sea which has been known to swallow a man alive, and whole. Müller, a well-known natural historian, of good character, relates an incident that illustrates this part of our subject very well:—

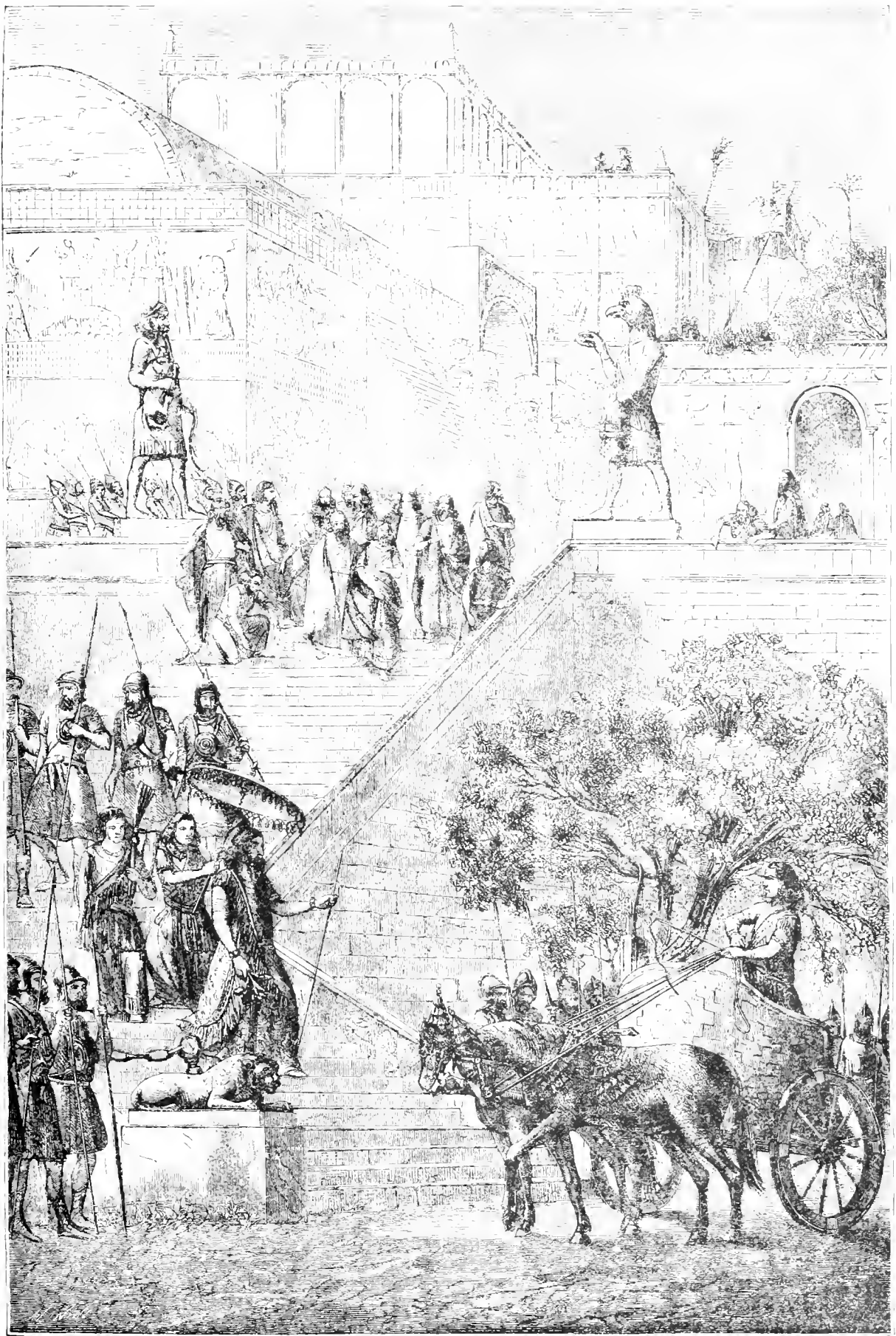
An English man-of-war was lying at anchor in one of the ports of the Mediterranean. While doing some work on the sides of the ship, one of the sailors fell overboard. Before he could be taken out of the water a shark swallowed him, and he disappeared. The captain ordered a gun to



Bas-relief from Nineveh.

be fired at the fish. The ball struck it, and it vomited up the sailor. He was picked up by his comrades alive, and very little hurt. The sailors followed up the shark, caught it, and killed it. It was twenty feet in length, and weighed nearly four thousand pounds. Sharks have been found in this sea as much as sixty feet in length. The sailor, who had been swallowed by this fish, took its skin off carefully, had it stuffed; carried it home to England, and exhibited it as a show to illustrate the Bible story of Jonah and the great fish.

That "great fish" of which the Bible speaks, became, as it were, the tomb, or grave, or burial place of Jonah. He remained in that fish exactly



A Temple of Nineveh Restored.



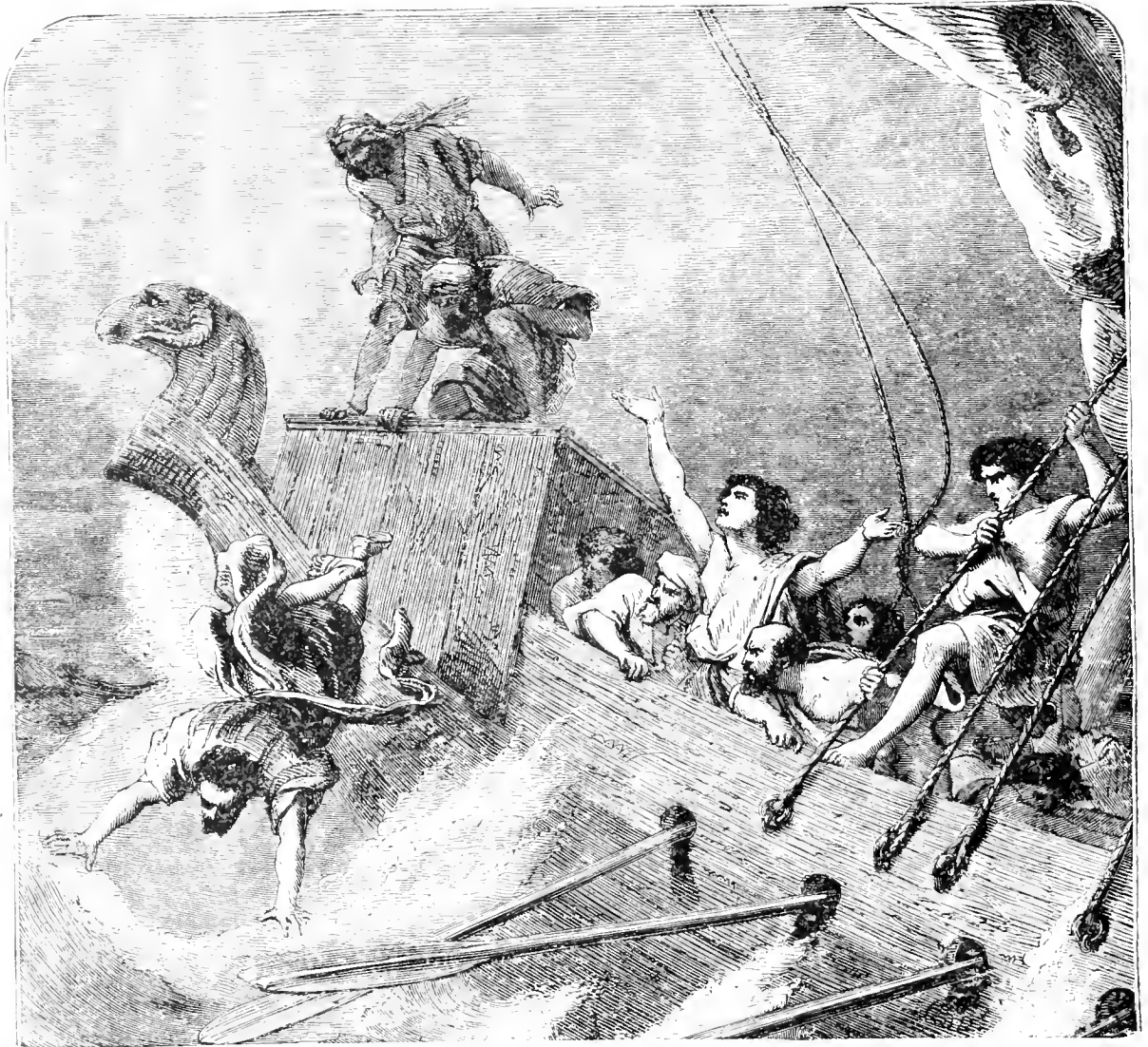
the same length of time that Jesus was buried in that rocky tomb near Jerusalem. And this was just the point of the comparison that Jesus made between Jonah and himself. He said, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the fish's belly, so should the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matth. xii: 40. This does not mean exactly three whole days and three whole nights, according to our way of speaking. When we wish to speak of the twenty-four hours which make up a whole day and a whole night, we can only do



A Ship in a Storm.

it by using three separate words. We have to say, day and night. But the Jews and the Greeks had one word which expressed the time denoted by the three words just spoken of. It was a word of four syllables, and was made by putting together the Greek word for day and for night. They called this time a nuk-tha-me-ron. And then they called any part of a day, or any part of a night, a nuk-tha-me-ron. So that if they wished to speak of the whole day, or one whole night, and two parts of a day and night, they would apply this same word to each, and call them three nuk-tha-me-rons, or three days and nights. The Jews reckoned their day and night from six o'clock in the evening of one day to six o'clock in the evening of the next day. And so if the fish swallowed Jonah, say about three o'clock

on Friday afternoon, and he remained in the fish till some time on Sunday morning, we can see how that would make, according to the Jewish way



Jonah thrown into the Sea.

of reckoning, three days and three nights. From three o'clock on Friday afternoon to six o'clock in the evening would make a part of the Friday, or the first day and night. From six o'clock on Friday evening to six o'clock on Saturday evening would make the whole of the Saturday, or second day and night; while from six o'clock on Saturday evening to any





Excavations at Nineveh.



time on Sunday morning would make part of the Sunday, or the third day and night. And so we see that as the Jews counted time, Jonah was in the fish three days and three nights, and this was just the length of time during which our Saviour lay buried in the grave. And so the comparison here is complete. Jonah and Jesus were alike in the *length of time they were buried*.

We have spoken of three points of contrast between Jonah and Jesus, or three things in which Jonah was very unlike Jesus. He was an *unwilling* preacher—a *successful* preacher—a *selfish* preacher. We have also spoken of two points of comparison between Jonah and Jesus, or two things in which they were like each other:—*They were both ready to die for others; and they were both buried for the same length of time.*

And when we think of the wonderful love of Jesus in being willing to lie down in the grave for us, it should lead us to love him with all our hearts, and make us willing to go anywhere, and do anything to show our love for him. Let me close with two illustrations. One shows what effect the thought of God's love had on a little child; the other shows what effect it had upon a minister of the gospel:—

A Christian mother had been talking one day to her little boy, three years old, about the love of God in sending his Son into the world to die for us. It seemed to touch the little fellow's heart very much. By and by, while still thinking of what his mother had taught him; she saw him all alone by himself, kissing his little hand and waving it up towards the sky.

"What are you doing, Birdie?" asked his mother. "I 'tans up and tisses Dod," was his sweet reply. It was a childlike, but beautiful illustration of the text,—"*We love him because he first loved us.*" So the thought of Christ's love should lead us all to love him.

The other story may be called "The Minister in the Robber's Vault." The incident I am about to tell, occurred many years ago in Edinburgh, during the time when the cholera was prevailing there fearfully. A minister of the gospel had been out nearly all day visiting the sick and dying, and burying the dead. He went home feeling weary and worn. When he went to bed he could not sleep, for thinking of the many sad and sorrowful scenes he had witnessed during the day. He lay tossing in his bed till midnight. Then there came a loud ring at his door-bell.

The servant went to the door, and came back to say that a man there was very anxious to see him. He dressed himself and went down. He held up the light to get a good view of the man; but it was not encouraging. His face was covered with a thick, shaggy-beard, and he looked very much like a robber.

“What do you want with me?” asked the minister.

“I want you to come and visit a dying man who wishes very much to see you.”

“What is his complaint?”

“Cholera.”

The minister hesitated about going. The man saw it, and said,—  
“Don’t be afraid, sir. Leave your watch and money behind, you’ll be safe.”

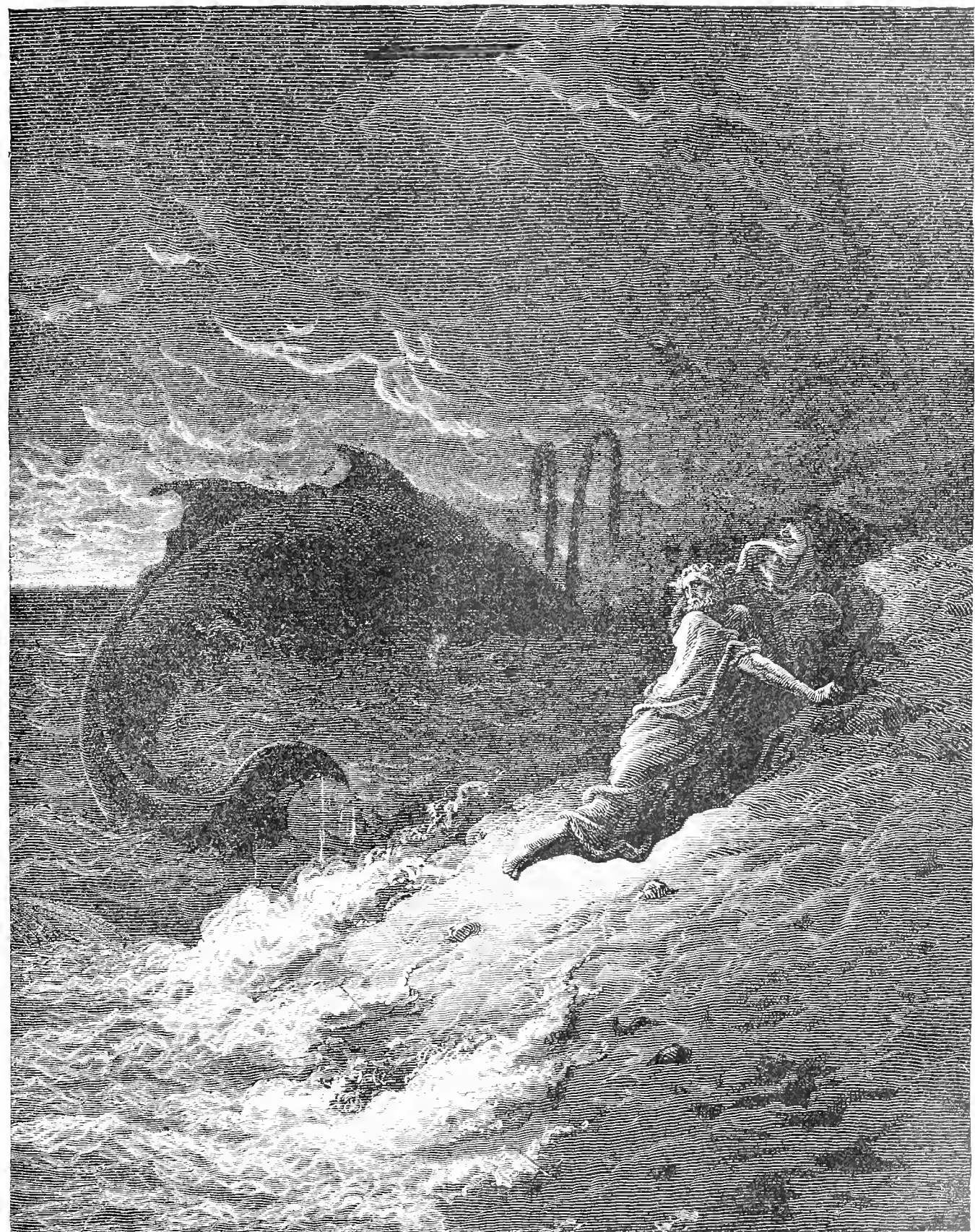
He resolved to go. But before starting he went back to his room, and kneeling down in prayer, asked God to take care of him, and keep him from harm.

Then he went with the strange man. He led him a long way through the town. At last they came to a lonely place in the outskirts. Here the man stopped, took out a jack-knife and scraped away some dirt from the ground. Presently he opened a trap-door which led into a deep, dark vault. The minister felt afraid at the idea of going down into such a place as that. “Don’t be afraid, sir,” said the man. Then he let himself down by a rope. On reaching the bottom, he lighted a candle, and setting a ladder up to the mouth of the vault, asked the minister to come down. Again he lifted up his heart in silent prayer to God for his protection, and went down the ladder. As he reached the bottom he felt like Daniel in the den of lions. Gazing round in the dim light he saw a number of savage looking men lying about in different positions. That gloomy vault was the retreat of a band of robbers. The man led the minister to the further end of the vault. There, on a bed of straw, lay a man dying of cholera. Sitting down on a stool by his side, he said to the dying man:—

“Did you wish to see me, my friend?”

“I did,” he replied, in a clear, decided voice.

“Why do you wish to see me?”



Jonah cast forth by the Whale.



“Because,” said the man, “some time ago I wandered into your church and heard you read some words that I have never been able to forget. I wish to hear them again before I die. I thought I could hide myself from God. But he has found me out, and laid his hand upon me. O, God! I have sinned against thee; thou art just; can there be any hope for a wretch like me?” and his whole frame shook with his deep feeling.

“Can you tell any of the words that will bring the passage to my memory?”

“Oh! it was something about God knowing my down-sitting, and mine uprising, and understanding my thoughts and my words.”

Then the minister knew it was the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm. He took out his Bible and read that Psalm. “Oh! that is it, that is it,” said the man in a low voice; “thank God I have heard it again.”

Then the minister said,—“The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

“To save sinners,” said he; “but, oh! not such a sinner as I have been.”

“Yes, such as you are. Hear what God says:—‘Come, now, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.’”

“But, how? O, how?” eagerly asked the dying man. “What must I do to be saved?”

“‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;’ your past sins will not condemn you. Christ ‘is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him.’”

The man stretched out his clasped hands, and with his eyes raised towards heaven, exclaimed—“God be merciful to me a sinner,” and with that prayer upon his lips he died.

The minister spoke a few earnest, solemn words to the companions of the dead man; and then the man who had brought him there, led him out of the vault, and back towards his home. How thankful that minister felt that God had made him willing to go, as soon as he was sent for, that he might preach the gospel to that poor dying sinner!

And when we think of Jesus, how different he was from Jonah; when we think of the love that made him willing to leave heaven; to come into

our dark world; to march on to the cross; to die there, and then to lie down in the grave, in order that we might be saved, how we should love him! and how ready we should be to go anywhere, and do anything that he wishes us to do that we may show our love for him! We ought to love him because he first loved us. And when we remember the greatness of his love, we may well say for ourselves individually:—

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a tribute far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my life, my soul, my all.”









THE GOOD SHEPHERD.



## CHRIST, THE SHEPHERD.



AMONG the names, or titles by which Jesus, our Saviour, was spoken of in the Old Testament, there is none that is oftener used than this name of Shepherd. If we look all through the Bible, we shall find that there are about twenty different places in which this title is given to him. David was speaking of him, when he said, "The Lord is my shepherd." Ps. xxiii: 1. And so again in Ps. lxxx: 1, when he says,—“Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock.” The Prophet Ezekiel—(Ch. xxxiv: 23), speaks of him as “*one* Shepherd,” who was to be set up over his flock. He was called “*one* Shepherd,” because there never was to be another like him. In one place God, the Father calls him “*my* Shepherd.” He says “Awake, O sword, against the man that is *my* Shepherd.” Zach. xiii: 7. And he might well speak of him in this way, because it was he who gave him to be our

shepherd. And when Jesus came into our world he applied these Old Testament titles to himself. He said,—“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” John x: 11.

The Apostle Paul calls him—“that *great* shepherd of the sheep.” Heb. xiii: 20. And the Apostle Peter calls him, in one place, “the shepherd and bishop of our souls.” I. Peter ii: 25. And in another place he speaks of him as—“the *chief* shepherd.” I. Peter v: 4. And while there are nearly twenty places in the Bible, in which Jesus is spoken of as a shepherd, there are more than fifty places in which his people are spoken of as sheep, or lambs.

And this word shepherd is one of the sweetest titles given to Jesus, our Saviour, in the Bible. It is very instructive. It teaches us what Jesus was to be to his people, and what he was to do for them. Sheep and lambs are interesting creatures. When we walk through the beautiful green fields in summer, we love to see the flocks of sheep quietly feeding there, and the young lambs frisking and playing about them.

But, in our country, shepherds are not so interesting as they were in the lands where the Bible was written. And the reason is that our way of keeping sheep is so different from what it was there. Our farmers generally, have no wild beasts to be afraid of. Their fields, too, are all fenced in. And so, when the shepherd turns a flock of sheep into the field, all he has to do is, to put up the bars, and the sheep are safe. He does not have to stay there with them, and watch them all the time. But it is different in eastern countries. Wild beasts prowl about there. And the fields have no fences around them. In journeying for forty days through the Holy Land, I do not remember to have seen a single fence. Of course then, the shepherd could not leave his sheep. He had to stay with them as long as they were out at pasture. He had to watch them both by day and by night. You remember, that the shepherds of Bethlehem were “keeping watch over their flock *by night*,” when the angel of the Lord appeared, to tell them of the Saviour’s birth. And, if we remember all that a shepherd, in those eastern countries, had to do for his sheep, then, when we find the prophets speaking of Jesus as one who was to be a shepherd, and when we find him calling himself “the good shepherd,” we may learn a great deal from this subject about what he was to do for his people.

We can easily think of *four* things which the shepherd did for his sheep. And when we see that these are the very things that Jesus does for us, we can understand how truly he may be called "The Shepherd."

*The first thing that a shepherd does for his sheep is, that—HE SEEKS THEM when lost.*

When Jesus was on earth, in one of his beautiful parables, he said:—"If a man have a hundred sheep, and lose one of them, he leaveth the



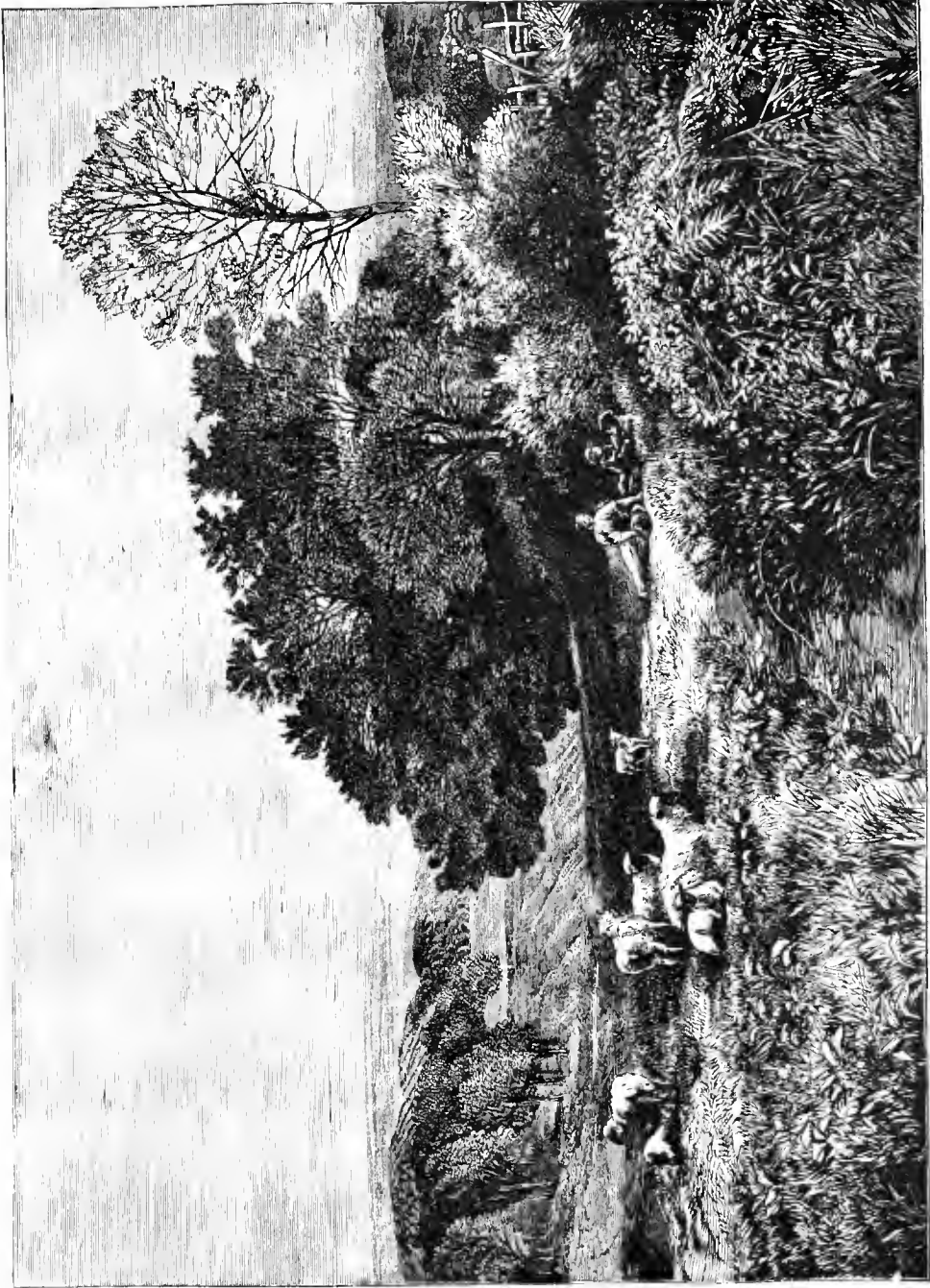
"I am the Good Shepherd."

ninety and nine in the wilderness, and goeth after that which is lost until he find it." This is only what any shepherd would do in the East, when he had lost one of his sheep. And shepherds in other countries would do the same.

An English minister of the gospel, who was spending the summer in Switzerland, gives an interesting account of a Swiss shepherd, one of whose lambs had wandered away from the flock, and was lost. The shepherd went after it to try and find it. He wandered away off into a wild part of the mountains, where there was no beaten path. Then he looked around in every direction. He called aloud to the lamb, and then

listened to hear an answer to his call. After calling many times he thought he heard a faint sound. Again he called, and listened. He heard the sound again. It was the bleating of a lamb. It seemed to come from a distance, far below where he stood. He went to the edge of a rock, and looked carefully over a steep precipice down into the valley, or chasm that opened beneath. There, far below, he saw the lamb on a little ledge, projecting from the steep side of the mountain. There was no path leading to it, either from above or from below. After studying awhile he saw that there was a ledge in the rock, about twenty feet above where the lamb was; and if he could only get down to this ledge he felt sure he could haul it up with a rope. Then he went home and got some ropes, and took some friends along with him. On returning to the place, he fastened one of the ropes under his arms, and taking another rope in his hand, was lowered down over the edge of the precipice by his friends. There he was, for awhile, hanging by that rope, over the awful depth that lay beneath him. Gently they lowered him down, farther and farther. At last he reached the ledge, and landed safely on it. Then he was about twenty feet above the lamb. It was impossible for him to get any nearer to it. Then he took the rope he had brought with him, and making a slip-knot, or noose, in the end of it, he lowered it down, and tried to get it over the head of the lamb, that, in this way, he might draw it up. But the lamb shook its head every time the rope came near it, and was not willing to be caught in the noose. But the shepherd kept on trying, and finally the noose slipped over the lamb's head, and in a moment, before he could be much hurt, he was drawn up to the ledge where the shepherd was. Then taking the poor lamb in his arms, the shepherd signalled to his friends above. They drew him safely up, and so the lost lamb was found and brought back in safety to the fold.

And when we think of this poor lamb that had wandered from the fold, and was lost upon the mountains, we have a good illustration of our condition as we are born into this world. The Bible says,—“*All we, like sheep, have gone astray.*” Isaiah liii: 6. And it is because we have wandered off from God, and have lost ourselves, that Jesus, the “Good Shepherd” came to seek and to find us. This is what he is doing all the time. He is going after the sheep and the lambs that have lost their way, and trying to bring them back to himself.



We love to see the Sheep quietly feeding.





“But none of the ransomed ever knew  
How deep were the waters crossed;  
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,  
Ere he found his sheep that was lost.  
Out in the desert he heard its cry—  
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.”

And it is wonderful how many strange ways Jesus takes, and what surprising means he uses to find his lost lambs, and bring them back to his fold. It would be easy to fill a volume with illustrations of the different ways in which this is done, but we have only room for one or two. Generally, he makes use of Christian parents, or Christian teachers to bring the lost lambs into his fold. But he has many other ways besides this.

“Jesus Sought Him.” A Chinaman applied to a minister to be allowed to join his church. The minister asked him some questions to find out whether he understood what it is to be a Christian, and how we are to be saved. Among other things, he asked him,—“How did you find Jesus?” In his broken English, the poor man replied:—“Me no find Jesus at all. *Jesus him find me.*”

“Awakened at the Bottom of the Sea.” A missionary, of the South Sea Islands, was very much interested in one of the natives who attended his church. This man was a pearl-diver. He was much impressed by a sermon he heard the missionary preach one Sunday, on the text, “Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matth. xi: 28. The missionary had many talks with this man, and tried all he could to persuade him to become a Christian. But he would not listen to him. He drove away all serious thoughts from his mind, and resolved that he would not become a Christian.

After awhile, when he was down at the bottom of the sea seeking for pearls, he picked up a shell that had some writing on it. He looked at it for a moment, and saw it was the missionary’s text,—“Come unto me, etc.” “Well,” said he to himself, “this is very strange. If the voice of God is following me to the bottom of the sea, it’s time for me to listen to it.” And he did so. He soon became a Christian. And that shell through which God had spoken to him so strangely from the bottom of the sea, he always afterwards kept on the table in his room on which his Bible stood.

What a curious museum it would make if we could have collected together an account of all the different means that Jesus has employed to bring his lost sheep back to himself!

The first thing that Jesus, as the shepherd does for his sheep, is that he seeks them when lost.

*But when a shepherd has found his sheep, the next thing he does for them is, to—FEED AND TAKE CARE OF THEM.*



Shepherd of the Pyrenees.

And it was just this view of what Jesus, the good Shepherd, was to do for his sheep, that the Prophet Isaiah was speaking of, when he said:—“He shall feed his flock, like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom.” Isaiah xl: 11. The shepherd leads his flock to places where there is good pasture for them; and when the pasture is eaten up in one place, he seeks out another for them, and leads them to it.

A gentleman who was spending some time at the city of Berne, in Switzerland, saw a good deal of the care which the shepherds there take of their flocks, and as it illustrates this part of our subject, I will quote

here, a part of what he says:—"One evening, as I was walking over the hills which surround the city, and looking at the distant Alps, in all the golden glory of the sunset, I saw a shepherd coming up the grassy-slope of the mountain, followed by a flock of sheep. Presently he stopped, and sat down on a stone, while the sheep began to graze around him. As I came near him, I saw he was fondling and playing with one of the lambs. I stood and watched him. He called gently, and two or three of the sheep and lambs came running up to him, and ate out of his hand the grass which he had plucked for them. Then they nestled down at his feet, as we often see a dog do. He took up one of the lambs and held it in his arms. I was very much interested in all this. I asked him if he ever used a dog to help him take care of his sheep."

"No," said he, "they always mind when I call them, and do what I tell them to do."

When I heard this, I said to myself, Ah! I wonder if the "Good Shepherd" can say this of all his sheep and lambs?

While he was speaking, I plucked some grass, and offered it to two of the lambs nearest to me. They began to eat; but as soon as the shepherd called them, though he offered them nothing, they left me, and ran to his side. I tried to imitate his call, but they took no notice of me. And then I thought of the words of Jesus, when he said, "My sheep hear my voice, and follow me. *But a stranger will they not hear, for they know not the voice of strangers.*" John x: 5.

Soon after this he rose, and went down the hill, followed by his faithful flock, and I went home, feeling that I never understood so well before, how "the Good Shepherd" feeds his sheep, and takes care of them. The Bible, with all the precious truths and promises that it contains, is the green pasture into which he leads his flock, and where he feeds them with food convenient for them.

But he *cares for* his sheep, as well as feeds them. We are told to "cast all our care on him, for *he careth for us.*" How many incidents we meet with that show us what great and tender care "the Good Shepherd" takes of his sheep and lambs.

"The Orphan Provided For." A gentleman was walking one day, in the streets of Philadelphia, when a little boy met him, and asked him for



"Into a Wild Part of the Mountains."

a penny. At first he felt disposed to send him off without giving him anything; but there was something in the little fellow's face that interested him; so he said to him:—"What do you want a penny for, my boy?"

"To buy some bread, sir," was the ready answer.

“Have you had nothing to eat to-day?”

“Nothing, sir.”

“Boy, are you really telling the truth?” he asked, as he looked the boy earnestly in the face.

“Indeed I am, sir,” said the boy; and as he said this, the tears started into his eyes.

“Have you a father?” asked the gentleman, who now felt interested in the boy.

“No, sir, father is dead.”

“Where is your mother?”

“She died last night. Come with me sir and I’ll show you where my mother is.”

Taking the hand of the boy, the gentleman went with him down a narrow alley, and stopped before a poor, miserable place, which the boy called home. Pushing open a door, he pointed to a dead body that lay upon a heap of straw, saying,—“There is my mother, sir.” Then he burst into tears, and cried as if his heart would break. The gentleman could not keep from joining his own tears with those of the poor orphan boy.

“Who was with your mother when she died, my boy?” asked the stranger.

“Nobody but me, sir.”

“Did your mother say anything before she died?”

“Yes sir; she said God will take care of you, my son.”

Sooner than that dying mother had dared to hope, God had honored and rewarded her faith in him, by sending to her poor, lonely and friendless boy, one whose heart was touched with tender pity for him. This gentleman was a good Christian man. He was very well off. He took that orphan child to his home, and brought him up as his own child. But it was Jesus, “the Good Shepherd” who did this. He heard the prayer of that dying mother, when she asked him to take care of her poor child, about to be left alone in the world. Jesus saw that helpless little one in his loneliness. He led the boy to ask a penny from that gentleman. He caused him to listen to the boy, and feel an interest in him. And he put it into the heart of that gentleman to feel pity for the boy, to become a friend and father to him, and take him to his own home. Here we have a

good illustration of one of the ways in which "the Good Shepherd" takes care of his sheep and lambs. And so we may well say that the second



Caught in the thicket.

thing which a shepherd does for his sheep, is to feed them, and take care of them. And Jesus may well be called a shepherd, because this is what he does for the sheep of his flock.

*But there is a third thing that a shepherd does for his sheep, he—*  
**PROTECTS—them.**

Sheep are weak and feeble creatures. They are needy creatures, too, and are not able to provide for their own wants. And then they are exposed to many dangers. Wolves, and bears, and lions are their enemies. The sheep cannot protect themselves against these enemies. And if the shepherd is not a good shepherd, like Jesus; if he should neglect to take proper care of his sheep, they will often be in danger of being injured or destroyed by their enemies. And sometimes they are exposed to this danger, even when they have good shepherds.

You remember how it was with David when he was a shepherd boy, and had charge of his father's flocks in the fields and forests of Bethlehem. There came one day, a lion, and another day a bear, and each seized a lamb from the flock, and ran away with it. David was a good shepherd. He could not bear to see one of his lambs exposed to danger without doing all in his power for its protection. So he ran boldly after the wild beasts. He fought with them, and slew them, and brought his lambs back in safety to the fold.

And Jesus might well be spoken of as a shepherd, because he is very careful to protect his sheep. He has many ways of doing this. Let us take one or two illustrations to show how he does it.

"Protection Through Prayer." If a shepherd hears one of his lambs bleating piteously, he knows that something is the matter, and hastens to see what it is. But the voice of prayer is to Jesus like the bleating of one of his lambs, and when he hears it, he is always ready to do what is needed for their help and protection.

In a village in Germany, a poor widow was once lying sick in bed, when suddenly and unexpectedly a party of soldiers came into her room. They said they had been sent to stay at her house, and, in a rude, violent way, they demanded bread, and meat, and beer.

Trembling with fear, the poor woman said that she had not bread enough in the house for herself and her little ones to eat, and that for her to feed them was impossible.

This made the men very angry. They began to break and smash things to pieces. They swore at her terribly, and even threatened to beat her, unless she gave them what they wanted at once.

Just then, a little boy, about four years old, who had run into a corner to hide himself, in terror, when the soldiers first entered the house, came out from his hiding place. He kneeled down by his mother's bed, and clasping his little hands together, while the tears were rolling down his cheeks, offered this simple, touching prayer:—"O, dear, kind Jesus, please don't let them hurt mother! make them good to her, and bless them. Amen."

One of the soldiers who had a little boy at home, of about the same age, was very much moved by this dear child's prayer. It brought the tears to his eyes, and in a low voice he said:—"Comrades, let's go somewhere else. In a house where a pious child like this lives, God himself must dwell. This is no place for us. Let's go."

They did go; but before going, the soldier put two pieces of money in the hand of the child. Here we see how "the Good Shepherd" protects his sheep.

"A Child's Preservation." A little boy named George, was sent by his mother on an errand to a neighboring village. On his way there, he was overtaken by a thunder-storm. When it began to rain, he looked around for shelter, and seeing a great hollow tree by the roadside, he crept into it, and so was sheltered nicely from the pelting storm.

After awhile he heard a voice in quick, hurried tones, calling,—“George, George, come out there directly!” He thought it was his mother's voice. He had been taught to obey at once. And so, though the storm was still raging, he hastened from his hiding-place. He had no sooner done so, than there came a bright flash of lightning. It struck the tree in which George had been hiding, and rent it in splinters to the ground.

Now, if George had not heard that voice calling him just at that moment, or if he had not obeyed at once, what he thought was his mother's call, he would have been killed on the spot.

George was a good, pious boy, one of the lambs of Jesus. And when he saw how wonderfully his life had been preserved, he kneeled down there in the midst of the rain to thank the good shepherd for protecting him.

And though it turned out that the voice he heard was not *his* mother's voice, and was not spoken to him; it was the voice of another mother, in





An Oriental Shepherd.

a cottage near by, calling *her* son George, to come out from a neighboring thicket; yet that only made it more wonderful still. For God made use of a voice that was calling to another, and protected him from danger in that way. If God had sent an angel from heaven to call George out from that tree, it would not have been, at all, more wonderful than that he should have made use of the voice of that strange woman to do it.

If a shepherd finds that in the field where his sheep are put to pasture, there are some dangerous places, where the sheep may get astray, or fall over a precipice and be wounded or killed, he builds fences round those places. And those fences are intended for the protection of the sheep. If the sheep do not mind the fences, but get through them, or jump over them, the wolf may catch them, and devour them, or they may suffer harm in some other way.

“Keep Away From the Wheels.” Little Charley Williams lived near a mill. He was very fond of going among the workmen and the young people employed there. The foreman of the mill had often said to him,—“Charley, my boy, be sure and *keep away from the wheels.*”

For awhile, he minded these important words. But, by and by, he grew careless about them, and thought he could go where he pleased without danger. One day he was walking through the mill, and not minding what he was doing. He went too near the wheels. The band caught his little coat, and drew him into the wheels; and before the men could stop the machinery and take him out, several of his limbs were broken; and though he was not killed, he was dreadfully mangled and hurt, and felt the effect of his carelessness all his life.

Now, the commands and directions which we have in the Bible, are the fences which Jesus, the good shepherd puts around his sheep to keep them from harm. If we mind them, we shall find protection in them. If we forget them, or neglect them, we shall surely run into danger.

The third thing that the shepherd does for his sheep is, that he protects them.

*There is only one thing of which I would speak that the shepherd does for his sheep, and, this is—he—SAVES—them.*

During the summer-time, the shepherd in the lands of the Bible, used to lead his sheep about over the hills and the mountains wherever he

could find pasture for them. And when the winter came, he would lead them home, and put them in the fold he had prepared for them. There they would be sheltered from the cold and the storms; they would be safe from all danger, and have everything they needed to make them comfortable.



“David had charge of his father's flock.”

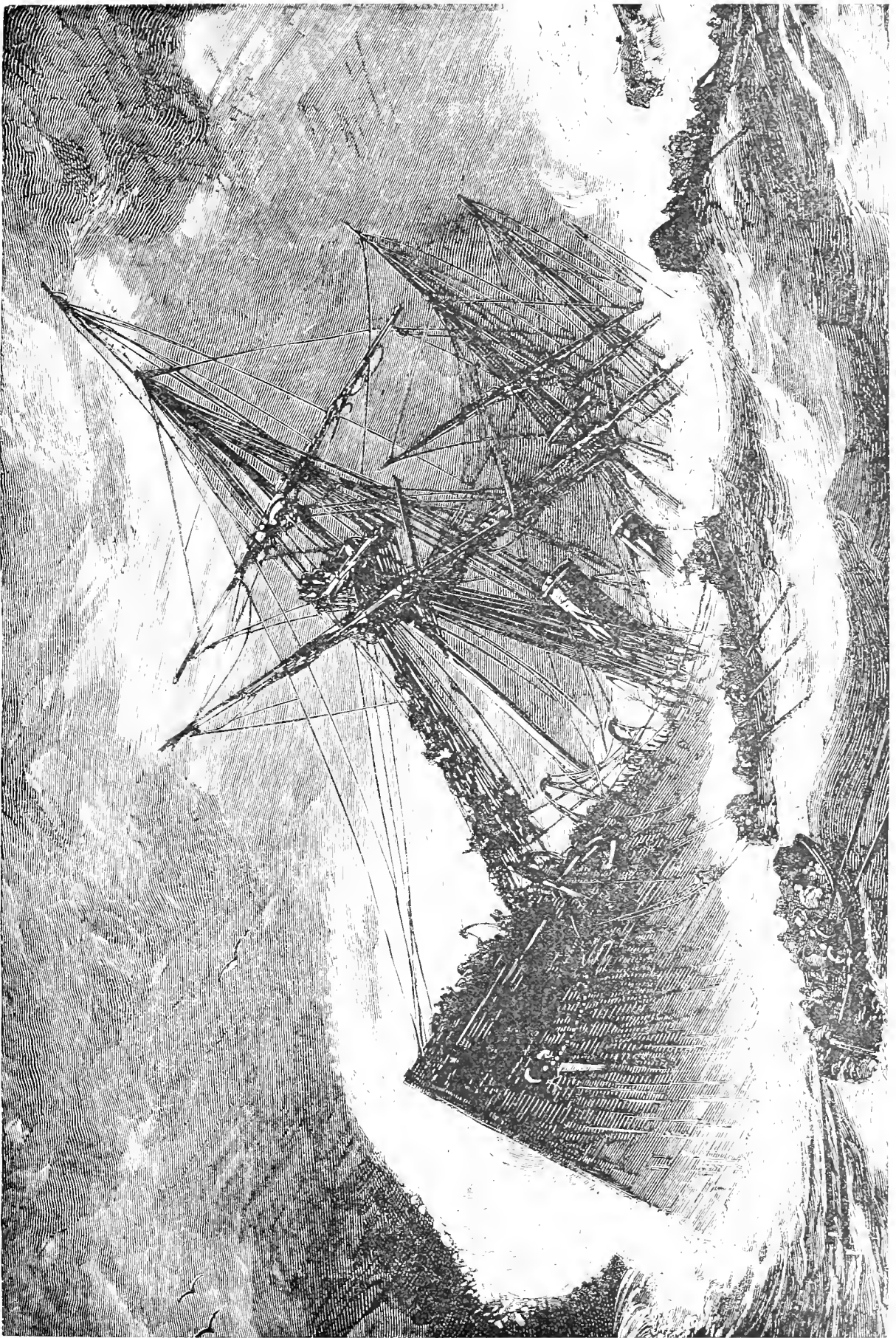
And this is what Jesus, our shepherd, is doing for his sheep. When he was here on earth, he said to his disciples, “I go to *prepare a place for you.*” John xiv: 3. That place is the heavenly fold which he is preparing for all the sheep and lambs of his flock. And all that he does for his sheep in this world is done in order that he may bring them to this fold at last. For this, he seeks them when they are lost. For this, he feeds them and takes care of them. And for this, he protects them when they are in danger. Salvation, or being saved, means being brought to this heavenly fold. And Jesus is called our Saviour, because he brings all his people at

last to that blessed place. To have the soul saved, is the greatest blessing that we can ask, or that God can give. When the life of the body is in danger, men will give all they have in the world to save that life. But when the life of the soul is in danger, to save *that* life, is a blessing unspeakably greater.

"Saved." You remember that fearful shipwreck of the steamer Atlantic, which took place some years ago on the coast of Halifax. Hundreds of lives were lost, and dreadful scenes were witnessed on that occasion. Among the passengers on board that steamer, was a merchant from Boston, who was a Christian man. When his family heard of the wreck, they were in great distress. How anxiously they waited to hear from him! How eagerly they examined the newspapers, and read over the list of the lost to see if his name was among them! But God ordered it so that this gentleman was permitted to get safe to shore. As soon as he could reach the telegraph office, he sent a telegram home to his family. There was but a single word in that telegram; but, O, it was worth more to his distressed family than all the world. It was the word—*Saved*. And when that merchant returned home, he had that telegram framed, and hung up in his office with that important word—*Saved*—in it, so that he might see it every day, and be reminded of God's great goodness in sparing his life. Yet it was only that merchant's *body* that was saved then. And this is nothing compared to the soul. But when we become the sheep of Jesus, the good shepherd, he engages to save our souls in heaven forever.

It does not cost a shepherd much trouble to save his sheep by preparing a fold for them; but, O, it cost Jesus, our shepherd, more than we shall ever know, to prepare that heavenly fold for us! Jesus said himself, "the Good Shepherd *giveth his life for the sheep*." Here is a good illustration of the way in which he did this:—

"One Died For All." One of our large ocean steamers left Liverpool sometime ago for New York. For a number of days the weather had been fine, and she was making good progress towards the end of her voyage. The passengers were gathered on the deck in little groups, talking about the old country they were leaving behind, and the new country to which they were going; when, suddenly, they were startled by



"That fearful shipwreck of the steamer *Hattie*."



a loud explosion, and volumes of blinding steam came rushing up from the hold of the vessel.

The wildest confusion followed. The women shrieked; the children screamed, and the men rushed wildly about trying to find out the cause of the explosion. It was a heart-rending scene. In the midst of all, the engineer came forward, looking as pale as a corpse. He said that one of the main-pipes had burst, and, that unless somebody went below, at the risk of his own life, and turned a stopper in connection with that pipe, in a few moments they would all be blown up.

Then the screams, and cries, and confusion, became worse than before. People rushed to the bows and the stern of the vessel, so as to get as far away as possible from the explosion. Moments seemed like hours then. Again the engineer cried out those terrible words, telling the people that unless some one would risk his life to turn off that stopper, they must all be lost.

And here I must say that I think this engineer was very much to blame. What business had he to stand there, telling the people about the danger they were in, and calling for some one else to go and do what it was *his* duty to attend to? He ought to have rushed in, at once, himself, and have tried to remove the difficulty, or have died in the attempt. If I had been the owner of that steamer, I should have dismissed that engineer as soon as I had heard of his cowardly conduct. Shame on such a man! The danger threatening might have come upon them; many lives might have been lost, and the vessel sunk before he would risk his precious life.

But it was not so with all. One of the firemen—a man of whom no one on board knew much—stepped forward, and offered himself for the dangerous duty. Seizing a large piece of canvas, he wrapped it quickly round him, and hastened down below. In a moment all was still. People held their breath with fear. Presently the sound of the escaping steam was hushed. Then the engineer and two volunteers went down to the engine-room. They saw the thing had been done on which the safety of the vessel and of all on board depended; and there, close by, they saw that brave and noble-hearted fireman; but he saw not them. His life was the sacrifice of the manly and generous act he had performed. The escaping steam had scalded him to death. The crew and passengers on board the

steamer were saved by that brave man; but *he laid down his own life, that he might save theirs.*

And this illustrates the way in which Jesus, the good shepherd, saves his sheep. But, after all, cases like this illustrate the love of Jesus only in an imperfect way. His love in being willing to die for us was so wonderful, that nothing quite like it was ever known. That brave fireman



The Sheepfold.

knew that he would have had to die in any case. If he had not nobly stepped forward as he did, to turn aside the danger that threatened them all alike, then he must have died with his companions. It was braver and better, therefore, that he should die *for* them, as he did, in making the efforts to save them, than that he should have died *with* them, having never made that effort. But it was different with Jesus when he undertook to save us. He need not have suffered or died at all, unless he had chosen to do so.



And then, it was not *certain* beforehand that the fireman would die, in doing what he undertook to do. There was a *bare possibility* that he might be able to turn aside the threatened danger, and yet not be killed himself. But it was different with Jesus. When he came into the world to save us, he knew that he could do this *only* by dying for us himself. There was no possibility of his doing this in any other way. This was the price he had to pay. It was not possible even for the Son of God to save us in any other way.

And then it was for his friends, his companions, and fellow-passengers that the brave fireman was willing to die. But it was different with Jesus. We were not his friends or companions. We did not love him, or know him, or care for him. No; but as the apostle says,—“*when we were enemies*”—or “*ungodly*”—“Christ died for us.” Rom. v: 6, 10. And Jesus may well be called the shepherd—“the Good Shepherd,” because he saved his people—the sheep of his flock—by laying down his life for them.

And he makes use of his Word, the reading of it, the teaching of it, the preaching of it, and many other means, in order that his lost sheep may be brought back to him, may learn to know him, and to love him, and to be saved by him.

And now, if we look back over what has been said on this subject, we shall see that four reasons are given why it was foretold of Jesus that he was to be a shepherd to his people. He might well be called a shepherd, because *he seeks his people when lost*, as the shepherd does his sheep; because *he feeds them, and cares for them*; because *he protects them*; and because *he saves them*.

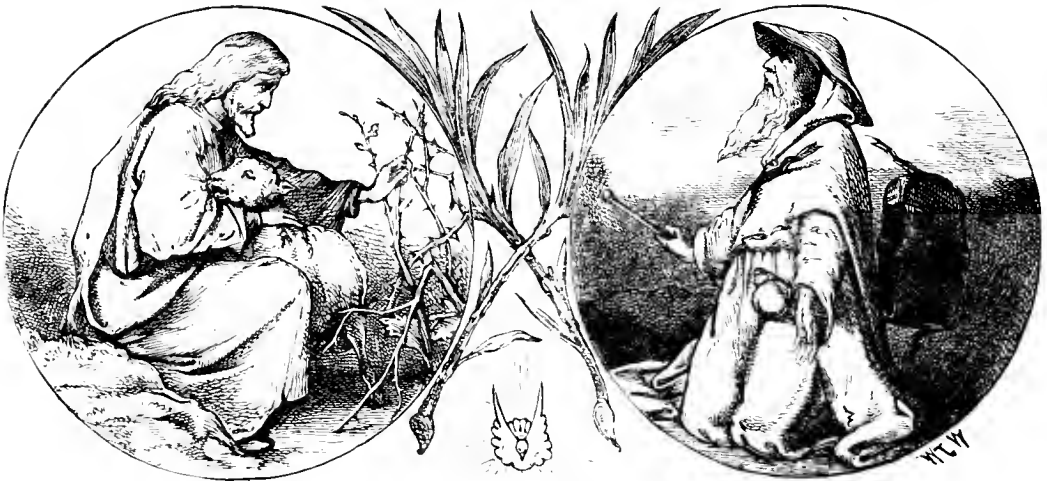
I will close this subject by quoting the lines of that sweet and simple hymn which speaks of Jesus as our shepherd:—

“See, the kind shepherd, Jesus, stands  
With all engaging charms;  
Hark! how he calls the tender lambs,  
And folds them in his arms.

Permit me to approach, he cries,  
Nor scorn their humble name;  
For 'twas to save such souls as these  
The Lord of glory came.

He'll lead us to the heavenly streams  
Where living waters flow,  
And guide us to the fruitful fields  
Where trees of knowledge grow.

The feeblest lamb amidst the flock  
Shall be its shepherd's care,  
While folded in the Saviour's arms,  
We're safe from every snare."





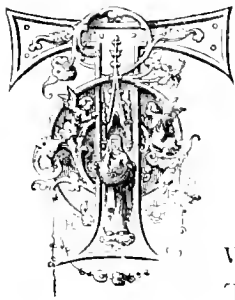


THE CHARITY OF DORCAS.



## THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT.

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HIS is one of the last prophecies in the Old Testament about our Saviour. Malachi iii: 1. We have spoken of a number of these, considering them as shadows that point us to Jesus. The promise to Adam and Eve of "the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head," was the first of these shadows. Noah's Ark was another. The promise to Abraham, of the blessing of the world through his seed was another. Then we had Joseph as a shadow of Christ, and Moses in his character as a prophet. Then we spoke of the Jewish Tabernacle as one of these shadows. After this, we had Melchizedek in his priestly character; David and Solomon in their office as king; Jonah as a prophet and preacher; then we had Christ's own character represented as a shepherd; and now we finish these Old Testament prophecies of Christ, by considering him as "the Messenger of the Covenant." I do not mean to say that we have spoken of all the prophecies that were given of our Lord before he came. It would have kept us

a long time to go over them all. We have only taken a few of them. We have made a selection of some of the more interesting and important ones.

And now we come to consider what we are taught of the character and work of Christ when he is spoken of as

### THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT.

A covenant means a bargain, or agreement made between two or more persons. One of these persons promises to do certain things, provided that the other will do certain other things. For example, we read in Genesis, twenty-ninth chapter, about Jacob going to live for awhile with his uncle, Laban, in Padanaram, where Abraham had formerly lived. Laban and Jacob made an agreement or covenant with each other. Jacob wished to marry Rachel, one of Laban's daughters. Laban said, "you shall have my daughter on these conditions: if you will serve me for seven years, as a shepherd, taking care of my flocks of sheep, then, as soon as the seven years are ended, you shall marry Rachel, and have her for your wife."

Jacob agreed to this. *That* was the covenant, or bargain they made about this matter.

The covenant about which so much is said in the Bible, and of which Jesus was to be "the Messenger," is called "the Covenant of Salvation," because it relates to the saving of our souls. The persons who made this covenant were God the Father, and God the Son. This is what is meant by the Prophet Zachariah, (Ch. vi: 13), when he says—"the counsel"—or covenant "of peace shall be between them both." Two persons are here spoken of as "them *both*." This refers to God the Father, and his Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. They made this covenant between them. God the Father engaged to save and bless all those who should repent of their sins, and believe in his Son, Jesus Christ, provided that he—*i. e.*, Jesus Christ—would do certain things. The things that God required Jesus to do, were these: he was to be willing to come down from heaven and take our nature upon him; to be born as an infant, of a virgin mother. Though equal with God, he was to take upon him the form of a servant, and to become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. ii: 6-8. He was to obey God's law for us, because we could not obey it ourselves.

He was to suffer and die in our stead, and so bear the punishment that we deserved for having broken God's law. Jesus agreed to do this. He said—*“Lo! I come to do thy will O God.”* Heb. vii: 9. This was what Jesus was doing all the time that he was here on earth. He was fulfilling his part of this covenant. And, at last, as he hung upon the cross, bearing such pain and anguish, as we cannot understand; while the sun hid his face; and darkness covered the earth; and the rocks were rending, and the graves were opening; when he uttered these words, just before he died,—*“It is finished;”—then*, he had done all that he promised to do. His part of the covenant was fulfilled. Then he died, and was buried. He rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven. And there he sitteth at the right hand of God. As “the Messenger of the Covenant” he has “all power given unto him in heaven and on earth” to save all those who believe and obey him. When we send a messenger, all that he has to do is to deliver the message we give to him. But it is different with Jesus. He came from heaven as God's messenger. He brought us that most wonderful message—“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” He delivered that message. But *that* was not all he had to do. His work was not ended then. It is not ended yet. It never will be ended. As “the Messenger of the Covenant,” he has every thing to do for you, and for me, and for all his people. All that is necessary to be done for our support, and protection, and guidance, and instruction, and comfort, and blessing, and salvation, Jesus is “the Messenger of the Covenant” to do for us. We must look to him for everything. What a comfort it is to know this! And when we think of Jesus, our gracious Saviour as—“the Messenger of the Covenant,” we may well ask ourselves this question—what sort of a messenger is he?

In trying to answer this question, we may speak of *five* things about him which show us that he is indeed a glorious messenger.

*Well then, to begin with, we may say of Jesus, that he is—A SWIFT—messenger.*

When a person is sent on a message, it is very important that he should not stop for anything by the way, but go straight on as quickly as possible, till the message is delivered. Suppose a man is to be hung at

twelve o'clock to-morrow. The Governor of the State signs a pardon for him, and gives it to you and me to carry to the man. But instead of hastening as fast as we could, suppose we stopped to amuse ourselves on the way, by calling to see a friend. We reach the end of our journey the next day, about an hour after the poor man has been executed. What a shameful thing that would be for us! We should be guilty of that man's death. It is very important for a messenger to be swift in his movements. And Jesus is a swift messenger. When speaking of the way in which he would attend to the prayers of his people, he says, "*It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*" Is. lxxv: 24. This shows what a swift messenger he is.

We have a striking illustration of this promise in the case of the Prophet Daniel. He knew that the time which God had set for his people to be in captivity, in Babylon, was nearly ended. He wished to know when God was going to deliver them from their captivity, and take them back to their own land; and so he set apart a day for special prayer to God in reference to this matter. He asked God to forgive his sins, and the sins of his people, and to remember his promises to them, and take them back to their own land. And while he was still engaged in prayer, he felt some one touch him. He looked up, and there stood an angel. He told Daniel that as soon as he began to pray, God commanded him to come and answer his prayer. He was "caused to fly *swiftly*." He had come all the way from heaven to earth, while Daniel was praying, and before his prayer was ended, there was the angel Gabriel with the answer which he desired. Dan. ix: 20-23.

And we have another illustration in the New Testament. Jesus is hanging on the cross. The two thieves crucified with him, are hanging at his side. One of them turns his eyes to Jesus, and says—"Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy Kingdom." We cannot tell what awful agonies Jesus was then enduring. It might well have been supposed that in that terrible hour, when he was "making his soul an offering for sin;" and God was "laying on him the iniquities of us all," he was too much taken up with his own sufferings to listen to the prayer of the poor sufferer at his side. But it was not so. He was "the Messenger of the Covenant," as he hung upon the cross. And even then, he was a *swift*



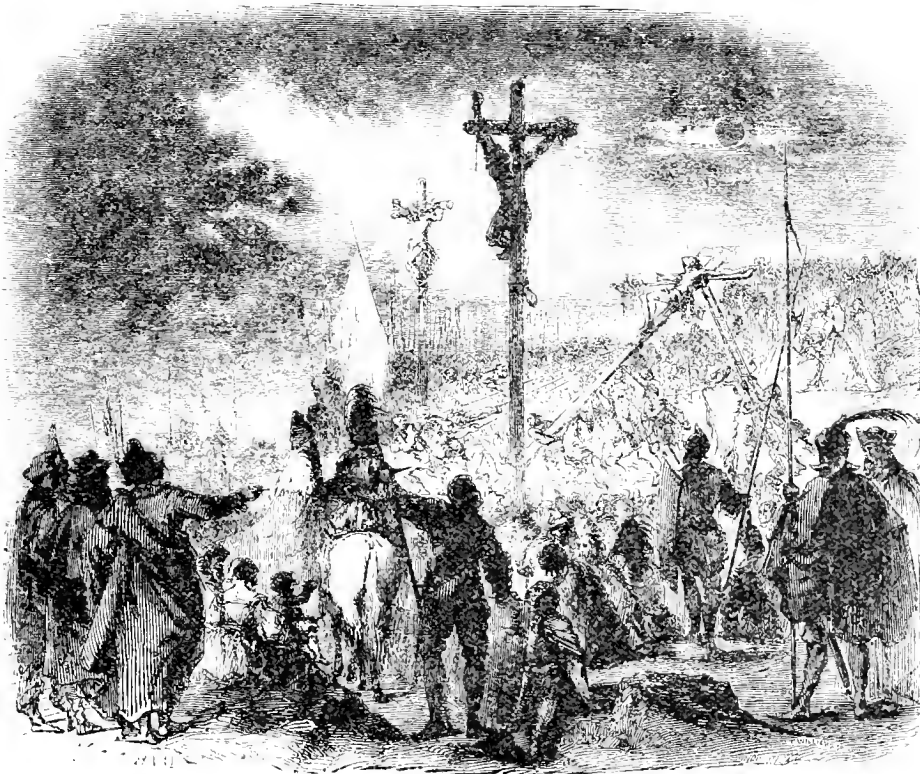


“Jacob wished to marry Rachel.”



messenger. Forgetting all about himself, and his own sufferings, he was ready, at once, to help and comfort the poor, penitent sinner who called upon him. "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Luke xxiii: 43. "While he was yet speaking," the dying thief was heard and answered.

And Jesus often proves himself a swift messenger now, to answer the prayers of those who call on him.



"He was to suffer and die in our stead."

There was a poor old widow woman who earned a scanty living by selling rags. She was a good Christian woman, strictly honest, as every true Christian will be, and she used to put by her pennies to pay her rent, before taking any of them for her own use. She became known to a lady in the neighborhood, who was kind to her, and often sent her a little help.

One evening this lady came home after being out on business through the day. She was kneeling down to thank God for taking care of her through the day, and asking him to show her what she could do to prove

her love to him. All at once the thought came into her mind as plainly as though she had heard a voice saying, "Go, at once, and take some candles to poor Sarah."

She did not mind it at first. It seemed strange to think of taking *candles*. Surely, she thought, bread, and butter, and tea, would be better than candles. But still the thought seemed pressed upon her so strangely and strongly, that she put some candles in a basket with a few other things, and went to the garret where old Sarah lived. It was so dark that nothing could be clearly seen. As she opened the door and went in, the old woman was just rising from her knees. She was surprised to find her kind friend there, and exclaimed, "Why, ma'am, what can have brought you here at this time?"

"Tell me, first of all, Sarah," said the lady, "what have you been praying for?"

"Why, ma'am, you'll think it very odd, but I was asking God to send me a candle; for my neighbor has lent me a large print Bible, just what I wanted so much; but I cannot see to read it without a light; so I thought it must be according to the will of God, that I should read his holy book."

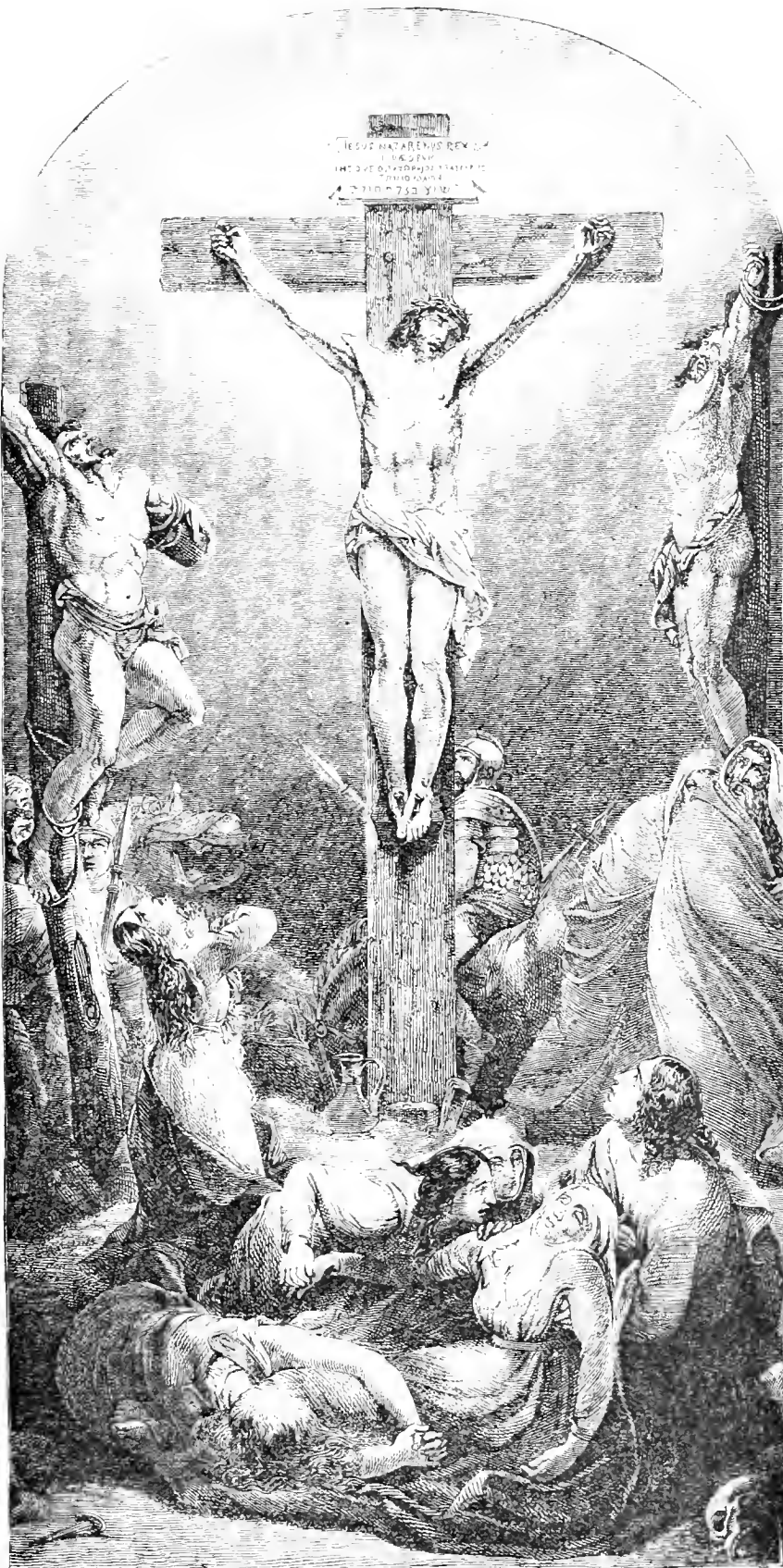
Tears came into the lady's eyes, for she felt that her heavenly Father had been pleased to use her as his messenger, and she handed the candles to Sarah, saying,—“God has sent these to you.”

The old woman wept, too, and they both lifted up their hearts in wondering thankfulness to that gracious Saviour, who delights to do for his praying children, “exceeding abundantly above all they can ask, or think.” Here was another illustration of the promise, “while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”

And when we think of Jesus as “the Messenger of the Covenant,” cases like these show us how truly we may say of him, that he is—A SWIFT—messenger.

*In the second place, we may say of Jesus, that he is—A LOVING—messenger.*

Sometimes persons who are sent as messengers are very rude. They tell us what they were sent to tell, but they do it in such a rough way as to hurt our feelings, and cause us to shed bitter tears. But Jesus was not to be such a messenger. What a kind and loving messenger he was to



"Lord, Remember Me."



be was foretold by the Prophet Isaiah, hundreds of years before he came into our world. He said of him:—"He shall not cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." This means that he was not to speak in a loud, rough manner. Then the prophet goes on to say, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." Is. xlii: 2, 3. This means that he was to be very gentle and loving in all that he did and said.



"What have you been praying for?"

And just such a messenger he was. As the people listened to his preaching, we are told that they—"all—wondered at the *gracious* words that proceeded out of his mouth." Luke iv: 22.

Let us take an example or two of the loving way in which Jesus delivered his messages, "when he was seen among men." One day as he was going by the city of Nain, he met a funeral procession coming out of the city. The dead man "was the only son of his mother, and she was a

widow." What deep sorrow was filling the bosom of that poor woman! The son, now dead, had been the sunshine of her home—the joy of her life—the prop on which she had leaned. Her heart was almost broken. A great company of her friends was with her, to show their sympathy in her grief. And when Jesus saw her, he pitied her, too. Very tenderly he said to her,—"*Μὴ κρῖναι.*" He did not mean to reprove her for weeping. It is right to weep when those we love are taken away from us. Our Saviour taught us this by his own example. As he stood by the grave of his friend Lazarus, and saw his sisters weeping, and the Jews also weeping that were with them, we read these two touching words—"*Jesus wept.*" The reason why he told this poor sorrowing widow not to weep, was, that he was going to take away the cause of her sorrow. Then he spoke to the dead young man, and called him back to life, and gave him to his wondering and now rejoicing mother. Here we see what a *loving* messenger he was.

And then we have an incident in the life of the Apostle Peter, which gives us another illustration of this same feature of his character.

You remember in that last sad night of our Saviour's life on earth, before his crucifixion, how Peter denied him three times, and swore, with oaths and curses, that he did not know him. It might have been supposed, after this, that when he rose from the dead, Jesus would not have cared to meet Peter; and that when he did meet him, he would have reproved him sharply for his unfaithfulness; but it was not so. On the contrary, when that glad Easter morning came, we are told that as the angels at the sepulchre met the good women who were the first to come there, they told them the glad tidings that Jesus had risen from the dead. And then they sent them with a message, saying—"Go, tell his disciples, and *Peter.*" The angels did not do this of themselves. It was Jesus who had told them to do it. "Go tell his disciples, and *Peter.*" Peter was the only one mentioned by name—the only one to whom a particular message was sent. We may well ask the question here—why was this? It was because of the loving character of the messenger of the covenant. Jesus knew how sorry Peter felt for what he had done. He knew how bitterly he had wept over his sin; and so he sent this message to comfort him. When Peter received this message, it would be a proof to him that the master whom he had three times denied, was ready to forgive him.



And the Apostle Paul tells us more about this matter. We learn from him that on the morning of the resurrection, *Peter saw Jesus before the rest of the disciples*. St. Paul says, "He was seen of Cephas." I Cor. xv: 5. It seems from this, that Jesus arranged things in such a way that



"The only son of his mother, and she was a widow."

Peter should have a private meeting with him, all alone by himself. We have no particular account of such a meeting given us in the gospels. But it is clear from what St. Paul says in the passage above referred to, that our Saviour did give Peter such a meeting. How kind and loving it was in him to do it! He knew how badly Peter was feeling for having denied him. He knew how painful it would be to him to have this matter talked over in the presence of the other disciples; and so *he kindly met*

*Peter all by himself.* We can imagine how Peter would throw himself at his Master's feet; what bitter tears he would shed while confessing his sin, and asking to be forgiven! And we can imagine, too, how tenderly Jesus would speak to him, and tell him that he freely forgave him, and received him back into his place, as one of the disciples. And after this, when Peter met Jesus in the company of the other disciples, he would feel comforted, because he knew that the gracious Saviour, whom he had treated so shamefully, had pardoned him, and taken him into his favor again. This shows us what a *loving* "Messenger of the Covenant" Jesus is!

And the great message which Jesus brings to us all is—that *God loves us*. The Bible was written to be the proof of this love; and our duty as Christians is to try and make men know this.

"I was leaving a gentleman's house where I had been paying a visit," said a minister of the gospel, when I put this question to the servant-maid who was about to open the door:—

"My friend, do *you* love God?"

"I am afraid not," she answered, "and I fear I never shall."

"Well," I said, "you may at least depend on this—it is *certain* that God loves *you*."

"How can you possibly tell *that*?" asked the master of the house, who was going down stairs with me. "This is the first time you have ever seen this woman, you know nothing about her character. You cannot tell whether she attends to her duties properly or not."

"Never mind about that," I said. "It is certain that God loves her, and *you*, too. I am quite sure of this, because God has told us that his love to us does not depend on what we are, or what we deserve. The Bible tells us "God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son" to die for it; and again it tells us, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to die for our sins!" I John iv: 10.

"If that is so," said the gentleman, "and your words seem to prove it, what a shame it is that I don't love him. May I say to myself without any fear of making a mistake, 'It is *certain* that God loves me?'"

"Indeed you may," I said; "and I pray to God you may soon be able to say 'It is certain that I love him.'"

And Jesus may well be called a loving messenger, because he came into the world not only to tell us this great truth, but also to be himself the proof of it.



“Jesus had Risen from the Dead.”

*But in the third place, Jesus is—AN EVER-PRESENT—messenger.*

A messenger can be of no use in any place where he is not present. And an earthly messenger can never be present in more than one place at

a time. But Jesus, the messenger of the covenant is *always* present in *every* place. David felt this when he said:—"From the ends of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Ps. lxi: 2. It would have been no use for David, "from the ends of the earth" to cry unto one who was not there to hear his cry. But Jesus is present everywhere.

What a good illustration we have of this in the case of Jonah! When he was in the belly of "the great fish" that swallowed him, he was carried down to the bottom of the sea. What a far off, lonely place that was to be in! In speaking of it himself, he said:—"The floods compassed me about. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the weeds were wrapped about my head; the earth with her bars was about me forever." Jonah ii: 3-6. What a strange place that was in which to pray! Jonah called it "the belly of hell." Yet from that deep, dark, lonely place Jonah prayed unto God. His prayer was heard and answered, and he was brought back in safety to the light, and to the land again.

Jesus the ever-present messenger was there to help him, when he cried. And so he is present in every place to hear and answer us when we call upon him.

Here is an illustration from the experience of a sea-captain. "Once, when I was crossing the Atlantic," said he, "it had been my watch on deck till midnight. Then the first-mate took my place, and I went down into the cabin to sleep for four hours. I told the mate the direction in which the vessel was to be steered. While I was undressing to turn into my berth, the thought came into my mind that I ought to change the ship's course one point." The mariner's compass, you know has a circle drawn around it which is divided up into a great many points. "The vessel was heading to the north-east. The thought that came into my mind was to change her course to one point south of north-east. But I could see no reason for the change, for I knew that north-east was the right course to reach the port for which we were sailing. So I turned into my berth and tried to go to sleep. But I could not sleep. Something seemed to be saying to me, in a strange way—"Change the vessel's course one point." I tried to put the thought away, but it was impossible. At last I rose and went on deck, and ordered the man who was steering, to change the vessel's

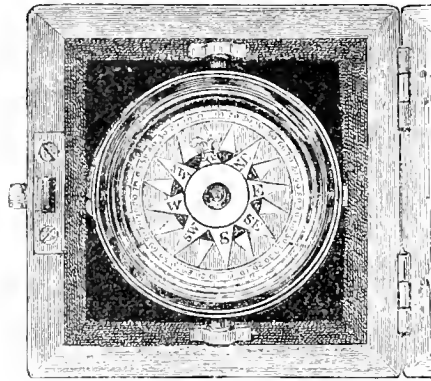


"It is certain God Loves You."

course one point. Then I went to bed and slept till morning. The next day we saw a vessel in the distance with a signal of distress flying. We made sail for her. On coming up to her, we found she had sprung a-leak, and was in a sinking condition. We saved the whole ship's company.

Soon after a severe gale arose in which the ship went down, and all on board would have perished if they had not been taken off. I did not understand, the night before, what I was changing my ship's course for; but now, the meaning of it was plain enough." This was the captain's story.

And here is the explanation of it. The captain of that sinking ship was not a Christian; but he had a Christian wife at home. There, hundreds of miles away, she was praying for the safety of her husband. Jesus, the messenger of the covenant, was present with her, and heard her prayers. He was present with her husband on that sinking ship. He saw the danger he was in. He was present with the captain of the other ship in his cabin. He put into his mind the thought which seemed so strange to him



The Mariner's Compass.

—"change the ship's course one point." In this way, the prayer of that Christian wife was heard, and her husband and his crew were saved from death. Jesus is an ever-present messenger.

*In the fourth place, Jesus is—AN ABLE—messenger.*

The messengers that we employ have very little power. They may be able to carry the message that we send by them, but that is all. In carrying our message, they may meet with many difficulties which they have no power to overcome. But Jesus, the messenger of the covenant, is able to overcome every difficulty in his way. He has "all power in heaven and on earth given unto him," and he makes use of that power to help, and comfort, and save, and bless his people. Just think for a moment, of some of the things which the Bible tells us that he is able to do. "He is *able* of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Matt. iii: 9.

“He is *able* to save unto the uttermost, them that come unto God through him.” Heb. vii: 25. “What he has promised, he is *able* to perform.” Rom. iv: 21. He is “*able* to make all grace abound to us, that we may abound in every good work.” II Cor. ix: 8. He is “*able* to build us up, and give us an inheritance among them that are sanctified.” Acts xx: 32. He is “*able* to keep us from falling, and present us faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.” Jude xxiv. He is “*able* to succor them that are tempted.” Heb. ii: 18. He is “*able* to make” his people



“We saved the whole Ship's Company.”

“stand.” Rom. xiv: 4. He is “*able* to save or to destroy.” James iv: 12. He is “*able* to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Ephes. iii: 20. This last is a most wonderful statement. Jesus is able to do not only *some* things that we ask, but *all* that we ask; he is able to do *above* all that we ask; he is able to do *abundantly* above all that we ask; he able to do *exceeding* abundantly above all that we ask. And then, as if this were not enough, the apostle tells us that Jesus is “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we *think*,” as well as above all that we ask. What a blessing to have such a messenger as our friend!

We have a striking illustration of the ability of Jesus to help his people in what took place on the Sea of Galilee, while he was here in our

world. He was crossing that sea one day with his disciples. Being weary with his many labors, he lay down in the hinder part of the ship and fell fast asleep. While he was sleeping, a violent storm burst upon the sea. The wind howled, the foaming waves roared in their fury. The vessel was tossed about like a play-thing, and was in danger of sinking. In their alarm, the disciples came to Jesus and awoke him, saying, "Master, save us, or we shall perish." Jesus arose. He went calmly to the side of the vessel, and spoke to the winds and the waves, saying—"Peace! Be still." They heard him. They knew him as their Lord and Master. They obeyed him; "and *immediately the wind ceased; and there was a great calm.*"

Let us take just one illustration from our own times of the ability of Jesus to help and to save.

We may call it—"The Prisoner of Glatz." In a valley called the Glatzer valley, among the mountains of Prussia, there is a very strong castle, or fortress, which is used as a prison for persons of rank, who commit any offence against the king or the government of the country. It is in a very wild and lonely place. The walls of the castle are very thick. The windows have strong iron gratings in them. The rooms in the castle are small and gloomy.

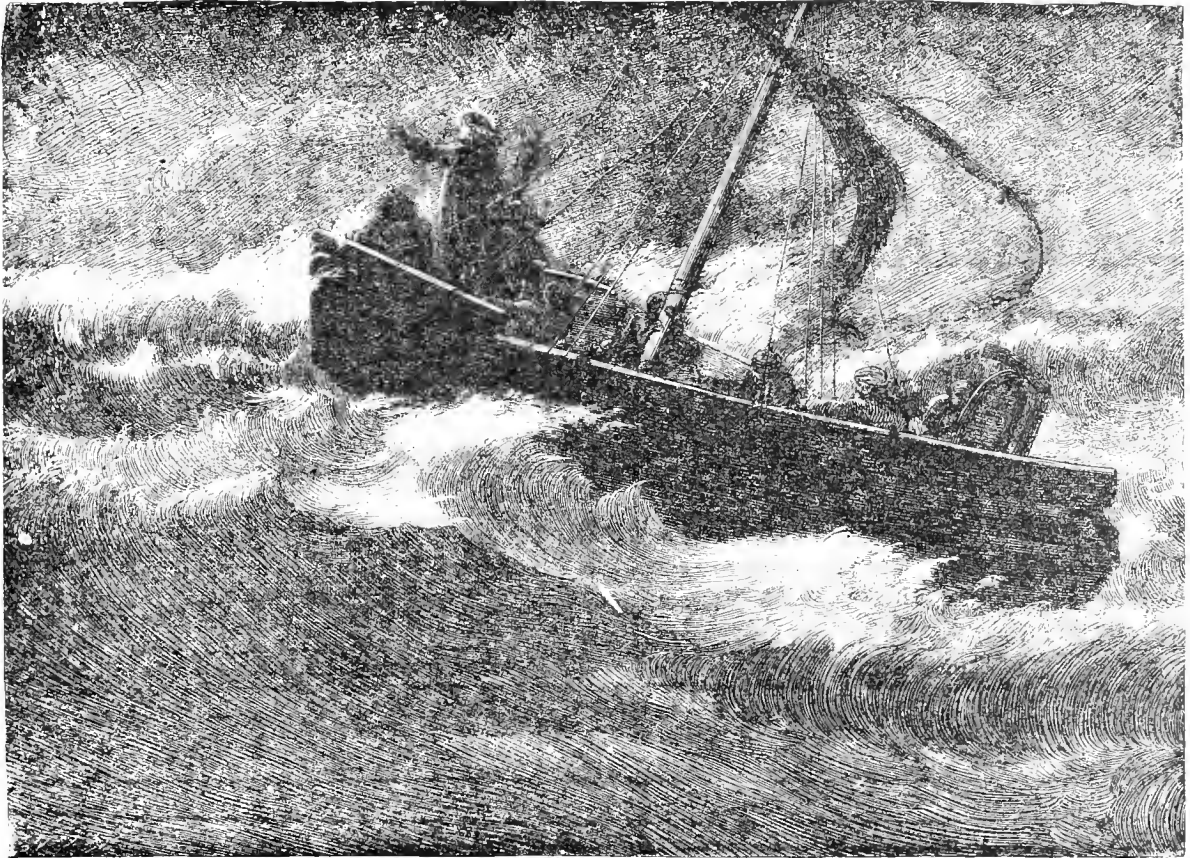
Some years ago, in the early part of this century, Colonel T., an officer in the Prussian army had committed some great offences against the government, and had even gone so far as to try to take the life of the king. For these things, he was sent to that gloomy castle to be a prisoner there for life. He was confined in a solitary cell, and none of his family or friends were ever allowed to visit him. He had been there several years at the time to which our story refers. Lonely, and gloomy, and sad, was his life. He had no comfort in this world, and no hope for the world to come. He was not a Christian, and did not even believe the Bible. And so, while his body was a prisoner in that gloomy castle of Glatz, his soul was locked up in the still darker prison of unbelief and sin. The object of this story is to show how Jesus, the messenger of the covenant, was able to bring this poor man out of both these prisons at once.

Colonel T. was not allowed to have any book with him but the Bible. Sometimes he would open the book and read it awhile, because he had nothing else to do. But he hated the God of the Bible, and



very soon he would close the book, and push it away from him in anger.

One winter's night a fearful storm was raging about that castle. The wind howled furiously round the battlements. The river that ran under the walls of the castle, rushed roaring by with greater violence than usual. The Colonel lay upon his couch, but could not sleep. A storm was raging



"Peace—Be still."

in his own bosom, more terrible even than that which was sweeping by, in such fury without. His whole life seemed to be rising up, and passing in review before him. He saw how fearfully he had sinned. He saw that *forsaking God* had been the cause of all his misery. He thought of his good mother, long since gone to heaven, and of the lessons she had taught him. For the first time in many years his heart was softened, and tears of penitence filled his eyes. He rose from his bed and took up that

despised and neglected Bible. As he opened the book, in the dim light of the little lamp that stood upon his table, his eye fell on the words written in Ps. I: v. 15. "*Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*" Like a voice from heaven, these words went to the heart of the prisoner. He fell on his knees, and did—what he had not done before, since he was a child—*he prayed*. With strong crying, and tears, he asked for pardon and grace, for Jesus' sake. And the prayer which went up to heaven from that lonely, storm-swept prison in the Glatzer valley, was heard and answered. He found peace in believing.

And now let us pass from the prisoner in that gloomy castle, to the palace of the king of Prussia, in the city of Berlin. On that same night, the king lay sleepless on his royal bed. He was racked with terrible pains that drove sleep from his weary eyelids. In his suffering, he prayed earnestly that God would grant him, at least one hour of comfortable sleep. His prayer was answered. And when he awoke, refreshed and strengthened in the morning, he said to the queen, his wife, "God has been so good to me, that I wish to do something to show my gratitude. Who, in all my kingdom, has most grievously offended me? Whoever it may be, I will pardon him."

"Colonel T.," said the queen, "who is a prisoner in the castle of Glatz."

"Right," replied the king, "he shall be released." Immediately a messenger was sent with a pardon to the prisoner of Glatz. It was the messenger of the king of Prussia who carried that pardon, but it was "the Messenger of the Covenant" who caused it to be sent. And when we see how Jesus released the body of that prisoner from the gloomy castle of Glatz, and how, at the same time, he released his soul from the gloomier prison in which sin and Satan had bound him, we may well say of him, that he is indeed an *able* messenger.

*The last thing we have to say of him is, that he is—A FAITHFUL—messenger.*

When we have a messenger engaged to attend to any business for us, it is a great comfort to us if we know that we can trust him with entire confidence. If he is one who always keeps his word, and always does what he engages to do, then we say that he is faithful, and we are not afraid to leave our business in his hands, whatever it may be. But there

never was any one so faithful as Jesus "the Messenger of the Covenant" is. Every word he speaks is true. Every promise he makes is sure. Heaven and earth must pass away, before the least part of one of his promises can fail.

When Jacob was going from his father's house on a visit to his uncle



He Prayed."

Laban, he slept one night out in the open field, at a place called Bethel. There he had that famous vision, in which he saw the ladder reaching from heaven to earth, with the angels of God going up and down on it. God appeared to him in that vision, and told him that he would be with him in all his journey, and bring him back in safety to his father's house. And then he added this sweet promise,—"*I will not leave thee, till I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.*" Gen. xxviii: 15. This meant

that God would never leave him till he brought him safe to heaven. And how was this promise fulfilled? A great many years after Jacob had that vision at Bethel, he lay upon his dying bed, a very old man. His family gathered round him to hear his last words. He told them how good God had been to him; and spoke of him as "the God who had fed him all his life long," and as "the Angel who had redeemed him from all evil." Gen. xlviii: 15, 16. The word angel here means the same thing as the word messenger in our text. Jesus, our glorious Saviour, was the "God who fed Jacob all his life long;" and he was "the Angel," or messenger who had "redeemed him from all evil." And so, upon his dying bed Jacob told his family that the promise which God had given him at Bethel, had been fulfilled. This was Jacob's testimony to the faithfulness of Jesus as "the Messenger of the Covenant."

And see how the Apostle Paul felt about this. He said, "*I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*" II Tim. i: 12. St. Paul says—"that which I have committed unto him." This meant his soul. Suppose you have a precious jewel worth fifty or a hundred thousand dollars. It is so valuable that you are afraid you may lose it, or that some one may steal it from you. And suppose you have a friend who has a safe that is fire-proof and robber-proof. You take your jewel to this friend, and say to him:—"Please take charge of this jewel, and keep it for me in your fire-proof." He takes it and locks it up there. And now you feel comfortable about that jewel. You know your friend is faithful, and your jewel is safe. You do not worry about it any more. You are ready to say about your jewel what St. Paul said about his soul, because you feel sure that it is safe.

And this is the way in which we should put our souls in a state of safety. We ought to commit them to Jesus to keep them for us, just as we would commit our jewel to a friend who was able to take care of it. And such a Friend we have in Jesus. He is "the Messenger of the Covenant," for this very purpose. "He *preserveth* the *souls* of his saints." Ps. xcvii: 10. And, in attending to all that the salvation of our souls requires, he is a faithful messenger. We may trust him without fear. When we have committed our souls to him, each of us may say, as St.

Paul said:—"I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him."

Taking out the "if." A working man's little girl attended a meeting one evening, and what she heard there, by God's blessing, led her to become a Christian. The minister preached that night, from these words:—"And behold there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Matth. viii: 2, 3.



"Lord if thou wilt."

In speaking about it afterwards, this dear, little girl said:—"I noticed that there was an "if" in what the man said to Jesus; but that in what Jesus said to the man, there was no "if." So I thought I would go home and take out the "if." I knelt down in my little room, and said, "Lord, Jesus, Thou *canst*—Thou *wilt* save me, and make me clean; I give myself to thee."

Let us all follow the example of this little girl, and take out the "if," when we commit our souls to Jesus.

And when we think of Jesus as "the Messenger of the Covenant," let us remember that he is a *swift* messenger—a *loving* messenger—an *ever-present* messenger—an *able* messenger, and a *faithful* messenger.



## THE FORERUNNER.



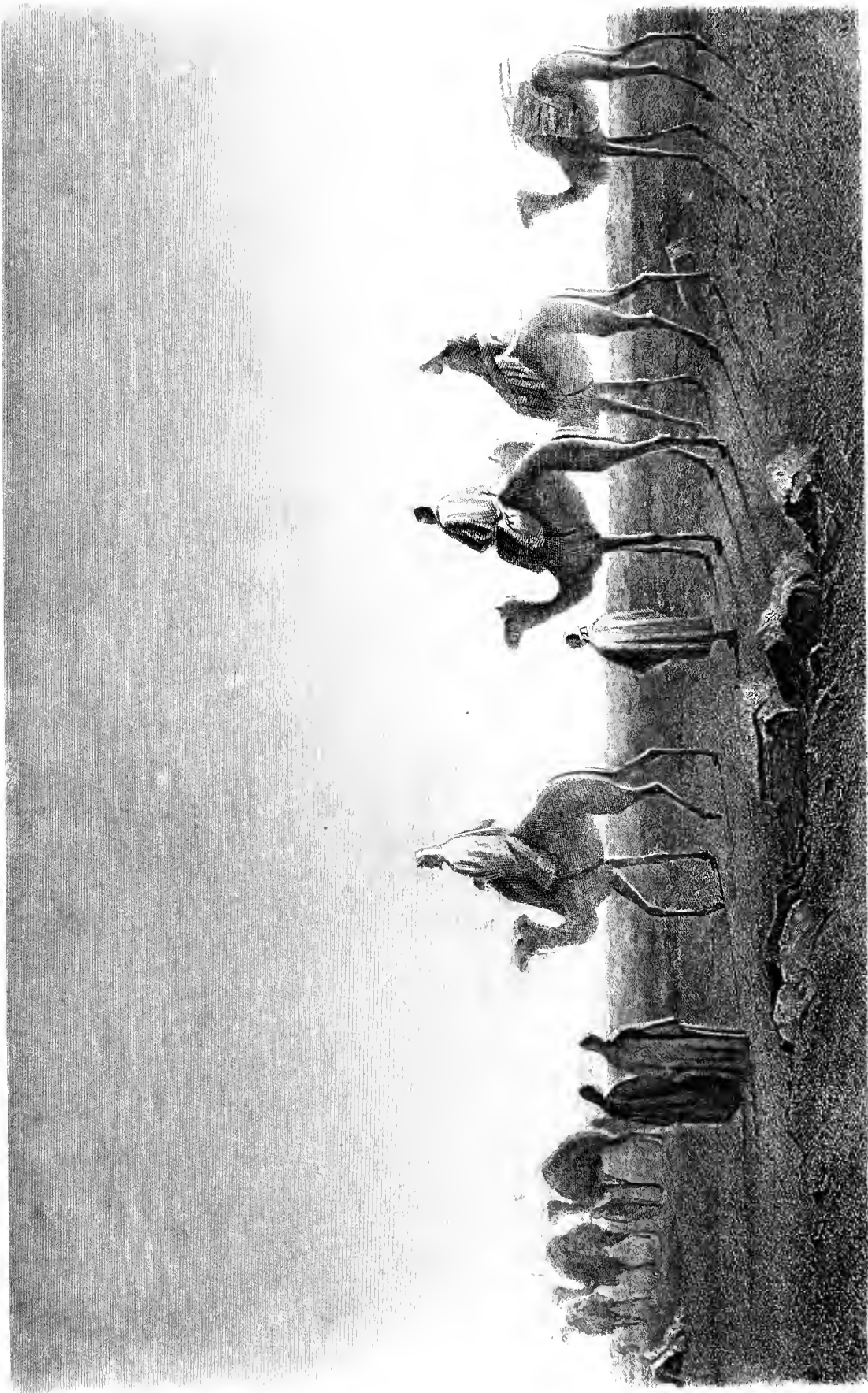
TO persons who have been watching through a long, dark, stormy night nothing can be more interesting than a sight of the morning star. It tells them that night with its gloom and darkness is almost over, and that day with its brightness and beauty is near at hand.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was born about four hundred years after the death of the prophet Malachi, who wrote the last book of the Old Testament. During all those four hundred years the Jews had no prophets. God sent them no messages from heaven. It must have











seemed to the pious Jews, during those years, as if God had forsaken them. And then their government was unsettled, and they had a great many troubles, as a nation, to pass through. These things made that period of their history a very trying one. We may well compare it to a long, dark night. It had, indeed, been very long, and very dark. But when John the Baptist came, he was like the morning star on the dark sky of Israel's stormy history. And as when the morning star appears, we know that the day is coming, so when John appeared, it was a sure sign to the pious Jews, that the Great Deliverer, the Messiah, of whom all their prophets had spoken, was near at hand.

We call John the Baptist the forerunner, because the angel said that he was to "go *before*" the coming Saviour "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke i: 17. You remember when Ahab, the king of Israel, rode in his chariot from Mount Carmel to Jezreel, how the prophet Elijah girded himself, and ran before him all the way. Then Elijah was the forerunner of Ahab. And in Eastern countries, the same custom is kept up at the present day. When a person, of any importance, rides in his carriage, you will generally see a young man running in front of the carriage, calling on people to get out of the way. This is a forerunner. And John was called "the forerunner of Christ," because he came to tell the people of his coming, and so "to prepare his way before him."

We have been occupied, thus far, in considering some of the things which were told us in the Old Testament, about Christ, *before* he came. And now, we are going to enter the New Testament, and speak of some of the things told us about him *after* he came. And so we begin this part of our subject by speaking of *John the Baptist—the Forerunner of Christ*.

And in speaking on this subject we may call attention to two things: *the first is—what the Bible tells us about John the Baptist; the second is, what we may learn from all that is thus told us; or to make it shorter, we may speak about—the facts of John's history; and the lessons which these facts teach us; or to put it shorter still—the facts and lessons of John's life.*

*The facts of John's life, are the first thing we are to speak of.*

Now it is a fact that *his coming into our world was foretold about seven hundred years before he came.* The prophet Isaiah was speaking of John the Baptist when he said—"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Is. 40: 3. We can see how John applied this passage to himself in John i: 23.

It is a fact that when the time arrived for John's coming into our world, the angel Gabriel was sent down from heaven to tell about it.

One day when Zacharias, who was to be the father of John the Baptist, was in the temple at Jerusalem, burning incense, as a priest, on the golden altar, at the time of the daily sacrifice, an angel suddenly appeared, standing near him. Zacharias was afraid when he saw the angel. You and I would have felt so too. The best people in the world have felt afraid when they have seen angels. The reason is because we are sinful creatures. "Fear not, Zacharias," said the angel. Then he told him about the birth of a child, of whom he was to be the father. He told him that the name of the child was to be "called John." He told him that this child was to be the forerunner of the Messiah, of whom the prophet Isaiah had spoken so long before: and then he showed him what sort of a person this promised child was to be, and what he was to do.

We are not surprised to find that Zacharias could not believe all the wonderful things of which the angel had told him. Zacharias asked the angel to give him a sign that all he had said was true.

The angel said he should be dumb, and not able to speak, until what he had said should come to pass. And just so it was. Zacharias never spoke a word, from that moment, until the promised child was born. The Jews used to give names to their children, when they circumcised them, on the eighth day after they were born. And when this little babe was circumcised, and the name John was given to him, the tongue of his father, Zacharias, was loosed again, and he broke out into a song of praise to God for all his mercies to him. We read about this in Luke i: 11-23, 59-79.

It is a fact that when John grew to be a boy he lived in the wilderness till he was thirty years old. We are not told anything about him during all these years. What he did, or how he spent his time we know



The Angel appearing to Zacharias.



not. We do not suppose that he spent this time in idleness. I have no doubt that the wilderness of Judea, was God's school, or college to John the Baptist, as the desert of Midian was to Moses, where for forty years he was studying the lessons that God wished him to learn.

It is a fact that when John was about thirty years of age he came out from the wilderness and began to preach. Luke iii: 3. He was dressed very coarsely, and lived very plainly. A camel's hair garment, such as the Arabs, in that country wear to-day, with a leathern girdle round his loins, was the dress in which John made his appearance as a preacher



The naming of John the Baptist.

He was to be a sort of second Elijah; as the angel said, to "go in the spirit and power of Elijah;" and so he was dressed like that stern prophet. 2 Kings i: 8. And his food was as plain as his dress. "Locusts and wild honey" were to be his chief articles of food. Poor people in that land to-day live in the same way. They have locusts dried, and prepared, as we prepare herring or other fish, and eat them with oil and honey.

It is a fact that John was a very popular preacher. We are told that people "from Jerusalem, and Judea, and all the region round about Jordan" went out to hear him. Matt. iii: 5. His preaching was very different from what the people had been accustomed to. They had never

heard anything but dull, sleepy sermons, on subjects which they could not understand, and did not feel much interest in.

But John had a new subject to preach about; and he preached about it in a way that was entirely new. He told the people that the long promised Messiah was coming, and that they must get ready to meet him. He told them that the only way in which they could do this was by repenting of their sins, or being really sorry for them, and by turning away from them. He compared the Jewish people to a tree, planted in a garden. He said that God had sent him to lay down the axe at the root of this tree; and that unless they minded what he said, or unless the tree which had long been barren began to bear fruit, it would be cut down and cast into the fire.

And then, there can be no doubt that John's *manner* of preaching was quite as startling as the *matter* of it was. We have no report handed down to us of the way in which he preached. But I have always thought it must have been very simple, very earnest, and very solemn preaching. I suppose he had a clear, loud voice; that his sermons were full of illustrations; that these were delivered with lively gestures, and that he made the wilderness ring again with his solemn warnings. And this being so, we are not surprised at the effects that followed from his preaching. *Great multitudes came, and were baptized by him.* This is one of the facts of his life. John's baptism was different from Christian baptism. It was not something that would answer in place of Christian baptism. We know this is true, for we find the apostles baptizing over again persons which had already received John's baptism. Acts xix: 3-5. We know not what form of words John used when he baptized people. Certainly he did not use the sacred words employed in the Christian church—"in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The Jewish teachers were in the habit of baptizing those who became their scholars. John came as a teacher sent from heaven. He had truths to teach that were new to the people, very important and solemn truths, and those who wished to become his disciples, and to learn these truths he received by the rite of baptism. And it was because he baptized so many people that the title he bears was applied to him, and he has always been known in the Christian church as—*John the Baptist.*



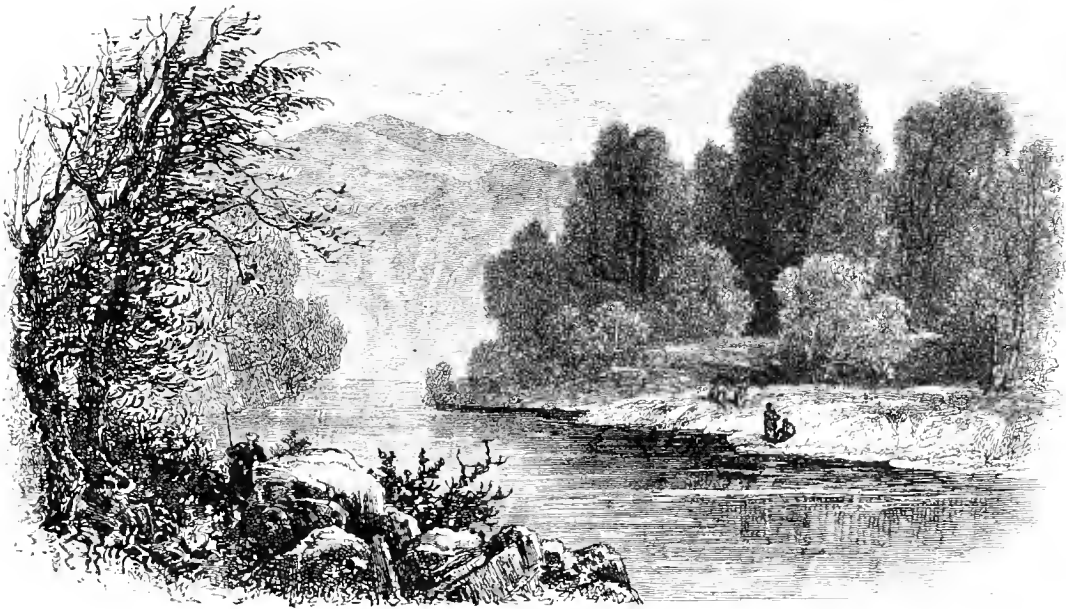


The River Jordan and the Wilderness.



It is a fact that John's preaching had a great effect on the minds of the Jewish people. They were thinking and talking about the coming Messiah. And this feeling went so far, we are told, that men began to think that John himself must be the Messiah. Luke iii: 15. And here we see how faithfully John discharged his duty as the forerunner of Christ.

It is a fact that John kept on preaching after Christ came. It is a fact that he acknowledged him to be a person greatly superior to himself. John iii. 27-32. He directed the attention of men to him, as—"the Lamb



The Jordan where John Baptized.

of God that taketh away the sin of the world." John i: 29. It is a fact that John kept on bearing witness to Christ, till Herod was offended at him, because he reprov'd him boldly for his sin. Luke iii: 19-20.

It is a fact that while he was in prison, John sent two of his disciples to Jesus to inquire whether *He* was the Christ, or whether they were still to look for some other person to come as the Messiah. Some people think that John only did this for the sake of his disciples. They suppose that John was expecting soon to die, and that he wanted to introduce his disciples to Jesus, that they might know him and follow him, when their

own master was dead. Others suppose that John had come to feel a little uncertain in his own mind on this subject, and that *this* was the reason why he sent his disciples to Jesus. We cannot tell positively which of these was the true reason. And it does not matter much which it was. The important thing for us to notice is, the answer, which Jesus sent back to John. He did not say yes, or no, to John's question. But he told his disciples to go back, and tell their master what miracles he was performing, and how he was preaching the gospel to the poor. Matt. xi: 2-6. The miracles that Jesus spoke of, were the very ones that the prophet Isaiah had said that the Messiah should perform when he came, as you will see, if you look at Isaiah xxix: 18, 35: iv: 5, and xlii: 7. The works that Jesus was doing were a more sure proof that he was the Messiah than any words that he could have sent back to John. Whether John was asking proof for himself, or for his disciples, *this* was the very best proof he could have.

And then it is a fact that not long after this John was beheaded in prison. Herod's wife was angry with John for what he had said to her husband about their marriage. She never forgave him for this; and when the opportunity came she took her revenge upon him by having his head taken off. How this was done we can see in Mark vi: 14-28.

These are the principal facts in the life of John the Baptist. And having considered these, we may go on to consider,

*The Lessons taught us by these facts.*

Now, if you wish to join in singing a tune, you must know what the key-note is, to which the tune has been set; if you wish to see all the beauty of a fine landscape, you must be careful to look at it from the right point. Such a life as that of John the Baptist, is like a grand tune, or a beautiful landscape. What is the key-note of this tune? What is the right point of view from which to look at this landscape? We shall find the key-note of this tune—the point of view from which to look at this landscape, in what was said about John, by the angel Gabriel, when he foretold his birth; and by our Saviour when he was speaking to his disciples concerning John. We find the angel's words in Luke i: 15. Here the angel is talking to Zacharias—the father of John. He tells him about his birth; and then he tells him what sort of a person he was to be. He

says—"He shall be great, in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine, nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb."

What our Saviour said of John, we read in Matt. xi: 11. This was just after John's disciples had been to Jesus, with the questions their mas-



John Preaching in the Wilderness.

ter had sent them to ask. Jesus answered their questions; and after they were gone away, he talked with his disciples about John. And among the things he said of him, we read these words:—"Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Here we find the angel saying that "he was to be great, in the sight of the Lord;" while our Saviour said he was as great as any one who had ever been born up to that time. We are to consider John the Baptist then as a *great man*. But there are two ways in which a person may be considered great. One of these is to be great in the sight of men; the other is to be great in the sight of God.

In the sight of men some persons are considered great on account of their birth, because they happen to be born of parents who occupy important positions. Some are considered great on account of their wealth, because they happen to be rich. Some are called great because of the names, and titles that are given to them. Some are called great because they have fought bloody battles, and have gained what are termed splendid victories. And some are called great on account of the useful and important inventions, and discoveries, that they have made. These are some of the things that make people great in the sight of men. But, John the Baptist was not great in any of these ways. He was "*great in the sight of the Lord.*"

And the lessons we are taught by the history of John's life are easily learned when we come to see what the things were that made him great. We can see plainly *four* things that helped to make him great, and each of these teaches us a lesson.

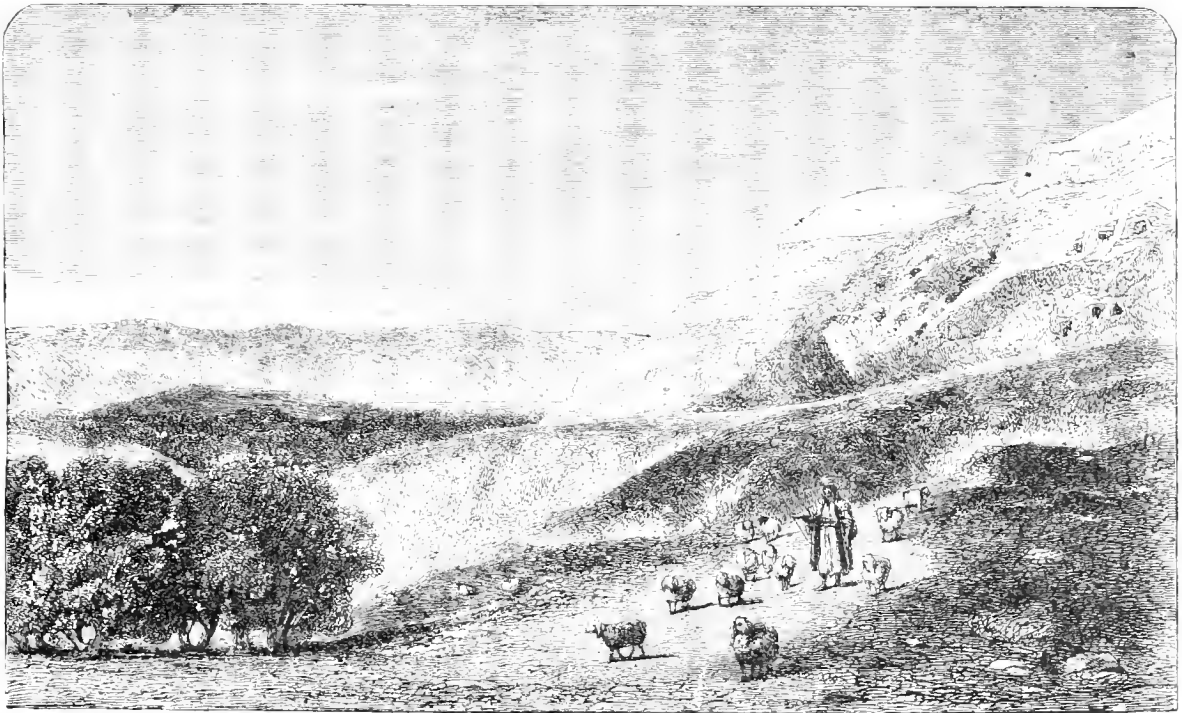
*Now when we think of John's greatness, the first lesson it teaches us is the lesson of—TEMPERANCE.*

The angel Gabriel spoke particularly of this when he foretold the birth of John.

He said he should "drink neither wine, nor strong drink." John was temperate in what he ate, as well as in what he drank. And he was temperate in his dress too.

It is interesting to remember that the only other person, besides John the Baptist, whose birth was foretold by an angel—excepting our blessed Saviour—was Sampson. And the angel foretold the same thing about Sampson, that he did about John. He said that he was to be a temperance man too. He was to drink neither wine nor strong drink. Judges xiii: 5. Num. vi: 23. And here we see that two of the most famous men mentioned in the Bible—Sampson, famous for his strength, and John the

Baptist famous for his greatness—were both temperance men. This shows us how much God approves of temperance principles, and temperance men. The young people of this country, the girls as well as the boys, should make up their minds to be great in temperance, like John the Baptist. And the reason why they should do this is that *intemperance causes so much misery*. If we try to express in figures how much money is wasted by intemperance every year, we get so far up among the millions that we can form no clear idea of the sum. It is calculated that it



The Wilderness near the Dead Sea.

costs more money than is paid for taxes by the whole country. And then more lives are destroyed by intemperance than by war, and famine, and pestilence, all put together. It is estimated that sixty thousand persons are killed by intemperance every year. Think what a large army that would make! If we could see them marching slowly, and sadly by, knowing that they were all going down in shame, and dishonor to a drunkard's grave, what a sorrowful sight it would be!

We know that John the Baptist's temperance was one of the things

that helped to make him a great man, eighteen hundred years ago. Now let us take an example of a man in our own day; one about whom we have all heard; and who owed much of his greatness to his temperance. One of the greatest men that ever belonged to our American navy was the late Admiral Farragut.

When he was only ten years old he was a cabin-boy, on board the vessel that his father commanded in the United States Navy. He had learned to swear, and drink, and smoke, and play cards like an old sailor; and he thought that this was something manly and great. One day, after dinner, his father ordered every body out of the cabin, but his son. Then he locked the door, and calling his boy to him, he said, "David, what do you mean to be when you grow up?"

"I mean to be a sailor," he replied.

"Yes," said his father, "a poor, miserable, drunken sailor, before the mast; to be kicked and cuffed about the world, and die at last in a fever hospital in some foreign country."

"No, father," said the boy, straightening himself up proudly, "I'll tread the quarter deck, and command one of my country's vessels as you do."

"No, David, you will not. No boy ever rose to the quarter deck, and to the command of a vessel with such principles and habits as you have. You'll have to change the whole course of your life, if you expect to become a good, or useful, or great man."

Then his father left him, and went on deck. But he remained below to think over what his father had just said. "A poor, miserable, drunken sailor, before the mast, kicked, and cuffed about the world, and then to die in some fever hospital! Is *this* what I am to be? Never. I'll change my life, and change it at once. By the help of God, I'll never utter another oath; I'll never drink another drop of intoxicating liquor, and never gamble again." These resolutions were solemnly made, and faithfully kept from that hour. He afterwards became a Christian, and by the grace of God grew up to be the good, and great, and noble commander that he was.

One lesson taught us by the greatness of John the Baptist is the lesson of temperance.



*The second lesson taught us by John's greatness is—the lesson of—*  
 HUMILITY.

Every thing about John shows how humble he was: When he was doing the work he had been sent to do, and was stirring all Jerusalem by



his preaching, the rulers of the Jewish people sent messengers to him to inquire who he was; and we see his humility in the answer that he sent back to them. He might have said—"I am the forerunner of the Messiah; I am the messenger sent before his face; I am the prophet, spoken of hundreds of years ago, by Isaiah and Malachi. I am the one whose birth, and mission, the angel Gabriel was sent down from heaven to tell about." But it was nothing of this kind that John said of himself. How

beautiful his humility appears when we hear him sending this word back:—

*“I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.”* “I am only a voice—a little breath put in motion, that’s all.” Here was humility. And when Jesus came to him to be baptized, John said,—“I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?” Here was humility. When he was speaking of Christ, on one occasion, to his disciples, he said he is one—“greater than I am—the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.” Here was humility. And when his disciples became jealous of the growing popularity of Jesus, and came to talk to John about it, he said to them plainly,—“He must increase, and *I must decrease.*” It was like comparing Jesus to the sun, and himself to the morning star, giving notice of the sun’s rising, and then saying “as the star melts away before the rising of the sun, so I must disappear as this glorious sun shines more and more.” Here was humility. A beautiful example of humility John was! And this had much to do with his greatness.

Those who are great in the sight of man often have no humility at all. The Romans had many men among them who were considered great, and yet in all the treasures of their language, they had no word to express what we mean by humility. And even the Greek language, which was considered richer than others, had no such word till the Apostle Paul introduced it. It has well been said that—“humility is that low, sweet root from which all heavenly virtues grow.” Solomon says of it—“*Before honor is humility.*” Prov. xv: 33. We see how true this was in the case of John the Baptist! He had the honor of being sent to prepare the way for the Saviour of the world. He had the honor of being called “*great*” by that glorious Saviour. But we see how humility went before this honor. And it is so still.

Here is an illustration from our own times:—

I suppose we have all heard about Dr. Morrison, the celebrated missionary to China. He found that the work in which he was engaged was too much for him. He needed some one to help him; so he wrote to his friends in England, and asked them to please send him out another missionary. When they got his letter they began at once to try and find a suitable young man to go out as a missionary to China and help Dr. Morrison.

After awhile, a young man from the country came and offered himself. He was an earnest Christian man, full of love to Jesus, and very anxious to be doing good. But he was poor. He had poor clothes on, and looked like a countryman, rough and unpolished. He came to the



Intemperance.

office of the Missionary Society, was introduced to the gentlemen of the Board, and had a long talk with them. They then asked him to call again in an hour or two, and they would give him an answer. In talking the matter over after he was gone, they came to the conclusion that this young man would not do to go as a help to Dr. Morrison. Finally they said to Dr. Phillips, one of their members:—"Doctor, you see the young man, when he calls again, and tell him that we do not think him fit to be a mis-

sionary; but that if he would like to go out as servant to the missionary, we will send him." The doctor did not much like to do this; but he did it. He told the young man just what the Board said. Now, many a young man would have been angry on hearing this, and would have said:—"No, I shall do no such a thing. If I can't go out as a missionary, I won't go at all." But this young man did not feel or act so. After hearing what the doctor said, his answer was:—"Well, sir, if the gentlemen don't think me fit to be a missionary, I will go as a servant. I am willing to be a hewer of wood, or a drawer of water, or do anything to help on the cause of my heavenly Master." Here was humility indeed! He was sent out as a servant; but he soon got to be a missionary, and turned out to be the *Rev. Dr. Milne*, one of the best and greatest missionaries that ever went to any country.

The second lesson taught us by the greatness of John the Baptist, was a lesson of humility.

*The third lesson taught us by John's greatness is the lesson of—*  
OBEDIENCE.

The most important of all the lessons we have to learn in this life, is the lesson of obedience. It is a hard lesson to learn, but it is one we must learn if we wish to be happy, or good, or great. John had learned this lesson well, and he spent his life in practicing it. He lived in the wilderness for thirty years, because God wished him to do so; and he obeyed God. Then God told him to go and preach about Jesus, and he obeyed. He cared nothing for his own ease, or pleasure, for wealth, or labor, or praise. He only cared to obey God. He learned this lesson well, and practiced it faithfully, and this made him great. And if we wish to be "great in the sight of the Lord" as John was, we must learn this lesson as **he did**. And if we do learn it properly, it will lead us to obey God, not only in some things, but in all things; not only in things that we like, and things that we understand all about, but also in things that we dislike, and things that we do not understand at all. Let us look at one or two illustrations of the kind of obedience God expects us to render him.

The Duke of Wellington once gave an order to one of his officers during a battle. It was a difficult and dangerous thing that officer was commanded to do. He ventured to tell the Duke that he thought the

thing he had been told to do was impossible. "Sir," said the Duke, "I did not ask your opinion about the order given you. I gave you the order that you might obey it. Go and do it."

This is the kind of obedience that God expects from us as his soldiers.

"Ours not to reason why;  
Ours not to make reply;  
Ours but to do, or die."

When the owner of a ship sends his vessel out on a long voyage, he gives written directions, or orders, to the captain of the ship, about all that he is expected to do. These orders he is never allowed to depart from. No matter what happens, he must, as far as possible, carry out the orders he has received. The rule for captains to follow is,—"*Obey orders if you break owners.*"

Some years ago, when Stephen Girard—then the richest man in Philadelphia—was living, he owned a number of vessels. On one occasion, he sent a vessel to the East Indies. He gave the captain orders about how he was to sell his cargo, and about the kind of cargo he was to bring back.

On arriving at the port to which he was sent, the captain sold his cargo. Then he found that he could make more money, for his owner, by taking back a different cargo, from what he had been told to bring. He did so. The result was that he made ten or twelve thousand dollars more by doing this than if he had obeyed the orders given to him. When he came to settle up for the voyage, in addition to his regular wages, Mr. Girard gave this captain a handsome sum of money, from the profits of the voyage; and *then dismissed him from his service*. When the captain expressed his surprise, Mr. Girard said,—“Sir, I can have no man in my employ who does not obey my orders. It happened to turn out very well in this case; but the next time disobedience might bring ruin.” He would not take the man back into his service.

Here is another illustration from Mr. Girard's life. On one occasion, a poor man applied to him for work. "I am willing to do anything," said he, "to gain an honest living."

“You take that heap of stones at the end of this lot,” said Mr. Girard, “and pile them up on the other side, in just the same way, and I will give you a dollar.” The man did so, and received his dollar. The next morning he came again, and was told, by his strange employer, to move the stones again, and put them where he had found them at first. And so he went on every day, for a week, carrying the stones first here and then there,



The Duke of Wellington Commanding.

but never complaining, nor asking any questions. On Saturday night, after Mr. Girard had settled with the man, he said, “I like you, my friend. There is no nonsense about you. You do just what you are told to do. Many men would have objected to doing the work over and over again. Now, you shall have work, as long as I have any to give to any one.”

This is the way in which God wants us to obey him. This was the way in which John the Baptist obeyed; and this was one of the things that helped to make him great. Let us learn this lesson as he did.

*And then the fourth lesson that John's greatness teaches us, is the lesson of—COURAGE.*

When he began his work as a preacher, he was not afraid of any one. He was not afraid of the common people, but told them plainly of their sins, and exhorted them to repentance. He was not afraid of the priests and Pharisees. He knew how wicked they were, and when he saw many of them coming to his baptism, he reprov'd them boldly, and said,—“O, generation of vipers, who hath warn'd *you*, to flee from the wrath to come?” He was not afraid of the great but wicked Herod, who was then the ruler of Judea. Herod liked John. We are told that—“when he heard him, he did many things” that John told the people to do, and “heard him gladly.” Mark vi: 20. But, though Herod was kind to him, John was not afraid to speak to him, plainly and faithfully, about his sins. Herod had enticed away from his own brother Philip, Herodias, his wife, and had married her while her husband was still living. This was a dreadful sin. It was breaking the seventh commandment. John spoke to Herod on this subject, and told him, boldly, that it “was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife.” Herod did not seem to mind it much. But it made Herodias very angry. She persuaded Herod to put John into prison. And, not satisfied with this, she never rested till she got an order from Herod to have him put to death. Herod's executioner came into the prison one day, with his sword in his hand, and “beheaded John in prison.” The head of John was given to Salome, the daughter of Herodias. She brought it to her mother.

Such was the end of this great man. But while we mourn his sudden, and early, and cruel death, we cannot but admire his courage.

And the Bible teaches us that if we learn to love God, it will make us bold and courageous as John was. We shall be “bold as a lion.” Prov. xxviii: 1. We shall be “as the goodly horse in the battle.” Zech. x: 3. We shall be “good soldiers of Jesus Christ.” II Tim. ii: 3. We shall be like a defenced city, with iron pillars, and brazen walls. Jer. i: 18. Our “faces will be like like flint.” Is. 1: 7, and “like adamant,” Ezek. iii: 9. We shall be “not ashamed.” Rom. i: 16. We shall be “in nothing terrified.” Phil. i: 28.

Here is an illustration of the way in which a boy may show this kind of courage:—

A poor boy was attending school, with a large patch on the knee of his trowsers. One of his schoolfellows nick-named him "Old Patch," and



The Holy Sacrament.

tried to raise a laugh on him. "Why don't you fight him?" cried one of the boys. "I'd give it to him," said another. "Oh!" answered the brave boy, "you don't suppose I'm ashamed of my patch, do you? For my



part, I'm thankful for a good mother, to keep me out of rags. I'm proud of that patch for my mother's sake."

*That*, was the highest kind of courage. Many a man has courage enough to walk up to the mouth of a cannon, who has not courage enough to bear to be laughed at.

And here is an illustration of true courage in a soldier:—

One of the best generals of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, was General Von Zeiten. He was an earnest Christian man, and never was ashamed to own and honor his Saviour. On one occasion he declined an invitation to dine with the king, because it was the day for the communion at the church he attended, and he desired to be present there. King Frederick was an infidel, and the next time General Zeiten appeared at his palace, he tried to make a jest of the holy communion of the Lord's Supper, and the other guests laughed at the king's remarks.

Zeiten shook his gray head solemnly, stood up, respectfully saluted the king, and then, with a firm voice, said:—

"Your majesty knows very well that in war I have never feared any danger, and often boldly risked my life for you, and for my country. I am still animated by the same spirit; and to-day, if it were necessary, and your majesty commanded it, would willingly lay my gray head at your feet. But, there is one above us who is greater than you and me—greater than all men. He is the Saviour and Redeemer, who died also for your majesty, and has bought us all with his own precious blood. This Holy One, I can never allow to be mocked, or insulted; for on him rest my faith, my comfort, and my hope, for this world and the world to come. It is in the power of this faith that your brave army has fought, and conquered. If your majesty undermines this faith, you undermine, at the same time, the welfare of the State. I salute your majesty."

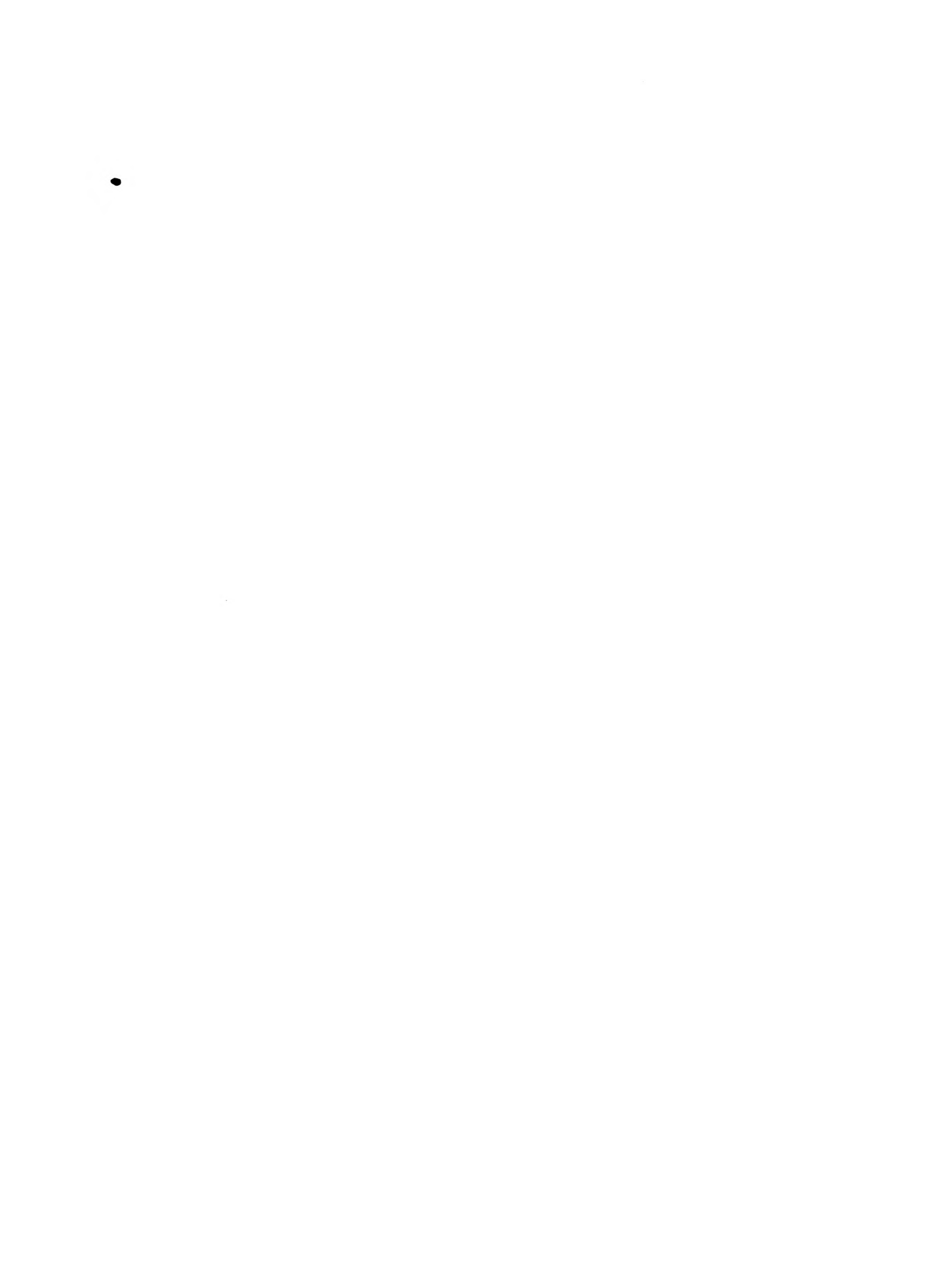
This noble confession of his Saviour by the brave old soldier, had a great effect upon the king. He felt that he had done wrong in trying to make a jest of the religion of his general, and he was not ashamed to acknowledge it. He gave his right hand to the general, and placing his left hand on the old man's shoulder, he said with much feeling:—

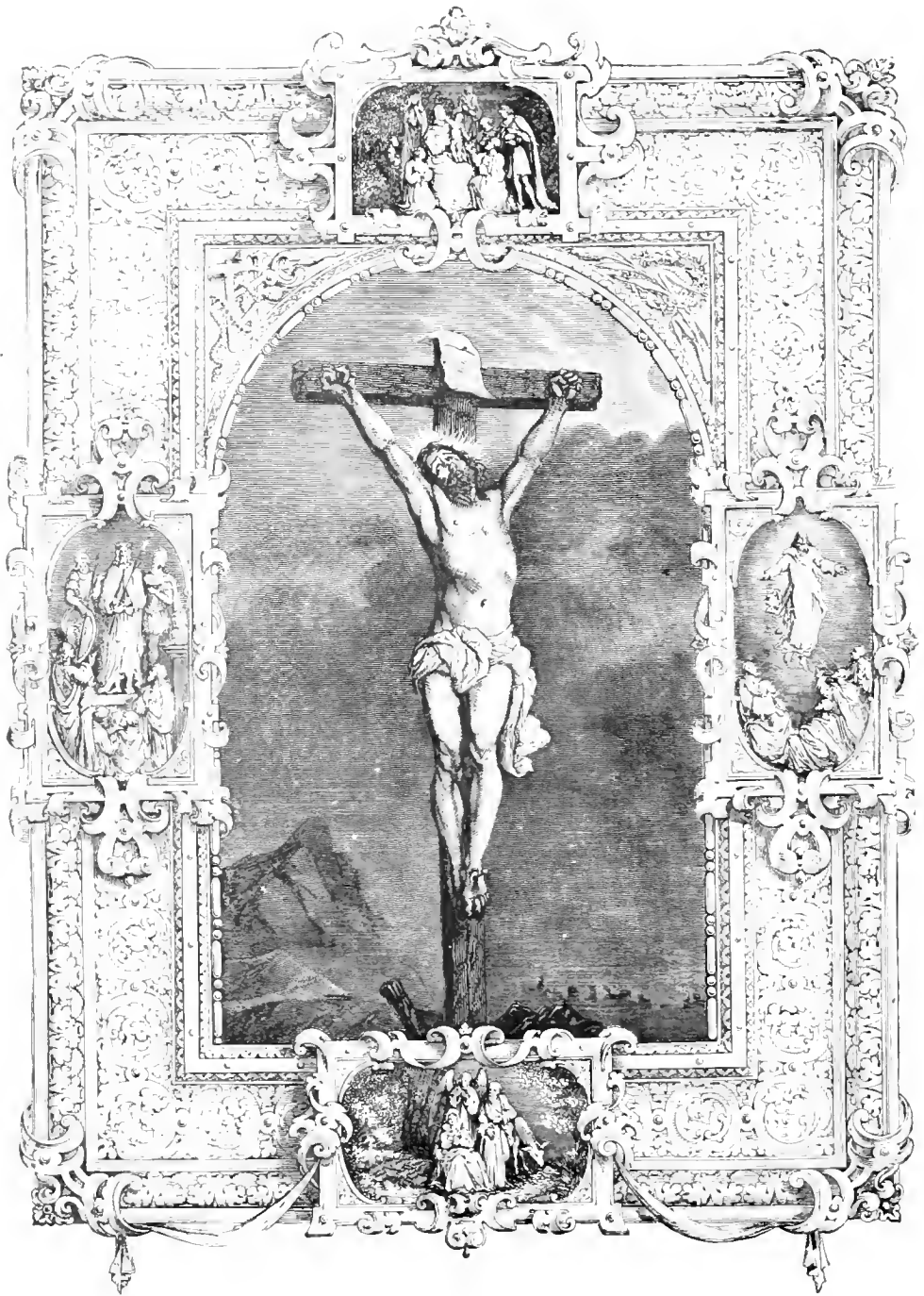
"O, happy Zeiten! how I wish I could believe as you do. I have the greatest respect for you. This shall never happen again."

This was true Christian courage, like that which helped to make John the Baptist great.

Thus we have spoken of four important lessons taught us by studying the greatness of John the Baptist. We have before us the *lesson of temperance*; the *lesson of humility*; the *lesson of obedience*; and the *lesson of courage*. May God help us all to learn these lessons, and practice them, and then, like John the Baptist, we shall be "great in the sight of the Lord."







THE CRUCIFIXION



## THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.



THERE is something very dismal about the darkness of night. And if you are sick, or suffering during the night, how slowly its hours pass away! and how long the night seems! And then, what a pleasant thing it is when the sun rises, and scatters his cheerful beams around! Then the birds begin to sing, and the flowers open their leaves, and unfold their loveliness, and everything seems bright and beautiful.

Before Jesus was born into our world the state of things here, was compared to night. The Prophet Isaiah was speaking of this, when he said,—“Darkness shall cover the

earth, and gross darkness the people." Is. lx: 2. And it was the effect of Christ's coming into our world that he was speaking of again, when he said,—"*The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.*" Is. ix: 2. The birth of Christ was to be like the morning coming after a long, dark night. The Prophet Malachi compares the coming of Christ to the rising of the sun. This is what he means when he says:—"*Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings,*" or his beams. Mal. iv: 2. Christ's coming was like sunrise to the world.

The birth of Christ was the most important event that ever took place in the history of our world. This is the great event of which we are now to speak. And in speaking of it, there are four things connected with it to be considered. These are—*the time of his birth; the place of his birth; the circumstances of his birth; and the reasons for his birth.* Or to express it more briefly, *when—where—how,* and *why*—Christ was born.

We begin them by considering—WHEN *Christ was born.*

Any Sunday-schoolboy or girl can answer the question—When was Christ born? We reckon our years from the time when this great event took place. We all know what year it is that we are living in. We call this—the year 1877. And what we mean by this numbering of the years is, that Jesus was born into our world eighteen hundred and seventy-seven years ago. Learned men who have examined this subject carefully, tell us that the birth of Christ really took place four years before this. They say that these four years ought to be added to these 1877. This would make it actually eighteen hundred and eighty-one years since the birth of Christ. But we may well be content to let the figures stand as they are. We call this year, Anno Domini 1877. This means in the year of our Lord 1877. And every time we speak of the year in which we are living, we are, as it were, pointing back to the time of our Saviour's birth.

And what St. Luke tells us, agrees with this. He informs us that John the Baptist began his ministry "in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar." Luke iii: 1. John was then thirty years old. This was our Saviour's age, too, for he and John were born in the same year, within six months of each other. The fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius

Cæsar corresponds with the year 30, Anno Domini, or the thirtieth year of our present way of reckoning time. And Tiberius Cæsar began his reign when John and Jesus were about fifteen years old. And as twice fifteen



Sunrise.

make thirty, this shows us that our present way of reckoning time from the birth of Christ is correct.

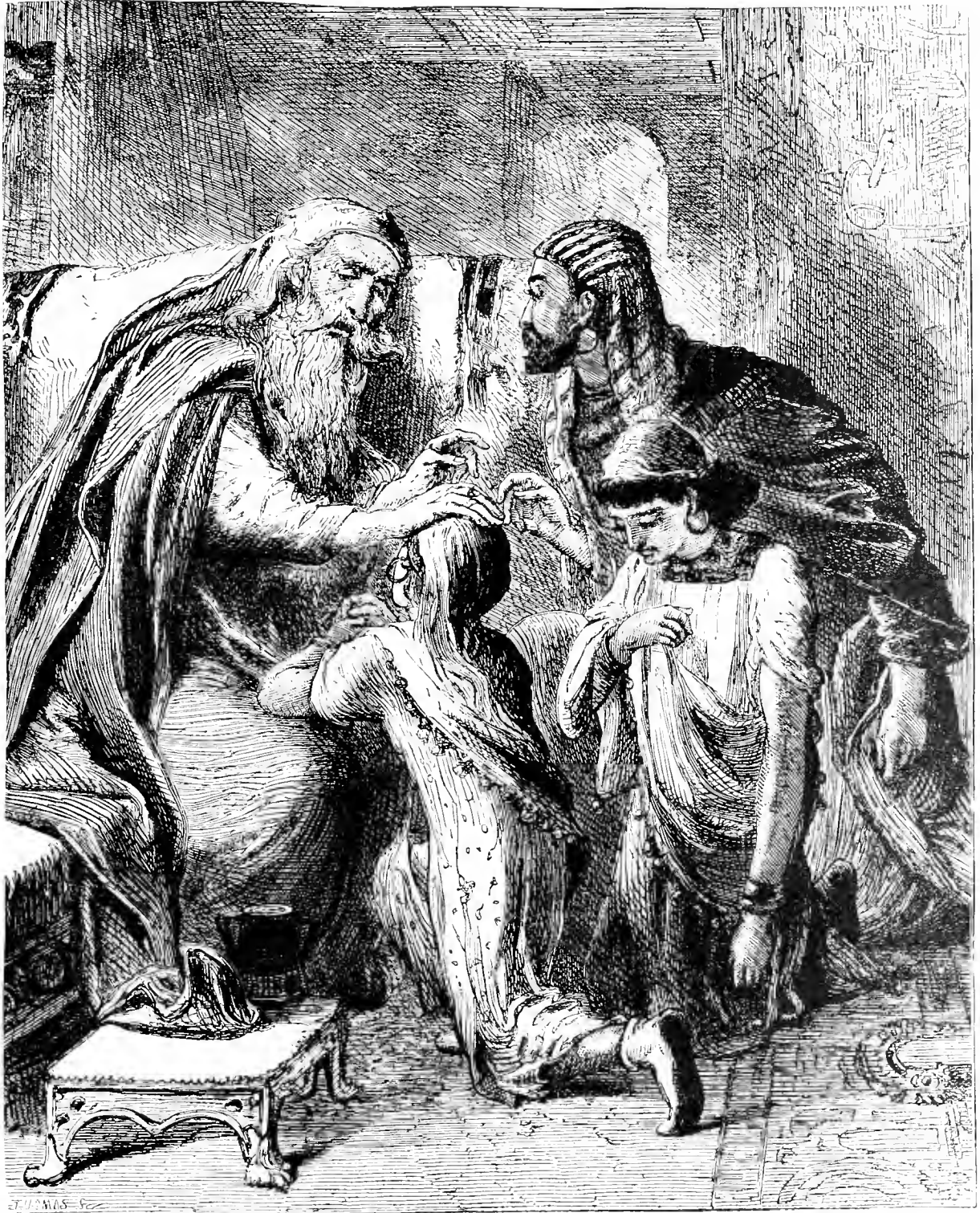
But some one may ask the question whether there was nothing said in the Old Testament about the time when Christ was to be born? Yes; there were two things said, and it may be well enough for us to take a look at them here:—

One of these things about the time of Christ's birth was spoken of by the Patriarch Jacob. The old man is on his death-bed. He gathers his sons round him, that he might, as we say, "tell them their fortunes," or let them know something about what would happen to them in the future. He begins with Reuben, the oldest, and goes on to Benjamin, the youngest. The most important of all the things he had to say, was when he came to speak of his son Judah. And the reason of this was, that Judah was the head, or father of the tribe from which Christ was to be born. In speaking of Judah, this was part of what he said:—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet until Shiloh come." Gen. xlix: 10. A great many difficult questions have been raised upon this passage. We need not trouble ourselves about these. The real meaning of it is simple enough for any thoughtful young person to understand. Shiloh here means the *peace-maker*. This refers to Christ. By the rod, or sceptre here spoken of, in connection with Judah, and the law-giver, Jacob meant to say that Judah was to continue a distinct tribe, and be at the head of the nation until Christ came. And this was the case. But very shortly after our Saviour left the world, Jerusalem was destroyed. Judah ceased to be a distinct tribe, and lost its authority as the head of the nation. Unless then our Saviour had been born about the time that his birth did take place, the prophecy of Jacob would not have been fulfilled. But "*the Scripture cannot be broken.*" Jacob's prophecy *was* fulfilled. Christ, the Shiloh, *did* come while Judah was a distinct tribe, as indicated by the rod, or sceptre, and having the chief authority in the nation, as was denoted by its being the law-giver. And this was what Jacob taught us about the time when Christ was to be born.

And then there is another passage in the Old Testament, which is very interesting on account of what it teaches us in reference to the time of Christ's birth. This is found in the book of Daniel. And the interesting thing about this passage is that it gives the date of Christ's birth, and tells us *in figures* when he was to be born.

When Daniel lived, the Israelites were captives in Babylon. But Daniel found out, by studying the Bible, and by prayer, that the time of their captivity was nearly ended. And he told his countrymen for their encouragement, that an order, or decree, would soon be issued by the





Jacob Blessing the Children of Joseph.



authority of the king of Babylon, giving them permission to go back to their own country, and to build again the walls of Jerusalem. And then, to encourage them still more, he went on to tell about the coming of the great Messiah, of whom all their prophets had spoken. And one of the things which he told them concerning him, was the time when he would



The Annunciation.

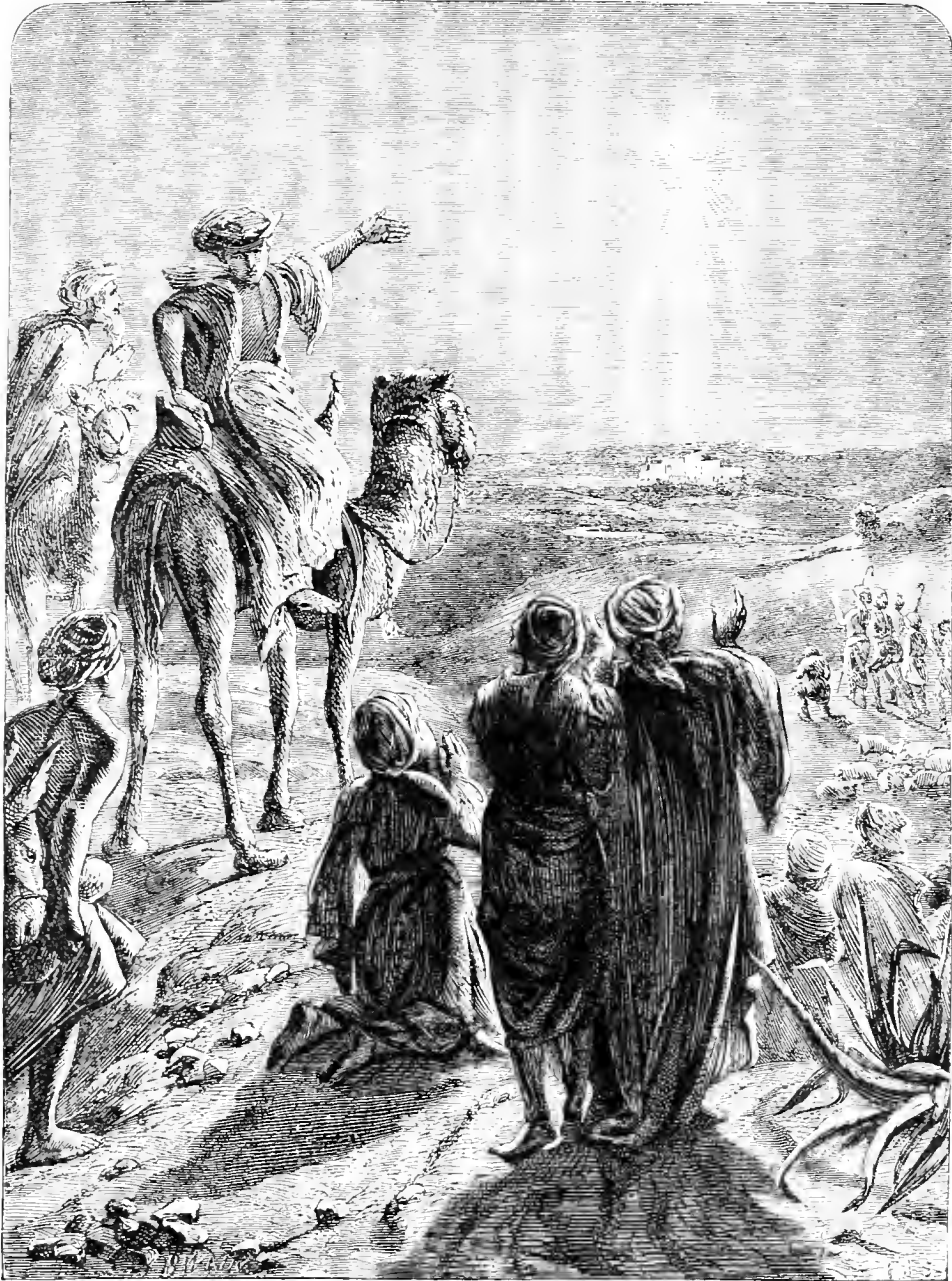
be born. In the ninth chapter of Daniel, and the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses, we read what the prophet said to them on this subject. These are his words:—"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgressions, &c." This is Daniel's famous prophecy of the seventy weeks. Learned men have found great difficulties in explaining this prophecy, and have started many hard

questions about it. We have nothing to do with these. All that we need trouble ourselves about is just to get the plain, simple meaning of the passage. And it is not hard to do this.

The decree, or commandment, for rebuilding Jerusalem, spoken of by Daniel here, is that of which we read in Ezra. vii: 11. This was issued by King Ahasuerus. And Daniel said that within seventy weeks from that time, Christ, the Messiah, was to be born, and to live, and to die. Now, in the way in which the prophets used to speak of time, a day was counted for a year. And as there are seven days in a week, seventy weeks multiplied by seven would give four hundred and ninety days, or four hundred and ninety years, as the period of time of which Daniel was here speaking. And what Daniel here taught the people was, that within the period of four hundred and ninety years from the time when Ahasuerus should issue his decree for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the birth, and the life, and the death of Christ would all take place.

Now let us look at these figures for a moment, and see how this sum works out. Get a reference Bible, and turn to Ezra. vii: 11. Here we have the commandment, or decree, to which Daniel refers. At the head of the column of references in your Bible you will find that the date of this decree was four hundred and fifty-seven years before Christ. This brings us to the time when Christ was to be born. It was to be four hundred and fifty-seven years after that decree went forth. At the time of his death our Saviour was thirty-three years old. Now add these two amounts together, 457 and 33, and the result is 490. And so Daniel's figures do not lie. They tell the simple truth. Within the seventy weeks, or the four hundred and ninety years of which he spoke, from the time when Ahasuerus issued his decree for rebuilding Jerusalem, all the great events which he foretold came to pass. Messiah was born; Messiah lived; Messiah died, or was cut off. And so there are four ways in which we can tell when Christ was born. We can count back from the year in which we are living, and tell when this great event took place. We can take St. Luke's account of the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, when Jesus was thirty years old, and work out the date of his birth from that. We can go back to old Jacob's prophecy about Judah and Shiloh, and trace it out from that; or we can take Daniel's prophecy of the seventy

weeks, or the four hundred and ninety years, and find out how exactly that points out to us *when* Christ was born.



The Star of Bethlehem.

*The next point we are to speak of, is the place of his birth, or WHERE Christ was born.*

Seven hundred years before he came into our world, the place where he was to be born had been distinctly foretold. The Prophet Micah had said:—"And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth to me, that is to be ruler in Israel." Micah v: 2. This was the prophecy.

And see how it was fulfilled. About the time that Jesus was born, we read that "there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying where is he that is born king of the Jews, for we have seen his star in the



The Adoration of the Wise Men.

East, and have come to worship him?" Matth. ii: 1, 2. This led Herod to call "the chief priests and scribes of the people together, demanding of them *when Christ should be born.*" The answer they gave him, was:—"In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet,"—Matth. ii: 5. And thus, to prove this, they quoted the prophecy of Micah, of which we have just spoken.

And how strangely it came to pass that Joseph and Mary, the parents of Jesus, should have been at Bethlehem when the time came for him to be born. They had been living at the little town of Nazareth, in Galilee. This was far away from Bethlehem. They had no business, and no relatives or friends to bring them to Bethlehem. But God put it into the heart

of Augustus Cæsar, the Emperor of Rome, in his imperial palace, in that great city, to send forth a decree for enrolling, or making a census of the inhabitants of Syria, as well as other parts of the Roman Empire. This rendered it necessary for every family to go up to the city of their fathers; and this brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem just in time for Jesus to be born there. If that decree had not been issued at all, or if it had been issued a month earlier, or a month later, there would have been nothing to call Joseph and Mary away from Nazareth at that precise time, and *Jesus would not have been born in Bethlehem*. The Emperor of Rome, little thought, when he issued that decree, that he was helping to fulfill a Jewish prophecy, written seven hundred years before, which foretold that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. But in this strange way, God caused that prophecy to be fulfilled. How wonderful this was! When we think about it, we may well say, in the language of the hymn:—

“ God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.”

The town in which Christ was born was called “Bethlehem Ephratah,” or “Bethlehem of Judea,” to distinguish it from another town of the same name in the tribe of Zebulon.

The meaning of Bethlehem is “house of bread.” This was a very appropriate name to be given to the birth-place of him who came down from heaven on purpose to be the bread of life to a hungry and perishing world. Bethlehem is situated about six miles south of Jerusalem. In itself, it has never been a place of much importance. The Prophet Micah called it “a little” place in his day. And such it has always been. Its present population is not more than about three thousand. They are chiefly peasants who live by the cultivation of their fields or gardens. The appearance of the town as you approach is very beautiful. It is situated on a narrow-ridge. The sides of this ridge are terraced down to the deep valleys that lie beneath. These terraces are well cultivated, being covered with rows of olive trees, intermingled with vines and fig trees. They sweep in graceful curves round the hill like natural stairs.

We cannot help feeling an interest in Bethlehem, because of what we learn from the Old Testament of its connection with David. It was here that Jesse, the father of David lived. Here David was born. It was in Bethlehem, and in the fields and forests around, that he kept his father's sheep, when a boy. It was here he fought the lion, and the bear that came to steal the lambs of his flock. And it was here that the Prophet Samuel came, at the command of God, to anoint the ruddy-faced shepherd boy to be the future king of Israel. Here David lived till he left his sheep to become a soldier. And this is the reason why Bethlehem was called "the city of David."

But *Jesus* was born in Bethlehem; and *this* is what will give the place its greatest distinction forever. When we hear, or read of Bethlehem, the first thing that we think about, is the stable in which the Saviour of the world was born, and the manger in which that child of wonders lay. And, of course, the first object of interest to every one who visits Bethlehem, is that most sacred spot—the place of the Nativity. It was so with my companions and myself, when we arrived at Bethlehem.

We went directly to where, we are told, that stable once stood. Of course, there is no stable there now. Instead of this a large church, called "The Convent of the Nativity" covers the hallowed spot. This is an enormous building, said to have been erected by the Empress Helena, in the early part of the fourth century. It is therefore one of the oldest specimens of Christian architecture in the world. What is called the nave of this great church, that is the body of it, or the part that stands between the chancel rail and the chief entrance, in front of the church, is the portion of greatest interest. From this, we went down to an underground vault, over which, and on account of which, this vast church was built. Here, at the entrance of a long winding passage, cut out of the limestone rock, of which the hill of Bethlehem is composed, we found ourselves in a small, irregular shaped chapel. This chapel is said to stand just where the stable stood in which Joseph and Mary found lodging on that memorable night. It is dimly lighted with silver lamps. There are two small recesses in this chapel nearly opposite each other. In one of these recesses, on the north side, is a marble slab set in the floor. This slab has a silver star fastened on its



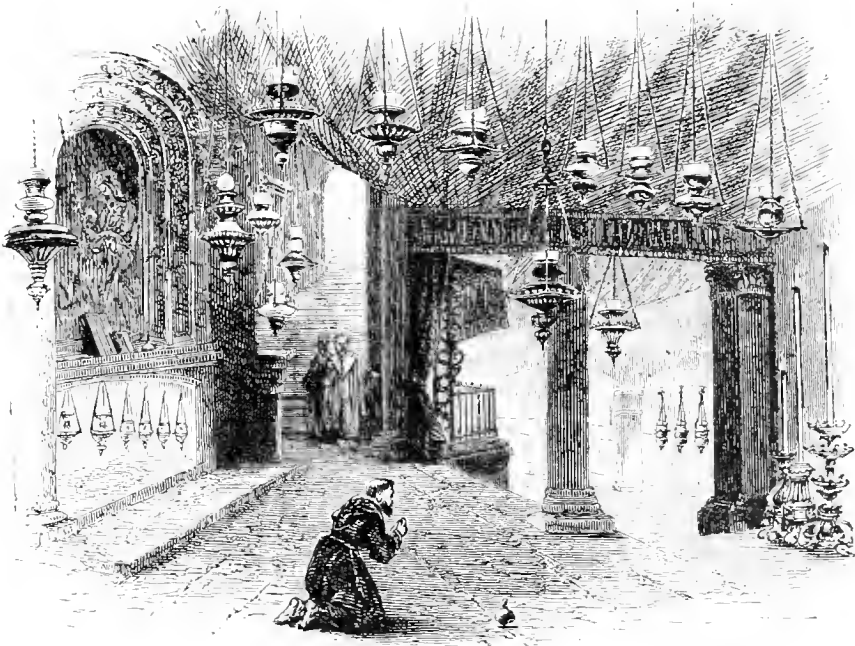


The Kings offering Gifts.



surface. This star is said to mark that most sacred of all places—the place of the Nativity of the Son of God. Around this star, cut into the marble, are these words in Latin:—“*Hic de Virgine Maria, Jesus Christus Natus Est*; in English they are these:—“*Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.*”

I never can forget the strange and impressive thoughts and feelings that filled my mind and heart as I stood musing there. That spot marked



“This Chapel is said to stand just where the Stable stood in which our Lord was born.”

the place, and the time, to which everything had looked forward since our world was made. And that spot marks the place, and the time, to which everything will look backward while our world shall last. It was very affecting to stand there and think of Jesus, the Son of God, seated now at the right hand of the Father in heaven, where “all the angels of God worship him,” and then to think of the helpless little one, born in that stable at Bethlehem. And it was very comforting then, and there, to take up the simple words of “The Little Child’s Hymn for Night and Morning,” and say:—

“Once thou wert in cradle laid,  
 Baby bright in manger-shade,  
 With the oxen, and the cows,  
 And the lambs outside the house ;  
 Now thou art above the sky ;  
 Thou canst hear a baby cry.”

We should be thankful that we know so well—the place where Christ was born.

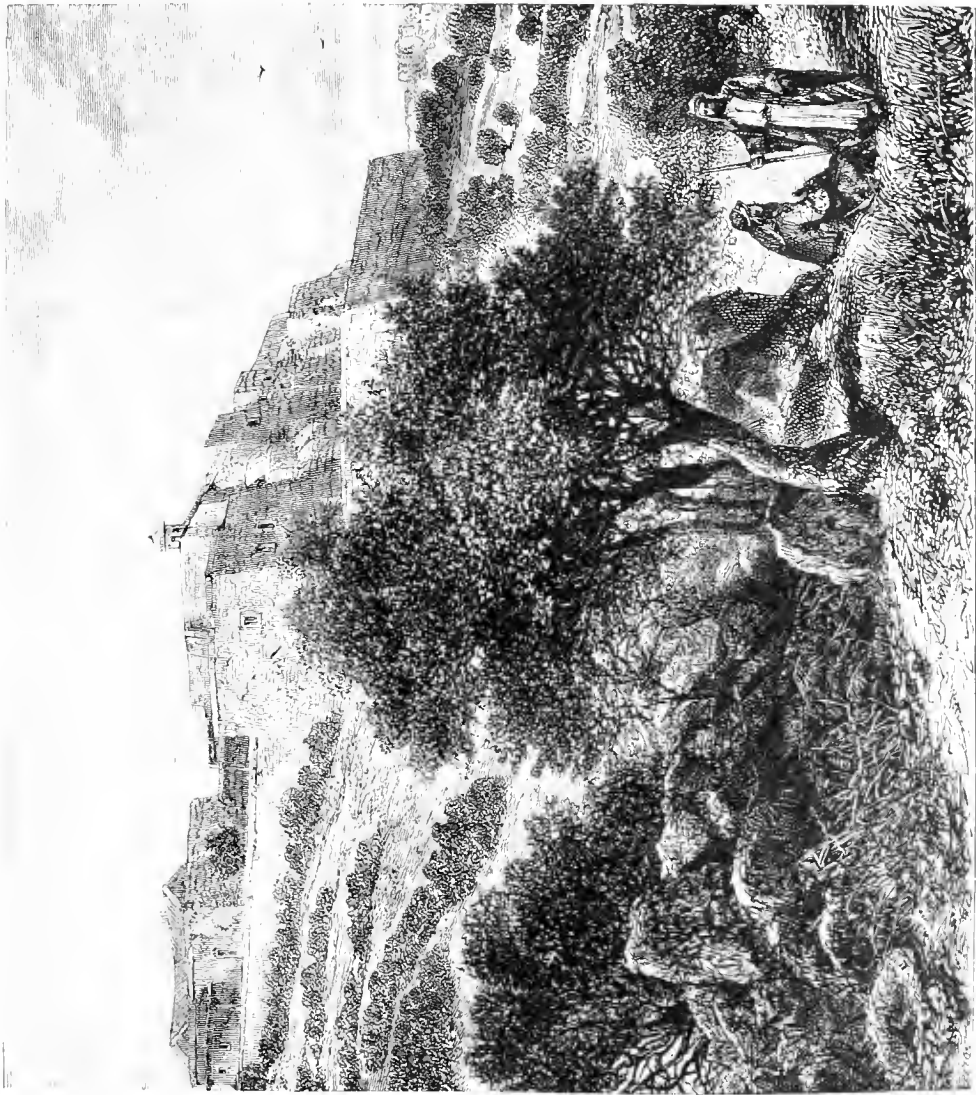
*And now we come to speak in the third place, of the CIRCUMSTANCES of the birth of Christ, or—now—he was born.*

And what this point of our subject will lead us to consider is *the contrasts* that attended the birth of Christ, or *the strangely opposite circumstances* that marked it. We have only time to look briefly at *three* of these.

There was a *strange neglect* on the one hand, attending our Saviour's birth; and yet, on the other hand, there was a *strange attention* marking it.

Here was taking place the birth of that great Deliverer, whose coming had been foretold from the beginning of the world. All the types and ceremonies of the Jewish religion had pointed to him. All their prophets had told about him. They had spoken plainly of the time *when*, and the place *where* he was to be born. The Jewish teachers had been studying those prophecies all their days, and teaching them to the people. And yet, they did not understand them themselves. They ought to have known that the time had come when Christ was to be born; but they did not know it. They ought to have had a committee of their best and wisest men sent down to Bethlehem, to be looking out for the birth of Christ, and to be ready to spread abroad the good news as soon as they knew that the birth of the promised Saviour had taken place. But they had no such committee there. They were not expecting the birth of Christ. No one was there to bid him welcome into the world he came to save. The chief priests, and rulers of the Jews, knew nothing about it, when it took place. They paid no attention to it. Here was strange neglect.

But then, in contrast to this there was *strange attention* paid to the birth of Christ from other quarters. No committee of the Jews from Jerusalem was there to welcome him. But a committee of angels from heaven was



The Convent of the Nativity, at Bethlehem



there. In the fields near Bethlehem were shepherds—"keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will to men." Luke ii: 8-15. Such a committee of angels never came from heaven to earth, before or since. And such a song of gladness as they sang, was never heard from lips of men, or angels. Here we see what strange neglect of Christ's birth there was on the part of men, and what strange attention was given to it on the part of angels.

Now look at another of these strange contrasts that marked the birth of Christ. There was *strange poverty* attending it, and yet *strange riches*, too. There was strange poverty attending the birth of Christ. Joseph and Mary were very poor. The fact, that *a stable* was the only place they could find to lodge in, when they came to Bethlehem, was the best proof of this that could be given. It is said they went there, "*because there was no room for them in the inn.*" Luke ii: 7. No doubt this was so. But even if the inn,—(or the khan, or caravansary, the public place appointed for strangers to lodge in)—was full, room might have been found for them somewhere else. If they had been rich people, traveling with chariots, and horses, and servants, no doubt, better quarters would have been found for them somewhere. But they were traveling alone. They probably had but one ass for Mary to ride on. We read of no servants attending them, and Joseph, no doubt, made the journey on foot. Everything about them showed that they were poor. They had no money to pay for lodgings; so no lodgings were offered them. Joseph and Mary belonged to the royal family of David. Their infant son was owner of all things. It was he whom the prophet represented as laying his hand on all the treasures of the globe, and saying,—"*The gold is mine, and the silver is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.*" Hag. ii: 8. And yet they were very poor. There was strange poverty here.

But then there was *strange wealth*, too. The visitors from heaven

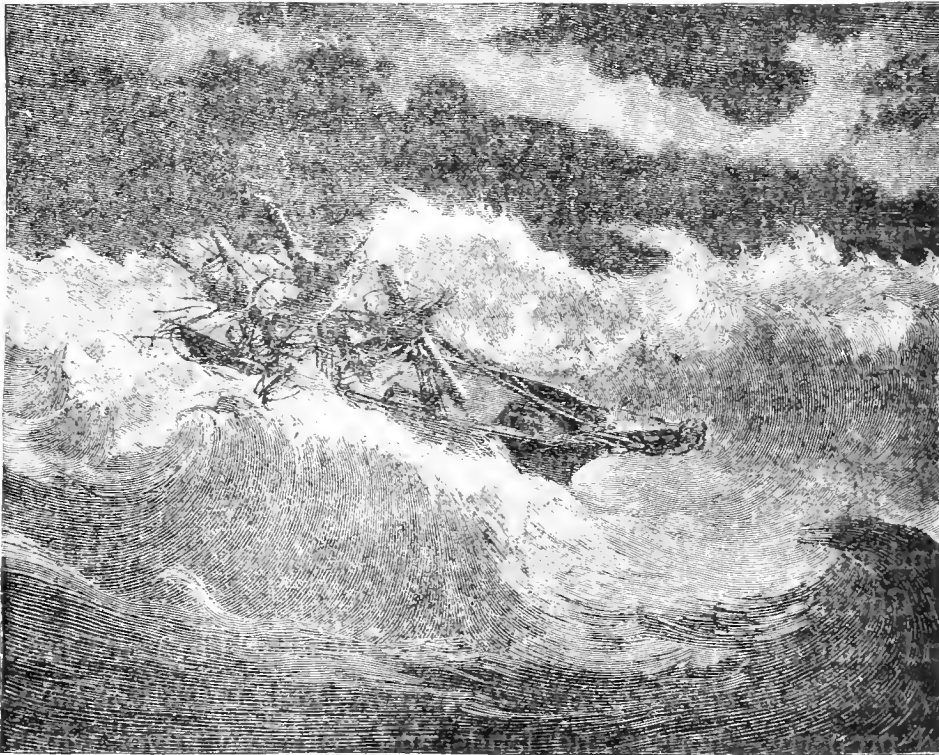
were not the only ones who came to show attention to this infant Saviour. Wise men from a far-off country in the East came, too. We shall have occasion to speak more particularly of them hereafter. But they supplied the want of which we are now speaking. They brought wealth to this family who were burdened with poverty. These men brought presents to the infant King, whose birth they had come to honor. And one of the gifts they brought was gold. Matth. ii: 11. We are not told how much gold they brought. But these men were, no doubt, very wealthy. They would not have undertaken so long a journey, for such a purpose as this, unless they had been well off. They are even supposed by some to have been kings themselves; but we have no proof of this. Yet, when we know they were rich themselves, and that they came to visit one "who was born *a king*," we may well suppose that the amount of gold they would give, under such circumstances, must have been very considerable. No doubt there was enough of it to make a poor family, like Joseph's, feel quite rich. And so we may truly say that there was *strange poverty*, and *strange wealth* connected with the birth of Christ.

And then there was still another contrast connected with the birth of Christ. We see *a strange humiliation*, and *a strange glory* blending together in his birth.

It was a strange humiliation that the place of his birth should have been a little town like Bethlehem, instead of in a famous, great city like Jerusalem. It was a strange humiliation that he should have been born in *a stable*, and not in some rich man's house or palace. It was a strange humiliation that the company into which he was introduced at his birth, were not the rich, and the great princes and nobles of the earth; but dumb animals—even the beasts of the stall. Well may we say, of his entrance into our world, as we do in the Collect for Advent Sunday, that—"He came to visit us in *great humility!*" And yet, what a strange contrast we see, when we look away from the humiliation of his birth, to the *great glory* that attended him even while he was lodged in the stable, and cradled in the manger! We see this glory in what the angels said about him to the shepherds of Bethlehem. They said that the birth of that child, who was born in such strange humility, should yet be the cause of "great joy to *all* people." They said that though a manger was his cradle, and



his head was lying "low with the beasts of the stall"—yet he was "*a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord;*" Luke ii: 11; that his coming into the world, would bring "*peace on earth, and good will towards men;*" and at the same time would bring "*Glory to God in the highest;*" glory to God in the *highest places;* glory to God among the *highest creatures,* and glory to God in the *highest measure.*



Don't you know the vessel is going to pieces?"

And when we think of these strange contrasts that attended the birth of Christ; the *neglect* on the one hand, and the *attention* on the other; the *poverty* on the one hand, and the *wealth* on the other; the *humiliation* on the one hand, and the *glory* on the other, we have clearly set before us the strangely opposite circumstances that marked his birth, or in other words, we see *HOW Christ was born.*

*There is one other thing for us to consider in connection with the birth of Christ; and this is the LESSONS that it teaches us, or—WHY—he was born.*

There are *two lessons* taught us about *God's thoughts*, and *two lessons* about *God's feelings*, when we consider how Christ was born. The Bible tells us that "God's thoughts are not our thoughts," and we see this very clearly when we consider what the birth of Christ teaches us about God's thoughts. One thing we are thus taught, is—*How little God thinks of places!*

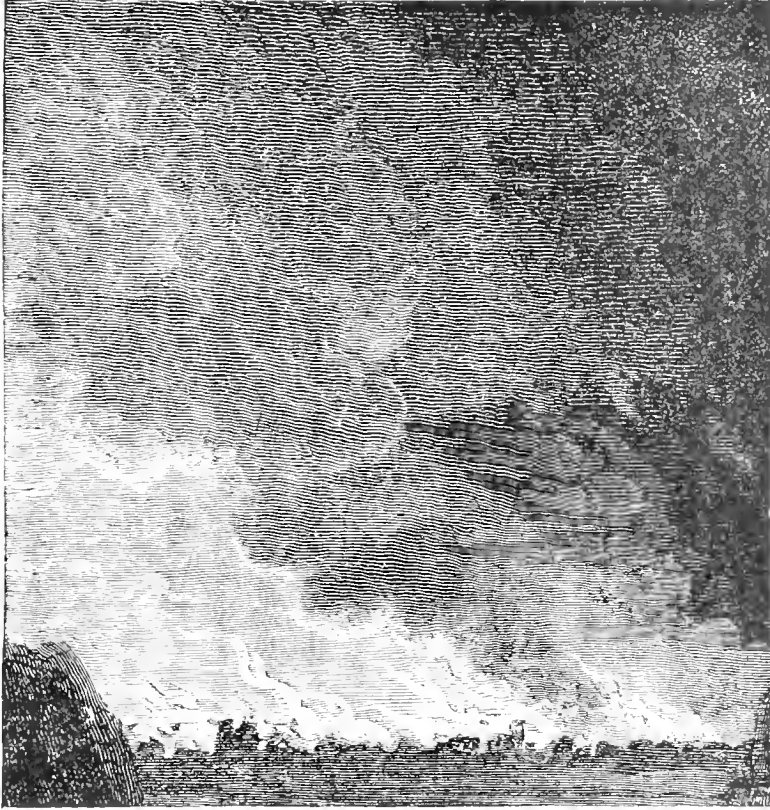
Men often speak, and think as if the place in which we are born, and in which we live was of very great importance. They think that we cannot be great, or honorable, or good, unless we are born, or live in some famous place. But when we remember that Jesus Christ—the greatest person who ever trod this earth—was born in *little* Bethlehem, and lived for the greater part of his life, in a place so *despised* as Nazareth, then we are taught this lesson—how little God thinks of places! If we are not like Jesus; if we have nothing good or great in ourselves; then, no matter where we are born, or where we live, we can never be of much use in the world, and never have any real honor—"the honor that cometh from God." But, if we are like Jesus; if we have anything really great or good in ourselves; then, no matter how insignificant the place of our birth, or how poor and despised the place in which we live, still, like Jesus, we may be useful, and good, and great. And this is one of God's thoughts we are taught by the birth of Christ.

And then, *the other thought of God*, which the birth of Christ shows us, is—*how little he thinks of earthly riches!* Men think it is having what is called property,—houses and lands, and gold and silver, which makes people rich. But this is not God's thought about it. And God's thought is the right one. It is not property,—that which we can only have for a little while, and which we cannot take with us, when we die, that makes us rich; no, but it is *character*,—that which is truly our own—which death cannot take away from us, which will go with us into eternity, and be ours forever, it is only *this*, which can make us truly rich.

Here is an incident that shows us the folly of supposing that merely having gold and silver can really make us rich.

"Rich for a Moment." Sometime ago, the *Brittania*, an English man-of-war was wrecked off the coast of Brazil. She had on board a large number of kegs filled with Spanish dollars. Some of them were brought on deck

at the time of the wreck, in the hope that there might be an opportunity of saving them. But the vessel was going to pieces so fast, that it was soon seen the only hope of saving the lives of those on board, was to leave everything behind, and get into the boats. The last boat was about to push off from the sinking wreck, when a young midshipman went back to see if any one was still on board. To his surprise there sat a sailor, who



"Commanding the fiery storm to burst forth on Sodom and Gomorrah."

had broken open the heads of some of these kegs, and was heaping up the silver dollars all around him.

"What are you doing there?" shouted the midshipman. "Don't you know the vessel is going to pieces, and will sink in a few moments?"

"Let her go," said the foolish man. "I've lived a poor wretch all my life, and I'm determined to die rich."

This was acting like a madman. And yet how many people are doing the very same thing! This world is only like a sinking wreck. And those

who spend all their time here in trying to get money, are following this example of the foolish sailor. How different it was with Jesus! When he was on earth he had neither houses nor land, neither gold nor silver. He was born in a stable. He said of himself,—“*The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*” Matth. viii: 20. When he sailed on the lake, it was in a *borrowed boat*. When he rode into Jerusalem, it was on a *borrowed ass*. Matth. xxi: 2, 3. When they called upon him to pay taxes, he *borrowed the money from a fish* to pay for himself and the Apostle Peter. Matth. xvii: 24–27. And when he died, he was *buried in a borrowed tomb*. And yet, in the midst of all this poverty, Jesus was *the richest man that ever lived*. He was rich, not only because he *really owned* everything in the world, but because he was rich in himself—rich in his own character—*rich in goodness and in grace*. In this way he is not only rich in himself, but is able to make others rich also. And this is what he means when he says,—“I counsel thee to buy of me *gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich.*” Rev. iii: 18. This means the grace of God, which Jesus has to give. There is nothing like this grace to make us rich. It makes the soul rich for eternity. The richest king in the world is only a poor man if he be without this grace. The poorest beggar in the world is a rich man if he only have this grace. And so we may well say that the birth of Christ teaches us two lessons about the thoughts of God. It teaches us how little God thinks of places; and how little he thinks of earthly riches—of gold and silver.

And then there are *two lessons about God's feelings* that we are taught by the birth of Christ.

It teaches us—*how God feels towards sin*.

We have many illustrations of his feelings on this subject. See him sending his angel to drive Adam and Eve out of Paradise, as soon as they had sinned. See him cursing the ground on account of sin, so that it should be barren and desolate, or bring forth thorns and thistles. Gen. iii: 17, 18. See him sending the waters of the deluge, and drowning the world for its wickedness. See him commanding the fiery storm to burst forth in its fury, and consume the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. See him sending earthquakes to rend the globe, and lightnings to blast it,



The Flight into Egypt.



and storms and tempests to waste it, and plagues and pestilences to destroy men's lives; all these things show us what God's feelings are towards sin. They are all illustrations of the meaning of that text, in which God speaks of sin, as—“*the abominable thing that he hates.*” Jer. xlv: 4. But all these things put together do not show us what God's feelings are towards sin, so clearly and strongly as the birth of Christ does. And, of course, when we speak of the birth of Christ here, we speak of that in connection with his life and his death. He was born to die, and to die upon the cross. There was but a step between Bethlehem and Calvary—the manger and the cross. And when we see Jesus, the Son of God, the Lord of life and glory nailed to the accursed tree, in shame and disgrace,—bleeding—agonizing—dying on account of sin; when we remember that it was necessary for Christ to suffer all this, before one sin could be pardoned; then, we are taught, in a way that nothing else could teach us, how God feels towards sin. And so we may well say that the birth of Christ teaches us a lesson about God's feelings towards sin. It shows us how God hates sin.

And then there is another lesson about God's feelings taught us by the birth of Christ. *It teaches us how GOD LOVES SINNERS*, at the same time that he hates their sin.

We must not think that God loves us because Jesus was born, and lived, and died for us. This is not so. No; but the truth is that Jesus was born, and suffered, and died for us, because God loves us. God's love was the fountain. The birth, and sufferings, and death of Christ were the stream that flowed out from that fountain. Jesus came into our world to tell us of the love of God, and to be himself the proof of that love. This was what he taught us when he uttered those wonderful words in John iii: 16:—“*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” This is a most glorious, golden text. It is the sweetest verse in the Bible. It seems as if the whole Bible had been pressed into it. And when we think of the birth and death of Christ, of the manger and the cross, we have the best illustration that can be given of the meaning of this precious passage. And this is what the apostle means when he says:—“Herein is love,”—the evidence, or proof of love—“not that we loved God, but that he loved

us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." I John iv: 10. Jesus was born to tell us of God's love; and then, that we might tell others, tell *all people* that God loves them.

"God Loves Me." Sometime ago two gentlemen were riding together, as they were about to separate, one of them said to the other:—

"Do you ever read your Bible?"

"Yes, but I get no benefit from it, because, to tell you the truth, I feel that I do not love God."

"Neither did I," replied the other, "but I found from the Bible that God loved me. And he loves you, too, my friend."

This was something that gentleman had never thought of before. It had a great effect upon him. As he said afterwards, in speaking about it, it made him feel "as if he had been lifted off the saddle up into the skies." He began to read the Bible, as he had never read it before. He learned the great lesson that God loved him; and the sense of that love brought him to Jesus, and he soon became an earnest, faithful Christian.

"God Loves Bad Children." "What kind of children does God love?" said a teacher, one day to his class.

"Good children"—"good children," was the answer from several voices.

The teacher was silent. The children saw that he did not think the answer correct, and knew not what to say.

"My dear children," said he, "the Bible teaches us that—"*there is none that doeth good, no not one.*" Rom. iii: 12. This applies to children as well as to grown people. No one then, young or old, can be loved of God, or saved by him because they are good."

"Then how can we be saved?" asked a little girl in his class.

"We can be saved," said the teacher, "as bad children, as sinners. Remember that Jesus Christ—'came not to call the righteous'—those who think themselves good—but *sinners*'—those who know and feel themselves bad—to repentance, and salvation. Remember, too, that—'Christ died for the *ungodly*.' Rom. v: 6. What the Bible teaches is, that God loves bad children, and will save them if they believe in Jesus."

"Oh! I'm glad of that, for I know that I am a bad child," said the little girl, as she burst into tears. And so she first began to learn the



lesson of God's love for sinners, which we are taught by the birth of Christ.

I will close this subject with one other incident. It illustrates both the lessons we have been speaking of, as taught us by the birth of Christ; the lesson of God's feeling towards sin, and his feeling towards sinners.

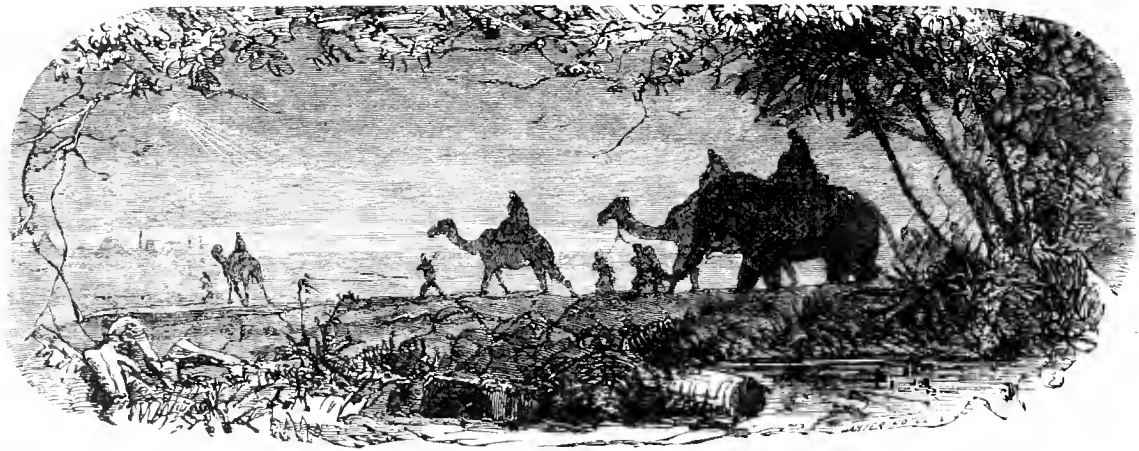
"A Just God and a Saviour." This story is about two boys who lived in Scotland. In their childhood they played together, and loved each other very much. After awhile they separated. For a long, long time they had never seen each other. They met at last, under very strange circumstances. One of them had turned out badly. He had committed a crime, and was brought into court to have the sentence due to that crime passed upon him. The other boy was now the judge in this very court. When the poor prisoner saw that the judge was his old friend, he thought that he would certainly let him off very easy. When the case was stated, instead of passing sentence at once, the judge called for the law book which stated what the penalty was for the offence which had been committed. The penalty was a fine. Two sums were specified in the law, one very small, the other very large. The poor man thought that the judge, as his old friend, would surely give him the smallest sum to pay. Instead of this he gave him the heaviest penalty. This was a sum of money he never could pay, and which would send him to prison for life. The poor fellow's heart sank within him like lead, and his head dropped on his bosom. "George, George," said the judge, "I have fixed this heavy penalty, as a just judge, to show how much I hate the sin you have committed; but to show how much I love you, as my old friend, I intend to *pay all the fine myself, so that you may go free.*" And so God acts towards us as "a just God, and a Saviour," to show how he hates sin. He appointed the heaviest penalties to be borne for our sins; and then to show how he loves sinners, he let his own beloved Son come and bear those penalties for us that we might go free.

"Jesus paid it all—all the debt we owe." And the blessed truth for us to know, is—that "*There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*" Rom. viii: 1.

And thus we have spoken of the four things connected with the birth of Christ which we proposed to consider. We have tried to show as

simply as possible,—*when* Christ was born; *where* Christ was born; *how* Christ was born, and *why* Christ was born.

God grant that all young persons who read these pages may receive "the innumerable benefits" that he intended should follow from the birth of Christ!

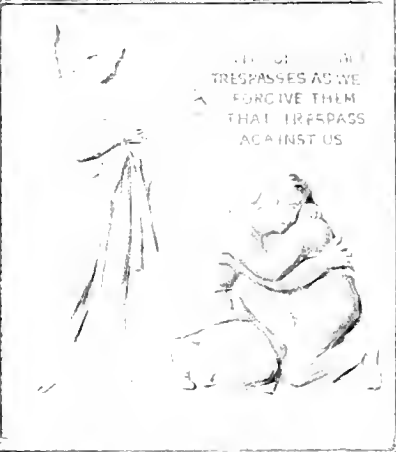






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## THE CIRCUMCISION; OR, NAMING OF CHRIST.

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WHEN an infant is born in a family it is generally the occasion of great interest. Many questions have to be asked and answered in connection with the little stranger. Not by any means the least interesting of these is the question—What shall we *call* the baby? What shall its *name* be? Sometimes it takes a long while to answer this question. We call the little darling—*baby*—and that seems name enough at first.

I had a dear, good minister from Ireland staying at my house, not long ago. We remember him and his visit with great delight. He had a large family of nine children. One day when we were sitting round the dinner table, I asked him what were the names of his children. In a moment, he began with the oldest, and repeated their names, one after another, till he had given the seventh name. Then he stopped to think. Presently he said:—"Sure and I've forgotten the names of the two youngest; and the reason is, we never use their names. We always call

them big baby, and little baby; and that's all we think of." The next day he remembered the names, and gave them to us

But, among the Jews the name of a baby always had to be settled very soon. They were required by God to circumcise their little boy babies when they were eight days old. This was the rite by which they were brought into outward connection with the Jewish church. And then their names were given, just as we give names to persons now, when they are baptized, whatever their age may be. And so we read in Luke ii: 21— "And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, he was called— *Jesus*."

The church of England and the Protestant Episcopal church in this country, have thought the circumcision of Christ of so much importance, that they have appointed a special service to be used every year in memory of this event. The scriptures appointed to be read in that service, have reference to this circumstance in the history of our infant Saviour; and a short, but very suitable prayer, is appointed to be used on that occasion.

Generally, it is not of much consequence what name is given to an infant. But it was different with our blessed Lord. His name was intended to show what his character and work were to be. The name which our Saviour was to have, was so important that it had been spoken of in the Old Testament, hundreds of years before he was born. The Prophet Isaiah lived about seven hundred years before Christ; and when speaking of him, in one of the prophecies, he said:—"His name shall be called *Wonderful*." Isaiah ix: 6. He mentions several names of the Messiah, in this same verse, such as "Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Now, the different titles here mentioned, were never actually made use of as the names which Jesus bore. He is not *called* "Counsellor," though he *is* a "Counsellor." He is not *called* "the Mighty God," though he *is* "the Mighty God." He is not *called* "the Everlasting Father," though he *is* an "Everlasting Father" to his people. He is not *called* "the Prince of Peace," though he *is* "the Prince of Peace." And so, although he is not *called* "Wonderful," yet certainly, he *is* "Wonderful." Thus we see that the word "called," denotes *being*. It is sometimes used to express the name which should be given



to a person, and sometimes to point out to us the character which the person referred to was to bear. And in this sense the Prophet Isaiah used it, when he said of the coming Saviour that "his name should be called



The Naming of Christ.

Wonderful." He meant to say that he was to be a wonderful person. And this we know is the truth.

The name actually given to our Saviour, when received into the Jewish church, was, as we know,—the name—Jesus. And to this name Isaiah's word—wonderful—applies. Let us look at this name of our Re-

deemer in the light which this word sheds upon it. Sometimes we pluck a flower from the garden, and look at it through a magnifying-glass, and we see beautiful things in it. Now, let the name of Jesus be our flower. Let the prophet's word—*wonderful*—be our magnifying-glass. Let us look at this flower through this glass, and speak about some of the wonderful things that we see in it.

“He was called—*Jesus*.”

And when we look at this name through the prophet's glass, we can see *five* wonderful things in it.

*In the first place, we see wonderful—AUTHORITY—in this name.*

This is a wonderful thing about the name of Jesus. It is very different from ordinary names, in this respect. These are not given by any authority.

But the highest authority in the universe, decided what his name should be. It was not given to him because it was the choice of his parents; or to please the fancy of any of his family; or because any of his kindred had been called by this name. No, it was not a fancy name, but an authorized name. The Lord God Almighty made choice of this name, and *commanded* it to be given to him. When the angel came down from heaven, and appeared to Mary, the Mother of our Lord, he told her that she was to have a Son, who was to be the promised Saviour of the world. He told her various things connected with this wonderful child; and among these, the name that was to be given to him. These were the angel's words:—“Thou shalt call his name—JESUS.” Luke i: 31. This was God's command. The angel brought it down from heaven. This name was given by the authority of the Lord Jehovah; the King of heaven, and Ruler of ten thousand worlds. There was the same authority for giving this name to the new-born Saviour that there was for giving the law of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. When that law was given, we are told “*God* spake these words, and said:—Thou shalt have none other gods, but me.” And when a name was to be given to him who came to “open the kingdom of heaven to all believers;” *God* spake these words, and said:—“Thou shalt call his name—*Jesus*.”

It is an interesting thing to notice that the name given to our Saviour and the name given to his forerunner—John the Baptist—both have the

same authority. And among all the myriads of children born into our world from its very beginning, these are among the few whose names were given by this high authority. The Omnipotent Jehovah gave the name of *Jesus* to his Son when he was born the infant Saviour of this ruined world. And the same Omnipotent Jehovah gave the name of John, to the infant son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, who was born to be the herald, or forerunner of Christ.

We sometimes hear persons find fault with those who make a more frequent use of this name than of any other, when speaking of the blessed Saviour. They say it is making ourselves too familiar with him to be always calling him—Jesus. I do not think any better answer can be given to those who make this objection



The Angel appearing to Mary.

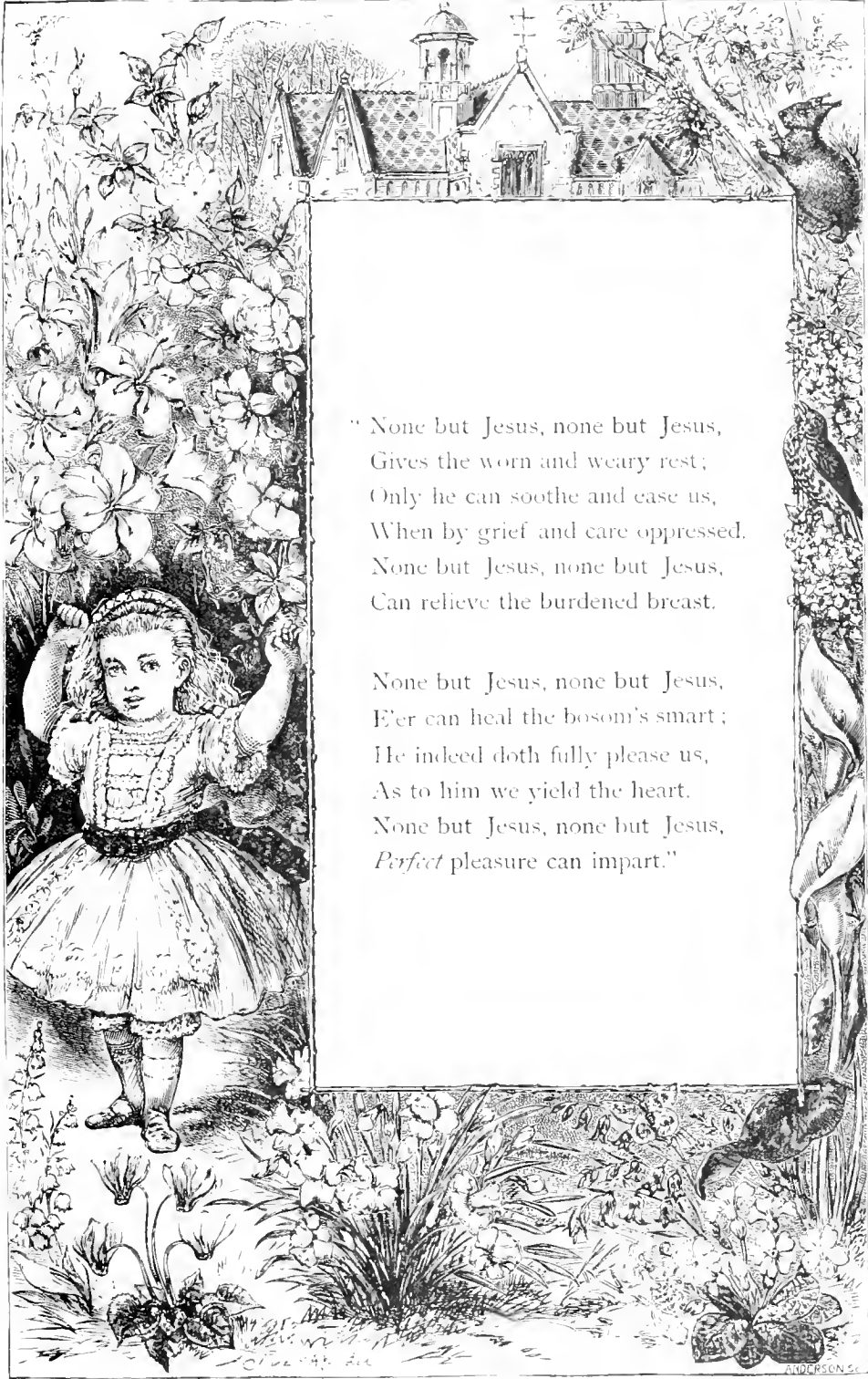
than simply to remind them of the high authority there is for the use of this particular name of our blessed Lord; and to quote the words of the command from the God of heaven which the Angel Gabriel brought to the Virgin Mary:—"Thou *shalt* call his name—Jesus."

A great multitude of names is given to our Lord in different parts of the Bible, but this name—Jesus—is the one that God delights in above all the rest. It is the only one which he has really *commanded* us to use. And so, as we gaze at this name—Jesus—through the prophet's magnifying-glass, we can see that there is wonderful *authority* in it.

*We take a second look at this name—Jesus—through the prophet's glass, and we can see that there is wonderful—COMFORT—in it.*

Let us look for a moment at some of the places in the Bible in which we are told about the comfort that Jesus gives his people. David says that he will "*comfort them on every side.*" Ps. lxxi: 21. Isaiah tells us that this was what he came into the world for. He says he was—"sent—to *comfort all that mourn.*" Is. lxi: 2. We all know what children do when they are in trouble. They run to their mother and tell her all about it. She takes them up in her arms, wipes away their tears, and kisses them. What a relief this is to them! They feel that none can comfort them as their mother does. Jesus knew this. And he speaks to our hearts as children, when he says, so sweetly, and so lovingly,—"*As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.*" Is. lxiv: 13. When good old Simeon took the infant Saviour up in his arms, as he found him in the temple, he called him "*the consolation of Israel.*" Luke ii: 25. When the Apostle Paul is speaking of the consolation which Jesus gives to his people, he calls it in one place, "*great consolation,*" Philem 7; in another, "*strong consolation,*" Heb. iv: 18; and in another place, "*everlasting consolation,*" II Thess. ii: 10.

When Jesus was talking to the woman of Samaria, as he sat by Jacob's well, he showed how much superior the comfort he gives, is to that found in any other source; for, pointing to that water with which the woman had come to fill her pitcher, he said,—"*Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*" John iv: 13, 14. Here are some sweet lines, headed,—"*None but Jesus.*" I am very sure that the person who wrote them must have had this well of water opened up in his heart, of which Jesus was speaking to the woman of Samaria:—



"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
Gives the worn and weary rest;  
Only he can soothe and ease us,  
When by grief and care oppressed.  
None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
Can relieve the burdened breast.

None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
E'er can heal the bosom's smart;  
He indeed doth fully please us,  
As to him we yield the heart.  
None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
*Perfect* pleasure can impart."

ANDERSON, C.

“A Martyr’s Joy.” Three hundred years ago, a martyr was burned for his religion, in the city of Rome. He must have felt the truth of the lines just quoted; for the last letter that he wrote to his friends, just before his death, he dated, not from prison, but “from the most delightful pleasure-garden.” In that letter he wrote thus:—

“Who will believe that which I now state? In a dark hole I have found cheerfulness; in a place of bitterness and death, I have found rest, and the hope of salvation. Where others weep, I have found laughter; where others fear, I have found strength. Who will believe that in a state of misery, I have had great pleasure; that in a lonely corner, I have had glorious company, and in the hardest bonds, perfect repose? All these things Jesus, my Saviour, has granted me. He is with me; he comforts me; he fills me with joy; he drives bitterness from me, and gives me strength and consolation.”

Surely that happy martyr saw *wonderful comfort* in Jesus.

And children may see and find this comfort as well as grown up people.

“I So Happy.” One day, a little boy was playing with his toys, when he stopped, and looking towards his mother, with his face all lighted up, he said:—“I so happy! I so happy!” “And what is it that makes my little boy feel so happy?” asked his mother.

“I’ve been thinking that Jesus up in heaven loves me. I love Jesus so much; and Jesus loves Harry. This makes me happy.” That little fellow was seeing wonderful comfort in the name of Jesus.

A good Christian man, who, like this little boy had found the love of Jesus make him happy, and, who had, as the Psalmist said, “been comforted by him on every side,” in telling what he thought about him, expressed himself in this way:—

“He is a path, if any be misled;  
 He is a robe, if any naked be;  
 If any chance to hunger, he is bread;  
 If any be a bondman, he is free;  
 If any be but weak, how strong is he!  
 To dead men, life he is; to sick men, health;  
 A pleasure without loss, a treasure without stealth.”

Certainly the man who could write of Jesus in this way, must have seen wonderful comfort in him. This is a good reason why the name of Jesus may well be called a wonderful name. There is wonderful comfort in it.

*And now, let us take a third look at this name—Jesus—through the prophet's glass, and we see wonderful—SALVATION—in it.*



Jesus and the Woman of Samaria.

This is just the meaning of the name. The angel said to his Mother Mary,—“Thou shalt call his name—Jesus—for *he shall save his people from their sins.*” Matth. i: 21. Of all the things that Jesus came to do, *this* is the most important. Everything else he did was only intended to lead to this. And this is what ministers of the gospel are sent to preach about. A good old minister once said, “he had only two things to tell his people: one was that they were great sinners; and the other, that Jesus is

a great Saviour." The soul is more valuable than the body. Our Saviour said, when he was on earth, that one soul is worth more than the whole world. As we are born into this world, our souls are all in a lost condition, in consequence of sin. We have lost the favor and friendship of God. We have lost all right to enter heaven; and we never should have been able to enter there, if Jesus had not come to help us. The work of Jesus in our world was to save these lost souls. This was what he meant, when he said:—"The Son of Man is come to seek, and to *save* that which was lost." Luke xix: 10. And it was not lost Jews only, or lost souls of any one particular nation that he came to save; but lost souls anywhere, and everywhere.

By the Prophet Isaiah, he says,—“Look unto me, and be ye saved, *all ye ends of the earth.*” Is. xlv: 27. There is salvation in Jesus for anybody, and everybody, who will seek it in the way that he points out. And this way is very plain and simple. Here is an illustration to show us what an easy way of salvation it is that Jesus has appointed:—

“Believing Saves.” A dying man lay in dread of what was coming to him. He sent for a Christian friend to talk with him, and comfort him.

“I am in the dark,” he said to this friend. And well he might say so, for he had been a great sinner. “I am in the dark, and am dying. What am I to do?”

“Jesus came to save the lost. Jesus died and rose again to save us. This is our message to lost sinners.”

“But what have I to do?” eagerly asked the dying man.

“Nothing. Christ has done it all. *The work that saves is done.*”

The anxious eye was closed for a moment, while he repeated over, very slowly to himself,—“*The work that saves is done.*” Then, passage after passage was read to him, pointing out the one link that knits the sinner to the sin-bearing work of the Son of God; “he that *believeth*, is not condemned;” “he that *believeth*, is justified;” “he that *believeth*, hath everlasting life.”

“But what am I to believe?”

“It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”





The Return from Egypt

Again he closed his eyes, while he repeated, three or four times over -  
*"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."*

"Yes," added his friend, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptance. This is the good news we bring you.

"I see it," he said, "and the peace of God took possession of his soul. In that peace he died."

It is a great thing to know Jesus as our Saviour. And it is no less a great thing to know that there is no other Saviour. Here is an incident that strikingly illustrates this statement:—

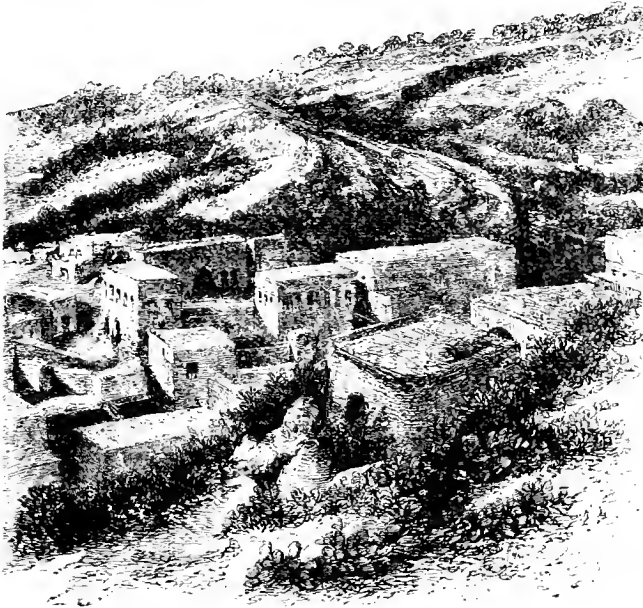
"None Other Name." Sometime ago a merchant in London, was led to see himself a sinner. This feeling led him to try to find a Saviour. His earnest desire was to have his soul saved. He gave up doing anything he knew to be wrong. He began to hold family worship, and attended church regularly. Still he did not feel right. The burden of sin on his conscience grew heavier all the time. He was trying to save himself by his own good works. But we know it is impossible to do this.

One day, while going along one of the crowded streets of London, he reached a spot where a blind man was accustomed to sit, and read aloud from a Bible, with raised type,—that wonderful invention by which the blind are enabled to read through the ends of their fingers.

As this gentleman passed by, the blind man was reading the fourth chapter of the Acts, and had just reached the twelfth verse,—“Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby they must be saved.” When in the midst of this verse, he came to the bottom of the page; and, as he was turning over the leaf, he repeated several times, the last three words on the page read:—“None other name”—“None other name,” etc. The gentleman went on his way; but he could not forget the words he had heard; “None other name—None other name.” They followed him through all the bustle of the day; “None other name—None other name.” He went home at night, when the business of the day was over. As he entered the house,—“None other name—None other name,” were the words still sounding in his ears. He retired to rest; but as he laid his head upon his pillow, the last sound he seemed to hear before falling asleep, and the first, on awaking in the morning, was still that of the same re-echoing words,—“None other name, —None other name.”

And then he said to himself,—“I see now, what it means. I have been making a mistake. I have been thinking that praying and reading the Bible, and going to church would save me. This was my mistake. It is *only Jesus* who can save. I must cast myself on him.”

And then, with the simple faith of a little child, he went to Jesus, in prayer, and asked him to pardon, and save him. Jesus heard, and answered his prayer, and the man was filled with peace and joy in believing.



Nazareth.

“How a Beautiful Hymn was Written.” There is an interesting incident mentioned in the life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, and which led to the writing of one of his very sweet hymns.

One day, Mr. Wesley was sitting by an open window looking out over the bright and beautiful fields in summer time. Presently a little bird, flitting about in the sunshine, attracted his attention. Just then, a hawk came sweeping down towards the little bird. The poor thing, very much frightened, was darting here and there, trying to find some place of refuge. In the bright sunny air, in the leafy-trees, or the green-fields, there was no hiding place, from the fierce grasp of the hawk. But, seeing the open window, and a man sitting by it, the bird flew, in its extreme terror,

towards it, and, with a beating-heart, and quivering-wing, found refuge in Mr. Wesley's bosom. He sheltered it from the threatening danger, and saved it from a cruel death.

Mr. Wesley was, at that time, suffering from severe trials, and was feeling the need of a refuge in his own time of trouble, as much as the trembling little bird did, that nestled so safely in his bosom. So he took up his pen and wrote that sweet hymn:—

“ Jesus, Saviour of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly,  
While the waves of trouble roll,  
While the tempest still is high.”

That prayer grew into one of the most beautiful hymns in our language, and multitudes of people, when in sorrow and danger, have found comfort while they have said or sung the last lines of that hymn:—

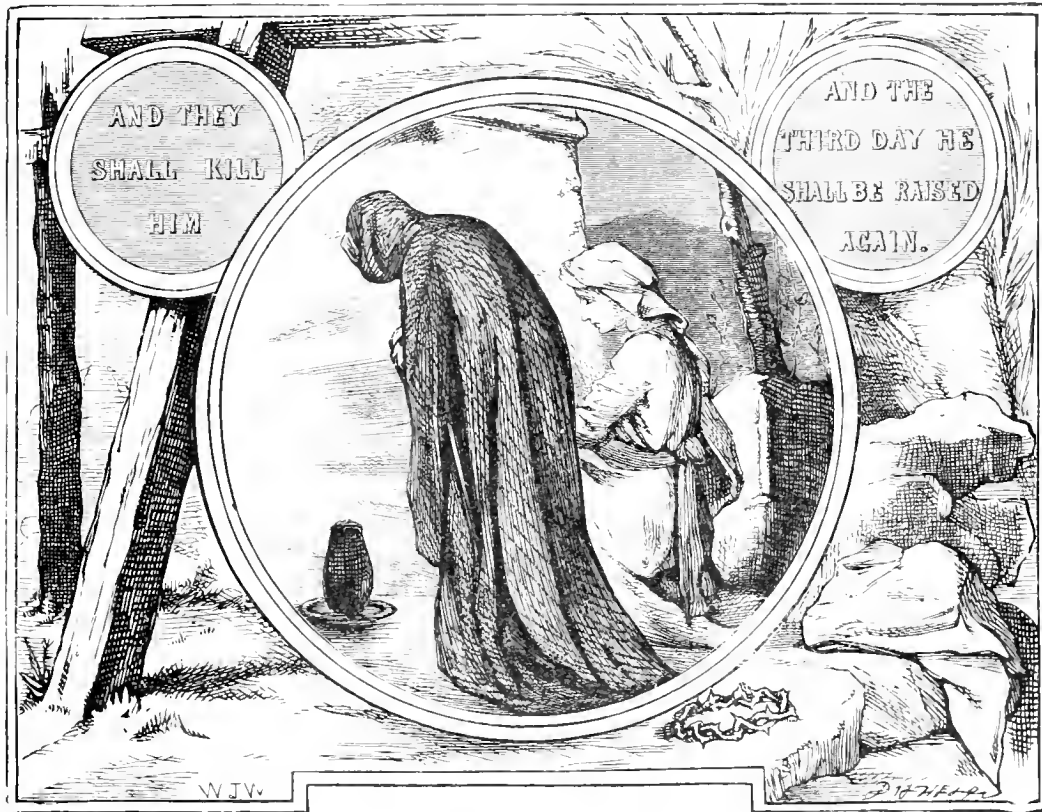
“ All my trust on thee is stayed ;  
All my help from thee I bring ;  
Cover my defenceless head,  
With the shadow of thy wing.”

There is wonderful salvation in the name of Jesus.

*We take a fourth look at this name through the prophet's glass, and we see that there is wonderful—GLORY—in it.*

There was great glory attending Jesus, even amidst the humility that marked his course when he was here on earth. An eloquent English minister has written very beautifully about this glory. He says:—“ His birth was very humble, and yet it was celebrated with hallelujahs, by angels from heaven. His lodging place was poor, and yet a star was sent by God to show the wise men how to find it. He had no long train of persons in splendid dresses to follow him; but multitudes of patients waited on him, seeking and finding healing of both soul and body. There was more glory in this than if crowds of princes even had followed him. He made the dumb that attended him to sing his praises; the lame to leap for joy; the deaf to hear his voice, and the blind to see his glory. He had no

guard of soldiers to receive and obey his orders, but health and sickness, life and death, stood ready to obey his commands. He did not walk on costly carpets; but when he walked on the sea, its waters supported him. All parts of creation, except sinful men united to show him honor and glory. He kept no treasure; but when he needed money, the sea sent it to him in the mouth of a fish. He had no barns, nor corn-fields; but when



The Empty Sepulchre.

he wished to make a feast, with five barley-loaves, and two small fishes, he could supply the wants of hungry thousands. None of all the monarchs of the world ever gave such entertainments. In these things we see the glory that appeared in the *life* of Jesus."

And even amidst the gloom and darkness of his death we see the rays of his glory shining forth. The leaders of the Jewish people showed no sorrow when Jesus died, but heaven and earth were mourners then. The sun was clothed in black. The inhabitants of the earth showed no signs

of fear; but the earth itself trembled as Jesus hung on the cross. There were few to show the Jewish sign of grief by rending their garments; but, the solid rocks were rent when Christ died, as if *they* were tenderer than the hearts of men. He had no grave of his own, but had to be buried in a borrowed tomb. And yet, wonderful was the work he did in that rocky sepulchre. Death and the grave never had any one like him to enter their gloomy kingdom. He entered it as an invader, and came forth from it as a conqueror. On the morning of the third day he took up again the life which he had voluntarily laid down. And in doing this, he robbed death of his sting, and broke the chains by which he bound men. And when Jesus walked forth from the tomb, he left the door open behind him, that all his people might come forth, too.

What glory we see here connected with the name of Jesus, when he first came into our world!

Now move this glass a little. Look away from the glory connected with the first coming of Christ, to the glory he will have when he comes again. His glory then will be much greater than it was before. He will come then, in the clouds of heaven, "*and all the holy angels with him; and then shall he sit on the throne of his glory.*" Matth. xxv: 31.

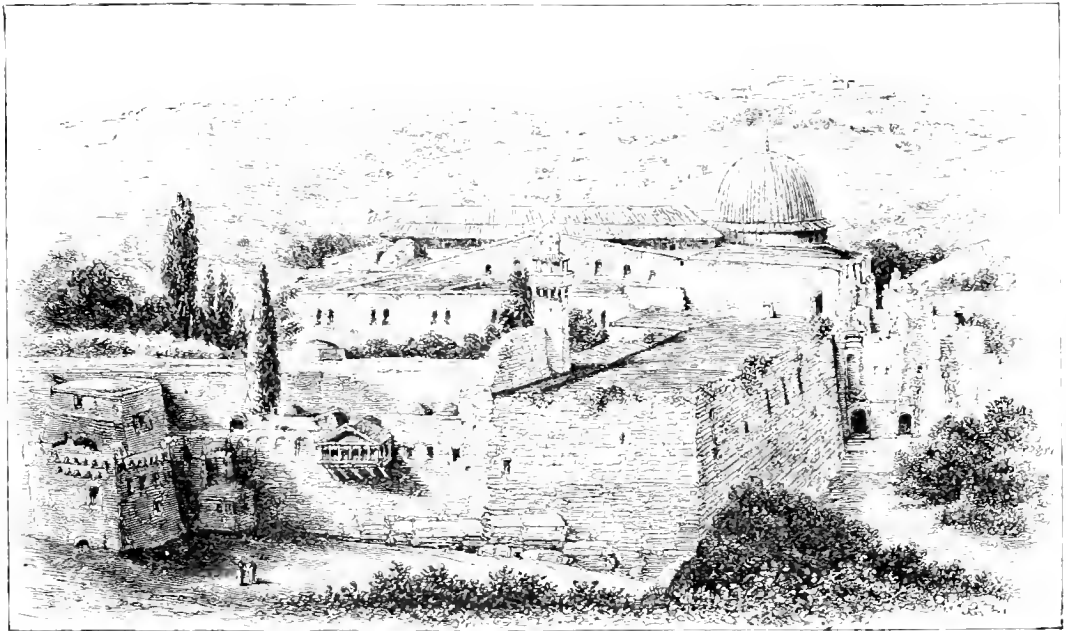
Then all nations will be gathered before him, and he will judge them. He will tell who of them are to be saved, and who are to be lost. He will bestow upon his people the rewards they are to receive, and give them the crowns they are to wear forever. How great the glory of Jesus will be when he is seen in the midst of his saved people, introducing them to all the joys of his heavenly kingdom, and listening to the song of gladness they will sing—as the great congregation shall unite their hearts and voices—and say:—

"Blessing, and honor, and *glory*, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

And now, if we make another little turn of this glass, we shall see even greater glory yet, connected with the name of Jesus.

Not only will he have the glory of saving his people, and the glory of giving them their rewards; but he will also have the glory of being worshiped by all the angels in heaven, and by all God's creatures everywhere. The Apostle Paul teaches us this in the second chapter of the Philippians.

Here he speaks first of the wonderful humiliation of Christ, in taking our nature upon him, and coming into the world as God's servant, and being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And then the apostle goes on to speak of the glory that was to follow to our Saviour, in consequence of this humiliation. "Wherefore," says he,—“God also hath highly exalted him, and given him *a name which is above every name*; that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things



Site of the Temple and Mount of Olives— from Zion

in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. ii: 6–12.

And notice here, that the same name is given to our Saviour, in the lowest depths of his humiliation, and in the highest display of his glory. “Thou shalt call his name Jesus,” said the angel who foretold his birth. When he was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger—*Jesus*—was the name he bore. And when the time for his highest honor comes; when he is exalted above all principalities, and powers; when all the angels of heaven bow down to him, and every creature of God worships him, still—*Jesus*—is “the name above every name,” by which he is known; and—*Jesus*—is the name around which all this glory gathers.

There is wonderful glory in this name.

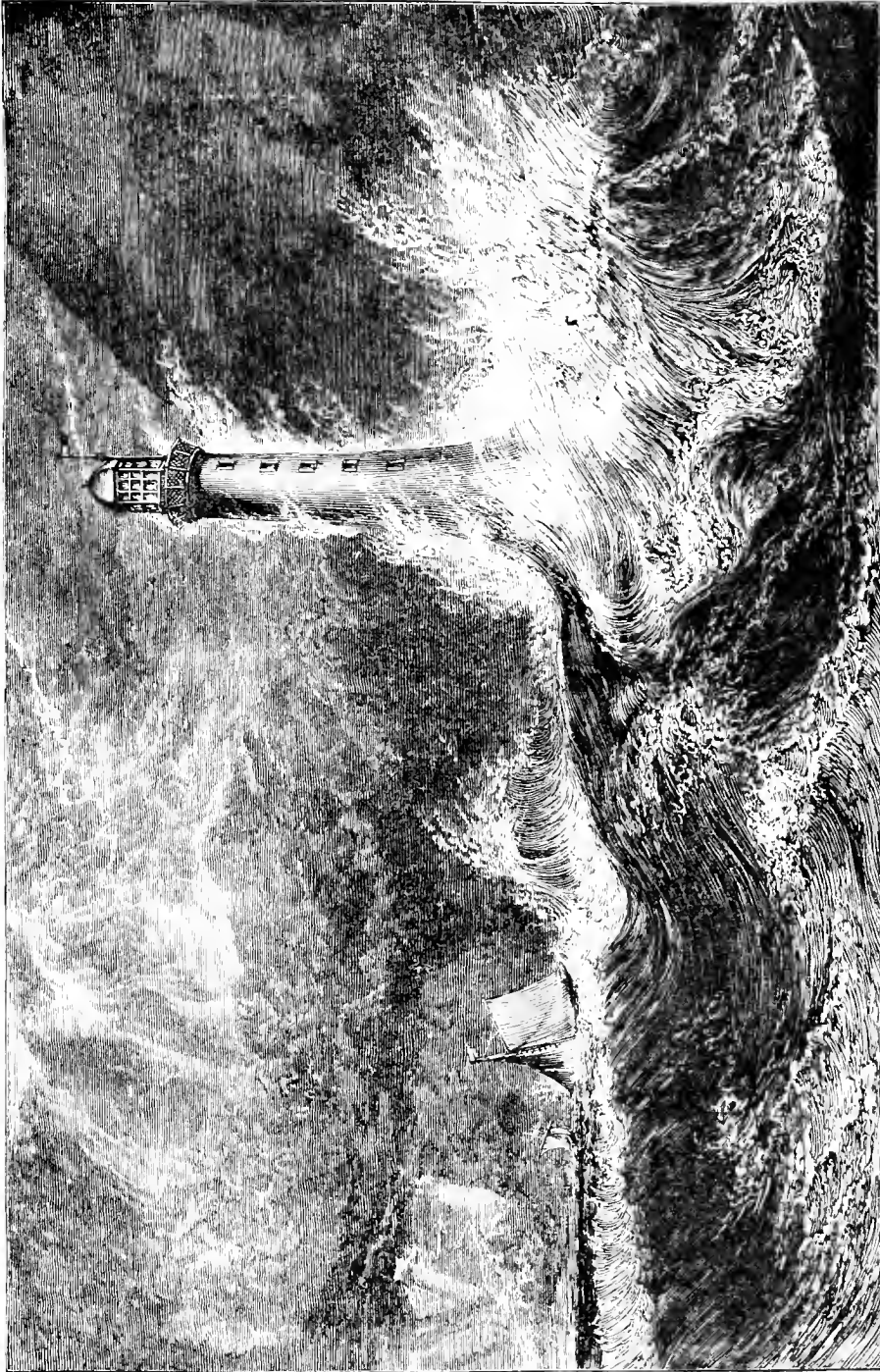
*We take one more look at this name through the prophet's glass, and we see wonderful—STABILITY—in it.*

The name—Jesus—is a name that will last without any change. The names that we have in this world, cannot be lasting. Some are changed while we live, and they will all be changed after we die. We often hear of names being changed. When a woman is married she changes her name. The family name received from her father is given up, and she takes the name of her husband. And sometimes persons have property left them on condition of changing their names. And then they apply to the Legislature, and get an act or law passed allowing them to change their names. When we die, our names are cut into the marble that makes our tombstones. But *that* is the last that will be known of them. We shall not carry our names with us into the eternal world. We cannot tell what our names will be in heaven. We only know they will be different from what they are here. God says his people shall then—“be called by a *new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.*” Isaiah lxii: 2.

And Jesus himself says the same thing. In the Epistle which St. John wrote to the church at Pergamos, in the name of his master, he was directed to say for him,—“To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and in the stone *a new name which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*” Rev. ii: 17. But there will be no change in the name that Jesus bears, either in this world or in the world to come. He has borne this name for nearly two thousand years already. And when ten thousand times that number of years shall have rolled away, he will be known by the same name still. When speaking on this subject, David says,—“*His name shall endure forever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun.*” Ps. lxxii: 17. This idea is beautifully expressed in the words of Montgomery's sweet hymn that we often sing:—

“The tide of time shall never,  
His covenant remove;  
*His name shall stand forever,*  
That name to us is love.”





A Modern Light-House.

Men have been very ingenious in trying to find out ways by which their names might be remembered among men, when they themselves have passed away. The story is told of a soldier in ancient times, who wished

to preserve his name in some way. In order to do this he engaged a celebrated artist to make him a shield, and to work his name into the material of which the shield was composed, in such a way that the name could not be taken out without destroying the shield. It was done. The soldier carried that shield bravely with him through many a hard-fought battle, feeling proud to think that his name was made so enduring. But that soldier is gone; his shield is gone; the artist who made it is gone; and no one knows the name that was wrought into that shield, nor the name of the artist who did the work.

“King Ptolemy and his Light-House.” There is a story told of Ptolemy, one of the kings of Egypt, that may come in, by way of illustration here. He undertook the building of a light-house on a little island in the harbor of the city of Alexandria. This light-house was one of the most famous ever built. It was five hundred and twenty feet high. It is said that the light from the top of it could be seen at night for a distance of more than forty miles. We are told that this light-house stood for sixteen hundred years. The little island on which it was built was called Pharos. This name was applied to the light-house itself. It was known as “The Pharos of the Nile.” Indeed in the French and Spanish language the word used for light-house is taken from this word Pharos. This light-house was very strongly built, of great massive stones. Ptolemy thought he would have his name engraved upon this light-house, and so leave it as a monument that would make his memory immortal. Sostratus was the name of the architect who built it. Ptolemy told him what he wanted him to do. But the architect thought that as the king only furnished the *money* for the building, while he himself furnished the brains, or the knowledge and skill, by which the work was done, it would not be fair for the king to have all the honor of putting up that great light-house, and for him to have none. So, without the king's knowledge, he cut his own name—Sostratus—deep and clear in one of the great stones of the building. This he covered carefully over with plaster or cement, and on that he put the name of the king. It lasted during Ptolemy's life. But in the course of time, the influence of the weather began to be felt on that plaster, or cement. The sea dashed against it. The sun and the air acted upon it. It began to crack. Piece by piece it fell off. Finally it all disappeared;

and the name of the king went with it. And then, underneath where Ptolemy's name had been—deeply cut into the solid rock—came out the name of Sostratus.

But Jesus, our glorious Saviour, is erecting a building that will be far more enduring than Ptolemy's famous Pharos of the Nile. This building is his church. The Apostle Peter calls this church "a spiritual house," or



The Adoration of the Wise Men.

temple. And each believer in Jesus, or each soul saved by his grace, will be "a living stone" in this temple. And each of these living stones will have the name of Jesus engraved upon it. Jesus says himself, that he will write his name upon them. Rev. iii: 12. And so we see that so long as the church of Christ shall last, so long as the souls of his people live, his name, which is written upon them, shall endure. The life which Jesus

gives us, is everlasting life; and so the name connected with that life must be an everlasting name. There is great stability in it.

And thus, as we hold up this name—JESUS—before us, and gaze at it through the glass which the Prophet Isaiah puts in our hands, we see five wonderful things in it. These are wonderful *authority*; wonderful *comfort*; wonderful *salvation*; wonderful *glory*, and wonderful *stability*.

May God teach us all to love the name of Jesus! And then, as we go on studying it, by the help of the Holy Spirit, through time, and through eternity, we shall be always finding in it new light, new meaning, new beauties, and new wonders!

Jesus! the name that calms our fears,  
That bids our sorrows cease;  
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,  
'Tis life, and health, and peace.







THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

LET ALL  
YOUR  
THINGS



BE DONE  
WITH  
CHARITY.

## THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.

**I**N the previous chapter we have spoken of the Circumcision; or, naming of Christ. This was a service that the Jewish religion required to be performed in the case of every male child born among that people. This service was performed when the child was eight days' old.

But there was another interesting service appointed for the Jews to observe. This was not required for all the Jewish children, but only for the first-born child in every family. It was a service to be performed forty days after the birth of the child. But this service had reference to the mother, as well as to the child. And so, when forty days had passed, after the birth of our blessed Lord, we read (Luke ii: 22-32), that his parents "brought

him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord," and "to do for him after the custom of the law." When a child was presented in the temple on these occasions, there was always a sacrifice to be offered. If the parents were able to afford it, the sacrifice was to consist of "a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove for a sin offering." But, if they were too poor to buy a lamb, then they were allowed to bring two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, instead of the lamb. Levit. xii: 6, 8. Joseph and Mary were very poor. They were descended indeed from the royal family of David, yet they were so poor that when they presented their first-born child, in the temple, they could not afford to bring a lamb for the offering. This child, Jesus, was the Maker of the World, and the owner of all things in it. And yet, his parents were so poor, that on this important occasion, two young pigeons was the only offering they could bring for their child.

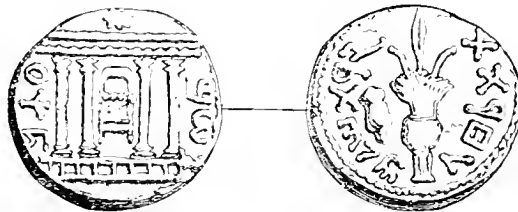
There was an interesting matter of history connected with this service. The law which required it, was first established in Egypt. You remember that the last dreadful plague which God sent on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, because they would not let his people go, was the death of their first-born. The angel of the Lord *passed over* the land, at the solemn hour of midnight, and smote all the first-born of the Egyptians. But the first-born of the Israelites were all spared. God protected them while his angel was destroying the first-born of the Egyptians. And because he had saved all the first-born of the Israelites from death on that occasion, God told them that always after that, he would claim all their first-born children as belonging to him, and as especially his own. And the law of the Jewish church was, that every first-born child should be brought to the temple, forty days after its birth, when a sacrifice was made for it, and an offering presented to God of five shekels of silver. This was the price of the child's redemption. A shekel of silver was worth about fifty cents of our money.

And thus we see there were three things connected with this service of presenting a first-born child in the temple, which God desired the Jewish parents always to remember. One was the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians on that memorable night. The other, was the preservation of their own first-born. The third, was that their first-born



all belonged to God, but were redeemed from being his ministers, and were allowed to engage in other business, by that payment of five shekels, or two dollars and fifty cents of our money.

And now Joseph and Mary have offered their sacrifice. The service connected with the presentation of their wonderful child in the temple is finished. But before they have time to go out of the temple, a very interesting incident occurs. A pious old Jew named Simeon, came in at that moment. He had long been studying the Old Testament Scriptures. He had found out that the time was near at hand for the coming of that blessed Saviour, who was to be "the consolation of Israel." He had been praying earnestly, and waiting patiently for his coming. God had told him that he should live to see the Messiah. And just then, the Holy



A Shekel of Silver.

Spirit led Simeon into the temple, and gave him to understand, that this child, of these poor parents, was the Great Deliverer, of whom "Moses, in the law, and the prophets did write." What a happy moment that was for this old man! How his heart leaped for joy, when he knew this! How tenderly, and lovingly he took that child of wonders in his arms, and exclaimed—in the overflowing-fulness of his grateful heart—"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Luke ii: 29-32.

Of the other things which Simeon said on this occasion, and of the aged prophetess Anna, who came in at the same time, I should like to speak also, but cannot do so now.

The words of Simeon here quoted, are sufficient in themselves to occupy our thoughts. And, in speaking about them, there are two things

for us to notice. One is,—*what old Simeon saw in the infant Jesus.* The other is,—*the effect this sight had on him.*

When Simeon held the infant Jesus in his arms, he saw *three* things in him.

*The first thing that he saw in him, was—SALVATION.*

He said,—“Mine eyes have seen thy *salvation.*” He saw this in that



Simeon.

wonderful name that we were speaking of in our last chapter. But this is something that we may speak of many times without getting to the bottom of it, or to the top of it, or to the length and breadth of it. There are more than a hundred and fifty places in the Bible in which this great salvation is spoken of. Nobody can ever tell *all* there is to be told about the wonderful salvation that is in Jesus.

When the Queen of Sheba came to see King Solomon in all his glory, she said she had heard so much concerning him, of his wisdom, and

riches, and grandeur, that she thought there must be a mistake about it, and she could not believe the accounts that were brought to her. But since she had come to Jerusalem, and had seen the temple and palaces he had built, and all the greatness of his kingdom, she confessed that instead of having heard more than was true—"the half had not been told." And whatever we may have heard about Jesus, and the salvation that is in him, yet, when we come to know him ourselves, and



Mount Tabor.

clearly understand how unspeakable his love is, and how wonderful the grace, and the blessings he bestows upon his people, we are obliged to say, in the language of the hymn—"The half was never told."

Let us look now at some illustrations of the wonderful ways in which Jesus saves those who call upon him.

"Saved from a Lion." The Rev. Dr. Moffat, from England, was a missionary in Southern Africa for fifty years. He has a son born and brought up in that country, who has taken his father's place, in trying to make Jesus known as a Saviour to the natives in that part of Africa. This missionary, the Rev. John Moffat, tells this story of a native lad who had

attended the services of the missionary. He was engaged once with some of his companions in hunting. They were in the full and eager pursuit of some animal, when suddenly, and unexpectedly, this lad found himself face to face with a lion, and almost touching him. His black face seemed as if it would turn white with fear. His companions were almost as much frightened as himself. They were a little further off, and saw his danger, but were unable to help him. In that awful moment the poor boy thought of Jesus, the Mighty Saviour, of whom he had so often heard the missionary speak. In his danger and distress, he cried out, in hearing of his companions,—“O, Jesus! save me now, and I will serve thee for ever!”

Soon after he had offered this prayer, the lion turned round, and walked quietly off, without touching the boy. He never forgot that hour. Wherever he went, the thought followed him,—Jesus saved me from the lion. He thought of another lion, spoken of in the Bible, not to be seen with our bodily eyes, even Satan, who “goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” I Peter v: 8. Then he prayed earnestly to Jesus to deliver him from this lion, too. Jesus heard his prayer, and he became an earnest Christian.

And Jesus has the same power to save in this country, that he has in Africa. Here is an incident connected with the life and labors of that saintly man, David Brainard, who spent his days in trying to teach the poor Indians about the salvation that is in Jesus Christ. We may call it,—

“A Soul Saved by a Tear.” An Indian guide in the Revolutionary war was fatally wounded. A Christian friend went to see him, and said, —“Do you know anything about Jesus Christ?”

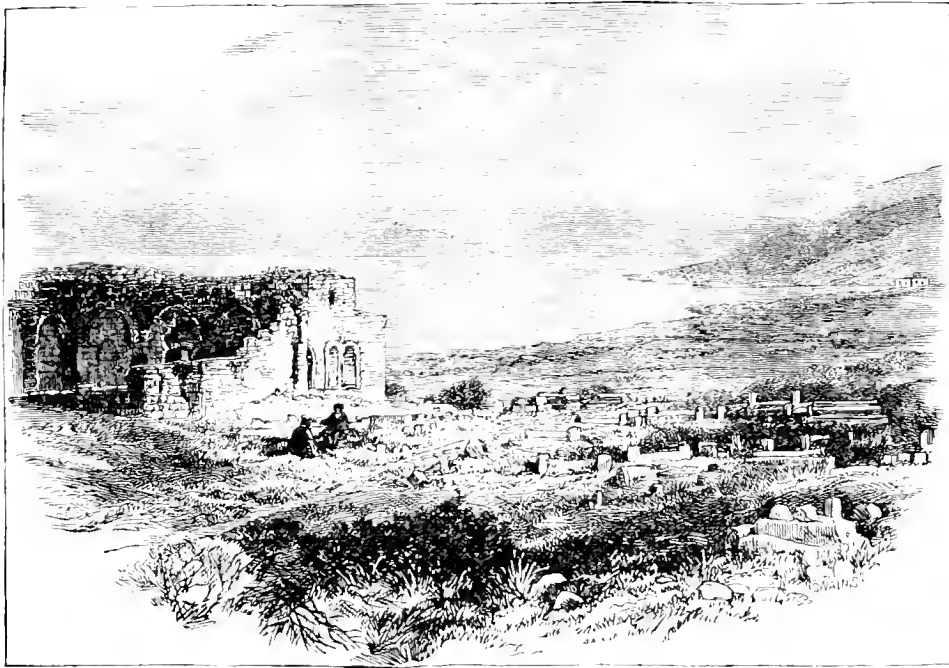
“Oh, yes, me know much 'bout him. Long time ago—very young—me go see Indian missionary, Brainard. In little log house, all alone, white man look sick—meet Indian—pray with him—make much prayer—talk out of spirit-book. Many times he look on Indian and say, ‘Poor friend,’—and *his eyes all run down with tears.*”

“Do you think you will meet him when you die?”

“Oh! yes; me certain Jesus Christ never forget poor Indian. Me never forget him one day. Me hope see him, and pale-faced missionary, before morning. Me no fear. *Inside eyes all open.* Inside heart all smooth.”

And so the poor Indian passed away,—a soul saved by a tear. But when he said, so expressively,—“*inside eyes all open,*” he was only repeating, in different words, the same thought, uttered eighteen hundred years before by good old Simeon, when he said, as he held the infant Jesus in his arms,—“*Mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*”

“I Have Seen Jesus.” This was the saying of a half-witted man, who had turned away from living a very wicked life, when he was asked what



The Vale of Hebron.

had led to this great change. The late Dr. Bushnell, of Hartford, Connecticut, tells this story. He was well acquainted with the person to whom it refers. In addition to his being naturally weak-minded, he had fallen into very wicked ways. He swore dreadfully; he was a confirmed drunkard; he would tell lies, and steal, and do almost every thing that was sinful.

At one time there was a revival of religion in connection with Dr. Bushnell's church. Among others who came to see the doctor then, with the earnest inquiry—What must we do to be saved? was this weak-minded, wicked man. Thoughtless people, when they saw him going to church,

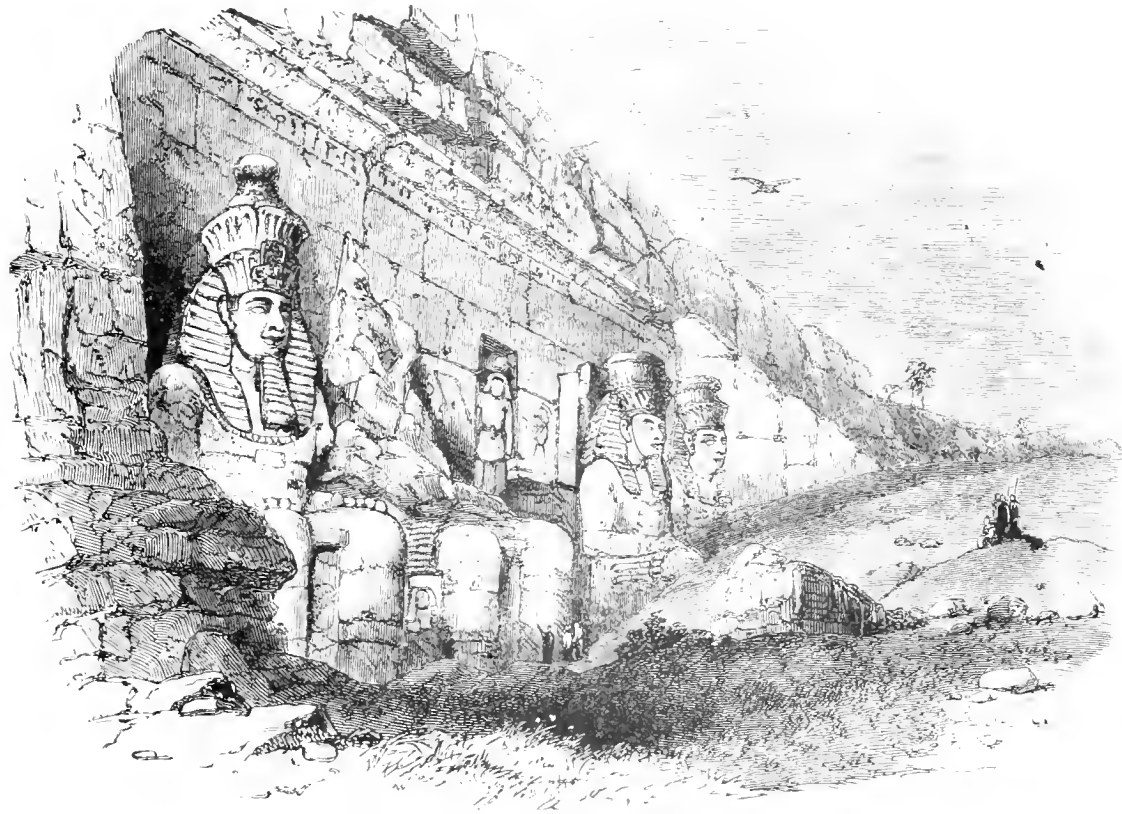
supposed he was only going in mockery, and to make sport of it. And even serious Christians looked on him with pity, and rather wished he would not come. But when Dr. Bushnell came to converse with him, he found him so earnest, and apparently so sincere, that he did not hesitate to receive him into the communion of the church. And the whole course of the poor man's life, after this, showed that the doctor was right in doing so. From that time onward, everything about the man showed that "old things had passed away" with him, "and all things had become new." He became an humble and consistent follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. All his bad habits were given up. He never drank intoxicating liquor again. A profane word was never heard from his lips. He was truthful and honest; regular in attending church; diligent in reading the Bible, and faithful in practising what it taught.

To those who had known him in former years this change seemed wonderful. And when he was asked, by some one, to tell what it was which had led to it, his answer was, in the words already quoted,—"*I have seen Jesus.*" This explained it all. He was weak-minded. He could not argue about "the deep things of God." He could give no account of the mysteries of redemption. It was not the kindness of Christians that had won him. No one had wept tears of tender compassion over him, as Brainard did over the poor Indian; for nobody seemed to think it possible for this poor simple one to be saved. But, like the poor Indian,—"*his inside eyes had been opened.*" Like old Simeon,—"*he had seen Jesus.*" And there was salvation in this sight. It was seeing Jesus that saved Paul, the persecutor, and made him the great apostle of the Gentiles. It was seeing Jesus that saved the African boy from one lion, that would have destroyed his body, and from the more terrible lion that would have destroyed his soul. It was seeing Jesus with his "inside eyes," that saved the poor Indian. And the poor way-faring man, though a fool, did not err in this way of salvation. Even *he* was saved, when he could say,—"*I have seen Jesus.*" There was salvation in this sight, as old Simeon beheld it, and there is salvation in it still.

*But there was—LIGHT—in the sight which Simeon saw as well as salvation.*

He tells us that the infant Saviour, whom he held in his arms, was intended by God to be—"a *light to lighten* the Gentiles."

The Jews generally did not believe what Simeon here said about the Gentiles. They were very narrow-minded on this subject. They thought that God did not care for any other nation in the world but theirs. It used to offend them very much to say anything about the Gentiles having any



Ruined Temple in Upper Egypt.

share in the blessings of salvation. But God had taught Simeon to know better than this. He had learned that God "was no respecter of persons; but that in every nation" he was ready to save and bless all who would humbly seek his mercy and grace in Jesus Christ. And so Simeon said Christ was to be—"a *light to lighten the Gentiles.*" He said also, that this "salvation was prepared *before the face of all people.*" This means that it was intended to be for the use and blessing of all people.

When this word "light" is used in the Bible, it sometimes means

*knowledge*, and sometimes *happiness*, joy, or gladness. When Jesus is called "a light" for us Gentiles, the meaning is that he would give us knowledge, or would teach us to know ourselves, as sinners, and to know himself as the Saviour of sinners; and that by giving us this knowledge, he would make us happy. Let us look at some illustrations of the way in which Jesus proves himself to be a "light to lighten the Gentiles," and of the happiness which this light gives.

"The Tartar-Chiefs; or, Jesus a Light to the Gentiles." Two Tartar-chiefs, from the borders of China, came to St. Petersburg, in Russia, some years ago. Their object in coming was to study the system of education that prevailed in Europe, and to learn the way in which business was done there. They brought recommendations with them, which showed that they were among the best and most sensible men of their tribe.

Now it happened, that while they were in St. Petersburg, a German missionary was there, trying to make a translation of the New Testament into the language of the Tartar tribes. He engaged these chiefs to help him in his translation. They gladly agreed to do so, because they thought it would help them to gain the knowledge they had come to seek. This work was carried on for many months. The missionary and the two chiefs each took a number of verses to translate. Every day they met to compare these translations together, and to decide upon which was the best. In the course of this work, the chiefs asked many questions about the religion of the gospel, which the missionary was always glad to answer.

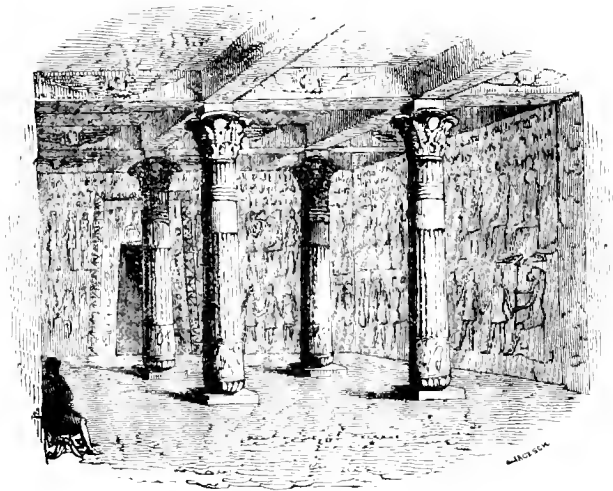
Finally the work was completed, and the missionary and the two chiefs met, as he supposed, for the last time. There lay the finished translation on the table. As their work was done, the missionary expected the chiefs to say "good-by," and go away. But they did not go. They sat in silence by the table, but looking very serious and thoughtful. The missionary wondered what was the matter, and inquired if they had any questions to ask.

"No," they answered, "but we have something to say."

"Well, my friends, say on," replied the missionary. And then, to his surprise and delight, for he had made no effort at all to convert them from the religion of their tribe, the elder of them, speaking both for himself and



for his friend, said, as he pointed to the translation on the table,—“I wish to tell you that we are both converted to the religion of that book. We have been zealous followers of the doctrines of Fo.”—(This is the Chinese name for Buddha, the chief idol worshiped by the millions of India.)—“We have studied attentively the books which contain his doctrines, but the more we studied them, the darker our minds became, and our hearts remained empty. But, in studying the doctrines of Jesus Christ, we have found it just the contrary. The more we study his words, the plainer they become to us, until at length it seems as if Jesus were talking with us.’



Interior of Egyptian Monument.

Ah! they had seen Jesus. They had found him to be indeed, as old Simeon said,—“*a light to lighten the Gentiles.*” And what a beautiful illustration this incident affords of the truth and meaning of the Psalmist’s words, when he says,—“*The entrance of thy word giveth light; It giveth understanding to the simple.*” Ps. cxix: 130.

“Light in the Valley.” A blind Hindoo boy, when dying, said joyfully:—“I see! I see! I have light now. I see the King in his beauty. Tell the missionary the blind boy sees. I glory in Jesus.”

A wounded soldier, when asked if he were ready to depart, said,—“Oh, yes; my Saviour, in whom I have long trusted, is with me now. The dark valley is lighted up by his smile.”

A young man, who had lately found Jesus, was laid upon his dying bed. A friend, who stood near him, asked,—“Is it dark?” In speaking of it afterwards, this friend said,—“I shall never forget his reply to my question. ‘No, no,’ he exclaimed, ‘it’s light, it’s light, it’s *all light!*’” And thus, in the joy which this light gives he entered into heaven.

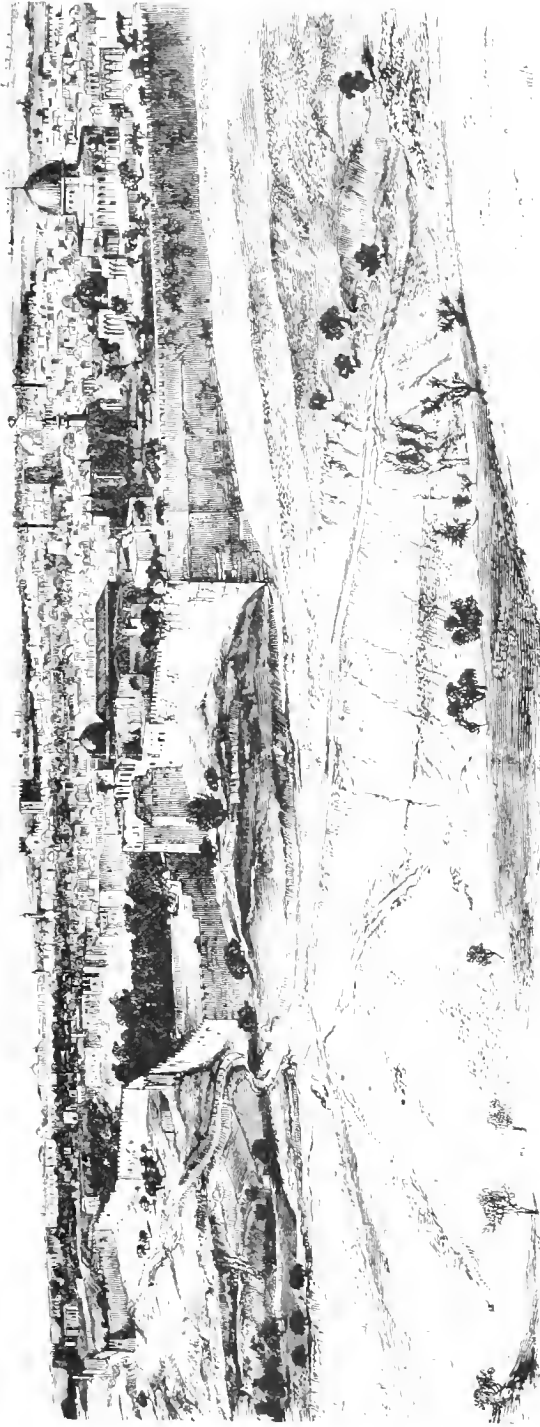
These were all Gentiles; and when we see what knowledge Jesus gave them, and what happiness they found in that knowledge, we understand how well old Simeon, as he held the infant Jesus in his arms, might say of him, that he was sent to be—“*a light to lighten the Gentiles.*” This was one thing that Simeon saw in him.

*But there was still one other thing in the sight which Simeon saw in the infant Saviour, and this was—GLORY.*

There was *salvation* in this sight; there was *light* in it; and there was *glory* in it also. He will be—said Simeon—“*the glory of thy people Israel.*” The Prophet Isaiah was speaking of this same Saviour, when he said,—“They shall hang on him all the glory of his Father’s house.” Is. xxii: 24. The chief glory that a nation has, is made up of the wise, and good, and great, and useful men who have belonged to it. We speak of Washington as the glory of America. We feel it an honor to belong to the nation which could claim Washington as one of its people. In Holland they call William, Prince of Orange, the glory of their nation. England, our grand old mother country, has had so many wise, and good, and great men, that it is hard to tell which to speak of as the best and greatest. They all help to make up the glory of the people of England. And any one who was born in England may feel it an honor to belong to a country which has produced so many good and great men.

And in the same way it is the glory of the Jewish nation, or of Israel, as a people, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, belonged to their nation. Jesus was a Jew. And the Jewish people may well feel it an honor to belong to the nation among whom he was born. It is true in this sense, that he is—“*the glory of his people Israel.*”

But it may be said we are Gentiles; we are not Israelites, and therefore, we cannot share in this glory. True, we are not Jews. But, if we believe in Jesus, and love, and serve him, we *are* his people, too. We are his people, as St. Paul says,—“born not after his flesh, but after the



Jerusalem. View from where Christ beheld the city and wept over it.

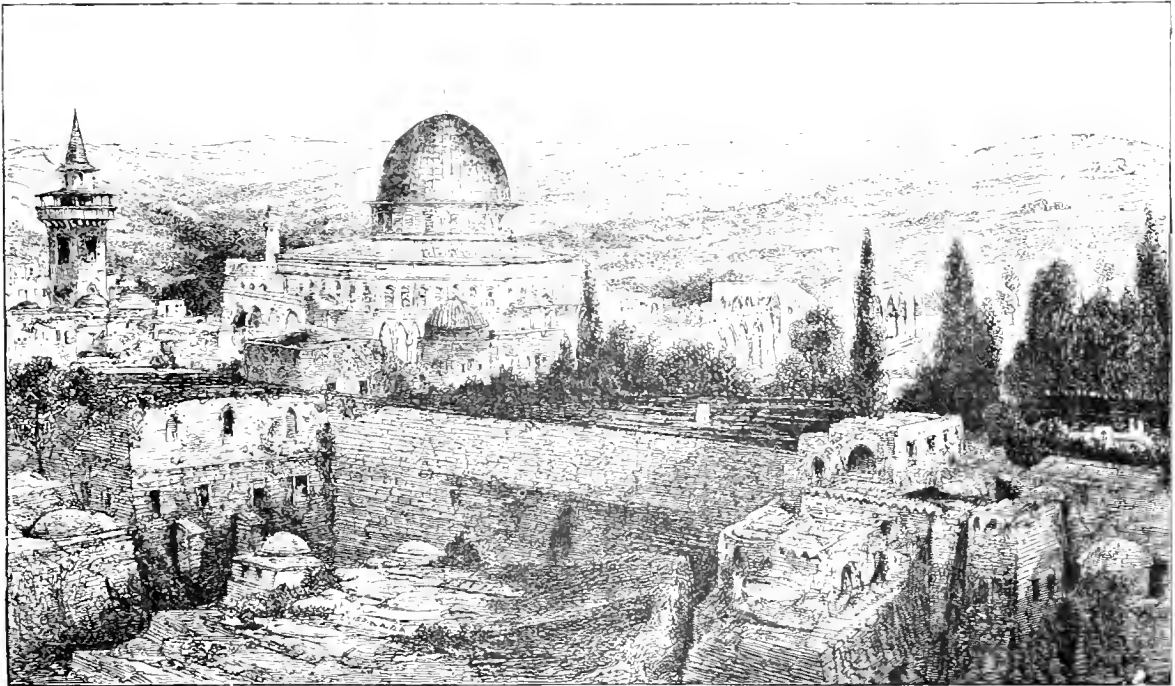
Spirit." Gal. iv: 29. And in this way we become "his people Israel," in a spiritual sense. And then Jesus will be *our* glory, too. Yes, and this glory which we shall have in Jesus, will be a greater glory than the

Jews have, whose only connection with him is that of belonging to the same nation. This glory that we shall have in Jesus will be made up of all the wonderful things he has done for us.

Let me give an illustration of what I mean. I am indebted to Mr. Ruskin for this illustration, but not for the application made of it. Suppose I set before you three beautiful jewels. One is a sapphire, the next, an opal, and the third, a diamond. And then suppose I should take a handful of mud from the trodden streets of a busy city. I set the mud down beside the jewels. The principal things that make up that mud are clay, and sand, and soot. Then I point to the beautiful blue sapphire, and tell you that this is made out of the clay in that mud. I point to the sparkling opal, and tell you that this is made out of the sand in that mud. I point to that brilliant diamond, and tell you it was made out of the soot in that mud. This is true. God has made this change. He made these jewels out of that ugly mud. We know not *how* it is done. But suppose we knew. Suppose that we could take a handful of mud, and change it into jewels. Then, you see, there would be a connection between us, and the beauty and glory of those jewels. Whatever glory the jewels have we have given it to them. It might be said of us that we *were* the glory of those jewels. We taught them how to shine. Their glory would belong to us. And it is exactly so with Jesus and his people. He calls them his "*jewels*." Malachi iii: 17. They are his, because he made them. And he makes them very much as other jewels are made. See what David says of himself, before God made him one of his jewels. "He brought me up," says he, "out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay." Ps. xl: 2. David was *in* the mire, was *part* of the mire, before he was made a jewel. But mire and mud are both the same. And so we may say that God makes *his* jewels out of mud. They are spiritual jewels, made out of spiritual mud; and this means the sin in which we were lying, and living in when God made us his jewels.

And these jewels will shine in his crown forever. But as they shine there, their brightness and their beauty will be only what he gives them. And so, we see how true it will be of all his saved people, that he will be their glory. We cannot tell how great this glory will be. But we know that Jesus will share his own glory with his people. John xvii: 22. "And

we know that when he shall appear, *we shall be LIKE him.*" I John iii. 2. His people will be clothed in glorious robes; and enjoy glorious rest; and wear glorious crowns; and inherit a glorious kingdom. And this glory will never fade. It will last forever, and grow brighter and brighter, as eternity goes on. And all this shows us how well it may be said that Jesus will be—*"the glory of his people Israel."*



Site of the Temple Dome.

And so we have spoken of the three things that old Simeon saw in the infant Saviour. These are—*salvation, light, and glory*

There is one other thing to speak of, this is,—*the effect this sight had on him.*

What this was we see, as we hear Simeon exclaim,—*"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."* These words have been sung, or chanted, as a hymn in prose, in the Christian church for eighteen hundred years. When this song of Simeon is put into Latin, the first two words are "Nunc Dimittis." And the song is called the Nunc Dimittis. By *departing* in peace, Simeon meant *dying* in peace. And so we see that the

effect of this sight upon him, or what he learned from seeing Jesus, was to be able to die in peace. None can have true peace in dying, but those who have seen Jesus, by faith, as old Simeon saw him. It is sin that makes us afraid of death. And while our sin is unpardoned, we have good reason to be afraid of death, because death is the messenger that God sends to bring us into his presence, that we may receive the punishment which our sins deserve. This fear or dread of death, is the sting that he has. And this is what the Apostle Paul means when he says,—“The *sting* of death is sin.” I Corinthians xv: 56. And we never can have true happiness or peace in death, till this sting is taken away. But Jesus is the only one “who has power on earth to forgive sins.” When we believe in him, or see him by faith, as Simeon did, then “his blood cleanseth us from all sin.” And this is the only thing that can take away the sting from death. As the hymn says:—

“If sin be pardoned, we’re secure,  
Death has no sting beside.”

God made use of a wasp once to teach this great lesson to a man who was afraid to die. This story illustrates very strikingly the great truth of which we are now speaking. We may call it—“The Wasp’s Sting.”

A gentleman in England, was the squire of the village in which he lived. He was very rich. His house was like a palace. His grounds were very extensive, and very beautiful. A fine stream of water ran through his land, and widened out at one place into a lovely lake. There were hills, and dales, and noble forest trees surrounding his house, so that it looked like an earthly paradise. He had everything around him the world could give to make him happy. But he was *not* happy, because he was not loving or serving God. He was living, as the Bible expresses it,—“without God in the world.” At length, he was taken sick. His sickness was of a severe and dangerous character. And as he had not thought about God when he was well, he was not willing to do so, even now, when sickness came upon him. The thought of death was so dreadful to him that he would not allow any one to speak of it in his presence. His wife was a God-fearing Christian woman. She begged him to let her send for their minister. But he refused. “No,” said he, “I don’t want any

minister to come near me. I have lived for this world, and I wish to enjoy it to the very last."

His wife prayed earnestly and constantly for him, that God would



Christ the Light of the World.

have mercy on him, and bring him to a better state of thought and feeling before he should be called to die. God heard and answered her prayer in a very singular way.

One day an old friend of the family, who was an earnest Christian minister, came to visit them. He asked if he might see the squire. His

wife went in and told him that this friend had called, and wished to see him. At first he refused to see him. But finally he yielded to the earnest pleading of his wife, and said:—"Well, let him come in; but tell him that he must not say a word to me on the subject of religion."

The friend entered the sick man's chamber, and as he did so, he lifted up his heart in silent prayer to God, and asked for help, that he might say something that would do the sick man good. He sat down by his bedside and talked with him about his sickness, and what medicine he was taking for it. While doing this, he resolved to try and get an opportunity of saying something to him about his soul. But he could not do it. His thoughts seemed to fail him. He could not think of a single thing to say. This seemed very strange to him. He never had felt so before, and was quite at a loss to know what to make of it. As he sat there, wondering why he could not speak freely on this subject, as he had always been accustomed to do, a large wasp came buzzing round the sick man's bed. It flew here and there about his head, as if threatening to sting him. This disturbed and troubled him greatly. The servants were called in. They chased the wasp away from the sufferer's bed, and finally succeeded in killing it. Then they went out of the room, and the sick man lay exhausted.

"Why were you afraid of the wasp?" asked the minister.

"Because I feared it might sting me."

"If you had known that its sting had been taken away, would you have been afraid?"

"Of course not. I'm not a fool. If it had no sting, it could only buzz about, without doing any harm."

"Are you afraid to die."

"Yes, I am."

"But *why* are you afraid to die?"

"Because I am a sinner, and I know that God is angry with me for my sins."

"Would you be afraid to die, if you knew that your sin, which is the sting of death, were taken away?"

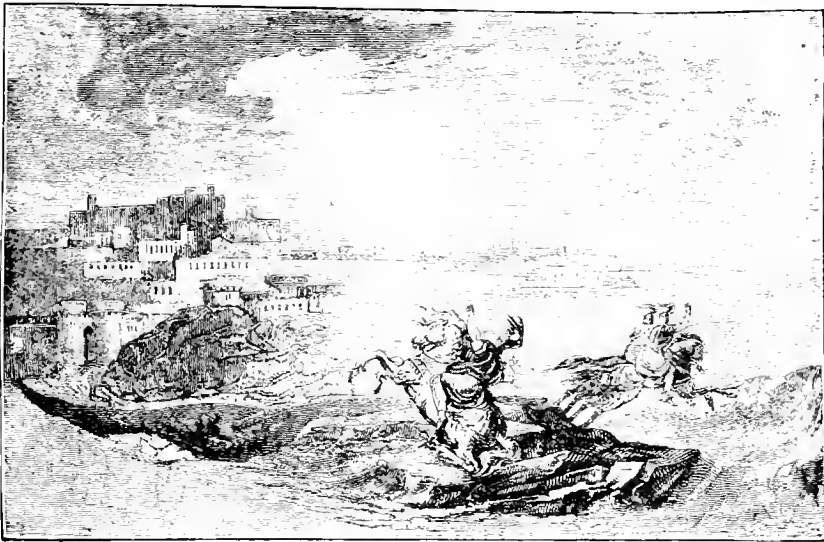
"No, of course not."

"The Lord Jesus Christ has taken away the sting of death. He died for your sins, and for my sins. He stood in our place, and bore all the



penalty that a just and holy God is bound to inflict on us for our sins. If you accept him as your Saviour, and look to him in simple faith, your sins are blotted out, and you may say with St. Paul,—‘O, death where is thy sting? O, grave where is thy victory?’”

Thus the door was opened, and the visit of the wasp gave the minister an opportunity of speaking to his friend on the forbidden subject. He went on and preached Jesus to the sick man. And God blessed what he said. The squire listened eagerly to him. He was led to true repentance for his sins, and to exercise faith in Jesus as his Saviour. And when he



The Conversion of Saul.

came to die, as he did not long after, he was able to take up good old Simeon's words, and say,—“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

In this story we see what the effect of seeing Jesus was on a dying man in England, not long ago. In the case of Simeon we see what the effect of seeing Jesus was on him, in the land of the Bible, eighteen hundred years ago. And seeing Jesus has the same effect now, on people in all lands. Just one more illustration. This is from an English missionary in India:—

“Our station,” says the missionary, “was on the borders of one of the largest jungles in India. One day a very rough-looking man, of whom we had some knowledge, and who was employed as a buffalo or cow driver in

the jungle, came to our house, bringing with him a little girl, about eight or nine years old.

He said, "This is my daughter, and I want you, if you please, to take her into your mission. I have given up worshipping idols. I have learned something of the religion of Jesus, and I want my child to learn it, too."

We took her in. She appeared like a very unpromising scholar. She was ragged and filthy, and seemed as dull and stupid as the cattle she had helped to drive. The entire change of life, at first, was hard for her to bear. But she soon began to feel great interest in the exercises of the school, and the services of the chapel. Before a year had passed away it was evident that a great change had taken place in her. She was neat and tidy in her dress, and ways; and gentle, and loving in her temper and manner.

About that time she came to me and expressed an earnest desire to be baptized. She understood well what it meant, and gave good evidence of being a Christian. But still I said, perhaps she had better wait awhile. Her reply was,—“I am not strong; I may not have long to live, and I want to be able to say I am a Christian before I die.”

She was baptized by the name of Jane. Not long after, she came one day to ask if she might go and visit her people. It was a long way off—a journey of several days to where they lived. When asked why she wished to go so far, her answer was,—“They know nothing of Jesus, and I wish to tell them what a Saviour I have found in him. My grandmother is old. She cannot live long. I want to tell her about Jesus before she dies. There is a messenger going from here to-morrow. He says he will take care of me. Please let me go, and in fourteen days I will be back again.”

We let her go. True to her word, at the close of the fourteenth day, after her departure, she returned.

As she entered my study, with her face all beaming with joy, she exclaimed:—“I was just in time. I'm so glad I went.”

“Just in time for what?” I asked.

“Just in time to save grandma. She only lived three days after I got there. But I told her all about Jesus. I prayed with her, and read to her

out of my Testament. Before she died she said,—‘I believe in Jesus.’ So I know she has gone to heaven. Oh, I’m so glad I went.”

Not long after this she was taken sick herself. A little while before she died, I said to her,—“Are you happy, Jane?”

“Oh! yes; joy! joy!” was her answer.

“Are you afraid to die, Jane?”

“Oh, no; I am going to be with Jesus! Joy! joy!” These were the last words she uttered.

Thus we have seen what the effect of seeing Jesus was on good old Simeon; on the English squire, and on the poor jungle girl in India.

What Simeon saw in Jesus was—*salvation—light—glory*. The effect of what he saw, was that *he was enabled to die in peace*.

May God enable all of us *so* to see Jesus with the eye of faith, that we may be able to take up Simeon’s words, and say,—“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”





## THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN.



THE visit of the wise men was one of the wonderful things that happened in honor of our Saviour's birth. St. Matthew is the only one of the Evangelists who says anything about this interesting incident. What he tells us respecting it, we find in the second chapter of his gospel, from the first to the twelfth verse. We call these men—"the wise men." In the Greek Testament they are called—Magi. This is a name that was applied in the eastern countries to a class of learned men, who spent their time principally in studying the stars, and other matters of natural science. We find men of this class spoken of in the book of Daniel as "the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the wise men." Dan. ii: 2, v: 7, 15.

We are told that these wise men, or Magi, came to Jerusalem to find out where Christ, "the King of the Jews," was to be born; for, they said, that in their own country, far away in the East, they had seen a star, which they called "his star," or the star which was sent to tell them that he was born; and now, they wanted to know where the new-born King was to be found, that they might go and worship him.

We know it to be a fact, because it is



Bethlehem, with the Church of the Nativity, and Convents, from the North.

mentioned by some of the principal writers of that day, that there was then a very general expectation prevailing among different nations that a great king was about to be born among the Jews, who was to be a blessing to the world.

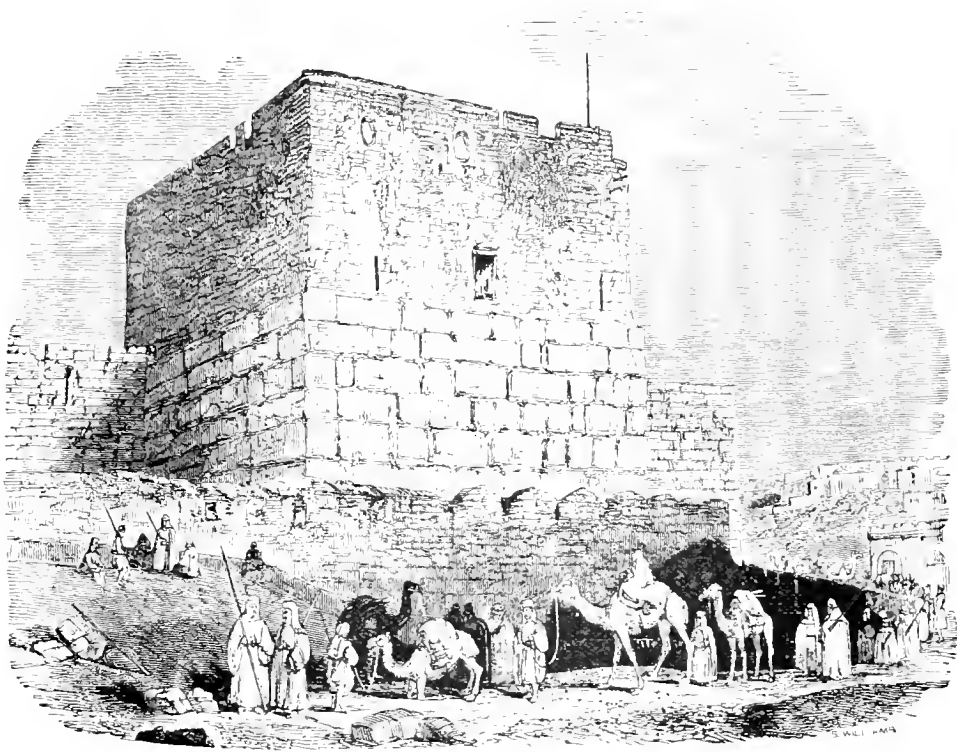
Balaam, of whom we read in the book of Numbers, and who lived nearly fifteen hundred years before Christ, had written a prophecy about this expected king. In speaking of him, he used this language:—"There shall come a *star* out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel." Num. xxiv: 17. This may have had something to do with this widespread expectation. And then Daniel had prophesied of Christ's coming about this time. Some of the Jews were found among all the principal nations of the earth. Wherever they went they took their scriptures with them, and so these prophecies would be known among the wise and learned men of different nations. And this, no doubt, had a good deal to do with the spreading abroad of the idea that some great king, or deliverer was about to come into the world.

And then it was a common opinion, in those days, that when kings, or great men were born, some peculiar appearance of the stars, or other heavenly bodies would take place in honor of their birth. The wise men said they had seen a star in their own eastern country, which they called "his star," that is the star of this new-born King. When they saw this star, they felt sure that the Great Deliverer, for whom the world was waiting, had been born; and they came to Jerusalem to inquire about the place of his birth, that they might go and worship him.

When Herod, the king, heard this, he sent and called for the chief priests and scribes, and inquired of them where Christ, the promised King and Saviour was to be born.

"And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet. And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." Micah v: 2. Then the wise men went to Bethlehem; and the star appeared to them again, and led them to the infant Saviour. And when they came to the place where Jesus was, they worshiped him, and presented their gifts to him, and then went back to their own country.

And this is really all that we know of these wise men. A great many things have been said about them, but we cannot be sure that they are true. It has been said that there were three of them; that they were kings; that their names were Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar; that when they knelt beside the manger, the babe reached out his hands over their heads and blessed them; that Mary, his Mother, gave them a linen band



Bethlehem Gate—Tower of Hippicus.

in which Jesus had been wrapped; that, on going away, they found they could work miracles with this linen band; that they afterwards became preachers of the gospel, and went as missionaries to the heathens, and finally were put to death as martyrs; that their bones were gathered up, and taken to the city of Cologne; and now, in the great cathedral of that city, may be seen a silver case adorned with precious stones, in which are three skeletons, said to be those of these three kings, with their skulls crowned with diamonds, and their names written in rubies. But these statements are all fables. No one can prove any of them. All that we

know about these wise men is the simple statement that we find in St. Matthew's gospel. They came seeking the Saviour. And this is what we should all be doing. Let us look at the wise men in this character—as men who were seeking Jesus. We shall find their example both interesting and instructive, when we consider it in this light. Now let us try to answer this question:—*What sort of seekers were these wise men?*

And when we come to look at them carefully, we shall find *five* things about them as seekers of the Saviour, which will teach us very valuable lessons. Each of these five things may be expressed in a single word, so that we may wrap this whole subject up in five words, that we can easily carry away with us, and remember as long as we live.

*Now we may begin by saying that these wise men were—*EARNEST SEEKERS—*of Jesus.*

When we see persons doing anything, we can tell, in a moment, whether they are in earnest about it or not. These men showed that they were in earnest in seeking Jesus, by the way in which they set about it. Suppose that when they saw that wonderful star, and learned from it that the promised Saviour was born, they had remained quietly at home, and merely sent some of their servants to inquire about him. This would have showed some *interest* in the matter, but it would not have showed any earnestness. But *this was not* what they did. *They came themselves* to see about it. They felt that it was a matter of too much importance to trust to others. And it was a long journey they had to take. We cannot tell exactly how long this journey was, because we do not know just where they came from. Some suppose they came from Arabia. This was a country to the south-east of Jerusalem. If it was from Arabia that they came, then they must have traveled over that dreary desert, through which the Israelites had to journey in coming from Egypt to Canaan. Some suppose that they came from Persia, or from Chaldea, the country in which Abraham was born, and from which he went out, at God's command, to dwell in the land of Canaan. If this was so, then their journey was longer still. It must have taken them at least several months to come from there to Jerusalem, and then return. And not only would it take up a great deal of *time* to make this journey, but it would require them to spend a great deal of money, and to go through a great deal of toil, fatigue, and danger.



Now if these wise men only looked upon the infant Christ as an ordinary king, then there was no reason why they should have been so earnest in seeking him. They had much better have stayed at home, and have saved their money and the trouble they were at. They would deserve to have been called *foolish* men, instead of wise men.

But if they knew the value of their souls; if they knew that these souls were lost and ruined by sin; if they knew that this new-born king had come to save their souls, and that he was the only one who could save them—and I have no doubt that this was the case—*then*, by their earnestness in seeking Jesus, they showed that they were indeed, “*wise* men.” It was worth that long journey, with all the money it cost, and all the toil and danger it involved, to seek this Saviour.

The old proverb says,—“Whatever is worth doing, is worth doing *well*.” But there is nothing in the world so worth doing as seeking the salvation of our souls. And when we begin to do this, we should do it well. This means that we should be in earnest about it. This was the case with these wise men. They were earnest seekers of Jesus.

And we should be earnest in this work, too. If we have not sought Jesus as our own Saviour, we should do it at once; and we should do it *earnestly*. This is what our Saviour, himself, meant, when he said:—“Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God.” Matth. vi: 33. What he intends by the word—*first*—here, is, that we should seek him, and his salvation, *before* we seek anything else; and that we should seek it more earnestly than we seek anything else. And if our own souls are saved, through faith in Christ, then we should be earnest in seeking to save others. Let us look at one or two examples of earnestness. We have a good illustration of earnestness in the blind man whom Jesus healed.

He was sitting by the way-side begging. He heard the noise of the passing crowd. “What’s the matter?” was his inquiry. Some one said—“Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.” The poor man had heard of the wonderful works of Jesus. He had faith in the power of Jesus, and had made up his mind that if ever he had a chance to get near him, he would ask him to open his eyes. And now the time has come. Jesus is passing. This is the golden opportunity for him. He resolves to improve it. He cries,—“Jesus, thou Son of David! have mercy on me!” The people

around try to stop him from crying, but in vain. The more they try to stop him, the louder he cries—"Jesus, thou Son of David! have mercy on me." Jesus hears him. He calls him, and opens his eyes, and sends him away rejoicing. This blind man was an earnest seeker.

"The Cottage on Fire." The family of a peasant, in England, were seated in their cottage one day, waiting for supper, when a fire began to burn in the thatched roof of their cottage. They knew nothing of it, and were quietly talking together. A neighbor saw it, and went to tell them of it. He was a slow, quiet sort of a man who never could be roused to earnestness in anything. He began a long, dull talk to them about the danger of fire, and how dreadful it is to be burned out of house and home. In the midst of his long speech, another neighbor rushed in, and striking his hands together, with the utmost earnestness, exclaimed:—"Fire! fire! your house is on fire. Get out directly, or you'll be burned to death."

This man was in earnest, as he ought to have been, under the circumstances.

"Praying Earnestly." Here is what a little boy, only five years old, said about his prayers:—

One morning at breakfast he was uncommonly quiet. After awhile, he said,—“Mamma, I've found out what makes me such a bad boy.”

“And what is it, my son?” asked his mother, surprised at the suddenness of his remark.

“It's because I haven't prayed my prayers. I haven't been earnest in my prayers; I haven't prayed them with my heart, and so I've been getting bad all the time. But this morning I thought about it in bed. And when I got up, I prayed my prayers. I prayed earnestly from my heart. I am sure Jesus will hear me, and help me to be a better boy.” That little fellow was an earnest seeker of Jesus. He was like the wise men in this respect. Let us all try to be *earnest seekers*.

*We may take a second look at these wise men, and we see that they were*  
—PERSEVERING SEEKERS.

They expected, no doubt, when they came to Jerusalem to find the people there all greatly interested in the matter about which they had come so far to seek for information. If they had found the inhabitants of Jerusalem so taken up with this subject that they could think and speak



The Man who was born Blind.

of nothing else, it would have seemed to these wise men to be the most natural thing in the world. But, instead of this, how different was the state of things they found on arriving at Jerusalem! Nobody there knew

anything of the birth of Christ. Nobody talked of it, or seemed to care anything about it. This must have appeared very strange to them. It must have disappointed them greatly. The wonder is that they did not turn round, and go directly home, when they found how utterly indifferent the people of Jerusalem were to the birth of their Great King. But these wise men were not to be so easily discouraged. If they had not been very earnest in their seeking, they would, no doubt, have gone back at once. But earnest seekers after Jesus will always be persevering seekers. It was so with these wise men. They knew very well what they were about. They felt the unspeakable importance of what they had come to seek. And no difficulties, or discouragements, could turn them aside from this purpose. Whatever others might do, they had made up their minds to go on, and persevere in seeking Jesus till they found him. We cannot but admire this perseverance. But we should not be satisfied with *admiring* it merely. The thing for us to do, is to *imitate* it. We should persevere like them in seeking Jesus for ourselves, and then we should persevere in trying to get others to seek him.

Let us look at one or two examples of perseverance.

“The Syro-Phœnician Woman.” This is a New Testament example of perseverance. We have the account of it in Matth. xv: 21–28. A woman came to Jesus, one day, seeking him, not for herself, but for her daughter. This woman was a Gentile. When she first began to call for the help of Jesus, he seemed to take no notice of her. Then the disciples begged him to send her away. She was not discouraged, but kept on calling to him. Then he told her that he had not been sent to the Gentiles, but only to the Jews. This would have discouraged many a seeker; but this woman was not discouraged. She persevered, and still kept praying to him. Then Jesus told her that it was not right to take the children’s bread—meaning the Jews—and give it to the dogs, that is the Gentiles. Now, most persons would have been utterly discouraged by these words, and, in despair, would have given up seeking any further. But it was not so with this woman. She still persevered. Her reply was,—“Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master’s table.” Then Jesus answered her, and said,—“O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.”

We must not suppose from this case that Jesus is ever unwilling to hear and answer the prayers of those who seek him. He *seemed* to be so in this case. But then I suppose the reason for it was, that he knew how



The Syro-Phœnician Woman.

strong this woman's faith was. He knew she would not be discouraged, or give up seeking him. And he wanted to hold her up to all people as an example of a persevering seeker.

"Perseverance Rewarded." Some years ago, in a manufacturing town in England, a young lady applied to the superintendent of a Sunday-

school for a class. He told her he had no vacant classes; but that if she liked to go out and hunt up a class of boys for herself, he would be glad to have her help. She did so, and gathered a class of poor ragged boys. Among these, the worst, and most unpromising boy was one named Bob. The superintendent told these boys to come to his house during the week, and he would get them each a new suit of clothes. They came and got their clothes. After two or three Sundays, Bob was missing. The teacher went after him. She found that his new clothes were torn and dirty. She invited him back to school. He came. The superintendent gave him a second new suit. After attending once or twice, Bob's place was empty again. Once more the teacher sought him out. She found that the second suit of clothes had gone the same way as the first. She reported the case to the superintendent, saying she was utterly discouraged about Bob, and must give him up.

"Please, don't do that," said the superintendent, "I can't but hope that there is something good in Bob. Try him once more. I'll give him a third suit of clothes if he'll promise to attend regularly." Bob did promise. He received his third suit of clothes. He did attend regularly after that. He got interested in the school. He became an earnest and persevering seeker after Jesus. He found him. He joined the church. He was made a teacher. He studied for the ministry, and the end of the story is, that that discouraging boy—that dirty, ragged, runaway Bob, became the Rev. Dr. Robert Morrison—the great missionary to China—who translated the Bible into the Chinese language, and so, "opened the kingdom of heaven" to the teeming millions of that vast country.

The wise men were persevering seekers.

*In the third place they were—SUCCESSFUL SEEKERS.*

Soon after they left Jerusalem, on their way to Bethlehem to seek the Saviour, we read that "the star which they saw in the East, went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was." Matth. ii: 9.

It is very clear from this that the star which guided the wise men to Jesus was not a common or ordinary star. For it would be utterly impossible for an ordinary star to do what this star did.

Learned men have written a great deal about the different planets that were in the sky at this time, and the great brightness with which they

shone. But no matter how great the brightness of those planets might have been, what could that have done to point out to the wise men the



The Wise Men following the Star.

particular house they wished to find, and in which the infant Saviour lay? At the time when I was writing this chapter, four of our most beautiful planets were shining in the sky every night. These were Venus, and

Jupiter, and Saturn, and Mars. I gazed at them every time I saw them with great delight. But if I had wished to find out some person who lived several miles from my house, and whose residence I did not know, I could have no help from those planets. They could not have gone before me, as this star did to the wise men, till they came and stood over where the person was that I wished to find. No ordinary star could do this. And so, we know that *this* star which the wise men saw could not have been an ordinary star. It must have been a miraculous star—one sent by God for this special purpose. It must have been like what we call a meteor. It might have been an angel that God sent to guide the wise men, and the angel made use of a bright, shining meteor for this purpose. This star, or meteor, must have moved along quite low down, not much higher than the tops of the houses, so that when it “came to the place where the young child lay,” it could stop moving and shedding down its soft, pale light, like a silvery finger could point out the house or place in which the young King lay. And in this way they became successful seekers; they found what they had sought so earnestly, and so perseveringly.

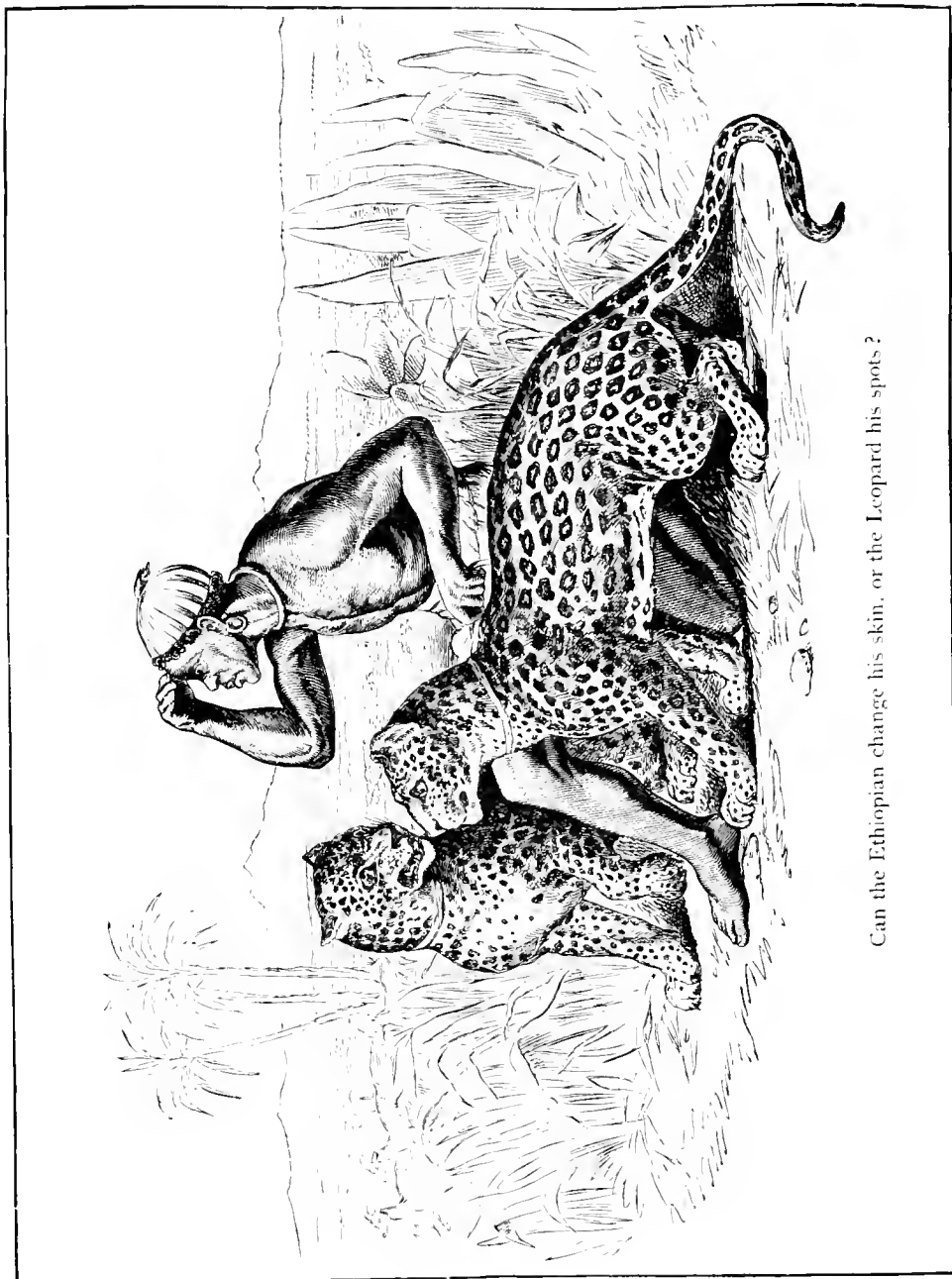
And all who are as earnest and as persevering in seeking Jesus as the wise men were, will be as successful as they were in finding him. We may be sure of this, because God has promised it. In one place God’s promise is given in these words:—“They that seek me early *shall find* me.” Prov. viii: 17. Now, early seekers here, mean *earnest* seekers; and we see that the promise of finding is given to them. And then in another place the promise is given in this way:—“And ye shall seek me, and shall find me, when ye shall search for me with all your hearts.” Jer. xxix: 13. But when we do anything “with all our hearts,” we are sure to be *earnest* and *persevering*. And so, in this promise, God gives us the assurance that when we are earnest and persevering seekers of him, we shall certainly be successful seekers.

The Ethiopian, of whom we read in Acts viii: 26–40, is a good illustration of a *successful seeker*.

His home was in Africa, down below Egypt. He had traveled all the way from there up to Jerusalem to worship God and get instruction about him. This shows that he was an *earnest seeker* of the truth. He had not



gained all the information he desired; and so, as he rode home in his chariot, he was reading the scriptures to try and get more knowledge about



Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots?

the way of salvation. This shows that he was a *persevering seeker*. Most persons would have waited till they reached home before reading the Bible any more. But this man was too anxious and earnest to wait. At

home he was a seeker. At Jerusalem, where he had been, he was a seeker. And now, as he rode along on his journey, he was a seeker, still. And those who seek Jesus in this way, will always be successful seekers; they will be sure to find him.

It was so with this Ethiopian. God sent Philip, the Evangelist, to help him to find what he was seeking. Philip came. He rode in the chariot with him. He found him reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, without knowing what it meant. Then Philip began at the same scripture, and preached unto him—Jesus. The man listened eagerly. He believed what he heard. He found Jesus in Philip's sermon. He received him as his Saviour; was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing. Earnest and persevering seekers of Jesus will always be successful seekers. It was so with the Ethiopian. It was so with the wise men. And it will be so with all who seek him in this way.

*Let us take another look at these wise men, and now we see them to be*—LIBERAL—*seekers.*

We read that after they had found Jesus, and had kneeled down and worshiped him, they "*opened their treasures, and presented unto him gifts—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.*"

We all know what gold is. Nothing need be said about this. Frankincense and myrrh were two fragrant gums obtained from trees that grow in Arabia and other parts of the East. These gums were very valuable, and were much employed in making the incense used by the priests in the services of the temple. They were also used for many other purposes.

The wise men did not make these gifts or offerings, as a price or payment for any benefits they had received from the infant Saviour whom they had been permitted to worship. They only made these offerings to show how thankful they were for the privilege of seeing and worshipping the Saviour whom they had come so far to seek.

No doubt they expressed their thankfulness with their lips, as they bowed down in solemn worship before the new-born King and Saviour. But they felt that this was not enough. They felt that they must make an offering to him of the best things they had. And so they "*opened their treasures,*" and gave him freely of what those treasures contained.



The Wise Men Offering Gifts.

And we should follow their example in this respect, too. If we find Jesus as the wise men did, it will lead us to "open our treasures." It will make us know and feel that our money, our property, or whatever makes up our earthly treasures, belongs to God, and not to ourselves. These

things are not *ours*, but *his*. He lends them to us to use for him. And when we find him as our Saviour; when we become Christians, if we are true Christians, we shall follow the example of these wise men. We shall "open our treasures, and present our offerings" of the very best and choicest things that we have. We shall feel ourselves to be his servants and stewards, and shall wish to use all that we have for the honor and glory of his blessed name. The religion of the wise men made them liberal in using their means, and if our religion do not have this effect upon us, there must be something wrong about it.

"Baptized Pocket-Book." A new convert was about to be received into the communion of a Baptist church by immersion. Before going into the water he was told to remove his pocket-book. "No, no," said he, "let it alone. *I want my pocket-book to be baptized, too.*" He meant to say, that he wished to use his money for the cause of Christ. And this is what we should all do. If we have been successful seekers of the blessed Saviour, we ought to be liberal seekers.

God promises to bless those who like these wise men, "open their treasures" and give of their means for doing good to their fellow-creatures, and for the glory of his name.

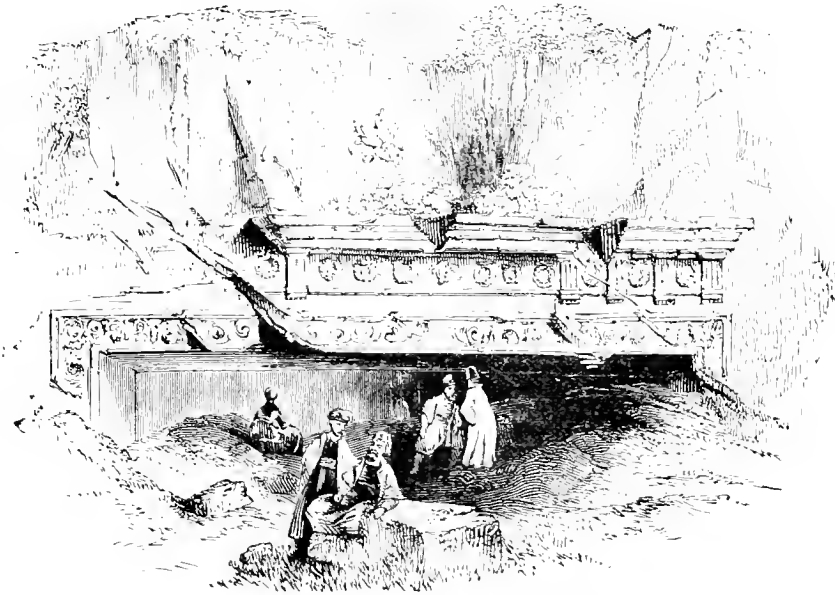
"The Consecrated Diamonds." The Princess Eugenia, of Sweden, is a devoted Christian lady, and very liberal. She had used up all the money she could control, in doing good in various ways.

Still, in visiting among the poor, she found a number of sick persons who never could be cured, but who could be made comfortable if they only had a hospital home. She wished to establish a home for incurables. But her money was all gone. It had been used up in doing good in other ways. She said to herself, What shall I do to get money for this home? There seemed to be no way of getting this money. At last she thought of a casket of very valuable diamonds that belonged to her. She said to herself,—"*May I not sell my diamonds?*" She asked her brother, the king, about it. He consented. The diamonds were sold. The hospital was built. It was kept full of patients. With them this noble princess spent much of her time, talking and praying with them, and trying to lead them to Jesus. Among these was an old woman, who was very ignorant, and had been very wicked. The princess had prayed and labored much over

this woman, and was very anxious to see her a Christian. But nothing seemed to make any change in her.

On one occasion the princess had to be absent for some weeks. She was going round among the patients saying good-by. The matron pointed to this old woman, and said—"You'll find her greatly changed."

As the princess came up to the bedside of this old woman, now near her end—she was greeted with these sweet words:—"I thank God that 'the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin,' and that he has



Sepulchre of the Kings of Judea.

cleansed mine." As she uttered these words, tears of grateful gladness flowed down her aged cheeks.

And the princess, herself, shed tears of joy when speaking of it to a friend, as she said:—"In the tears of that saved soul—*I saw my diamonds again!*" Yes, and how beautiful they must have appeared, as she thus saw them!

One other illustration before we leave this part of our subject. And the lesson which this story illustrates may be thus expressed:—

"Giving, God's Way for Getting." Our Saviour said,—*"Give, and it shall be given unto you."* Luke vi: 38. And Solomon taught the same

lesson when he said,—“There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” Prov. xi: 24. A minister, who was seeking help to build a chapel, called on a gentleman who was both rich and liberal. He heard the minister’s story, and gave him a handsome donation. Then turning to his three boys, who were present, and had heard the minister’s statement, and had seen what their father gave, he said,—“Now, my dear boys, what will you give to help this good man in his work?” One said, “I’ll give all that I’ve got in my pocket;” which he did. The second said, “I’ll give half what I’ve got in my pocket,” and he gave it. The third said, “I’ll give nothing.” About twenty years passed away. The minister was making a visit to the city where this incident occurred. He had never forgotten it. He inquired about his generous friend, and his family. The gentleman himself had died, and gone to heaven. But mark now, what he found out about those three boys. The eldest, who gave all he had in his pocket, had been greatly prospered, and was a very rich man. The second son, who gave half of what he had, was moderately well off. But the third, who said “I’ll give nothing,” was so poor that his two brothers had to support him.

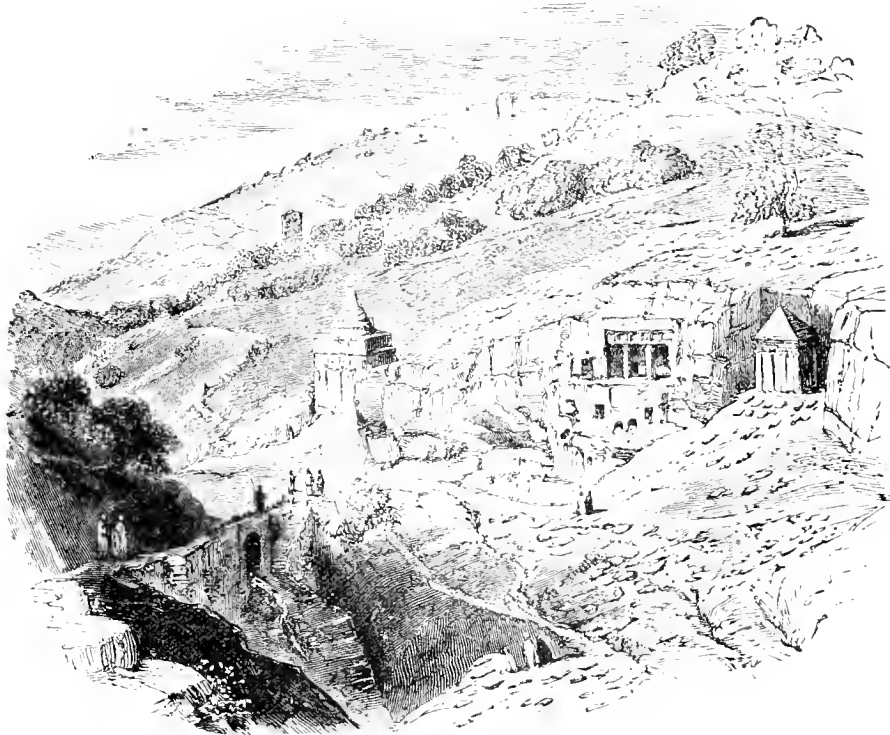
The wise men were liberal seekers.

*There is one other thing to say about these wise men, and that is, they were—HAPPY SEEKERS.*

We read that “when they saw the star, they *rejoiced with exceeding joy!*” Matth. ii: 10. They were happy seekers then, indeed. But it was not anything in the star itself; not what the star *was*, but what the star *did* for them, that made them happy. It led them to Jesus, and finding Jesus made them happy. And this is what the Bible teaches us will always be the case with those who find Jesus. David compares it to the joy a man feels who unexpectedly finds great spoil or treasures. Ps. cxix: 162. Solomon says,—“Happy is the man who findeth wisdom.” Prov. iii: 13. But wisdom here is one of the names belonging to Jesus. What he teaches in this passage is, that finding Jesus will make us happy. And “the joy and gladness, the thanksgiving, and the voice of melody,” that we read so much about in the Bible, all refer to the happiness that follows from finding Jesus. There is no happiness in the world like that which those feel who really find Jesus, and know, and love, and trust him as

their own precious Saviour. One who had thus been taught to know Jesus, wrote these sweet lines to express the happiness he found in him:—

“ I’ve found the pearl of greatest price,  
 My heart doth sing for joy ;  
 And sing I must, a Christ I have,  
 O, *what* a Christ have I !



The Valley of Jehoshaphat.

“ Christ is my meat, Christ is my drink,  
 My medicine, and my health ;  
 My peace, my strength, my joy, my crown,  
 My glory and my wealth.

“ Christ is my father and my friend,  
 My brother and my love ;  
 My head, my hope, my counsellor,  
 My advocate above.”

And if *all this* is found in Jesus, we may well speak of those who find him as happy.

Let us look at some incidents which show us how happy those are who truly find Christ.

“Singing all the Time.” A little Sunday-school boy was badly wounded at a spinning-mill, in Dundee, Scotland. After being taken home, he lingered for a few days and died.

His mother came to the mill to see the boy’s teacher, and tell him about his death. The teacher asked her how he died.

“He was singing all the time,” said she.

“Tell me what he was singing?” said the teacher.

“He was singing,—

“O, the Lamb, the loving Lamb,  
The Lamb of Calvary ;  
The Lamb that was slain, but has risen again,  
And intercedes for me.”

And the meaning of this was that *that* poor boy had found Jesus, and this had made him happy.

“The Little Irish Missionary.” A gentleman from England was visiting a faithful minister of Christ, in Ireland, not long ago. One day they went out for a walk. As they went on, a ragged-looking Irish boy was seen coming down the road. “Sec,” said the minister, “here comes one of my missionaries.” As the lad drew near, the gentleman saw that he had a book under his arm.

“Well, my boy,” said he, “are you a missionary?”

“Yes, your honor.”

“And what do you teach the people?”

I teach them—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins ;  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains,”

—your honor.

“You seem to be very poor,” said the gentleman.

“Sure, and your honor’s mistaken,” replied the boy; “for indade I’m very rich.”

“What riches have you?”



“Sure, then I have the unsearchable riches of Christ. And more nor that, I am an heir of God, and a joint heir with our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“Anything more?”

“Yes, your honor, I have an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me.”

And the meaning of it all was, this boy had found Jesus; and finding him had made him happy.

“Blessed Are They That Mourn.” Mr. Johnson, the superintendent of a mission-school, was locking up the door of the school-house one Sunday night, when he saw a little girl, ten or twelve years' old, standing in the doorway, crying bitterly. He asked her into the school-room.

“What's wrong with you, my child?” he asked.

“Please, sir, everything's wrong with me, and I just wish I was dead,” she said, as she burst into tears.

The child was a stranger to him, so he spoke kindly to her, and asked her to tell him her story. It was this:—

Her father had been dead for years; her mother died a week ago, and now she was grieved to think how often she had disobeyed her mother.

“O, sir,” she said, “when I came in here to-night and heard you telling about Jesus dying on the cross, I just thought it was all my fault; and I've been so bad that he'll never forgive me.”

Mr. Johnson told her how Christ came to save the chief of sinners, and how ready he is to pardon, and save, and bless all who believe in him. He talked and prayed with her, and asked her to come to his house the next day.

At the time appointed, she met him with a smile, and said,—“I see it all now, sir. I have put myself in the hands of Jesus, and feel happy.”

Mr. Johnson got her a nice situation with a good Christian lady. On the following Sunday she came to school. On coming up to Mr. Johnson, she pointed to one of the illuminated texts on the wall, and said,—“Please, sir, read that.” He said,—“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.”

“That's me, sir,” she cried joyfully; “that's me! Jesus took away my mother and my home, and when I mourned, he gave me another home, and bade me follow my mother to heaven. And when I was sorry for my

sins, he washed them away. Now I am happy. So when I saw that sweet text, I couldn't help telling you, sir,—“That's me! that's me!”

This poor child had found Jesus, and it made her happy. And so it was with the wise men, who came seeking Jesus. Remember what sort of seekers they were. They were earnest seekers; persevering seekers; successful seekers; liberal seekers; happy seekers. Let us seek Jesus as they did, and then we shall be happy, too.







THE TEMPTATION



## THE BOY CHRIST.



**N**OW there are two incidents in the life of our Saviour closely connected with the visit of the wise men, of which we have last spoken. These are the slaughter of the little children in Bethlehem and its borders, and the flight into Egypt. When the wise men came to Jerusalem to inquire about the place of Christ's birth, they were told that he was to be born in Bethlehem. Before they left Jerusalem to go and seek him, Herod asked them to come back and tell him where this royal child was to be found, that he might come and worship him also. He was not speaking the truth when he said this. The fact was that it alarmed him very much to hear about the birth of a child who was to be king of the Jews. And if he could have found out where that child was, he intended, not to go and worship him, but to send and kill him. God knew this. To him "all hearts are open, all desires known, and from him, no secrets are hid." And when the wise men had found the young king, and had worshiped him, God told them not to go back to Herod, but to return to their own country another way.

And when Herod saw that they were not coming back to tell him where the young child was, he thought he would make sure of the death

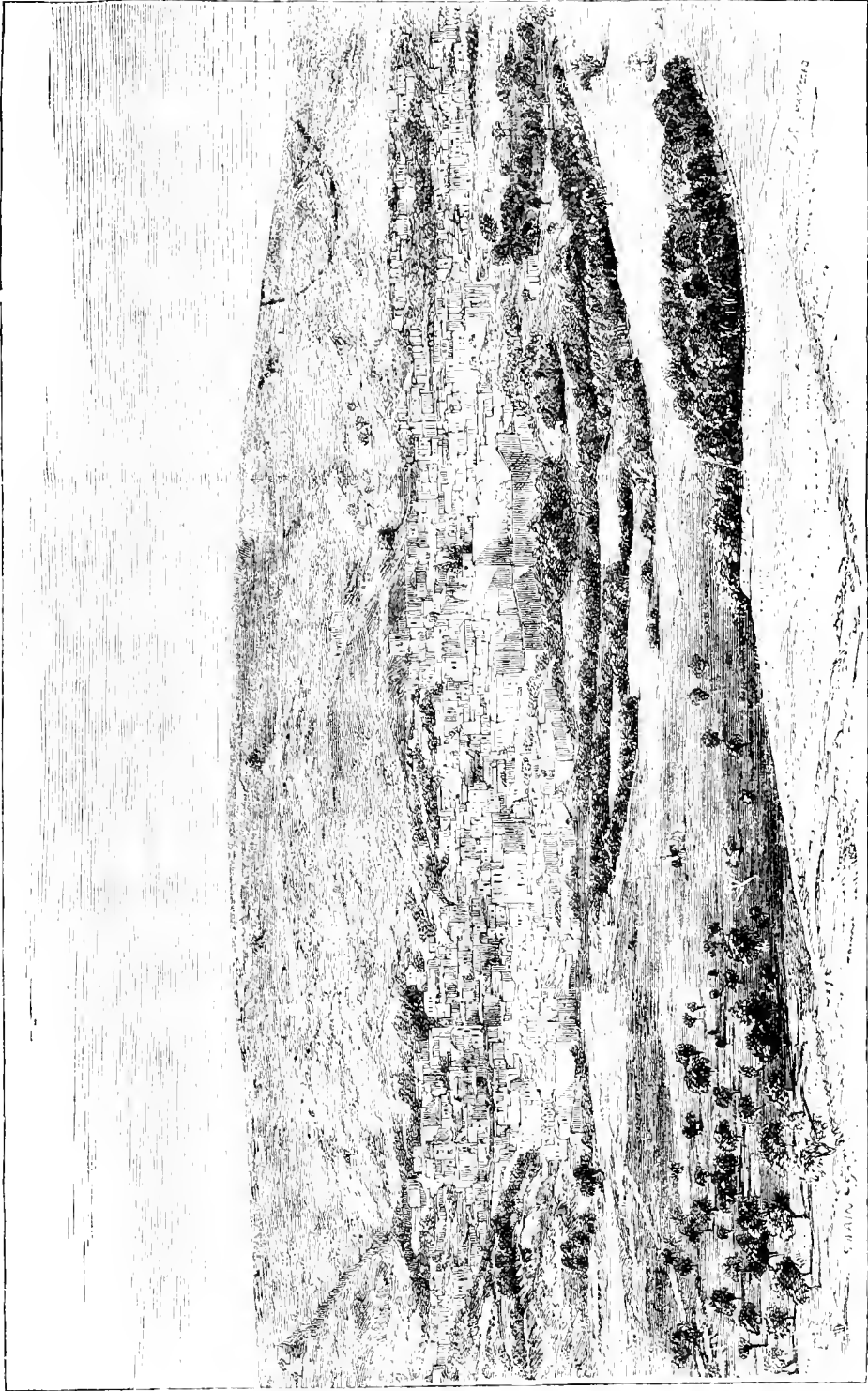
of the child, so he sent some of his soldiers to go to Bethlehem and kill all the young children who had been born in that town during the last two years. And if Joseph and Mary had remained there, with their child, he would most certainly have been killed. But God took care that this should not happen. He sent an angel who appeared to Joseph, in a dream by night. The angel told him what Herod was going to do; and in order to preserve the life of the infant Saviour, he told him to take the young child and his mother, and go down into the land of Egypt, and stay there until he should hear of the death of Herod.

Joseph did this; and so, although Herod had his cruel order carried out, and "the slaughter of the innocents" did take place in Bethlehem, and many a mother's heart there was wrung with anguish at seeing her darling little one butchered before her eyes, yet Jesus was saved, that he might save the world. It would be interesting to pause and speak more fully about these incidents connected with the infant days of our blessed Lord, but there are so many more important events to be considered, that we must leave these and pass on.

The next period in the life of our Saviour, of which we are now to speak, is the longest period in it. It reaches from his return from Egypt, till the time when he was baptized and entered on his public ministry. This one period takes in thirty years of the life of Christ, leaving only three years and a half to make up all the rest of it.

We may call this period—*The Boyhood of Christ*.

When Herod the king died, God sent an angel to Joseph, in Egypt, to tell him the news; and also to direct him to return to his own country. He obeyed the angel's word, and came back to the land of Israel, with Mary his wife, and their child. It seems that he was going back to Bethlehem, where he had lived before; but hearing that Archelaus, the son of Herod, who like his father, was a very bad man, had been made king in Jerusalem, he was afraid to go there, and concluded to go to Nazareth, and make *that* his home. And, in this way it happened that "the boyhood of Christ," extending over the first thirty years of his life, was spent at Nazareth. This led to his being called "Jesus of Nazareth." St. Matthew says,—this was done in order "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene." Matth. ii: 23. These exact



Nazareth, from the East.

words are not found in any of the Old Testament prophets. But in different places they speak of Christ as one whose condition in life was to be very humble and despised. And this is what Jesus of Nazareth, or Jesus the Nazarene, means.

It was my privilege some years ago to travel through that country. In a volume containing a sketch of those travels, published by the American Sunday-School Union, and called—"Illustrated Rambles in Bible-Lands," Nazareth is thus spoken of:—

"We spent a Sunday at Nazareth, resting in our encampment near the well, outside the city. This place is so full of sacred associations connected with the early life of Jesus, as to make a sojourn here particularly interesting. That Sabbath, spent in the youthful home of our Great Redeemer, will never be forgotten. In the afternoon we had a delightful union service, in a large tent, in which a number of other travelers took part.

"At the close of the afternoon we took a walk through the town of Nazareth. The population is about four thousand. The town lies in a valley on the side of a hill, answering exactly to the description given by St. Luke (iv: 29) of the angry crowd that broke up the synagogue service, and 'led Jesus to the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.'

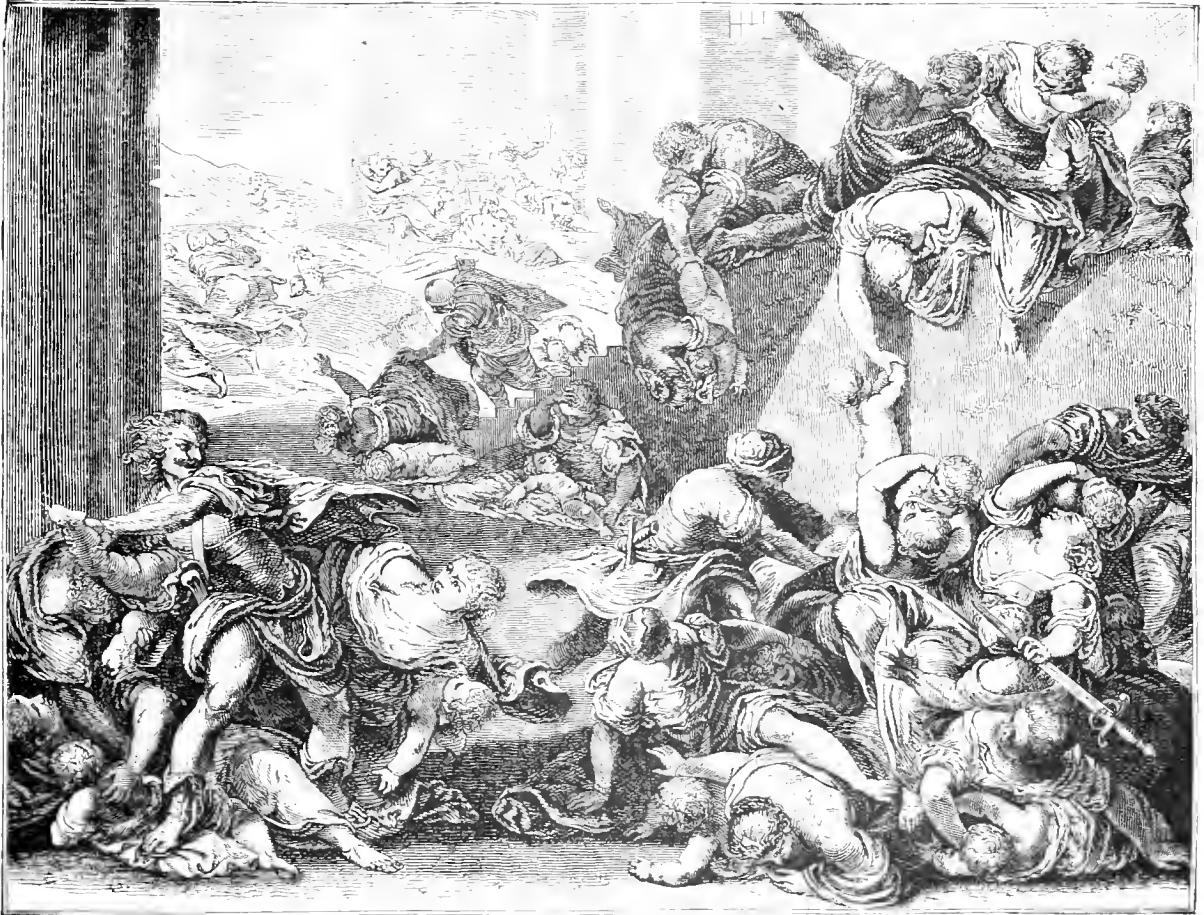
"After rambling through the town, we climbed up the hill, or ridge of hills behind it, so as to get from above a view of Nazareth and of the country around. This ridge is about five hundred feet high. The descent, immediately below the crest of the hill, is so steep, that it would not be difficult to find more places than one, from which, if a person were thrown over, he would have a headlong fall."

We sat down on "the brow of the hill," at the quiet sunset hour, to meditate on the scene before us, so rich in hallowed associations. There was a feeling of intense reality in everything around us. The Nazareth of to-day occupies, no doubt, the same locality with the Nazareth of eighteen hundred years ago, when Jesus was there. Over these very fields, the boy Jesus had played with his companions. Up this very hill, doubtless, he had often climbed. Where we were sitting, he may often have sat, and gazed on the same landscape spread out in its beauty before



us. It was pleasant indeed to linger on such a spot, and indulge in such thoughts.

But, apart from these associations, the view from that hill, behind Nazareth, is very interesting. It is one of the most varied and extensive that Palestine affords. It overlooks the beautiful plain of Esdraelon. It



The Slaughter of the Innocents.

takes in the snowy-peak of Hermon, the rounded summit of Tabor, the long dark ridge of Carmel, and beyond it, the white strand of the Mediterranean.

In the midst of this scene of beauty Jesus spent his days, from the time of his infancy until he was thirty years' old. How strange it seems that we have no history of those years! We long to know more about

the boyhood of Christ. But there is nothing with which to satisfy this longing. Only one anecdote of his boyhood is told. This is his visit to the temple, when he was twelve years old. Of this we shall have occasion to speak by and by. This is so full of interest, that it only makes us wish that more such incidents had been told of him. But they have not been told. With this one exception, the early life of our Saviour is passed over in entire silence.

Let us never forget that when Jesus came into our world, to do the most important work that ever was done in it,—to teach and to save the world,—he spent thirty years of his life in private, and only three and a half in public. There are many lessons that God intended to teach us by this strange fact. But there is one that we should remember above all the rest; it is this,—*The importance of home duties.* The Apostle Paul teaches us that we must—“Learn first to show *piety at home.*” I Tim. v: 4. Jesus spent thirty years of his life in “first showing piety at home,” before he began to show piety in public. And here is an example for every boy and girl to follow. *This* is the great lesson that comes to us from the boyhood, and early manhood of Christ.

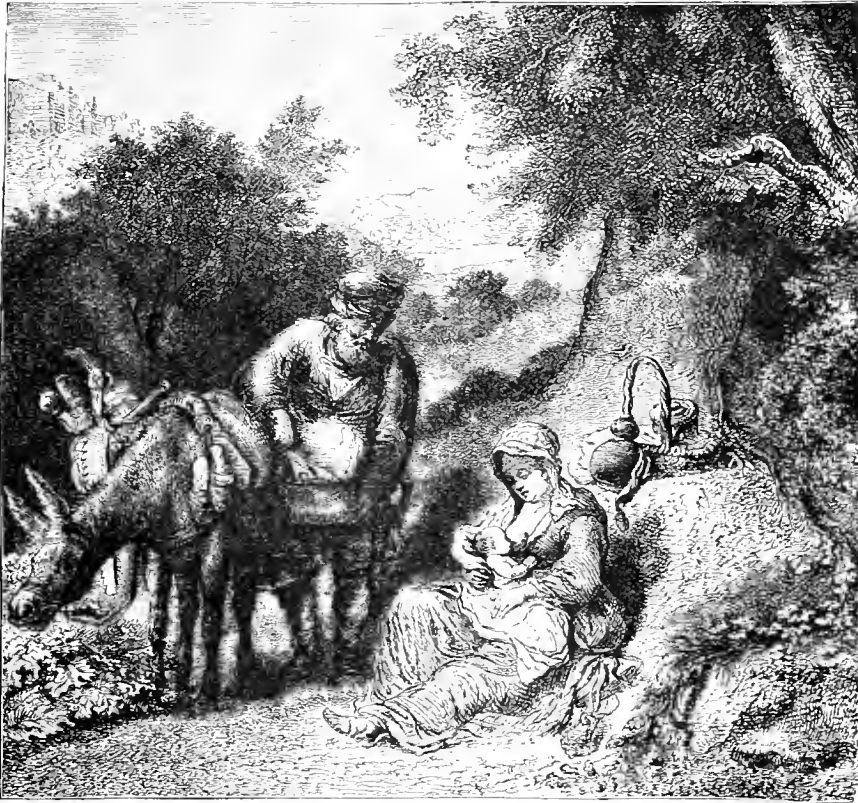
Other histories of the early years of our Saviour's life have been written; but they are very different from the simple history given us in the Bible. They are full of stories about the marvelous things said to have happened to him; but of course they are not true. Here are some specimens of these stories:—

In giving an account of the flight into Egypt, these stories tell us how dragons came and bowed to him; how lions and leopards came and worshiped him; how the roses of Jericho blossomed wherever he went; how the palm trees bowed down before him that his parents might gather the fruit they bore; and how, when he entered Egypt, all the idols in the land, fell from their pedestals, and were broken in pieces.

And then in describing his life in Nazareth, similar stories are told. They say that, one day, when his father was doing some work, as a carpenter, he cut a board too short; but Jesus took hold of it, and stretched it out to the length that was needed, as easily as you or I could stretch a piece of India-rubber. They say that sometimes he would make little birds out of clay, and then when he clapped his hands, they

would turn into real live birds and fly away; at other times, when playing with his companions, he would turn them into kids, and then, after awhile, turn them into boys again.

How different from all this, is the simple history of the boyhood of Christ which we have in the gospels!



The Flight into Egypt.

And the question we have now to ask is this:—*What sort of boy was Jesus?*

We can answer this question from what we are told about him in the New Testament. And the whole answer may be given in *four* words.

*And in answering this question, the first thing to say is, that—Jesus was a—POOR—boy.*

We always reckon a boy to be rich or poor according to what his father is. And we must judge of Jesus, when he was a boy, in the same way. His father and mother we know were both poor. They were

the descendants of King David, indeed, and yet they were so poor, that when they went up to Bethlehem to be taxed, they could not afford to hire a room to stay in, but had to seek shelter in a stable, when the infant Saviour was born. And when he was forty days' old, and they went up to Jerusalem, to present him in the temple, according to the Jewish law, they were too poor to buy a lamb for the offering, but had to be satisfied with two young pigeons. And this was their condition all through the years of Christ's boyhood. They were not so poor as to be in actual want of food; not so poor as to have to beg their daily bread. Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus, was a working man—a mechanic. He earned enough money to support his family. He provided them with a home; he clothed them, and fed them. And yet it was the home of the poor in which Jesus lived. It was the food of the poor that Jesus ate; and the clothing of the poor that Jesus wore. And so, we may well speak of Jesus as a poor boy. He was the Son of a poor laboring man. But this did not just happen so. It was not because it could not be helped, and that he was obliged to be poor. No, for he had made the world and all things in it. He might have stood on the top of the hill, which overlooked the city of Nazareth, in which he lived, and stretching out his hands towards the four quarters of the globe, might have said,—“The silver and the gold everywhere are mine. The cattle upon the thousand hills are mine. The earth is mine—and the fulness thereof.” Of course then, he might have lived very differently, if he had chosen to do so. But he chose, when a boy, to be a poor boy. And one reason why he did this, was to teach us not to think less of persons, simply because they are poor. Jesus put honor on honest, industrious poverty, by choosing himself to be poor. If we are poor, let us never forget that Jesus was poor. He knows how the poor feel. He remembers how he felt when he was poor.

“Sympathy with the Poor.” There was a good Christian lawyer once, who was very kind to the poor. He was so ready to help them, that he was called, “*the poor man's friend*.” One morning a poor, half-naked beggar was found upon his door-step, who had passed the night there, shivering in the cold. The next night he made the beggar sleep in his bed, and he, himself, lay upon the door-step, that he might learn, from experience, what the sufferings of the poor are. And Jesus came down from

heaven, with all its blessedness and glory, and lived as a poor boy, and a poor man, that he might have sympathy with the poor, and know how to feel for them.



Nazareth, from the North.

Jesus was a *poor* boy.

*But in the second place, Jesus was a—THOUGHTFUL—boy.*

There can be no doubt that he was happy and cheerful, and played pleasantly with other boys of his own age, whom he knew in Nazareth.

But, then, there can be little doubt that he knew very early in life about his wonderful birth, and the great purpose for which he had been sent into the world. We cannot suppose that his mother would fail to tell him of the angel's visit to her before he was born, and of the song which was sung by "a multitude of the heavenly host," who appeared to the shepherds of Bethlehem on the night in which he was born. And when these strange things were told to him they must have had a wonderful effect upon him. He could not help thinking about them. And we can easily imagine how he would often go away by himself into the woods around Nazareth, or on the hill-top behind the city, and think over all the marvelous things the angels had said of him; and pray to his Father in heaven to prepare him for the great work he was to do. All this must have helped to make him very serious and very thoughtful.

The Jewish parents were very careful in teaching their children the words of God's holy book. This was the law given by Moses:—"Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deut. vi: 7. In this way Jesus would be taught about the Messiah, of whom all the prophets had spoken; and then the great thought must have come into his mind, very early in life, that *he* was the person referred to by these prophets. We cannot tell how strangely these thoughts must have made him feel.

Nothing is mentioned in the New Testament about the school-days of Jesus. But we know that the Jews were very particular about the education of their children. They used to say, that—"a town in which there is no school must perish." They said that "Jerusalem was destroyed because the education of the children was neglected." There can be no doubt, I think, that Jesus did go to school, and receive the ordinary education given to poor boys like himself. Some persons think that he never went to school; because afterwards, when he became famous as a preacher, the Jews said:—"How knoweth this man letters, having never learned."

But this does not mean that he never went to school at all. It only means, as we should say, that he never went to college; he never went to one of their great schools, or received such an education as is given to those who are to be public speakers.



The Stable in Bethlem.

But now let us look for a moment at the only incident given us of the early life of Jesus, and which shows us clearly what a thoughtful boy he was.

This incident we find in the second chapter of St. Luke, from the forty-first to the fifty-second verses. Here we are told that when he was twelve years' old, his parents took him with them, as they went up to Jerusalem, to attend the feast of the Passover. This festival, you know, was kept in memory of that most wonderful night, in their history as a nation, when God delivered them out of Egypt. It was the greatest of all the Jewish festivals. The men, among the Jews, were required by law, to go up to Jerusalem every year and keep this feast. The women might go, if they chose, but were not compelled to do it. But the pious women generally went up with their husbands, as Mary did, in order to show their love for the worship of God. And so, when a Jewish boy grew to be twelve years old, he generally went up with his father to Jerusalem to keep this great festival. There was no law requiring this to be done, but it had gotten to be the custom. The Jews believed that it was at this age that Moses, the great law-giver, was taken from his mother to live with Pharaoh's daughter, who had found him in the ark of bulrushes, floating on the river Nile, and who had adopted him as her own son. They believe, too, that it was at this same age that,—

"Little Samuel woke,  
And heard his Maker's voice."

And this belief led them to the practice of taking their boys up to the temple when they were twelve years' old. Then the boy was called "a son of the law;" and he began from this time to wear what they called—phylacteries, which were pieces of parchment, having some of the words of scripture written on them. And so, according to this custom, when Jesus was twelve years' old, his parents took him with them to Jerusalem, when they made their annual visit there to keep the Passover.

This must have been a very interesting event in the life of the youthful Saviour. It was probably the first time he had been away from Nazareth since he was an infant,—the first time he had ever seen anything more of the world than he could see from the top of the hill which over-



looked that city. It was an interesting journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem. The country was hilly. Those hills are all bare now, but they were covered with trees then, making the landscape everywhere very beautiful. It must all have been new to the human sight of Jesus, and no doubt he enjoyed it greatly. And when he came near Jerusalem and got his first view of that celebrated and sacred place, and especially when



Jesus and his Mother.

he came to see the temple and enter it for the first time, how much the feelings of the thoughtful boy must have been stirred within him!

Great multitudes of people from all over the country, came up to Jerusalem at this feast, and the city was always very much crowded at this time. Joseph and Mary spent eight days there attending to all the religious services of the Passover. If you wish to know what these services were, you will find a full account of them given in the twelfth chapter of Exodus.

At last the feast is ended. The solemn services connected with it are all over. The strangers in Jerusalem are ready to leave. The visitors from Nazareth are all acquainted with each other. They agree to travel together as a sort of caravan. This will secure them pleasant company and mutual protection. They start on their homeward journey. Jesus is not with his parents when they leave Jerusalem. But they have probably seen him not long before, with the young people belonging to their company, and so they feel easy about him. The travelers journey quietly on till the close of the day. Then they halt, and pitch their tents for the night. Mary expects every moment that her Son will come in, but he does not come. They inquire about him, but get no information. They seek him "among their kinsfolk and acquaintance." But he is not there. No one has seen him. They feel very anxious, and return to Jerusalem seeking him. In this way, two days are spent—one in journeying from Jerusalem, another in journeying back there; and then a third day is spent in seeking him in the city. Here they find him at last, in the temple. This does not mean in the temple proper, where sacrifices were offered and worship presented to God, but in one of the rooms in the courts that surrounded the temple. Here the Jewish Rabbies and teachers were accustomed to meet for the purpose of giving instruction about the law of God to those who desired to receive it.

Full of anxiety, Joseph and Mary enter the door of this room, and pause for a moment to look round. A company of grave and learned men occupy that room. And there, too, they see their lost Son, whom they are seeking. But what an unexpected position it is in which they find him! He is "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." How Mary's heart must have leapt for joy when she saw the calm, bright face of her thoughtful boy in such company! We read, "and when they saw him, they were amazed; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy Father, and I have sought thee sorrowing? And he said,—How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not"—(*i. e.*, did ye not know that)—"I must be about my Father's business?"

Mary's question to our Saviour was intended as a sort of gentle reproof; as if she meant to imply that he ought to have told them he

was going to stay behind, or to have asked her permission to do so. The answer of Jesus to his mother was perfectly respectful. It was intended to remind her of what his true character was, and of the important work he had come into the world to do. If Jesus had been only like other boys, his mother might well have felt anxious about him when he was missed. But knowing all that she did know about him, she ought to have felt perfectly sure that he could not be lost; that no harm could happen to him; and that, wherever he might be, he would certainly "be about his Father's business." But when he said this, we are told that, "they understood not the saying that he spoke unto them." How strange this was! How very dull they must have been!

The fact is, it seems as if the parents of our Lord were beginning to lose faith in what the angels had said about their wonderful child. It may have been that this scene in the temple took place, and the words there spoken were addressed to them, on purpose to remind them how entirely different from all other boys was this thoughtful boy of theirs. And though we know so little about the early life of Jesus, yet this story of his visit to the temple shows very clearly that even when he was only twelve years' old he was thinking, and feeling, and praying about that great and wonderful work which he came into the world to do.

And so we may well say of Jesus that he was a—*thoughtful boy*.

*The next thing to notice about Jesus is, that he was an—OBEDIENT—boy.*

After the talk with his parents, when they found him in the temple, we read that—"he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and *was subject* unto them." Luke ii: 51. This means that he obeyed them. It shows us that he was an obedient boy. This visit occurred when he was twelve years' old. He remained at Nazareth practicing obedience to his parents till he was a full-grown man—thirty years' of age. And thus we see that he spent all those years in leaving an example of obedience for young people to follow.

Joseph, the supposed father of Jesus, was a carpenter. Among the Jews every boy was obliged to learn a trade. Jesus learned his father's trade and worked with him as a carpenter. This would not have been surprising if, like other boys, Jesus had never lived anywhere else before

he came into our world. This is true of you and me, and all of us. When we were born into our world, that was the very beginning of our life. We never lived anywhere else. But it was not so with Jesus. He had lived before he came into our world. He tells us himself, that he had been "in the bosom of the Father," John i: 18; and that he had shared his glory "before the world was." John xvii: 5. He must have remembered that heavenly home, where he had lived with God his Father, "from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." Prov. viii: 23. And when he thought of the glory and happiness of that heavenly home, how hard it must have been for him to live in a poor cottage at Nazareth!

When Jesus was in heaven he was there as King, and the angels obeyed him. But when he came into our world, he had to obey, not the angels, but his parents, and they were only poor, feeble, human creatures like ourselves. This must have been hard for him to do. The Apostle Paul tells us that "he was made *under the law*." Gal. iv: 4. This means that he was "made," or born, or sent into the world on purpose that he might be obedient to the law.

Suppose that you, or I, had been a king for many years. We had been accustomed to sit on a throne, and wear a crown, and make laws for our subjects to obey. And then suppose that we had to lay aside our crown, and come down from the throne, and become subjects ourselves, and obey the very laws we had made for others. That would be hard. But *that* was what Jesus had to do.

He was bound to obey the word and will of his earthly parents. And through all those long years he went forth to his daily work as an obedient Son. It is supposed that Joseph, his reputed father, died when he was nineteen years' old; and then, after that, Jesus had to work for the support of his mother. O, if we could have seen him, day after day, through all those years, going out in the morning to his work, and coming home at night, weary with his labor; and if we could have known who he was, and what he came into our world for, how strange it would have seemed! Many things about the life of Jesus were strange and wonderful; but one of the most strange and wonderful is, that he should have lived so long as an obedient boy.

When Jesus began his public ministry, he only spent three years and a-half in teaching all the great and important things he had to make known.



Jesus in the midst of the Doctors.

But before he began this part of his work, he spent *thirty years* in teaching young people everywhere the lesson of obedience. This is the most important lesson for every boy and girl to learn.

“Truthful and Obedient.” A company of boys were playing ball. One of them, named Charley, heard his name called. “That’s mother,” he cried, instantly throwing down his bat, and picking up his cap and jacket.

“Don’t go yet, Charley,” said one of the boys. “Let’s finish the game.”

“I must go right off, this minute—I told mother I’d come whenever she called.”

“Make believe you didn’t hear!” the boys exclaimed.

“But I *did* hear.”

“She’ll never know you did.”

“But I’d know, and I’m not going to act a lie.”

“Let him go,” said another of the boys; “you can’t do anything with him. He’s tied to his mother’s apron-strings.”

“Yes,” said Charley, “and there’s where every boy ought to be tied, and in a good hard knot, too.”

“I wouldn’t be such a baby as to run the minute I was called,” said another of the boys.

“I don’t call it babyish to keep one’s word,” said *this* obedient boy, with a beautiful light glowing in his eyes. “I call it manly for a fellow to keep his word with his mother; and if he doesn’t keep his word to her, you see if he keeps it to anyone else.”

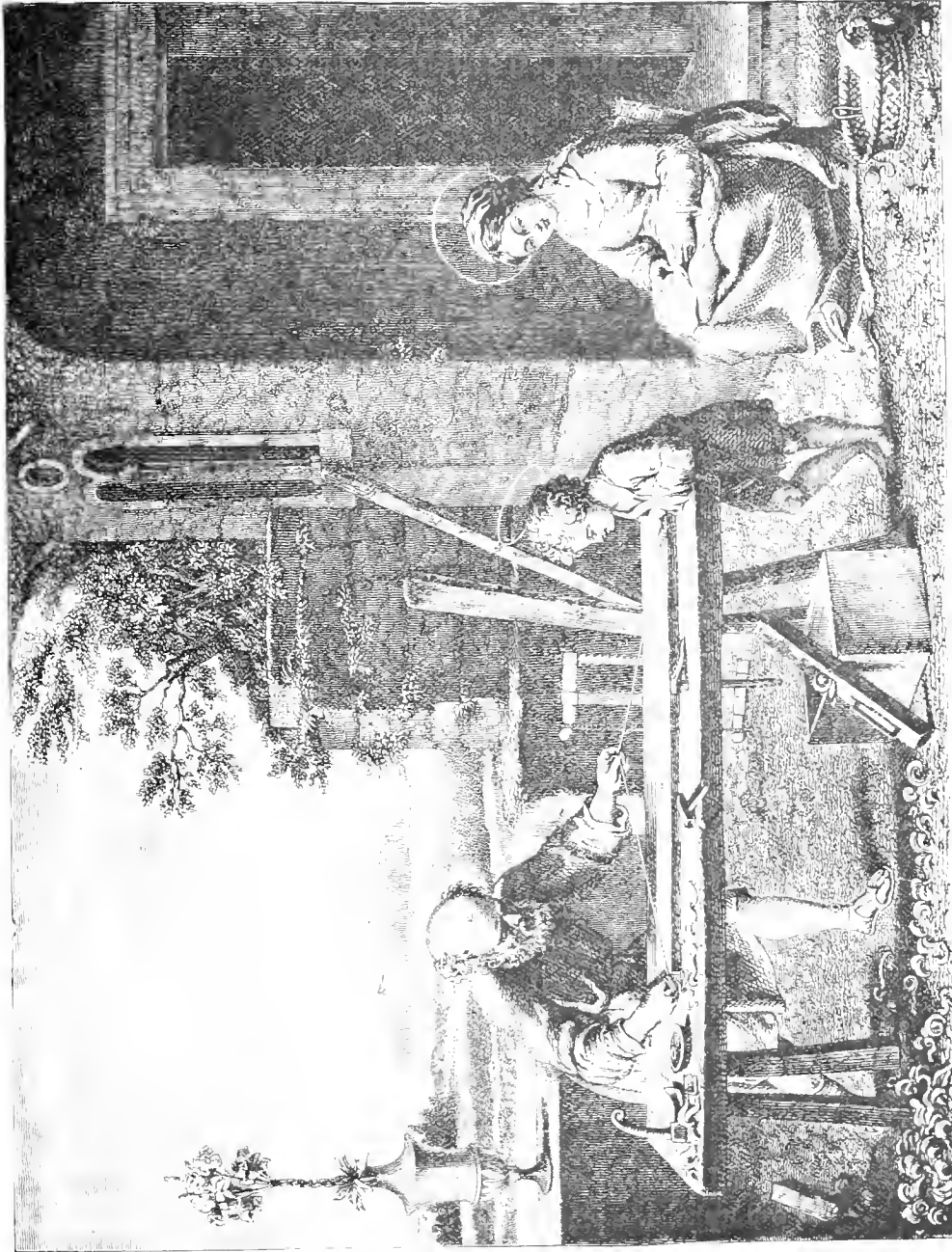
This was noble in Charley. He was following the example of Jesus—the obedient boy. And what Charley said was true. The only one of the Ten Commandments to which God has added a special blessing is the fifth, which requires us to obey our parents.

Here is an illustration of the way in which that blessing is sometimes given. We may call it—“The Secret of Success.”

A Christian merchant, who, from being a poor boy, had risen to wealth and honor, was once asked, by an intimate friend, to what, under God, he owed his great success in life. His immediate reply was:—“*To prompt and steady obedience to my parents.* In the midst of many bad examples, of boys of my own age, who would not mind their parents, I was always able, by God’s help, cheerfully to obey my father and mother, and I firmly believe that a blessing has, in consequence, followed me all through my life.”

Now let us take an opposite example.

"Why Didn't I Mind My Mother?" A gentleman was going to New



Jesus working as a Carpenter.

York, once, by rail, from a neighboring town. As the train stopped at one of the stations, he noticed the passengers crowding to the windows of the car. On looking out he saw a large boy lying on a wheel-barrow. His

limbs were crushed and bleeding, and his face bore marks of the greatest agony.

It seemed that he, and several of his companions, had undertaken to steal a ride on the railroad, by hiding themselves underneath the cars. This poor lad had lost his hold, had fallen under the wheels, and his limbs had been crushed beneath them.

As he was borne along on the wheel-barrow, to be placed in the baggage-car and taken home, he was heard repeating these words, in a most sorrowful tone:—

*“Why didn't I mind my mother? Why didn't I mind my mother?”*

It seemed that his mother had warned him against this dangerous and foolish practice. But he refused to mind his mother. He had not learned the lesson of obedience. The consequence was—his limbs were crushed and mangled, and he was left a cripple for life.

I am sure the little girl, whose good resolutions are expressed in the following lines, was trying to imitate the example that Jesus set for all young persons, when he lived at Nazareth as the—obedient boy:—

“O yes, I will try for the whole of to-day,  
To do what they bid me, and mind what they say;  
And even before they say what they want,  
I'll be careful to do it, and not say—'I can't.'”

“If any one teases, I will not be cross,  
Nor for something to do need I be at a loss;  
I can work in my garden, and play with my brother,  
And go little errands to help my dear mother.

“I will not be idle at lessons or work,  
Nor disturb busy people with questions or talk;  
To be earnest in business, and merry at play,  
Is the way to go happily through the whole day.

“Now, if I can keep resolutions like these,  
It will make me more happy and good; and will please  
Not my parents alone, but my Father above,  
Who delighteth in goodness, and kindness, and love.”

And so, when we think of Jesus as a boy, let us always remember that he was an—obedient boy.





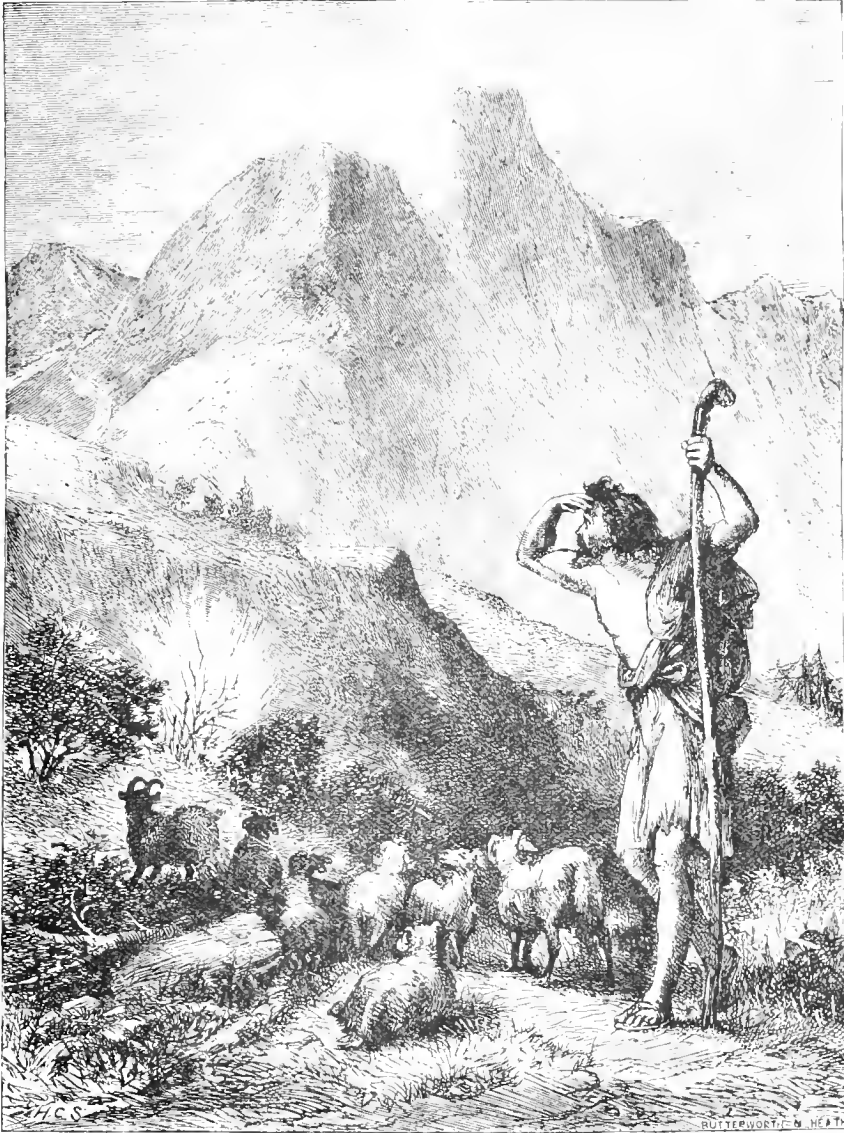
Jesus Learning to Read.

*But, there is one other thing for us to remember, when we think of the boyhood of our blessed Lord, and this is that he was a—PATIENT—boy.*

He was perfectly willing to wait, till the time appointed, by his Father in heaven for him to begin his great work, had come. If he had not known who he was, and what the work was which he was sent into the world to do, his patience would not have been so surprising. But it is plain, from what took place on the occasion of his visit to the temple, when he was only twelve years old, that he knew very well then, who he was, and what he had been sent into the world to do. He understood what his "Father's business" was. He knew how many important lessons he had to teach, and how many mighty miracles he had to perform. He knew there were sick people waiting for him to heal them; and blind men waiting for him to come and open their eyes; and lame, and deaf, and palsied men waiting for him to make them whole, and yet he was patient. He knew there were many persons in distress and sorrow, waiting for him to comfort them. And above all, he knew that there was a world of poor lost sinners going down to death, and waiting for him to come and save them; and *yet he was patient*. He was in no hurry to begin his work, until his Father's time for him to begin it had fully come. Month after month, and year after year, he waited. He "let patience have its perfect work," till he was thirty years of age. *This* was the time which God the Father had appointed for him to begin his work; and he waited patiently till this time came. St. Paul told the Hebrews that—they "had need of patience." And this is true of us all. It is especially true of all young persons. Boys are in a hurry to be men. Girls are in a hurry to be women. Boys and girls have need of patience. When Jesus was a boy, he was in no hurry. He knew very well, that his Father's time was the best time for him to begin his work, and he was patient till that time came. This patience of Jesus was one of the most wonderful things connected with his early life.

And it is a matter of very great importance for us to follow his example in this respect, and learn well this lesson of patience. In working for God, it will save us from a great deal of trouble, if we learn to wait patiently till his time for us to begin our work comes. See what an illustration of this we have in the case of Moses. I suppose he knew that the work God wanted him to do was to deliver his people Israel out of

Egypt. Moses was not patient as Jesus was. He learned this lesson afterwards; for we are told he became "the meekest man in the earth."



Moses and the Burning Bush.

But when he was a young man he was not patient. He was in a hurry to begin his work. But he began it forty years too soon. The consequence was that he got into trouble. He had to give up what he had begun to do, and flee for his life. He hid himself in the wilderness. There he waited

for forty years, till God gave him orders to go and do the work he had for him to do.

The angel of the Lord appeared to him in the burning bush. Moses saw that wonderful sight—how the bush burned with fire, and yet was not consumed. God spoke to him from the midst of that bush. He told him that the right time for him to do his work had come. He gave him directions how to do it; and then Moses found no difficulty in doing it. Here we see the importance of patience in beginning our work.

But we need patience in doing our work when it is begun.

“Mrs. Wesley’s Patience.” Some one said to Mrs. Wesley,—“How can you have the patience to teach the same thing to your child twenty times over?”

“Why,” she replied, “if I had said it only nineteen times, and then stopped, I should have lost all my labor. It was the twentieth time that fixed it.”

“A Little Girl’s Patience.” A poor woman had a supply of coal laid at her door, by a kind neighbor. Her little girl came out, with a small fire shovel, and began to take up a shovelful at a time, and carry it to a sort of bin in the cellar. A gentleman going by, stopped to look at her:—“My child,” he said “do you expect to get all that coal in with your little shovel?”

She was confused, and held down her head for a moment, and then answered:—“Yes, sir, if *I work long enough.*”

And then we need patience to make us satisfied with the situation we are placed in. This is what we are taught in the catechism, when told that we “must learn and labor truly to get our own living, and do our duty in *that state of life in which it has pleased God to call us.*” We see this illustrated in the following—*Fable of a Flower.* “Only a flower,” said a primrose. “I suppose I am nothing better, and they think this shady place is good enough for me. But I think I’m quite as pretty as many of those in the flower-beds, that have so much more care and sunshine. If I only had the chance, they should soon see that I was worth looking at.”

“I think, gardener,” said little Nell, “I should like my primrose in a better place; it is not much seen there, and it is so very pretty, and has such fine blossoms.”

"They would not be fine long, Miss Nellie," said the gardener, "if they were taken out of the shade."

"Do try it, please."

So the primrose plant was carefully removed to a more open and sunny place in the garden. It was very much pleased at first, and put forth as many blossoms as possible to gaze at the sun the better, but they were very weak blossoms, and soon began to droop under the sun's heat.

The next day the primrose said to itself,—“O, I wish I were back in my old place again! It's too hot for me here. I can't stand this. I feel faint and thirsty.”

"I think you were right, gardener," said Nellie. "Though you were so careful not to disturb the root, still, I see the sunshine is not so good for my primrose as the shade."

So the primrose was taken back to its old place. On recovering from the effects of the change, it found itself stronger and wiser. "The gardener who put me in the shade knew best what was good for me," said the primrose. We are all like plants in God's garden, and he knows best where to put us.

And when we think of the boyhood of our Saviour, let us never forget these four words, and always remember him as the *poor* boy; the *thoughtful* boy; the *obedient* boy, and the *patient* boy.

In the Collect for the Second Sunday after Easter, is a beautiful prayer, and one very proper for us to offer when we think of the example set before us in the boyhood of Christ.

"Almighty God who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that, his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavor ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."



## THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST.



**T**HE years of quiet, private life in the history of our Saviour at last are ended. The time has come for him to begin in public the great work he came into our world to do. Now, indeed, as he said, when he was only twelve years old, He "*must* be about his Father's business."

John, the Baptist—his forerunner—has been preaching for about six months. His preaching has stirred the hearts of the Jewish people in a way that had never been known before. He has told them that the long promised Messiah is about to come; and has urged them to repent of their sins, and so be prepared to meet him. The people came out in crowds to hear John preach. St. Matthew tells us:—"Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Ch. iii: 5, 6.

And, while this is going on among those who come to John for baptism, one day, Jesus, himself appears. We have no account of his



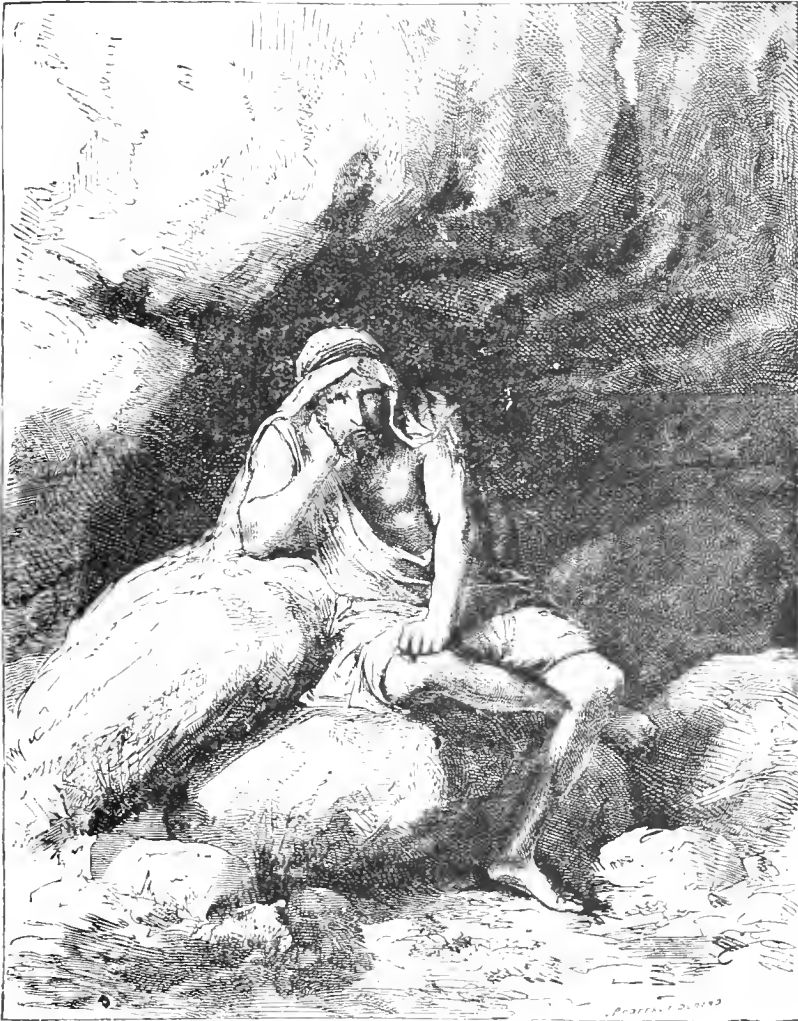


F. MEYER, 1852

“THEY CAST HIM OUT OF THE VINEYARD.”



leaving Nazareth. We are not told how he put away his carpenter's tools for the last time. We are not told how he said good-bye to his mother, as he let her know that he was now going to begin his public ministry.



“John lived in the Wilderness.”

But we cannot doubt that he did this. He bids farewell to his mother and to his quiet home in Nazareth. He travels across the country towards Jordan. He comes to John and asks to be baptized. John was glad enough to baptize most of those who came to him for this purpose. But he hesitated about baptizing Jesus. He was not willing to do it. We read that—“John forbade him, saying, *I have need to be baptized of thee,*

*and comest thou to me?"* Matth. iii: 14. It would seem from this as though John knew Jesus as soon as he saw him. And yet he says himself, speaking of Christ before his baptism:—"I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." John i: 33. There seems to be a contradiction here. In the verse above, quoted from St. Matthew, John appears to recognize Jesus as soon as he saw him; while in the other verse, he says expressly—"I knew him not." But, when he used these words, I suppose he did not mean to say that he had no knowledge of Jesus at all. John and Jesus were cousins. And, though they lived in different and widely distant parts of the country, yet they would be most likely to meet, from time to time, when they went up with their parents to the great festivals at Jerusalem. And we can understand how John might have known Jesus as his cousin; might have known him as the Son of Mary; as one who was remarkably pure, and holy, and free from sin, so that he could speak of him as "coming after him, yet preferred before him; the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose;" and yet, at the same time, he might not have known positively that he was the Messiah. God told him that he should know this, with entire certainty when he saw the Holy Spirit descending on him, like a dove, and abiding on him. John did see this at the baptism of Jesus.

After this had taken place, he said,—“I saw, and bare record that *this is the Son of God.*” John i: 34.

When John hesitated about this baptism, Jesus told him it was a right and proper thing for him to do. This was what he meant when he said, “Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” Matth. iii: 15. And then John baptized him.

This baptism took place in the river Jordan; but we do not know the exact spot where Jesus was baptized. There were several places, on the river, which were convenient for this purpose, because the banks were low and shelving. Which of these it was, at which the baptism of Jesus took place, we are not told. But it is not a matter of much importance. We know that Jesus *was* baptized, and that the baptism took place in the river Jordan.

And so we come now to speak of "The Baptism of Christ."

If you ever make a visit to that wonderful work of God—The Falls of Niagara—you will not be satisfied with just looking at it from one point



John Preaching in the Wilderness.

of view, and then going away. Instead of this, you will spend a good deal of time in walking about, and looking at this great work from different points of view. It is necessary to do this if you wish to get a clear idea of Niagara, and to understand how beautiful, how grand, how glorious it is. And it is exactly so when we come to study any important subject, like the baptism of Christ, that is now before us. And, there are three points of

views from which we may look at this subject; and three lessons we may learn from it. You may easily remember these points if we put them in this way; *three looks* at the baptism of Christ; and *three lessons* from it.

*We come now to take our FIRST look at the baptism of Christ, and we see it to be—VERY STRANGE.*

We are not surprised to find that John felt unwilling to baptize Jesus when he first came to him. John knew very well that baptism was intended for the use of sinful men. It was the expression of a desire to have their sins washed away. He knew that when persons come to be baptized, with the right kind of feelings, that is, when they were truly sorry for their sins, those sins would be washed away. And then the water of baptism was a sign, or pledge of the pardon of their sins. This was what Ananias meant, when he said to Saul, of Tarsus, after he had seen that wonderful vision,—“Arise and be baptized, and *wash away* thy sins.” Acts xxii: 16. Saul’s sins were really pardoned as soon as he repented, and had faith in Jesus as his Saviour. But when he was baptized, the water of baptism was the sign, or seal, given to assure him that God had put away his sins.

And John knew very well, that though he, himself was a sinner, yet Jesus was pure and holy. He had no sin of his own to be washed away. And this was what John meant when he said,—“*I have need to be baptized of thee.*” He could not understand why he, who was, as the Apostle Paul says,—“Holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners,” (Heb. vii: 26), should want to be baptized. The thought of trying to make *him* better, must have seemed to John like trying to bleach the snow, or polish the sunbeams.

Jesus did not stop to argue with John, and explain to him why it was that he desired to be baptized. He said to him,—“Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” Matth. iii: 15.

I suppose that when Jesus used these words, he meant to tell John that he wished to be baptized, because it was the will of God, his Father in heaven, that he should be baptized. He called it,—“Fulfilling all righteousness.” Doing the will of God is the best kind of righteousness. And we never can have a better reason for doing anything than to know that God wishes us to do it. Jesus knew that it was the will of God that

he should be baptized; and this was enough for him. But even when we know this, we cannot help being surprised at it. When we think of the pure and holy Jesus being baptized, as the poor sinners were whom he



Before Jesus had left his home.

came to save, we cannot help feeling that the baptism of Jesus was *very strange*. This is what we see in our first look at it.

*We take our second look at the baptism of Jesus, and we see that it was—VERY WONDERFUL.*

And the wonderful thing about it was, not so much the baptism itself, as what followed it. The mere fact that Jesus went into the water of the

river Jordan, though it might be called strange, could yet hardly be called wonderful. But look for a moment and see what took place there, just after the baptism was over. There we see Jesus walking along the banks of the river; and he is praying as he walks. No doubt, he is asking his Father in heaven to help him, and fit him for the great work he has to do. And see, as he is thus walking and praying, the heavens open directly above him. A glorious light shines down upon him, "above the brightness of the sun." And that bright light is not the only thing we now see; but look at that beautiful snow-white dove coming down with the light! How gently it descends! How graceful its motions are! Nearer and nearer it comes to the blessed, baptized Saviour; and now, at last, it rests upon him. This is no common bird. It comes directly down from heaven. It is the Spirit of God—the Holy Ghost—the Third Person in the Blessed Trinity. In heaven he has no bodily form; but, on this occasion, he chose to make himself visible in the form of a dove. In this form he came down to anoint Jesus for his work, to remain with him and help him do that work. How wonderful this was! Nothing like it was ever seen in our world before. But this was not all the wonder.

Not only what was *seen* at the baptism of Jesus was wonderful; but what was *heard* then, was not less wonderful. For now, let us look again at that opening in the heavens, and as we look, let us listen. A voice is heard coming out from the midst of that glorious light. It is the voice of God the Father. It comes down along that path of light from his glorious throne in heaven. That is the brightest and the holiest place in the universe. And these are the words which that voice speaks:—"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." How wonderful this was! Everything about this event was wonderful. That opening in the heavens was wonderful. The glorious light shining down through that opening was wonderful. The Holy Spirit, coming down in the form of that heavenly dove, was wonderful. But, most wonderful of all was that voice of the Everlasting Father, sounding forth amidst the glory which was shining there. We have an illustration here of the truth of one of the most important doctrines of the Bible.

You know that we speak of the God, whom we worship, as—*The Trinity*. This means the three in one. God is a wonderful Being, in

whom there are three persons, and yet only one God. The Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods, but one God. We cannot explain this, because we cannot understand it; but we believe it, because the Bible teaches it. But we need not wonder that we cannot understand all about God, because we cannot understand all



"He went to the Feasts at Jerusalem every year."

about ourselves. You know, for example, that we each have a body, which can be seen and felt; and in these heads we each have a mind that thinks; and in these beating hearts we each have a soul that loves, and hates, and fears. There are these three parts in me; yet I am not three men, but one man. And so it is with all of us. I do not mean to say that this explains the doctrine of the Trinity, for it does not. I only use it as an illustration to show us, that as we cannot understand ourselves, we must not be surprised if we find that we cannot understand God.

This wonderful thing that took place in connection with the baptism of Jesus, both illustrates and proves the doctrine of the Trinity. For here we see the three great Persons of the Blessed Trinity taking part in what took place directly after this baptism. Jesus, the Son of God, is seen standing on the banks of the Jordan. God the Father is heard speaking to his Son Jesus, and saying how well pleased he is with him. And then God the Spirit is seen coming down in the shape of a dove, and resting on Jesus.

And this teaches us that the work of saving souls from death, on which Jesus was now entering, was a work *so great*, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity—could all unite in it. And when we think of all these things; of the opening heavens; and the shining light; and the descending dove; and of the voice of the Father speaking to his Son, and declaring how well pleased he was with him; and when we remember, that all this was done to honor Jesus, and to show us how much he is esteemed in heaven; then, we must admit that this scene which occurred in connection with our Saviour's baptism, was one of the most wonderful events that ever took place since the world was made.

*And now we take our third look at the scene of the baptism of Jesus, and we see that it was—*VERY INSTRUCTIVE.

The instruction here all has reference to Christ. And *this* is the best of all instruction. All knowledge is valuable, but knowledge that relates to Jesus is more valuable than any other. The Apostle Paul understood this very well when he said he was willing to endure the loss of all things “for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.” Phil. iii: 8. And this third look at the baptism of Jesus may well be called an instructive look, for it branches out into the three lessons that are taught us by this event.

*The first of these three lessons teaches us to think of Jesus as—*THE PLEASING SON.

This was the view of his character to which God the Father called attention, when his voice was heard from that opening in the heavens, saying—“This is my beloved son *in whom I am WELL PLEASED.*”

No doubt there were many things in Jesus which were pleasing to his heavenly Father. But that which was the most pleasing of all, was the



cheerful readiness he showed in doing his Father's will. He said, on one occasion,—“I came down from heaven, *not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*” John vi: 36. On another occasion, he said,—“My *meat* is, to do the will of him that sent me.” John iv: 34. And long before his entrance into our world, he had said,—“I *delight* to do thy will, O my God.” Ps. xl: 8. From these three passages we learn that it was the *mission*, the *meat*, and the *delight* of our blessed Saviour to do the will of his Father. No wonder then he was so anxious to be baptized, when he knew that *this* was his Father's will. And Jesus came to be our example of the way in which we are to serve God. And there is nothing in which we need his example more than in learning to do the will of God. *This* was what made his Father so “well pleased” with him. And if we wish to please God, as Jesus did, we must do it in the same way.

The will of God for us is that we should obey our parents, and mind the rules appointed for us, in our homes, in our schools, in our places of business, or wherever we may be. We must learn this lesson if we desire to please God. It is impossible to do this in any other way. There must be the same mind in us in this respect that was also in Christ Jesus. We must “tread in the blessed steps of his most holy life,” in this matter of doing the will of God.

And now, let us take an illustration or two to show us what sort of boys and girls we shall be, if we learn to be like Jesus, as the pleasing son.

“General Havelock and his Boy.” This brave soldier was both a great commander and a good man. He had a son whose name was Henry. One evening a gentleman was at the General's house. As they were talking together, Mrs. Havelock turned to her husband, and said,—“My dear, where is Henry? I have not seen him all the afternoon.” The General started to his feet, quite excited, and said,—“Why, poor fellow! he's standing on London bridge, and in this cold wind, too! I left him there at twelve o'clock to-day, and told him to wait there for me, and there he is still, I'm sure. In the pressure of business I quite forgot my appointment with him.”

It was now seven o'clock in the evening—seven long hours that faithful, obedient boy had been waiting for his father! The General excused

himself to his friend, called for a cab, and drove rapidly to the bridge; and sure enough, there was Henry, shivering in the cold, indeed, but patiently doing what his father had told him to do. In the course of an hour they were back at the house, and as they came in, the General said to his friend, "You see, sir, the discipline of a soldier's family."

How well that dear boy had learned the lesson which Jesus practiced in his baptism! the lesson of submission to his Father's will, which made him the pleasing son!

"Wanted—A Boy!" A tradesman once advertised in the morning papers for a boy to work in his store—run errands, and make himself generally useful.

The next morning the store was thronged with boys, of all ages and sizes, trying to get the place. The storekeeper only wanted *one* boy, and as he was at a loss to know how to get the right one out of so large a crowd, he thought he must find out some plan to lessen the number of boys and to be sure of getting a good one. So he sent them all away till he could think over the matter a little. The next day the papers contained this advertisement:—

"WANTED—A BOY WHO OBEYS HIS MOTHER."

And out of the crowd who were there the day before, how many do you suppose came to get that place? *Only two*. Whichever of these two the storekeeper chose we may be very certain would prove a good boy. Jesus was pleasing his Father in heaven all the time that he was obeying his Mother on earth. And so it is always. The boys who learn to obey at home, are the boys who will be most wanted for places in business, and who will be most useful and successful in them.

And Jesus not only obeyed his Father in heaven and did his will, but he did it cheerfully and pleasantly. As we saw in the verse already quoted from the Psalms, he "*delighted* to do his will."

Let us take one illustration of the way in which a son or daughter may do this:—

"Obeying his Mother Pleasantly." Harry had seen some boys flying their kites from the tops of the houses, and he thought it would be nice fun to do so. So he came into the house, when his mother was away, and

said, "Aunt Mary, may I go up to the top of the house and fly my kite?" His aunt wished to do everything she could to please him; but she thought this was a dangerous thing to do; so she said, "No, Harry, my boy; I think that's not safe. I'd rather you wouldn't go."

"All right," said Harry, "then I'll go out on the bridge and fly my kite."

His aunt smiled, and said she hoped he would always be as obedient as that.



The Banks of the Jordan.

One day his mother said to him, "Harry, what are you doing?"

"Spinning my top, mother."

"Can't you take the baby out to ride? Get out the carriage and I'll bring him down."

"All right," shouted the boy as he put away his top in his pocket and hastened to obey his mother.

"Uncle Willie," said Harry, at breakfast one day, "may I go over

to your shop this morning? I want to see those baskets again, that I was looking at yesterday."

"Oh yes, Harry," said his uncle; "I shall be very glad to have you come."

"But I can't spare you to-day, Harry," said his mother. "I want you to go out with me; you can go to the shop another day."

"All right," said Harry, and went cheerfully on with his breakfast.

No matter what Harry was asked to do, or what refusal he met with, when asking for anything, his constant reply was, "All right." He never stopped to worry or tease. He never asked, "Why can't I?" or "Why mustn't I?" Harry had learned not only to obey, but to obey cheerfully and pleasantly."

He was treading in the footsteps of Jesus when he acted as the pleasing son.

*The second lesson from the baptism of Jesus, leads us to think of him as—THE GENTLE DOVE.*

We have said before that the dove here spoken of, means the Holy Spirit. This is true. We are accustomed to sing the hymn which begins,—*"Come Holy Spirit Heavenly Dove,"* etc. But, as the chief thing that distinguishes the dove is its gentleness; and as this heavenly dove rested upon Jesus, showing us that the Holy Spirit "without measure," was to remain with him; then we may think of Jesus as having all that gentleness which the dove represented. And so, taking it in this sense, we may well speak of Jesus as the gentle dove. When we see that dove descending and resting on him, it teaches us that he was to be very gentle. And we know that this was the case. His gentleness was one of the most striking things about him. He said himself, to his disciples, while on earth,—*"Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart."* Matth. xi: 29. This is the same as if he had said,—*"Learn of me; for I am gentle."* This is one of the first things we learn about our blessed Saviour, as we repeat the words of that sweet hymn, connected with our earliest recollections,—*"Gentle Jesus, Meek and Mild,"* etc. When the Apostle Paul was writing to the Corinthians, he says,—*"I beseech you by the gentleness of Christ."* II Cor. x: 1.

We see the gentleness of Jesus all through the history of his life. Let us take a single illustration of it. One day, the Pharisees brought a

woman to Jesus, whom they accused of having committed a great sin. They said, that according to the law of Moses, this woman ought to be stoned. And they asked Jesus what he thought about the case. They did this not because they hated sin, and not because they cared so very much for the law of Moses, but simply because they wanted to find something to say against Jesus. And they felt certain of doing this now. They thought they had laid a trap for him, in which he would be sure to be taken, whatever he might say. It seemed to them that Jesus would be obliged to say one of two things, viz.: either that the woman *ought* to be stoned, or that she ought *not*. If Jesus had said that the woman ought to be stoned, they would have accused him of being hard-hearted and cruel. If he had said she ought not to be stoned, they would have accused him of teaching contrary to the law of Moses. But, instead of saying either of these things, Jesus looked those wicked Jews in the face, and said,—*“He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her.”* In this way they set their own consciences to work against them. They felt that they were quite as great sinners before God, as this wretched woman was. Ashamed of themselves, they quietly crept out, one by one. “And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, ‘Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?’ She said, ‘No man, Lord.’ And Jesus said unto her, ‘*Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.*’” John viii: 3-11.

Here we see beautifully illustrated the wonderful gentleness of Jesus. And we must learn to imitate him in the gentleness of his spirit if we wish to be his disciples. There is marvellous power in gentle words and actions, to help us in trying to do good to men. Let us take an example or two of the power of gentleness.

“The Gospel in a Kiss.” A Christian lady went to a city missionary, and said she wished to make herself useful among the poor. “I am willing to do anything in my power,” she said, “but I can’t talk to people.”

The missionary said she might do some good by kind actions, even if she could not speak kind words. Praying to God to help her, and taking some little books and tracts, she went out, in a gentle loving spirit, to try what she could do.

One of the first cases she met with was a woman who had been in prison for drunkenness, and other sins, still worse than that. She was well known for the violence of her temper, and for her abusive language. This poor woman's case seemed so desperate that the missionary had never even thought of trying to do her any good. He had warned this Christian lady against going to visit her, as he thought it hardly safe. But she went. She sought this poor creature out in her miserable room. She spoke some kind words to her, and bending over her in pity, she kissed her. The woman looked up with astonishment, and said:—

“You wouldn't do that if you knew who I was.”

“Yes, but I do know.”

“Then why did you do it?”

The loving, gentle answer was:—“Because I love Jesus Christ, and that makes me love every one that needs him.” Then she took this poor outcast to her own home, and clothed her. When Sunday came she was at church. Before long she became a changed woman—a new creature in Christ Jesus. Afterwards when some one said to her,—“Mrs. W. how did the gospel first come to you?” Her answer was,—“*It came in a kiss.*”

“The Power of a Kind Word.” Two young girls, Rosa and Mary, were going along the street. “Rosa,” said Mary, “look at that horrid, drunken man sitting on the curbstone; do come across the street, for I wouldn't pass near him for anything!” So Mary ran away. Rosa felt afraid, too, but she had just been repeating the words of a little song she had learned to sing, which said,—“Speak a kind word whenever you can.” Then she went up to the wretched-looking man, and said, timidly, “Poor man, I'm sorry for you! can I do anything to help you?”

He raised his head, looked at her in surprise, and his sad face almost made Rosa cry for pity.

“Little girl, your kind words have helped me already, I never expected to hear any such words again, for I have no friend on earth.”

“But, God will be your friend, if you ask him,” said Rosa, as she went nearer to him still. “Did you ever ask him?”

“No; I've been sinning against him all my life,” groaned the man.

“Poor man! Let God be your friend. He can do everything for you. I am your friend, but I can't do anything more than speak a kind word.”

“Darling child, that kind word has saved me. Good-bye.”

He held out his trembling hand. Rosa was not afraid now. She placed her plump little hand in his, and as he bent down to kiss it, two big tears fell upon it. Then he went away, and Rosa rejoined her companion.

Years after this Rosa was present in Sunday-school. A noble-look-



Christ and the Woman of Sin.

ing, silver-haired old gentleman was addressing the scholars. He told them always to be kind and gentle to the friendless and distressed, and especially to the poor drunkard; “for when I was friendless, and wretched, and forsaken,” said he, “God sent a dear child to speak a kind word, and that word saved me.”

When the school closed, a young girl came up to the aged speaker, held out her hand, and with tears in her eyes, said, “Sir, do you remember me?” He looked at her long and earnestly, and then, clasping her out-

stretched hand, said slowly and solemnly, "Yes, yes, dear child, it was the loving, gentle word you spoke, that saved me."

Let us think of Jesus as the gentle dove, and try to learn this lesson from him.

*The third lesson from the baptism of Jesus leads us to think of him as—THE ATONING LAMB.*

It was after Jesus had been baptized, that John the Baptist pointed him out to his disciples, and said,—"*Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.*" John i: 29.

This is the most valuable and important lesson about the character and work of Jesus that we can ever learn. We may be thankful to have this lesson brought out so clearly, at the very beginning of his ministry. The Apostle Paul teaches us the same great truth about Jesus, and shows us *how* he was to do this work, when he tells us that Jesus "appeared, to put away sin, *by the sacrifice of himself.*" Heb. ix: 29. And in another place he says more plainly still, that "*Christ died for our sins.*" I Cor. xv: 3. This is what is meant when we speak of Jesus as the Atoning Lamb. We all deserved to die on account of our sins. But Jesus came into the world to die in our place.

There is an interesting story in Roman history which illustrates very beautifully this part of our subject. We are told that, about four hundred years before Christ, there was a great earthquake in the city of Rome. This earthquake caused a large portion of the open space, called the forum, in front of the Capitol, to sink into the earth. Thus, a great gulf, or chasm was left in the midst of the most public part of the city. The people tried to fill it up; but in vain. All that they threw in disappeared, and left the awful chasm as deep, and as wide as before.

The citizens of Rome were in great distress about it. They came to their priests and inquired what was to be done. The priests consulted their gods. The answer given was that the chasm could only be filled by throwing into it the most precious thing in Rome,—that on which the greatness of Rome depended. While they were wondering what this could mean, a brave soldier, whose name was Marcus Curtius, presented himself before them. He said there was nothing more precious in Rome—nothing on which its greatness depended more—than a valiant soldier,





A Vicious Sacrifice.

armed as for battle. He offered *himself* to die for the people. And then, arraying himself in complete armor, and mounting his war-horse, he galloped to the edge of the precipice, and sprang into the abyss. Immediately after this, the story says, the earth closed; the chasm disappeared, and the forum resumed the appearance it had always borne before. This is the story, and whether it be true or not, it affords a good illustration of the way in which Jesus, "the Lamb of God took away the sin of the world." And now the precious truth which the gospel teaches, is that, "*The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.*"

"The Wet Sand." A woman came to a minister one day, bringing with her a bundle of wet sand. She laid it down before him, and said, "Do you see this sir?"

"Yes," he said, "it is wet sand."

"But do you know what it means?"

"I don't know exactly what you mean by it. What is it?"

"Ah! sir," she said, "that's me. My sins are like these grains of sand. They can't be numbered. O, wretched creature that I am! How can I get rid of these sins?"

"Where did you get this sand from?" asked the minister.

"I got it from the sea-shore, sir."

"Well, go back to the sea-shore. Take a spade with you. When you get there, dig, dig, dig; raise a great heap of sand; shovel it up as high as you can, then leave it there; take your stand on the sea-shore; wait till the tide comes up, and see what effect the water of the sea will have upon your heap of sand."

"Oh! I see," she said, "I see what you mean. The water will take the sand all away. And so the blood of Christ will take away my sins." That woman was learning the lesson of the Atoning Lamb.

"Sins Blotted Out." A little boy was once much puzzled about his sins being blotted out. He came to his mother, and said, "I can't think what becomes of all the sins that God forgives, mother."

"Why, Charlie, can you tell where all the figures are that you wrote on your slate yesterday?"

"I washed them all out, mother. Why, they are *nowhere* now; they are gone," said Charlie.

“And just so it is with our sins when we believe in Jesus,” said his mother. “They are nowhere; they are gone. The Lamb of God hath taken them away.” They are “remembered no more.” Jer. xxxi: 34. God “casts them behind his back.” Jer. xxxviii: 17.

Here is another illustration of this same great truth, in a different form. We may call it:—

“The Debt Paid.” That great Statesman, Henry Clay, was once greatly troubled by a debt of ten thousand dollars, which he owed to the Northern Bank of Kentucky in Lexington. Some of his friends, in different parts of the country, heard of his trouble. In a quiet way, they raised the money, and paid off the debt, without letting Mr. Clay know of it. In ignorance of what had been done, he went to the bank one day, and addressing Mr. Scott, the cashier, he said:—

“I have called to see you, Mr. Scott, about that debt of mine to the bank.”

“You don’t owe us anything,” replied Mr. Scott.

Mr. Clay looked at him inquiringly, and said, “You don’t understand me, Mr. Scott. I’ve come to talk about that debt of ten thousand dollars that I owe your bank.”

“You don’t owe us a dollar, Mr. Clay.”

“Why, what do you mean?” asked Mr. Clay, in utter amazement.

“I mean, sir, that a number of your friends have united together and paid off your debt. There’s nothing on our books against you.”

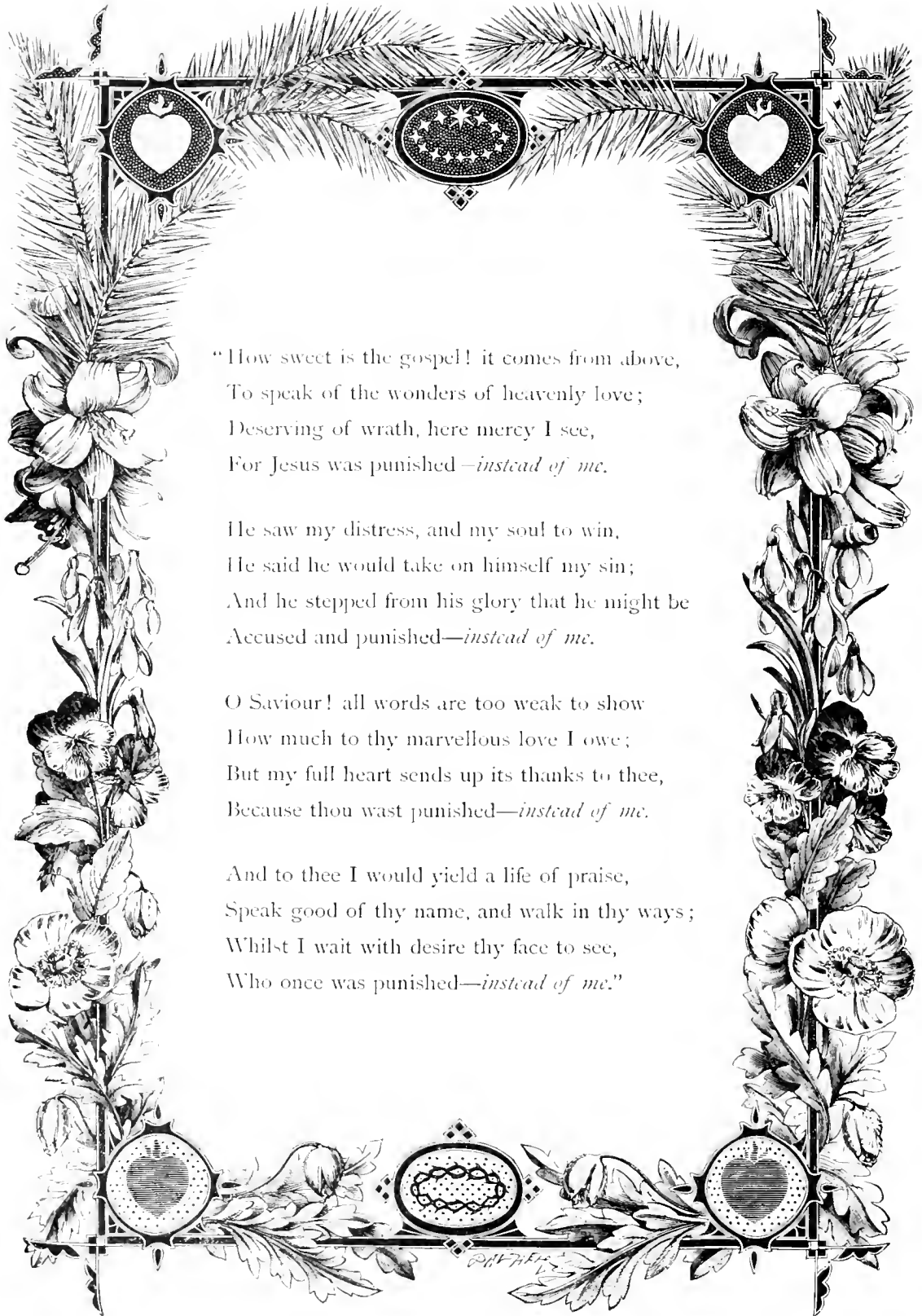
Mr. Clay could not speak a word. Tears filled his eyes, as he turned and walked quietly out of the bank.

And this is what Jesus has done for us, in the language of the hymn:—

“Jesus paid it all,  
All the debt we owe;  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow.”

“Instead of Me.” A little girl, in her prayer was heard to use these words:—“I thank thee, O, blessed Saviour, that thou wast punished—*instead of me.*”

And on hearing of this, some one wrote these simple lines:—



“How sweet is the gospel! it comes from above,  
To speak of the wonders of heavenly love;  
Deserving of wrath, here mercy I see,  
For Jesus was punished—*instead of me.*

He saw my distress, and my soul to win,  
He said he would take on himself my sin;  
And he stepped from his glory that he might be  
Accused and punished—*instead of me.*

O Saviour! all words are too weak to show  
How much to thy marvellous love I owe;  
But my full heart sends up its thanks to thee,  
Because thou wast punished—*instead of me.*

And to thee I would yield a life of praise,  
Speak good of thy name, and walk in thy ways;  
Whil-st I wait with desire thy face to see,  
Who once was punished—*instead of me.*”

And whenever we hear, or read of the baptism of Christ, let us think of the three looks we have here taken at it, and the three lessons we have learned from it. The three looks are—very *strange*—very *wonderful*—very *instructive*. The three lessons are about—the *Pleasing Son*—the *Gentle Dove*—the *Atoning Lamb*.

I do not know that we could close this subject better, than by using here, with a very slight alteration, the words of the Collect in the prayer book, which we use after persons have been baptized:—

“We yield thee humble thanks, O heavenly Father, that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy grace, and faith in thee; increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore. Give thy Holy Spirit to *all baptized* persons; that being now born again, and made heirs of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, they may continue thy servants, and attain thy promises; through the same Lord Jesus Christ thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, everlastingly. Amen.”





## THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.



**F**OREMOST among the many wonderful things connected with the history of our blessed Saviour while on earth, were the days of temptation which he spent in the wilderness. What a striking contrast there is between the event we were considering last, and that we are to consider now,—between the baptism and the temptation! There, the heavens were opened above him, and the light which streamed down through that opening, must have covered all around with glory, and have made everything look bright and beautiful. Here, there is only the ordinary sunlight, and it shines on him in the wilderness, where all around is wild, and desolate, and gloomy. There, he was in the company of his cousin, John the Baptist, and of numbers of the people who had come, like himself, to be baptized; here, he is separated from human society, and the wild beasts of the desert are his only companions. There, he heard the voice of his loving Father,











speaking words of comfort and encouragement to him; while here, the only voice he hears is that of Satan—the tempter, the enemy of himself,



Abraham Offering Isaac.

and those he came to save. That voice speaks horrible things to him, things that were intended to spoil the great work he had come down from heaven to do. In the baptism of Jesus we see everything that was pleasant and comforting to him; but in the temptation of Jesus we see

nothing but what must have been in the highest degree painful and trying to him.

And this is what we have now to consider—The Temptation of Christ.

And in studying this part of our Saviour's life there are two points of view from which we may look at it; one of these is what we are *told* about this temptation, and the other is what we are *taught* by it.

And so we may wrap up in three words, each beginning with the letter t, all we have to say on this subject. These are—*temptation—told—taught*.

We begin then by noticing what we are told about the temptation of Christ in the New Testament.

*Well then, we are told that he was—TEMPTED.* The word tempt is sometimes used in a good sense, and sometimes in a bad sense. When used in a good sense, it simply means to *try* a person, or thing. For instance, suppose a man makes a rope. He wishes to know how strong it is. He fastens one end of it to a high beam, and hangs heavy weights on the other end. He does this in order to find out how much his rope will bear. In other words, he is *trying* it.

And this is one of the meanings of the word tempt. We find the word used in this sense, in Genesis xxii: 1, where it says that—“God did *tempt* Abraham.” This does not mean, of course, that God tried to persuade Abraham to do something wrong. God never tempts or tries people in *that* way. It only means that he tried him, as the man would try his rope, to see how much it would bear. This is the good sense of the word tempt.

But, there is another, and a bad sense, of this word tempt. We see this when it is used to mean—enticing, or persuading to do wrong. Suppose a hungry boy is standing in front of a baker's shop-window. He sees a lot of nice, hot rolls in the window. If the hunger that he feels, entices him to take one of them, then the boy is tempted, in a bad sense. He is enticed to do wrong. And this is the sense in which this word is used in reference to our Saviour. When it is said he was *tempted*, the meaning is that the trial was made upon him to see if he could be induced or persuaded to think, or feel, or say, or do something that was wrong:

*Then we are told that this temptation took place—IN THE WILDERNESS.* This means “the wilderness of Judea.” It lies between Jerusalem and

Jericho. It is one of the most lonely, dreary, desolate regions to be found in the world. We know not which part of this wilderness it was



The Golden Image.

where the temptation took place, but it was somewhere in that gloomy region.

*We are told that Jesus was—"LED"—into this temptation.* The Spirit

of God led him into the wilderness for this purpose. Matth. iv: 1. And it makes all the difference in the world, whether we are "led" into temptation, or whether we rush into it ourselves, without being led. Shadrack, Mesech and Abednego were led into the temptation, which required them either to bow down to the golden image, or to be cast into the burning fiery furnace. And when they came to be thrown into the furnace, they asked God to take care of them, and he did. But, suppose they had leaped into the furnace of their own accord, do you suppose God would have kept them from being burnt? Of course not. When God leads us into temptation, he will always help us, if we ask him to do so.

*We are told that the—DEVIL—was the tempter* in this case. This has been his business since the world began. This was the business he was engaged in when we first find him mentioned in the Bible. When Adam and Eve were tempted in the garden of Eden, he was there to do it. And this is what he has been doing ever since. And he gets one of his many names from tempting men. He is called "the tempter." We read in St. Matth. iv: 3,—"*And when the tempter came to him.*"

And here the question meets us—*How did Satan come to Jesus?* A great deal has been written on this subject. Some people think that Satan did not appear in any visible, personal form to our Saviour, but that he came unseen, and whispered, or suggested his temptations to him, as he does to us. Nothing can be proved on this point, because nothing has been said on it.

My own opinion is that Satan came to Jesus in his own personal form, as a fallen angel. I think so, for two reasons. One reason for this is, that *it agrees better with the scripture account of it.* In this account we read of Satan, the tempter, coming to Jesus and having a conversation with him. Now, if we should read of any two persons meeting, and having a talk together, the most natural way of thinking of it, would be to suppose that they really met, face to face, and spoke to one another, just as you and I might do on meeting. This is what the scriptures tell us of Jesus and the tempter, and I see no reason why we should not take the account of the temptation exactly as it is given.

My other reason for thinking that Satan appeared to Jesus in his own person is, *that he could not hide himself from him,* however much he

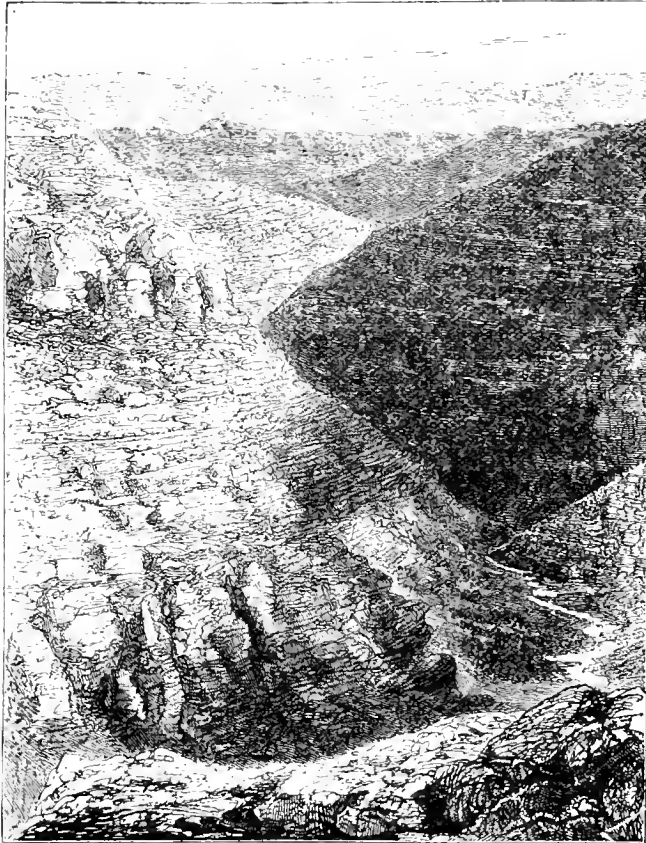
might have wished to do it. When he comes to tempt us, we cannot see him, because we cannot see spirits. *But Jesus could.* We find it written, (John ii: 25), that Jesus—"needed not that any should testify of man; for *he knew what was in man.*" He could read the thoughts, and hearts of men. Matth. ix: 4. And if this were so, then he could see spirits. And so it is clear that Satan could not hide himself from him. Whatever form he might have chosen to appear in, or if he came as a spirit without any bodily form, Jesus would have known him in a moment. Doubtless, Satan knew this, and so I think he would not be guilty of the folly of trying to hide himself from him—"to whom all hearts are open; all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid." And for these reasons, I believe, that when Satan came to tempt Jesus, he did it by appearing to him in his own proper person.

*We are told again that Jesus was in the wilderness FORTY DAYS; and that he FASTED* all this time. This does not mean, that he merely changed his articles of food and ate less than usual, as we do when we fast; for St. Luke iv: 2, tells us expressly that,—"*in those days he did eat nothing.*" But to go forty days without eating at all, and yet remain alive, could only be done by miracle. And, from what we read in Matth. iv: 2, it appears that he not only ate nothing during all those days, but that he never felt hungry, till they were over. We keep the solemn season of Lent every year, in memory of these days of temptation, that Jesus spent in the wilderness. And though we cannot fast as he did, and are not required to do so, yet we may, as the Collect for the First Sunday in Lent says—ask God to give us grace—"to use such abstinence, that our flesh being subdued to the spirit, we may ever obey his godly motions."

*We are told that at the close of these forty days Jesus felt HUNGRY,* and then Satan came to him to take advantage of this feeling, and press him with some new temptations. We are not to suppose that the tempter did not come to Jesus till after the forty days were ended. St. Mark says—(chapter i: 13),—"He was there, in the wilderness, *forty days tempted of Satan.*" It is evident from this, that Satan was tempting him, more or less, all through those forty days. He would, probably tempt him in one way, then leave him for awhile, and come back, by and by, and tempt him in another way. The three temptations mentioned are not all that Jesus

passed through, but only specimens, of the different ways in which he was tempted.

*When he felt hungry, we are told* that Satan came, and wanted him to turn some of the stones of the wilderness into bread; that he might eat, and satisfy his hunger. This was a temptation to distrust his Father's care for him. If he had done this, it would have been a dishonor to his Father



The Wilderness of Judaea, from the Cave of Abdullum.

in heaven. Jesus met this temptation by quoting a passage of scripture. He said,—“It is written man shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Deut. viii: 3.

*Then we are told how Satan took Jesus* to the holy city—*i. e.*—to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and asked him to throw himself down in the presence of the people. In the last temptation Satan tried to get Jesus to trust his Father too little; now he tries to get him to



trust his Father too much. We know not exactly what the pinnacle of the temple was. But it must have been one of the highest parts of the temple. From that to the bottom of the valley, at the foot of the hill on which the temple stood, was a depth that would make one dizzy to look at it.

Some people think that Satan only took Jesus to this pinnacle of the temple in a vision, or in thought. But this is not what the Bible tells us. It says,—“*Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple.*” Matth. iv: 5. And when it says this, I believe it means just what it says. If it do not mean what it says here, how can we be sure that it means what it says, in other places? While they are on this pinnacle of the temple, Satan tempts Jesus to cast himself down. And he pretends to be very pious all at once, and quotes scripture to induce Jesus to yield to his temptation. The passage that he quotes is in Psalm xci: eleventh and twelfth verses. “He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” Satan does not quote the passage as it is found in the Psalms. He leaves out one very important part of the eleventh verse,—“*To keep thee in all thy ways.*” This clause shows us that God only promises to take care of us when we are doing our duty, and are in the way in which he has led us. If we go out of the way of duty, we cannot expect that God will take care of us.

For example, when Daniel was cast into the lion's den, he was doing his duty. He was in the way that God had appointed him to walk in. And so, when he prayed to God, he sent his angel, and shut the lions' mouths that they might not hurt him. But, suppose that Daniel had gone of his own accord, and jumped into the lions' den; would he have had any right to expect that God would protect him? None, whatever. There would have been no angel there to shut the lions' mouths; and they would soon have made an end of Daniel.

And so it was with Jesus, on the pinnacle of the temple. If he had cast himself down, as the tempter asked him to do, he would not have been in the path of duty. *That* was not one of the ways that his Father in heaven wished him to go in. And so, he answered this temptation as he had answered the previous one, by a text of scripture. He said,—“It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” Deut. vi: 16.

*After this, we are told of the last temptation* to which Jesus was exposed on this occasion. We read,—“Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.” Matth. iv: 8. There is a high mountain in the wilderness of Judea, to the west of Jericho that answers the description here given, and that is generally supposed to be the mountain here referred to. But there is no mountain in the world from which “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them” could be seen at once, without some miraculous help. And there must have been such help in this case. From the top of the mountain referred to, a large part of the mountains, and valleys, and plains, and cities of Palestine could be seen. And then, in connection with these, Satan must have woven into a sort of vision, a pictorial view of “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.” St. Luke tells us that this was done—“*in a moment of time.*” Chap. iv: 5. This proves, that it must have been done, in some miraculous way.

And when Satan had spread out before the eye of Jesus, this vision of worldly glory, he said to him,—“All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me!” How could he look the pure and holy Jesus in the face and utter such blasphemous words! What a wonder the ground did not open beneath his feet and swallow him up! Satan was at his old work again of telling lies. The kingdoms of the world did not belong to him; he had no power to give them away. God the Father had given them to Jesus already; and they belonged of right to him. And so, by quoting scripture once more, Jesus resists this temptation, as he calmly says,—“Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Matth. iv: 10. Deut. vi: 13.

And so the forty days of our Saviour’s temptation ended.

*And then, the last thing we are told*, in connection with this temptation of Jesus is, that after it was all over, and Satan had left him,—“*Angels came and ministered unto him.*” Matth. iv: 11.

These are the things we are told, about the temptation of Christ.

And now we come to speak of *the things we are*—TAUGHT—by this temptation. There are *four* lessons of which we wish to speak.

*In the first place, the temptation of Christ shows us that—we must expect temptation.*

If Jesus, who was so pure and holy, did not escape from being tempted while he was in this world, it is very certain that *we* cannot escape. We must be tempted. You know that we go to school to learn. But this world is the school in which God puts us. And some of the most important lessons we have to learn in this school, can only be learned by our being tried or tempted. Wherever we are, and what-



Pass on the Road from Jerusalem to Jericho.

ever we are doing—at home, at school, at work, or at play, we shall find ourselves tempted, as we say in the general confession, to do—“those things that we ought not to do, and to leave undone the things that we ought to do.” Here is a story about a grasshopper, which illustrates this part of our subject. It is a true story, only it is put in the form of a fable, so that we can allow the grasshopper to speak:—

A Sunday-school boy was studying his geography lesson under a shady tree, one summer's day. A grasshopper was jumping about near him, and in danger of getting caught in a spider's web close by. “Take

care, Mr. Grasshopper," said the boy. "There's a spider's web. If you don't look out, you'll be caught in it."

"You mind your book," said the grasshopper. "I know what I'm about. Do you think I'm such a fool as to jump into that web?"

These words were hardly out of his mouth, before, as he took another leap, he was caught by one of his hind legs in the spider's web. With an awkward turn, he had come round to hang with his head downwards, and his body towards the web.

"There," said the boy, "didn't I tell you."

"Pooh! that's nothing," said the grasshopper. "There's only one foot caught. I've got five free yet. I'll show you. Just look here." Then he gave a push with his other hind foot. But instead of loosing the first foot, the second was caught in the web, too.

"Aha," said the boy, "there you go."

"Wait a minute; I've four feet free yet," said the grasshopper, as he struggled with all his might. But, one after another, his feet were caught, till at last the whole six were entangled in the net. Then out rushed the spider, and fastened thread after thread around him till the poor grasshopper was bound as tight as a drum, and the spider made many a meal of him.

Now, Satan, like a great spider, is weaving his webs about us all the time. And, as Jesus said, we must—"Watch, and pray always, that we may be accounted worthy to escape all these things." Luke xxi: 36.

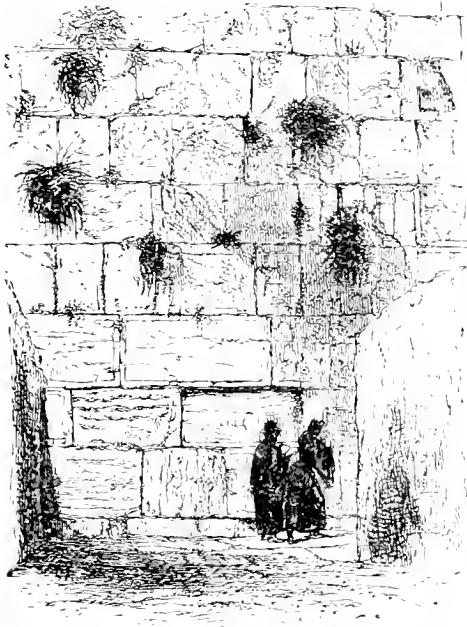
"The Old Man's Struggles." A good old Christian man was asked once, if he had much trouble with his temptations, and this is what he said about it:—

"Indeed, I have trouble enough with them. This is what I have to do every day:—I have two falcons to tame;—(a falcon is a bird of prey something like an eagle, but much smaller)—two hares to keep from running away; two hawks to manage; a serpent to confine; a lion to chain, and a sick man to tend and wait upon."

"Why, that can't be," said his friend; "no one could attend to all these things at once."

"Yes, indeed," said the old man, "it is just as I have said. The two falcons are my two eyes, which I must diligently guard, lest they should

look at something that may be dangerous to my soul; the two hares are my feet, which I must hold back, lest they should run into sinful ways; the two hawks are my two hands, which, as the catechism says, I must 'keep from picking and stealing, and learn to labor truly to get mine own living;' the serpent is my tongue, which I must 'keep from evil—speaking, lying, and slandering;' the lion is my heart, which I have to struggle with all the time, to keep free from evil thoughts and feelings; and the sick man, is my whole self, which always needs my watchfulness and care."



Portion of the Wall on the Site of the Temple.



Underground Buildings in the Temple.

And if we have all these things to attend to, we must know a good deal about temptation.

Here is a story to show one of the ways in which temptation may come to us. We may call it:—

"John and the Postage-stamp." John was a boy who "lived out." His mother lived on a small farm among the rocky hills of New England; and John wrote to her every week. One day he picked up an old envelope from the kitchen wood-box. On this envelope he saw a postage-stamp, which had been used once, but had no mark on it, to show that it had been used. "The postmaster missed his aim, then," said John.

"He left no mark on this stamp. It is as good as new. I can use it myself."

Then he moistened it by the steam from the spout of the tea-kettle, and carefully pulled the stamp off.

"Don't do it," said his conscience; "for that would be cheating. The stamp has been on one letter; it ought not to be used again."

"It can be used again, very well," said John, "for there's no mark on it. The post-office people won't know."

"But *you* know," said conscience, "and that is enough. It's not honest to use it the second time. It's but a little matter, to be sure; yet it's cheating."

"But, no one will know it," said John, faintly.

"No one!" cried conscience. "Yes, God will know it; and that is enough; and he, you know, desireth truth in *the inward parts*." Ps. li: 6.

"Yes," cried all the better parts of John's character, "it would be cheating to use the postage-stamp the second time, *and I'll not do it*."

Then he tore the stamp in two and threw it away. John gained a glorious victory that day. If he had used that stamp he would have been like the foolish grasshopper when he got his first leg caught in the spider's web. When once caught in that web it is hard to get clear of it. Let us try to keep out of it.

We must expect temptation. This is the first lesson taught us by the temptation of Christ.

*The second lesson taught us by this subject is, that—THERE IS NO SIN IN BEING TEMPTED.*

I mean by this that there is no sin in it, *if we do not give way* to the temptation. They were dreadful sins that Satan tempted our blessed Saviour to commit during those forty days in the wilderness. It is awful to think what the result would have been if Jesus had given way to any of them! But never, for a moment, did he think of yielding to them. Bravely and grandly he resisted them all. And the consequence was that Jesus came out from that temptation as good, and as pure, and as holy, as he was before. And so it will be with us if we resist temptation. No matter how much we may be tempted, it will do us no harm, *if we do not yield to the temptation*. Your heart, or my heart, is like a fort, which

belongs to Jesus. What he tells us to do, is to—“*Hold the Fort*” for him.

Satan may come and try to get possession of this fort. But he cannot take it by storm. He cannot force his way into it, because Jesus is stronger than he. And so he tempts us by threats, or by promises to open the gates of the fort and let him in. And in doing this he will tell all manner of falsehoods. This is very sinful; but then the sin is Satan's, and not ours. We have no share in the sin so long as we do not yield to Satan, and do what he wants us to do. God says to us,—“If sinners entice thee, *consent thou not.*” Prov. i: 10. To entice means to tempt, or persuade to do wrong. But this enticing is not our work. It is not what we do. It is done by some one outside of ourselves. We are not to blame for that. It is not our sin. The sin only begins with us *when we consent to the enticing*, or yield to the temptation. No matter how strong the enticement may be, nor how long the temptation may last, if we do not yield to it, it can do us no harm. There is no sin in being tempted.

One of the best illustrations of this part of our subject, is seen in the case of Job. We have an account of it in the first two chapters of this book.

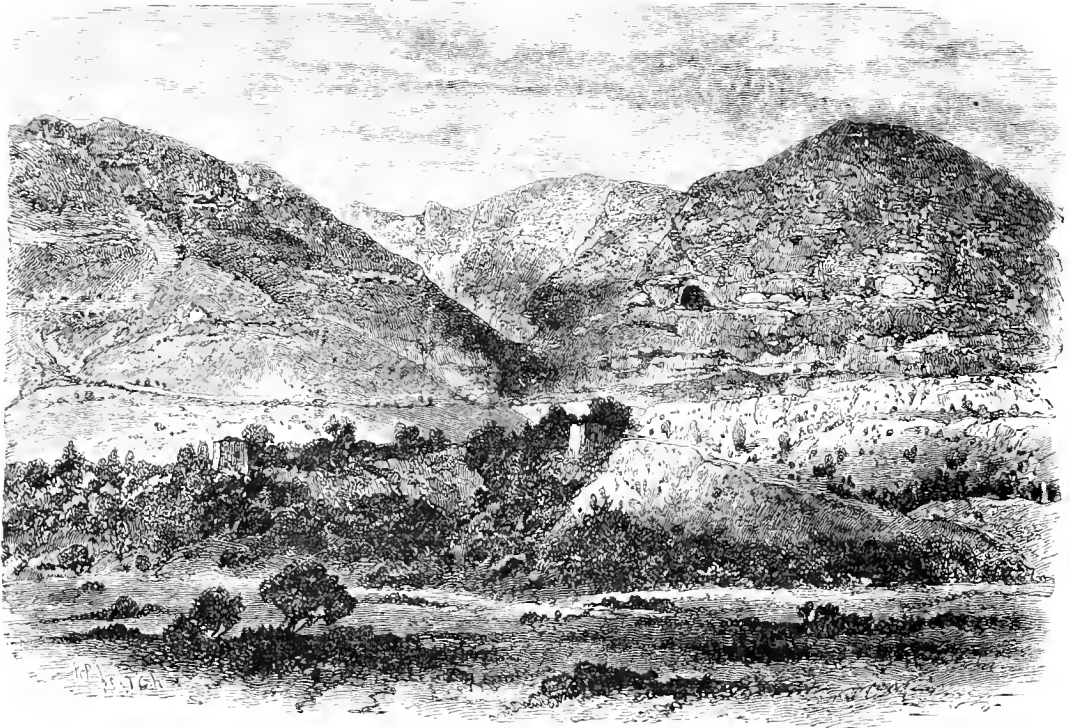
Job was a great and rich man. His position was that of a wealthy and powerful Arab Sheik. He was one of the best men in the world. Satan said that Job only served God because he had found that service profitable, or because God had made him rich, and had done so much for him. Then he asked God to let him take away Job's property, and see if, in *this way* he could not destroy his faith and piety.

God gave Satan leave to do this. Immediately he undertook to tempt Job, and try if he could not make him give up his trust in God, and think, and feel, and speak wickedly about him.

He contrived to have Job's property all taken away from him very suddenly. The plan was so arranged that the reports of his losses should come in upon him, one after another, in rapid succession, like the waves of the sea, so that he might be overwhelmed by them.

One day a servant came running in to Job, all out of breath, to tell him that a band of robbers had stolen away all his five hundred yoke of oxen, and not one of them was left. While he was speaking, another

servant came running in, to say that his seven thousand sheep had all been destroyed by lightning, and not one of them was left. While he was speaking, there came another to say that a band of robbers had seized his three thousand camels, had driven them all away, and not one of them was left. And while he was speaking, another came to tell him that his ten children—his seven sons and three daughters were feasting in their elder brother's house, when there came a terrible whirlwind and blew down the house.



Quarantania, the "High Mountain" of the Temptation.

His children were all killed! How dreadful this must have been! And how did Job act when this temptation, or trial came upon him? Did he get angry, and say that it was cruel in God to treat him so? No. But we read that,—“He rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down on the ground, and worshiped, and said, the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord! In all this, Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.” Job i: 20-22.

Then Satan said that Job did not care much for anything so long as he only enjoyed good health; but that if God would allow some painful



disease to come upon him, then he would lose his trust in God, and speak wickedly of him. And God allowed Satan to tempt him in this way. He smote poor Job with one of the most painful and loathsome diseases known. It came out in terrible boils all over his body, from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. The sight was so offensive that it was painful to look at him, or to come near him. His wife yielded to the tempter, and said to Job,—“Curse God, and die!” But poor, patient Job, as he lay among the ashes, meekly replied to her,—“Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?” “In all this, did not Job sin with his lips.” Job ii: 10.

And so Job's case gives us a good illustration of the second lesson taught by our Saviour's temptation, viz.: that there is no sin in being tempted.

*The third lesson taught us by this part of the life of Christ, is—*HOW TO RESIST TEMPTATION.

Jesus had power to have driven Satan away from him, as soon as he appeared, if he had chosen to do so. He might have said to him at the beginning of the temptation, what he said to him at the close of it,—“Get thee hence, Satan;” and he would have been obliged to go. But that would not have helped us any. And one thing that Jesus had in view, when he consented to be tempted, was to teach us this very lesson we are now considering. He wished to show us how we are to resist temptation when it meets us. You may notice how Jesus answered Satan from the scriptures every time that he tempted him. “It is written”—“It is written,” was what he had to say. The Bible is called—“the sword of the spirit.” Ephesians vi: 17. This sword is the weapon we must use in fighting Satan. And here Jesus shows us how to use it. He is the Captain of our salvation. We are his soldiers. In this temptation scene, Jesus does, as it were, step out before us, with this sword in his hand, to show us how to use it. Here we see him skilfully handling this sword. When Satan aims a blow at him, he wards it off, with this sword of the spirit, saying,—“It is written”—“It is written.” And this shows how important it is for us to be well acquainted with the scriptures. David was showing us the true use to make of the truth we are taught in God's blessed book, when he said,—“Thy word *have I hid in mine heart*, that I

might not sin against thee." Ps. cxix: 11. Now let us take an example or two of the good that will come to us from making a right use of the Bible.

"The Antidote." There is a tree found in the West Indies, called the Manchineel. It is a good looking tree. The fruit that it bears looks like the golden pippin. It is beautiful to the eye, and has a fragrant smell; but, when eaten, it produces certain death. The juice of this fruit is so deadly that the Indians dip their arrows in it, for the purpose of poisoning their enemies when they wound them. It is remarkable that wherever this tree grows, there is always found, not far from it, a plant, the juice of which counteracts and cures the poison of the manchineel. How well this poison may represent the sad effect of sin! And then, in the effect produced by this healing plant, we see illustrated the influence exerted by God's blessed word on souls that are poisoned by sin. And this is what David meant, when he said,—*"He sent his word, and healed them."* Ps. cvii: 20.

"Thou, God, Seest Me." "I'll pay him back; see if I don't!" said Jim, picking himself up from the ice, and scowling at Ned, who had hit him as he skated by. Ned did not mean it; but it was a hard knock.

"Ah, Jim!" said good old farmer Hayes, "don't hit him here, wait till you find a safer place."

"What place?—where, where?" asked Jamie.

"*A place where God is not,*" said the farmer.

Ah! if we should never tell a lie, or steal, or do anything wrong, till we find a place where God is not, how this would help us to resist temptation!

"The Bible-Lamp." Harry was sent on an errand, one evening, in the winter time. After giving him his message, his mother said,—*"Be sure and take the lantern with you, Harry."*

"What do I want with a lantern?" said Harry. "I know the way well enough." So he went without the lantern.

Very soon, in crossing the road, he stumbled into a hole, and wounded his leg, besides covering his clothes with mud. On his way back he forgot that the fence was broken near the edge of a ravine; and as he was groping his way along, he fell over the bank to the bottom of the ravine. He did not break his limbs, as he might have done; and succeeded in getting out,

but he returned home covered with mud and bruises. *The lantern would have saved him from all this.*

And the Bible is just like such a lantern. "Thy word," says David, "*is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*" Ps. cxix: 105. Let us



Jesus in the Wilderness.

take it with us wherever we go. It will keep us from falling into many horrible pit, and from getting many a painful wound. The third lesson we are taught by the temptation of Christ, is—how to resist temptation.

*The fourth lesson we learn from the temptation of Christ, is about—*  
THE REWARD OF VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION.

When the last trial was over with our Saviour, we read,—“Then the devil leaveth him, and *behold angels came and ministered unto him.*” Matth. iv: 11. What a blessed change this must have been to him! To have the hated presence of Satan removed, with the horrible thoughts he was suggesting; and instead thereof, to have the angels of God come and visit him, and minister to him; who can imagine what a relief this must have been! How they would congratulate him on the great victory he had just gained over the tempter! How they would talk with him about that bright and beautiful heavenly home that he had left, and about that great work on which he was just entering, and the blessed results that would follow from it, in glory to God, and in salvation to men! This visit of the angels was part of the reward bestowed upon him for the victory he had gained over the temptations of Satan.

And God always rewards his people when they get the victory over temptation. The angels may not come to us, as they came to Jesus, but *a blessing will come*, in one form or other. We have God’s promise for this. He says,—“Blessed is the man that endureth, (or getteth the victory over) temptation.” James i: 12. The blessing here promised is a crown of life in heaven.

This reward in the future will be glorious. No one can tell how great the glory of that crown of life will be! But God rewards his people now, in this life, for their victories over temptation. Job felt very sure of this, for while he was in the midst of his long temptation, he said, speaking of God,—“When he hath tried me, *I shall come forth as gold.*” Job xxiii: 10. Here Job teaches us that getting the victory over temptation helps to make our characters *golden*. What a blessed thought this is! There may be some things about us that are mean and selfish. Enduring temptation will change these things, and make them noble and generous. It is like taking things that are of clay, and iron, and brass, and turning them into gold.

And the blessing which God gave to Job for enduring temptation, not only made his character golden, but his possessions, too. He was twice as rich after his great trial as he was before. We read in the last chapter of the book of Job,—that God gave him the same number of children that he had before his temptation, and twice as many sheep, and oxen, and camels, and asses.

I have just one more story. It shows how a boy was tempted; the victory he gained over his temptation, and the reward which the victory brought to him.

"Johnny," said a farmer to his little boy, "it's time for you to go to the pasture and drive the cows home."

Johnny was playing at ball, and the pasture was a long way off; but he was accustomed to obey promptly, so he started, without a word, as fast as he could go.

Being in a hurry to get back to play, he only half let down the bars, and then hurried the cattle through; and one fine cow, in trying to crowd over, stumbled, and broke her leg.

Johnny stood by the poor suffering creature, and said to himself,—“Now, what shall I do? that is the best cow father has; it will have to be killed, and that will be a great loss to father. What shall I tell him?”

“Tell him,” whispered the tempter—the same tempter that came to Jesus,—“tell him you found the bars half down, and the cow lying there.”

“No, I can't say that, for that would be a lie.”

“Tell him,” whispered the tempter again, “that while you were driving the cows, that big boy of farmer Brown's, threw stones, and hurried the cow so that she fell.”

“No, no,” said Johnny, “I never told a lie yet, and I won't begin now. I'll tell father the truth. It was all my fault. I was in a hurry; I frightened the poor creature, and she fell and broke her leg.”

As soon as he had made this brave resolution, he ran home as fast as he could, as if he was afraid the tempter would catch him. He went straight to his father, and told the whole truth. And what did his father do?



An Eastern Fortress.

He laid his hand on Johnny's head, and said,—“I'm very sorry to lose that cow; but I would rather lose every cow I own, than have my dear boy tell an untruth!” O, how happy Johnny felt then, that God had given him grace to do the right thing. He had been tried, but he had “come forth as *gold*.” Truth is golden, and Johnny had told the truth. Honesty is golden, and Johnny had acted honestly. Honor is a golden thing, and Johnny had behaved honorably towards his father. And he felt in his own heart the reward God gives to those who get the victory over temptation.

And thus we have spoken of the *temptation* of Christ; what we are *told* about it, and what we are *taught* by it. The lessons taught by it are four. Lesson first—We must expect temptation. Lesson second—There is no sin in being tempted. Lesson third—How to resist temptation. Lesson fourth—The reward of victory over temptation.

The Collect for the First Sunday in Lent comes in beautifully here:—“O Lord, who for our sakes didst fast forty days and forty nights, give us grace to use such abstinence that our flesh being subdued unto the spirit, we may ever obey thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to thy honor and glory, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen!”











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